



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**MAYOR LEE AND SUPERVISOR HILLARY RONEN INTRODUCE A
SPECIAL USE DISTRICT FOR CALLE 24 LATINO CULTURAL
DISTRICT**

*Zoning regulations to help preserve and enhance the neighborhood within
the Calle 24 Latino Cultural District*

San Francisco, CA— Mayor Ed Lee and Supervisor Hilary Ronen introduced legislation today aimed at preserving and enhancing the prevailing neighborhood character of the Calle 24 Latino Cultural District through a set of comprehensive zoning regulations on new commercial uses. This initiative with the community looks to recognize the contributions of the Latino community to the neighborhood and to San Francisco.

“This is a good day for the Calle 24 Latino Cultural District and a step forward in the City’s effort to preserve our neighborhoods, serve small businesses and promote the cultural diversity of our City,” said Mayor Ed Lee. “Calle 24 Latino Cultural District is known for its rich history and with today’s legislation it will continue to be a welcoming place for generations to come.”

"This legislation is a critical tool in helping us preserve the character and vibrancy of San Francisco’s Latino Cultural District,” said District Nine Supervisor Hillary Ronen. “For the first time, we are using land use tools to articulate what characteristics we would like to see in new businesses coming into a neighborhood that has been in turmoil because of widespread displacement of longtime residents and businesses. It will help us retain the diverse mix of businesses along the corridor so that Calle 24 doesn’t just become restaurant row.”

The legislation proposes the formation of a Special Use District (SUD), with 22nd street, Potrero, Cesar Chavez and Mission streets as boundaries, commonly known as the Latino Cultural District. The SUD will require commercial establishments to secure Conditional Use authorization when:

- Seeking to replace or occupy the space of a former legacy business. This will not apply if the property has been vacant for three years or more.
- Seeking to merge two or more separate commercial storefronts in one that is greater than 799 gross square feet.

The SUD will also prohibit new eating and drinking establishments in areas where more than 35% of the commercial frontage is already dedicated to this type of business.

As part of the conditional use authorization, new commercial establishments will also need to adopt at least four of six guidelines and demonstrate their contribution to the Latino Cultural District including 1) preserving and

enhancing the physical character of the neighborhood 2) support production or offering of local or Latino arts and craft; 3) preserving legacy businesses 4) offering a variety of goods and services accessible to diverse households 5) developing partnerships amongst existing and new local businesses, institutions, vendors and micro entrepreneurs 6) working with the City to address local workforce needs. The Office of Economic and Workforce Development will review the SUD for effectiveness an applicability and make any suggested amendments after five years from the start date.

Calle 24 Latino Cultural District was established by the City in 2014 to recognize the importance of Calle 24 as the center of Latino culture and commerce, and to enhance the unique nature of the district as a special place for San Francisco's residents and visitors.

"The Office of Economic and Workforce Development is focused on preserving the neighborhood character, supporting local and Legacy businesses, and the community's workforce needs," said Todd Rufo, Director of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development. "This legislation comes from working with the community and following their direction."

"This is one step out of many in helping the preservation of existing businesses that are very important to the Latino Cultural District. It's important to understand that there are other elements that will work hand in hand to enhance the cultural district," said Erik Arguello, Calle 24 Latino Cultural District Council President.

"These regulations will mean protections for small mom and pop businesses and the preservation of the Latino culture including its food and products. The efforts of the Latino Cultural District will continue to benefit my business in many ways, where I won't feel forced out and will be able to keep my costs low for my clients that are of Latino background," said Gabby Lozano owner of L's Caffe on 24th Street. "In working with the City, I have been provided legal advice to secure my lease at an affordable rent, giving me the security and peace of mind that I will be here for a while."

As part of Mayor Lee's ongoing strategy to preserve and enhance the neighborhood, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) through the Invest In Neighborhoods Initiative continues to provide support through direct business and technical assistance programs such as lease negotiations, guidance and support around regulatory compliance such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), marketing and branding services to help drive patrons to the area, and major investments for physical improvements along the corridor. New street signs along 24th Street were recently installed by the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA). Through a grant from the Arts Commission, Precita Eyes was also commissioned to restore historic flags that represent 27 Latin American countries. The Flags of the Americas will be re-installed on street poles this winter. The 24th Street Commercial Corridor also now has a designated liaison to serve more businesses and work under a partnership with the Latino Cultural District Council and OEWD.

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