



Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: February 27, 2023

LA MEJOR BAKERY

Application No.: LBR-2022-23-028
Business Name: La Mejor Bakery
Business Address: 3329 24th St.
District: District 9
Applicant: Carmen Elias, Sole Proprietor
Nomination Date: December 20, 2022
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

La Mejor Bakery was founded in 1993 by Carmen Elias. Carmen started the bakery after her early retirement from Bank of America. For Carmen, the new bakery was an opportunity to connect with her community and honor her father's memory. In the late 1960s, Carmen's family relocated from Mexico City to the United States so that her father could pursue his career. After her father's office job ended, he returned to a familiar trade he knew as a young man: baking pastries. Don Gonzalo Morales, Carmen's father, worked at numerous bakeries across San Francisco including La Reyna Bakery & Coffee Shop, La Mexicana Bakery, Dianda's Italian American Pastry, La International, and Dominguez Mexican Bakery. Throughout her youth, Carmen spent a significant amount of time in panaderías and often worked as a babysitter to the children in the places where her father was employed. In those spaces, Carmen gained an appreciation for customer service and a reverence for those who worked in the baking industry.

With the help of her father's former colleagues and her brother Gonzalo Morales, Carmen was able to open the bakery. The first two years of the business were difficult. Carmen modified her business hours to attract early morning customers and late night patrons leaving local clubs and bars. Carmen's business was able to become established and she hired long term employees including Rigoberto Calzada a full-time baker for 20 years, Miriam Huerta for 15 years and Lisenia Rivera for 11 years.

In recent years, Carmen Elias has transformed the bakery into an information hub for Spanish-speaking customers and fellow business owners. Most of Carmen's regular customers are Latino and many are in the United States alone, working to support their families who are living in Latin America. For many, the business has become an important connection to the culture that they left behind. Through open doors and delicious pastries, La Mejor Bakery has continued to serve the Mission and the Latino community.

CRITERION 1

Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

Yes, La Mejor Bakery has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

3329 24th St., 1993 to Present (30 Years)

Legacy Business Program

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City Hall Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-6680
legacybusiness@sfgov.org
www.legacybusiness.org





CRITERION 2

Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

Yes, La Mejor Bakery has contributed to the history and identity of the Mission neighborhood and San Francisco.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- The business operates as a panadería and is associated with Mexican culinary traditions.
- La Mejor Bakery is located in a one-story, wood frame commercial building that has retained its original 20th-Century Commercial design. The building was constructed in 1910. Some of the noteworthy architectural details include paneled frieze, a denticulated cornice along the roofline, glazed transom windows, and angled vestibules pared with octagonal tiles at the bakery's entrance. The architectural details along the roofline have been painted red, white, and green, and are emblematic of the national flag of Mexico.

This parcel was surveyed during the 2010 South Mission Historic Resource Survey and was determined to be eligible for the California Register as an individual property. The Planning Department also lists the historic resource status as "A – Historic Resource Present."

- Recently, a mural has been painted on the side of the subject building, along Osage Alley. The mural, La Familia Santana, honors the Santana family's musical legacy and contribution to Latin Rock. The mural was unveiled in October of 2021 and was painted by cartoonist Mark Bodē and subsequently restored by Wes Marks. This mural is part of a collection of murals created by local artists and organized by Mission Art 415.
- The business has been featured in numerous online and print publications including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The New York Times* and *El Tecolote*. The business has also received recognition from local officials.
- On June 23, 2016, Carmen Elias received a Certificate of Honor from the City and County of San Francisco for her contributions to the small business community, her leadership and partnership, and her help in fueling the economy and bringing prosperity to the neighborhood. In May 2016, La Mejor Bakery received a Small Business Heritage Award from Mayor Edwin Lee during San Francisco Small Business Week. On May 25, 2016, La Mejor Bakery received a Senate Certificate of Recognition signed by State Senator Mark Leno in recognition for receiving the Small Business Heritage Award from Mayor Edwin Lee.

CRITERION 3

Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

Yes, La Mejor Bakery is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that La Mejor Bakery qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

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Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Historic architectural features.
- Window displays.
- La Virgen de Guadalupe awning.
- A commitment to the community.
- Traditional Mexican pastries.

CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Bakery.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include La Mejor Bakery currently located at 3329 24th St. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

Legacy Business Program

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Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

February 27, 2023

LA MEJOR BAKERY

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District: District 9
Applicant: Carmen Elias, Sole Proprietor
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Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for La Mejor Bakery, currently located at 3329 24th St.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 27, 2023, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes La Mejor Bakery in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at La Mejor Bakery.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Historic architectural features.
- Window displays.
- La Virgen de Guadalupe awning.
- A commitment to the community.
- Traditional Mexican pastries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain La Mejor Bakery on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Bakery.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on February 27, 2023.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

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Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2022-23-028
Business Name: La Mejor Bakery
Business Address: 3329 24th St.
District: District 9
Applicant: Carmen Elias, Sole Proprietor
Nomination Received: December 20, 2022
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?

☒ Yes ☐ No

3329 24th St., 1993 to Present (30 Years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?

☒ Yes ☐ No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTES: n/a

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: December 21, 2022

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

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Member, Board of Supervisors
District 9



City and County of San Francisco

HILLARY RONEN

December 20, 2022

Richard Kurylo, Legacy Business Program Manager
Legacy Business Program, San Francisco Office of Small Business

Dear Mr. Kurylo:

I am enthusiastically writing a Letter of Nomination in support of La Mejor Bakery, located at 3329 24th Street, as a Legacy Business. Owned and operated by Doña Carmen Elias since 1993, La Mejor Bakery is a true community institution and receives my strongest support in this nomination.

La Mejor Bakery is centrally located near the 24th Street BART Plaza. It is in the heart of the Mission District and the Calle 24 Latino Cultural District, and in many aspects, it has operated as a heart for community – a welcoming and safe place where working class, Spanish-speaking community members can come in and enjoy a pan dulce together. Everyone who walks into this bakery is welcomed in and Doña Elias has kept her prices affordable despite the overwhelming gentrification in the area. On top of this, Doña Elias has always employed local community members, with some staff working at La Mejor for over a decade!

Doña Carmen Elias deserves recognition for all she has had to overcome to maintain the bakery over the years, including the latest pandemic. District 9 is so fortunate to have this incredible, longstanding, immigrant woman-owned small business in the heart of our community. I am honored to submit this nomination on La Mejor Bakery's and Doña Elias' behalf.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hillary Ronen".

Hillary Ronen
Supervisor, District 9



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: La Mejor Bakery

Business owner name(s): Carmen Elias

Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business

Current business address: 3329 24th St.

Telephone: (415) 724 – 0251

Email: bakerylamejorsf@gmail.com

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website: n/a

Facebook: @profile.php?id=100057537014275

Twitter: n/a

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0 4 2 6 4 6 4

Do any of these describe your business? (select all that apply)

Requires at least 51% of the business be owned, operated, and controlled by the business designation below.

☒ Immigrant-Owned Business

☐ Owned by Person with a Disability

☐ LGBTQ+-Owned Business

☐ Veteran-Owned Business

☒ Minority-Owned Business*

☒ Woman-Owned Business

**Minority is defined as on or more of the following racial or ethnic groups: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; Middle Eastern or North African; Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander*

Contact Person Information

Contact person name: Carmen Elias

Contact person title: Sole Proprietor

Contact telephone: () –

Contact email: bakerylamejorsf@gmail.com

Business Location(s)

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business.

If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address.

Original San Francisco address: 3329 24th St. Zip Code: 94110

Is this location the founding location of the business? (Y/N): Y

Dates at this location: From: October 17, 1993 To: Present

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other Address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Applicant Disclosures

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified. A business deemed not current with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for grants through the Legacy Business Program.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- ☒ I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- ☒ I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- ☒ I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- ☒ I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- ☒ I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- ☒ I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- ☒ I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Name: *Carmen ELias*

Signature: *Carmen ELias*

Date: *12/20/22*

LA MEJOR BAKERY

Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

La Mejor Bakery ("La Mejor") is a Mexican bakery established in 1993. It's located at 3329 24th Street in the Mission District within the limits of the Latino Cultural District and is considered an anchor to the Latino community.

La Mejor Bakery was founded by Doña Carmen Elias, a former Bank of America teller who retired at age 40. Originally from Mexico City and with a long history of bakers in her family, she decided to come out of retirement when a family friend pointed out a failing panadería on 24th Street, not far from where she grew up.

Doña Carmen moved to San Francisco as a child in the late 1960s due to her father's work. After his office job ended, Don Gonzalo Morales – Doña Carmen's father – returned to the trade he knew as a young man back in Mexico City: baker. He worked for a number of bakeries established at that time including La Reyna Bakery & Coffee Shop, La Mexicana Bakery, Dianda's Italian American Pastry, La International, and Dominguez Mexican Bakery.

Doña spent a lot of time in the panaderías, often working as a babysitter to the kids in the places where her father was employed, until he passed away at age 52. A good friend of her father's pointed out a for rent commercial unit on 24th Street and encouraged her to rent it. The same family friend helped her recruit her father's former colleagues to bake for her on their days off. In return, she named her bakery La Mejor after a bakery of the same name in Tijuana where Carmen's father and his friends would gather. This memory of Doña Carmen's father was the inspiration for its name.

In establishing La Mejor Bakery with the guidance of her father's friends, Doña Carmen Elias followed in her father's footsteps.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

La Mejor Bakery has been in continuous operation since its inception in 1993, always in San Francisco and always at the same location.

c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

La Mejor Bakery is not technically a family-owned business, defined here as any business in which two or more family members are involved and the majority of ownership or control lies within a family. Doña Carmen Elias is the sole owner. Both her brother Gonzalo and Hector Morales assisted her in the opening process but are not involved with the business.

d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

Doña Carmen Elias has been the sole proprietor of La Mejor Bakery since it was founded in 1993.

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Not applicable.

f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

The historic resource status of the building that houses La Mejor Bakery is classified by the Planning Department as Category A, Historic Resource Present, with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. The building is within the boundaries of the Calle 24 Latino Cultural District established in 2014 and is a contributing building to the South Mission Historic Resource Survey.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

La Mejor Bakery has been around since the time when pan dulce was sold practically on every corner. The identity of a Latino neighborhood goes hand-in-hand with the smell of freshly baked bread and cookies. Without bakeries like La Mejor, the Mission would not be a Latino neighborhood.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

In the 1980s and 1990s the Mission saw a surge of Central American citizens fleeing war in their countries. These immigrants renamed the 24th Street BART plazas the “Plaza Martí” and “Plaza Sandino,” where they demonstrate, organize, create art, and hold community events. La Mejor has been the largest contributor of coffee and pan dulce for most events and festivities on the BART plazas and on the 24th Street commercial corridor, such as Carnaval, Fiestas de las Americas, Día de Muertos, Las Posadas, Cinco de Mayo, Kings of the Streets, etc. This collaborative tradition has continued for as long as La Mejor has been around.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

In May 2016, La Mejor Bakery received a Small Business Heritage Award from Mayor Edwin Lee during San Francisco Small Business Week.

On May 25, 2016, La Mejor Bakery received a Senate Certificate of Recognition signed by State Senator Mark Leno in recognition for receiving the Small Business Heritage Award from Mayor Edwin Lee.

On June 23, 2016, Doña Carmen Elias received a Certificate of Honor from the City and County of San Francisco for her contributions to the small business community, as her leadership and partnership help fuel the economy and bring prosperity to the neighborhood.

On August 2, 2018, Jonathan Kauffman from the San Francisco Chronicle’s food section wrote a story about Doña Carmen Elias and La Mejor Bakery.

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

On a wall in La Mejor Bakery, Doña Carmen proudly displays a photo of her with Mayor Edwin Lee, who visited the bakery.

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

La Mejor Bakery provides employment to members of the Mission community. Soon after Doña Carmen opened the bakery, a 17-year-old who had just moved from México applied for a job. “I know everything about baking,” Rigoberto Calzada told her. She hired him – and for 20 years he was her only full-time baker until he opened his own bakery in San Bruno in the spring of 2018. Other long-time employees include Miriam Huerta who has been employed for 15 years and Lisenia Rivera for 11 years.

La Mejor Bakery also demonstrates commitment to the community by providing services in the language and culture of the community that they serve and by supporting the local economy by purchasing ingredients from the local produce stores.

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

Located in the heart of the Mission, La Mejor Bakery serves laborers and low- and medium-income working class families.

In the 1970s when there was a surge of Central American immigrants fleeing civil war in their countries, a movement was created to name the 24th Street BART plazas – Plaza Martí and Plaza Sandino – where candle vigils are still held by community members, organizers and activists. The indigenous Danzantes perform blessings as the seasons turn, and up-and-coming musicians and poets perform free of charge for the community. La Mejor, being on the same block as the BART plazas, is the largest contributor of coffee and pan dulce for these events.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

The building that houses La Mejor Bakery is a one-story, wood frame commercial building designed in the 20th-Century Commercial style. The rectangular-plan building, clad in shiplap wood siding, is capped by a flat roof. The foundation is not visible. The primary façade faces north and includes four structural bays. The building includes four commercial units with four entrances at the street level. Entrances include fully-glazed, recessed wood doors surmounted by a glazed transoms and angled vestibules pared with octagonal tiles. The storefronts feature wood kick plates and fabric awnings. Typical fenestration consists of fixed plate-glass aluminum-sash windows. There is also a projecting sign that reads: "24th St. Station Shops." Architectural details include wall panels, a paneled frieze and a denticulated cornice at the roofline.

La Mejor received a grant from the City and County of San Francisco in the early 2010s to make minor façade improvements and become ADA compliant. The minor façade changes altered the overall look of the property's three ground level units.

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

There was a time when nine panaderias (bakeries) served the 24th Street corridor and surroundings. With gentrification, a surge of high rents has become the new normal, proving detrimental to small panaderia businesses like La Universal, Dominguez Mexican Bakery, and La Victoria. Losing the panaderia La Mejor would be the beginning of the end to what has been for six decades a thriving working class Latino community. It will also give way to trendier, more expensive destination venues, not community-oriented businesses.

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

When you walk through the door at La Mejor Bakery, the first thing that will strike you is the delicious pan dulce smell. On the walls you can admire the business' many awards and

recognitions, and pictures of the owner Doña Carmen Elias from the not-too-distant past. As you walk your way past the tables, you will hear conversations in Spanish spoken with the accents of Central America and South America. The topic of conversation would be political, casual or a recount of the last fighting match or the most recent episode of a soap opera, and when you get to the service counter you can appreciate the items with aromas that made you come in in the first place. By many accounts, La Mejor is a tiny hole-in-the-wall, but once you cross the threshold, you will see how mighty it really is.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

For nearly three decades, Doña Carmen has shown commitment for crafting her breads and cookies in the same manner her ancestors did, with exquisite care and accommodating the seasons and holidays.

Doña Carmen continues assisting her customers in their preferred language; in fact her entire staff is composed of Spanish speakers who reside in the vicinity. Her business model is for every person that comes in to be tended to with the utmost respect and kindness, no matter if they can't afford to pay. The affordability of the goods she manufactures and the ambiance created by the community are the traditions that make the character of the place.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

The most especial feature of La Mejor can be appreciated from the outside. The unmistakable image of La Virgen de Guadalupe is painted on the awning. Also, street artists decorate with washable paint the large windows with seasonal themes that resemble mosaics. On a third inconspicuous window, you can find the Golden Gate Bridge, a caricature baker and the name of the bakery in large font all year round. The inside of the business is reminiscent of their humble beginnings despite the trendier businesses La Mejor is surrounded by today.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Not applicable.





The sign is painted on a light grey background that resembles a coffee cup. It has a grey lid at the top. Two vertical yellow streaks run down the center of the cup. There are four hand-painted brown coffee beans: one on the left side, one on the right side, one near the bottom left, and one near the bottom right. The text is painted in a stylized, hand-painted font.

LA MEJOR

BAKERY.

EXQUISITE
MEXICAN
BREAD
PASTRIES
COOKIES



Exquisite & Delicious
Cookies



PEOPLE
LOVE US

special

COOKIES

La Mejor Bakery in the Mission matters now more than ever

[Jonathan Kauffman](#) Aug. 2, 2018 Updated: Aug. 2, 2018 6:57 p.m.



(From left to right) Lisenia Rivera, Reina Orellana, Carmen Elias, Miriam Huerta, and Claudia Rojas pose for a portrait at La Mejor Bakery in San Francisco. The establishment has been owned by Elias for 25 years. Elias, who was born in Mexico and moved here in the 1960s, turned her bakery into an information hub for her Spanish-speaking community. Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle



Claudia Rojas, left, carries a tray as she works with owner, Carmen Elias, at La Mejor Bakery. Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle



Baked cookies rest in the window at La Mejor Bakery. Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle



La Mejor Bakery, located at 3329 24th St., in San Francisco. Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle



La Mejor Bakery, located at 3329 24th St. Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle

Carmen Elias would never have met the mayor — two mayors, in fact — if the city hadn't offered to help out her La Mejor Bakery. Now she's determined to return the favor, acting as a conduit between local government and her neighbors in the Mission.

In her early 60s, Elias' dark hair is streaked with blond highlights and her voice has retained the clear, melodic tone of a violin sonata. Social Security has begun sending her notices letting her know she could retire — for the second time — but she sets them aside, every year.

The first time she retired was when she was 39. In 1993, the Bank of America, where Elias had worked since the age of 19, offered early retirement to anyone who had been with the company for 20 years. Her husband of 15 years had died four years before. She had no kids. She took the buyout.

But what do you do with your life when you retire before 40? One of her father's old co-workers suggested she take over a failing panaderia on 24th Street, not far from where she grew up.



Carmen Elias converses with a staff member at La Mejor Bakery. Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle

Elias had moved to San Francisco in 1968 with her family, when her father, who was working for Marriott in Mexico City, was transferred to the U.S. He secured visas for his wife and children and rented a three-bedroom apartment in the Mission for \$350 a month, if you can imagine. But he was soon forced to make that bargain this country forces on so many immigrants: To stay here you have to give up a lifetime's worth of professional achievements. From the office he returned to the trade he had practiced as a young man: baking pastries. King's, La Victoria, Dominguez and other Mission shops all employed him before he died at the age of 52.

His daughter had grown up around the panaderias but had never wanted to work in them. But she knew she was good with people. The family friend helped her recruit her father's former colleagues to bake

for her on their days off. In return, she named her new business after his: La Mejor. Buying the business took all her money. “I only saw the check in my hand and then I had to give it away,” she says now.

The first two years, Elias made no money and couldn’t afford to hire full-time staff. She would open the store at 5 o’clock to catch the early-morning customers not served by the seven other neighborhood bakeries, take a few hours off in the middle of the day to sleep, then work until midnight to attract the bargoers. She dispensed trays’ worth of free cookies to bring them back.

Around the time that business picked up, a 17-year-old who had just moved from Mexico applied for a job. “I know everything about baking,” Rigoberto Calzada told her. She hired him — and for 20 years, until he opened his own bakery in San Bruno this spring, he was her only full-time baker.



Baked cookies rest in the window at La Mejor Bakery. Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle

Elias still comes in at 4 in the morning on weekdays to help the crew pull trays of breads and pastries from the ovens. A line of customers forms outside her door even before 5 a.m.: first, workers picking up tamales and savory breakfast sandwiches, then parents with their schoolchildren for pan dulce. Around 9, the “computer people” stop in for pre-work custard turnovers and slices of pumpkin-nut bread. Saturdays and Sundays, Elias says, are more relaxed. She only comes in for the late morning or afternoon.

The middle of the day, before the afterwork rush for cookies and other sweets, is social hour at La Mejor. The paleta sellers park their carts outside for an hour before jingling their way back up Mission Street. Older men claim the tables for cups of weak coffee and cross-table gossip, which her full-time worker, Lisenia “Chiquitita” Rivera, stokes from behind the counter. Elias presides over the conversation. “They want to know what has happened and they ask me,” she says, so she makes sure to keep up on the day’s news, translating it into Spanish.

About three years ago, after a rash of ADA-compliance lawsuits filed against small businesses in the Mission, the city reached out to her and her neighbors, offering grants and assistance. With the grant, Elias installed a new door and rebuilt the tables and coffee station in her narrow shop so wheelchairs could fit under them.

In the process, she befriended Diana Ponce de Leon, Mission District point person for the city’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development. The two struck up a relationship that Ponce de Leon considers familial. “She calls me at least once a month to see how everything is going,” Ponce de Leon says. “She keeps her ear to the ground, if there are issues with small businesses, and lets me know what’s happening.”



(From left to right) Miriam Huerta, Lisenia Rivera, Gonzalo Morales (Carmen Elias's brother), and Carmen Elias pose for a portrait at La Mejor Bakery. The establishment has been owned by Elias for 25 years. Elias, who was born in Mexico and moved here in the 1960s, turned her bakery into an information hub for her Spanish-speaking customers and fellow business owners.

Photo: Yalonda M. James / The Chronicle

Elias' corner of the Mission is a small one, it turns out. She buys half of her supplies from local businesses — cheese, plastic goods, produce — and they return the favor. Most of her seven employees actually have jobs at nearby restaurants, taking extra shifts at La Mejor just as her father's friends did 25 years before. Sometimes it feels like the same dollars circle around the neighborhood, she says.

The business owners all talk to one another about the rents, of course, tracking every hike and eviction. But recently, they've been talking about immigration, too. Elias attended meetings the city held to educate the Mission about the prospect of Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids. "The community was scared," she said. "Maybe a lot of my customers don't have documents."

She learned how to confirm that an ICE officer's warrant is valid and memorized the emergency number to report violations — 200-1548, she rattles off as proof. Then she made the rounds, sharing that news with her fellow businesses. Not all of them are Latino, but Saudi, Pakistani and Chinese, too. "It's good if they know what to do or what not to do," she says.

Not long after Elias' regular phone calls to the city began, Mayor Ed Lee honored her as a Latino Heritage Business. He visited the shop a few times, often enough to pick a favorite cookie (pineapple and coconut). A photograph of the late mayor is now up on her wall, beside all her workers' food-handling certificates and a small plaque reading "God bless this business."

Last year, then-acting Mayor Mark Farrell followed Lee's path to La Mejor, stopping by to reassure her and other Mission businesses of San Francisco's commitment to its sanctuary city status. Elias likes Mayor London Breed's emphasis on cleaning up the sidewalks. She wouldn't say no to a visit from mayor number three.

A more immediate reassurance arrived two weeks ago, not long after her birthday, when her neighbors delivered her favorite cake from Dianda's Pastries on three days in a row. She asked her landlord on the phone if he would extend her lease when it expired again next year. Carmen, don't worry, he told her. "I'm going to give it to you for five years."

Six more years! The news means she can relax, says the woman who works seven days a week. She can even joke about retiring for good, now that she knows she won't have to.



Written By
Jonathan Kauffman

Reach Jonathan on



Jonathan Kauffman has been writing about food for The Chronicle since the spring of 2014. He focuses on the intersection of food and culture - whether that be profiling chefs, tracking new trends in nonwestern cuisines, or examining the impact of technology on the way we eat.

After cooking for a number of years in Minnesota and San Francisco, Kauffman left the kitchen to become a journalist. He reviewed restaurants for 11 years in the Bay Area and Seattle (East Bay Express, Seattle Weekly, SF Weekly) before abandoning criticism in order to tell the stories behind the food. His first book, "Hippie Food: How Back-to-the-Landers, Longhairs and Revolutionaries Changed the Way We Eat," was published in 2018.

The New York Times

36 HOURS

36 Hours in San Francisco

By **Bonnie Tsui**

Oct. 28, 2015

Don't blink or you'll miss the next "new" San Francisco. This is a city that's reinventing itself with every refresh of your Twitter feed, with cranes rising all over downtown and an army of young tech workers pouring into neighborhoods across the city. In the '60s, San Francisco was synonymous with the hippie counterculture; in the '90s, it was the dot-com boom (and eventual bust, in the early 2000s); more recently, it was the ripening of the Bay Area food movement. Now it's home to such new-establishment icons of the digital economy as Airbnb, Uber and, yes, Twitter. But don't be fooled by the shiny patina: San Francisco is more than just the physical headquarters of our virtual world. There are some things that haven't changed, and by themselves, are reason enough to revisit: the mind-boggling views along that glorious waterfront; the Mission's still-feisty, freaky, welcome-all-comers character; the meandering natural pleasures of Golden Gate Park. Even when classic San Francisco rubs up against new San Francisco, the friction, though at times contentious (Google bus protests, the anti-eviction fight), is also where the community-conscious activist roots of this city are as vital and visible as ever.

Friday

1. City by the Bay | 4 p.m.

Make time for a stroll along the Embarcadero, San Francisco's quintessential bayside pedestrian promenade. Your starting point is just south of the Bay Bridge, at Red's Java House on Pier 30. A no-frills waterfront dive the San Francisco Chronicle once called "the Chartres Cathedral of cheap eats," Red's has been around in some form or another since 1912, when longshoremen came for the cheeseburger-and-beer breakfast special. Nowadays, it's a favorite stop for Giants fans on their way to a ballgame at AT&T Park, home to the 2010, 2012 and 2014 World Series champs. Join the cheerfully egalitarian crowd for a sourdough cheeseburger (\$5.52) and a beer on the outdoor patio — it has a view that goes for miles.

2. To Market | 5:30 p.m.

It's hard to believe that it's been 12 years since the century-plus-old Ferry Building reopened as a grand marketplace and European-style food hall, after decades of blight and decay in the shadow of the former Embarcadero Freeway (which was taken down after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake). Though the Ferry Building has come to represent all the modern trends in the Bay Area food world, it hews to tradition with a thrice-weekly outdoor farmers' market, plus indoor food stalls in former ferry berths; the butcher, the baker and the cheesemonger are all on hand to talk to you. Just browsing is a pleasure: It's all eye candy, from the ceramics to the chocolate. And whatever your age, watching the ferries come and go never gets old.

3. Two Piers | 7 p.m.

Charles Phan, of Slanted Door fame, has shifted gears with Hard Water, a tiny, New Orleans-inflected whiskey bar and restaurant that opened in 2013 on Pier 3. The kitchen turns out a mean fried chicken — the better to soak up the powerful cocktails. Whiskey flights start at \$22, and are a gentle intro to a deep list. For a heartier meal, head two piers over to Michael Chiarello's Spanish-meets-California Coqueta, where the extraordinary paella — bomba rice with clams, shrimp, chorizo and broccolini in fragrant broth made from shellfish and jamón serrano, \$45 — is enough to feed three.

4. Nightcaps | 9 p.m.

A bar in the Mission is an appropriate place to end the night. At the divey, atmospheric Royal Cuckoo, great cocktails are the rule — try the Carnival Mule, with cachaça, ginger beer, Domaine de Canton, tangerine and lime — as is live music Wednesday through Sunday nights showcasing the house's old-fashioned Hammond organ. Outdoor drinking is an option at Zeitgeist, a punk-spirited biergarten and neighborhood institution; its native population is heavy on the bikers and bike messengers. Don't take selfies, or management might boot you out — service is gruff, and proud of it.

Saturday

5. Break Bread | 10 a.m.

Along 24th Street in the Mission, Mexican bakeries are still where mornings begin. For just a dollar or two, pick up sugar-dusted pan dulce or custard-filled pastries with your coffee at La Mejor Bakery or Panaderia La Mexicana, and watch the neighborhood wake up. Then head south for a climb up over windswept Bernal Hill to the sprawling Alemany Farmers' Market, said to be the oldest in the state of California, improbably situated near where Interstate 280 crosses Highway 101. The weekly market still offers the best cornucopia in

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La Mejor: more than just another Mexican bakery

June 2, 2016 Elizabeth Veras Holland

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Column: Community in focus



Carmen Elias, owner of La Mejor Bakery. Photo Drago Rentería

If you get off the bus at 24th and Mission streets in the early morning hours, you are almost sure to smell the freshly baked pan dulce. In a neighborhood that has seen the effects of gentrification it is a welcomed smell, which serves as a sign that culture is still alive here in the heart of the Mission. And if you follow it, you will find a small colorful shop nestled between Mission and Bartlett streets. This panaderia is appropriately named La Mejor Bakery (The Best Bakery). It certainly is one of the best, and not just because of the delicious bread.

When I visited La Mejor for the first time, I was instantly brought back to memories of my childhood home. Spanish was being spoken all around me. A television positioned in a high corner was set to a soccer game. And of course the sight of pink, orange and white conchas caught my eye. I ordered a concha, a cup of "Abuelita's hot chocolate" and a tamale.

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Comida es Medicina



"Below Market Rate" ownership home at 1452 Bush Street

1 two-bedroom home priced at \$371,337 with 1 car parking

Applicants must be first-time homebuyers and cannot exceed the following income levels:

100% of Area Median Income 2019
One person: \$86,200; 2 persons: \$98,500; 3 persons: \$110,850;
4 persons: \$123,150 etc.

Applications due by 5:00 PM on July 11, 2019. Apply online through DAHLIA, the SF Housing Portal at <https://housing.sfgov.org> or mail in a paper application with a self-addressed stamped envelope to BMR 1452 Bush, P.O. Box 420847, San Francisco, CA 94142. Paper applications can be downloaded from <https://housing.sfgov.org> or picked up from Vanguard Properties at 1801 Fillmore Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. Please contact Rebecca Stock and/or Colleen Cotter for an application and more information at (415) 705-1241 or rebecca@vanguardsf.com.

Units available through the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development are subject to monitoring and other restrictions. Visit www.sfmohcd.org for program information.



Sitting at a table in the back of the shop, I couldn't help but feel that being there was very different from being at a typical coffee shop in San Francisco. No one was on their laptop or distracted by their phone. The customers and employees all seemed to know each other well. They were engulfed in the soccer game, laughing, yelling, chatting with each other over cups of coffee and treats. The sense of community was undeniable. But even more than that, there was a sense of home.

On Christmas Eve 2015, I went to pick up an order of tamales at La Mejor. I asked the owner, Carmen Elias, if she was going to be closed on Christmas Day.

"Mamita, I'm open seven days a week," she replied. "I'm open on Thanksgiving, too. Some people have nowhere to go for the holidays."

I remember my first few visits there. The sense of community and home was real and it was Carmen's intentions to create it. Carmen emigrated from Mexico when she was a teenager with her five siblings. She'd had a career in banking, but 23 years ago she decided to take on the challenge of opening an authentic Mexican bakery in the Mission.

"I had no bakery experience," she said. "But I was retired and a friend told me I should do it. I had the funds to take it on, so I did."

Since then she has kept the bakery running seven days a week, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. By the end of the night, the bread is sold out and there are still a few customers sitting waiting until the last minute to leave. They wait because some of them do not have beds to sleep in for the night. They retreat to the streets.

Most of Carmen's regulars are Latino and many are here in the United States alone working to support their families who are living in Latin America. Some are homeless; others rent rooms in houses from owners they barely know. Oftentimes, they don't have access to kitchens or TVs where they live. They might have roofs over their heads, but they don't have homes.

Carmen tells me that this is the inspiration behind why she opted to get the necessary permit to allow seating in the bakery. There are five tables and they seem to always be occupied, but somehow everyone makes room for one another, pulling up chairs or sharing if necessary.

The space is open and people aren't turned away. This is a special community for Latinos who don't have family here. It's a connection to the culture that they have left behind, to the language that they understand and to the foods they knew as children. They have some sense of family, because family is everything in Latino culture.

And there's a love story too. Carmen met her sweetheart while working. He was a regular who would come in every morning for a cup of coffee and pan dulce. Now he helps her by working behind the counter in the evenings. They've been together for 10 years.

Love, friendship and family are all things that can be found at La Mejor. Carmen's heart and work ethic embody what the Mission is all about: not just working for profit, but for the love of people and sustaining a community. To visit La Mejor is to be welcomed with open arms into that community whether you are Latino or not. And, in all seriousness, the pan dulce really is perfection.

 [Carmen Elias](#) [La Mejor Bakery](#) [panaderia](#)

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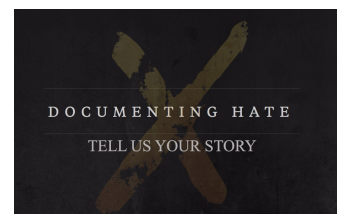


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The City and County of San Francisco

Certificate of Honor

Presented To

LA MEJOR BAKERY

JUNE 23, 2016

WHEREAS, on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, I am pleased to recognize and honor La Mejor Bakery for your dedication and contributions to our small business community. Your tenacity, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit fuel San Francisco's economy. You are a key contributor to job creation, providing needed neighborhood services, and your many tireless efforts make up the fabric of our communities. As a small business, you are the heart of San Francisco's economy, and you bring prosperity to our neighborhoods. Your leadership and partnership are truly reflective of the care you have for your community. Congratulations on being recognized during Small Business Week, and best of luck in all your future endeavors.



THEREFORE, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City and County of San Francisco to be affixed.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edwin M. Lee".

Edwin M. Lee
Mayor



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

La Mejor Bakery
Mayor's Small Business Heritage Award

Congratulations on being honored by Mayor Edwin Lee as an inspirational and exemplary business. The leadership you have demonstrated helps to bring greater economic empowerment and a brighter future for our city. Congratulations!

A stylized, cursive signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Leno".

MARK LENO
Senator, 11th District
May 25th, 2016



LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: January 18, 2023

Filing Date: December 21, 2022
Case No.: 2022-012790LBR
Business Name: La Mejor Bakery
Business Address: 3329 24th Street
Zoning: NCT (MISSION STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT) Zoning District
Calle 24 SUD (SPECIAL USE DISTRICT)
55-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 6516/025
Applicant: Carmen Elias
3329 24th Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Located In: District 9
Staff Contact: Emily Lane – (628) 652-7582
Emily.Lane@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

La Mejor Bakery was founded in 1993 by Carmen Elias. Carmen started the bakery after her early retirement from Bank of America. For Carmen, the new bakery was an opportunity to connect with her community and honor her father's memory. In the late 1960's, Carmen's family relocated from Mexico City to the United States so that her father could pursue his career. After her father's office job ended, he returned to a familiar trade he knew as a young man: baking pastries. Don Gonzalo Morales, Carmen's father, worked at numerous bakeries across San Francisco including La Reyna Bakery & Coffee Shop, La Mexicana Bakery, Dianda's Italian American Pastry, La International, and Dominguez Mexican Bakery. Throughout her youth, Carmen spent a significant amount of time in panaderías and often worked as a babysitter to the children in the places where her father was employed. In those spaces, Carmen gained an appreciation for customer service and a reverence for those who worked in the baking industry.

With the help of her father's former colleagues and her brother Gonzalo Morales, Carmen was able to open the bakery. The first two years of the business were difficult. Carmen modified her business hours to attract early morning customers and late night patrons leaving local clubs and bars. Carmen's business was able to become established and she hired long term employees including Rigoberto Calzada a full-time baker for 20 years, Miriam Huerta for 15 years and Lisenia Rivera for 11 years. In recent years, Doña Carmen Elias has transformed the bakery into an information hub for Spanish-speaking customers and fellow business owners. Most of Carmen's regular customers are Latino and many are in the United States alone, working to support their families who are living in Latin America. For many, the business has become an important connection to the culture that they have left behind. Through open doors and delicious pastries, La Mejor Bakery has continued to serve the Mission and the Latino community.

The business's location at 3329 24th Street is a Category A (Historic Resource Present) structure on the south side of 24th Street between Bartlett Street and Osage Alley in the Mission neighborhood. It is within the Mission Street NCT (Neighborhood Commercial Transit) Zoning District, Calle 24 SUD (Special Use District), and a 55-X Height and Bulk District.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1993.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes. La Mejor Bakery qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. La Mejor Bakery has operated continuously in San Francisco for 30 years.
- b. La Mejor Bakery has contributed to the history and identity of the Mission neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. La Mejor Bakery is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

Yes, the business operates as a panadería and is associated with Mexican culinary traditions.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

Yes. La Mejor Bakery is located in a one-story, wood frame commercial building that has retained its original 20th-Century Commercial design. The building was constructed in 1910. Some of the noteworthy architectural details include paneled frieze, a denticulated cornice along the roofline, glazed transom windows and angled vestibules pared with octagonal tiles at the bakery's entrance. The architectural details along the roofline have been painted red, white and green, and are emblematic of the national flag of Mexico.

Recently, a mural has been painted on the side of the subject building, along Osage Alley. The mural, La Familia Santana, honors the Santana family's musical legacy and contribution to Latin Rock. The mural was unveiled in October of 2021 and was painted by cartoonist Mark Bodē and subsequently restored by Wes Marks. This mural is part of a collection of murals created by local artists and organized by Mission Art 415.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

Yes. This parcel was surveyed during the 2010 South Mission Historic Resource Survey and was determined to be eligible for the California Register as an individual property. The Planning Department also lists the historic resource status as A – Historic Resource Present.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No, not as of the date of this Executive Summary. However, the Latino Historic Context Statement is in progress.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journal, etc.?*

Yes. The business has been featured in numerous online and print publications including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The New York Times* and *El Tecolote*. The business has also received recognition from local officials. On June 23, 2016, Carmen Elias received a Certificate of Honor from the City and County of San Francisco for her contributions to the small business community, her leadership and partnership help to fuel the economy and bring prosperity to the neighborhood. In May 2016, La Mejor Bakery received a Small Business Heritage Award from Mayor Edwin Lee during San Francisco Small Business Week. On May 25, 2016, La Mejor Bakery received a Senate Certificate of Recognition signed by State Senator Mark Leno in recognition for receiving the Small Business Heritage Award from Mayor Edwin Lee.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 3329 24th Street (1993 – Present)

Recommended by Applicant

- Historic Architectural Features
- Window displays
- La Virgen de Guadalupe Awning
- A commitment to the community
- Traditional Mexican pastries

Additional Recommended by Staff

- None

Basis for Recommendation

The Department recommends the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a resolution recommending the business listed above be adopted by the Small Business Commission to the Legacy Business Registry.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Resolution

Legacy Business Registry Application:

- Application Review Sheet
- Section 1 – Business / Applicant Information
- Section 2 – Business Location(s)
- Section 3 – Disclosure Statement
- Section 4 – Written Historical Narrative
 - Criterion 1 – History and Description of Business
 - Criterion 2 – Contribution to Local History
 - Criterion 3 – Business Characteristics
- Contextual Photographs and Background Documentation



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 1299

HEARING DATE: JANUARY 18, 2023

Case No.: 2022-012790LBR
Business Name: La Mejor Bakery
Business Address: 3329 24th Street
Zoning: NCT (MISSION STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL TRANSIT) Zoning District
Calle 24 SUD (SPECIAL USE DISTRICT)
55-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 6516/025
Applicant: Carmen Elias
3329 24th Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Hillary Ronen
Located In: District 9
Staff Contact: Emily Lane – (628) 652-7582
emily.lane@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR LA MEJOR BAKERY CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 3329 24TH STREET, BLOCK/LOT 6516/025.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on January 18, 2023, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends that La Mejor Bakery qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated in San Francisco for more than 30 years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community, and, if not included in the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for 3329 24TH ST.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

- 3329 24th Street (1993 – Present)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Historic Architectural Features
- Window displays
- La Virgen de Guadalupe Awning
- A commitment to the community
- Traditional Mexican pastries

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file **2022-012790LBR** to the Office of Small Business on January 18, 2023.



Jonas P. Ionin Digitally signed by Jonas P. Ionin
Date: 2023.01.18 11:00:00 -0800

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES: Wright, Black, Foley, Johns, So, Nageswaran, Matsuda

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ADOPTED: January 18, 2023