

# CULTURAL DISTRICT Activities and Accomplishments

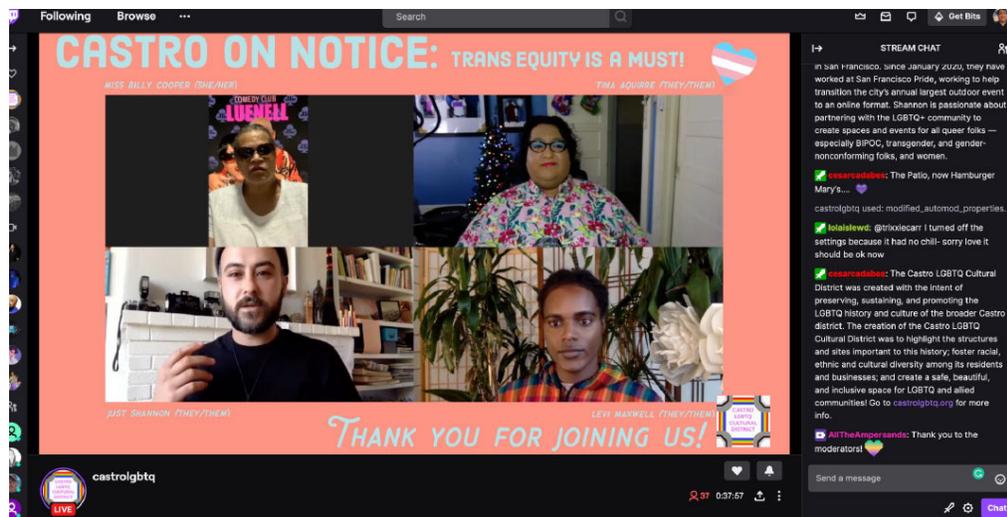
## FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021

### Start-up Phase:

- HIRING STAFF AND CONSULTANTS** – The district hired Cultural District Director Tina Aguirre in October 2020. Staff worked with the fiscal sponsor to create systems to observe best practices around nonprofit administration. The district hired a program associate in April 2021. It secured the services of Be the Change Consulting in May 2021 to facilitate focus groups and listening sessions for this report.

### Arts and Culture:

- EVENTS** – The district produced a panel discussion “Castro on Notice: Trans Equity is a Must!” in November 2020. The district collaborated with Still Here SF on a virtual event on the poetry, movies and cultural productions of Tina Aguirre in January 2021. The district held its first town hall in April 2021. The district co-produced the May 2021 Harvey Milk Day in the Castro. The district collaborated with NextSF and Alaska Airlines on a virtual panel on five San Francisco cultural districts in June 2021. The district produced the Pulse Memorial in Jane Warner Plaza in June 2021.



Screencap provided by Tina Aguirre

CULTURAL DISTRICT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Cont.)

**COVID-19:**

- **FOOD RELIEF** – In April 2021, the district worked with the Golden State Warriors and Brenda’s Restaurant to distribute food boxes for 500 Castro residents/visitors as part of COVID relief efforts.
- **OUTREACH** – Also in April, the district distributed posters and information to promote vaccines and testing in the neighborhood.

**Historic and Cultural Preservation:**

- **HARVEY MILK PLAZA** –The district began working with Friends of Harvey Milk Plaza in March 2021 on their redesign of the space, producing focus groups to ensure that racial, gender, and queer equity best practices were observed in the process and final draft of the project.

**Fiscal Year 2021-2022**

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**Arts and Culture:**

- **ARTISTS MINI-GRANTS AND POP-UP ART SHOW** – In November 2021, the district partnered with Queer Cultural Center to distribute \$20,000 in artist mini-grants, working with Curator Marcel Pardo Ariza. An art show was exhibited at the Castro Art Mart.



Photo Credit: Bradley Roberge

**COVID-19:**

- WEEKLY CASTRO COVID TESTING AND VACCINES** – Weekly Castro COVID Testing and Vaccines – In May 2021, the district piloted collaborating with medical partners to provide COVID testing and vaccines. This became a weekly project from August 2021-December 2022. In total, the district vaccinated more than 1,200 people and the district provided 4,690 PCR COVID tests. This was especially important for underserved members of the LGBTQIA+ community: older adults, people with low-income or no-insurance, and front-line workers in the Castro.



Photo Credit: Tina Aguirre

- COVID HOUSING SUBSIDIES** – In FY 2021-2022, the district distributed \$60,000 in cash housing subsidies to underserved members of the LGBTQIA+ in the Castro who were housing insecure during the COVID pandemic. The district partnered with the Q Foundation as they had systems in place to identify clients and disburse the funds.
- COVID ORGANIZATIONAL ASSISTANCE (SPONSORSHIPS)** – In FY 2021-2022, the district distributed \$90,000 in sponsorships or grants to community organizations. These funds were pivotal to keep these groups financially solvent during the pandemic. Organizations included SF Pride, Frameline, Castro Street Fair, QWOCMAP, Queer Cultural Center, GLBT Historical Society, Fresh Meat, Lyon Martin Health Services, El/La Para TransLatinas, Bay Area American Indian Two Spirits (BAAITS), GAPA, Openhouse SF, and LYRIC.

## FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023

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### Arts and Culture:

- **CREATING CHANGE CONFERENCE PANEL** – In February 2023, the district helped lead a panel of local cultural work with a special focus on Latinx LGBTQIA+ projects at the Creating Change Conference. Several hundred people from across the nation attended.
- **DRAG LAUREATE PROGRAM** – In spring 2023, the district participated in the Human Rights Commission-led effort to create a Drag Laureate program, culminating with the selection of D’arcy Drollinger as the first Drag Laureate in June 2023.
- **MURAL** – The district commissioned Serge Gay Jr. to paint *Circle of Change*, a mural of four Black lesbians and transgender women located on a building at 4122 18th St. in the Castro.
- **TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY** – Director Aguirre shared remarks at the event attended by more than 150 people.
- **DRAG UP! FIGHT BACK! RALLY** – Director Aguirre marched and spoke at the event held in Union Square.
- **EVENTS** – In May, the district co-produced Harvey Milk Day and in June, the district produced the Pulse Memorial Event in Jane Warner Plaza.



Photo Credit: Tina Aguirre

### Diversity and Inclusion:

- **TRAININGS** – In March 2023, the district started provided internal trainings to build the skills of advisory board members and key constituent organizational leaders in relation to racial, gender, and queer equity frameworks used by the district. Be the Change Consulting provided facilitation.

### Economic Workforce and Development:

- **SMALL BUSINESS OPENING** – Director Aguirre gave remarks at the Welcome Castro store opening that used OEWD funds to open in a vacant storefront. Paintings of images in the Circle of Change mural were provided by Serge Gay Jr. for an installation at the store during its first months of operation.

CULTURAL DISTRICT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Cont.)

- **JANE WARNER PLAZA REDESIGN** – The district participated in a walkthrough of the Jane Warner Plaza and elevator redesign project with City representatives and key stakeholders of the neighborhood.
- **SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS** – The district distributed \$36,000 in grants to small businesses in fiscal year 2022-2023 including \$10,000 to Queer Arts Featured.

**Housing:**

- **OPENHOUSE SF** – Director Aguirre joined the OpenHouse SF Steering Committee for the 1939 Market development for LGBTQIA+ housing for seniors. The district helped choose public art for the development.

**Historic and Cultural Preservation:**

- **CASTRO THEATRE** – The cultural district was a member of the Friends of Castro Theatre Coalition, made up of over 20 community organizations and 100 individuals. The district helped lead the Coalition’s work as they advocated for the preservation of the historic interior of the Castro Theatre and maintenance of it as a space of LGBTQ+ cultural production. As a result of this work, the Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Department voted to approve conditions for the future operation of the theatre, including a percentage of LGBTQ+ programming and a community engagement and oversight process.



Photo Credit: Daniel Cunningham

CULTURAL DISTRICT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Cont.)

- **HARVEY MILK PLAZA** – The district worked closely with Friends of Harvey Milk Plaza, SWA Group, and Volume SF to design and implement a workshop and 3-hour walking tour experience entitled LGBTQ+ Castro: Past, Present, and Future, as part of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) 2022 Conference on Landscape Architecture. The event took place on November 11, 2022 with more than 40 attendees from throughout the Americas.

**FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024**

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**Arts and Culture:**

- **FILIPINO AND QUEER INTERSECTION** – The district curated a panel and film program with the Facine Film Festival focused on the *Fall of the I Hotel* and LGBT activism in coalition building from the 70s. A panel included a Filipina lesbian housing community organizer who was part of the I Hotel activism in the 70s.
- **LATINX QUEER AND TRANS HISTORY** – Director Aguirre’s movie, *¡Viva 16!*, was part of an event at the SF Main Library produced by Julian Delgado Lopera on queer and trans Latinx history and culture.



Photo Credit: Tina Aguirre

- **HALLOWEEN ACTIVATIONS** – The district held a party at the GLBT Historical Society for Halloween as part of community wide activations.

CULTURAL DISTRICT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Cont.)

**Diversity & Inclusion:**

- **TRAININGS** – The district convened internal trainings with advisory board members in October 2023 and March 2024. The district convened external trainings with key constituent organizational leaders in October 2023 and February 2024. Be the Change Consulting facilitated all trainings.

**Housing:**

- **OPENHOUSE SF** – Director Aguirre represented the district in the OpenHouse SF Steering Committee for the 1939 Market development for LGBTQIA+ housing for seniors.

**Economic Workforce and Development:**

- **SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS** – The district distributed \$36,000 in grants to small businesses in fiscal year 2023-2024, including \$6,000 to Fabulosa Bookstore and \$6,000 to Rouse Relational Wellness (focused on couples therapy, sex therapy, and polyamory related mental health and wellness services).



Photo Credit: Tina Aguirre

**Historic and Cultural Preservation:**

- **TRANSGENDER HISTORY MONTH** – The district supported the vote to designate August 2024 as Transgender History Month at the State Capital in Sacramento as part of a contingent of queer and trans activists and community leaders.

**Fiscal Year 2024-2025**

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**Arts and Culture:**

- **ART COMMISSIONS** – Tanya Wischerath created a series of paintings, “Living Lesbian Legends,” for the district highlighting eight leaders in the lesbian and queer women’s community. District commissioned paintings were exhibited at Queer Arts Featured for three months starting in November 2024. The district is commissioning new art to focus on trans masc and transgender men art in spring 2025.
- **MURAL** – Tanya’s artwork will be used for a mural she will paint on the same wall as the mural painted by Serge Gay Jr. in the Castro.

CULTURAL DISTRICT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS (Cont.)

- **SPONSORSHIPS** – The district is a regular financial supporter of the Castro Merchants Holiday Tree, GLBTQ+ Asian Pacific Alliance (GAPA) Runway, Queer Women of Color Media Arts Project (QWOCMAP) Film Festival, and other LGBTQIA+ centering community events.
- **EVENTS** – The district produces the annual Pulse Memorial at Castro and Market to commemorate the loss of 49 souls at the LGBTQIA+ club in Orlando, FL in 2016. The district also co-produces the annual Harvey Milk Day in the Castro, along with townhalls & focus groups that help us learn from community members how to better preserve and promote LGBTQIA+ people, places and culture.



Photo Credit: Bill Jennings

**Diversity and Inclusion:**

- **TRAININGS** – The district will complete all scheduled internal trainings with advisory board members and external trainings with key constituent organizational leaders by June 2025. Be the Change Consulting facilitates these trainings.

**Historic and Cultural Preservation:**

- **HISTORY BOOKLET** – The district is creating a booklet “Castro LGBTQ Cultural Heritage” by Gerard Koskovich and Jen Reck, Ph.D. The publication documents the emergence and development of the Castro as a queer mecca.
- **CASTRO THEATRE** – Director Aguirre participated in a documentary produced on the theater focused on its refurbishing and the advocacy conducted by the district.