

Proclamation

Issued By The Mayor

Proclamation Declaring Jewish American Heritage Month

WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is an annual recognition and celebration of American Jews' achievements and contributions to the United States of America during the month of May. Originally conceived in 1980 by authorization of the U.S. Congress to then-President Jimmy Carter to designate a time for this purpose, who issued a proclamation in April of that year. However, it was not until 2006 that it was formally adopted after tireless advocacy by the Jewish American community for acknowledgement of their stories and achievements in this nation; and

WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is intended to empower communities across the country to celebrate the inspiring history of Jewish people in America; educate diverse public audiences about Jewish culture; as well as spark crucial conversations about the Jewish American past, present, and future; and

WHEREAS, for over 350 years, despite enduring bigotry, prejudice, discrimination, and antisemitism, Jewish people have been a vibrant thread woven into the fabric of our nation's history, becoming one of the largest, most prosperous, and most successful Jewish communities in the world, whose contributions are reflected in every facet of our society; and

WHEREAS, beginning in the 1850s and 1860s, Jewish people settled in what would then become the City of San Leandro. In 1881 they began organizing the San Leandro Hebrew Congregation, which incorporated in 1888. Trustees of the incorporation included J. Herrscher, Adolph Wimmer, A. Levy, David Ury, and D. Herrscher, prominent Jewish men of early San Leandro; and

WHEREAS, in 1889, they founded and established what would become known as Temple Beth Sholom. The congregation built a simple wooden synagogue, affectionately called the Little Shul, modeled in the eclectic and fashionable styles of the times. It was built upon land purchased for the sum of one dollar at what is now 59 Chumalia Street. For more than half a century, school classes and religious services were held there, attracting Jewish families from throughout the East Bay; and

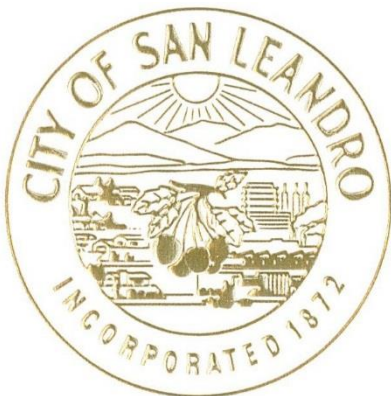
WHEREAS, beginning in 1947, the congregation expanded to hire a full-time rabbi, purchased a site on Dolores Street, and constructed a new and larger synagogue. Subsequently, it adopted its present name of Temple Beth Sholom, which means House of Peace; and

WHEREAS, in 1970, Temple Beth Sholom paid one dollar to the Judah Magnes Museum for the Little Shul to be moved to its present location behind the temple on Dolores Street, where it was beautifully restored. Today it is still used for services, classes, and special occasions. The Little Shul holds the honor of being the oldest wooden synagogue in the Western United States and among the oldest original synagogue buildings still standing in the country; and

WHEREAS, the Jewish community of San Leandro has been an invaluable part of our city and our history, pursuing justice and equity; welcoming diversity and inclusion; cultivating acts of generosity and kindness; as well as embodying the power and value of service towards building a better world for all of us; and

WHEREAS, this proclamation will serve as the foundation of a dynamic and growing recognition as well as celebration of Jewish people in the United States of America and the City of San Leandro in this year and every year thereafter.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, San Leandro Mayor Pauline Russo Cutter do hereby proclaim the Month of May 2021 as "JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH" in the City of San Leandro.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of San Leandro to be affixed this 17th day of May 2021.
