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**Historical Evaluation of  
Foster City and the Foster City Levee System  
San Mateo County, California**



Vicki R. Beard, M.A.

June 21, 2016



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San Mateo County, California**

Prepared by:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'V. R. Beard', written over a horizontal line.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Tom Origer & Associates completed an historical evaluation for the Foster City Levee Protection and Improvements Project EIR being prepared by Urban Planning Partners, Inc. Recent studies found that much of the Foster City levee system does not meet Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements for accreditation, and that improvements are necessary to maintain its accreditation as a low-risk flood area. In order to evaluate the levee system's importance, it was necessary to consider the whole of Foster City as a resource because of the unique correlation between the two.

This evaluation was designed to determine Foster City's potential for inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources based on the eligibility criteria set forth in Title 14 CCR, §4852. The study found that Foster City, and subsequently the levee system, meets California Register criteria 1 and 3 through its association with the post World War II, modern new town movement.

In addition to this report, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms were completed and are provided in Appendix A. Documentation pertaining to this study is on file at Tom Origer & Associates (File No. 15-164).

## **Synopsis**

Project:	Historical evaluation of Foster City and the Foster City Levee System
Location:	Foster City, San Mateo County, California
APN:	NA
Quadrangle:	San Mateo, California 7.5' series
Study Type:	Historical/architectural evaluation
Scope:	Property specific
Finds:	Eligible for the California Register

## **Project Personnel**

This report was prepared by Vicki R. Beard, who has been with Tom Origer & Associates since 1990. Ms. Beard holds a Master of Arts in cultural resources management with an emphasis in historical resources, and meets the Secretary of the Interior's standards for archaeology, history, and architectural history. Graduate coursework and applied studies included building and structure evaluation, and historical research. Post-graduate work was completed in historical architecture through the Architecture Department at the University of California Berkeley; heritage resource management at the University of Nevada, Reno; and architectural history and historic landscapes through the National Preservation Institute, Alexandria, Virginia. Professional affiliations include the Society of Architectural Historians, Northern California Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, and Vernacular Architecture Forum. She is also listed on the Register of Professional Archaeologists.

## CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Synopsis.....	i
Project Personnel .....	ii
Introduction.....	1
Regulatory Context.....	2
Significance Criteria.....	2
Study Procedures .....	2
Historical Setting .....	4
Historic Context.....	6
Swamp Land Reclamation, 1849 to 1961.....	6
The Modern New Town Movement, 1955 to 1990. ....	7
Property Description .....	9
Conclusion .....	10
Assessment of Significance .....	11
Assessment of Integrity .....	11
Summary and Recommendations .....	11
Materials Consulted .....	12
Appendix A: Resource Documentation	
Table 1. Comparison of Planned and Actual Development.....	10

## FIGURES

Figure 1. Project vicinity .....	1
Figure 2. Study location.....	3
Figure 3. 1894 and 1910 San Mateo County maps .....	4
Figure 4. Aerial view of Foster City c. 1967 .....	5
Figure 5. Reclaimed land in San Francisco Bay circa 1958 .....	8

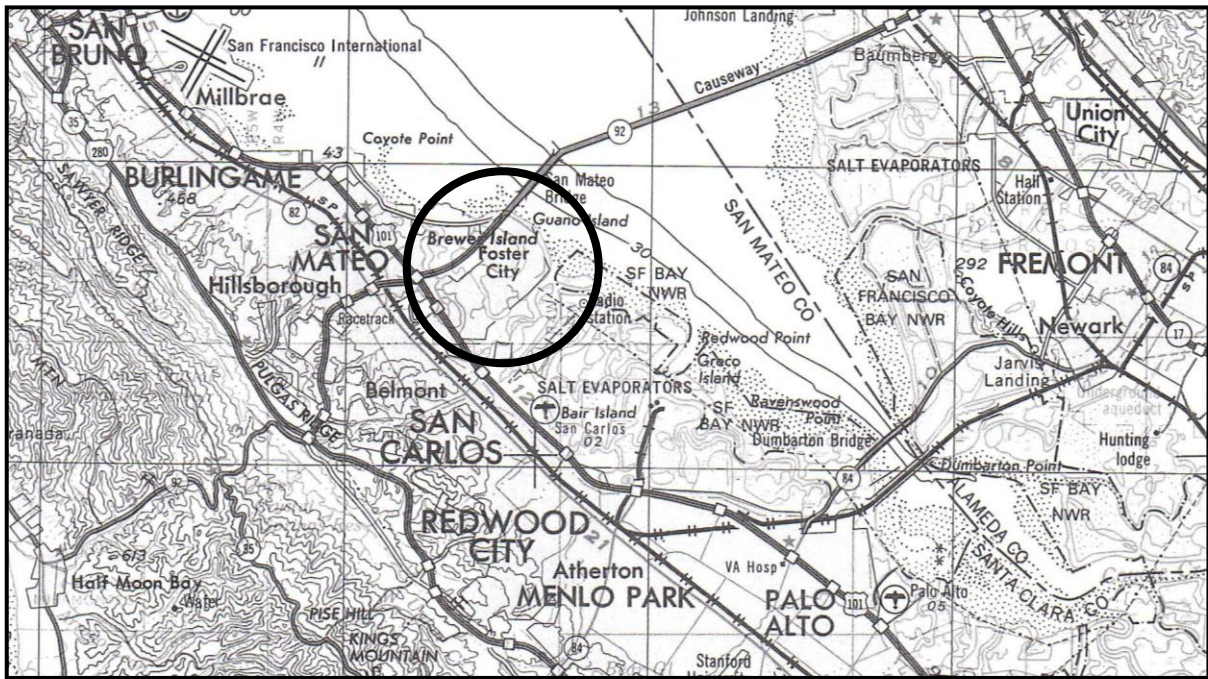
## INTRODUCTION

Tom Origer & Associates was asked to complete an historical evaluation of the Foster City Levee System as part of an environmental impact report (EIR) being prepared by Urban Planning Partners, Inc. for the Levee Protection and Improvements Project proposed by the City of Foster City in eastern San Mateo County, California (Figures 1 and 2). Recent studies found that much of the Foster City levee system does not meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements for accreditation, and that improvements are necessary to maintain its status as a low-risk flood area. Because the project could result in impacts to a potentially significant cultural resource an evaluation of the levee system's historical importance was necessary.

The purpose of this study was to determine if the levee system meets criteria for inclusion on the California Register of Historic Resources (California Register) based on the eligibility criteria set forth in Title 14 CCR, §4852. Once research began for the evaluation, it was clear that the levee system could not be evaluated without considering Foster City as a whole because the levee system played, and continues to play, such an instrumental role in the creation of the city. Therefore, this study provides an evaluation of the historical significance of the City of Foster City, and an assessment of proposed project impacts to the levee system, as part of an historical resource.

Work to create Foster City began in the early 1960s as 18 million cubic yards of dredged material was imported to form a foundation for the development. This work was preceded by reclamation efforts in the 1890s when the first levees were built.

The results of the study are presented in this report and on the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms provided in Appendix A. Documentation pertaining to this study is on file at Tom Origer & Associates (15-124).



**Figure 1.** Project vicinity (adapted from the USGS 1980 San Francisco 1:250,000-scale map).

## **REGULATORY CONTEXT**

This study adhered to requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which mandate that cultural resources be considered as part of the environmental review process. This is accomplished by an inventory of resources within a study area, evaluation of resource importance, and an assessment of potential project effects on resources found to be important. Determining a resource's importance is discussed below.

### **Significance Criteria**

Under CEQA, when a project might affect a cultural resource (i.e., site, building, structure, object, or district) the project proponent is required to conduct an assessment to determine whether the effect may be one that is significant. Consequently, it is necessary to determine the importance of resources that could be affected.

The importance of a resource is measured in terms of criteria for inclusion on the California Register (Title 14 CCR, §4852) listed below. A resource may be important if it meets any one of the criteria below, or if it is already listed on the California Register or a local register of historical resources.

An important historical resource is one which:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

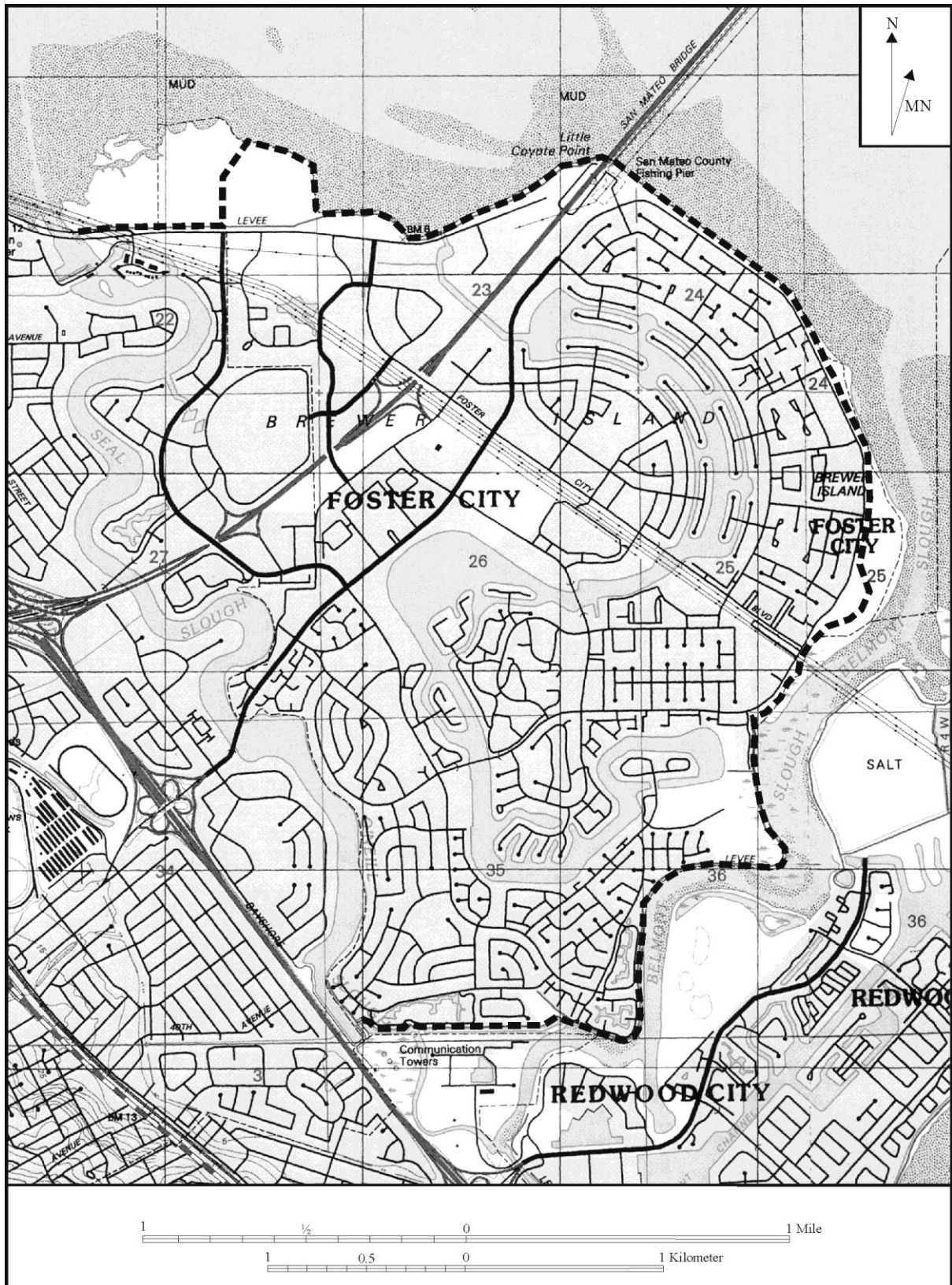
In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, eligibility for the California Register requires that a resource retains sufficient integrity to convey a sense of its significance or importance. Seven elements are considered key in assessing a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

## **STUDY PROCEDURES**

Historical research was conducted at the San Mateo Historical Society, the San Mateo County Library, the City of Foster City, and various online databases such as the Online Archive of California, Calisphere, Ancestry.com, and Leagle.com. Additionally, documents, maps, and secondary sources at the offices of Tom Origer & were searched.

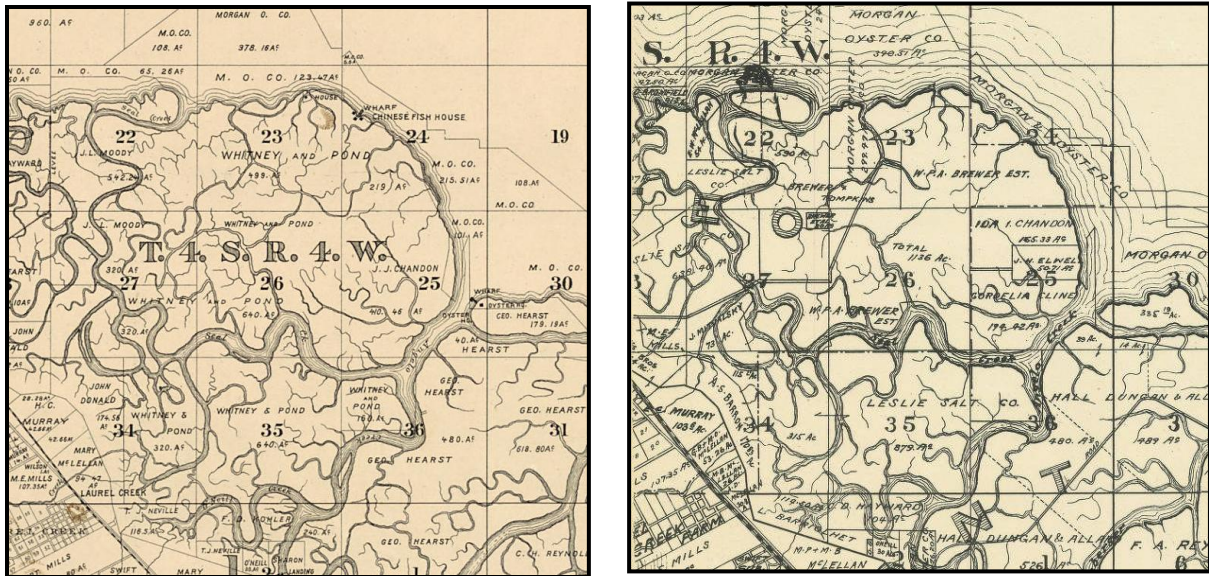
A field examination was conducted by TOA associate Eileen Barrow on February 23, 2016. Photographs were taken at that time, and notes made regarding the levee structure and its integrity.





**Figure 2.** Study location (adapted from the USGS 1997 San Mateo and 1993 Redwood Point 7.5' maps).





**Figure 3.** 1894 (left) and 1910 (right) San Mateo County maps showing the future location of Foster City (after Bromfield 1894, 1910).

## HISTORICAL SETTING

In 1958, retired real estate developer, T. Jack Foster, Sr. and his partner, Richard Grant, purchased 2,600 acres of former marsh land located east of the city of San Mateo, 20 miles south of San Francisco. This low-lying property was created by Arthur L. Whitney and E.B. Pond when they built a series of levees to hold back bay waters from their 5,000-acre tract (*San Francisco Chronicle* 1898). Historically, the shoals surrounding the area were used extensively by the Morgan Oyster Company (Figure 3). The company was founded by Captain J.S. Morgan, who brought the first railroad shipment of seed oyster from the east in 1869. The Morgan Oyster Company came to monopolize the Bay Area's oyster industry as it bought out most of the other oystermen (Barrett 1963). The company went out of business in 1921, and its San Mateo beds were sold to the Pacific-Portland Cement Company, which erected a plant at the Port of Redwood City in 1924. The cement company controlled thousands of acres on the floor of San Francisco Bay where the accumulation of clam, oyster, and mussel shells provided tons of good-grade limestone, and the other ingredients for cement (Logan 1947).

A portion of the Whitney and Pond tract was purchased by William P.A. Brewer during the 1890s, and he established the San Mateo Ranch Dairy. William Brewer was born in Honolulu, where his father Charles established C. Brewer & Company, the off shoot of a mercantile company that became heavily involved in sugar production in the 1860s. While noted in the 1900 census as a farmer, William Brewer was a wealthy man, and his family was prominent in the San Francisco social scene (*San Francisco Call* 1908; Social Register Association 1909, 1931). Still it seems that Brewer took an active part in the dairy management. Brewer's San Mateo Ranch Dairy was featured in the *San Francisco Call* in 1891 where it was noted that Brewer held firm opinions about the types of cows best used for milk production and the importance of providing clean facilities and high quality feed (*San Francisco Call* 1891:9).

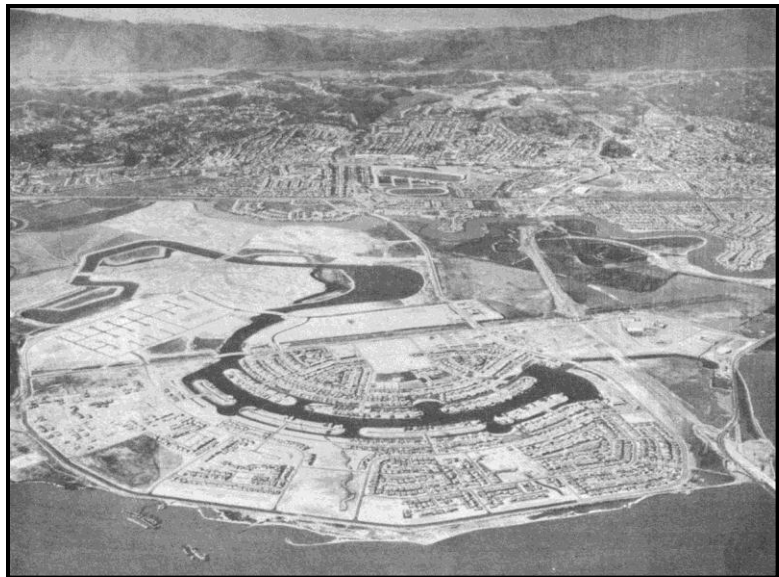
After William's death in 1905, his son Frank became proprietor of the dairy. Frank resided nearby with his two sisters, Eleanor and Amy (United States Bureau of Census 1910). Frank's sister Nora married

into the Cudahy family of Chicago, but neither Frank nor Amy married. Amy lived for a while with her sister in Chicago, and after World War I, she spent two years in France as a Red Cross relief worker. Frank spent several years as a mate on merchant ships. By 1930, the siblings are living together again in San Mateo County though both traveled extensively over the years.

The Brewers sold much of the dairy property, by that time known as Brewer's Island, to the Leslie Salt Refining Company in the 1940s. Leslie Salt had large holdings along both sides of San Francisco Bay, with a large refining plant located near Redwood City, just south of Brewer's Island.

Acting on the 1958 option, Foster purchased the 2,600 acres of swampy grazing land in 1960 and commenced the unparalleled task of creating buildable land. Grant was no longer involved in the project. Instead, Foster's three sons would work with their father. Over a three-year period, 18 million cubic yards of sand were dredged from the San Bruno Shoals and transported to Brewer's Island by barge to raise the ground level six feet. Foster relied on the expertise of engineering firm Wilsey, Ham & Blair, and soils consultants Dames & Moore to work out issues of subsidence and drainage. At just eight feet above sea level, Foster City relies on a system of levees and lagoons for drainage and flood control. When the existing levees were inspected, they were found to be well maintained and required little work initially (Foster 2012). Later, the City was required to raise the levees 18 inches to conform with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations. Then, as now, the City's accreditation as a low flood risk zone was at jeopardy, and all Foster City property owners with federally-backed loans would be required to carry flood insurance without the accreditation. The City spent \$2.5 million dollars to raise the levee.

The resulting landmass featured a system of lagoons created primarily for drainage purposes that became a focal point for the new community. In 1961, a Master Plan was submitted to San Mateo County for the development of Brewers Island. The plan envisioned a completely self-contained community with diverse housing types, waterfront lots and parks, and marinas with accommodations for professional, commercial, and industrial enterprises and public services. The plan projected a population of 35,000, 11,000 residential units, and 10,000 jobs.



Eventually, Foster City comprised nine residential neighborhoods, a town center, and an industrial center. The neighborhoods were named One through Nine, though they were not built in numerical order. Infrastructure for Neighborhood One was developed in 1962, and in November 1963 construction began on the neighborhood's first homes.

In 1960, the California Legislature created the Estero Municipal Improvement District (EMID), a public agency with general taxing and bonding powers, specially created to aid specific land developments. One of only two such districts in California, "the organizational requirements of these

districts placed each of them under the direct control of the developers and in addition anticipated and encouraged self-dealing between the developer and the district — all without any independent audit controls or other review procedures" (Foster *et al.* v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue 1983). The initial bill called for three EMID directors who would all be owners or their representatives (Senate Bill 51, Chapter 82, 1960). EMID was granted most of the government powers associated with an incorporated municipality, except the powers to zone and approve development and certain police powers; however, property owners became disenchanted with the developer-run EMID as taxes increased. In 1967, the State amended the enabling act, increasing the number of directors to five distributed such that "two shall be owners or officers or legal representatives of owners, two shall be registered voters resident within the district, and one shall be a public member designated and appointed by the county board of supervisors" (Sec. 3-6, Chapter 1511, California State Statutes, 1967). In addition, all directors were required to be residents of Foster City by the time of the 1971 election. The city was incorporated that same year. Between 1970 and 2010, the population of Foster City rose from 9,327 to 30,567 (Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments 2016; USBC 2012), not quite reaching Foster's initial projection.

In 1961, a Master Plan was submitted to San Mateo County for the development of Brewers Island. The plan envisioned "a completely planned and self-contained city consisting of nine residential neighborhoods, an industrial park, and a town center. Each neighborhood was to be built around an elementary school... Each neighborhood was to include both waterfront (lagoon and bay) and non-waterfront lots and a mix of single-family and multiple-family dwellings, as well as some commercial development (Foster et al. v. Internal Revenue Service, 80 T.C. 34, 55). At build out, projections for Foster City included a population of 35,000, 11,000 residential units, and 10,000 jobs. In 2013, 19,900 jobs, primarily in the technology and finance sectors, were reported for Foster City (BAE Urban Economics 2013:iii).

## **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

Historic contexts are those patterns or trends in history by which a specific occurrence, property, or site is understood and its meaning (and ultimately its significance) within history or prehistory is made clear. To evaluate the significance of a resource, it is necessary to understand how it relates to historic patterns and themes that are important on national, state, and local levels. The significance of a historic property can be judged and explained only when it is evaluated within its historic context.

The Foster City and the Foster City levee system are associated two themes important on State and local levels. First, the levees instrumental in the creation of Brewers Island, and ultimately Foster City, represent the pattern of marsh reclamation of the mid- to late 19th century that led to the creation of millions of acres of land. Additionally, Foster City was California's first post-war "new town," a master planned community in the spirit of the modern new town movement following World War II.

### **Swamp Land Reclamation, 1849 to 1961.**

Diking and draining swamp and overflowed lands was an important part of the San Francisco Bay Area's developmental history. Spurred by federal legislation that ceded control of swamp and overflow lands to the state, California granted vast tracks of seasonally inundated land to speculators for the purpose of reclaiming wetlands by the construction of levees and drains. The 1849 and 1850 Swamp Land Acts eventually led to more than two million acres granted in the state of California (USGS 2006). The State of California established the Board of Swamp and Overflowed Land

Commission in 1861, and in 1866, the affected counties assumed authority over their marshlands (State of California Department of Water Resources 1994).

By law, swamp lands included marshes and intermittent ponds with no natural means of effective drainage, and overflowed lands consisted of the frequently submerged lower levels of flood plains. These lands were considered “wet and unfit for cultivation,” although for a while there was some discrepancy between what some considered wet and unfit. The Bureau of Land Management (1973) settled on the following definition.

“Wet and unfit for cultivation” is interpreted to mean that the land must have been so swampy or subject to overflow during the planting, growing, or harvesting season, in the majority of years at or near the date of the grant, as to be unfit for cultivation in any staple crop of the region in which it is located, without the use of some artificial means of reclamation such as levee protection or drainage ditches.

In a 1959 report prepared for the Army Corp of Engineers, the U.S. Department of Commerce (1959:79) reported that San Francisco Bay had 259.8 acres of marsh, tideland, and submerged land available for reclamation in 1850. By 1957, 94.8 acres had been reclaimed, leaving 165 acres available. The report divides the bay into northern and south sections with the dividing line being at Point San Mateo, north of Foster City. Figure 5 shows the distribution and use of reclaimed land in San Francisco Bay presented in the Department of Commerce report (Plate 20, Sheet 2). At that time, 76 percent of the reclaimed land in the southern section comprised salt ponds. Relatively little land was in use for agricultural by 1959 although much of the industrial and residential land shown just south of Point San Mateo was reclaimed initially for agricultural.

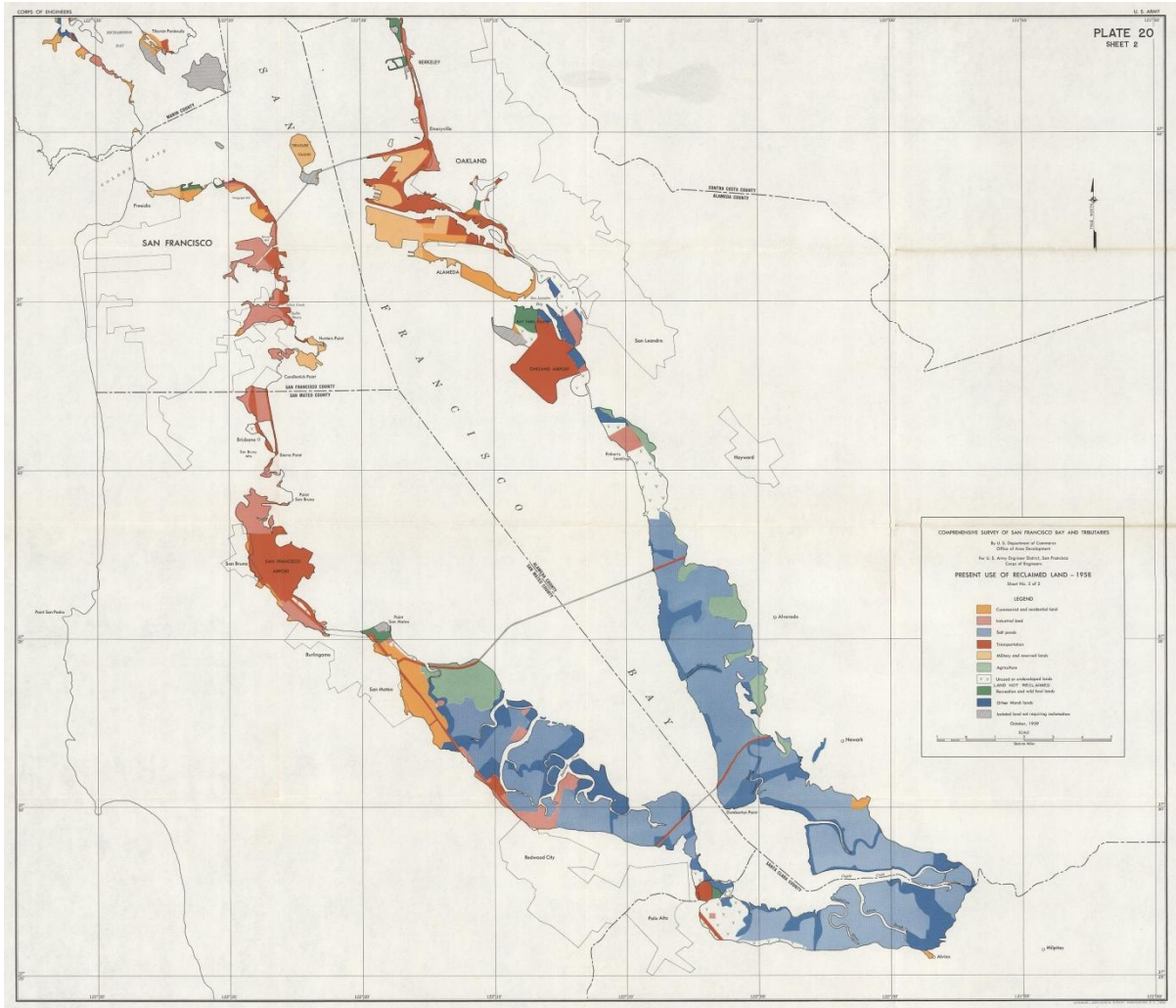
While the pros and cons of the Swamp Land Act and tideland reclamation are debated, the process is nonetheless an important part of California's history. Reclamation along the San Francisco Bay shoreline added thousands of acres of land put to a variety of uses that contribute to the area's economy.

### **The Modern New Town Movement, 1955 to 1990.**

The roots of the modern new town movement lie in the concepts of Ebenezer Howard presented in his 1898 publication *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* and republished in 1902 as *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* (Howard 1898, 1902). While Howard advocated a variety of social reforms, his diagram of the model town became the focus of the Garden City movement in the United Kingdom during the early 20th century. The movement continued on a wider scale after World War II when the British Parliament passed the New Towns Act of 1946 in response to the need to repair and rebuild the war-torn nation.

In the United States, garden cities and greenbelt communities were promoted in the 1930s and 40s, and some towns developed around specific activities, such as Oak Ridge, Tennessee, where during World War II, thousands of workers and their families lived during development of the atomic bomb. After the war, housing shortages led to sprawling suburbs of nearly identical homes. Critics pointed to suburbs as “landscape[s] of uniformity, privatization, decentralization, and conformity [that] stifled cultural achievement” (Bloom 2001:11). Yet the internal pressures of overcrowding, lack of housing, and increasing crime rates, combined with the ready affordability of automobiles saw a





**Figure 5.** Reclaimed land in San Francisco Bay circa 1958 (U.S. Department of Commerce 1959:Plate 20, Sheet 2).

steady stream of people moving to the "burbs." Criticisms of the suburbs caused some developers to rethink the earlier garden city and new town concepts during the 1950s and 60s.

If suburbs were soulless, culturally malnourished entities of forced compliance, new towns would bring back culture, community involvement, and individualism. Planned, self-sustaining communities were promoted across the United States. House & Home magazine printed a list of 50 new town developments in its February 1964 issue. California was well represented with 18 communities, thirteen of which were slated for construction by the end of the year (Murray 1964:125). Eichler and Kaplan (1967:Appendix 1) provided a similar list showing 21 new planned communities in California. The communities discussed varied greatly in size from 1,000 to 93,000 acres, with Foster City being at the small end of the spectrum.

In a summary paper regarding "Large Developments and New Communities," the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (1969) provided the U.S. governments definition of a "new town:"

Certain criteria are generally applied to further define this [new town] concept: a new community is developed in accordance to an overall masterplan; it consciously follows principles of urban design, and preserves and enhances the natural environment; it has a geographic and social identity, and self government; it is sufficiently large to provide social diversity and all urban functions necessary to its residents; and it has some source of primary employment and community revenues. The line between a large development and a new community depends on the degree to which these criteria are met [United States Department of Housing and Urban Development 1969].

T. Jack Foster, Sr. was on the cutting edge of the modern new town movement. Planning and construction of Foster City predated Columbia, Maryland and Irvine, California, and was coeval with Reston, Virginia, three of the better known developments of the era.

Foster's method for constructing Foster City was to develop the land and infrastructure for one neighborhood, and begin construction in that area while land and infrastructure were under construction for the next neighborhood. By taking that approach, he was able to avoid the stereotypical, cookie-cutter appearance of other large developments. Foster worked primarily with three builders: Eichler Homes, Duc & Elliot, and Kay Homes, and sold each company limited numbers of scattered lots in a given neighborhood so that no one area looked too homogeneous. His vision was to have an architecturally, culturally, and ethnically diverse community, and he required builders to provide homes that fit within those parameters and were affordable. In that respect, one of Foster's chosen builders had a similar vision. Joseph Eichler of Eichler Homes built a reputation on his modern, well-designed, and affordable homes, homes for the masses. He was also an advocate for inclusion and sold his homes to whoever wanted to buy one, which met with opposition in the racially segregated 1950s and 60s (Adamson and Arbunich2002:197-200). For his Foster City homes, Eichler advertized in the *Chinese Times* in San Francisco.

The ultimate decision that all new towns had to face was how to align themselves. Writing for the American Institute of Architects in 1969, Jack Fraser outlined alternatives open to the new communities: incorporation, annexation to a bigger city, retention as part of the county, or they could "struggle in the grip of developers with law suits and bond disputes as at Foster City in San Francisco Bay" (Fraser 1969:6). Fraser refers to the struggle between homeowners and the EMID, whose control of the community rested in the hands of the developers. The EMID accrued more than \$64 million in bond debt for which they in turn taxed the homeowner. Eventually, the California Legislature amended the EMID enabling act adding two more members to the board and elucidating the process by which the municipal district would transfer to the citizenry of the city. As the transfer was affected, 98 percent of the residents voted for incorporation, making Foster City one of only a few of the modern new towns to do so.

## **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**

The City of Foster City lies on the west shore of San Francisco Bay, on man-made land created during the late 19th century and enhanced during the mid-20th century. Creation of the land and lagoons that would become Foster City began in earnest in 1961. Over the next 40 years it became the home to more than 30,000 people. The city comprises just over 2,600 acres divided into nine residential neighborhoods and a mix of commercial, industrial, social, and recreational opportunities.

The planning for Foster City projected 11,000 residential units. Half of the residences would be detached, single-family homes, and half would comprise townhouses, garden apartments, and high-

rise apartments. Jack Foster's master plan also outlined thresholds for other land uses, and after more than 50 years the City has not strayed far from Foster's design (See Table 1). Fewer homes were built than anticipated but the area dedicated to recreation increased 10 percent. The discrepancy in the numbers and types of schools actually built in Foster City could not be controlled by Foster or the City management. Although school land was allocated as outlined in the Master Plan, decisions regarding the locations of new schools was in the hands of the San Mateo County Board of Education, which had to consider the entire county.

**Table 1. Comparison of Planned and Actual Development.**

Land Use	Planned 1961		Existing 2014	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Residential	1,360	52	1,215	46
Commercial/Industrial	460	18	404	16
Public/Semi-Public	550	21	503	17
Recreation	230	9	448	19
Mixed Use			47	2
Total	2,600	100	2,617	100
<sup>1</sup> Source: Foster City: A New City on the Bay (McDougall 2008)				
<sup>2</sup> Foster City General Plan, Land Use Element, adopted 2016				

The neighborhoods evolved as intended with mixed architecture and varying lot sizes to avoid the stereotypical look of a suburb. Emphasis was placed on the city's proximity to San Francisco Bay and the man-made lagoons, and advertising materials from the 60s highlighted the city's park-like feel.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the historical significance of Foster City, including the levee system that helped to form the city, based on the California Register criteria provided in an earlier section of the report. Restated briefly, a resource acquires significance from its association with an important event or pattern in history; through its association with an important person; because it represents a particular type, period, region or method of construction, the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or because it contains information that can be studied to enhance our understanding of history. The purpose of the historic context is to provide a framework for understanding and assessing the relative importance of an historic resource.

In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, eligibility for the California Register requires that a resource retain sufficient integrity to convey a sense of its significance or importance. As defined by the State, "Integrity is the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance" (California Office of Historic Preservation 2011:2). Seven elements are considered key in assessing a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.



## **Assessment of Significance**

Foster City was evaluated within the context of Swamp Land Reclamation, 1849 to 1961, and the Modern New Town Movement, 1955 to 1990. The following conclusions were reached with regard to each of the California Register criteria.

### ***Criterion 1***

Foster City meets Criterion 1 for inclusion on the California Register as an example of the new town movement that changed the way communities were envisioned after World War II. A master plan for the city was developed by Wilsey, Ham, & Blair for T. Jack Foster, and was approved by San Mateo County in 1961. Unlike the builder developed subdivisions of the 1940s and 50s, the Foster City master plan was a community design with provisions for civic, commercial, industrial, and recreational activities in additions to housing. It was among the first, if not the first, California new town to be planned and constructed, and one of the only towns that carried through to incorporation.

### ***Criterion 2***

Under Criterion 2, a resource can be significant because of its association with an important person or group of people. While Jack Foster was an influential business man, that does not elevate them to the status of "important people" in a way that satisfies Criterion 2.

### ***Criterion 3***

Foster City meets Criterion 3 for inclusion on the California Register. Criterion 3 requires that a resource embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction. From the ground up, Foster City was an engineering feat that required coordination between planners, civic engineers, soil scientist, and builders. The result was a unique, man-made land mass and community that is unparalleled in California, and possibly nationwide.

### ***Criterion 4***

Criterion 4 generally applies to archaeological resources or resources that, through study of construction details, can provide information that cannot be obtained in other ways. This construction of this resource is well documented and possesses no intrinsic qualities that could answer questions or provide important information about our history. Criterion 4 is not met.

## **Assessment of Integrity**

With reference to the seven key elements of integrity that are applied to potentially significant historical buildings, The Foster City retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

## **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Tom Origer & Associates completed an historical evaluation for the Foster City Levee Protection and Improvements Project EIR being prepared by Urban Planning Partners, Inc. The levee system is an integral part of Foster City and the two could not be separated when evaluating historical significance. This study found that Foster City meets California Register criteria 1 and 3 through its association with the post World War II modern new town movement. While Foster City was one of California's smaller new towns planned in the 1960s it was among the first of its kind, and despite political and financial difficulties the city exceeded has stayed true to the original plan.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Resource Documentation**

# PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # P-  
HRI #  
Trinomial:  
NRHP Status Code:  
Resource Name or #: Foster City Levee System

Other Listings:  
Review Code: Reviewer: Date:  
Page 1 of 8

## P1. Other Identifier:

P2. Location: Unrestricted a. County: San Mateo  
b. USGS 7.5' Quad: Redwood Creek and San Mateo Date: 1993 and 1997  
T 4 S/R 4 W; Sec. 22-27, 35, 36; MDBM  
c. Address: City: Foster City Zip:  
d. UTM: Zone: 10 562840 mE 4158430 mN  
565100 mE 4158740 mN  
565220 mE 4154400 mN  
565820 mE 4154400 mN  
e. Other Locational Information:

P3a. Description: This resource consists of an earthen levee constructed between the 1890s and early 1960s. Early components of the levee were built to create agricultural land. New levees were built and the old levees enhanced in 1961 when development was proposed on what was known as Brewers Island. During the 1990s, minor improvements were made to the levee, including the construction of a concrete stormwall along a portion of the levee at Belmont Slough, the addition of a berm along the water side of the levee crest to raise the height of the levee, the addition of small pedestrian ramps to portions of the levee along San Francisco Bay to allow recreationist to access the water. The levee crest is a paved bicycle and pedestrian trail, and is a portion of the San Francisco Bay Trail. The existing system of levees is an integral component of the planned community (now city) of Foster City. Foster City was built on fill dredged from San Francisco Bay. The levees and lagoons constructed are the city's primary flood control elements.

P3b. Resource Attributes: HP11 (Engineering Structure) P4. Resources Present: Structure

## P5. Photograph or Drawing:

P5b. Description of Photo: View facing northwest along the top of the levee adjacent to Beach Park Boulevard. San Mateo Bridge is in the background.



P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:  
1890s, 1960s

P7. Owner and Address:  
City of Foster City  
610 Foster City Blvd.  
Foster City, CA 94404

P8. Recorded by:  
Eileen Barrow  
Tom Origer & Associates  
P.O. Box 1531  
Rohnert Park, CA 94927

P9. Date Recorded:  
March 2016

P10. Type of Survey:  
Reconnaissance

P11. Report Citation: Beard, V. 2016  
*Historical Evaluation of Foster City and the Foster City Levee System, San Mateo County, California.*

P12. Attachments: Building, Structure, Object Record, Linear Feature Record, Continuation Sheets, Location Map



# BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary # P-

HRI #

NRHP Status Code:

Resource Name or #: Foster City Levee System

Page 2 of 8

**B1. Historic Name:** Unknown

**B2. Common Name:** Foster City levee

**B3. Original Use:** Levee

**B4. Present Use:** Levee

**B5. Architectural Style:** NA

**B6. Construction History:** Work on the levee system began in the 1890. In 1961, new levees were built and the old ones enhanced. In the 1990s, the levees were raised 18 inches per FEMA requirements.

**B7. Moved?** No

**Date:** NA

**Original Location:** Yes

**B8. Related Features:** Levee System (see Linear Record)

**B9a. Architect:** NA

**B9b. Builder:** NA

**B10. Significance:**

**Theme:** Swamp Land Reclamation

**Area:** San Francisco Bay

The Modern New Town Movement

California

**Period of Significance:** 1849 to 1961  
1955 to 1990

**Property Type:** Structure

**Applicable Criteria:** California Register criteria 1 and 3

The Foster City levee system is uniquely tied to Foster City in that without the levee, the city could not exist. The levees were developed to keep bay water from the low-lying property that would become the city site. Evaluation of the levee system would not be adequate without evaluating the larger, Foster City resource.

## Context Statement

The Foster City and the Foster City levee system are associated with two themes important on State and local levels. First, the levees instrumental in the creation of Brewers Island, and ultimately Foster City, represent the pattern of marsh reclamation of the mid- to late 19th century that led to the creation of millions of acres of land. Additionally, Foster City was California's first post-war "new town," a master planned community in the spirit of the modern new town movement following World War II.

**B11. Additional Resource Attributes:**

**B12. References:**

See Continuation Sheet page 5

**B13. Remarks:**

**B14. Evaluator:** V. Beard

**Date of Evaluation:** June 2016

North ↑



# CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 3 of 8

Recorded by: V. Beard

Primary #:

HRI #:

Trinomial:

Resource Name or #: Foster City Levee System

Date: June 2016

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## B10. Significance: (Continued)

### *Swamp Land Reclamation, 1849 to 1961*

After passage of the Swamp Land Acts of 1849 and 1850, California granted vast tracks of seasonally inundated land to speculators for the purpose of reclaiming wetlands by constructing of levees and drains. The Swamp Land Act eventually led to more than two million acres granted in the state of California (USGS 2006). In the San Francisco Bay Area, reclaimed land was put to a variety of uses, including agriculture, urban development, transportation, military, and industrial. By 1957, most of the reclaimed land in the south part of the bay was diked to create salt pond, including portions current-day Foster City.

### *The Modern New Town Movement, 1955 to 1990*

After World War II, the United States experienced a serious housing shortage due to the number of servicemen returning to an already limited housing supply resulting from the Depression. The sprawling suburbs created by the housing boom received much criticism regarding their uniformity, decentralization, and lack of cultural opportunities. Criticisms of the suburbs caused some developers to rethink the earlier garden city and new town concepts during the 1950s and 60s. Many thought that new towns were the answer to the problem, and planned, self-sustaining communities were promoted across the United States in response. Foster City was one of the first new towns to be designed and constructed, predating Colombia, Maryland and Irvine, California; both well known new towns.

### **Property History**

T. Jack Foster purchased the 2,600 acres of swampy grazing land in 1960 and commenced the unparalleled task of creating buildable land. Over a three-year period, 18 million cubic yards of sand were dredged from the San Bruno Shoals and transported to Brewers Island by barge to raise the ground level six feet. Foster relied on the expertise of engineering firm Wilsey, Ham & Blair, and soils consultants Dames & Moore to work out issues of subsidence and drainage. At just eight feet above sea level, Foster City relies on a system of levees and lagoons for drainage and flood control. When the existing levees were inspected, they were found to be well maintained and required little work initially (Foster 2012). Later, the City was required to raise the levees 18 inches to conform with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations. Then, as now, the City's accreditation as a low flood risk zone was at jeopardy, and all Foster City property owners with federally-backed loans would be required to carry flood insurance without the accreditation. The City spent \$2.5 million dollars to raise the levee.

The resulting landmass featured a system of lagoons created primarily for drainage purposes that became a focal point for the new community. In 1961, a Master Plan was submitted to San Mateo County for the development of Brewers Island. The plan envisioned a completely self-contained community with diverse housing types, waterfront lots and parks, and marinas with accommodations for professional, commercial, and industrial enterprises and public services. The plan projected a population of 35,000, 11,000 residential units, and 10,000 jobs.

Eventually, Foster City comprised nine residential neighborhoods, a town center, and an industrial center. The neighborhoods were named One through Nine, though they were not built in numerical order. Infrastructure for Neighborhood One was developed in 1962, and in November 1963 construction began on the neighborhood's first homes.

### **Statement of Significance**

Briefly, a resource eligible for the California Register is one that meets one of the following criteria.

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

# CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 4 of 8

Recorded by: V. Beard

Primary #:

HRI #:

Trinomial:

Resource Name or #: Foster City Levee System

Date: June 2016

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## B10. Significance: (Continued)

In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, eligibility to the California Register requires that a resource retain sufficient integrity to convey a sense of its significance or importance. As defined by the State, "Integrity is the authenticity of an historical resource's physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource's period of significance" (California Office of Historic Preservation 20011). Seven elements are considered key in considering a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The following conclusions were reached regarding Foster City's eligibility for the California Register as:

**Criterion 1.** Foster City meets Criterion 1 for inclusion on the California Register as an example of the new town movement that changed the way communities were envisioned after World War II. A master plan for the city was developed by Wilsey, Ham, & Blair for T. Jack Foster, and was approved by San Mateo County in 1961. Unlike the builder developed subdivisions of the 1940s and 50s, the Foster City master plan was a community design with provisions for civic, commercial, industrial, and recreational activities in additions to housing. It was among the first, if not the first, California new town to be planned and constructed, and one of the only towns that carried through to incorporation.

**Criterion 2.** Under Criterion 2, a resource can be significant because of its association with an important person or group of people. While Jack Foster was an influential business man, that does not elevate them to the status of "important people" in a way that satisfies Criterion 2.

**Criterion 3.** Foster City meets Criterion 3 for inclusion on the California Register. Criterion 3 requires that a resource embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction. From the ground up, Foster City was an engineering feat that required coordination between planners, civic engineers, soil scientist, and builders. The result was a unique, man-made land mass and community that is unparalleled in California, and possibly nationwide.

**Criterion 4.** Criterion 4 generally applies to archaeological resources or resources that, through study of construction details, can provide information that cannot be obtained in other ways. This construction of this resource is well documented and possesses no intrinsic qualities that could answer questions or provide important information about our history. Criterion 4 is not met.

### Assessment of Integrity

With reference to the seven key elements of integrity that are applied to potentially significant historical buildings, The Foster City retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

### Conclusion

Foster City meets California Register criteria 1 and 3 through its association with the post World War II, modern new town movement. While Foster City was one of California's smaller new towns planned in the 1960s it was among the first of its kind, and despite political and financial difficulties the city has stayed true to the original plan. The creation of Foster City was also a engineering feat that is unparalleled in California.

# CONTINUATION SHEET

Page 5 of 8  
Recorded by: V. Beard

Primary #: P-  
HRI #:  
Trinomial:  
Resource Name or #: Foster City Levee System  
Date: June 2016

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## B12. References:

California Office of Historic Preservation

2011 *California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register)*. Technical Assistance Series No. 6. California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento.

Foster, T.J.

2012 *The Development of Foster City*. Xlibris Corporation. Bloomington, Indiana.

United States Geologic Survey

2006 Wetlands of the United States, Their Extent and Their Value to Waterfowl and Other Wildlife: A Century of Wetland Exploitation. <<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/wetlands/uswetlan/century.htm#swamp>>

# LINEAR FEATURE RECORD

Primary #

HRI #

Trinomial:

NRHP Status Code:

Resource Name or #: Foster City Levee System

Other Listings:

Review Code:

Reviewer:

Date:

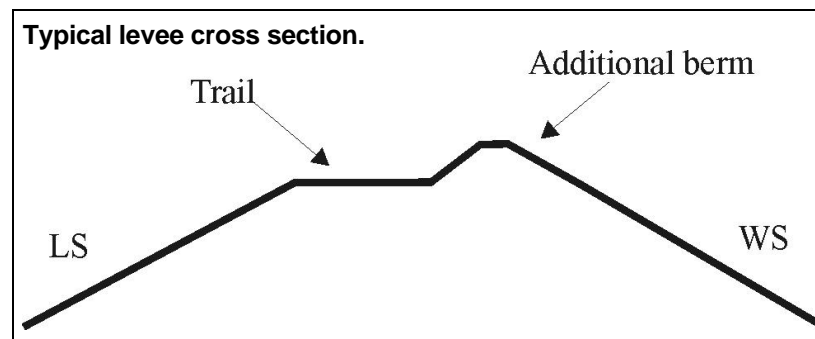
Page 6 of 8

**L1. Historic and/or Common Name:** Foster City Levee

**L2a. Portion Described:** Entire Resource X Segment Point Observation Designation:

**L2b. Location of point or segment:**

**L3. Description:** The resource consists of an earthen levee. Early components of the levee were constructed c. 1890s; new levees were built and the old levees enhanced in 1961 when development was proposed on what was known as Brewers Island. During the 1990s, minor improvements were made to the levee, including the construction of a concrete stormwall along a portion of the levee at Belmont Slough, the addition of a berm along the water side of the levee crest to raise the height of the levee, the addition of small pedestrian ramps to portions of the levee along San Francisco Bay to allow recreationist to access the water (see section cross section below). The levee crest is a paved bicycle and pedestrian trail, and is a portion of the San Francisco Bay Trail.



**L4. Dimensions:**

- a. Top Width: 12-20 feet
- b. Bottom Width: 50-65 feet
- c. Height or Depth: Varies
- d. Length of Segment: 6.39 miles

**L5. Associated Resources:**

**L6. Setting:** The levee is located on the outer rim of Foster City. The levee protects Foster City from San Francisco Bay and Belmont Slough. Prior to historical development all of Foster City consisted of marshland.

**L7. Integrity Considerations:** Levee maintenance has occurred regularly over the years with the most substantive changes made during the 1990s when the levees was raised 18 inch to conform to FEMA regulations. Rock and concrete have been added to the seaward side of the levee to slow erosion.

**L8a. Photograph, Map or Drawing:** See page 7

**L8b. Description of Photo, Map, or Drawing:** Representative view of the Foster City levee.

**L9. Remarks:**

**L10. Form Prepared by:**

Eileen Barrow  
Tom Origer & Associates  
P.O. Box 1531  
Rohnert Park, CA 94927

**L11. Date:** March 2016

# CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #: P-

HRI #:

Trinomial:

Resource Name or #: Foster City Levee System

Date: June 2016

Page 7 of 8

Recorded by: V. Beard

Representative views of the  
Foster City Levee System.





## LOCATION MAP

Page 8 of 8

**Map Name:** Redwood Creek and San Mateo **Scale:** 7.5'

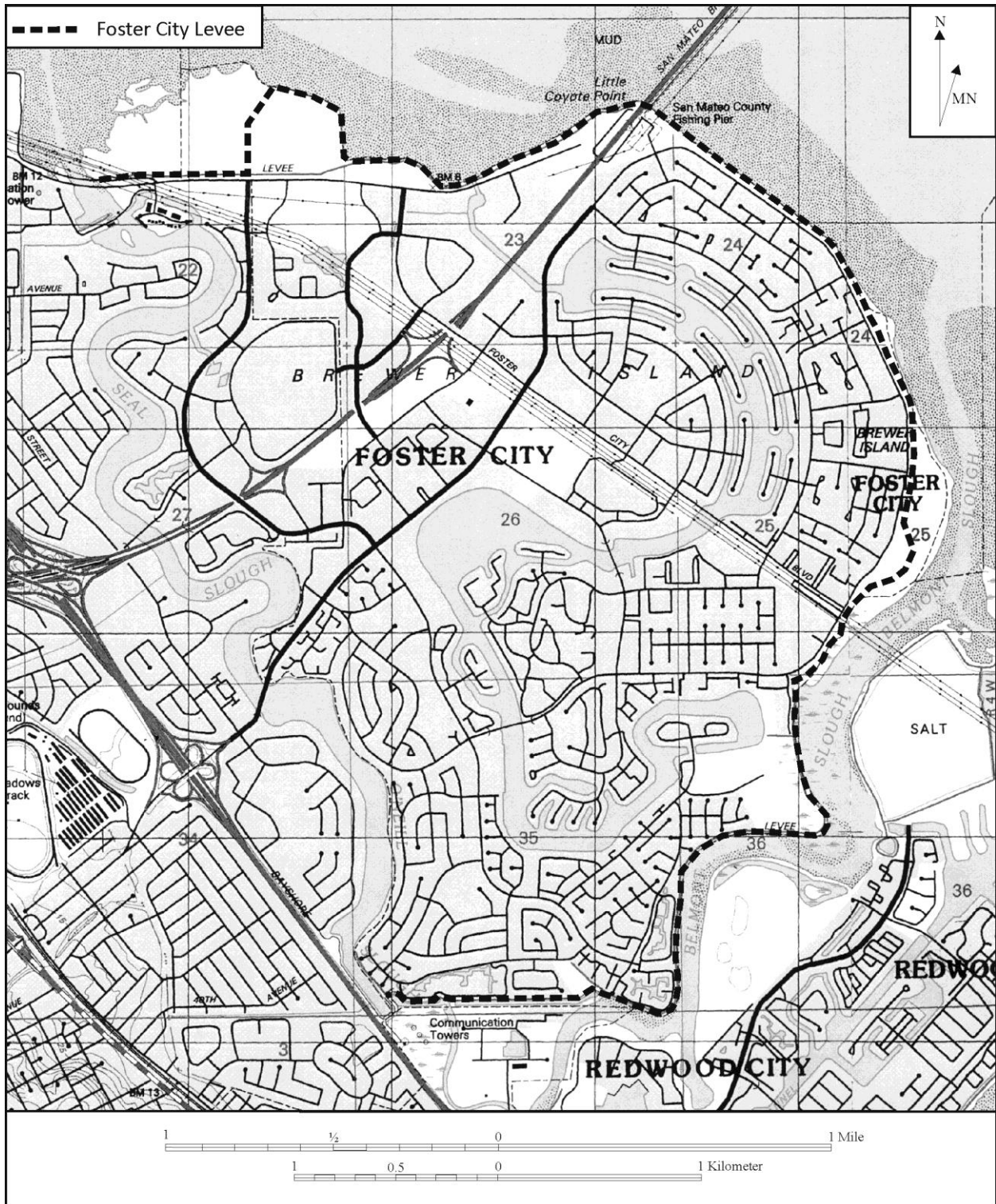
**Primary #:** P-

**HRI #:**

**Trinomial:**

**Resource Name or #:** Foster City Levee System

**Date of Map:** 1993/1997





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**A Cultural Resources Survey for the  
Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project  
Foster City, San Mateo County, California**

Eileen Barrow, M.A./RPA

February 22, 2016



**A Cultural Resources Survey for the  
Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project  
Foster City, San Mateo County, California**

Prepared by:



---

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(707) 584-8200  
(707) 584-8300 (fax)

Prepared for:

Carla Violet  
Urban Planning Partners, inc.  
507 17th Street, 2nd Floor  
Oakland, California 94612

February 22, 2016

## **ABSTRACT**

Tom Origer & Associates conducted a cultural resources survey for the Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, Foster City, San Mateo County, California. The study was prepared at the request of Carla Violet of Urban Planning Partners, Inc., on behalf of Foster City and designed to satisfy requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.

This study included archival research at the Northwest Information Center, Sonoma State University (NWIC File No. 15-1035), examination of the library and files of Tom Origer & Associates, contact with Native American representatives, and field inspection of the study area.

Field survey found no prehistoric or historical resources within the study area. Documentation pertaining to this study is on file at the offices of Tom Origer & Associates (File No. 15-124).

## **Synopsis**

Project: Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project  
Location: Primarily the perimeter of Foster City along San Francisco Bay  
Quadrangles: Redwood Creek and San Mateo, California 7.5' series  
Study Type: Intensive survey  
Scope: ~8 miles  
Finds: Foster City Levee

## **Project Personnel**

Eileen Barrow served as the project manager for this project. She co-authored the report, participated in the fieldwork, and provided project oversight. Ms. Barrow has been with Tom Origer & Associates since 2005. She holds a Master of Arts in cultural resources management from Sonoma State University. Ms. Barrow's experience includes work that has been completed in compliance with local ordinances, CEQA, NEPA, and Section 106 (NHPA) requirements. Her professional affiliations include the Society for American Archaeology, the Society for California Archaeology, the Cotati Historical Society, the Sonoma County Historical Society, and the Western Obsidian Focus Group.

## CONTENTS

Abstract .....	i
Synopsis .....	i
Project Personnel.....	ii
Contents .....	iii
Introduction .....	1
Regulatory Context .....	1
Significance Criteria.....	2
Project Setting .....	3
Study Area Location and Description .....	3
Cultural Setting .....	5
Study Procedures and Findings.....	5
Native American Contact Procedures .....	5
Native American Contact Results .....	6
Foster City Historical Society .....	6
Archival Study Procedures.....	6
Archival Study Findings .....	6
Field Survey Procedures .....	7
Field Survey Findings .....	7
Recommendations .....	7
Accidental Discovery .....	7
Summary .....	8
Materials Consulted .....	9
APPENDIX A: Native American Contact	
APPENDIX B: Project Description	

## FIGURES

Figure 1. Project vicinity	1
Figure 2. Study location	4

## INTRODUCTION

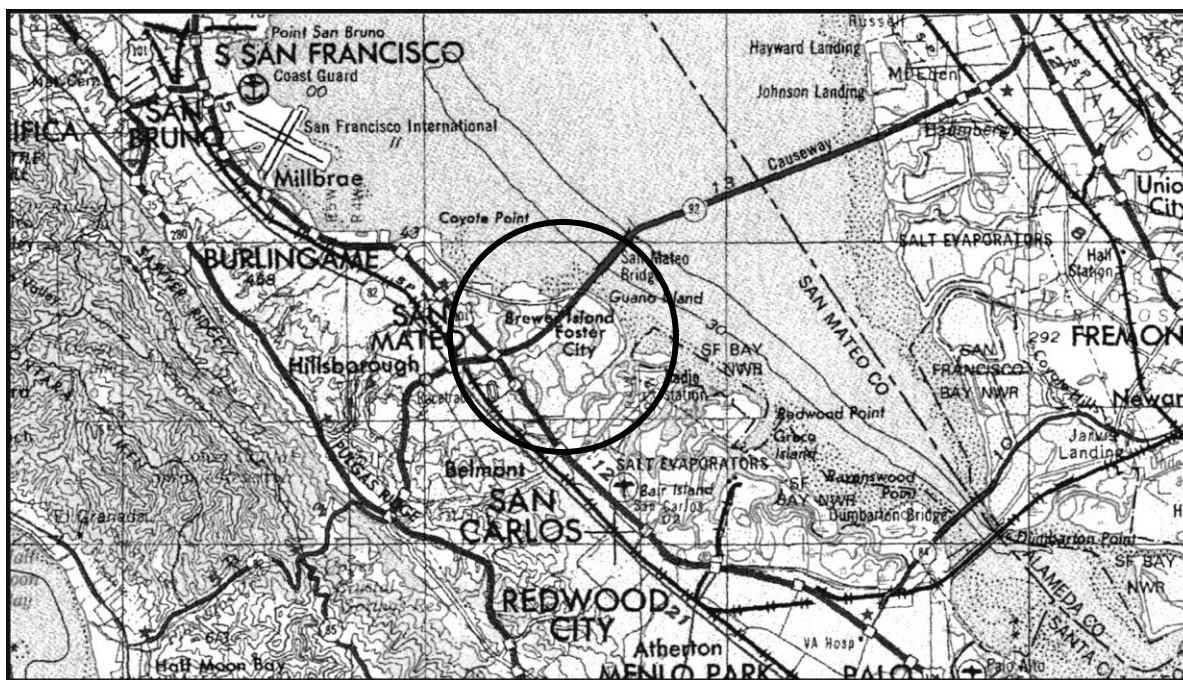
Tom Origer & Associates conducted a cultural resources survey for the Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, Foster City, San Mateo County, California (Figure 1). The study was prepared at the request of Carla Violet of Urban Planning Partners, Inc., on behalf of Foster City and designed to satisfy requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. Documentation pertaining to this study is on file at Tom Origer & Associates (File No. 15-124).

Foster City is currently protected from flooding by approximately eight miles of levee which form the perimeter of the city. Recently, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducted a coastal flood hazard study that found that approximately 85% of Foster City's levees do not meet current FEMA standards. Without improvements to the levees, Foster City would lose their Zone X accreditation status; designating the entire city as a flood zone. This would require property owners with Federally-backed loans to obtain flood insurance, and require owners selling properties in Foster City to disclose the flood zone designation as part of the sale, which could lower property values.

The purpose of the Protection Planning and Improvements Project is to make necessary improvements to the levee system so that Foster City will retain their Zone X accreditation status. Proposed improvements to the levees include construction of sheet pile floodwalls, earthen levees, and conventional floodwalls.

## REGULATORY CONTEXT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that cultural resources be considered during the environmental review process. This is accomplished by an inventory of resources within a study area and by assessing the potential that cultural resources could be affected by development.



**Figure 1.** Project vicinity (adapted from the 1980 San Francisco 1:250,000-scale USGS map).

This cultural resources survey was designed to satisfy environmental issues specified in the CEQA and its guidelines (Title 14 CCR §15064.5) by: (1) identifying all cultural resources within the project area; (2) offering a preliminary significance evaluation of the identified cultural resources; (3) assessing resource vulnerability to effects that could arise from project activities; and (4) offering suggestions designed to protect resource integrity, as warranted.

## **Resource Definitions**

The State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) classifies cultural resources as sites, buildings, structures, objects and districts, and each is described by OHP (1995) as follows.

**Site.** A site is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure.

**Building.** A building, such as a house, barn, church, hotel, or similar construction, is created principally to shelter any form of human activity. "Building" may also be used to refer to a historically and functionally related unit, such as a courthouse and jail, or a house and barn.

**Structure.** The term "structure" is used to distinguish from buildings those functional constructions made usually for purposes other than creating human shelter.

**Object.** The term "object" is used to distinguish from buildings and structures those constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale and simply constructed. Although it may be, by nature or design, movable, an object is associated with a specific setting or environment.

**District.** A district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

## **Significance Criteria**

When a project might affect a cultural resource, the project proponent is required to conduct an assessment to determine whether the effect may be one that is significant. Consequently, it is necessary to determine the importance of resources that could be affected. The importance of a resource is measured in terms of criteria for inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources (Title 14 CCR, §4852) as listed below. A resource may be important if it meets any one of the criteria below, or if it is already listed on the California Register of Historical Resources or a local register of historical resources.

An important historical resource is one which:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.



2. Is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.
4. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to the pre-history or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, eligibility for the California Register requires that a resource retains sufficient integrity to convey a sense of its significance or importance. Seven elements are considered key in considering a property's integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Additionally, the OHP advocates that all historical resources over 45 years old be recorded for inclusion in the OHP filing system (OHP 1995:2), although the use of professional judgment is urged in determining whether a resource warrants documentation.

## **PROJECT SETTING**

### **Study Area Location and Description**

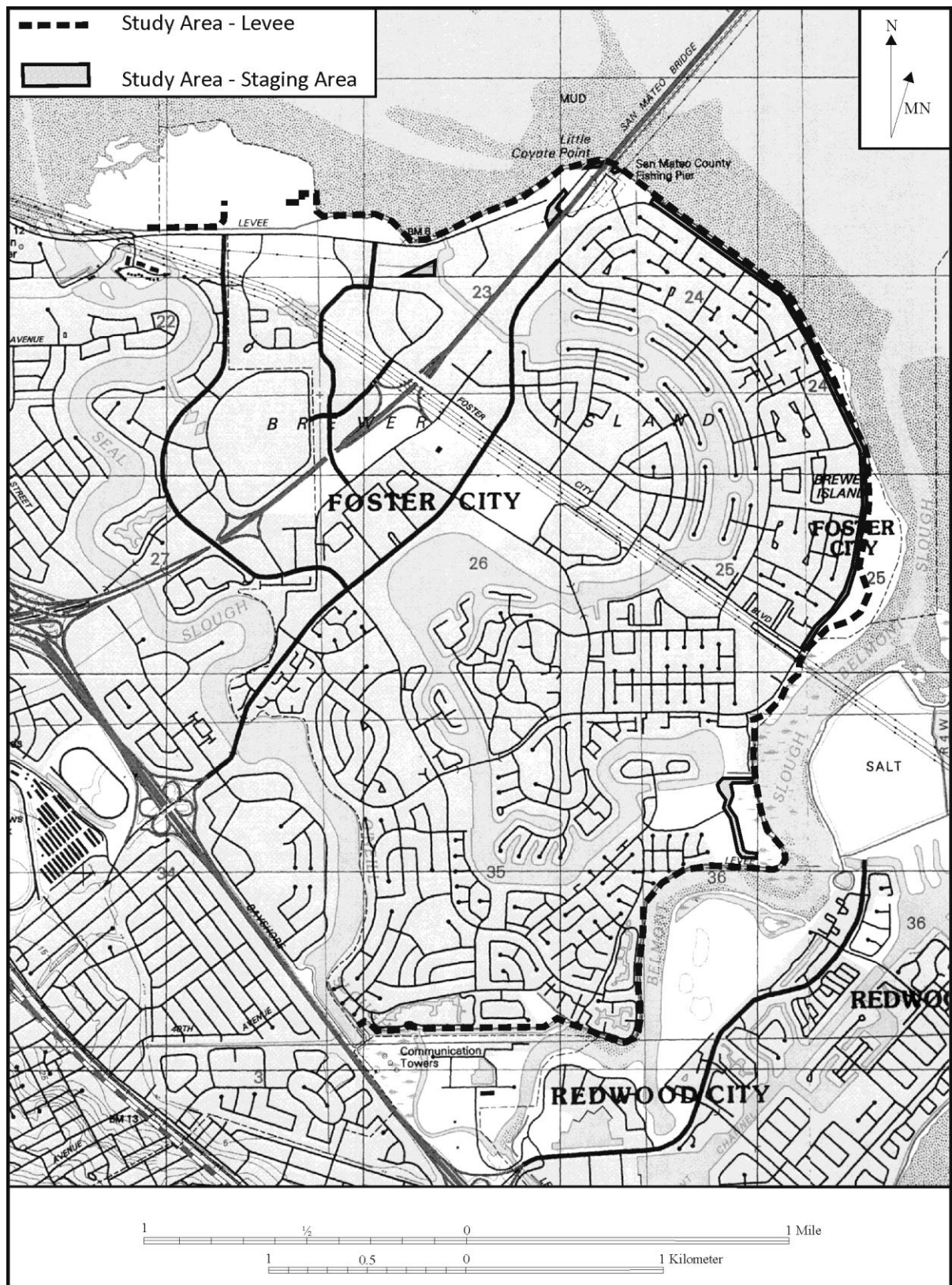
The study area is located in Foster City in east San Mateo County, as shown on the Redwood Creek and San Mateo, California 7.5' USGS topographic maps (Figure 2). Project plans involve improvements to the existing 8-mile long levee system that protects Foster City. Improvements would include construction of sheet pile floodwalls, earthen levees, and conventional floodwalls. In addition to improvements to the levee, six staging areas will be required during construction. A detailed description of what this entails can be found in Appendix B.

Historical maps show that during prehistoric times the study area was situated at the bay margin in an area of extensive marshlands.

Soils within the study area are primarily Urban land-Orthents Reclaimed, but there are a few small areas consisting of Novato clay, Orthents-cut and fill-Urban land, and Pits and Dumps (Kashiwagi and Hokholt 1991:Sheets 6 and 7). Urban Land-Orthents Reclaimed soils are found in locations that were once part of San Francisco Bay and adjacent tidal flats. These soils consist mostly of urban land, which is classified as areas covered by asphalt, concrete, buildings, and other structures. Orthents consist of soils that have been filled and are very deep, poorly draining soils which contain gravel, broken cement, asphalt, bay mud, and sold waste material (Kashiwagi and Hokholt 1991:36).

Orthents-cut and fill-Urban land soils are similar to Urban Land-Orthents Reclaimed, but consists primarily of Orthent soils versus Urban land. In addition, these soils tend to be found on broad alluvial fans and flood plains. They also range from poorly draining to well draining but are still very deep soils (Kashiwagi and Hokholt 1991:30-31).

Novato clay consists of very deep, poorly draining soils found in salt water marshes along the edge of San Francisco Bay. Native vegetation consists of pickleweed, cordgrass, and saltgrass. This type of soil is used primarily as wildlife habitat (Kashiwagi and Hokholt 1991:26).



**Figure 2. Study location** (adapted from the 1993 Redwood Point and the 1997 San Mateo 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles).

Pits and Dumps are typically locations where a gravel pit, refuse dump, or rock quarry is located (Kashiwagi and Hokholt 1991: 30).

The geology of the study area consists of artificial fill and bay mud (Pampeyan 1993 and 1994).

Prior to the reclamation activities that took place on what was known as Brewer Island and now Foster City, Seal Creek, Angelo Creek, and several smaller unnamed creeks flowed through the tidal flats into the bay, within the study area.

## **Cultural Setting**

Archaeological evidence indicates that human occupation of California began at least 11,000 years ago (Erlandson et al. 2007:59). Early occupants appear to have had an economy based largely on hunting, with limited exchange, and social structures based on the extended family unit. In the greater San Francisco Bay Area, earliest sites tend to date to 7,000-8,000 B.C. (Fitzgerald 1993; Hylkema 2002; Meyer and Rosenthal 1997; Schwaderer 1992). No sites have been found in the immediate area of Foster City that date to this time.

Linguistic evidence shows that between 8,000 and 6,000 B.C. inhabitants in the area were Pre-Hokan speakers but by 4,000 B.C. Hokan languages had developed in the Foster City area (Moratto 2004:545). Between 2000 B.C. and A.D. 1 Penutian speakers began to migrate into the area from the lower Sacramento Valley (Moratto 2004:552-557).

Later, milling technology and an inferred acorn economy were introduced. This diversification of economy appears to be coeval with the development of sedentism and population growth and expansion. Sociopolitical complexity and status distinctions based on wealth are also observable in the archaeological record, as evidenced by an increased range and distribution of trade goods (e.g., shell beads, obsidian tool stone), which are possible indicators of both status and increasingly complex exchange systems.

At the time of European settlement, the study area was included in territory controlled by the Ssalson linguistic group of the Ohlone, though it was very close to the Lamchin linguistic group of the Ohlone (Levy 1978:485; Milliken 1995:228, 246-247, and 255). The Ohlone were hunter-gatherers who lived in rich environments that allowed for dense populations with complex social structures (Kroeber 1925). They settled in large, permanent villages about which were distributed seasonal camps and task-specific sites. Primary village sites were occupied throughout the year, and other sites were visited in order to procure particular resources that were abundant or available only during certain seasons. Sites often were situated near freshwater sources and in ecotones where plant life and animal life were diverse and abundant. For more information about the Ohlone, see Lowell (1994) and Milliken (1995).

## **STUDY PROCEDURES AND FINDINGS**

### **Native American Contact Procedures**

A letter was sent to the State of California's Native American Heritage Commission seeking information from the sacred lands files, which track Native American cultural resources, and the names of Native American individuals and groups that would be appropriate to contact regarding this

project. Letters were also sent to the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista, the Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe, the Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan, the Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area, The Ohlone Indian Tribe, the Trina Marine Ruano Family, Jakki Kehl, and Linda G. Yamane.

### **Native American Contact Results**

The Native American Heritage Commission responded via email stating that a search of the sacred land file failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources within the study area. However, they provided a list of additional contacts who may have knowledge.

No other responses have been received as of the date of this report. A log of contact efforts is provided at the end of this report (Appendix A), along with copies of correspondence.

### **Foster City Historical Society**

The Foster City Historical Society was also contacted by letter. No response has been received as of the date of this report.

### **Archival Study Procedures**

Archival research included examination of the library and project files at Tom Origer & Associates. A review (NWIC File No. 15-1035) was completed of the archaeological site base maps and records, survey reports, and other materials on file at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC), Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park. Sources of information included but were not limited to the current listings of properties on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), California Historical Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and California Points of Historical Interest as listed in the Office of Historic Preservation's *Historic Property Directory* (OHP 2012).

The Office of Historic Preservation has determined that structures older than 45 years should be considered potentially important historical resources, and former building and structure locations could be potentially important historic archaeological sites. Archival research included an examination of historical maps to gain insight into the nature and extent of historical development in the general vicinity, and especially within the study area. Maps ranged from hand-drawn maps of the 1800s (e.g., GLO plats) to topographic maps issued by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) from the early to the middle 20th century.

In addition, ethnographic literature that describes appropriate Native American groups, county histories, and other primary and secondary sources were reviewed. Sources reviewed are listed in the "Materials Consulted" section of this report.

### **Archival Study Findings**

Archival research found that small portions of the north end of the study area have been previously surveyed (Chavez 1979, 1981). The closest cultural resources to the study area are located over a mile away from the northwest end of Foster City.

Review of the ethnographic literature found no ethnographic sites reported within the study area (Kroeber 1925; Levy 1978).

Review of historical maps show buildings present within the study area as early as 1894 (USACE 1939; Bromfield 1894, 1910; GLO 1918; USCGS 1857, 1862a, 1862b, 1906; USGS 1896, 1899a, 1899b, 1915a, 1915b, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1956, 1959a, 1959b, 1968a, 1968b, 1973). A building simply labeled 'House', a 'Wharf', and a 'Chinese Fish House' are located in the vicinity of where Highway 92 enters Foster City from the east (Bromfield 1894). A large portion of what is now Foster City was purchased by Frank Brewer in 1898. Mr. Brewer was a dairy farmer who constructed many of the levees that surround the City in 1900. The area became known as Brewer Island for many years, even after Mr. Brewer sold his land (Foster City Historical Society 2005).

## **Field Survey Procedures**

Eileen Barrow completed a field survey on February 23, 2016. The entire levee was walked. Places where historical or archaeological features were noted during the archival research were examined closely to look for deposits adjacent to and potentially extending underneath the levee.

Based on the distribution of known cultural resources and their environmental settings, it was anticipated that prehistoric archaeological sites could be found adjacent to the study area. Prehistoric archaeological site indicators expected to be found in the region include but are not limited to: obsidian and chert flakes and chipped stone tools; grinding and mashing implements such as slabs and handstones, and mortars and pestles; bedrock outcrops and boulders with mortar cups; and locally darkened midden soils containing some of the previously listed items plus fragments of bone, shellfish, and fire affected stones. Historic period site indicators generally include: fragments of glass, ceramic, and metal objects; milled and split lumber; and structure and feature remains such as building foundations and discrete trash deposits (e.g., wells, privy pits, dumps).

## **Field Survey Findings**

No archaeological resources were discovered during the course of our study.

The Foster City Levee was documented during our survey.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Foster City Levee will be formally evaluated for its historical importance. This evaluation will be provided in a separate report.

## **Accidental Discovery**

Although the geology of the study area consists of Holocene alluvium, the land was marshland prior to reclamation activities and development of the area into Foster City. In addition, a great amount of earth movement took place for the construction of Foster City. Because of this, there is a low likelihood of buried prehistoric cultural resources within the study area; however accidental discovery could occur.

In keeping with the CEQA guidelines, if archaeological remains are uncovered, work at the place of discovery should be halted immediately until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the finds (§15064.5 [f]). Prehistoric archaeological site indicators include: obsidian and chert flakes and chipped stone tools; grinding and mashing implements (e.g., slabs and handstones, and mortars and pestles); bedrock outcrops and boulders with mortar cups; and locally darkened midden soils. Midden soils may contain a combination of any of the previously listed items with the possible addition of bone and shell remains, and fire affected stones. Historic period site indicators generally include: fragments of glass, ceramic, and metal objects; milled and split lumber; and structure and feature remains such as building foundations and discrete trash deposits (e.g., wells, privy pits, dumps).

The following actions are promulgated in Public Resources Code 5097.98 and Health and Human Safety Code 7050.5, and pertain to the discovery of human remains. If human remains are encountered, excavation or disturbance of the location must be halted in the vicinity of the find, and the county coroner contacted. If the coroner determines the remains are Native American, the coroner will contact the Native American Heritage Commission. The Native American Heritage Commission will identify the person or persons believed to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent makes recommendations regarding the treatment of the remains with appropriate dignity.

## **SUMMARY**

Tom Origer & Associates conducted a cultural resources survey for the Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, Foster City, San Mateo County, California. The study was prepared at the request of Carla Violet of Urban Planning Partners, Inc., on behalf of Foster City and designed to satisfy requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act. Survey found no cultural resources within the study area and no resources-specific recommendations were warranted. Documentation pertaining to this study is on file at Tom Origer & Associates (File No. 15-124).

## MATERIALS CONSULTED

Bromfield, D.

1894 *Official map of San Mateo County, California*. <<http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15130coll3/id/1720/rec/3>>

1910 *Official map of San Mateo County, California*. <<http://digitalcollections.ucsc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15130coll3/id/1736/rec/1>>

Chavez, D.

1979 Letter report regarding a Cultural Resources Evaluation for the East Third Avenue Widening project. Document S-3115 on file at the Northwest Information Center, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park.

1981 Letter report regarding the San Mateo Redevelopment Plan EIR: Bay Meadows and Shoreline Areas. Document S-3166 on file at the Northwest Information Center, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park.

General Land Office

1918 *Township 4 South; Range 4 West*. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

Hoover, M., H. Rensch, E. Rensch, W. Abeloe

1966 *Historic Spots in California*. 3rd ed., Stanford University Press. Stanford.

Hoover, M., H. Rensch, E. Rensch, W. Abeloe, and D. Kyle

1990 *Historic Spots in California*. 4th ed., Stanford University Press. Stanford.

2002 *Historic Spots in California*. 5th edition, Stanford University Press. Stanford.

Jennings, C. and J. Burnett

1961 Geologic Map of California, San Francisco Sheet (1:250,000-scale). Olaf P. Jenkins edition. Division of Mines and Geology, Williams & Heintz Map Corporation, Washington, D.C.

Kroeber, A.

1925 *Handbook of the Indians of California*. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 78, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Kashiwagi, J. and L. Hokholt

1991 *Soil Survey of San Mateo County, Eastern Part and San Francisco County, California*. United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with the University of California Agricultural Experiment Station.

Levy, R.

1978 Costanoan. In *California* edited by R. Heizer, pp. 485-495. Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 8, W. Sturtevant, general editor. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Lowell, J. (editor)

1994 *The Ohlone Past and Present: Native Americans of the San Francisco Bay Region*. Malki-Ballena Press, Menlo Park.



Milliken, R.

1995 *A Time of Little Choice: The Disintegration of Tribal Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1769-1810*. Ballena Press, Menlo Park.

Moratto, M.

1984 *California Archaeology*. Academic Press, San Francisco.

Office of Historic Preservation

1995 *Instructions for Recording Historic Resources*. Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento.

2012 *Historic Property Directory*. Office of Historic Preservation, Sacramento.

Pampeyan, E.

1993 *Geologic Map of the Palo Alto and part of the Redwood Point 7-1/2' Quadrangles, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, California*. U.S. Geological Survey, Menlo Park, California.

1994 *Geologic Map of the Montara Mountain and San Mateo 7-1/2' Quadrangles, San Mateo County, California*. U.S. Geological Survey, Menlo Park, California.

State of California Department of Parks and Recreation

1976 *California Inventory of Historic Resources*. Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento.

United States Army Corps of Engineers

1939 San Mateo 15' map. U.S. Army, Washington, D.C.

United States Coast and Geodetic Survey

1857 San Francisco Bay, California. Register No. T-664. Department of Commerce, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington D.C.

1862 *Southern Part of San Francisco Bay, California*. 1:50,000 Department of Commerce, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington D.C.

1862 *Upper Part of San Francisco Bay, California*. 1:50,000 Department of Commerce, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington D.C.

1906 *San Francisco Bay, Southern Part, California*. 1:50,000 Department of Commerce, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington D.C.

United States Geological Survey

1896 San Mateo, California. 15' map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.

1899a Haywards, California. 15' map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.

1899b San Mateo, California. 15' map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.

1915a Haywards, California. 15' map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.

1915b San Mateo, California. 15' map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.

- 1947 San Mateo, California. 7.5 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1948 Redwood Point, California. 7.5 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1949 San Mateo, California. 7.5 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1956 San Mateo, California. 7.5 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1959a Hayward, California. 15' map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1959b Redwood Point, California. 7.5 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1968a Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' quadrangle. Photorevised from 1959 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1968b San Mateo, California. 7.5 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.
- 1973 Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' quadrangle. Photorevised from 1959 and 1968 map. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C.

## **APPENDIX A: Native American Contact**

Contact Log  
Correspondence and Maps

**Native American Contact Efforts**  
**Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project**  
**Foster City, San Mateo County, California**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Letters</b>	<b>Results</b>
Native American Heritage Commission	Katy Sanchez	12/29/15	A response was received on January 6, 2016. The NAHC stated that a search of the sacred land files failed to indicate the presence of cultural resources within the project area. A list of additional contacts was provided.
Amah Mutsun Tribal Band	Irene Zwierlein	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.
Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe	Tony Cerda	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.
Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan	Ann Marie Sayers	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.
Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area	Rosemary Cambra	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.
The Ohlone Indian Tribe	Andrew Galvan	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.
Trina Marine Ruano Family	Ramona Garibay	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.
	Jakki Kehl	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.
	Linda Yamane	12/29/15	No response received as of the date of this report.

## **Sacred Lands File & Native American Contacts List Request**

### **NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION**

1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 100  
West Sacramento, CA 95691  
(916) 373-3710  
(916) 373-5471 – Fax  
nahc@nahc.ca.gov

#### *Information Below is Required for a Sacred Lands File Search*

Project: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project  
County: San Mateo

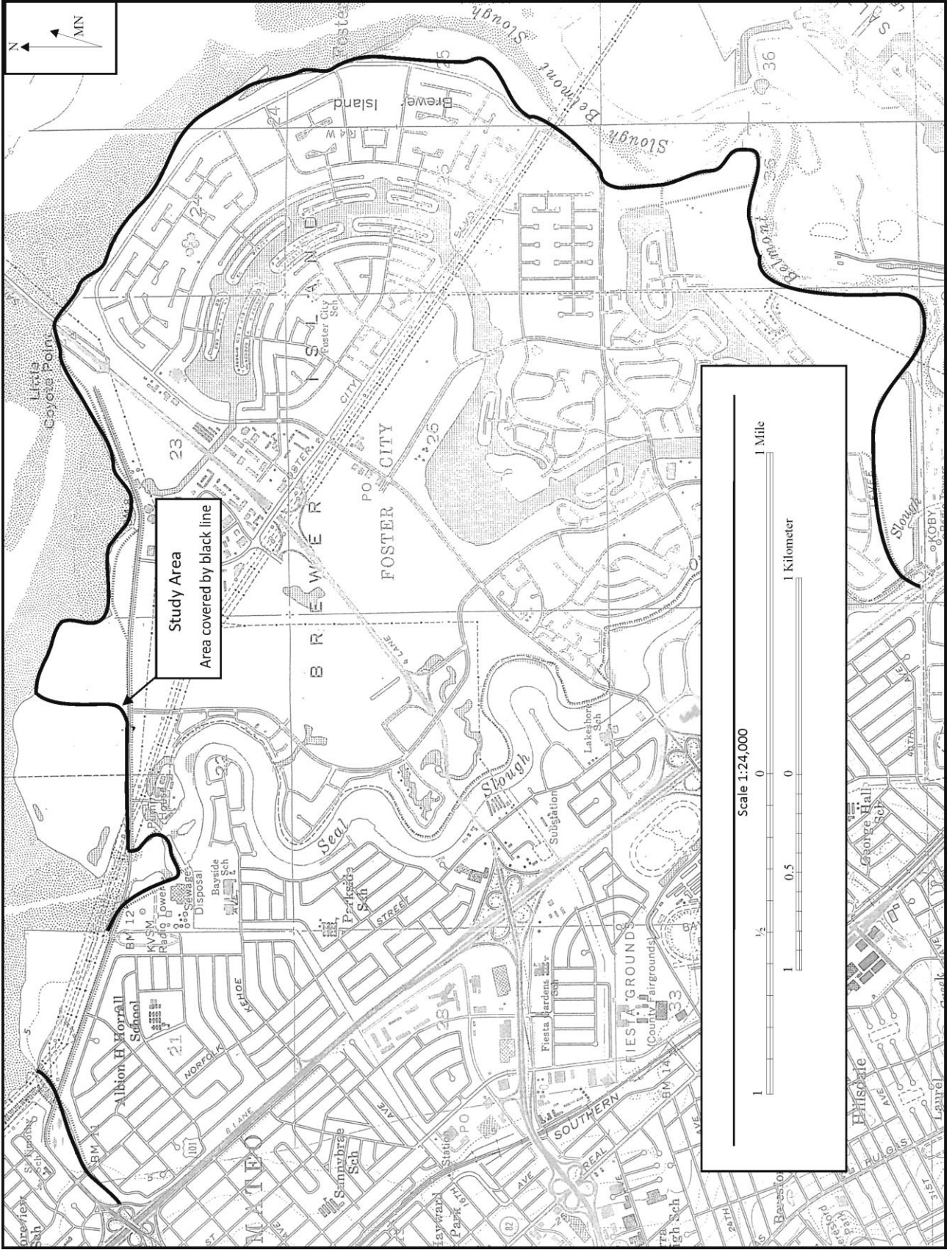
USGS Quadrangles

Name: San Mateo  
Township T4S Range R4W Section(s) 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 35, 36 MDBM

Date: December 16, 2015  
Company/Firm/Agency: Tom Origer & Associates  
Contact Person: Taylor Alshuth

Address: PO Box 1531  
City: Rohnert Park Zip: 94927  
Phone: (707) 584-8200 Fax: (707) 584-8300  
Email: Taylor@origer.com

Project Description:  
The project area is approximately eight miles of levee. The project proponent is proposing to construct improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County to prevent flooding.



**NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION**

1550 Harbor Blvd., ROOM 100  
West SACRAMENTO, CA 95691  
(916) 373-3710  
Fax (916) 373-5471



January 6, 2016

Taylor Alshuth  
Tom Origer & Associates  
P.O. Box 1531  
Rohnert Park, CA 94927

Email to: Taylor@origer.com

Re: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County.

Dear Ms. Alshuth,

A record search of the sacred land file has failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate project area. The absence of specific site information in the sacred lands file 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.

Enclosed is a list of Native Americans individuals/organizations who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. The Commission makes no recommendation or preference of a single individual, or group over another. 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 or group. If a response has not been received within two weeks of notification, the Commission requests that you follow-up with a telephone call to ensure that the project information has been received.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from any of these individuals or groups, please notify me. With your assistance we are able to assure that our lists contain current information. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 373-3712.

Sincerely,

Katy Sanchez  
Associate Environmental Planner

**Native American Contact List  
San Mateo County  
January 6, 2016**

<p>Jakki Kehl 720 North 2nd Street Patterson , CA 95363 jakkikehl@gmail.com 510-701-3975</p>	<p>Ohlone/Costanoan</p>	<p>Coastanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe Tony Cerda, Chairperson 240 E. 1st Street Pomona , CA 91766 rumsen@aol.com (909) 524-8041 Cell (909) 629-6081</p>	<p>Ohlone/Costanoan</p>
<p>Linda G. Yamane 1585 Mira Mar Ave Seaside , CA 93955 rumsien123@yahoo.com (831) 394-5915</p>	<p>Ohlone/Costanoan</p>	<p>Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan Ann Marie Sayers, Chairperson P.O. Box 28 Hollister , CA 95024 ams@indiancanyon.org (831) 637-4238</p>	<p>Ohlone/Costanoan</p>
<p>Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista Irene Zwierlein, Chairperson 789 Canada Road Woodside , CA 94062 amahmutsuntribal@gmail. (650) 400-4806 Cell  (650) 332-1526 Fax</p>	<p>Ohlone/Costanoan</p>	<p>Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area Rosemary Cambra, Chairperson P.O. Box 360791 Milpitas , CA 95036 muwekma@muwekma.org (408) 314-1898 (510) 581-5194</p>	<p>Ohlone / Costanoan</p>
<p>Coastanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe Tony Cerda, Chairperson 240 E. 1st Street Pomona , CA 91766 rumsen@aol.com (909) 524-8041 Cell (909) 629-6081</p>	<p>Ohlone/Costanoan</p>	<p>The Ohlone Indian Tribe Andrew Galvan P.O. Box 3152 Fremont , CA 94539 chochenyo@AOL.com (510) 882-0527 Cell  (510) 687-9393 Fax</p>	<p>Ohlone/Costanoan Bay Miwok Plains Miwok Patwin</p>

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of the statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources for the proposed Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County.



**Native American Contact List  
San Mateo County  
January 6, 2016**

Trina Marine Ruano Family  
Ramona Garibay, Representative  
30940 Watkins Street      Ohlone/Costanoan  
Union City , CA 94587      Bay Miwok  
soaprootmo@comcast.net      Plains Miwok  
(510) 972-0645      Patwin

**This list is current only as of the date of this document.**

**Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of the statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.**

**This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources for the proposed Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County.**

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

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December 29, 2015

Jakki Kehl  
720 North 2nd Street  
Patterson, CA 95363

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Ms. Kehl:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

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December 29, 2015

Irene Zwierlein, Chairperson  
Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista  
789 Canada Road  
Woodside, CA 94062

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Ms. Zwierlein:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

---

December 29, 2015

Ann Marie Sayers, Chairperson  
Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan  
PO Box 28  
Hollister, CA 95024

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Ms. Sayers:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

---

December 29, 2015

Rosemary Cambra, Chairperson  
Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area  
PO Box 360791  
Milpitas, CA 95036

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Ms. Cambra:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

---

December 29, 2015

Andrew Galvan  
The Ohlone Indian Tribe  
PO Box 3152  
Fremont, CA 94539

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Mr. Galvan:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

---

December 29, 2015

Ramona Garibay, Representative  
Trina Marine Ruano Family  
30940 Watkins Street  
Union City, CA 94587

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Ms. Garibay:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

---

December 29, 2015

Linda G. Yamane  
1585 Mira Mar Ave  
Seaside, CA 93955

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Ms. Yamane:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate



# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

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December 29, 2015

Tony Cerda, Chairperson  
Coastanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe  
240 East 1st Street  
Pomona, CA 91766

RE: Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project, San Mateo County

Dear Mr. Cerda:

I write to notify you of a proposed project within San Mateo County, for which our firm is conducting a cultural resources study. The Foster City Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project is designed to make improvements to the existing levee system in Foster City, San Mateo County, to prevent flooding. The study area is represented by the solid black line as shown on the map provided. The City of Foster City Planning Division is reviewing the project for CEQA compliance.

Enclosed is a portion of the San Mateo and Redwood Point, Calif. 7.5' USGS topographic quadrangles showing the project location.

Sincerely,

Taylor Alshuth  
Associate

# Tom Origer & Associates

Archaeology / Historical Research

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January 6, 2016

Tony Cerda, Chairperson  
Coastanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe  
244 East 1st Street  
Pomona, CA 91766

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Julia Franco  
Associate