

**CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD
POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

Monday, March 9, 2026, 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM

HYBRID HEARING

**5th Floor Large Conference Room
City Planning Department - City Administration Building
202 C Street, San Diego, CA 92101**

Until further notice, Policy Subcommittee meetings will be conducted pursuant to the provisions of California Government Code section 54953(a), as amended by Assembly Bill 2249. Effective February 10, 2023, the Policy Subcommittee will be participating in-person and the meeting will be open for in-person testimony.

In lieu of in-person attendance, members of the public may participate virtually:

THE LINK TO JOIN THE WEBINAR BY COMPUTER, TABLET, OR SMARTPHONE IS:

<https://sandiego.zoomgov.com/j/1603633302?pwd=aHZ5OHRET1prZ0tLRXFNOEk2UUUvUT09>

Meeting ID: 160 363 3302 Passcode: ysF4GZ

To join by using Telephone: Dial 1-669-254-5252 or (Toll Free) 1-833-568-8864. When prompted, input Webinar ID: 160 363 3302

The public is encouraged to [subscribe](#) to receive meeting agendas.

The Policy Subcommittee is a subcommittee of the City of San Diego's Historical Resources Board. It is primarily composed of Historical Resources Board members who are interested in policy matters. In general, the Subcommittee is not a voting entity, but rather a forum for discussing issues and policy matters related to historic resources and their preservation. Comments at the meeting do not predispose future positions on any matter by the Historical Resources Board.

Members of the public will be allowed an opportunity to speak, for up to one minute each, at the end of the Subcommittee's discussion on an agenda item. Each member of the public is required to state their name and the organization (if any) that they represent prior to their one-minute presentation.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Non- Agenda Public Comment (on matters not on the agenda)
3. Subcommittee Comment (on matters not on the agenda)
4. Preservation Awards: The Historical Resources Board and City of San Diego wish to recognize preservation projects, activities, and people with an outstanding commitment to historic preservation. The winners will be announced in May to commemorate National Historic Preservation Month and will be celebrated at the May Historical Resources Board meeting. Projects completed between January 2020 and December 2025 are eligible for nomination. The Policy Subcommittee will make determinations on this year's recipients in the categories of Preservation Projects, Preservation Activities and People in Preservation.
5. Adjourn

Next Policy Subcommittee Meeting will be on Monday, April 13, 2026 at 3:00 PM.

For more information, please contact Suzanne Segur by phone at (619) 236-6139 or email at ssegur@sandiego.gov



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 4, 2026
TO: Historical Resources Board- Policy Subcommittee
FROM: Audrey Rains, Assistant Planner, City Planning Department
SUBJECT: 2026 Annual Preservation Awards Submissions

Background

The Historical Resources Board Procedures (Section IV.B) gives the Historical Resources Board the ability to present Awards of Excellence recognizing outstanding achievement in the field of historic preservation. In 2024, the Annual Awards were reinstated after a seven-year hiatus with changes to the nomination categories to further align the awards with other California award programs and to capture the widest array of preservation work in the City. These same categories were used for the 2026 Annual Awards call for submissions. Based on feedback from the 2025 Annual Awards when submissions were limited to the previous year, the 2026 Annual Awards were open to projects completed in the City within the last five years.

The Policy Subcommittee is tasked with considering the nominated recipients at the April subcommittee meeting and shall determine which recipients in which categories shall receive awards. In advance of the April meeting, City staff has compiled the 2026 submitted nominations for Subcommittee review.

Award Categories

In order to be considered for an award, projects must be located in the city limits and have been substantially completed between January 2020 and December 2025 to be nominated. Rehabilitation projects must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Nominations are accepted under the following three categories. Submissions are asked to self-select the category to be considered under, although the Subcommittee can evaluate the nomination under any category it deems the best fit.

- Preservation Projects
 - Rehabilitation or Restoration Projects
 - Adaptive reuse of historic buildings, structures, sites, or cultural landscapes
 - Archaeology Projects
- Preservation Activities
 - Activities related to the identification, protection, and interpretation of historic or tribal/cultural resources.

- Innovative efforts in historic preservation education, public outreach, or interpretive programs.
- Local, State, and National Register nominations that significantly contribute to our knowledge of historic resources and/or contexts.
- Projects that demonstrate new or novel approaches to the protection of historic and/or prehistoric archaeological sites.
- Exemplary historical research projects, including oral histories.
- Exemplary stewardship of historic places.
- People in Preservation
 - Organizations or individuals who have shown exemplary leadership or dedication to preservation. (Nominations of those individuals and groups working at a grassroots level are especially encouraged)
 - Eligible nominees will have made significant contributions over time to the advancement of historic preservation and/or the preservation of historical resources in San Diego.
 - Individuals may not self-nominate.

In addition to these categories, special consideration should be given to preservation projects and activities that:

- Add additional housing units to an existing site through adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, or new construction on a historic site.
- Demonstrate and promote sustainability and/or climate change resiliency.
- Broaden the ethnic and cultural diversity of historic preservation activities.


2026 Submissions

City Planning accepted nominations between February 1, 2026 and February 27, 2026. The following indicates the breakdown of submissions and categories.

- Preservation Projects: 11 Submissions
- Preservation Activities: 2 Submissions
- People in Preservation: 2 Submissions

These submissions have been compiled for digital review by the policy subcommittee in preparation of voting at the April meeting.


Audrey Rains
Assistant Planner
City Planning Department


Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner / Staff to Policy Subcommittee
City Planning Department

AR/SS

ENCL: Submission Documents

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: San Diego Historic & Cultural Preservation Awareness Program

Address: 3525 7th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103 (physical); PO Box 80788, San Diego, CA 92128 (mailing)

Category (refer to first page of packet): Category 2. Preservation activities

Project Completion Date (month, year): December 2025

Program Launch Date (month, year): January 2022

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Save Our Heritage Organisation
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Nominator Information

Name: Alana Coons

Company or Title (optional): Save Our Heritage Organisation

Address: 3525 7th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103 (physical); PO Box 80788, San Diego, CA 92128

Phone: 619-297-9327 Email: sohosandiego@aol.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?
(Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

- For nominating projects, discuss the work performed, and provide details as to how specifically the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- For programs, discuss the overall structure of the program, how the community engages with and or participates in the program, and how the program aligns with historic preservation.
- For people, discuss the background, work, and leadership of the individual or organization. Please provide details about their contributions to the field of preservation.
- Does the project or program demonstrate an innovative approach to preservation, encourage sustainability/climate resiliency, or add housing units? If so, please provide a description of how.

Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and curves, positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Documentation: Supporting materials may be submitted to supplement but not substitute for the justification that is supposed to be provided in the Narrative portion of the nomination.

Types of materials that may be included:

- For building projects:
 - Photos of the completed project (REQUIRED).
 - Plans, drawings, PowerPoint, or other documentation sufficient to illustrate the property before and after the nominated activity and to address how the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
- For interpretive/educational/community projects or programs: Copies of related materials, such as a book, brochure, DVD/CD, website links, transcripts, or photographs of exhibits or activities.
- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.

Outstanding Educational Program: Raising Awareness for the Preservation of San Diego's Historic and Cultural Resources

Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) is being nominated for its series of self-guided interpretive tours produced between 2022 and 2025, an innovative educational program designed to expand public understanding of San Diego's historic, architectural, and cultural resources while advancing preservation advocacy. Over the past five years, SOHO has created nine self-guided tours exploring a broad range of sites and themes, including the Hotel del Coronado, Paradise Point/Vacation Village, Mission Hills Modernism, 1920s Park Boulevard, San Diego State University, San Diego's architectural art tile, WPA-era architecture and art, historic gardens and landscapes, and Rediscovering Calle Judeo in Old Town State Historic Park.

These tours are intentionally accessible and inclusive. Three were produced as printed booklets, and all tours are freely available as downloadable PDFs or interactive web pages on SOHO's website, allowing residents and visitors to engage with historic places at their own pace and without financial barriers. The interpretive content blends architectural history and social history, presenting complex stories in a clear, engaging format suitable for audiences with or without prior preservation knowledge. Many tours incorporate "then and now" perspectives, reinforcing the value of historic resources and encouraging stewardship through understanding.

The program demonstrates innovation through its scalable, low-cost, and sustainable approach to public education. By leveraging self-guided formats and digital access, SOHO expanded its educational reach without the environmental and logistical impacts of staff-led tours. Preservation itself is presented as a sustainable practice, emphasizing the reuse of existing buildings, cultural continuity, and the environmental benefits of conserving historic resources.

SOHO fully conceived, researched, authored, and produced each tour, drawing on its institutional knowledge and preservation expertise. Select projects were developed in collaboration with site partners, including the Hotel del Coronado and Paradise Point, while maintaining SOHO's independent interpretive voice, as well as volunteer historians and architects. Several tours received award recognition from the San Diego Press Club.

Collectively, these self-guided tours represent an outstanding educational achievement, significantly increasing public awareness of San Diego's diverse historic and cultural resources and reinforcing preservation as a shared civic responsibility.

Please see the following links for these tours:

2025 - Paradise Point Resort and Spa / Vacation Village
<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tours/vacationvillageweb.pdf>

2024 - History Uncovered: The Hotel del Coronado Restoration
<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tourbooklets/hoteldelcoronado101024.pdf>

2024 - Rediscovering Calle de Judeo – The Jewish Men & Women of Enterprise in Old Town San Diego (State Historic Park).

<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tours/callejudeospreadsweb.pdf>

2024 - The Golden Era of San Diego's Architectural Art Tile: 1910-1940

<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tours/tile/indextile.htm>

2023 - Mission Hills Modernism: Delawie, Ruocco, and Friends: 1942-1965

<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tourbooklets/mhmodernismtour.pdf>

2023 - 1920s Park Boulevard: A Decade of Elegant Apartment Buildings

<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tourbooklets/1920sparkblvd2023web.pdf>

2022 - The Historic Architecture of San Diego State University: 1930-1942

<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tourbooklets/sdsutour2022.pdf>

2022 - Architecture and Art: The WPA in San Diego

<https://www.sohosandiego.org/tourbooklets/wpatour2022.pdf>

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

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Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Alvarado Water Treatment Plant Mural Restoration

Address: 5540 Kiowa Drive, San Diego, CA 91942

Category (refer to first page of packet): 2. Preservation Activities

Project Completion Date (month, year): December 2025

Program Launch Date (month, year): March 2024

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. See attached.
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Nominator Information

Name: David Marshall, AIA

Company or Title (optional): Heritage Architecture & Planning

Address: 363 Fifth Ave. #302 San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-239-7888 Email: david@heritagearchitecture.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?
(Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

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Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

See attached.

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David Marshall

Signature of Applicant

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Types of materials that may be included:

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- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.

See attached. Before and after photos are in the Monitor's Final Report.

Alvarado Water Treatment Plant Murals Restoration

Narrative Description of Project

The Alvarado Water Treatment Plant was dedicated on January 15, 1951, marking a major milestone in San Diego's growing water infrastructure. At its heart stands the Operations Building at 5540 Kiowa Drive, designed by architect Daniel A. Elliot in an elegant blend of Spanish Colonial Revival and Streamline Moderne styles. In 1994, the "Alvarado Water Filtration Plant Operations Building" earned designation as a historic resource (HRB Site #321), including its striking interior foyer/gallery — home to two monumental photo murals that are part of the City of San Diego Civic Art Collection. Serving as both an entryway and interpretive gallery, the foyer immerses visitors in the sweeping story of San Diego's water supply, beginning at Lake Mead in Boulder City, Nevada, and tracing its remarkable journey south.

Each mural spans 47 feet in length and 11 feet in height. Created as dynamic photographic montages by Richard Yale and art director H. Wilson Smith, the works were printed by Brian Smith Printing Company and adhered to plaster walls. Due to the technical limits of mid-century printing processes, each mural was assembled from multiple sections, their lower edges secured with aluminum trim. The result is a bold, cinematic panorama of engineering achievement and regional transformation.

Over time, however, the murals faced serious threats. Persistent rainwater infiltration into the foyer led to cracking, tearing, and areas of detachment. Decades of UV exposure, humidity shifts, temperature fluctuations, surface abrasion, and accumulated soiling further compromised their integrity and appearance.

In 2024, the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department commissioned Heritage Architecture & Planning to guide the murals' preservation, working alongside lead consultant RECON Environmental. Heritage prepared a Historical Resources Report with restoration recommendations, followed by a Historical Monitor's Final Report upon project completion.

The Balboa Art Conservation Center (BACC) was called in to provide additional assessment of the murals. After examination and testing of the materials, adhesives, and supports, the murals were found to be well adhered to the wall across the majority of the surface (approximately 60-70%), indicating that attempting to remove the murals would very likely result in significant and irreversible damage. Furthermore, detached sections of the murals provided BACC's art conservators with the opportunity to examine the photographic paper more closely to determine that it retained some degree of strength and flexibility, despite its age and condition. These findings led to BACC's recommendation that the murals could be treated in situ, as this route represented the lowest-risk approach to achieve the best possible preservation outcome.

The stabilization and conservation of the murals were entrusted to the BACC, whose skilled art conservators spent months testing, planning, and implementing the best route of treatment for the murals. This included meticulously cleaning the surfaces, repairing damage, re-adhering loose

sections, and applying subtle infill painting techniques — all while preserving the murals’ authentic historic patina. In accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards*, “materials and features from the restoration period will be retained and preserved,” so no surviving historic fabric was removed or replaced. The team at BACC also provided recommendations for monitoring and conditions moving forward, so the artwork can continue to be stewarded by its historical caretakers, the Alvarado Water Treatment Plant staff.

This restoration project presented a unique challenge, as the murals were adhered directly to the walls of the water plant, requiring a solution that would preserve the murals without damaging the historical building, and preserve the building without damaging the historical murals. This challenge presented the opportunity for an exciting collaboration between experts of the historical built environment and experts in historical fine art conservation. The result of restoring the Alvarado murals stands as a model of careful stewardship, fully compliant with *The Standards*. Completed in 2025, these rare Mid-Century masterpieces once again command the foyer with clarity and vibrancy, honoring both San Diego’s artistic heritage and the enduring story of its water for generations to come.

Alvarado Water Treatment Plant Murals Restoration

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project (in alphabetical order)

Sara Bisi, Paper Conservator
Balboa Art Conservation Center
sbisi@bacc.org

Nylah Byrd, Assistant Objects Conservator
Balboa Art Conservation Center
nbyrd@bacc.org

Gregory Cross, Project Manager
Public Utilities Department, City of San Diego
GCross@sandiego.gov

Katie Foggiano, Conservation Services Manager
Balboa Art Conservation Center
Kfoggiano@bacc.org

Bianca Garcia, Associate Paintings Conservator
Balboa Art Conservation Center
bgarcia@bacc.org

Erick Gude, Senior Conservation Technician
Balboa Art Conservation Center
egude@bacc.org

David Marshall, AIA, Preservation Architect
Heritage Architecture & Planning
david@heritagearchitecture.com

Alexis Miller, Senior Paintings Conservator
Balboa Art Conservation Center
amiller@bacc.org

Carla Miller, Associate Objects Conservator
Balboa Art Conservation Center
cmiller@bacc.org

Chuck Miller, Senior Public Art Manager
Civic Art Collection, City of San Diego
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Elizabeth Salmon, PhD, Preventive Conservator
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Lluvia Santana, Associate Planner, environmental review & support
Public Utilities Department, City of San Diego
LSantanaFreg@sandiego.gov

Michael Simpson, Plant Superintendent
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Tiffany Smith, Senior Planner
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SmithTJ@sandiego.gov

Morgan Wylder, Associate Paintings Conservator
Balboa Art Conservation Center
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Carmen Zepeda-Herman, Environmental Coordinator
RECON Environmental
czepeda@reconenvironmental.com



Final Report & Maintenance Plan Alvarado Water Treatment Plant Photographic Mural

February 24, 2026
Updated April 8, 2026

Prepared by
Dr. Elizabeth Salmon, Preventive Conservator
Sara Bisi, Paper Conservator
Katie Foggiano, Project Manager
Balboa Art Conservation Center

Background and Significance

This report details the conservation treatment of two large-scale photographic murals located in the interior foyer of the Alvarado Water Filtration Plant Operations Building (5540 Kiowa Drive, La Mesa 91942) and provides recommendations for the continued preservation of the murals.

The Operations Building was designed by architect Daniel A. Elliot in the Spanish Colonial Revival style and was dedicated on January 15, 1951 as part of the City of San Diego's expanding municipal water infrastructure (Figure 1). The foyer, where the murals are installed, functions as a public gallery space intended to introduce visitors to the history and process of San Diego's water supply system. Historically, members of the public encountered the murals while visiting the Operations Building to pay their water bills at the payment window located on the East Wall. Today, the foyer serves as an important stop for visitors on guided tours of the water treatment plant. The Alvarado Water Treatment Plant was designated as an *American Water Landmark* by the American Water Works Association in 2002. This designation, marked with a plaque on the exterior of the Operations Building, recognizes that, "the Alvarado Water Treatment Plant has been the heart of the City of San Diego's drinking water system for more than half a century" and it is therefore a "landmark for the City and the surrounding community" (Figure 2). The murals play a crucial, visual role in telling this story.



Figure 1: The historic entrance of the Alvarado Water Treatment Plant, with the Operations Building pictured in the back right.

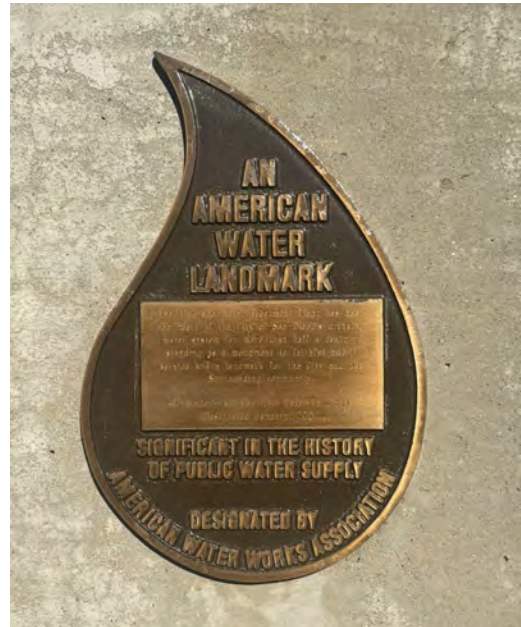


Figure 2: The Plant was designated as an American Water Landmark in 2002 and marked with this plaque on the exterior of the building.

The Operations Building was designated as a historic resource in 1994 and is listed on the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board Register as Site #321. This designation explicitly includes the interior foyer and the two photographic murals installed inside, recognizing them as character-defining features of the historic building. The murals are also part of the City of San Diego's Civic Art Collection and their stewardship is the responsibility of the City of San Diego, in coordination with departments overseeing public art, water infrastructure, and historic resources.

The murals depict the development of San Diego's water supply system, beginning with Lake Mead in Boulder City, Nevada, and tracing the engineering achievements that enabled regional growth in the mid-twentieth century, such as the Hoover Dam, the pumping plant at Lake Havasu, and the Colorado River Aqueduct. Each mural measures approximately 47 feet in length and 11 feet in height and is composed of a collage of multiple photographic images, which was then photographed to produce the final composite image. The photographs were taken by Richard Yale, a San Diego-based publisher and journalist, and likely printed by the Brian Smith Printing Company under the direction of H. Wilson Smith (City of San Diego Civic Art Collection 2026). The murals were produced using silver gelatin photographic processes typical of the late 1940s and early 1950s, when silver gelatin prints dominated both fine-art and documentary photographic production in the United States (Lavédrine 2009). The murals were assembled from multiple strips of photographic paper that were adhered directly to plaster walls, with adhesive applied overall and aluminum trim mechanically securing the bottom edges.

From a historical perspective, the murals are significant, rare examples of mid-twentieth century photographic murals mounted directly to architectural surfaces. Silver gelatin photographic murals of this scale are inherently fragile, making them particularly rare. Unlike many painted murals, photographic murals are composed of highly light and water sensitive materials not designed for prolonged exposure in an architectural setting. As a result, surviving examples from the 1950s are uncommon, particularly those that remain in their original locations, as do the murals at the Alvarado Water Treatment Plant. Due to the inherent vulnerability of the material, it is notable that the murals were not significantly altered, removed, or destroyed over the last 75 years. The Balboa Art Conservation Center previously assessed the murals in 1996 and produced a preliminary report that describes many of the condition issues that are presented here, though these condition issues have apparently continued to advance over the last 30 years and became more apparent in recent years. Despite the condition issues described in this report, the Alvarado murals retain a high degree of material integrity and image clarity that allowed them to be preserved *in situ* with conservation treatment.

On May 6, 2024, Heritage Architecture & Planning submitted the findings of their investigation of the Alvarado Water Treatment Plant Murals via a *Historical Resources Report*. They noted the deterioration of the murals and provided their recommendations in the following quoted text (Heritage Architecture & Planning 2024):

We recommend the following two restoration options, listed in order of preference.

OPTION 1: MURAL REPLICATION

Given the damage to the existing murals, much of which is irreversible (i.e. discoloration, brittleness, tearing, etc.) along with the fact that this artwork is a photo print rather than a one-of-a-kind hand painted mural, the photo murals could be accurately replicated. But replication only works if the original negatives (or large prints) are still available. Since the murals are photo montages made up of a blend of at least 20 photographs, locating all 20 negatives – or two composite negatives – is key.

The advantage of this approach is that it would faithfully recreate the original murals in new condition, using the artist's original photos to recreate the way the murals looked in 1951. This would also be significantly less expensive by alleviating the need for a time-consuming and meticulous restoration which could never fully recreate the original look of the murals. The repository for photographer Richard Yale's work is the Special Collections & University Archives at San Diego State University (SDSU). Called the Dick Yale Papers, the archive consists of 17 boxes of articles, papers, photographs, and miscellaneous keepsakes.

On May 3, 2024, Heritage visited the SDSU Special Collections and went through the Dick Yale Papers. Unfortunately, the only item that was found related to the murals was a print of the downtown San Diego aerial photo, seen in Photo 8 below. No negatives or paperwork was discovered regarding the murals. Based on these findings, mural replication using original negatives or photo prints will not be possible.

This leaves one more option to recreate the murals from original sources: Photographically document (or scan) the existing murals in high resolution in-place so that they can be reprinted on new paper, without the UV-created sepia tone, and installed as faithful replicas. This method would also allow the "repair" of tears and other damage via digital retouching. The technology, along with the availability of an experienced consultant/conservator to perform this work, is unknown without conducting further research. It is also possible that this method may prove to be technically or financially infeasible given the size and condition of the murals.

OPTION 2: MURAL REMOVAL, RESTORATION & REATTACHMENT

Since the murals cannot be fully reattached and restored piecemeal, this option would involve the careful removal of both complete murals so they could be repaired and conserved offsite and returned for reinstallation with new, longer-lasting adhesive. As noted above, this would be costly and time-consuming and would not be able to fully recreate the original appearance of the murals. It is also possible that the murals are so brittle they cannot be removed and rolled-up for transport without being destroyed. Testing will be important to determine whether this option is even feasible.

Following this assessment, BACC was called in by the City to provide additional assessment and examine the murals on January 8th, 2025 (Appendix A). After examination and testing of the materials, adhesives, and supports, the murals were found to be well adhered to the wall across the majority of the surface (approximately 60-70%). This level of adhesion indicated that attempting to remove the murals would very likely result in significant and irreversible damage to the original materials. Areas where the murals had partially detached provided conservators with the opportunity to examine the photographic paper more closely to determine that it retained some degree of strength and flexibility, despite its age and condition. These findings led to BACC's recommendation of a third option: that the murals could be treated in situ, as this route represented the lowest-risk approach to achieve the best possible preservation outcome. Attempting to remove, treat, and reinstall the murals would not only introduce substantial risk of loss and damage, it would also require significantly greater treatment time and cost, likely with a diminished preservation outcome. By contrast, in situ treatment provides the most cost-effective means of preserving original, historic material while achieving the best possible conservation result. Accordingly, a proposal for treatment with the following goal was submitted by BACC:

Goal: Stabilize current condition to keep original mural on display without a reproduction obscuring the original. This treatment is estimated to take 1-2 months, with follow-ups and reporting provided at the 6-month and 1-year mark. Note: We recommend third party photographers be hired post-treatment for any potential future reproduction as needed.

The conservation treatment described below was carried out by the Balboa Art Conservation Center (BACC) between August and November 2025. The primary goal of conservation treatment was to allow the original murals to remain in their historic, original location so they can continue to serve as interpretive, historical resources. To achieve this goal, unsightly, detached areas of the murals that distracted viewers from the image content were reattached to the walls, smaller areas of detachment were addressed before they progressed further, and surface grime and dust was reduced to improve image clarity. Due to the unique set of materials that comprise the murals, a team of art conservators with an appropriate range of specializations, including Paper Conservation, Objects Conservation, Paintings Conservation, and Preventive Conservation, was assembled to plan and carry out the conservation treatment.

The murals were first assessed to determine sensitivity and solubility before conservators performed surface cleaning using dry and mechanical methods. Then detached areas of the murals were reattached to the walls using conservation grade materials and techniques. Environmental data collected in the foyer beginning in August 2025, along with observations made by the conservation team, were used to develop recommendations for continued preservation of the murals. Following this extensive conservation treatment, it is strongly

recommended that the murals be documented with high-resolution, color-accurate digital photography so that the content of the murals can be referenced or reproduced to scale in the future, should it ever be necessary.

Materials and Manufacture

Both of the murals are composed of gelatin silver photographs printed on matte, medium weight photographic paper. Each mural consists of three horizontal rows of photographic paper that, when seamed together, run the full width of the wall (approximately 47 feet). On each wall, a metal seismic joint intersects the mural vertically, at approximately one third the length of the mural towards the south side. Additional strips of photograph run vertically along the seismic joints to allow the image to appear continuous along the entire length of the wall. There is a maximum overlap of approximately 1 cm where the strips are joined. All of the strips of photographic paper are adhered with a starch-containing adhesive. The presence of starch was confirmed by performing a chemical spot test¹ on a small sample of the adhesive (Odegaard 2000). Though starch was identified, the exact composition of the adhesive is not known and it may also contain synthetic additives.

The murals do not appear to be printed directly from the original photographic negatives onto the photographic paper. Each mural was created by assembling pieces of existing photographic prints together like a collage before photographing the composite image and printing this onto the photographic paper we now see. This is clearly visible in the final print where shadows exist along edges of the collaged photographs that were torn, trimmed and layered on top of one another to create the desired visual effect (Figure 3). This method of composition allows for the multiple sites that were significant to the history of water treatment in San Diego to be included in one continuous photograph with multiple focal points.

Additional evidence of the photographic process as well as examples of historic retouching were observed across both murals, offering valuable insight into the working methods of the mural makers. Viewers today can observe the location of staples that were used to position the photographic paper during the exposure process, which are now captured in the print. Fibers or other debris on the negatives at the time of printing also result in underexposed areas that are not damages, but artifacts of the printing process (Figure 4). There is also evidence of historic retouching near the edges of the paper strips. Where darker image areas do not align exactly, additional dark pigment was added on top of the original photograph (Figure 5). This added material may have discolored over time at a different rate than the surrounding area, making it more readily distinguishable from the original image areas today than it may have been at the time of application. It is our estimation that this retouching was most likely performed at

¹ The Iodine/potassium iodide chemical spot test was performed to test for starch (Odegaard 2000).

the time the murals were installed, to achieve visual continuity across the multiple paper strips that comprise each mural.



Figure 3: Each mural is a collage of multiple photographs, as evidenced by torn and overlapping edges shown here. The collages were then photographed to create the two final images used in the murals.

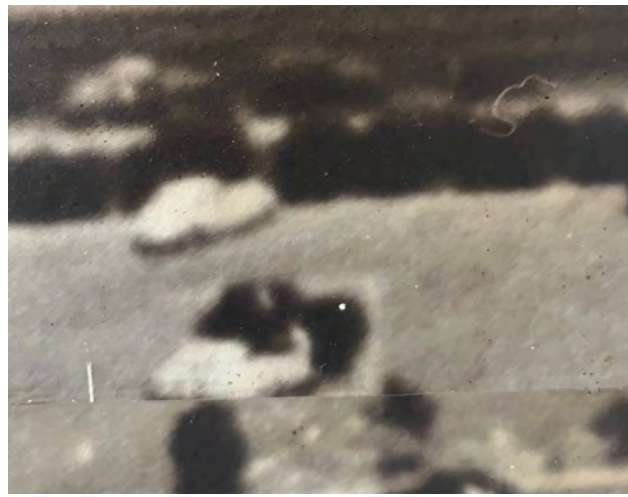


Figure 4: Detail image of staple mark (lower left) and light squiggle line (top right) from a fiber or hair on the photographic negative during printing.



Figure 5: Historical retouching evident near seams.

These gelatin silver photographs appear to have no baryta layer. A baryta layer traditionally consists of a thin coating of barium sulfate, a white, reflective material that can be applied to the surface of photographic paper below the gelatin layer to help increase contrast between highlights and darker image areas once a photograph is developed. Based on this method of construction, it is likely that the highlights were never intended to appear as a bright white, as the lack of a baryta layer limits the capacity for tonal contrast from the paper support.

Additionally, instead of a neutral black, the murals exhibit a warm tone in the dark image areas suggesting the photographs were toned as part of the printing process. Historically, photographic papers were produced throughout the twentieth century that allowed photographers to create a variety of warm browns, sepia, and purplish tones. Sulfide, selenium, and gold are examples of such toning agents. Image stability is often improved when the silver image is toned which could explain why there is no significant silver mirroring overall, and the image remains very legible, despite its being completely exposed to all interior environmental conditions of the building since it was first installed over 75 years ago.

On close inspection with specular and raking illumination, there is some unevenness to the surface sheen and discoloration (Figure 6), suggesting a surface treatment or coating may have been applied at some point in the history of the mural. It is not clear if it would have been done at the time the mural was installed or at a later date. While any coatings may have been intended to protect the surface of the photograph, they have likely contributed to the discoloration and yellowing over time, as coatings tend to both trap dirt and pollutants and also yellow themselves as they degrade. This is also the case with the adhesives and previous repairs where the aging of the materials used has negatively affected the appearance of the mural over time, despite the benefits they may have offered in the short term.

The source of the present color tone of the murals and any discoloration discussed in this report is based on direct observations of the current condition and what we know about the general appearance and deterioration of historic photographs of this nature. No documentation has been identified that describes the chemical processes used in development or the appearance of either mural when they were originally created.



Figure 6: Raking light detail image of surface characteristics of East Mural.

Pre-Treatment Condition of Murals

The Image Layer

The gelatin emulsion (image layer) exhibits a fine, overall pattern of cracking,² with small losses observed throughout the murals, but particularly at eye level. Some cracks are associated with structural cracks in the wall below the mural (discussed below), while others occur only in the image layer. Cracking of this nature typically results from a variety of factors including the age, environmental conditions as well as the natural inclination of the materials to degrade over time. Some losses are due to direct physical abrasions, while others are associated with tear edges or areas where the cracking has resulted in localized lifting and detachment of the emulsion. The fine cracking pattern is not readily visible from a normal viewing distance but is evident upon close inspection. Wherever the paper, gelatin and any other surface coatings or adhesives have become brittle with age, especially in a layered structure such as a photograph, the risk of cracking escalates. Fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity exacerbate this condition as the various layers expand and contract at different rates. The surface characteristics of these photographic murals are consistent with their age and storage conditions.

Aging of both the gelatin emulsion (image layer) and the paper support³, combined with the accumulation of a substantial surface grime layer (primarily dust, dirt, and soot), resulted in an overall reduction in image contrast. While the murals were never bright white and true black, there was likely greater contrast between the dark and light image areas at the time of manufacture than what we observe today. On close inspection with specular and raking illumination during treatment, an unevenness of the surface sheen and discoloration was observed in certain areas of the mural. It is possible a protective coating was applied to the mural at some point in its history, but its uneven application or deterioration has resulted in the mottled appearance observed (Figure 6). It is so degraded and/or inconsistent at this point that, without written records, it is difficult to tell whether it was applied intentionally as a protective coating or is the result of unintentional spills or grime accumulation over the years. It is also not clear if this material was applied to the surface of the murals at the time of creation, during installation, or at a later date. The only effect observed is a mottled coloration and surface sheen that is only visible on very close inspection with specific lighting conditions. It does not affect the legibility of the image, and is not easily distinguished at a normal viewing distance for such a large photograph. In addition to overall discoloration, there are physical abrasions, adhesive residues, insect debris (i.e. cobwebs), small stains, accretions (i.e. fly specs) (Figure 7) and paint drips

² This fine pattern of cracking in the gelatin emulsion layer was also noted by BACC conservators that examined the murals in 1996.

³ If a surface coating was applied, it would very likely also contribute to perceived discoloration, as protective coatings tend to both trap dirt and pollutants and also yellow themselves as they degrade.

(Figure 8) throughout the image that cumulatively have a negative visual affect on the murals as a whole.

Due to the condition of the image layer and surface of the murals, they remain extremely sensitive to water or any aqueous solutions applied directly to the surface. The majority of the mural has only been affected by indirect humidity (as described in the Environmental Assessment section of this report). Very few, small areas appear to have suffered from direct contact with water, as a result of small leaks, drips, or splatters that cause discoloration, staining, or loss of image material. It is extremely important that aqueous solutions, including wet cleaning products and adhesives, be completely avoided as the image layer remains vulnerable to staining and loss, particularly when wet or moist. Physical contact with the murals (e.g. wiping, scrubbing) when they are wet or moist will result in irreversible loss to the image and permanent staining.

The surface of each mural remains sensitive to physical abrasions as well. Physical abrasions include minor abrasions such as small scratches, scuffs, and pencil marks (Figure 9) and also larger abrasions, such as gouges likely created with a large, heavy object (i.e. maintenance tools or equipment) (Figure 10). The most significant areas of abrasion can be described to be within arms length at standing position. The area to the right of the door frame surrounding the light switch plate was the most heavily damaged. This area will remain vulnerable post-treatment without careful use of the switch. It may be possible to devise a larger switch plate or other covering to hover over the switch area of the mural as a preventive measure, but it is imperative that nothing be adhered or drilled through the photographic mural itself. In addition to the minor and major abrasions noted above, there were also two small pieces of historic pressure-sensitive tape above the entry door (Figure 11). Sticking anything to the murals should be avoided, as it will cause physical damage when removed. If anything is adhered to the surface of the mural in the future, it is recommended that it remain in place and a paper or photograph conservation professional be contacted to perform the removal in an effort to limit damage as much as possible.



Figure 7: Fly specs, or stains created by insect excrement, are present throughout.



Figure 8: Paint drips on the surface of the murals likely occurred when the ceiling or neighboring walls were painted.



Figure 9: Example of small scratches, scuffs, and pencil marks.

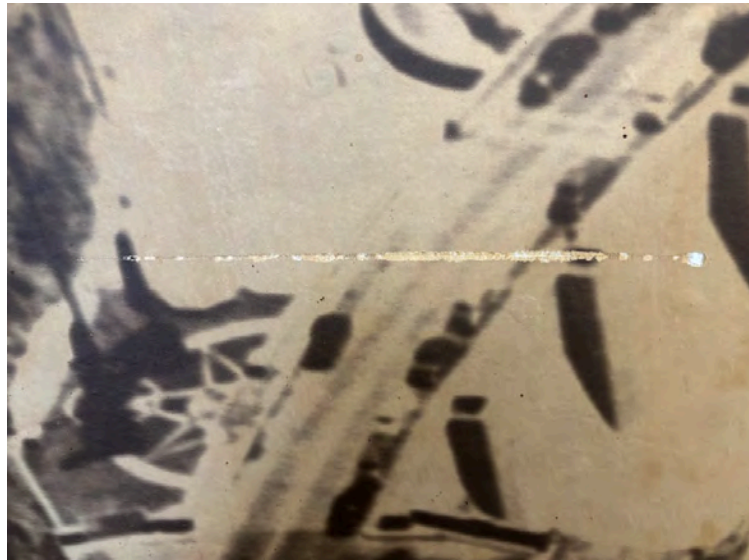


Figure 10: Gouges like this were likely created by large tools or equipment during building maintenance.



Figure 11: Pressure-sensitive tape was found stuck to the surface of the West Wall mural, above the entry door.

The Paper Supports

The paper supports are in fair condition due to physical damage and chemical deterioration, but considering their age and environment, the majority of the surface area remains intact and well adhered to each wall. They are a medium weight wove paper that was observed to retain minor flexibility where the paper had already separated from the wall. Since their production over 75 years ago, the photographic paper supports have become brittle and discolored due to natural aging and prolonged exposure to environmental factors including light, heat, moisture and gaseous pollutants. Ultraviolet (UV) light from unfiltered sunlight currently enters through the north and south facing windows on the walls between the two murals (Figure 12). This light is particularly damaging to photographs, as it exacerbates chemical changes that manifest as yellowing, darkening, and embrittlement. The addition of heat (due to the infrared component of sunlight) can speed up deterioration when the photograph is directly exposed for long periods of time.



Figure 12: Direct light on West mural from window.

Without a white baryta layer, the brightness of the highlights in the photograph rely on the color of the paper support and any subsequent discoloration of the gelatin image layer or other coatings. In the case of the murals, as the paper has discolored over time, the highlights have correspondingly darkened, reducing the contrast overall.

The paper support for the East Mural maintained better contact with the wall over time and was in better physical condition than the West Mural, which has suffered more significant and visually distracting damage. There are several areas where the original adhesive has failed on both murals, although these areas are more immediately apparent on the West Mural, where detached paper hangs down, exposing the bare wall. The adhesion has failed both between the adhesive and wall as well as the adhesive and paper, leaving adhesive residue on both wall and verso of the paper support. The delamination, or loss of adhesion between the plastered wall and the paper layer, has led to cracks and eventually tears in the paper supports. In most instances where original adhesive previously failed, the paper is separated from the wall but remains intact, resulting in a gap or “air bubble” under the paper layer. These gaps can be very small (< 1 inch in diameter) or relatively large (up to 12 inches in diameter). As these gaps grew larger, more pressure was put on the paper support through cycles of expansion and contraction due to fluctuations in relative humidity without the structural support of the adhesive and wall restricting movement. As the paper became brittle with age, it was no longer able to withstand significant fluctuations, which lead to cracks, tears, and eventually large sections of the mural that detached from the wall. Fortunately, the paper support maintained enough flexibility and integrity to drape down over the mural without separating completely in these areas (Figures 13 & 14). These areas of paper remained slightly flexible at the time of the initial assessment and throughout the treatment process.



Figures 13 & 14: Detached sections of paper on the West Wall retain enough strength and flexibility to hang down in "flaps."

There were four large areas on the West Mural where the original adhesive failed, resulting in large sections of exposed wall where the paper draped down over itself. In each case, the paper supports suffered only minimal loss at the tear edges and more complex areas where tears overlapped. Naturally, the paper support was most significantly distorted in these areas. Other distortions were present at the wall and ceiling edges where layers of adhesive and interior paints contributed to stiffening and curling at the extreme edges of the photographic paper.

Evidence of prior restoration or repair attempts are apparent on both murals. Sections of torn and lifted paper were re-adhered to the wall and in some cases to the adjacent areas of paper using adhesives that now appear very yellow to orange in color, and are highly brittle (Figures 15 & 16). These adhesives were thickly applied and, in some cases, the photograph was not properly aligned. Misalignment has created distortions that will remain as the adhesive is not reversible and these areas are no longer treatable. During treatment, it was possible in some areas, especially along the seismic joints or behind detached paper flaps, to reduce excess adhesive on the wall behind the murals. However, adhesives applied at the top edge along the ceiling, as pictured below, were not accessible for removal unless the paper was detached, as shown. In these areas, the paper was especially rigid with built up layers of adhesive on the reverse (Figures 15 & 16). In other areas, it appears that a material was brushed or wiped on top

of the image layer, now appearing as a dark stain (Figure 17). Since these dark, swipe stains always align with distortion and tears in the paper support, it is likely that they were also applied during an attempt to re-attach lifted paper. This is another example of how inappropriate and incompatible materials can ultimately cause irreversible damage to historic artifacts.



Figures 15 & 16: Adhesive applied during a prior restoration attempt (yellow arrow) is yellow and brittle compared to the original adhesive used to install the murals (blue arrow).



Figure 17: Dark stains such as associated with torn and previously lifted areas suggest prior restoration attempts were made.

Structural Factors: Seismic Joints and Wall Cracks

A metal seismic joint intersects both East and West Walls and protrudes slightly beyond the surface of the plaster-coated wall. In both cases, the murals were installed so they visually continued over the joint. Since the metal surface sits proud of the wall, the photographic paper was cut so a strip could be attached directly over the metal and provide visual continuity.

Due to the nature of the building structure, a gap exists between the metal joint and wall. This gap allows persistent airflow to enter the building. During recurring examinations, the

airflow moved into the building with greater force from the West wall than the East, likely due to wind direction and the nature of the architectural design of the building. The gaps in the wall structure were populated by numerous insects including spiders and ants on both walls. The increased levels of moisture and gaps in the wall also created favorable conditions for insects such as silverfish to consume the paper⁴, which caused skinning and irregular holes or edges (Figure 18). After treatment, these areas will continue to deteriorate at a faster rate than the rest of the mural due to acute exposure and rapidly changing micro-environment from persistent airflow. Any reduction of airflow to this area will likely decrease this deterioration rate, and is encouraged to achieve long-term preservation goals.

The elevated levels of moisture occurring as a result of airflow at the seismic joint has caused deterioration of the mural, metal joint, and plaster wall surface. This was especially noticeable on the West Wall where the plaster surface of the wall adjacent to the joint was powdery and crumbling in numerous areas. Losses in the wall material created an uneven surface along the joint in addition to pockets of air. The moisture has also caused reddish-brown corrosion on the joint itself which, in the most severe cases, has stained the photographic paper or undermined the adhesion of the paper to the metal surface. The added bulk from the development of the corrosion exerted outward pressure onto the adhesive and photographic paper, which itself expanded and contracted with localized fluctuations in humidity. In many areas on and around the metal joint, the photographic paper was no longer attached or present as a result.

The degree of damage to the photographic paper along the seismic joint on each mural varies. The most severe and noticeable damages on the East Wall include a loss of paper from the joint near the ceiling as well as an adjacent section that had detached and draped down over itself, revealing the bare gray metal joint below (Figure 19). On the West Wall, the edges of the photographic paper along the majority of the metal joint and adjacent wall surface were distorted and partially detached. The yellowed adhesive that was applied to other areas of the murals during a prior restoration attempt was also introduced at the seismic joints, where it has similarly become brittle, bulky and degraded. The glue was applied thickly and has resulted in very rigid and distorted sections along the joint. The rigid or brittle areas are most susceptible to loss, as cracked and lifted sections of paper require very little pressure to detach.

⁴ Silverfish thrive in humid conditions and prefer to eat paper with starch-based additives, such as the paper used to produce the murals.



Figure 18: The paper support was severely damaged near the metal joint, as the intrusion of outside air supported pest activity and corrosion (West Wall, before treatment).



Figure 19: Corrosion of the metal joint led to detached sections of the paper (East Wall)

Both the East and West mural walls contain structural cracks in the plaster that extend through the photographic paper. It could not be determined during this treatment how deep the cracks penetrate into the structure of the wall. These areas remain vulnerable to further damage and separation of the paper support from the wall over time. Cracks on both walls present in criss-cross patterns and cracks radiating from door frames, which suggests that it is inherent in the construction of the wall and cannot be remediated without damage to the mural.

In many cases, the plaster wall surface on either side of the cracks remains intact and the photographic paper is well adhered to the wall. However, there are some cases where the cracks are wider and the wall material beneath the photographic paper is friable, or powdery and crumbling. In three locations, sizable voids existed behind the photographic paper where the wall material had crumbled away leaving no surface for the mural to adhere to. In other cases where the paper had separated from the wall, powdery wall material and small pieces of debris fell from the wall and became trapped in the cavity behind the paper. Vibrations were observed on the lower section of the West Wall during the treatment phase of the project. The source was identified as water plant mechanical equipment in the levels below the atrium. These vibrations may contribute to loosening of wall material where the walls are already cracked.

Treatment Approach

The goal of conservation treatment was to stabilize the murals and minimize the appearance of loss and damage so they can remain on display, preserved in their original format. This approach allows original photographic material to be preserved in situ while also providing an opportunity to capture images of the mural in better condition for future reference and reproduction.

Prior to treatment, testing was carried out on each mural to assess condition, determine material sensitivities, and inform treatment decisions. This type of testing is standard practice in art conservation, as no two artworks are identical and each presents challenges that are unique to that particular work. In this case, solubility testing was conducted to evaluate the response of the photographic paper and image layer to moisture and a selection of solvents. This testing demonstrated that both murals are extremely sensitive to direct application of solvents in liquid form. Initial spot tests with a 00 sized brush indicated even very brief contact with small droplets of deionized water disturbed the gelatin emulsion affecting the surface characteristics of the photograph, and risked creating dark tide lines as the water readily wicks into the paper moving soluble discoloration with it. The emulsion is extremely vulnerable to any physical contact when fully wet and risks loss of image material if touched. Only light humidification was possible without disturbing the surface of the photographs. The surface of the photograph was sensitive to the application of both polar and nonpolar solvents commonly used in conservation including acetone, ethanol, isopropyl alcohol and toluene. Due to the sensitivity of the photograph, it was determined that attempting to clean the murals using aqueous solutions or solvents posed an unacceptable risk. Instead, dry surface-cleaning methods were selected as the safest and most effective approach to reduce surface dirt and grime.

The goal of cleaning the murals was to reduce harmful dust and debris while improving contrast, and therefore legibility of the image content. Surface cleaning does not reverse yellowing, as the source of this discoloration is not within the grime layer but rather a natural, expected, and irreversible result of the photographic materials and any surface coatings degrading over time. Dry surface cleaning of the murals was carried out in two stages. First, the entire surface of each mural was lightly dusted using soft hake brushes to remove loose particulates, insect debris, and cobwebs. Dust and insect debris was captured using a HEPA-filtered vacuum. Second, lighter areas of the images were selectively cleaned using polyurethane foam cosmetic sponges to gently reduce accumulated grime (Figures 20 & 21).



Figures 20 & 21: Surface grime was removed using dry cosmetic sponges.

These lighter image areas were targeted because surface soiling was more visually apparent and could be reduced safely without visually disrupting the image layer. Additional debris, including old adhesive residues, loose wall material, and corrosion on exposed areas of the seismic expansion joints were mechanically reduced to prepare the surfaces for reattachment. Where accessible, old adhesive residues from previous repair campaigns and powdery white wall material were also mechanically reduced from the back of the photographic paper or the wall surface using hand tools such as scalpels, brushes, microspatulas, air bulbs, and a HEPA vacuum with micro-attachments (Figures 22 & 23). In many areas, old adhesive could not be accessed where the paper remained securely adhered to the wall. The most significant debris removed consisted of loose, powdery wall material trapped between the photographic paper and the wall, which created visible and tactile bulk. This material was carefully removed as much as possible prior to re-adhering the paper to the wall so that the paper could be reattached smoothly and torn edges could meet as close as possible.



Figures 22 & 23: Debris and old, degraded adhesives were removed mechanically using a HEPA vacuum and scalpel.

The photographic paper retains a substantial amount of strength and integrity considering its age and format. The remaining flexibility in the paper supports allowed the sections of the murals that were detached and torn to hang down over the mural without cracking and fully tearing off, as discussed above. These detached but hanging sections of paper were particularly vulnerable to tearing, as the weight of the flaps put additional strain on the creased paper at the point of attachment. To support these hanging sections of paper in preparation for reattachment, tears and edges were mended with heat-set tissue. These pre-coated mending tissues were prepared in advance using various weights of Japanese paper (koko fiber) coated with a 3:2 mixture of Lascaux 303HV and Lascaux 498HV diluted with deionized water and brush-applied. Some tissues were also toned with acrylic paints to better match the color of the photographic image visible on either side of open tears. The prepared tissues were cut to appropriate sizes and attached to the reverse side of the photographic paper using tacking irons to apply heat and pressure through silicone release paper (Figures 24 & 25). This technique eliminated the need for wet adhesives and was primarily used to stabilize large tears prior to humidification and reattachment of the photographic paper to the wall.



Figures 24 & 25: Tears and edges in the paper support were reinforced with toned mending tissue (blue arrow) when necessary.

Where required, rigid, curled, or creased paper edges were lightly humidified using cool deionized water delivered via an ultrasonic humidifier to relax the paper support prior to mending and reattachment to the wall (Figure 26). Initial tests demonstrated that the photographic paper responded well to light humidification which, unlike fully wetting the surface, did not alter surface characteristics or color. Localized humidification was performed mainly along the ceiling so brittle edges could be flattened gently and gradually without tearing. Humidification was also necessary in areas where large sections of paper had separated from the wall and torn, creating distorted flaps.



Figure 26: Creased, brittle paper was relaxed with cool humidification in preparation for reattachment.

Photographic paper that was delaminated or detached from the wall was reattached with Lascaux 303HV and Lascaux 498HV adhesives used independently or in combination, depending

on the condition of the paper and how much tack was desired. Application methods were selected based on the nature of the damage and aimed to avoid direct application of the adhesive to the photographic paper as much as possible. Whenever possible, a 2:1 mixture of Lascaux 303HV: Lascaux 498HV adhesive diluted in deionized water was applied with a brush directly to the exposed wall surface and allowed to dry. A second layer was applied and allowed to partially dry before pressure was applied to the photographic paper to tack it back into place. Once fully dry, heat and light pressure was applied using a small tacking iron to activate the adhesive between the photograph and the Lascaux-coated wall (Figure 27). In areas where the paper was torn and lifted but the wall was not exposed, syringes of varying sizes were used to introduce the adhesive to the wall beneath the paper (Figure 28). In select cases, small incisions were made using a scalpel to allow syringe access where the paper had separated from the wall and formed bubbles but had not yet torn. This approach was used only when the delamination posed a risk of further damage to the photographic paper in the near future and no alternative treatment was feasible. This step was taken as a preventive measure in an attempt to reduce the timeframe between treatment campaigns.



Figure 27: Adhesive was activated using heat from a small tacking iron through silicone release paper.



Figure 28: Adhesive was applied using narrow syringes when access was limited.

In three instances, the wall had deteriorated and crumbled behind the photographic paper on either side of cracks, limiting treatment options. These shallow voids left behind were filled where possible with Modostuc delivered via a syringe, as the paper could not be safely lifted to

allow access with a microspatula. After the Modostuc dried, the filled areas were coated with Lascaux adhesive in the same manner as the wall. Existing cracks in the wall were not filled and remain visible upon close inspection. The photographic paper was adhered with Lascaux only to stable wall surfaces adjacent to these cracks.

Extensive treatment was carried out on the mural along both seismic expansion joints. Due to the severity of physical damage and loss, treatment included fills for missing plaster and in some cases photographic paper as well. Areas where losses resulted in stepped depressions from the surface of the photograph to the wall surface, Modostuc was used to level the area of loss to the same plane as the photograph. In one case along the East Wall seismic joint, the edge of the paper support was especially thin and fragile along an area of loss. To reduce the risk of further lifting, a Japanese paper (koko fiber) fill was adhered to the wall and intentionally overlapped the vulnerable edge of the photograph to reduce the risk of lifting in the future and aid in longer term preservation (Figure 29). This fill was later inpainted to visually integrate it with the surrounding area.



Figure 29: Toned Japanese paper (blue arrow) was used as a fill material to support fragile edges of the paper support and make reattachment more successful (East Wall, during treatment).

Areas of image and paper loss were addressed with inpainting and areas that contained paint drips, fly specks, accretions, and adhesive residues were retouched on top due to

irreversibility of these damages. In one location, a small piece of modern western wove paper was toned and used to fill a rectangular shaped loss of photographic paper at the lower right edge of the mural on the West Wall. This fill was subsequently inpainted for visual integration. In most other cases, losses were inpainted directly on the surface of the wall. A section of the grey metal wall trim that was missing from this section remains absent. It would be best replaced, if possible, to protect the edge of the mural from future detachment and loss.

The goal of inpainting and retouching was to visually reintegrate areas of loss and damage so they no longer distracted from the image as a whole, without altering the original content of the image. Golden PVA Conservation Paints and Gamblin Conservation Colors were both used and applied by brush in ethanol or isopropanol. These materials were selected for their solubility in fast-drying solvents and their suitability for use on the varied surfaces present, including the wall substrate, Modostuc fills, modern paper fills, and the original photographic paper where the image layer was damaged. Water-based media such as watercolor or gouache were not used, as they are incompatible with the extreme moisture sensitivity of the photographic emulsion.

The approach to inpainting and retouching varied depending on the type of damage or loss. In some cases, the wall surface itself was inpainted prior to reattachment of the photographic paper. Once reattached, further retouching was carried out along tear edges to tone discolored or exposed paper fibers. Areas of the murals where the photographic emulsion was damaged or lost, but the paper remained intact were selectively toned as possible to improve visual continuity across the mural. In some cases, these areas exhibited damage consistent with exposure to water (or another liquid) affecting the photographic image layer. It should be noted that these areas were small (< 2 inches in diameter) and were not consistent with a large-scale leak or flooding event. In these cases, the image layer was damaged or stained, and the damages could not be reversed. Large dark stains and large areas of old adhesive from previous repair campaigns could not be masked with retouching without covering a significant amount of original image material. These areas remain visible, particularly in dark image areas, but do not significantly detract from the overall visual interpretation of the murals.

Environmental Assessment

Two HOBO dataloggers were placed adjacent to the murals to begin collecting environmental data on September 10, 2025 (see Charts 1 & 2 below). One datalogger was placed on the ledge above the payment window on the East Wall and the second was installed within the metal window framing on the North Wall, positioned as closely as possible to the West Wall (Figures 30 & 31). These locations were selected to capture representative conditions near both murals while remaining discreet and secure. The dataloggers remained in place following the treatment and continue to log temperature (°C) and relative humidity (%RH) data that will inform post-treatment condition assessments, allowing for continued evaluation of environmental trends and their potential impact on the murals.

Environmental Conditions: East Mural

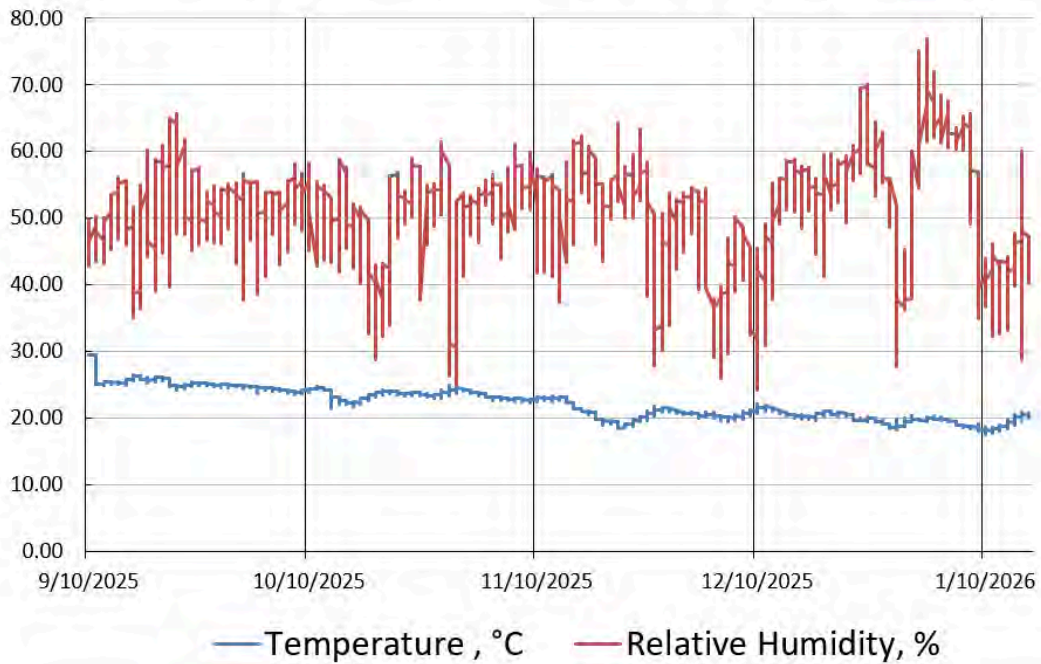


Chart 1: East Mural environmental conditions captured between September 10, 2025 and January 16, 2026.



Figures 30 & 31: Placement of datalogger above payment window on East Wall (left) and on the North Wall window framing, near the West Wall (right).

Throughout the monitoring period, the temperature experienced by the murals remained relatively consistent, with a recorded high of 29.5 °C (85.1 °F) and a low of 17.3 °C (63.1 °F).

Importantly, these temperature changes occurred gradually, both seasonally and within daily cycles. For example, interior temperatures consistently remained above 25 °C (but did not exceed 30°C) from early September through mid-November. Likewise, temperatures generally remained below 25 °C from mid-November through January. These trends echo ambient outdoor conditions in San Diego, indicating a largely passive interior environment. This gradual rate of change is a critical factor in preservation, as materials can generally tolerate a broad temperature range provided that shifts are slow and consistent. Seasonal shifts, such as those observed here, with warmer temperatures in summer and early fall months and cooler temperatures in winter months are acceptable and do not raise concern for significant mechanical stress. Fluctuations of 3 °C or more occurring repeatedly and on a daily basis would be concerning from a preservation standpoint. However, the temperatures recorded here often changed by approximately 1°C within a 24-hour period and the change in temperature never exceeded 2°C within a day. Under these conditions, temperature alone is unlikely to be a primary driver of deterioration.

Extreme high temperatures can also be considered a risk to historic materials. The temperature generally recommended for preservation of most historic materials is 21.5 °C +/- 3 (70 °F +/- 5 °F). During this period, the temperature remained in this range for 80% of the time (with the temperature exceeding 24.5 °C only 20% of the time). Furthermore, the temperature only reached extreme highs of 27°C (80.5 °F) or higher 1.5% of the time. The infrequent occurrence of elevated temperatures during this period is not considered problematic from a preservation perspective, although it should be noted that environmental data have not yet been collected during the summer months, when higher temperatures are expected.

Fortunately, minor differences in temperature were recorded from the dataloggers placed near the East and West murals, suggesting that overall conditions in the space are relatively uniform.⁵ However, localized risks remain. Both murals experience direct sunlight coming in through the windows, resulting in periodic temperature “hot spots” at the mural surface. Even modest localized warming can accelerate chemical aging of photographic materials, including embrittlement of paper fibers and the degradation of gelatin binders, particularly when compounded over long periods. While these effects are subtle and cumulative, they underscore the importance of mitigating direct exposure to unfiltered sunlight where possible. This risk could be mitigated through the application of UV-filtering window films, which would also reduce visible light intensity and infrared light (heat) known to accelerate deterioration of paper materials.

In contrast to temperature, relative humidity (%RH) is the dominant environmental risk factor in this space. Relative humidity describes the amount of water vapor present in the air, expressed as a percentage of the maximum water vapor that the air can hold at the present

⁵ Two dataloggers were placed in the room with an understanding that one may be inadvertently removed during regular operations and maintenance at the Plant. This aimed to ensure that at least one datalogger will remain in the space for one full year.

temperature. The paper and photographic emulsion are hygroscopic, meaning that when the RH rises, the paper absorbs excess moisture and expands but when the RH drops, it releases moisture and contracts. While temperature remained relatively stable, the recorded relative humidity (%RH) ranged from a low of 24.1% to 79.4%. This range is extremely broad for paper-based materials and, more importantly, changes in RH occurred rapidly and irregularly, rather than following a gradual, seasonal pattern.

From a preservation standpoint, it is not only the RH values that are concerning, but the frequency and magnitude of fluctuation in humidity. When RH is too low (i.e. < 35%), paper becomes increasingly brittle and when RH is too high (i.e. > 75%) the rate of chemical reactions that exacerbate deterioration increases. Furthermore, when fluctuations in RH occur, paper suffers mechanical stress as it expands and contracts in frequent, repeated cycles. Over time, this mechanical fatigue leads to planar distortion and cockling in the paper support and failure of adhesive bonds between the photograph and the wall substrate, which were condition issues observed throughout this treatment. The data show multiple instances where RH changed by 20-40% over periods of hours to a few days, such as the drop from 59% to 26% between the night of October 28 and mid-day on October 29, 2025 and the late-December oscillation from 70% down to 29% and back up to nearly 80% by early January. These fluctuations coincided with cycles of heavy rainfall in San Diego during that period. These rapid changes in environment are particularly stressful to the material because it does not have time to equilibrate gradually. Historic materials in general are less able to accommodate this mechanical stress without cracking or deformation, both of which were condition issues observed in the murals.

Environmental Conditions: West Mural

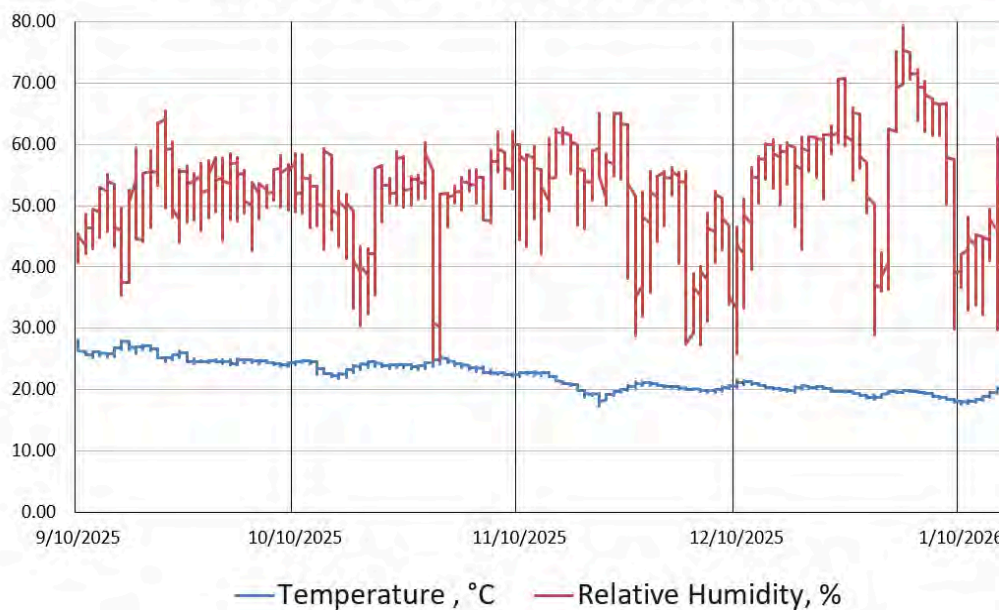
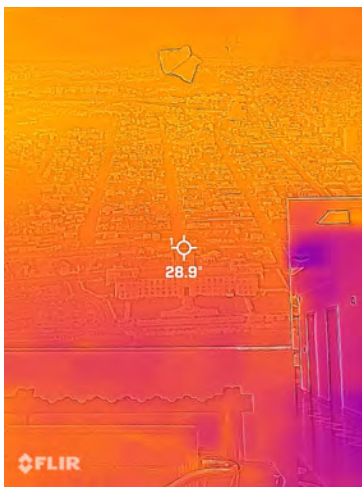
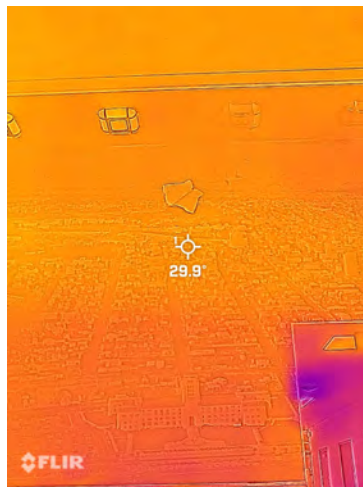
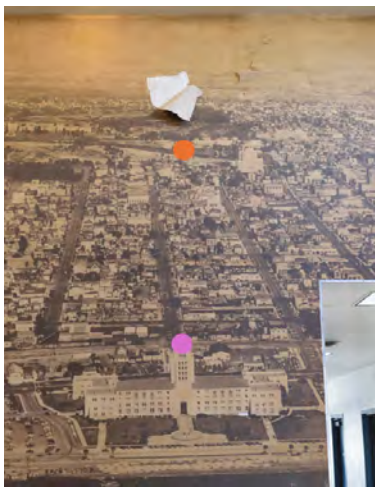


Chart 2: West Mural environmental conditions captured between September 10, 2025 and January 16, 2026.

The effects of repeated mechanical stress, apparently driven by fluctuations in RH, were most pronounced in the upper portion of the West Mural, where the paper support became fully detached from the wall in four locations. Thermal imaging conducted with a FLIR infrared camera helps explain why separation of the paper support from the wall progressed most in these areas (Figures 32, 33, & 34). The upper portion of the West Mural was consistently measured at approximately 1°C warmer than the lower portion of the mural, particularly where the paper support was already lifted and hanging free. While the lower portion of the wall is connected to another section of the building that shields it from direct sunlight, the upper portion of the West Mural receives direct sunlight on the exterior wall behind it. These localized temperature elevations likely amplified the mechanical stress imposed by RH fluctuations, resulting in greater movement of the paper relative to the wall substrate. As the paper repeatedly expanded and contracted in response to rapid RH changes, warmer conditions likely also put strain on the adhesive layers holding the paper in place. Over time, this repeated stress led to weakening of the adhesive bond and progressive separation of the paper from the wall in these areas.



Figures 32, 33, & 34: Thermal images show higher surface heat near the top of the West Mural (above, marked in orange on photo) than on the lower portion of the West mural (left, marked in purple on photo).

It is critical to note that the temperature never approached the dew point during the monitoring period, meaning that condensation on the wall did not occur during this period⁶. This is important because the mural was observed to be extremely sensitive to liquid water. Evidence of past exposure to liquid water would be highly apparent and it was not, suggesting that there were no previous water events (i.e. flooding, significant leaks) that caused large areas of the murals to be wet. That said, some degree of condensation (though not enough to result in wet drips) may have occurred on the mural surface at some point in the past, and could provide another possible explanation for the uneven surface characteristics described above (Figure 6). Although it was not observed during treatment, condensation is more likely to occur at the metal seismic joints, where moist microclimates occur due to the intrusion of outside air at the gaps, paired with the fact that the metal is likely to be a cooler temperature than the adjacent wall. The paper support is in poor condition along the metal seismic joint, due to moisture and possible condensation that occurs there as a result of the outside air that enters from the gap.

Based on observations during the treatment and the environmental data collected so far, RH fluctuations posed the greatest risk to the murals. These cycles of change in RH have caused repeated mechanical stress that contributed to paper deformation and, ultimately, separation from the wall. Keeping RH within a narrower, more consistent range would allow the materials to adjust gradually and reduce the risk of further detachment. Improvements to the building envelope would also support these goals. At present, the foyer of the Operations Building is not well insulated from environmental conditions outside. There is direct access to the space via an exterior “front door” that allows a significant amount of air exchange when entering or exiting. There is also a short hallway off the foyer leading directly to a second exterior door. Both doors lead to areas where water is stored or being processed within a short distance. There are also stairs in the foyer that lead down to lower levels of the building, which are not environmentally isolated from the foyer above. Water events, which have occurred in these spaces, are likely to contribute to elevated humidity in the foyer. Additionally, air is able to freely enter on the sides of the metal seismic joint, causing relative humidity inside to fluctuate nearly as much as outside. This not only caused rusting of the metal joint, but also exposed the mural to cycles of rapidly fluctuating RH. As long as the gap adjacent to the metal seismic joint continues to allow airflow into the foyer, the murals will deteriorate more quickly in this area. Together, improved environmental control and exclusion of outdoor environmental conditions would create a more stable interior environment and better preserve the murals over time.

⁶ Environmental data was collected from data loggers placed nearby, not on the mural surface. This data, paired with observations that the mural surface was not noticeably cooler than the ambient temperature in the foyer, suggests that the mural surface temperature also did not reach dew point.

After Treatment

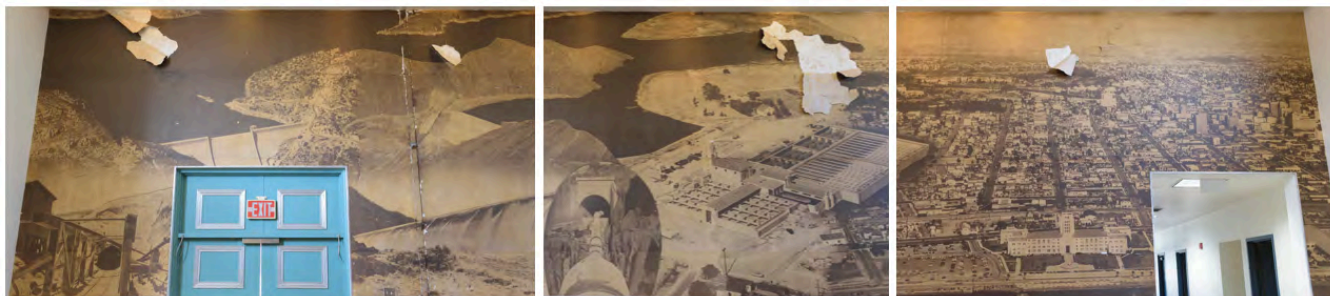
Through conservation treatment, the murals were stabilized to the greatest extent possible within the constraints of the building environment and given their age and material condition. Before and after treatment photographs document the significant improvement in overall planar stability, reduction of active lifting of the paper support, and improved visual continuity of the image (Figures 35 through 44). Detached areas of the photographic paper were carefully reattached, surface soiling was reduced, and losses and discoloration were visually integrated through inpainting and retouching. Despite these improvements, the murals remain inherently vulnerable due to ongoing environmental instability, the inherent vice of aging materials, and structural conditions of the building.



East Wall – Before Treatment



East Wall – After Treatment



West Wall - Before Treatment



West Wall - After Treatment

Figures 35 & 36: Before and after photos of both sides of the mural.



Figure 37: West Wall - Before Treatment (Detail).



Figure 38: West Wall - After Treatment (Same Area Detail).



Figure 39: West Wall - Before Treatment (Detail).



Figure 40: West Wall - After Treatment (Same Area Detail).



Figure 41: West Wall - Before Treatment (Detail).

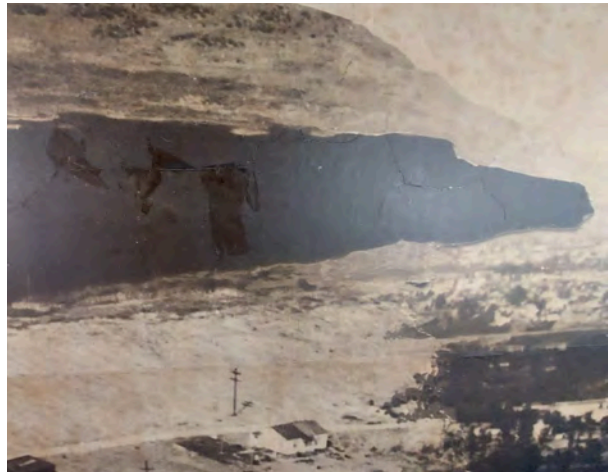


Figure 42: West Wall - After Treatment (Same Area Detail).

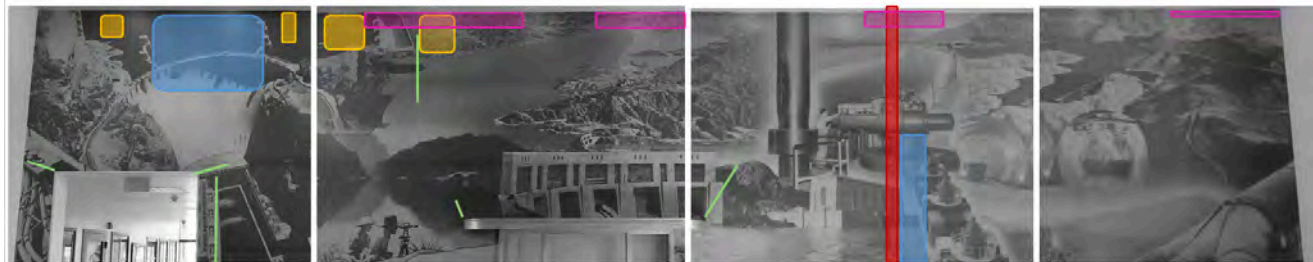


Figure 43: West Wall - Before Treatment (Detail).



Figure 44: West Wall - After Treatment (Same Area).

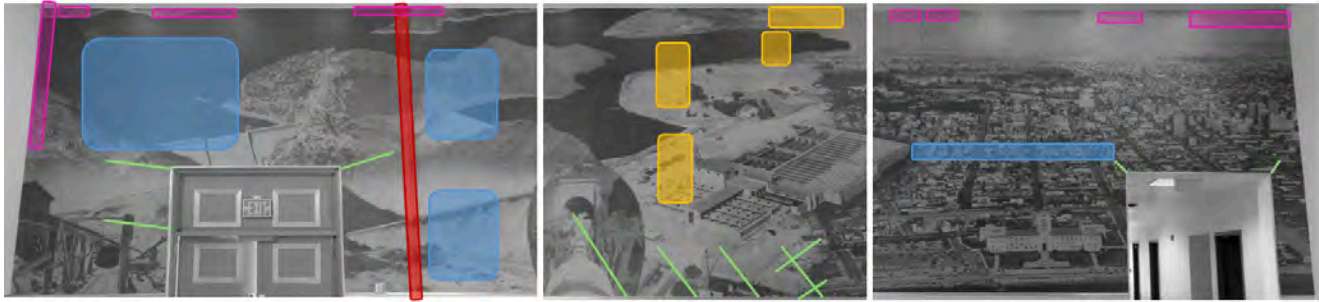
To document residual risks and guide future monitoring, a Preservation Map was created for each mural (Figures 45 & 46). These maps identify areas of known vulnerability and past intervention using color-coded overlays and should be referenced during all future visits, including the post-treatment assessments, as well as any future retreatment campaigns.



Preservation Map

- Metal Joint
- Old Adhesive
- Cracks in Wall
- Pest Damage
- Susceptible to Detachment

Figures 45 & 46: Preservation Map, East Wall (above) and Preservation Map, West Wall (below).



The metal seismic joint, marked in red on the Preservation Maps, remains a significant risk factor. This joint contains a gap that allows air to persistently enter the space on both the East and West sides of the room, contributing to rapid cycles of fluctuating RH in the foyer. As described in the previous section, these RH fluctuations are a primary driver of mechanical stress for the paper support. While the paper on and near the joint was reattached where possible (e.g. when paper pieces remained), these areas remain vulnerable if air intrusion at the metal is not prevented.

Areas marked in yellow indicate the presence of old, yellowed and degraded adhesives from previous reattachment campaigns. As described above, this adhesive has aged poorly and is now brittle, cracked, discolored, and bulky. Although it was mechanically reduced as much as possible during the treatment, complete removal was not feasible without risking damage to the paper support. The presence of this aged adhesive limits the effectiveness of the new conservation grade adhesive introduced during this treatment (which has much better aging properties) and reduces the flexibility of the paper support in these areas. As a result, areas with residual old adhesive remain more vulnerable to future separation. This is an example of why adhesive should only be introduced by conservators who are trained to select adhesives that are both compatible with the historic materials and also have good aging properties.

Cracks in the wall substrate are marked in green. These cracks were previously documented in BACC's 1996 report on the condition of the murals and remain evident today. On the East Wall, the largest cracks are associated with the central payment window, extending diagonally from its upper corners. On the West Wall, an extensive network of intersecting diagonal cracks span the central section of the wall in the lower third of the mural. While the paper support was successfully reattached on either side of these cracks during the current treatment, the cracks in the wall beneath the mural could not be structurally addressed. Movement of the wall along these fissures remains a concern and these areas should be monitored. Fortunately, it does not seem like these cracks in the wall have progressed significantly since they were described by BACC in 1996, although a photo was not included in that report.

Areas of pest damage are marked in purple and primarily occur near the ceiling. These areas show losses to the paper support likely caused by silverfish, which are able to digest

cellulose (a component of paper) and consume materials containing polysaccharides such as the starch found in adhesives and paper. Although the paper was reattached when not lost completely, losses and prolonged detachment have left these areas embrittled and mechanically weak. As a result, they remain susceptible to cracking or renewed separation. Spiderwebs were also found and removed from these areas during treatment, as pest presence often attracts secondary infestations. Frass (insect excrement) or fly specs were also evident, causing discoloration of the paper support. These areas were addressed to the extent possible through cleaning and retouching. While high humidity poses a preservation risk to the murals, as described above, it also increases pest activity, particularly for silverfish, which thrive in humid environments. Addressing humidity concerns will also serve to reduce pest damage to the murals.

Zones marked in blue remain susceptible to future detachment. These areas exhibit a high concentration of small gaps or “air bubbles” between the paper support and the wall substrate. Adhesive was introduced to these gaps where access permitted; however they coincide with areas of the murals that are inherently vulnerable to detachment, particularly near the metal seismic joint and near the upper portion of the walls, which experienced higher temperatures via direct sunlight on the exterior walls. As discussed earlier in this report, these conditions amplify mechanical stress caused by RH fluctuations and increase the likelihood of detachment from the wall.

While the conservation treatment has significantly improved the stability and appearance of both murals, the Preservation Maps clearly show the vulnerabilities that remain after treatment. These maps should be used as living documents to guide future monitoring and maintenance efforts.

Recommendations

The continued preservation of the historic murals installed at the Alvarado Water Treatment Plant depends on addressing building-related risk factors, reducing environmental stress, and establishing a culture of care around the murals which prevents people from harming them inadvertently. While the recent conservation treatment has significantly improved the murals’ stability and aesthetic legibility, both works remain inherently vulnerable due to uncontrolled relative humidity (RH), unfiltered sunlight, and structural features of the building, most notably the seismic joint and structural cracks in the wall. The following recommendations emphasize preventive conservation and risk reduction strategies intended to slow deterioration, extend the interval between future treatment campaigns, and reduce the likelihood of irreversible loss before additional intervention becomes necessary.

Environmental Control and Insulation

Based on observations during treatment and the environmental data collected to date, instability in relative humidity poses the greatest long-term risk to the murals. It is not only extreme RH values that are problematic, but the frequency and magnitude of fluctuations. Cyclical expansion and contraction of the paper support in response to changing RH has already resulted in mechanical stress, planar distortion, and detachment from the wall substrate.

Although the Operations Building does not currently have HVAC control for temperature or humidity, the introduction of even modest environmental regulation would substantially improve preservation outcomes. Installation of a climate control system capable of moderating both RH and temperature is recommended. Strict museum-level precision is not required, particularly since the murals have acclimated to some degree of environmental fluctuation over the last 75 years. However, photographic materials of this age would benefit from a more stable environment, which can be achieved by limiting the intrusion of outside air in the space, improving insulation, and installing a HVAC system. The HVAC system should aim to reduce rapid RH fluctuations, maintain RH within a narrower and more consistent range (ideally 40-60%), and avoid prolonged periods of extreme dryness (< 35 %) or elevated humidity (> 70%). Air flow from the HVAC system should not be pointed directly at the murals, but rather pointed toward the center of the room, so as not to create microclimates or extreme conditions at the mural surface. HVAC filters can help reduce the dust and particulate matter that enters the space, which can ultimately stick to the surface of the murals and form a grime layer. Filters rated MERV 13 or higher are recommended to reduce dust in the presence of paper and photographic materials.

If full HVAC installation is not immediately feasible, interim measures should be considered. Where feasible, improved insulation at exterior walls, windows, doors, and particularly at the seismic joint would further buffer indoor conditions from outdoor weather changes. Ensuring exterior doors remain closed unless being utilized for passage is very important to stabilize the interior environment and keep particulate matter, dust, and pests from entering the building. This will be particularly important if the fountain adjacent to the entrance is restored, as water flow so close to the foyer entrance will introduce moisture and contaminants that can harm the murals. On particularly humid days or during water events, fans can be used to circulate air in the foyer as a temporary solution to reduce the effects of high relative humidity. Fans should never be pointed directly at the murals, but rather used to circulate air in the space. Stabilizing the interior environment will reduce mechanical stress on the paper support, relieve strain at adhesive interfaces, and significantly decrease the likelihood of progressive detachment.

The metal seismic joint remains a primary source of environmental instability and has been directly linked to RH-driven damage documented during treatment (i.e. corrosion of the metal joint and pest intrusion at this access point leading to greater deterioration of the murals). A gap in the wall at the seismic joint allows continuous intrusion of exterior air, creating a

microclimate at the mural surface that is impossible to buffer from exterior conditions. Following conservation, this area will continue to deteriorate at a faster rate than the rest of the mural unless an adequate seal is installed in this gap. During the treatment phase of this project, Water Plant staff applied expanding foam to the exterior of the building adjacent to the seismic joint on the West Wall to help mediate air flow and insect activity. The benefits and long-term efficacy of the use of expanding foam is not clear. The feasibility of sealing or gasketing the joint to limit air exchange, while fully preserving its seismic function, should be assessed by qualified building professionals. If permanent sealing is not possible, reversible or seasonal barriers that reduce air movement without compromising structural safety should be explored.

Ongoing environmental monitoring is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented improvements and to identify emerging risks. The existing HOBO dataloggers should remain in their current locations and continue collecting data through the summer months. This environmental data can be interpreted in conjunction with condition observations made during follow-up site visits. The preservation maps created during treatment identify areas of known vulnerability and should be treated as active working documents. These maps should be referenced during post-treatment site visits (and by any future preservationists) to assess changes in condition. Particular attention should be paid to areas adjacent to the seismic joint, upper sections of the mural where detachment was more prevalent, zones containing residual historic adhesive, and areas of previous pest damage or paper loss. Any new lifting, cracking, discoloration, distortion, or evidence of mechanical damage should be recorded. These records will be invaluable for future conservators should additional treatment become necessary.

Light Exposure

Both murals are exposed to direct sunlight through adjacent windows, resulting in periodic temperature “hot spots” at the surface. Even modest localized warming can accelerate deterioration. In the case of the murals, there is risk of embrittlement of paper fibers, degradation of the gelatin emulsion, fading of image material, and deterioration of adhesives over time. While such effects are gradual and cumulative, they underscore the importance of mitigating direct exposure to unfiltered sunlight. Although fading and discoloration already experienced by the murals cannot be reversed⁷, minimizing light exposure, particularly to UV light from sunlight, will help increase the lifespan of the murals. The application of UV-filtering window films is recommended to reduce ultraviolet radiation, visible light intensity, and infrared heat gain. These measures would not only reduce surface heating but also slow light-induced fading and chemical degradation of the photographic murals. Only light bulbs that do not include any infrared or UV radiation, such as LED bulbs, should be installed in the foyer.

⁷ As previously noted, it could not be determined how much the murals may have faded or shifted in color since their installation.

Maintenance Protocols and Stewardship

Stewards play a critical role in early detection of change. Staff at the Plant should be recognized as stewards of the murals and their understanding, care, and “buy in” considered central to the preservation of the murals and a first step in limiting preventable damage. Visual inspections should be conducted annually. Observers should look for new lifting, bubbling, planar distortion, cracking near wall fissures, accumulation of dust or cobwebs, signs of pest activity and any new surface marks or abrasions. It is helpful when changes or damages are documented photographically. Consultation with a conservation professional specializing in paper, photographs, or preventive conservation is highly recommended when significant physical damages occur.

The mural surfaces remain highly sensitive to physical abrasion and surface contact. Minor contact can result in scratches, scuffs, staining, or loss of image material. During treatment, evidence of avoidable mechanical damage was observed, including pencil marks on the mural surface, abrasion consistent with furniture or equipment movement, paint drips matching the ceiling paint on the mural surface, and old masking tape adhered directly to the murals. These conditions underscore the need for increased awareness and more careful maintenance practices within the space. Maintenance personnel and contractors should exercise extreme caution when working in proximity to the murals. Painting, ceiling repairs, mechanical servicing, or other overhead work should never be conducted without appropriate protective measures in place to shield the murals from drips, splatter, dust, or debris. Tape of any kind should never be applied to the mural surface. If temporary masking or protection is required elsewhere in the room, materials should be secured to adjacent non-art surfaces only. Applying surface coatings with the intention of protecting the surface of the mural is not advisable, and can cause irreparable harm if carried out with incompatible materials or techniques. Taking care to avoid inadvertently harming the murals will help maintain their stable condition.

Similarly, staff working in the plant as well as contractors should be advised that the murals are fragile and historically important works of art that must not be touched. Even light contact can cause abrasion or transfer of oils and dirt to the surface. Furniture, ladders, tools, and equipment should be kept at a safe distance from the murals at all times. If the space is reconfigured or furniture is moved, care must be taken to ensure that no object comes into contact with the mural surface. The establishment of clear, written maintenance protocols, staff orientation regarding mural sensitivity, and subtle physical barriers would significantly reduce the risk of inadvertent damage. The historic benches housed in the foyer are a good example of a subtle physical barrier, particularly because they are not tall enough to touch or abrade the surface of the murals, yet help keep people from touching or leaning on the murals in these areas. Likewise, the trophy case that is also housed in the foyer should be placed with a 4-inch gap between its back and the mural surface, so as not to trap moisture behind the case or abrade the mural surface if it is purposely or inadvertently moved. The trophy case should not be placed in

front of the seismic joint so as not to trap moist air in this particularly vulnerable area. Careful movement and mindful placement of furniture will prevent minor, repeated mechanical impacts and meaningfully extend the life of the murals.

Additionally, care should be taken during any wet cleaning in the space (i.e. cleaning floors, windows) to limit moisture as much as possible and avoid directly spraying liquids in the space. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that behave like indoor air pollutants can negatively affect and accelerate aging of the photographic materials. Any new wall paints or cleaning solutions should have low VOC content and not contain chlorinated compounds if possible. In the future, it will be helpful to avoid maintenance tasks that may exacerbate moisture levels in the air, such as wet cleaning with excessive amounts of water or painting during periods of already high humidity.

Documentation and Professional Oversight

Following this extensive conservation treatment, it is strongly recommended that both murals be documented with high-resolution, color-accurate photography. Staff advised that the original negatives used to produce the photographic murals could not be located, meaning that there are currently no means to reproduce the murals in the future. Since the murals depict important historical information, it is essential that this information be documented in case the murals are ever damaged beyond repair. In their present state following this treatment, the murals are likely in the best condition that they will ever be in the future, making this an important time to document them with high resolution images. These images should be of high enough resolution to allow for digital reference and future reproduction should it ever be necessary.

All future work involving the murals should be carried out exclusively by professionals qualified to treat sensitive historic artworks, specifically trained conservators. The murals are highly water sensitive. Under no circumstances should aqueous solutions, wet cleaning agents, or inappropriate adhesives be introduced. The image layer remains vulnerable to staining, swelling, and irreversible loss when exposed to moisture. Physical contact with the surface while it is wet or even slightly damp, such as wiping or scrubbing, will result in permanent damage. Only a conservator should introduce adhesives, as the use of inappropriate materials in the past has resulted in staining, yellowing, embrittlement, and decreased the capacity for successful retreatment.

Since it is not in the job description or professional capacity of any Water Plant staff to clean or assess the murals, the Plant should work with a conservator every five years to do an overall dusting of the murals with a soft brush and HEPA vacuum. This will help prevent the accumulation of surface grime and reduce the need for future surface cleaning treatment. Also every five years, the conservator should conduct a visual assessment to track changes in condition and identify future treatment needs before they advance. Implementing these regular

assessments will help the City and Plant staff plan for retreatment before the murals reach the level of need that was observed by BACC staff in January 2025.

As outlined here, there are many factors that contribute to deterioration over time. Physical and chemical deterioration is inevitable, but these rates can be reduced with both preventive care and treatment strategies. If the recommendations in this document, including the regular assessments and general care are followed, it significantly increases the probability that deterioration will proceed at a slower rate than its pre-treatment state. Preventive efforts such as managing humidity and associated broad swings in RH will significantly reduce future mechanical failure and prolong the lifespans of the murals considerably. These efforts have the potential to afford decades of life, barring any catastrophic incidents or physical forces. The usable lifespans of the murals are primarily dependent on their legibility for teaching visitors about the history of San Diego’s water supply. At present, there is limited quantitative data available to accurately predict future deterioration rates or overall lifespan. The murals have remained in place for 75 years, during which time the space has been subject to minimal environmental controls and regular public access. Following BACC’s one-year post treatment check-in, and a review of one-year of environmental data, a more informed projection regarding the timing of future interventions can be provided.

Summary

The recommendations described above are listed in the table below, categorized by time sensitivity and level of investment. Taken together, these recommendations prioritize risk reduction, responsible maintenance practices, and sustained stewardship to reduce the need for additional treatment. By reducing environmental extremes, limiting air infiltration and light exposure, and reducing inadvertent damage caused by people using the space, stewards can slow deterioration and extend the service life of the murals. Continued collaboration among building managers, maintenance personnel, Plant staff, and conservation professionals will be essential to ensure the long-term preservation of these important, historical works.

	Immediate (\$)	Mid-Term (\$\$)	Long-Term (\$\$\$)
Environmental Control	Seal or gasket the gap along the seismic joint, which allows intrusion of exterior air.	Insulate doors and windows with gaskets or door sweeps (and ensure existing gaskets are in good condition).	Installation of HVAC system to moderate both temperature and relative humidity. Use appropriate filters to limit dust and particulate intrusion (e.g. MERV 13).
Light Exposure	Install UV-filtering film		

	on windows. Continue using appropriate light bulbs (i.e. LEDs)		
Maintenance Protocols	Educate staff and maintenance personnel to avoid damaging the murals. Replace the missing piece of silver aluminum strip used to protect the bottom edge of murals. Advise staff to be cautious with light switches or consider installing larger switch plates. Do not adhere anything (i.e. tape) directly to the murals. If something is stuck to the murals, call a conservator to remove it.	Work with a conservator every 5 years to do a brief exam and general surface cleaning as part of a maintenance plan.	
Documentation	Document the murals with high-resolution images of sufficient quality for future reproductions.		

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Appendix

Attachment A - BACC's Report on Condition | Dated January 8th, 2025

Attachment B - BACC's Treatment Proposal | Dated April 11th, 2025

Attachment C - BACC's Treatment Report | Dated February 24th, 2026

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Granger Hotel

Address: 964 Fifth Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101

Category (refer to first page of packet): Category 1- Adaptive reuse of historic buildings, structures, sites or cultural landscapes

Project Completion Date (month, year): December 2024

Program Launch Date (month, year): October 2023

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Alvin Mansour - Oram Hotels
2. Kevin Mansour - Oram Hotels
3. Chris Fairchild - Oram Hotels
4. Matthew Winter, AIA - LPA Design Studios

Nominator Information

Name: Matthew Winter, AIA

Company or Title (optional): Director of Mixed Use -LPA Design Studios

Address: 2765 Truxtun Rd, San Diego, CA 92106

Phone: (858) 232 -4870 Email: mwinter@lpadesignstudios.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award? (Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

- For nominating projects, discuss the work performed, and provide details as to how specifically the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- For programs, discuss the overall structure of the program, how the community engages with and or participates in the program, and how the program aligns with historic preservation.
- For people, discuss the background, work, and leadership of the individual or organization. Please provide details about their contributions to the field of preservation.
- Does the project or program demonstrate an innovative approach to preservation, encourage sustainability/climate resiliency, or add housing units? If so, please provide a description of how.

Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

The Granger Building is an adaptive reuse project located in downtown San Diego, CA, at 964 Fifth Ave. It is a historic Romanesque-style building originally constructed in 1904 as an office building and later housed various uses, including a temporary home for animals destined for the San Diego Zoo in 1917. The project involved transforming this aging steel-frame building into a boutique hotel known as the Granger Hotel, which is San Diego's only location included in the Marriott Design Hotel collection and the only "guest only" hotel downtown.

The project was five years in the making and utilized Historic Tax Credit financing as well as the California Historic Building Code to creatively address technical challenges. The design goals included maintaining the building's authentic character while creating a comfortable, modern hotel experience with integrated technology and a focus on sustainability, aiming to reduce the building's Energy Use Intensity (EUI) to 70% below baseline. The wellness aspect of the project focused on daylighting, sound control, and natural ventilation to foster a healthy environment for occupants.

The hotel features 96 rooms, two restaurants, and a lobby lounge called The Parlor Room, designed to attract young creatives. The project highlighted many historic elements such as embossed tin ceilings and distinctive office doors and windows, which were retrofitted to meet current codes through innovative solutions. The project has been recognized as a catalyst for development in the Gaslamp Quarter neighborhood and was included in the Michelin Guide for San Diego.

<https://lpadesignstudios.com/news/san-diego-union-tribune-downtown-building-on-ce-housed-san-diego-zoo-animals-a-bank-and-law-offices-now-its-a-hotel>

<https://lpadesignstudios.com/projects/granger-building>

<https://lpadesignstudios.com/catalyst/saving-a-historic-landmark>

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. H. H.', written in a cursive style.

Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Documentation: Supporting materials may be submitted to supplement but not substitute for the justification that is supposed to be provided in the Narrative portion of the nomination.

Types of materials that may be included:

- For building projects:
 - Photos of the completed project (REQUIRED).
 - Plans, drawings, PowerPoint, or other documentation sufficient to illustrate the property before and after the nominated activity and to address how the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
- For interpretive/educational/community projects or programs: Copies of related materials, such as a book, brochure, DVD/CD, website links, transcripts, or photographs of exhibits or activities.
- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.













2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Ezabelle Apartments

Address: 454 13th St, San Diego, CA 92101

Category (refer to first page of packet): Historic Preservation Project

Project Completion Date (month, year): July 2021

Program Launch Date (month, year): July 2021

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Soheil Nakhshab, Nakhshab Development & Design, Inc: soheil@nakhshab.com
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Nominator Information

Name: Amy Reed

Company or Title (optional): _____

Address: 598 W Laurel St Unit 11, San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-255-7257 Email: amy@nakhshab.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?
(Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

- For nominating projects, discuss the work performed, and provide details as to how specifically the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- For programs, discuss the overall structure of the program, how the community engages with and or participates in the program, and how the program aligns with historic preservation.
- For people, discuss the background, work, and leadership of the individual or organization. Please provide details about their contributions to the field of preservation.
- Does the project or program demonstrate an innovative approach to preservation, encourage sustainability/climate resiliency, or add housing units? If so, please provide a description of how.

Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

SEE NEXT PAGE

Ezabelle shows how historic preservation and modern urban living can successfully coexist when approached with care, creativity, and collaboration. Built on a long-neglected, 42-foot-wide infill parcel in downtown San Diego, the project centers on the adaptive reuse of a High Victorian Italianate residence originally constructed in 1881–1882. Though the 1,350-square-foot, single-story home had fallen into serious disrepair since its last renovation in 1942, it retained key architectural features—bay windows, narrow double-hung windows, a recessed front porch, and a mansard roof—that made it worthy of historic designation and careful restoration.

From the outset, the goal was to preserve what made the home historically significant while giving it a viable future. The project team worked closely with the City of San Diego, Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO), and historic preservation attorney Marie Burke Lia, whose guidance was instrumental in navigating the regulatory process and ensuring full compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Given the tight lot size and the need for substantial site upgrades, the historic structure was carefully dismantled, documented, and stored off-site during early construction. This allowed the new concrete residential structure to be built without risking damage to historic materials. Once the modern portion of the building was complete, the historic home was reconstructed and restored on-site, forming the ground-floor façade of the mixed-use development. The result is a preserved historic presence at the street level, paired with a contemporary residential structure that is clearly differentiated yet compatible in scale and placement.

The new construction rises behind the restored Italianate façade, maintaining the historic streetscape and ensuring the original residence remains the visual anchor of the site. Rather than mimicking historic details, the modern design respects the old by letting it stand apart. Inside the building, an interior courtyard was designed as a nod to old-world Italian streets, reinforcing the Italianate character of the historic home. Cobblestone paving and intimate proportions give the space a timeless feel while bringing natural light and air into the residential units.

Ezabelle delivers 46 micro-apartments and ground-floor commercial space, providing much-needed workforce housing in a high-demand downtown location. The project also set a citywide precedent by becoming the first multi-residential development in San Diego approved with no on-site parking—reducing excavation, lowering costs, and allowing space to be used more efficiently. Sustainable materials, efficient unit layouts, and low-maintenance landscaping further support the LEED-certified project's long-term environmental goals.

By restoring and reusing a long-abandoned historic residence and integrating it into a compact, mixed-use development, Ezabelle demonstrates that preservation doesn't have to mean freezing a building in time. Instead, it shows how historic structures can be thoughtfully adapted to meet today's needs while retaining the character and craftsmanship that make them worth saving.

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.

Amy Reed
Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Documentation: Supporting materials may be submitted to supplement but not substitute for the justification that is supposed to be provided in the Narrative portion of the nomination.

Types of materials that may be included:

- For building projects:
 - Photos of the completed project (REQUIRED).
 - Plans, drawings, PowerPoint, or other documentation sufficient to illustrate the property before and after the nominated activity and to address how the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
- For interpretive/educational/community projects or programs: Copies of related materials, such as a book, brochure, DVD/CD, website links, transcripts, or photographs of exhibits or activities.
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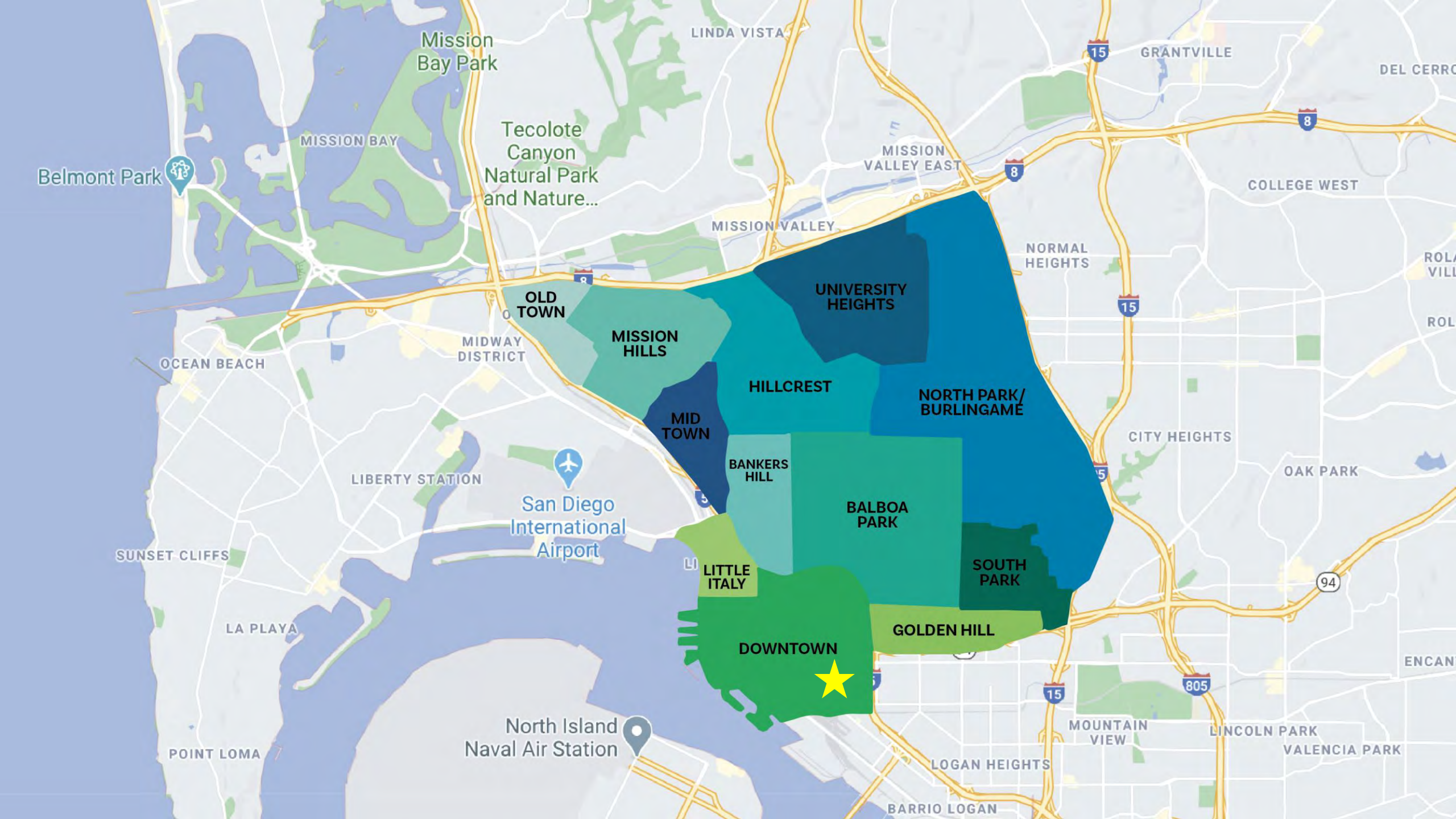


EZABELLE

San Diego, California, USA

Owner: NDD on 13th Street Lofts, LLC

Designer: Nakhshab Development & Design, Inc.



Mission Bay Park

LINDA VISTA

GRANTVILLE

DEL CERRO

Belmont Park

MISSION BAY

Tecolote Canyon Natural Park and Nature...

MISSION VALLEY EAST

MISSION VALLEY

COLLEGE WEST

NORMAL HEIGHTS

OLD TOWN

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

OCEAN BEACH

MIDWAY DISTRICT

MISSION HILLS

HILLCREST

NORTH PARK/BURLINGAME

MID TOWN

CITY HEIGHTS

LIBERTY STATION

San Diego International Airport

BANKERS HILL

BALBOA PARK

OAK PARK

SUNSET CLIFFS

LA PLAYA

LITTLE ITALY

SOUTH PARK

94

North Island Naval Air Station

DOWNTOWN

GOLDEN HILL

MOUNTAIN VIEW

LINCOLN PARK

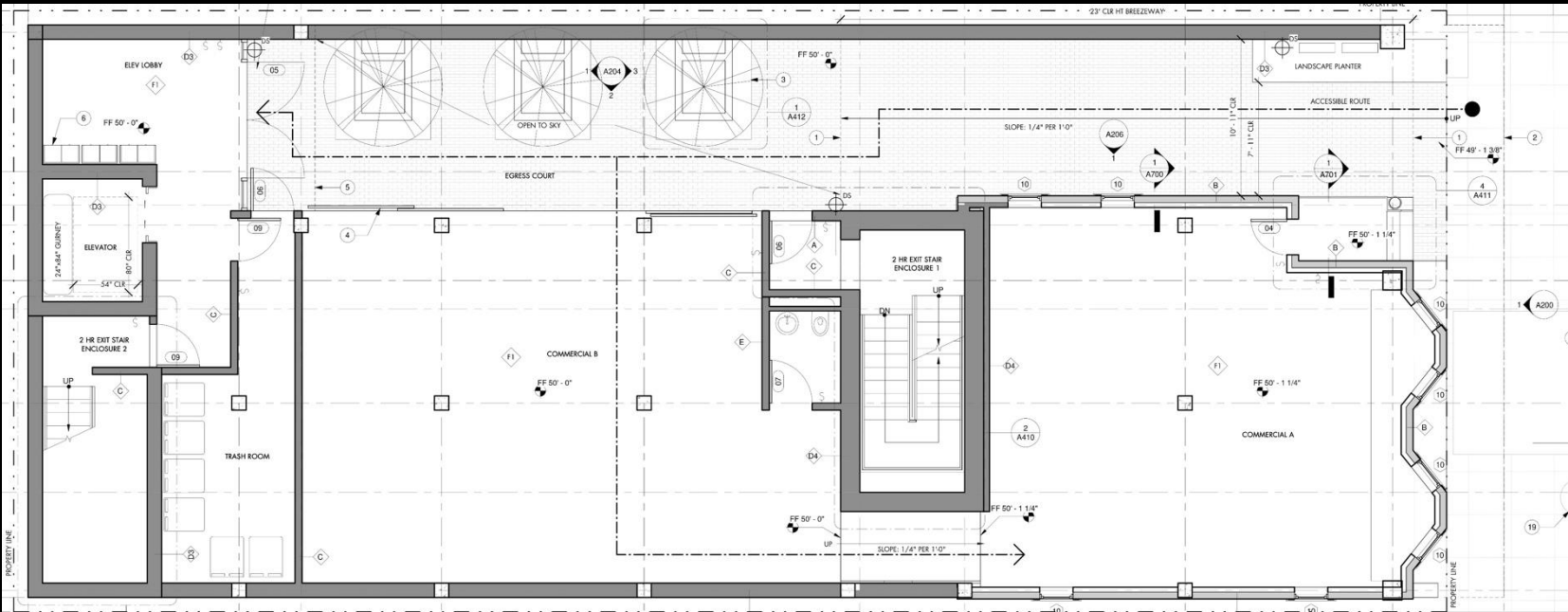
VALENCIA PARK

POINT LOMA

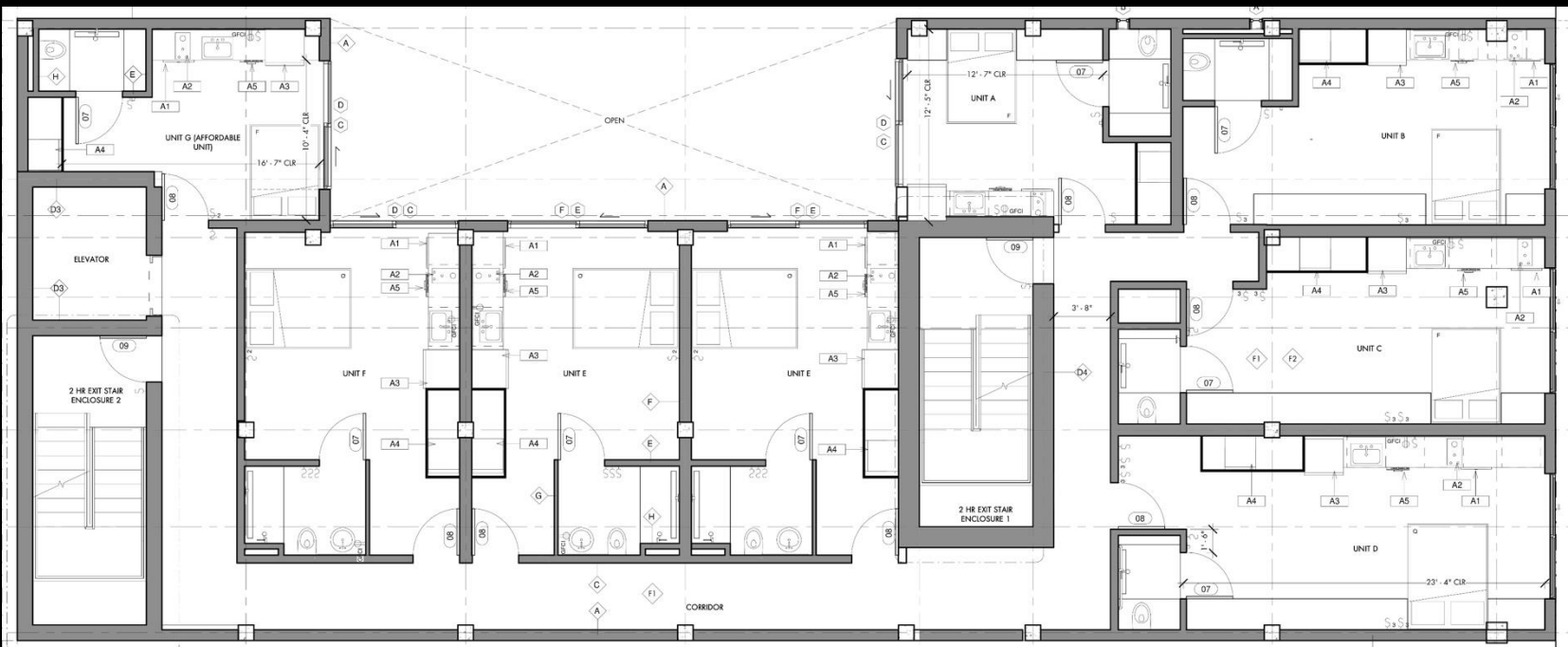
LOGAN HEIGHTS

BARRIO LOGAN

ENCAN...



Commercial Space Site Plan



Residential Floors Site Plan

BEFORE



RENDERING





BEFORE

AFTER







454





















City of San Diego | 2026 Preservation Awards

County Administration Center Renovation

County of San Diego | **SILLMAN**



1938



2026

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME

County Administration Center Renovation

ADDRESS

1600 Pacific Hwy
San Diego, CA 92101

CATEGORY

Preservation Projects

PROJECT COMPLETION DATE

June 2025 (Phases 1-17)

INDIVIDUALS / ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT:

1. County of San Diego:

Kathryn Moroz, Project Manager
kathryn.moroz@sdcountry.ca.gov

2. SILLMAN Architects:

Julio Medina, Architect, AIA
jmedina@sillmanarch.com

3. Architect Milford Wayne Donaldson:

Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
mwdonaldson13@yahoo.com

4. RTD Construction Management Corp.:

Richard Dinnean, Project Manager
richard.dinnean@rtdcm.com

5. Turner Construction Company:

Edgar Sanchez, Project Manager
esanchez@tcco.com

6. BWE, Inc.:

Charles Colvin, SE
ccolvin@bwesd.com

7. IMEG Consultants Corp.:

Eric Glatzl, PE
eric.glatzl@imegcorp.com

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Name: Brett Tullis, AIA

Company: SILLMAN Architects

Address: 7515 Metropolitan Dr, Ste 400
San Diego, CA 92108

P: 619.818.5721

E: btullis@sillmanarch.com

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Operational Heart of County Government, Preserved with Precision The San Diego County Administration Center (CAC) anchors the County's civic identity and has provided public services **since 1938**. Residents recognize it as the County's "Crown Jewel" - a landmark that defines the waterfront skyline and embodies civic pride.

When aging mechanical, electrical, life-safety, roofing, and accessibility systems approached end-of-life, the County took decisive action. Rather than replace this National Register landmark, the County launched the Major Systems Renovation Project (MSRP) in 2019 to extend the building's life, strengthen its resilience, and modernize performance - without compromising historical integrity.

The project accomplished:

- ✓ Complete mechanical, electrical, plumbing systems replacement & additional new fire protection system
- ✓ Seismic strengthening using discreet fiber-reinforced polymer structural reinforcement
- ✓ Modernization of building-wide security systems, including upgraded surveillance and monitoring infrastructure
- ✓ Energy performance upgrades to meet California Title 24 standards
- ✓ Comprehensive ADA improvements under the California Historical Building Code
- ✓ Restoration of marble corridors, terrazzo floors, mahogany railings, and historic lighting
- ✓ Conservation of original 1938 bronze elevator doors and Otis hardware
- ✓ In-place repair of historic rolled steel windows
- ✓ In-kind restoration of clay tile roofing, mosaic domes, decorative concrete, and bronze entrances
- ✓ Protection of Works Progress Administration (WPA) era murals and public art
- ✓ 300,000+ sf of phased tenant improvements
- ✓ Phased construction that maintained uninterrupted County operations

The County paired preservation discipline with sustainability strategy. By retaining the original structural frame and concrete walls, the project avoided significant embodied carbon impacts.

New high-efficiency air handling units, LED lighting with occupancy controls, a Building Automation System, cool roofing, added insulation, and maintained operable windows dramatically improved energy performance.

This renovation does more than maintain a landmark, it secures its future.



SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Historical Background Architects Samuel W. Hamill, Louis Gill, Richard Requa, and William Templeton Johnson designed the CAC as the centerpiece of San Diego’s waterfront civic center. Funded through New Deal investment and dedicated in 1938, the building projected permanence and optimism during economic hardship.

The CAC commands attention with its Art Deco exterior, Spanish Colonial Revival detailing, and Beaux-Arts planning principles. Red clay tile roofs, decorative ceramic panels, bronze doors, terrazzo floors, and Tennessee marble-lined corridors demonstrate craftsmanship intended to endure.

For generations, residents have gathered here to participate in public hearings, access services, and engage in civic life. The building shapes San Diego’s civic identity and collective memory.

Period of Significance & National Register Stewardship The National Register listing (1988) identifies 1938–1941 as the building’s period of significance. The Project team treated that designation as a directive.

The project preserved:

- ✓ Original Historic Materials and Finishes
- ✓ Defining Architectural Details
- ✓ Interior Spatial Integrity
- ✓ Craftsmanship and Decorative Features
- ✓ Symbolic Elements of the Tower and Façade
- ✓ Continued Public Use

Each intervention strengthened the building’s integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards - Project Approach Under the **guidance of Historical Preservation Architect, Wayne Donaldson**, the team applied Preservation, Restoration, and Rehabilitation treatments intentionally and consistently.

All work was completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

- **Repair Before Replacement** Restored marble walls, repaired terrazzo floors, conserved bronze elevator doors, preserved mahogany railings, restored mosaic roof dome tiles, and rehabilitated steel windows in place. When deterioration required replacement, the team matched materials in composition, scale, color, and texture.
- **Research-Driven Restoration** Historic paint cross-section analysis established restoration-period colors. The team reinstated documented finishes based on laboratory evidence rather than approximation.
- **Minimal Intervention** Engineers routed new mechanical, electrical, and fire protection systems through service areas and cavities to avoid altering significant spaces. Designers preserved historic volumes, corridors, and proportions.

Sustainability Through Preservation As part of extending the building's useful life, the County completed a **comprehensive seismic evaluation** to better understand performance during a major earthquake. The assessment identified vulnerabilities within the tower and select structural zones.

A fiber reinforced polymer reinforcement system was introduced to discreetly strengthen key structural elements while **retaining original concrete and masonry assemblies**. By upgrading the existing structure rather than replacing it, the project improved seismic resilience, enhanced occupant safety, and **preserved significant embodied carbon**. This intervention supports long term durability **without altering the building's historic character** while avoiding environmental impacts associated with reconstruction.

Operational efficiency improved through:

- ✓ Replacement of all air handling units with high-efficiency systems
- ✓ Installation of a Building Automation System for real-time control
- ✓ LED lighting with occupancy sensors and daylight harvesting
- ✓ Installation of a white TPO cool roof on non-clay tile areas
- ✓ Added rigid roof insulation to strengthen the envelope
- ✓ **Retention of operable windows** to support natural ventilation
- ✓ Seismic strengthening using discreet fiber-reinforced polymer reinforcement to extend structural lifespan while preserving original concrete systems



These measures **reduce energy demand, improve comfort, and enhance long-term resilience**.

Accessibility & Code Compliance - Preservation in Practice A comprehensive ADA evaluation was completed prior to construction under the California Historical Building Code.

Accessibility improvements were carefully integrated to:

- Provide equitable access
- Install compatible brass hardware
- Preserve character-defining restrooms and corridors
- Upgrade elevators and stairways without altering historic materials

Life-safety and systems were modernized with the installation of a new fire protection system while **minimizing visual impact**.

Determination of Historical Colors & Finishes Laboratory-based paint cross-section analysis established restoration-period colors. Exterior turquoise window finishes and interior brown trim were reinstated based on documentation, not conjecture. **Repainting followed Restoration Standards and Preservation Brief guidance.**



INTERIOR HISTORIC FEATURES

Lobbies & Corridors:

- Tennessee Rose & Vermont Verde marble restored
- Terrazzo flooring repaired to original composition
- Original wood-and-glass light fixtures restored and retrofitted with concealed LED bulbs
- Mahogany stair railings preserved
- Brass trim revealed and reinstated
- Spatial proportions & Beaux-Arts circulation patterns were maintained.

Elevators:

- 1938 bronze doors restored in situ
- Original Otis hardware retained
- Cab terrazzo and marble bases repaired in-kind

Restrooms Historic tile restrooms were restored. ADA-compliant facilities were located adjacent to avoid compromising significant spaces.

Tenant Improvements Approximately 300,000+ sf of office space was modernized with compatible yet contemporary finishes that respect historic circulation.

Board Chambers Modern audiovisual and life-safety systems were integrated while protecting **WPA-era murals** under conservator supervision.



EXTERIOR HISTORIC FEATURES

Concrete, Stucco & Decorative Tile Exterior repairs followed Preservation Brief guidance to ensure compatibility in material strength, composition, and finish.

Roofing Mission clay tile roofing was repaired in-kind. Salvaged roll tiles were reused to maintain weathered character. New copper flashing was installed.

Mosaic Domes Ceramic tile domes were restored by specialized art conservators. Mortar joints were duplicated in strength, composition, color, and profile.



Exterior Windows 600 Rolled steel windows, defining features of the façade, were preserved through:

- Early condition assessment
- In-place repair and reinforcement
- Restoration of historic colors
- Improved operability
- Protective coatings for marine exposure
- Laminated glazing was introduced only where necessary and without visual disruption

Bronze Doors & Metal Features Certified conservators tested and implemented the gentlest cleaning methods to remove corrosion while preserving patina. Protective coatings were applied to ensure durability in the coastal environment.

Mechanical & Energy Upgrades New HVAC, electrical, fire alarm, sprinkler, and life-safety systems were installed with minimal impact to historic spaces.

The building now meets California Title 24 energy standards while retaining its architectural identity.

Building Security was comprehensively modernized to protect occupants and the facility while respecting historic character.

A new building-wide surveillance system was integrated throughout interior and exterior areas with redundant local and cloud based storage to support continuous monitoring and rapid retrieval. The system is monitored at multiple secure locations by the Sheriff's Office, strengthening coordinated response capability without altering significant architectural spaces.

Fiscal Stewardship The renovation of more than 300,000 square feet of occupied civic space and full modernization of major building systems was completed without exceeding the approved construction budget.

The project **advanced during the COVID-19 pandemic**, a period marked by supply chain disruption and volatile market conditions. Through early procurement of long lead materials and disciplined coordination, the County and design team maintained schedule and cost stability while preserving quality and historic integrity.

This careful stewardship of public resources reflects the same responsibility applied to the preservation of the building itself.

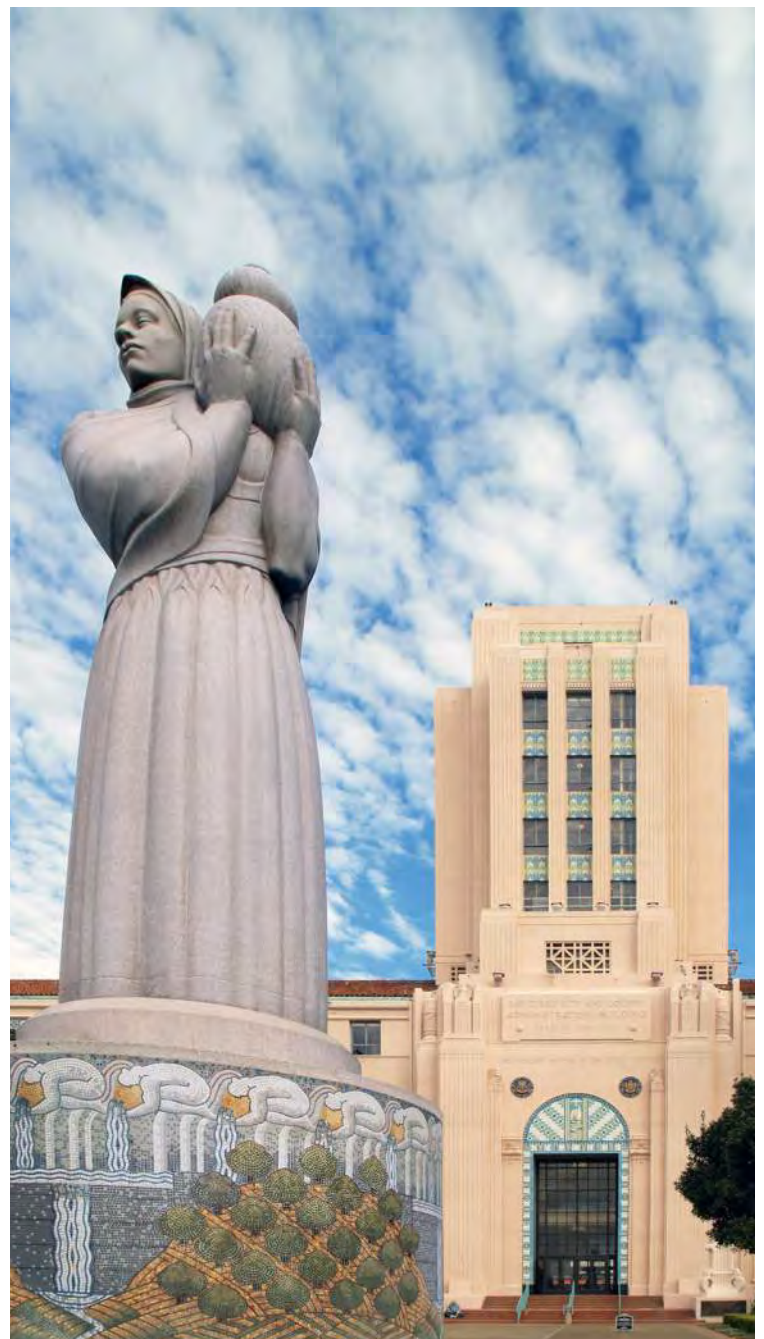
CONCLUSION

The Renovation of the San Diego County Administration Center demonstrates that **preservation and modernization are not opposing forces, they are complementary acts of stewardship.**

This project:

- ✓ Extended the life of a National Register landmark
- ✓ Preserved irreplaceable Depression-era craftsmanship
- ✓ Integrated modern systems with restraint and precision
- ✓ Maintained uninterrupted public service during construction
- ✓ Reinforced the CAC's role as a civic symbol on San Diego's waterfront

The renewed CAC stands today as both an authentic 1938 landmark and a resilient, future-ready civic institution, honoring its past while fully prepared to serve the community for decades to come.



The Renovation of the San Diego County Administration Center demonstrates that **historic preservation is not simply compatible with sustainability, it is one of its most powerful tools:**

Preservation as Carbon Reduction At its core, the project embodies a **preservation-first sustainability strategy:** retain and upgrade rather than demolish and rebuild.

The most significant environmental decision was the preservation of the building's structural frame and exterior concrete walls. Structural and concrete systems represent the largest contributors to a building's embodied carbon. By maintaining these components, the County avoided the substantial environmental impacts associated with demolition, debris hauling, new material production, and reconstruction.

Extending the useful life of this 1938 landmark is itself a climate resiliency strategy. **The greenest building is the one that already exists** - and this project demonstrates how a historic civic structure can be repositioned for another generation of service without incurring the carbon cost of replacement.

High-Performance Building Systems While preserving historic fabric, the project simultaneously transformed the CAC into a high-performance facility.

These Building Systems Included:

- ✓ All air handling units (AHUs) were replaced with high-efficiency systems designed to reduce energy consumption and improve operational reliability.
- ✓ A modern Building Automation System (BAS) was installed, enabling real-time monitoring and optimization of heating, cooling, and ventilation systems.
- ✓ Lighting was upgraded to energy-efficient LED fixtures equipped with occupancy sensors and daylight controls to minimize electrical demand.

These upgrades reduce operational energy use while maintaining the architectural integrity of historic interiors.

Cool Roof & Envelope Enhancements Roof replacement presented an opportunity to improve climate performance without compromising character-defining clay tile elements.

- Non-clay tile roof areas were replaced with a white TPO "cool roof" system, significantly reducing heat absorption.
- Additional rigid insulation was added to improve thermal performance.

Together, these improvements lower rooftop temperatures, reduce cooling loads, and enhance resilience during extreme heat events, an increasingly critical consideration in southern California.

Natural Ventilation & Passive Strategies Wherever feasible, historic operable steel windows were preserved and restored. Maintaining operability allows occupants to **utilize natural ventilation during favorable weather conditions**, reducing reliance on mechanical systems and promoting occupant wellbeing.

This integration of passive and active strategies reflects a balanced, climate-conscious design philosophy.

Operational Continuity as Resiliency The CAC serves as the seat of County government. Ensuring that this facility remains operational during system upgrades, and resilient against future failures, is a matter of public safety and governance.

By replacing aging infrastructure proactively, the County reduced the risk of catastrophic system failures that could remove a critical civic facility from service. **Emergency Generator Upgrade**

The renovation included **replacement of the existing tenth floor emergency generator** with a new, larger capacity generator located within a purpose built concrete enclosure north of the building.

Major life safety systems, including the fire pump, fire alarm, emergency lighting, and elevators, are connected to the new generator. The system was sized to support safe occupant evacuation and maintain critical operations during utility outages.

An Innovative Model for Historic Civic Buildings

This project demonstrates an innovative preservation model:

- ✓ Retain embodied carbon through structural conservation
- ✓ Modernize systems to reduce operational energy
- ✓ Integrate cool roof and insulation upgrades discreetly
- ✓ Preserve operable windows to support passive ventilation
- ✓ Extend life-cycle performance of a National Register landmark

The result is not simply a restored historic building, but a climate-responsive civic institution prepared to serve the community for decades to come.

The Renovation of the CAC proves that historic preservation is not an obstacle to sustainability. It is a strategy for achieving it.



BROADENING ETHNIC & CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Renovation of the San Diego County Administration Center demonstrates that historic preservation can serve as a platform for equity, access, and civic inclusion - not just architectural conservation:

Preserving a Civic Space for All Communities Since its dedication in 1938, the CAC has functioned as the operational heart of County government. For generations, residents from every ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic background have entered its marble-lined corridors to access essential public services. By **preserving and modernizing this landmark, rather than relocating services to a new facility**, the County ensured that this historic building continues to serve the full diversity of San Diego County.

Preservation, in this case, was not symbolic, it was functional. The project safeguards uninterrupted access to government services that directly impact historically underserved communities.

Housing Equity-Centered Public Services Today, the **CAC houses departments that directly support diverse populations**, including the Office of Equity and Racial Justice and the Health and Human Services Agency. These departments deliver programs addressing health access, housing stability, behavioral health, food security, and social services across a culturally diverse region.

By extending the life of the CAC and modernizing its systems, the project ensures that a National Register landmark remains a living civic institution, **actively advancing equity** rather than standing as a static artifact of the past.

Historic preservation here broadens its reach by **sustaining the infrastructure that supports cultural and ethnic diversity** in real, tangible ways.

Expanding Public Access & Civic Engagement The CAC is not isolated - it is integrated with the County's Waterfront Park, one of the most actively used public open spaces in downtown San Diego.

The surrounding site includes:

- Interactive public fountains used by families from across the region
- A playground and family-accessible amenities
- Public basketball courts
- Open lawn areas for gatherings, demonstrations, and cultural events

These spaces host community celebrations, civic gatherings, and public expression representing the diverse voices of San Diego County. The CAC serves as both architectural landmark and democratic backdrop - **reinforcing preservation as a shared civic experience**.



Accessibility as Inclusion Through ADA upgrades implemented under the California Historical Building Code, the **project strengthened physical accessibility while preserving historic character**. By improving access to entrances, restrooms, elevators, and circulation paths, the renovation ensures that residents of all abilities can engage with this historic civic space.

Preservation was approached not as restriction, but as expansion of access.

Reframing Historic Preservation as Public Stewardship Historically, preservation has often focused on architectural aesthetics or elite narratives. The CAC renovation broadens that framework by reinforcing preservation as civic infrastructure.

The project demonstrates that:

- ✓ Historic buildings can actively support diverse communities
- ✓ Preservation can advance equity by maintaining access to public services
- ✓ Inclusive public space is part of historic stewardship
- ✓ Cultural diversity is reflected not only in architecture, but in ongoing use

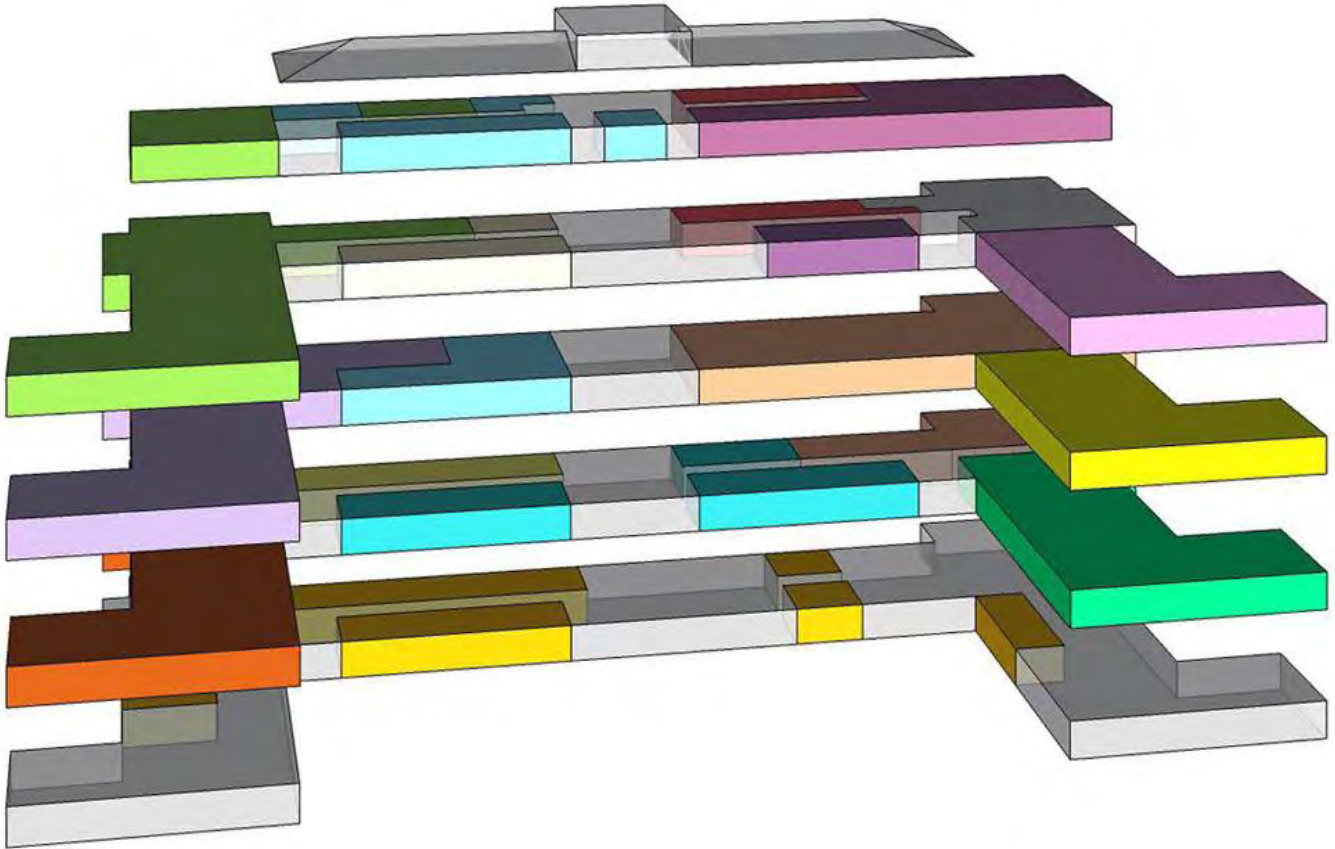
By **sustaining this landmark as a functioning, inclusive civic center**, the project broadens historic preservation from **protecting materials to protecting public access, representation, and participation**.

The San Diego County Administration Center remains not just a preserved building, but a living civic resource that reflects and serves the full ethnic and cultural diversity of the County today.

ALL WORK WAS COMPLETED IN PHASES TO MAINTAIN FULL BUILDING OPERATION DURING CONSTRUCTION

Staff and Public Safety During Construction Throughout the five year construction period, the CAC remained fully operational. Phased construction planning, continuous coordination, and disciplined site management protected staff and visitors while complex system replacements were underway.

No construction related injuries occurred among building staff or members of the public. At no time was the facility required to close, reflecting careful planning, strong collaboration, and a shared commitment to public safety.



Phase	Departments
3	Temporary Offices, Swing Space
4	North Board Chambers, DGS, Sheriff & Offices
5	Clerk of the Board
6	County Counsel, Conference, CCO, OEC, CSC, Inter-Gov Affairs
7	County Counsel, South Board Chambers, Kitchen, Cafeteria
8	County Counsel, Auditor & Controller, Communications, Hearing Room, Porter Room
9	Board of Supervisors
10	District Offices , Annex, Technology Office
11	CAO, ACAO, Communications, LUEG, LR
12	HR, PSG, Conference, HHSA
13	ARCC, Marriage License, Marriage Waitting
14	Assessor
15	Assessor, Treasurer
16	TCC
17	TCC, Treasurer, FG3

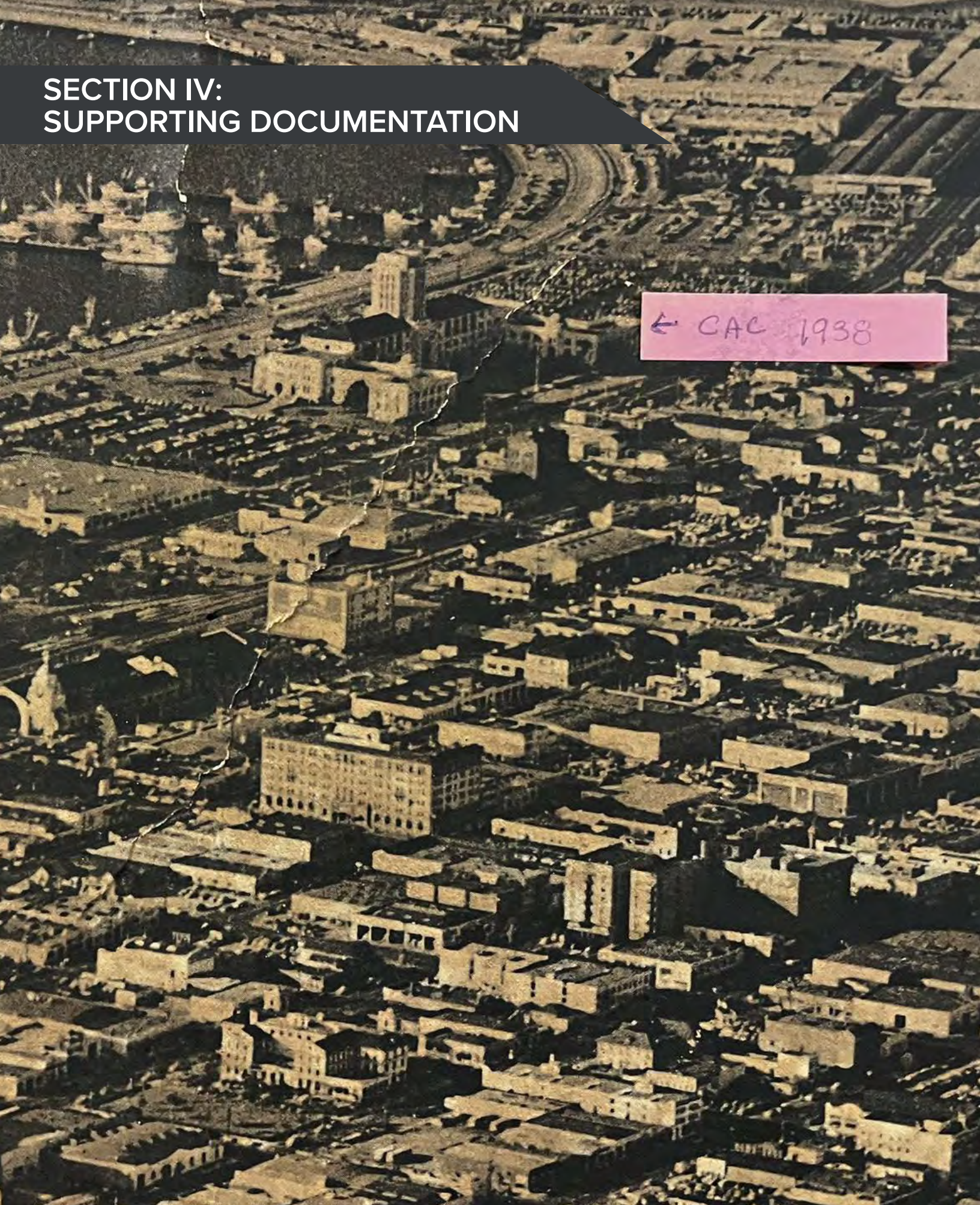
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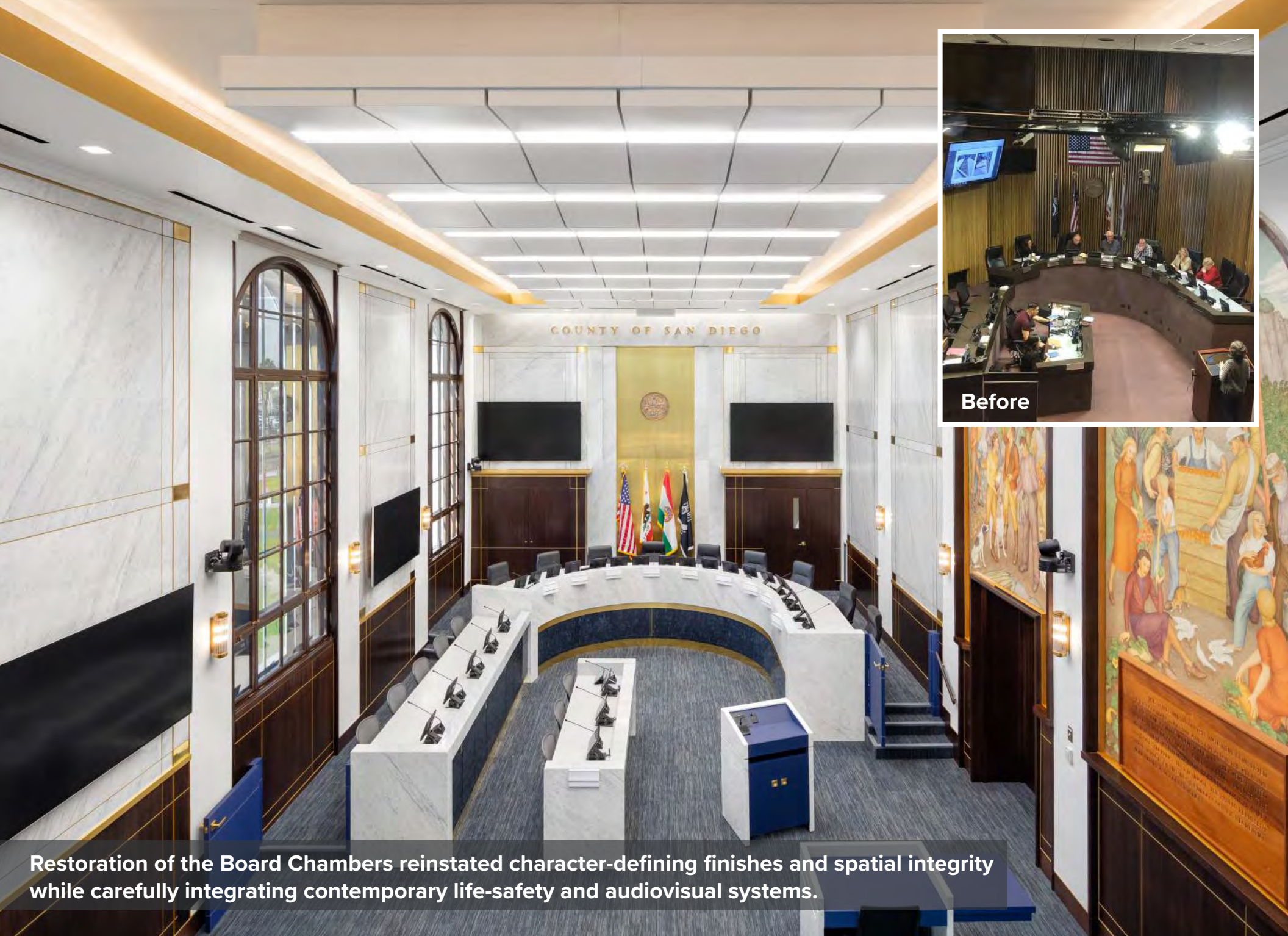
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Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION



← CAC 1938

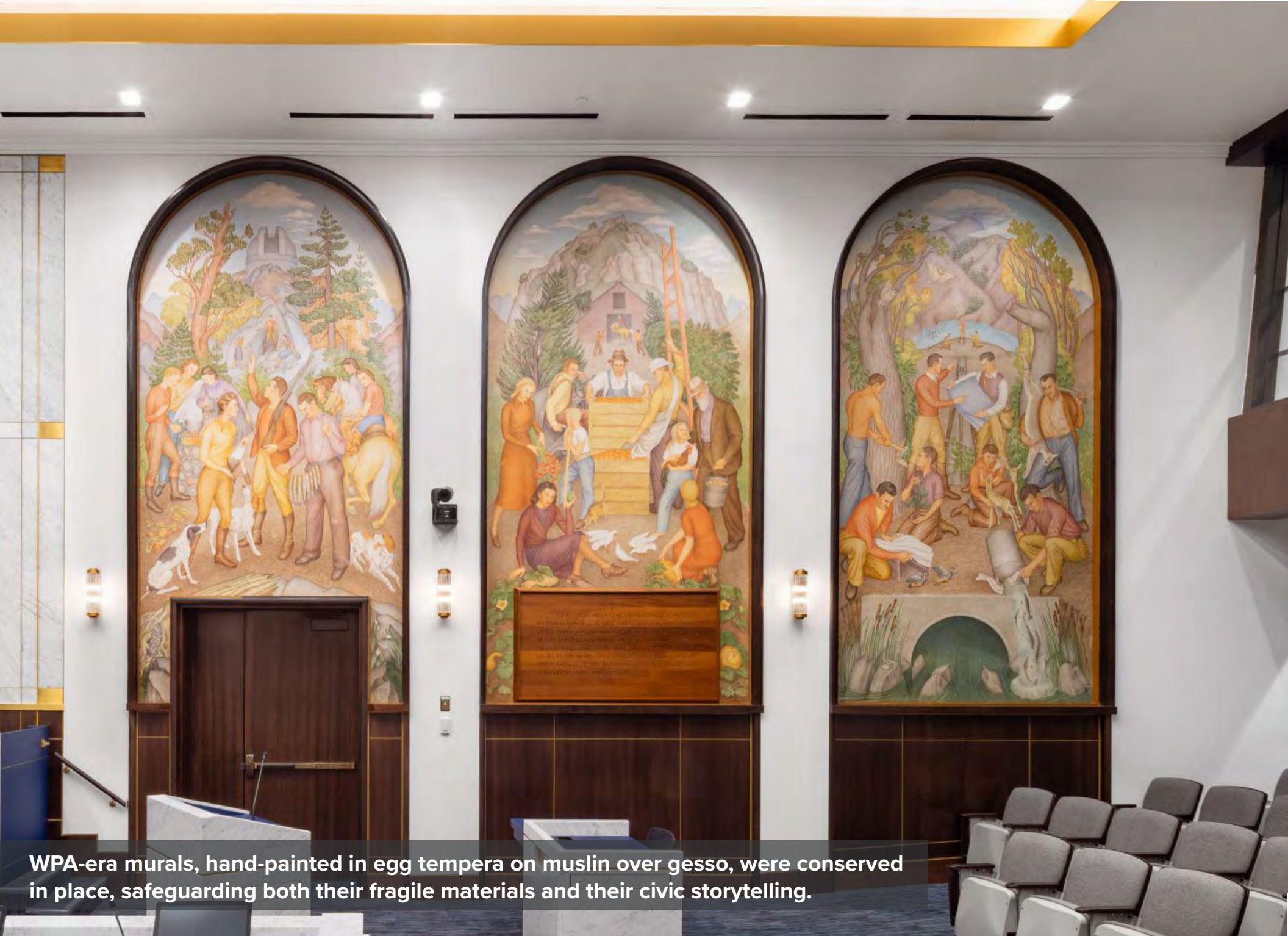


Before

Restoration of the Board Chambers reinstated character-defining finishes and spatial integrity while carefully integrating contemporary life-safety and audiovisual systems.



Historic arched windows, marble cladding, and restored wood detailing reinforce the chamber's original Beaux-Arts character while supporting continued civic use.



WPA-era murals, hand-painted in egg tempera on muslin over gesso, were conserved in place, safeguarding both their fragile materials and their civic storytelling.



Tennessee marble wall panels and terrazzo flooring were restored, preserving the lobby's material authenticity and civic grandeur.



Historic finishes and decorative fixtures were conserved and repaired in place, preserving craftsmanship while accommodating discreet contemporary upgrades.

RECORDER

CLERK

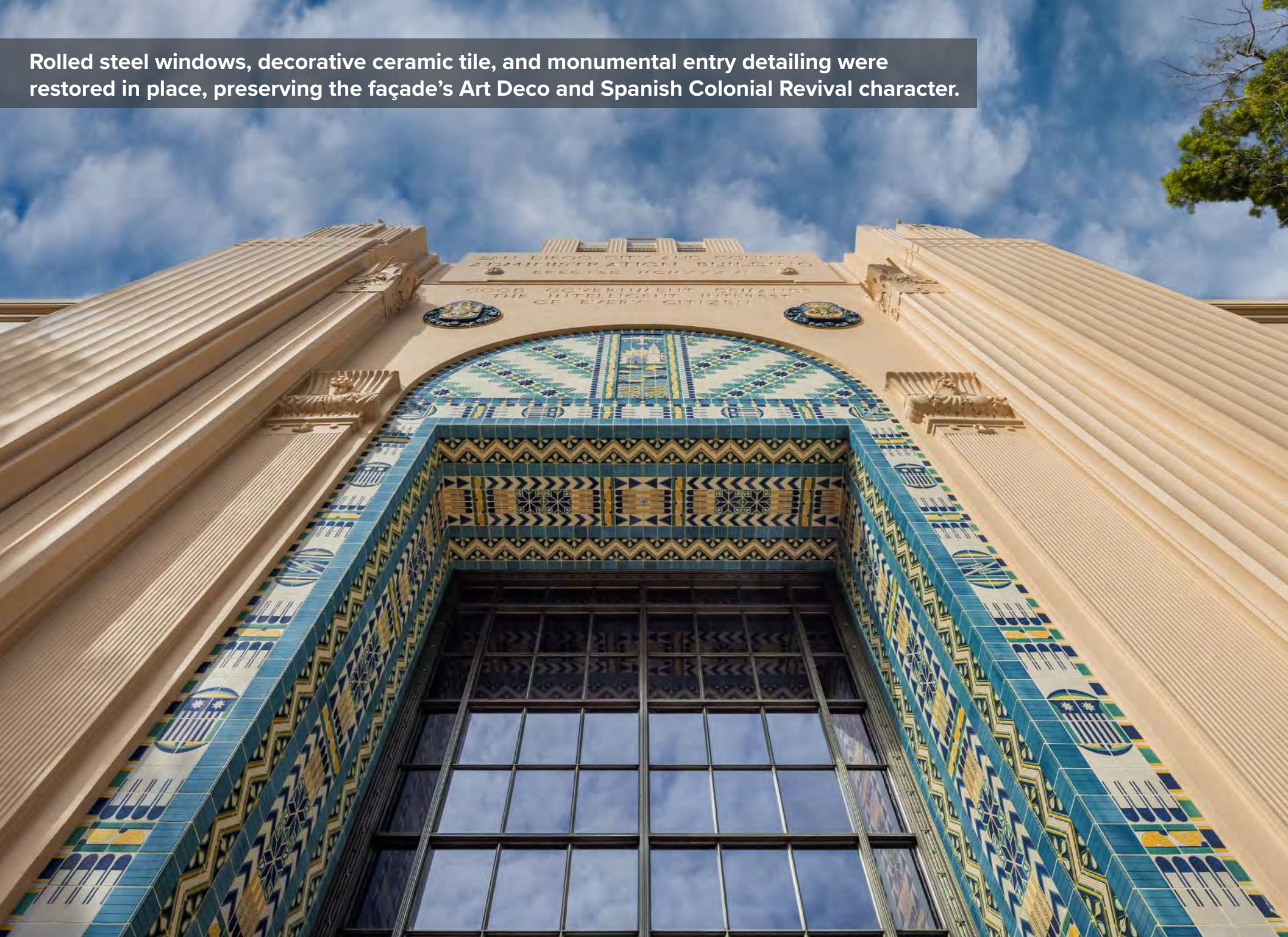
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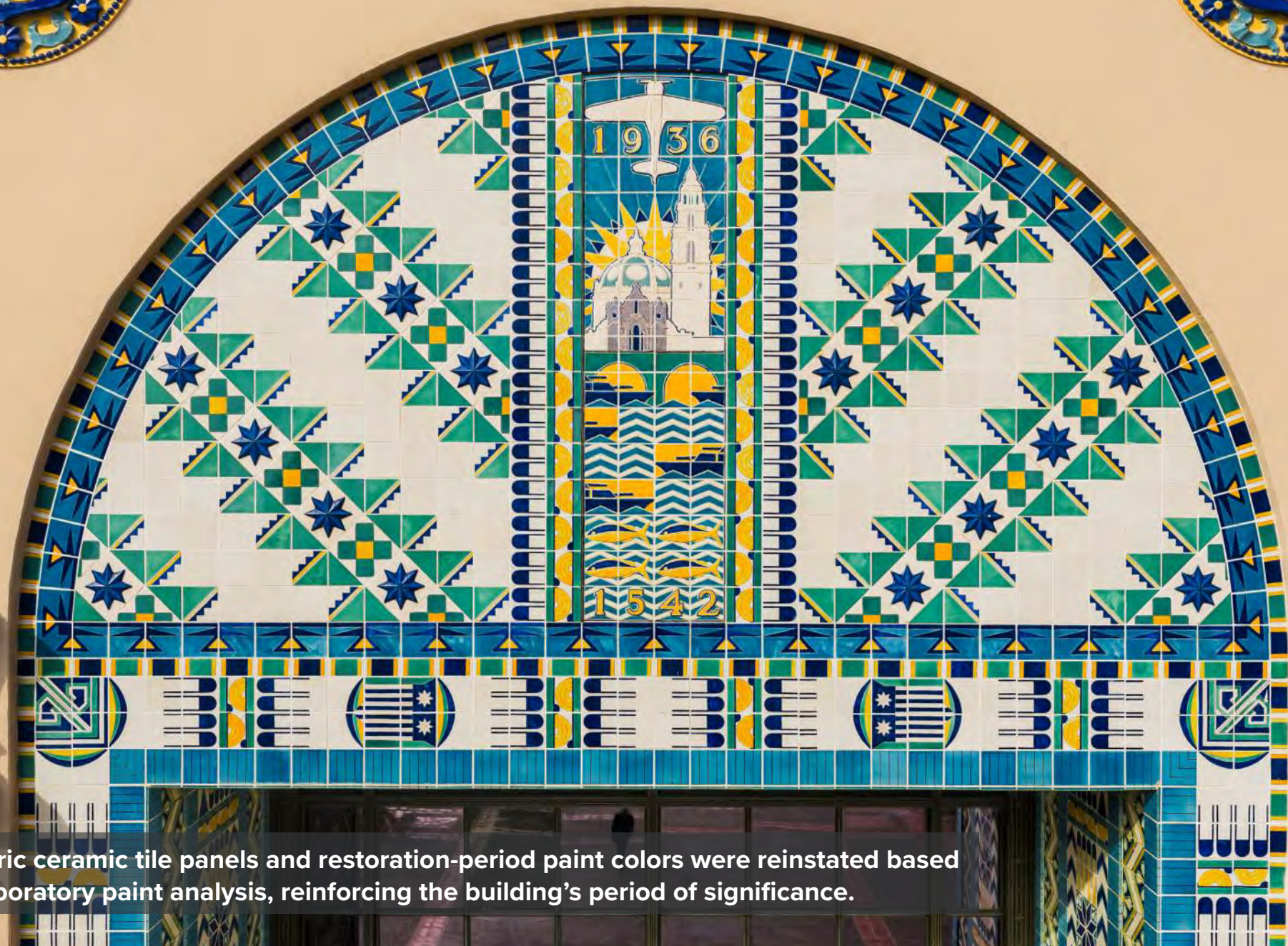
Hours
8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

No Food
Drinks Must Be Covered

Original wood-and-glass entry assemblies were preserved and restored, maintaining historic craftsmanship while accommodating contemporary public service functions.

Rolled steel windows, decorative ceramic tile, and monumental entry detailing were restored in place, preserving the façade's Art Deco and Spanish Colonial Revival character.



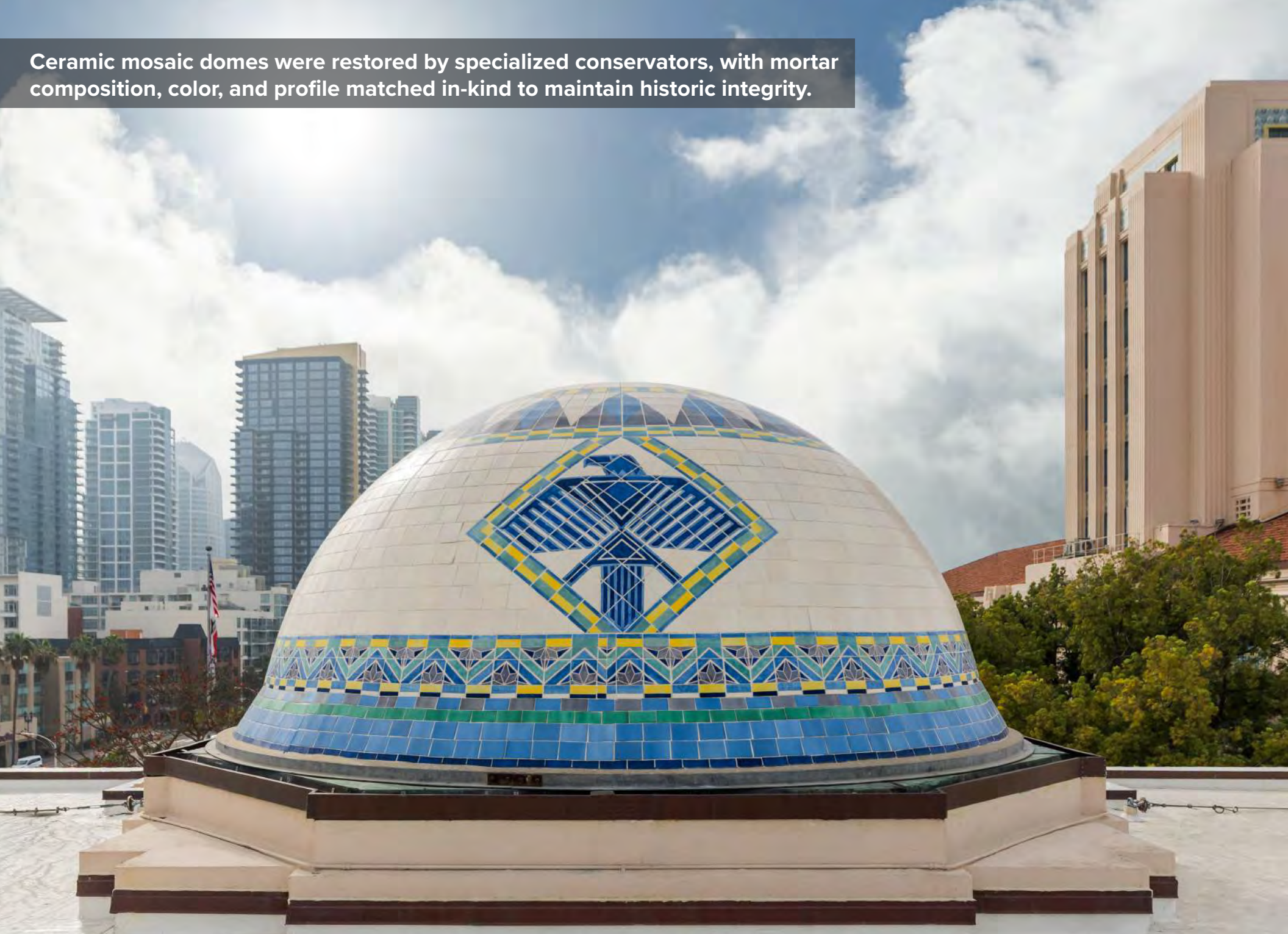


Historic ceramic tile panels and restoration-period paint colors were reinstated based on laboratory paint analysis, reinforcing the building's period of significance.

Restoration-period paint colors were reinstated following archival research and laboratory analysis, ensuring historical accuracy rather than approximation.



Ceramic mosaic domes were restored by specialized conservators, with mortar composition, color, and profile matched in-kind to maintain historic integrity.

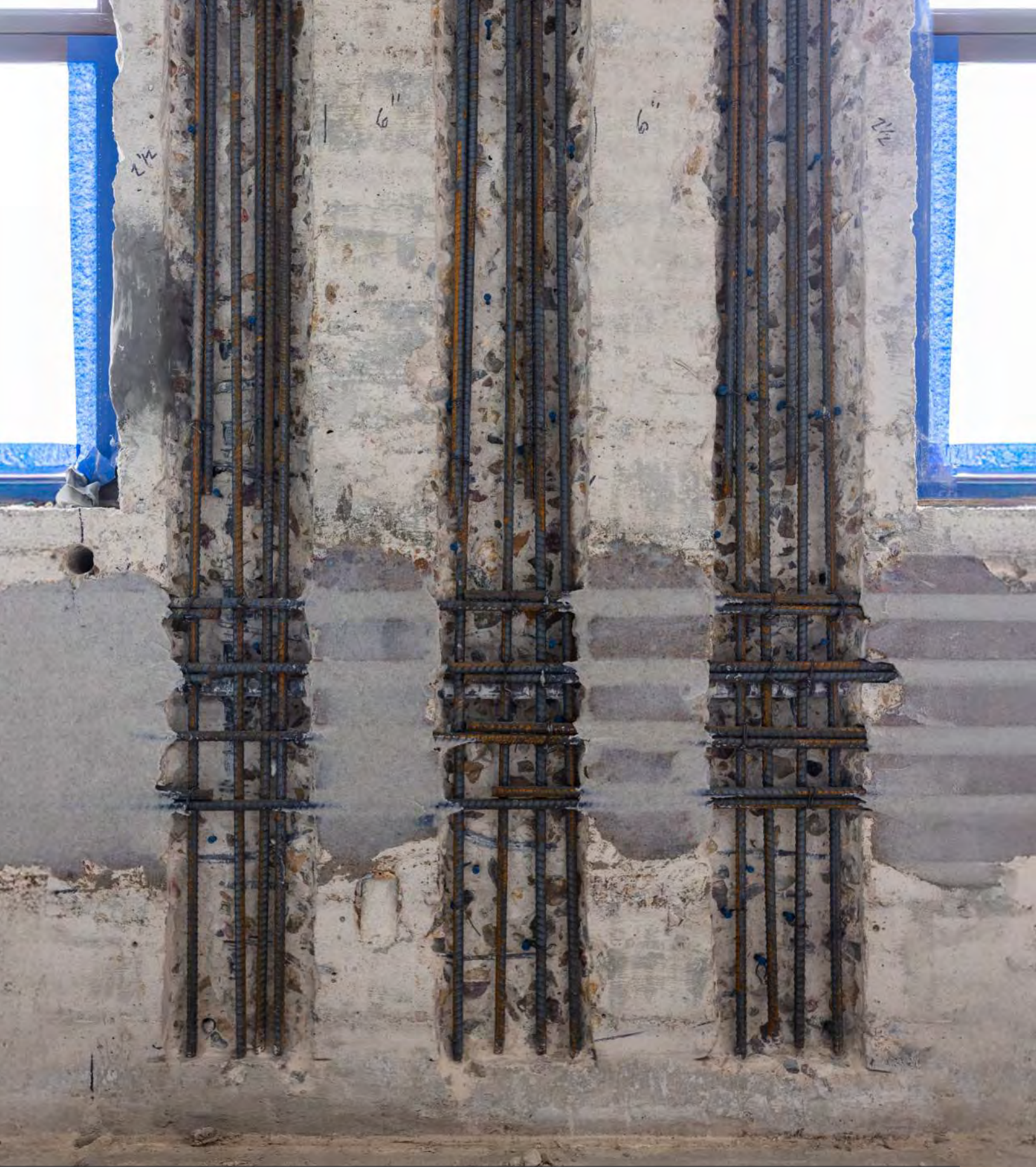




SAN DIEGO CITY AND COUNTY
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
ERECTED MCMXXXVI

GOOD GOVERNMENT DEMANDS
THE INTELLIGENT INTEREST
OF EVERY CITIZEN

The building's iconic tower and decorative façade were preserved in-kind, reinforcing the building's civic presence along San Diego's waterfront.



Fiber-reinforced polymer seismic reinforcement strengthens the historic structure discreetly, extending the building's life while retaining original concrete and masonry.



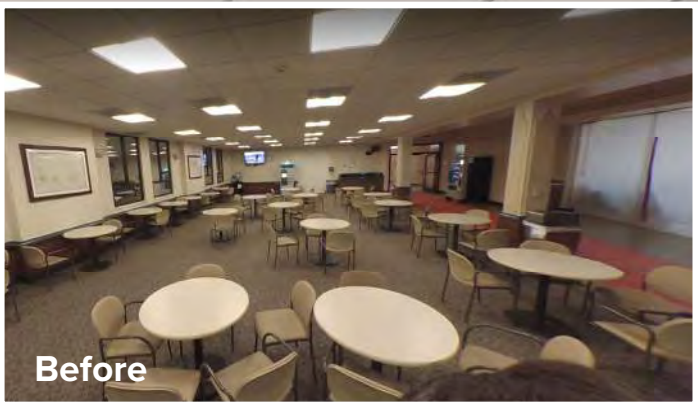
Building automation, fire protection, and life-safety systems were modernized throughout the facility, transforming performance while preserving historic spaces.



Comprehensive mechanical upgrades were carefully integrated within service spaces, allowing complete system replacement without altering character-defining public interiors.



New electrical infrastructure enhances operational reliability and resilience while preserving the historic fabric above and around these service areas.



Before

Modern amenities were integrated into secondary spaces using compatible materials and restrained design to respect adjacent historic interiors.



Contemporary breakroom upgrades support daily public service functions while remaining visually subordinate to historic architectural elements.

Preservation of exterior materials and roof elements protects the building's historic silhouette and waterfront presence.



The CAC remains a defining landmark of San Diego's civic skyline, its historic character preserved while modern systems extend its functional lifespan.



City of San Diego | 2026 Preservation Awards

County Administration Center Renovation

County of San Diego | **SILLMAN**



2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: George and Anna Marston House Museum & Gardens Restoration

Address: 3525 7th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92103

Category (refer to first page of packet): Category 1, Restoration Projects

Project Completion Date (month, year): 02/07/2025

Program Launch Date (month, year): 07/01/2025

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Save Our Heritage Organisation
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Nominator Information

Name: Alana Coons

Company or Title (optional): Save Our Heritage Organisation

Address: PO Box 80788, San Diego, CA 92138

Phone: 619-297-9327 Email: sohosandiego@aol.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?
(Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

- For nominating projects, discuss the work performed, and provide details as to how specifically the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- For programs, discuss the overall structure of the program, how the community engages with and or participates in the program, and how the program aligns with historic preservation.
- For people, discuss the background, work, and leadership of the individual or organization. Please provide details about their contributions to the field of preservation.
- Does the project or program demonstrate an innovative approach to preservation, encourage sustainability/climate resiliency, or add housing units? If so, please provide a description of how.

Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

The restoration of the city-owned George and Anna Marston House Museum & Gardens represents an outstanding achievement in historic preservation stewardship, technical execution, and fiscal responsibility. Undertaken in 2024, the project addressed decades of deferred maintenance affecting one of San Diego's most architecturally and culturally significant historic sites. The work focused on stabilizing and restoring character-defining exterior features of the 1905 Arts & Crafts estate, including brick masonry, wood trim, windows, doors, garden walls, gates, terraces, and the carriage house, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the site for public use.

All work was executed in strict accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, prioritizing preservation over replacement and repair over removal. Masonry repointing employed historically compatible soft mortar appropriate to early twentieth-century brick, preventing further damage caused by incompatible modern materials. Original wood elements, windows, and doors were repaired wherever feasible, and missing or severely deteriorated features were reconstructed based on physical evidence and historic documentation. These approaches retained the maximum amount of historic fabric while restoring architectural integrity.

Sustainability and Climate Resiliency

The project demonstrates sustainability through its emphasis on material conservation, embodied energy retention, and reuse of existing historic resources. By repairing original materials rather than replacing them, the restoration minimized waste and reduced the environmental impacts associated with new construction. Preservation of historic masonry, woodwork, and landscape features also contributes to climate resiliency by maintaining durable, time-tested materials and passive environmental benefits such as shade, thermal mass, and stormwater absorption through historic gardens and terraces.

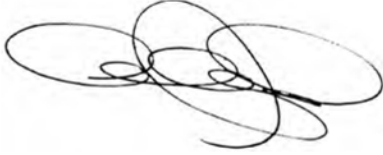
Organizational Leadership and Contributions

This project was made possible through the exceptional leadership and expertise of Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO). As steward of the Marston House for over 16 years, SOHO has consistently invested in the preservation and public accessibility of the site despite limited funding for major capital work. Executive Director Bruce Coons, drawing on more than 50 years of experience in restoration, preservation, and contract management, personally defined the project scope, selected the restoration contractor, and oversaw all aspects of the work. His technical fluency enabled precise decision-making on materials, methods, and historic accuracy.

By absorbing all administrative and oversight costs, SOHO ensured that 100 percent of the \$1 million grant for the city-owned resource was dedicated to physical restoration. This project exemplifies best-in-class nonprofit stewardship and sets a high standard for preservation practice, accountability, and public benefit.

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Documentation: Supporting materials may be submitted to supplement but not substitute for the justification that is supposed to be provided in the Narrative portion of the nomination.

Types of materials that may be included:

- For building projects:
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- For interpretive/educational/community projects or programs: Copies of related materials, such as a book, brochure, DVD/CD, website links, transcripts, or photographs of exhibits or activities.
- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.


























SPECTRA
HISTORIC CONSTRUCTION









2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

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Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Ruth Lindley/Nathan Rydon House

Address: 1515 W Lewis St

Category (refer to first page of packet): Preservation Project

Project Completion Date (month, year): October 2024

Program Launch Date (month, year): November 2022

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Betty Willis - Bwillis@frontporch.net
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Nominator Information

Name: Kiley Wallace

Company or Title (optional): Landmarks Historic Preservation

Address: 5100 Marlborough Dr, Suite 106A, SAN Diego

Phone: 760-704-7373 Email: Kiley@preserve.sandiego.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?

(Y) (N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: Kiley@preserve.sandiego.com

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

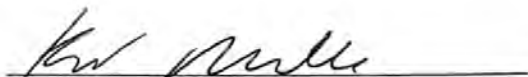
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- Does the project or program demonstrate an innovative approach to preservation, encourage sustainability/climate resiliency, or add housing units? If so, please provide a description of how.

Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

See attachment

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kw Miller", is written over a horizontal line.

Signature of Applicant

Section II: Narrative Description

The Ruth Lindly house at 1515 West Lewis in Mission Hills was originally nominated under Criteria C for its Prairie Architectural style. The home was designated under C and consultant Kiley Wallace did additional research and brought the project back to the HRB Board for consideration under B. Despite some opposition from city staff, the Board designated the home additionally under Criteria B for Ruth Lindley who was significant as an early WASP pilot during WW2 and whose Women's Air Service Jacket is currently on display at the Smithsonian Institute.

The consultant did additional research and was able to find additional early historical photographs showing what the original front porch looked like. The front porch was rebuilt at some point in the 1940's, which was not known during initial designation. Lindly's daughter, who unfortunately died from Cancer during this time, provided priceless early Mission Hills photos. These showed enough of the porch to allow for the restoration of the original design and rebuilding of the Prairie style front porch.

Owner Betty Willis chose to take on and complete the restoration of the original porch which took a multi-year effort during the global pandemic. The front porch restoration along a main drive in Mission Hills serves as a gift to the Mission Hills community as well as serving as a reminder of the significant contributions of Ruth Lindly as a pioneering member of the earliest female military pilots. See below historical photos and photos detailing the recently completed restoration.

Section IV: Supporting Documentation

Transitional Photos before porch restoration



Historic Photo showing original porch



Current Photos showing Restoration



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SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Kelner Residence

Address: 2127 Fort Stockton, San Diego, CA 92103

Category (refer to first page of packet): Rehabilitation/Restoration Project + Add Additional Housing Unit (ADU) & People in Preservation (Homeowner)

Project Completion Date (month, year): 11/2025

Program Launch Date (month, year): N/A

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

- Greg Kelner, Homeowner/gregkelner@me.com
- Kim Grant, Architect/kim@kimgrantdesign.com
- Tony Parker, Contractor/tparkergbinc@gmail.com
- _____

Nominator Information

Name: Kim Grant, Architect

Company or Title (optional): Kim Grant Design Inc.

Address: 2400 Kettner Blvd. Studio 220, San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-269-3630 Email: kim@kimgrantdesign.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award? (Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

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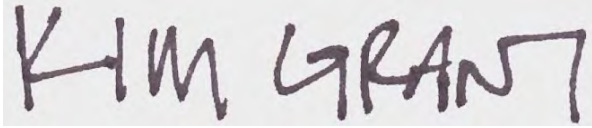
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Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

[See Attached Narrative](#)

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

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A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature reads "KIM GRANT" in all capital letters. The letters are somewhat stylized and connected, with a prominent horizontal line under the "K" and "M".

Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Documentation: Supporting materials may be submitted to supplement but not substitute for the justification that is supposed to be provided in the Narrative portion of the nomination.

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 - *Photos of the completed project (REQUIRED).*
 - Plans, drawings, PowerPoint, or other documentation sufficient to illustrate the property before and after the nominated activity and to address how the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
- For interpretive/educational/community projects or programs: Copies of related materials, such as a book, brochure, DVD/CD, website links, transcripts, or photographs of exhibits or activities.
- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.

[See Attached Supporting Documentation](#)



KIM GRANT DESIGN INC



RESTORING and EXPANDING A 1923 HOME

2127 Fort Stockton Drive, Mission Hills

SAN DIEGO PRESERVATION AWARDS - 2026

2026 San Diego Preservation Award Nomination

Homeowners: Greg Kelner **Architect:** Kim Grant, AIA

Reason for Nomination: The current homeowners deserve to be recognized for the effort put forth in Restoring this 1923 home. Great care was taken in preserving the architectural style and restoring the non-original stucco finish back to the original texture. Delineating the older addition as well as carefully delineating the new addition from the the original portions of the home. The homeowner has brought this charming Spanish Eclectic home back to its original condition along with substantially setback and diminished additions. Also, as part of this project, a new Garage was built on the alley with an ADU located above to create an additional housing unit, in keeping with the Spanish style of the original structure, all located at the rear of the property and out of public view from the street.

Project Description:

House

This 1923 home had an addition at the rear of the house that was not properly distinguished from the original home. Part of the work included re-stuccoing the original house back to the original finish that was found below the non-original stucco. Then delineate the end of the original house to that area of the older addition with a specific score line, then changing the stucco texture to a lightly smoother finish. The current additions were also delineated by a subtle score line then using a smoother stucco texture. Where the parapet roof needed to be raised to create a guardrail in the back half of the house/roof, a score line was used to trace the outline of the original parapet roof, keeping the original profile information alive, while very subtly expressing it.

The second story addition was pushed far to the rear of the original house, keeping the original footprint and impression of the home scale. The addition was differentiated by a change of roof style and venting detail, smoother stucco, and simplified windows. Where a parapet was used for a portion of the new second story roof, the parapet shape was kept simple, unlike the variation of the original roof line.

All windows that could be restored were restored/repared; A new roof was put on the original home.

The ADU was built all the way at the rear of the property, out of public view from the street. The building uses similar materials, smoother stucco, terra cotta tile details at windows and the stoop roof at the Entry. The roof line is kept simple to distinguish the structure from the original home, with a reduced dimension in the parapet step.

Master Bedroom Suite Addition – Second Story

The second story addition consists of the new Master Bedroom, Bathroom, and Closet. There is also a small roof terrace with a gas firepit. This terrace is directly accessed from the Master Entry area and the Master Bedroom.

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties:

The project met the Standards in that the Additions to the structure are pushed back from the front of the structure, maintaining the original historic structure’s prominence on the property; The original stucco texture finish was restored, and the new areas of stucco were differentiated by smoothing the texture and creating a subtle score line between new and old; Differentiation in the roof design and detailing, simplification of the window designs; The added ADU building is detached from the original historic structure and is located in the rear of the property and out of public view from the street, keeping in the Spanish style, yet simplified from the original house.

Historic Designation

This property has been designated by the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board, HRB Site# 07-031 (District Contributor 822-35)

Resources List

Homeowners: Greg Kelner
2127 Fort Stockton Drive
San Diego, CA 92103
858-775-8249
gregkelner@me.com

Architect: Kim Grant, AIA
Kim Grant Design, Inc.
2400 Kettner Blvd. Studio 220
San Diego, CA 92101
T: 619.269.3630
kim@kimgrantdesign.com

Contractor: Tony Parker General Builders
619-977-1227
tparkergbinc@gmail.com

2026 SAN DIEGO PRESERVATION AWARD

NOMINATION SUPPORTING DOCUMENTAION

Historic Landmark No. 822-35
Fort Stockton Line Historic District Contributor
Mayor Bard House

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA
02-24-2025



Kim Grant, Architect

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Photos of current home: Front of Home; Historic Landmark Plaque

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Photo of current home: The original stucco finish has been restored back to its original finish/texture

Photo of current home: Second story addition pushed back to respect the original scale of the home/ smoother stucco texture used

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before

Photo of existing home prior to construction: Stucco finish not original

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



After

Photo of current home: The original stucco finish has been restored back to its original finish/texture

Photo of current home: Second story addition pushed back to respect the original scale of the home

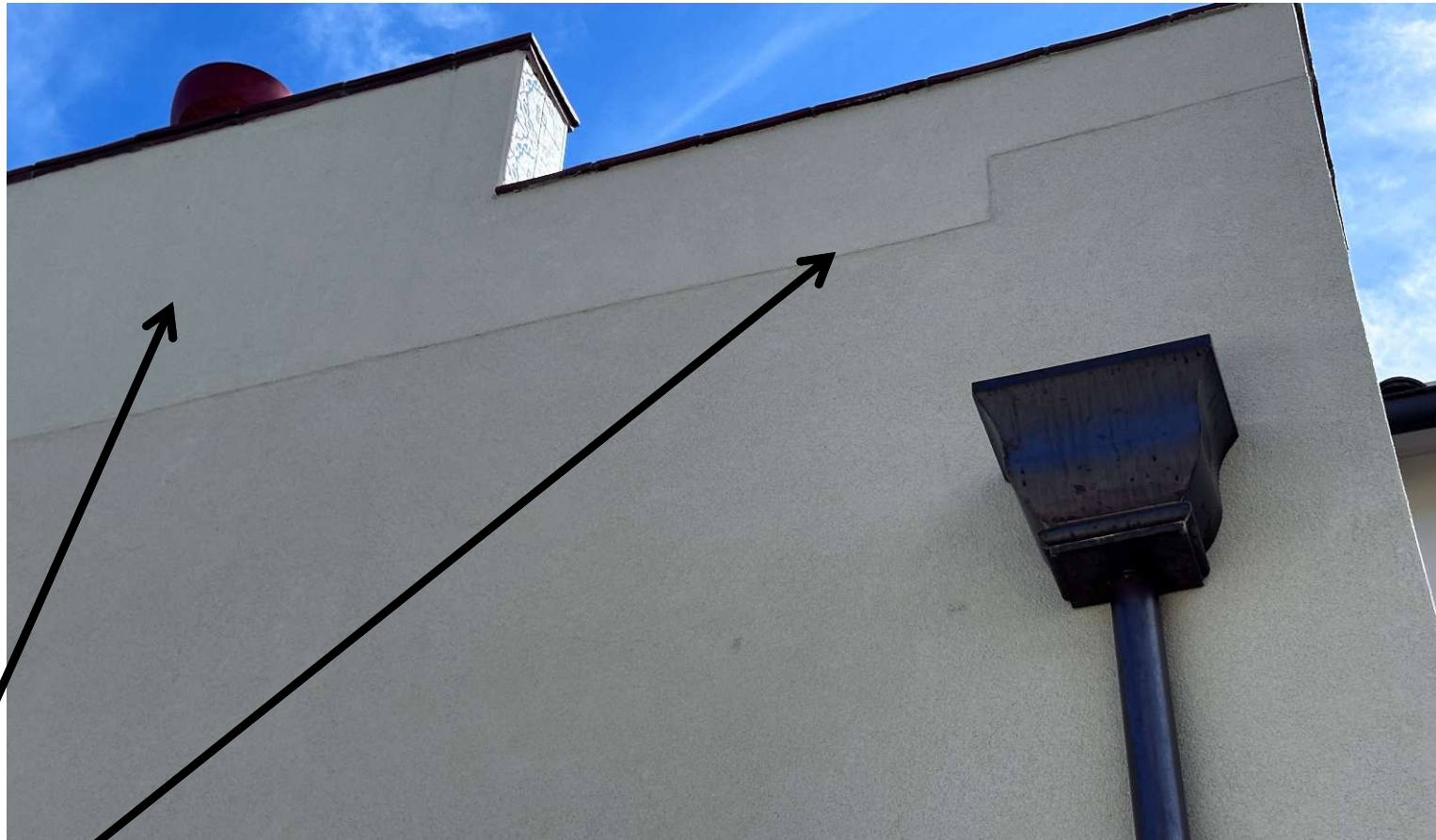
2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before

Photo of existing home prior to construction:
Original parapet profile

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



After

Photo of current home: New stucco wall scored at guardrail extension to highlight original parapet profile outline; New walls finished in smoother stucco than original finish

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



After

Photo of current home: New walls finished in smoother stucco than original finish; Subtle score line between finishes to delineate original roofline

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Front of Home

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Driveway View of Home

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



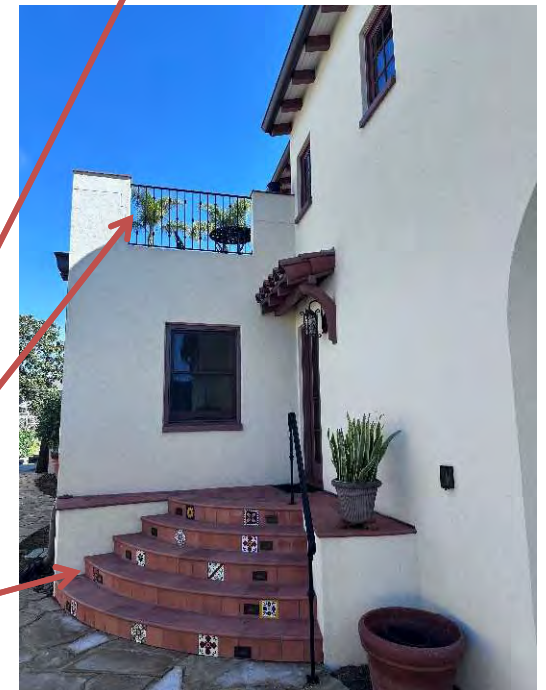
After



Before

Photos of existing home prior to construction: Existing back door and stairs

Photos of current home: New second story addition; New exterior stairs to rear yard; New rooftop terrace delineated from original parapet with different stucco, railing, and score line



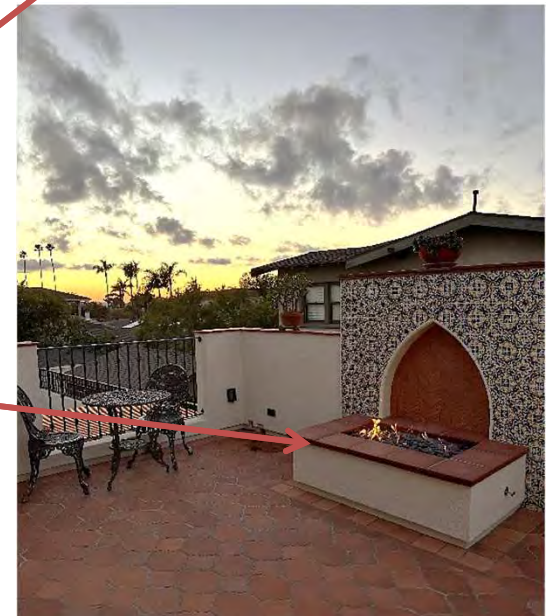
After

2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Second Story Addition and Rooftop Terrace



Photos of current home: New set back second story addition; New tiled rooftop terrace with firepit

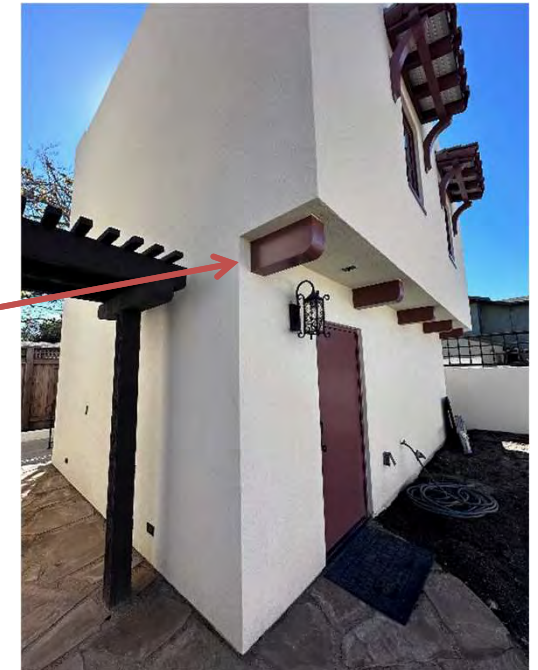


2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of ADU

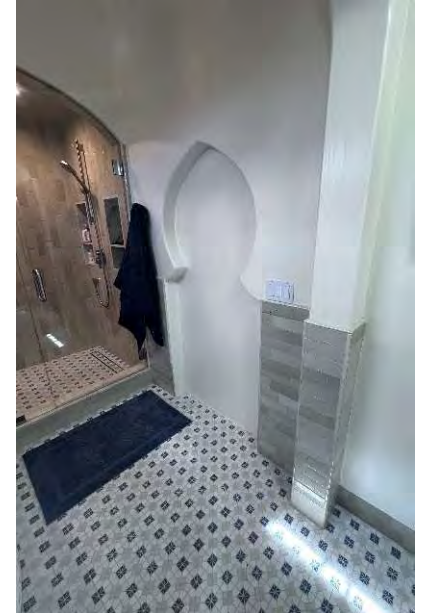
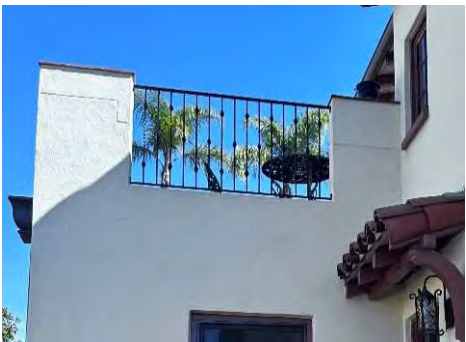
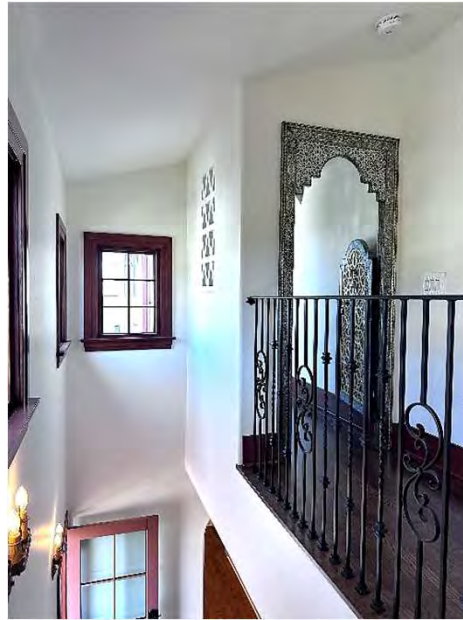
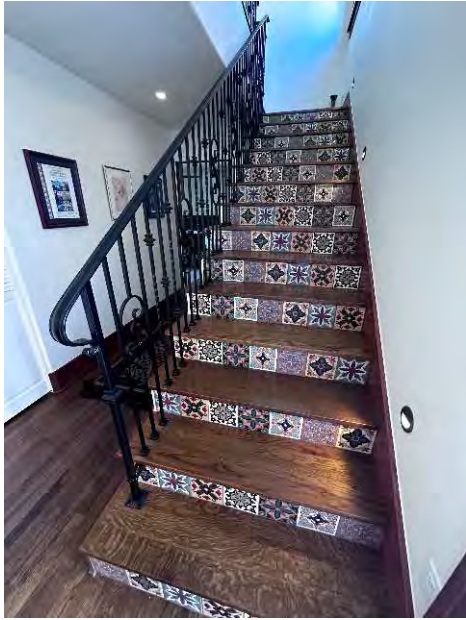


Photos of current home: New ADU with simple roofline to distinguish it from the original home; Similar construction materials to those used with new second story addition



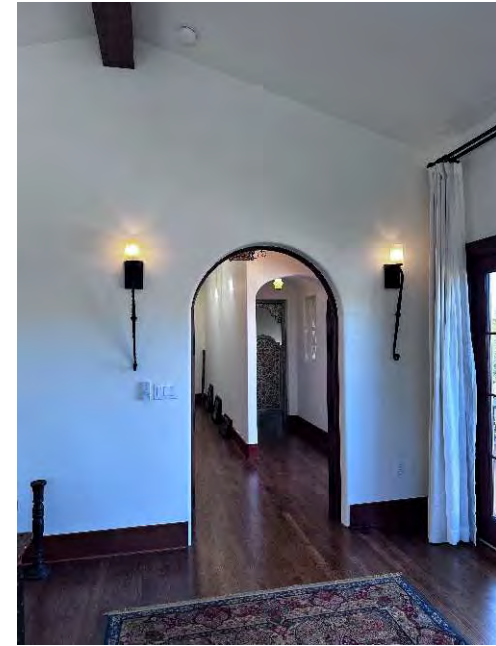
2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Architectural Details



2127 FORT STOCKTON DRIVE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Master Bedroom Addition



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SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Petronzio Residence

Address: 1824 Sheridan Ave., San Diego, CA 92103

Category (refer to first page of packet): Rehabilitation/Restoration Project & People in Preservation (Homeowner)

Project Completion Date (month, year): 12/2023

Program Launch Date (month, year): N/A

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Vince Petronzio, Homeowner/vpetronzio@gmail.com
2. Kim Grant, Architect/kim@kimgrantdesign.com
3. Boyd Masing, Contractor/boyd@masingconstruction.com
4. Elizabeth Barkett, Interior Designer, Ross Thiele,elizabeth@rossthiele.com

Nominator Information

Name: Kim Grant, Architect

Company or Title (optional): Kim Grant Design Inc.

Address: 2400 Kettner Blvd. Studio 220, San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-269-3630 Email: kim@kimgrantdesign.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award? (Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

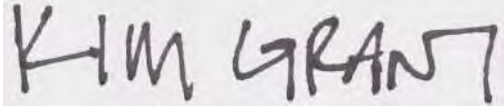
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[See Attached Narrative](#)

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Signature of Applicant

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- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.

[See Attached Supporting Documentation](#)



KIM GRANT DESIGN INC



RENOVATING A 1912 HOME

1824 Sheridan Avenue, Mission Hills

SAN DIEGO PRESERVATION AWARDS - 2026

2400 Kettner Blvd. Studio 220, San Diego, CA 92101 ♦ T 619.269.3630

2026 San Diego Preservation Award Nomination

Homeowners: Vince Petronzio **Architect:** Kim Grant, AIA

Reason for Nomination: The current homeowners deserve to be recognized for the effort put forth in Restoring this 1912 home as well as the care taken to create a new Kitchen and Courtyard that is complementary to the original architecture. One of the aspects of the craftsman style is the connection to the outdoors and nature. The new Kitchen uses stained wood similar to the original stained wood throughout the home in contrast to the bright white Kitchen in the previous owners design. To increase the connection to the outdoors, a large bifolding door was installed to replace three sets of narrow French doors. The large bifolds are designed to be respectful of the original glass detail, yet modified scale to differentiate from the original. The size of the bifold doors fits within the perimeter of the original doors per HRB direction. The courtyard changes included an Outdoor Fireplace, Water Feature, and Built-In Outdoor Kitchen. Fencing was also improved.

Project Description:

House

This 1912 home underwent a Kitchen Remodel years ago under the direction of the previous owner. That older non-original Kitchen was compartmentalized, bright white, and separated from an outdoor connection. In our project, the Kitchen was remodeled using stained wood on the walls and ceiling more in keeping with the original stained redwood interiors, as well as the use of colors and tile that are more in keeping with the period of the home. The Kitchen was opened to the Dining Room and the Courtyard using large bifold wood doors, using a glass detail respectful of the original French doors but differentiated in scale, filling the width of the original three French door pairs. The entire house was painted and shingles were restored as well as the roof was repaired and replaced as needed.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties:

The project met the Standards in that the modified Bifold doors were within the outer limit lines of the original French doors, therefore, keeping intact the wall sections and original overall width of openings. The new outdoor fireplace was differentiated from the original brick chimney detailing by using brick of a different dimension and slightly different color variation. The Kitchen changes including the bifold doors as well as the Courtyard improvements are located out of public view.

Resources List

Homeowner: Vince Petronzio
1824 Sheridan Avenue
San Diego, CA 92103

Architect: Kim Grant, AIA
Kim Grant Design, Inc.
2400 Kettner Blvd. Studio 220
San Diego, CA 92101
T: 619.269.3630
kim@kimgrantdesign.com

Interior Designer: Elizabeth Barkett, ASID
858-454-2133
elizabeth@rossthiele.com

Contractor: Boyd Masing
619-247-7995
boyd@masingconstruction.com

2026 SAN DIEGO PRESERVATION AWARD

NOMINATION SUPPORTING DOCUMENTAION

Historic Landmark No. 572
Mary F. Ward/Emmor Brooke Weaver House
1911

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA
02-24-2025



Kim Grant, Architect

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Photo of current home: Front Elevation

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Photos of current home: Front of Home; Historic Landmark Plaque

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



After

Photo of current home: New folding exterior doors to rear courtyard installed within original overall opening of existing three pairs of exterior doors; New door glass break up of two rectangular glass panes over two vertical glass panes below to differentiate from original

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before

Photo of home prior to construction: Rear courtyard with three pairs of exterior doors; Original door glass break up of two square glass panes over two vertical glass panes below

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

Before Photos of Rear Courtyard



Photos of home prior to construction: Rear courtyard with three pairs of exterior doors; Original door glass break up of two square glass panes over two vertical glass panes below; Non-original fireplace



1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Rear Courtyard



1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Rear Courtyard



Photos of current home:
New outdoor fireplace
with subtle change in
brick pattern to
differentiate from the
original fireplace
chimneys; New wood
fence with open lattice;
New Outdoor Kitchen;
new Water Feature



1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before

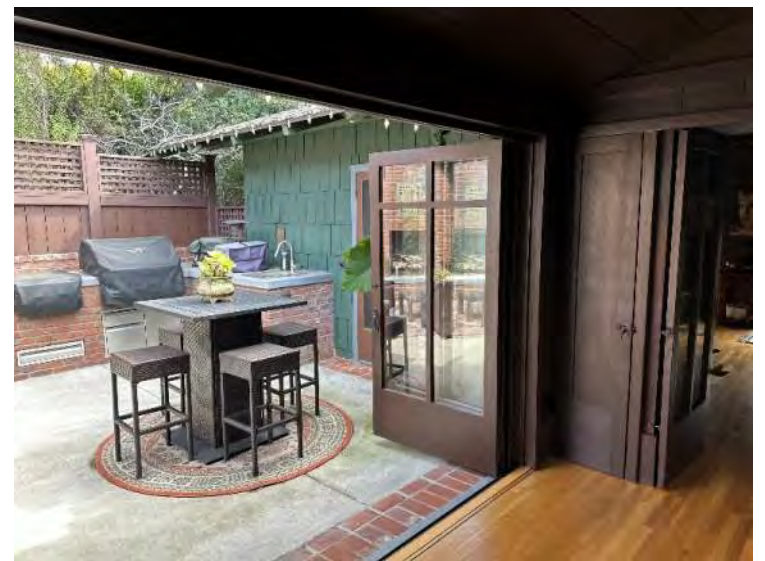
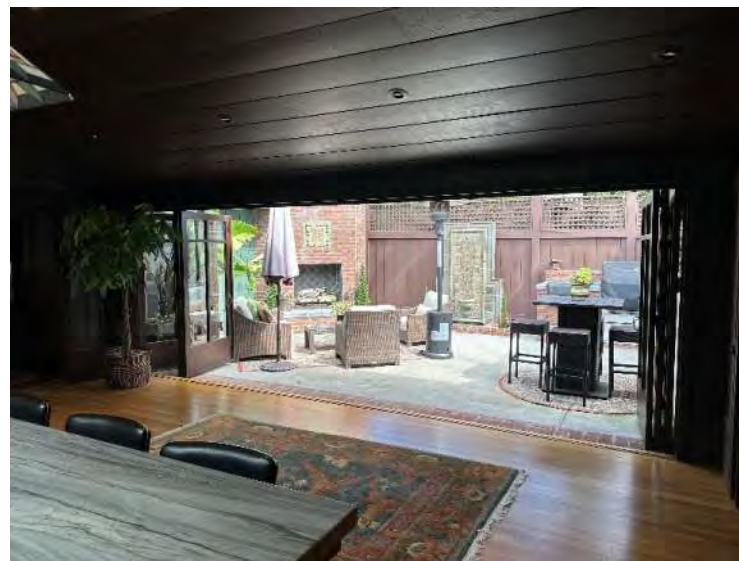


After

Before and After Photos of Expanded Exterior Courtyard Doors

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Kitchen and Expanded Door Opening



1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

Before Photos of Kitchen and Dining Room



Photos of existing home prior to construction: Separate Kitchen and Dining Room; Existing skylights; Existing doors to Rear Courtyard

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

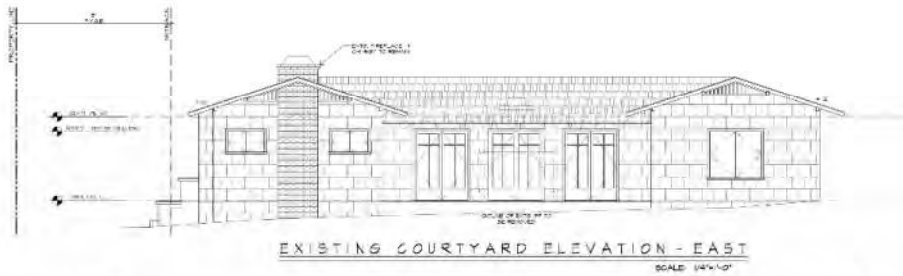
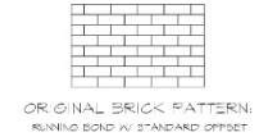
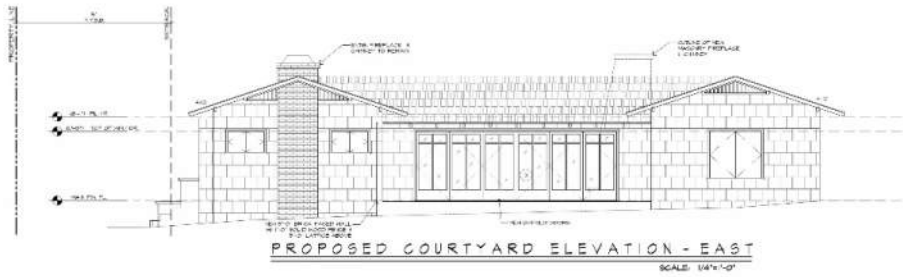
After Photos of Kitchen



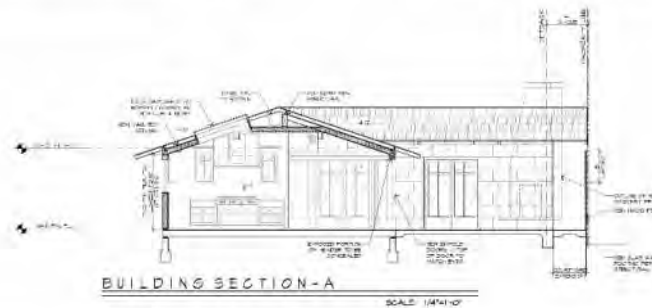
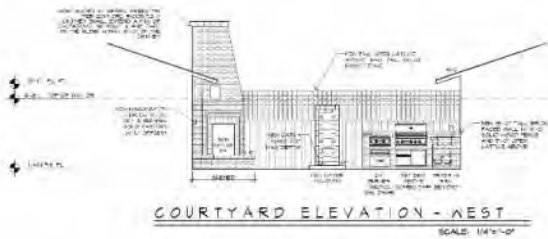
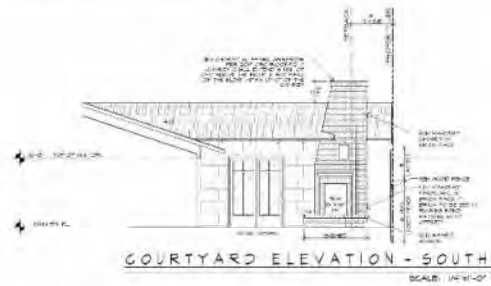
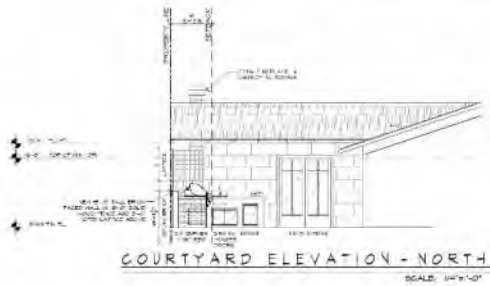
Photos of current home:
New open Kitchen/Dining
area; New island, New tile
inlay at range top

1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

Approved Exterior Elevations



IF REPLACE BRICK PATTERNS
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



PETRONZIO RESIDENCE
1824 SHERIDAN AVENUE
SAN DIEGO, CA 92103

REV. SHEET

DATE

A4.1

DATE

08/22

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Hailey Residence

Address: 4494 Tivoli Street, San Diego, CA 92107

Category (refer to first page of packet): Rehabilitation/Restoration Project & People in Preservation (Homeowner)

Project Completion Date (month, year): 5/2024

Program Launch Date (month, year): N/A

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Rob and Kathy Hailey, Homeowners/kak2bea@gmail.com
2. Kim Grant, Architect/kim@kimgrantdesign.com
3. Kiley Wallace, Historian/kiley@preservesandiego.com
4. Paige Hailey, Landscape Designer/California Farm and Garden

Nominator Information

Name: Kim Grant, Architect

Company or Title (optional): Kim Grant Design Inc.

Address: 2400 Kettner Blvd. Studio 220, San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-269-3630 Email: kim@kimgrantdesign.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award? (Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: _____

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

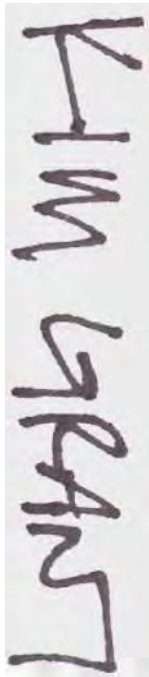
- For nominating projects, discuss the work performed, and provide details as to how specifically the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- For programs, discuss the overall structure of the program, how the community engages with and or participates in the program, and how the program aligns with historic preservation.
- For people, discuss the background, work, and leadership of the individual or organization. Please provide details about their contributions to the field of preservation.
- Does the project or program demonstrate an innovative approach to preservation, encourage sustainability/climate resiliency, or add housing units? If so, please provide a description of how.

Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

[See Attached Narrative](#)

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "KIM GRANT" in all capital letters, written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Documentation: Supporting materials may be submitted to supplement but not substitute for the justification that is supposed to be provided in the Narrative portion of the nomination.

Types of materials that may be included:

- For building projects:
 - *Photos of the completed project (REQUIRED).*
 - Plans, drawings, PowerPoint, or other documentation sufficient to illustrate the property before and after the nominated activity and to address how the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
- For interpretive/educational/community projects or programs: Copies of related materials, such as a book, brochure, DVD/CD, website links, transcripts, or photographs of exhibits or activities.
- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.

[See Attached Supporting Documentation](#)



KIM GRANT DESIGN INC



RESTORING A 1927 HOME

4494 Tivoli Street, San Diego, CA 92107

SAN DIEGO PRESERVATION AWARDS - 2026

2026 San Diego Preservation Award Nomination

Homeowners: Rob and Kathy Hailey **Architect:** Kim Grant, AIA

Reason for Nomination: The current homeowners deserve to be recognized for the effort put forth in Restoring this 1927 home. Great care was taken in preserving the architectural style and replacing the many details of the original design as well as a dedication to restoring all salvageable elements from the original home. With all their hard work, the homeowners have brought this charming Spanish Eclectic home back to life.

Project Description:

House

This 1927 home had a previous addition that included enclosing a portion of the prominent balcony facing the ocean view. As part of the restoration work, and working with HRB Staff, the delineation of where the original balcony was located was clearly delineated by adding differentiated stucco, an extension of the balcony tile, and simplifying the in-fill detailing.

All windows that could be restored were restored/repared; double hung windows were re-roped and re-puttied and elsewhere where non-original windows had been, new all wood windows were built to match existing details and hardware.

Additions as part of our project included extending the northeast rear wing of the house, adding 101 square feet, towards the backyard and out of public view, to allow for a proper sized Kitchen, Laundry and Powder Room. The exterior work included removing non-original structures in the backyard and creating a covered Terrace area complete with an outdoor fireplace and BBQ. The pool was reshaped to be more traditional and consistent with the Spanish style with the addition of a water feature. The driveway was replaced using matching colored concrete and score pattern from the original design and the addition of a simple iron driveway gate.

The landscaping is mostly drought tolerant and complimentary to the Spanish style home, designed and installed by the homeowner's daughter.

Kitchen

The existing space that was the Kitchen was transformed by extending the northeast wing of the building into the backyard and out of public view adding 101 square feet. Vaulting the ceiling created a more significant feeling to the space and reflective, yet different, from the original Living Room vaulted ceiling. Large wood bifolding doors were added to the Kitchen to take in the views to the patio and new pool/spa/fountain and to allow for more light.

Bathrooms

Main Level Bath: Remodeled entirely yet keeping the original built in tub and deep arch detail, and keeping the original windows.

Upper Level Bath: Remodeled entirely yet keeping the original windows.

Master Bath: Remodeled this Bath with more appropriate tile and finishes.

Interiors

The original faux stone/plaster walls still exist in the Entry and into the Stairwall; The original staircase and railings have been restored; the stained glass/original skylight lens has been restored as the centerpiece of the stairwall; The Living Room maintains the original vaulted and beamed ceiling. Damaged plaster has been repaired. The house has been rewired and replumbed.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties:

The project met the Standards in that the previous Balcony enclosure was remodeled to differentiate the in-fill stucco from the original stucco texture; the Balcony tile edge detail was added for the extent of the enclosed portion delineating that that portion had originally been an outdoor Balcony; All wood windows were replaced-in-kind as needed where restoration was not possible (custom built); The Kitchen addition was kept in the rear of the house, not visible from public view. The Kitchen addition was differentiated by stepping down the terra cotta roof, use of smoother stucco and a vertical

score line between the original rear corner of the house and the addition. The new bifold doors from the Kitchen to the patio are the width of the two original windows, outer edges, per HRB direction. The non-original terra cotta roof over wood rafters and posts in the patio was removed and the stucco restored.

Historic Designation

This property has been designated by the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board, HRB Site# 23-029, Historic Report by Kiley Wallace.

Resources List

- Homeowners: Rob and Kathy Hailey
4494 Tivoli Street
San Diego, CA 92107
- Architect: Kim Grant, AIA
Kim Grant Design, Inc.
2400 Kettner Blvd. Studio 220
San Diego, CA 92101
T: 619.269.3630
- Historian: Kiley Wallace
Landmark Historic Preservation
760-704-7373
- Landscape Design: Paige Hailey (owner's daughter)
California Farm and Gardens
Owners: Paige Hailey and Mat Roman

2026 SAN DIEGO PRESERVATION AWARD NOMINATION SUPPORTING DOCUMENTAION

Historical Landmark No. 23-029
C. H. Salyers, Original Architect
Dodge Construction Company, Original Contractor

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA
02-24-2025



Kim Grant, Architect

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Photo of current home: Front Elevation

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Historic Photo



Before: Existing home prior to construction



After: current home

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



After

Photo of current home: Stucco texture at previously filled-in balcony changed to smoother texture to differentiate between historic and prior construction

Photo of current home: Restored scored concrete entry

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Historic Photo

Historic Photo: Showing original open balcony

Historic Photo: Showing original awnings

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before

Photo of existing home prior to construction:
Original portion of Second Story open balcony is now
enclosed; Windows added and stucco used closely
matches original

Photo of existing home prior to
construction: Original Awnings
removed

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



After

Photo of current home: Stucco texture at previously filled-in balcony changed to smoother texture to differentiate between historic and prior construction; Balcony tile floor extends to create detail below the filled in area; Simplified wood windows installed

Photo of current home: Awnings added

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

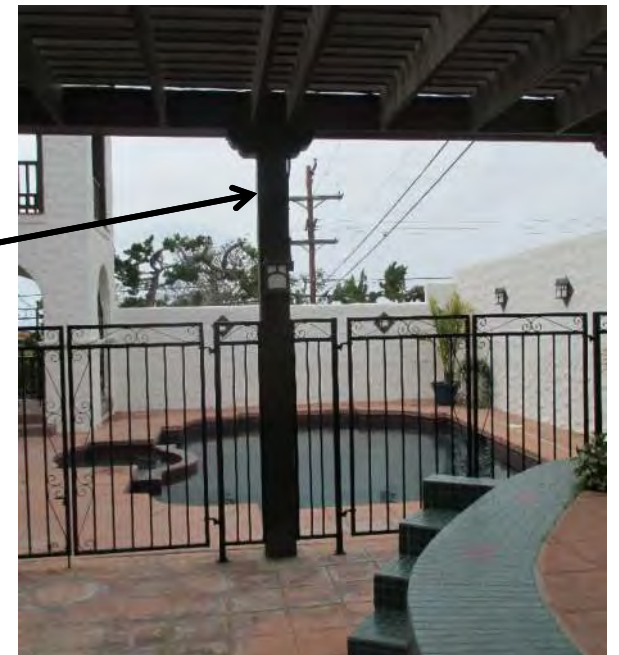


Photos of existing home prior to construction: Previously enclosed portion of original open balcony; Existing stucco too closely matching the original texture at the filled in areas; Non-original concrete balcony flooring

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Photos of existing home prior to construction: Pool and existing stucco wall; Rear courtyard; Rear yard dining area; Rear yard wood trellis



4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



After

Photo of current home: New kitchen addition with vertical score in stucco and stepped down roof to differentiate from original building

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Original Turret

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Outdoor Breezeway

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Restored Driveway and New Gate

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Balcony

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Rear Yard: New covered terrace with fireplace and BBQ

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before
Non-original tiled patio cover



After

Before and After Photos of Rear Courtyard: Non-original tiled patio cover removed; New folding doors installed within the original opening dimensions; New decorative tile; New lighting

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Rear Courtyard: New Covered Terrace

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA



Before



After

Before and After Photos of Rear Yard: New Covered Terrace and Fireplace

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

Before and After Photos of Pool Area: New water feature; Relocated Spa



Before

After

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

Before and After Photos of Kitchen



Before

After

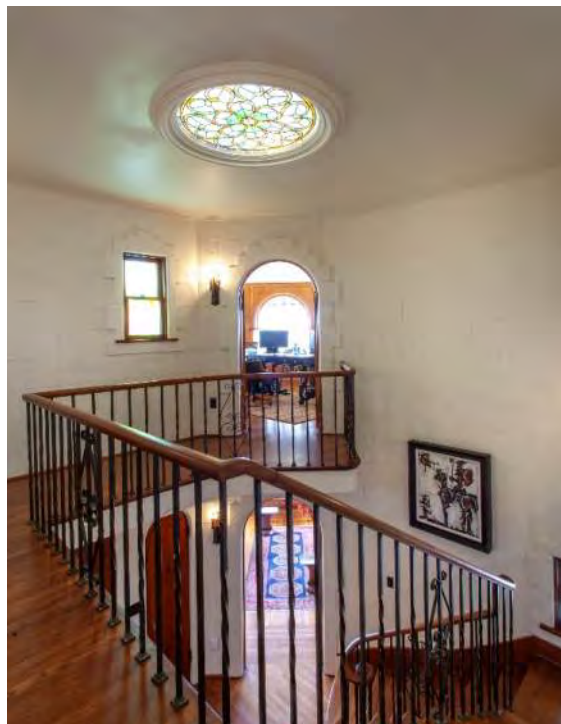
4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of New Kitchen



4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Restored Interior: Restored archways and stained-glass skylight

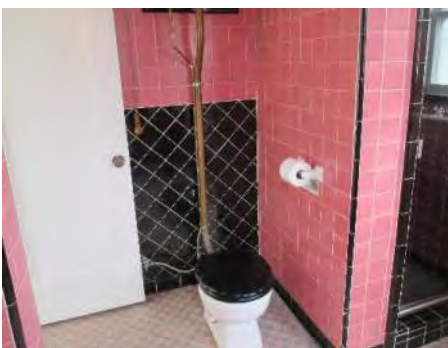
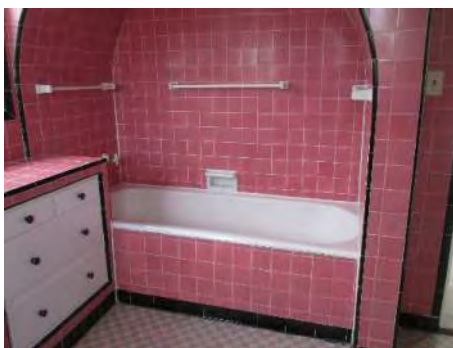


4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

Before and After Photos of Upstairs Bath



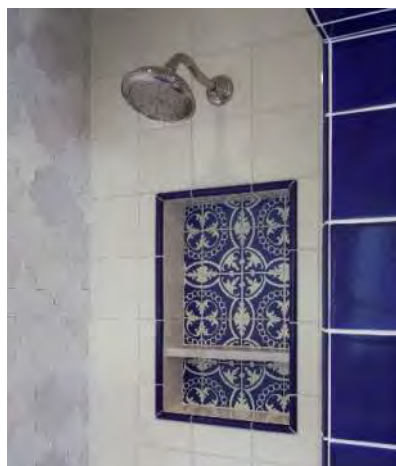
After



Before

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

After Photos of Master Bath



4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

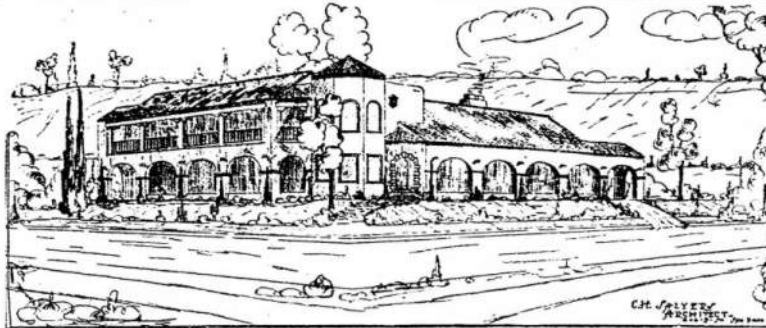
4494 Tivoli St.

Historical Research Photos and Rendering
Legacy 106 Inc.

San Diego Union, October 31, 1926

Mexican-Colonial Combined With Spanish Architecture Creates Ideal Southern California Style for Sunset Cliffs

Architect's sketch of residence to be erected at once in Sunset Cliffs for W. S. Mills, sales manager of the John P. Mills Organization, Inc. The design is a combination of Mexican-colonial and Spanish architecture and was suggested by Mills. C. H. Salyers is the architect, and the Dodge Construction company the contractor.



A palatial home will be erected at once in Sunset Cliffs, on the Point Loma ocean shore, for W. S. Mills, sales manager of the John P. Mills organization, he announced yesterday, in deciding to build there. Mills is following the lead of his brother, head of the organization, whose fine home now is nearing completion on Sunset Cliffs boulevard.

This new home, unique in architectural design and of 12 rooms, will cost \$118,000 and, with its site, will comprise an investment of \$25,000. The location is the northeast corner of Tivoli and Guizot streets. There will be a frontage of 120 feet on the former and 118 feet on the latter. C. H. Salyers of San Diego, is the architect and the Dodge Construction company also of this city, is the contractor.

The architect, following instructions by the owner, has combined Mexican-Colonial and Spanish architecture in the plans for the home. The columns and the balcony on the second floor contain about 1200 square feet of space. A tower, limited in height to the gable of the main part of the house, is a feature of the design. Exterior walls will be of tinted stucco and the entire building will be roofed with red tile. All of the rooms are to be differently decorated and ceilings will be of varied design. Three baths are provided.

Placement of the house on a villa site gives most of the ground to gardens in the rear of the house, and this will be watered in after a manner suggested by the colonial style of the lower part of the house. The site, on the rising slope of the Point, commands an excellent view over the Pacific.

San Diego Union, May 8, 1927

PALATIAL RESIDENCE OF W. S. MILLS

SITUATED AT THE CORNER OF TIVOLI AND GUIZOT STREETS, SUNSET CLIFFS, POINT LOMA
Open For Public Inspection to Celebrate "Better Homes" Week

The Public Is Invited!
Home Open Every Day
This Week Until 10 P. M.
Starting Today



Home of W. S. Mills (Sunset Cliffs), C. H. Salyers, 646 E St., Designer

LOOK
at the job of
linoleum
laying in the
kitchen of the
Mills home
when you visit
it this week

A "better home" should
have a "better floor"

H. L. BENBOUGH

Mr. Mills--
"In the home of yours you have built a monument to yourself as well as a permanent home for your children."

And we urge everyone to inspect carefully the tile work in the kitchen and bathroom, as well as the Tivoli and Magnolia work installed by

Thurnell Tile and Marble Co., Inc.
1238 First Phone Franklin 2151

W. S. Mills

Owner of this Dream Home, allow us in our humble way to offer you our sincerest congratulations.

We are proud indeed of the part we have taken in the completion of this stately work of art and want to thank each subcontractor and his staff for their untiring effort and co-operation on being able to turn the home over to the owner in schedule time.

Dodge Construction Co.
"Builders of Better Homes"

4750 Van Dyke Ave. Hillcrest 8667-J
Interior Decorating by C. Wesley Johnston Phone Hillcrest 8667-J
4849 Biosa Street

We recently consulted with the request of W. S. Mills in making for the best obtainable

The Hardwood Floors
were laid and finished by us, and we will make original inspection.

KIRK
The Floor Man
4038 Idaho St. Hillcrest 1882

To W. S. Mills

We say:
Well done, then good and faithful service.
Your broad vision is deserving of no end of praise.
And we furnished the Onest work.

Ray L. Miller
Onest Contractor
4135 Litch St. Phone Hillcrest 1396-W
Estimates carefully given and satisfaction guaranteed.

We ask that you carefully inspect the Electric Wiring, Electric Heating and Electric Fixtures in this exceptional home.

We know you will agree when we say it was a true work of art. Installed by
F. L. Byrum
Electrical Contractor
3708 Adams Ave. Ph. Hillcrest 5221-W

ELECTRO-KOLD

In the New Home of W. S. Mills, on Sunset Cliffs Tivoli Street, is all possible modernness with the beautiful tile drain board and equipment. You know the Electro-Kold to be the ideal ornamental iron work installed in the Refrigerator, installed by the Water, Inc.

Building restrictions called for **Red Tile Roofing**
Mr. Mills called for the best, and we were awarded the contract, of which we are justly proud, and offer sincere congratulations to the owner of this beautiful edifice.

Union Roofing Co.
143 W. Pennsylvania Ave. Hillcrest 1988-J

W. S. Mills
IS WORTHY OF A GREAT DEAL MORE THAN MERELY CONGRATULATIONS and we are proud of the beautiful ornamental iron work installed in this magnificent home by us.

Southern Wire and Iron Works
513 Seventh St. Phone Main 5801

Mill Work, Sash Doors and Glass furnished by

FRANK GALEY & SONS
Sash Balance
3817 20th St. Phone Hillcrest 3151
S. O. Symonds
Barnhart and Partner
April 1927

CONGRATULATIONS—and without fault of construction, we say no better job of plumbing can be found in Southern California than that installed in the new home of W. S. Mills.

Guy Fox
(Plumber)
4528 Wightman Ave. Ph. Hillcrest 3551-J

Furnishing the Dress

Paint, varnish and stencils of quality, and mechanics of ability are the necessities of beautifying every home.

PABCO PAINT STORE
3877 University Avenue
Phone Hillcrest 0131

Congratulations to W. S. Mills. Like a Gem is a finished gem in the Lighthouse is a beautiful home. And nothing was left undone in completing a perfect picture of stonework and lawn around this palace. The sprinkling system was also installed by us under the personal supervision of F. J. Waddington, manager of the Sprinkling system department. Growing Grasses, Murrey Dan Road

Southern California Nurseries
2791 Park Boulevard Phone Hillcrest 604

Historic Research on the property

4494 TIVOLI STREET, SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA

Save Our Heritage Organization (SOHO)
The Sunset Cliffs Home Tour 1989
A Study of Spanish Revival Architecture



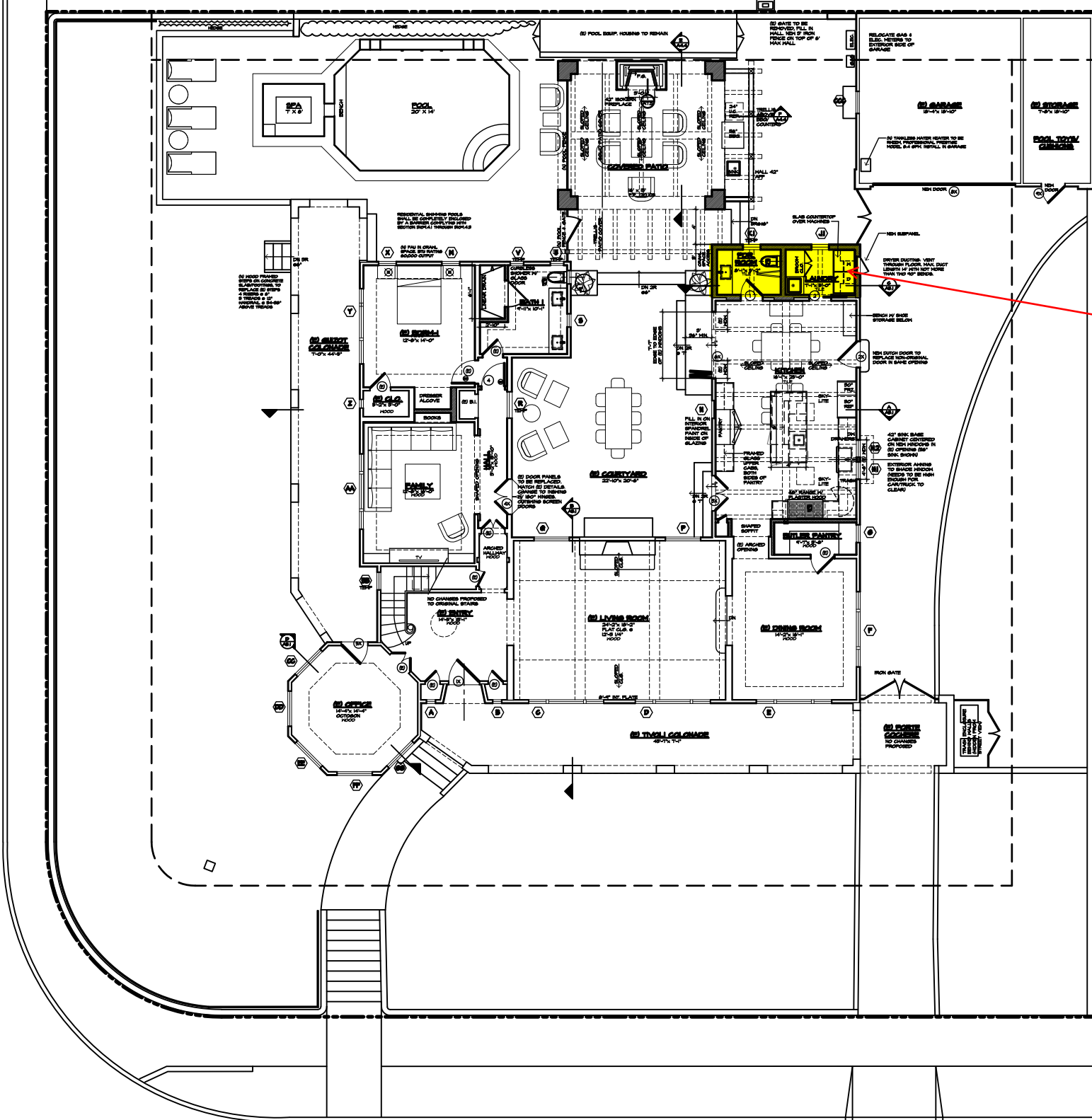
4494 Tivoli



This home was designed by local architect C.H. Salyers under the direction of the owner, William S. Mills, and built by the Dodge Construction Company. Mills, the brother of John P., and sales manager for the John P. Mills Organization Inc., erected this \$18,000 twelve room, three bath home in 1927. The tower, limited in height to the gable of the main part of the house, was a feature in the design. The home included two colonades, a Spanish balcony, and a large patio with a fountain. All of the rooms inside were decorated differently and ceilings were of varied designs. The estate featured a musical fireplace made possible through an innovative system of radio wiring conceived and installed under the personal supervision of Mr. Mills. In fact, the system permitted radio music in all the public rooms, all from one radio and the use of a set of loud speakers. No one had seen such an elaborate plan for radio reception built into a home. Called the "Castle on the Cliffs" in a newspaper article, an open house was provided for the public during the "Better Homes Exposition" in May of 1927.

Mills and his wife, Olga, resided there until 1931, when he, like his brother, left town due to the financial decline of their business.

Historic Research on the property



101 S.F.
Addition

HAILEY
RESIDENCE

Preservation Project Award Nomination

Nomination for City of San Diego Preservation Award Preservation Project Category

California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum) Palisades Rehabilitation — Coordinated Preservation Projects Balboa Park, San Diego, California



Submitted to

Historical Resources Board
City of San Diego Planning Department
Historic Preservation Planning Section

February 23, 2026

Nomination Forms

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

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Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Restoration of Monumental Murals
Address: Balboa Park Committee of 100 Project, Kevin Carpenter President 2025-present
president@c100.org
Category (refer to first page of packet): Restoration Project

Project Completion Date (month, year): 2015 Research begun

Program Launch Date (month, year): March 2021

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

- RTK Studios , rtkstudios@sbcglobal.net
- Mike Kelly, President C100 (2005-2019), mkelly4358@gmail.com
- Ross Porter, President C100 (2022-2024), rossporterster@gmail.com
- Barnhart Reese Construction , Vice President, Chuck McArthur and Superintendent, Shane Liberty, cmcarthur@debconstruct.com

Nominator Information

Name: Seonaid McArthur
Company or Title (optional): Chair, La Jolla Landmark Steering Committee
Address: 391 Via del Norte
Phone: 858-922-5162 Email: seonaidm@gmail.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award? (Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: Y

Project: Restoration of Monumental Murals, Individuals Involved (continued)

Roger Showley, President C100 (2020-2021) rshowley@yahoo.com

Travis Nixon, Lighting, travis@absolutelyelectric.com

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: **Restoration of Sculptural Ornamentation: Maya Relief Panels, Bears, and Flagpoles, for the California State Building**

Address: **Balboa Park**

Category (refer to first page of packet): **Preservation Project**

Project Completion Date (month, year): **May, 2023**

Program Launch Date (month, year): **2017**

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. **Roger Showley, President C 100, rrmshowley@yahoo.com**
2. **Robert Thiele; robert@robertthiele.com**
3. **Bellagio Precast Kevin_matson@yahoo.com**
4. **Barnhart Reese Construction, Chuck McArthur cmcarthur@debconstruct.com**

Nominator Information

Name: **Dr. Seonaid McArthur**

Company or Title (optional): **Chair, La Jolla Landmark Steering Committee**

Address: **391 Via del Norte, La Jolla, CA**

Phone: **858-922-5162** Email: **seonaidm@gmail.com**

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?

(Y/N) **Y**

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: **seonaidm@gmail.com**

Project: Restoration of Ornamentation (Individuals Involved, continued)

Tony Court, Structural Engineer, abcourt@abcourtse.com

Travis Nixon, Lighting, travis@absolutelyelectric.com

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Color Restoration of the Palisades Buildings, Balboa Park

Address: C-100

Category (refer to first page of packet): Preservation Project

Project Completion Date (month, year): 2022

Program Launch Date (month, year): 2021

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. William Chandler, Chandler Art Consulting Services will.cacs@outlook.com
2. Susan Beck, Ph.D., Conservator and Paint Analyst
3. Natasha K. Loeblich, Architectural Paint Analyst
4. Roger Showley Committee of 100 President (2020-2021), rrmshowley@yahoo.com
5. Ross Porter, President C100 (2022-2024), rossporterster@gmail.com

Nominator Information

Name: Dr. Seonaid McArthur

Company or Title (optional): Chair, La Jolla Landmark Steering Committee

Address: 391 Via del Norte, La Jolla, CA

Phone: 858-922-5162 Email: seonaidm@gmail.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?
(Y/N) **Y**

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: seonaidm@gmail.com

Project: Color Restoration, Individuals involved (continued)

Milford Wayne Donaldson, Architect, FAIA, mwdonaldson13@yahoo.com

David Marshall, Architect, AIA, DavidMarshall@HeritageArchitecture.com

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.


Signature of Applicant

Table of Contents

Nomination Forms	2
Project Overview	10
PROJECT 1 -- Restoration of Monumental Murals	11
Description of Work Performed	11
Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards	12
PROJECT 2: Restoration of Ornamentation – Maya Relief Panels, Bears, and Flagpoles	13
Description of Work Performed	13
Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards	14
PROJECT 3: Historic Color Restoration of the Palisades Buildings	16
Description of Work Performed	16
Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards	17
Section IV Supporting Documentation - Murals	18
Section IV Supporting Documentation - Ornamentation	23
Section IV Supporting Documentation – Color Restoration	29
Required Photographs – “Before - 2019” and “After - 2024”	32
Letters of Support	33
References	36

California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum)
Palisades Rehabilitation — Coordinated Preservation Projects
Balboa Park, San Diego, California

Project Overview

The rehabilitation of the California State Building in Balboa Park represents a coordinated preservation effort undertaken by the Balboa Park Committee of 100 to restore key architectural, artistic, and material features of the building dating to the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition.

This nomination presents three preservation projects that collectively restored the building's historic character and architectural integrity:

- Restoration of Monumental Murals
- Restoration of Sculptural Ornamentation (Maya Relief Panels, Bears, and Flagpoles)
- Historic Color Restoration of the Palisades Buildings

Together, the projects reinstate the visual composition, symbolic ornamentation, and architectural finishes that defined the California State Building during the exposition period, while meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration. Each project required the Committee of 100 to lead fundraising, define the preservation vision, coordinate contractors and fabrication teams, and work with the City on necessary permits and installation

PROJECT 1 -- Restoration of Monumental Murals

Description of Work Performed

The Automotive Museum Façade Mural Project involved the research-based restoration and permanent re-creation of four monumental exterior murals originally installed on the California State Building for the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition. These murals—depicting Transportation, Scenic Beauty, Agriculture, and Industry—were a defining artistic feature of the Palisades but had been removed shortly after the Exposition, and were long considered lost.

When the **Committee of 100** selected the Automotive Museum as the first building to undergo rehabilitation within the Palisades preservation initiative in 2015, no color photographs, cartoons, or physical fragments of the murals were known to survive. The project therefore began not with conservation of surviving material, but with forensic reconstruction. Historic documentation consisted primarily of a limited number of black-and-white photographs and hand-colored postcards in which mural imagery was partially obscured by shadow, glare, or distance. Figures, landscape forms, infrastructure elements, and symbolic motifs were often indistinct. The reconstruction process required careful comparison across multiple photographic sources, enlargement and proportional scaling of façade bays, and digital clarification of tonal contrasts to distinguish foreground from background forms.

Scaled façade elevations were developed from historic construction drawings, and archival photographs to establish proportional relationships between architectural openings and mural panels. From these, full-scale line drawings were prepared, translating blurred historic imagery into legible compositional frameworks. Contextual research into California infrastructure, agricultural development, transportation systems, and landscape imagery of the 1930s informed interpretation of ambiguous elements, ensuring that reconstructed forms were grounded in period-appropriate references rather than conjecture.

Artists **Mary Kennedy** and **Richard Keit** of RTK Studios collaborated closely in translating this documentation into permanent ceramic murals fabricated using the *cuerva seca* technique. Glaze development required extensive testing to achieve tonal variation consistent with 1930s architectural tile while ensuring colorfastness and durability in an exterior coastal environment. Mock-ups and sample firings were evaluated to refine line weight, color saturation, and surface finish.

Approximately 576 square feet of architectural ceramic murals were fabricated and kiln-fired. Installation required structural review, anchoring design, and integration with the existing façade, without damage to historic fabric. Structural evaluation and installation coordination were undertaken with engineering consultation, and project architect Robert Thiele provided on-site oversight to ensure alignment between documentary evidence and constructed work.

The tile murals were finished by the studio in May 2020, installed on the building in March 2021, and formally dedicated 13 April 2021.

The recreated murals restore a defining artistic feature of the California State Building and reestablish the integration of architecture and narrative public art that characterized the Palisades during the Exposition.

Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

The mural restoration conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration through reliance on documentary evidence, historically informed craftsmanship, and compatible materials. Reconstruction was based on archival photographs, postcards, and contextual research (Standards 1 and 3). The murals restore a distinctive artistic feature of the building (Standard 5) using durable ceramic tile compatible with the historic appearance (Standards 6 and 7). The new murals are identifiable as contemporary fabrications derived from historic documentation (Standards 8 and 9).

Collectively, the work demonstrates a disciplined application of restoration methodology grounded in documentary evidence and material compatibility.

Conclusion

The restoration and re-creation of the monumental façade murals return a major artistic feature to the California State Building and reestablish the integration of architecture and public art that defined the Palisades during the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition. Through archival research, digital reconstruction, and ceramic fabrication using historically informed techniques, the project successfully recovered imagery that had been considered lost for decades while maintaining the integrity of the historic structure.

PROJECT 2: Restoration of Ornamentation – Maya Relief Panels, Bears, and Flagpoles

Description of Work Performed

The original California State Building decorative features included Maya-inspired relief panels, rooftop bear sculptures, and flagpoles framing the building's primary entrance. Together, these elements established vertical emphasis, symbolic identity, and architectural hierarchy within architect Richard Requa's exposition-era composition.

By the late twentieth century, the relief panels had deteriorated or been removed, the rooftop bears were lost, and the flagpoles no longer reflected their historic configuration. Reconstruction therefore required careful archival investigation, dimensional analysis, and material reinterpretation.

Maya Relief Panels

Research into the missing façade ornament began in 2017 when the Committee of 100 commissioned **William Chandler** to examine archival photographs and exposition documentation. The original panels, fabricated in 1935 using lightweight Canec wallboard composed of compressed sugar-cane fiber, had been designed as temporary exposition features. Their ephemeral material composition explained their loss and required that reconstruction address both historic appearance and long-term durability.

Using enlarged archival imagery, architect **Robert Thiele** developed measured drawings and proportional studies to determine panel dimensions, relief depth, and repeating geometric sequences. Digital modeling was employed to test shadow lines and projection depth relative to the façade surface.

Fabrication was undertaken by **Bellagio Precast** under the direction of sculptor **Michael Matson**, working with **Kevin Matson**. Full-scale relief models were sculpted using foam substrates and hand-applied modeling compounds. Sectional profiling ensured dimensional consistency across repeated glyph forms. Latex molds were produced, and panels were cast in glass-fiber-reinforced concrete (GFRC), selected for its strength-to-weight ratio and ability to replicate crisp sculptural detail.

Panels were mounted on stainless-steel framing systems engineered to anchor independently of the historic stucco substrate, thereby minimizing intervention into the original fabric while ensuring seismic and environmental stability.

Bears and Flagpoles

The rooftop bear sculptures were reconstructed using archival photographs that documented their original placement and silhouette. Sculptor **Michael Matson** began with a scaled clay maquette to establish massing and profile. The maquette was sectioned at measured intervals to generate scaled templates used to fabricate a ribbed plywood armature corresponding to the full-size sculpture, approximately five feet in height and eight feet in length.

Full-scale modeling refined musculature, fur texture, and stance consistent with historic imagery. Internal stainless-steel armatures were engineered to anchor the sculptures to roof framing while accommodating wind loads and seismic requirements. The final bears were cast in GFRC with a cold-cast bronze finish designed to evoke the intended historic appearance while providing durability appropriate for permanent installation.

Installation required structural analysis, mounting design, building permits, and FAA review due to rooftop placement. The bears were installed on the north and south roof corners in 2021, restoring the building's vertical sculptural emphasis.

Flagpole Reconstruction

Flagpole Reconstruction similarly relied on digital modeling, historic photographs, and dimensional analysis to confirm original placement and proportions relative to the curved parapet and entry façade. New tapered aluminum flagpoles were fabricated using components manufactured by L. **Ph. Bolander & Sons**. Custom mounting assemblies and maintenance platforms were engineered to meet contemporary safety standards while replicating the historic roofline configuration. The flagpoles were reinstalled in their original locations in 2021.

Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

Reconstruction of the bears and flagpoles relied on archival photographs, measured drawings, and digital modeling (Standards 1 and 3). Distinctive architectural features central to the building's identity were reinstated in their original locations (Standard 5). Compatible materials including GFRC and stainless-steel armatures were used to replicate historic appearance while ensuring durability (Standards 6 and 7). Mounting systems minimized impact on historic fabric.

Conclusion

The restoration of the bears and flagpoles reinstates key architectural elements that defined the California State Building during the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition. Through research-based reconstruction and historically informed fabrication, the project restores the visual completeness of the building and strengthens the architectural integrity of the Palisades ensemble.

PROJECT 3: Historic Color Restoration of the Palisades Buildings

Description of Work Performed

As part of the Palisades rehabilitation work plan adopted by the **Committee of 100** for the Preservation of Balboa Park, restoration of the original exterior paint colors of the Palisades buildings was undertaken between 2020 and 2021. The effort focused on identifying and reinstating the documented 1935 color palette for the California State Building (Automotive Museum), the Palace of Electricity and Varied Industries (Municipal Gymnasium), and the Federal Building (now the Comic-Con Museum).

Decades of repainting campaigns had obscured the original finishes, altering the tonal relationships between wall planes and sculptural ornamentation that defined the exposition-era design. To recover the authentic palette, the Committee of 100 initiated a forensic paint investigation combining archival research, physical sampling, and laboratory analysis. Paint samples were extracted from protected areas and surviving fragments of original ornamentation preserved in the San Diego History Center Study Collection. Samples were embedded in resin, cross-sectioned, polished, and examined under microscopy to identify original paint strata and substrate conditions. Stratigraphic analysis distinguished the earliest surviving finish layers from subsequent repaint campaigns.

The research team included:

- **William Chandler**, Chandler Art Consulting Services — archival research and documentation
- **Susan Beck**, Ph.D., Conservator and Paint Analyst — cross-section microscopy and paint stratigraphy
- **Natasha K. Loeblich**, Architectural Paint Analyst — comparative microscopy analysis and finish studies

Because original coatings on portions of the California State Building had been lost during earlier repainting, comparative analysis of intact paint layers from related exposition-era buildings was used to establish the historic palette.

The analysis confirmed that the Palisades buildings were originally painted in a **light, warm neutral body color with slightly darker ornamentation**, consistent with tonal relationships visible in historic photographs of the 1935-36 exposition.

Based on the research findings, the exterior color selected for the buildings corresponded to **Sherwin-Williams SW 6114 “Bagel”**, while the ornament color was matched to **Benjamin Moore AF-345 “Honeymoon.”**

Repainting the buildings using these historically derived colors restored visual coherence to the Palisades ensemble and reestablished the intended relationship between architectural surfaces and sculptural ornamentation

Conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

The historic color restoration meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration through reliance on scientific evidence, documentary research, and historically appropriate finishes.

The project reinstated documented exterior finishes from the building's period of significance, consistent with Standards 1 and 3. Color selection was grounded in cross-section microscopy, analysis of original ornament fragments, archival documentation, and comparative sampling across multiple exposition buildings, ensuring decisions were based on physical and documentary evidence rather than interpretation.

The reinstated color palette restores the architectural composition and tonal relationships integral to the original exposition design, consistent with Standard 5. The 2020–2021 repainting corrected inaccurate late-twentieth-century alterations and returned the buildings to their documented historic appearance.

Conclusion

The historic color restoration of the Palisades buildings represents a research-driven preservation effort that combined conservation science, archival investigation, and architectural stewardship. By reinstating the original 1935 palette, the Committee of 100 restored a fundamental aspect of the Palisades' architectural identity and ensured that subsequent restoration work—murals, relief panels, and sculptural elements—would be visually and historically integrated.

Section IV Supporting Documentation - Murals



California State Building and fountain in the Palisades, Balboa Park, during the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition. Historic view showing the building with monumental façade murals, flagpoles, and bears. San Diego History Center.



1935 Original



2019

California State Building entrance with original façade murals visible in arched recesses, 1935. Courtesy San Diego History Center.

Four Murals Get Places in State Building at Expo

Four beautiful murals, vividly depicting the march of progress in commerce, industry, agriculture and the scenic beauty and wonders of California, were hung yesterday in the huge semi-circular entrance of the California State building at the Exposition.

The murals are the work of Juan Larrinaga and are done in imitation mosaic work. Each mural is 9 by 18 feet.

With the murals for the State buildings completed and in their places, Larrinaga and his staff have started work on three panels, which will be hung in the Palace of Transportation. One of these panels will be devoted entirely to water transportation, while the other two will depict travel by air, rail, autos and trains. These panels will be completed and in place before the end of the week, Larrinaga said.

Arturo Eneim, an artist on Larrinaga's staff, is making still another gigantic panel which will be symbolic of electricity and the wheels of industry. This panel will be done in imitation bronze.



Historic newspaper article documenting the imagery in the four murals in the California State Building during the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition.



Artist Richard Keit (RTK Studios) presenting mural design concepts to Committee of 100 President Mike Kelly during research and reconstruction phase.

Here's some technical information about our tile glazes:

Developed over the past 40 years, the glazes we will be working with are composed primarily of silica and alumina as are all natural clays. Roughly speaking, clays range from 65% silica/35% alumina to 55% silica/45% alumina while durable glazes are essentially a Silica based glass with minimal percentages of Alumina to allow the glaze to conform and therefore adhere to the various coefficients of thermal expansion and contraction of fired clays. Our titanium-borosilicate glazes are opaque by design as they are applied to a red clay body that would muddy the colors of a translucent glaze formula.

These glazes bases (the body of the glaze not counting metallic oxides and carbonates that provide the colors) have evolved over time into complicated formulas that average around 20 components not including the metallic colorants. These glazes are fired to approximately 2,000 degrees F over a period of 36 hours slowly melting into a glass and creating an interface layer of glaze and clay that permanently adheres the two. Silica is the main ingredient of both the clay and glaze. Titanium and boron combined with silica add considerable hardening strength to the surface. In addition, Titanium adds opacity and surface texture while boron boosts colors in the blue to green spectrum.

These glazes have been formulated to endure decades of foot traffic on floors including many high traffic public building entrances. Of course no one will be walking on these tiles, but this family of glazes are all the more resistant to wind driven particles and rigorous surface cleaning techniques because of their extremely high resistance to abrasion.

Ceramic glazes are completely inorganic in composition and so almost all ceramic-glass forming glazes, with the exception of low temperature fired enamels and Bristol glazes (which depend on zinc oxide as it's main fluxing component), are immune to the ultra violet rays of the sun that quickly breakdown and bleach out organic materials such as vinyl fabrics, painted surfaces, wood stains, and the like.

We have many outdoor installations in public areas that are more than three decades old at this point and none show any sign of color deterioration.

While our glazes are hard as granite, the one threat to any colored glazed surface (to which our glazes are quite resistant) is the use of highly acidic materials to clean hard water calcium deposits on fountain and pool tiles without neutralizing the acid quickly after. Even the errant acid etching of the surface of our tiles is reversible by polishing the etched surface (which we have supervised a few times over the years), as our glazing technique utilizes "full bodied" glazes (meaning though and through color) that are fired to an approximately 1/16th" thick as compared to typical brush glazing techniques such as Majolica which fire to the thickness of a piece of paper with an even thinner layer of the colorants on top of the white glaze.

Richard Keit and Mary Kennedy
RTK Studios



Technical documentation describing ceramic glaze development and material testing for the recreated murals by RTK Studios.



Quarter-scale blow-up of historic mural imagery used for reconstruction (left) and reverse-image line drawing developed using a light table



Step #3) Using a see-through vellum type paper on top of reverse image, I can now perfect the lines (camera ready) and create objects out of the unknown with help from google search references. The finished line art is scanned into digital format using a large scale scanner, reversed back to original view and ready to be flood filled on the computer using PaintShopPro. Filters will be applied to create the effects that the ceramic glazes will have in mimicing the original painted mural and lines diminished Transform into banners for hanging/fundraising and Viola!!



Reconstruction process materials, including archival photo references, line drawings, and digital preparation of mural imagery for ceramic fabrication.



Digital reconstruction drawing of the Commerce mural panel showing harbor, rail, and industrial imagery derived from archival photographs. 2017.

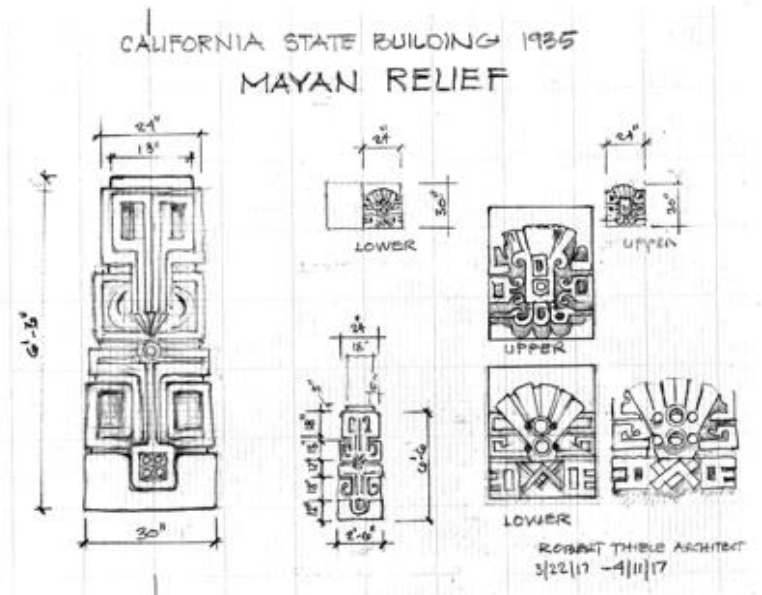


Color prototype for ceramic mural tiles planned for California State Building façade, representing Transportation, Scenic Beauty, Agriculture, and Industry.

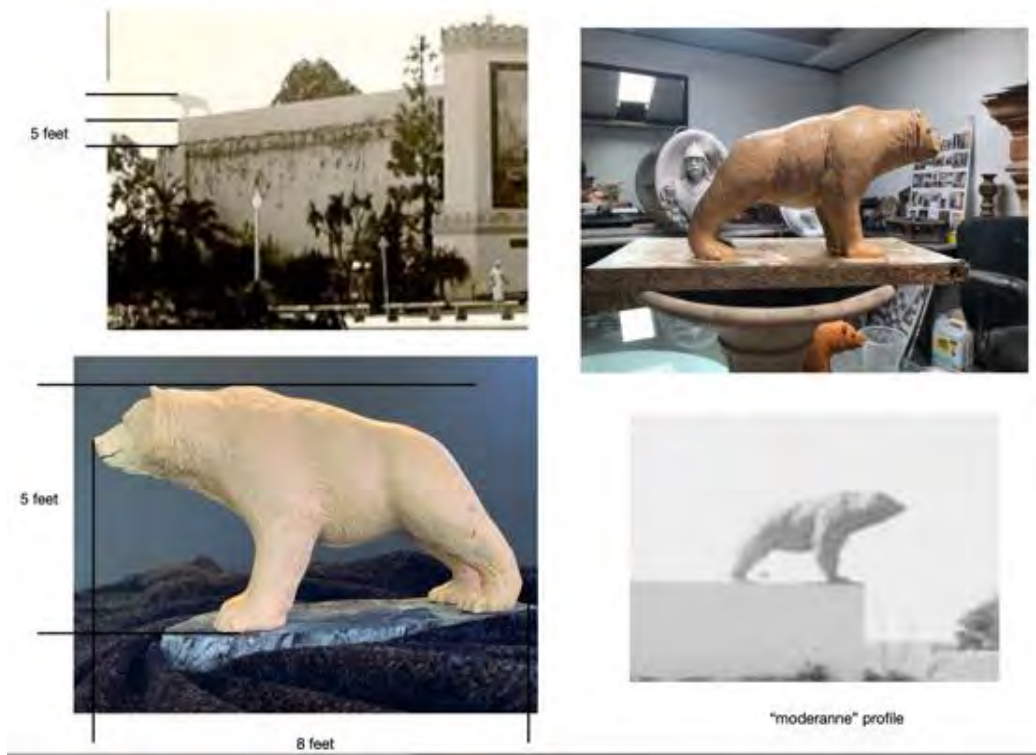


Digital rendering illustrating the reconstructed ceramic mural panels installed within the arched façade bays of the California State Building. Rendering derived from measured documentation and archival photographs to confirm scale, placement, and visual integration prior to fabrication and installation.

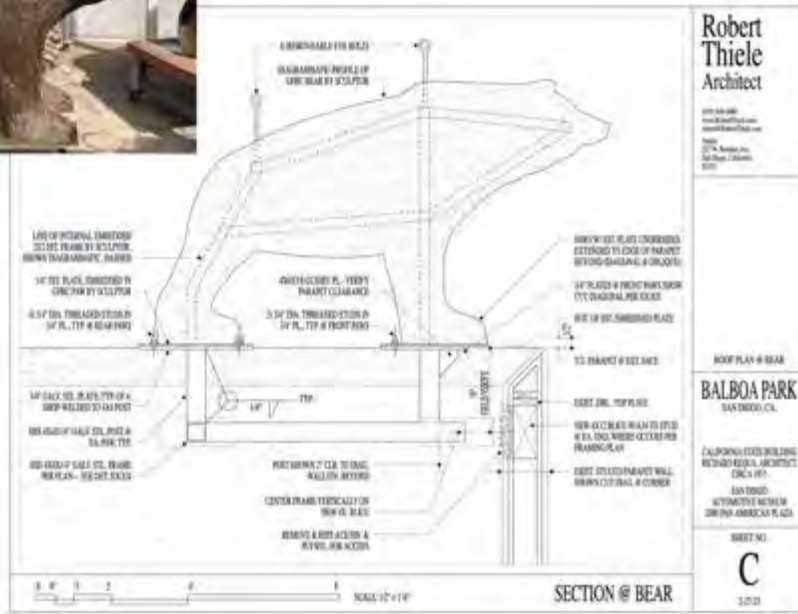
Section IV Supporting Documentation - Ornamentation



Sculpted study model of reconstructed Maya-inspired relief panel shown with measured drawing documenting dimensions and glyph geometry derived from archival photographs. Used to verify proportion and relief depth prior to GFRC fabrication.



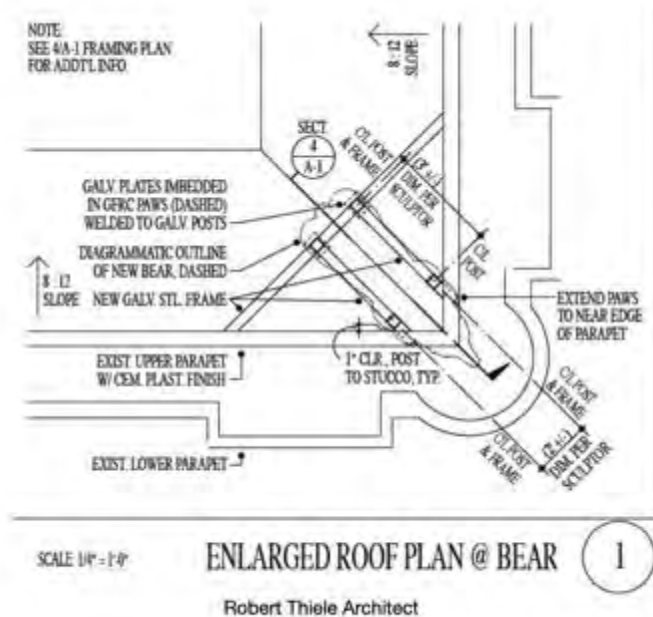
Clay maquette used to develop the form and proportions of the California grizzly bear sculptures.



Full-scale armature construction showing sectional rib framework used to create the bear sculptures.



Automotive Museum Bears on north and south corners of building



Armature proposed for Installation of reconstructed bear sculpture on roofline corner of the California State Building.



Michael Matson



Inspection of bear sculpting in progress at Bellagio Studio, June 2021. Former California State and Federal Historic Preservation Officer **Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA**, and Committee of 100 Board Member (center), review and approve the reconstruction work with sculptors **Kevin Matson** (left) and **Michael Matson** (right).



Installed reconstructed California grizzly bear sculpture at roofline corner of the California State Building. The bear's forepaws extend over the curved parapet edge, replicating the original 1935 silhouette and reinforcing the building's vertical sculptural emphasis. Flagpoles are visible in their restored historic locations.

Flagpole Reconstruction



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EXTRA HEAVY GROUND SET CONE TAPERED ALUMINUM FLAGPOLES EXTERNAL HALYARD

REVOLVING NON-COLLAPSING TRUCK DETAIL
 Aluminum Body with 20 Ball Bearings
 Steel Ball Bearings with Two Guides
 Shrouds of 316 Stainless Steel

SELF ALIGNING INTERNAL SLEEVE
 The pro-Rod, vinyl mounted sleeve is designed to slide in the flag assembly without rubbing of large shafts which must be aligned in sections. Proper fitting of the cylindrical parts will result in a fine line top joint.

FOUNDATION DIMENSIONS

Overall Height	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
20'	9"	8"	10"	8"	10"	3"	10"	20"
25'	9"	8"	10"	8"	10"	3"	10"	20"
30'	9"	8"	10"	8"	10"	3"	10"	20"
35'	9"	8"	10"	8"	10"	3"	10"	20"

Overall Height	Ball	Flare	Wall Thickness	Flare	Length	Ball Dia.	Halyard Dia.	Ship Sections	Ground Sleeve	Flag Size	Shipping Weight
HT20	22"	6"	3"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	152#
HT25	27"	6"	3"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	167#
HT30	32"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	174#
HT35	37"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	181#
HT40	42"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	188#
HT45	47"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	195#

Digital reconstruction model illustrating placement of roof-mounted flagpoles.



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FOUNDATION DIMENSIONS

Overall Height	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
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35'	9"	8"	10"	8"	10"	3"	10"	20"

Overall Height	Ball	Flare	Wall Thickness	Flare	Length	Ball Dia.	Halyard Dia.	Ship Sections	Ground Sleeve	Flag Size	Shipping Weight
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HT25	27"	6"	3"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	167#
HT30	32"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	174#
HT35	37"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	181#
HT40	42"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	188#
HT45	47"	6"	3.5"	184"	11'	12"	1"	5/16"	1"	3'x2'	195#

Flagpole fabrication and mounting design documentation.



Digital rendering derived from a three-dimensional architectural model of the California State Building, illustrating the proposed reconstruction of the historic bear sculptures and flagpoles based on archival photographs and measured documentation.

Section IV Supporting Documentation – Color Restoration



Late 20th-century fiberglass replica ornamentation installed on the northwest corner façade of the Federal Building exhibiting advanced surface deterioration; photograph dated January 23, 2019. Surviving original *Canec* ornament fragments in the San Diego History Center collection derive from the ground-floor cornice band and the vertical panel of four stacked rectangular reliefs.



Context photos for color sampling, 1935 Federal Building – Original canec ornamentation fragments as found in San Diego History Center Study Collection, August 2020. William S. Chandler



Two-layer sample. Beneath 1950s “Padre Brown” type paint is original paint color. 2020, William S. Chandler.



(Left) An area roughly 1 inch wide was scraped down to reveal the original finish. Effort was made to remove as much grime as possible from the surface layer. This material was compared to paint swatches from several commercial paint companies. In natural light, the best match found was Benjamin Moore's AF-345 Honeymoon. (Right) Comparison of another color "Bagel" found in samples from the Gymnasium samples, May 2020. William S. Chandler

Required Photographs – “Before - 2019” and “After - 2024”



After restoration of murals, relief panels, bears, flagpoles, and reinstated historic color palette.

Letters of Support

Wayne Donaldson

ARCHITECT MILFORD WAYNE DONALDSON FAIA

February 19, 2026

Historical Resources Board

City of San Diego Planning Department
Historic Preservation Planning Section

Dear Chairperson Kristi Byers

I am pleased to offer my strong support for the recognition of the Coordinated Preservation Project undertaken at the California State Building in Balboa Park. The comprehensive restoration effort led by the Committee of 100 for the Preservation of Balboa Park represents an exemplary model of research-based preservation practice, collaborative leadership, and architectural stewardship.


The rehabilitation of the California State Building demonstrates an integrated and methodologically rigorous approach to restoration. Through the reconstruction of the monumental façade murals, the reinstatement of the Maya-inspired relief panels and rooftop sculptural program, and the scientifically grounded restoration of the original 1935 color palette, this project has restored critical character-defining features of one of the most significant structures from the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition.

What distinguishes this effort is not only the quality of the craftsmanship, but the depth of research and documentation that informed every phase of the work. Archival investigation, measured drawings, digital modeling, conservation science, structural engineering, and skilled artisan fabrication were coordinated in a manner fully consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration. The result is a project that restores historic integrity without conjecture, strengthens architectural coherence, and ensures long-term durability.

The Committee of 100 provided sustained leadership, fundraising, and coordination among architects, artists, conservators, engineers, contractors, and regulatory agencies. Their stewardship reflects a deep commitment to the preservation of Balboa Park's historic resources and to the responsible rehabilitation of civic landmarks. The talented professionals and artisans who executed this work demonstrated exceptional skill in translating documentary evidence into built form with precision and respect for the original design intent.

This coordinated preservation effort stands as a model for how complex historic restoration projects should be approached—grounded in evidence, collaborative in execution, and mindful of both authenticity and longevity. I commend the Committee of 100 and the entire project team for their dedication and professionalism, and I strongly support this nomination for recognition.

Sincerely,



Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
7754 GREENRIDGE WAY, FAIR OAKS, MWDONALDSON13@YAHOO.COM CA 95628 916 532 8004

Save Our Heritage



Save Our Heritage Organisation
Protecting San Diego's architectural and cultural heritage since 1969

February 22, 2026

Attn Kelley Stanco

City of San Diego Planning Department
Historic Preservation Planning Section

Dear Ms. Stanco and members of the Historical Resources Board,

On behalf of Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO), I am pleased to offer our strong support for the nomination of the three projects related to the restoration of the California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum) for the City of San Diego's 2026 Preservation Award.

The California State Building is a significant contributor to the architectural legacy of the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition and to the cultural identity of Balboa Park's Palisades district. The comprehensive restoration effort undertaken by the Balboa Park Committee of 100 represents an exemplary model of research-driven preservation, technical rigor, and long-term stewardship.

The restoration of the monumental façade murals, the reconstruction of the Maya-inspired relief panels, rooftop bear sculptures, and historic flagpoles, and the 1935 color palette collectively reestablish the building's architectural integrity and symbolic presence.

The project shows how lost or deteriorated character-defining features can be responsibly reconstructed when the work is grounded in credible documentary evidence and carried out through careful collaboration among preservation professionals, architects, artists, and fabricators. The result is not only the recovery of important architectural elements, but the revitalization of the Palisades as a coherent historic ensemble.

The project demonstrates thoughtful and effective preservation work in the City of San Diego and merits consideration for a 2026 Preservation Award.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bruce Coons
Executive Director
Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO)

3525 Seventh Avenue • San Diego CA 92103 • www.SOHOsandiego.org • 619/297-9327



BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE OF 100

Working to conserve Balboa Park's history, architecture, gardens, and public spaces

1849 to Present, since City of San Diego (CA 97104)

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A 501(C)3 CORPORATION

TAX ID: 95-8187105

February 23rd, 2026

Historical Resources Board
City of San Diego Planning Department
Historic Preservation Planning Section

Dear Chairperson Kristi Byers and Members of the Board,

As president of the Balboa Park Committee of 100 (C100), I am pleased to offer our strong support for the nomination of the Restoration of the California State Building for the City of San Diego's 2026 Preservation Award.

C100 is enthusiastically embracing projects in the Palisades, an oft-overlooked part of the park. It's the ideal area to realize a more accessible, less refined sense of place, and the activation and future projects we hope to bring about in this area will be a great counterpoint to the formality of the central mesa/Prado area. It is already a place for families and individuals who are focused on fun and recreation to spend an afternoon in the park.

Through careful research and coordinated execution, the four projects described in the nomination to recreate the monumental murals, reconstruct the Maya-inspired relief panels, return two newly recreated rooftop bear sculptures, add rooftop flagpoles resembling the originals, and repaint the building in the historically documented 1935 color palette. Together, these efforts have returned the building's defining architectural features and strengthened the historic character of the Palisades.

The award provides an important opportunity to recognize the many individuals who contributed their expertise to this work. Researchers, architects, preservation specialists, artists, engineers, and fabricators each played a vital role—from archival investigation and design to fabrication and installation. Their collective skill and dedication made this restoration possible.

We are proud of the collaboration that brought this project to completion and respectfully submit it for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kevin J. Carpenter
President, Balboa Park Committee of 100

References

Primary Sources

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(Press Coverage and Contextual Interpretation)

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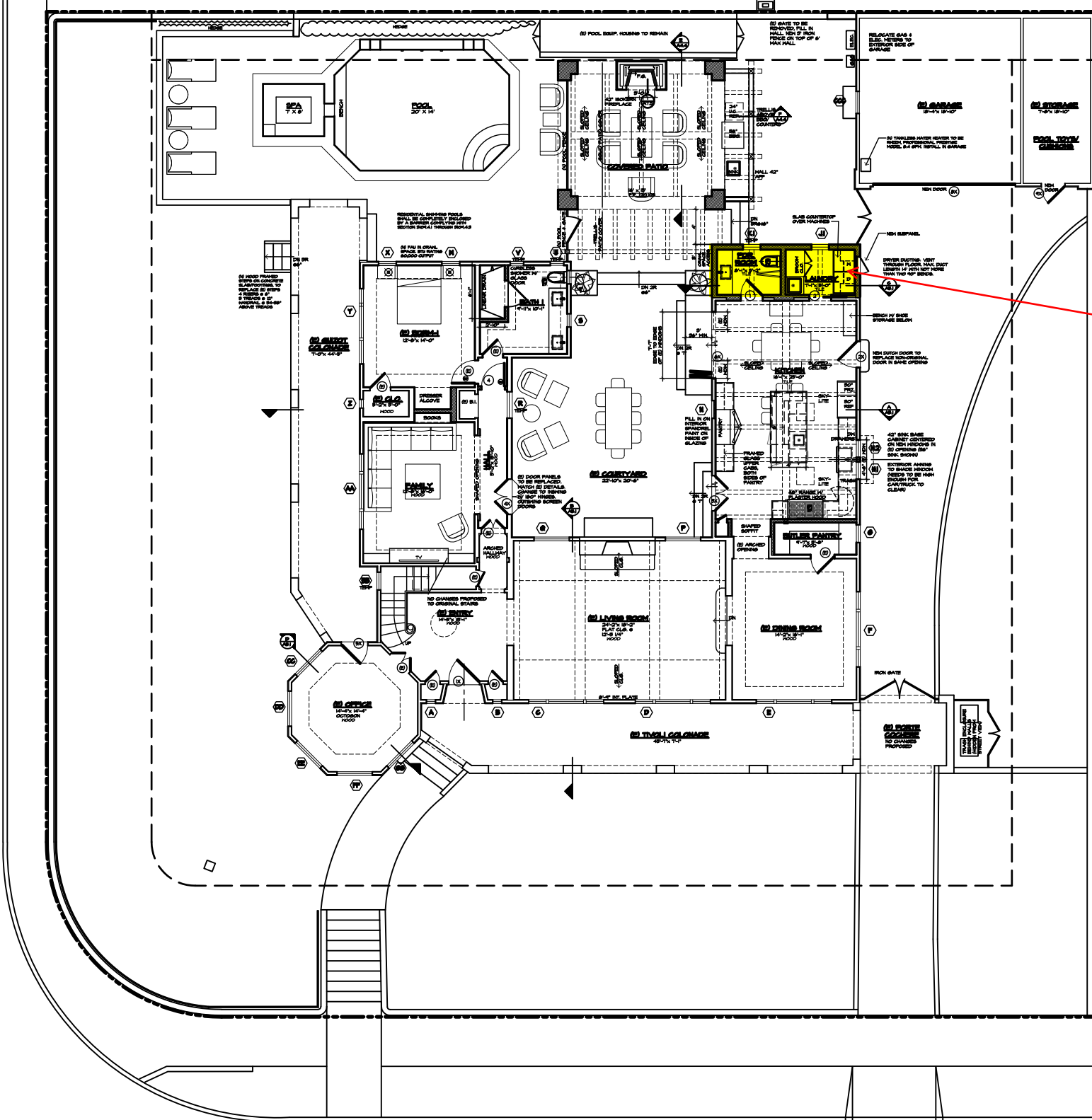
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101 S.F.
Addition

HAILEY
RESIDENCE

2026 City of San Diego Preservation Awards

People in Preservation Award Nomination

For Robert Thiele

February 23, 2026

Prepared By Seonaid McArthur Ed.D.

391 Via del Norte, La Jolla, Ca

858-922-5162

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Robert Thiele Nomination

Address: _____

Category (refer to first page of packet): People in Preservation

Project Completion Date (month, year): ongoing

Program Launch Date (month, year): _____

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. Robert Thiele, robert@roberthiele.com
2. Kevin Carpenter, President C 100, president@c100.org
3. _____
4. _____

Nominator Information

Name: Dr. Seonaid McArthur

Company or Title (optional): _____

Address: 391 Via del Norte, La Jolla, CA

Phone: 858-922-5162 Email: seonaidm@gmail.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award? (Y/N)

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: Yes

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.


Signature of Applicant

City of San Diego Preservation Awards

People in Preservation Award Nomination

Nominee: Robert Thiele

Affiliation: Balboa Park Committee of 100

Nomination Narrative

Architect Robert Thiele has demonstrated sustained individual leadership in the preservation and restoration of the Palisades area of Balboa Park, particularly the exposition buildings constructed for the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition. Working through the Balboa Park Committee of 100, Thiele has served as investigator, designer, coordinator, and on-site preservation lead for the reconstruction of lost architectural ornamentation and artistic features at the California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum), the Municipal Gymnasium, and the surrounding Palisades landscape.

Since 2015, Thiele has led the rehabilitation of the Palisades one project at a time, serving not as a retained consultant, but as a dedicated citizen architect. Volunteering his professional expertise to the Balboa Park Committee of 100 without compensation, he has coordinated the research, design, permitting, construction observation, artist collaboration, and community interface required to bring complex preservation projects to completion. As he describes it, “The architect collects and brings all the ideas, pieces, and players of a project together and transforms it into a real thing.” His sustained, unpaid civic service reflects a commitment to stewardship rather than professional obligation — work pursued for the joy of contributing to Balboa Park’s future.

Thiele’s preservation work in Balboa Park began through sustainability and building-assessment projects and evolved into a long-term commitment to restoring the Palisades. After joining the Committee of 100 in 2015, he began assembling archival drawings, historic photographs, and documentary evidence needed to initiate restoration projects when no clear implementation plan existed.

California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum)

One of Thiele’s earliest preservation efforts focused on recreating the ceramic tile murals and Maya-inspired sculptural ornamentation that once defined the California State Building. With no surviving drawings or color documentation, he relied on archival photographs, postcards, and proportional analysis of the building itself to reconstruct the imagery. He worked with graphic specialists to digitally interpret historic photographs, determining that tile replication of the imagery would provide a permanent and historically appropriate medium for recreating the mural content. He found RTK

Studios, Ojai, California, who worked in early tile techniques, for their ability to fabricate new tile murals using the *cuerva seca* process.

Thiele worked with the artists to reconstruct the mural scenes, coordinated structural evaluation, and worked with engineers and contractors to develop attachment methods for the heavy tile assemblies. He participated in contractor selection with the Committee of 100 and maintained a daily on-site presence during installation to ensure the work followed preservation intent.

Committee of 100 work plans from 2020–2021 document these efforts, including the installation of tile murals, GFRC ornamentation, and building lighting.

Maya Ornamentation, Bears, and Flagpoles

To reconstruct missing sculptural ornamentation, Thiele scaled historic photographs to full size, created three-dimensional foam mockups, and used shadow analysis to determine relief depth before coordinating fabrication with sculptors and precast specialists. He worked closely with sculptor-fabricators to refine the grizzly bear sculptures through multiple maquettes to match the historic bear profile. Thiele also helped resolve design and cost challenges related to installation of the rooftop bears and flagpoles, advocating for historically appropriate solutions that preserved the architectural composition. These projects were identified in Committee of 100 planning documents as key components of the Palisades rehabilitation initiative.

Municipal Gymnasium Sculptural Decoration

Beginning around 2020, Thiele expanded his preservation work to include restoration of sculptural features at the Municipal Gymnasium. Using archival photographs and historic drawings obtained from park design records, he coordinated the recreation of a large “bronze mural” and industrial-themed sculptural elements originally installed for the 1935 exposition.

Working with Matson Studios and structural engineer Michael Krackhower, Thiele helped develop a fabrication strategy using **glass-fiber-reinforced concrete (GFRC) for sculptural reproduction**, finished with a cold-cast bronze surface to replicate the appearance of the original mural while ensuring durability and safe installation.

He coordinated historical review of design details with preservation professionals and continues to oversee the drawings, fabrication process, and installation planning for these elements.

Palisades Planning and Public Space Activation

In addition to building-specific restoration projects, Thiele has contributed to broader planning for the rehabilitation of Pan American Plaza and the Palisades. Working with landscape architect Vicki Estrada and the Committee of 100, he has helped develop concept plans for a fountain and public plaza improvements that respect the historic footprint of the 1935 exposition while supporting

contemporary public use. These efforts reflect the Committee of 100's strategic focus on revitalizing the Palisades through coordinated restoration, planning, and public engagement.

Motivation, Legacy, and Public Impact

Thiele's preservation work is driven not by professional obligation, but by opportunity, stewardship, and a belief in the cultural importance of Balboa Park. He described his motivation as "the pure opportunity of working as an architect in Balboa Park on projects that will make a difference," as well as the desire to respond to the limited public resources available for maintaining the park's historic buildings.

He views the Palisades as an important cultural platform that has been underutilized for decades and believes restoration can help revive public engagement with this part of the park. His goal is to restore the Palisades as a place of cultural activity, imagination, and civic pride — a space where visitors of all backgrounds can gather and experience architecture, art, and public life together.

Thiele has described the work as "an adventure into the arts," encompassing tile making, sculpture, architecture, and historic research. He approaches preservation as a daily, incremental effort — "My thought, every single day, was 'how can I make another small step forward.'"

His long-term hope is that restoration of the Palisades will create a renewed cultural destination within Balboa Park, strengthening connections among museums, public spaces, and future generations of visitors.

Closing Statement

Through sustained leadership since 2015, Robert Thiele has combined architectural expertise, historical research, technical innovation, and civic dedication to restore the defining ornamentation of the Palisades. His work exemplifies how one individual's long-term commitment can catalyze meaningful preservation outcomes for the City of San Diego.

Robert Thiele's contributions exemplify the purpose of the City of San Diego's **People in Preservation Award**.

the ceramic tile mural program at the California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum). Drawings include section, elevation, and panel layout studies based on scaled analysis of historic photographs.



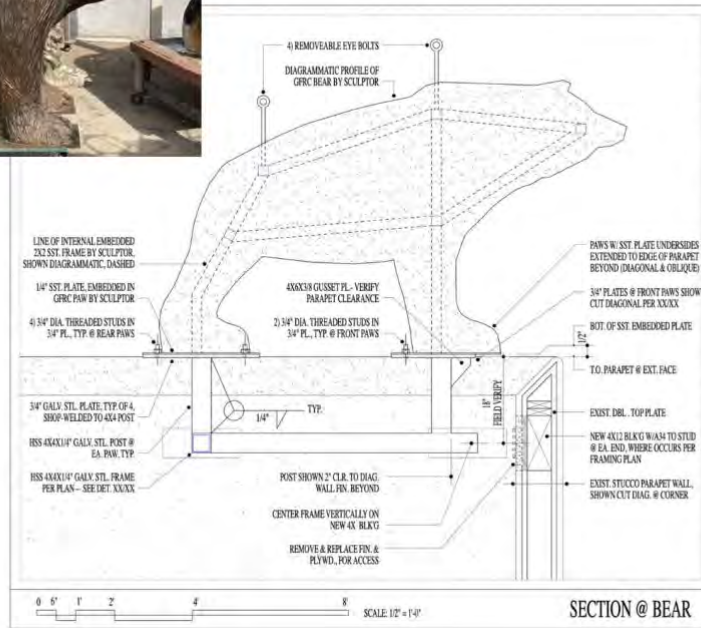
RESTORATION
VISUALIZATION

BALBOA PARK
SAN DIEGO, CA
CALIFORNIA STATE BUILDING
RICHARD REQUA, ARCHITECT
CIRCA 1935

SAN DIEGO
AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM
2080 PAN AMERICAN PLAZA

SHEET NO.
2
14.17

Robert Thiele, Architect
Committee of 100



Robert Thiele Architect

(619) 449-0880
www.RobertThiele.com
rthiele@RobertThiele.com

Studio:
217 W. Broadway Ave.
San Diego, California
92103

ROOF PLAN @ BEAR

BALBOA PARK
SAN DIEGO, CA
CALIFORNIA STATE BUILDING
RICHARD REQUA, ARCHITECT
CIRCA 1935

SAN DIEGO
AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM
2080 PAN AMERICAN PLAZA

SHEET NO.
C
2-27-23

Grizzly Bear Sculpture – Maquette and Section Drawing

Full-scale maquette and section drawing used to determine mounting, structural support, and proportional alignment of



Robert Thiele and Michael Matson posing with bear maquette.



Robert Thiele working with Michael Matson

California State Building (Automobile Museum) – “Before” and “After” Committee 100 Project



2019



2025

Letters of Support



2080 Pan American Plaza
San Diego, CA 92101
619-231-2886
sdautomuseum.org

Chair and Members
City of San Diego Historical Resources Board
Planning Department – Historic Preservation Planning Section

RE: Support for Robert Thiele — People in Preservation Award Nomination

Dear Chair and Members of the Historical Resources Board,

On behalf of the San Diego Automotive Museum, I am pleased to offer this letter of support for the nomination of architect Robert Thiele for the City of San Diego's People in Preservation Award.

Robert Thiele has played a central role in the restoration of the California State Building, home of the San Diego Automotive Museum, particularly through the reconstruction of the monumental façade murals and the sculptural ornamentation program, including the Maya relief panels, rooftop bear sculptures, and flagpoles. These projects restored character-defining architectural features that had been missing for decades and significantly strengthened the historic integrity and public presence of the building.

Throughout these restoration efforts, Robert worked closely with the Balboa Park Committee of 100, artists, fabricators, engineers, and City staff to translate archival documentation into carefully executed preservation work. His persistence, technical knowledge, and commitment to Balboa Park have helped return an important exposition-era building to a level of architectural completeness not seen since the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition.

The San Diego Automotive Museum is deeply grateful for Robert's dedication to preserving the California State Building and the Palisades. His work has enhanced the visitor experience, reinforced the building's historic significance, and contributed meaningfully to the ongoing revitalization of this important area of Balboa Park.

For these reasons, I strongly support Robert Thiele's nomination for the People in Preservation Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lenny Leszczynski", written over a horizontal line.

Lenny Leszczynski
Chief Executive Officer
San Diego Automotive Museum

THE MISSION of the San Diego Automotive Museum is to serve as the heir of our culture in San Diego—vibrating communities, igniting passion, and creating opportunities through the power and legacy of the automotive world.
San Diego Automotive Museum is an (RS 501)(c)(3) Organization. Tax ID # 93-0647888

ARCHITECT MILFORD WAYNE DONALDSON FAIA

February 17, 2026

Historical Resources Board

City of San Diego Planning Department
Historic Preservation Planning Section

Dear Preservation Awards Committee,

It is my pleasure to support the nomination of Robert Thiele for the City of San Diego's People in Preservation Award. Having known Robert for more than four decades and worked alongside him through the Balboa Park Committee of 100 for many years, I have had the opportunity to witness firsthand his dedication, creativity, and persistence in advancing preservation work in Balboa Park — particularly in the Palisades.

Over the past twelve years, Robert has become one of the key individuals responsible for transforming long-standing preservation goals for the Palisades into tangible projects. While many people shared the vision of restoring the exposition-era buildings constructed for the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition, Robert consistently took on the responsibility of determining how that work could be accomplished. His combination of architectural training, construction experience, and willingness to engage deeply with archival research has made him uniquely effective in moving preservation projects from concept to completion.

Robert's leadership has been especially evident in the restoration work at the California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum), where he guided the recreation of tile murals, Maya-inspired ornamentation, rooftop bear sculptures, and flagpoles that had been missing for decades. Working with artists, engineers, contractors, City staff, and the Committee of 100, he helped translate historic photographs and limited documentation into accurate and durable reconstructions that restore the building's architectural character.

He has continued this work through restoration planning and implementation at the Municipal Gymnasium and through broader efforts to revitalize the Palisades public spaces, including Pan American Plaza. These projects require patience, technical skill, collaboration, and persistence — qualities Robert demonstrates consistently.

What distinguishes Robert's contribution is not only his professional capability, but also his commitment to preservation as a form of civic stewardship. Much of this work has required sustained volunteer effort and long-term dedication. Robert has approached these projects with the mindset of a "citizen architect," working to ensure that Balboa Park's historic resources are preserved and experienced by future generations.

As someone who has spent much of my own career working on preservation projects in Balboa Park and throughout California, I recognize the importance of individuals who are willing to carry preservation efforts forward over many years. Robert Thiele is one of those individuals. His work in the Palisades represents a meaningful and lasting contribution to the preservation of Balboa Park's historic architecture and cultural landscape.

For these reasons, I strongly support Robert Thiele's nomination for the People in Preservation Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Milford Wayne Donaldson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA

Former California State Historic Preservation Officer, 2004-2012
Former Chairman, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 2010-2019
Former Member San Diego Historical Resources Board
Balboa Park Committee of 100 Board Member



Save Our Heritage Organisation
Protecting San Diego's architectural and cultural heritage since 1969

February 17, 2026

Chair and Members
City of San Diego Historical Resources Board
Planning Department – Historic Preservation Planning Section

RE: Support for Robert Thiele — People in Preservation Award Nomination

Dear Chair and Members of the Historical Resources Board,

Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO) is pleased to support the nomination of Robert Thiele for the City of San Diego's People in Preservation Award.

Through his work with the Balboa Park Committee of 100, Robert Thiele has demonstrated sustained leadership and dedication to the preservation of the Palisades area of Balboa Park, particularly the California State Building (San Diego Automotive Museum). His efforts to reconstruct the building's monumental façade murals and sculptural ornamentation—including the Maya relief panels, rooftop bear sculptures, and flagpoles—have restored important character-defining features from the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition.

These projects required careful archival research, collaboration with artists and fabricators, and thoughtful integration of contemporary materials with historic architecture. Robert's ability to translate historic documentation into successful preservation projects reflects both technical skill and a deep commitment to stewardship of San Diego's historic resources.

The restoration work completed in the Palisades represents a meaningful contribution to the preservation of Balboa Park as a National Historic Landmark District. By helping to recover lost architectural and artistic elements of the California State Building, Robert has strengthened public understanding of the Exposition-era design vision and supported ongoing revitalization of this important civic landscape.

SOHO recognizes Robert Thiele's long-term commitment to preservation in Balboa Park and strongly supports his nomination for the People in Preservation.

Sincerely,

Bruce Coons
Executive Director
Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO)

3525 Seventh Avenue • San Diego CA 92103 • www.SOHOsandiego.org • 619/297-9327



BALBOA PARK COMMITTEE OF 100

Working to preserve Balboa Park's history, architecture, gardens, and public spaces

1649 El Prado, Suite 300 San Diego, CA 92101

PRESIDENT

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A 501(C)3 CORPORATION

TAX ID: 95-8187105

February 23rd, 2026

Historical Resources Board
City of San Diego Planning Department
Historic Preservation Planning Section

Dear Chairperson Kristi Byers and Members of the Board,

As president of the Balboa Park Committee of 100 for the Preservation of Balboa Park, I am honored to offer our strongest support for the nomination of Robert Thiele for the City of San Diego's 2026 People in Preservation Award.

In short, the research and design that have gone into resurrecting Balboa Park's Palisades area of Balboa Park are a direct result of Robert's expertise and passion. His deep knowledge of the architecture of the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition, combined with his thoughtful and disciplined approach to preservation, has shaped every phase of this work.

Robert's contributions to our organization and to Balboa Park represent critical professional ability that he has given freely and generously as a "Citizen Architect," that is, as a volunteer. He has led the research, prepared measured documentation, and guided the design development for the restoration projects we have completed. In addition, he has managed public presentations, budgets, and building permits, ensuring that complex preservation efforts moved forward responsibly and successfully.

Simply put, this work would not have happened without Robert Thiele. His leadership, technical skill, and sustained commitment have been indispensable to the restoration and revitalization of the Palisades. For these reasons, we respectfully submit Robert Thiele for your consideration and believe he exemplifies the spirit and purpose of the People in Preservation Award.

Sincerely,


Kevin J. Carpenter
President, Balboa Park Committee of 100

2026 San Diego Preservation Awards Nomination Form

The City of San Diego City Planning Department is now accepting nominations for the 2026 Preservation Awards. Nomination forms must be completed in their entirety. Additional pages and attachments may be provided. Photos are required for any architecture-based nomination.

Nominations must be received no later than February 27, 2026.

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Project/Program Name: Timothy Hutter

Address: 600 W. Broadway, 27th Floor, San Diego, CA 92101

Category (refer to first page of packet): People in Preservation

Project Completion Date (month, year): 7/2016

Program Launch Date (month, year): 4/2025

Individuals/Organizations Involved in the Project

For each participant entered here, include name, organization name (if applicable), and email address (attach additional pages as needed).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Nominator Information

Name: Heather Riley

Company or Title (optional): _____

Address: 600 W. Broadway, 27th Floor, San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-233-1155 Email: hriley@allenmatkins.com

If you are not associated with the project, do you wish to be notified if the project wins an award?

Yes.

If yes, please indicate your preferred email: hriley@allenmatkins.com

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

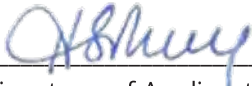
Narrative Description of Accomplishment and Reason for Nomination:

- For nominating projects, discuss the work performed, and provide details as to how specifically the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.
- For programs, discuss the overall structure of the program, how the community engages with and or participates in the program, and how the program aligns with historic preservation.
- For people, discuss the background, work, and leadership of the individual or organization. Please provide details about their contributions to the field of preservation.
- Does the project or program demonstrate an innovative approach to preservation, encourage sustainability/climate resiliency, or add housing units? If so, please provide a description of how.

Please provide narrative below. Insert more sheets as necessary.

SECTION III: MATERIALS RELEASE APPROVAL

I understand and agree that the City of San Diego, in the promotion of the awards program and historic preservation, may use all materials submitted for this nomination unless identified as restricted, and all official photographs and videos taken at the awards ceremony.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ashley", is written above a horizontal line.

Signature of Applicant

SECTION IV: SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Supporting Documentation: Supporting materials may be submitted to supplement but not substitute for the justification that is supposed to be provided in the Narrative portion of the nomination.

Types of materials that may be included:

- For building projects:
 - Photos of the completed project (REQUIRED).
 - Plans, drawings, PowerPoint, or other documentation sufficient to illustrate the property before and after the nominated activity and to address how the project met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
- For interpretive/educational/community projects or programs: Copies of related materials, such as a book, brochure, DVD/CD, website links, transcripts, or photographs of exhibits or activities.
- Copies of other materials, such as news clippings or other commendations that support the case for noteworthiness of the project, program, or person.

SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Tim Hutter was initially appointed to the City of San Diego (“City) Historic Resources Board (“HRB”) by Mayor Kevin Faulconer and approved by the City Council in 2016, starting his tenure on the board in July of 2016. Soon thereafter, Mr. Hutter was elected as Vice Chair of the HRB in April of 2017. He served in that role until August of 2022, when he was voted Chair. He served as Chair through March of 2025.

During Mr. Hutter’s tenure, the HRB designated more than 300 individual resources, as well as four locally designated historic districts: the Spalding Place, South Park, Valle Vista Terrace, and Melhorn & Sons districts. Mr. Hutter also contributed to the review of historic resources in numerous community plan updates, and helped to shape the framework for large-scale historical clearance of tract home and subdivision development starting with the Mira Mesa Community Plan, as well as the University Community Plan.

Mr. Hutter served on the HRB’s Archaeological and Tribal Cultural Resources Subcommittee, as well as the Policy Subcommittee where he was the chair from 2022 through 2025. Throughout his service, Mr. Hutter pushed the board and staff for consistent interpretation and application of City regulations, particularly in the context of new development. He emphasized the need to balance preservation and progress in the City’s historic regulations.

Outside of the City, but during this same time, Tim used his historical resource experience to assist clients with preservation issues in other jurisdictions, including the designation of the historic Racquet Club in Palm Springs.

Mr. Hutter, the son of a Navy veteran, moved to San Diego as a child and graduated from Rancho Bernardo High School. Other than brief stints outside of San Diego for school, Mr. Hutter has chosen to live and raise his family in the City. His service to the preservation community is evidence of his long standing commitment to the City he loves. His lengthy tenure on the HRB should be celebrated as an example for others to follow.