

Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 8



City and County of San Francisco

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 26, 2024

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### \*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\*

## SAN FRANCISCO FINALIZES PURCHASE OF PERMANENT HOME FOR THE NATION'S FIRST LGBTQ HISTORY MUSEUM

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** — Today the City and County of San Francisco finalized the purchase of 2280 Market Street, marking a transformative milestone for LGBTQ+ history and culture in San Francisco. The newly acquired space in the heart of the Castro neighborhood will serve as the permanent home of the GLBT Historical Society Museum, the nation's first stand-alone museum dedicated to LGBTQ+ history and culture when it opened nearly 14 years ago.

“This is a historic day for San Francisco and our LGBTQ+ community,” said **District 8 Supervisor Rafael Mandelman**. “With this purchase, a two-decades-long dream of securing a permanent home for the GLBT Historical Society Museum is finally a reality. The museum will serve as a local and international destination and a community hub to elevate the stories and contributions of LGBTQ+ individuals, ensuring they are celebrated and remembered for generations to come.”

On October 8th, Mayor Breed and Supervisor Mandelman introduced legislation authorizing Andrico Q. Penick, the Director of Real Estate to enter into a Purchase and Sale Agreement for the acquisition of 2280 Market Street for \$11.6M. The ordinance was unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors and signed by the Mayor on November 14th.

Today's purchase of 2280 Market Street builds on years of collaboration between Mayor London Breed, Supervisor Mandelman, Senator Scott Wiener, the City's Real Estate Division, the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, the San Francisco Arts Commission, and nonprofit partners including the GLBT Historical Society and the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST).

“At a time when queer rights are under attack across the country, the purchase of this building is a powerful affirmation of our community’s resilience and pride,” said **Supervisor Mandelman**. “I am deeply grateful to Mayor Breed and Senator Wiener — without their years-long support and advocacy, this achievement would not have been possible.”

“It’s amazing to see the dream of the nation’s first LGBTQ museum become a reality right here in San Francisco. Today, we celebrate yet another amazing milestone of our efforts to secure a space that celebrates, honors, and preserves San Francisco’s LGBTQ+ history and culture,” said **Mayor London Breed**. “We dedicate this historic moment to the fearless community, partners, and advocates who have been champions for our City’s LGBTQ community, ensuring the forever home for this museum in the Castro. I thank Supervisor Mandelman and Senator Wiener, who have worked tirelessly not just as local leaders, but as advocates who helped tremendously to make this project possible.”

“It’s easy to forget what an indelible mark San Francisco’s LGBTQ community has left on the entire country,” said **Senator Scott Wiener**. “This Museum will ensure future generations can learn from that history for many years to come. We worked hard to obtain support for the Museum in the state budget, and I look forward to adding another new attraction to our thriving ecosystem of world-class San Francisco LGBTQ institutions.”

### **Historical and Cultural Significance**

The purchase of 2280 Market Street honors San Francisco’s legacy as a global leader for LGBTQ+ rights, activism, and culture. During the 1960s and 70s, the Castro neighborhood emerged as a refuge for LGBTQ+ individuals. This period saw the rise of a vibrant community and the birth of historic movements that shaped the fight for equality, including the election of Harvey Milk as one of the first openly gay public officials in the nation, the formation of queer-owned businesses, and the resistance against oppressive laws that targeted LGBTQ+ people, such as anti-cross-dressing ordinances and discriminatory policing.

In the 1980s, the Castro was also at the forefront of the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The neighborhood mobilized to provide care, advocacy, and activism, shaping national awareness and responses to the crisis.

These efforts laid the groundwork for the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement and cemented the Castro as a symbol of resilience and progress.

“History matters,” said **Supervisor Mandelman**. “Ensuring we have a world class museum in the Castro, a neighborhood that has been at the forefront of the LGBTQ+ rights movement, ensures that the stories of our struggles and victories remain accessible and inspiring.”

### **A Home for Now and the Future**

The newly acquired property offers 22,330 square feet, with an initial 11,165 square feet allocated to the GLBT Historical Society Museum, Archives, Research Center and administrative space on the second floor. Over time, the museum is expected to expand to the

ground floor as leases expire, providing a dynamic, multi-level cultural space that can host even more exhibits, educational programming, and events.

"With the purchase now completed, we are thrilled to begin planning and building our new home in the heart of the Castro," said **Roberto Ordeñana, Executive Director of the GLBT Historical Society**. "This is more than just a physical space; it is a permanent home for our history, where the stories, struggles, and triumphs of LGBTQ and allied communities will be preserved and shared for generations to come. As we look ahead to our 40th anniversary in 2025, this milestone comes at a critical time when our voices need to be heard, and our work has never been more important in elevating and amplifying our stories."

He added, "This achievement would not have been possible without the steadfast dedication and vision of many community leaders who worked tirelessly to make it happen. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone helping to bring this dream to life, and we look forward to building on this incredible moment together."

The acquisition was made possible by financial commitments by Mayor Breed, including \$12.5M set aside in the City's 2021 budget for the purchase of the museum building, and \$5.5M from the State of California through the advocacy of Senator Scott Wiener for tenant improvements and programmatic support. The GLBT Historical Society will continue fundraising efforts to ensure the museum becomes a world-class destination honoring LGBTQ+ history.

The City will establish a public-private partnership with the GLBT Historical Society and the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST) to manage and operate 2280 Market Street, including overseeing current leases and supporting the development of the future LGBTQ History Museum. Under this arrangement, the City's Real Estate Division will lease the property, while CAST and the GLBT Historical Society will coordinate sublease and operational responsibilities.

"This is a moment to celebrate the deep persistence and vision of the GLBT Historical Society, the leadership of elected officials who backed their advocacy with critical resources, and a network of partners named and unnamed who helped us reach this moment," said **Ken Ikeda, Chief Executive Officer of the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST)**. "It takes a village with patience and determination. CAST is thankful for the opportunity to proceed in partnership with GLBT Historical Society and the City of San Francisco."

The lease and sublease agreements are expected to be finalized and presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval by mid-2025.

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