

# Site Resources

## LOCAL SETTING

The Lower Presidio Historic park is located within the Presidio of Monterey, a 400 plus acre military base in the heart of Monterey. With its panoramic vista to Monterey Bay, the Lower Presidio adds open space character to Monterey's coastline.

The historic park site is within walking distance of the downtown, Monterey State Historic Park, Cannery Row Historical Landmark District, and the historic Royal Presidio of San Carlos de Borromeo.

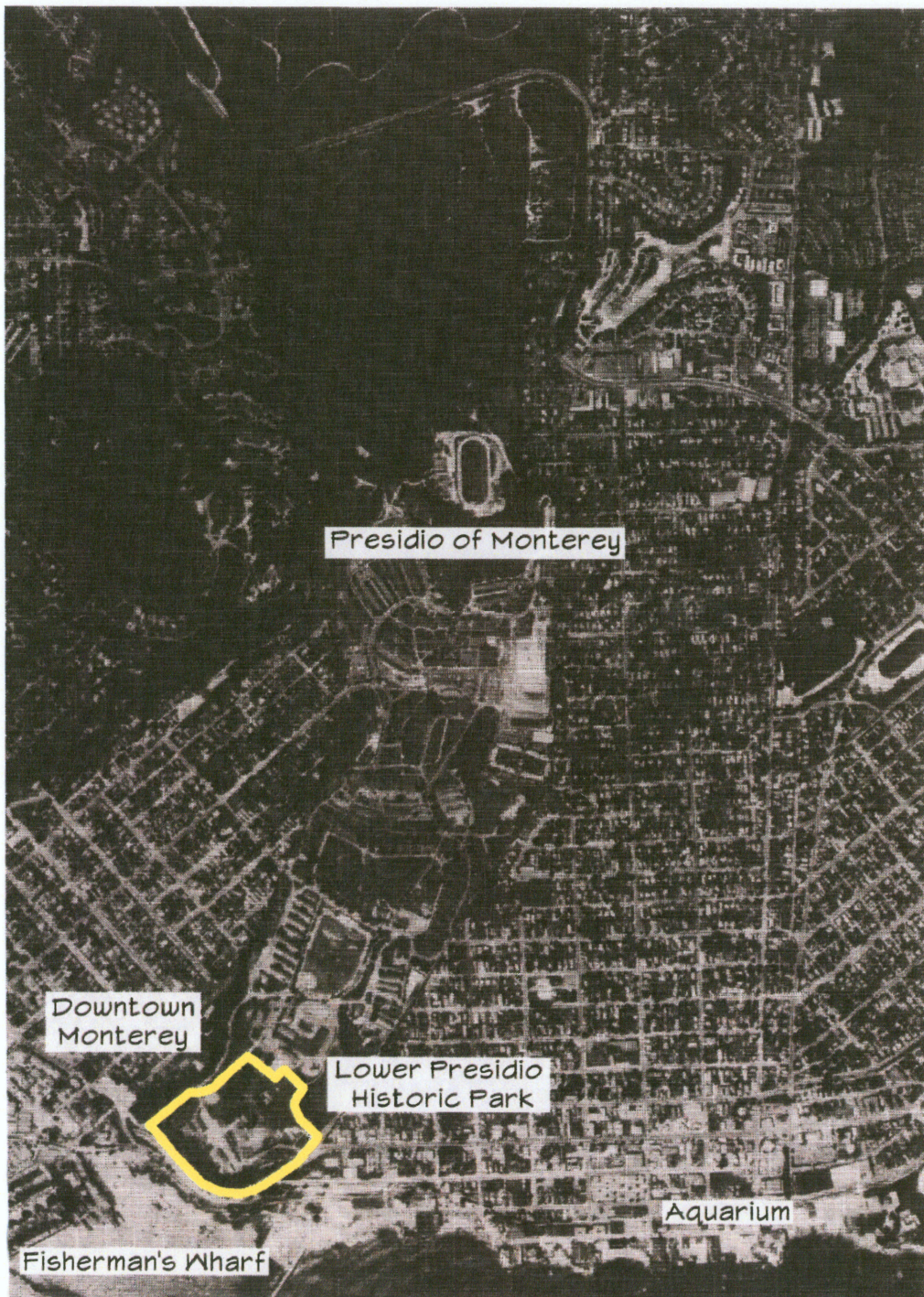
The presidio is actively used by the U.S. Army, with over 5,000 military students annually and 150 teachers. While the Lower Presidio is not integral to the current U.S. Army mission, the roadways and open space are traveled daily.

## SITE CHARACTER & PHYSICAL FEATURES

City and military streets bound the 26 acre lease parcel. As viewed off site from the City, the Lower Presidio is elevated on a 15'-35" high granite bluff. A mix of Monterey Cypress, Monterey Pine and Coast Live Oak further obscure views into the site.

On site, Artillery Street and Private Bolio Drive continue to serve as secondary access routes into the Presidio of Monterey. A heavily wooded drainage ravine borders the southern edge of the proposed park. The heart of the site includes four one story wood buildings loosely organized along Corporal Ewing Road. The structures and their affiliated parking lots, interrupt the interior open spaces.





*Local Setting*



Once on site, views into Monterey and the bay are spectacular. A visitor can begin to appreciate the visual prospective desired by the sites earliest inhabitants.

The site contains a variety of historic features and markers. Dominating the top of the proposed park is the Sloat Memorial and remnants of the Old Fort Mervine. Various buildings actively used by the Army currently form the upper edge of the park site.

#### **GEOLOGY & GEOGRAPHY OF LOWER PRESIDIO HILL**

Lower Presidio Hill is a granite promontory exposed by wave and wind erosion. The granite ringing the Monterey Peninsula originated far south near Santa Barbara and is moving north with the Pacific plate. It is said to date to the Cretaceous period some 66 to 140 million years ago in the last part of the Mesozoic era when dinosaurs still roamed the earth. A plutonic igneous rock, it was formed of molten magma beneath the crust of the earth and surfaced through uplift and erosion of upper rock layers. The granite is jointed and breaks along its joints creating the jagged and picturesque coastline. The Lower Presidio is the first point of the Monterey Peninsula that defines the south end of Monterey bay.

Lake El Estero where the Spanish Presidio was located is an extension of Monterey Bay that went further inland than it does today and was open to the bay in historic times. The Spanish word estero means a brackish lake with salt and fresh water.

The upper Presidio is formed of marine sandstone dating from the middle Miocene epoch in the Tertiary period of the middle Cenozoic era about 5.3 million to 24 million years ago. It is much "younger" than the lower Presidio granite. The former knob at the upper extremity of the historic Presidio of Monterey 597 feet above sea level was quarried. It is thought to be the

sandstone source for the facade of the Spanish Royal Presidio Chapel (1794). A second knob further west at 700 feet above sea level is located on land added to the Presidio of Monterey in this century. Its stone has also been quarried, but is now part of a protected environmental preserve.

## ACCESS

Regional access to Lower Presidio Historic Park is primarily via Highways 1 and 68. Currently, no signage exists directing travelers to the Presidio. However, a reasonably direct route exists from Del Monte Avenue, one of Monterey's primary entrances. Cars or buses will probably use the Artillery Street Gate on Pacific Street.

Pedestrians have a variety of access options, although no natural pedestrian corridor exists today. The City's Path of History brings people close to the site on nearby Van Buren and Scott Streets, but access currently requires people to retrace their route back to Pacific Street. Enhancing pedestrian bridge connections to the site significantly improves safety and accessibility. The nearby Monterey Recreation Trail is a major pedestrian and bicycle corridor that provides tremendous opportunity, but has no direct connection to the Lower Presidio. Pedestrian access from Van Buren and Reeside Streets are major opportunities for neighborhood residents.

## REMNAINT FEATURES

### *Prehistoric*

The site has been the focus of the archaeological studies for the last forty years. The most recent major fieldwork was documented and published in 1978: *Heritage on the Half-Shell: Excavation at CA-MNT-298*. Since that time, site construction activity has prompted focused observations to monitor excavation activities.





# Site Boundaries

- · — Historic District Boundary
- - - Lease Boundary

## Lower Presidio Historic Park

### Project Boundary

Prepared For:  
City of Monterey

Bellinger Foster Steinmetz  
299 Cannery Row Monterey, CA 93940  
Edna E. Kimbro, Historian  
Past Forward Archaeology

Scale 1:3000

1997 Aerial Photo





### Current Buildings/Conditions

- — — — — = Historic District Boundary
- — — — — = Lease Boundary
- 121 = Building Number
- = Existing Trees Outside the Study Area
- = Existing Trees Within the Study Area

### Notes:

- 104 = Laboratory
- 105 = Gun Shed
- 106 = Laboratory
- 109 = Serra Monument
- 112 = Latrine
- 113 = Magazine
- 118 = Stables
- 119 = Stables
- 121 = Blacksmith
- 125 = Office
- 141 = Barracks/Warehouse
- 152 = Sloat Monument

## Lower Presidio Historic Park

### Site Analysis

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Existing Buildings/Uses



While field testing of the entire 26 acre parcel has not occurred, it is anticipated that the entire site has once been inhabited by early man.

***Historic***

Several U.S. Army structures remain as evidence of earlier military use. The various buildings are shown on military maps and aerial photographs to confirm their age, location and use. The following *Historic Resources* section details existing structures history.