



A City of Los Angeles  
Neighborhood Council  
Certified 2002

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May 22, 2024

### Submitted by email

Lucille Roybal Allard  
President, Los Angeles Harbor Commission  
[commissioners@portla.org](mailto:commissioners@portla.org)

Gene Seroka  
Executive Director  
Port of Los Angeles  
[gseroka@portla.org](mailto:gseroka@portla.org)

Dear members of the Los Angeles Harbor Commission and Mr. Seroka:

The Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council was deeply concerned to learn the Port of Los Angeles is considering demolition of the remaining buildings of the Japanese American community on Tuna Street.

We are talking about the Nanka Shokai and Nakamura Co. store buildings at 700-716 Tuna Street. Per information relayed by Sergio Carrillo from CD 15, the Port's Department of Real Estate has recommended these buildings for demolition as they consider rehabilitation too costly.

These buildings are the last physical remnants of the Japanese American community that called Terminal Island home and helped build the Port's still-thriving economy. They are also the last built fabric attesting to the important national and local history of the forced displacement and internment of the Japanese American population during the Second World War.

Both the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the LA Conservancy consider these buildings nationally significant from a cultural standpoint.<sup>1</sup>

Demolition would directly contradict the goals of the 2018 Port Master Plan, which explicitly states that the Port "shall identify and pursue the preservation of the historic resources within its jurisdiction. The history of the Port, **including significant periods such as** the era of shipbuilding, commercial fishing, and **the Japanese American Fishing Village, should continue to be memorialized**, as appropriate, **through monuments and preservation of associated existing buildings and sites.**"<sup>2</sup> (emphasis ours)

It would also contradict the Port's Built Environment Historic, Architectural and Cultural Resource Policy adopted in 2013 following consultation with stakeholders including the Terminal Islanders Club, the LA Conservancy, and the San Pedro Bay Historical Society.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, "11 Most Endangered Historic Places: Terminal Island, Port of Los Angeles, California, 2012," <https://savingplaces.org/places/terminal-island>; Adrian Scott Fine, LA Conservancy, letter to Christopher Cannon, Director of Environmental Management, Los Angeles Harbor Department, 4/8/2013, [Microsoft Word -LAC comments on Port Master Plan DEIR\\_draft2 \(laconservancy.org\)](https://www.portla.org/Port-Assets/Port-Master-Plan-DEIR-draft2)

<sup>2</sup> Port of Los Angeles, Port Master Plan, 2018, Section 3.2.5, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles Harbor Department, Built Environment Historic, Architectural and Cultural Resource Policy, 2013.

We strongly oppose the demolition of these buildings. Instead, they should be preserved and revived in a way that honors this unique heritage. We ask the Port for the following:

1. A site visit by the City's Office of Historic Resources in conjunction with community stakeholders for the City's preservation architect to assess the present condition of these buildings.
2. A breakdown from the Port of the estimated cost to bring these buildings (jointly and individually) back to life.

We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Dillon Clark, President  
On behalf of the Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council

CC:

Derek Nakamura, great-grandson of the founder of Nakamura Co. market  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
LA Conservancy  
San Pedro Bay Historical Society  
City of Los Angeles, Office of Historic Resources  
City Councilmember Tim McOsker, Los Angeles 15th District  
County Supervisor Janice Hahn, Los Angeles 4th District  
Representative Nanette Diaz Barragán, CA-44 (by mail)  
Assemblymember Mike Gipson, State Assembly, District 65  
Senator Steven Bradford, State Senate, District 35

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