

City and County of  
San Francisco



President, Board of  
Supervisors

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**Aaron Peskin Announces Downtown Master Permit Program & Activation Funding**  
*Community Benefit Districts would benefit from streamlined permitting for arts & entertainment activations in 12 new Entertainment Zones + budget investment totaling \$2.75M*

San Francisco – Today Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin announced new legislation to create a Greater Downtown Master Permit program for arts & entertainment activation within the geographic boundaries of the following four community benefit districts (CBD’s) making up the Greater Downtown area: Downtown SF Partnership, the East Cut, Yerba Buena Community Benefit District and the Union Square Alliance.

Each community benefit district identified 3 “activation locations” within their public realm plans where they are able to commit to regularly-scheduled arts and entertainment programming, sustained over the course of the five-year duration of each master permit. Each of the dozen locations automatically qualify for expedited Entertainment Zone status, per Senate Bill 76 enabling legislation. Small businesses that would rather come in under the CBD’s master permit program could opt to fold their existing parklet into the neighborhood activation permit.

“This legislation came directly from the community of Downtown stakeholders who have worked so hard to be a part of the City’s economic recovery, but still struggle with the slow pace and confusing duplicative nature of our permitting systems,” said **Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin**. “It shouldn’t be this hard to have a First Thursday art walk or regular block party, especially in neighborhoods that don’t have the same residential density that might necessitate more review. These downtown community benefit districts are already doing the work to program these events, we just have to make it easier, bigger and bolder if we want Downtown to come alive more than once a month.”

The dozen locations permitted through the legislation include:

- Annie Plaza
- Gold Street
- Claude Lane
- Front Street
- Harlan Place
- \* Jessie Alleys
- \* The Landing at Leidesdorff
- \* Maiden Lane
- \* Natoma Street
- \* Second Street

Some of the locations are already experiencing programming, but could be expanded quickly under the legislation, which is designed to streamline access for participating small businesses, as well. The Downtown SF Partnership, for example, has already begun piloting activations on Front Street and Leidesdorff Alley, but the launches were delayed while permit approvals dragged on.

“Imagine what we can accomplish for San Francisco just by creatively streamlining clunky government processes,” said **Robbie Silver, President and CEO of the Downtown SF Partnership**. “Supervisor Peskin’s first-in-the-nation legislation does just that, by prioritizing downtown recovery through regular programming and activation in under-utilized alleys and side streets. It goes beyond temporary pop-ups to expand Entertainment Zones, cut red tape for small businesses, and anchor arts and culture through real investments. This legislation will help the Downtown SF Partnership accelerate our Public Realm Action Plan to reimagine the Financial District and Jackson Square.”

Claude Lane is another activation location at the edge of Union Square, where local restaurateur and arts organization owner, Daniel Pan, has been working to attract additional tenants to the alley where he previously operated both Gitane restaurant and Claudine wine bar before the pandemic – and where he has since located another outpost of his venue and mural offices, 1AMsf and 1AM Projects.

“We hosted constant activations in the heyday of Claude Lane before the pandemic, as well as 15 years of art parties and sidewalk workshops at our Sixth Street location,” said **Daniel Pan, founder of 1AMsf and co-founder of Gitane and Claudine**. “It’s somehow harder to activate Claude Lane now than either of those times! I’d love to fill Claude Lane with art and music, especially if it would help attract new tenants to the alley. But after researching the process just to throw a rotating mural festival in the alley with live music, it became clear it would be a lot of work without any guaranteed support from the City. We need help to thrive, and this legislation gives us hope that we’ll have a tool to attract more regular collaboration and investment to this part of Union Square.”

The legislative introduction comes a day before the City’s budget will be signed into law. The Board of Supervisors recently voted to approve Supervisor Peskin’s reappropriation of \$2.75 million to be used specifically for arts and entertainment activation throughout the Greater Downtown neighborhoods.

This legislation will be scheduled for a hearing after the Board of Supervisors return from their summer legislative recess in September.

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