

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY


CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER KAPLAN, MAYOR THAO, AND COUNCIL
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE OAKLAND “LAKESHORE LGBTQ CULTURAL DISTRICT” TO UPLIFT THE RICH HISTORY OF AND CULTIVATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR LGBTQ INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, ALLIES, AND BUSINESSES IN LAKESHORE, AND NURTURE A SAFE, VIBRANT, AND WELCOMING COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, the Oakland metropolitan area has the highest percentage of LGBTQ residents of any metropolitan area in the entire United States, according to The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland has been at the forefront of fighting for justice and equity for the LGBTQ community, including the celebrations of Oakland Pride and Pridefest and the establishment of the oldest operating gay bar in the nation, but Oakland lacks any designated LGBTQ cultural districts; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, a record number of bills restricting the rights of LGBTQ people have been introduced across the country this year, with a particular focus on eroding protections for trans youth, making efforts to sustain, protect, uplift, and celebrate LGBTQ people all the more critical; and

WHEREAS, cultural districts are an important and established strategy for preserving, protecting, and expanding the cultural vitality of vulnerable communities, and LGBTQ cultural districts have proven successful in other cities; and

WHEREAS, a coalition of LGBTQ community stakeholders have united to establish Oakland’s first LGBTQ cultural district in the Lakeshore area; and

WHEREAS, the vision for the Lakeshore LGBTQ Cultural District (“the District”) is to become one of Oakland’s premier safe spaces free from violence and discrimination for all LGBTQ individuals, allies, and families to be in an environment where Oaklanders can be ourselves no matter what race, sexuality, religion, or ethnicity; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the District is to uplift the rich history of the LGBTQ Oakland community, cultivate a supportive environment for diverse LGBTQ individuals, families, allies, and businesses, and nurture a safe, vibrant, and welcoming community; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the District is to create a warm, vibrant, welcoming and inclusive space where the LGBTQ community, youth, families, elders, and allies can gather to be their full selves, deepen relationships, access services, and patronage local businesses; and to celebrate the rich diversity of the LGBTQ community that will embrace the myriad of expressed identities, allowing people to feel supported and respected for exactly who they are; and

WHEREAS, the District shall include the area bounded by Grand Avenue to the west, El Embarcadero to the south, Lakeshore Avenue to the east, and Kenmore Avenue continuing to Fairbanks Avenue and Boulevard Way to the north, including both sides of each boundary street, as depicted in attachment A; and

WHEREAS, the District is a well-recognized mixed-use area of the City of Oakland in which a high concentration of LGBTQ businesses can serve as an anchor of attraction for the LGBTQ community and allies; and

WHEREAS, the history of LGBTQ community and culture in Lakeshore includes Sistahs Steppin' in Pride, an annual march and festival that brought the East Bay's diverse queer women's community together for a decade, and whose historic gathering and march began at Lake Merritt at the pillars between Lakeshore and Grand Avenues; and

WHEREAS, the District is home to a primary cultural hub for the LGBTQ community in the form of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, founded in 2017 as Oakland's first nonprofit multi-service center dedicated to serving the multi-ethnic, intergenerational, LGBTQ community members; and

WHEREAS, Oakland LGBTQ Community Center is also one of very few, all-inclusive LGBTQ community centers in the nation, led and founded by African Americans, and the first in the state of California; and

WHEREAS, the District is home to a concentration of cultural facilities, creative enterprises, and arts venues owned and operated by LGBTQ people, including the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center, the Queer Arts Center, Shakewell, Slick & Dapper, Modigliani Café, Kinetic Chiropractic, United Grooming, Baymade, Galleria Scola Picture Framing, VT Nail Spa, Alkali Rye Beverage Shop, Arizmendi Bakery, and Michael's Chocolates; and

WHEREAS, the District also boasts a concentration of LGBTQ-serving businesses that have made their allyship with the community a focus, including Good Vibrations, Arise Yoga, Melo Melo Kava Bar, Cat House, Bardo Lounge and Supper Club, Rico Rico Taco, Colonial Donuts, Peet's Coffee, and T-Mobile; and

WHEREAS, the District is a walkable, compact area that is easy for visitors to recognize, and can act as a center for LGBTQ cultural activities—curative, artistic, and economic; and

WHEREAS, the District can make meaningful improvements for the people and City of Oakland, including by:

- beautifying and activating streets and community spaces
- promoting LGBTQ tourism and visitation
- supporting and encouraging artists, creative businesses, and entrepreneurial opportunities for the LGBTQ community
- contributing to an artistic and innovative environment
- driving economic growth and tax revenue
- highlighting LGBTQ culture and history; and

WHEREAS, this designation aligns with Oakland's existing policy codified in the historic preservation element of Oakland's General Plan which states a desire to "preserve, protect, enhance, perpetuate, and prevent the unnecessary destruction or impairment of properties or physical features of special character or special historic, cultural, educational, architectural or aesthetic interest or value"; and

WHEREAS, this designation is intended to align with the Housing Element and shall not prevent or impede the construction of residential housing of all income levels as set forth in the Housing Element; and

WHEREAS, this designation prepares the City to seek state resources to invest in the area by applying for state designation and funding through the competitive grant process established by California AB 189 which is administered through the California Arts Council; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland hereby establishes the “Lakeshore LGBTQ Cultural District,” as described above and depicted in exhibit A, to uplift the rich history of and cultivate a supportive environment for LGBTQ individuals, families, allies, and businesses in lakeshore, and nurture a safe, vibrant, and welcoming community; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: the City Council hereby directs the City Administrator to work with the community and stakeholders to develop a strategic plan for the Lakeshore LGBTQ Cultural District that outlines goals, priorities, and strategies to support and promote business and the artistic and cultural vitality of the neighborhood; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City Administrator is directed to identify funding or other in-kind resources to fund the initial implementation of the Lakeshore LGBTQ Cultural District; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the City Administrator is hereby authorized to take action with respect to this designation consistent with this Resolution and its basic purposes, including developing administrative guidelines, in consultation with the Office of the City Attorney, to effectuate the intent of this Resolution.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, JENKINS, KALB, KAPLAN, RAMACHANDRAN, REID, AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____

ASHA REED

Acting City Clerk and Clerk of the Council
of the City of Oakland, California