



**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Southern Pacific Railroad Bayshore Roundhouse

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Junction of Industrial Way and Bayshore Avenue not for publication N/A

city or town Brisbane vicinity N/A

state California code CA county San Mateo code 081 zip code

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
2		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th century/Other: Industrial

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
roof Composition rolled roofing
walls Brick
other



Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1910-1957

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown/Southern Pacific Railroads

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

California State Railroad Museum Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
2	—	—	—	4	—	—	—

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The property is located on Assessor's Parcel Number APN 005-340-060 (see map)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Brandi, Architectural Historian

organization _____ date November 9, 2009

street & number 125 Dorchester Way telephone 415 753-5130

city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94127

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Steve Hanson, General Manager, Universal Paragon Corp,

street & number 150 Executive Park Blvd # 4200 telephone (415) 468-6676

city or town San Francisco state CA zip code 94134

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Narrative Description

Summary

The Southern Pacific Railroad Bayshore Roundhouse consists of a semi-circular shaped, one-story brick building and turntable pit. It is located in Brisbane, San Mateo County, California, in the southwest corner of the former 200-acre Southern Pacific rail yard. The building encompasses 108 degrees of curvature and is 87 feet deep, from an inside radius of 125 feet to an outside radius of 212 feet. The roundhouse contains 17 enclosed stalls, numbered clockwise from 24 to 40. Significant features are a turntable pit and whisker tracks marked by a series of extant lighting poles. The roundhouse is in damaged condition but retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

Resource

The Southern Pacific Railroad Bayshore Roundhouse consists of a semi-circular shaped, one-story brick building and turntable pit. The building encompasses 108 degrees of curvature and is 87 feet deep, from an inside radius of 125 feet to an outside radius of 212 feet. Subtracting the thickness of the exterior walls, the interior depth is 85 feet, the dimension that appears in the title of original construction drawings. The roundhouse contains 17 enclosed stalls, numbered clockwise from 24 to 40. The remaining stalls (#1-23) are open to the air (so-called "whisker tracks") and are located to the southwest of (counterclockwise from) the enclosed stalls. A series of extant lighting poles mark the location of each outdoor stall. Original construction plans and photographs suggest that pile foundations were driven for all 40 stalls although superstructure was completed for only 17 of them.

The predominant building material is brick, used for the wall along the outer circumference, the end walls, and an internal fire separation wall. The roof is radial gabled, clad with pitch and gravel, and has a light and ventilation monitor along the gable's peak at the east edge. The interior construction is timber post and beam with knee braces. There are limited applications of trusses in the roof structure, including shallow kingpost trusses at longer purlin spans as well as a deeper truss taking the place of a column that would have otherwise interfered with the drop pit between stalls 37 and 38. These trusses consist of wood compression chords and struts with wrought iron (or possibly steel) looped eyebars.¹

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Cast iron posts are located between the stalls along the inner circumference. These once supported equipment doors and still support cast iron lintels carrying the roof above each opening.

Arched windows are located on the outer circumference of the roundhouse and in the east facing wall at stall 40. The east facing (side) wall has four sets of triple, double hung windows, nine over nine divided lights with wood sashes. The west facing (side) wall is unpierced because it was intended to be an interior fire wall separating stall 24 from the planned but never built stall 23.² The roundhouse's curve is actually a series of faceted segments corresponding to each stall. Each segment on the north facade contains two sets of double hung windows, with nine over nine divided lights and wood sashes. All of the glass panes have been broken and many of the wood sashes are damaged to various degrees.

Inside the roundhouse, drop pits are visible in stalls #39 and #40. These are partially filled with debris. The floor is concrete and no tracks are visible in the roundhouse. At some point during the roundhouse's history, a wood partition was erected between stalls 39 and 40 so that the latter could be used as a paint booth. This partition is remarkable in that it has a beaded wainscot, an unusually high degree of finish for a maintenance facility that indicates the possible involvement of the railroad's cabinetry shop. The only other extant partition is an interior brick wall providing a fire separation between stalls 32 and 33.

The Bayshore roundhouse was completed with a steel turntable that sat within a 90-foot diameter concrete pit. The turntable was expanded to 110-foot diameter in 1941 to handle longer locomotives.³ The turntable was removed after the building was no longer used as a roundhouse. The concrete turntable pit is extant and filled with water and overgrown with vegetation. The circumference of the top of the pit walls are visible in several locations.

The open air stalls, located adjacent to the brick roundhouse at the southwest corner of the building where the "whisker tracks" once were laid, are traced by a series of extant, wood lighting poles dating from the period of significance that marks the location of each outdoor stall (#1-23). The whisker tracks are not visible and may have been removed or they may be covered by topsoil.

The roundhouse site is bounded on the south by Industrial Boulevard and on the west by Bayshore Boulevard. To the north and east of the roundhouse lie a flat expanse of land that once contained numerous tracks, buildings, and structures of the rail yard. All that remain are the roundhouse, an adjacent building to the north (the former tank and boiler shop not subject to this nomination), and three wood sheds located on the northern edge of the yard. Also, the main line

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of the Southern Pacific's former Peninsula route to San Francisco runs along the eastern edge of the yard and is currently used for Caltrain commuter service and infrequent freight operations. A passenger train station of recent vintage is located along the tracks several hundred yards north of the roundhouse.

Alterations or changes to the property.

The roundhouse experienced minor alterations during its period of significance and retains its integrity.⁴ Historic photographs and original construction drawings show light and ventilation monitors running along the greater portion of the roof, as well as smoke jacks to vent the smokestacks of steam locomotives running inside the building.⁵ It is not known when these monitors and smoke jacks were removed. The iron posts along the inside circumference of the roundhouse originally were covered with swing out wood doors but these doors are not extant. The opening to stall #39 is presently covered with corrugated metal. Several door openings in the outer circumference allowed locomotives to run completely through the building. The door opening at stall 26 is shown on the original construction drawings, and a second door at stall 37 that was either closed up or never built. The present door openings at stalls 36 and 38 were clearly added at a later date. These two openings preserve evidence of changing maintenance standards, as the jambs are toothed in with different colored brick and a lower quality of workmanship than the original masonry.

Deterioration

The building shows signs of damage due to vandalism, neglect, weather, and a fire that occurred in 2001, burning through the roof structure over stalls 24 through 32 but stopped by the brick fire separation wall so that the roof over stalls 33 through 40 remains relatively intact. There is graffiti on many of the wall surfaces. All of the window panes are broken, as are many of the sashes, but the arched window openings and sills are intact. All of these signs of deterioration can be repaired and the roundhouse can be restored without conjecture using existing extant materials and forms, historical records, and other information.

Historic Integrity

As discussed in Section 8, the former Southern Pacific Railroad roundhouse at Bayshore and its functionally related turntable are significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion C (Design/Construction) for embodying "the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction," of a Southern Pacific Railroad roundhouse of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. To be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the National Register criteria, but it also must have integrity.

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There are seven aspects of historic integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. According to the National Register, “retention of design, workmanship, and materials will usually be more important than location, setting, feeling, and association” for properties significant under Criterion C.⁶ The roundhouse retains these essential aspects of integrity:

The design, i.e., its “form, plan, space, structure, and style” is unchanged.

The building’s workmanship, “... the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site,” i.e., remain. All the brick work remains and the interior roof framing and trusses are still extant in more than one half of the building. Furthermore, subsequent alterations, such as the paint booth partition and the toothed-in jambs of the run-through doors, have attained their own significance as a physical record of the building’s evolution in response to changing locomotive maintenance needs.

The roundhouse retains its “key exterior materials dating from the period of its historic significance,” i.e., the brick walls. While some of the brick walls have been painted with graffiti, they do not appear to have been seriously compromised. The cast iron posts and lintels along the interior circumference also remain. The latter bear a sequence of stall numbers, 24 through 40, conveying the railroad’s original intent to build a larger building. The lighting posts along “whisker tracks” 1 through 23 visually complete the circumference of the roundhouse, marking the extent of original foundation piling that lies beneath.

Although of lesser importance, the roundhouse also retains the aspects of location, setting, and feeling. The building has not been moved, so the location is the same. The setting has changed to the extent that most of the rail yard buildings and tracks have been removed. However, the main line of the Southern Pacific’s former Peninsula route is still extant and is in constant use. Trains are seen and heard from the roundhouse, as they were historically. The roundhouse also retains its feeling, i.e., the historic sense of a particular period of time. Its association as the place of roundhouse as been somewhat compromised. Thus, the building retains six of the seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

Despite the fire in 2001 and its somewhat degraded physical condition, the roundhouse retains its historic integrity. Although the condition of a portion of the building’s roof structure has suffered, the effects have not compromised the property's overall historic integrity. All exterior walls remain intact, preserving the original plan extent of the building. The unique shape of the

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building, its relatively simple construction, and the retention of its distinctive materials allow it to convey its historic significance. There is no mistaking this building for anything other than a railroad roundhouse. According to the National Register:

(under Criterion C) a property important for illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique must retain most of the physical features that constitute that style or technique. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible *if* it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. The property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style.⁷

The roundhouse retains the majority of its features. The roundhouse retains all the physical features “important for illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique” such as its massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials, and ornamentation. Loss of some of the roof material, which is not a key feature, does not preclude the roundhouse from eligibility for the National Register.

¹ Southern Pacific Railroad, Maintenance of Way Division, “85 Ft. Brick Roundhouse, Bay Shore, Roof Truss over Drop-Pits,” Drawing 8172, Sheet 12, California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento, Calif.

² Southern Pacific Railroad, Maintenance of Way Division, “Part Piling Plan,” Drawing 8172, Sheet 3, California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento, Calif.

³ Signor, *Southern Pacific’s Coast Line*, 146.

⁴ Historic Sanborn maps do not exist for unincorporated San Mateo County where the train yard was located. The County of San Mateo did not issue building permits until 1933, after the roundhouse was built. Although building permit records were supposedly transferred to the City of Brisbane after the area was incorporated, no permits could be located for buildings in the Bayshore Yard except for ones issued in the recent past

⁵ The California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento maintains extensive files on the Southern Pacific Railroad, including original construction drawings for the Bayshore Roundhouse.

⁶ Section VIII, <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>. Accessed March 16, 2009.

⁷ “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation bulletin,” National Register Web site, www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/, accessed February 10, 2009.

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Narrative Statement of Significance:

The former Southern Pacific Railroad roundhouse at Bayshore and its functionally related turntable are significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion C (Design/Construction) for embodying “the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction,” of a Southern Pacific Railroad brick roundhouse of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As an early 20th century transportation building, it is significant on the local/regional level in the areas of Transportation and Architecture. Developed in response to the need to service and repair locomotives during the steam era, roundhouses typically had circular footprints with tracks that were arranged radially leading to separate stalls. Roundhouses often had turntables to position locomotives into individual stalls. Although there were non-roundhouse designs, the roundhouse form was a compact solution to service steam locomotives that were generally designed to run in the forward direction with only limited ability to back up. It is the only extant railroad roundhouse of the many that once existed in California during the era of steam locomotives. It is eligible for listing as an example of a distinctive railroad support facility. The period of significance is 1910-1957. This period coincides with the date the roundhouse was completed (1910) to the year when steam locomotives were last serviced in the roundhouse (1957).

Historic Context:

Native American Period

The site of the Bayshore roundhouse and rail yard was once part of San Francisco Bay. The Bayshore roundhouse and yard were constructed on man-made land on what one had been a shallow cove at the end of Visitacion Valley, located on the border between San Francisco and San Mateo counties. Native Americans lived along San Francisco bay from the mid-peninsula to San Francisco.¹ The Yelamu tribe lived in the area of San Francisco and the villages of Amuctac and Tubsinte were located in Visitacion Valley.²

Spanish/Mexican Period

Spanish colonization of the San Francisco peninsula began when over 200 Spanish colonists arrived in June 1776 to build a fort (the Presidio of San Francisco) and mission, (San Francisco de Asis, commonly known as Mission Dolores) using Native Americans as a workforce. A nearby pueblo or town, Yerba Buena (the future San Francisco), was also established. Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821 and the Mexican Congress secularized the mission

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lands in 1833, making large tracts available to petitioners requesting ranch land from the government.³ Jacob Lesse took possession of a 9,500 acres land grant in 1841 called *Rancho Canada de Guadalupe la Visitacion y Rodeo Viejo* which included three valleys: *La Visitacion Rodeo Viejo* and *Canada de Guadalupe*. The grant included portions of the future the cities of San Francisco, Daly City, and Brisbane. He transferred the Visitacion Valley rancho to Robert Ridley for lands in Sonoma in 1845.

American Period

When the United States took control of California after Mexican-American War (1846-1848), many titles to Mexican land grants were contested. In time, major land owners in Visitacion Valley included Francois Pioche and Henry Schwerin who both established plant nurseries in Visitacion Valley. Visitacion Valley generally runs east to west along the boundary of San Francisco and San Mateo counties.

The area also witnessed vegetable farms in the late 1800s.⁴ Most of the farmers in Visitacion Valley were Italian immigrants from Genoa, who also worked the outlying areas in Mission Valley, Noe Valley, Hayes Valley, Ocean View, Bayview, and Lake Merced. Entire families and hired hands cultivated ten-acre plots with water pumped by windmills. The produce was loaded into horse-drawn wagon in the early morning hours and driven to the Colombo Market,⁵ a vegetable exchange established in 1876 at Davis and Front streets, the “greatest vegetable market in the world.”⁶ After the turn of the 20th century, farming became less attractive and the land was more valuable as home sites.⁷ While some farms survived in Visitacion Valley until the 1940s,⁸ and some nurseries until the 1960s, the transformation of agricultural land into residential tracts was almost complete by World War II.

Most of the Bayshore yard including the roundhouse lies in the City of Brisbane, immediately south of San Francisco. Until Brisbane incorporated in 1961, the rail yard was located in an incorporated part of San Mateo County. The town of Brisbane lies on San Bruno Mountain, south of the yard and physically separated by hills. Brisbane was subdivided for the first time in 1908 but no streets or utilities were installed and the area remained limited to a few roadhouses near the old county road (today’s Bayshore Boulevard) and pastures. Growth was slow until the 1930s when more than 400 houses were built on the hill sides on 25 foot wide lots between 1929 and 1933. By 1942, the population was about 3,000 and it increased to 4,000 by 1960.⁹

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Southern Pacific History

The Southern Pacific Railroad had significant impact on the West, the state of California, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Many believe that the Southern Pacific had a baneful effect on the state's economic development because of its monopolistic practices, dominance of shipping rates, land holdings, and political clout. A more recent view sees the Southern Pacific as more aligned with the public welfare and as "a major force in shaping agricultural, industrial, commercial, and urban growth and modernization."¹⁰ In any case, the Southern Pacific impacts were far reaching in the settlement and development of California in the 19th and early 20th century.

The antecedents of the Southern Pacific began in 1861 when railroad engineer Theodore Judah convinced Collis P. Huntington, Leland Stanford, Charles Crockett and Mark Hopkins, to build the western leg of the transcontinental railroad over the Sierra Nevada Mountains with the creation of the Central Pacific Railroad. After Judah's death in 1863, the Big Four, as they later became known, would subsequently run an ever expanding railroad enterprise for several decades though a complex arrangement of many companies and subsidiaries.¹¹

At about the time of Judah's death, another railroad was completed running between San Francisco and San Jose. In 1864, the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad (SF&SJ) began running trains from San Jose to San Bruno along the present day Caltrain route. At San Bruno, the line curved west to avoid the San Bruno Mountain and entered San Francisco near Lake Merced. The steam trains ran through San Francisco neighborhoods to a terminal at 25th and Valencia Streets.¹² The backers of the SF&SJ railroad also attempted to build a transcontinental line but they hoped to go several hundred miles south and then turn east around the Sierra Nevada Mountains. They renamed their railroad the Southern Pacific. The Big Four acquired this railroad in 1870, kept the name, and rapidly pushed it south to Los Angeles (1876), Tucson (1880), El Paso (1881), and finally New Orleans (1883).¹³

By the 1890s, C.P. Huntington was the last survivor of the Big Four and the Southern Pacific (SP) was one of the largest transportation companies in the world with oceanic steamships, ferries, interurban trains, and 8,000 miles of track.¹⁴ In 1901, Edward H. Harriman, who had acquired the Union Pacific Railroad in 1897, assumed financial control of the Southern Pacific after Huntington's death. Harriman unified the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific railroads under a single management. Acknowledged at the time as "the most competent railroad man in the world," Harriman rehabilitated the Union Pacific railroad and was determined to rehabilitate the Southern Pacific by reducing curvature, lowering grades, and improving the rolling stock.¹⁵

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Creation of the Bayshore Yard and Roundhouse 1904-1908

During the next eight years (1901-1909), Harriman spent \$247 million on the Southern Pacific Railroad, twenty times more than was spent in the previous eight years.¹⁶ As part of a campaign to rehabilitate and modernize the Southern Pacific and other railroads under his control, Harriman built new sidings, expanded block signals, laid millions of tons of ballast, installed heavier rail, built stronger bridges, and bought real estate for new terminals. He also completed three, multimillion dollar projects: the Lucin Cutoff across the Great Salt Lake in Utah (opened 1904), the Montavlo cut-off south of Santa Barbara (opened 1904), and the Bayshore cut-off (opened 1907).¹⁷ The Bayshore yard contains the roundhouse subject to this nomination.

The Bayshore Cut-off involved rerouting the line east from San Bruno and then north along the bay. This new route avoided the narrow right of way, sharp curves, steep grades and San Franciscans' bitter opposition to trains running through their backyards of the original route.¹⁸ The Bayshore route required filling the bay at several places, boring five tunnels, and building a long trestle, but it increased capacity and reduced operating costs.¹⁹

As part of the project, the cove at Visitation Valley was filled in with tailings from the tunnels. More than 200 acres were reclaimed from the bay to make room for the railroad right of way and for the construction of a major marshalling yard with extensive maintenance facilities. This yard would supplant the cramped San Francisco machine shops at 16th Street and the car repair and roundhouse at Mariposa Street (Mission Bay). The new yard, called Bayshore, was 8,400 feet long and included a roundhouse, machine shop, car shops, and a hump²⁰ for making up train consists, the second to be built on the Pacific coast.²¹

Bayshore was one of several yards and roundhouses that were located along the route from San Francisco to Santa Barbara. This route was administered by the Southern Pacific's Coast Division. Coast Division roundhouses were located at Mission Bay (San Francisco), Bayshore, San Jose, Watsonville Junction, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara. The Mission Bay, San Jose, and Santa Barbara facilities primarily provided light service while Bayshore and San Luis Obispo conducted heavier repairs. During the 1920s, the Manager of Development for the Southern Pacific Railroad claimed that the Bayshore yard held the distinction for maintaining nearly all the 179 locomotives operated by the Coast Division.²² This implies a heavy utilization of the Bayshore roundhouse. The Southern Pacific used the Bayshore yard for major railcar rehabilitation and locomotive maintenance from 1914 to 1983.²³

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Bayshore Yard

The roundhouse was one of many buildings and structures constructed at the Bayshore yard. The bulk of the construction took place from 1907 through 1920, although additions were made in later years. The roundhouse was under construction from about 1908 and was completed by the end of 1910, making it the first, or one of first, buildings built in the yard and the only one still extant.²⁴ The freight car repair shop was operating by November 1917 and the passenger shops were expected to open in December.²⁵

By 1920, the yard contained a freight car repair shop, passenger coach repair shop, machine shop, store, and two 150-ton track scales. Under construction was a tank and boiler shop.²⁶ In 1921, Bayshore yard's repair and heavy locomotive repair shops were handling 42,000 cars a month on 64 outbound and inbound tracks and 21 repair tracks. By the mid twenties, the yard employed 1,196 employees who earned an average of \$164.31 month.²⁷ Some of these workers were apprentices, men aged 16-21, who took instruction on becoming railroad mechanics in one of eleven trades. Enrollment was open and,

Preference is given to the sons of employees but any willing ambitious young man between 16 and 21 who can read and write and understands ordinary arithmetic will receive consideration...²⁸

Although apprenticeships were limited to males, during the first World War 100,000 women worked in the nation's railroads, which were operating under the temporary control of the federal government through the United States Railroad Administration. Apparently, no women were employed in the Bayshore yard during WWI, although women were employed elsewhere during the war by the Southern Pacific.²⁹

Many skilled workers were employed at a roundhouse including boilermakers, machinists, sheet metal fabricators, painters, carpenters, blacksmiths, and pipefitters. Unskilled or semi-skilled workers were wipers (who cleaned the locomotives), oilers, ash-pit men, and hostlers (who drove the engines into the roundhouse). Boilermakers repaired or cleaned boiler tubes, a dirty and dangerous occupation, and they received some of the highest wages, \$2.94 for a 10-hour day in 1874 on the Sante Fe Railroad, for example. Machinists were paid slightly more \$3.02/day for their skills fabricating metal parts of the locomotives. Railroad engineers were highest paid at \$3.55/day.³⁰

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The challenging life of a roundhouse foreman on the Southern Pacific was chronicled in 1920:

The roundhouse foreman, to a certain extent, must be familiar with all of the trades in connection with the upkeep of the locomotive. He must be conversant with all of the rules as required by the Federal and State laws and regulations governing the upkeep and care of locomotive, boilers and tender and stationary plants. He must know the engineers' and firemen's agreements and rules that govern shop crafts. He must also be temperamentally fitted to the job, for his patience is sometimes tested to the limit. In addition to this he must be something of a diplomat...He must have a good stiff backbone, and if he has a hide like an armadillo so much the better, for he is the shock-absorber and the target of most of the slings and arrows of criticism directed at his department...it is the roundhouse foreman's good judgment to a great extent that keeps the trains moving."³¹

The Bayshore yard served one of the business segments on the entire Southern Pacific (SP) system. During the 1920s, Bayshore handled 22 million gross tons per mile, making it SP's heaviest traveled stretch of track.³² While the 1930s saw a fall off in traffic, the line again became the heaviest on the SP system during World War II with 46.5 million gross tons per mile in 1943. Little has been recorded about activities at the yard during the war. It is known that special blackout hoods to shield headlights, signal lights, and markers from enemy planes were fabricated in Bayshore Yard for use during WWII.³³ Women were employed during the war at Bayshore as were workers from Mexico.³⁴

After the war, diesel powered locomotives supplanted and then replaced steam powered locatives across the country including the Southern Pacific. Diesel freight engines were introduced by SP in 1948 and diesel switchers entered service on Coast Division in 1950. Steam locomotives were phased out on the Coast line during mid 1950s and the last use of steam engines was on the San Francisco Peninsula commuter service on January 22, 1957.³⁵

Diesel engines require considerably less maintenance than steam engines and roundhouses were largely obsolete by the late 1950s with the end of steam.³⁶ Southern Pacific's steam facilities were quickly closed: the Santa Barbara roundhouse closed in 1956; steam facilities at San Luis Obispo and Watsonville Junction closed in 1957; and the Mission Bay roundhouse was closed in 1960. None of these roundhouses are extant. In 1957, Bayshore became a graveyard for steam engines waiting to be scrapped.³⁷

The Bayshore yard declined as San Francisco became less important as a freight terminal after WWII. The Western and Coast divisions were combined in 1964 with Oakland becoming the

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hub of operations in the Bay Area. Further consolidations occurred along the line during the 1960s with closing of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo yards.³⁸ In the spring of 1979, Bayshore yard was phased out and facilities were dismantled over next several years.³⁹ One of the last demolitions occurred in 2000 when a permit was issued by the City of Brisbane for the demolition of seven structures containing about 3,000 square feet and identified as “the old firehouse and abandoned buildings and fragment walls.”⁴⁰ The only buildings that currently remain are the roundhouse, the adjacent former tank and boiler shop (rented by the Lazzari Fuel Company), and two or three wood, one-story buildings at the northern end of the yard. The roundhouse suffered a fire on September 1, 2001 which burned about one half of the roof.⁴¹

The Significance of the Railroad Roundhouse Property Type

The Bayshore roundhouse is the only surviving roundhouse built by Southern Pacific in California. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of the type, period, and method of construction used in roundhouses of the steam era in the early 20th century. It is also the only surviving roundhouse of any railroad in California, not counting a few small or specialized railroads.⁴² The City of Brisbane lists the roundhouse as a historic resource.⁴³

During the steam era, locomotives required constant maintenance and most of this work took place in roundhouses where engines were serviced and repaired between runs.⁴⁴ The basic roundhouse structure was a building with a circular footprint. Railroad tracks were arranged radially. Each track led to a separate bay or “stall.” Stalls could be used for storage, light service, or heavy service, depending on the setup of the roundhouse. The roundhouse was a compact solution to the need to house steam locomotives that were generally designed to run in the forward direction with only a limited ability to back up. Although commonly called a roundhouse, completely circular roundhouses appear to have been rare in the west. Instead, roundhouses were built in semi-circular designs in varying degrees. The circle was often completed with a number of outdoor tracks, as is the case with the Bayshore roundhouse.⁴⁵ Even though it was never built out to its intended 40 stalls, the Bayshore roundhouse was one of the larger roundhouses in California.

An integral feature of most roundhouses was its turntable, a device for positioning locomotives so they could enter a stall for servicing.⁴⁶ Turntables were the most compact solution to the problem of re-orienting locomotives. A rotating bridge structure, or “turntable,” pivoted about the center of a circular pit with masonry walls, in this case concrete. This rotating structure allowed for access to all of the tracks within the roundhouse. The bridge structure would be positioned to allow a locomotive to access the turntable deck from the entrance track. The

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locomotive would proceed onto the turntable and stop. An operator would then rotate the turntable to access the desired track or stall.

Many nineteenth century roundhouses in the west were constructed of wood but by the 20th century, more permanent and less flammable materials such as stone, concrete, or brick were being used. The roof and interior columns were often of heavy timber. The design of the Bayshore roundhouse reflects these trends. While the architects or engineers who designed it are not known, the roundhouse was a product of the Southern Pacific's construction department. The design is similar to the SP brick roundhouse at San Jose constructed in 1899, with pilastered brick walls along the ends and outer circumference with arched windows; radial gabled roof with light and ventilation monitors along the gable's peak.⁴⁷ Inside, drop pits were installed under the bays to conduct maintenance.⁴⁸

The most significant features of the Bayshore roundhouse are its brick construction, curved shape, openings for stalls on one side, and windows on the other side. The design is relatively simple, essentially a curved shaped garage for locomotives. The floor is concrete and the roof is a simple wood framing system. Because it was built on reclaimed land with high potential for post-construction settlement, both the building and tracks within it were built on pile-supported concrete foundations. The building remains unaltered from its configuration in 1957, which had survived in nearly original condition from 1910. The turntable was removed and the circular concrete pit is now filled with water and obscured by vegetation. While the rest of the yard is now nearly vacant, the roundhouse is a visible reminder of the railroad's past. The scene looks much as it did in 1910 when the roundhouse was the prominent feature on the vast expanse of land.

Summary

The former Southern Pacific Railroad roundhouse at Bayshore and its functionally related turntable are significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion C (Design/Construction) for embodying "the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction," of a Southern Pacific Railroad brick roundhouse of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As an early 20th century transportation building, it is significant on the local/regional level in the areas of Transportation and Architecture. It is the only extant railroad roundhouse of the many that once existed in California during the era of steam locomotives. It is eligible for listing as an example of a distinctive railroad support facility. The period of significance is 1910-1957. This period coincides with the date the roundhouse was completed (1910) to the year when steam locomotives were last serviced in the roundhouse (1957).

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¹ Alan Hynding, *From Frontier to Suburb, The Story of the San Mateo Peninsula* (Belmont, CA: Star Publishing Company, 1982), 8.

² Cynthia Cox, et.al, *San Francisco's Visitacion Valley* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 9.

³ Mel Scott, *The San Francisco Bay Area: A Metropolis in Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 9-11.

⁴ Deanna Paoli Gumina, *The Italians of San Francisco 1850-1930* (The Center for Migration Studies of New York, 1978), 99.

⁵ "Where the Land Gives Most to the Acre, Italian Vegetable Gardens of San Francisco," *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 18, 1903.

⁶ Gumina, *The Italians of San Francisco 1850-1930*, 101

⁷ Richard Brandi, "Farms, Fire and Forest: Adolph Sutro and Development West of Twin Peaks," *Argonaut*, San Francisco Museum and Historical Society, Vol. 14, No. 1, Summer 2003, 42.

⁸ Raymond Stevenson Dondero, "The Italian Settlement of San Francisco," (Master thesis, U.C. Berkeley, 1953), 57.

⁹ Hynding, *From Frontier to Suburb, The Story of the San Mateo Peninsula*, 248.

¹⁰ Richard J. Orsi, *Sunset Limited, The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West 1850-1930*, Berkeley: University of California Press 2005, xiv.

¹¹ Brian Solomon, *Southern Pacific Railroad* (St. Paul, MN: Voyager Press, 2007), 15.

¹² John R. Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line* (Wilton, CA: Signature Press, 1994), 31-21.

¹³ Solomon, *Southern Pacific Railroad*, 24.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 31.

¹⁵ Don L. Hofsommer, *The Southern Pacific, 1901-1985* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986), 9.

¹⁶ Harry Klein, *Life and Legend of E. H. Harriman* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 256.

¹⁷ Hofsommer, *The Southern Pacific, 1901-1985*, 14-19.

¹⁸ Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line*, 31-21.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 27-37.

²⁰ A hump is a raised section of track designed to move cars to selected tracks using gravity.

²¹ *Ibid*, 35.

²² Letter to Jack Hanlon from R.E. Kelly, Southern Pacific Manager of Development, dated April 19, 1926.

²³ "Community Relations Plan: Southern Pacific Railroad Transportation Company Rail Yard Brisbane, California," April 7, 1989, Mara Feeney & Associates, 3.

²⁴ Signor *Southern Pacific's Coast Line*, 34 shows a photo of the roundhouse and a one story and two story building in 1910.

²⁵ "Railroad Shops Busily at Work on Equipment to Meet Wartime Needs," *The Bulletin*, Southern Pacific Company employee publication, Vol. VI, No. 22, November 15, 1917, 3.

²⁶ T. Ahern, "Following in the Footsteps of the Padres, The Coast Division, rich in romance, history, industrial growth and operating achievements, described by its Superintendent," *The Bulletin*, Southern Pacific Company employee publication, Vol. IX, No. 1, November 1920, 3.

²⁷ Cynthia Cox, et al., *San Francisco's Visitacion Valley*, 42.

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²⁸ "S.P Instructors Teach Appendices Eleven Trades," *The Bulletin*, Southern Pacific Company employee publication, Vol. IX, No. 3, March 1920, 12.

²⁹ "Women in the Field of Railroading," *The Bulletin*, Southern Pacific Company employee publication, Vol. VIII, No. 8, August 1919, 11. Women were employed in the SP's General Office, and the West Oakland, Sacramento, and Los Angeles shops.

³⁰ Hans and April Halberstat, *The American Train Depot & Roundhouse* (Osceola, WI: Motorbooks International, 1995), 155.

³¹ E. R. Burroughs, "Fuel, The Engineer and The Roundhouse Foreman," *The Bulletin*, Southern Pacific Company employee publication, Vol. IX, No. 5, May 1920, 18.

³² Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line*, 49.

³³ *Ibid*, 143,146.

³⁴ There were wash and locker facilities for women and temporary living quarters for Mexican nationals at Bayshore during WWII, see the California State Railroad Museum archives CE 9878 / Sketch A June 25, 1943 / Aug. 4, 1943. Wash and locker building, for women employees only. 17 x 24 in. Paper negative. Filing location: Big Four Map Case 16 ID 2919. Also listed is Southern Pacific. CE 9954 / P 7 Feb. 1944 Temporary living quarters for Mexican nationals. 9 x 14 in. White line on blue paper. Filing location: Box 36 ID 4227.

³⁵ Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line*, 158.

³⁶ <http://www.sanfranciscotrains.org/bayshore-roundhouse.html> accesses February 23, 2009

³⁷ Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line*, 154-159.

³⁸ Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line*, 171.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 267

⁴⁰ City of Brisbane Application for Building Permit 00-0413-08, approved April 13, 2000.

⁴¹ "Fire Destroys Old Railroad House," *San Mateo County Times*, September 1, 2001.

⁴² Researching railroad roundhouse architecture is complicated by the lack of scholarly and popular attention to the subject. While much has been written about train terminals and stations, there is a dearth of material about roundhouses.

⁴³ City of Brisbane, General Plan Background Report, "Existing and Potential Parks, Recreation, Historic and Cultural Resources," dated March 1994.

⁴⁴ www.sanfranciscotrains.org/bayshore-roundhouse.html accessed February 23, 2009.

⁴⁵ E-mailed from Randolph R. Ruiz, AIA, November 14, 2008.

⁴⁶ The turntable was omitted at some shortline roundhouses (e.g., the San Francisco State Belt Line) where a small number of stalls could be served by a branching network of engine-stall leads.

⁴⁷ In 2000, the San Jose roundhouse was disassembled, palletized and moved to the county fairgrounds. The California Trolley and Railroad Corporation Website, www.ctrc.org/history/lenzen-roundhouse/lenzen-roundhouse, accessed January 20, 2009.

⁴⁸ Hans and April Halberstadt, *The American Train Depot and Roundhouse*, 147.

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Sources:

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City of Brisbane, General Plan Background Report, "Existing and Potential Parks, Recreation, Historic and Cultural Resources," dated March 1994.

Mara Feeney & Associates. "Community Relations Plan: Southern Pacific Railroad Transportation Company Rail Yard Brisbane, California," April 7, 1989.

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The Bulletin, Southern Pacific Company employee publication:

"Railroad Shops Busily at Work on Equipment to Meet Wartime Needs," Vol. VI, No. 22, November 15, 1917.

"Women in the Field of Railroading," Vol. VIII, No. 8, August 1919.

"S.P Instructors Teach Appendices Eleven Trades," Vol. IX, No. 3, March 1920.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the roundhouse is pie-shaped and includes the buildings and structures of the property subject to the nomination: the roundhouse, turntable pit, and whisker tracks. The roundhouse is semi-circular shaped and encompasses 108 degrees of curvature. It contains 17 enclosed stalls, numbered clockwise from 24 to 40, and 23 open air stalls, the so-called "whisker tracks" located to the southwest of (counterclockwise from) the enclosed stalls. A series of extant lighting poles mark the location of each outdoor stall. Additionally, a steel turntable once sat within a 90-foot diameter concrete pit (later expanded to 110-foot diameter). The turntable was removed and the concrete turntable pit is extant and filled with water and vegetation.

The boundary of the nominated property extends in a curve approximately 10 feet north of the roundhouse to an existing fence and continues west and south in a circumference that includes the poles marking the whisker tracks. The resultant pie shaped boundary encompasses the whisker tracks and the turntable pit.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the property historically occupied by the roundhouse, its associated whisker tracks, and the turntable pit described in the verbal boundary description.

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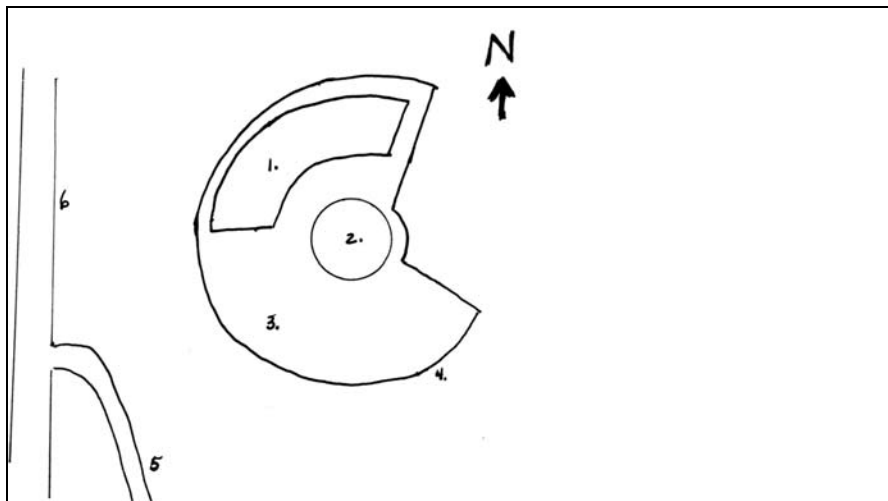
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Geographical Data:

Southern Pacific Railroad Bayshore Roundhouse: Contributing Buildings, Structures and Site.



Legend

1. Roundhouse
2. Turntable pit
3. Whisker tracks area
4. Boundary line of area to be included in nomination
5. Industrial Way
6. Bayshore Boulevard (not to scale)

Scale 1" = 135 feet

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Historic Illustration 1. Roundhouse under construction looking east in 1910. Source: California State Railway Museum, MS 10/4 Engineering Dept. Records SPED b-3.



Historic Illustration 2. Roundhouse under construction looking west in 1910. Source: California State Railway Museum. MS 10/4 Engineering Dept. Records SPED b-3.



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Historic Illustration 3. Bayshore Yard looking north in 1911. Roundhouse is in the upper left hand side of photo. Source: John R Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line* (Wilton, CA: Signature Press, 1994) 39.



Historic Illustration 4. Bayshore Yard looking southwest in 1921. Source: John R Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line* (Wilton, CA: Signature Press, 1994), 49.



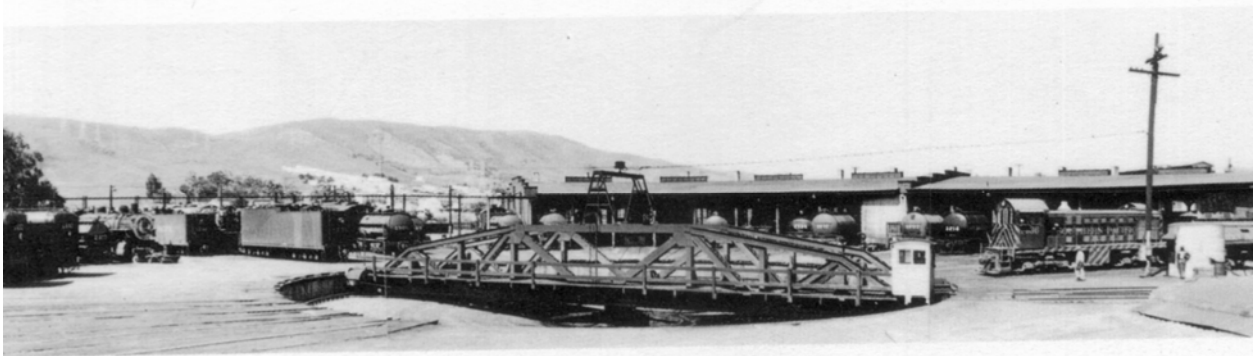
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Historic Illustration 5. Bayshore Roundhouse and turntable looking northwest in 1950. Source: John R Signor, *Southern Pacific's Coast Line* (Wilton, CA: Signature Press, 1994), 187.



Historic Illustration 6. Roundhouse and turntable with other yard buildings (no longer extant) in 1975. Source: Anthony J. Thompson and John R. Signor (*Southern Pacific's Coast Line Pictorial*, Wilton, CA: Signature Press, 2000), 39.



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Photographs

Name of Property: Southern Pacific Railroad Bayshore Roundhouse,
Address: Bayshore Boulevard and Industrial Way, City of Brisbane,
County and State: San Mateo county, California.
Location of Digital Files: Richard Brandi, 125 Dorchester Way, San Francisco, CA

Photographer: All photos taken by Richard Brandi.
Photos taken February 2009.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse1

The former Southern Pacific rail yard, camera looking northwest, with roundhouse in the center of photo.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse2

The north façade of Southern Pacific roundhouse, camera looking southeast.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse3

The north façade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking west.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse4

The south façade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking east.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse5

The south façade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking west.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse6

The east façade Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking west.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse7

The west façade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking northeast.

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse8

Close up of windows on north façade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking south.

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Index of Photos:

CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse1. The former Southern Pacific rail yard, camera looking northwest, with roundhouse in the center of photo.



CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse2. The north facade of Southern Pacific roundhouse, camera looking southeast.



CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse3. The north facade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking west



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CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse4. The south facade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking east.



CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse5. The south facade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking west.



CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse6. The east facade Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking west



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CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse7. The west facade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking northeast.



CA_SanMateo_SPRoundhouse8. Close up of windows on north facade of Southern Pacific Roundhouse, camera looking south.

