



# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: October 11, 2022

## LARKINS BROTHERS TIRE COMPANY

*Application No.:* LBR-2022-23-009  
*Business Name:* Larkins Brothers Tire Company  
*Business Address:* 370 South Van Ness Ave.  
*District:* District 9  
*Applicant:* Jason P. Labagh, President  
*Nomination Letter Date:* August 22, 2022  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Hillary Ronen  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Larkins Brothers Tire Company is an automotive services business opened by William and Kenneth Larkins in 1950. When first founded, the business primarily sold new and reconditioned tires until 1986 when ownership was transferred to Martin "Marty" Labagh, a family friend. Labagh expanded the business to include full automotive services and added staff from across the Bay Area. Day-to-day operations were managed by Labagh's brother-in-law, Randy Hill, who was known for his rapport with the shop's many customers.

Thanks to a loyal customer base, the store is now open 6 days a week with over a dozen full-time employees to better serve the San Francisco Bay Area. Many of these employees have stayed with the company for 20-30 years. The business has also been able to establish a customer account with the City and County of San Francisco, servicing their service vehicles.

Most recently, in April of 2021, the next Labagh generation took over Larkins Bros. Tire Co. through Marty's son, Jason Labagh, who grew up in the business. He started at a young age of 7, along with his older brother Justin Labagh, painting used tires black making them look newer. Then they moved into a tire installer role during every summer growing up. Jason Labagh is now the sole owner of Larkins Bros. Tire Co., which he runs with his uncle Randy, who has remained at the company for over 30 years.

### CRITERION 1

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

Yes, Larkins Brothers Tire Company has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

370 South Van Ness Ave. from 1950 to Present (72 Years)

### CRITERION 2

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

Yes, Larkin Brothers Tire Company has contributed to the history and identity of the Mission neighborhood and San Francisco.

**Legacy Business Program**  
Office of Small Business  
City Hall Room 140  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 554-6680  
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The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- Larkins Brothers Tire Company traces its San Francisco history back to 1865 with the founding of the carriage business, Larkins & Company. Headed by William Larkins, an Irish immigrant, the business was originally located on Sumner St. near Montgomery and served residents across San Francisco. Relocating several times throughout its history, Larkins & Company remained in San Francisco for its entire existence and employed a variety of craftspeople to paint and construct bodies for high-end automobiles, buses, and even wooden airplane assemblies. The company even held a number of patents related to vehicles of the period.

After WWII, the Geary Streetcar barns, which were located at the northwest corner 19th Avenue and Geary Street and served as the company's headquarters since 1919, were converted into a used car dealership. This was to be the first on Geary Street's "Auto Row," which ran from Arguello Blvd. to Eleventh Avenue. In 1950, the fourth generation of Larkins, brothers William and Kenneth Larkins, established Larkins Bros. Tire Co. at 370 South Van Ness Ave.

The Larkins family and their respective businesses, since 1865, have played a notable role in the history and development of San Francisco's carriages, streetcars, buses, and automobiles, which is subsequently related to streetcar development across the city.

- The property is within the boundaries of the Inner Mission Commercial Corridor survey but was not evaluated at the time due to the age of the building.
- Marty Labagh had been interviewed by a local news station regarding potholes in the city and their impact to tires and wheels.

### CRITERION 3

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

Yes, Larkin Brothers Tire Company is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

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

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Structure of the building and utilitarian/industrial feeling.
- Original Larkins Brothers outdoor signs in the lobby/main office area.

### CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

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

- Automotive services.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Larkins Brothers Tire Company currently located at 370 South Van Ness Ave. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
Legacy Business Program

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# Small Business Commission

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

October 11, 2022

## LARKINS BROTHERS TIRE COMPANY

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*Nominated By:* Supervisor Hillary Ronen  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

**Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Larkins Brothers Tire Company, currently located at 370 South Van Ness Ave.**

**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 October 11, 2022, 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 Larkins Brothers Tire Company in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Larkins Brothers Tire Company.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Structure of the building and utilitarian/industrial feeling.
- Original Larkins Brothers outdoor signs in the lobby/main office area.

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

- Automotive services.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on October 11, 2022.

---

Katy Tang  
Director

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Ayes –  
Nays –  
Abstained –  
Absent –

**Legacy Business Program**

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## Legacy Business Registry

# Application Review Sheet

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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

370 South Van Ness Ave. from 1950 to Present (72 Years)

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

☒ Yes ☐ No

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

☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTES: n/a

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: August 24, 2022

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
Legacy Business Program

### Legacy Business Program

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Member, Board of Supervisors  
District 9



City and County of San Francisco

## HILLARY RONEN

August 22, 2022

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

Dear Mr. Kurylo:

I am writing a Letter of Nomination in support of Larkins Brothers Tire Co., located at 370 South Van Ness Avenue, as a District 9 Legacy Business. Larkins Bros. Tire Co. have provided reputable, reliable automobile service and repair to the Mission and greater San Francisco community for over 30 years. It is a family-owned business that employs a staff of 13, many of whom have worked at the shop for decades. The Larkins Bros. Tire Co. can trace its roots back to 1865, when the first generation of Larkins established a carriage company in San Francisco. Since 1950, the Larkins Bros. Tire Co. as it exists today began at its current location at 370 South Van Ness Ave. I am happy to nominate this historic establishment as a Legacy Business.

Sincerely,

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

Hillary Ronen  
Supervisor, District 9

# Section One:

## Business / Applicant Information.

Please provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

<b>NAME OF BUSINESS:</b>	
Larkins Brothers Tire Co.	
<b>BUSINESS OWNER(S)</b> (Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business):	
Jason P. Labagh	
<b>CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:</b>	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER:</b>
370 S. Van Ness Ave. San Francisco, CA 94103	(415) 873-5730
	<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>
	larkinsbrostire@gmail.com
<b>MAILING ADDRESS – STREET ADDRESS:</b>	<b>MAILING ADDRESS – CITY AND STATE:</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Business Address	
	<b>MAILING ADDRESS – ZIP CODE:</b>
<b>WEBSITE ADDRESS:</b>	
<b>FACEBOOK PAGE:</b>	
<b>TWITTER NAME:</b>	
<b>APPLICANT'S NAME:</b>	<b>APPLICANT'S TELEPHONE NUMBER:</b>
Jason P. Labagh	
<b>APPLICANT'S TITLE:</b>	<b>APPLICANT'S EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>
President	
<b>SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:</b>	
1119112	
<b>SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (If applicable):</b>	
4554655	

## Section Two:

### Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS	ZIP CODE	START DATE OF BUSINESS
370 S. Van Ness Ave.	94103	1950
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	1950 - Present	

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
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		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
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OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (If applicable)	ZIP CODE	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

## Section Three:

### Disclosure Statement.

#### 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.

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Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:



# **LARKINS BROS. TIRE CO.**

## **Written Historical Narrative**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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

Larkins Bros. Tire Co. is a tire and full automotive service and repair shop. They provide brakes, alignments, tune-ups and any other vehicle repairs needed.

#### **b. Describe who the business serves.**

Customers of Larkins Bros. Tires come from all San Francisco neighborhoods and throughout the Bay Area, including the Peninsula, Marin and the East Bay. Many customers that have moved out of the area still come to Larkins. Customers range from new drivers to long time customers who have been coming for over 30 years.

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

Personable and Honest Automotive Service

### **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.**

Larkins Bros. Tire Co., located at 370 South Van Ness Avenue, was founded 1950 by twin brothers William Larkins and Kenneth Larkins. The company originally only sold only new, used, and recapped tires.

In 1986, Martin Labagh (a family friend) took over the store, which at the time only had three employees. Within one year, he added mechanical services including alignments, brakes, and other auto maintenance repairs. With these services, he was able to employ more people from the Bay Area. Marty recruited his brother-in-law Randy Hill to help manage the day-to-day operations. A great portion of Larkins Bros. success is due to Randy's personal connection with the customers.

Thanks to a loyal customer base, the store is now open 6 days a week with 14 full time employees to better serve the San Francisco Bay Area. Many of these employees have stayed with the company for 20-30 years. The business has also been able to establish a customer account with the City and County of San Francisco, servicing their service vehicles.

Most recently in April of 2021, the next Labagh generation took over Larkins Bros. Tire Co. through Marty's son, Jason Labagh, who grew up in the business. He started at a young age of 7, along with his older brother Justin Labagh, painting used tires black making them look newer. Then they moved into a tire installer role during every summer growing up. Marty had a second shop in San Bruno from 1981 to 2017, which Jason ran right out of college for 15 years until they sold it.

Jason Labagh is now the sole owner of Larkins Bros. Tire Co., which he runs with his uncle Randy who has been at the company for 30+ years now. Jason hopes to follow his father's legacy and continue to treat every customer like family.

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

1950 to 1986:	Bill Larkins and Ken Larkins
1986 to 2021:	Martin Labagh
2021 to Present:	Jason Labagh

Larkins Bros. Tire Co. is a family-owned business. It started with the two Larkins brothers, Bill and Ken, co-owning the company equally from 1950 to 1986. Then it was purchased by Marty Labagh who ran the company with his son Jason Labagh and brother-in-law Randy Hill from 1986 to 2021. In 2021, Jason Labagh took over as owner. Randy Hill, Jason's uncle, remains working at the shop.

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

Larkins Brothers Tire has never ceased operations for any period of time. They have remained open and operating from the start of the business.

**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.**

When Larkins Bros. Tire Co. was founded in 1950, they originally only sold only new, used, and recapped tires. The business offerings expanded in the mid-1980s to offer full mechanical and routine services. This gave their customers one place to go for their complete vehicle maintenance.

The character of Larkins Bros. Tires is defined by the employees that work there. They have established relationships with their customers and are the main reason those customers return.



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

Patrons of the business have included the mayor of San Francisco (London Breed & ), several police captains and fire department chiefs, local radio hosts, sportscasters for the Golden State Warriors, and present and former professional sports athletes.

Company founders Bill and Ken Larkins were actually the fourth generation Larkins in the automotive business in San Francisco. The original Larkins business in the city was Larkins & Co. established in 1865 by William Larkins. The company made high-grade carriages.

William Larkins (possibly Larkin) was born on May 20, 1833, in Ballinasloe, County Galway, Ireland to Thomas and Mary Larkin (possibly Larkins). Ballinasloe was a market town situated on the main road leading between Galway and Dublin and as such had a considerable carriage building history dating back to the mid-eighteenth century.

Already an experienced craftsman, William immigrated to Massachusetts sometime near the end of the Great Potato Famine (1845-1952) and found employment as a carriage painter in one of Boston's numerous carriage shops. On November 8, 1858, he married another immigrant from Ballinasloe named Sarah Nicholson in the Boston suburb of Roxbury.

Sometime prior to 1861, the young couple relocated to San Francisco where William Larkins was listed in the city's 1861 city directory as a carriage painter. By 1865, he had become the proprietor of Larkins & Co. The business also had silent partners. One was George McCloud who is listed as a co-owner in Crocker-Langley's 1889 San Francisco directory.

The business was originally located on Sumner Street near Montgomery. On an unknown date, the business moved to 634-638 Howard Street between Second and Third streets, where it remained until the earthquake and fire of 1906.

On January 21, 1869 (possibly 1867) the Larkins were blessed with the birth of a son, William Bernard Larkins. William Bernard attended the Mission grammar school and also a business college. Even while in school he assisted his father in the latter's carriage shop, obtained a most comprehensive knowledge of the work, and as a consequence gradually relieved his father from many responsibilities.

On June 26, 1894, William Bernard Larkins was married to Elizabeth McIntosh, a native of San Francisco. They had four children: Allan Thomas (b. April 28, 1895), William Burton (b. August 22, 1896), Kenneth John (b. July 22, 1902), and Marian.

After the 1906 earthquake, Larkins & Co. relocated to temporary quarters in the city's Mission District at 276-278 Guerrero Street. A further move brought the firm to 1610-1614 Van Ness Avenue at California Street.

At the time of the elder William Larkins' death on July 6, 1913, his eldest son, William Bernard, had been in charge of the firm's operations for some time. The 1915 San Francisco Directory lists E.V. Williams as an owner of the firm. His exact involvement with the firm is unknown, however prior to that time Williams, who was a master blacksmith, had been associated with the vast naval shipyards located north of San Francisco at Mare Island.

In 1919, the business relocated to the all-brick former Geary Street Car barns which were located at the northwest corner 19th Avenue and Geary Street (originally Point Lobos Avenue).

The Geary Street Car Barns were originally constructed in 1898 to house the streetcars of the Geary Street Park & Ocean Railway (GSPO). The sturdy brick structure was taken over by the San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni) in 1912 when they purchased the assets of the GSPO. Muni leased the property to Sperry Flour in 1916 and in 1919 sold it to William Larkins who remodeled it with a new stucco facade, renaming it the Larkins Building. In the new facility, Larkins & Co. manufactured a small number of custom bodies for local high-end automobile dealers, although refinishing and painting motor vehicles made up the bulk of the business. Other products included bus bodies, commercial bodies and wooden air-frame sub-assemblies.

As William Bernard's sons matured, they in turn became associated with the family business.

Larkins' designer, August H. Pape of Kentsfield, California, held a number of patents for automobile tops which were assigned to Larkins:

- The first, a "means for converting collapsible tops of automobiles into closed tops" was originally filed on October 27, 1919, and granted on December 28, 1920, as patent #1,363,908. It was reissued on April 29, 1924.
- Pape's next patent, #1,488,827 (filed June 8, 1920; approved April 1, 1924) was for a 'sliding side window,' the principal design feature of what would be soon popularly known as the Larkins Top.
- On November 11, 1919, Pape filed a patent for a 'window fastener,' patent # 1,530,909, which was eventually granted on March 24, 1925.
- Pape's most famous creation, which was to become the 'Larkins Top' (automobile top, patent #1,563,287), was originally filed on Feb 16, 1921 and granted on November 24, 1925.
- Pape also submitted a design for an "automobile side curtain" (patent # 1,563,288) which was submitted at the same time.

After World War II, the Larkins Building at 19th and Geary was converted into an automobile dealership, the very first on Geary Street's Auto Row, which ran from Arguello Blvd. to Eleventh Avenue.

In 1950, the fourth generation of Larkins, brothers William and Kenneth Larkins, established Larkins Bros. Tire Co. at 370 South Van Ness Avenue.

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

Larkins Bros. Tire Co. donates to its community and sponsors youth baseball teams. They have hired students and hard-to-employ people. They provide concession to first responders and health care workers.

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

Marty Labagh had been interviewed by a local new station regarding potholes in the city and what it does to tires and wheels. There is no other known media for the business.

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

The business has not received any awards, recognition, or political commendations.

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

If the business were to close, the San Francisco community and beyond would lose a trustworthy, reliable place to bring their vehicles. Thirteen employees would be out of work. The surrounding local businesses would lose a customer base of those waiting for their vehicles to be repaired. San Francisco would lose the oldest tire shop on record in the city.

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

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

The structure of the building is the same as it was in 1950. No significant changes have been made to the original layout.

One of the original outdoor Larkins Bros. Tires signs from the 1950s is hung on the wall in the main office/lobby area.

There are no plans to change the structural integrity of the business.

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

Larkins Bros. Tires is committed to maintaining the business as an automotive tire and repair shop.

**c. What challenges is the business facing today?**

Increased market rent in the area is one challenge. Increased costs of goods and trying not to pass those costs on to loyal customers is another challenge. Staffing challenges to find qualified mechanics or technicians has been difficult.

**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.**

Automotive services.

**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 Dept. Historic Resource Status is "B - Unknown / Age Eligible." The building was constructed in 1970 and was less than 50 years old at the time of historic survey.



# Larkins & Co.

est. 1865





AGENTS CHALMERS—FLANDERS ELECTRIC AND FULL LINE TRUCKS

**PIONEER AUTOMOBILE CO.**

E. P. BRINEGAR, Pres. and Manager

Phone PARK 590

515-529 VAN NESS AVE.

CAR

CROCKER-LANGLEY DIRECTORY

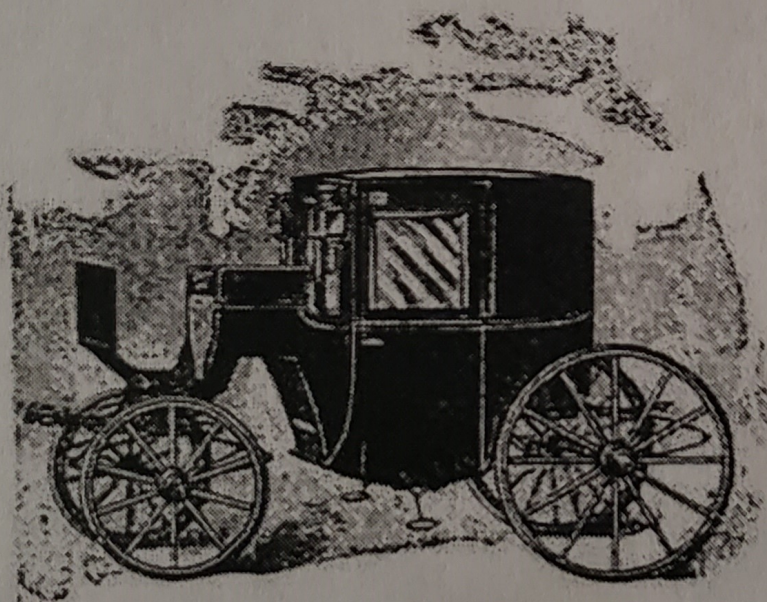
CAS

**LARKINS & CO.**

ESTABLISHED 1865

BUILDERS OF

**FINE CARRIAGE AND AUTOMOBILE BODIES**



Repairing, Painting, Trimming

RUBBER TIRES

PERSONAL ATTENTION  
GIVEN TO ALL WORK

AUTOMOBILE REPAIRING  
A SPECIALTY

Telephone Market 1453

**276-280 Guerrero Street**

Carriage and Wagon Makers—Cont'd

**LARKINS & CO.** 276 Guerrero

Mulvey John J. 759 Gough

Meyer Chas J. 1219 Pierce

Modern Vehicle Co. 311 Main

Murasky Wm F. 47 Duboce Av

**OLSEN O S LITHOGRAPH CO.** 339  
Jackson

**SCHMIDT LITHOGRAPH CO.**

FACTORY & OFFICE 2ND & BRYANT STS.









Continental  
TIRES

NO  
APPOINTMENT  
NECESSARY

LARKINS BROS. TIRE CO.  
COMPLETE SERVICE CENTER  
370 So. Van Ness 863-5730

DRIVE-THRU  
SERVICE

KES-SHOCKS  
EIGN DOMESTIC  
ORK GUARANTEED

TIRES-WHEELS  
HIGH PERFORMANCE  
NEW RETREADS USED

LARKINS  
TIRE (SINCE 191)

Continental  
The German Road

HOURS  
7:30-6:00  
SAT 8:00-4:00  
CLOSED SUNDAY





# LARKINS BROS. TIRES

COMPLETE AUTO SERVICE

*Since 1950*

(415) 863-5730

BRAKES  
&  
STRUTS  
4-WHEEL

TUNE-UPS  
FULL MAINTENANCE  
80K • 60K • 90K • 120K

370 SQ YARDNESS









# LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**HEARING DATE: September 21, 2022**

*Filing Date:* Aug 24, 2022  
*Case No.:* 2022-008549LBR  
*Business Name:* Larkins Brothers Tire Company  
*Business Address:* 370 South Van Ness Avenue  
*Zoning:* UMU (URBAN MIXED USE) Zoning District  
48-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 3548/095  
*Applicant:* Jason Labagh  
370 S. Van Ness Avenue  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Hillary Ronen  
*Located In:* District 9  
*Staff Contact:* Branden Gunn – (628) 652-7367  
Branden.Gunn@sfgov.org

**Recommendation:** Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

## Business Description

Larkins Brothers Tire Company is an automotive services business opened by William and Kenneth Larkins in 1950. When first founded, the business primarily sold new and reconditioned tires until 1986 when ownership was transferred to Martin “Marty” Labagh, a family friend. Labagh expanded the business to include full automotive services and added staff from across the Bay Area. Day-to-day operations were managed by Labagh’s brother-in-law, Randy Hill, who was known for his rapport with the shop’s many customers.

Thanks to a loyal customer base, the store is now open 6 days a week with over a dozen full-time employees to better serve the San Francisco Bay Area. Many of these employees have stayed with the company for 20-30 years. The business has also been able to establish a customer account with the City and County of San Francisco, servicing their service vehicles.

Most recently, in April of 2021, the next Labagh generation took over Larkins Bros. Tire Co. through Marty’s son, Jason Labagh, who grew up in the business. He started at a young age of 7, along with his older brother Justin

Labagh, painting used tires black making them look newer. Then they moved into a tire installer role during every summer growing up. Jason Labagh is now the sole owner of Larkins Bros. Tire Co., which he runs with his uncle Randy, who has remained at the company for over 30 years.

The business's primary location at 370 South Van Ness Avenue is a Category B (Unknown/Age Eligible) structure on the west side of Van Ness Avenue between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets in the Mission neighborhood. It is within the Urban Mixed Use (UMU) Zoning District and a 48-X Height and Bulk District. The property is also within the Mission Alcohol Restrict Special Use District and American Indian Cultural District.

## Staff Analysis

### Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1950.

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

Yes. Larkins Brothers Tire Company qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Larkins Brothers Tire Company has operated continuously in San Francisco for 72 years.
- b. Larkin Brothers Tire Company has contributed to the history and identity of the Mission neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. Larkin Brothers Tire Company 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?*

No.

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

Yes. Larkins Brothers Tire Company traces its San Francisco history back to 1865 with the founding of the carriage business, Larkins & Company. Headed by William Larkins, an Irish immigrant, the business was originally located on Sumner Street near Montgomery and served residents across San Francisco. Relocating several times throughout its history, Larkins & Company remained in San Francisco for its entire existence and employed a variety of craftspeople to paint and construct bodies for high end automobiles, busses, and even wooden airplane assemblies. The company even held a number of patents related to vehicles of the period.

After WWII, the Geary Streetcar barns, which were located at the northwest corner 19th Avenue and Geary Street and served as the company's headquarters since 1919, were converted into a used car dealership. This was to be the first on Geary Street's "Auto Row," which ran from Arguello Blvd. to Eleventh Avenue. In 1950, the fourth generation of Larkins, brothers William and Kenneth Larkins, established Larkins Bros. Tire Co. at 370

South Van Ness Avenue.

The Larkins family and their respective businesses, since 1865, have played a notable role in the history and development of San Francisco's carriages, streetcars, busses, and automobiles, which is subsequently related to streetcar development across the city.

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

No. The property is within the boundaries of the Inner Mission Commercial Corridor survey but was not evaluated at the time due to the age of the building.

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

No, not at the time of this executive summary.

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

Yes. Marty Labagh had been interviewed by a local news station regarding potholes in the city and their impact to tires and wheels.

## Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 370 South Van Ness Avenue

Recommended by Applicant

- Structure of the building and utilitarian/industrial feeling
- Original Larkins Brothers outdoor signs in the lobby/main office area

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
  - o Criterion 1 – History and Description of Business



- Criterion 2 – Contribution to Local History
  - Criterion 3 – Business Characteristics
- Contextual Photographs and Background Documentation



# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 1269

**HEARING DATE: SEPTEMBER 21, 2022**

*Case No.:* 2022-008549LBR  
*Business Name:* Larkins Brothers Tire Company  
*Business Address:* 370 SOUTH VAN NESS AVENUE  
*Zoning:* UMU (URBAN MIXED USE) Zoning District  
48-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 3548/095  
*Applicant:* Jason Labagh  
370 South Van Ness Avenue  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Hillary Ronen  
*Located In:* District 9  
*Staff Contact:* Branden Gunn – (628) 652-7367  
[Branden.Gunn@sfgov.org](mailto:Branden.Gunn@sfgov.org)

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR LARKINS BROTHERS TIRE COMPANY CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 370 SOUTH VAN NESS AVE (PRIMARY ADDRESS), BLOCK/LOT 3548/095.

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on September 21, 2022, 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 370 SOUTH VAN NESS AVE 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 Larkins Brothers Tire Company.

*Location(s):*

Current Locations:

- 370 South Van Ness Avenue (1950 – Present)

*Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:*

- Structure of the building and utilitarian/industrial feeling
- Original Larkins Brothers outdoor signs in the lobby/main office area

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2022-008549LBR to the Office of Small Business on September 21, 2022.



Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

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

NOES: None

ABSENT: Black

ADOPTED: September 21, 2022