Santa Clara
All-America City

Planning Division

2001

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE 49ers STADIUM PROJECT

PROJECT APPLICANT: San Francisco 49ers National Football League Team

FILE NO: PLN2008-06947 / CEQ2008-01060

The San Francisco 49ers NFL Football Team proposes to construct a football stadium for 68,500 seats on an existing parking lot in the City of Santa Clara. Approval of the proposed stadium and related facilities, including off-site event parking, will require actions by the City of Santa Clara, including the preparation and certification of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to support zoning amendments and other entitlements.

As the Lead Agency, the City of Santa Clara will prepare an EIR for the above-referenced Project. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

According to State law, the deadline for your response is 30 days after receipt of this notice; however, we would appreciate an earlier response, if possible. In addition to providing written comments, you may attend one of two sessions of a Scoping Meeting that have been set for September 2, 2008 at 3:30 and 6:30 PM in the City of Santa Clara Council Chambers (see address below). Each session will be approximately one hour long and, following a presentation of the project description, will provide an opportunity for agencies and the public to identify issues that they believe should be addressed in the EIR that will be prepared for this project.

To respond in writing, agencies should identify a contact person. Please send your response to:

Jeff Schwilk, Associate Planner
City of Santa Clara
Planning Division
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Kevin L. Riley

Date: August 15, 2008

Kevin L. Riley, AICP
Director of Planning and Inspection

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August 2008

Introduction

The San Francisco 49ers NFL Football Team proposes to construct a football stadium for 68,500 seats on an existing parking lot in the City of Santa Clara. Approval of the proposed stadium and related facilities, including off-site event parking, will require actions by the City of Santa Clara, including the preparation and certification of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to support zoning amendments and other entitlements.

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to evaluate a project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment; to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts; and to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. The EIR will address the significant or potentially significant effects of the proposed project. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the EIR will include the following:

- An executive summary including a summarized project description and a list of identified significant impacts and proposed mitigation;
- A detailed project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, environmental impacts, and mitigation measures for the project;
- Alternatives to the project as proposed; and
- Environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) the growth inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (c) cumulative impacts including global climate change.

Project Location

The proposed project is comprised of multiple sites which are not directly adjacent to one another. The general location of the project is the area bound by Highway 101, State Route 237, Lawrence Expressway, and the Guadalupe River in the City of Santa Clara. Figures 2 and 3 have been provided to show the general location of the project area. A more detailed description of the project location is provided below.

As shown on Figures 1 and 4, the project site is comprised of four separate properties including the proposed stadium site (site C), the proposed parking garage site (site A), the existing substation (site B), and the proposed substation receiver site (Site D). In addition, numerous public and privately owned properties have been identified for the possible utilization of existing off-site surface parking (see Figure 5).

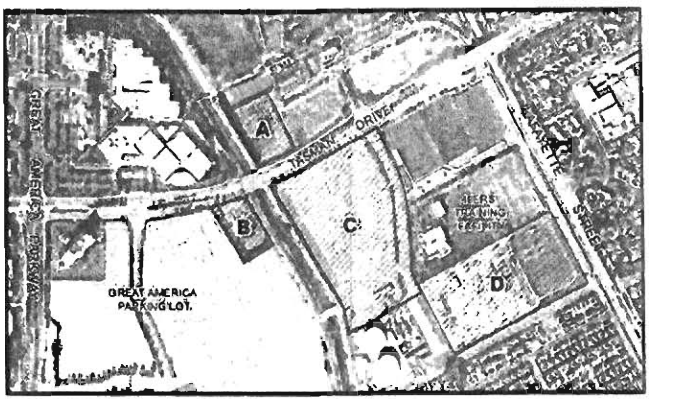


Figure 1 – Project Locations

The stadium site encompasses approximately 22.0 acres located generally at the southwest corner of the intersection of Tasman Drive and Centennial Boulevard in the City of Santa Clara.

The joint-use parking garage that would provide a portion of the necessary parking for the facility is proposed on 2.0 acres on the north side of Tasman Boulevard, immediately east of San Tomas Aquino Creek.

The existing substation is on 2.1 acres located at the southwest corner of San Tomas Aquino Creek and Tasman Drive; the proposed substation receiver site is a 14.2-acre property located immediately southeast of the stadium site that contains the Silicon Valley Power's Northern Receiving Station.

The project is proposing to use existing off-site parking to be located throughout the industrial and commercial area within walking distance of the proposed stadium site. Figure 5 shows the locations of the candidate parking areas.

Project Description

The proposed project includes four specific components:

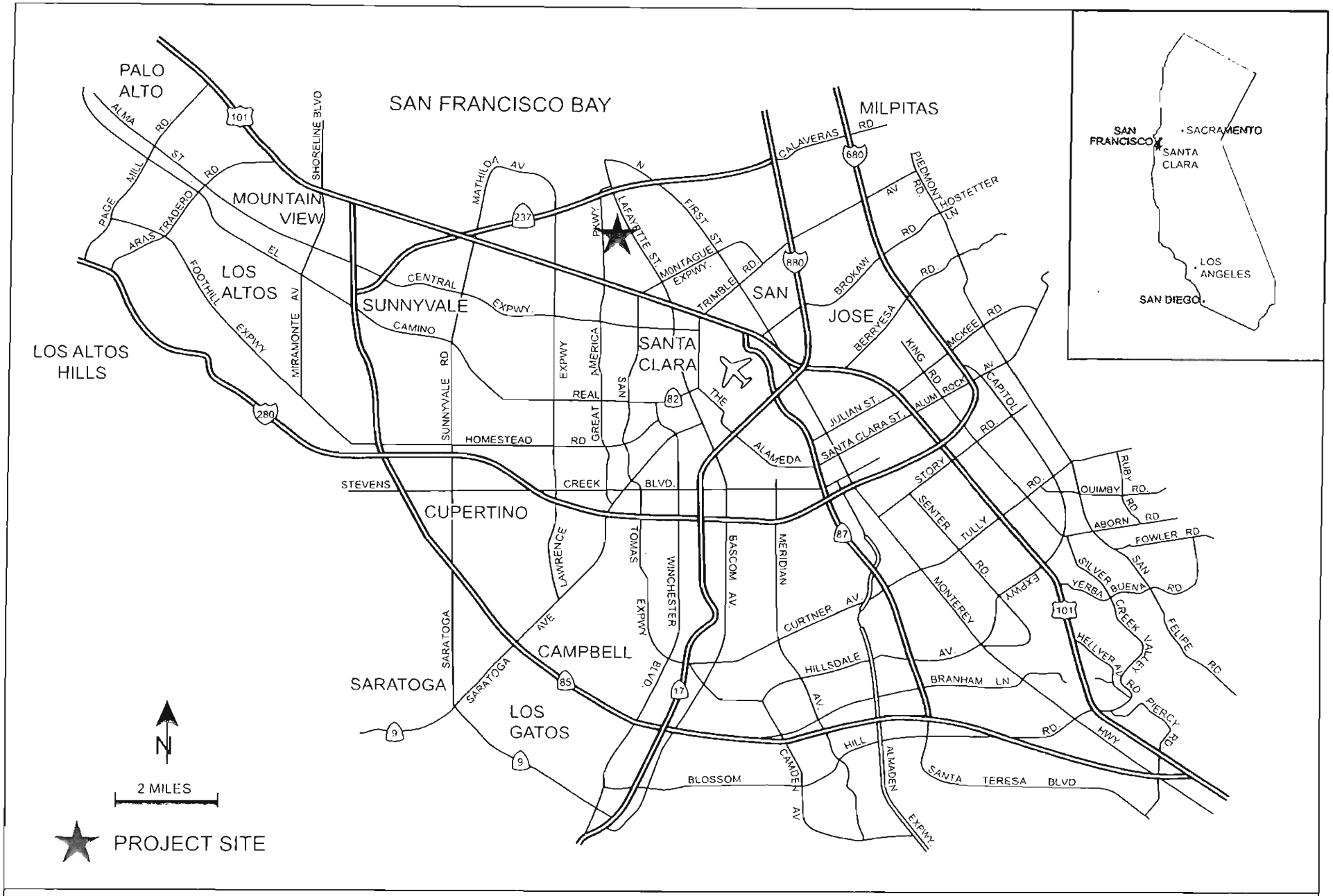
- Stadium
- Substation Relocation
- Off-Site Surface Parking
- Parking Garage (Shared Use)

Each of these project components are described below.

Stadium Component

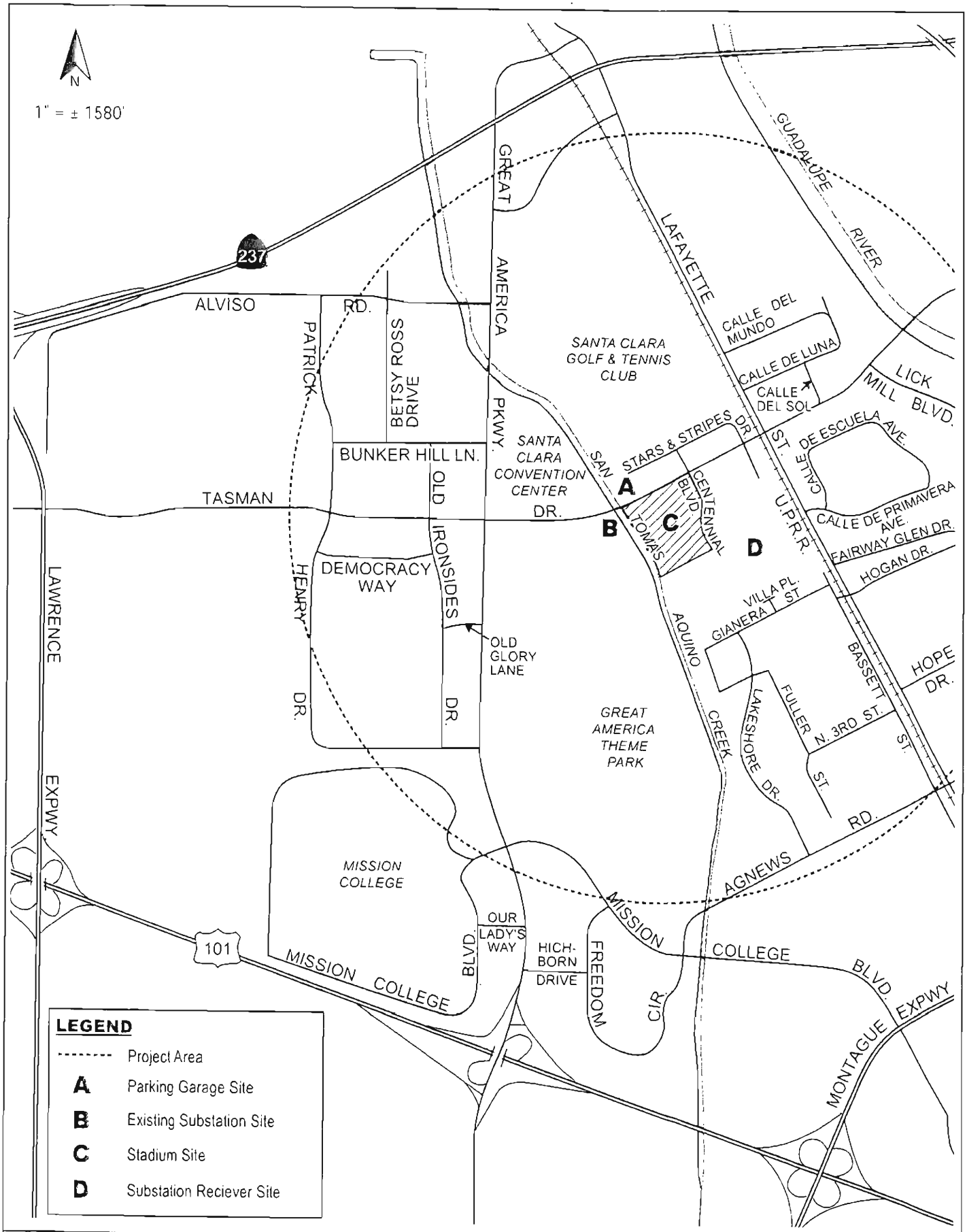
The proposed stadium site is bounded on the north by Tasman Drive, on the east by the Santa Clara Youth Soccer Park (soccer park) and the existing Marie P. DeBartolo Sports Centre[1], on the south by Silicon Valley Power's Northern Receiving Station (receiving station) and the City of Santa Clara's North Side Water Storage Tanks (water storage tanks), and on the west by San Tomas Aquino Creek. Most of the stadium site is currently designated as an overflow parking lot for the nearby California's Great America theme park (Great America).

[1] The Marie P. DeBartolo Sports Centre is the current training facility and corporate headquarters for the San Francisco 49ers football team and will be referred to in this document as the training facility.



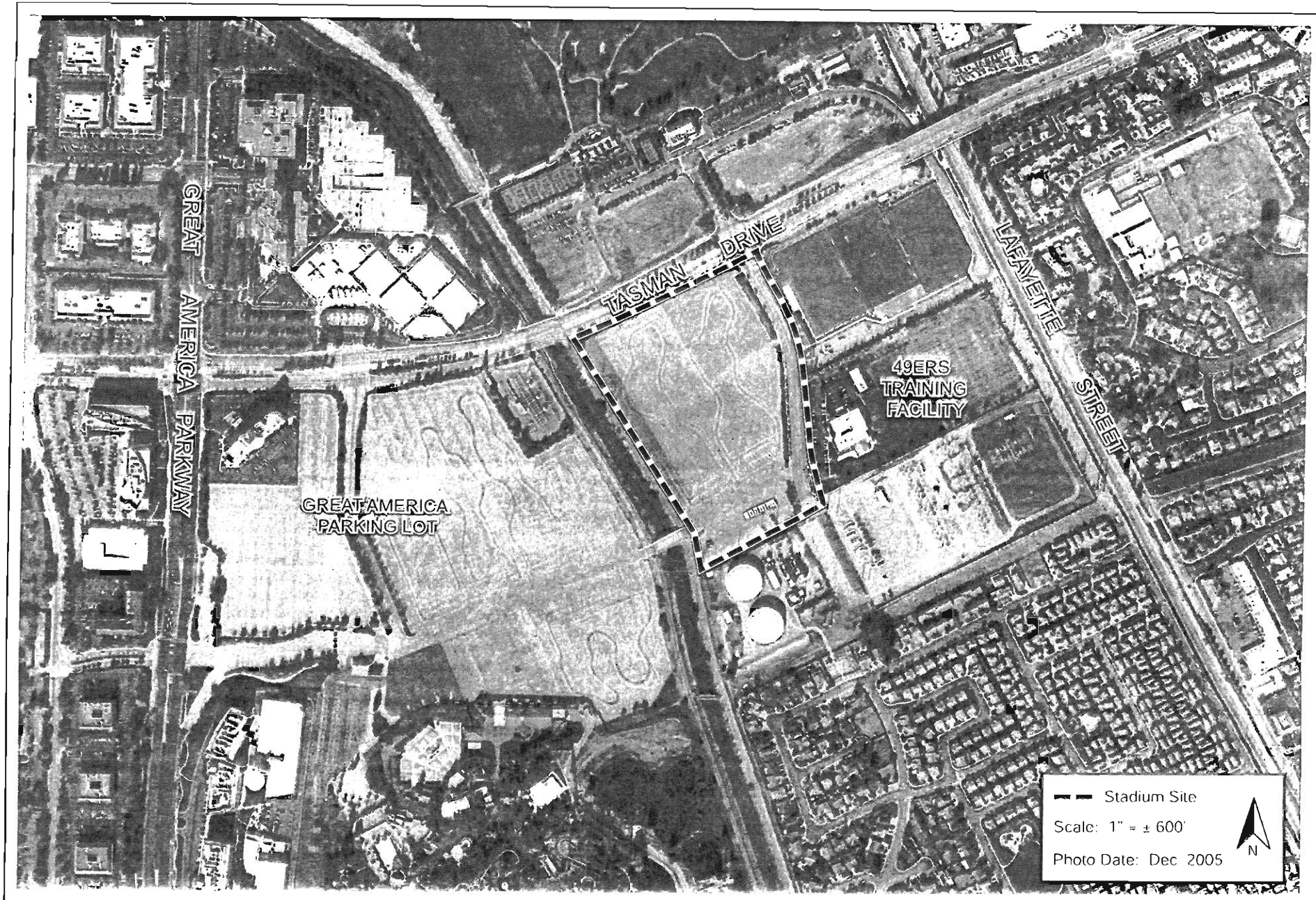
REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 2



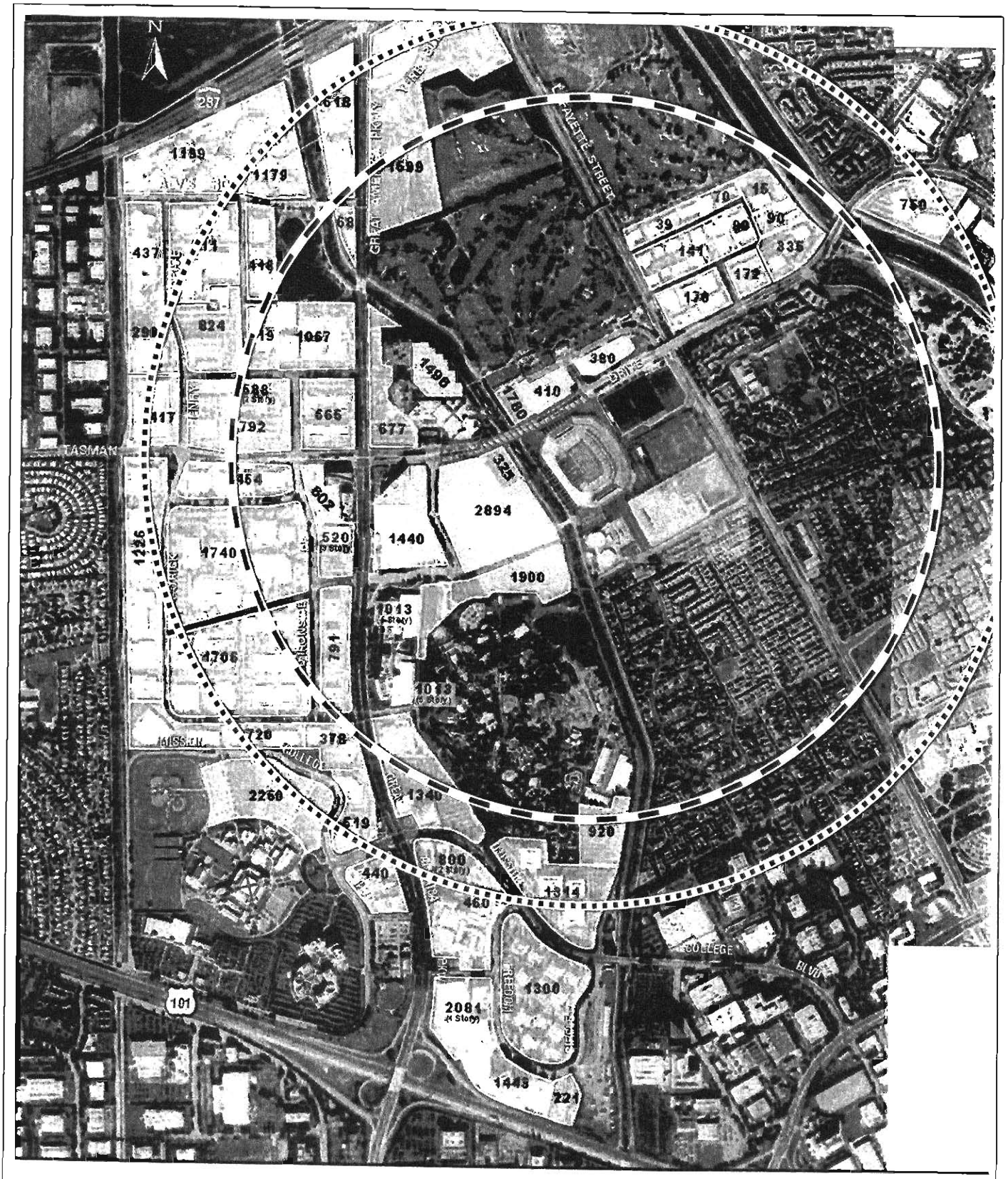
VICINITY MAP

FIGURE 3



PROJECT AREA

FIGURE 4



Parking Supply

15 Minute Walking Radius

20 Minute Walking Radius

AVAILABLE PARKING AREAS

FIGURE 5

The stadium would be developed and owned by a public agency to be formed by the City of Santa Clara and the City's Redevelopment Agency. The stadium would be leased to the San Francisco 49ers (49ers team), a National Football League (NFL) franchise, for playing home games during the NFL pre-season, regular season, and post-season and other NFL related events. In addition to football events, use of the stadium may range from incidental use of meeting room facilities within the main building, including support of Convention Center activities, to significant activities such as concerts and other sporting events that could use a significant amount of the available seating. Approximately 20 non-NFL related significant events per year are contemplated.

The proposed stadium would have a permanent seating capacity of up to 68,500 seats and will be designed to expand to approximately 75,000 seats for special events. An NFL Super Bowl game would be an example of a special event requiring additional seating. The stadium structure would have a maximum height of 175 feet above the ground surface with light standards on top of the structure reaching a maximum height of 200 feet above the ground surface. The stadium would be five levels on the east, north, and south sides and nine levels (referred to as the Suite Tower) on the west side. The event level of the stadium (i.e., ground level) would include the playing field, locker rooms, main commissary, facilities for groundskeeping staff, operations (including management, security, and janitorial), truck docks, and facilities for various other support functions. The event level will be constructed at approximately the existing site elevation (an average of 12 feet above sea level[2]). The press as well as TV and/or radio broadcast personnel will have facilities at the Press Level located on the top floor of the west side. The box office, 49ers Team store, Stadium Authority office, and for-lease commercial space will be located on ground level along the Tasman Drive frontage.

In order to accommodate the stadium as proposed, Centennial Boulevard south of Tasman Drive will need to be abandoned and the roadway removed. A two-lane access driveway will be added along the eastern boundary of the stadium site to provide access to the soccer park. With the new two-lane driveway, access to the soccer park will not change. Vehicular access to the training facility and the receiving station will be from Stars and Stripes Boulevard which is accessed via Centennial Boulevard north of Tasman Drive. During significant events, including NFL games, Tasman Drive may be temporarily closed to vehicle access (with the exception of emergency vehicles) between Great America Parkway and Centennial Boulevard to accommodate crowds entering and leaving the stadium. In addition to the temporary closing of Tasman Drive, the widening of the existing overflow parking lot bridge and the construction of a pedestrian-only bridge south of the Tasman Drive bridge over San Tomas Aquino Creek are also contemplated to enhance pedestrian movement.

Substation Relocation Component

The existing electrical substation equipment located on the Tasman Substation site, immediately west of San Tomas Aquino Creek, may be relocated to the west end of Silicon Valley Power's Northern Receiving Station. Specifically, the electrical equipment would be placed west of the 60k bus structure and just south of the Control House building. Relocation of the substation would include abandonment, removal, and relocation of portions of the transmission lines serving the substation and surrounding properties. An existing electric service that serves the Light Rail would remain along Tasman. The abandoned substation site could be developed with additional surface parking.

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[2] USGS, Milpitas Quadrangle California 7.5 Minute Topographic Map. NW/4 San José 15" Quadrangle.

Parking Component

The proposed 68,500 seat stadium would require 17,125 parking stalls under the City's zoning requirements. It is estimated, however, based on historic usage of the existing 49ers team stadium that approximately 19,000 attendee parking stalls and 1,740 employee parking stalls will be required for NFL Football events and other large non-NFL events. The anticipated parking demand could not be accommodated on the stadium site and would require approval of a parking arrangement or master plan that utilizes off-site parking facilities for events.

The required parking will be provided through existing and planned parking facilities in the immediate project area. New parking facilities will include the proposed shared parking structure north of Tasman Drive (discussed below), proposed surface parking immediately east and south of the stadium, and the additional surface parking proposed to replace the existing Tasman substation site. Existing parking lots in the area that could be utilized for large event parking include the main Great America parking lot, the undeveloped lots adjacent to the parking structure site (south of and adjacent to the Santa Clara Golf and Tennis Club), and the surface parking lots and structured parking of nearby businesses (most of which are located west of San Tomas Aquino Creek on both sides of Great America Parkway). These parking facilities, many of which are underutilized during weeknights and weekends, could be made available by contractual arrangements for large events at the stadium. Circumstances related to development or redevelopment of any or all of these parking sites could result in changes to the master parking plan over time. It is contemplated that rights to use off-site parking facilities will require land use entitlements within a prescribed parking overlay.

Parking Garage Component

The new six-story parking garage would be located on approximately two-acres of a four-acre site directly across Tasman Drive from the proposed stadium. As stated above, the parking structure would have up to 1,780 parking stalls which would be utilized by the stadium, the convention center, and the Great America theme park[3]. Vehicular access to the parking structure will be provided directly from Tasman Drive and from Stars & Stripes Boulevard via Centennial Boulevard. A clear span pedestrian bridge could be included to connect the garage to the Convention Center across San Tomas Aquino Creek to the west.

Potential Environmental Impacts of the Project

The EIR will identify the significant environmental effects anticipated to result from development of the project as proposed. The EIR will evaluate impacts from the proposed project in the following specific environmental categories:

1. Land Use

The project sites are located in a developed urbanized area surrounded by commercial, industrial, and residential land uses. The EIR will describe the existing land uses adjacent to and within the project area. Land use impacts which would occur as a result of the proposed project will be

[3] The proposed stadium site is currently designated as an overflow parking lot for the Great America theme park with 1,823 parking spaces. The proposed parking structure and surface parking lots north of Tasman Drive would provide approximately 2,570 parking spaces (1,780 in the garage and 790 in the surface lots) which would offset the loss of parking on the stadium site.

analyzed, including the compatibility of the proposed and existing land uses in the project area. Due to the need for off-site parking and possible conflicts with other businesses in the project area, the EIR will also address the adequacy of the proposed parking plan. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

2. *Visual Resources*

The project vicinity includes a theme park, a golf course, a convention center, multi-story commercial and industrial buildings, and a residential neighborhood. The EIR will describe the existing visual setting of the project area and the visual changes that are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project. The EIR will also discuss possible light and glare issues and possible shade and shadow impacts from development of the proposed stadium. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

3. *Geology*

The project is located in Seismic Zone 4, which is the most seismically active region in the United States. The EIR will discuss the possible geological impacts associated with seismic activity and the existing soil conditions on the project sites. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

4. *Hydrology*

While the project sites are near or adjacent to San Tomas Aquino Creek which is designated as a 100-year flood zone, the project sites are located in Flood Zone X. Flood Zone X is an area subject to a 500-year flood; an area subject to a 100-year flood with depths of less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile; or an area protected by levees from a 100-year flood. The EIR will address the possible flooding issues of the sites as well as the effectiveness of the storm drainage systems and the project's effect on storm water quality. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

5. *Biological Resources*

The project sites currently contain some landscape trees and shrubs. The EIR will provide a discussion of the loss of trees on-site. The EIR will also address the proposed expansion of the two bridges over San Tomas Aquino Creek and the possible impact to habitat and special status species within the creek channel. Lastly, the EIR will address the possibility of the loss of burrowing owls and/or burrowing owl habitat. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

6. *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*

The stadium site is surrounded by industrial and commercial businesses and City utility facilities. The site is within the San José International Airport flight path and noise contour area. The EIR will summarize known hazardous materials conditions on and adjacent to the project sites, and will address the potential for the proposed development to be significantly impacted by hazardous materials and other hazards. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

7. Cultural Resources

Most of the City of Santa Clara is considered a sensitive area for prehistoric and historic resources because of the nearby local waterways, the known occupation of the area by the Costanoan (Ohlone) tribe, and the presence of the Santa Clara mission. The EIR will address the known presence of historic and archaeological sites in the project area and the likelihood for unknown resources to be found during construction of the project. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

8. Transportation and Circulation

The EIR will examine the existing traffic conditions in the vicinity of the project area including traffic conditions in nearby jurisdictions (i.e., San José, Milpitas, and Sunnyvale). A transportation impact analysis will be prepared for the proposed project in order to identify the transportation impacts of the proposed project on the existing local and regional transportation system and the planned long-range transportation network. In addition, the EIR will qualitatively analyze the adequacy of both vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation plans. Parking impacts on surrounding areas will be analyzed relative to significant stadium events. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

9. Air Quality

The EIR will address the regional air quality conditions in the Bay Area and will identify the proposed project's impacts to local and regional air quality. Temporary construction related impacts such as construction vehicle exhaust and air-borne particulates (i.e., dust) will also be discussed. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

10. Noise

The existing noise environment on-site is created primarily by local traffic on Tasman Drive and Lawrence Expressway as well as aircraft fly-overs and operation of the Great America theme park. The EIR will discuss impacts to the proposed project from existing noise levels on the project site. The EIR will also discuss the increase in ambient noise levels in the project area that would result from implementation of the proposed project. Increases in the ambient noise levels could result from increased traffic, stadium event noise, and temporary construction noise. Noise levels will be evaluated for consistency with applicable standards and guidelines in the City of Santa Clara. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

11. Utilities

Implementation of the proposed project will result in an increased demand on utilities and public facilities compared to existing conditions. The EIR will examine the impacts of the project on public services, including utilities such as sanitary and storm drains, water supply, and solid waste management. In accordance with SB 610, a formal Water Supply Assessment will be prepared for the proposed project. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

12. Public Services

Implementation of the proposed project will result in an increased demand on some public services, such as police and fire protection. The EIR will address the availability of public facilities and service systems to support large events at the proposed stadium (including security

and traffic management) and the possible need for private security service. The EIR will also address the potential for the project to require the construction of new police and/or fire facilities. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

13. Alternatives

The EIR will examine alternatives to the proposed project including a "No Project" alternative and one or more alternative development scenarios depending on the potential impacts identified. Alternatives discussed will be chosen based on their ability to reduce or avoid identified significant impacts of the proposed project while achieving most of the identified objectives of the project.

14. Significant Unavoidable Impacts

The EIR will identify those significant impacts that cannot be avoided, if the project is implemented as proposed.

15. Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will include a Cumulative Impacts section which will address the potentially significant cumulative impacts of the project when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area. A discussion of the projects contribution to global climate change will also be included in this section.