

1 [Initiating Landmark Designation - Castro Rock Steam Baths]

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3 **Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for**  
4 **the Castro Rock Steam Baths, located at 578-582 Castro Street, Assessor's Parcel**  
5 **Block No. 2695, Lot No. 013.**  
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7 WHEREAS, Under Planning Code, Section 1004.1, the Board of Supervisors may by  
8 Resolution initiate landmark designation; and

9 WHEREAS, Planning Code, Section 1004.2(b), requires the Historic Preservation  
10 Commission to respond to historic district or individual landmark designations initiated by the  
11 Board of Supervisors within 90 days, and authorizes the Board, by Resolution, to extend the  
12 time within which the Historic Preservation Commission is to render its decision; and

13 WHEREAS, 582 Castro Street, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 2695, Lot No. 013, and  
14 located across the street from Harvey Milk's residence and camera shop, is significant for its  
15 early association with the Castro as an LGBTQ enclave; and

16 WHEREAS, 582 Castro Street was home to one of the City's longest-running  
17 bathhouses, open from circa 1933-1977; and

18 WHEREAS, The Castro Rock Steam Baths became an exclusively gay bathhouse in  
19 the 1970s amidst the backdrop of the Castro neighborhood initially establishing itself as an  
20 internationally recognized LGBTQ enclave; and

21 WHEREAS, Bathhouses played an important role in LGBTQ community development  
22 as relatively safe and private spaces for queer men to meet; and

23 WHEREAS, The Castro Rock Steam Baths was conveniently located in the Upper  
24 Market-Castro area, open 24 hours, serving a diversity of queer male patrons of different ages  
25 and economic circumstances; and

1 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Health Department ordered a citywide closure of  
2 bathhouses at the onset of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, leading to the loss of a vital  
3 economic and social resource for the LGBTQ community; and

4 WHEREAS, In 2016 the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission adopted the  
5 Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco which provided  
6 frameworks for identifying and evaluating sites for historical significance and integrity  
7 associated with San Francisco's diverse and robust LGBTQ histories; and

8 WHEREAS, The Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History was prepared  
9 by qualified historians in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards; and

10 WHEREAS, Through applying the evaluative framework as outlined in the Citywide  
11 Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History, the property can be considered as an  
12 individually eligible historic resource based on its strong association with LGBTQ History; and

13 WHEREAS, The Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History identifies the  
14 Castro Rock Steam Baths as a property which may be eligible for City Landmark status; and

15 WHEREAS, The building exterior remains identifiable as the location of the Castro  
16 Rock Steam Baths, as it did in the 1970s; and

17 WHEREAS, The Castro LGBTQ Cultural District's 2024 Cultural History, Housing and  
18 Economic Sustainability Strategies (CHHESS) report includes the strategy, "Ensure the  
19 Historic Preservation Commission and/or the Board of Supervisors prioritize further municipal  
20 landmarking and state and national nominations of Castro LGBTQIA+ historical sites..."; now,  
21 therefore, be it

22 RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors hereby initiates a landmark designation of the  
23 Castro Rock Steam Baths under Planning Code, Section 1004.1; and, be it

24 FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board requests that the Planning Department prepare a  
25 landmark designation report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission for its

1 consideration of the full historical, architectural, aesthetic, and cultural interest and value of  
2 the Castro Rock Steam Baths; and, be it

3 FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors requests that the Historic  
4 Preservation Commission consider whether the Castro Rock Steam Baths warrants landmark  
5 designation and submit its recommendation to the Board according to Article 10 of the  
6 Planning Code.