



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: May 14, 2009 REPORT NO. HRB-09-030

ATTENTION: Historical Resources Board  
Agenda of May 28, 2009

SUBJECT: **ITEM 10 – 2701 NORTH HARBOR DRIVE DEMOLITION  
PROJECT DRAFT EIR**

DESCRIPTION: Review and Comment on Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for  
Project

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Provide comments to staff for transmittal to the lead agency prior to the close of the public review period on June 10, 2009.

## BACKGROUND

The San Diego Unified Port District (SDUPD), as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2701 North Harbor Drive Demolition Project. Public comments are being solicited on the Draft EIR at this time (see attached Notice of Availability). The comments will become part of the public record and along with the responses to the comments will be incorporated into the Final EIR. The Board of Port Commissioners will then consider the Final EIR in its decision regarding the proposed project. The City of San Diego will use the Final EIR for the issuance of a permit from the Noise Abatement and Control Administrator for nighttime demolition activity and for issuance of a Metropolitan Waste Water District Ground Water Permit for discharges to the City's sewer collection system.



## ANALYSIS

The 46-acre project site is under the jurisdiction of the SDUPD and is presently leased to the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority for future airport uses. The site was previously used for aviation manufacturing facilities operated by the former tenant, Teledyne-Ryan Aeronautical Industries, from 1932 to 2002. The proposed project, expected to be completed over a 24 to 30 month period, includes removal of approximately 50 existing structures; removal of all asphalt, concrete and other paving materials; removal and disposal of all hazardous and contaminated demolition materials; removal and disposal of chlorofluorocarbons; cutting, capping, and removal, replacement or relocation of underground piping and utility systems; capping storm drain and sanitary sewer laterals; and, removal of all on-site landscape, irrigation pipes and valve boxes.

Impacts to historical resources located on the project site has been identified as an area of known controversy and historical resource mitigation has been identified as an issue to be resolved by the decision-making body. The Cultural Resources section of the Draft EIR analyzes potential impacts of the proposed project on historical resources found on the project site. Previous technical reports were prepared for the project site in 2006 and in 2008. These reports are included in the Draft EIR as Appendix B.

Prehistoric and historic period overviews were prepared and both archaeological and architectural history field surveys were conducted. No prehistoric cultural resources were identified and no significant impacts associates with archaeological resources are anticipated. A potential historic district, the Ryan Aeronautical Company Historic District, was identified in the initial January 2006 field survey. This historic district consists of 17 contributing resources and 30 non-contributing resources. The 2008 updated architectural history survey found that the 17 contributing resources retained sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criteria A, B and C for listing on the California Register under Criteria 1,2, and 3. The identified period of significance is 1939 to 1969 when the site was directly associated with aviation pioneer T. Claude Ryan and the Ryan Aeronautical Company's significant contributions to national defense during WW II and important developments in aerospace research and development during the 1950s and 1960s. The contributing resources architecturally embody the distinctive design characteristics of aircraft manufacturing plants in southern California during the period of significance.

Significant impacts to historical resources have been identified due to the proposed demolition of all buildings and structures located within the National and California Registers-eligible historic district. The Draft EIR concludes that because the project objectives are to demolish all buildings and structures on the project site, mitigation measures such as consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, adaptive re-use of significant historic properties, and incorporation of historic materials, fabric and designs into the proposed new project ". . . are not considered applicable for the Proposed Project to reduce impacts to a less than significant level." Feasible mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR include HABS/HAER documentation and architectural salvage of materials prior to demolition, an interpretive display for public exhibition, and contractor training and methods for addressing subsurface features discovered

during demolitions activities. With implementation of these recommended mitigation measures the impacts to historical resources would be reduced but not to a level of less than significant.

Three alternatives to the proposed project were considered in the Draft EIR: the no project alternative, the rehabilitation and re-use alternative, and the rehabilitation and relocation alternative. Each alternative was evaluated for feasibility and for achieving the objectives of the proposed project, along with the potential impacts of implementation of the alternative on various environmental issues. All three alternatives were found to potentially avoid or substantially reduce impacts to historical resources compared to the proposed project. However, all alternatives were found to be infeasible for varying reasons, would not accomplish one or more of the project objectives, and would not substantially reduce or avoid potential impacts to issue areas other than historical resources.

The attached Notice of Availability identifies the Draft EIR and supporting documents are available for review at the Port District offices and several libraries. In addition, the documents may be accessed online at <http://www.portofsandiego.org/> under the Real Estate tab. In reviewing the Draft EIR, the Board should focus on the adequacy of the proposed mitigation measures for reducing impacts to historical resources and on the alternatives analysis relative to the avoidance of impacts to historical resources. It is appropriate, as part of the Board's comments on the Draft EIR, to suggest additional or different mitigation measures and alternatives with the goal of further reducing impacts to historical resources.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, staff recommends the Board provide comments at this meeting on the Draft EIR for transmittal to the San Diego Unified Port District prior to the close of the public review period on June 10, 2009.



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Attachment: Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Report