# West Hollywood council formally recognises the Rainbow District... and Go-Go Appreciation Day!



Over the past decade, a section of Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood has developed a distinct identity as the Rainbow District, known for its role in LGBTQ+ nightlife. This week, the City Council officially recognised this area and presented plans aimed at revitalising and enhancing its appeal.

During the council meeting, Councilman John Erickson spoke of how important it was to formally designate the Rainbow District. “Formally classifying what we all refer to as the Rainbow District officially was an item that myself and Mayor [Chelsea] Byers brought forward about a year or so ago," he said. He further elaborated that the proposed initiatives aim to reassess straightforward improvements to support the local business community.

Among the initiatives are strategies to increase visibility and engagement for the district, which will include a designated social media budget, branded street pole banners, utility box wraps, and collaborations with Visit West Hollywood. Additionally, the council has proposed establishing themed murals along the boulevard, extending trolley operating hours, and exploring the concept of “drop zones” for rideshare vehicles to improve accessibility.

Councilman Danny Hang emphasised the importance of community feedback in crafting this plan, stating, “This plan hits on what we’ve heard from the community – more visibility, better safety, easier access and stronger support for local businesses.” Yet, the idea of drop zones sparked debate due to potential impacts on parking availability, with Councilman John Heilman noting that the success of these improvements hinges on addressing broader issues such as homelessness and commercial vacancies. He remarked, “We have great businesses in the area that already attract a lot of customers, but we need to ensure that the area is clean and safe as well as exciting and vibrant.”

The council also voted to reinstate Go-Go Appreciation Day to celebrate those who contribute to the club scene, a move members believe aligns with efforts to revitalise the district. “Events like Go-Go Appreciation Day celebrate the vibrant culture and history of West Hollywood,” Hang said, adding that these events enhance visibility for the dancers and boost business for local establishments.

The timing of these developments comes as West Hollywood prepares for its annual Pride celebrations, scheduled for 31 May to 1 June. The City Council received updates regarding the event, which has already confirmed high-profile headliners such as Lizzo, Lil Nas X, and Kim Petras for the OUTLOUD Music Festival. The partnership with event production company JJLA has also been extended until 2030 to further enhance the Pride experience, reflecting the city’s commitment to supporting its LGBTQ+ community amidst ongoing challenges.

“As we’ve seen, Prides across the country and world are being threatened, and here in West Hollywood, we’re expanding our celebration of our beautiful LGBTQ community,” Erickson stated. Councilman Heilman echoed this sentiment, noting that the city’s actions underscore the importance of a professionally organised Pride festival in the face of increasing hostility toward the LGBTQI+ community.

Notably, feedback from local residents at the council meeting varied. Some expressed support for the initiatives, while others raised concerns about the need for a broader range of community events and the sustainability of local businesses. Larry Block, the owner of Block Party WeHo, urged the council to allocate more resources to ensure the survival of the Rainbow District, citing ongoing sales declines that have persisted for nearly two years.

Resident Mikie Friedman brought attention to the need for diverse community events, questioning the focus solely on LGBTQ+ activities. “Why does everything have to be LGBTQ+? This is not a gay city. This is a gay-friendly city,” she remarked. She called for a resurgence of events like the Sunset Music Festival, which she felt would benefit the community more broadly, highlighting the closure of several local venues in recent months.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.wehochamber.com/rainbow-district> - This URL supports the claim that the Rainbow District is known for its vibrant LGBTQ+ culture and nightlife along Santa Monica Boulevard. It highlights the area's iconic venues and celebrations.
* <https://thebayouweho.com/blogs/news/where-to-party-best-gay-bars-in-west-hollywood-ca> - This webpage underscores West Hollywood's status as a global hotspot for LGBTQ+ nightlife, featuring legendary bars like The Abbey and Mickey’s, which are integral to the Rainbow District's identity.
* <https://thebayouweho.com/blogs/news/discover-the-best-gay-nightlife-in-west-hollywood> - This article emphasizes West Hollywood’s role as an LGBTQ+ nightlife destination, highlighting events such as LA Pride, which aligns with the city's ongoing commitment to its LGBTQ+ community mentioned in the article.
* <https://www.visitwesthollywood.com/> - To explore collaborations with Visit West Hollywood as part of enhancing the Rainbow District, this website would provide insight into how Visit West Hollywood supports local initiatives and events.