

APPENDIX 4b

**CRM TECH**

1016 E. Cooley Drive, Suite A/B
Colton, CA 92324

September 4, 2019

Kaitlyn Dodson
Tom Dodson & Associates
2150 N. Arrowhead Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92405

Re: Update to Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey
Hotel Murrieta Project (Formerly Proposed Site of Murrieta Education Center)
City of Murrieta, Riverside County, California
CRM TECH Contract 3518

Dear Ms. Dodson:

At your request, CRM TECH has completed a historical/archaeological resources records search, a historical background review, and a field inspection on the property referenced above. These research procedures serve as a part of the environmental review process for the proposed Hotel Murrieta Project, which entails the construction of a nine-story, approximately 250-room hotel and associated off-site infrastructure improvements. The City of Murrieta, as the lead agency for the project, required the study in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The area involved in the project consists of roughly 13 acres of vacant land in Assessor's Parcel Nos. 910-020-009 and -014 and 3,300 linear feet of infrastructure rights-of-way, including segments of Monroe Avenue, Guava Street, and Newton-Azrak Street (Figures 1, 2). It is located on the southwestern side of the Interstate 15-215 interchange and between Fig Street and Guava Street, in a portion of the Rancho Temecula land grant lying within T7S R3W, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian.

Background

As you know, the project area was previously the subject of standard Phase I historical/archaeological resource surveys that CRM TECH completed for the Murrieta Education Center Project in 2008 and 2014 under the provisions of both CEQA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Bodmer et al. 2008; Tang et al. 2014). The scope of those studies included records searches, historical background research, intensive-level archaeological field surveys, and Native American consultations.

Throughout the courses of the 2008 and 2014 studies, no "historic properties" or "historical resources," as defined by Section 106 and CEQA, were identified within or adjacent to the project area. Therefore, CRM TECH concluded that the Murrieta Education Center Project would have *No Effect/Impact* on any "historic properties" or "historical resources" (Bodmer et al. 2008:12-13; Tang et al. 2014:15-16). Since the 2008 and 2014 studies are now 11 and 5 years old, respectively, the present study was implemented as an update to the research results.

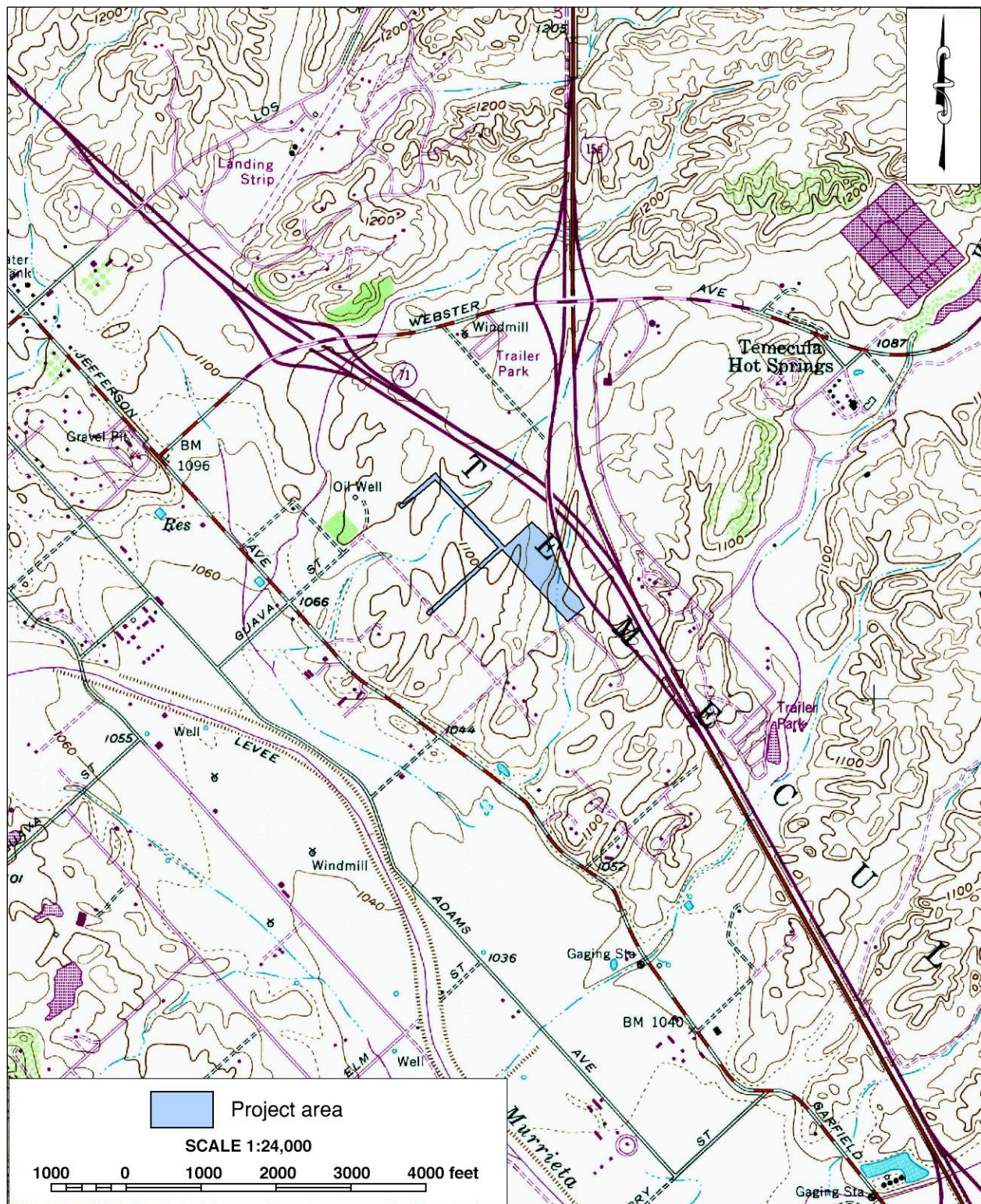


Figure 1. Location and configuration of the project area. (Based on USGS Murrieta, Calif., 7.5' quadrangle, 1979 edition)

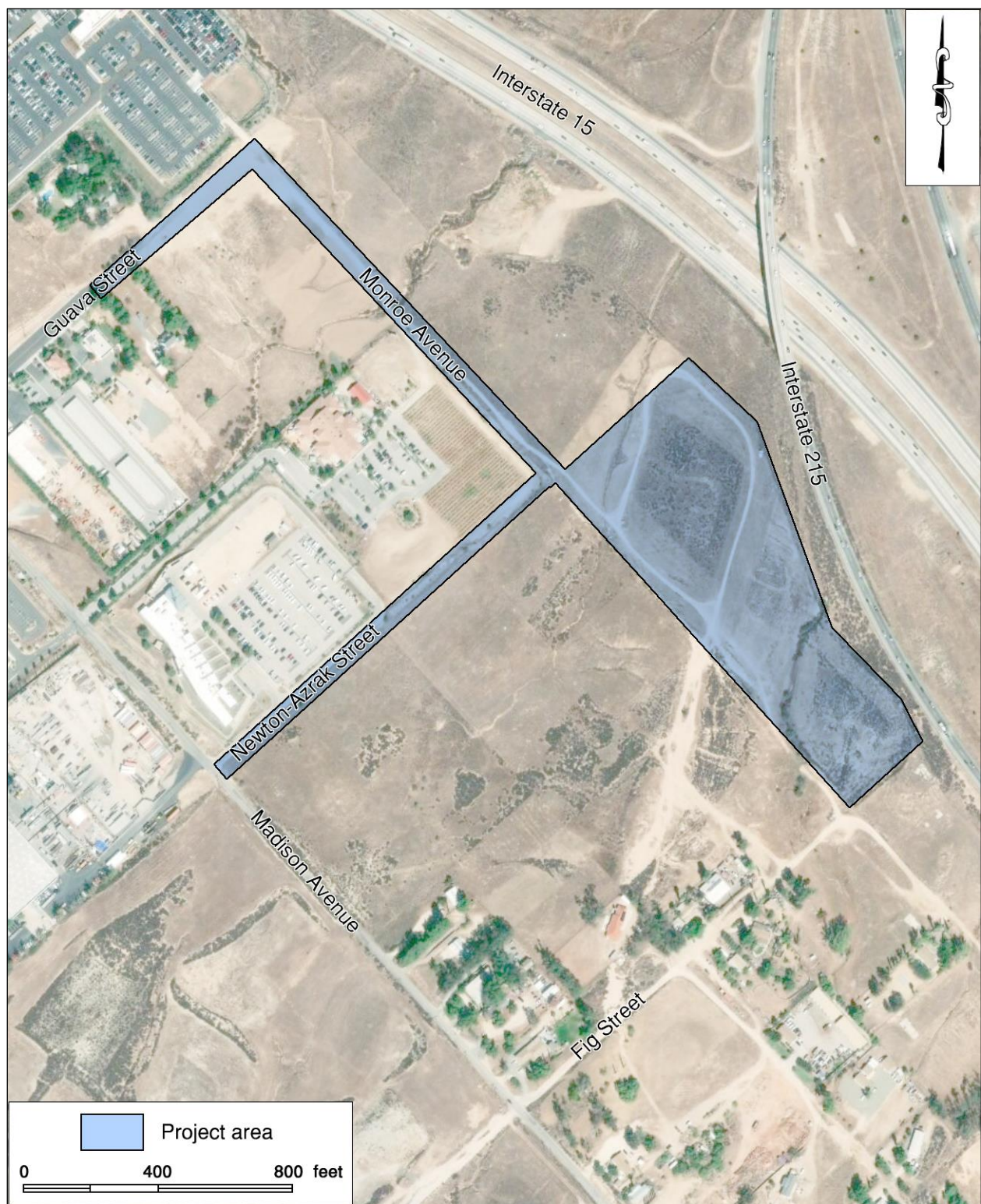


Figure 2: Aerial image of the project area.

Records Search

On July 25, 2019, CRM TECH archaeologist Nina Gallardo, B.A., updated the 2008-2014 records search results at the Eastern Information Center (EIC), University of California, Riverside. The latest records search indicates that since 2014 one additional cultural resources study, completed in 2018 for a street improvement project along Madison Avenue, has covered a small portion of the project area, but that no cultural resources have been identified within or adjacent to the current project boundaries.

Within a one-mile radius of the project location, EIC records show some 120 previous studies on various tracts of land and linear features, compared to the roughly 75 studies identified in 2014 (Tang et al. 2014:10-11). As a result of these past studies, 28 historical/archaeological sites and five isolates—i.e., localities with fewer than three artifacts—have been recorded within the scope of the records search, compared to the 23 sites and three isolates reported in 2014 (*ibid.*:10-12).

Among these known cultural resources, eight of the 28 sites and all five the isolates were of prehistoric—i.e., Native American—origin, consisted mainly of bedrock milling features, habitation debris, and scattered lithic artifacts. The nearest among them, Isolate 33-024903 and Site 33-001003, were recorded as a basalt biface scraper and a possible campsite with flaked-stone and groundstone artifacts, located a few hundred feet to the northwest and the southwest of the project location, respectively.

The other 20 sites dated to the historic period and included buildings, roads, fence lines, water conveyance features, and a refuse scatter. The nearest among these were Site 33-005786, a fence line, and 33-016009, a circa 1930 residence at 41223 Madison Avenue, also located a few hundred feet from the project area. Since none of these previously recorded sites or isolates was found within or immediately adjacent to the project area, none of them requires further consideration in conjunction with the Hotel Murrieta Project.

Historic Background Review

The historical background review for this study was conducted by CRM TECH principal investigator/historian Bai “Tom” Tang, M.A. To supplement the information from sources consulted during the 2008 and 2014 studies (Bodmer et al. 2008:7; Tang et al. 2014:9), aerial photographs of the Murrieta area that have become available since then were also examined during this study. Taken between 1938 and 2018, the aerial photographs are available at the Nationwide Environmental Title Research (NETR) Online website and through the Google Earth software.

The aerial photographs confirm the observations made in the 2008 and 2014 studies (Bodmer et al. 2008:8; Tang et al. 2014:10-12) that no notable man-made features were present in the project area throughout the historic-period, although some of the adjacent properties were known to be used for agricultural purposes at least by the late 1930s (NETR Online 1938-1967). The earliest man-made features within the project boundaries, the unpaved Monroe Avenue and Guava Street, did not come into being until the 1970s-1990s, and the main project site in Assessor’s Parcel Nos. 910-020-009 and -014 has remained vacant and undeveloped to the present time (NETR Online 1967-2016; Google Earth 1996-2018).

Field Survey

On July 31, 2019, CRM TECH field director Daniel Ballester, M.S., and Nina Gallardo carried out a reconnaissance-level field survey of the project area with the assistance of Native American monitor Chris Yearyean from the nearby Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians. The survey was conducted on foot by walking across the open field in Assessor's Parcel Nos. 910-020-009 and -014 and along both sides of the linear components while visually inspecting the ground surface for any evidence of human activities dating to the prehistoric or historic period (i.e., 50 years ago or older).

Other than the occasional presence of pavement in the linear portions of the project area, visibility of the native ground surface ranged from poor (30-40%) to good (80-90%) depending on the density of vegetation growth (Figure 3). As in 2008 and 2014 (Bodmer et al. 2008:11-12; Tang et al. 2014:14-15), the field survey produced completely negative results for potential cultural resources, and no buildings, structures, objects, sites, features, or artifacts more than 50 years of age were encountered.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to update the findings of the 2008 and 2014 surveys and to identify any “historical resources” that may be impacted by the proposed Hotel Murrieta Project, as required by CEQA. In summary of the research results outlined above, no potential “historical resources” were identified within or adjacent to the project area throughout the course of this study. Therefore, CRM TECH concludes that the finding of the previous studies—that no known “historical resources” will be affected by the proposed development and offsite infrastructure improvements—remains valid and appropriate.

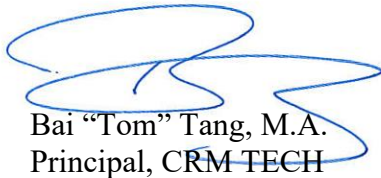


Figure 3. Current condition of the project area. (Photograph taken on July 31, 2019; view to the northwest)

As recommended at the completion of the 2008 and 2014 studies, no further cultural resource investigations will be necessary for the Hotel Murrieta Project unless development plans undergo such changes as to include areas beyond the boundaries of this survey. However, if buried cultural materials are encountered during any earth-moving operations associated with the project, all work in that area should be halted or diverted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the finds.

Thank you for this opportunity to be of service. If you have any questions regarding this study or need any further information, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,



Bai "Tom" Tang, M.A.
Principal, CRM TECH

References Cited

Bodmer, Clarence, Daniel Ballester, and John J. Eddy

2008 Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report: The Murrieta Education Center Project, City of Murrieta, Riverside County, California. On file, Eastern Information Center, University of California, Riverside.

Google Earth

1996-2018 Aerial photographs of the project vicinity; taken in 1996, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2009, 2011-2014, and 2016-2018. Available through the Google Earth software.

NETR Online

1938-2016 Aerial photographs of the project vicinity; taken in 1938, 1967, 1978, 1996, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016. <http://www.historicaerials.com>.

Tang, Bai "Tom," Mariam Dahdul, Daniel Ballester, and Nina Gallardo

2014 Identification and Evaluation of Historic Properties: Murrieta Education Center Project, City of Murrieta, Riverside County, California. On file, Eastern Information Center, University of California, Riverside.