



Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application Number: LBR-2025-26-030
Business Name: Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria
Business Address: 590 Washington St.
District: District 3
Applicant: Michael Imperiale, 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

590 Washington St. from 1995 to Present (31 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: Restaurant featuring Italian cuisine

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
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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 Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria (“Tricolore”) for inclusion in the Legacy Business Registry.

Tricolore opened in 1995, and it has been owned and operated by Michael Imperiale and Claudia Gruber in the historic Columbus Savings Bank building since day one. Tricolore is known as a beloved and affordable lunch establishment for workers who spend their days in and around the Financial District. Through its authentic decor and delicious menu, it brings a taste of southern Italy to our city and makes San Francisco feel like home for many. Michael and Claudia’s commitment to their community is clear through the relationships they have built with their customers and neighbors over the years. Their resilience is to be celebrated, as they not only weathered the pandemic but they are now looking to expand their service to include dinner.

Tricolore has served delicious Italian food and contributed positively to the Jackson Square neighborhood for over 30 years, and for that reason I strongly believe that Tricolore 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.S.".

Supervisor Danny Sauter



Legacy Business Registry Application



Business Information

Business name: Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria

Business owner name(s): Michael Imperiale and Claudia Gruber

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

Current business address: 590 Washington St., San Francisco, CA 94111

Business phone number: 415-391-0509

Business email: immi@att.net

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website: www.tricoloresf.com

Link to social media: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068050265391#

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

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0943015

Contact Person Information

Contact person name: Michael Imperiale

Contact person title: Owner

Contact phone number:

Contact email: immi@att.net

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: 590 Washington St.

Zip Code: 94111

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

Dates at this location: From: August 1, 1995

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:

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: Michael Imperiale

Signature: *Michael Imperiale*

Date: 7/16/2025



Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria

Written Historical Narrative

Introduction

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

Tricolore is a restaurant/cafè as well as a pizzeria. It currently offers breakfast and lunch, in addition to lunch and event catering. It offers take-out and in-house lunches based on Italian food.

b. Describe whom the business serves.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of Tricolore's customers came from the immediate neighborhood. It catered to office workers in the Financial District and gallery owners and employees from the Jackson Square neighborhood.

Since the pandemic, Tricolore now receives less business from the Financial District, as many office workers only travel into the office 2-3 times a week. However, employees from the new stores opening in the Jackson Square neighborhood are now becoming repeat customers. Many businesses in the Financial District still use Tricolore's catering services. In the summer, tourists coming down from North Beach also frequent the restaurant.

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

Fresh, fast, and well-priced Italian food.

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.

Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria opened its doors at 590 Washington Street on August 1, 1995, inside the two-story neo-classical Columbus Savings Bank building (SF Landmark no. 212). Since it was founded, the homestyle Italian eatery has remained in this historic location, serving delicious food at reasonable prices.

The business, originally opened by Michael Imperiale and Claudia Gruber, is named for the three colors of the Italian flag—red, white, and green. Michael grew up in a small southern Italian town called Bisaccia located one hour east of Naples. His Nonno (grandfather) was a well-known winemaker in the area, specializing in the Aglianico varietal. The family was largely self-sufficient, growing their own wheat, olives, grapes, vegetables, and a wide variety of fruits.

This upbringing shaped his belief in natural, genuine cooking, rooted in simplicity and made with local, seasonal ingredients.

After the devastating 1980 Irpinia earthquake east of Naples, Michael's family relocated to Daly City to temporarily stay with an uncle. Soon after their arrival, they were featured on NBC's local Channel 4 as earthquake refugees, prompting the local Italian community to offer support with job opportunities. This generosity led to work at Toto's in Daly City, one of the Bay Area's oldest and most beloved Italian restaurants. Michael went on to gain hands-on experience in a variety of restaurant roles while balancing high school and college studies. In 1987, Michael met his future wife, Claudia, a Swiss elementary school teacher. After spending time working in Switzerland and enjoying stays in Italy, the couple decided to return to the Bay Area, where they pursued their dream of opening their own restaurant.

In 1995, this plan came to fruition with a clear vision: to serve fresh home style Italian food at a fair price for breakfast and lunch to the various workers, residents, and tourists in the neighborhood.

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

1995 to Present: Michael Imperiale; Claudia Gruber

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

In March 2020, San Francisco issued a shelter-in-place order and Tricolore had to close its doors from March 16, 2020, to June 12, 2020. It first reopened for pick-up orders with limited hours, and then resumed full in-house service in June of 2021.

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.

Business founders Michael Imperiale and Claudia Gruber created an intimate space inside Tricolore, with a look and feel akin to dining outside in southern Italy. The restaurant features playful details such as stuccoed walls and faux painted window shutters. The goal was to make the customer feel as though they'd stepped into a quaint Italian village, offering a brief escape from the office.

When Tricolore opened in 1995, it was often called the new favorite kid on the block by customers, i.e., people working at the Transamerica Pyramid and in the antique shops in the

Jackson Square neighborhood. Customers appreciated the décor of the restaurant and the fast and friendly service at reasonable prices.

The corporate office employees enjoyed its small business feel where the owners knew their customers by name. Many longtime customers who have gone on to work at different companies and areas still stop by to say hello and appreciate that Tricolore is still there. Many business owners from the Jackson Square neighborhood have also appreciated the consistent presence of Tricolore over the years.

The restaurant and café continue to be known for its scratch-made pizza dough, focaccia, salads and fresh vegetables, sandwiches, soups, and pastas with signature sauces. Customers' favorites are the Penne Bolognese and the Beef Lasagna as well as the in-house made vegan soups. Tricolore also offers in-home and office catering services, and their space is also available to book for private events.

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

In the first few years of the business, the radio station K101 was located directly next door to Tricolore, and the restaurant was mentioned often during the morning show with Don Bleu. Angela Alioto and family, who occupied the offices upstairs, stopped for a quick bite regularly. Lawrence Ferlinghetti from City Lights Bookstore also became a regular for a while.

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

Tricolore demonstrates its commitment to the community by keeping its menu items affordable despite the high cost of doing business in San Francisco.

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

Tricolore's Michael Imperiale was featured in the ABC7 news story, "[SF's Financial District slowest in US to recover in post-pandemic phase, study shows](#)," on August 24, 2022, to discuss the impact of the pandemic on local businesses.

Tricolore was featured in San Francisco Heritage's [Jackson Square spotlight month](#) in June 2025, which focused on the history and heritage of San Francisco's first historic district. Tricolore was mentioned in the article "[Jackson Square Business Spotlights: William Stout Architectural Books and Tricolore Caffè & Pizzeria](#)," which shared the histories of potential Legacy Businesses in the neighborhood.

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

No.

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

If Tricolore were to be sold, relocated, or shut down, the community would lose more than just a beloved lunch spot; it would lose a long-standing cultural anchor in Jackson Square. For decades, Tricolore has provided a welcoming, affordable gathering place for workers, tourists, and neighborhood regulars, helping maintain the area's unique mix of historic charm and local vibrancy. Its presence in the landmark Columbus Savings Bank building also reinforces the district's architectural continuity and identity. Losing Tricolore would leave a noticeable void in both the social fabric and historic character of the neighborhood.

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?

Tricolore is housed in a culturally significant historic building. It occupies the two-story neoclassical Columbus Savings Bank building at the corner of Montgomery and Washington streets, within the Jackson Square Historic District. Designed by Meyer and O'Brien and built of Colusa sandstone in 1904-1905, it survived San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake and Fire and is the oldest of four buildings that represent the beginning of Italian banking in San Francisco. (The others are the Italian-American Bank, the Bank of Italy, and the Italian Popular Bank.) The Columbus Savings and Loan Society remained at 700 Montgomery Street until 1923, when it merged with Sbarboro's Italian-American Bank. This, in turn, merged with A.P. Giannini's Bank of Italy in 1927, whereupon 700 Montgomery became, for two years, the Columbus Branch of the Bank of Italy.

Tricolore joins other Italian businesses that have occupied the building over the years, including the Pisani Printing and Publishing Company (1939-1953), the Italian consulate (1948-1951), and the law offices of Mayor Joseph L. Alioto and Angela Alioto.

The sign above the front door with the Cherub Angel was crafted by a San Francisco artist and is in its original shape and form. Tricolore is committed to maintaining the rustic and interior.

Today, the Columbus Savings Bank building is San Francisco Landmark no. 212.

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

Tricolore is committed to maintaining an Italian restaurant and pizzeria serving the Financial District and Jackson Square, catering to local workers, tourists, and aiming to become a destination dining spot.

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

The owner's son has expressed potential interest in taking over the business one day. In the meantime, Tricolore is exploring the idea of expanding into dinner service, trattoria-style, offering a similar menu. Tricolore is also exploring partnerships with other local restaurateurs to bring this vision to life.

d. What challenges is the business facing today?

Tricolore has weathered many challenges over the years, from the dot-com crash, to 9/11 and the Great Recession, and has remained a steady presence in the Financial District. Each of these events significantly affected the business, which has always been closely tied to the financial heart of San Francisco.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21 had a profound impact on the lunch business in the area. As with fellow small businesses across San Francisco, the onset of COVID proved a significant setback to Tricolore. Many offices relocated or shifted to remote work, and foot traffic declined sharply. While some workers have begun returning to their offices by the mid-2020s, foot traffic has not yet fully recovered from pre-pandemic levels. Mondays and Fridays remain particularly slow.

However, recent renovations in and around the Transamerica Pyramid and the many new businesses opening up in Jackson Square show continued economic growth in the area. So, while their customer base has shifted slightly—fewer regular office workers but new customers from newer nearby shops—most of Tricolore's customers continue to come from the immediate area to enjoy Tricolore's no frills Italian food and warm hospitality. The neighborhood's current changes might allow Tricolore to open up for dinner service six days a week.

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.

Restaurant featuring Italian cuisine.

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 Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria is "A - Historic Resource Present."









Small Business Commission

Resolution No. _____
February 23, 2026

TRICOLORE CAFFÈ AND PIZZERIA

Application Number: LBR-2025-26-030
Business Name: Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria
Business Address: 590 Washington St.
District: District 3
Applicant: Michael Imperiale, 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 Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria, currently located at 590 Washington St.

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on February 23, 2026, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

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San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 554-6680
legacybusiness@sfgov.org
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BE IT RESOLVED, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria 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 Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria.



Physical features or traditions that define the business:

- Cherub Angel sign crafted by a San Francisco artist, in its original shape and form.
- Rustic interior meant to invoke a quaint Italian village, including stucco walls and faux painted window shutters.
- Reasonably priced southern Italian lunch options for customers.
- Scratch-made pizza dough, focaccia, salads, sandwiches, soups, and pastas with signature sauces.

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

- Restaurant featuring Italian cuisine.

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 –

Legacy Business Program
Office of Small Business
City Hall Room 140
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
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LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HEARING DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 2026

Filing Date: January 21, 2026
Case No.: 2026-000683LBR
Business Name: Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria
Business Address: 700 Montgomery Street (Unit: 590 Washington Street)
Zoning: C-2 Districts: Community Business
65-A Height and Bulk District
Cultural District: Not Applicable
Block/Lot: 0196/028
Applicant: Michael Imperiale
590 Washington St
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Divya Jain | 6286527409
Divya.Jain@sfgov.org

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

Business Description

Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria opened its doors at 700 Montgomery Street (Unit: 590 Washington Street) on August 1, 1995, inside the two-story neo-classical Columbus Savings Bank building (SF Landmark no. 212). Since it was founded, the homestyle Italian eatery has remained in this historic location, serving delicious food at reasonable prices. The business, originally opened by Michael Imperiale and Claudia Gruber, is named for the three colors of the Italian flag—red, white, and green.

Michael grew up in a small southern Italian town called Bisaccia located one hour east of Naples. His upbringing shaped his belief in natural, genuine cooking, rooted in simplicity and made with local, seasonal ingredients. After the devastating 1980 Irpinia earthquake east of Naples, Michael's family relocated to Daly City to temporarily stay with an uncle. Soon after their arrival, they were featured on NBC's local Channel 4 as earthquake refugees, prompting the local Italian community to offer support with job opportunities. This generosity led to work at Toto's in Daly City, one of the Bay Area's oldest and most beloved Italian

restaurants. After gaining hands-on experience in a variety of restaurant roles in the Bay Area and abroad, Michael and his wife Claudia returned to the Bay Area to pursue their dream of opening their own restaurant.

In 1995, this plan came to fruition with a clear vision: to serve fresh home style Italian food at a fair price for breakfast and lunch to the various workers, residents, and tourists in the neighborhood. Michael and Claudia created an intimate space inside Tricolore, with a look and feel akin to dining outside in southern Italy. The restaurant features playful details such as stuccoed walls and faux painted window shutters. The goal was to make the customer feel as though they'd stepped into a quaint Italian village, offering a brief escape from the office. Longtime customers enjoyed its small business feel where the owners knew their customers by name. Tricolore has weathered many challenges over the years, from the dot-com crash, to 9/11 and the Great Recession, and has remained a steady presence in the Financial District. Each of these events significantly affected the business, which has always been closely tied to the financial heart of San Francisco. In March 2020, San Francisco issued a shelter-in-place order due to the COVID 19 pandemic, and Tricolore had to close its doors until June of 2020. It first reopened for pick-up orders with limited hours and then resumed full in-house service in June of 2021. Since the pandemic, Tricolore receives less business from the Financial District, however, is building a new regular customer base of employees from the new stores opening in the Jackson Square neighborhood.

The restaurant and café continue to be known for its scratch-made pizza dough, focaccia, salads and fresh vegetables, sandwiches, soups, and pastas with signature sauces. Customers' favorites are the Penne Bolognese and the Beef Lasagna as well as the in-house made vegan soups. Tricolore also offers in-home and office catering services, and their space is also available to book for private events.

If Tricolore were to be sold, relocated, or shut down, the community would lose more than just a beloved lunch spot; it would lose a long-standing cultural anchor in Jackson Square. For decades, Tricolore has provided a welcoming, affordable gathering place for workers, tourists, and neighborhood regulars, helping maintain the area's unique mix of historic charm and local vibrancy. Losing Tricolore would leave a noticeable void in both the social fabric and historic character of the neighborhood.

Staff Analysis

Review Criteria

1. When was business founded?

The business was founded in 1995.

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

Yes. Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria has operated continuously in San Francisco for over 30 years.
- b. Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria has contributed to the history and identity of the Jackson Square neighborhood and San Francisco.

- c. Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria 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 Italian cuisine, particularly from Southern Italy.

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

Yes. Tricolore is housed in a culturally significant historic building. It occupies the two-story Greek Revival style, Columbus Savings Bank (SF Landmark No. 212) building at the corner of Montgomery and Washington streets, within the California Register-eligible and National Register-eligible Jackson Square Historic District. Designed by Meyer and O'Brien and built of Colusa sandstone in 1904-1905, it survived San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake and Fire.

Former Supervisor Angela Alioto and family, who occupied the offices upstairs, stopped by for a quick bite regularly. Lawrence Ferlinghetti, poet, painter, activist, and founder of City Lights Booksellers and Publishers was also a regular customer.

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

Yes, the site is listed as an Article 10 Landmark No. 212, and is a contributor to the Jackson Square Historic District under Article 10, and is listed in the California and National Register as a contributor to the district.

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. Tricolore's Michael Imperiale was featured in the ABC7 news story, "SF's Financial District slowest in US to recover in post-pandemic phase, study shows," on August 24, 2022, to discuss the impact of the pandemic on local businesses. Tricolore was also featured in San Francisco Heritage's Jackson Square spotlight month in June 2025, which focused on the history and heritage of San Francisco's first historic district. Tricolore was mentioned in the article "Jackson Square Business Spotlights: William Stout Architectural Books and Tricolore Caffè & Pizzeria," which shared the histories of potential Legacy Businesses in the neighborhood.

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.

Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria is located in the Columbus Savings Bank building. The Columbus Savings Bank building is the oldest of four buildings that represent the beginning of Italian banking in San Francisco. (The others are the Italian-American Bank, the Bank of Italy, and the Italian Popular Bank.) The Columbus Savings and Loan Society remained at 700 Montgomery Street until 1923, when it merged with Sbarboto's Italian-American Bank. This, in turn, merged with A.P. Giannini's Bank of Italy in 1927, whereupon 700 Montgomery became, for two years, the Columbus Branch of the Bank of Italy. Tricolore joins other Italian businesses that have occupied the building over the years, including the Pisani Printing and Publishing Company (1939-1953), the Italian consulate (1948-1951), and the law offices of Mayor Joseph L. Alioto and Angela Alioto.

Tricolore is an immigrant-founded business. Founders Michael Imperiale and Claudia Gruber both immigrated from Europe – Michael from southern Italy after his family was displaced following the 1980 Irpinia earthquakes east of Naples, and Claudia from Switzerland. Michael's upbringing in a small southern Italian town called Bisaccia shaped his belief in simple, genuine cooking using local produce, further bolstered by his experience in restaurants through his high school and college years.

As a consistent presence for over 30 years, Tricolore contributes to an enduring legacy of Italian-American founded businesses in the Jackson Square area.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 700 Montgomery Street (Unit: 590 Washington Street)

Recommended by Applicant

- Cherub Angel sign crafted by a San Francisco artist, in its original shape and form.
- Rustic interior meant to invoke a quaint Italian village, including stucco walls and faux painted window shutters.
- Reasonably priced southern Italian lunch options for customers.
- Scratch-made pizza dough, focaccia, salads, sandwiches, soups, and pastas with signature sauces.

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: FEBRUARY 18, 2026

Case No.: 2026-000683LBR
Business Name: Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria
Business Address: 700 Montgomery Street (Unit: 590 Washington Street)
Zoning: C-2 Districts: Community Business
65-A Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 0196/028
Applicant: Michael Imperiale
590 Washington St
Nominated By: Supervisor Danny Sauter
Located In: District 3
Staff Contact: Divya Jain | 6286527409
Divya.Jain@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR TRICOLORE CAFFÈ AND PIZZERIA CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 700 MONTGOMERY ST, BLOCK/LOT 0196/028.

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 Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria 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 Tricolore Caffè and Pizzeria.

Location(s):

Current Locations:

- 700 Montgomery Street (Unit: 590 Washington Street)

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Cherub Angel sign crafted by a San Francisco artist, in its original shape and form.
- Rustic interior meant to invoke a quaint Italian village, including stucco walls and faux painted window shutters.
- Reasonably priced southern Italian lunch options for customers.
- Scratch-made pizza dough, focaccia, salads, sandwiches, soups, and pastas with signature sauces.

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.