

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The following is summarized from a Phase I archaeological survey conducted for the 18.9 acres TT 52717 study area. This investigation involved an archival records search, a review of existing published and unpublished references on local prehistory and history, and an on-foot, intensive survey of the subject property. A complete copy of this Phase 1 survey is located in Appendix 4.4.

4.4.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

a. Ethnographic Background

The study area falls within the ethnographic territory of the Takic-speaking Gabrielino. "Gabrielino" is of Spanish derivation, resulting from the standard missionary practice of naming indigenous peoples after the mission to which they were attached, in this case Mission San Gabriel. What historically have been referred to as the Gabrielino extended from Orange County north through the Los Angeles Basin to the crest of the San Gabriel Mountains, including the headwaters and watershed of the San Gabriel River, and from the coast eastward to include Mt. San Antonio (Mt. Baldy) and western Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. To the west, Gabrielino territory extended to Topanga Canyon, and included the San Fernando Valley.

The inhabitants of the region were hunters-gatherers, with subsistence emphasizing acorns, yucca, juniper berries, sage seeds, mesquite, pinyon and islay (Chia) and other plant resources. It is likely that the Gabrielino wintered in large villages near permanent water sources on the coast and on the larger Los Angeles Basin floor. Upland zones, such as are found in the Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains and foothills, would have been exploited seasonally, during the Spring, Summer and Fall, when valuable plant species ripened (e.g., on the northern slopes, pinyon nuts in the fall). Small, single family camp-sites would have been established near to the plant resources at this time.

Social and political organization involved patrilineal clans of 3 to 10 lineages that served as political-ritual-corporate units. Each lineage maintained a village site and resource exploitation area. It is likely that their religion followed the patterns found among surrounding groups. In this case, shamanism would have functioned as the central element. This indicates direct and personal relationship between each individual and the supernatural world, with this relationship enacted by entering a trance or

hallucinatory state (usually based on the ingestion of psychotropic plants, such as jimsonweed or native tobacco).

b. Archival Records Search

An archival record search was conducted at the California State University, Fullerton, Archaeological Information Center (AIC), by AIC staff members to determine: (1) if prehistoric or historical archaeological sites had previously been recorded within the project area; (2) if the study area had been systematically surveyed by archaeologists prior to the initiation of this field study; and/or (3) whether the region of the field project was known to contain archaeological sites and to thereby be archaeologically sensitive.

The records search indicates that the study area had never been systematically surveyed by archaeologists, although archaeological surveys had been conducted on adjacent properties. One prehistoric site had been recorded within a one-half mile radius of the study area, but none were identified within the boundary of the project site. Examination of historical maps (specifically, the Pomona 1894 and 1906 15' series topographical sheets) failed to reveal any indications that historical sites would be present within the study area. In conclusion, the archival record search indicated that the project area had never been surveyed to ascertain whether cultural resources were present within it, and that no sites were known to be present on it.

c. Field Survey

An intensive field survey of the study area was conducted on October 15, 2001. Where possible, the groundsurface was examined with the crew spaced at 10-meter intervals, walking transects across the study area to identify artifacts or other archaeological indicators that might be present on the groundsurface. This included flat and relatively flat terrain. In such areas, special attention was paid to depositional environments, such as saddles, swales and toeslopes, where the likelihood of archaeological preservation is enhanced.

The results of the survey indicate that no evidence of extant cultural resources of any kind are found on the property. While two contemporary structures are present within the study area, neither constitute historical resources based on their age and method of construction. The intensive Phase I archaeological survey failed to find any evidence of extant cultural resources, either prehistoric or historical, at this locale.

4.4.3 PROJECT IMPACTS

a. Significance Threshold Criteria

Section 15064.5 of the CEQA *Guidelines* identifies the following significance threshold criteria for determining impacts to archaeological and historical resources:

“A project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.”

As proposed, the project would require grading of the site for the construction of roadways and building foundations, and trenching for utilities and storm drains.

b. Project Impacts

Information provided from the record search and from field surveys indicates that no cultural resources are present on the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact to any known historic or prehistoric resources. In the event that cultural materials are encountered during the course of construction, all development will cease in these areas until the cultural resources are properly assessed and subsequent recommendations are determined. This measure is designed to prevent the cultural resources from being damaged and/or destroyed during site development. In addition, local archaeological agencies (i.e., the UCLA Archaeological Survey and the Northridge Archaeological Research Center) must be notified immediately if subsurface cultural materials are found. Potential impacts are considered to be less than significant.

4.4.4 CUMULATIVE PROJECT IMPACTS

Impacts upon cultural resources tend to be site specific and are assessed on a site-by-site basis. Where resources exist, implementation of cumulative development in the region would represent an incremental adverse impact to cultural resources. However, provided that proper mitigation, as defined by CEQA, is implemented in conjunction with cumulative project development in the area, no significant cumulative impacts are anticipated. In fact, if mitigation is properly carried out, a positive impact on cumulative cultural resource information would occur; that is, mitigation measures would result in the acquisition of additional scientific information about the prehistory of the region, thereby serving to clarify our reconstruction of prehistoric lifeways. The artifacts obtained from the sites during mitigation procedures would be preserved for future analysis and study.

4.4.5 MITIGATION MEASURES

a. Legal/Regulatory Requirements

None Required.

b. Mitigation Measures Recommended by the EIR

The following measure is recommended to ensure no significant impact to previously undetected subsurface cultural resources would occur during site excavation and construction operations.

- 4.4-1 A cultural resources monitor shall be present during grading activity on the site. In the event that previously unknown cultural resources are uncovered during this activity, the monitor shall have the authority to cease work until the extent and importance of the find can be determined. Any artifacts uncovered shall be recorded and removed for storage at a location to be determined by the monitor.

4.4.6 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Provided that the proposed mitigation measure is properly implemented, no unavoidable significant impacts are expected.