

36CFR Part 800.11: Documentation

Description of the Undertaking

Onizuka Air Force Station (AFS) is located in the City of Sunnyvale, Santa Clara County, California. It consists of 30 buildings and structures on a 23-acre parcel located at the northwest corner of the intersection of US Route 101 and State Route 237 (Figure 1). In 2005, Onizuka AFS was selected for closure in accordance with the federal Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act (DBCRA) of 1990, commonly known as Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). Onizuka AFS is scheduled to close no later than September 15, 2011. It is anticipated that the installation will be transferred to the City of Sunnyvale, California in 2011, and redeveloped in accordance with the city's redevelopment plan.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the undertaking is the conveyance of Onizuka AFS to a non-federal entity by 2011. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) is comprised of the 23-acre Onizuka AFS parcel (Figure 2).

Identification of Historic Properties

In 2004, a Historic Building Inventory and Evaluation (HBIE) was undertaken by the US Air Force Space Command (AFSPC), 21st Space Operations Squadron (SOPS) at Onizuka AFS. The inventory identified and evaluated 30 buildings and structures at Onizuka AFS (including Buildings 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 10031 and 10032) for National Register of Historic Places (National Register) eligibility in accordance with Section 106. The report concluded that 24 buildings and structures were not eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The report also recommended that the six remaining interconnected buildings (Buildings 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 10031 and 10032) be considered not eligible for inclusion in the National Register. However, the report recommended that they be re-evaluated under the following circumstances:

- When they reach 50 years of age.
- When the installation's missions are declassified and/or decommissioned.
- When sufficient information to support a National Register eligibility determination is available.

In 2009, an addendum to the 2004 HBIE was undertaken by the US Air Force, Headquarters, Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment (AFCEE) in conjunction with the conveyance of Onizuka AFS to the City of Sunnyvale. As recommended by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) (also known as the California State Historic Preservation Officer [SHPO]) Buildings 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 10031 and 10032 were collectively evaluated to determine if they meet the criteria to be considered eligible for listing in the National Register, including Criteria Consideration G: Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Last Fifty Years. The addendum concluded that Buildings 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 10031 and 10032 are recommended National Register-eligible as the proposed US Air Force Satellite Test Center Historic District. The proposed district is eligible under Criteria A and Criteria Consideration G for its national, state, and local significance as a satellite reconnaissance facility associated with crucial intelligence-gathering activities during the Cold War (1946-91). A compact disc (CD) with a copy of the addendum in PDF format accompanies this document.

Description of Historic Properties

Onizuka AFS was established in 1959 when Building 1001 was constructed by the US Air Force to serve as the command center for its first reconnaissance satellite program, the Corona Program. The program was developed by the US Air Force and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), with assistance from private contractors such as Lockheed Missiles and Space Division. Originally a classified program, it

became publicly known as the Discoverer Program by 1960. Operational by 1960, satellites were controlled from the building by Lockheed Missiles and Space Division, with oversight by the US Air Force. The satellites were also supported by a series of tracking stations, all of which were linked to Building 1001.

By 1961, the National Reconnaissance Organization (NRO) was established and assumed control of the Corona Program, as well as newly developed reconnaissance satellite programs. The US Air Force and Lockheed Space and Missiles Division continued to provide support for the satellites from Onizuka AFS. Furthermore, additional satellites, including communications; early missile warning; meteorology; navigation; and nuclear detonation detection were also supported from Onizuka AFS. To provide additional space for personnel, Building 1002, an administrative building, was constructed in the early 1960s. By the late 1960s, Building 1003 and 1004 were constructed. Although Building 1003 was initially constructed to support the Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL) Program, cancelled in 1969, the building was utilized to provide command and control for numerous satellite programs, many of them likely for reconnaissance. Building 1004 provided power to the installation, rendering it energy-independent.

From the 1960s onward, the installation continued to play a key role as the only US Air Force satellite control facility. Tracking stations associated with the Air Force Satellite Control Facility (AFSCF) continued to be developed, and were all linked to Onizuka AFS. In the 1980s, Buildings 10031 and 10032 were constructed in conjunction with the development of the Air Force Satellite Control Network (AFSCN). When a new satellite control center – the Consolidated Space Operations Center (CSOC) – was constructed in Colorado Springs, Colorado in the mid-1980s, Onizuka AFS was no longer the only US Air Force installation providing satellite support.

Brief descriptions of the six buildings are provided below and photographs of the building are attached.

Building 1001

Constructed in 1959, Building 1001 is a one-story, irregular-plan, windowless, utilitarian steel-frame building sheathed in concrete panels. It sits atop a concrete foundation and is capped by a flat roof. It is connected to Building 1002 to the north, Building 1004 to the south, and Buildings 1003 and 100031 to the west. Building 1001 has been altered on the exterior and interior.

Building 1002

Constructed in two phases in 1962 and 1964, Building 1002 is a two-story, square-plan, utilitarian steel-frame building sheathed in stucco-like material with an open interior courtyard. It sits atop a concrete foundation and is capped by a flat roof. Bands of windows in metal surrounds pierce the first and second story on the north, east, and west facades. Building 1002 is connected to Building 1001 to the south. Building 1002 has been altered on the exterior and interior.

Building 1003

Constructed in 1969, Building 1003 is a four-story, rectangular-plan, windowless, utilitarian steel frame building sheathed in pale blue-painted concrete panels. It sits atop a concrete foundation and is capped by a flat roof. It is connected to Building 10031 to the north, Building 1001 to the east, and Building 10032 to the west. Building 1003 has been altered on the interior.

Building 1004

Constructed in 1969, Building 1004 is a two-story, rectangular-plan, windowless, utilitarian steel frame building sheathed in concrete panels. It sits atop a concrete foundation and is capped by a flat roof. Two-story-high metal louvered vents occur on the east and west facades. Building 1004 is connected to Building 1001 to the north. Building 1004 has been altered on the interior.

Building 10031

Constructed in 1985, Building 10031 is a three-story, rectangular-plan, windowless, utilitarian steel frame building. It sits atop a concrete foundation and is capped by a flat roof. The first two stories are open and originally functioned as a parking lot. The third story is sheathed in corrugated siding. Building 10031 is connected to Building 1001 to the east, and Buildings 1003 and 10032 to the south. The entrance to Building 10031 occurs on the north facade. This entrance provides access to all six buildings. Building 10031 has been altered on the interior.

Building 10032

Constructed in 1988, Building 10032 is similar to Building 10031. It is a three-story, rectangular-plan, windowless, utilitarian steel frame building. It sits atop a concrete foundation and is capped by a flat roof. The first two stories are open and originally functioned as a parking lot. The third story is sheathed in corrugated siding. Building 10032 is connected to Building 10031 to the north, and Building 1003 to the east. Building 10032 has been altered on the interior.

National Register Eligibility Evaluation

The six buildings at Onizuka AFS are intrinsically linked to the Cold War in terms of their construction dates (1959-1988) and intelligence-gathering functions. Therefore, they are recommended National Register-eligible under Criteria A and Criteria Consideration G as a historic district, the proposed US Air Force Satellite Test Center Historic District (Figure 3).

The proposed historic district is recommended eligible under Criterion A at a national, state, and local level for its association with reconnaissance satellites during the Cold War, including the first reconnaissance satellite program, the Corona Program. The Corona Program provided the first satellite reconnaissance photographs of the Soviet Union and China, among other countries. In addition, Corona satellites, controlled from the installation, provided concrete evidence that the missile gap did not exist. As new satellite technologies developed, the installation began to support additional satellites, which also provided valuable data and support throughout the Cold War. Although many satellite programs remain classified, the constant presence of the NRO at the installation clearly illustrates the crucial role that it played in satellite reconnaissance throughout the Cold War.

In addition, the proposed historic district is also recommended eligible at the state and local levels under Criterion A for its association with the development of California as a leader in technological innovations. California, and specifically the City of Sunnyvale in Silicon Valley, began to emerge as a leading technological center during the Cold War. This was due, in part, to the military's investment in the development of defense technologies in California, such as command and control of reconnaissance satellites at Onizuka AFS. In addition, the military funded efforts of private contractors, such as Lockheed Missiles and Space Division, to assist with the development of multiple new technologies, such as spacecraft and boosters, among others. The presence of Lockheed Missiles and Space Division in Sunnyvale California in the mid-1950s, followed by Onizuka AFS in the late 1950s, laid the groundwork for the development of this area as a high-technology center.

The proposed historic district is also recommended eligible at a national, state, and local level under Criteria Consideration G because its associations with the Cold War appear to have exceptional importance. Originally constructed in 1959 as the command center for the Corona Program, the installation continued to develop throughout the Cold War as the sole US Air Force satellite command and control center for the AFSFC. Numerous satellites were supported from the installation, many of which provided invaluable data concerning the Soviet Union, China, and other countries. Although many of the satellite programs remain classified, it is apparent through the presence of the NRO, key reconnaissance satellite programs were supported at the installation throughout the Cold War. Thus, the six interconnected buildings form a cohesive unit, and represent the massive investment of the United States to combat the perceived threat posed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

Impact of Undertaking

According to the 2005 BRAC decision, Onizuka AFS will close no later than September 15, 2011. In 2006, the Department of Defense (DoD), through the Office of Economic Adjustment, formally recognized the City of Sunnyvale as the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) for planning the redevelopment of Onizuka AFS and its conversion to civilian use. In December 2008, the LRA completed the *Final Onizuka Air Force Station Local Redevelopment Authority Redevelopment Plan*. The plan analyzed a number of reuse options, and recommended that Onizuka AFS be redeveloped as an auto retail center. To best accommodate this goal, the LRA proposed to demolish all buildings and structures on the 23-acre installation.

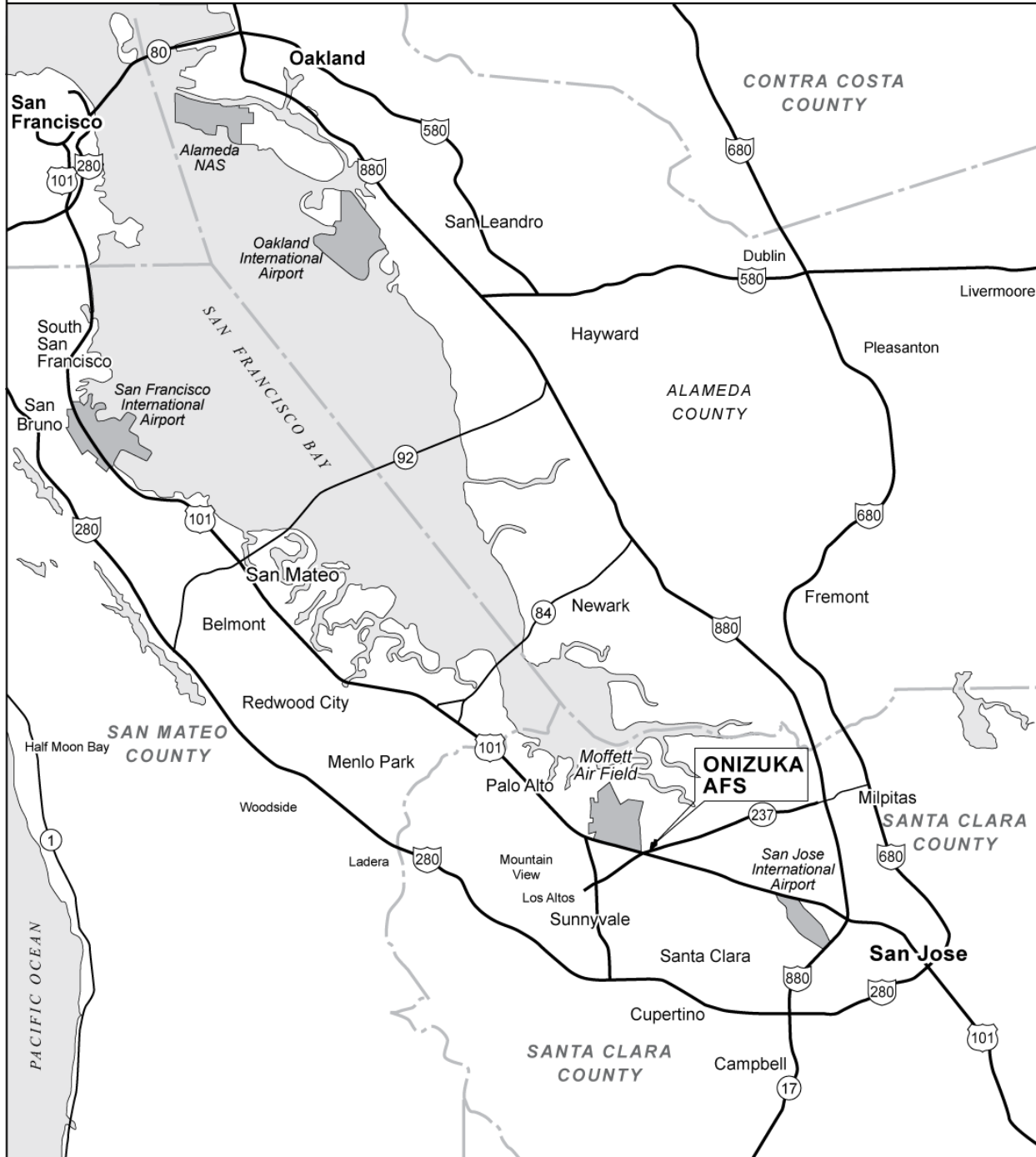
Under Section 106, the transfer of Onizuka AFS out of federal hands will constitute an adverse effect on the proposed National Register-eligible US Air Force Satellite Test Center Historic District. However, pursuant to federal property disposal laws and Federal Property Management Regulations (FPMR), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requested a 2.4-acre portion of Onizuka AFS, including Building 1002, Building 1018, Building 1034, and associated vehicle parking space. The US Air Force approved this request. Therefore, as the transfer process moves forward, it is anticipated that the LRA will incorporate the VA's request into their redevelopment plan.

Recommended Actions to Mitigate Adverse Effects

In accordance with Section 106, the undertaking will have an adverse effect on the proposed US Air Satellite Test Center Historic District. Although avoidance of adverse effects is the preferred option, it is not practical in this case. In general, the US Air Force prefers to mitigate the adverse effect of base closures on National Register-listed and/or eligible resources prior to transfer by documenting them to Historic American Building Survey (HABS) Level II standards or, in this case, the California SHPO-equivalent standards.

The US Air Force will consult with the City of Sunnyvale LRA, California SHPO, Advisory Council, and other interested parties to determine how best to mitigate the adverse effects caused by the transfer of Onizuka AFS to a non-federal entity. Consultation would also include discussions concerning the reuse of Building 1002 by the VA in a manner that acknowledges its status as a contributing resource to the proposed historic district. The US Air Force plans to meet with interested parties at Onizuka AFS in March 2010 to discuss mitigation strategies that would be included in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) drafted in accordance with Section 106.

Regional Map

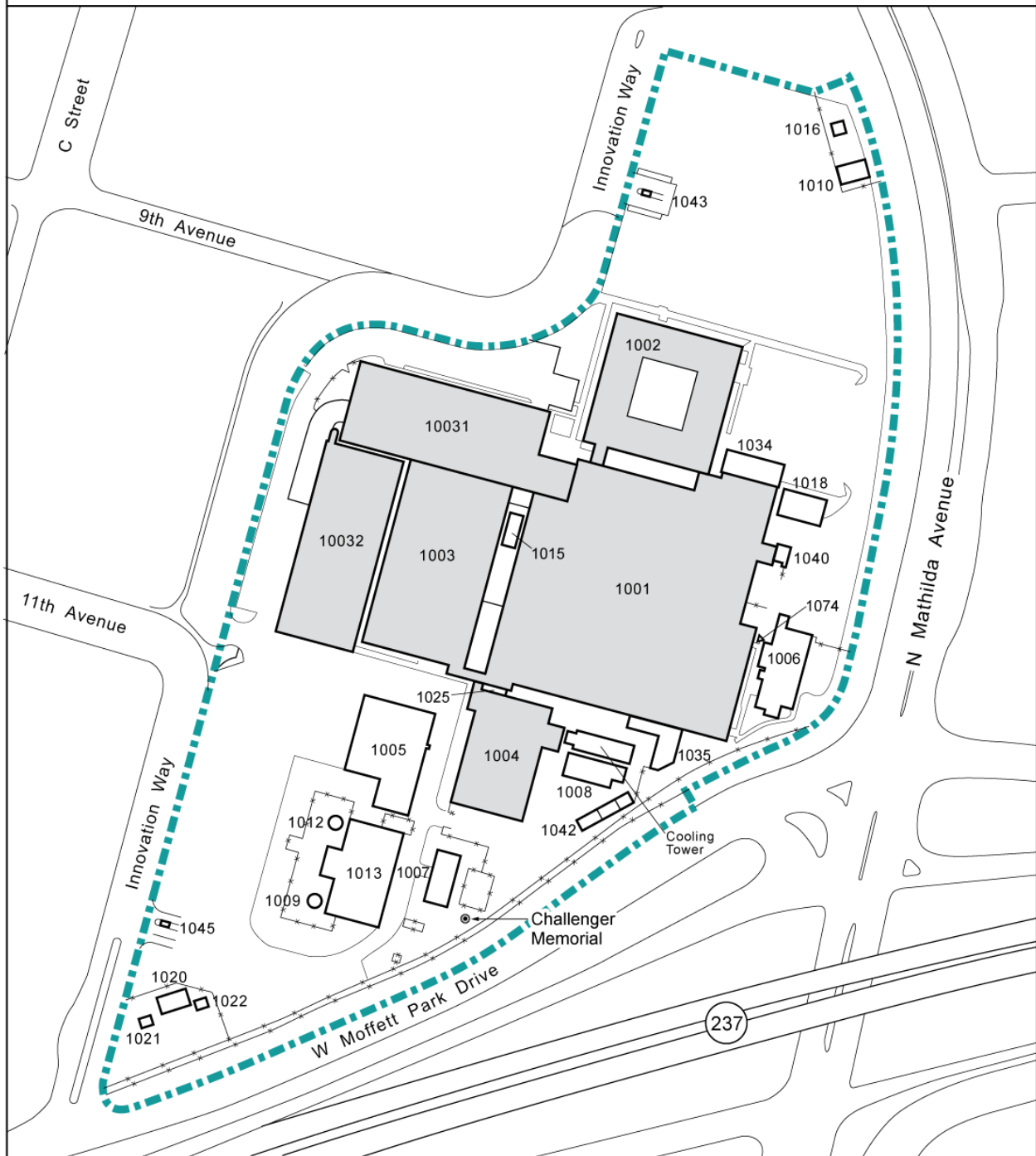


- Interstate Highway
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway



Figure 1

Area of Potential Effect



--- Area of Potential Effect
█ Evaluated Buildings

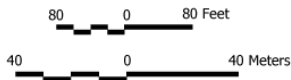
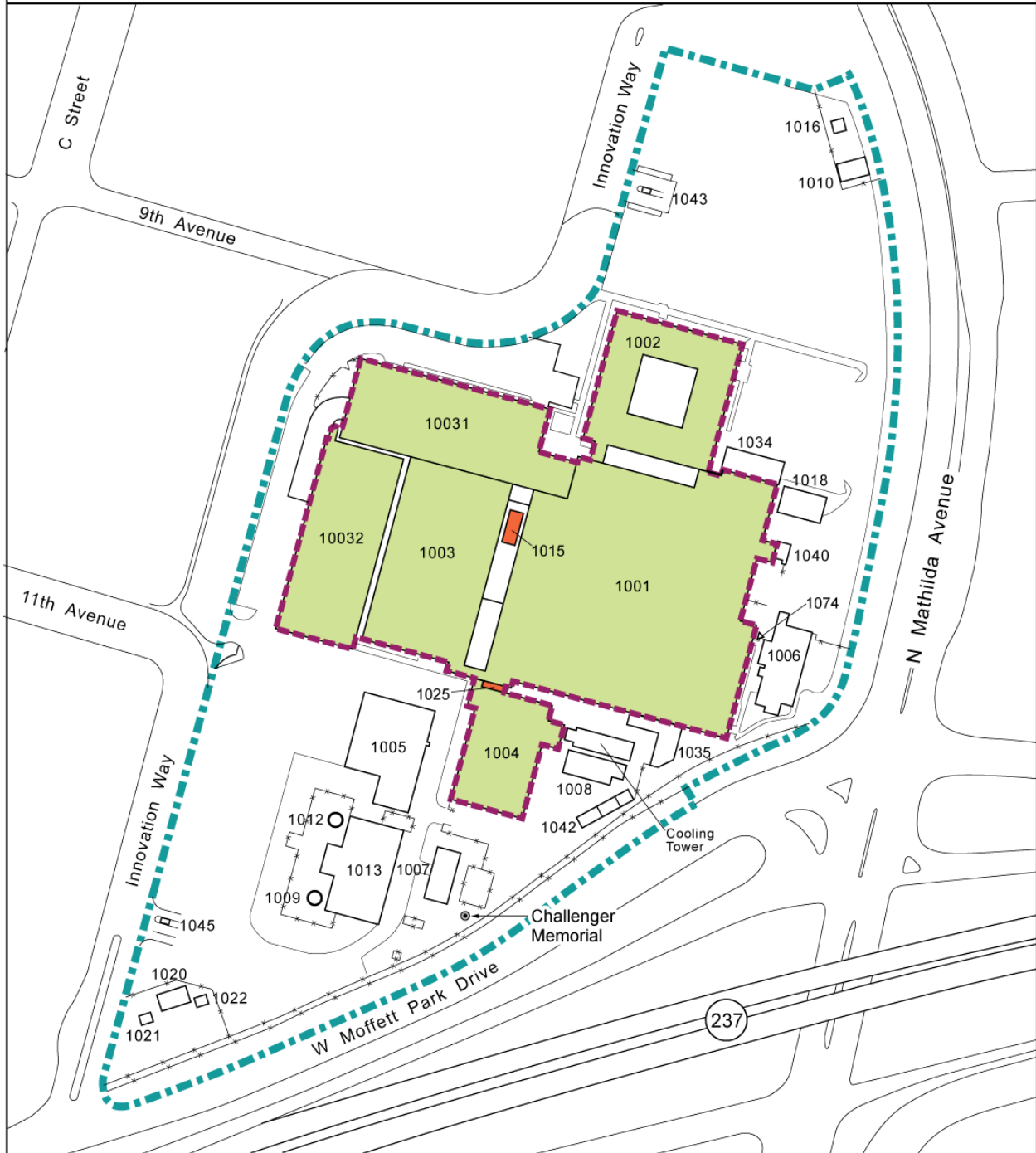






Figure 2

US Air Force Satellite Test Center Historic District



-  Installation Boundary
-  Proposed National Register Boundary
-  Contributing
-  Non-contributing

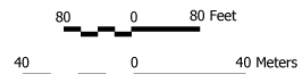


Figure 3



Photo 1: View looking south toward entrance to Building 10031. This entrance provides access to Buildings 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, and 10032 because all buildings are interconnected.



Photo 2: View looking east toward rear façade of Building 1001. Note Buildings 1006 and 1040 in foreground partially obscure Building 1001.



Photo 3: View looking southeast toward Building 1002 (left), Building 10031 (right), and Building 1003 (rear).



Photo 4: View looking south toward Building 10031 (foreground) and Building 1003 (background).



Photo 5: View looking southeast toward Building 1002 (foreground) and Building 1003 (background).



Photo 6: View looking west toward Building 1004.