

Tait & Associates Aims to Shape County's Future

SERVICES: Part of Newport Coast, Dana Point projects

■ By KATIE MURAR

Santa Ana-based **Tait & Associates** has an expansion strategy that will increase the civil engineering, environmental service, land planning and architectural firm's presence outside of California, but that doesn't mean the nearly 200-person company is pulling away from Orange County.

In fact, the firm has several notable master planning projects in the works across OC, including repurposing a landfill in Newport Beach and acting as master engineer for the **Dana Point Harbor** redevelopment project.

In Newport Beach, the company was recently granted approvals by the OC Board of Supervisors to develop the former **Coyote Canyon Landfill** into a mixed-use recreational hub.

The firm is still in the early entitlement process for the 375-acre Newport Coast property, a few miles inland from the ocean near **Sage Hill School** and the 73 toll road.

Various uses, including a golf course, have been considered for the site.

The company said it has been working with various agencies and is performing extensive engineering and environmental due diligence to determine what those uses will be.

"Though we aren't able to disclose more specifics at this point, the project has the opportunity to become a national model of how to sustainably repurpose landfill sites," said **Trevor Tait**, the company's managing director.

In Dana Point, Tait & Associates is the master engineer for all components of the city's mas-



Chairman Emeritus Kenneth Tait, center, with other Tait & Associates execs



sive harbor's overhaul, which will update and replace the existing facilities at the county-owned harbor over the next five years.

Burnham Ward Properties, R.D. Olson Development and Bellwether Financial Group, all based in Newport Beach, are heading the redevelopment that will include retail, hotel, office and marina components.

Tait & Associates has also been involved in the redevelopment occurring at **Tustin Legacy**, with the city still considering various long-term uses for the site, including the two historic, 17-story-high blimp hangars at the former marine helicopter base just off Tustin Ranch Road.

"We are fortunate to get to work on projects that are shaping the future of our county and

our country," Tait said.

The family-owned business, which has long counted significant ties to OC, was one of five honored at this year's **Family-Owned Business Awards**, held on Aug. 26 at the **Irvine Marriott**. Tait & Associates earned the nod for the Longevity Award at the event.

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Tait & Associates



- **FOUNDED:** 1964
- **HEADQUARTERS:** Santa Ana
- **FOUNDER:** Kenneth Tait
- **BUSINESS:** engineering, environmental, and land development company
- **EMPLOYEES:** 210
- **NOTABLE:** heading redevelopment of Coyote Canyon Landfill in Newport Coast

Tait

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Family Founders

More than five decades ago, after serving in the Korean War, **Kenneth Tait** established what was then a small civil engineering consulting firm in the region.

The firm evolved from a gas station developer into a diversified enterprise that provides engineering, environmental and land development services, among its offerings.

Kenneth is still involved in the company as chairman emeritus; the firm's leadership team also includes his two sons, President **Rich Tait**, and Chief Executive Officer **Tom Tait**, also the former mayor of Anaheim.

The company is now in its third generation and 57th year of business, with Tom Tait's son, Trevor, heading up operations as managing partner of the firm.

"My grandpa started the company with an entrepreneurial spirit," said Trevor Tait. "He is an incredibly kind and generous person, and that culture is ingrained in every aspect of the company."

Poised for Growth

Tait & Associates had a record year in 2020 despite the pandemic, largely due to a business diversification that's been occurring over the past six years.

This includes an expansion into public infrastructure work, as well as a greater emphasis on the industrial sector, which has seen historic gains in recent years, and housing, with Tait & Associates seeing opportunities stemming from the state's housing crisis.

The firm's core business—development services—includes engineering, architecture and land entitlements, and is also seeing gains, with a targeted expansion into new markets in the Western U.S., like Colorado, Idaho and Texas.

"I think we are poised for tremendous growth," Trevor Tait said.

The company attributes much of its success to its 200+ employees.

"If all of our ideas had to come from the Tait family, we would have been out of business a long time ago," he said. ■

Coyote Canyon: links-style golf course under consideration for large portion of the project

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