



11TH & NATOMA PARK NAMING

Community Meeting #1
2/13/24
6:00pm

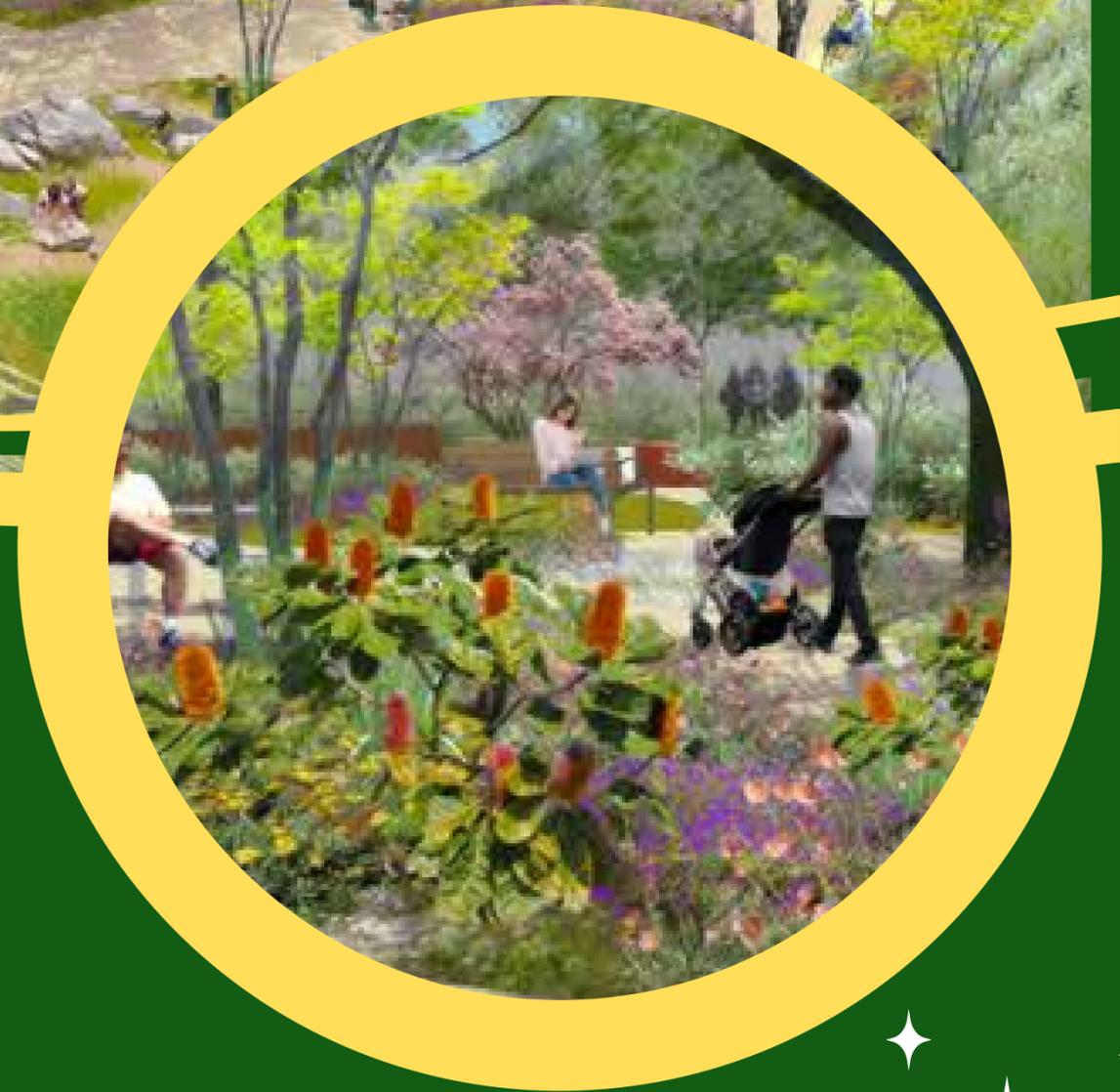


LEATHER & LGBTQ
CULTURAL DISTRICT



AGENDA

- SF Rec & Park 11th & Natoma Park Project overview & Update
- SF Arts Commission: final draft of the Park's Public Art Project Plan for feedback
- Naming Process Overview
- Presentation of naming proposals by community members



COMMUNITY PROPOSALS

(in no particular order)

1 DOJO PARK

- The 11th street Dojo has been a fixture in soma since 1986
- Hence the name should be,

“DOJO PARK”

“Do” means, *The way*

“Jo” means, *The place*

- The dojo building is a fixture standing alone in the corner of the park. It's a land mark.

Our Disability Rights Park

This name is submitted because the park is very close to the Arc SF, and disability rights are very important to us.

3

Joanna Fraguli Park

- Former Director of Mayors Office of Disability
- Lifelong advocate, who championed issues of disability in policy development, research, education, and accessibility
- Disabled parent of disabled children
- Honors the vibrant disability community in the SOMA neighborhood
- SOMA is home to the Disability Rights Movement in San Francisco



4

11th and Natoma Park Naming Proposal: Rachele Sullivan Park

- A born healer, she worked as a registered nurse in emergency rooms, prisons, and hospice care.
- She dedicated herself to serving the Indigenous and Filipino communities.
- Her husband's death from HIV spurred her to raise funds to fight AIDS including her work on the International Ms. Leather Contest.
- She helped create the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District, both behind the scenes and publicly.



*Rachele Sullivan, center, cut the ribbon outside the old Stud bar June 12, 2018 to celebrate the designation of San Francisco's Leather and LGBTQ Cultural District.
Photo: Liz Highleyman*

- Rachele helped establish the Eagle Plaza at 12th and Harrison Streets.
- She served on the boards of both the San Francisco Bay Area Leather Alliance and the Folsom Street Fair. She was also a long-time member of the Exiles, a club for leather women.
- Since the new park is within the borders of the Soma Pilipinas Filipino Cultural Heritage District and nearly adjacent to the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District, we propose that the park honor Rachele Sullivan, who was a prominent member of both communities.



5

The park at 11th & Natoma should be named:

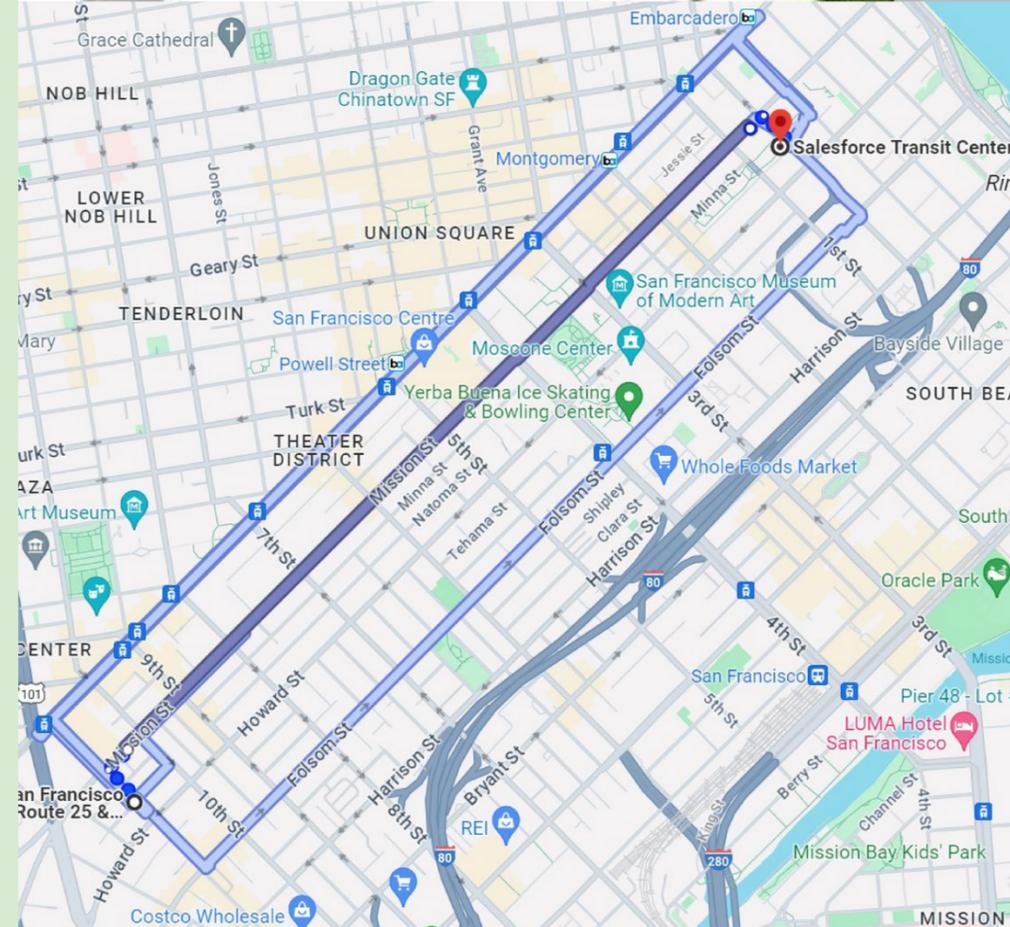
Ed Lee Mid-Market Park

Celebrates San Francisco's first Asian-American Mayor, who abruptly passed away December 2017

Acknowledges the work he did to attract more commerce into the Central Mid-Market area, amidst controversy

Commemorates decades of work as a civil right lawyer, protecting those underrepresented in SOMA

His Dedication to making SF a *Transit First* city, which SOMA, with a proliferation of MUNI & Bart Lines, can be bookended by the Salesforce Transit Center and this park



Reasons and Promotes

How does this name affect San Francisco?

1. Attracts greater Asian-American participation (commerce, residential, civic) in this mid-market, SOMA area. This could provide a catalyst for Chinatown small businesses and residents to expand into the SOMA area. This will provide more benefit than than [renaming Kearny St. after Ed Lee.](#)
2. The Central Market-Tenderloin Area Payroll Expense Tax Exemption was a controversial policy, but it was a tangible attempt to revitalize this area. Opens up SF to consider moderate, capitalist solutions alongside progressive ones. Arguably, we [should have passed a ban on corporate cafeterias alongside this exemption, however.](#)
3. The maligned “tech boom” under Ed Lee overshadowed his years of work on civil rights and affordable housing. Recognition should be given for his work to [stabilize homeless counts](#) during an unprecedented time of growth and gentrification in SF’s history.
4. Much of MUNI & Bart infrastructure is based on SOMA acting as the hub. A park that serves as a “sibling” to the Transit Center park could be used to promote SF as a Transit-First city, evidenced by [Transportation 2030.](#)

6

HEKLINA PARK: AN OASIS FOR LGBTQ+ FRIENDS AND FAMILIES



Stefan Grygelko (June 17, 1967 – April 3, 2023), better known by the stage name **Heklina**, was an American actor, drag queen, and entrepreneur in San Francisco. His legacy includes, among many other things, OASIS, San Francisco's internationally acclaimed drag show nightclub / cabaret located nearby on 11th Street. During COVID-19 when the City and the nation shut down,

OASIS, put on outdoor shows, and when necessary online shows, raising enough money to weather the huge environmental river COVID-19 proved to be for many venues and businesses. OASIS survives and thrives today.

Drag Queens are central to why our community is loud and proud and still around.

Drag Queens are the antithesis to our community going back in the closet. San Francisco and the San Francisco Bay Area remain the number one place to live openly in America as ourselves, where diversity matters, as well as the number one LGBTQ+ tourist destination in America. The City and California are heightened by its drag queens and its LGBTQ+ denizens. Let's celebrate and let's inspire diversity and joy by naming 11th and Natoma park after Heklina: **Heklina Park:**

An Oasis for LGBTQ+ Friends and Families.

7

Tim Figueras is a *community champion*



Tim was a brother, a coach, a role model, a father figure, and a friend to many.

He had a community first philosophy and a compassion for the disenfranchised.

Tim shared his love of sports to engage the youth and to create a strong sense of community in the South of Market neighborhood.

Tim lived in service of the community



Tim was one of the original staff of the SoMa Gene Friend Recreation Center when it opened in 1990.

He provided P.E. support to students at Bessie Carmichael Elementary School & coached various sports.



Tim engaged the SoMa youth to participate in sports as a positive outlet.

“My big goal was just to get people to play. If they showed even the most remote interest...I would ask if they were interested in playing ball because I knew about the realities of the streets at the time, and I knew sports could be a positive alternative to all of that.”



Tim served as a board member at the Bayanihan Equity Center, SoMa West Community Benefit District, and a member of the San Francisco Arts Commission.

Teotimo Rempillo Figueras Jr., known to many as Tim Figueras, was a brother, a coach, a role model, a father figure, and a friend to many. He was raised and rooted in San Francisco, and unfortunately, passed away on September 30, 2023 at 66 years old.

He had a community first philosophy and a compassion for the disenfranchised. Tim shared his love of sports to engage the youth, and to create a strong sense of community in the South of Market (SoMa) neighborhood. The Bayanihan Equity Center, with the Figueras family's blessing, proposes to name the 11th and Natoma Park as the Tim Figueras Park in honor of Tim's legacy as a community champion.

Tim lived a life in service of the community. He began his work for the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department on July 2, 1979, and was one of the original staff members of the Gene Friend SoMa Recreation Center when it opened in 1990. As the Recreation Director, Tim supported the students at Bessie Carmichael Elementary School through Physical Education support and coaching various sports such as, baseball and basketball. Tim also developed a community program for the seniors living in the neighborhood. Tim ensured that the Recreation Center was a home away from home - creating a safe and inclusive space for all SoMa residents.

Throughout his career, spanning close to four decades, Tim fiercely encouraged the youth living in the SoMa to participate in sports as a positive outlet. Tim shared the following statement: "My big goal was just to get people to play. If they showed even the most remote interest...I would ask if they were interested in playing ball because I knew about the realities of the streets at the time, and I knew sports could be a positive alternative to all of that." After retiring, Tim continued to provide his guidance in the community by serving as a board member at the Bayanihan Equity Center, SoMa West Community Benefit District, and a member of the San Francisco Arts Commission. Tim loved SoMa, and the SoMa loves Tim. Tim humbly served the community, and was a positive father figure to many SoMa youth, changing their lives for the better. In naming the 11th and Natoma Park after Tim Figueras, we not only celebrate his legacy as a SoMa figure, but we also invite the community to share in Tim's vision of cultivating safe and multigenerational community spaces that people in the neighborhood can call their home away from home.

8

JIM MEKO PARK



Jim Meko looms large among a long list of activists who fought for the neighborhood and against the power and plans of the Redevelopment Agency and the many large-scale, capital-intensive developments that have remade much of eastern SOMA.

- In the late 1990s, Jim Meko took up those batons of notables such as George Woolf, Pete Mendelson, Herb Donaldson, and the co-founders of the Folsom Street Fair Kathleen Connell and Michael Valerio, becoming one of the most dedicated and effective of these neighborhood defenders.
- Jim was passionate about “preserving and enhancing the quality of life and existing character of the neighborhood,” as well as providing ample opportunities for smart growth rather than demolition and unbridled construction.
- In 1981, Jim and his partner Roy opened their printing business, The Best Impression. Best Impression was one of the businesses that helped anchor the area’s gay and leather presence when SOMA was the west coast capital for
 - typesetting, printing, and publishing.
- When hostilities erupted between residents and entertainment venues in the late 1990s, Jim joined the SoMa Residents Association and became its vice president. He began a new career of mediating conflicts and brokering deals.
- This led to the SoMa Leadership Council, and to Jim’s tenure as the neighborhood representative on the newly formed Entertainment Commission.
- Jim’s participation in the Neighborhood Network led to the formation of the Western SOMA Citizen’s Planning Taskforce. Jim became co-chair of the Taskforce, and worked for nearly a decade through the process of formulating the Western SOMA Community Plan.
- Jim worked with a developer to fund the remaking of Ringold Alley into the Leather History Walk, with commemorative plaques and bronze bootprints.
- In 2007, Jim was honored with the first Jim Berk Memorial Award for his lifetime of leadership and public service to the diverse communities of San Francisco. In 2010, Jim was given the Neighborhood Enhancement Network Lifetime Achievement Award by the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services.

SURVEY #1 IS NOW LIVE!

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