[Intent to Establish Pacific Islander Cultural District]

Resolution reflecting the intent of the Board of Supervisors to establish a Pacific Islander Cultural District to commemorate historical sites, preserve existing spaces, and plan for thriving and vibrant communities to celebrate Pacific Islander culture in the Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale neighborhoods.

WHEREAS, According to the 2015 United States Census Bureau estimate, there are 353,666 Pacific Islanders (PI) living in California, more than any other state other than Hawai‘i; and

WHEREAS, Pacific Islanders are defined as the 20 or more communities with origins in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia and each group carries their own distinct beliefs, practices, and languages; and

WHEREAS, According to the Pacific Islander Demographics Report published by the Regional Pacific Islander Taskforce in the Bay Area, the Pacific Islander populations accounts for 0.8% of California’s population as of 2015 and almost one in five Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders in California reside in the Bay Area, with 53% of the population living in Alameda, San Francisco, and San Mateo; and

WHEREAS, Between 2000 and 2017, the Pacific Islander population grew by 27% in California and the Census Bureau has identified 19 distinct ethnic communities within the Pacific Islander populations; and

WHEREAS, Among the three Bay Area counties, San Francisco has approximately 6,773 Pacific Islanders, with a majority of the population living in Visitacion Valley and surrounding neighborhoods in the southern part of the city; and
WHEREAS, Native Hawaiians are the largest PI ethnic subgroup in the Bay Area with 22.8%, followed by Samoans at 19.4%, and Tongans at 18%; many Pacific Islanders are also of multiracial descent; and

WHEREAS, As the result of the colonialization of the Samoa Islands, Tonga, Fiji, Micronesian Islands, and many additional South Pacific Islands from the Tripartite Convention of 1899, as well as the militarization of America Samoa and recruitment of Pls to join and work for the military during World War II, these factors influenced the early migration and later migration to San Francisco when PI military personnel were sent to California and Hawai‘i on military business; and

WHEREAS, After World War II to the mid-1950s, families of the PI community from American Samoa started to migrate to San Francisco for education and job opportunities, and some continued to join the military including working on the now decommissioned Hunters Point Naval Shipyard; and

WHEREAS, From 1951-1970, numerous large groups of migrations of the Pl community from American Samoa moved to San Francisco and other cities of California and Hawai‘i seeking job opportunities and new homes when American Samoa’s economic condition took an unexpected turn for the worst due to the relocation of the U.S. Naval Base to California and Hawai‘i, the end of the G.I. Bill for vocational training and education, change of administration (Department of Interior) oversight control of the U.S. territory, decreased food supply due to drought, high cost of import and decreased export, 47% increase of the local populations, and bad living conditions left behind by the U.S. Navy; and

WHEREAS, The PI community’s early and later migrations to San Francisco in the 1900s to the 1980s can also be traced back to many factors, including: The Mormon Church’s recruitment of members through missionaries and recruitment of labor pools from the PI

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communities in America Samoa, Tonga, and Samoa (also known as Western Samoa) to build their Temple in Hawai`i; and

WHEREAS, After the completion of the Mormon Temple in Hawai`i, many of these workers stayed on the island, some returned to their native homes, and many moved to San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, The continuous migration influx of PI communities from Tonga and Samoa to San Francisco from 1951-1980 were encouraged and sponsored by the Mormon Church for missionary labor, while some of the PI communities from American Samoa, Samoa, and Tonga were brought to the San Francisco Bay Area for farm labor; and

WHEREAS, The PI community faced many challenges including language barriers, lack of help and resources from the government, cultural shock, and discrimination when they first settled in San Francisco; to remedy the lack of help from the government, the PI community formed their own aiga (family) network system to provide social support and mutual aid: housing, jobs, cultural retention activities, education, translators, counseling, community gathering spaces, and other needs; and

WHEREAS, In 1972, the first PI non-profit organization, Samoa-Mo-Samoa was formed in Visitacion Valley in partnership with Leali'ie'eia Nofoaluma Fulu Asi Tuiasosopo, the first woman activist of the PI community, and other community members; the organization was fully funded by the city government; and

WHEREAS, Samoa-Mo-Samoa, in partnership with Samoan Affairs, now housed under the Samoan Community Development Center in the Sunnydale and Visitacion Valley neighborhood, extended their education program for youths who were suspended, expelled, drop-outs, and juvenile delinquent, and created an adult school for the PI community adults to learn English, get their GED or high school diploma and receive job training on skills for jobs; and
WHEREAS, The Pacific Islander community has been in San Francisco for over 100 years and have largely settled in the Visitacion Valley neighborhood while others settled in the Bayview Hunter Point, Forest Hill, and Ingleside neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, The Visitacion Valley neighborhood has been the primary home to the Pacific Islander community since the early 1900s; and

WHEREAS, The Visitacion Valley neighborhood also reflects the decline and disparities of the PI community in San Francisco as well as highlights the contributions of the PI community to the city; and

WHEREAS, The Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale neighborhoods are where most PI families found temporary and permanent homes after arriving in San Francisco and the neighborhood holds important legacy sites that are vital to the fabric of the PI community history; and

WHEREAS, Many PI residents from the Sunnydale area started community churches and restaurants from their kitchens, created space for meeting of high chiefs, and conducted fundraising in the neighborhood; more importantly, the Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale neighborhoods are where the PI community lost many loved ones; this area serves as a special memorial to honor all the PI community kids, youth, and adults that were victims of gun violence, hate crimes, and other domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, The first PI businesses and restaurants in San Francisco started their roots in Visitacion Valley including the South Pacific Restaurant, and a Samoa/Tonga Seamstress Shop on Geneva Avenue bordering Daly City; unfortunately these stores were forced to close or relocate due to high rents; currently the Polynesian Luau remains on Geneva Avenue as a dining hub for the PI community; and

WHEREAS, Beginning in 1975, the Leland Avenue commercial corridor was home to many of the first PI community-owned businesses including: a t-shirt shop, video shop, The

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Hugo Store, a furniture store and other PI businesses; there were also two Samoan
restaurants on Leland and a Tongan restaurant on 28 Leland Avenue, where most of the PI
community families and other cultural communities in the area dined at; and

WHEREAS, The Sunnydale public housing is an important cultural legacy site to the PI
community history and is still home to over 70% of the low-income families of the PI
community; and

WHEREAS, Bravo Cocktail Lounge-Restaurant, now called Bayside Cafe, located on
Bayshore Boulevard and Hester Avenue was another important historical gathering venue for
the PI community history; this was also a gathering place for some of the PI community
leaders, matai (chiefs), church leaders, and deacons and their wives to socialize, have dinner
and have their talanoa (talk) every Friday evening; and

WHEREAS, Leaders from the South Pacific Islanders frequently stayed on the Motor
Inn Lodge on Geneva Avenue when visiting and attending important events of the PI
community in San Francisco; and

WHEREAS, The Samoan Community Development Center, located at 2055 Sunnydale
Avenue is a community anchor for the PI community providing programming for families,
parents, children, youth, seniors, and much more; and

WHEREAS, In 2020, the S.A.L.L.T. association, co-founded by San Francisco South
Pacific Islands, All Islanders Gathering As One, Living in Peace, and the San Francisco
Tongans Rise Up, and with many additional PI organizations, was established during the
COVID-19 pandemic to address service gaps to the PI community and primarily serving the
Visitacion Valley, Sunnydale, and Bayview neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, As a response to the COVID-19 health emergency throughout 2020 and
2021, the City invested in community-led hubs that provided essential services to the
communities most impacted by COVID19, including funding the first ever Pacific Islander
Community Hut led by S.A.L.L.T., modeled after the Latino Task Force located in the Mission and the Bayview Hub located on 1800 Oakdale, to provide job assistance, help with applying to various city and state programs, translation, quality of life support, housing assistance, immigration support, COVID-19 response including providing food assistance to address food insecurity and many more services; and

WHEREAS, Visitacion Valley neighborhood is home to many different churches that support the spiritual needs of its diverse communities, the Samoan Congregation Church of Jesus Christ is on Schwerin Avenue along the Daly City border and most of its Samoan community congregation members are residents of the Visitacion Valley neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, The PI community are also members of different denominations, including Mormons, Catholics, Pentecost, Seven Days Advent, Methodist, and Assembly of God and have created churches in the neighborhood from the church leaders' living rooms or garages due to the small size of the congregation; and

WHEREAS, The Pacific Islander community has often been lumped with the Asian American community for statistical purposes, however, the Pacific Islander community faces the largest amount of disparities that need to be disaggregated from general Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) data including the lack of access to resources, higher education, job skills training, and general assistance; and

WHEREAS, In researching for the Pacific Islander Cultural District, there is limited data and documentation of the PI community's history in San Francisco other than spoken stories shared among families and communities; and

WHEREAS, The boundaries of the Pacific Islander Culture District are defined as Visitacion Valley Avenue along the south side of Campbell Avenue to San Bruno Avenue, to Bayshore Boulevard at Hester Avenue, along Hester Avenue looping back to Bayshore Boulevard to Geneva Avenue, along the north side of Geneva Avenue to Moscow Street, to
the east side of Moscow Street to France Avenue, to the south side of France Avenue to La
Grande Avenue bordering the west border of McLaren Park to Sunnydale Avenue at Persia
Avenue, along Persia Avenue, which turns into Mansell Avenue to Visitacion Valley Avenue
through McLaren Park to Campbell Avenue; and

WHEREAS, Despite decades of relentless economic pressure, many challenges, and
substantial displacement, there are still vibrant Pacific Islander communities, cultural assets,
and institutions in the Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale neighborhoods; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors intends to establish a
Pacific Islander Cultural District in the Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale neighborhoods to
acknowledge and preserve the Pacific Islander history and cultural influences in San
Francisco; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That in establishing the Pacific Islander Cultural District, the
Board of Supervisors intends to endorse the following goals:

1) To preserve, advance, and promote San Francisco’s Pacific Islander Cultural District
as a local, national, and international resource, and as a culturally and commercially enriched
neighborhood and District;

2) To preserve, document, and strengthen the Pacific Islander Communities of San
Francisco by bringing together our diverse histories and cultures at and within the District for
all persons to enjoy and share;

3) To create an atmosphere of safety, creativity, vitality, and prosperity for present and
future Pacific Islander community and broader diverse neighborhood participants,
organizations, institutions, commercial activity, entertainment, cultural events, and street fairs
within the District;
4) To augment and make sustainable Pacific Islander: housing, commerce, community
development, cultural resources, physical spaces, and healthcare, in particular, culturally
appropriate health services;
5) To honor all the Pacific Islander ancestors that have impacted the Pacific Islander
community and honor all the Pacific Islander residents that were victims of violence;
6) To inspire hope that communities can reclaim, revitalize and uplift their
neighborhood and restore a sense of unity in communities; and, be it
FURTHER RESOLVED, That Board of Supervisors intends that the Pacific Islander
Cultural District will preserve and further develop the Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale’s past,
present, and future Pacific Islander communities and resources, and to recognize the
historical and present contributions of the Pacific Islander Community; and, be it
FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors intends that the Pacific Islander
Cultural District will preserve and further develop opportunities for Pacific Islander businesses
along the commercial corridors within the boundaries of the district.
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November 07, 2022 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED

November 15, 2022 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
Ayes: 11 - Chan, Dorsey, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 11/15/2022 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

London N. Breed
Mayor

11/16/22