



Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2025-26-003
Business Name: Gemini Unisex Hairstyling
Business Address: 1045 Fillmore St.
District: District 5
Applicant: Narcella Banks, Owner
Nomination Date: July 23, 2025
Nominated By: Supervisor Bilal Mahmood

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?
 X Yes No

1045 Fillmore St. from 1974 to Present (51 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?
 X 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?
 X Yes No

FEATURES OR TRADITIONS: Hair salon

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION: August 18, 2025

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
Legacy Business Program

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



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 5



City and County of San Francisco

BILAL MAHMOOD
馬百樂

July 23, 2025

Richard Kurylo
Office of Small Business, Legacy Business
City Hall, Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Kurylo,

I am writing to nominate Gemini Unisex Hairstyling, a long-standing business in the Fillmore, to be added to the Legacy Business Registry.

Gemini first opened its doors in 1974, and for more than five decades, has served the community in the heart of the Fillmore. Specializing in hairstyling for people of all genders and backgrounds, Gemini is one of the oldest businesses on the 1000 block of Fillmore Street and remains a pillar of the neighborhood's small business community.

Gemini is far more than a salon. It was founded as a safe space for Black residents in the Fillmore in the wake of urban renewal. Over the years, it has provided not just haircuts, but a deep sense of care: offering youth opportunities to learn and earn through sweeping and shampooing, providing services for free to those in need, and cultivating a space for storytelling, healing, and connection. In a corridor that has weathered displacement and disinvestment, Gemini has stood firm as a living archive of community resilience.

Today, Gemini continues to provide quality, affordable services while anchoring the cultural identity of the neighborhood. Its legacy is one of service, pride, and perseverance, qualities that speak directly to the spirit of the Registry.

I wholeheartedly support the nomination of Gemini Unisex Hairstyling to the Legacy Business Registry and hope to see it recognized for its decades of commitment to the Fillmore and San Francisco at large.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bilal Mahmood', written in a cursive style.

Bilal Mahmood
Supervisor, District 5
City and County of San Francisco



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: Gemini Unisex Hairstyling

Business owner name(s): Narcella Banks

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

Current business address: 1045 Fillmore St., San Francisco, CA 94115

Telephone: (415) 368 – 3751

Email:

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website:

Facebook:

Twitter:

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0 3 8 5 2 4 3

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 one 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: Narcella Banks

Contact person title: Owner

Contact telephone: (415) 368 – 3751

Contact email:

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: 1045 Fillmore St. Zip Code: 94115

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

Dates at this location: From: 1974 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: Narcella Banks

Signature:

Narcella Banks

Date: December 18, 2024

GEMINI UNISEX HAIRSTYLING

Written Historical Narrative

INTRODUCTION

a. Describe the business. What does it sell or provide?

Gemini Unisex Hairstyling provides hair care and skin care services and products, including hairstyling, cuts, shaves, and braids. Gemini also does weaves, waves, roller sets, cuts, color, chemical services, eyebrows, and some waxing and hair removal.

b. Describe whom the business serves.

Gemini provides services to everyone in the San Francisco community and beyond.

c. In about 2-5 words (15-30 characters), describe what the business is known for.

Generations of hair services to generations.

CRITERION 1: The business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years

a. Provide a short history of the business, including locations and owners.

Gemini Unisex Hairstyling was established by Mildred Long in 1974 at its present day location at 1045 Fillmore Street.

Mildred was the mother of three daughters – Hazel, Belinda, and Ardanna – and worked in several other barber shops until she opened Gemini. She had a dream of creating a barbershop downstairs and a hair salon for women upstairs.

Mildred Long retired in 1992 but allowed joint ownership with her youngest daughter Ardanna Colson. Born in March 1953, Ardanna spent most of her time in Los Angeles where she worked for many actors and performances keeping their books. Most of her work was under the legendary Stevie Wonder as his personal accountant. She still found time to keep books for her mother and Gemini Unisex Hairstyling.

In May 2000, Mildred passed away and Ardanna became ill. On October 18, 2000, Narcella Banks became proprietor of Gemini. Narcella is Mildred's second oldest granddaughter, Ardanna's niece, and Belinda's daughter. Narcella grew up watching her family do hair. Not only did her grandmother do hair, but her mother was also a well-respected hairstylist at the business.

Gemini Unisex Hairstyling is a family legacy.

b. Provide the ownership history of the business in a consolidated year-to-year format.

1974 to 1992:	Mildred Long
1992 to 2000:	Mildred Long and Ardanna Colson
2000 to Present:	Narrella Banks

c. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for any significant length of time.

Gemini closed for many months during the COVID pandemic, starting March 15, 2020. It also ceased operations during construction from November 18, 2024, until February 6, 2025.

CRITERION 2: The business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community

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

Mildred Long was a member of the El Bethel Baptist Church and was very active in her church and community. She served as a youth leader, helping support the next generation of community leaders. She was an advocate for families, affordable housing, safety, and nourishment. Mildred would often volunteer at food banks making sure people had access to healthy foods. At Gemini, she kept her prices affordable. Seniors held a special place in her heart, and Mildred made sure they had their own discount. She also gave young people, who were barbers and beauticians, the opportunity to grow in their profession. Also, young boys and girls from the neighborhood would come and sweep or do light cleaning to feel a sense of independence and earn some pocket change.

Mildred's granddaughter and present owner Narcella Banks received her cosmetology license on May 5, 1995, and began working in Gemini the same day. She has continued to serve the community until present. Over the years, Narcella got married and raised six children – three girls and three boys – all while continuing to work at Gemini. Narcella has seen the neighborhood change over the years. She has witnessed many joys and hardships that her clients have been through, not excluding her own. She has also raised her children in the same area as her clients. They've been just as supportive of her as she has been to them. In August 2023, Narcella lost one of her youngest clients to gun violence. He had just turned 15. She went to the funeral home and did his hair one last time (at no charge, of course).

Gemini Unisex Hairstyling is a part of the community.

b. Is the business associated with significant people or events, either now or in the past?

Gemini is the last original business on Fillmore Street between McAllister Street and Golden Gate Avenue after the City's Redevelopment Agency had demolished the storefronts on the

street and new buildings were constructed. It was the first business in the building, and it is the last original one remaining.

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

Gemini has provided hairstyling and skin care services and products to the public since 1974. Mildred Long established the business to serve the community and keep it affordable for seniors and mothers. It is still serving the community and newcomers, as well. Gemini also provides free services to those in need.

d. Has the business ever been referenced in the media, business trade publication, and/or historical documents?

Not applicable.

e. Has the business ever received any awards, recognition, or political commendations?

Not applicable.

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

If Gemini Unisex Hairstyling were to close, it would be a grave disservice to the community. Families have been coming to Gemini for decades, and the business has served generations of customers. Gemini's clients range from new to over 40 years. Losing the business would be an inconvenience and less affordable to the underserved people in the community and the Bay area at large. Clients want what is familiar. Everyone knows Gemini.

CRITERION 3: The business is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business

a. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building, structure, object, signage, mural, architectural detail, neon sign, or any other special physical feature that defines the business?

The building includes big picture windows, and the business includes an upstairs area that has been used for braiding.

b. In a few words, describe the main business activity you commit to maintaining.

The business is committed to maintaining hairstyling and barbering services.

c. What is the plan to keep the business open in the long term beyond the current ownership?

Family ownership will continue, and the plan is to train others to continue the business. Narcella isn't ready to retire, but she is encouraging the next generation, which is her older daughter, Ciara Turner. Ciara was born in 1988. She is a braider. Narcella's sister Melinda McCall is also a braider. They would like to expand their braiding by teaching youth how to create styles, while building confidence and self-esteem. Doing this strengthens the community and gives the next generation hope.

d. What challenges is the business facing today?

With construction from November 2024 to February 2025, the business was closed and has lost money and workers. Clients of 35 years or more were displaced and had to seek out other businesses for services.

Legacy Business Program staff will add the following details:

a. Features or traditions that define the business and should be maintained for the business to remain on the Legacy Business Registry.

Hair salon.

b. 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 Planning Department Historic Resource Status of the building at 1015-1045 Fillmore Street is "B - Unknown / Age Eligible."



Gemini

BARBER

(415)

GEMINI UNISEX
HAIRSTYLING

CELESTINE

(415) 343-5711

Barber
Shop

Quality Hair
Styling

Since 1973

1010 PLYMOUTH
SANTA MONICA, CA 90401

APPOINTMENTS
WELCOME







Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____

September 22, 2025

GEMINI UNISEX HAIRSTYLING

Application No.: LBR-2025-26-003
Business Name: Gemini Unisex Hairstyling
Business Address: 1045 Fillmore St.
District: District 5
Applicant: Narcella Banks, Owner
Nomination Date: July 23, 2025
Nominated By: Supervisor Bilal Mahmood
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Gemini Unisex Hairstyling, currently located at 1045 Fillmore 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 September 22, 2025, 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 Gemini Unisex Hairstyling in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Legacy Business Program

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





BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Gemini Unisex Hairstyling.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Hairstyling and barbering services.

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

- Hair salon.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on September 22, 2025.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes –
Nays –
Abstained –
Absent –

Legacy Business Program

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





LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: September 17, 2025

Filing Date: August 19, 2025
Case No.: **2025-007615LBR**
Business Name: Gemini Unisex Hairstyling
Business Address: 1045 FILLMORE STREET
Zoning: NCT - Fillmore Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit District
RM-4 – Residential- Mixed, High Density
40-X Height and Bulk District
50-X Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: **Not Applicable**
Block/Lot: 0774/021
Applicant: Narcella Banks
1045 Fillmore Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Bilal Mahmoud
Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: Will McCallum - 628-652-7338
Will.Mccallum@sfgov.org

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

Gemini Unisex Hairstyling first opened in 1974 as a hair salon specializing in hairstyling for people of all genders and backgrounds. It was founded as a safe space for Black residents in the Fillmore in the wake of urban renewal. Mildred Long first opened Gemini in 1974 and ran the business until retiring in 1992. Mildred's daughter Ardanna Colson ran the business from 1992 until 2000, and in 2000 Narcella Banks (Mildred's granddaughter) became the proprietor of Gemini and remains the owner to this day.

Mildred Long was a member of the El Bethel Baptist Church and was very active in her church and community. She served as a youth leader, helping support the next generation of community leaders. She was an advocate for families, affordable housing, safety, and nourishment. Mildred would often volunteer at food banks making sure people had access to healthy foods. At Gemini, she kept her prices affordable. Seniors held a special place

in her heart, and Mildred made sure they had their own discount. She also gave young people, who were barbers and beauticians, the opportunity to grow in their profession. Also, young boys and girls from the neighborhood would come and sweep or do light cleaning to feel a sense of independence and earn some pocket change.

Gemini is the last original business on Fillmore Street between McAllister Street and Golden Gate Avenue after the City's Redevelopment Agency had demolished the storefronts on the street and new buildings were constructed. It was the first business in the building, and it is the last original one remaining.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1974.

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

Yes. Gemini Unisex Hairstyling qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Gemini Unisex Hairstyling has operated continuously in San Francisco for 51 years.
- b. Gemini Unisex Hairstyling has contributed to the history and identity of the Western Addition neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. Gemini Unisex Hairstyling is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

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

Yes. The business is associated with the art of hairdressing and braiding.

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

Yes. Although the building is a Category B and has not been determined to be a significant resource, the previous owner Ardanna Colson worked as Stevie Wonder's personal accountant for many years.

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

No.

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

No, not as of the date of this Executive Summary.

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

No.

Racial and Social Equity Analysis

On July 15th, 2020 the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission adopted [Resolution No. 1127](#) centering Preservation Planning on racial and social equity. Understanding the benefits, burdens, and opportunities to advance racial and social equity that proposed Preservation Planning documents provide is part of the Department's Racial and Social Equity Initiative. This is also consistent with the Mayor's Citywide Strategic Initiatives for equity and accountability and with the Office of Racial Equity, which required all Departments to conduct this analysis.

The Legacy Business Program is deeply intertwined with these goals. One of the primary purposes of the Legacy Business Program is to maintain San Francisco's cultural fabric and to foster civic engagement and pride by assisting long-operating businesses remain in the city. The Legacy Business Registry was established to recognize longstanding, community-serving businesses that are valuable cultural assets of the city. These businesses, ranging from restaurants to art galleries to tire shops to community shelters, are key to sustaining the racial and social diversity in San Francisco and adding to the identity and character of our city and the many communities within it.

Gemini Unisex Hairstyling is a minority owned business, a woman owned business, and a business owned by a person with a disability. It is the last business left on Fillmore Street between McAllister Street and Golden Gate Avenue after the City's Redevelopment Agency had demolished the storefronts on the street and new buildings were constructed. It has remained a gathering space for the African American community in the Fillmore for the last 51 years, after many of the original African American owned and operated businesses have been displaced.

Gemini gives young people the opportunity to grow in their profession as barbers and beauticians. Also, young boys and girls from the neighborhood would come and sweep or do light cleaning to feel a sense of independence and earn some pocket change. Seniors received special discounts at Gemini to keep it affordable and accessible to the community it serves.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 1045 Fillmore Street (1974 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- none

Recommended by Applicant

- hairstyling and barbering services

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 DRAFT RESOLUTION NO.

HEARING DATE: September 17, 2025

Case No.: **2025-007615LBR**
Business Name: Gemini Unisex Hairstyling
Business Address: 1045 FILLMORE STREET
Zoning: NCT - Fillmore Street Neighborhood Commercial Transit District
RM-4 – Residential- Mixed, High Density
40-X Height and Bulk District
50-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0774/021
Applicant: Narcella Banks
1045 Fillmore Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Bilal Mahmoud
Located In: District 5
Staff Contact: Will McCallum - 628-652-7338
Will.Mccallum@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR GEMINI UNISEX HAIRSTYLING CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1045 FILLMORE STREET , BLOCK/LOT 0774/021.

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 September 17, 2025, 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 Gemini Unisex Hairstyling qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Gemini Unisex Hairstyling.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

- 1045 Fillmore Street (1974 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- none

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- hairstyling and barbering services

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 to the Office of Small Business on September 17, 2025.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

RECUSE:

ADOPTED: September 17, 2025