



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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June 17, 2020

Hon. London Breed  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 200  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: San Francisco Legacy Business Program COVID-19 Recovery

Dear Mayor Breed,

At its May 6, 2020 hearing, the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) expressed concern for the stability of the City's Legacy Businesses in light of the economic hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting shelter-in-place restrictions on business operations. The HPC is committed to supporting the success of Legacy and other small businesses during the COVID-19 crisis and recovery as we understand that they are critical to the health of San Francisco's economy.

It is our understanding that the Small Business Commission is not currently authorized to act on the Legacy Business Registry (LBR) during the COVID-19 emergency, and that their Commission has been directed by your office to only list items on the agenda that are COVID-related. While we understand and commend the City's desire to focus our attention and resources to critical response and recovery work, we propose that the processing of LBR applications better positions Legacy Businesses to receive the support they will need to weather the economic downturn resulting from the crisis. For this reason, we would like to request that the Small Business Commission and its staff be permitted to resume this important work. We understand that there are approximately 30 applications waiting to be reviewed, and we are anxious to see these businesses supported as soon as possible so that they can receive the public attention and support they deserve.

Additionally, as the City and the Economic Recovery Task Force plan for appropriate funding and programs to assist our small business community, we encourage utilization of the existing Legacy Business Program to target resources towards those longstanding businesses that characterize our City and hold significant historical and cultural value for our residents and visitors. We would hope that the program's existing grant functions and technical assistance could be bolstered to ensure the survival of these irreplaceable cultural assets. The current funding of \$1 million for Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund grants has not increased since its inception and is being divided among more and more applicants, thus reducing the amounts available to each individual business. We recognize that we are entering a phase in which the City needs to reduce budgets and figure out how to do more with less, but these businesses are the economic engine that, if supported, can help bring life back to our commercial corridors and clearly demonstrate a great return on investment.

Furthermore, understanding the racial and social disparities that the City's marginalized communities face and which are exacerbated in times of extreme stress such as this, we recommend that these recovery measures be implemented in a manner that addresses these inequities and prioritizes

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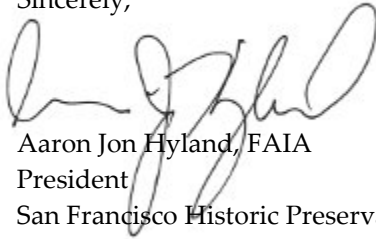
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stabilization of our most vulnerable communities. Specifically, it would be beneficial to look at all our commercial corridors, but especially in Districts 5, 7, 10 and 11, and identify unrecognized and underrepresented Legacy Businesses that deserve to be nominated to the Registry and that would benefit from support through this program.

The Historic Preservation Commission would like to contribute to the recovery and continued support of our small business community and welcomes any requests from your office or other members of the City Family to participate in the furtherance of this goal. Diane Matsuda, the HPC Vice-President, has been designated as our liaison for the various cultural legacy initiatives underway. She and I are available to meet with you or any of your staff at your convenience. Thank you for your attention to this matter during these difficult times.

Sincerely,



Aaron Jon Hyland, FAIA  
President  
San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission

cc: Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, for distribution to Board of Supervisors  
Regina Dick-Endrizzi, Executive Director, Office of Small Business  
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