

2023 GOVERNOR'S HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

Historic Shipyard at Pier 70 Rehabilitation



The **Historic Shipyard at Pier 70 Rehabilitation** project encompasses the architectural adaptive reuse of a half dozen historic buildings known as “20th Street Historic Buildings at Pier 70.” The buildings are contributing resources within the Union Iron Works Historic District, which achieved National Register of Historic Places listing in April 2014. The seven-acre site was once home to Bethlehem Shipbuilding, one of the largest ship-repair yards on the west coast.

The rehabilitation project was part of a successful public-private partnership between the property owner the Port of San Francisco, and Orton Development using Federal Historic Tax Credit incentives. Project objectives were twofold: refurbish deteriorated existing construction and accommodate new interior architectural concepts within the highly complex and diverse structures. Throughout the complex, the architect and other project team members worked with the developer to preserve as much historic material as possible, as well as maximize daylighting and views throughout. Other historic features (gantry cranes, pendant lighting fixtures, inlaid tile flooring, hardwood detailing) were restored and emphasized. Existing structural columns, beams, trusses, walls,

were left natural and unpainted, or protected with transparent coatings when needed. The new structural and architectural elements clearly stand out in compatible contrast to the original historic ones.

The Pier 70 Redevelopment Project received extensive community support. Before the project began, the site was almost entirely closed off; years of neglect and vandalism made the buildings dangerous and unstable. No one could use these buildings, and unprotected and exposed, the legacy of San Francisco industry was decaying further with each passing day. The rebirth of the 20th Street historic buildings preserved and celebrated this history while opening Pier 70 to the community once again. Transportation funding is being generated by the larger Pier 70 development project, which will improve transit access to the neighborhood in the long term. Infill development of both commercial and residential spaces is planned for the surrounding Pier 70 site. Nine acres have been set aside for open public space and new parks, which are crucial in this urban context.

By revitalizing a crumbling and unsafe shipyard facility into a vibrant place for work and public gatherings, the Historic Shipyard at Pier 70 project reopened a piece of San Francisco that had been closed off for too long, and preserved a significant part of the city's history.