

**Appendix C:
Cultural Resources Supporting Information**

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Memorandum

Date: May 26, 2021

To: Cindy M. Yee, Senior Planner, City of San Ramon

From: Dr. Dana DePietro, Director of Cultural Resources, FirstCarbon Solutions

Subject: Peer Review Memorandum for Cultural Resources Analysis–City Village Project, City of San Ramon, California

FirstCarbon Solutions (FCS) has reviewed the applicant-provided archaeological resources study prepared in 2021 by ESA for the City Village Project (proposed project) located at 2400-2440 Camino Ramon in the City of San Ramon. The proposed project would include removal of the existing Bishop Ranch 6 office complex and development of 404 dwelling units on the project site.

Overall, FCS finds the letter report to be adequate, containing standard records search results from the Northwest Information Center (NWIC), National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), California State Historical Landmarks, California Points of Interest, and Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD), and Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File (NAHC-SLF). Additional research included a review of historic maps, aerial photographs, and geotechnical boring data obtained from an adjacent parcel. Pedestrian survey results were inconclusive due to the hardscaped nature of the project site; however, these were supplemented by a discussion of subsurface archaeological sensitivity, which took soil types, deposition, grade, and proximity to known natural resources and previously identified cultural resources into account.

The letter report would benefit from further discussion of any outreach attempts made to Native American tribal representatives identified by the NAHC, and the inclusion of the NWIC records search results in a confidential appendix. The photo exhibit is missing captions that make it difficult to orient the reader, and the letter report is missing important contextual information including a cultural background section that would be needed to support a full CEQA Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Overall, however, the report's conclusions are based on solid research, are well founded, and the present study is sufficient for the purposes of a CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND).

Sincerely,

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January 20, 2021

Justin Hu
SummerHill Apartment Communities
777 S. California Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Subject: Archaeological Resources Study for 2400-2440 Camino Ramon, San Ramon, Contra Costa County, California

Dear Mr. Hu:

The following letter report documents the results of an archaeological resources study conducted for 2400-2440 Camino Ramon, San Ramon, Contra Costa County, California. ESA understands that SummerHill proposes to develop 404 units on 31 acres at Bishop Ranch 6 (Project, Project Site). The Project is located within an unsectioned area of Township 2 South, Range 1 West on the Diablo, CA U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (**Figure 1**).

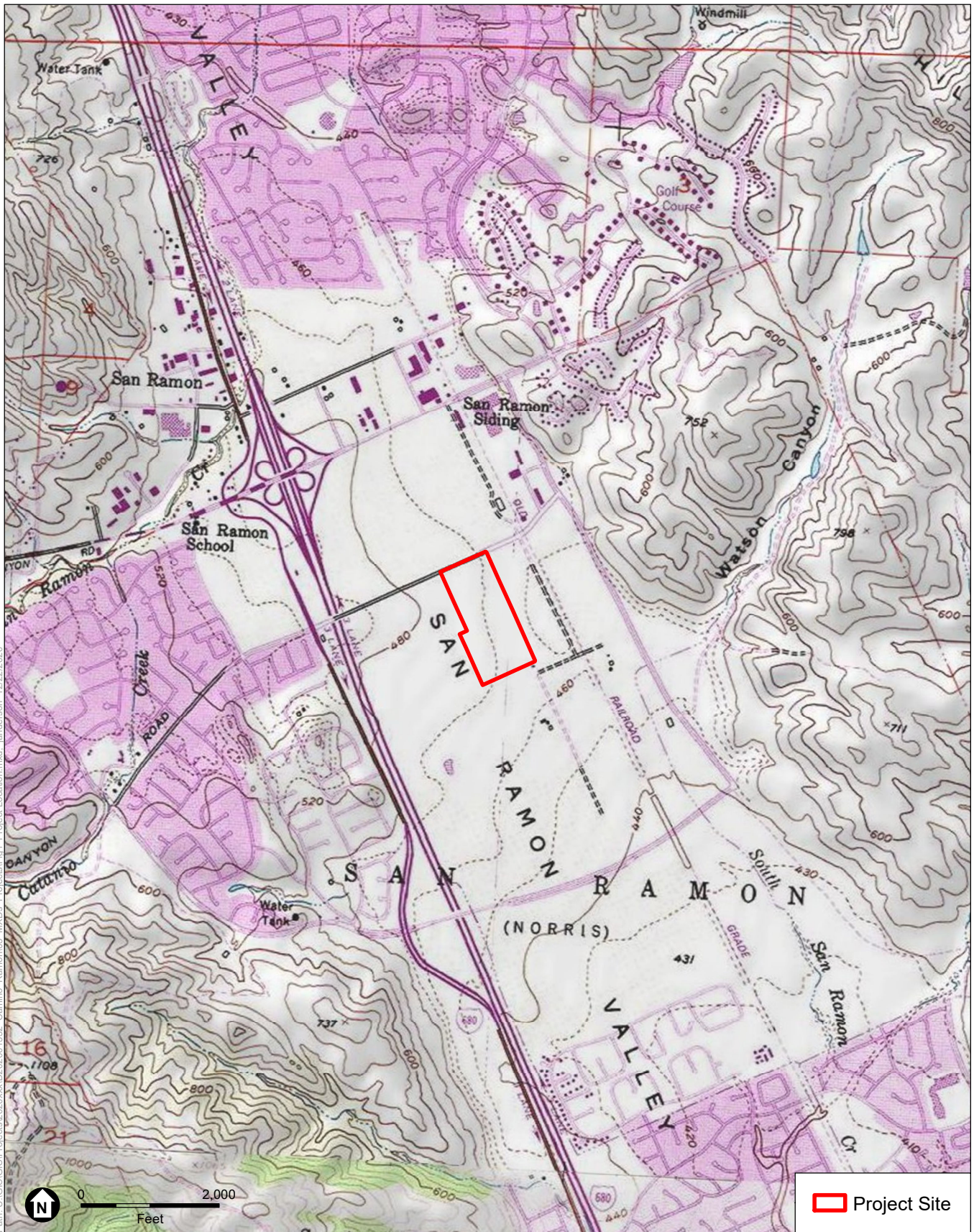
This study included a California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) - Northwest Information Center (NWIC) records search, a Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) search, a pedestrian field survey, and a subsurface sensitivity assessment. This letter report has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is intended to support an analysis of potential impacts to archaeological resources that may qualify as historical resources (as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)) or unique archaeological resources (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g)), and human remains.

CHRIS-NWIC Records Search

A search of the CHRIS-NWIC files housed at Sonoma State University was conducted on January 12, 2021 (File No. 20-1236). The records search included a review of previous cultural resources studies and recorded cultural resources within the Project Site and a 0.5-mile buffer (study area). The Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility were also reviewed.

The records search results indicate that a total of 27 cultural resources studies have been previously conducted within the study area. It appears that approximately 95 percent of the study area has been subject to some level of past cultural resources study; however, it does not appear that the majority of the study area has been systematically surveyed. It does not appear that the Project Site has been systematically surveyed for cultural resources.

No cultural resources have been recorded with the study area or Project Site. The nearest known resource is P-07-000718, a prehistoric habitation site, which is located outside of the 0.5-mile study area (precise location unknown).



Path: U:\GIS\GIS\Projects\2020\2020001332_Camino_Ramon\03_MXDs\Projects\Fig1_Project_Location.mxd_janderson_12/22/2020

SOURCE: USGD 7.5' Topoquad Diablo

2400-2440 Camino Ramon

Figure 1
Project Location





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Review of Online Databases

ESA reviewed the online listings of the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, California State Historical Landmarks, California Points of Interest, and Built Environment Resources Directory (or BERD) (California Office of Historic Preservation, 2021a, 2021b). No cultural resources were identified within the study area or Project Site.

Sacred Lands File Search

The NAHC maintains a confidential SLF which contains sites of traditional, cultural, or religious value to the Native American community. The NAHC was contacted on January 8, 2021 to request a search of the SLF. The NAHC responded to the request in a letter dated January 21, 2021 indicating that the results of the SLF were negative (**Attachment B**).

Additional Research

Additional research included a review of geologic and soil maps, geotechnical boring data, historic topographic maps, and aerial photographs. Preliminary geological mapping of the Diablo quadrangle by Dibblee (1980) indicates that the surface of the Project Site is mapped as Quaternary alluvium (Qa) (11,700 years ago to present, although deeper deposits may be older). Soils within the Project Site are mapped as Botella series clay loam (BaA, 0 to 2 percent slopes) (NRCS, 2021). Botella soils are found in small valley bottoms and on alluvial fans with slopes of 0 to 15 percent. Botella soils formed in alluvium derived from mixed rock sources on stream terraces and alluvial fans.

Geotechnical boring data of an adjacent parcel (2600 Camino Ramon) was reviewed to garner information on the subsurface conditions in the immediate Project vicinity. Three borings (B-1, B-2, and B-3) were drilled in a paved parking lot just north of Bishop Drive, approximately 1,800 feet south of the Project Site (**Table 1**). All three borings encountered 3 inches of asphalt underlain by 21 inches of aggregate base (total of 2 feet). In B-1, the clay encountered between 2-3.5 feet below ground surface was characterized as fill and in B-2 the clay encountered between 2-3 feet below ground surface was characterized as fill. No fill was observed in B-3 beneath the asphalt/aggregate base. The layers beneath the asphalt/aggregate base and fill were primarily clay, with some layers of silty sand, clayey sand, sand with silt, and clay with sand. Terminal depths of the bores was between 50 and 51.5 feet below ground surface. Groundwater was encountered between 16.5 and 29 feet below ground surface.



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TABLE 1
GEOTECHNICAL BORING DATA

Boring No.	Type	Diameter (inches)	Terminal Depth (feet)	Soil Observations
1	Hollow Stem	3	50	0-2 ft: Asphalt/Base (Fill) 2-3.5 ft: Clay (Fill) 3.5-9 ft: Clay 9-13 ft: Silty Sand 13-16 ft: Clay 16-19 ft: Clayey Sand 19-22 ft: Sand with Silt 22- 50 ft: Clay
2	Hollow Stem	3	51.5	0-2 ft: Fill 2-5.5 ft: Clay 5.5- 9.5 ft: Clayey Sand 9.5-13.5 ft: Silty Sand 13.5-19 ft: Clay 19-20 ft: Clayey Sand 20-23.5 ft: Clay 2.35-25 ft: Clayey Silty Sand 25-37.5 ft: Clay 37.5-40 ft: Silty Sand 40-49 ft: Clay 49-51 ft: Clayey Sand 51-51.5 ft: Clay
3	Hollow Stem	3	50.5	0-2 ft: Fill 2-8 ft: Clay with Sand 8-9 ft: Silty Sand 9-9.5 ft: Clay 9.5-12.5 ft: Silty Sand 12.5-22 ft: Clay 22-24 ft: Silty Sand 24-49 ft: Clay 49-50.5 ft: Clayey Sand

Source: Lagan Treadwell Rollo, 2014

Available historic topographic maps include the USGS 1896 Mt. Diablo, CA 15-minute quadrangle, 1943 Mt. Diablo, CA 15-minute quadrangle, and 1953 Diablo, CA 7.5-minute quadrangle (**Table 2**). Historic aerial photographs were reviewed for the years 1939, 1947, 1959, 1965, 1969, 1979, 1982, and 1993 (**Table 3**). The map and aerial review indicates that the Project Site was developed with orchards as early as 1939 and remained in agricultural uses until it was improved with the current onsite improvements sometime between 1982 and 1993.

TABLE 2
HISTORIC TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS

Year	Map Name	Scale	Observations
1896	Mt. Diablo	1:62500	Unimproved roads bisect the Project Site. San Ramon Creek is located about 0.75 mi to the NW. Perennial and intermittent streams are located about 800 ft to the E. The terminus of the Southern Pacific Railroad Sam Ramon Branch is located about 800 feet to the N.
1943	Mt. Diablo	1:62500	The Southern Pacific Railroad Sam Ramon Branch has been extended through the valley, and passes just to the east of the Project Site.
1953	Diablo	1:24000	Orchards cover the Project Site and have expanded across much of the valley.

Source: USGS TopoView, 2021

TABLE 3
HISTORIC AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Year	Flight ID No.	Frame No.	Scale	Observations
1939	C-5750	280-9	1:20000	Orchards
1947	GS-CP	2-46	1:23600	Orchards
1959	BUU-1958	9V-113	1:20000	Orchards
1965	CAS-65-130	9-59	1:12000	Orchards
1969	-	-	-	Agricultural fields
1979	-	-	-	Agricultural fields
1982	-	-	-	Agricultural fields
1993	-	-	-	Current office buildings, paved parking, and landscaping

Source: NETROnline, 2021; UCSB, 2021

Survey

A survey of the Project Site was conducted by ESA archaeologist Douglas Alexander on January 11, 2021. The Project Site is currently developed with five modern-era office buildings, surface parking, and landscaping. All areas with visible ground surface were surveyed in 15-meter transects. Ground visibility was less than 10 percent. No archaeological resources were observed. **Attachment A** provides photographs of the existing onsite conditions.

Subsurface Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment

This analysis of the potential to encounter buried prehistoric archaeological deposits at the Project Site is based on the following concepts: 1) age of the underlying soil contemporaneous with period of human occupation of the area; 2) proximity to permanent or semi-permanent water sources capable of supporting long-term or seasonal occupation of the area; and 3) flat or gently sloped topography conducive to human habitation. Previous research



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conducted elsewhere in California has indicated that the presence of buried archaeological sites is positively correlated with proximity to water, as well as flat to gently sloped landforms (Meyer et al., 2010).

Geologic mapping indicates that the Project Site is underlain by Quaternary alluvium deposits (Qa). These deposits date to the Holocene (11,700 years ago to present), and are contemporaneous with the period for which there is widely accepted evidence for human occupation of Southern California (Byrd and Raab, 2007). The Project Site is relatively flat (0 to 2 percent slope) and is in close proximity to historical water courses (San Ramon Creek, perennial and intermittent streams), which could have provided fresh water and food sources to indigenous inhabitants. Therefore, there appears to be a potential for prehistoric archaeological resources. However, in the 1980s, the Project Site was developed with the existing onsite improvements, which is likely to have disturbed at least the uppermost layers of soil. Intact prehistoric archaeological resources, should they exist, would be more likely to be located in deeper layers or in areas where there may have been less intensive ground disturbance, such as landscaped areas.

Historic map and aerial photographs indicate that the Project Site was in agricultural uses prior to the development of existing onsite improvements. It does not appear that there is a potential for subsurface historical archaeological resources, such as those related to past residential or industrial uses.

Summary and Recommendations

No archaeological resources or human remains were identified within the Project Site. The nearest known resource is more than 0.5 miles from the Project Site. The entirety of the Project Site has been subject to disturbances associated with the construction of current onsite improvements. However, there is a potential to encounter prehistoric archaeological resources given the Holocene-age of underlying soil, the close proximity to historical water sources, and flat topography. Since the Project would include ground disturbance, the potential to encounter archaeological materials or human remains cannot be ruled out. The following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce potential impacts to archaeological resources potentially qualifying as historical resources or unique archaeological resources and human remains to a level of less than significant under CEQA.

- **Mitigation Measure CUL-1:** Prior to start of ground-disturbing activities, a Qualified Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology shall conduct cultural resources sensitivity training for all construction personnel. Construction personnel shall be informed of the types of archaeological resources that may be encountered, and of the proper procedures to be enacted in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources or human remains.
- **Mitigation Measure CUL-2:** In the event of the unanticipated discovery of archaeological materials, all construction shall immediately cease within approximately 100 feet of the discovery until it can be evaluated by a Qualified Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for Archaeology. Construction shall not resume until the Qualified Archaeologist has assessed the significance of the find. If the discovered archaeological resource constitutes a historical resource or unique archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA, avoidance and preservation in place shall be the preferred manner of mitigation. Preservation in place maintains the important relationship between artifacts and their archaeological context and also serves to avoid conflict with traditional and religious values of groups who may ascribe meaning to the resource. Preservation in place may be accomplished by, but is not limited to, avoidance, incorporating the resource into open



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space, capping, or deeding the site into a permanent conservation easement. In the event that preservation in place is determined to be infeasible and data recovery through excavation is the only feasible mitigation available, an Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Treatment Plan shall be prepared and implemented by the Qualified Archaeologist that provides for the adequate recovery of the scientifically consequential information contained in the archaeological resource. The appropriate Native American tribal representatives shall be consulted in determining any treatment for prehistoric or Native American resources to ensure cultural values ascribed to the resources, beyond those that are scientifically important, are considered. The plan shall include provisions for the final disposition of the recovered resources, which may include onsite reburial, curation at a public, non-profit institution, or donation to a local Native American Tribe, school, or historical society.

- **Mitigation Measure CUL-3:** Human remains discoveries shall be treated in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If human remains are encountered, all construction shall immediately cease within approximately 100 feet of the discovery until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin of the remains. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC shall then identify the person(s) thought to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD may, with the permission of the landowner, inspect the site of the discovery and make recommendations for treating or disposing of the human remains and any associated grave goods. The MLD shall complete their inspection and make their recommendation within 48 hours of being granted access to the site by the landowner. Until the landowner has conferred with the MLD, they shall ensure that the immediate vicinity where the discovery occurred is not disturbed by further activity, the discovery is adequately protected according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices, and further activities take into account the possibility of multiple burials. If the NAHC is unable to identify an MLD, or the MLD identified fails to make a recommendation, or the landowner rejects the recommendation of the MLD and the mediation provided for in Subdivision (k) of Section 5097.94, if invoked, fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner, the landowner shall inter the human remains and associated items with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further and future subsurface disturbance.

Should you have any questions about the information contained in this letter report, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (831) 737-7438 or by email at cehringer@esassoc.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Candace Ehringer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Candace Ehringer, M.A., RPA
Cultural Resources Program Manager



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January 20, 2021
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References Cited

- Byrd, Brian F., and Mark L. Raab. 2007. Prehistory of the Southern Bight: Models for a New Millennium. In *California Prehistory: Colonization, Culture, and Complexity*, edited by Terry L. Jones and Kathryn A. Klar, pp 215-227.
- California Office of Historic Preservation. 2021a. Listed California Historical Resources, <https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/>, accessed January 20, 2021.
- California Office of Historic Preservation. 2021b. Built Environment Resources Directory (BERD), https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30338, accessed January 20, 2021.
- Dibblee, Thomas W. Jr. 1980. Preliminary Geologic Map of the Diablo Quadrangle Contra Costa and Alameda Counties, California (1:24,000), U.S. Geological Survey, Department of the Interior.
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- Meyer, Jack, D. Craig Young, and Jeffrey S. Rosenthal. 2010. *Volume I: A Geoarchaeological Overview and Assessment of Caltrans Districts 6 and 9. Cultural Resources Inventory of Caltrans District 6/9 Rural Conventional Highways*, EA 06-0A7408 TEA Grant, prepared by Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., Davis, California.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). 2021. Web Soil Survey, <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>, accessed January 20, 2021
- NETROnline. 2021. Historic Aerials, <https://www.historicaerials.com/viewer>, accessed January 20, 2021
- University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB). 2021. Aerial Photography, https://mil.library.ucsb.edu/ap_indexes/FrameFinder/, accessed January 20, 2021
- U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). 2021. TopoView, <https://ngmdb.usgs.gov/topoview/>, accessed January 20, 2021.

Attachment A: Photographs

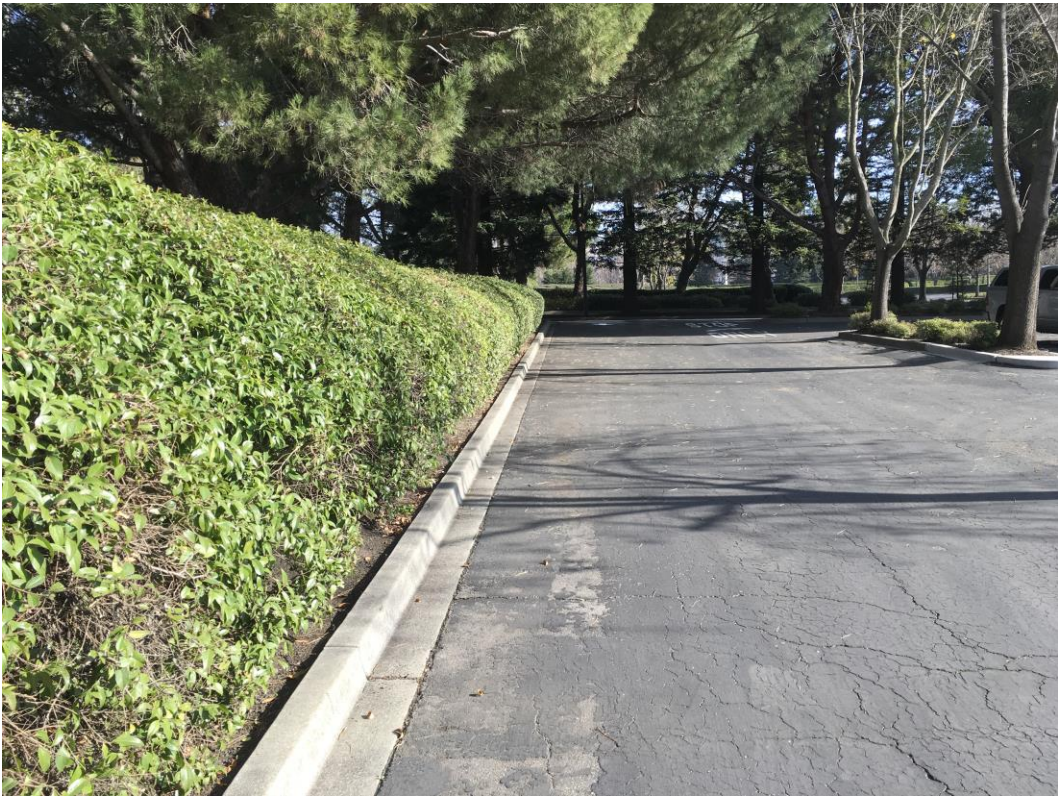














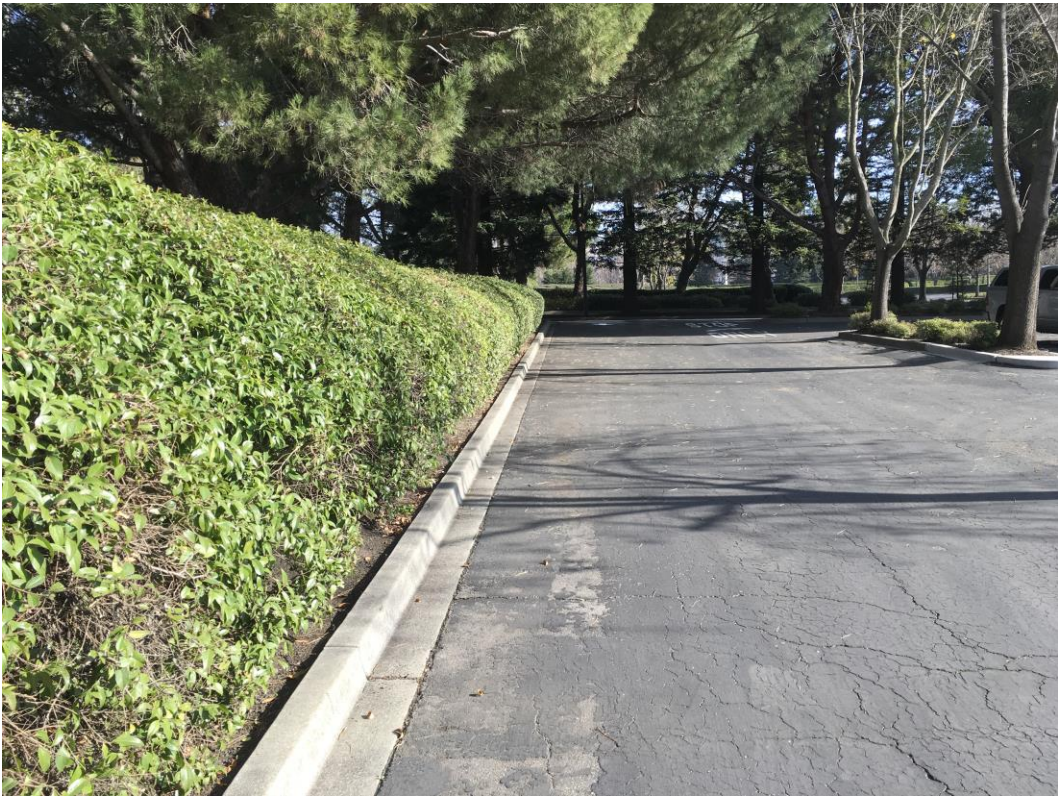














Attachment B: SLF Results

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

January 21, 2021

Fatima Clark, Senior Cultural Resources Specialist
ESA

Via Email to: fclark@esassoc.com

Re: 2400-2440 Camino Ramon Project, Contra Costa County

Dear Ms. Clark:

A record search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) was completed for the information you have submitted for the above referenced project. The results were negative. However, the absence of specific site information in the SLF does not indicate the absence of cultural resources in any project area. Other sources of cultural resources should also be contacted for information regarding known and recorded sites.

Attached is a list of Native American tribes who may also have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. This list should provide a starting place in locating areas of potential adverse impact within the proposed project area. I suggest you contact all of those indicated; if they cannot supply information, they might recommend others with specific knowledge. By contacting all those listed, your organization will be better able to respond to claims of failure to consult with the appropriate tribe. If a response has not been received within two weeks of notification, the Commission requests that you follow-up with a telephone call or email to ensure that the project information has been received.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify me. With your assistance, we can assure that our lists contain current information.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: Sarah.Fonseca@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Sarah Fonseca
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment



CHAIRPERSON
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SECRETARY
Merri Lopez-Keifer
Luiseño

PARLIAMENTARIAN
Russell Attebery
Karuk

COMMISSIONER
William Mungary
Paiute/White Mountain
Apache

COMMISSIONER
Julie Tumamait-Stenslie
Chumash

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**Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Contra Costa County
1/21/2021**

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The Ohlone Indian Tribe

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Bay Miwok
Ohlone
Patwin
Plains Miwok

Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan

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Miwok

Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan

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Miwok

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Miwok

North Valley Yokuts Tribe

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The Confederated Villages of Lisjan

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Ohlone
Delta Yokut

North Valley Yokuts Tribe

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Rumsen Am:a Tur:ataj Ohlone

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Costanoan

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed 2400-2440 Camino Ramon Project, Contra Costa County.

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