APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY

Braz Shabrell

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER BROWN, MAYOR LEE, COUNCILMEMBER WANG, AND COUNCILMEMBER RAMACHANDRAN

RESOLUTION IN CELEBRATION OF LGBTQ+ PRIDE IN OAKLAND AND THE SIXTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF OAKLAND'S PRIDE PARADE AND FESTIVAL; AND HONORING LGBTQ+ LEADERS WHO HAVE BUILT A LEGACY OF SERVICE, EXCELLENCE, AND RESILIENCE IN OUR CITY

WHEREAS, the City of Oakland proudly honors the leadership, vision, and unwavering dedication of LGBTQ+ community leaders whose advocacy, service, and activism have strengthened our city while advancing equality, inclusion, and visibility for all; and

WHEREAS, Oakland Pride, which is celebrating its 16th anniversary, stands as a powerful embodiment of LGBTQ+ leadership by fostering community, championing social justice, and creating spaces that uplift culture, identity, and belonging, including the establishment of Oakland's first LGBTQ+ community center to provide advocacy, essential services, and connection; and

WHEREAS, the courage, creativity, and commitment of Oakland's LGBTQ+ leaders continue to inspire new generations, enrich civic life, and reflect the resilience, activism, and unity that make our city vibrant, inclusive, and equitable; and

WHEREAS, in this milestone year, the City of Oakland is proud to recognize and celebrate the following outstanding LGBTQ+ leaders whose vision, passion, and dedication have left a profound and lasting impact on our community; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Barbara Lee honors **Michael Colbruno** during Pride Month, recognizing a longtime Oakland civic and business leader and LGBTQ+ advocate whose decades of public service have advanced equality, representation, and opportunity throughout the Bay Area. Mr. Colbruno forged his commitment to LGBTQ+ equality as Chief of Staff to trailblazer Carole Migden at the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and California State Assembly, advancing domestic-partnership policies and organizing San Francisco's landmark 1996 City Hall civil ceremony for domestic partners. In Oakland, Mr. Colbruno became the first openly LGBTQ+ person to chair the Planning Commission and to lead the Board of Port Commissioners, serving the Port for twelve years (2013–2025), including two terms as President (2016, 2024), and co-founded the nation's first LGBTQ+ affinity group for port commissioners and employees. He has

served as board member and PAC chair for Equality California, the Alice B. Toklas LGBTQ Democratic Club, and the East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club, and was honored with the San Francisco Business Times' 2017 "OUTstanding Voices" award; and

WHEREAS, the At-Large Office honors **George J. Smith III** for his decades of service to the LGBTQ+ community across the Bay Area. For more than 30 years, George has been a steadfast pillar of the LGBTQ+ communities in both Oakland and San Francisco, dedicating his life to service, intersectional solidarity, and the building of safe spaces where transgender individuals, queer youth, and people of color, can live authentically and thrive. Alongside fellow organizers, he also helped build Bay Area Black in the Life, creating vital space and visibility for Black and Brown LGBTQ+ community members. As President of the Board of Directors of Oakland Pride Inc., he led the organization through a historic and difficult period, successfully transitioning Oakland Pride to an official program of the Oakland LGBTQ+ Community Center. This secured a permanent home and long-term financial stability for the annual parade and festival for generations to come. In the face of nationwide attacks on transgender people's rights, he championed the 2025 theme, "In Unity, We Thrive," demonstrating his commitment to fostering resilience and standing up for what is right. Through his intentional, tireless, and selfless leadership, George J. Smith III has left an enduring mark on Oakland's LGBTQ+ community and its future. In recognition of his extraordinary service, advocacy, and lasting contributions, At-Large Councilmember Rowena Brown proudly honors George J. Smith III; and

WHEREAS, District 1 honors **James Rojas and John Kamp** for their dedication to Oakland and their impactful work as urban and landscape designers, planners, and facilitators who have built an international reputation through their writing and practice, whose work has touched numerous countries, cities, and communities; and as Oakland residents, James and John have donated countless hours to improving public spaces in our community, while facilitating community engagement and participation; with their impact in Oakland including the amazing Frog Park, the Rockridge Community Vision Plan and many other projects; and where their book, *Dream Play Build: Hands-On Community Engagement for Enduring Spaces and Places* has become an influential guide to how community members can change their public spaces; and their impact as members of the LGBTQ+ community who are able to honor their lived experiences and use them to contribute to their communities; and

WHEREAS, District 2 honors **Kin Folkz**, a visionary equity-seeker, visual artist, and ardent art activist who is a steadfast advocate for marginalized populations. Kin centers their multimedia work on "Artivism"—the powerful intersection of art and activism—alongside collective self-healing to deconstruct the Digital Divide and elevate QTBIPOC creatives. Kin has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to Oakland through profound community organizing and monumental public art. As the Founder and Executive Director of the Oakland-based Queer Healing Arts Center and Spectrum Queer Media, Kin has spearheaded vital inclusive platforms, including the Oakland Queer + Trans Open Mic, the Oakland LGBTQ Pride Creative Arts and Film Festival, and various wellness workshops. Their impactful cultural contributions to the city include the Oakland Museum of California's "Leap At The Sun" exhibit and a 7-block-long "All Black Trans Queer Non-binary Woman Disabled Imprisoned Lives Matter" mural at Lake Merritt. Recognized worldwide for uplifting the underserved, Kin was elected by the global community as the 2018 SF Pride Grand Marshal and is featured in the award-winning documentary "State of Pride". Through their transformative leadership, Kin Folkz continuously asks, "Who is the most marginalized?", fiercely demanding visibility, equity, and resources for the entire LGBTQIA+ family; and

WHEREAS, District 3 honors **Vee Vargas** (she/her/ella), a queer Latina entrepreneur, hairstylist, educator, and community builder with more than 15 years in the beauty industry. She is the founder of Be Here Salon & Collective, an award-winning Oakland salon rooted in inclusive beauty, well-being, sustainability, and community, and Be Infinite, an education and workforce-development initiative creating accessible pathways into the beauty industry for transitional-age youth and emerging professionals through apprenticeship, mentorship, hands-on education, and industry connection. Through partnerships including New Door Ventures, Be Infinite provides young people with real-world salon experience and pathways toward sustainable careers. Vee's work extends beyond the salon into Oakland's broader community. She leads the annual Be Here & Be Infinite beauty industry gathering and, in 2026, co-produced the inaugural Queer Latine Pride celebration on Valdez Street in Uptown Oakland, welcoming more than 500 people for a free celebration of queer joy, Latine culture, local artists, businesses, and community. Across each of these initiatives, Vee's work is grounded in a shared belief: when we create spaces where people feel seen, connected, and supported, we create more possibilities for everyone; and

WHEREAS, District 4 honors **Aroma**, a prolific queer performer from Oakland whose unique music blends alternative rock, new wave, soul, funk and hip-hop. Aroma's work explores the extremity of human emotion and seeks to bring together the feelings of love, loss, death and grief, queerness, and originality. As demonstrated in ZoomBug, a musical project created by Aroma which became a local cult classic, their music captures a fluid understanding of time and self-expression. Aroma has performed on stage at local venues in the Bay Area, including the Oaklash Queer Arts Festival, Psyched Fest, and many others. We honor Aroma for their creation of a truly authentic musical experience and for pushing the boundaries of traditional genres; and

WHEREAS, District 5 honors **Lisa L. Williams**, a distinguished executive, strategist, and community leader with more than twenty-five years of professional experience spanning strategic planning, program development, government relations, political campaign management, sponsorship development, and large-scale event production; and she currently serves as the Chief Strategy and Program Officer for Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (BOSS), where she provides strategic leadership and oversees initiatives that expand opportunities and improve outcomes for underserved individuals and communities in District 5 and throughout Alameda County; and she previously served as Senior Field Representative for Assemblymember Mia Bonta while also leading One Source Consulting, a firm specializing in major event production, sponsorship management, and political strategy; and her extensive governmental and political background includes work with prominent leaders such as Vice President Kamala Harris, Governor Gavin Newsom, Mayor London Breed, and others; and she has held key leadership roles with San Francisco Pride and Oakland Pride, establishing her reputation as an accomplished event producer, fundraiser, and community advocate; and she continues her community service through leadership and advisory positions with Soul of Pride, Black Women Organized for Political Action, the Bayard Rustin LGBTQ Coalition, Rafiki Wellness, the Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club, the Mega Black COVID Taskforce, and the San Francisco Behavioral Health Commission, consistently demonstrating her enduring commitment to equity, civic engagement, LGBTQ+ advocacy, and the advancement of underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, District 6 honors **Bill Thomasson**, who is a lifelong Oaklander whose life reflects the strength, diversity, and enduring spirit of Oakland's LGBTQ+ community. Born at Highland Hospital, raised on Seneca Street in East Oakland, and a 1978 graduate of Oakland High School, Bill has remained deeply rooted in the community he proudly calls home. Bill has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to District 6 through his leadership as President of the

Toler Heights Neighborhood Council, advocating for his neighbors, strengthening community connections, and working to improve public safety and quality of life throughout his neighborhood. His dedication to civic service includes five years on the Oakland Police Commission Selection Panel and many years as a National Night Out host, bringing residents together and fostering stronger relationships among neighbors and community partners. Bill and his husband, Ben, built their family in the same East Oakland neighborhood where Bill was raised, raising their children, Ava and the late Elijah, with love, resilience, and a deep sense of belonging. Council President Kevin Jenkins proudly honors Bill Thomasson for his advocacy, neighborhood leadership, and dedicated service to District 6, and recognizes his lasting contributions to Oakland's LGBTQ+ community and the City of Oakland; and

WHEREAS, District 7 honors **Brendalynn Goodall** for her long-standing commitment to community building, public service, and advocacy on behalf of issues pertaining to mental health, BIPOC communities, elder justice, and LGBTQ+ rights. After receiving her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the formerly known California State University - Hayward, now known as California State University - East Bay, and a Master of Social Work from San Francisco State University, Brendalynn dedicated more than twenty years of service, working for the City of Oakland as Program Director for the Department of Human Services and Division Manager for the Aging and Adult Services division. Following retirement, Brendalynn remained deeply rooted in civic engagement, serving as treasurer, secretary, and vice president of the East Bay Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club for six years. Currently, Brendalynn serves as a Commissioner on the California State Commission on Aging and most recently, as a Board member for the California State Workforce Development Board. Through her decades of service, Brendalynn has consistently advocated for equity, inclusion, dignity, and opportunity, leaving a lasting impact on countless lives and has strengthened the communities she served; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the City of Oakland celebrates the 16th anniversary of Oakland Pride under the banner of ***Pride, Power, and People,*** and honors these LGBTQ+ leaders for their dynamism, resilience, and steadfast commitment to serving and uplifting our communities.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - BROWN, FIFE, GALLO, HOUSTON, RAMACHANDRAN, UNGER, WANG, AND PRESIDENT JENKINS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST:_____

ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California

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