



Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application Number: LBR-2025-26-029
Business Name: Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.
Business Address: 345 California St., Suite 160
District: District 3
Applicant: Melissa Lippi Ornstil, Co-Owner
Nomination Date: January 21, 2026
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter

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

1 Columbus Ave. and 2 Columbus Ave. from 1869 to 1924 (55 years)
628-630 Montgomery St. from 1924 to 1975 (51 years)
415 Sansome St. from 1975 to 1991 (16 years)
400 Sansome St. from 1991 to 2001 (10 years)
600 Beach St. from 2001 to 2006 (5 years)
170 Grant Ave. from 2007 to 2014 (7 years)
345 California St., Suite 160 from 2015 to Present (11 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

FEATURES OR TRADITIONS: Travel agency

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION: January 21, 2026

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 3



City and County of San Francisco

DANNY SAUTER

January 20, 2026

Director Katy Tang
San Francisco Office of Small Business
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Director Tang,

I am honored to nominate Fugazi Travel Agency (“Fugazi Travel”) for inclusion in the Legacy Business Registry. Since its founding in 1869, Fugazi Travel has helped create countless special memories for San Franciscans while they travel the world. Having been ranked the #1 safari operator by Travel & Leisure, Fugazi Travel has made its mark as a world-class travel agency recognized for its unique itineraries, personalized service, and commitment to the community.

As it was founded by Giovanni F. “John” Fugazi, this special travel business helped keep Italian families in San Francisco afloat as its vault (the only one in North Beach) served as a trusted place for Italian immigrants to store their savings and important documents. Fugazi went on to shape the history of banking in San Francisco, and the generations of families that took over the business since then have kept the vision alive.

For over 150 years, Fugazi Travel has persevered through major historical events in our city and it stands as one of the last remaining independent travel agencies in San Francisco today. I strongly believe that Fugazi Travel Agency is worthy of being designated a Legacy Business. Thank you for your consideration of this nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. J. Sauter".

Supervisor Danny Sauter



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.

Business owner name(s): Christine Fecchi, CEO & President

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

Current business address: 345 California St., Suite 160, San Francisco, CA 94104

Business phone number: 415-397-7111

Business email: info@fugazitravel.com

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website: www.fugazitravel.com

Link to social media: www.facebook.com/FugaziTravel

Link to social media #2: www.instagram.com/fugazi_travel

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0000482

Contact Person Information

Contact person name: Melissa Lippi Ornstil

Contact person title: Co-Owner

Contact phone number:

Contact email:

Business Locations

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: 1 Columbus Ave. and 2 Columbus Ave. **Zip Code:** 94111

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

Dates at this location: From: 1869 **To:** 1924

Other address (if applicable): 628-630 Montgomery St. **Zip Code:** 94111

Dates at this location: From: 1924 **To:** 1975

Other address (if applicable): 415 Sansome St. **Zip Code:** 94111

Dates at this location: From: 1975 **To:** 1991

Other address (if applicable): 400 Sansome St. **Zip Code:** 94111

Dates at this location: From: 1991 **To:** 2001

Other Address (if applicable): 600 Beach St. **Zip Code:** 94133

Dates at this location: From: 2001 **To:** 2006

Business Locations

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:

Zip Code:

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

Dates at this location: From:

To:

Other address (if applicable):

170 Grant Ave.

Zip Code:

94108

Dates at this location: From:

2007

To:

2014

Other address (if applicable):

345 California St., Suite 160

Zip Code:

94104

Dates at this location: From:

2015

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:

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:

Date:

Signature:

Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.

Written Historical Narrative

Introduction

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

Since the historic days of 1869 when the transcontinental railroad first stretched across America, Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. has consistently delighted the world's most experienced travelers. Immigrants of the past entrusted their savings to the vault at the Banca Popolare Fugazi and made arrangements to transport their families from their homelands.

Modern-day explorers entrust Fugazi Travel with their most treasured experiences - international explorations, ocean voyages, grand safaris, indulgent escapes, and anniversary retreats. Friends and families continue to enjoy the agency's expertise and professional service.

b. Describe whom the business serves.

Fugazi Travel is one of the last remaining independent travel agencies in San Francisco. Its dedicated full-time employees, along with experienced independent contractors, primarily serve upscale travelers seeking customized itineraries that maximize their time abroad.

Fugazi manages airline tickets, hotel reservations, transportation, and restaurant recommendations, while also coordinating with trusted local partners who are available to assist in emergencies or answer client questions. The agency earns the majority of its revenue from commissions paid by hotels and tour operators.

Fugazi's personalized service distinguishes the travel agency from generic travel websites and crowd-sourced social media suggestions. Additionally, Fugazi's industry relationships provide travelers with added value, such as complimentary breakfasts, free Wi-Fi, late checkouts, food credits, and potential room upgrades.

Although such personalized services may seem geared toward older clientele, younger travelers are increasingly appreciating these offerings.

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

World-class, historic travel agency.

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.

Since 1869, Fugazi Travel has persevered as a leading, world-renowned travel agency, operating in a series of North Beach and Financial District buildings in San Francisco.

Giovanni F. “John” Fugazi, a businessman, banker, community leader and philanthropist from Milan, Italy, immigrated to America in 1855 and eventually settled in California. Once in San Francisco, he founded San Francisco’s first travel agency, the successful travel business “John F. Fugazi and Co.,” which continued to prosper. The business was located at 1 Columbus Ave. and 2 Columbus Ave. in North Beach, two separate locations across the street from each other.

In 1900, his two sons, James and Samuel Fugazi, joined the family business, which became Agenzia Fugazi.

John retired from the Fugazi travel business in 1911 to focus on his banking endeavors.

In 1924, Fugazi Travel moved to 628-630 Montgomery Street in the Financial District.

In an unknown year, Albino Zullo joined Fugazi Travel until 1958 when he sold the business to George Lippi and Joseph Bagnatori.

In 1964, Fugazi Travel merged with Dana Giusti Paoni Travel, forming Fugazi Dana Giusti Travel. The partners were George A. Lippi, Robert Giusti, and Giuseppe Bagnatori.

In 1975, the business moved to 415 Sansome Street in the Financial District.

Giuseppe Bagnatori retired in 1983, and Robert Giusti retired in 1985.

From 1985 to 1991, it was a sole proprietorship under George A. Lippi’s leadership.

In 1991, Fugazi Travel moved to 400 Sansome Street, which is the Old Federal Reserve Bank Building. In 2001, it moved to The Cannery at 600 Beach Street, where it remained until 2006. From 2007 to 2014, it moved to 170 Grant Avenue.

Fugazi Dana Giusti Travel operated as a sole proprietorship until 1991 when it was incorporated as Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. From 1991 to 1998, owners included George A. Lippi, his wife Annette Lippi, and their three children Alessandra Lippi Granelli, Melissa Lippi, and Leo Lippi.

In 1998, several long-term employees became co-owners: Christine Fecchi, Joanne Blake, Battistina Grelli, Robert Romano, and Lori Wulff.

Co-owners from 2011 to 2016 were George A. Lippi, Annette Lippi, Melissa Lippi Ornstil, Leo Lippi, Christine Fecchi, Joanne Blake, Battistina Grelli, Robert Romano, and Lori Wulff.

In 2015, Fugazi Travel moved to its present location at 345 California Street, Suite 160, in the Financial District.

Co-owners from 2016 to 2019 were George A. Lippi, Annette Lippi, Melissa Lippi Ornstil, Christine Fecchi, Joanne Blake, Battistina Grelli, Robert Romano, Lori Wulff, and Erika Chiostri.

Following has been the ownership since 2019:

- Christine Fecchi, President & CEO
- Joanne Blake, Secretary
- Battistina Grelli, CFO
- Melissa Lippi Ornstil, Shareholder
- Robert Romano, Shareholder
- Lori Wulff, Vice President
- Erika Chiostri, Shareholder
- Matila Belo-Aisenberg, Shareholder

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

1869 to 1900:	Giovanni F. "John" Fugazi
1900 to 1911:	Giovanni Fugazi; James Fugazi; Samuel Fugazi
1911 to Unknown:	James Fugazi; Samuel Fugazi
Unknown to 1958	Albino Zullo
1958 to 1964:	George Lippi; Joseph Bagnatori
1964 to 1983:	George A. Lippi; Robert Giusti; Giuseppe Bagnatori
1983 to 1985:	George A. Lippi; Robert Giusti
1985 to 1991:	George A. Lippi
1991 to 1998:	George A. Lippi; Annette Lippi; Alessandra Lippi Granelli; Melissa Lippi; Leo Lippi
1998 to 2011:	George A. Lippi; Annette Lippi; Alessandra Lippi Granelli; Melissa Lippi Ornstil; Leo Lippi; Christine Fecchi; Joanne Blake; Battistina Grelli; Robert Romano; Lori Wulff
2011 to 2016:	George A. Lippi; Annette Lippi; Melissa Lippi Ornstil; Leo Lippi; Christine Fecchi; Joanne Blake; Battistina Grelli; Robert Romano; Lori Wulff
2016 to 2019:	George A. Lippi; Annette Lippi; Melissa Lippi Ornstil; Christine Fecchi; Joanne Blake; Battistina Grelli; Robert Romano; Lori Wulff; Erika Chiostri
2019 to Present:	Christine Fecchi, President & CEO Joanne Blake, Secretary Battistina Grelli, CFO Melissa Lippi Ornstil, Shareholder Robert Romano, Shareholder

Lori Wulff, Vice President
Erika Chiostri, Shareholder
Matila Belo-Aisenberg, Shareholder

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

Not applicable.

Fugazi Travel has survived and thrived through several major worldwide challenges, including the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the 1929 stock market crash, the invention of the internet which caused innumerable travel agencies to close, and most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these obstacles, the company remains resilient and dedicated to its mission.

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.

From 1869 until approximately 1940, Fugazi Travel Agency played a vital role in helping immigrants travel from Europe to America, many of whom settled in San Francisco. The agency safeguarded clients' personal documents, travel papers, and savings in a historic banking vault, the only vault in North Beach, which is still housed at Fugazi Travel to this day.

Fugazi Travel's services include arranging intercity travel and practical itineraries in places where an on-the-ground partner can make a big difference, such as Egypt, Japan, and Africa.

Fugazi Travel continues to be a mainstay in San Francisco's historic business landscape. Its tailored services and legacy of excellence make it one of the city's few original, authentic businesses still thriving today and continuing to serve individuals and the community.

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

Business founder Giovanni F. "John" Fugazi retired from the Fugazi travel business in 1911 to focus on his banking endeavors, such as Banca Colombo, which later merged with the Italian American Bank. In 1927, the combined banks merged with A.P. Giannini's Bank of Italy, which later was renamed Bank of America. Until Fugazi opened his travel agency, Italians had no way to send money to Italy. Once a poor, hungry, and unemployed immigrant, Fugazi became the wealthiest man in the colony. He was known for his generous heart and unceasing assistance to all those who turned to him for help.

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

Fugazi Travel has a longstanding tradition of supporting local organizations, schools, and charitable causes. Some of these are:

- St. Ignatius College Preparatory School
- Salesian Boys & Girls Club
- Museo Italo Americano
- Italian Catholic Federation
- de Young Museum

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

Fugazi Travel has been referenced in the media over the years. Following are key media references:

- [This 150-year-old SF travel agency is not scared of the internet](#)
SFGATE
September 30, 2019
- [Trendsetter: Erika Chiostri, Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.](#)
Luxury Travel Advisor
December 6, 2016

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

George A. Lippi, one of the owners, received a “Man of the Year” award from the Salesian Boys’ and Girls’ Club in North Beach. In recognition of the award, the City and County of San Francisco proclaimed March 4, 2017, to be “George Alexander Lippi Day in San Francisco.”

Fugazi Travel received a Certificate of Honor from the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco on November 7, 2019, in commemoration of the business’ 150th anniversary.

Travel & Leisure ranked Fugazi as the #1 safari operator on the strength of the 85 packages they offer, which range from a five-day experience at the Seychelles Garden of Eden to an eight-day Namibia desert escape.

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

Currently, Fugazi Travel is one of the few remaining retail travel agencies with a physical office. If the business were to close, San Francisco would lose a rare, well-established historical gem. Without Fugazi Travel, approximately 20 travel advisers would be without work, and clients would be without personal consultation for their travel needs.

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?

Fugazi Travel dates back to the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, and you can tell from walking around the office. Relics like a civil war bullet lodged in a railroad track rest on a beautiful wooden desk from its original office. A massive safe from the days when Fugazi doubled as a bank sits front and center. Stacks of oversized photo books of Italian islands serve as inspiration for prospective clients and hark back to the days when the company booked railroad and steam ship tickets for Italians immigrants coming to San Francisco.

The “Fugazi Building” is located at 415 Sansome Street, which Fugazi Travel once occupied. The building continues to be owned by the families of the former partners of Fugazi Travel.

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

Fugazi Travel is committed to offering exceptional and personalized travel planning.

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

Fugazi Travel’s owners, employees, and independent contractors are committed to the company and the clients they serve. Many have been with the agency for decades, ensuring that its legacy will continue from generation to generation.

d. What challenges is the business facing today?

Rent is the biggest recent challenge, which is an issue shared by many San Francisco businesses.

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.**

Travel agency.

- 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 that houses Fugazi Travel Agency is “C - No Historic Resource Present.”

Spedizione di denaro

Biglietti di passaggio

LA PIU GRANDE AGENZIA NELLA COSTA DEL PACIFICO



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Stati per qualunque ufficio postale e Banca del Mondo.

UFFICIO NOTARILE

Si fanno procure atti di vendita, atti richiamo, contratti di cessione, ecc. in lingua Italiana ed Inglese.

AGENZIA FUGAZI

Agenzia autorizzata per depositi nelle Casse di Risparmio di Postali del Regno d'Italia in Roma ed Uffici Postali di Regno, per le Casse di Risparmio di Galles, Edo, Milano, Cremona, Pavia, Cosenza, Palermo, etc.

Agenzi Generali per la Costa del Pacifico della Compagnia Generale Transatlantica Linea Francese.

Si rilasciano vaglia e cambi per qualunque ufficio postale e Banca del Mondo.

UFFICIO NOTARILE

Si fanno procure atti di vendita, atti richiamo, contratti di cessione, ecc. in lingua Italiana ed Inglese.

Ricevuto dal. Sig. *Carlo Giuseppe Ricci*
la somma di Lire Italiano *duemila trecento e cinquanta*
per essere depositata a *Carlo Giuseppe Ricci*
Sul libretto *77* Serie *11* Sul quale sono già inserite Lire *100*
By *Manager*

No. *1772*

Lire It. *16,50*

AGENZIA FUGAZI

SUCCURSALE DELLA BANCA D'ITALIA

630 Montgomery Street

Agenti Generali per la Costa del Pacifico della Compagnia Generale Transatlantica, **Linea Francese**.

Si spedisce moneta per qualunque parte del mondo

Succursale: 109 Cherry Street, Seattle, Wash.

San Francisco, Cal.

Ricevuto dal. Sig. *Carlo Giuseppe Ricci*
la somma di Lire Italiano *Mille e cento e cinquanta*
per essere depositata a *Carlo Giuseppe Ricci*
Sul libretto *966* Serie *15188* Sul quale sono già inserite Lire *2350*
By *Manager*

NOT TRANSFERABLE









TRAVEL

This 150-year-old SF travel agency is not scared of the internet

By **Dan Gentile**, SFGATE
Updated Sep 30, 2019 11:53 a.m.



An older image with several families posing together, dressed up, to take a Fugazi-booked charter plane to Italy.
Blair Heagerty / SFGate

When asked what's been the biggest challenge as of late for Fugazi Travel, a 150-year-old travel agency in the base of a Financial District tower, the first answer is something that every San Francisco business faces: rent. Surprisingly, the second answer didn't have anything to do with the internet.

Before 2002, travel agencies made most of their money on airline ticket commissions. "We went through the whole airline commission cut," says Christine Fecchi, vice president of Fugazi. "When the airlines took away our commissions, we were very worried and nervous."

Fugazi is one of the last independent travel agencies in the city. The full-time staff of 8, plus twelve independent contractors, cater mostly to upscale travelers looking for carefully tailored itineraries to maximize their time abroad.

The airline commission change led the agency to move away from corporate travel bookings on which they earned mainly airline commissions and forced them to add a ticket purchasing fee, one of their only surcharges.

Fugazi takes care of tickets, hotel reservations, transportation, restaurant suggestions, and perhaps most valuably, works with local partners on-call to answer questions or help in emergencies. They earn most of their money via commissions from hotels and tour companies.

While it seems like these services would mostly appeal to older customers, according to Fecchi, younger generations are taking note.

"They're trying themselves to book online, but finding there's certain components they just don't know how to do," says Fecchi.

That includes tasks like setting up intercity travel and practical itineraries for places where an on-the-ground partner can make a big difference, citing Egypt, Japan and Africa as examples of places where an extra hand in planning a trip can be useful. And they've received the accolades to prove it: Travel & Leisure named them their #1 safari operator on the strength of the 85 packages they offer, which range from a five-day experience at the Seychelles Garden of Eden to an eight day Namibia desert escape.

Granted, many of these experiences could be booked independently or pieced together as a DIY itinerary, but Fugazi sees themselves as guarantors. In the age of Instagram travel, when most people's vacations are filtered to obscure missteps and bad decisions, a travel agency offers a level of curation and reassurance. Fugazi admits that the internet serves as a great travel tool, but as they see it, it can't compare to the total package.

"If you're looking for an airline ticket, that's one thing. If you're looking for a trip, that's something else," says Fecchi.

Fugazi dates back to the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, and you can tell from walking around their office. Relics like a civil war bullet lodged in a railroad track rest on a beautiful wooden desk from their original office. A massive safe from the days when they doubled as a bank sits front and center. Stacks of oversized photo books of Italian islands serve as inspiration for prospective clients and hark back to the days when the company booked railroad and steam ship tickets for Italians immigrants coming to San Francisco.

Given it's their 150-year anniversary, 2019 was to be a celebratory year, but the anniversary became bittersweet when Fugazi's "fearless leader" George Lippi passed away from cancer at the age of 87. He was the third head of the company and worked actively until October of the previous year.

Fecchi, who has worked at the company since 1972, grows emotional when speaking about him.

"George was an extremely unique individual. He loved people, he loved life. His memory for detail was incredible. He had a way of, I won't say story-telling because it was all fact, but he could tell it in such a way that you just wanted to go."

That personal touch is one thing that distinguishes Fugazi from travel sites or social media recommendations. Another is their industry connections result in hotel perks that travelers might not receive otherwise, like breakfast, free wi-fi, late checkout, food credits and upgrades based on availability.

"If you book a hotel online, you have a reservation. If we book a hotel for you, you're expected," says Fecchi.

Dan Gentile is an SFGATE digital editor.

Sep 30, 2019 | Updated Sep 30, 2019 11:53 a.m.



Dan Gentile

SENIOR CULTURE EDITOR



Dan Gentile is the senior culture editor at SFGATE, where he has covered music, movies and San Francisco subcultures since 2019. Previously he was the founding editor of Thrillist Austin and worked as a freelance writer for over 15 years with stories appearing in outlets like Texas Monthly, Wax Poetics, Rolling Stone, Defector, The Ringer and more. He won San Francisco Press Club awards in 2022 and 2023 for commentary and investigative reporting.

Certificate of Honor

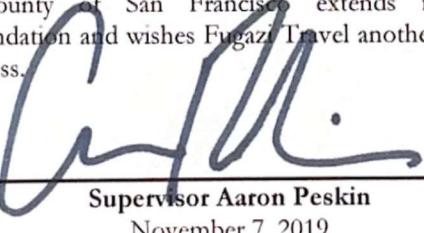
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
City and County of San Francisco

The Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco hereby issues, and authorizes the execution of, this Certificate of Honor in appreciative public recognition of distinction and merit for outstanding service to a significant portion of the people of the City and County of San Francisco by:

Fugazi Travel

150th Anniversary Celebration

In celebration of Fugazi Travel's long-standing legacy since the historic days of 1869 when the Transcontinental Railroad first stretched across the country – initially serving as a business entrusted to transport immigrant families from their homeland to now being the institution known for offering world-class travel experiences, and in memory of George Lippi's contribution that elevated the Fugazi name into an industry leader, the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco extends its highest commendation and wishes Fugazi Travel another 150 years of success.



Supervisor Aaron Peskin

November 7, 2019





Proclamation

City and County of San Francisco

WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco traditionally recognizes the achievements of notable individuals, today we pay special tribute to George Alexander Lippi, for over 60 years of service to the San Francisco community; and

WHEREAS, George grew up in the Marina district in the 1930s and worked at his family's business before joining the Marine Corps Reserve at age 16, ultimately going on to earn his B.A. from the University of California, Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, George briefly attended the University of San Francisco School of Law before finding his passion in travel, and interning at Zappettini Travel, later partnering with Joseph Bagnatori to buy Fugazi Travel Agency; and

WHEREAS, George poured his heart into the agency which historically assisted Italian immigrants with their banking needs and voyages to America, later merging with Bob Giusti of Dana Giusti Travel, going on to tirelessly assume leadership as the majority partner; and

WHEREAS, George continues to demonstrate dedication to his business, his passions, and the people of San Francisco and has taken pride in his children and grandchildren, with whom he has been bonding at the Salesian Boys' and Girls' Club; and

WHEREAS, George, in an attest to his generosity, and desire to better his community, has been a supporter of the Salesian Boys' and Girls' Club for innumerable years, donating wonderful trips for auctions and raffle prizes, and attending the Club's fundraises; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his involvement in the Club, George has served on the Board of Regents at St. Ignatius College Preparatory, and is a proud member of the Olympic Club, the Knights of Malta, the Knights of Holy Sepulcher, and the Marines' Memorial Association; and

WHEREAS, The Salesian Boys' and Girls' Club is proud to recognize George for his support of the Club over the years, and is honored to designate him as their "Man of the Year" for 2017; now

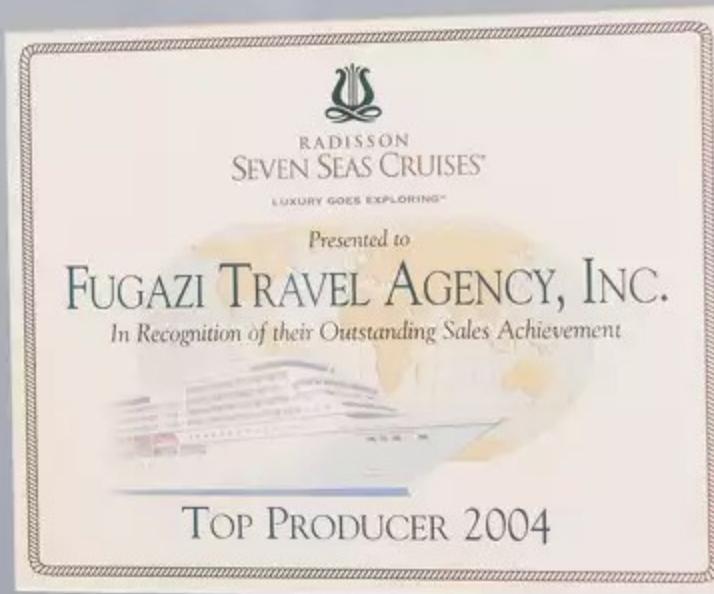
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Edwin M. Lee, Mayor of the City and County of San Francisco, in recognition of the service to our communities and to the Salesian Boys' and Girls' Club, in wishing him all the best moving forward, do hereby proclaim March 04, 2017 as...

GEORGE ALEXANDER LIPPI DAY *in San Francisco!*



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

Edwin M. Lee
Mayor





Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____
February 23, 2026

FUGAZI TRAVEL AGENCY, INC.

Application Number: LBR-2025-26-029
Business Name: Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.
Business Address: 345 California St., Suite 160
District: District 3
Applicant: Melissa Lippi Ornstil, Co-Owner
Nomination Date: January 21, 2026
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter
Staff Contact: Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc., currently located at 345 California St., Suite 160.

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 23, 2026, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

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 RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.



Physical features or traditions that define the business:

- Personalized travel planning.
- Relics from history and from past clientele from their travels (e.g., photo books, train and steam ship tickets, massive safe, Civil War bullet that is lodged in wooden desk).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Travel agency.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on February 23, 2026.

Katy Tang
Director

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Ayes – _____
Nays – _____
Abstained – _____
Absent – _____

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LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: February 18, 2026

Filing Date: January 21, 2026
Case No.: 2026-000632LBR
Business Name: Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.
Business Address: 345 California Street
Zoning: C-3-O (Downtown-Office) Zoning District
400-S Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: Not Applicable
Block/Lot: 0261/017
Applicant: Melissa Lippi Omstil
345 California St
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Heather Samuels - 628-652-7545
Heather.Samuels@sfgov.org

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

Founded in 1869, Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. is San Francisco's first travel agency and one of the oldest continuously operating travel agencies in the United States. This business was established by Giovanni F. "John" Fugazi, who was an Italian immigrant, banker, philanthropist, and community leader, which emerged during a pivotal era in San Francisco's growth, coinciding with the completion of the transcontinental railroad. In its earliest years, Fugazi Travel served immigrant families who entrusted the agency with their savings to reunite loved ones and build new lives in America. This mission positioned the company at the heart of San Francisco's immigrant experience and global connections from its very beginning.

Originally operating as John F. Fugazi and Co. in North Beach at 1 and 2 Columbus Avenue, the agency later became Agenzia Fugazi when John Fugazi's sons, James and Samuel, joined the family business in 1900. After John Fugazi retired in 1911 to focus on banking, the agency continued to thrive, relocating in 1924 to 628-630 Montgomery Street in the Financial District. Over the decades, Fugazi Travel evolved through partnerships,

mergers, and leadership transitions that ensured its continuity, including the involvement of Albino Zullo, and later the ownership of George Lippi and Joseph Bagnatori beginning in 1958.

In 1964, the agency merged with Dana Giusti Paoni Travel to form Fugazi Dana Giusti Travel, operating under the leadership of George A. Lippi, Robert Giusti, and Giuseppe Bagnatori. The business continued its long-standing presence in San Francisco's Financial District, relocating to several iconic buildings, including 415 Sansome Street, the Old Federal Reserve Bank Building at 400 Sansome Street, The Cannery at 600 Beach Street, and 170 Grant Avenue. In 1991, the agency was incorporated as Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc., transitioning from a sole proprietorship to a family- and employee-owned corporation.

Ownership expanded over time to include long-term employees, reinforcing Fugazi Travel's commitment to continuity, institutional knowledge, and local employment. From 1998 onward, employee-owners played a vital role in guiding the company through industry changes, ensuring its survival as independent travel agencies declined nationwide. In 2015, Fugazi Travel established its current headquarters at 345 California Street in San Francisco's Financial District, where it continues to operate today.

Modern-day travelers entrust Fugazi Travel with their most meaningful journeys, including international explorations, ocean voyages, safaris, milestone celebrations, and luxury escapes. The agency's full-time staff and experienced independent contractors specialize in highly customized itineraries, managing flights, accommodations, transportation, dining, and emergency support through trusted global partners. Fugazi's extensive industry relationships provide clients with added value such as complimentary amenities, upgrades, and personalized service unavailable through online booking platforms.

For more than 150 years, Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. has contributed to San Francisco by preserving a rare, independent, locally rooted business model; creating long-term employment opportunities; and embodying the city's enduring role as a global gateway. Its uninterrupted presence in San Francisco's historic neighborhoods and commercial centers reflects the resilience, diversity, and international spirit that define the city itself.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. When was business founded?

The business was founded in 1869.

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

Yes. Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. has operated continuously in San Francisco for 157 years.
- b. Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. has contributed to the history and identity of the Financial District neighborhood and San Francisco.

c. Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. 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, or tradition?

No.

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

Yes. Business founder Giovanni F. “John” Fugazi retired from the Fugazi travel business in 1911 to focus on his banking endeavors, such as Banca Colombo, which later merged with the Italian American Bank. In 1927, the combined banks merged with A.P. Giannini’s Bank of Italy, which later was renamed Bank of America. Until Fugazi opened his travel agency, Italians had no way to send money to Italy. Once a poor, hungry, and unemployed immigrant, Fugazi became the wealthiest man in the colony. He was known for his generous heart and unceasing assistance to all those who turned to him for help.

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. Though, the building that Fugazi Travel Agency In. is located in, 345 California Street, is mentioned in the Architecture, Planning, and Preservation Professionals: A Collection of Biographies Historic Context Statement as it was designed by the Architect Marc Evan Goldstein.

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

Yes. Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. has been mentioned in articles. SF Gate featured this business in an article “This 150-year-old SF travel agency is not scared of the internet” in September of 2019. Additionally, the business was featured in Luxury Travel Advisor in an article “Trendsetter: Erika Chiostri, Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.” in December of 2016.

Racial and Social Equity Analysis

On July 15, 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.

Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. is one of San Francisco's oldest continuously operating businesses and a rare survivor of the city's early immigrant-founded enterprises. Established in 1869 by Italian immigrant Giovanni F. "John" Fugazi, the agency played a critical role in helping immigrant families reunite and build new lives, positioning it at the heart of San Francisco's global and multicultural identity. For more than 150 years, Fugazi Travel has remained locally rooted and independent, adapting through industry changes while preserving institutional knowledge and long-term employment. As travel agencies nationwide have disappeared, Fugazi Travel continues to serve as a living link to San Francisco's history as a gateway city and a center of international connection.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 305 Divisadero Street (1983 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 1 Columbus Avenue and 2 Columbus Avenue (1869 – 1924)
- 628-630 Montgomery Street (1924 to 1975)
- 415 Sansome Street (1975 to 1991)
- 400 Sansome Street (1991 to 2001)
- 600 Beach Street (2001 to 2006)
- 170 Grant Avenue (2007 to 2014)

Recommended by Applicant

- Personalized Travel Planning
- Relics from history and from past clientele from their travels (i.e. Photo Books, Train and Steam Ship Tickets, Massive Safe, Civil War Bullet that is lodged in Wooden Desk)

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: February 18, 2026

Case No.: 2026-000632LBR
Business Name: Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc.
Business Address: 345 California Street
Zoning: C-3-O (Downtown-Office) Zoning District
400-S Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: Not Applicable
Block/Lot: 0261/017
Applicant: Melissa Lippi Omstil
345 California St
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Heather Samuels - 628-652-7545
Heather.Samuels@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR FUGAZI TRAVEL AGENCY CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 345 CALIFORNIA STREET, BLOCK/LOT 0261/017.

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 February 18, 2026, 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 Fugazi Travel Agency, Inc. 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 Fugazi Travel Agency Inc.

Location

Current Locations:

- 305 Divisadero Street (1983 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- 1 Columbus Avenue and 2 Columbus Avenue (1869 – 1924)
- 628-630 Montgomery Street (1924 to 1975)
- 415 Sansome Street (1975 to 1991)
- 400 Sansome Street (1991 to 2001)
- 600 Beach Street (2001 to 2006)
- 170 Grant Avenue (2007 to 2014)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

- Personalized Travel Planning
- Relics from history and from past clientele from their travels (i.e. Photo Books, Train and Steam Ship Tickets, Massive Safe, Civil War Bullet that is lodged in Wooden Desk)

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 February 18, 2026.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

RECUSE:

ADOPTED: February 18, 2026