

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT OF APPROXIMATELY 36 ACRES AT  
4701 N. 1ST STREET IN THE ALVISO AREA  
OF SAN JOSÉ IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**



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*Cover photo:* Overview of eastern tract with current golfing facility, looking north.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The approximately 36-acre Project Area is located at 4701 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street in the Alviso area of San José in Santa Clara County. This report documents archival literature review and an archaeological survey. This report will assist the developers with the City of San José planning process.

A records search and literature review identified no previously recorded archaeological sites within the project footprint. Previous archaeological studies included portions of the Project Area and identified the potential for buried archaeological resources within its boundaries.

Native American consultation began by contacting the Native American Heritage Commission. A second letter was sent when no response was received after six weeks. Their response did not identify any concerns, but included a list of 11 individuals/groups who were also contacted. Of the three who have responded to date, none have expressed any concerns. At no time during the consultation process was any specific Native American resource identified within or adjacent to the Project Area.

On 8 October 2015, Holman & Associates conducted an intensive survey of the Project Area. No prehistoric or historic-era cultural materials were noted, Holman & Associates recommends a qualified archaeologist trained in both California prehistoric and historic current methods complete a presence/absence exploration with a backhoe once specific plans are designed and prior to any earth moving activities.

In the unlikely event cultural resources are discovered during the proposed construction work, the following information should be considered to address the situation. If undetected, buried, or previously unrecognized archaeological deposits or materials of any kind are inadvertently exposed during any construction activity, work within 100 ft. of the find shall cease until a qualified archaeologist can assess the find and provide recommendations for further treatment, if warranted. Construction and potential impacts to the area(s) within a radius determined by the archaeologist shall not recommence until the assessment is complete.

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## INTRODUCTION

The approximately 36-acre TopGolf Project Area is located at 4701 North 1<sup>st</sup> Street in the Alviso area of San José in Santa Clara County (Maps 1 and 2). Currently 26 acres are developed with the Pin High Golf Center, which consists of a ground-level driving range, three golf holes, and additional golf instructional areas, along with associated infrastructure such as parking, lights, and netting. The adjacent 10 acres to the west is partially undeveloped, and an area closest to Pin High Golf Course is used for recreational vehicle storage. Plans for this western area consist of constructing a hotel to provide as many as 225 hotel rooms and 100,000 square feet (sf) of commercial uses. This report documents an archival literature search, and archaeological survey conducted by Holman & Associates on 8 October 2015. The investigation and will assist the developers with the City of San José planning process.

This report was prepared by Sunshine Psota, M.A. (Cultural Resources Management [CRM]), Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA). The author has more than 35 years of experience in California archaeology, much of it in the San Francisco Bay Area. She meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for professionals in prehistoric and historical archaeology. The survey was conducted by Kevin Dobinson (B.A.), who has more than 15 years of experience in California archaeology.

## SOURCES CONSULTED

### RECORDS SEARCH METHODS AND RESULTS

On 1 October 2015, the author performed a records search at the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), Sonoma State University (File Number 14-516). The review included all cultural resources mapped on the CHRIS base maps within a quarter mile of the Project Area, and within an eighth of a mile for studies. Also reviewed were historic-era maps and literature on file including state and federal inventories. Reports and maps from Holman & Associates' library were also used and limited archival research was conducted.

The CHRIS has plotted no cultural resources within the Project Area. Three cultural resources detailing the built environment are recorded within a quarter mile:

- P-43-346, also designated CA-SCL-339H, documents the standing concrete wall and foundation of the former Bayside Cannery Warehouse (Dexter and Rivera 2011);
- P-43-1110, also designated CA-SCL-810H, describes an historic ship building facility at the Port of Alviso which operated during World War II (Dexter and Hatoff 1998); and
- P-43-1468, consists of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Port of Alviso District including residences, public buildings, warehouses, and docks, and is listed on the National and California registers (Kerr 1978).

Four previous investigations have included portions of the TopGolf Project Area though none identified any cultural resources within or adjacent to the Project Area. Holman (2000) conducted an archival and field study of most if not all of the current Project Area. He described his study area as undeveloped in the north, a golf course in the center, a remnant slough of Guadalupe River in the east, and trailer and equipment storage in the Moffat, Liberty, North 1<sup>st</sup> streets western area. He noted Cartier's recent investigations of a survey and trenching of a nearby property to the east. Cartier had identified a well-shaped bowl mortar and some fragments of potentially heat-affected rock in the spoils of an

excavated drainage ditch. Cartier recorded the resource as CA-SCL-485 (over a quarter of a mile east of the TopGolf Project Area) and then conducted subsurface trenching along the northern side of North 1<sup>st</sup> Street without identifying buried cultural materials or deposits. Holman's survey of the property documented extremely limited soil visibility, recent fill, and the high potential for nearby buried archaeological sites. He recommended additional research be conducted because so much of his study area was unavailable for mechanical subsurface exploration, specifically the golf course area.

In 1980, Detlefs et al. conducted research and a field survey for the Guadalupe River Flood Control Project. That study included the southern edge of the current Project Area along the banks of the current channel of the Guadalupe River. Their research identified a historically sensitive area within the southeast portion of the TopGolf Project Area that was associated with the Charles W. Young/Peter Burnett house from the mid to late 1800s.

Basin Research Associates (1995) completed a Master Plan for Alviso that included the entire Project Area. Their study included both archival research of previously identified cultural resources and a windshield survey of potential additional buildings constructed in the 1800s. No archaeological survey work was completed for any of their study area.

In 2010, Busby completed a Historic Property Survey Report for the San José Bay Trail Master Plan Project. That project consisted of 13.3 miles of trails in the Alviso area including the south central portion of the current Project Area by the Guadalupe River.

Four other investigations have been conducted within an eighth of a mile to the Project Area (Busby 1997; Garaventa and Harmon 1982; Holman 1989, 1992). Garaventa and Harmon's project area abutted the northeastern end of the current Project Area by North 1<sup>st</sup> Street. These researchers recommended archaeological monitoring of ground disturbing activities (Garaventa and Harmon 1982:12). Holman's 1992 study area was just north of the current Project Area, north of 1<sup>st</sup> Street between Grand Ave. in the west and Mayne School in the east, and it was covered with fill. Busby's 1997 study area was a smaller footprint but in the same location as Holman's 1989 study. Busby (1997:6) recommended archaeological monitoring of earth disturbing activities.

In this general area, Native American sites tend to be situated adjacent to the edge of the historic margins of San Francisco Bay, and adjacent to creeks and rivers. Given changes to riparian systems and bay margins over several millennia, and a nearby former wetland environment or pond to the northeast, the likelihood of subsurface Native American deposits within the Project Area is moderate to high.

A review of the *California Inventory of Historic Resources* (CA-DPR 1976) and the most recent California's Office of Historic Preservation's *Historic Property Data File* (2012) did not identify any cultural resources within the Project Area. Nor do the City of San José's Heritage Resources Inventory (2014a) City Districts (2015), and Designated City Landmarks (2014b) list any resources within or adjacent to the Project Area.

## **AGENCY AND PUBLIC CONSULTED**

Holman & Associates contacted the Native American Heritage Commission on 24 September 2015 to request a review of the Sacred Land Files for any evidence of cultural resources or traditional properties of potential concern to Native Americans within or adjacent to the Project Area (see Appendix for correspondence). When the Commission did not respond by 2 November, the author contacted the Commission later that day, and also the following day. Another inquiry letter with map was emailed on 3

November 2015. The Commission responded on 10 November with a list of eleven Native American contacts who may be able to provide information on possible areas of cultural sensitivity. That day, the author contacted each of these by email or one by regular mail requesting any information about cultural resources in the vicinity or any concerns they would like to express about this particular project.

That day Ed Ketchum, Historian for the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band responded that the project is near the area associated with *Ulistac* on lands controlled by the Tamien speakers. He believes these lands are best represented by the Muwekma Tribal Band (who were also contacted). The next day, Valentin Lopez, Chairman of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, replied that the project is outside the traditional territory of the Amah Mutsun, and the tribe had no comment. Andrew Galvan responded that he had no comments based on the recommendations provided at the end of this report. No other comments were received. At no time during the consultation process was any specific Native American resource identified within or adjacent to the study area.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL**

The project footprint is situated east of where the Guadalupe River empties into the southernmost portion of San Francisco Bay. The Project Area lies within the Alviso area of northern San José. The land slopes from 5 to 16 ft. above mean sea level with the lowest elevation in the southeast. The project footprint is situated on part of a large alluvial valley floor just east of the southern portion of San Francisco Bay.

Soils are mapped as Urbanland Xerothents (123), an anthropogenic fill, in the westernmost portion of the Project Area (USGS 2015). The paved storage area and the parking facility for golfing are noted as Urban – Clear Lake Complex (150). The golfing center is mapped as Clear Lake Silty Clay (161), an alluvium basin soil typically consisting of 0-66 inches of silty clay. The southeastern-most area consists of Campbell silty loam (166) formed on alluvial fans, frequently comprised of 0-24 inches of silty loam underlain by 25-51 inches of silty clay loam with 51-79 inches of silty clay below.

Geological deposits are recorded along the western edge and closest to the current channel of the Guadalupe River as Alluvial fan – estuarine complex deposits (Qhfe; Witter et al. 2006). Alluvial fan deposits, fine facies (Qhff), are mapped for the remaining portions of the golf course area. According to an 1857 mapping of the wetlands of San Francisco Bay, the entire Project Area was part of the flat lands adjacent to historic bay margins. This environment could have served as a prime resource area for native people with small special task sites geared towards subsistence activities

### **ETHNOGRAPHY**

The project area lies within the territory controlled ethnographically by Costanoan or Ohlone-speakers (Levy 1978). A member of the Utian language family, the Ohlone language was spoken throughout the San Francisco Peninsula, the East Bay, and the Monterey Bay area. Some Native American descendants of these people still prefer the term “Costanoan,” while others prefer Ohlone, whereas still others more readily identify with specific tribelet names.

The project area is situated within the Alviso SF Solano tribelet (Milliken 2006:Figure 5, 46). The Alviso SR Solano were centered around the historic-era community of Alviso and they also controlled

other parts of the estuary that frames South San Francisco Bay in Santa Clara and Alameda counties (Milliken 1995:252, 256). Their western boundary likely extended to the Guadalupe River. No ethnographic villages have been identified within or adjacent to the Project Area (Kroeber 1925:465; Levy 1978:485; Milliken 1995).

## HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Initial Spanish contact with the local Native Americans probably began prior to the establishment of the Mission Santa Clara in 1777 (Hoover et al. 1990). The missions' goals of colonizing the local Native American community were accomplished by using them to provide the labor for building, construction and daily operations of the missions. After secularization of the missions, large areas of land were opened for landgrants with the Project Area part of *Rincon de Los Esteros* landgrant. The associated Alviso (Valencia) adobe was constructed around 1830 and it was situated on a large bend of the Guadalupe River a half mile east of Liberty Street and north of the Alviso – Milpitas Road (now State Route 237; Detlefs et al. 1980:9; Hendry and Bowman 1940:865) beyond the southeastern end of the Project Area. During the Hispanic Period, the project footprint was likely part of a large grazing area.

The Project Area is situated between the Hispanic waterfront of the *Embarcadero de Santa Clara* on the south side of the Guadalupe River about a half mile upstream from present day Alviso and the historical downtown portion of Alviso that took its place as a port (Busby 1997:3-4). The town was surveyed in 1849 and was incorporated three years later. The major thoroughfare was the San José – Alviso Road, now North 1<sup>st</sup> Street. At its peak, Alviso was one of the major commercial shipping ports in northern California. But when the San Francisco to San José railroad was constructed in the 1870s, it was not near Alviso and the town declined from economic neglect despite several enterprising efforts to revitalize the area including a cannery. The town was incorporated into the City of San José in the 1960s.

A review of historic-era maps was conducted to expand on the changing historical land use patterns of the preceding approximately 160 years. Before the community of Alviso was established, the bay marsh was situated close to the northwest corner of the Project Area at North 1<sup>st</sup> and Liberty streets (Nichols & Wright 1971 projecting USCGS 1857). By 1876, the northern and western portions of the Project Area were owned by C.W. Young with a house situated between North 1<sup>st</sup> Street and a gooseneck of the Guadalupe River (Thompson & West 1876). O. Whitbaugh owned 19 acres to the east including most of the Eastern Tract.

By 1899, the port of Alviso (see SCL-335) was developed between Alviso and Guadalupe sloughs (USCGS 1899). One building was situated near the northwest corner and five buildings were extant in the southern central portion of the Project Area. North 1<sup>st</sup> was the main road from the port south to San José, laid out east of the Guadalupe River. West of the Guadalupe River, the Southern Pacific's Santa Cruz Division railroad tracks carried goods between Alviso and Santa Clara where that spur linked up with the Monterey Division. The Guadalupe River once meandered more with goosenecks before flood control project straightened its channel; prior to recent channelization more land was present between North 1<sup>st</sup> and the river than the current Project Area entails.

Sanborn Insurance Maps offer few details because the town ended at Liberty Street, however, a one-room building was depicted facing that road in 1908 with a similarly shaped outbuilding to the rear (Sanborn Insurance Company 1908). This location is now part of the southwestern portion of the Project Area. By 1930, a one-story two-room Japanese School with two outbuildings was situated back from

Liberty Street midway between that street and the current Project Area (Sanborn Insurance Company 1930).

By 1942, the Project Area contained eight buildings, none fronting North 1<sup>st</sup> Street. All were situated along a dirt road approximately equidistant between North 1<sup>st</sup> and the then unchannelized course of the river (US Army 1942, 1947). The southeastern portion of the Project Area was situated adjacent to a marsh that had once been part of the river. Gold Street was constructed just east of the railroad tracks. Salt ponds were constructed west of Alviso within wetlands. Between 1951 and 1953, the dirt road (now Moffat Street) had been improved in the western quadrant of the Project Area (USGS 1951, 1953). Four buildings were situated within the Project Area: a new one in the northwest, a new one in the southwest and two previously depicted buildings remaining in the south central portion. To the east and south, lands were planted in orchards, and to the north and west more lands were converted to salt ponds. By 1961, three buildings faced Liberty Street and no other buildings were extant within the Project Area (USGS 1961). Small ponds, presumably remnants of past flooding, had formed between the leveed main river channel and the Project Area.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY**

Portions of the golf course and associated parking area are moderate to highly sensitive to contain buried Native American sites. The potential for historic-era archaeological deposits associated with several different buildings is also high, and those locations are dispersed throughout the Project Area and have been briefly described above.

## **FIELD METHODS**

On 8 October 2015, Holman & Associates conducted a surface reconnaissance focusing on all accessible lands within the Project Area. Locations with exposed soil were inspected for evidence of subsurface material or paleosols that might have been redeposited on the surface during previous impacts to the parcels. Where exposed soils were encountered, a trowel was used to remove engineering gravels and vegetation to increase the area of visibility and enabled inspection.

## **STUDY SUMMARY AND FINDINGS**

Plans to improve an existing golf course and driving range and adjacent parcels used for vehicular storage will include a driving range, limited golf course, and hotel. A records search did not identify any recorded cultural resources within the Project Area even though several previous studies included portions of the project footprint. Because of past periods of alluviation and more recent construction activities including fill deposits, there is a moderate to high possibility of buried archaeological deposits. Initial Native American consultation did not identify any concerns about specific resources within the Project Area.

## **SURVEY FINDINGS**

The Project Area is described in three sections: the Western Tract, the Golfing Center, and the Eastern Tract (Map 2). Photos 1-5 provide clarification to the discussion below.

## **Western Tract**

Most of this area was not accessible for archaeological surveying because it is paved and fenced (Photo 2). In the southeast corner, some soil was visible and consists of gray to tan/gray silt. The compacted soil contains some modern debris and is recent fill.

The westernmost area adjacent to Liberty Street is approximately one to two feet above street level. Soil is tan to brown silt mixed with modern debris including concrete, plastic, and metal scraps (Photo 1). The area adjacent to North 1<sup>st</sup> Street is approximately four feet higher than the road (Photo 4).

## **Driving Range and Eastern Tract**

The active, current driving range is surrounded by a small golf course (Cover Photo) and only the perimeter of the course could be surveyed. The perimeter had exposed soil, tan/gray to gray fine silt with fine-grained sand that was most likely imported when landscaping the range and course. The golf center's parking lot is covered with imported gravel. The landscaped area in the parking lot had some visible soil, tan silt with some small gravel. A mound area in the southwest portion is composed of tan soil with gravels.

The Eastern Tract was covered in heavy vegetation with very limited tan silty soil visible (Photo 5). The area is the lowest of the project footprint and is approximately 10 to 12 feet below the top of the levee. In contrast, the driving range is about five to six feet below the levee. The lands adjacent North 1<sup>st</sup> Street are covered with gravels and include a storm drain (Photo 4).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The archaeological survey did not identify any cultural resources within the Project Area. Based on the information presented above and the moderate to high potential for archaeological deposits, Holman & Associates recommends that a qualified archaeologist trained in both California prehistoric and historic current methods complete a presence/absence exploration with a backhoe once specific plans are designed and prior to any earth moving activities. If any potentially California Register eligible resources are identified, they should be briefly documented, photographed, mapped, and tarped before the area is backfilled. If any archaeological resources are identified, Holman & Associates recommends a research design and treatment plan be completed by a qualified archaeologist before the archaeologists return to that location to hand excavate the feature(s) or deposits.

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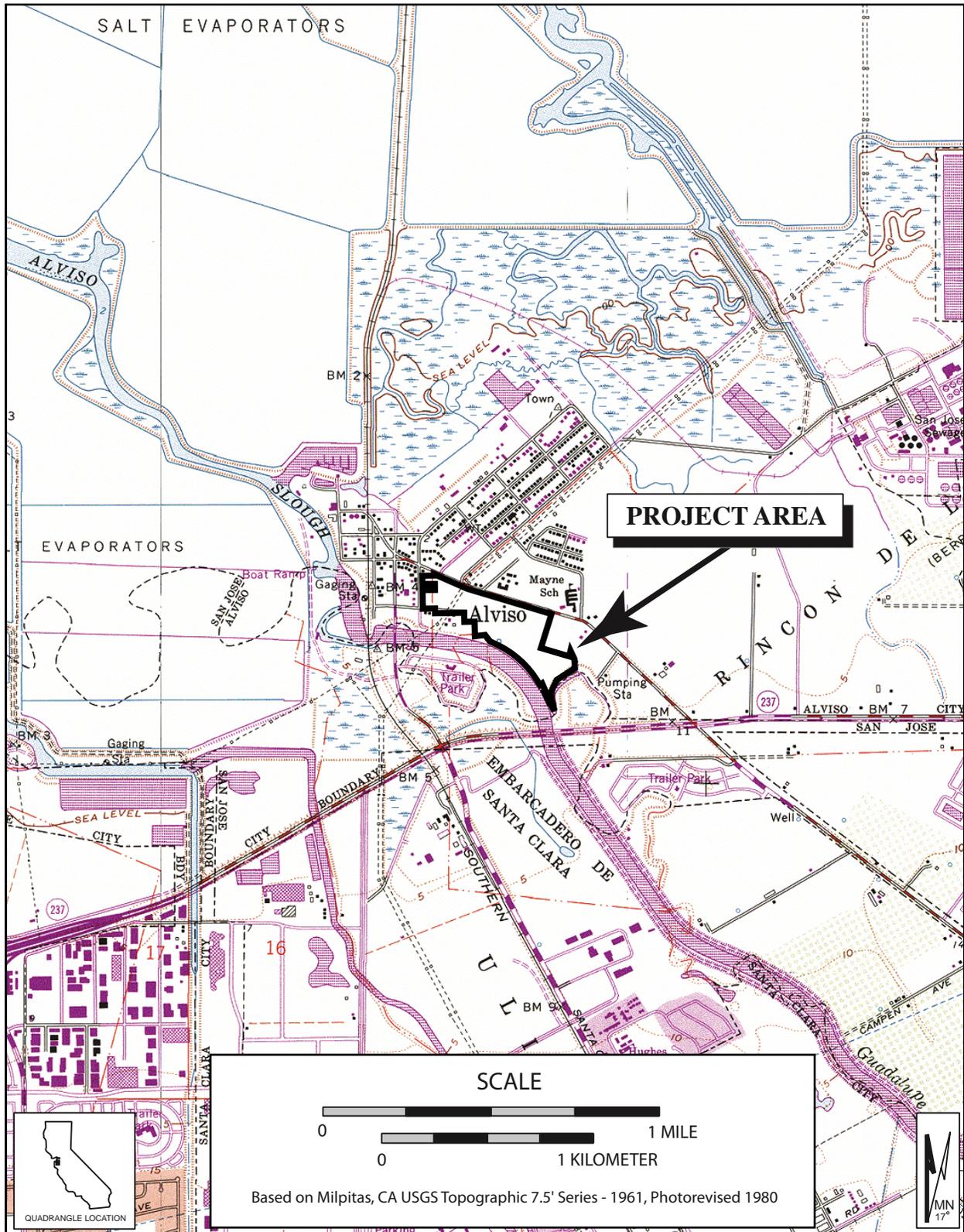
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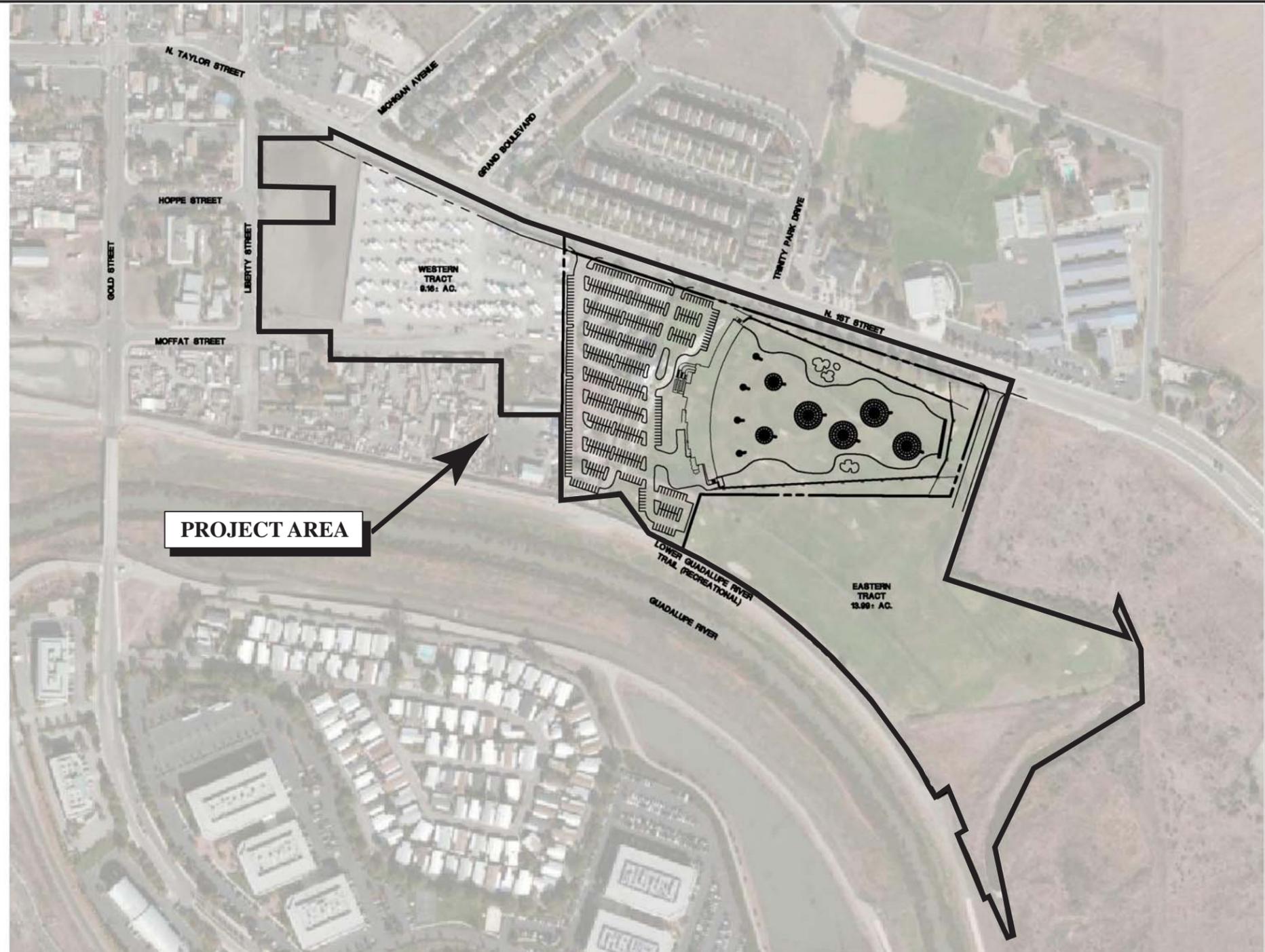
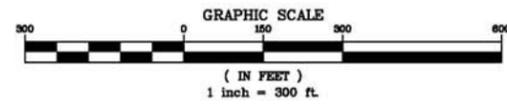
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Map 1. Location of TopGolf Driving Range Project, N. 1st Street, Alviso, Santa Clara County , California



TOTAL PARCEL AREA = 1,673,543 SF (38.42± ACRES)

1ST ST RIGHT-OF-WAY = 81,022 SF (1.86± ACRES)  
 WESTERN TRACT AREA= 399,119 SF (9.16± ACRES)  
 EASTERN TRACT AREA= 609,550 SF (13.99± ACRES)  
 TOPGOLF SITE AREA = 583,852 SF (13.40± ACRES)

BUILDING/OUTFIELD AREA = 7.90± ACRES  
 PARKING AREA = 5.50± ACRES

PARKING SPACES = 501 SPACES

HITTING BAYS = 120 BAYS

**Map 2. Aerial View of Project Area with Proposed Improvements**



Photo 1. Overview of open area of fill in Western Tract. Photo 2. Paved area for vehicular storage in Western Tract. Photo 3. Overview of golfing area situated on raised fill. Photo 4. View of North 1st Street with raised fill area to south (left). Photo 5. Overview of unmaintained Eastern Tract.