



Historical Commission

March 4, 2018

The Honorable Jonathan Rothschild
and Council Members
P.O. Box 27210
Tucson, AZ 85726-7210

RE: Providing Permanent Protection for the Tucson Origins Heritage Park

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

At the January 2018 meeting of the Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission (T-PCHC), commissioners voted unanimously to direct me to write to you to urge the City of Tucson to promptly determine the best method to provide the highest level of permanent protection for the Tucson Origins Heritage Park (TOHP), as demarcated in the TOHP Master Plan and presented in the attached map. Given full approval of the master plan by Mayor and Council and the Rio Nuevo District in December 2006, the TOHP property extends from the southern boundary of the present Caterpillar site on the north to Mission Lane on the south, and from the eastern boundary of Barrio San Agustín on the west to the Santa Cruz River bank on the east (please see map following this letter). The parcel features the significant cultural and historical elements of the area known as Tucson's Birthplace, and includes the confirmed locations of the S-cuk Son Ancestral Village, the Festival Area, the Leopoldo Carrillo house, a significant Native American burial site, and the walled Mission San Agustín complex, where the Convento, chapel, and granary structures await protection and future reconstruction.

Tucson's Birthplace is internationally recognized for its unique historical and cultural significance. The area's 4,100 years of continual occupation and agriculture make it the longest continually cultivated location in the United States. Despite the fact that the cultural resources of this unique site deserve full preservation, we recently witnessed the dangers to a historical site with no official protective status, when portions of the archaeological remains of the granary were inadvertently damaged by blading. The existing Mayor and Council resolution (No. 22573, adopted May 17, 2016) recognizing the site's importance is not adequate to prevent encroachment by other interests, and increased awareness and greater communication about the values of the site are needed. Please take measures to determine and designate the most secure, permanent preservation status for the site, and to clearly delineate the boundaries of the protected area so that no other accidental disturbances take place. We urge you to act promptly to protect our cultural patrimony and thank you in advance for your action. The multiple ownership creates a wonderful opportunity for all the major players to show a new level of cooperation.

Sincerely,

Teresita Majewski, Chair
Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission

Cc: Allison Diehl, Acting COT Historic Preservation Officer and Marty McCune, COT Historic Preservation Office; Linda Mayro, Director, Pima County Office of Sustainability & Conservation; Michael Ortega, Tucson City Manager; Albert Elias, Assistant City Manager; Tucson Mayor and Council; Pima County Board of Supervisors; T-PCHC Commissioners



TUCSON ORIGINS HERITAGE PARK