

**Final Historic Resource Assessment of the
Artesia Farmers and Merchants Bank Branch,
3290 East Artesia Boulevard, Long Beach, California**

With Notes on Aesthetic Considerations for the Initial Study

Prepared for:

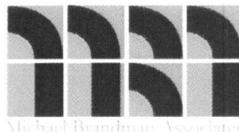
Palm Desert Development Company
P.O. Box 3958
Palm Desert, California 92261

Contact: Jeffrey Tartaglino, Director of LDDC

Prepared by:

Michael Brandman Associates
621 E. Carnegie Drive, Suite 100
San Bernardino, California 92408
909.884.2255

Contact: Michael Dice, Senior Cultural Resource Project Manager



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MANAGERIAL SUMMARY

Michael Brandman Associates (MBA) cultural resource staff undertook a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and City of Long Beach Landmark-compliant historical analysis of a commercial structure located at 3290 Artesia Boulevard in the City of Long Beach. The building is an operating branch of the Farmers & Merchants Bank, and was constructed in 1962. The purpose of this report is to determine whether or not the structure qualifies as a significant historic property at the State and City level of analysis. The potential loss of this structure to development has been mitigated for by the inclusion of research above and beyond the normal level of historic assessment analysis. This research consists of a complete photographic rendering of the structure, along with reproductions of available building plans. Additional Bank structure-related documents are available at the City of Long Beach Planning Department.

This report is in support of an IS/MND for the project. Replacement of the existing commercial building with a multi-family structure requires an analysis of aesthetic issues for the Initial Study that are best provided within the context of this report.

This report has been written in order to fulfill cultural resource recommendations found in the Long Beach General Plan, the North Long Beach Redevelopment Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and the City of Long Beach Historic Preservation Ordinance. A draft version of this report was provided to the City Planning Department and the Proponent, and included certain recommendations for further study. The Final version of this report contains an additional technical photographic study.

Results of the initial historic resource assessment showed that the structure can be evaluated for significance utilizing an architectural context, and that the integrity of the building is considered good to excellent. The historical evaluation showed that the structure should be considered a historic resource at the Local level of analysis because it meets certain City of Long Beach parameters, but we do not consider the property significant at the State (CEQA) level of analysis. Because of this finding, we consider the loss of the structure to be a significant impact to the environment of North Long Beach following CEQA guidelines. Redevelopment of the area will likely be allowed and the loss of the building assured. The additional photographic study was needed in order to successfully mitigate for impacts.

We thank the Long Beach Public Library, City Planning Department, the Library at Cal-Poly Pomona, the Long Beach Historical Society for access and use of records therein. Mr. Dale Wiersma of the City of Long Beach Planning Department provided us with reprints of the architectural drawings of the evaluated structure. Mr. Jim Robeson, Artesia Branch manager, graciously allowed MBA to view the interior of the Bank and provided much valuable historical information.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

At the request of the Palm Desert Development Company (PDDC), MBA has undertaken a CEQA-compliant and City of Long Beach-compliant historical assessment of a building located at 3290 Artesia Boulevard in the City of Long Beach California. The Bank is located on parcel APN #7120-003-034. The building is an operating branch of Farmers & Merchants Bank (“Bank”) of Long Beach, California and was constructed in 1962. Research was undertaken by Michael Dice, M.A. MBA Senior Archaeologist/Historian, Arabesque Said-Abdelwahed, staff Cultural Resource Specialist and Dale Hameister, Staff Photographer. A site visit and review of original building plans at City Hall took place on May 5 2009, and a research visit to the Long Beach Historical Society occurred on May 23, 2009. A technical photographic survey of the entire building was undertaken on October 27, 2009 in order to mitigate for the loss of the structure to redevelopment.

The City of Long Beach requires this report as part of an environmental compliance package because the Bank parcel will be redeveloped in the near future, and a historic significance assessment of any structure more than 45 years old is required following mitigation measures noted in the North Long Beach Redevelopment Plan Program EIR. This study examines the potential historic significance of the building with State and Local register criteria in mind. We note that structures less than 50 years old are typically not eligible for inclusion in the National Register (following Section 106 guidelines) unless special circumstances dictate a need; therefore, the Bank was not reviewed at the Section 106 level of analysis. Because the State and Local technical procedures are derived from Section 106, a short review of the Section 106 process will be necessary.

The project proponent, Palm Desert Development Company (PDDC), proposes to demolish the Bank and build a three-story 60-unit senior (55+) housing complex which will serve the needs of the local community. Parking lots and landscaping directly adjacent to the Bank shall also be removed. It is likely that those portions of the project area which will exhibit buildings will undergo over-excavation, but not to a depth in which fossiliferous sediments will be exposed. Paleontological analysis and mitigation recommendations are therefore not warranted.

1.1 - The Project Area

The Bank is located in the northeastern corner of a section of the City known as “North Long Beach” (Exhibit 1, Exhibit 2). Originally found in the Rancho Los Cerritos, a Spanish and Mexican land-grant ranch, the region was grazed by sheep and remained completely undeveloped until about the mid 1880’s. The rancho was bought by Jonathan Temple in 1843, and in 1866 Mr. Temple sold the rancho in desperation to a sheep rancher consortium known as Flint, Bixby & Co. Subdivided and resold as the California Co-operative Colony beginning in the last part of the 1880’s, parcels in North Long Beach were annexed into the City in 1924 during a post-WWI development and annexation

boom¹. Agriculture was the prime economic engine of the area until the late 1950's and the project parcel was used for farming until about 1960.

The 2009 GoogleEarth image (Exhibit 2) shows the project parcel located on the south side of Artesia Boulevard in a wedge of residential land between a large petroleum-related development at the corner of Artesia and Paramount Boulevard to the west, and the extensive commercial development in the City of Bellflower to the east. Exhibit 3a through 3h shows the visual transformation of the project vicinity through a set of eight aerial survey photographs taken between 1928 and 1994. According to a review of on-line assessor records found at the Los Angeles County Assessor website², lots on the north and south sides of Artesia near parcel APN#7120-003-034 have been zoned multi-family and/or commercial for decades. Review of other assessor records show that multi-family residential mixed with commercially zoned parcels are typical for arterials in this area. An assisted-family living center, built in 1970, is located due west of the Bank on the adjacent parcel. Ramona Park lies due south of the Bank parking lot, and it appears that Bank customers must share parking with Park users. A baseball diamond, seen on the 1950's era aerial photograph in Exhibit 3d, is located in the northwest corner of Ramona Park. Tennis courts were developed in the Park in the 1960's.

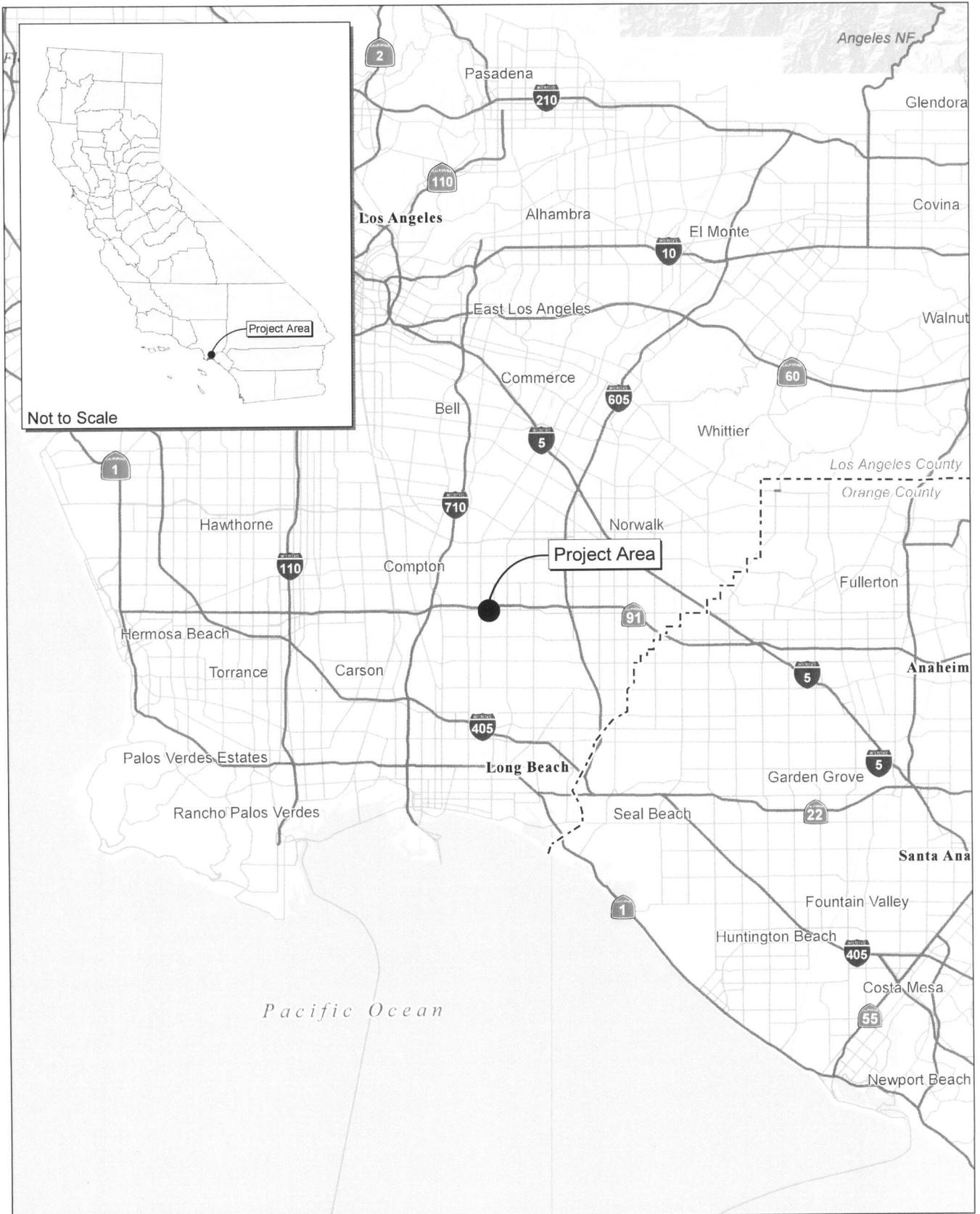
The sea of tract houses south of Artesia and within which Ramona Park is embedded consists of small homes mostly built between 1952 and 1959, although there are many houses within one mile that were built in the 1910's. The residential structures in the vicinity are typically small one-story homes of a vernacular character with 2-3 bedrooms and one bath. The original size of the homes was usually 1200 square feet or less, but many have been remodeled since they were built. Review of Assessors records that some of the tracts south of Artesia were built en masse, while others were spot builds where a house may have sat next to a vacant lot for several years. It was typical, in a boom market, for many of the neighborhoods to be built soon after the City permitted the subdivision, and when the boom died down somewhat (especially during the recessions of the 1950's), individual houses were spot-built on the tract lots.

The majority of homes in North Long Beach were built during the Post-War Southern California housing boom, which began about 1947³, and did not end in the Long Beach area until about 1973-1974. In less than 25 years, this boom completely replaced all traces of small citrus and tree-crop orchards, dairying, and field-based agricultural developments that began in the previous century, and drove massive infrastructure development that continues to this day. A local bank branch would have had an effect on this transformation in that it would have served both the farmers who were being replaced and the new home owners, through development financing and mortgages.

1 City of Long Beach Public Library "North Long Beach" newspaper clippings file.

2 All parcel records accessed May 18, 2009: <http://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/mapping/viewer.asp>

3 Ivers, L.H. 2009. "Long Beach: A History Through its Architecture." Historical Society of Long Beach, Long Beach, CA..



Source: Census 2000 Data, The CaSIL, MBA GIS 2009.



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27720017 • 11/2009 | 1_regional.mxd



Exhibit 1 Regional Location

PDDC • RAMONA PARK SENIOR APARTMENTS
CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY



Source: Google Earth aerial (2009).



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 27720017 • 11/2009 | 2_Aerial.mxd

Exhibit 2 Local Vicinity

PDDC • RAMONA PARK SENIOR APARTMENTS
 CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY



 Project Area

Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).

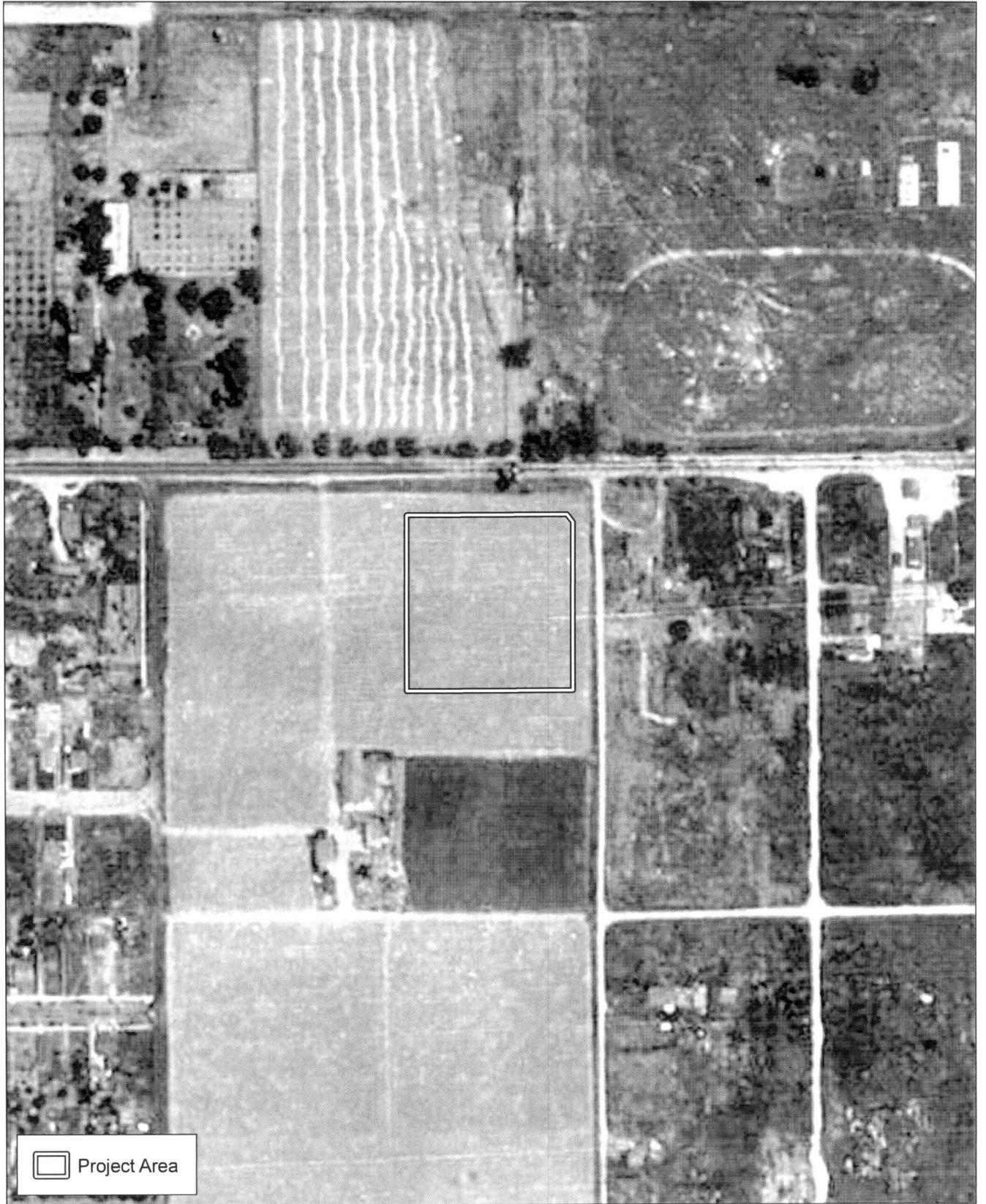


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Exhibit 3a Historical Aerial: 1928

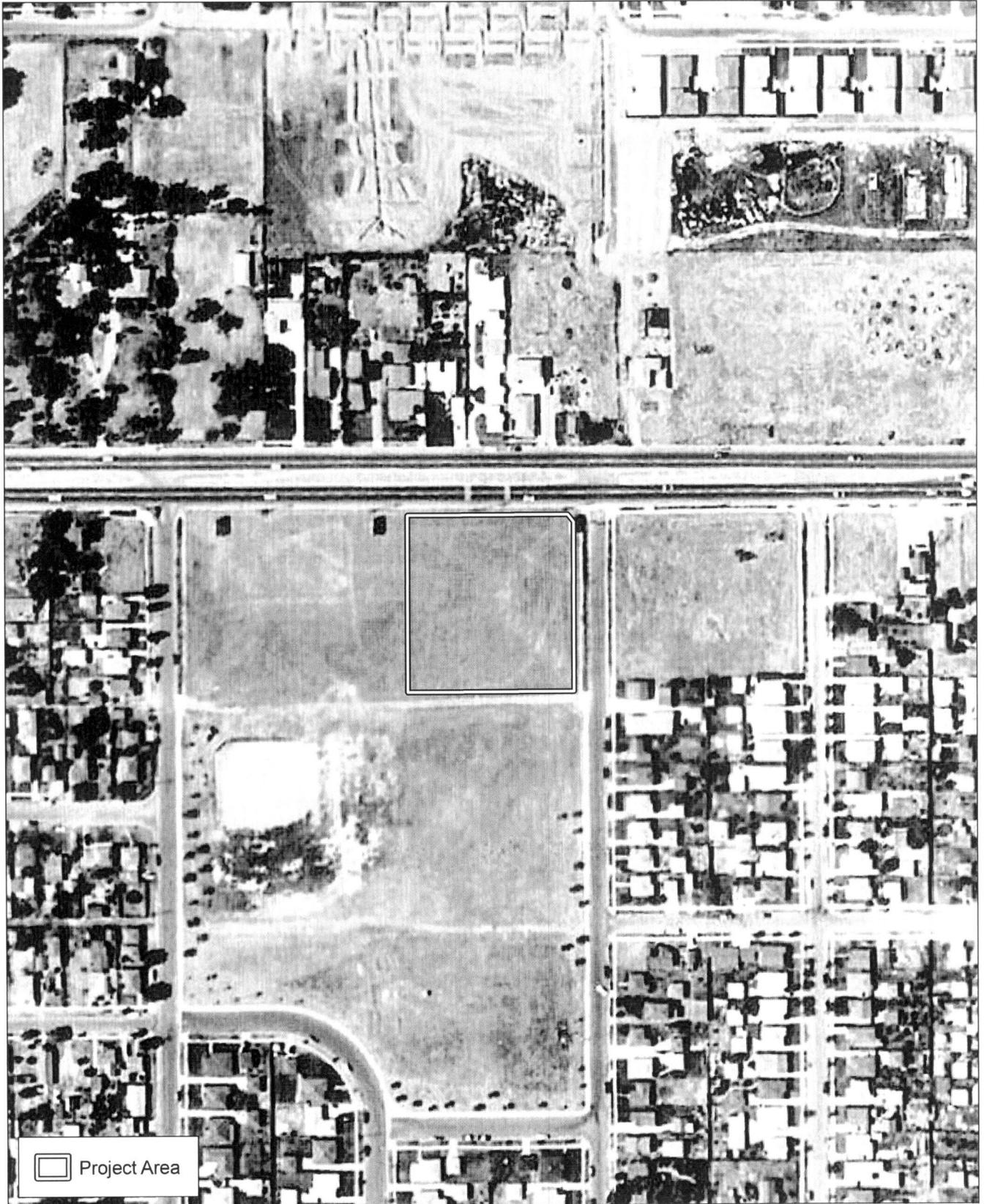
PDDC • RAMONA PARK SENIOR APARTMENTS
CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY



Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).



Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).



Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).



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27720017 • 11/2009 | 3d_1956.mxd



Exhibit 3d Historical Aerial: 1956

PDDC • RAMONA PARK SENIOR APARTMENTS
CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY



Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).

  200 100 0 200 Feet

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27720017 • 11/2009 | 3e_1968.mxd

Exhibit 3e Historical Aerial: 1968



Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).



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27720017 • 11/2009 | 3f_1976.mxd



Exhibit 3f Historical Aerial: 1976

PDDC • RAMONA PARK SENIOR APARTMENTS
CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY



Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).



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27720017 • 11/2009 | 3g_1982.mxd



Exhibit 3g Historical Aerial: 1982

PDDC • RAMONA PARK SENIOR APARTMENTS
CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY



Source: Track Info Services, LLC (2009).



Michael Brandman Associates
27720017 • 11/2009 | 3h_1994.mxd



200 100 0 200 Feet

Exhibit 3h Historical Aerial: 1994