# FINAL

# Building 146/146A Engineering and Manufacturing Building

# Historic American Buildings Survey Level I

2701 North Harbor Drive, San Diego, California 92101

Prepared for

San Diego Unified Port District (SDUPD) San Diego County Regional Airport Authority

April 2010

**CH2MHILL** 

#### HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

#### RYAN AERONAUTICAL COMPANY HISTORIC DISTRICT

#### BUILDING 146 - ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING BUILDING

<u>Location:</u> 2701 North Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92101, USA

region (URS Corporation, 2008).

Present Owner/Occupant: San Diego County Regional Airport Authority

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: Building 146 is located within the boundaries of the Ryan Aeronautical Company

Historic District, a 46-acre complex containing 17 contributing resources and 30 non-contributing resources. The district is eligible on the local and national level for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A, B, and C and for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) under Criteria 1, 2 and 3. The historic district is eligible under NRHP Criterion A (CRHR 1) for its association with the contribution of aircraft manufacturers at Lindbergh Field to World War II defense production. It is also eligible for its association with Cold War research, development projects, and defense manufacturing. Under Criterion NRHP B (CRHR 2) the district is eligible for its association with aviation pioneer T. Claude Ryan and his aircraft aerospace manufacturing businesses. Ryan Aeronautical Company, under Mr. Ryan's leadership, made significant contributions to national defense production during World War II, as well as important developments in aerospace research and development in the 1950s and 1960s. The historic district is eligible under NRHP Criterion C (CRHR 3) for its representation of industrial architecture associated with the 1930s and World War II. The district embodies the distinctive architectural characteristics of aircraft manufacturing buildings of the period in Southern California. The building and structures in the district illustrate the design fabrication concepts common to aircraft manufacturing plants from the 1930s to the 1960s. During this period, the aerospace industry played a dominant role in the economy of the

Building 146 (including Building 146A, a 1956 addition to the west elevation of Building 146), is a contributing resource to the Ryan Aeronautical Company Historic District. It functioned as the Sub-Assembly building for the manufacture of aircraft, adjacent to the Building 140, the Final Assembly Building. This building is representative of the period and type of construction found at aviation factories in the mid-20th century in California and the U.S.

Historian: Sara Orton

# PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

- 1. Date of erection: Building 146, 1945; Building 146A, 1956
- 2. Architect: Frank L. Hope, Jr. & Associates
- 3. Original and subsequent owners: Ryan Aeronautical Company signed a 50-year lease in 1939. Ryan Aeronautical Company sold to Teledyne Inc. in 1969, and the combined company became Teledyne-Ryan Aeronautical Company (TDY Industries). TDY Industries merged with Allegheny Ludlum Corporation in 1996, and Northrop Grumman Corporation acquired TDY Industries from Allegheny in 1999. Presently, the property is leased by the San Diego County Regional Airport and is under the Jurisdiction of the San Diego Unified Port District.
- 4. Original plans and construction: The original portion of Building 146 is a two-story, rectangular, mostly open-interior building. It measures 306 feet by 215 feet. The interior of the north half of the building is open while the south half of the building is divided into shops and offices on both floors. The north wall of Building 146 is the exterior southern wall of Building 140 (URS Corporation, 2009).
- 5. Alterations and additions: Building 146 was modified in 1956 with the addition of the Engineering Annex (Building 146A) on the west elevation of the original building. Building 146A measures 101 feet by 145 feet and is two stories tall. The first floor is open with just metal support beams and the second floor is divided into offices (URS Corporation, 2009).

### B. Historical Context:

# 1. San Diego's Aviation History:

During the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the aviation industry was established in San Diego and it became a focal point of San Diego's activities and reputation. In 1912, the Army founded an air base and the first year-round military aviation school at Rockwell Field on Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego (Macaulay, 1928; Moore, 1960). The creation of the military air bases helped establish aviation in the region during the industry's pioneering years. In 1928, the Army and Navy had invested \$5,500,000 in the air bases at North Island (Macaulay, 1928). The high profile attained by aviation in the local community during these years resulted in an awareness of the potential future of the industry by the inhabitants of the region. San Diego became the first U.S. city to establish a Municipal Board of Air Control in 1926, and was also the first to issue a complete set of air ordinances (Macaulay, 1928).

In 1922, T. Claude Ryan, an aviation pioneer who began his career as an Army pilot, left the Army and moved to San Diego, where he began giving airplane rides and flying instructions. He soon established the Ryan Flying Company at the Dutch Flats Airfield in San Diego, which later became Ryan Airport. Dutch Flats Airfield was located at present-day Barnett Avenue and Midway Drive, off the current San Diego airport site and not within the current historic district boundaries. In the 1920s, Ryan Airport was the focal point for Ryan's expanding aeronautical enterprises (flying school, flying service, and an airplane manufacturing company). In the late 1920s, the use of the airport expanded as civil aviation came of age with other companies using Ryan's field to operate air services. With the help of T. Claude Ryan, civilian aviation flourished in San Diego County during these decades.

In the mid-1920s, the Chamber of Commerce promoted San Diego as the "Air Capital of the West." The development of what is now Lindbergh Field would be the central effort in this campaign. The committee realized that in order to maintain a leadership role in aviation, San

Diego must have an adequate municipal airport. They wanted the location of the airport to be a place that would combine facilities for the operation of land and seaplanes, and be as near to the city of San Diego as possible. They selected an area at the north end of San Diego Bay on Cityowned tideland; however, this area did not contain enough area to meet government requirements. Negotiations were made with the United States Navy to provide portions of the Marine Corps-owned tidelands for the airport expansion (URS Corporation, 2009).

Ryan was instrumental in the development of Lindbergh Field, San Diego's nascent municipal airport, which was established in 1928. In 1929, 4,755 planes and over 20,000 passengers arrived or departed from the Dutch Flats Airfield (Leiser, 2000). Within a few years, the majority of these activities would move to Lindbergh Field. In 1939, Ryan established a manufacturing site on airport grounds, which is the location of the historic district.

## 2. Ryan Aeronautical Company:

T. Claude Ryan was born in Parsons, Kansas in 1898, but moved with his family to Orange, California in 1912. Ryan began a lifelong relationship with the aviation industry when, around the age of 19, he enrolled at the American School of Aviation in Los Angeles. In 1919, Ryan began studying mechanical engineering at Oregon State College. While in school, he applied to the Army for aviation cadet training and was accepted, but left the Army by January 1922 in hopes of flying as a civilian (National Aviation Hall of Fame, 2009). Ryan moved to San Diego to establish the Ryan Flying Company. The Ryan Flying Company changed its name to Ryan Airlines, Inc. when it was reorganized in 1924 to begin operating the first year-round, scheduled airline service in the United States from Dutch Flats (URS Corporation, 2009). Around the same time, in the mid-1920s, Ryan entered the aircraft manufacturing business with partner Frank Mahoney and created the Ryan M-1 Monoplane, which became one of the best-known air mail carriers in the country. A modified Ryan Monoplane became the *Spirit of St. Louis*, the plane Charles Lindbergh flew from New York to Paris in May 1927 on the first solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean. Ryan sold the company to Mahoney in 1926 and established the Ryan Aeronautical Corporation for the sale and manufacture of aircraft engines. The company changed its name to the Ryan Aeronautical Company in 1934.

Ryan Aeronautical Company signed a 50-year lease, starting in 1939, on land at the southeastern edge of Lindbergh Field along North Harbor Drive. Three buildings from the site of the previous company were relocated to this new location. The Ryan plant was one of several aircraft manufacturers located at Lindbergh Field that contributed to the nation's war effort in the 1940s. At peak wartime production, the Ryan plant had 8,500 employees and annual production exceeded \$55 million. Following the war, workforce was reduced to 1,200 and annual production to \$8 million (URS Corporation, 2009).

The Korean conflict provided the Ryan Aeronautical Company the opportunity to work with electronics for aerospace applications. The role in aerospace electronics led to the development of a variety of aircraft navigation and positioning equipment, including helicopter hovering devices, altimeters, and remote sensors (URS Corporation, 2009).

In 1947, the United States Navy awarded Ryan a contract to research the feasibility of reaction controls for jet aircraft. With jet engines and reaction controls handled by remote control, a Ryan vertical test rig lifted itself off the ground for the first time in 1950. In 1953, the Air Force awarded Ryan a contract to design and build two manned vertical takeoff jet research planes

and 2 years later, the Ryan X-13 Vertijet was constructed. In the 1960s, Ryan continued target drone and electronic systems production and vertical takeoff and landing research (URS Corporation, 2009).

In 1969, the company was sold for \$128 million to Teledyne Inc. and became known as Teledyne-Ryan Aeronautical Company (TDY Industries). T. Claude Ryan remained with the company as chairman until his death in 1982. In 1996, TDY Industries merged with Allegheny Ludlum Corporation, and then later became a subsidiary of that company. In 1999, Northrop Grumman Corporation acquired TDY Industries from Allegheny and relocated the plant to a site in Ranch Bernardo, California, leaving the former plant site vacant. The site continues to be mostly vacant, with only a small portion of Building 100 used for administrative offices and several other buildings used for storage.

### PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

#### A. General Statement:

- 1. Architectural Character: Building 146 (including the 1956 addition of Building 146A to the west elevation) is an industrial-style building within an industrial facility. Building 146 has retained its two rows of multi-paned steel-framed awning windows, corrugated sheet metal cladding, and large hanging doors (URS Corporation, 2009).
- 2. Condition of Building Material: Building 146 is in fair condition. Building 146A is in poor condition due to roof leaks unique to that addition.

# B. Description of Exterior:

- 1. Overall Dimensions: Building 146 is a two-story rectangular building measuring 215 feet by 306 feet. Building 146A, on the west elevation measures 101 feet by 145 feet.
- 2. Foundations: Building 146 sits on a concrete slab floor and foundation.
- 3. Walls: The exterior walls of Building 146 are sheathed in corrugated metal.
- 4. Structural System: Building 146 is supported by a steel grid system and perimeter rows of I-beam posts. The north wall of Building 146 is the former exterior southern wall of Building 140. The east, west, and south walls are constructed of steel I-beam posts placed approximately 12 feet apart and support a steel frame covered with corrugated sheet metal. A steel grid supported by perimeter rows of -I-beam posts and a row of concrete buttresses on the south wall of Building 140 hold rectangular roof trusses placed 12 feet apart across the east and west side of the building. Three interior rows of steel I-beams in the north half of the building provide additional roof support (URS Corporation, 2009).

# 5. Openings:

a. Doorways: The main entry of Building 146 is a large, two-story, set of sliding doors on the west elevation, leading into the factory area. A double personnel door has been cut into the larger sliding door. The west elevation also has a double door leading directly to a set of stairs to the second floor offices. There are several other garage door-type entrances on the west and south elevations that may not be operable. The south elevation has a double, aluminum-frame entry to the first- and

- second-floor offices of Global Hawk. The west elevation (Building 146A) has two garage doors on the first floor and a double entry at the top of the exterior stair.
- b. Windows: Building 146 has two rows of multi-paned steel-framed windows with awning openings; one row on the first floor and one row on the second floor on the west, south and east elevations.
- 6. Roof: The roof of Building 146 is constructed of 2-inch-by-6-inch board sheathing with an asphalt roofing material on the exterior.
- C. Description of Interior:

Floor Plans: Building 146 is a two-story, rectangular building measuring approximately 230 feet by 300 feet. The interior of the north half of the building is open while the south half of the building is divided into shops and offices. Building 146A, added to the west elevation in 1956, has an open first floor and offices on the second floor.

D. Site:

Historic Landscape Design: As part of the original design, Building 146 creates a courtyard, gathering area with Buildings 120, 127, and 140.

## PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early Views: N/A

B. Interviews: N/A

C. Bibliography

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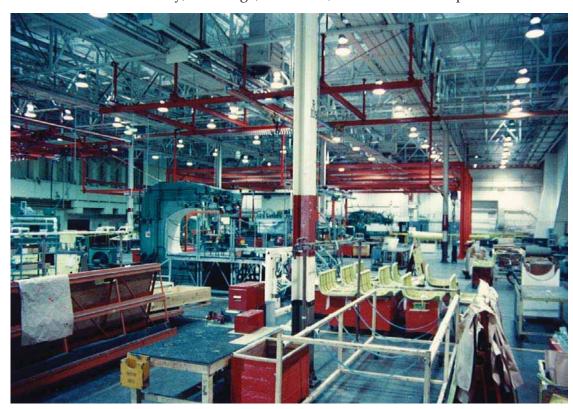
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San Diego Unified Port District. 1971. San Diego Unified District Annual Report: 1970-71. Carl Reupsch Collection, San Diego Historical Society, San Diego, CA.

San Diego Unified Port District. 1977. San Diego Unified District Annual Report: 1976-77. Carl Reupsch Collection, San Diego Historical Society, San Diego, CA.



Aerial view, Building 146 in the center background, attached to Building 140, the barrel roof structure south of the runway, San Diego, California, c. 1960. Annual Report 1960.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building Interior, San Diego, California, Date unknown. Teledyne-Ryan Archives.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, East Elevation with the central courtyard in front, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, East Elevation, second floor entry detail, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Southeast Oblique, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, South Elevation, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, South Elevation, facing Northwest, the white brick facing indicates the Global Hawk office entrance San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Southeast Elevation, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Southwest Oblique, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Southwest Oblique, Building 146A is the portion with the lower roof level, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, West Elevation, facing northeast, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Northwest Oblique, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Northwest Oblique, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, South Elevation, door and window detail, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior, facing Northeast, buttresses from the former exterior of Building 140 along back wall San Diego, California, October 2009.

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Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior door, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior storage, facing Southeast, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior, first floor, central portion of the building, facing Northwest, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior, second floor conference room, Southeast corner of the building, San Diego, California, October 2009.



Building 146/146A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior, second floor office space in the southern portion of the building, facing West, San Diego, California, October 2009.



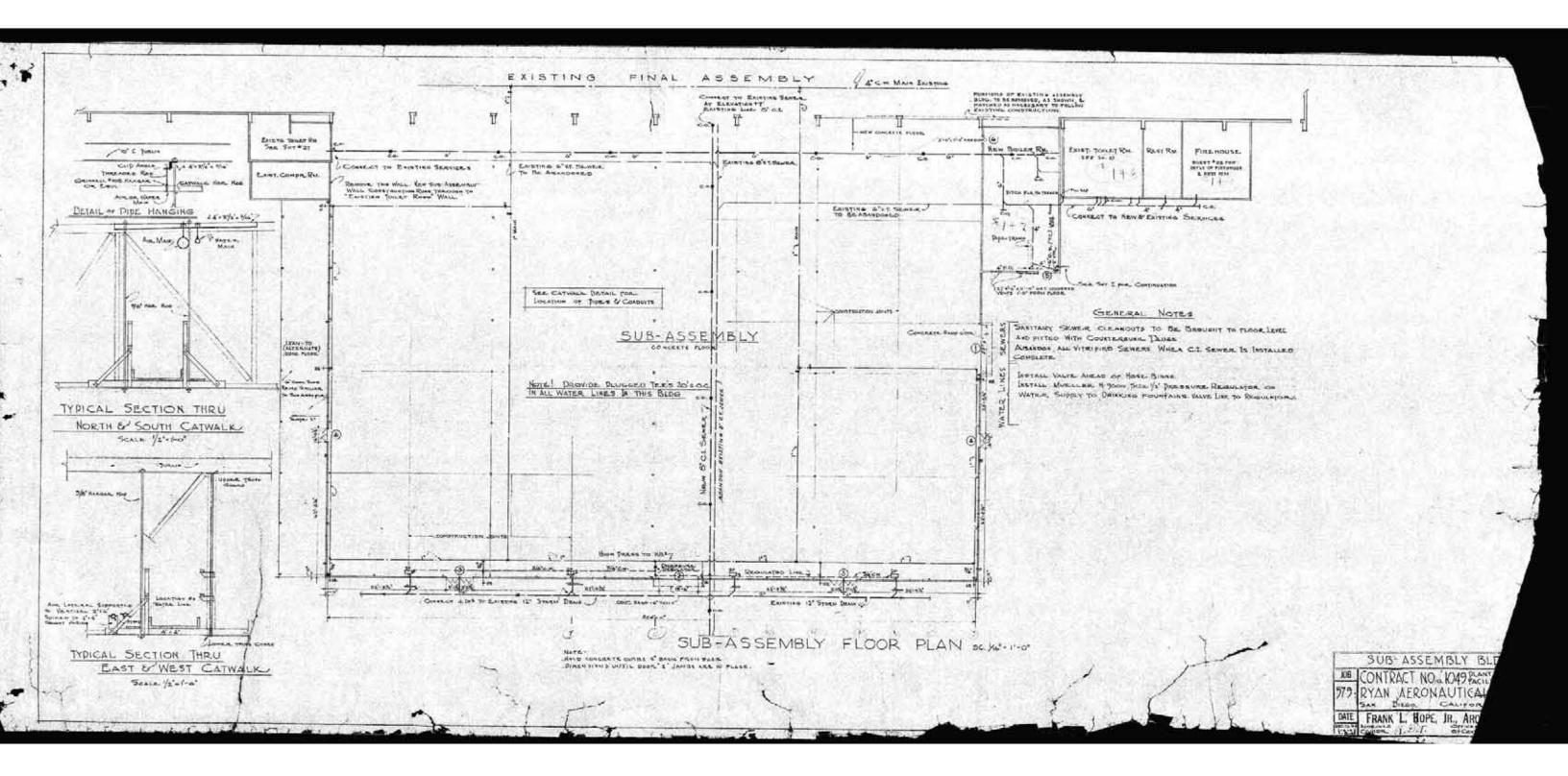
Building 146 – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior, first floor, entry to Global Hawk offices in the southern portion of the building, facing east, San Diego, California, October 2009.

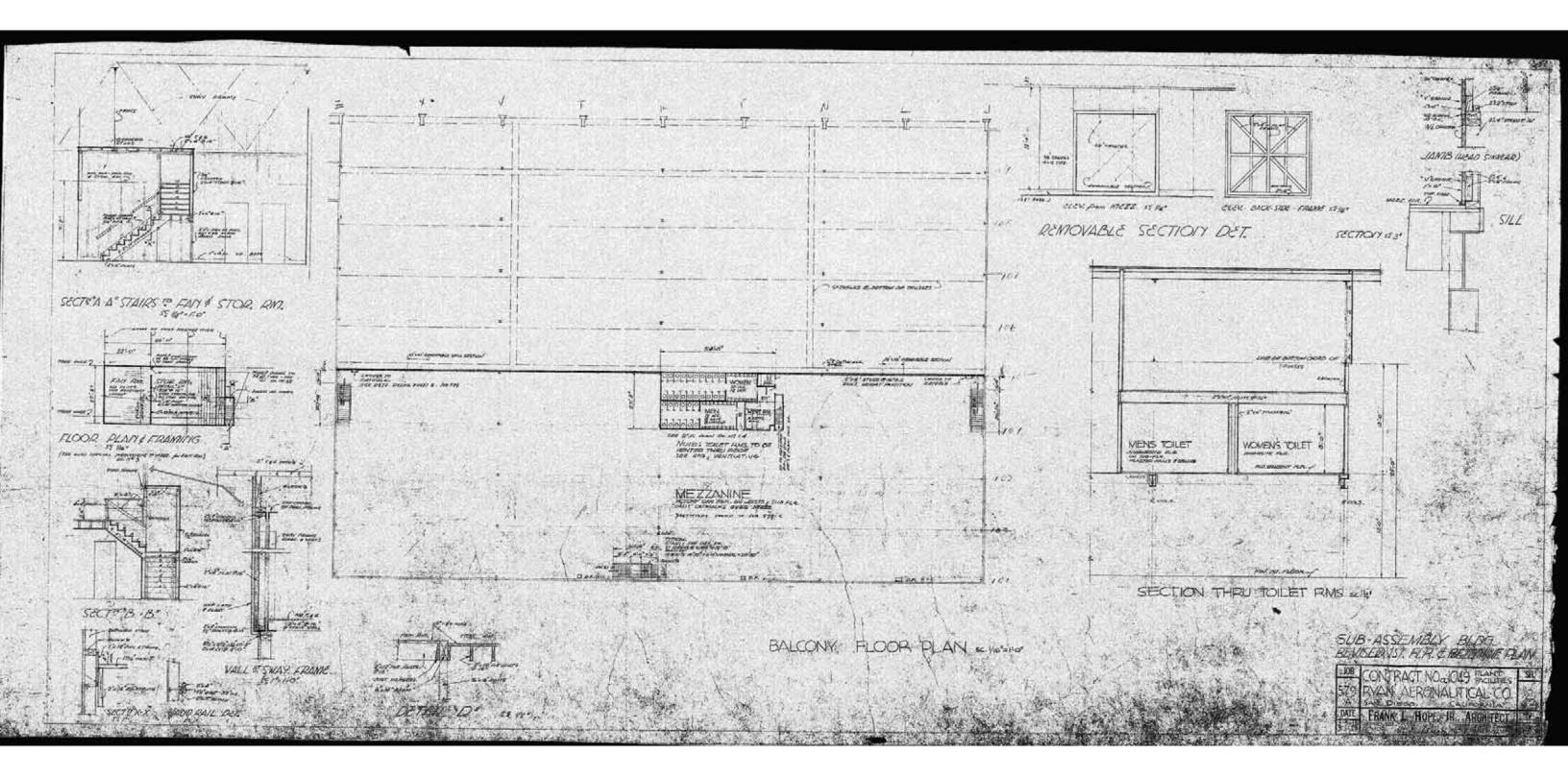


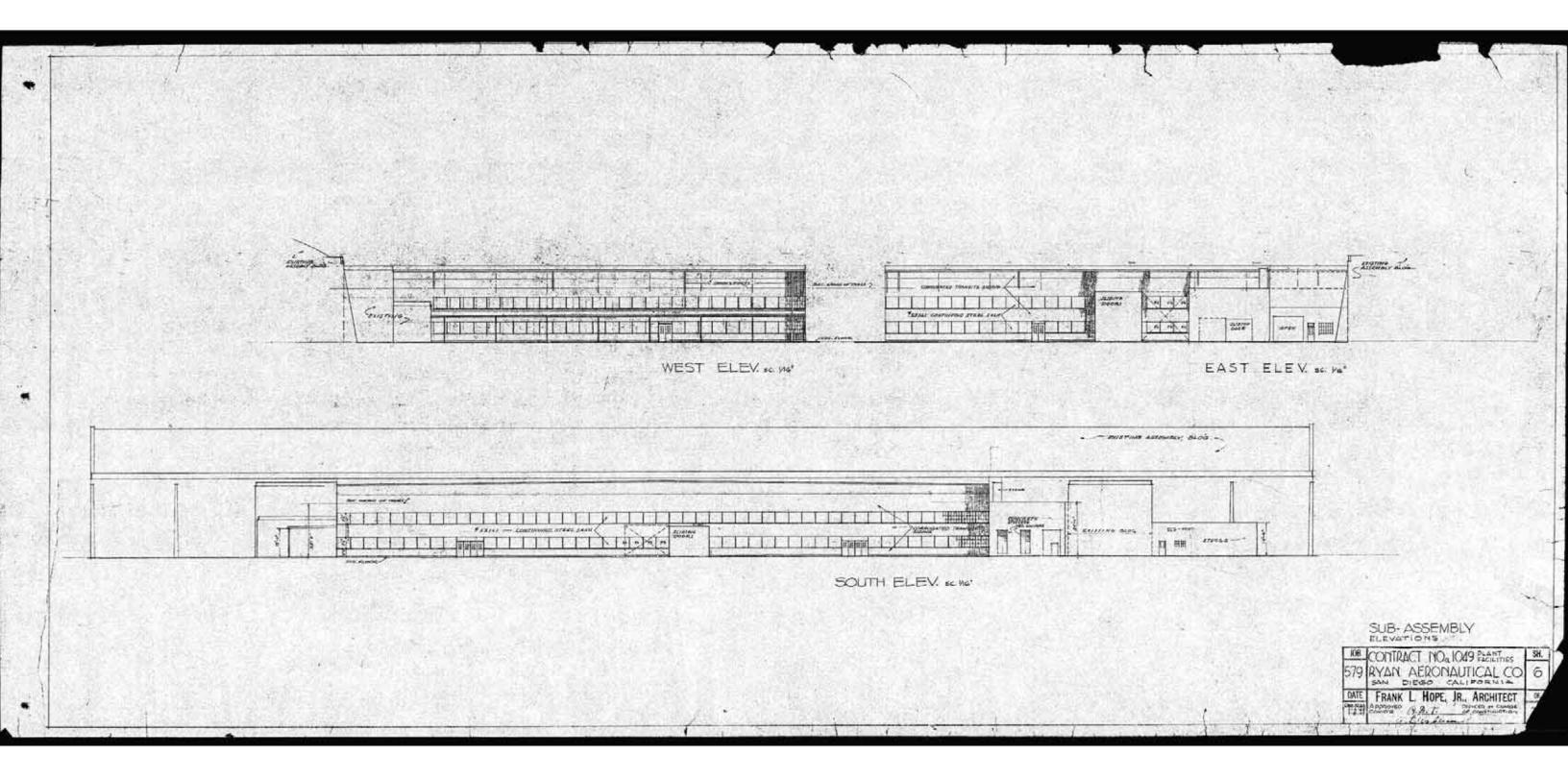
Building 146-A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior, first floor facing Southeast, San Diego, California, October 2009.

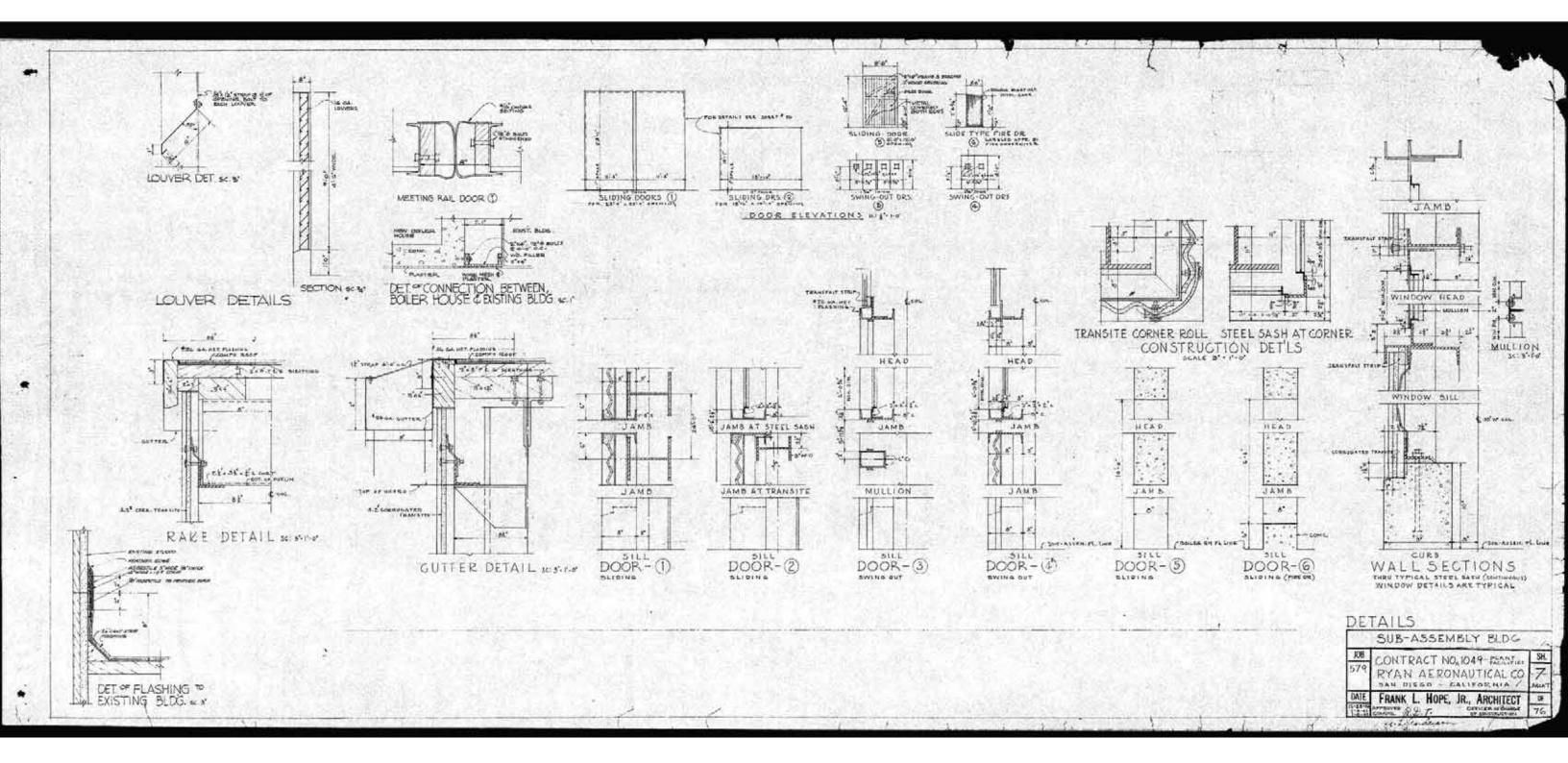


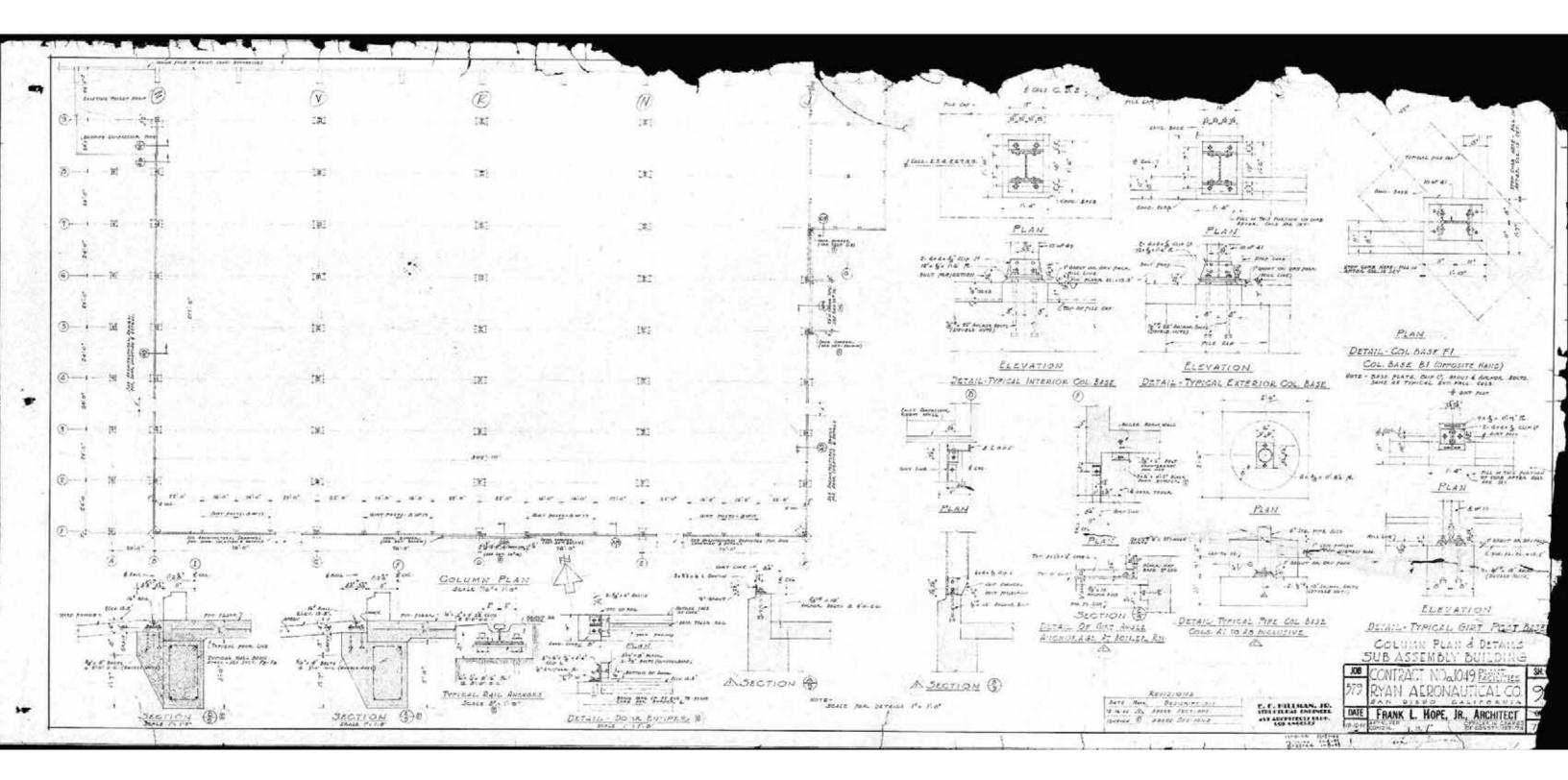
Building 146-A – Engineering and Manufacturing Building, Interior, second floor facing Northeast, San Diego, California, October 2009.

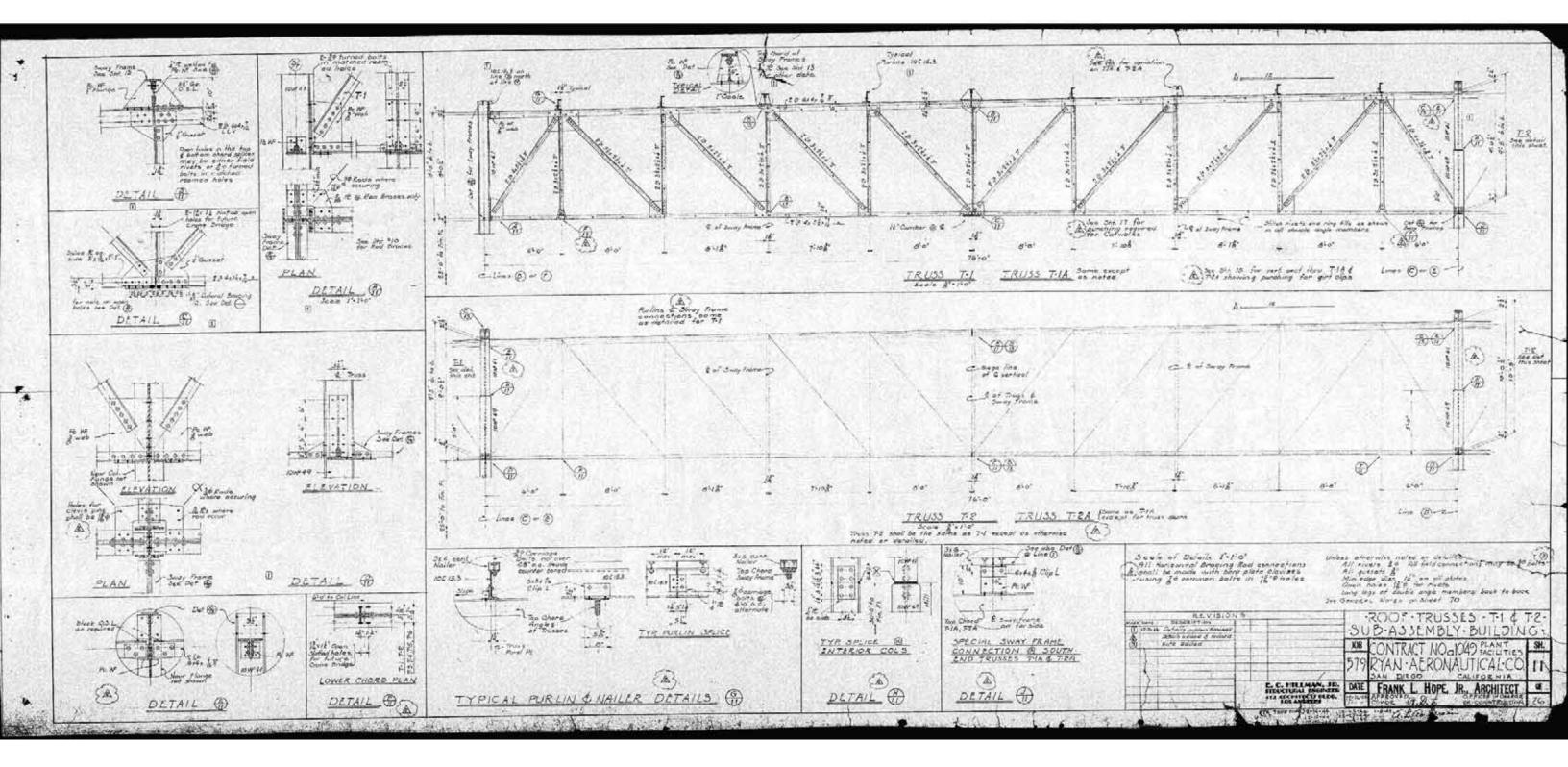


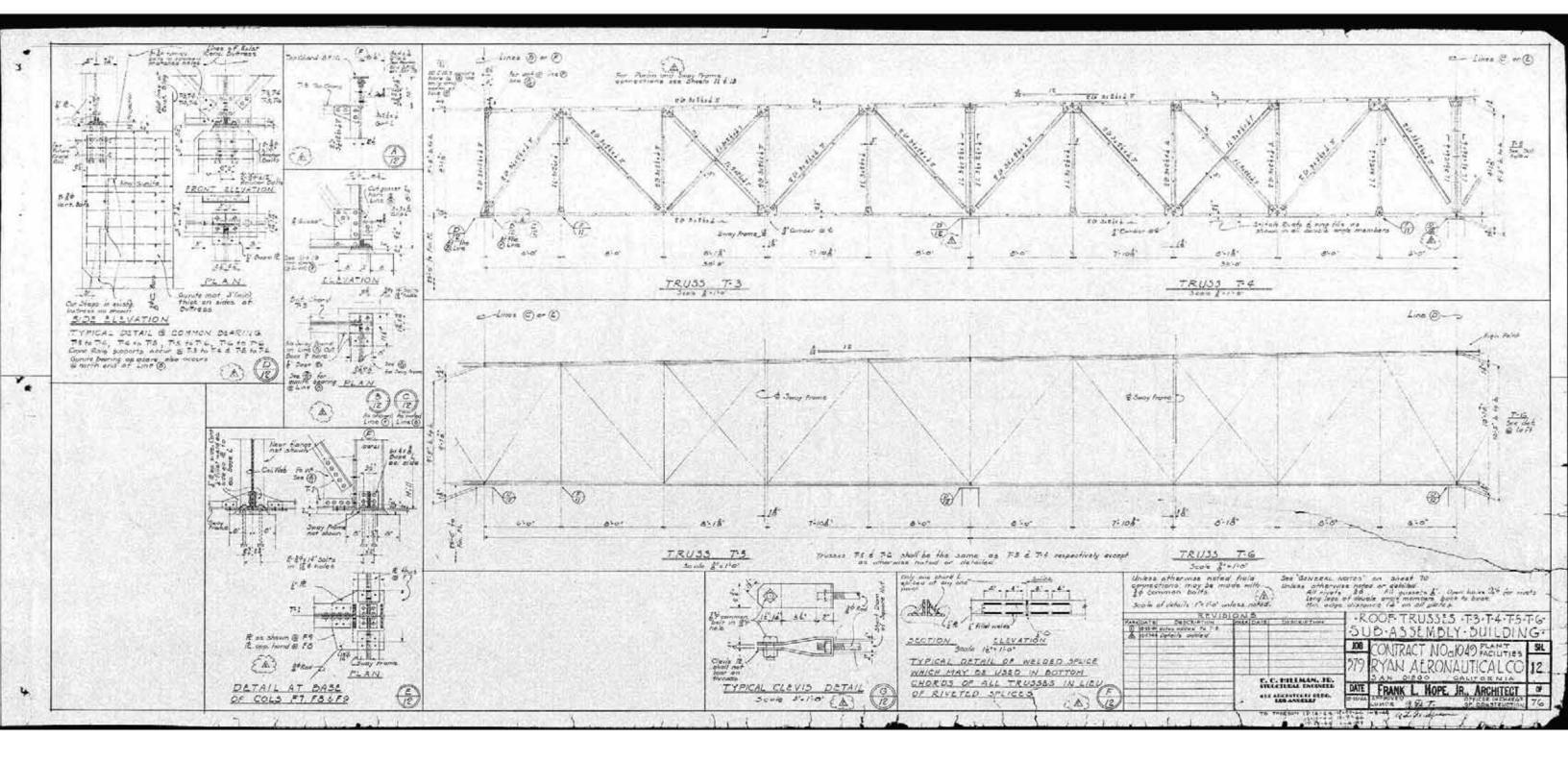


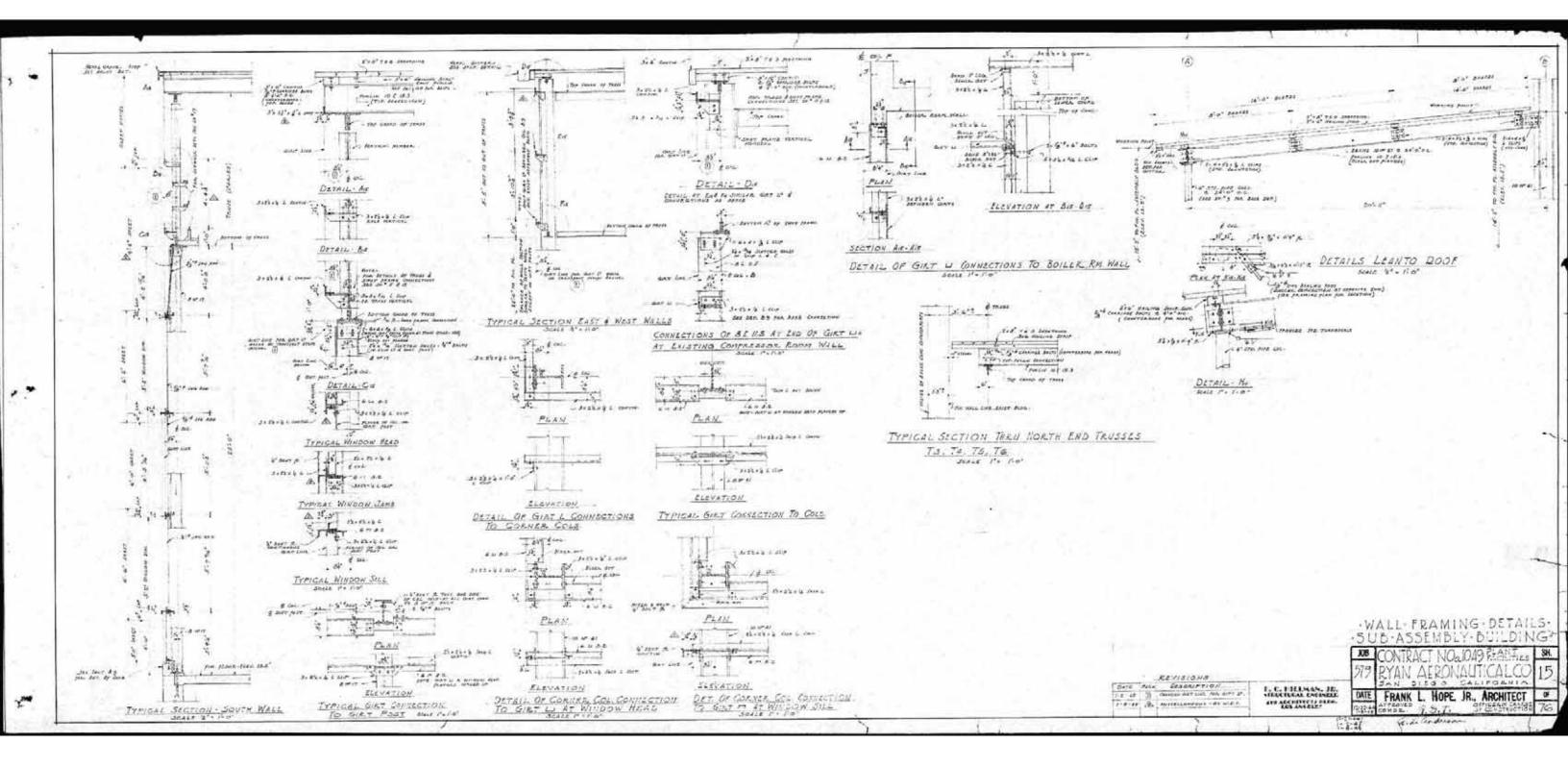


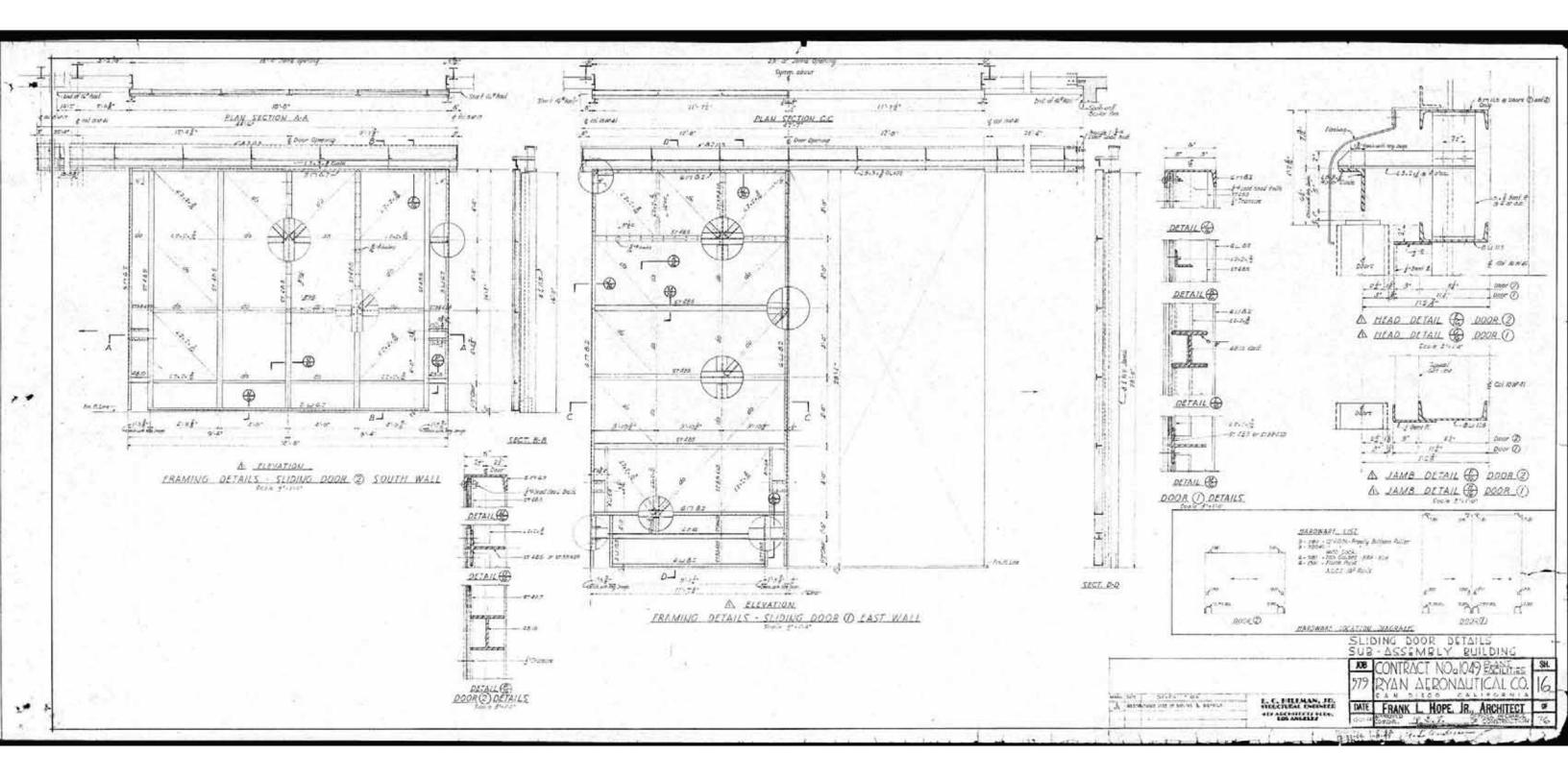


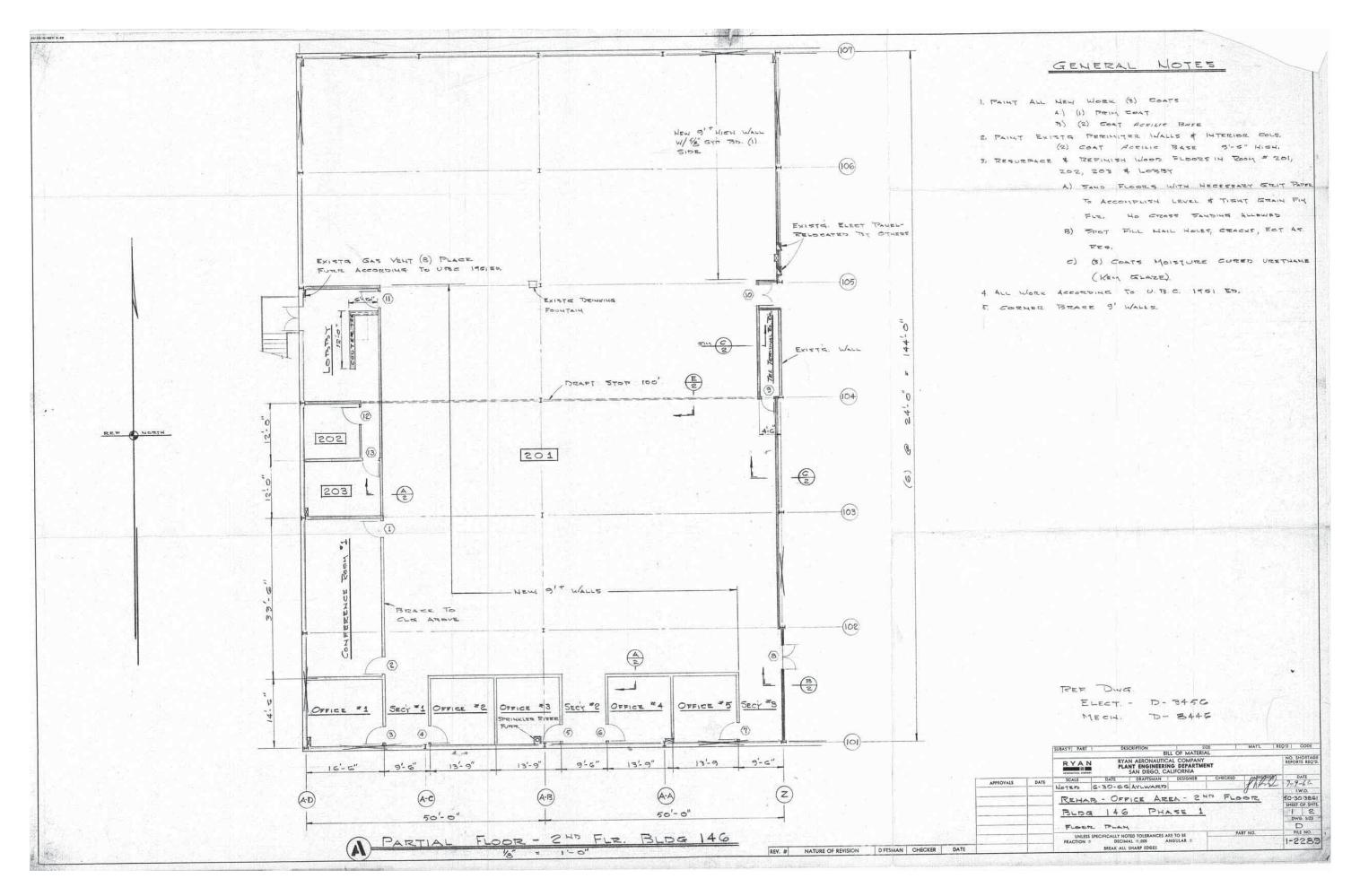


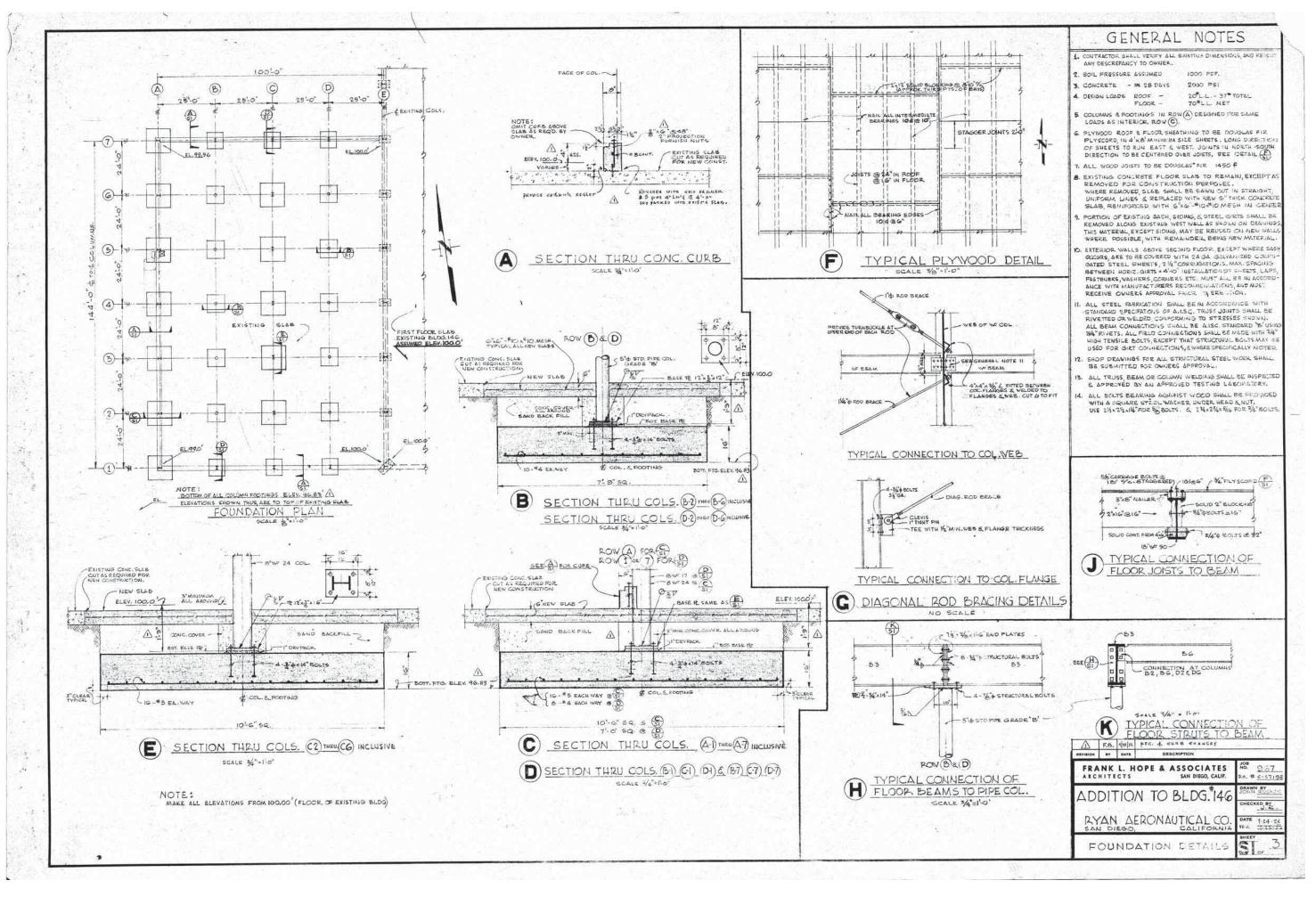


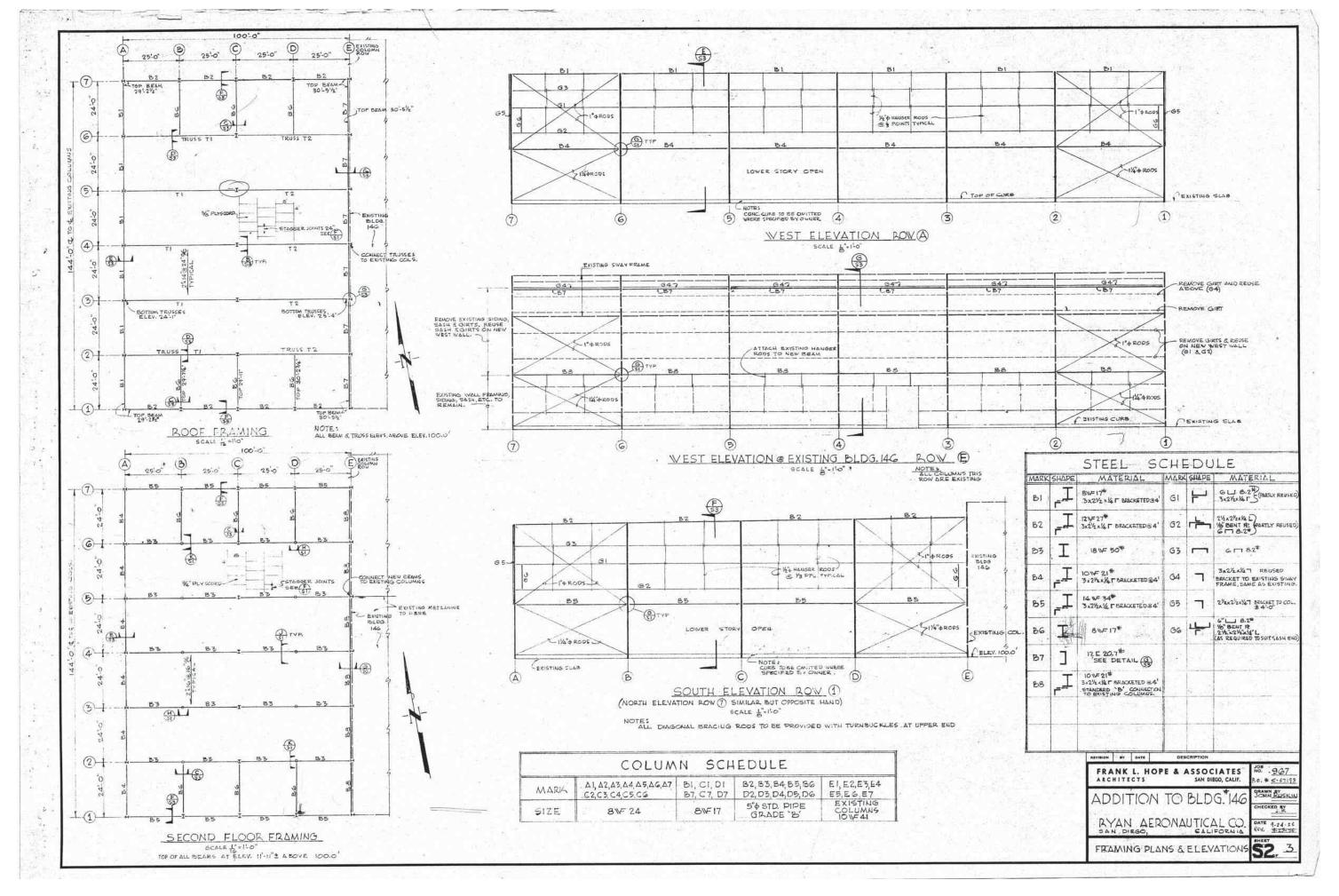


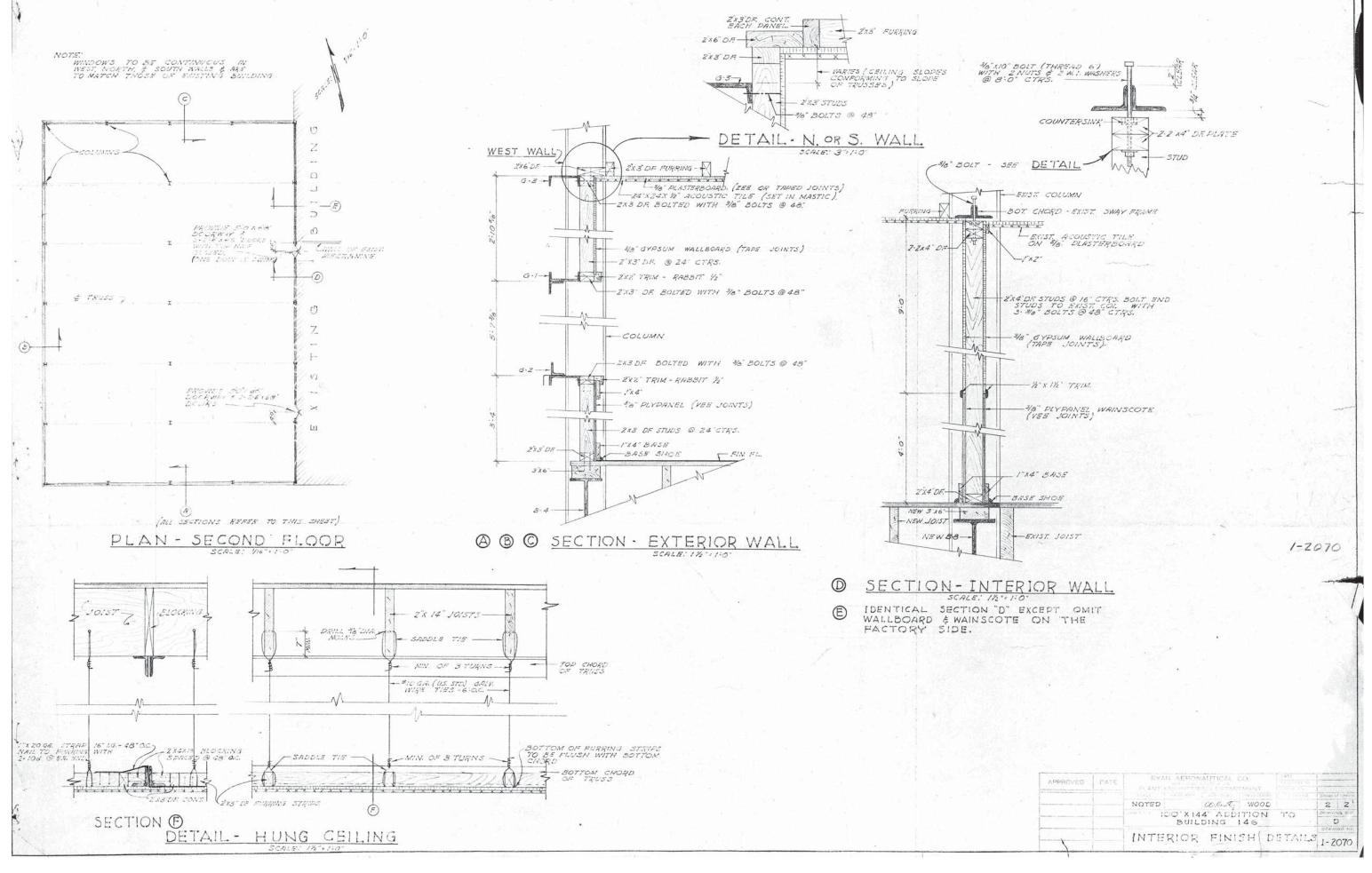


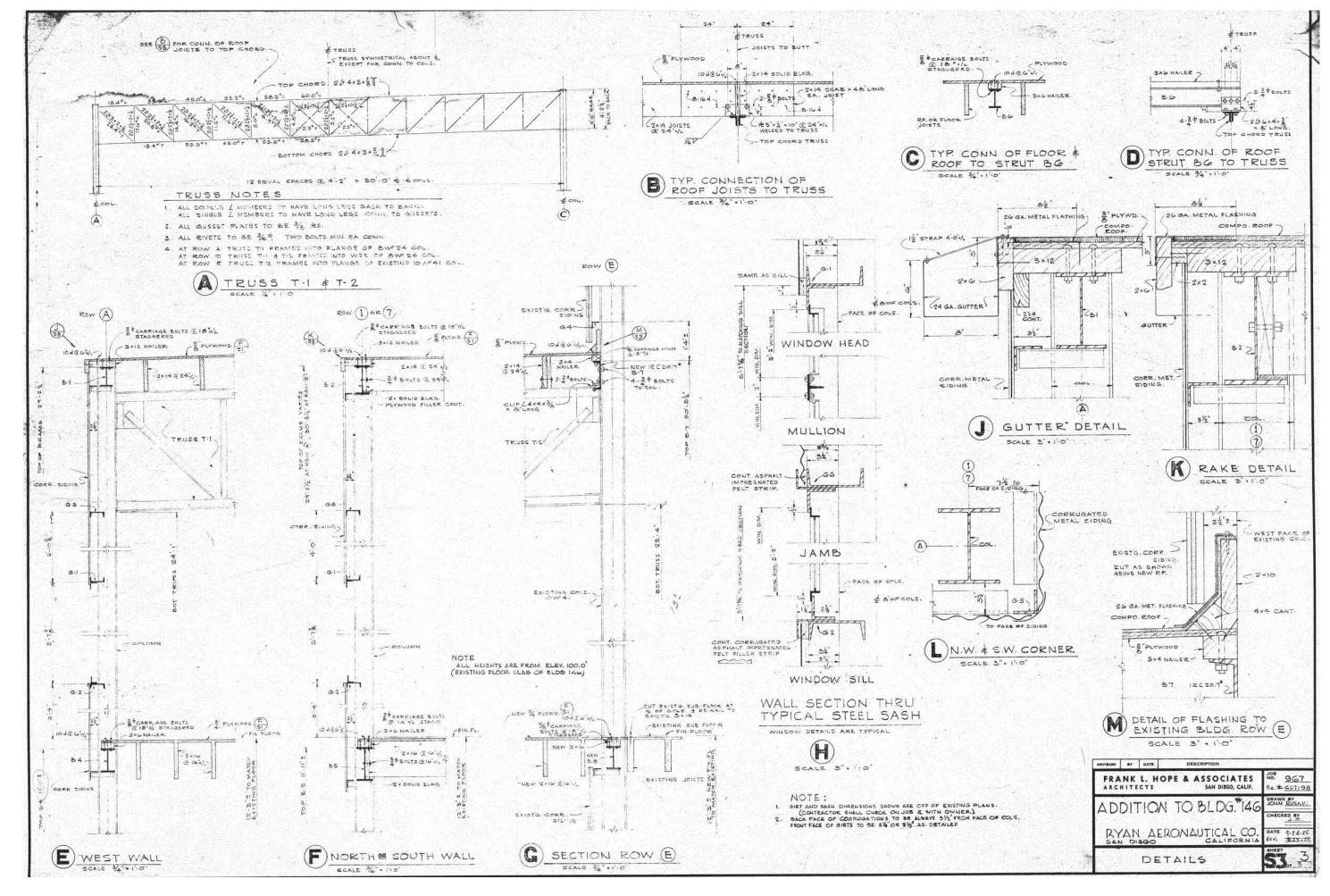


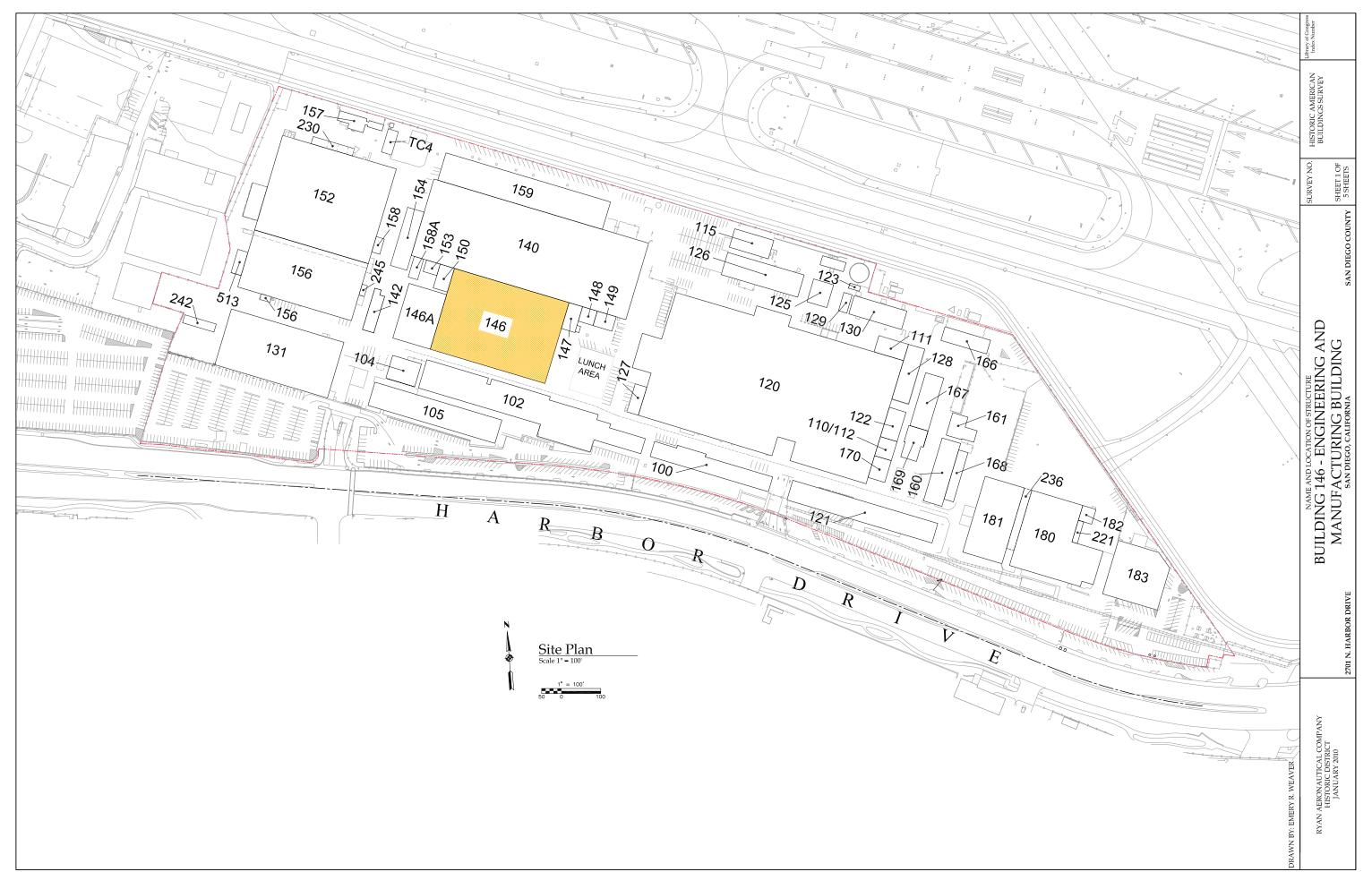


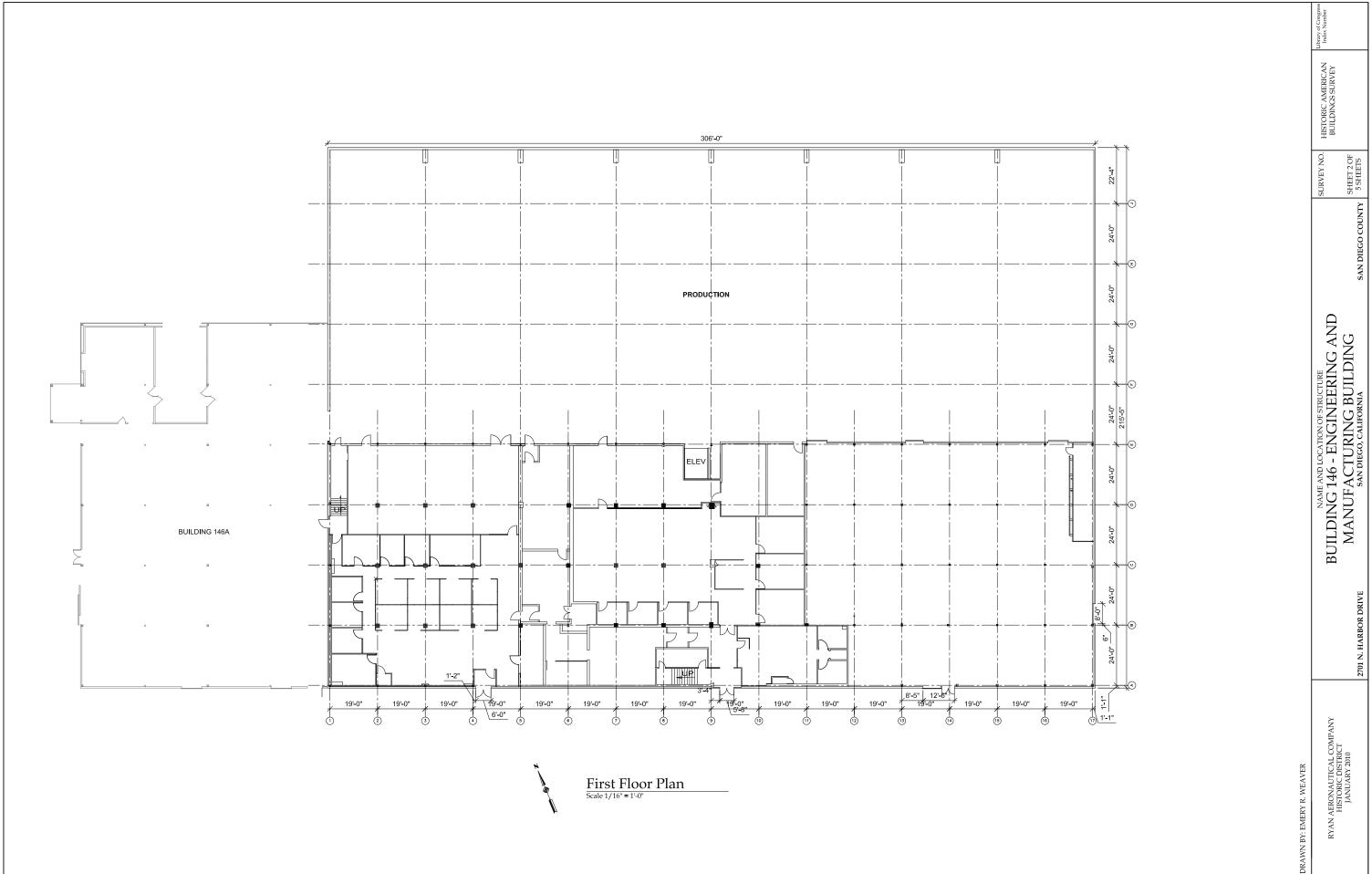


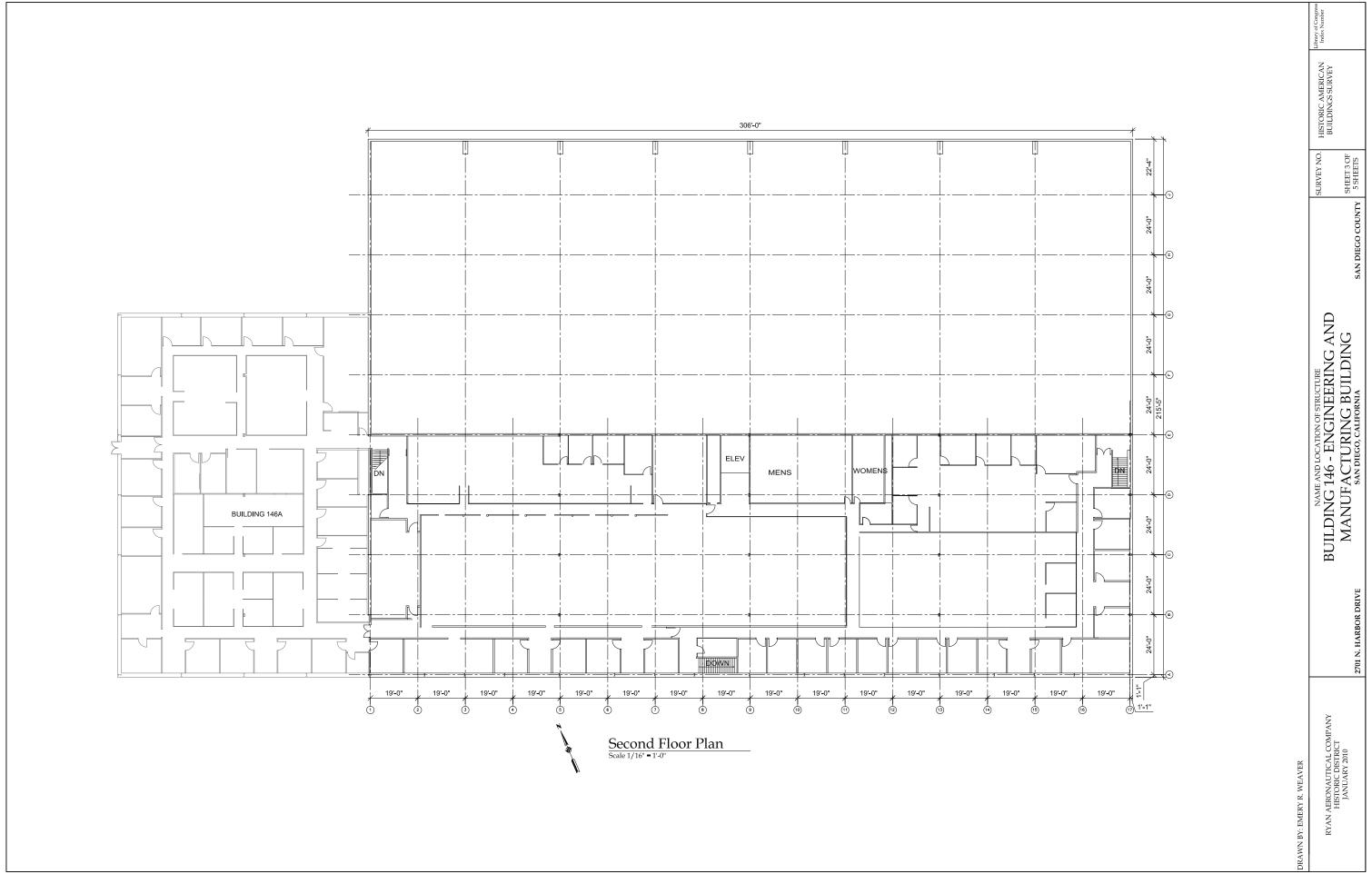


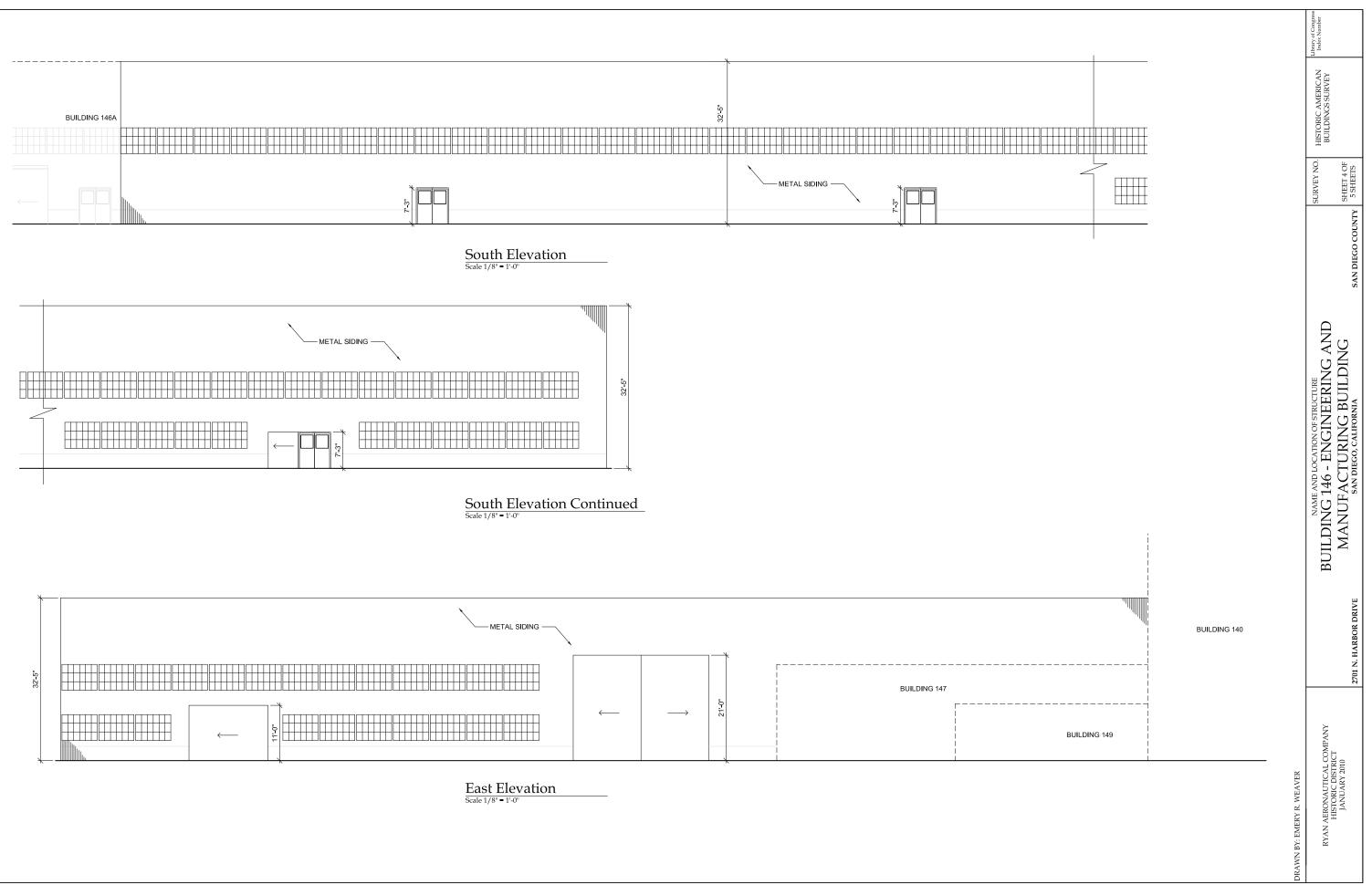




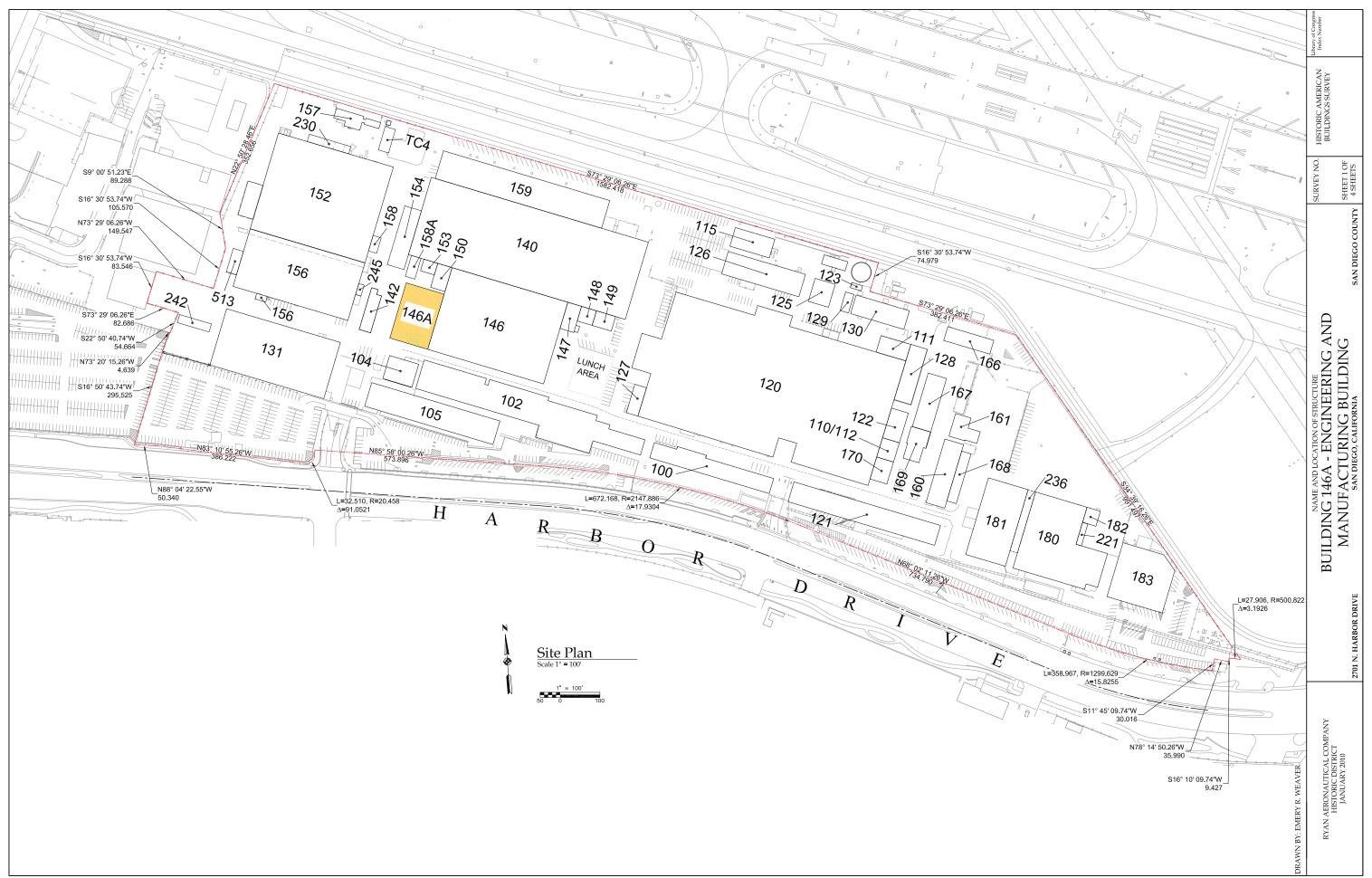


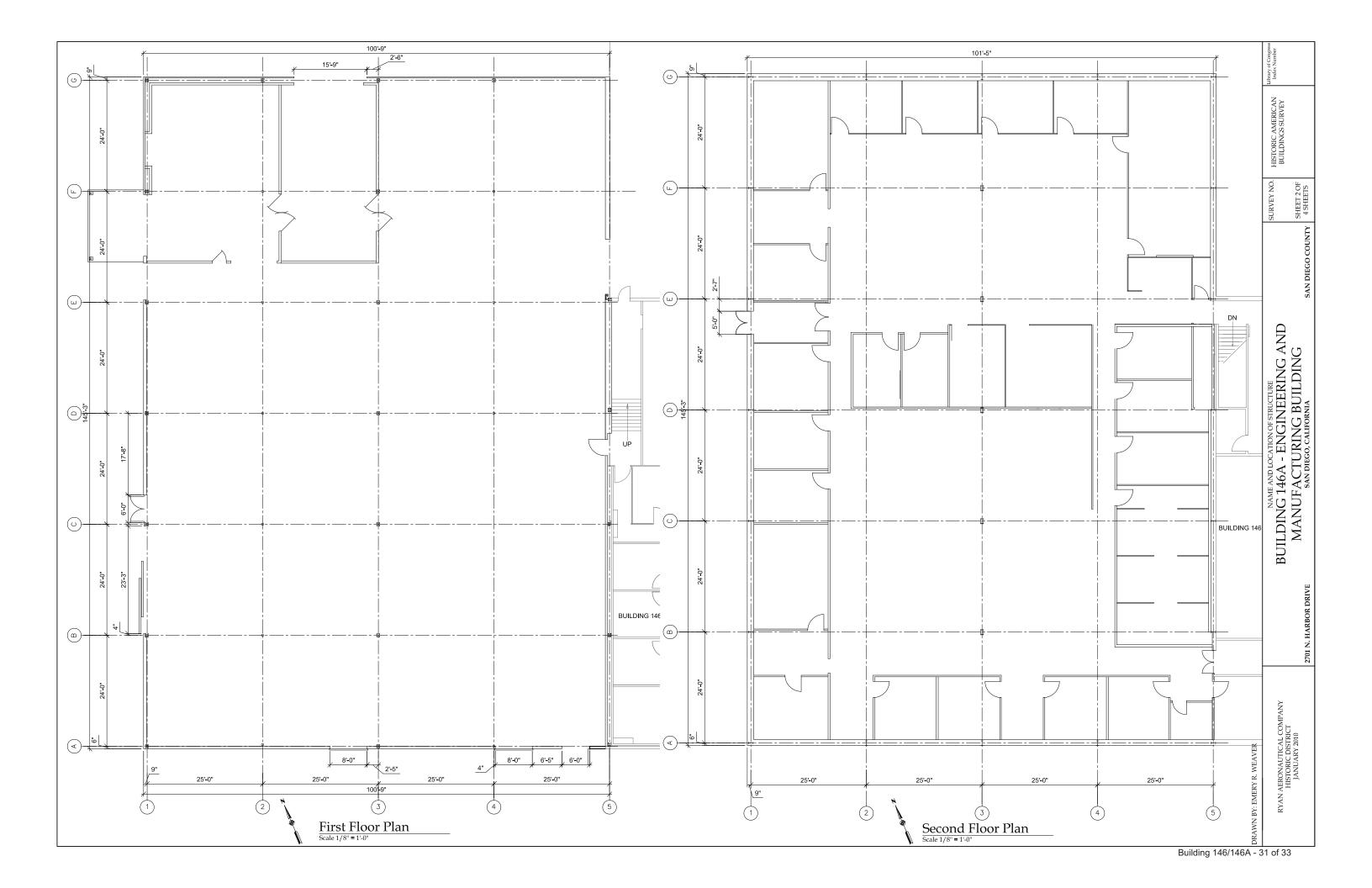


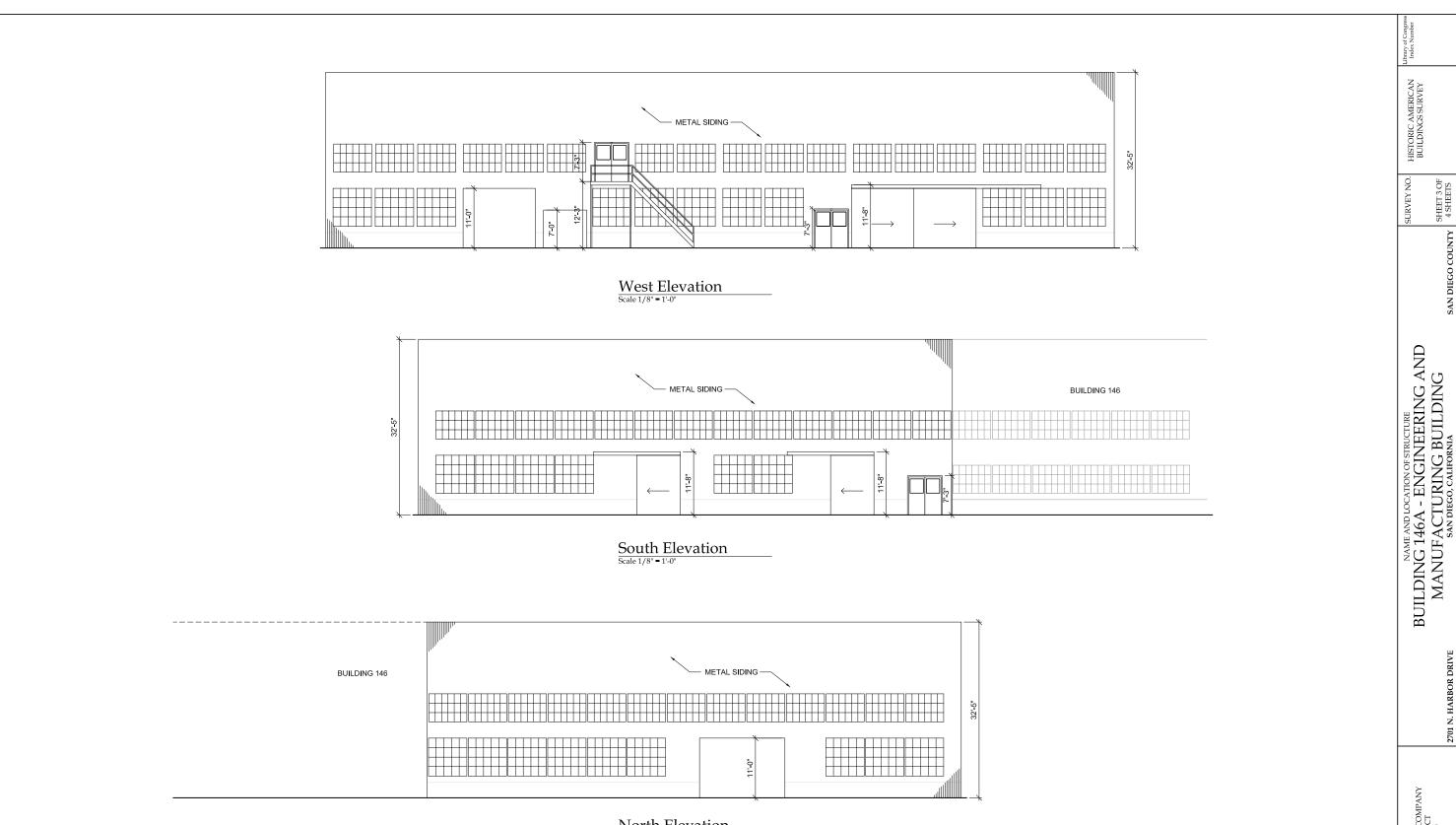




Section Scale 1/8" = 1'-0"	







North Elevation
Scale 1/8" - 1'-0"

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