

Only in San Francisco

Application Review Sheet

Application Number: LBR-2025-26-038
Business Name: Only in San Francisco
Business Address: Pier 39, Space #A-01
District: District 3
Applicant: Nick Hoppe, Managing Member
Nomination Date: March 18, 2026
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter

Eligibility

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

Criterion 2

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

Yes

Criterion 3

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

Yes

Features or traditions

Gift store

Notes

NA

Delivery date to the Historic Preservation Commission

March 18, 2026

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

DANNY SAUTER

March 18, 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 Only in San Francisco for inclusion in the Legacy Business Registry. Since 1979, Only in San Francisco has served as an iconic storefront at the entrance of Pier 39 that allows tourists and visitors to take a piece of San Francisco home with them. From trinkets to clothing to local art, Only in San Francisco offers unique souvenirs and gifts that spread the spirit of our city around the world.

Only in San Francisco has been contributing to the vibrant and special history of Pier 39 since its opening. In fact, co-owner Caroline Simmons is the widow of Pier 39 developer Warren Simmons, who was a partner in this business until his passing. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is especially important to celebrate and support businesses like Only in San Francisco that have helped attract more tourists and economic activity back to Fisherman's Wharf and our city as a whole.

For the past 47 years, Caroline and co-owner Nick Hoppe have cultivated a diverse, iconic shop that truly encapsulates the energy of our city. I commend Caroline and Nick for their commitment to sharing their love for San Francisco with visitors from around the world and I strongly believe that Only in San Francisco is worthy of being designated a Legacy Business. Thank you for your consideration of this nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danny Sauter".

Supervisor Danny Sauter

Only in San Francisco

Application Form

Business information

Business name: Only in San Francisco
Business owner name(s): Nick Hoppe
Current business address: Pier 30, Space #A-01, San Francisco, CA 94133
Mailing address: 496 Jefferson St, San Francisco, CA 94109
Business phone number: 415-397-0122
Business email:
Website:
Link to social media #1:
Link to social media #2:
Business Account Number: 0117910

Contact person information

Contact person name: Nick Hoppe
Contact person title: Managing Member

Business locations

San Francisco address: Pier 39, #A-01
Dates at this location: 1979 to Present

San Francisco address: Pier 39, #D-11
Dates at this location: 1983 to Present

Only in San Francisco

Historical Narrative

Introduction

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

Only in San Francisco is the premier gift and souvenir store in San Francisco. It sells higher-end gifts and clothing and is located at the entrance to Pier 39. The business has every souvenir and gift you could imagine. No matter what you love about the city, you'll find something to remember it by at Only in San Francisco.

b. Describe whom the business serves.

Only in San Francisco serves primarily tourists visiting San Francisco and Pier 39. The business "offers an eclectic selection of souvenirs and gifts that capture the spirit of the city. Tourists will find everything from local artisan crafts to iconic San Francisco-themed memorabilia, making it the perfect spot to find that special keepsake for friends and family back home."¹

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

Quality souvenirs.

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.

Only in San Francisco opened in 1979 and has been in the same location ever since at Pier 39, #A-01. The principal owners are Nick Hoppe and Caroline Simmons.

Nick Hoppe was born and raised in San Francisco. The Hoppe family has a long history in the city. His father, Arthur Hoppe, was a longtime columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle. Caroline Simmons is the widow of Pier 39 developer [Warren Simmons](#).

Circa 1983, Only in San Francisco opened a second location at Pier 39, #D-11 just upstairs from the original location.

¹ [Only In San Francisco: A Unique Gift Shop Experience](#), Evendo

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

1979 to Present: Nick Hoppe; Caroline Simmons

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

The only break in operation was in March 2020 during the COVID pandemic. The business was shut down for a few months.

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.

The business is, and always has been, the gateway to Pier 39.

“Only In San Francisco is an enchanting gift shop located at the bustling Embarcadero, renowned for its unique selection of souvenirs that embody the essence of this iconic city. As you step inside, you are greeted by an array of vibrant displays showcasing local artisan products, quirky memorabilia, and classic San Francisco gifts. The shop prides itself on offering items that tell the story of the city, from Golden Gate Bridge-themed trinkets to locally crafted jewelry and artwork. Visitors will appreciate the thoughtful curation of products that cater to every taste and budget, making it easy to find memorable gifts for loved ones or a personal keepsake to cherish your visit.”²

“Aside from its diverse selection, what makes Only In San Francisco truly special is its location. Situated in the heart of Fisherman’s Wharf, tourists can easily explore the surrounding attractions after a visit. The shop’s welcoming atmosphere invites you to linger a little longer, and the staff is always ready to share their recommendations on the best local experiences. With its convenient hours from 9 AM to 10 PM daily, it fits seamlessly into any travel itinerary. Whether you are searching for a unique memento or simply browsing, Only In San Francisco promises an enjoyable shopping experience that perfectly captures the city’s charm and creativity.”³

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

Nick Hoppe is the son of Arthur Hoppe, columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle for over 50 years. Caroline Simmons is the widow of Warren Simmons, who developed Pier 39. Warren was a partner until his death in 2006.

² [Only In San Francisco: A Unique Gift Shop Experience](#), Evendo

³ Ibid

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

Only in San Francisco makes significant charitable contributions throughout each year.

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

Only in San Francisco has been featured on shows highlighting Pier 39 many times. Other press on the business include the following, listed from newest to oldest:

- Are tourists coming back to San Francisco? Let's count the sweatshirts
[San Francisco Examiner](#)
July 28, 2022
- Depleted Tourism at Fisherman's Wharf
[Xpress Magazine](#)
February 18, 2022
- Top Gift Shops In San Francisco
[CBS News](#)
July 16, 2016
- Believe it or not, Pier 39 has upside
[San Francisco Chronicle](#)
July 11, 2015

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

Only in San Francisco is frequently recognized as one the top gift shops in the city that features San Francisco-themed merchandise.

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

Only in San Francisco is the face of Pier 39. If the business were to close, another store would certainly take its place, but it would never be the same.

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?

Only in San Francisco is associated with Pier 39, which is a premiere entertainment destination in the heart of the San Francisco waterfront. Pier 39 features two levels of dining, entertainment, shopping, and attractions, including the world-famous sea lions, which have been delighting guests daily at K-Dock since 1990. With picture-perfect views of the San Francisco Bay, the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, and the city skyline at almost every turn, Pier 39 is consistently the most visited attraction in San Francisco.

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

Providing an enormous selection of gifts and souvenir clothing to the tourist market.

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

The business will be passed on to the next generation of family members.

d. What challenges is the business facing today?

Challenges include high costs of doing business in San Francisco and attracting tourists to San Francisco.

Additional details:

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

Specialty store.

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 Pier 39 is "A - Historic Resource Present."

Images of Only in San Francisco



Only in San Francisco



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KIDS





Only in San Francisco

DRAFT Resolution of the Small Business Commission

Resolution information

Resolution number: 029-26-LBR
Resolution date: April 27, 2026

Business information

Application number: LBR-2025-26-038
Business name: Only in San Francisco
Business address: Pier 39, Space #A-01
District: District 3
Applicant: Nick Hoppe, Managing Member
Nomination date: March 18, 2026
Nominated by: Supervisor Danny Sauter

Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Only in San Francisco, currently located at Pier 39, Space #A-01 and Pier 39, Space D-11.

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 April 27, 2026, 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 Only in San Francisco 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 Only in San Francisco.

Physical features or traditions that define the business:

- Specialty gift store.

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

- Gift store.

Executive Director certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on April 27, 2026.

Katy Tang
Executive Director

Small Business Commission action

Ayes –

Nays –

Abstained –

Absent –



LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: APRIL 15, 2026

Filing Date: March 18, 2026
Case No.: 2026-002479LBR
Business Name: Only in San Francisco
Business Address: Pier 39, Space #A-01 (Primary Address)
Zoning: C-2 Community Business Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: Not Applicable
Block/Lot: 9900/039
Applicant: Nick Hoppe 415.397.0122
495 Jefferson Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Divya Jain Divya.Jain@sfgov.org 628-652-7409

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

Only in San Francisco, founded in 1979 by Caroline Simmons and Nick Hoppe, has served as an iconic storefront at the entrance of Pier 39 that allows tourists and visitors to take a piece of San Francisco home with them. Known for their unique selections of souvenirs, Only in San Francisco offers local artisan products, San Francisco memorabilia, and other trinkets, that spread the spirit of our city around the world. Visitors enjoy souvenirs at a variety of price points, catering to a wide array of tastes. Staff are always happy to share their recommendations and favorite local experiences.

Only in San Francisco has been contributing to the vibrant and special history of Pier 39 since its opening. In fact, co-owner Caroline Simmons is the widow of Pier 39 developer Warren Simmons, who was a partner in this business until his passing. Tourism has long been a major economic driver for the City of San Francisco. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses like Only in San Francisco have helped attract more tourists and economic activity back to Fisherman's Wharf and our city as a whole.

For the past 47 years, Simmons and Hoppe have cultivated a diverse, iconic shop that truly encapsulates the energy of our city. If Only in San Francisco were to be displaced, or move, the entrance to Pier 39 would be forever changed.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1979.

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

Yes. Only in San Francisco qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Only in San Francisco has operated continuously in San Francisco for 47 years.
- b. Only in San Francisco has contributed to the history and identity of the Fisherman's Wharf neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. Only in San Francisco 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 tourism industry in San Francisco and Fisherman's Wharf.

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

Yes, the Pier 39 location is associated with Warren L. Simmons, the original developer of the tourist-oriented Pier 39. He was known as a charismatic entrepreneur who used humor and grace in his business dealings. At nine years of age, Simmons took his first turn at business by selling newspapers on the streets of San Francisco. Two years later, he went to work as a soda jerk at Keiser's Colonial Creamery in the city's Sunset District. During World War II, while enrolled at Lowell High School at age 19, Simmons worked 12-hour shifts on the waterfront. He then went off to the University of California at Berkeley and received a degree in Business Administration. After college, Simmons became a pilot for Pan American Airlines for 20 years (1950-1970) and spent his spare time looking for lucrative investments. He founded the Disco department store chain as well as the chain of Tia Mexican Restaurants where he was CEO. Simmons was looking for property on the wharf for a Tia Maria restaurant when his wife suggested they stroll onto Pier 39 which was then an abandoned cargo pier used to store old refrigerators. It was then that Simmons envisioned building his village of specialty shops and restaurants. He sold his interest in the Tia Maria restaurant chain and formed a company with other investors to raise \$3.2 million to get his project started. His dream started to take shape. Over the course of five years, Simmons had to deal with 11 agencies to get the plans for Pier 39 approved. As a testament to Simmon's perseverance, Pier 39 became the first commercial development on the San Francisco Waterfront since World War II.

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

No. Although Pier 39 is located within the boundaries of the California Register Listed and National Register Eligible Port of San Francisco Embarcadero Historic District, the tourist-oriented Pier 39 is not a contributor as it was built outside of the period of significance for the historic district and does not relate to the district in its history nor its use. This district as a whole consists of over twenty piers and remnants of piers, a bulkhead wharf, a seawall, the Ferry Building, the Agriculture Building, and other smaller buildings.

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.?*

Yes. A number of shows and articles highlighting Pier 39 have included Only in San Francisco, including the San Francisco Chronicle and CBS News. Since the Covid-19 Pandemic, Only in San Francisco has also been highlighted in articles discussing loss and resurgence of tourism in the city, including the San Francisco Examiner and the Xpress Magazine.

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.

Only in San Francisco makes significant charitable contributions throughout each year.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- Pier 39, #A-01 (1979 – Present)
- Pier 39, #D-11 (1983 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- None

Recommended by Applicant

- Specialty Gift Store

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: APRIL 15, 2026

Case No.: [2026-002479LBR](#)
Business Name: Only in San Francisco
Business Address: Pier 39, Space #A-01 (Primary Address)
Zoning: C-2 (COMMUNITY BUSINESS) Zoning District
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 9900/039
Applicant: Nick Hoppe
495 Jefferson Street
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Divya Jain - 628-652-7409
Divya.Jain@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR ONLY IN SAN FRANCISCO CURRENTLY LOCATED AT PIER 39, SPACE #A-01 (PRIMARY ADDRESS), BLOCK/LOT 9900/039; PIER 39, SPACE #D-11, BLOCK/LOT 9900/039.

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 April 15, 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 Only in San Francisco 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 Only in San Francisco.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

- Pier 39, #A-01 (1979 – Present)
- Pier 39, #D-11 (1983 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- None

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Specialty Gift Store

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 April 15, 2026.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

RECUSE:

ADOPTED: April 15, 2026