Introduction
This memo provides an overview of historic interpretive programs across the United States in order to facilitate discussion about creating such a program in San Francisco. The Planning Department (Department) is requesting the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) provide direction on the content and structure of the program.

1. Article 10 Individual Landmarks Plaque Program
The Department contracted with a graphic designer who provided a draft template of a plaque (Exhibit 1). Preliminary plaque designs for Article 10 buildings consist of a round plaque with polished bronze-colored border engraved with “San Francisco Landmark” at the top and “San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission” at the bottom. The center of the plaque is a darker matte bronze with raised letters. Text provides the landmark number, landmark name, a short explanation of the landmark’s significance, and date of designation. City and County of San Francisco seal is located at the bottom.

Some cities allow the property owner to write the text, order, install and pay for the plaque. Other cities are responsible for writing the text, ordering and paying for the plaque with the property owner responsible for installation.

In San Francisco, either the City or the property owner/applicant could be responsible for the providing the text, ordering, installing and paying for the plaque. If the Commission desires to require landmark buildings to display a plaque, a code amendment may be necessary. If a building permit is required to install a plaque, the fee may be substantially reduced for such a permit.

Suggested vendor for plaques include Louis R. Biro. Preliminary cost estimates for a bronze metal plaque are $1,175 for an 18” diameter plaque and $2,000 for a 24” diameter plaque. An alternative metal, such as aluminum with a bronze colored painted finish, might reduce the cost. Other cost estimates are pending.
Example: City of San Diego, CA Plaque Program
Landmark property owners receive a letter encouraging them to display a plaque (Exhibit 2). The letter details plaque specifications, including shape, size, color and information the plaque must contain (such as historical name, date, and landmark number). Staff may be contacted to verify the historical information. The property owner may choose to order a plaque from the four listed companies as prices may vary from company to company. An example illustration of a plaque with dimensions is included with the letter.

Example: City of Covington, KY Plaque Program
The property owner must sign a letter of agreement with the city in which the owner agrees to maintain the structure’s historic integrity. City staff assists with wording on the plaques. Plaques are ordered by the city and property owner reimburses the city for the plaque. The property owner is responsible for picking up the plaque from the city and installing it. The city provides installation instructions that include a suggested mounting location and instructions for mounting on masonry or wood (Exhibit 3).

Example: City of Philadelphia, PA Plaque Program
The Historical Commission authorizes property owners to install specially-made cast metal plaques (Exhibit 4) on historically-designated buildings, structures, sites, objects, and interiors that are in restored condition. The Commission’s staff reviews and approves the application if the property is designated as historic and in restored condition. If the property is not designated or not in restored condition, staff directs the applicant on the steps to take to qualify the property for a plaque. Once a plaque application is approved, the Commission issues a letter to a specific plaque manufacturer authorizing it to sell a plaque to the applicant and issues a letter to the applicant with directions for purchasing a plaque. Plaque prices fluctuate, but the plaques generally cost about $70. The applicant must submit photographs of all façades visible from the public right-of-way with the application form for review by the Commission and staff. The plaque may only be displayed on the building or structure for which it is issued. If it is lost or stolen, the owner must notify the Philadelphia Historical Commission of its loss. A new plaque may be issued upon approval of a new application. The Philadelphia Historical Commission may revoke the privilege of displaying the plaque should the building or structure fail to comply with the City’s historic preservation ordinance.

2. Article 11 Conservation Districts Recognition
Six Conservation Districts are located exclusively in the city’s downtown core area (Exhibit 5). Unlike traditional historic districts, which recognize historic and cultural significance, Conservation Districts seek to designate and protect buildings based on architectural quality and contribution to the environment. These downtown districts contain concentrations of buildings that together create geographic areas of unique quality and thus facilitate preservation of the quality and character of the area as a whole. Limited information is available on districts and individual buildings in the district beyond the Code, which makes recognition difficult. It may be more efficient to address recognition of Conservation Districts on a website or app.

Example: Coney Island Wayfinding Kiosks
A program of nine wayfinding kiosks placed along Coney Island Boardwalk with each kiosk incorporating a map with park facilities locations, landmarks such as the Parachute Drop, the Cyclone
and Keyspan Park, as well as historical photos with background anecdotes related to each kiosk area (Exhibit 6).

3. Article 10 Landmark Districts Recognition

Article 10 Landmark Districts are locally designated Historic Districts, similar to the National Register of Historic Places but at the local level. Districts are defined generally as an area of multiple historic resources that are contextually united (Exhibit 7). The Department has already created walking tours for each district that details the history and significance of the district and its contributors.

The Department contracted with a graphic designer who provided a draft template of a banner (Exhibit 8). Preliminary designs consist of a two sided banner with the front side displaying the name of the district and a new district logo. The back side displays the name of the district, a map of the district boundaries and brief history of the district. Design alternatives could include eliminating text and adding a website address that would provide more information on the district or displaying the name of the district and district logo on both sides of the banner. Banners may be made of either vinyl/fabric or metal.

Suggested vendors for banners include Art Sign and Banner Service and Signs America DBA Sign-A-Rama (a City vendor). Preliminary cost estimates for a vinyl/fabric, 72 x 36 inch double sided banner is $268. Cost estimates for metal signs are pending.

Example: City of Chicago Landmark Districts Signage

18 x 30 inch metal signs (Exhibit 9) are installed on light poles by Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT). Signs are generally created and installed in the order of when the district was established. All content and design is provided by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks and staff.

4. Website or App

In addition to the plaque and banner program, a mobile and tablet friendly website or a free downloadable application (app) would provide more in-depth information on Article 10 and 11 buildings in one convenient location. It would document Article 10 and 11 buildings with detailed explanation of their significance, current photographs and historic photographs. Interactive maps, possibly using Google My Maps, would allow users to find the closest landmark building or district to their current location. The website or app would include the District walking tours mentioned above or may allow users to create their own walking tours based on their interest. Finally, users may be able to add their own stories of historic buildings and districts to the website.

A mobile friendly website built by an outside professional may cost $20-40,000 and require $1,500 for outside hosting and maintenance. An app may cost $50-75,000 to develop one platform (either Android or Apple). Developing an additional platform may cost $15,000. Other associated costs may include budget for a City project manager, content administrator and technical staff for maintenance. The advantage of a mobile friendly website over an app is that it could be updated easily and as often as needed. Also, a mobile-friendly website could be translated into multiple languages using Google translate.

Another option is using a website template created by ERSI, a company that supplies ArcGIS, a geographic information systems (GIS) mapping software. This software is currently used by the
Department. ESRI Story Map templates are free with an ESRI account. There are templates for map-based tours, collections of points of interest, in-depth narratives, presenting multiple maps, and more. Most are mobile friendly. For example, the Story Map Tour presents a linear, place-based narrative featuring images or videos. Each “story point” in the narrative is geo-located. Users have the option of clicking sequentially through the narrative, or they can browse by interacting with the map or using the thumbnail carousel (Exhibit 10). Or the Story Map Shortlist can show users a curated list of city sites (Exhibit 11). Additional research would be necessary to determine if there is a monthly hosting fee or any other associated fees. Internal resources would still be needed for management and maintenance.

Example: City of Berkeley Historical Plaque Project Website
In 2012 the Berkeley Historical Plaque Project, a non-profit group started in 1997 to document Berkeley’s history through plaques identifying locations of historical importance, launched a website documenting its work, www.berkeleyplaques.org. On the mobile friendly website, plaques are categorized by geographic areas and linked to interactive Google maps (Exhibit 12). Texts are accompanied by historic photos and links to external articles, lectures, and videos. “e-Plaques” virtually document historic buildings, homes of notable Berkeley residents, and unique natural phenomena. Crowd-sourcing is used to expand the texts and photos.

Example: Connect Historic Boston Program
Connect Historic Boston, www.connecthistoric-boston.org, will make walking, biking, and taking public transportation to National Park Service sites and other destinations easy, fun, accessible, and convenient with discovery along the way. Connect Historic Boston is an initiative between the National Park Service (NPS) and the City of Boston’s Transportation Department. The initiative proposes upgrades to the built environment along the streets, sidewalks, and bridges that link transit stations to park destinations; and explores new tools for wayfinding including digital applications, traditional maps, and navigational markers in the landscape such as architecture, art, sound and signage. Partners will include historic sites, advocates for walking and biking, neighborhood associations, and government agencies that will help promote the Connect Historic Boston initiative as the way to get around downtown Boston.

5. Administration
The program may be administered by City staff that would be responsible for writing and approving content for plaques, wayfinding kiosks, banners, and website; issuing permits and reviewing attachment points and location of plaques, wayfinding kiosks, banners; providing technical assistance to property owners; purchasing; and administration of promotional and/or educational opportunities with local non-profits.

6. Partnership Opportunities, Funding, Branding and Outreach
Possible partnerships for the program include:
- SF Travel
- SF Heritage
- SF Beautiful
- SF Museum and Historical Society
- SF Library
- Community Benefit Districts
- Local media: 7x7, SF Magazine, San Francisco Chronicle
• SFMTA
• San Francisco Bike Coalition
• Walk SF
• California Preservation Foundation
• Office of Historic Preservation

Possible funding sources for the program include FOCP and Fund Committee.

As part of the branding for the program launch, designs for each neighborhood district can be made available on t-shirts, prints and cards. The designs can be exact replicas or slightly altered, depending on the audience. These items can be made available on the website as well as independent stores, local museums, and community events. Proceeds can be used to offset production costs or used for additional outreach programs. A possible partnership with a locally based company, such as SF Made, to collaborate on the process would be beneficial.

Outreach would be conducted via social media; including Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor, neighborhood newsletters, City agencies, district supervisors, neighborhood organizations and with a potential partnership organization. Pitching would include local and targeted national media.

Attachments:
Exhibits
Exhibit 1
Preliminary Plaque Design

Sam Jordan was a prominent African American community leader, Golden Gloves champion, pioneering African American business owner, and the first African American candidate for Mayor of San Francisco (1963). In 1959, Mr. Jordan opened Sam Jordan’s Bar in a c.1880’s building that was originally constructed adjacent to the corrals, slaughterhouses, and tanneries associated with “Butchertown.”

As one of the oldest African American businesses along the Third Street corridor, Sam Jordan’s Bar was known as an organizing space and catalyst for community-based initiatives and was part of network of African American bars and restaurants that served dual roles as neighborhood-serving charitable and social organizations.

DESIGNATED FEBRUARY 6, 2013
Historic Interpretive Program - Exhibits
Informational Presentation
August 19, 2015
Exhibit 3
City of Covington, KY Plaque Program

HISTORIC PLAQUE
PLAQUE INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

City of Covington - Historic Preservation and Planning Department of Development
20 W Pike Street, Covington, KY 41011
Tel: (859) 292-2171 Fax: (859) 292-2106 email: bjohnson@covingtonky.gov
www.covingtonky.gov

PLAQUE PLACEMENT

As a general rule, plaques are to be placed on the facade of the building facing the main street. If the entrance is on the front of the house, plaques should be placed to the left or right of the door. Figure A. If the main entrance is on the side of the house, place the plaque near the corner of the house. Figure B.

Plaques may also be placed on brick porch piers. The suggested mounting height is 5’6” above porch or entry floor.

Figure A

Figure B

PLAQUE INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS - MASONRY

1. Install screws on the back of the plaque
2. Cut off screw heads
3. Make a template for hole positions. Using a masonry drill bit, drill the correct number of holes for the installation. Try if possible to make holes in mortar. If the mortar crumbles drill into stone or brick.
4. Dry fit the plaque to verify its level.
5. Use two-part epoxy, 30 minute set. It is available at hardware stores, Kmart, Wal-Mart, Auto Part Stores. It looks like two hypodermic syringes.
6. Put epoxy on screws and in the pre-drilled holes.
7. Install plaque on wall.

PLAQUE INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS - FRAME

1. Place plaque on building and mark holes with pencil. Drill holes.
2. Screw the plaque into the pre-drilled holes.

Historic Interpretive Program - Exhibits Informational Presentation
August 19, 2015
Exhibit 4
City of Philadelphia, PA Plaque Program

PUBLIC SECTOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
In 1938, 3,000 Philadelphia municipal workers launched a strike protesting wage cuts and layoffs, among the first in a major American city. After 8 days, a collective bargaining agreement was reached, leading to the formation of AFSCME District Council 33.
Exhibit 5
Article 11 Conservation Districts
Exhibit 6
Coney Island Wayfinding Kiosks
ITS CHECKERED HISTORY IS FAR FROM SQUARE. Alamo means poplar tree in Spanish and in the early 1800s, the lone cottonwood on Alamo Hill marked a watering hole along the horseback trail from Mission Dolores to the Presidio. Mayor James Van Ness set aside 12.7 Acres of the hole in 1856, naming it Alamo Square. Confirmed by the state legislature the following year as a public park, Alamo Square and its Victorian residences started down the potholed road to historic district, over 100 years later.
Exhibit 9
City of Chicago, IL Landmark District Signage

[Image of landmark district signage]

Featuring a mix of elaborate residences built by affluent residents and more modest homes typical of the period, this community of German, Eastern European, and Scandinavian immigrants was home to merchants and labor activists alike in the late 19th century.

COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS
City of Chicago • Richard M. Daley, Mayor
www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks
Exhibit 10
ESRI Story Map App Example 1

City of Vista Citywide Map Tour

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