



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: September 12, 2024 REPORT NO. HRB-24-031

HEARING DATE: September 26, 2024

SUBJECT: **ITEM #3 – CA-SDI-22,936**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: Tri Pointe Homes represented by RECON Environmental, Inc.

LOCATION: Address Restricted, Otay Mesa Community Plan Area, Council District 8

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the site above as a historical resource.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate CA-SDI-22,936 as a historical resource under HRB Criterion A. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource is a special element of the City's and Otay Mesa's archeological and cultural development. Specifically, CA-SDI-22,936 likely functioned as a tool manufacturing location and could provide enough data to answer regional research questions regarding site function, chronology and subsistence due to its high density subsurface cultural deposit and minimal disturbance within the central portion of the site.

### BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a proposed development project, consistent with San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0212.

### ANALYSIS

CA-SDI-22,936 is located in the Otay Mesa Community Planning Area and the site contains no buildings or structures. The larger project site is located between the I-805, the Otay Mesa Freeway, Cactus Road and the United States/Mexican border, and consists primarily of mesa top cut with the Moody and Dillion Canyons. The resource is located at the northwest terminus of Dillon Canyon which exhibits steep slopes and moderately dense coastal sage scrub.

The area surrounding CA-SDI-22,936 exhibits heavily disturbed soils due to grading associated with farming activities, site disturbances from a dirt road and trash dumping; however, the resource has experienced minimal disturbance due to its location on a steep canyon slope. The centrally located and less disturbed portion of the site is likely one of the few areas on Otay Mesa that has not had its topsoil removed.

A historical resources investigation was prepared by RECON Environmental, Inc. which concludes that the resource CA-SDI-22,936 is significant under HRB Criterion A and staff concurs. This determination is consistent with the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*, as follows.

*CRITERION A - Exemplifies or reflects special elements of the City's, a community's or a neighborhood's historical, archaeological, cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, landscaping or architectural development.*

The resource, CA-SDI-22,936, which was previously unrecorded, was excavated by RECON Environmental staff in August of 2023. All artifacts from the surface were collected and eight 1-by-1-meter units and two shovel test pits (STPs) were excavated. The excavation revealed that the subsurface cultural deposit at CA-SDI-22,936 was denser than those of the other resources on the west end of Otay Mesa. A total of 1,769 artifacts comprised of 1,594 debitage pieces, 173 flaked lithic artifacts, 1 mano, and 8.38 grams of marine shellfish remains were recovered from the surface collection, test units, and STPs; 1,101 artifacts were collected from the surface and 668 were collected from the units and STPs. The majority of the artifacts were recovered from Units 4, 5, and 7, located within a less disturbed portion of the site, centrally located on the finger ridge extension from the mesa top.

The RECON historical resources investigation concludes that the lack of midden-like soils suggests that the site was not occupied over a long period of time, and therefore is not a habitation site. Based on Binford's model for foraging and gathering societies, CA-SDI-22,936 can be classified as a location where specialized activities took place. When the recommended test for classification as a habitation site proposed by Gallegos et al. (1998) is applied, CA-SDI-22,936 qualifies as a habitation site based on the subsurface density of 100 artifacts per square meter within the less disturbed core area where over 100 artifacts were recovered from units 4, 5, and 7. CA-SDI-22,936, however, lacks a diversity of artifact types, faunal remains (shellfish, bone fragments), and/or hearth features included in the classification of a habitation site; therefore, this resource appears to be more than just an artifact scatter because of the subsurface density of artifacts but not a habitation because of the lack of artifact variety, features, and faunal remains as defined by Gallegos et al. 1998.

Recovered artifacts suggest that the site likely functioned as a tool manufacturing location. The presence of the mano and marine shellfish remains suggests that more than flaking activities took place, perhaps plants were being processed and shellfish was being consumed. The high number and variety of scrapers suggest that manufacturing of scrapers may have been the focus of lithic activities at CA-SDI-22,936. The 19 scrapers that do not exhibit use-wear damage represent 26 percent of the total number of scrapers and strengthen the idea of the site functioning as a scraper manufacturing location.

None of the artifacts that were recovered are indicative of a particular time period. Cores, modified flakes, hammerstones, sidescrapers, and debitage are found in both Archaic and Late Prehistoric periods. No charcoal or bone was recovered to provide an opportunity to date the site.


Significance Statement: The resource is a special element of the City's and Otay Mesa's archeological and cultural development. Specifically, CA-SDI-22,936 likely functioned as a tool manufacturing location and could provide enough data to answer regional research questions regarding site function, chronology and subsistence due to its high density subsurface cultural deposit and minimal disturbance within the central portion of the site. Therefore, staff recommends designation as a Historical Resource under HRB Criterion A.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the site in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include flexibility in the application of other regulatory requirements; the use of the Historical Conditional Use Permit which allows flexibility of use; and other programs which vary depending on the specific site conditions and owner objectives. Because the historical resource does not include any above-ground buildings or structures, this property, should it be designated, would not at this time qualify for the Mills Act Program.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted, it is recommended that CA-SDI-22,936 be designated as a historical resource under HRB Criterion A as a special element of the City's archaeological and cultural development.



Suzanne Segur  
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison  
City Planning Department

Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Resources Investigation (under separate cover)
3. Confidential Attachments to Applicant's Historical Resources Investigation (under separate cover)

RESOLUTION NUMBER N/A  
ADOPTED ON 9/26/2024

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 9/26/2024, to consider the historical designation of **CA-SDI-22,936** (owned by Donald and Rachele Winans Family Trust 10-06-99, 4802 Mt. Elbrus Drive, San Diego, CA 92117 and TriPointe Homes, 1250 Corona Pointe Ct. #600, Corona, CA 92879) located at **Not Permitted to List**, APN: **000-000-00-00**, further described as in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California; and

WHEREAS, in arriving at their decision, the Historical Resources Board considered the historical resources report prepared by the applicant, the staff report and recommendation, all other materials submitted prior to and at the public hearing, inspected the subject property and heard public testimony presented at the hearing; and

WHEREAS, the property would be added to the Register of Designated Historical Resources as **Site No. 0**, and

WHEREAS, designated historical resources located within the City of San Diego are regulated by the Municipal Code (Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 2) as such any exterior modifications (or interior if any interior is designated) shall be approved by the City, this includes but is not limited to modifications to any windows or doors, removal or replacement of any exterior surfaces (i.e. paint, stucco, wood siding, brick), any alterations to the roof or roofing material, alterations to any exterior ornamentation and any ground disturbing activities or additions or significant changes to the landscape/ site.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Historical Resources Board based its designation of CA-SDI-22,936 on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION A as a special element of the City's and Otay Mesa's archeological and cultural development. Specifically, CA-SDI-22,936 likely functioned as a tool manufacturing location and could provide enough data to answer regional research questions regarding site function, chronology and subsistence due to its high density subsurface cultural deposit and minimal disturbance within the central portion of the site. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby approves the historical designation of the above named property. The designation includes the parcel, including all surface and subsurface artifacts and cultural resources, as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. 0**.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Secretary to the Historical Resources Board shall cause this resolution to be recorded in the office of the San Diego County Recorder at no fee, for the benefit of the City of San Diego, and with no documentary tax due.

Vote:

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
TIM HUTTER, Chair  
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,  
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,  
Deputy City Attorney