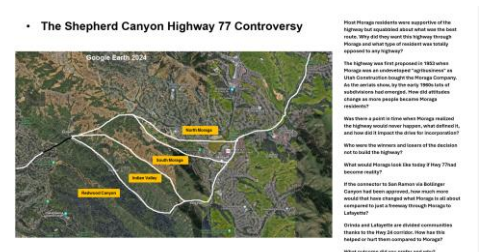
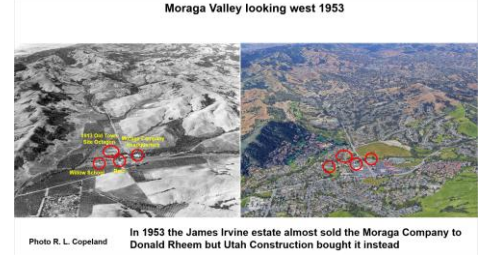


The Road to Incorporation and Beyond

- Introduction – an aerial history tour of Moraga
- The Shepherd Canyon Highway 77 Controversy
- The Moraga vs the Martinez Mentality
- The Tri-City and Boundary Controversies
- The final incorporation struggle
- Time Capsule Ceremony video – short version
- Open Discussion

With Sue (McNulty) Rainey and Barry Gross – former Moraga mayors

MHS Speaker Event: February 23, 2025
1:00 pm at the Casita

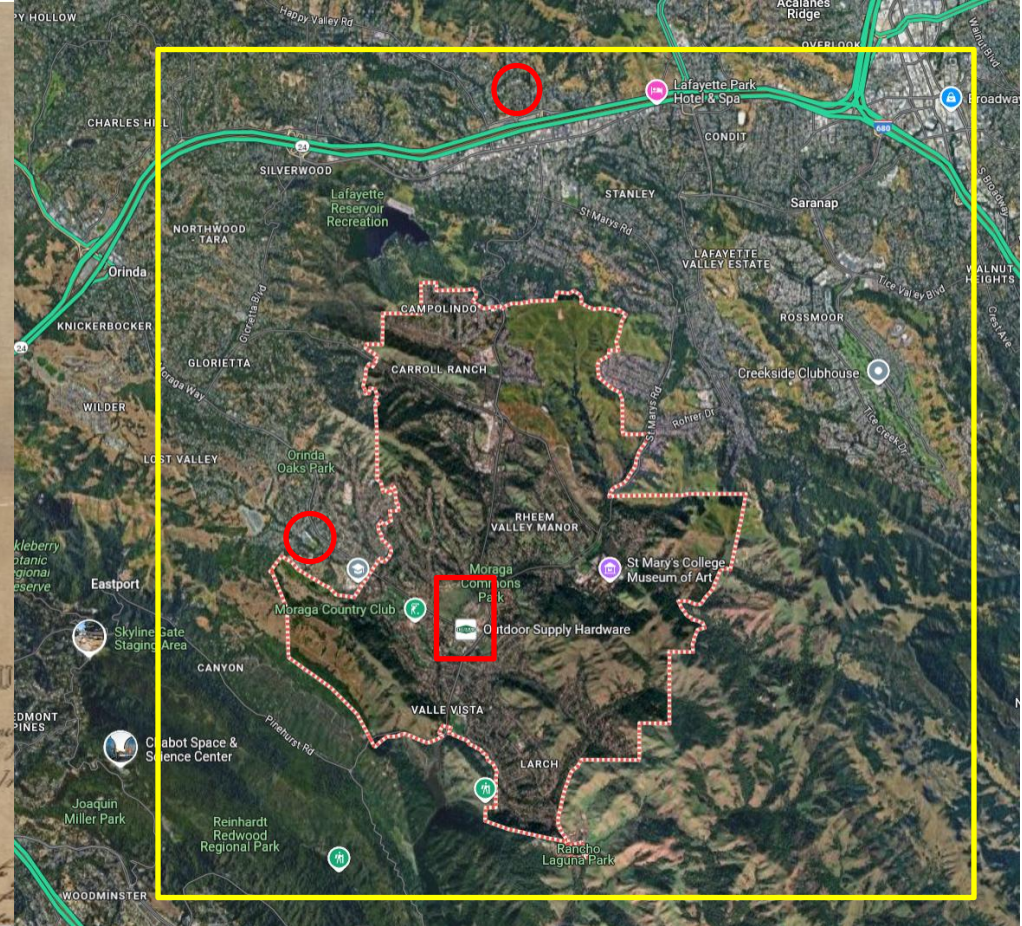


Rancho Laguna de los Palos Colorados Land Grant 1841 – Joaquin Moraga and Juan Bernal

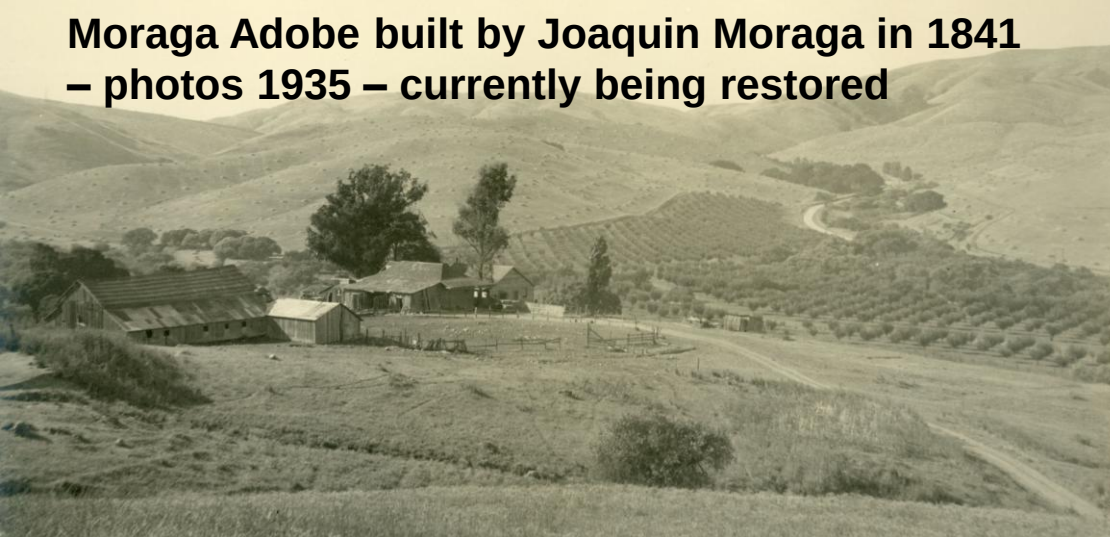
H. A. Higley 1855 Survey of the Land Grant



Town of Moraga Boundary compared to land grant



**Moraga Adobe built by Joaquin Moraga in 1841
– photos 1935 – currently being restored**



What Joaquin Moraga would see today from his 1841 Adobe

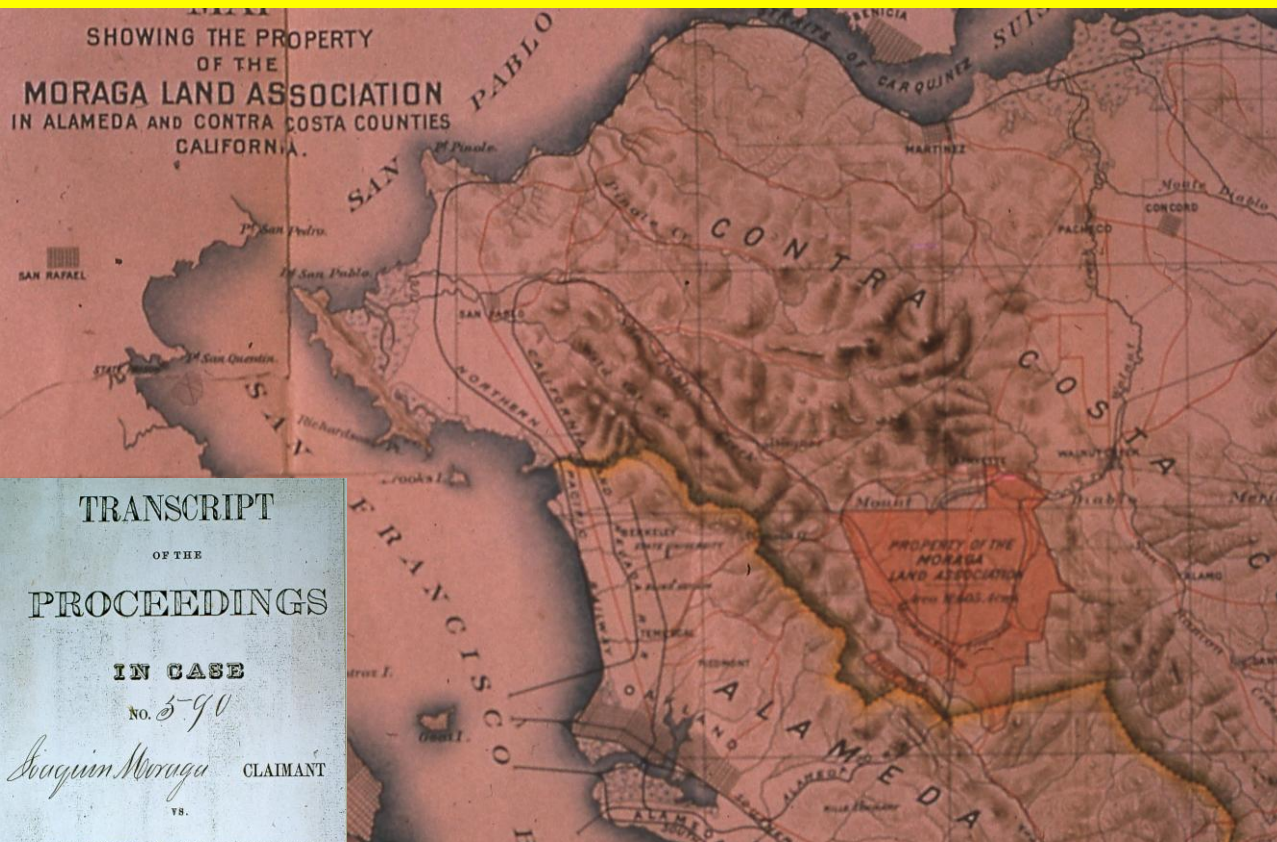


SMC

Old Moraga
Town Site

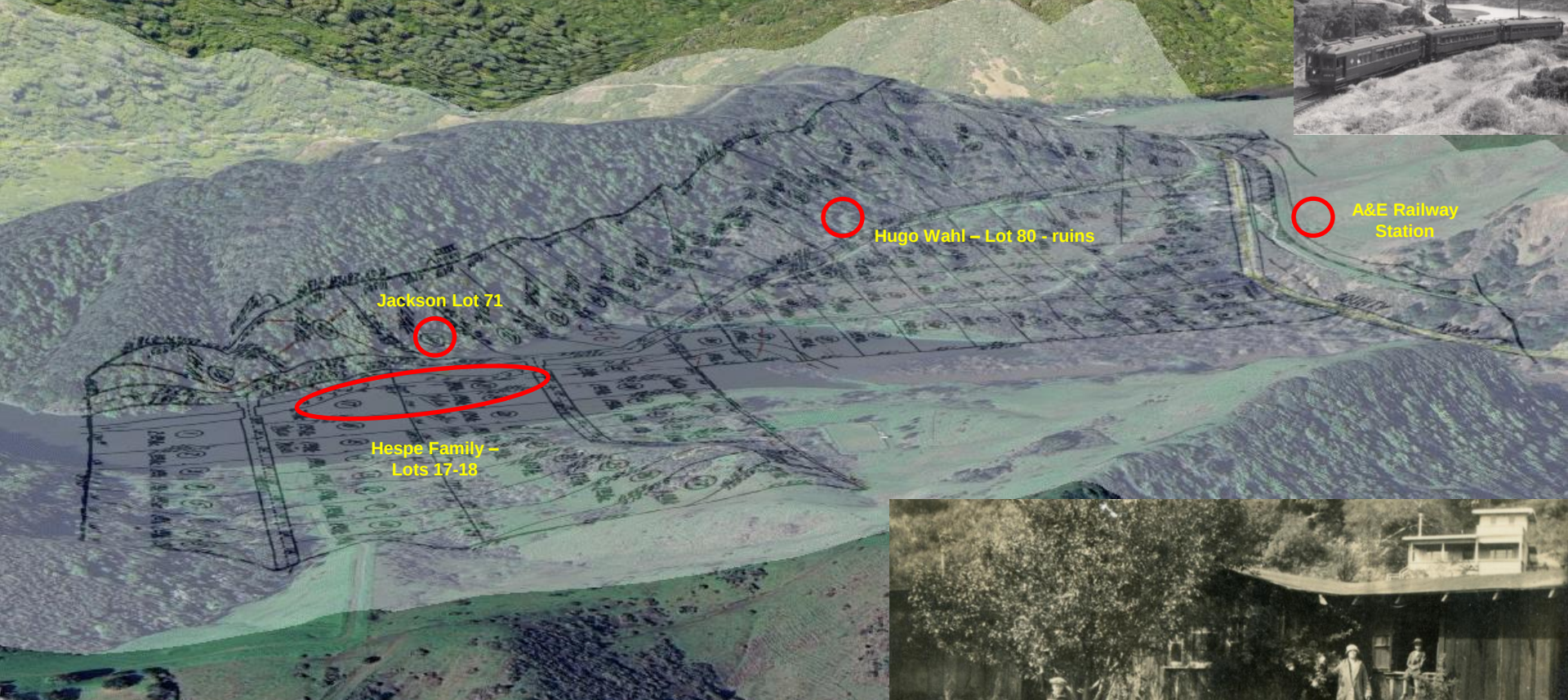
Moraga Adobe

California's Americanization 1848-1890



After Mexico ceded Alta California to the USA in 1848 the land grant owners had to resort to litigation to defend their title which they funded by selling or mortgaging parcels. Oakland founder Horace Carpentier began to buy up the parcels and mortgages, gradually consolidating title to most of the Rancho. He rented lots to farmers and ranchers. In 1889 he sold the land to the Moraga Land Association which tried to establish a railway but in 1899 Carpentier regained title. He granted a right of way to the Antioch & Eastern Railway in 1911 which pushed a tunnel through the Oakland Hills at Shepherd Canyon and was operational by 1913. Carpentier sold the Rancho land in 1912 to Charles Hooper who flipped it to James Irvine's Moraga Company in 1913. His two development initiatives, the Old Town Site Plan and the Valle Vista Subdivision 3 both failed by the mid 1920s.

Valle Vista Subdivision 3: Moraga's first subdivision



Moraga Company created 98 lots in 1913, sold 57 and houses were built on 20. Owners farmed and commuted via Antioch & Eastern Railway which had a station at Valle Vista. In 1915 East Bay Water Company secured the right to expand the Upper San Leandro Reservoir and used eminent domain to acquire all the lots to be flooded by 2026. Its successor EBMUD bought the remaining lots over the next 20 years. Only the ruins at Lot 80 remain.

Hespe House 1924 – Jackson House Lot 71 in background

Saint Mary's College: 1927 Moraga Company plan to stimulate development



The Bluffs – Mastodon Footprints

Lake LaSalle

1942-1946 SMC operated as Pre-Flight Training Campus for the Navy

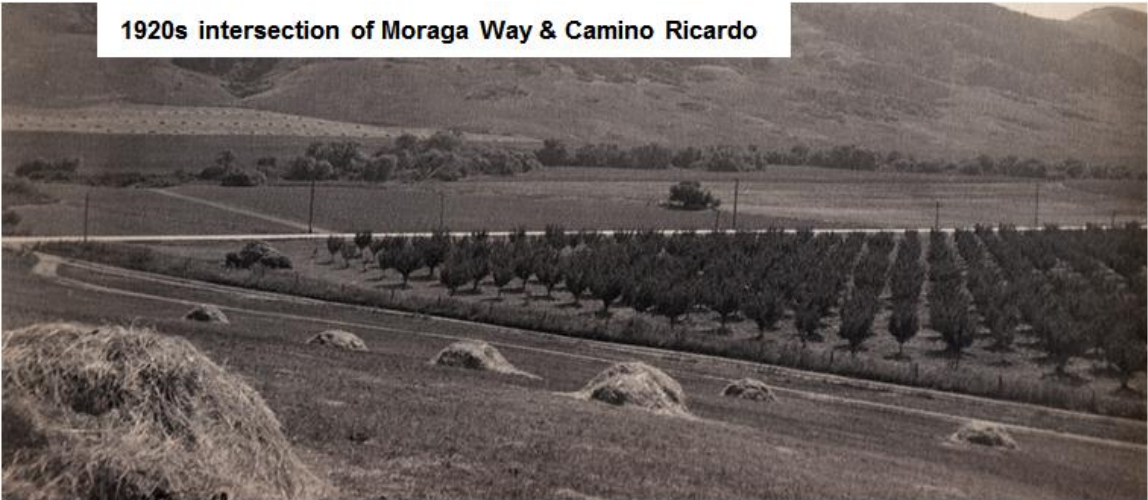


The Bluffs – Mastodon Footprints

Lake LaSalle Today

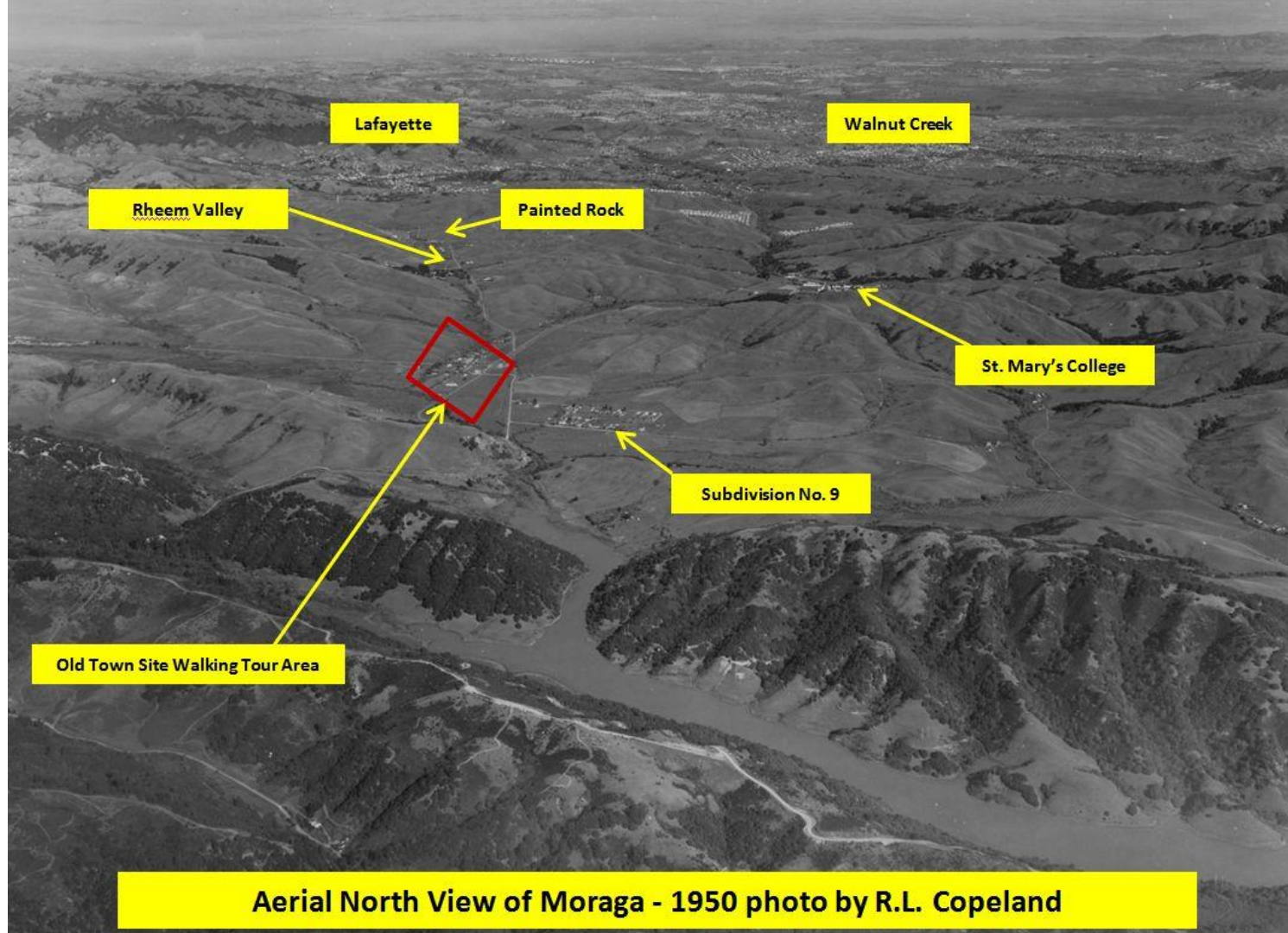
The Moraga Company operated as an agribusiness specializing in pears and walnuts while renting farmland to sharecroppers until 1953

1920s intersection of Moraga Way & Camino Ricardo



Today seen from Google Earth



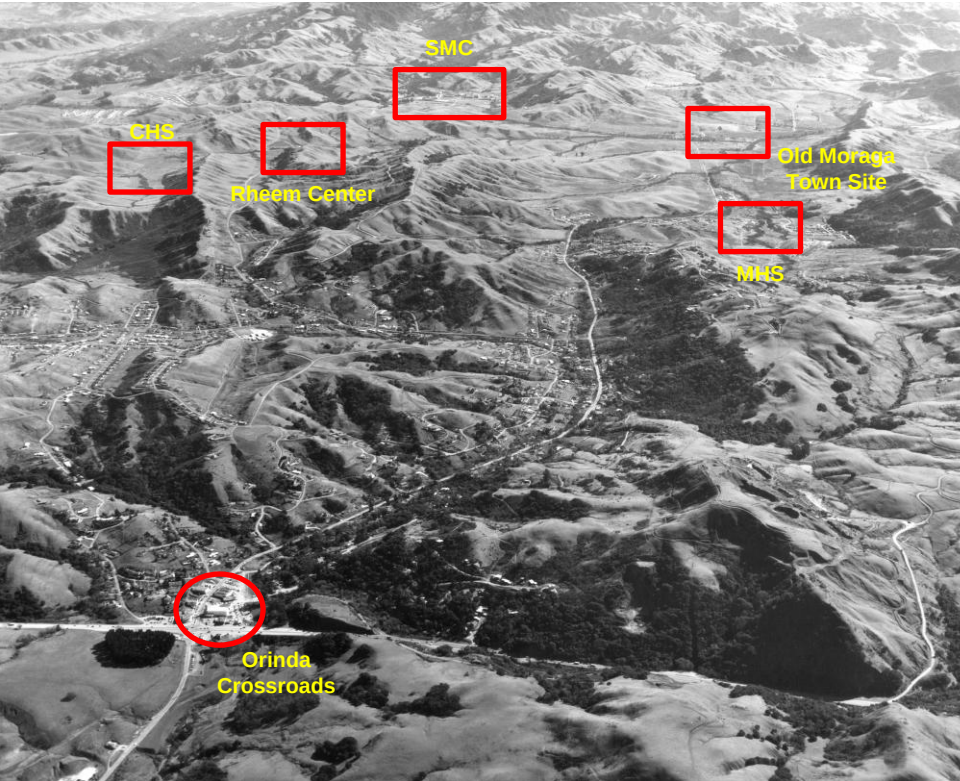


Moraga Valley looking west 1953



In 1953 the James Irvine estate almost sold the Moraga Company to Donald Rheem but Utah Construction bought it instead

Moraga Valley looking east 1953



Between 1955-1965 Utah Construction developed 31 subdivisions starting in the Glorieta area of Orinda moving eastwards

Moraga Valley looking north 1953

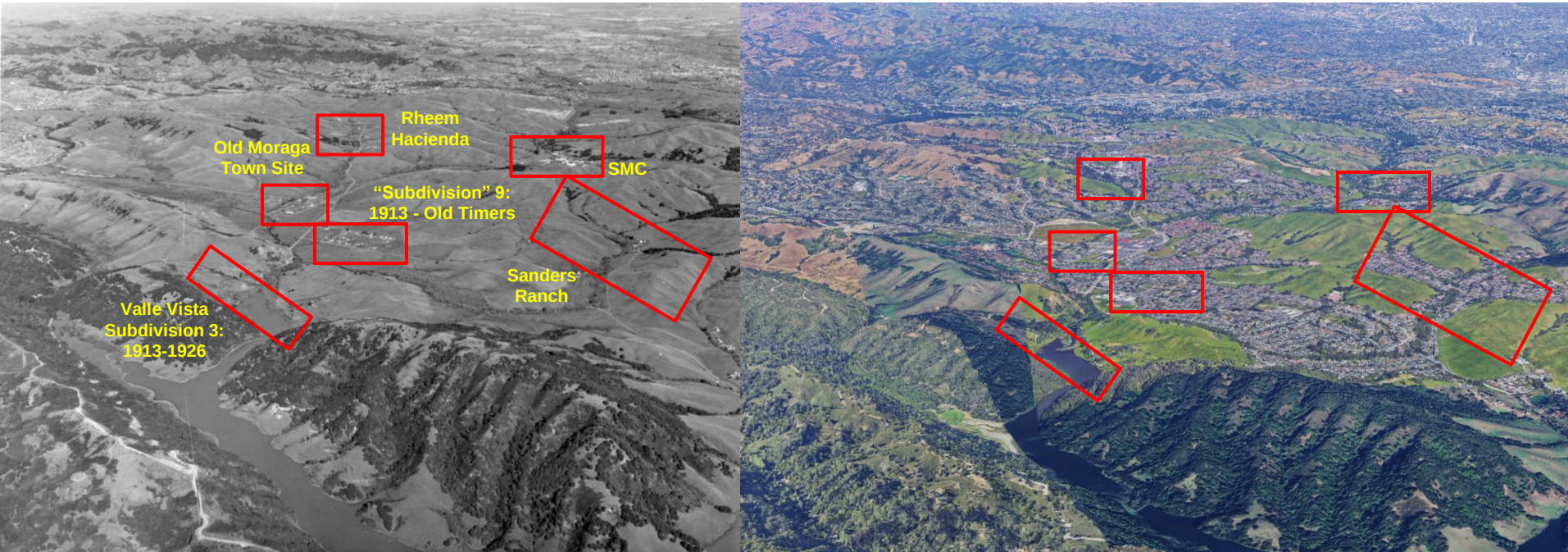
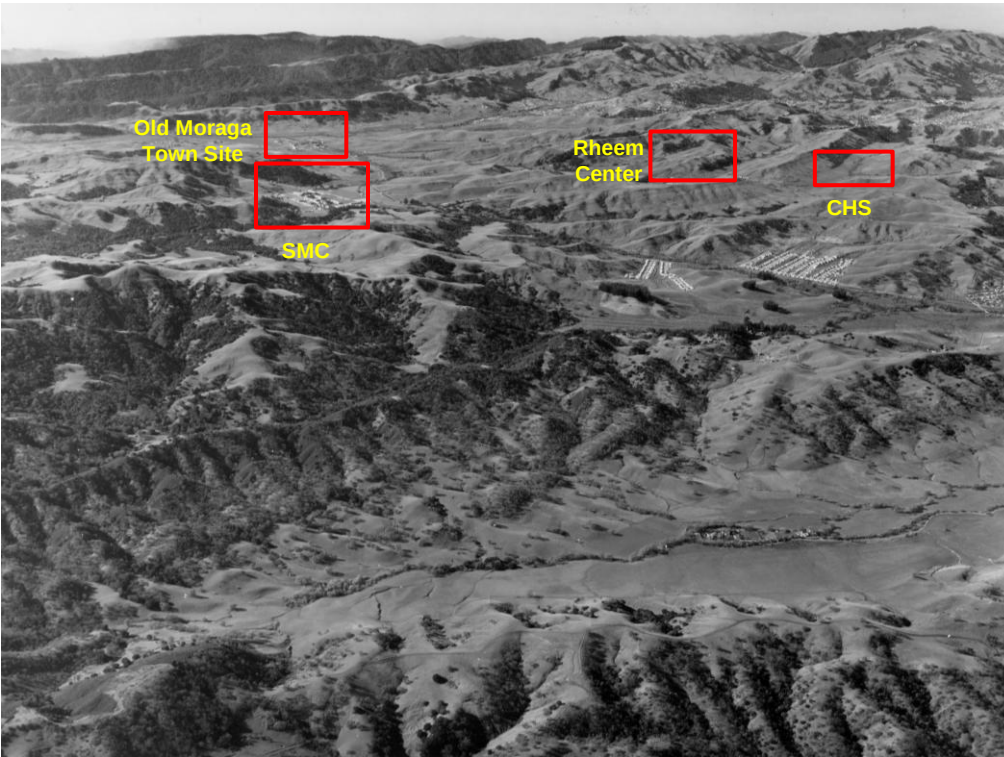


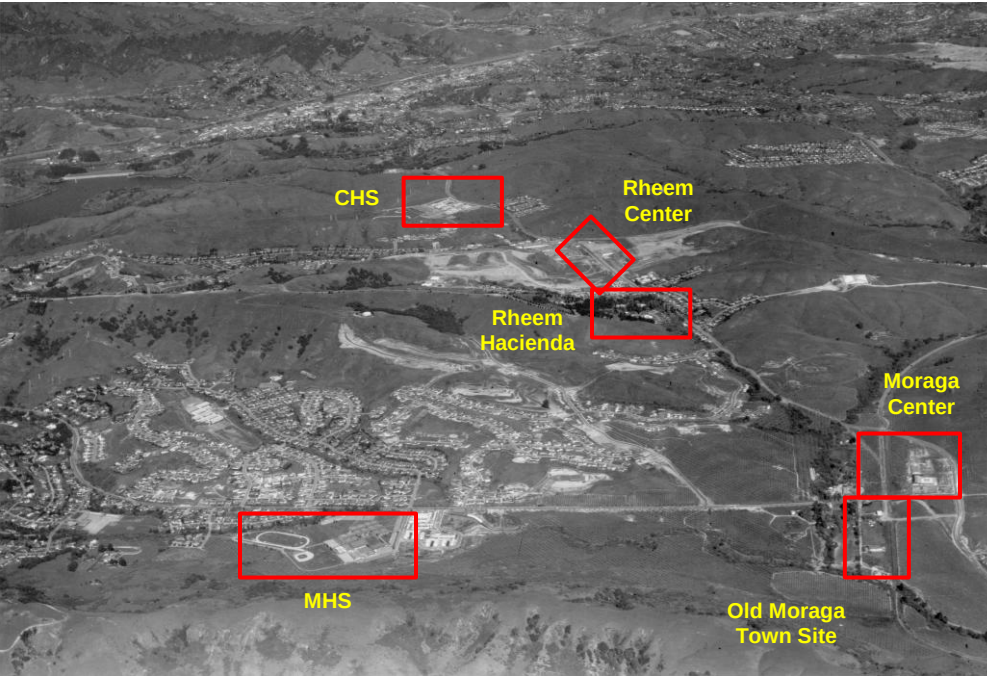
Photo R. L. Copeland

Utah Construction specialized in building infrastructure to serve subdivisions it created and sold to homebuilders with pre-designed homes

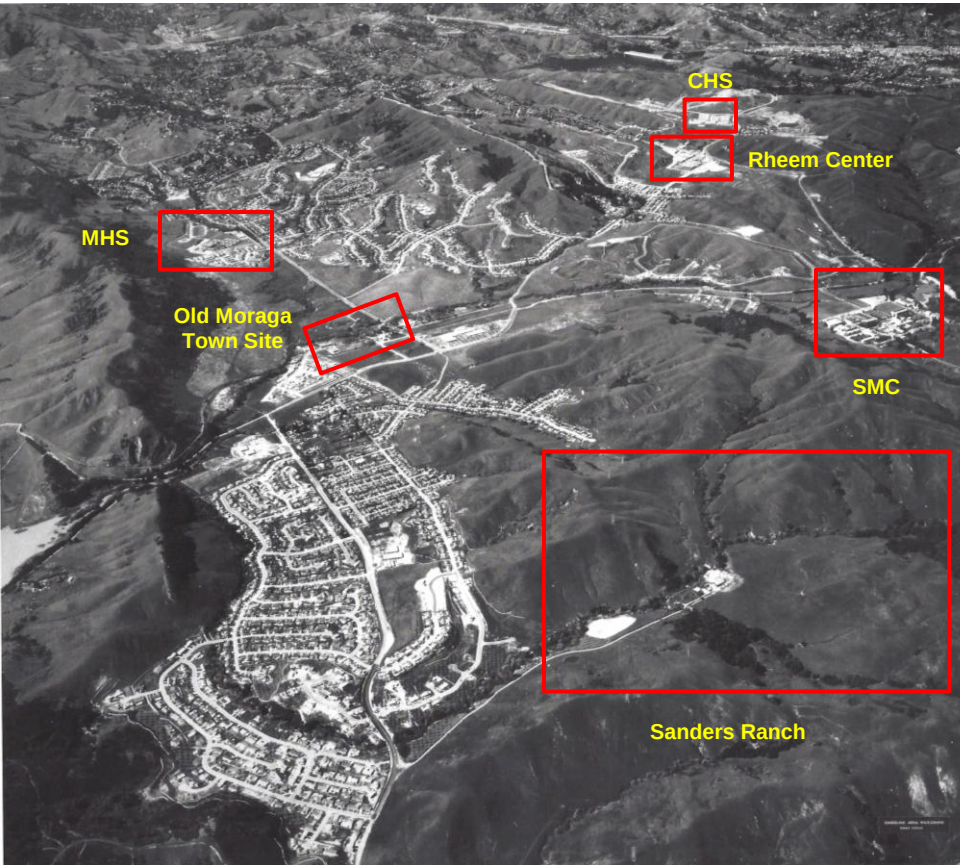
Moraga Valley looking south 1953



Moraga Valley looking north 1960



Moraga looking northwest 1966





**Aerial View
of
“Downtown”
Moraga 1966**



Old Moraga Town Site Walking Tour

Old Moraga Town Site – 1971

#4 Moraga Creek Bridge

#3 Willow Spring School II

#2 Moraga Grocery

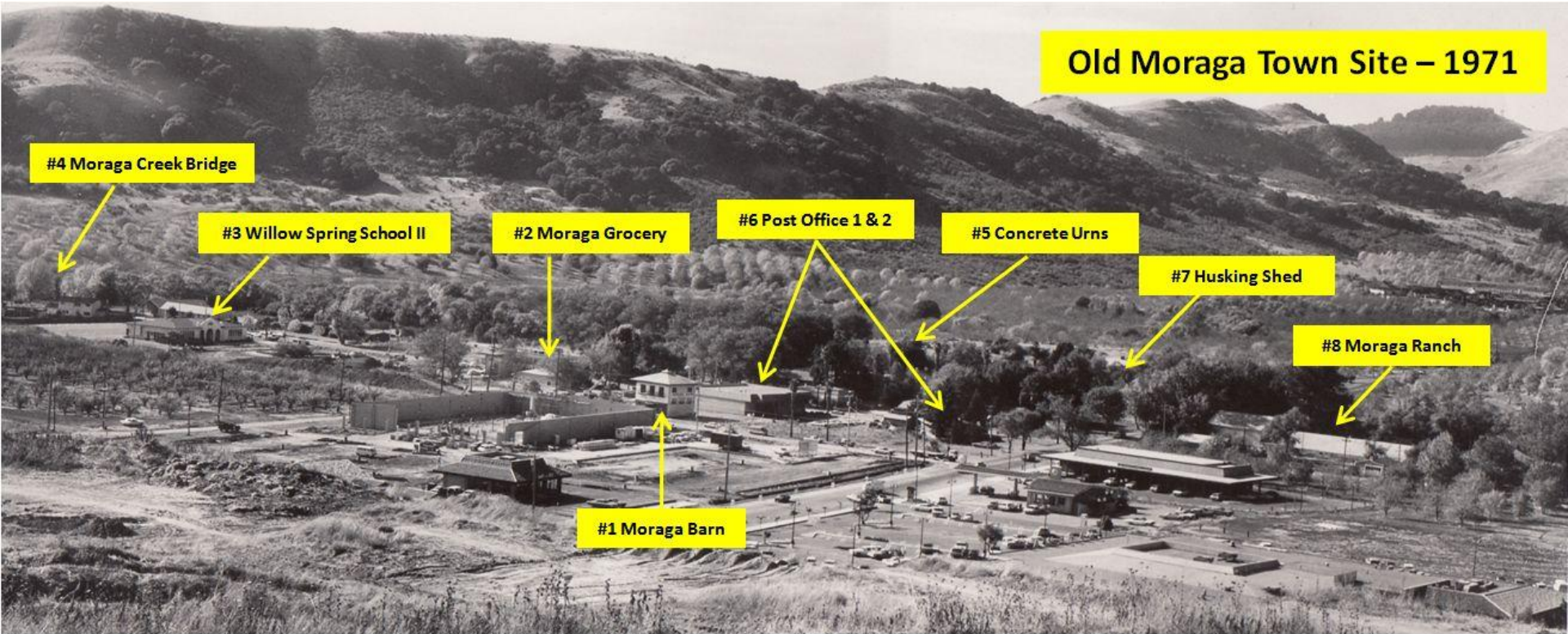
#6 Post Office 1 & 2

#5 Concrete Urns

#7 Husking Shed

#8 Moraga Ranch

#1 Moraga Barn



Moraga looking west 1972



MHS

Hacienda

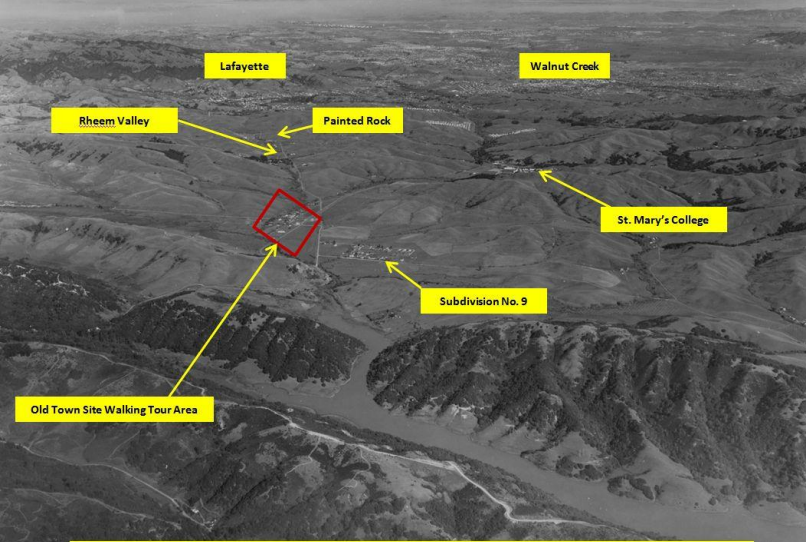
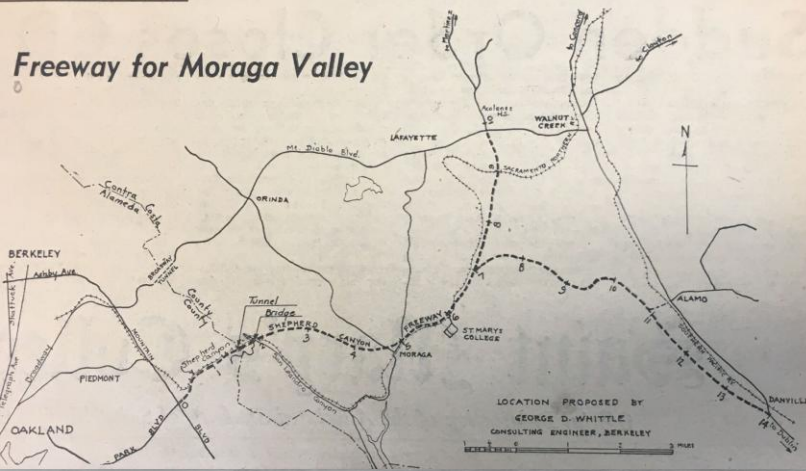
Rheem Center

CHS

Moraga looking west 2025

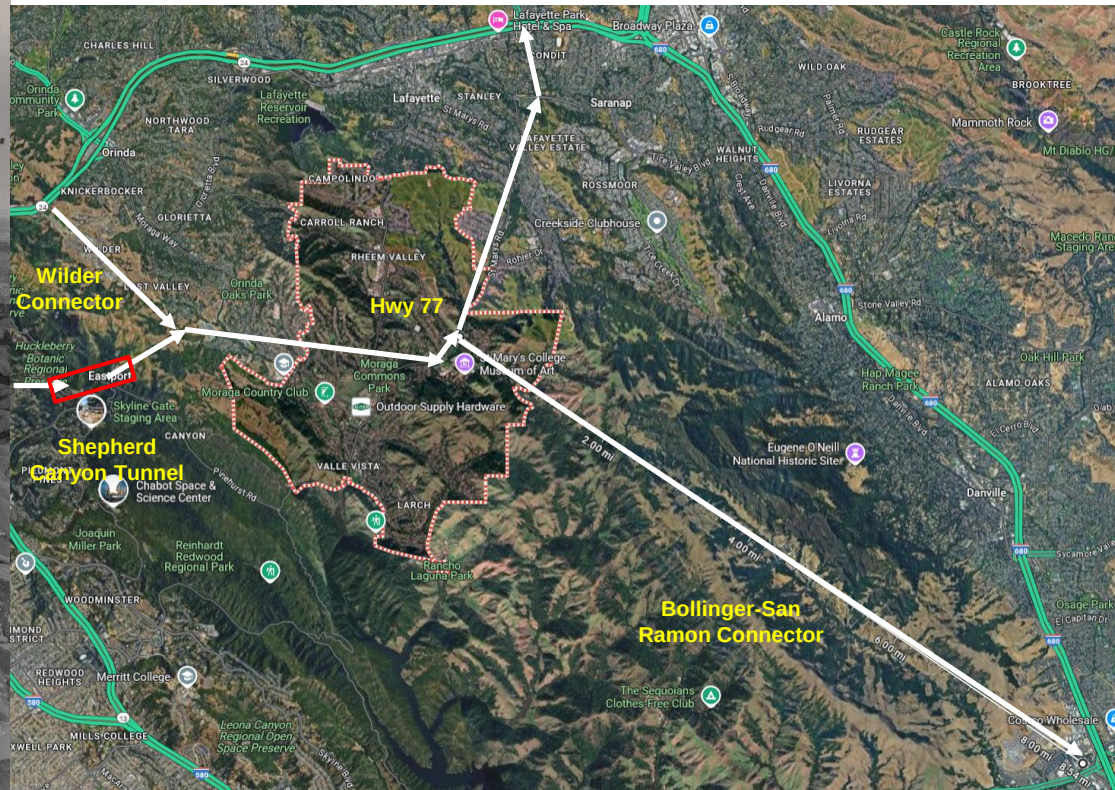


Freeway for Moraga Valley

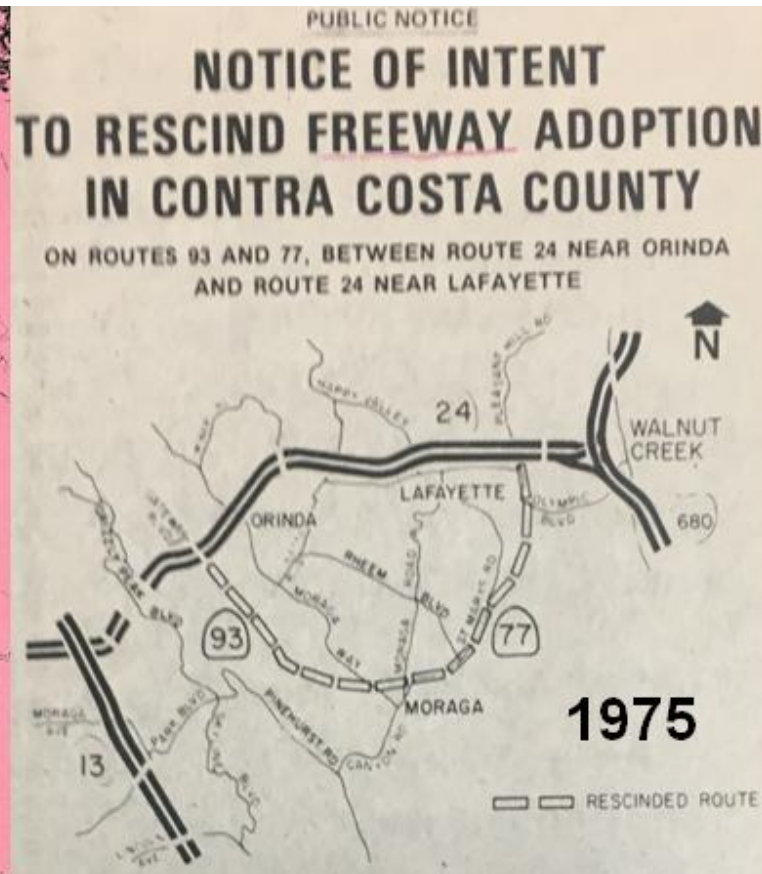
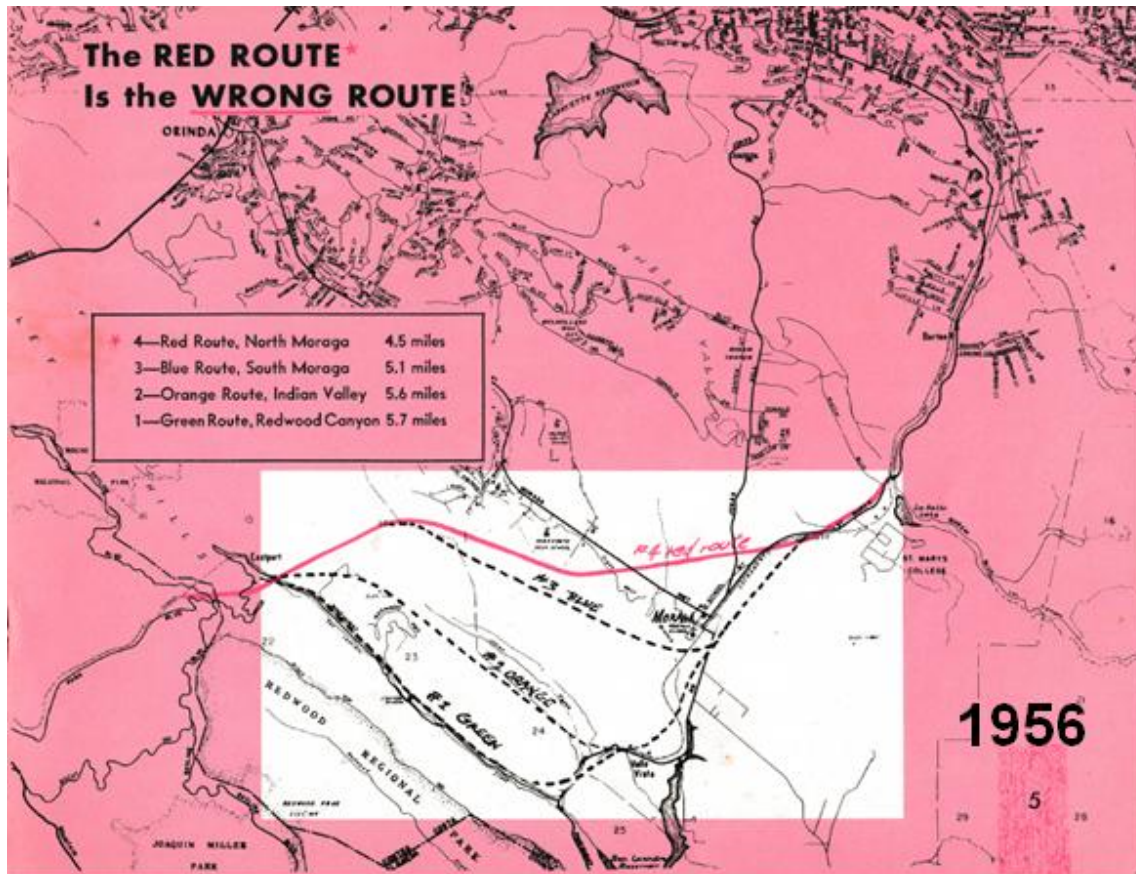


Aerial North View of Moraga - 1950 photo by R.L. Copeland

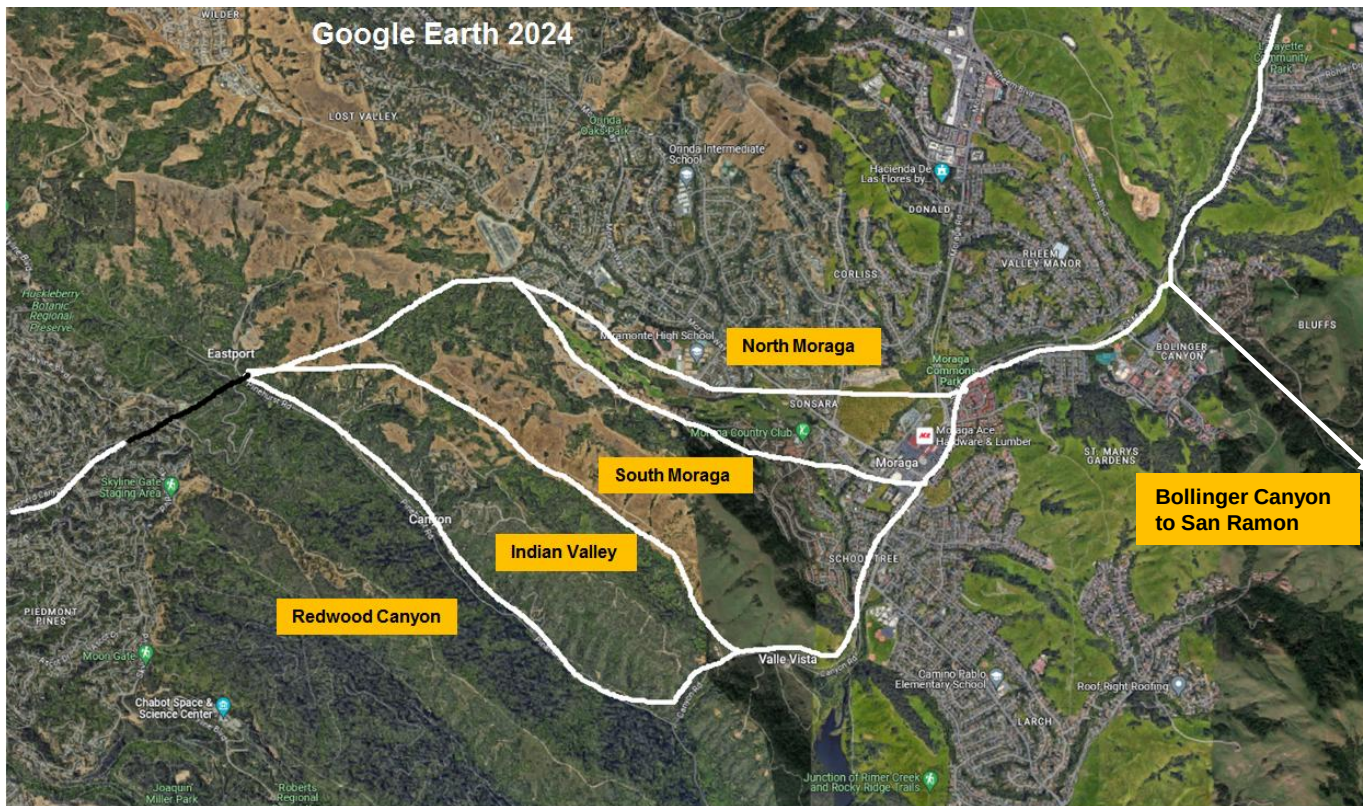
The Shepherd Canyon Highway 77 Controversy 1953-1975



- Initially the controversy was about the best route



- Then it became about Highway 77 as a vision supporting a future population of 60,000 compared to 17,000 today



Most Moraga residents initially supported the highway but disagreed about the best route. Why did they want this highway through Moraga and who preferred which route?

When and why did Moraga become opposed to the very idea of a freeway through Moraga Valley and how did that affect the drive for incorporation?

Had the highway not died thanks to BART, and instead become a 4 lane freeway screaming through town, how would that have changed your priorities as town council members and future mayors?

Would an 8 mile connector to San Ramon via Bollinger Canyon have made Hwy 77 better or worse for Moraga?

Hwy 24 partly split Orinda and Lafayette. Are they better or worse off than cul-de-sac Moraga?

- **The Moraga Mentality vs the Martinez Mentality**

1972 – the Ascot Subdivision along the ridge became a flashpoint for development control and the open space movement

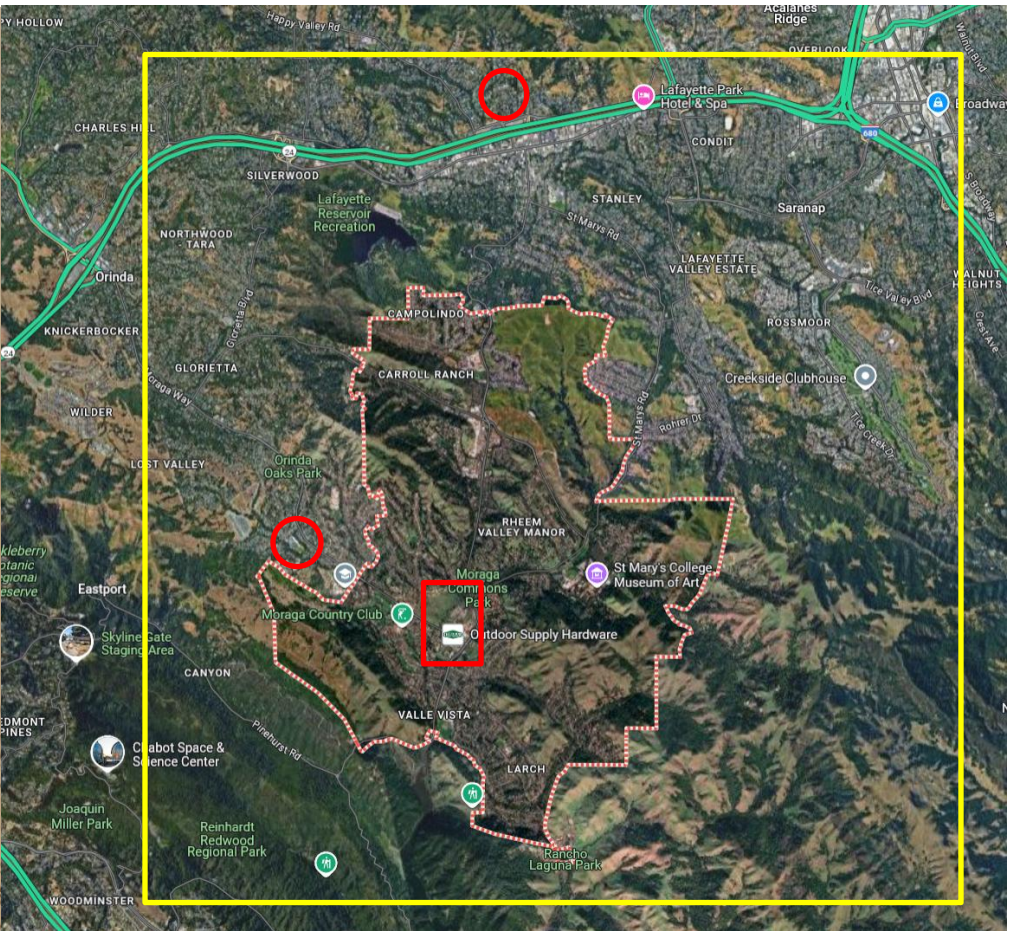


- The Moraga Mentality vs the Martinez Mentality



- What was the Moraga Mentality?
- What was the Martinez Mentality?
- How did support for the push to incorporation evolve?
- What drove the for and against sides?
- How important was the Ascot Subdivision for the evolution of the open space movement?

Rancho Laguna de los Palos Colorados once included parts of Orinda and Lafayette





• The Tri-City and Boundary Controversies

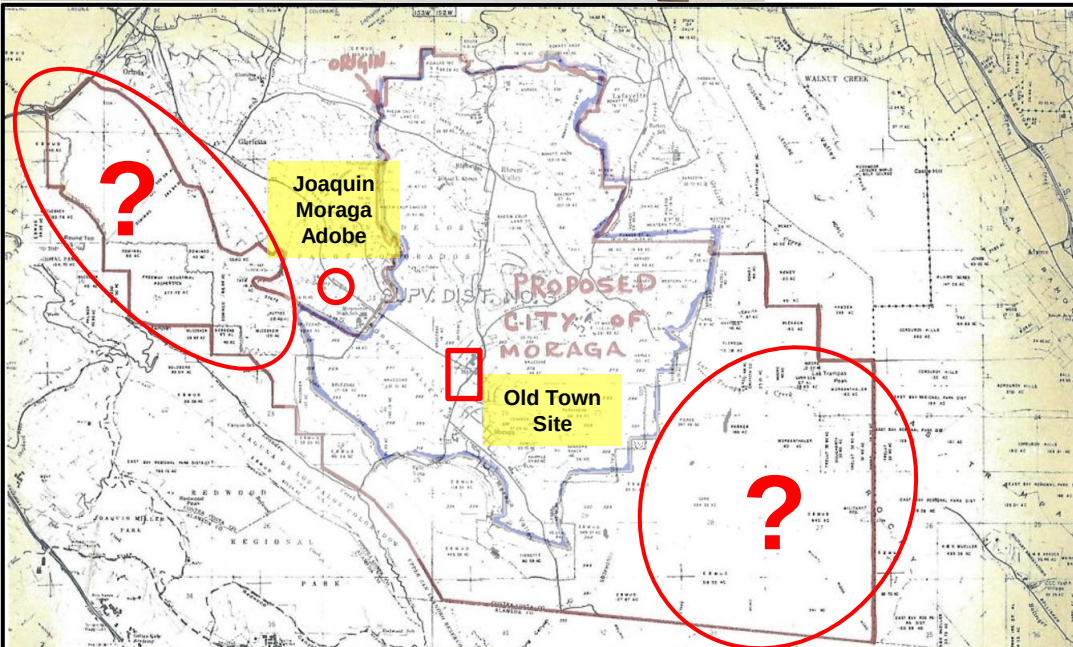
How did the Moraga Adobe end up in Orinda and the Bernal Adobe in Lafayette?

How did the southeastern part of the land grant end up outside Moraga?

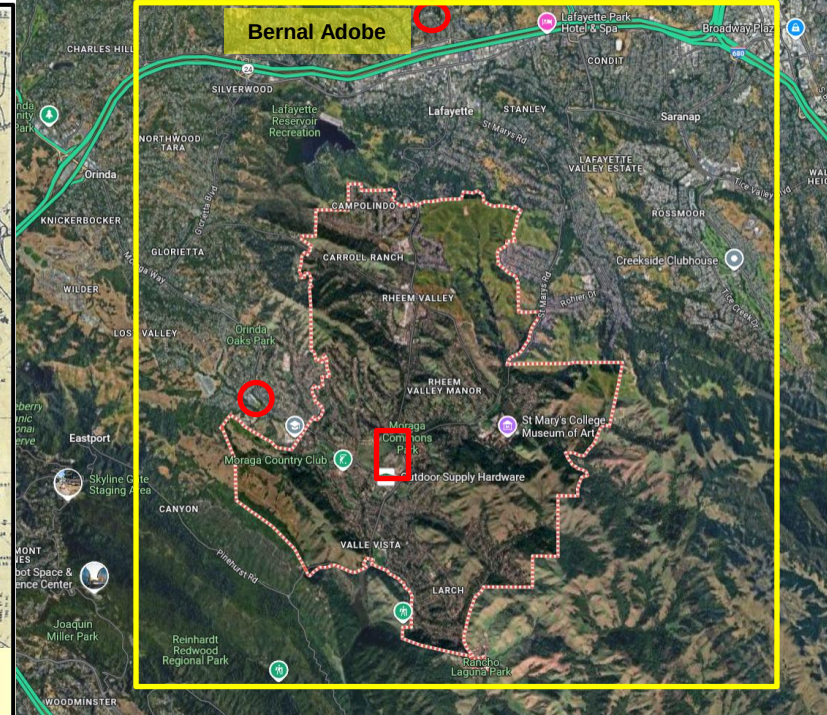
What was the western “teaspoon” all about?

What was behind the idea of a tri-city called Lamorinda and why did it fizzle?

Why did Canyon end up separate from Moraga?



This map was drawn circa 1970-1974. It depicts Moraga extending its boundary into Orinda; the blue outline reflects the final boundary.



- The final incorporation struggle



- How nervous were Moragans about the outcome of the vote?
- How vicious was the initial race for a 5 member town council?
- What were the top priorities of the new town?
- How did Moraga celebrate 50 years ago?

Moraga celebrates 50th anniversary of November 12, 1974 incorporation



- Time Capsule Ceremony video – short version
- Open Discussion

This presentation was prepared by John Kaiser. Due to illness Sue (McNulty) Rainey was unable to participate as planned. Susan Sperry took her place to answer questions along with Barry Gross. We thank Susan and Barry for their participation in this MHS Speaker Series Event.