

Memorandum

To: Trina Meiser, Cultural Resources Manager, NASA Ames Research Center
CC: Kathy Kwong, AECOM
Subject: Section 106 Consultation on Ames Entryway Signage Project, NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, Santa Clara County, California
From: Heather Miller, Architectural Historian
Date: February 5, 2025

1. Introduction

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Ames Research Center (ARC) proposes the Ames Entryway Signage Project (project or undertaking) at ARC, Moffett Field, Santa Clara County, California (Attachment - Figures 1 and 2). As the lead federal agency, NASA is responsible for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (54 United States Code [USC] 300101 et seq.), which requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their activities and programs on historic properties, and its implementing regulations in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide necessary information for compliance with Section 106, including a description of the undertaking and the Area of Potential Effects (APE), the methodology used to identify and evaluate historic properties within the APE, a description of the affected historic properties, and an assessment of potential effects resulting from the undertaking.

1.1 Project Location

The proposed project site is a planting strip at the southeast corner of the southwest of the intersection Moffett Boulevard/Clark Road and NASA Parkway next to the Visitor Registration & Pass Office (Building 26) (Attachment - Figure 3). The proposed sign location and Building 26 are within the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed U.S. Naval Air Station (NAS) Sunnyvale Historic District boundary.

1.2 Project Personnel

This study was conducted by cultural resources professionals who meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 CFR Part 61; 48 Federal Register 44738). Heather Miller, M.A., Architectural Historian, prepared the analysis; Leah Moradi, provided map figures; and Kirsten Johnson, M.A., served as the lead verifier of this document.

2. Description of the Undertaking

The project is considered an undertaking per 36 CFR § 800.3(a) and involves the manufacture and installation of entryway signage at the outskirts of ARC off Moffett Road/Clark Road near Building 26.

Project details:

- The primary structure will be a sheet metal shell, built around a structural core made of two vertical beams and several horizontal stringers.

- The core structure of the signage will be made from A36/A500 steel; the paneling will be made from 304 stainless steel; the tubes supporting the letters will be made from 4130 alloy steel; and all outward facing surfaces will be powder coated for both surface protection and to achieve correct coloring.
- Signage dimensions are shown in Plate 1:
 - The NASA logo will be 10 feet in diameter and 1.67 inches in thickness.
 - The total height of the signage, including the logo and podium will be 15.25 feet; the total width of the signage, including the podium base and red vector shape will be 12.5 feet.
- A time capsule chamber (2 feet deep, 2 feet tall, and 1 foot wide) with a simple close-out panel will be added inside the podium.
- The signage will be attached to a concrete foundation that is wider and longer than the podium with zinc plated bolts and washers.
- The signage will be illuminated at night by floodlights attached to the foundation.

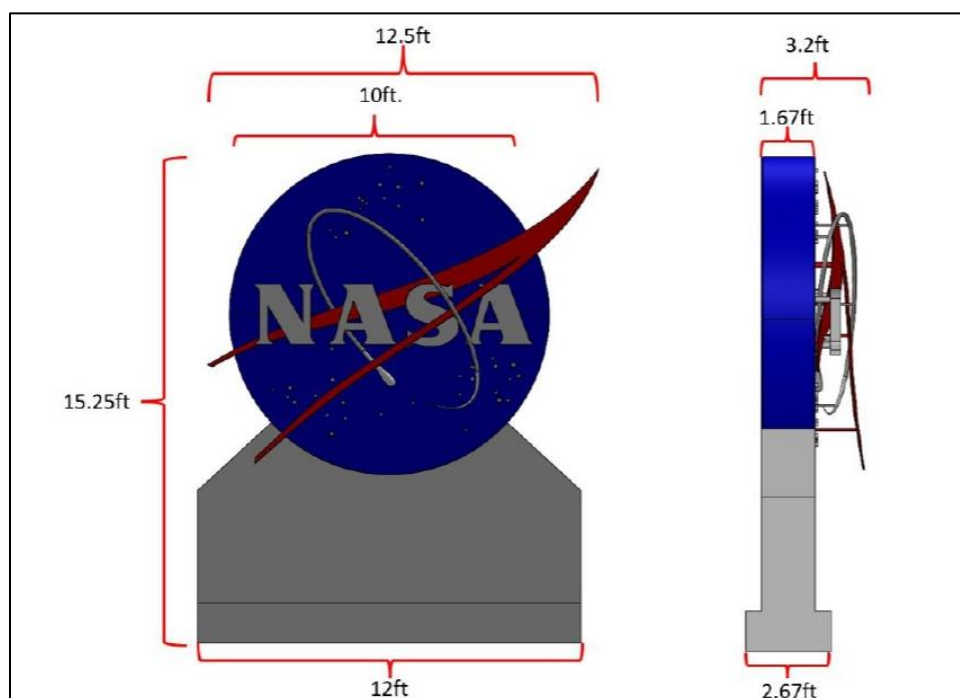


Plate 1: Design and dimensions of proposed signage.

To the greatest extent possible, the signage shall be manufactured in-house in the Ames N211 Fabrication Shop and with materials currently on-hand. The staging area for this project will be limited to the paved parking lot immediately south from the proposed signage location that is associated with the Ames Mars Exploration Center (Building 943A).

3. Area of Potential Effects

The APE (Attachment - Figure 3) was defined to address both direct and indirect impacts on historic properties and encompasses areas that may be affected by both temporary and permanent construction activities. The APE overlaps the NAS Sunnydale Historic District and accounts for potential indirect effects on the district as a whole but does not include the entire district boundary due to the project's relative scale to the district. Minimal below-grade activities for this project consist of an electrical tie-in to existing electrical utility lines for the signage floodlights. The area of proposed ground disturbance has been modified several times since the road was first

constructed in 1933 and consists of imported spoils. Therefore, the APE was defined as the limits of staging and construction for the undertaking with a 250-foot buffer to address potential visual intrusions related to signage installation.

4. Identification of Historic Properties

Historic properties are defined as any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in or is eligible for listing in the NRHP. The following sections address the methodology and efforts to identify historic properties in the APE. The APE includes the NAS Sunnyvale Historic District, including contributing features Building 26 and the viewshed along Clark Road towards Shenandoah Plaza and Hangar 1 in the distance. The Ames Mars Exploration Center (Building 943A) and Medical Clinic (Building 685) are both outside the APE and are less than 50 years old (see Attachment - Figure 3).

4.1 Archaeological Resources

The land that comprises ARC has changed dramatically since the early twentieth century from predominantly agricultural use to an extensive military airfield installation beginning in 1931 and aeronautical research and development beginning in 1939. Extensive surface disturbance occurred throughout ARC with grading and fill to create the airfield and the campuses with hundreds of buildings and structures to support operations.

A comprehensive investigation of previous archaeological studies at ARC was completed in 2017 (AECOM 2017). This investigation involved a desktop survey of archival resources and a geoarchaeological assessment of the entire ARC site and included an assessment of archaeological sensitivity and the potential for buried archaeological resources. The study concluded that there is low potential for more deeply buried prehistoric archaeological resources across ARC and at the proposed signage location.

The area of proposed ground disturbance is in a planting strip next to Building 26 and NASA Parkway which provides entry to the paved parking associated with the Ames Mars Exploration Center (Building 943A). This area was previously disturbed by grading, trenching, and boring associated with the Planetary Ventures' (PV) Main Gate Realignment Project and its necessary road widening at RT Jones Road, Clark Road, and Moffett Boulevard (Moffett Intersection) between 2016 and 2017. The referenced undertaking (Main Gate Realignment Project, NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, CA, dated June 4, 2013) received concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on NASA's finding of No Adverse Effects. Prior to the PV Main Gate Realignment Project, the proposed signage location part of a small parking lot. The extant planting strip where the proposed signage will be installed consists of imported soils; therefore, no potential effects on archaeological resources are anticipated.

4.2 Architectural Resources

The NAS Sunnyvale Historic District was listed in the NRHP under Criteria A and C in 1994 (NRHP 1994). The historic district originally included only Shenandoah Plaza with the earliest Spanish Colonial campus buildings and Hangars 1, 2, and 3. The original periods of significance of the district were identified as 1930 through 1935 and 1942 through 1946. In 2013, AECOM conducted a study of Moffett Field and areas outside of the historic district to determine the eligibility of airfield resources (AECOM 2013). As a result of that study, NASA determined the airfield was eligible as an extension of the NAS Sunnyvale Historic District and expanded the district boundary (see Attachment - Figure 2). On June 6, 2013, the SHPO concurred with the expanded district boundary and a revised period of significance of 1942 through 1961 related to significant World War II missions for the airfield (NASA_2013_0417_001).

Building 26 is a small, single-story, Spanish Colonial Revival-style building with an irregular plan due to a flat-roofed former garage building attached to its south elevation (Plate 2). Smooth stucco coats the exterior, and the primary hipped roof is covered with red barrel tiles. The main entrance is under a covered extension with large arches on the west and north walls. Two similar arches on the north side have been infilled and contain windows, and one arch on the east side has been completely infilled (Plate 3). Original windows are narrow, wood-framed

units protected by Spanish-style metal security grills. The three former garage bays on the west side have been infilled with two windows and a glazed metal entry door.



Plate 2: West side of Building 26, view facing east, November 7, 2024.



Plate 3: North side of Building 26 and gate, view facing southeast, November 7, 2024.

The two stucco-clad gate posts that flank the entry to Clark Road are approximately 10 feet tall with square bases and simple banded capitals with lights affixed on top. A third gate post was historically located between the two extant posts but has since been removed (compare Plates 4 and 5). Five smaller, simplified fence posts, which front the roadway to the north, are connected by a low, stucco clad base and iron fence panels.



Plate 4: Overview of modified gates and gate posts, view facing northeast, November 7, 2024. Compare to Plate 5 below.

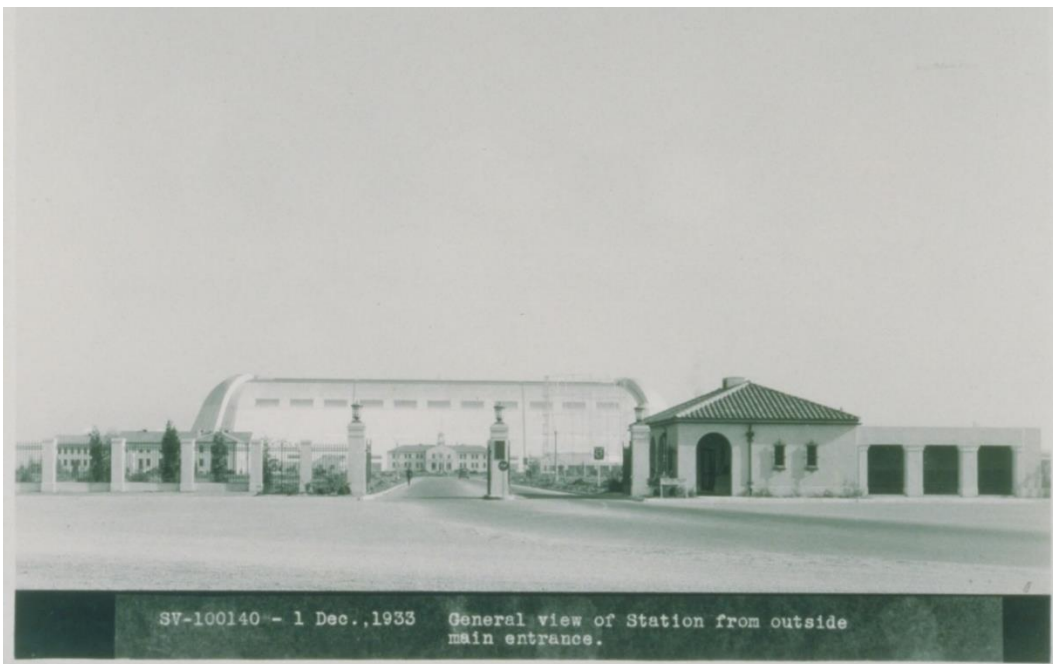


Plate 5: 1933 photograph of Building 26 and the gate posts (Source: Moffett Field History Museum 1933).

5. Assessment of Effects

Per 36 CFR § 800.5(a)(1), an adverse effect results when an undertaking may alter, either directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property for inclusion in the NRHP in a manner that would diminish the historic property's integrity.

The Criteria of Adverse Effect pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5(a)(1) are applied to assess effects of the undertaking on historic properties within the APE:

An adverse effect is found when an undertaking may alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property for inclusion in the NRHP in a manner that would diminish the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. Consideration shall be given to all qualifying characteristics of a historic property, including those that may have been identified subsequent to the original evaluation of the property's eligibility for the NRHP. Adverse effects may include reasonably foreseeable effects caused by the undertaking that may occur later in time, be farther removed in distance, or be cumulative.

Several examples of adverse effects are listed in 36 CFR 800.5(a)(2). The following assessment examines the undertaking under relevant examples.

(iv) Change of the character of the property's use or of physical features within the property's setting that contribute to its historic significance

The project will not change the character of the NAS Sunnyvale Historic District or contributing Building 26 at the main entrance to ARC at Clark Road. The setting will be minimally modified by the placement of the new sign next to Building 26 and within the southern boundary of the historic district.

(v) Introduction of visual, atmospheric or audible elements that diminish the integrity of the property's significant historic features

No visual, atmospheric, or audible elements would be introduced by this project that would diminish the integrity of the NAS Sunnyvale Historic District or contributing Building 26. The project site has been modified several times since it was first constructed in 1933, including recent intersection improvements in 2017, which installed cantilevered traffic signal poles, sidewalks, roadway planting islands; removed the 1933-constructed Clark Road Gate House; and installed a new ARC monument sign next to the gate posts. Although the proposed sign will be next to Building 26, the associated gate, and the viewshed along Clark Road towards Shenandoah Plaza, it will not diminish any aspect of integrity of these historic properties.

6. Summary of Findings

The criteria of adverse effect were applied to historic properties in the APE, including the NAS Sunnyvale Historic District and its contributing features Building 26 and the viewshed from the main gate along Clark Road towards Shenandoah Plaza and Hangar 1 in the distance. The proposed undertaking involves installation of new entryway signage next to Building 26 and within the boundary of the historic district. Based on this analysis, the proposed undertaking would not alter, directly or indirectly, any of the characteristics of historic properties that qualify them for inclusion in the NRHP. Therefore, a finding of No Adverse Effect on historic properties per 36 CFR § 800.5(b) is recommended for this undertaking.

To address the potential to affect unknown subsurface archaeological resources, NASA will follow its standing operating procedures for unanticipated discoveries as outlined in the 2014 Draft Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (AECOM 2014). In such cases, implementation of the established procedures for unanticipated discoveries would result in no adverse effect to historic properties.

7. References

AECOM. 2013. *Historic Property Survey Report for the Airfield at NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, California*. Accessible online at https://historicproperties.arc.nasa.gov/downloads/hpsr_airfield.pdf.

_____. 2014. *Draft Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan*. On file at ARC.

_____. 2017. *NASA Ames Research Center Archaeological Resources Study*. Accessible online (redacted) at https://historicproperties.arc.nasa.gov/downloads/s106_archaeology_20170224_nasa_att_redacted.pdf.

Ames. 2023. "Ames Entryway Signage Design and Analysis – RM: Applied Manufacturing Division." Provided to AECOM.

Moffett Field History Museum. 1933. "SV-100140 – 1 Dec. 1933 General view of Station from outside main entrance" [photograph].

National Parks Service (NPS). 2017. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings*. Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services.

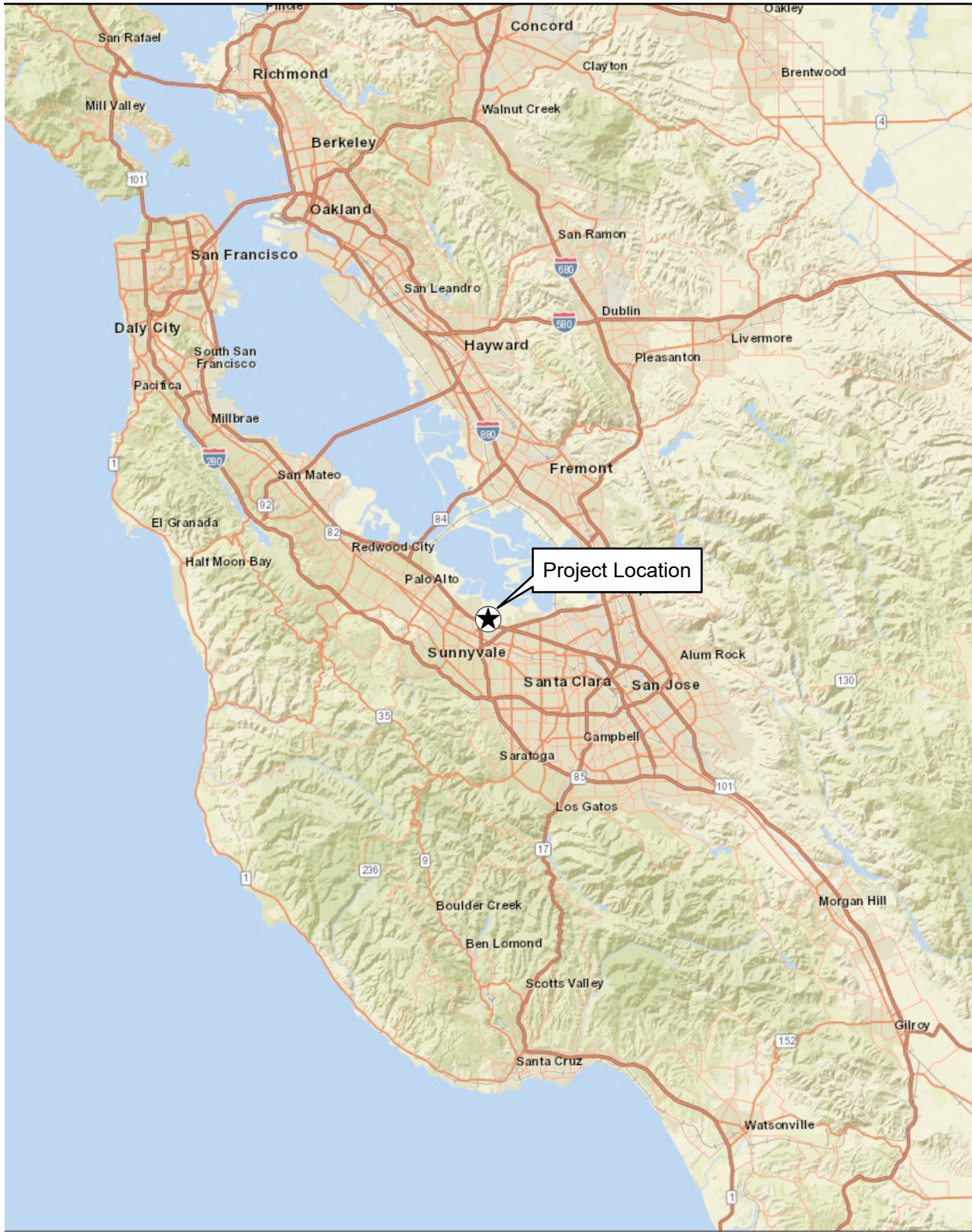
National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). 1994. U.S. Naval Air Station Sunnyvale, California, Moffett Field, Santa Clara County, California, NRHP # 94000045.

Attachments

Figures 1-3 (Project Location, Project Vicinity, APE)

Attachments

Figure 1 – Project Location
Figure 2 – Project Vicinity
Figure 3 – APE Map



Source: ESRI, AECOM, NASA

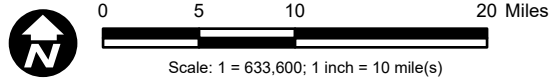


Figure 1
Project Location

Ames Entryway Signage Project

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Source: ESRI, AECOM, NASA, National Geographic Society; USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle: Mountain View

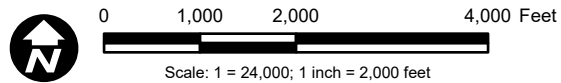
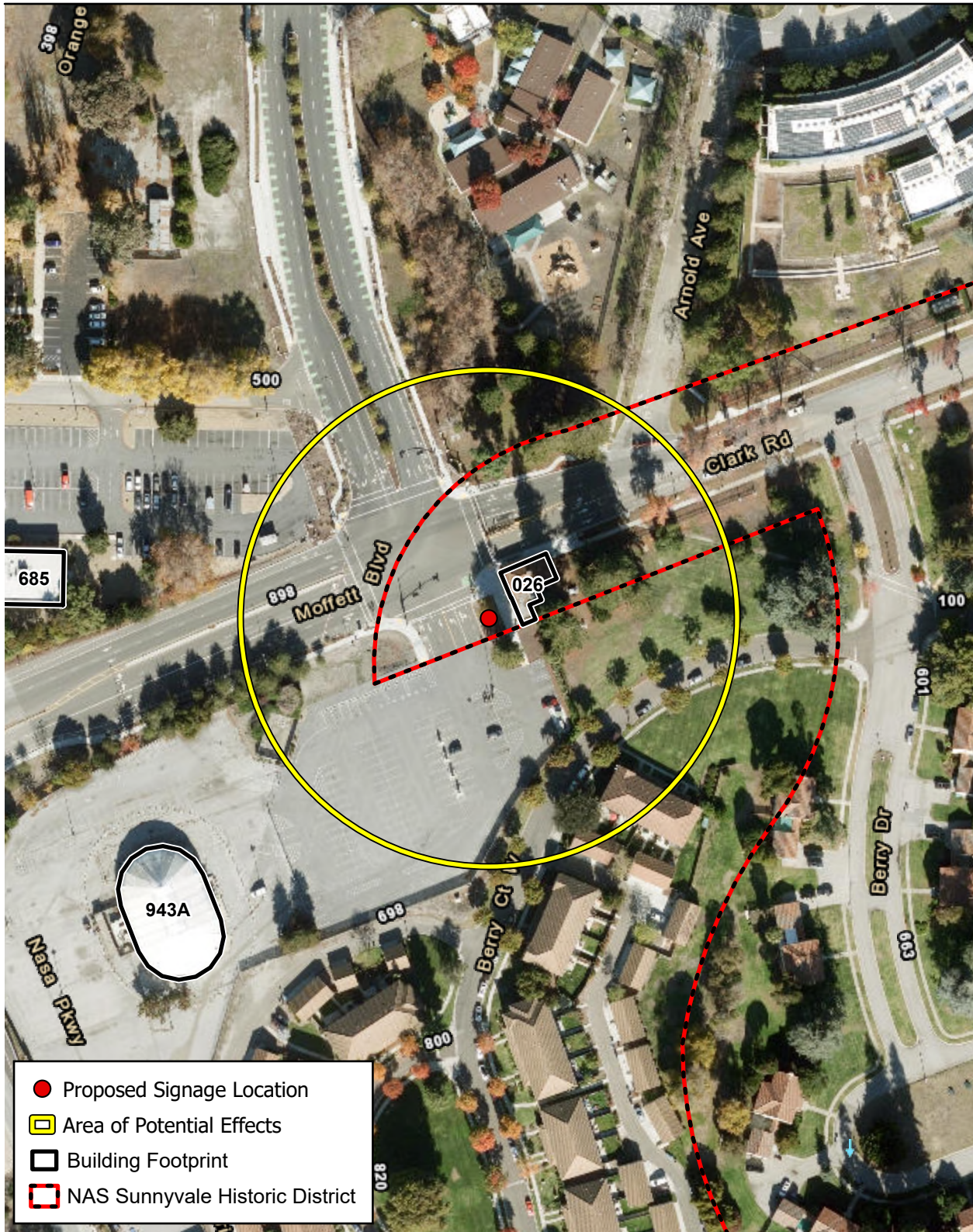


Figure 2
Project Vicinity Map

Ames Entryway Signage Project

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- Proposed Signage Location
- Area of Potential Effects
- Building Footprint
- NAS Sunnyvale Historic District

Source: ESRI, AECOM, NASA

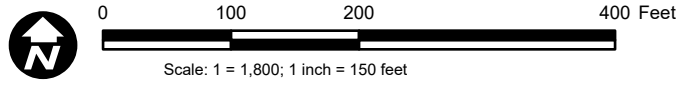


Figure 3
APE Map

Ames Entryway Signage Project

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