



Save Our Heritage Organisation
Saving San Diego's Past for the Future

January 24, 2015

Ms Maria de los Remedios Gómez Arnau, Consul General
1549 India Street
San Diego CA 92101

Attn: Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto
Presidente de Estados Unidos Mexicanos

Re: Requesting your help to preserve La Puerta Mexico in Tijuana, Baja California for its value as a cultural resource of the Mexico-US border region.

Dear Mr. Nieto,

My name is Bruce Coons, Executive Director of Save Our Heritage Organisation (SOHO). We oversee the entire county of San Diego and have partnered with historic projects in Baja over the years. We are California's oldest preservation group and a local partner with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

I respectfully wish to express our deep concern for the preservation and protection of La Puerta Mexico, a significant building for Mexico-US border history and especially for San Diegans and Tijuanaenses.

This building built by Mexican architect Guillermo Rossell de la Lama under the Programa Nacional Fronterizo directed by urban planner and architect Mario Pani in 1964, has a unique modern design inspired by internationally recognized architect Félix Candela. Its aesthetic and functional design and its cultural value as a community space for the millions of people that cross the border every year could make it eligible for designation as a cultural resource at the local, state, and federal levels if it were located in the US. We also believe that La Puerta Mexico is eligible for designation as a cultural and aesthetic building in Mexico.

La Puerta Mexico is part of the historical image that has characterized the entrance to Mexico for many American tourists and Mexican residents in the last 50 years. The Tijuana and San Diego border is the most important crossing point between the US and Mexico and this building has become an iconic structure that welcomes people to Mexico and Latin America. Its unique design

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Bruce Coons, Executive Director

characteristics make it also an important touristic attraction. La Puerta Mexico is probably the most relevant building of its type in the California/Baja California region.

Tijuana and San Diego have a shared history represented by buildings and structures meaningful for the history of both cities. The colonial missions in California and Baja California are already recognized as part of a bi-national heritage corridor, the El Camino Real Misionero by the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Mexico and the National Park Service in the US. Many archeological sites in Mexico have cultural value for the US too. La Puerta Mexico could be recognized as an international example that reflects our shared border history as a relevant architectural and engineering design of modernity.

SOHO would gladly lend our expertise and support Mexican preservationists if requested in order to preserve and restore this building. We know that preservation and restoration linked to urban regeneration could enhance and beautify the historical entrance of downtown Tijuana and promote economic development for the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Coons", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bruce Coons

cc. Gerardo Ruiz Esparza. Secretario de Comunicaciones y Transportes
María Cristina García Cepeda. Directora del Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes
Olga Orive Bellinger. Presidenta de ICOMOS Mexicano