Appendix C

Historical Resources Evaluation - Piedmont Corporation Yard

Rincon Consultants, Inc.
449 15th Street, Suite 303
Oakland, California 94612
510-834-4455

July 13, 2023
Rincon Project No. 21-11542

Kevin Jackson, AICP
Director of Planning & Building
City of Piedmont
120 Vista Avenue
Piedmont, California 94611

Subject: Historical Resources Evaluation - Piedmont Corporation Yard

Dear Mr. Jackson:

This memorandum presents the findings of a historical resources evaluation (HRE) for buildings within the Piedmont Corporation Yard in Piedmont, Alameda County, California (subject property). Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) was retained by the City of Piedmont to prepare the evaluation in support of the Piedmont Housing Element Update EIR (Project). Implementation of the 2023-2031 Housing Element calls for development of a Specific Plan for four City-owned parcels in Moraga Canyon located in the northeastern portion of Piedmont, including the Piedmont Corporation Yard (APN 048A-7002-003-03). In order to support the identification of historical resources for the Piedmont Housing Element and ensure compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the buildings within the Piedmont Corporation Yard were evaluated for historical resources eligibility as defined in Section 15064.5 (a) of the CEQA Guidelines. (Figure 1 through Figure 3).

Architectural Historian Andrew Rodriguez conducted archival research and was the primary author of this memorandum. Architectural Historian JulieAnn Murphy, MSHP conducted the site visit, served as the project manager, and provided oversight. Cultural Resources Director Steven Treffers, MHP, provided senior oversight. Geographic Information Systems Analyst Kat Castanon prepared the figures found in this report. Ms. Murphy and Mr. Treffers meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (PQS) for history and architectural history and Mr. Rodriguez meets the PQS for history (36 CFR Part 61).

Methods and Findings

Archival and Background Research

Rincon completed background and archival research in support of this study in July 2023. A variety of primary and secondary source materials were consulted. Sources included, but were not limited to, historical maps, aerial photographs, and written histories of the area. The following sources were utilized to develop an understanding of the subject property and its context:

- Alameda County Assessor's Office
- Historical building permits provided by the City of Piedmont
- Historical aerial photographs accessed via NETR Online
- Historical aerial photographs accessed via University of California, Santa Barbara Library FrameFinder

- Historical newspaper clippings obtained from Newspapers.com, ProQuest Historical Newspapers.com, and the California Digital Newspaper Collection

Pedestrian Survey

Architectural Historian Project Manager JulieAnn Murphy conducted a historical resources survey of the subject property on June 22, 2023. Ms. Murphy completed a visual inspection of built environment features on the subject property to assess their overall condition and integrity, and to identify and document any potential character-defining features. Observations were recorded using detailed notes and digital photographs. In accordance with the guidelines of the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), properties over 45 years of age were recorded and evaluated for historical resources eligibility on California Department Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 series forms, which are included as an attachment.

National Register of Historic Places

Although the project does not have a federal nexus, properties which are listed in or have been formally determined eligible for listing in the NRHP are automatically listed in the CRHR. The following is therefore presented to provide applicable regulatory context. The NRHP was authorized by Section 101 of the National Historic Preservation Act and is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. The NRHP recognizes the quality of significance in American, state, and local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects. Per 36 CFR Part 60.4, a property is eligible for listing in the NRHP if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

Criterion A: Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

Criterion B: Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past

Criterion C: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of installation, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

Criterion D: Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

In addition to meeting at least one of the above designation criteria, resources must also retain integrity. The National Park Service recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, considered together, define historic integrity. To retain integrity, a property must possess several, if not all, of these seven qualities, defined as follows:

Location: The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred

Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property

Setting: The physical environment of a historic property

Materials: The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property

Workmanship: The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory

Feeling: A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time

Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property

Certain properties are generally considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP, including cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions, relocated structures, or commemorative properties. Additionally, a property must be at least 50 years of age to be eligible for listing in the NRHP. The National Park Service states that 50 years is the general estimate of the time needed to develop the necessary historical perspective to evaluate significance (National Park Service 1997:41). Properties which are less than 50 years must be determined to have "exceptional importance" to be considered eligible for NRHP listing.

California Register of Historical Resources

The CRHR was established in 1992 and codified by PRC Sections 5024.1 and Title 14 Section 4852. The CRHR is an authoritative listing and guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the state and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change (Public Resources Code, 5024.1(a)). The criteria for eligibility for the CRHR are consistent with the NRHP criteria but have been modified for state use in order to include a range of historical resources that better reflect the history of California (Public Resources Code, 5024.1(b)). Unlike the NRHP however, the CRHR does not have a defined age threshold for eligibility; rather, a resource may be eligible for the CRHR if it can be demonstrated sufficient time has passed to understand its historical or architectural significance (California Office of Historic Preservation 2011). Furthermore, resources may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR even if they do not retain sufficient integrity for NRHP eligibility (California Office of Historic Preservation 2011). Generally, the California Office of Historic Preservation recommends resources over 45 years of age be recorded and evaluated for historical resources eligibility (California Office of Historic Preservation 1995:2).

A property is eligible for listing in the CRHR if it meets one of more of the following criteria:

Criterion 1: Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage

Criterion 2: Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past

Criterion 3: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values

Criterion 4: Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

Results

The following section summarizes the results of background research and fieldwork as they pertain to built environment resources that may qualify as historical resources. The field work and background research resulted in the identification one historic-age property within the subject property, 898 Red Rock Road, which consists of a maintenance yard, playing field, and skate park, which were constructed at various dates beginning in the 1920s through the 1990s. As part of the assessment, the property was recorded and evaluated for historical resources eligibility on DPR series forms, which are included in Attachment B and summarized below.

Piedmont Corporation Yard

Physical Description

Located at 889 Red Rock Road in the city of Piedmont, the Piedmont Corporation Yard is a large irregularly shaped parcel which contains several uses including the city's maintenance yard, Coaches Field, and Kennelly Skatepark. Both the sports field and the skatepark are functionally independent and less than 45 years old, the generally accepted threshold for recording historical resources per guidance from OHP, and were not considered further for historical resources eligibility.

The city's maintenance yard, also known as the Piedmont Corporation Yard, is the base for the city fleet and plant maintenance facility and the street maintenance crew and is comprised of four buildings organized at the center of drive that encircles the buildings and continues to the entry gate. Buildings include a garage, a maintenance building, an office, and a shed. All of the buildings have a primary, south elevation. The maintenance building, office, and shed all front the garage building which features a wide, U-shaped footprint that follows the curve of the encircling drive.

The maintenance building is one-to-two story wood frame building situated on a concrete base at the east end of the site (Figure 4). It appears to be the result of several additions and its primary elevation features three front-facing gables – two one-story gables with a two-story gable rising above. It has a wood plank exterior and an asphalt shingle roof. The primary, southern portion of the building appears to be office space, while the rear is garage with loft space above. The east elevation features an exterior wood stair to access the loft space above the garage. The building's rear elevation includes a ground story garage entry topped with a deep eave plywood awning, which appears to be a later addition. The area above the garage includes a closed paired opening with a hoist beam above. The elevation continues to a one-story section of the building with a short gambrel-shaped overhang above a sliding glass door entry. The building's south elevation is comprised of the building's one-story portion. The building appears to be the result of several additions, revisions, and accretions over time and as a result has a mix of horizontal and vertical wood siding, modern horizontal slide and historic awning casement windows, and multiple entries.

The garage building is a one to two story building and features a skillion roof that slopes toward the rear of the building with overhanging eave at the primary, south elevation for the length of the building (Figure 5). It has a horizontal wood plank exterior. As described above, the building has an irregular, U-shaped footprint. It continues for 11 bays – four bays at the eastern, two-story portion; a one bay breezeway followed by three bays at the center; and three bays at the western end. The two-story portion has three garage entries with metal rollup doors and one man door with a rollup door at the ground floor with two three-over-three wood frame windows flaking a wood horizontal slide door below a hoist beam at the second floor. The second floor is accessed via an exterior wood stair at the building's east elevation, which also features a two-over-two wood window. The remainder of the building features additional roll-up doors at each bay described above, with the exception of the breezeway between the one- and two-story portions of the building, which provides access to the rear of the building. The rear of the is devoid of openings or ornamentation. The building's west elevation includes an additional vehicular bay.

The two buildings at the western end of the site include the shed and office buildings. Adjacent to a vehicle gas pump, the shed building is a one-story wood frame building with a gable roof and wood plank exterior (Figure 6). It has aluminum horizontal slide windows on each elevation, and a rear entry door at its north elevation. The office building is between the shed and the maintenance building (Figure 7). It is a one-story wood frame building with a gable roof and horizontal wood plank exterior. A deep eave overhangs above the east elevation, covering a concrete ramp with wood railing below. The elevation includes two entry doors. A short stair at the north elevation provides access to a third

entry. The west elevation has a short wood stair to a paired door entry and includes two horizontal slide windows. The south elevation includes two horizontal slide windows.

Site History

The area surrounding the subject property was known as Blair Park and historically encompassed the subject property, as well as a portion of the Mountain View Cemetery to the west. Blair Park was named after Walter Blair, the first European settler in the area that would become Piedmont (Walking Piedmont 2023). When Blair first came to the area in 1853, it was primarily large ranchos. Blair purchased 600 acres of the former Rancho San Antonio from the Peralta family and ran a dairy and farm on the property, that extended from the cemetery wall to beyond present-day Blair Avenue and supplied milk and butter to the surrounding area and San Francisco. In 1884, Blair developed 40 acres of his land for a "picnic park," which eventually became the 75-acre Blair Park, an amusement park, at the end of the Oakland-Piedmont Railroad horsecar line, the regional transportation line that he helped to develop. The park, with small sail boats, pony rides, and acrobats served as a way to lure riders to the cable cars.

Walter Blair passed away in 1888. Blair Park kept operating with its various attractions until 1905. Thereafter, a portion of Blair Park was sold to the Mountain View Cemetery. The City of Piedmont was incorporated in 1907 and subsequently began establishing and codifying city institutions and services. During the early 1900s, various cities in the Bay Area constructed corporation yards in order to facilitate growing and developing cities, which began to rely more on motor equipment to carry out city projects, like paving streets. According to historical newspaper accounts, the prospect of using a portion of the remaining Blair Park land for a municipal corporation yard was discussed as early as 1913. At that time, the mayor argued that quarrying rock from the site could be used to pay for it (Oakland Tribune 10/03/1913). Before that time, the property was the site of the red rock quarry operated by local businessman WH Maxwell (Oakland Geology 2017). Located at the head of Blair Park, it was a popular material for local driveways (Oakland Tribune 1972). In late 1913, the remaining portion of the Blair Park property and an adjacent property called Blackberry Brae, totaling 52.39 acres, was optioned for sale to the City of Piedmont to develop a playground and corporation yard until January 1914 (Oakland Tribune 12/10/1913). It is unclear from available archival records if the City exercised the option at that time, but residential development in the former park began to emerge by 1918 (Oakland Tribune 1918). Available topographical maps show that there was one building at the end of Red Rock Road by 1915 (USGS 2023). The corporation yard was established by the 1920s, and likely incorporated the existing building (Walking Piedmont 2023).

According to historical aerial photographs, the corporation yard was the only development north of Moraga Avenue in this area for many years. The earliest available aerial photograph from 1939 indicates that the property included the garage building, the maintenance building, and a third building that appears to have since been demolished (UCSB 2023).

A historical aerial photograph from 1946 shows the site included a third building at north end of the property that has since been demolished (NETR 2023). The shed building was constructed by 1959, and a third building between the shed and maintenance building in the area of the current office building was demolished and replaced with the current building sometime between 1993 and 2000, according to historical aerial images (NETR 2023). It was during that period when Coaches Field and Kennelly Skatepark were constructed. The site has remained unchanged since that time. In addition to available aerial imagery and newspaper accounts, visual observations confirm that the buildings have been continuously altered over time to adapt to the changing needs of the corporation yard.

Historical Resources Evaluation

The subject property is recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR under any eligibility criteria due to a lack of historical or architectural significance and limited integrity.

The subject property was initially developed as a municipal corporation yard for the city by the 1920s. After its incorporation in 1907, Piedmont steadily grew and expanded to provide municipal services for its residents, including establishing parks, municipal buildings, and support infrastructure like the corporation yard. Typical of the function of an incorporated city, the corporation yard was constructed during a period when cities began to rely on motor equipment to carry out city projects, like paving streets. The property at 898 Red Rock Road is typical of the development of municipal services properties of the early twentieth century. Research did not indicate that the property is significant within this trend or associated with any important events in the history of the city, region, state, or nation. Furthermore, the property has been consistently updated over time with a series of new and replaced buildings. The two oldest buildings, the maintenance building and the garage building have been altered with additions and material replacement and do not maintain their historic integrity. The property is therefore recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion A/1.

Research through newspapers and ancestry databases did not yield any information on any significant individuals associated with the property. Though originally part of Walter Blair's property, it was developed for the corporation yard several decades after his death and he was not historically associated with its use as the corporation yard. Therefore, the property is recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion B/2.

A series of utilitarian buildings constructed between the 1910s through the 1990s, the corporation yard buildings do not embody distinctive characteristics of any architectural style. They do not have distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Archival research was unable to identify information on the builder or architect and it does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. Furthermore, the oldest buildings on site, the garage building and the maintenance building have been altered over time with additions, new windows, infilled openings, and replacement garage doors. The site has also been continuously updated with the consistent addition and removal of buildings. As a result, the property does not retain sufficient integrity as an early twentieth century corporation yard. The property is, therefore, recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion C/3. A review of available evidence does not suggest 898 Red Rock Avenue has yielded or has the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of Piedmont or the greater Bay Area, California, or the nation. It is recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion D/4.

As detailed above, the property at 898 Red Rock Road, also known as the Piedmont Corporation Yard, is recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR. As such, the property does not qualify as a historical resource. Based on the findings of this investigation, Rincon recommends a finding of ***no impact to historical resources*** under CEQA.

Should you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at 213-342-5341 or at arodriguez@rinconconsultants.com.

Sincerely,
Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Andrew Rodriguez, MA
Architectural Historian

JulieAnn Murphy, MSHP
Architectural Historian Project Manager

Steven Treffers, MHP
Cultural Resources Director

Figures

Figure 1 Project Location
Figure 2 Detailed Project Location
Figure 4 Primary Elevation of Maintenance Building, Camera Facing North
Figure 5 Primary Elevation of Garage Building, Camera Facing Northeast
Figure 6 Primary and West Elevation of Shed Building, Camera Facing Northeast
Figure 7 Rear and East Elevation of Office Building, Camera Facing Southwest

Attachments

Attachment A California DPR 523 Series Forms

References

California Office of Historic Preservation

1995 *Instructions for Recording Historical Resources*. Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento, California.

2011 "California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register)," *California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6*. Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento, California

2011 "California Register and National Register: A Comparison (for purposes of determining eligibility for the California Register)," *California Office of Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Series #6*. Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento, California

History of Piedmont

2023 "Walter Blair." Accessed July 2023. https://www.historyofpiedmont.com/blair.

2023 "Blair Park." Accessed July 2023. https://www.historyofpiedmont.com/blair-park

Oakland Geology

2017 "Red Rock Quarry," January 9. Accessed July 2023. https://oaklandgeology.com/2017/01/09/red-rock-quarry/.

Oakland Tribune

1913 "Park Site Is Cause of Dispute," October 3. Accessed July 2023. https://www.newspapers.com/image/78513582/?terms=%22corporation%20yard%22%20%22piedmont%22%20%22quarry%22&match=1.

1913 "The Cost of Several Parks," December 10. Accessed July 2023. https://www.newspapers.com/image/79699340/?terms=%22blair%20park%22%20%22corporation%20yard%22&match=1.

1918 "Old Blair Park is Now a Modern Residence Center," May 12. Accessed July 2023. https://www.newspapers.com/image/82736775/?terms=%22blair%20park%22%20%22piedmont%22%20&match=1 .

1972 "The Knave," November 12. Accessed July 2023. https://www.newspapers.com/image/547137398/?terms=%22red%20rock%22%20%22piedmont%22&match=1.

National Park Service

1983 Secretary of the Interior's Standards Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Department of the Interior.

NETR Online

2023 "Historic Aerials." Various historic aerials and topographic maps of the project area. Accessed July 2023. https://www.historicaerials.com/.

Parcel Quest

2023 Alameda County property information for 898 Red Rock Road. Accessed July 2023, https://pqweb.parcelquest.com/#home

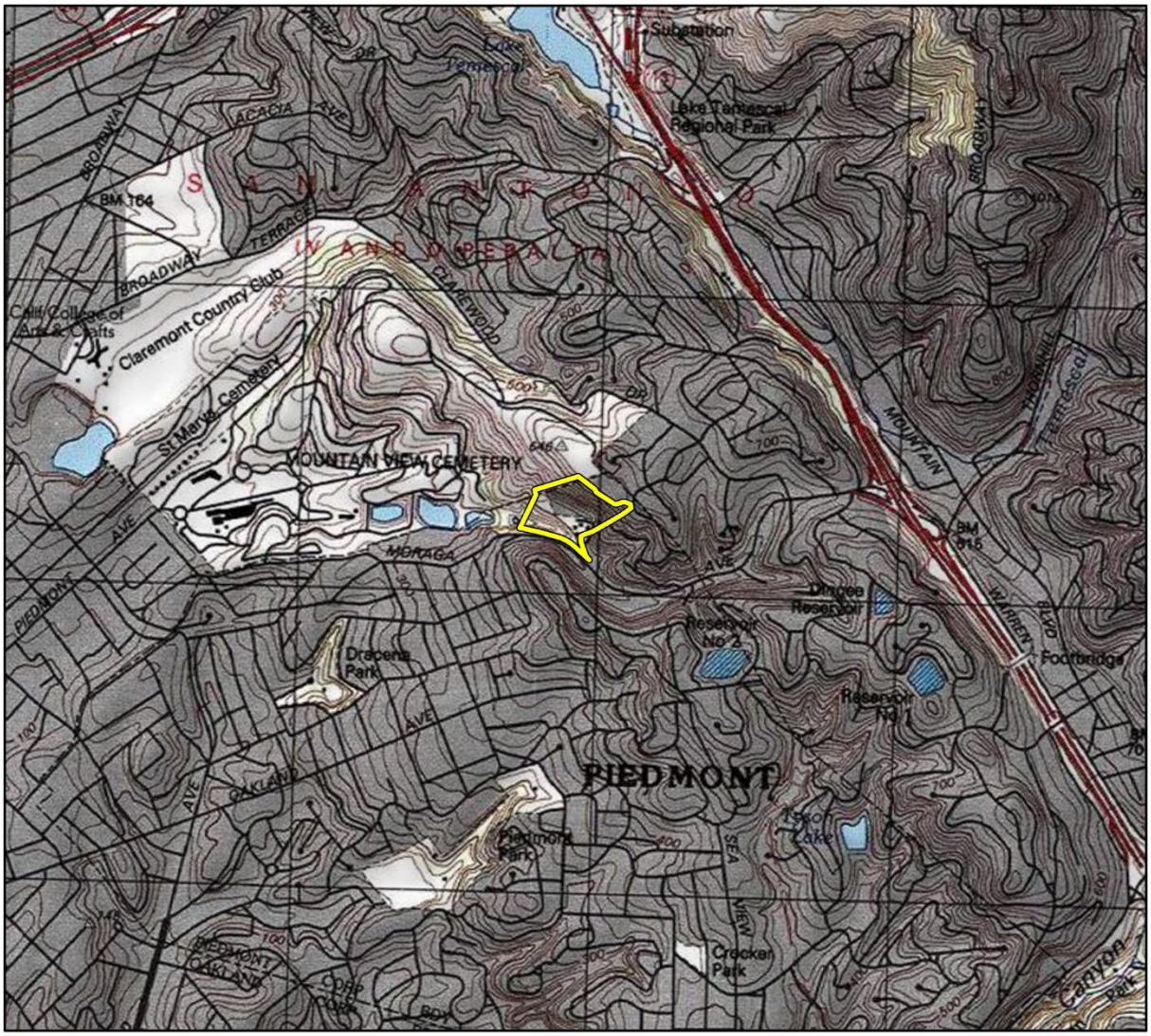
Walking Piedmont

2023 “Blair and Coaches Field Skate and Park Walk.” Accessed July 2023. Blair and Coaches Field Skate and Park Walk (walkingpiedmont.com)

2023 “Walking in Walter’s Shoes.” Accessed July 2023. Walking in Walter's shoes (walkingpiedmont.com)

Figures

Figure 1 Project Location



Basemap provided by National Geographic Society, Esri and their licensors © 2023. Oakland East Quadrangle. T01S R03W S19. The topographic representation depicted in this map may not portray all of the features currently found in the vicinity today and/or features depicted in this map may have changed since the original topographic map was assembled.

21-11542 CR
CRFig X Project Location 898 Red Rock Road

Project Location

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

N

Figure 2 Detailed Project Location

Imagery provided by Microsoft Bing and its licensors © 2023.

21-11542 CR
Fig X Project Location Aerial 898 Red Rock Road

Figure 3 Moraga Canyon Specific Plan Area

Imagery provided by Esri and its licensors © 2023.

Figure 4 Primary Elevation of Maintenance Building, Camera Facing North

Figure 5 Primary Elevation of Garage Building, Camera Facing Northeast

Figure 6 Primary and West Elevation of Shed Building, Camera Facing Northeast

Figure 7 Rear and East Elevation of Office Building, Camera Facing Southwest

Attachment A

California DPR 523 Series Form

State of California — The Resources Agency **Primary #**
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION **HRI #**

PRIMARY RECORD

Trinomial
NRHP Status Code

Other Listings
Review Code **Reviewer** **Date**

 *__Resource Name or #:__ 898 Red Rock Road

P1. Other Identifier: Piedmont Corporation Yard / Piedmont Maintenance
***P2. Location:** ☐ **Not for Publication** ☐ **Unrestricted** ***a. County:** Alameda
and
***b. USGS 7.5' Quad:** *Oakland East* **Date:** 1997 **T:** 01S ; **R:** 03W ; **¼ of ¼ of Sec:** 19**;** M.D. B.M.
c. Address: 898 Red Rock Road City: Piedmont Zip: 94611
d. UTM: N/A Zone: N/A ; mE/ mN (G.P.S.)
e. Other Locational Data: 048A-7002-003-03 Elevation: N/A

***P3a. Description:**

Located at 889 Red Rock Road in the city of Piedmont, the Piedmont Corporation Yard is a large irregularly shaped parcel which contains several uses including the city's maintenance yard, Coaches Field, and Kennelly Skatepark. Both the sports field and the skatepark are functionally independent and less than 45 years old, the generally accepted threshold for recording historical resources per guidance from OHP, and were not considered further for historical resources eligibility.

The city's maintenance yard, also known as the Piedmont Corporation Yard, is the base for the city fleet and plant maintenance facility and the street maintenance crew and is comprised of four buildings organized at the center of drive that encircles the buildings and continues to the entry gate. Buildings include a garage, a maintenance building, an office, and a shed. All of the buildings have a primary, south elevation. The maintenance building, office, and shed all front the garage building which features a wide, U-shaped footprint that follows the curve of the encircling drive.

See Continuation Sheet 4.

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP9: Public Utility Building
***P4. Resources Present:** ☒Building ☐Structure ☐Object ☐Site ☐District ☐Element of District ☐Other

P5a. Photo or Drawing

P5b. Description of Photo: Primary (south) Elevation of Garage Building, Camera Facing Northeast

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:** ☒Historic ☐Prehistoric ☐Both
Circa 1920 (walkingpiedmont.com)

***P7. Owner and Address:**
City of Piedmont
120 Vista Avenue
Piedmont, California, 94611

***P8. Recorded by:**
JulieAnn Murphy
Rincon Consultants, Inc.
180 N. Ashwood Avenue
Ventura, California 93003

***P9. Date Recorded:**
June 22, 2023

***P10. Survey Type:**
Pedestrian

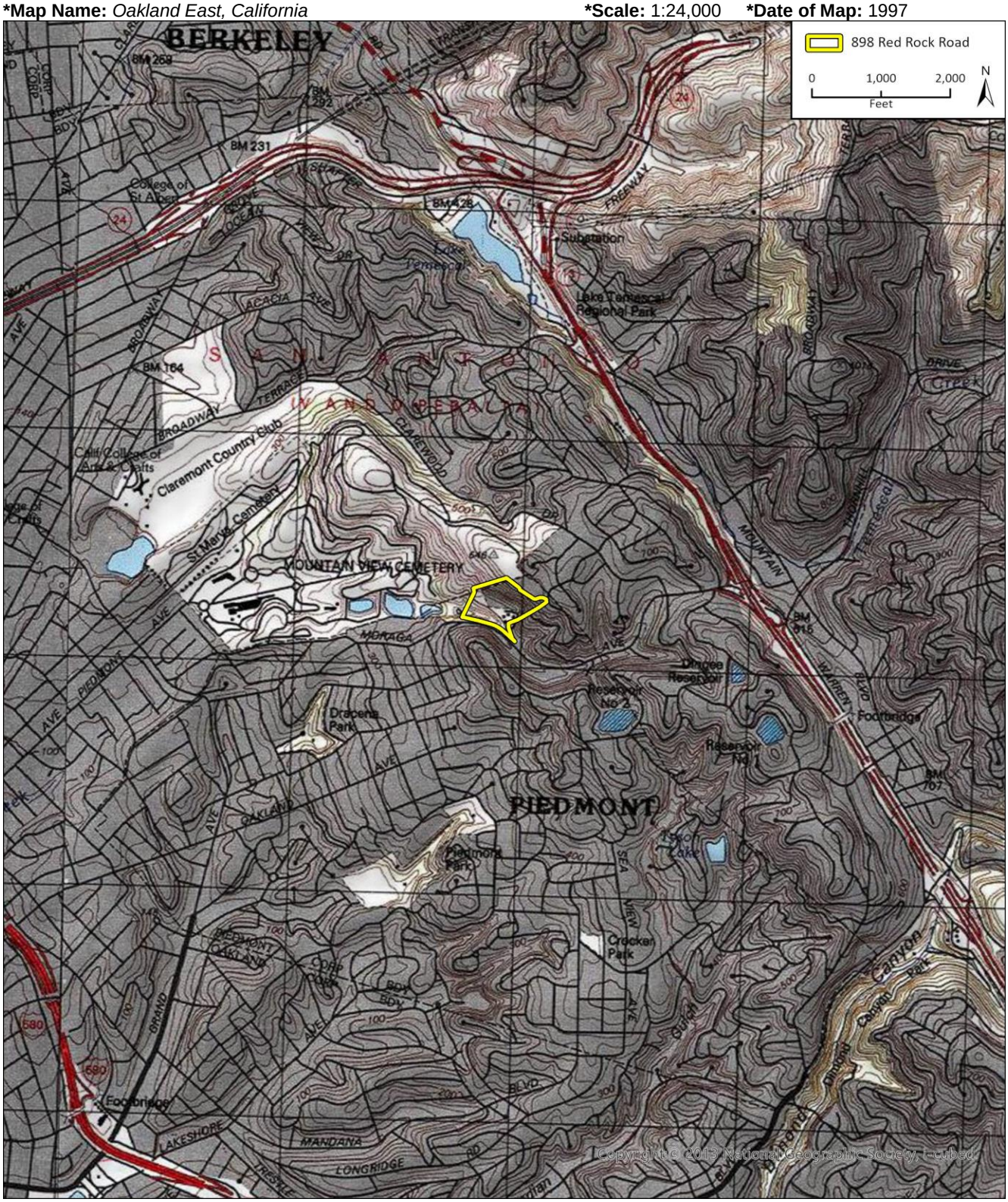
***P11. Report Citation:**
Rodriguez, A., J. Murphy, S. Treffers, *Historical Resources Evaluation – Piedmont Corporation Yard, 898 Red Rock Road, Piedmont, Alameda County, California,* Rincon Consultants, Inc., Project Number 21-11542, report on file at Northwestern Information Center, Sonoma State University.

***Attachments:** ☐NONE ☒Location Map ☐Sketch Map ☒Continuation Sheet ☒Building, Structure, and Object Record ☐Archaeological Record ☐District Record ☐Linear Feature Record ☐Milling Station Record ☐Rock Art Record ☐Artifact Record ☐Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION **LOCATION MAP**	Primary # HRI# Trinomial

 ***Resource Name:** 898 Red Rock Road

***Map Name:** *Oakland East, California* ***Scale:** 1:24,000 ***Date of Map:** 1997



BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code** 6Z
***Resource Name:** 898 Red Rock Road

B1. Historic Name: Piedmont Corporation Yard
B2. Common Name: Piedmont Maintenance
B3. Original Use: Public Utility
B4. Present Use: Public Utility
***B5. Architectural Style:** Non-discernable style
***B6. Construction History:**

Available topographical maps show that there was one building at the end of Red Rock Road by 1915 (USGS 2023). The corporation yard was established by the 1920s, and likely incorporated the existing building (Walking Piedmont 2023). According to historical aerial photographs, the corporation yard was the only development north of Moraga Avenue in this area for many years. The earliest available aerial photograph from 1939 indicates that the property included the garage building, the maintenance building, and a third building that appears to have since been demolished (UCSB 2023).

A historical aerial photograph from 1946 shows the site included a third building at north end of the property that has since been demolished (NETR 2023). The shed building was constructed by 1959, and a third building between the shed and maintenance building in the area of the current office building was demolished and replaced with the current building sometime between 1993 and 2000, according to historical aerial images (NETR 2023). It was during that period when Coaches Field and Kennelly Skatepark were constructed. The site has remained unchanged since that time. In addition to available aerial imagery and newspaper accounts, visual observations confirm that the buildings have been continuously altered over time to adapt to the changing needs of the corporation yard.

***B7. Moved?** ☒**No** ☐**Yes** ☐**Unknown** **Date:** N/A **Original Location:** N/A
***B8. Related Features:** N/A

B9a. Architect(s): N/A
b. Builder: N/A
***B10. Significance:** N/A **Theme:** N/A
Area: N/A
Period of Significance: N/A **Property Type:** N/A **Applicable Criteria:** N/A

The area surrounding the subject property was known as Blair Park and historically encompassed the subject property, as well as a portion of the Mountain View Cemetery to the west. Blair Park was named after Walter Blair, the first European settler in the area that would become Piedmont (Walking Piedmont 2023). When Blair first came to the area in 1853, it was primarily large ranchos. Blair purchased 600 acres of the former Rancho San Antonio from the Peralta family and ran a dairy and farm on the property, that extended from the cemetery wall to beyond present-day Blair Avenue and supplied milk and butter to the surrounding area and San Francisco. In 1884, Blair developed 40 acres of his land for a "picnic park," which eventually became the 75-acre Blair Park, an amusement park, at the end of the Oakland-Piedmont Railroad horsecar line, the regional transportation line that he helped to develop. The park, with small sail boats, pony rides, and acrobats served as a way to lure riders to the cable cars.

See Continuation Sheet 4.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes:

***B12. References:**

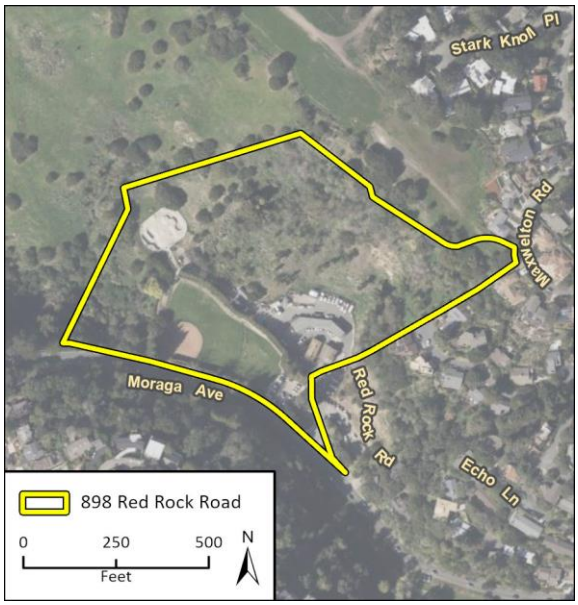
History of Piedmont. 2023. "Walter Blair." Accessed July 2023. https://www.historyofpiedmont.com/blair.
History of Piedmont. 2023. "Blair Park." Accessed July 2023. https://www.historyofpiedmont.com/blair-park
Oakland Geology. 2017. "Red Rock Quarry." January 9. Accessed July 2023. https://oaklandgeology.com/2017/01/09/red-rock-quarry/.

See Continuation Sheet 5.
B13. Remarks: N/A

***B14. Evaluator:** Andrew Rodriguez, Rincon Consultants, Inc.

***Date of Evaluation:** July 13,2023

(This space reserved for official comments.)



***P3a. Description (Continued):**

The garage building is a one to two story building and features a skillion roof that slopes toward the rear of the building with overhanging eave at the primary, south elevation for the length of the building. It has a horizontal wood plank exterior. As described above, the building has an irregular, U-shaped footprint. It continues for 11 bays – four bays at the eastern, two-story portion; a one bay breezeway followed by three bays at the center; and three bays at the western end. The two-story portion has three garage entries with metal rollup doors and one man door with a rollup door at the ground floor with two three-over-three wood frame windows flaking a wood horizontal slide door below a hoist beam at the second floor. The second floor is accessed via an exterior wood stair at the building's east elevation, which also features a two-over-two wood window. The remainder of the building features additional roll-up doors at each bay described above, with the exception of the breezeway between the one- and two-story portions of the building, which provides access to the rear of the building. The rear of the is devoid of openings or ornamentation. The building's west elevation includes an additional vehicular bay.

The two buildings at the western end of the site include the shed and office buildings. Adjacent to a vehicle gas pump, the shed building is a one-story wood frame building with a gable roof and wood plank exterior. It has aluminum horizontal slide windows on each elevation, and a rear entry door at its north elevation. The office building is between the shed and the maintenance building. It is a one-story wood frame building with a gable roof and horizontal wood plank exterior. A deep eave overhangs above the east elevation, covering a concrete ramp with wood railing below. The elevation includes two entry doors. A short stair at the north elevation provides access to a third entry. The west elevation has a short wood stair to a paired door entry and includes two horizontal slide windows. The south elevation includes two horizontal slide windows.

***B10. Significance (Continued):**

Walter Blair passed away in 1888. Blair Park kept operating with its various attractions until 1905. Thereafter, a portion of Blair Park was sold to the Mountain View Cemetery. The City of Piedmont was incorporated in 1907 and subsequently began establishing and codifying city institutions and services. During the early 1900s, various cities in the Bay Area constructed corporation yards in order to facilitate growing and developing cities, which began to rely more on motor equipment to carry out city projects, like paving streets. According to historical newspaper accounts, the prospect of using a portion of the remaining Blair Park land for a municipal corporation yard was discussed as early as 1913. At that time, the mayor argued that quarrying rock from the site could be used to pay for it (Oakland Tribune 10/03/1913). Before that time, the property was the site of the red rock quarry operated by local businessman WH Maxwell (Oakland Geology 2017). Located at the head of Blair Park, it was a popular material for local driveways (Oakland Tribune 1972). In late 1913, the remaining portion of the Blair Park property and an adjacent property called Blackberry Brae, totaling 52.39 acres, was optioned for sale to the City of Piedmont to develop a playground and corporation yard until January 1914 (Oakland Tribune 12/10/1913). It is unclear from available archival records if the City exercised the option at that time, but residential development in the former park began to emerge by 1918 (Oakland Tribune 1918).

The subject property is recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP or CRHR under any eligibility criteria due to a lack of historical or architectural significance and limited integrity. The subject property was initially developed as a municipal corporation yard for the city by the 1920s. After its incorporation in 1907, Piedmont steadily grew and expanded to provide municipal services for its residents, including establishing parks, municipal buildings, and support infrastructure like the corporation yard. Typical of the function of an incorporated city, the corporation yard was constructed during a period when cities began to rely on motor equipment to carry out city projects, like paving streets. The property at 898 Red Rock Road is typical of the development of municipal services properties of the early twentieth century. Research did not indicate that the property is significant within this trend or associated with any important events in the history of the city, region, state, or nation. Furthermore, the property has been consistently updated over time with a series of new and replaced buildings. The two oldest buildings, the maintenance building and the garage building have been altered with additions and material replacement and do not maintain their historic integrity. The property is therefore recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion A/1.

Research through newspapers and ancestry databases did not yield any information on any significant individuals associated with the property. Though originally part of Walter Blair's property, it was developed for the corporation yard several decades after his death and he was not historically associated with its use as the corporation yard. Therefore, the property is recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion B/2.

A series of utilitarian buildings constructed between the 1910s through the 1990s, the corporation yard buildings do not embody distinctive characteristics of any architectural style. They do not have distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Archival research was unable to identify information on the builder or architect and it does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. Furthermore, the oldest buildings on site, the garage building and the maintenance building have been altered over time with additions, new windows, infilled openings, and replacement garage doors. The site has also been continuously updated with the consistent addition and removal of buildings. As a result, the property does not retain sufficient integrity as an early twentieth century corporation yard. The property is, therefore, recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion C/3. A review of available evidence does not suggest 898 Red Rock Avenue has yielded or has the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of Piedmont or the greater Bay Area, California, or the nation. It is recommended ineligible for listing to the NRHP or CRHR under Criterion D/4.

***B12. References (Continued):**

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NETR Online. 2023. "Historic Aerials." Various historic aerials and topographic maps of the project area. Accessed July 2023. https://www.historicaerials.com/.

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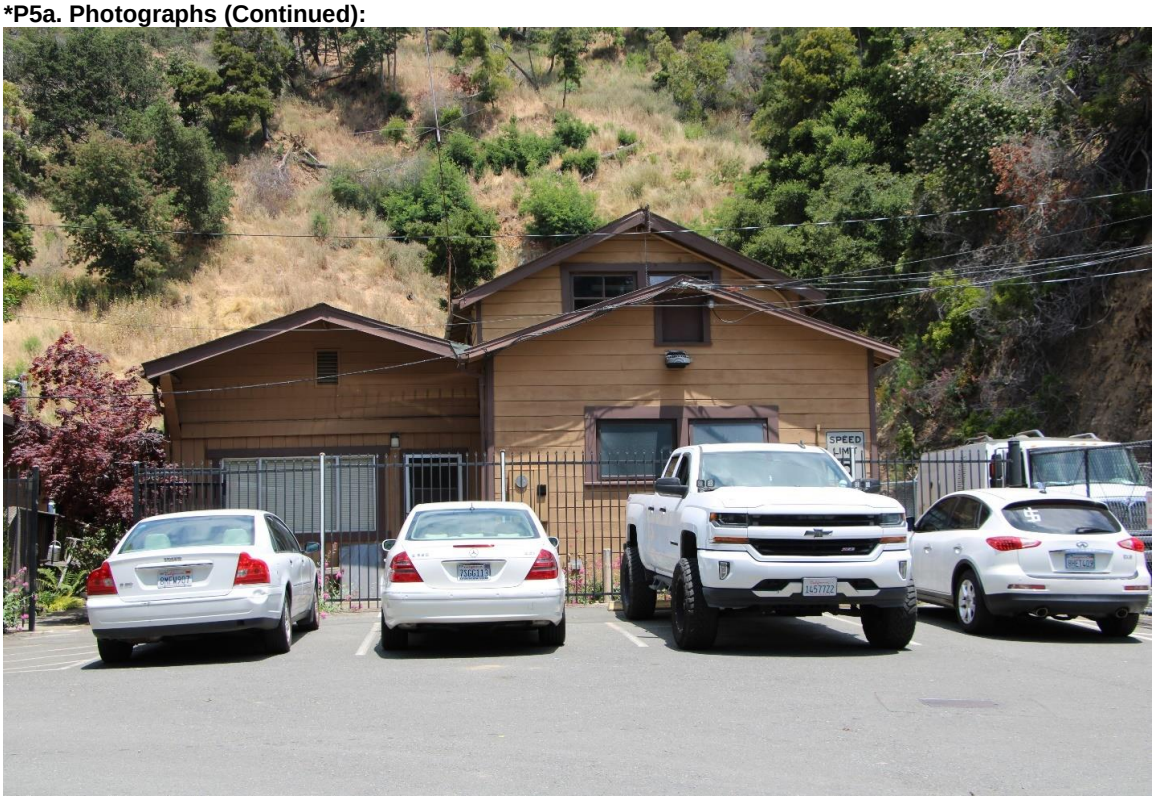
Walking Piedmont. 2023. "Blair and Coaches Field Skate and Park Walk." Accessed July 2023. "Blair and Coaches Field Skate and Park Walk." Walkingpiedmont.com

Walking Piedmont. 2023. "Walking in Walter's Shoes." Accessed July 2023. "Walking in Walter's Shoes." Walkingpiedmont.com

***P5a. Photographs (Continued):**



Primary Elevation of Maintenance Building, Camera Facing North.

See Continuation Page 6.

***P5a. Photographs (Continued):**

Primary and West Elevation of Shed Building, Camera Facing Northeast.

Rear and East Elevation of Office Building, Camera Facing Southwest.