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RB INYOKERN DATA CENTER

Application for Small Power Plant Exemption (SPPE)

Inyokern, Kern County, California

Docket Number - 26-SPPE-01

Supporting Document Appendix B

Subsection(s):

- B.2 - Historical Architectural Report



Historical Resources Technical Report for Inyokern Data Center Project, Kern County, California

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Draft Version

March 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ASM Affiliates (ASM) was retained by Quad Knopf, Inc. to conduct an architectural historical resources evaluation and assessment for the proposed Inyokern Data Center Project (Project) to be constructed by Intuva Inc. and Valley Wide Engineering & Construction. The Project is located within the census-designated place (CDP) of Inyokern, in Kern County, California. The lead agency for the Project is the California Energy Commission (CEC). The report was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the study was conducted to identify any architectural historical resources that have the potential for significant impacts from the Project. The CEC has additional applicable regulations that were followed, specifically the *California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20, Division 2, Chapter 5, Appendix B: Information Requirements for an Application for Certification or Small Power Plant Exemption section (g)(2)*.

The Project area includes approximately 95 acres of undeveloped private land. In defining the area of potential impacts (API), per CEQA and CCR Title 20.2.5(g)(2), a buffer area was included to ensure the consideration of Project impacts to all potential architectural historical resources. That buffer ranges from one parcel to 0.5 mile depending on the character of the setting of that area of the Project. The size of the buffer surrounding the Project was determined in consultation with CEC's cultural resources staff following the CCR Title 20.2.5(g)(2) guidelines for *both* urban and rural settings; in the more developed areas/suburban areas of the Project the API includes a one-parcel buffer from the proposed plant site whereas in the rural areas of the Project the API includes a 0.5 mi buffer from the proposed plant site and linear facility route.

No previously identified historical resources have been identified within the API that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), California Points of Historical Interest (CPHI), California Historic Landmarks (CHL), nor any local register of historic resources. As the result of an intensive-level survey, ASM's architectural historians identified 31 properties within the API that contain buildings or structures constructed more than 45 years ago. Thirty of those properties were evaluated in this HRTR, as one parcel was not visible from the public right-of-way. ASM also noted 10 architectural resources within the API that are less than 45 years old.

In this HRTR, 30 properties containing a total of 40 buildings or structures are individually evaluated for their eligibility for the CRHR and as CEQA historical resources. All are recommended not eligible for the CRHR nor are they CEQA historical resources. ASM did not note the potential for any eligible historic district within the API.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Historical Resources Technical Report (HRTR) is an identification and evaluation of potential historical architectural resources that could be impacted by the Inyokern Data Center Project (Project). The proposed Project is located within the census-designated place (CDP) of Inyokern, Kern County, California. The lead agency for the Project is the California Energy Commission (CEC). This HRTR was prepared to meet the requirements set forth in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Public Resources Code 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA guidelines (California Code of Regulations, section 15000 et seq.) as well as *California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20, Division 2, Chapter 5, Appendix B: Information Requirements for an Application for Certification or Small Power Plant Exemption section (g)(2)* and the guidelines provided in CEC's *Historic Resource Report Format for CEQA Projects*.

The report was conducted to identify any historical architectural resources that have the potential for significant impacts from the Project. The HRTR consisted of a review of project information, intensive-level survey from the public right-of-way, archival research, and evaluation of resources per the applicable criteria.

Project Description

As designed, Intuva Inc. and Valley Wide Engineering & Construction have proposed the Inyokern Data Center. The Project will consist of a 99 MW modular, hyperscale campus located in Kern County, California. This Conceptual Basis of Design (BoD) defines the guiding engineering philosophies, performance criteria, and design parameters for the project, supporting both the California Energy Commission (CEC) Small Power Plant Exemption (SPPE) and subsequent design development phases. Constructed in three phases (35 MW → 70 MW → 99 MW), the project utilizes dual-sided electrical and mechanical systems for concurrent maintainability, high energy efficiency, and readiness for future technological evolution. The design adheres to a 70/30 load split and maintains operational redundancy across all critical infrastructure systems.

The main facility, a 99 MW Tier III+ facility supplied via a 115 kV interconnection to Southern California Edison (SCE), will encompass a 55.54-acre site which lies south of West Inyokern Road (Highway 178) and west of Brown Road, composed of Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 084-010-45 (portion), 084-010-44, and 084-010-43.

The site scales through three construction phases:

1. Phase 1 (0–24 months): 30–35 MW total, IT 21–25 MW, Non-IT 9–10 MW; three suites, first transformer and generator yard.
2. Phase 2 (24–48 months): 65–70 MW total, IT 45–49 MW, Non-IT 20–21 MW; additional suites, second transformer, and expanded cooling.
3. Phase 3 (48–72 months): 99 MW total, IT 70 MW, Non-IT 29 MW; final suite, complete 2N substation, and second generator yard.

The proposed Inyokern Data Center Project will encompass a total of approximately 95 acres, which includes all access roads, staging areas, the main facility, and ancillary infrastructure construction.

Area of Potential Impacts

The Project area, consisting of open flat land, is located within the CDP of Inyokern, Kern County, California (Figure 1.1). This Project is located within the open flats of the Indian Wells Valley, a western

extension of the Mojave Desert, and at an elevation range of approximately 2,415 feet (ft.) to 2,435 ft. above mean sea level (amsl). Specifically, the Project is within Sections 19, 20, 29, and 30, in Township 26 South, Range 39 East (T26S/R39E), Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDBM) as illustrated on the Inyokern USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. The Project will involve approximately 95 acres of undeveloped private land. The API also includes a buffer surrounding the Project that was included to ensure the consideration of impacts to all potential historical resources adjacent to the Project (Figure 1.2). That buffer ranges from one parcel to 0.5 mile (mi.) depending on the character of the setting of that area of the Project, per guidelines in CEC's *Historic Resource Report Format for CEQA Projects*. The size of the buffer surrounding the Project determined in consultation with CEC's cultural resources staff following the CCR Title 20.2.5(g)(2) guidelines for *both* urban and rural settings; in the more developed areas/suburban areas of the Project the API includes a one-parcel buffer from the proposed plant site whereas in the rural areas of the Project the API includes a 0.5 mi buffer from the proposed plant site and linear facility route.

Thirty properties within the API, and one linear resource, contain buildings or structures constructed more than 45 years ago (Figure 1.3 and Table 1). Ten properties in the API contain architectural resources that are less than 45 years old (Table 2). The APNs for each parcel within the API are listed in the following tables, which also include information regarding the address, property type, year built, number of buildings within each parcel, and eligibility for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).

Table 1. Parcels with Built Environment Resources 45 Years Old or Older

APN	Address	Property Type	Year Built	No. of Buildings on parcel
084-040-02-1	1661 N Brown Road	Trailer Park	c.1955	2*
084-040-32-8	1520 Second Street	Agricultural Shed	c.1950	1
084-040-17-9	6546 Orchard Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1940	1
084-040-29-4	1509 N Brown Road	Single-Family Residence	1947	2: Residence & garage
084-152-02-4	1447 N Brown Road	Single-Family Residences / Duplex	1944	3
084-152-05-7	1429 N Brown Road	Non-Permanent Trailer Residence	c.1960	1
084-140-02-9	101 Ash Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1932	1
084-140-09-4	1401 N Brown Road	Commercial Building	c.1935	1
084-090-13-3	1353 N Brown Road	Commercial Building	1946	1
084-060-15-0	6509 Locust Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1953	1
084-211-14-3	1312 Broadway	Single-Family Residence	1973	1
084-211-02-8	6521 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1958	1
084-211-03-6	6517 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1960	1
084-211-04-4	6513 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1953	2: Residence & garage
084-211-05-1	109 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1948	1
084-211-14-3	1233 Brown Road	Commercial Buildings	1936	3
084-212-25-7	6564 Sierra Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1951	1
084-212-09-1	1201 Brown Road	Non-Permanent Trailer Residence	1961	1
084-021-01-3	6331 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1950	1
084-021-02-1	1244 N Dera Street	Single-Family Residence	1978	1
084-021-06-2	1249 N Nadine Street	Single-Family Residence	c.1980	1
084-021-10-4	N/A	Single-Family Residence	1978	1
084-022-19-3	5831 Delbert Street	Single-Family Residence	1982	1
352-310-32-0	1372 Comet Street	Single-Family Residence	1981	1
352-310-25-4	1344 N Comet Street**		1980	1
352-310-23-9	5527 Graaf Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1970	1
352-310-14-8	1511 Comet Street	Single-Family Residence	1963	2: Residence & garage
352-310-15-5	1540 N Mercury Street	Single-Family Residence	1981	2: Residence & garage
352-310-11-4	5631 Inyokern Road	Single-Family Residence	1978	1
352-502-23-1	Inyokern Substation	Infrastructure	c.1912	1
	U.S. Highway 395	Linear Resource	1933/1966	1

*There are two permanent buildings recorded in the Kern County Assessor's office. However, there are 48 lots with one RV or Mobile Home each within this parcel.

**The building constructed in 1980 could not be viewed from the public right-of-way during the 2026 survey of the parcel. Because ASM was not able to view it, this building was not evaluated.

Table 2. Parcels with Built Environment Resources Less Than 45 Years Old

APN	Address	Property Type	Year Built	No. of Buildings >45 years old on parcel
084-090-10-9	6512 Locust Avenue	Institutional	1986	1
084-021-14-6	-	-	-	0
084-010-37-0	1317 Moonwind Street	Single-Family Residence	Unknown	1
084-021-15-3	1217 N Oriole Street	Single-Family Residence	2006	2: Residence & garage
084-022-01-1	6501 Sunset Avenue	Single Family Residence	2004	2: Residence & garage
084-140-02-9	101 Ash Avenue	Commercial Building	1993	1
084-022-10-2	5853 Ward Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1985	1
084-022-14-4	1226 N Sun Street	Single-Family Residence	1983	1
084-010-59-4	6260 California Highway 178	Commercial	1998	1
084-010-58-6	6259 California Highway 178	Commercial	1988	1
084-010-46-1	-	-	-	0
352-502-12-4	1925 N Blackbird Street	Single-Family Residence	1984	1
352-502-08-2	6068 Pebble Beach Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1984	1
352-310-31-2	5556 Ward Avenue	Single Family Residence	2008	2: Residence & garage

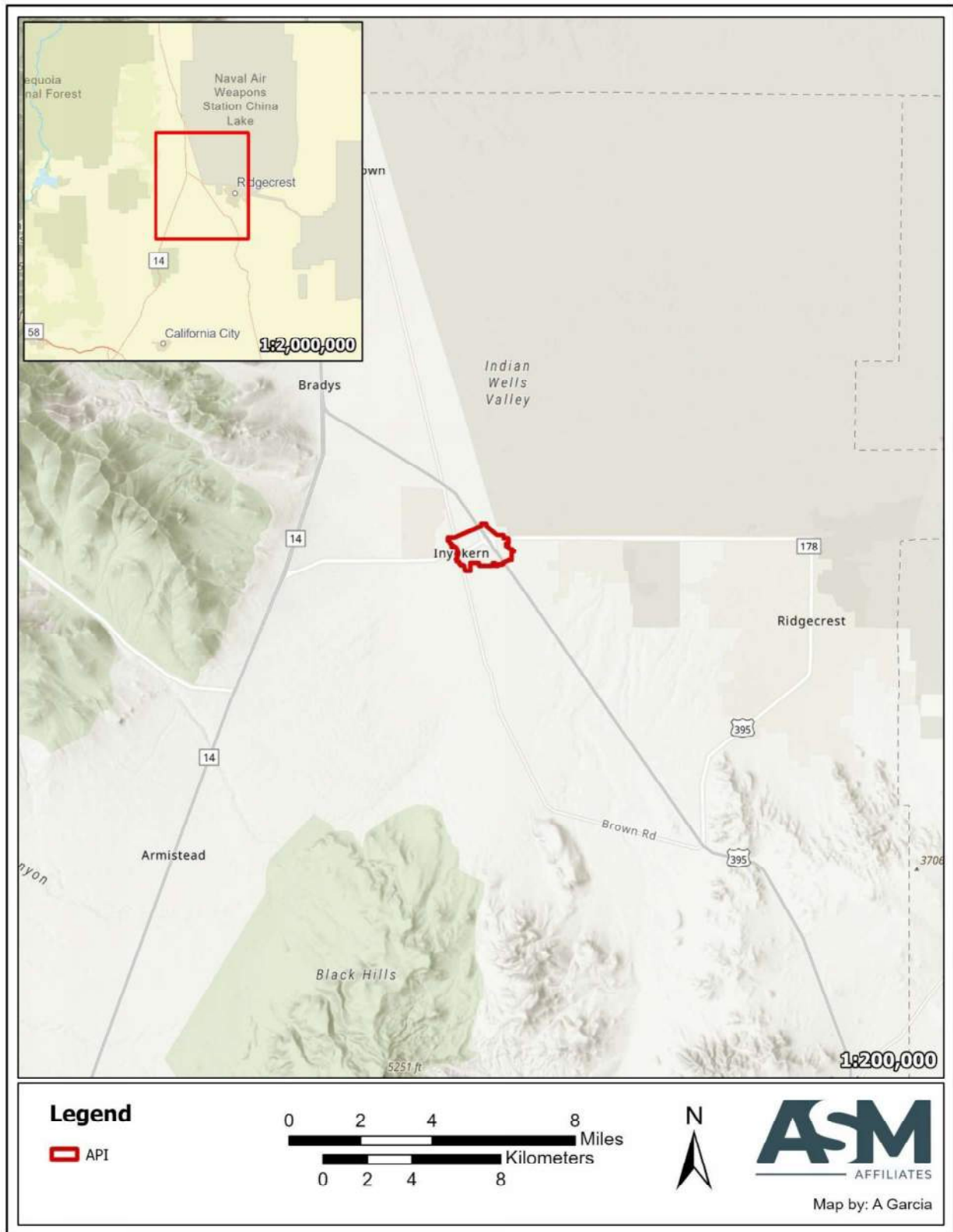


Figure 1.1 Project Vicinity

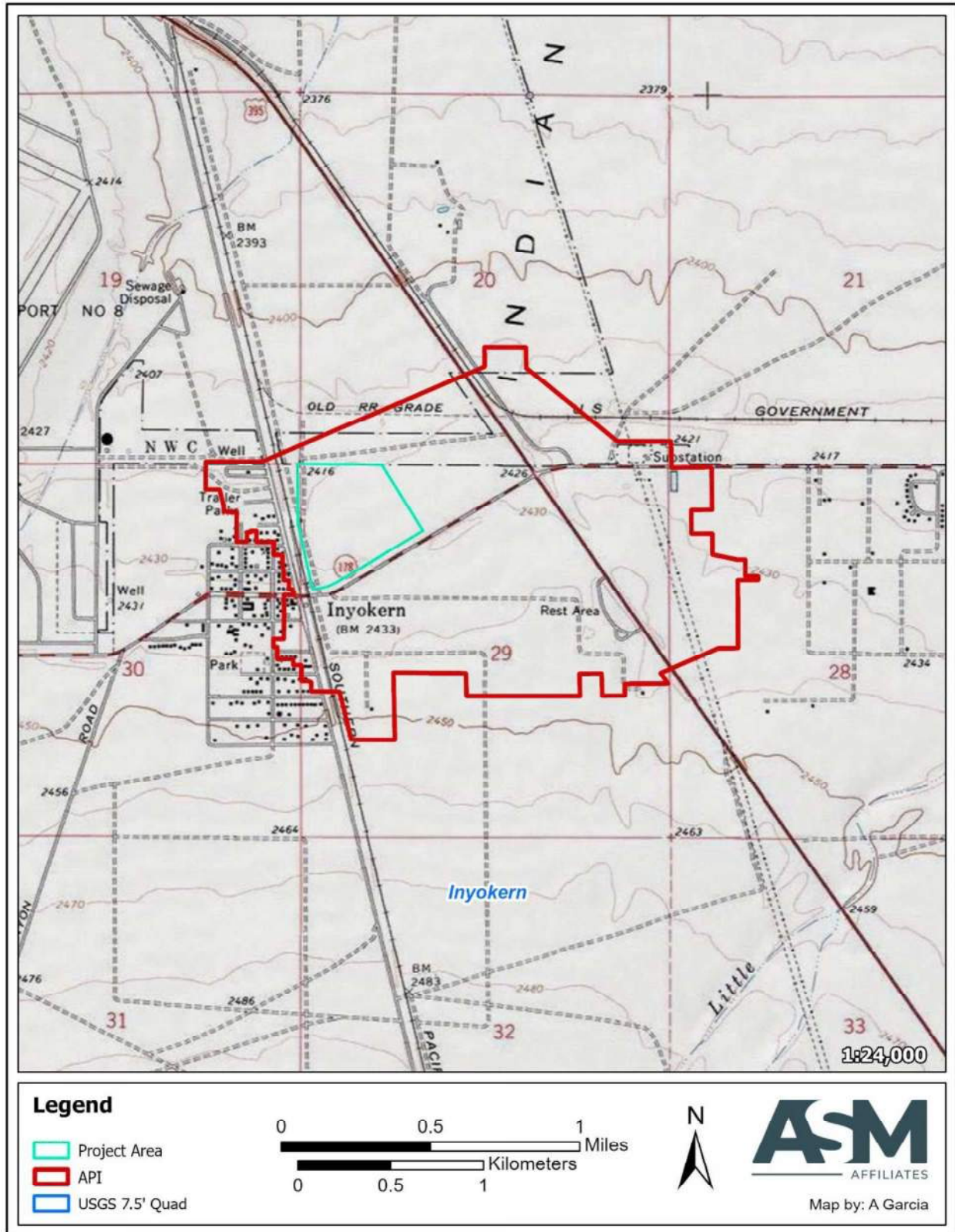


Figure 1.2 Project Location and Area of Potential Impacts

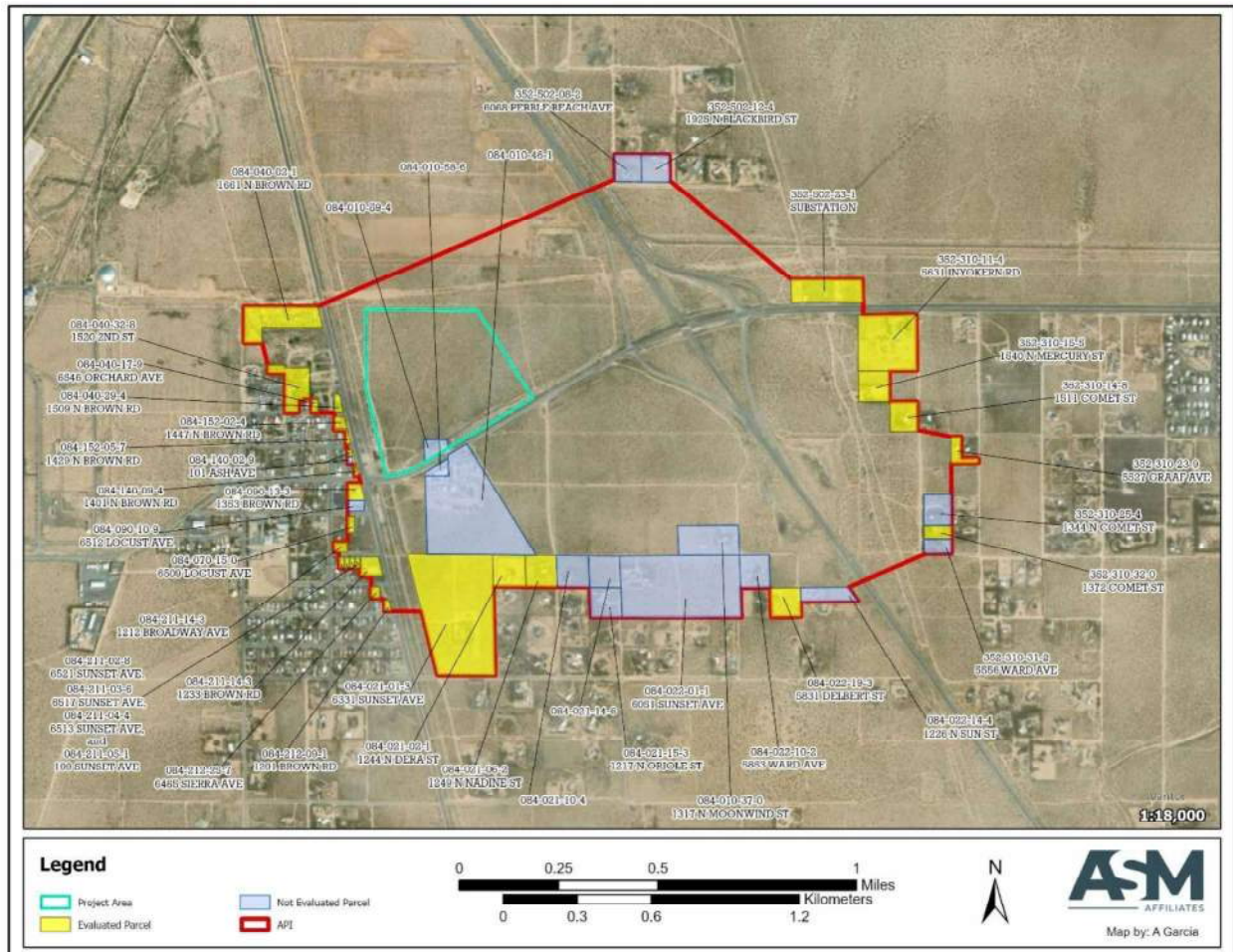


Figure 1.3 Parcels within the API surveyed for architectural resources, identifying which parcels were and were not evaluated.

1.1 METHODOLOGY

Field Methods

The National Park Service identifies two levels of survey. A reconnaissance-level survey is a quick inspection of an area, the purpose of which is to characterize the area generally as the basis for more detailed survey efforts. General historical research is conducted, such as the study of aerial photos, historical maps, and written histories. This research is followed by field work that identifies the basic characteristics of the area, such as extant property types, architectural styles, and street patterns.

Intensive surveys are used to precisely document the cultural resources within a given area or when information is needed for particular properties for later evaluation and treatment decisions. Such surveys entail the documentation of the types of properties that are present, the precise locations and boundaries of all identified properties, the method of survey (including the extent of survey coverage), and data on the appearance, significance, and integrity of each property (National Park Service 2009).

This HRTR was conducted at an intensive level in terms of historic context, property research, field study, analysis, and evaluation. The survey of the properties within the API was completed by ASM Architectural Historians Madeline Gonzalez and Emily Steele between January 28 and January 29, 2026. During the survey, multiple photographs were taken of the properties within the API from the public right-of-way. Architectural details of the buildings and their surroundings were noted. California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms for each property are provided in Appendix A.

Research Methods

Historic aerials photographs (1971, 1972, 1984, 1985) and topographic maps (1915, 1943, 1956, 1958, 1965, 1971, 1975) were first consulted in conducting research on the properties within the API. ASM relied on the materials available in the Kern County Library Local History Room to provide the broad historic context for the area, specifically for Inyokern. ASM also contacted the Kern Historical Society, the Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert, and the Inyokern Chamber of Commerce and requested any available historic photographs. Extensive searches of local papers including *The Bakersfield Californian*, *The Owens Valley Progress Citizen*, and the *San Bernardino County Sun* provided information to develop the history of the town of Inyokern and the surrounding area, and potentially significant events associated with the buildings or structures within the parcels. The *California Highway and Public Works* periodicals were extensively searched to provide information regarding U.S. Highway 395, as well as drawing from prior HRTRs ASM has prepared for projects containing segments of this highway. ASM attempted to source local directories and census records to research the biographical history of the people associated with the parcels to determine if they were historically significant.

Evaluation

In evaluating the resources within the API for eligibility for the CRHR and as CEQA historical resources, a number of factors relevant to making recommendations of eligibility were considered, including:

- the history of Inyokern;
- the history of agriculture in Inyokern;
- each property's association with important people or events;
- whether any of the properties contain buildings that are the work of a master architect, craftsman, artist, or landscaper;
- whether any of the properties contain buildings representative of a particular style or method of construction; and

- whether any of the properties have undergone alterations over the years, the extent to which such alterations have compromised their historical integrity, and the current condition of the property.

Key Personnel

Shannon Davis, MA, RPH, served as project manager and Madeline Gonzalez, MA, and Emily Steele, MS, served as architectural historians. All three meet the *Professional Qualification Standard* for Architectural Historian, and Ms. Davis additionally meets the *Professional Qualification Standard* for Historian. All have extensive experience evaluating historic properties in Southern California.

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2.0 REGULATORY CONTEXT

2.1 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CEQA Section 15064.5 *Determining the Significance of Impacts to Archeological and Historical Resources* requires that all private and public activities not specifically exempted be evaluated against the potential for environmental damage, including effects to historical resources. Historical resources are recognized as part of the environment under CEQA. It defines historical resources as “any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California.”

Properties of local significance that have been designated under a local preservation ordinance (local landmarks or landmark districts), or that have been identified in a local historical resources inventory, may be eligible for listing in the CRHR and are presumed to be significant resources for purposes of CEQA unless a preponderance of evidence indicates otherwise.

Generally, a resource is considered by the lead agency to be a “historical resource” if it:

- 1) Is listed in or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (PRC Section 5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.).
- 2) Is included in a local register of historical resources or is identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the PRC.
- 3) Is a building or structure determined to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California.

2.2 CALIFORNIA REGISTER OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The CRHR program encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archaeological, and cultural significance; identifies historical resources for state and local planning purposes; determines eligibility for state historic preservation grant funding; and affords certain protections under CEQA. The criteria established for eligibility for the CRHR are directly comparable to the national criteria established for the NRHP.

In order to be eligible for listing in the CRHR, a building must satisfy at least one of the following four criteria:

- 1) It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.
- 2) It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
- 3) It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.
- 4) It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Historical resources eligible for listing in the CRHR must also retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. For the purposes of eligibility for the CRHR, integrity is defined as “the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance” (California Office of Historic Preservation 2001). This general definition is generally strengthened by the more specific definition offered by the NRHP—the criteria and guidelines upon which the CRHR criteria and guidelines are based.

Integrity

In order to be eligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR, a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance. The NRHP publication *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin 15, establishes how to evaluate the integrity of a property: “Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance” (National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places 1991). The evaluation of integrity must be grounded in an understanding of a property’s physical features and how they relate to the concept of integrity. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a property requires knowing why, where, and when a property is significant. To retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, aspects of integrity:

1. **Location** is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
2. **Design** is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
3. **Setting** is the physical environment of a historic property and refers to the character of the site and the relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often refers to the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. These features can be either natural or manmade, including vegetation, paths, fences, and relationships between other features or open space.
4. **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period or time, and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
5. **Workmanship** is the physical evidence of crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory and can be applied to the property as a whole, or to individual components.
6. **Feeling** is a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, when taken together, convey the property’s historic character.
7. **Association** is the direct link between the important historic event or person and a historic property.

3.0 HISTORIC CONTEXT

3.1 INYOKERN HISTORIC CONTEXT

The town of Inyokern is located within the Indian Wells Valley, on the edge of the Mojave Desert and on the far northeastern section of the county of Inyo. Before the United States (U.S.) Geographic Board settled on the name of Indian Wells Valley in 1920, the valley had previously been known as, or locally referred to as, Inyokern Valley, Brown Valley, and Salt Wells Valley (*Desert Dispatch* 1947). This late official designation is reflective of how sparsely populated and largely unsettled this valley was by Anglo-Americans during the late nineteenth and very early twentieth century. It was not until the first decade of the 1900s that the area surrounding the present town of Inyokern was first homesteaded, largely after reports that artesian water was sourced within the valley and that wells could be constructed for agricultural purposes. In 1909, it was reported that a colony of people filed for about 5,000 acres of agricultural land in Indian Wells Valley (then known as Salt Wells Valley) under the Desert-Land Act, with hopes that the fertile volcanic desert soil and the purported abundance of artesian water would lead to agricultural success (*Inyo Independent* 1909). Of these early colonists, several homesteads were established near what would eventually become the town of Inyokern, one of which was known as the Carr family homestead. Although this land was eventually sold and acquired by the Navy during the mid-twentieth century, in the obituary of the last of the Carrs who died in Inyokern in the 1970s, the family was recognized as one of the earliest settlers of the Inyokern area (*Bakersfield Californian* 1974).

While the reports of artesian water and the prospect of agricultural opportunities brought homesteaders to the Indian Wells Valley and the area in the general vicinity of Inyokern, the origins of the town itself are intrinsically tied to the presence of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Throughout the first decade of the 1900s, the Southern Pacific Railroad constructed the Lone Pine Branch across the edge of the Mojave Desert in order to assist in the construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct (Blankenship 1966; Orr 2021). The railroad ran supplies to the construction site and later also transported cattle and alfalfa to a nearby agricultural experiment station (Blankenship 1966). The town of Inyokern was first known as “Siding 16,” and started as a settlement that grew from the railroad siding. The railroad ran northwest along the present alignment of Brown Road, and the siding was located northeast of the present intersection of Brown Road and Inyokern Road. Although historic resources offer varying accounts of how the town was settled and the year in which it happened, the majority of sources as well as the Inyokern Chamber of Commerce indicate that “Siding 16” was founded in 1909 and was the beginning of the town.

The first Post Office opened in 1910, an electric substation that brought power to the town of Inyokern opened in 1912, the first elementary school opened in 1913, and it is likely around this time that the town adopted the name Magnolia (Orr 2021). No longer a small railroad camp, the early settlements within Magnolia featured orchards and diversified farming areas. The remnants of these orchards are still visible among some of the residences within the town from this era. Although it is unclear exactly when the name Magnolia was officially dropped, an announcement in the 1922 *Bakersfield Morning Echo* relayed that the town of Magnolia would now be labeled as Inyokern in any subsequent maps (*Bakersfield Morning Echo* 1922). While it is largely recognized that the name Inyokern arose from combining the names of the two counties that are in close proximity to the town (Inyo County and Kern County), some accounts indicate that this name change occurred early in the town’s history after the U.S. Post Office objected that there were too many towns named Magnolia in California. A name-the-town contest was then held and won by a local who created the name (*Bakersfield Californian* 1974; Darling 2003).

Supported by the already established agrarian community and perhaps due to its location within the Indian Wells Valley and with close access to power and telephones lines because of the nearby substation, the

town of Inyokern quickly grew, as visible on a 1915 topographic map which shows several structures in the town.¹ Amidst the other towns noted on the map along the Southern Pacific Railroad through the Indian Wells Valley, Inyokern by far retained the greatest amount of buildings and was comparatively the largest town in the area. By 1920, the town of Inyokern retained two commercial stores, one post office, a small hotel, and several residences (*Desert Dispatch* 1947). Local residents recall that from the early 1920s through the beginning of World War II, Inyokern was the only town within the entirety of the Indian Wells Valley that had telephone service (*Bakersfield Californian* 1974). These are likely the reasons that Inyokern was chosen for the location of a small airport with two landing strips in 1933. The only airport serving the Indian Wells Valley, it appears that the two landing strips were largely used for emergency landings and were not regularly in service. Later on in the decade, the Navy was searching for potential air testing sites leading up to World War II and particularly looked in the areas around the Mojave Desert due to the presence of the nearby Edwards Air Force Base in Kern County. The isolation of Inyokern, the relative flatness of the area, the proximity to major pre-existing state automobile routes, the presence of a nearby substation, and extant airport landing strips, led Inyokern to be the location of the first Navy Ordnance Test Station (NOTS).

Before the community of Ridgecrest grew to its present population and density, Inyokern was the largest community within the Indian Wells Valley. It was far removed from the county seat of Bakersfield, and even by 1943 was still the only major town present in the topographic map of Indian Wells Valley. This was partially due to a minor population influx in the early 1930s, spurred by a decree from the U.S. Land Office that the land around Inyokern was again open under the Homestead Act, but only for qualified ex-servicemen. Primarily veterans from World War I, a group of these ex-servicemen settled the areas around Inyokern between 1931 and 1935 (*The Tehachapi News* 1931). As the area around Inyokern suddenly grew, resources that could assist in the keeping of the peace were few and far between. An article from the *Los Angeles Times* in 1932 describes that “without even a constable nearer than Kernville,” the conditions of the town were so bad that “automobiles [were] stolen in broad daylight” and “cabins [were] loaded onto trucks and whisked away” (*Los Angeles Times* 1932). In addition to the brazen and blatant theft occurring in the town, it was also reported that rampant gambling was taking place in the only “saloon” in town and that men were regularly taxied to the Red Canyon mining camp where other illicit activities were available. These rough edges of the town were ultimately smoothed when the NOTS officially opened and there were more higher-ranking officials who could wield some semblance of authority over the area (Christman et al. 1978). The establishment of NOTS at Inyokern also led to the immediate presence of Navy men, along with the need for men for the construction of the various facilities of the naval base. When the Navy first arrived at Inyokern in the mid-1930s, the town featured a “wide unpaved main street” with a water tower, and “trailers, tar paper shacks, and adobe huts” spreading out from the center. What was described as decrepit buildings were “pressed into service for lodging” due to immediate need, and there was only “one public eating place” that boasted a “lunch counter with six seats” (Christman et al. 1978) (Figures 3.1-3.3).

Although the presence of the military installation led to improvements within the town of Inyokern, a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp referred to as Inyokern CCC was established about 3 mi. to the northeast of the town. This CCC camp appeared to be active between 1936 and 1941, and likely was responsible for the improvements of the roads and the construction of roadside infrastructure in the broader Indian Wells Valley area (*Los Angeles Times* 1936). It should also be noted that presence of U.S. Highway/Route 395 played a significant role in the development of Inyokern as well. As highway tourism picked up in the 1930s, Inyokern became a popular rest stop for re-fueling of automobiles as well as appetites, prompting improvements in the town alongside the improvements made for the airport and the presence of the Navy. As such, while Inyokern was still primarily supported economically by agriculture, the presence of U.S. Highway 395, the Navy, and the airport created demand for a commercial corridor,

¹ Notably, in this topographic map the town was already labeled “Inyokern,” although the surrounding valley was still labeled Brown Valley.

which grew east of the intersection of the town along U.S. Highway 395, along what is now called Inyokern Road.

However, this demand for a commercial corridor was short lived. The Navy eventually re-located their NOTS base further to east, close to the then small community of Ridgecrest in the mid-1940s, which ultimately became the commercial support center and primary residential housing area for the Navy. The commercial economy of the town was further compromised when U.S. Highway 395 was realigned around the same time, re-directing automobiles along a route farther to the east. While still in proximity to Inyokern, automobiles no longer passed through the center of town, and traffic became more local. The demand for highway tourism-associated commercial businesses is still visible in the architectural landscape of the town, where a gas station historically and presently is located on the corner of (then) Route 395 and Inyokern Road, across from an auto garage constructed in the 1930s, adjacent to a motel that was constructed around this time and has since been abandoned (Figures 3.4-3.6).

As the NOTS grew and continued to be an active base through the end of World War II and then through the duration of the Korean War, Ridgecrest was expanded to support the commercial and suburban needs of the men working on base and their families, and Inyokern became a more remote bedroom community option for those who did not wish to live in Ridgecrest. The 1943 topographic map indicates that at the time it was surveyed, Inyokern featured only five main roads aligned East/West (Orchard Avenue, Ash Avenue, Inyokern Road/Route 178, and Locust Avenue) and three main roads aligned North/South (Brown Road/Route 395, Broadway, and Second Street); these are considered the historic boundaries of the town. However, the influx of residents from men associated with the Naval base overloaded the town. By 1945, it was estimated that 17,000 war workers, their families, and children lived in the town of Inyokern, causing extreme traffic woes and pushing development of the town (*Bakersfield Californian* 1945). As such, in 1945, the planning commission approved a subdivision of 200 lots immediately south of the town. An additional north/south road (3rd Street) was added, along with five new east/west roads below Locust Avenue (Sunset Avenue, Sierra Avenue, Valley Avenue, Canyon Avenue, and Plains Avenue) to support the construction of new residences. Additionally at this time, a large tract in the northwest quadrant of the town near the Inyokern Elementary School was approved to be a park, particularly a playground site. Although there was not the same residential expansion in the northern section of Inyokern, a trailer park was also established north of Orchard Avenue. Thus, by the survey of the 1972 topographic map, the boundaries of the town of Inyokern and its historic center were in place and largely reflect the general boundaries of the community in the present (Figures 3.7-3.10).

The final wave of development in Inyokern occurred between the 1970s and the 1990s and was associated with the growth of the nearby Naval facility. The population of Inyokern peaked in 1988, as more residences were constructed within the historic boundaries of the town, and to the east on the other side of Brown Road and south of Inyokern Road. This late-twentieth century population spike appears to be the culmination of the various military men that were present in the area during active war time in addition to the new expanded use of the Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) China Lake during this era. Inyokern continued to cater specifically to those who preferred to live in a more rural setting compared to the developed suburban communities found in Ridgecrest. As a result, the majority of the new residential development in this era were constructed east of Brown Road along county roads that presently remain unpaved, with residences constructed in the center of large parcels of land. Development in this era also occurred in the historic section of Inyokern and filled out the previously vacant lots, which also prompted residential and agricultural development to spread farther south as well.

However, the general scale-back of military operations in the 1990s stalled further development in Inyokern and resulted in the abandonment of properties within the town. The changes to Inyokern as a result of the peak and then sudden population drop is most notable in the changes enacted to the southwest corner of Inyokern Road and Brown Road before the population loss, where multiple properties facing Inyokern Road

were demolished in order to expand the commercial needs of the then-booming town. The gas station and the associated mini-mart were re-developed and expanded, and an additional commercial building that now is a fast-food restaurant was constructed. There are large areas of empty space on the large parcel, where presumably further commercial buildings were meant to be constructed before the economy dwindled as a result of the loss of the military community. Before the demolition of the buildings, locals to Inyokern relay that Inyokern Road still retained a “frontier” feel and that multiple Western genre movies were filmed along the main street. While there are still a number of movies filmed at the Inyokern Airport well into the present day, the demolition of the buildings on the corner of Brown Road and Inyokern Road as well as the abandonment of many buildings within the older, historic area after the 1990s have altered the character of the town.

Presently, Inyokern remains a rural bedroom community to Ridgecrest and is accessed primarily by Inyokern Road/Route 178 from Ridgecrest or U.S. Highway 395 to the east. With only a handful of operating commercial businesses, Inyokern is largely residential. The town appears to still suffer the loss from the 1990s-era military financial scale-backs, as there are multiple parcels featuring commercial buildings and residences within the community that are abandoned and are not presently in use.



Figure 3.1 The Homestead, Inyokern, 1935



Figure 3.2 Inyokern, 1936 (U.S. Highway 395 and Inyokern Road)



Figure 3.3 Inyokern Library Branch, 1941



Figure 3.4 Siding 16 looking southwest, 1941

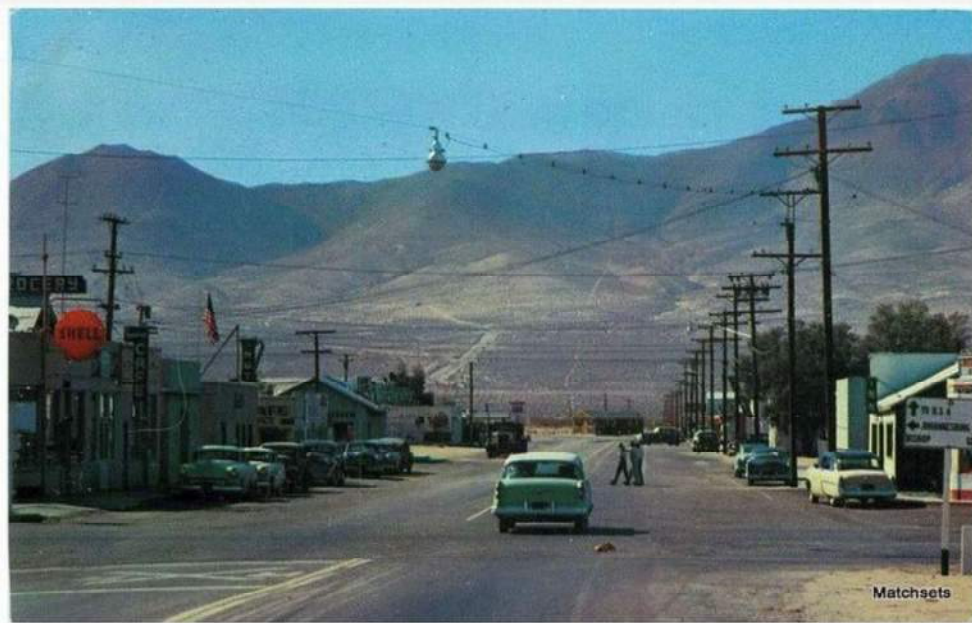


Figure 3.5 Inyokern, U.S. Highway 395 and Inyokern Road, c.1950s

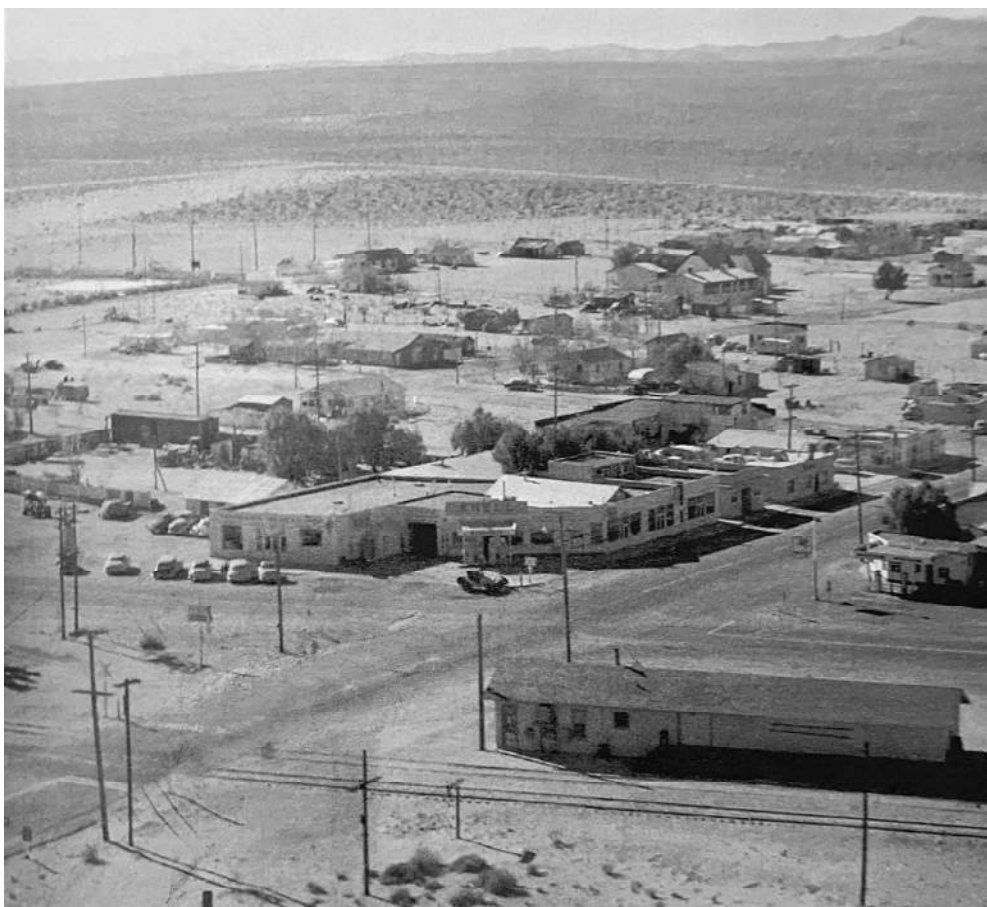


Figure 3.6 Aerial with Siding 16 visible in the corner, c.1950s

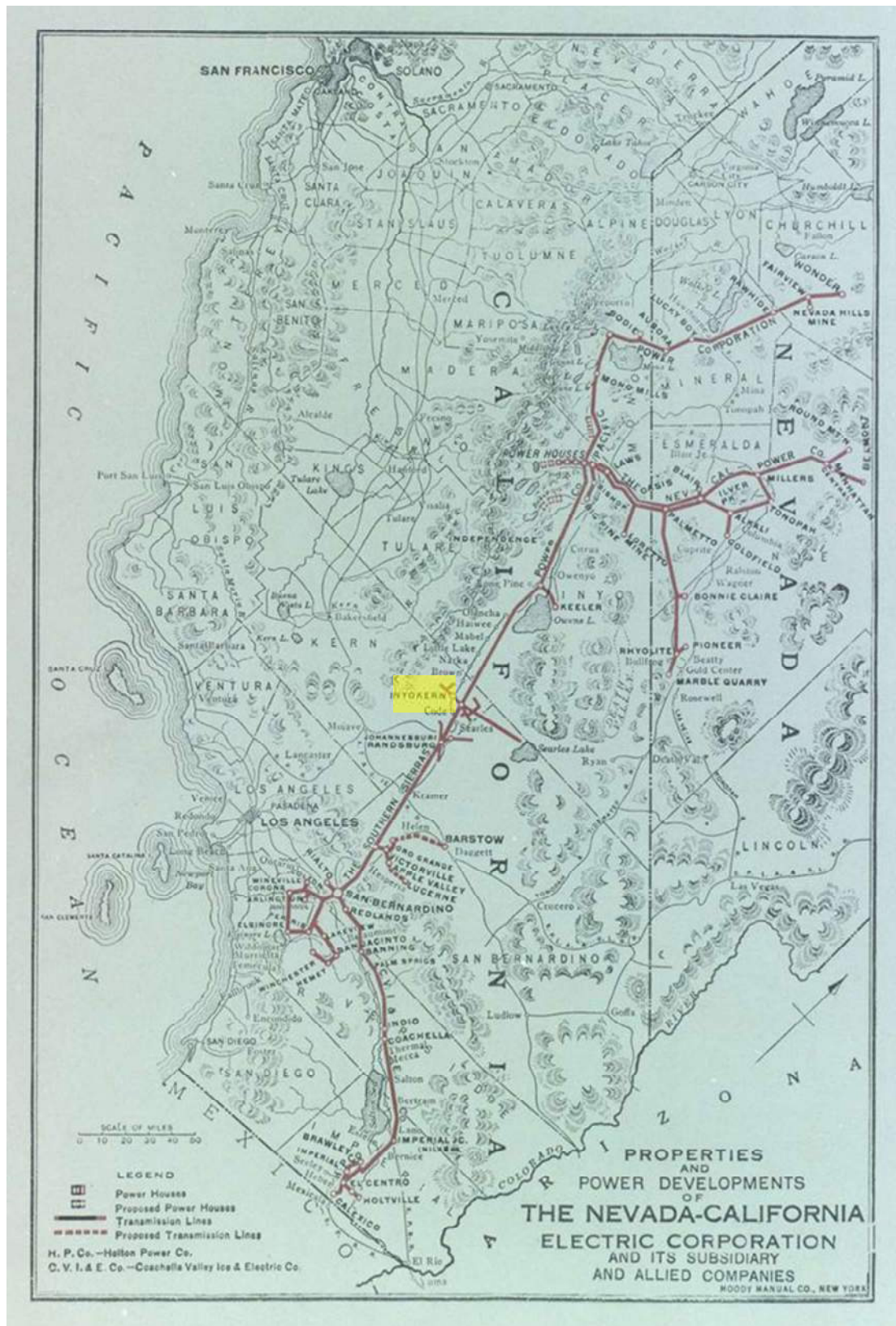


Figure 3.7 Southern Sierras Power Company Transmission Line Map, Inyokern highlighted.

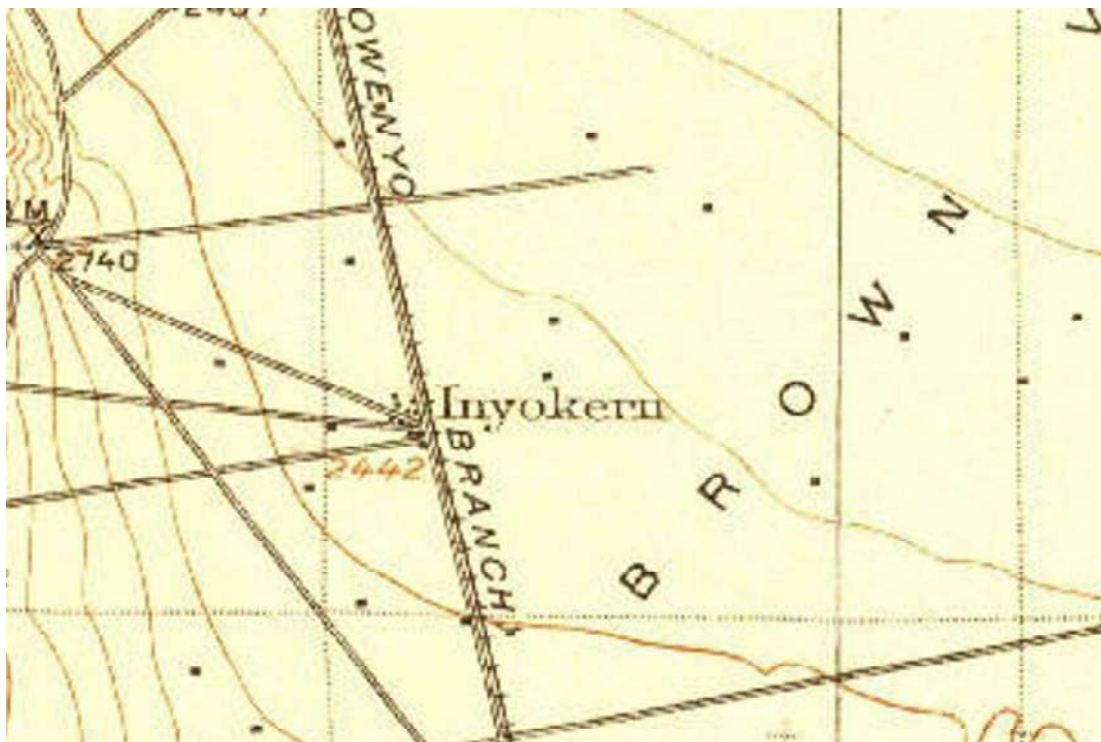


Figure 3.8 Inyokern as depicted in a 1915 topographic map

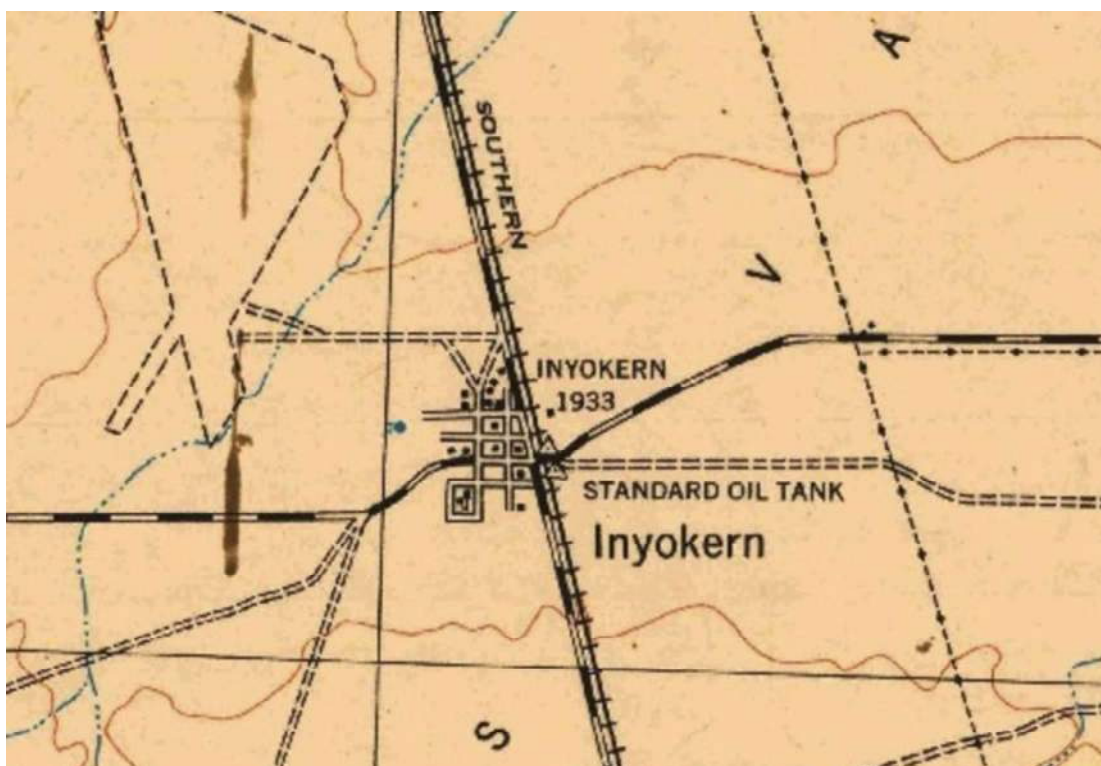


Figure 3.9 Inyokern as depicted in a 1943 topographic map

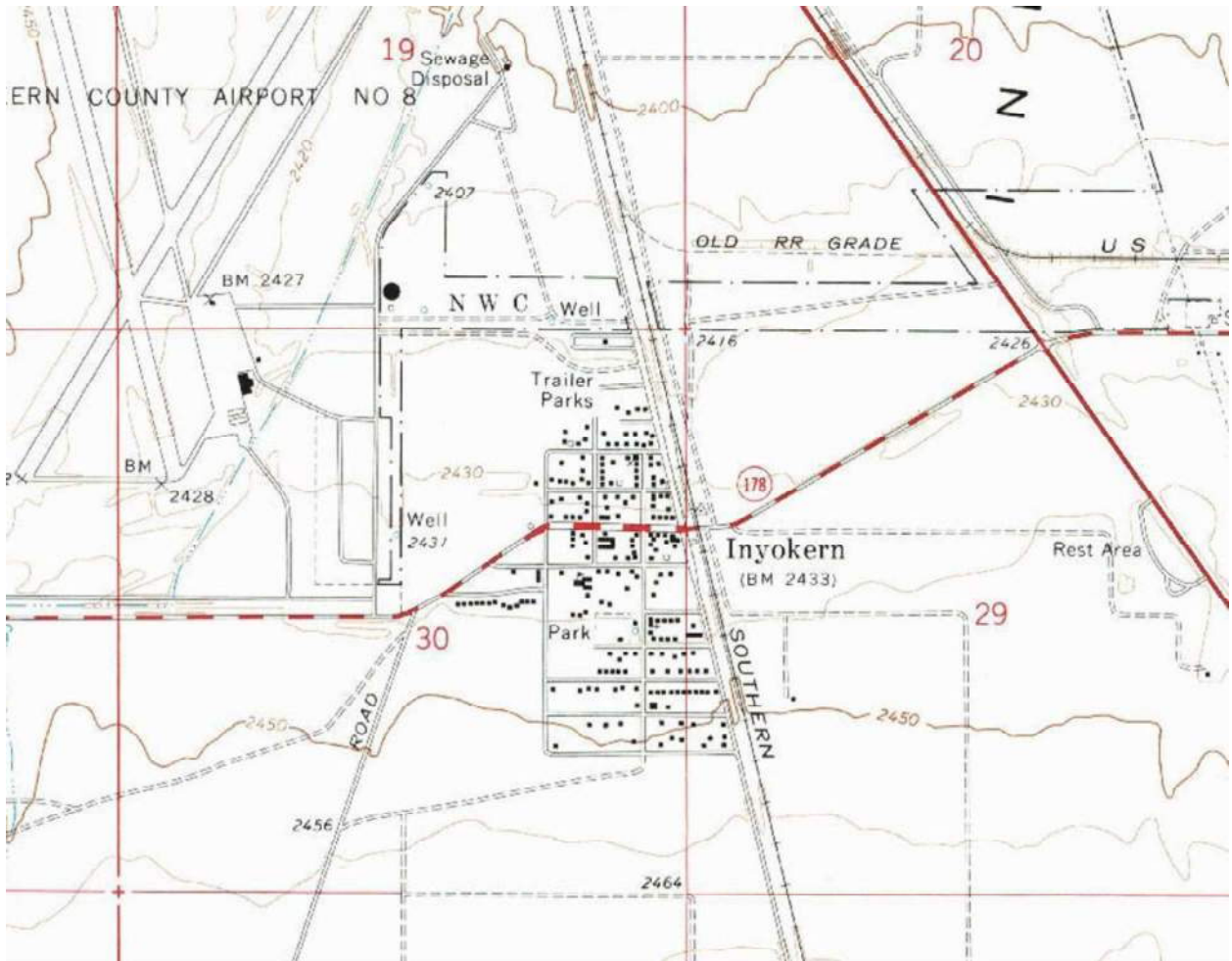


Figure 3.10 Inyokern as depicted in a 1972 topographic map

3.2 ELECTRIC POWER IN THE INDIAN WELLS VALLEY

3.2.1 Southern Sierras Power Company

The beginnings of what would become the Southern Sierras Power Company are tied to the Nevada-California Power Company (NCPC). The NCPC formed in 1905 to harness the potential hydroelectric power from the Owens River Gorge and immediately began construction on the first generating plant on Bishop Creek. This plant would eventually feed what was then the longest powerline in the world, a 113-mi. 55kV transmission line from Bishop Creek to Goldfield, Nevada. As more mines were discovered and established in Nevada, the need for further electric power to sustain the mining colonies increased. The NCPC began utilizing timber from 4,000-year-old trees to reach the mining towns where normal lumber could not withstand the elements and eventually took over and became the primary source of electric power in the area. The imposing presence of the company was coupled with lightning quick speed of production, where 30 mi. of power and telephone lines could be installed within a six-hour six-man shift. As the mines in Nevada and California demanded more power and company prosperity began to grow, NCPC began harnessing hydroelectric power to the fullest extent. Quickly, the advancements made in generator technology coupled with the constant flow water maintained at the Hillside Reservoir (today known as South Lake), exceeded the needs of the area, and the company looked to expand further into California, specifically, Southern California (Williams 2018).

In response to the excess of power and the growing agricultural industry in the California valleys, the Southern Sierras Power Company (SSPC) was created as a subsidiary of the NCPC in 1911. The first primary goal of the SSPC was to construct the world's largest transmission line, which in the end, was a 238-mi. line that stretched from Bishop Creek, through the Owens Valley, across the Mojave Desert, through the Cajon Pass, and into San Bernardino. This is a familiar route through California, as this line would parallel a major segment of U.S. Highway 395. Segments of the supply and control road that were improved as the transmission lines were constructed eventually became repurposed to connect U.S. Highway 395 along this area of California (Williams 2018) (see Figure 3.7).

During the 1910s, the SSPC continued to monopolize the Owens Valley power sources by buying out smaller power companies and becoming the sole provider for power. However, issues quickly began to fester as water was diverted through the SSPC for hydroelectric purposes, and SSPC was not accommodating the water needs of local farmers and landowners. By 1920, local residents decided to take a stand against the SSPC which ultimately led to hearings over the water rights to Bishop Creek. This resulted in what is now known as the “Chandler Decree,” the 1922 court decision that stipulated mandatory water deliveries from Bishop Creek to City of Bishop and local landowners and is still enforced presently (Williams 2018).

This was the beginning of the end for the SSPC, which was further deflated by the Great Depression in the 1930s and the cheap energy harnessed from the Colorado River in that decade. In 1941, the SSPC and its electrical network merged with California Electric Power Company (Calelectric), and in 1964, the Bishop Creek power system was purchased by Southern California Edison (Williams 2018).

3.2.2 Southern California Edison

Southern California Edison (SCE) electric infrastructure facilities energized and industrialized the southern California region and established SCE as a major utility provider both historically and today. SCE has developed a thorough historic context for their facilities as part of their *Historic-Era Electrical Infrastructure Management Program* (Becker et al. 2015). The following provides a brief overview drawn from that in-depth historic context and other sources (as noted) that pertains directly to the Mojave Desert service area:

Southern California lacked sufficient electrical power to accommodate uncontrolled population growth and urban expansion at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1896, in Los Angeles, California, a syndicate of businessmen formed the West Side Lighting Company in response to the city's increased need for electricity. In 1897, West Side Company President George H. Barker met with General Electric officials in San Francisco to negotiate the use of Thomas Edison's three wire conduit technology in the Los Angeles area, and to discuss a merger with General Electric and the West Side Company. The new Edison Electric Company of Los Angeles (EEC) was incorporated in 1897, and with George Baker as the company head, the new company took over all the properties and franchises of the West Side Lighting Company and the three wire conduit equipment license. In the following years EEC merged with and acquired additional electric lighting and power companies including the Southern California Power Company, and soon expanded into communities outside of Los Angeles as far north as Santa Barbara and as far east as Redlands near Riverside, California. At the turn of the century, the EEC, alongside its primary competitors, Pacific Light and Power Company (PLP), the San Joaquin Power & Light Company, and Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), served as the pioneering commercial entities for electrical distribution in California [Becker et al. 2015:12-15].

By 1909, the EEC provided electricity to more than 600,000 people throughout five counties. To reflect this expanded presence, the EEC was reincorporated as the Southern California Edison Company. SCE continued to expand throughout the growing southern California region, including a merger with competitor PLP which included the important Borel to Los Angeles Transmission Line and Big Creek Hydroelectric System. Prior to 1916, 83 southern California communities were lit by SCE infrastructure. After 1917, subsequent to the PLP and other mergers, an additional 83 communities were lit by infrastructure under the control of SCE (Becker et al. 2015:20).

At the inception of electrical transmission technology in California, power was distributed via wood poles and later iron poles but was limited to short spans carrying a low voltage. The development of hydroelectric power at the end of the nineteenth century set precedent for the demands of commercial electrical needs of the twentieth century, and led to the installation of electrical transmission lines spanning great distances from generating facilities at California's river banks, through mountain ranges and deserts, before terminating within the urbanizing communities of southern California (Becker et al. 2015:15-16).

California power companies, having exploited hydrological sources within the state, soon explored options in other states for power production. Attention turned to the Colorado River where it was agreed that the river needed to be harnessed with a dam for the purposes of irrigation, drinking water, and power generation (Blair et al. 2004). A survey party made up of men from the SCE and the U.S. Geological Survey set off on a long journey to explore and study the Colorado River from Green River, Utah, to Needles, California (Myers 1984). At roughly the same time, the Federal government was also interested in building a dam on the river. To accomplish this, the government had to arrive at a mutual agreement between seven states where the river ran; this eventually resulted in the Colorado River Compact signed in November 1922, and the Boulder Canyon Act enacted in December 1928 (Blair et al. 2004).

Situated in a desolate desert environment southeast of Las Vegas, Black Canyon was selected as the site for the location of a massive concrete dam, initially known as Boulder Dam; the site was later renamed and is known today as Hoover Dam. In order to facilitate the construction of the dam, it was recognized that electrical power was needed, power that the local Nevada Power Company could not provide. Southern Sierras Power Company was contracted as the provider and by the middle of December 1930, had work crews in the field constructing a 132,000-volt power line from Victorville, California, to the Nevada rim of the canyon overlooking the dam construction site (Wilbur and Ely 1933). At a record-setting pace of a mile

a day, the crews for Southern Sierras Power completed the job in 225 days, and the first power was delivered to the substation in June of 1931, just in time to begin construction on the dam (Myers 1984). Once construction of the dam was completed, the focus turned to getting the power plant into operation. Unit N-2, the first of four electric-producing turbines on the Nevada side of the power plant, began commercial production of electricity in October 1936. Electricity generated by this unit flowed across a new 266-mi.-long, 287,000-volt transmission line serving the cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena, Glendale, and Burbank. Unit A-8 on the Arizona side of the power plant went into operation less than a year later, and its electricity flowed back over the same 132,000-volt line that had earlier supplied the dam construction site with energy (Myers 1984).

The Bureau of Power and Light, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), entered into contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in 1930 to purchase electrical power from Hoover Dam (Powers 1993). LADWP began construction of the 270-mi.-long Boulder Lines 1 and 2 in June 1933 and completed them in mid-1936. A portion of the Boulder Line 3 was placed into service in December 1939 with the entire line in operation by 1940, covering a distance of 285 mi. The project would set a new standard for long-distance transmission through investments in research, development, and technological advances in the design and construction of towers, conductors, control mechanisms, and auxiliary equipment for the 270-mi.-long system. Aside from the construction of widely spaced, galvanized metal towers, an access road paralleling all three side-by-side lines was bladed and used for construction maintenance and operation purposes. By 1940, there were no less than 11 power transmission lines emanating out of Hoover Dam dedicated to providing Southern California with electrical power (Blair 1994; Blair et al. 2004).

SCE's 66kV, 220kV, and 500kV systems were developed by 1930, 1941, and 1971, respectively. These dates help to establish the period of significance for high and extra high-voltage technology up to 500kV and help determine CRHR eligibility. In the late 1960s, the first 500kV high-voltage lines were constructed for the Pacific Intertie project. At the time, the Pacific Northwest had an excess of power during the summer months, while California's power supply was low. In an effort to improve the distribution of electric power, the Bonneville Power Administration, Portland General Electric, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), and SCE built two 500kV interconnecting long-distance transmission lines forming the Pacific Northwest-Southwest Intertie. SCE shortly thereafter built additional 500kV transmission lines and 500kV substations expanding across the desert to the Eldorado and Mohave Substations and the Four Corners area of the U.S. SCE no longer operates and maintains the 500kV line to Four Corners.

Today SCE's service territory spans some 50,000 square miles and comprises electrical infrastructure constructed by SCE and its predecessor companies. The company traces its origins to July 4, 1886, with formal incorporation in 1909, and the company's last major acquisition in 1964. SCE now provides electric service to more than 13 million people in 180 cities and the SCE service territory covers approximately 50,000 square miles and covers all or portions of Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura counties (Becker et al. 2015:8).

3.3 U.S. HIGHWAY 395

3.3.1 Brief Context for Road Development in the U.S. and Eastern Kern County

The advent of the automobile at the end of the nineteenth century radically changed the lives of Americans during the twentieth century. New vehicles opened the possibility for more independent and comfortable travel alongside and away from railroad corridors and for increased commercial transport of goods on the roadways. The demand and financial support for improved roads for personal and commercial travel evolved as more Americans took to the roads. Most Americans could not afford an automobile in the 1910s,

but by the end of the decade, streamlined automobile production changed that. Between 1917 and 1920, automobile ownership changed dramatically from one car for every 13 families to one car for every three. Automobile ownership tripled during the economic boom of the 1920s, prompting the establishment of roadside businesses, such as gas stations, motels, motor courts, and service stations to accommodate travelers (Kyvig 2004).

Construction and the improvement of roads had developed out of a late-nineteenth century national movement for better local roads, financed by county taxes and increasingly state bonds in the early twentieth century. As states developed their own system of primary roads, a national conversation was developing for some form of interconnected highways across the U.S. Most local roads at the start of the twentieth century in the western U.S. were in poor condition and were often disconnected segments, especially in rural areas. Construction of trunks and laterals to connect local rural roads with regional roads would be necessary for any form of national highway system, first to connect primary roads and then secondary roads. Some proponents supported interstate roads for an expanded tourism economy, while others only wanted better local roads, first for bicyclists and farmers and then to develop commerce by connecting cities. Historian Bruce E. Seeley appropriately characterized the evolution of selected local roads that became part of state highways and eventually federal freeways: “Between 1890 and 1960, the American highway system was transformed from two million miles of poorly built, disconnected roads into a coordinated system of four million miles of paved roads. During these years, the focus of American highway policy also changed from farm-to-market roads to a federally aided system of roads between cities” (Seely 1987).

This evolution was mirrored in the development of roads and highways in Kern County as well. It is difficult to characterize Kern County as a whole, as the county covers approximately 8,161 square miles of California and features various topographies, climates, and population centers. The easternmost area of Kern County, which U.S. Highway 395 would eventually run through, is geographically distinct and features different primary transportation corridors than the areas west of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. As such, when Caltrans divided the state into separate districts for management, eastern Kern County was placed within an entirely different Caltrans district than the rest of the county. Eastern Kern County is characterized primarily by the town of Mojave, the edge of the Mojave Desert, and the Owens and Indian Wells Valleys. Sparsely populated with little rail service in the area, there was little need for roads until automobile tourism and commercial trucking began in the 1920s and a passage east of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range that could provide a more direct route through the state was desired. The 1915 topographic map reveals that there was once a winding road, likely connecting mining towns, against the eastern side Sierra Nevada Mountains in the Indian Wells Valley. As it became necessary to straighten or eliminate curves for safer, more direct travel, this road would eventually become California State Route 6. Various roads were contemplated for connecting eastern Kern County through the Indian Wells and Owens Valleys to a wider system of roads within California and Nevada, which would eventually become U.S. Highway 395. The first major road through the area was constructed alongside the Southern Pacific Railroad Tracks, connecting through various towns in the Indian Wells Valley along the path of the railroad. Regularly utilized in this era due to the traveling that occurred between towns in the valley, this was the route that was ultimately chosen for U.S. Highway 395.

3.3.2 Overview of U.S. Highway 395 in Eastern Kern County

The origin of U.S. Highway 395 in the early 1900s was tied to the desire to create a western corridor that would connect Canada and Mexico through the U.S., thus receiving the nomenclature of the “Three Flags Highway.” The idea for this highway, and the name “Three Flags Highway,” was in the public conscious for some time and was discussed since the earliest days of the automobile. However, in the early 1930s, this proposed highway gained legitimate traction when a route was drawn of existing state and local highways in Washington, Oregon, Nevada, and California that could connect Canada to Mexico. Approximately 3,000 mi. long, it was proposed that this new route would carry much interstate traffic, as

segments of the route that were proposed for the highway were already heavily in use, and were the subject of much complaint due to the ever increasing amounts of traffic (*San Bernardino County Sun* 1931).

By August 1933, Governor James Rolph, Jr. signed a state act that identified the country roads within the state that were to be incorporated into the state's secondary highway system and therefore maintained by the state (*San Diego Union* 1933). On August 15, 1934, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) formally established the U.S. Highway 395 route from the Canadian border to San Diego. It ran in eastern Kern County through the city of Johannesburg, through the town of Inyokern, through the town of Brown at the north section of the Indian Wells Valley, and then to the Owens Valley segment of the highway. It is clear from the 1934 highway transportation survey that the route was becoming increasingly important, likely attributable to the growth in commercial traffic with increased commercial trucking and recreational traffic (State of California, Department of Public Works, Division of Highways 1928, 1934). Commercial trucking was particularly prominent through the Indian Wells Valley as, except for a short distance, the lack of railway facilities placed the burden of heavy hauling directly on this segment of highway through Southern California to Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, Montana, and Wyoming (Lowden 1939). In response to the highway designation and subsequent increase in use and traffic, by 1939, the "Three Flags Highway" was considered the principal route in its district as defined by the California Highways and Public Works division (now Caltrans) (Lowden 1939). In addition to commercial trucking, by the start of World War II, U.S. Highway 395 also needed to accommodate the heavy automobiles present on the road in relation to military use, as well as the population increase that came with the establishment of military facilities. Population increases around defense centers translated to a greater need for goods and services, necessitating a more modern roadway that better connected remote facilities such as Edwards AFB, NAWS China Lake, and MCMWTC Bridgeport to the rest of Southern California, Northern California, and Western Nevada.

By 1952, the growing population in Southern California and the importance of the region nationally was reflected in the development of the highway system, not only in the progress made in design of freeways, but in the many routes that connected Southern California to the rest of the state, nation, and continent. U.S. Highway 395 was one of these important routes. By this time, U.S. Highway 395 began in San Diego, headed inland through Escondido and reached Riverside County through Temecula, joined U.S. Highway 91 into San Bernardino County, joined U.S. Highway 91 and U.S. Highway 66 through the Cajon Pass, headed independently through the Indian Wells Valley via Johannesburg, then traveled through Kern, Inyo, and Mono counties following the Sierra Nevada mountain range for 300 mi., crossed into Nevada for 70 mi. to reach Reno and Carson, and then re-entered California for 300 mi. along the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Mountain Ranges until reaching Oregon.

Through connecting to all these various large population centers or important economic areas, U.S. Highway 395 was very important, particularly in District IX (as defined by the California Highways and Public Works division). U.S. Highway 395 formed "the very backbone of the network of state highways" in this district and was an "economic lifeline of an area which has no through railroad lines nor any scheduled airline flights." Even with some railroad lines in the district, the role that the railroad played in the transportation of goods, products, raw materials, or people "is small compared to that of the fleets of motor trucks with daily rumble over the highways" (Lowden 1952). Sharing U.S. Highway 395 with the fleets of trucks was tourist traffic, which began to be an important addition to the other economic factors within the district and the area of eastern Kern County. Tourists from Southern California wishing to explore the many recreation areas that northern Mono County has to offer (such as Crowley Lake, Convict Lake, Whitmore Hot Springs, Mammoth Lake and Mammoth Mountains, Casa Diablo Hot Springs, and more) must of necessity pass through Inyo County and Kern County. While Inyo and Kern counties were not entirely dependent on the tourist trade, the number of travelers along U.S. Highway 395, particularly in the remote areas of the Indian Wells Valley, led to commercial possibilities such as roadside motels, gas stations, and auto shops that were supported by the tourist trade.

By the 1950s, the roads were described as “typical early desert road construction” where “grades follow undulations of the natural ground necessitating no passing sections,” shallow dips “serve in lieu of culverts and bridges,” and “long stretches of comparatively straight road [are] punctuated by occasional sharp curves” (Hart 1952). As early as 1958, the segment of U.S. Highway 395 between Johannesburg and the California/Nevada state line at Topaz Lake was one of several segments within the district that was eyed for eventual freeway development, primarily to solve the above-described problems with the Mojave Desert segment of the highway. However, the first freeway adoption in District IX occurred in 1953 on a portion of State Route 212 between U.S. Highway 6 and the San Bernardino County line east of Ridgecrest (Foley 1958).

In June 1959, Governor Pat Brown established the state freeway-express system by converting U.S. highway routes into freeways (Thudium 1965). In response to that mandate, the 1960s were the decade of significant changes to U.S. Highway routes, including U.S. Highway 395. Corridors for highways were incorporated into freeways with widened roadbeds and rights-of-way for future expansion, and those segments that were not included were truncated or functioned thereafter as local roads. Immediately eyed for development were the highways in or near the Mojave Desert, specifically U.S. Highway 395. Improvements to U.S. Highway 395 in District IX from this era include: updating portions of U.S. Highway 395 between Johannesburg and Randsburg to a two-lane road, improving the surface and constructing shoulders in portions of the highway north and south of Little Lake, regrading the previous described segment to provide the first four-lane divided highway in the district, resurfacing completed along the Haiwee Reservoir to Olancho, reconstruction from the Owens Dry Lake bed to Diaz Lake, and resurfacing projects across the entirety of the highway.

By the early 1960s, the significance of the highway in general began to decline due to increased importance of airline travel and new superhighways across the state that facilitated higher automobile speed and better traffic flow. Some segments of U.S. Highway 395, particularly in Southern California, lost significance during this era as other highways were improved, or new freeways were constructed that diverted traffic away from the original route. However, due to the remote nature of the Indian Wells Valley and the lower population numbers, U.S. Highway 395 remained (and remains presently) the primary highway east of the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. It is still the most direct route from Southern California to Mono County for automobile travelers and commercial truckers, and the most direct route between Reno, Nevada, and the various population centers east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. On February 14, 2008, California legislators officially designated “Historic State Highway Route 395” but recognized only the original route.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL HISTORICAL RESOURCES

4.1 1661 N Brown Road / El Solana RV and Mobile Home Park

The address of 1661 N Brown Road is the general address that was given to the El Solana RV and Mobile Home Park (El Solana) in an area north of the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern along Brown Road. The Kern County Assessor's office revealed that there is a total of 48 units within the boundaries of the El Solana, including two permanent buildings recorded as improvements (one building constructed in 1952, and another building constructed in 1966), for a total number of 50 units within the El Solana (Figure 4.1). Research did not reveal the exact year that the El Solana was founded, nor the exact location of the two improvements recorded in the Kern County Assessor's office. The 1971 topographic map indicates only one permanent structure, located in the center of the El Solana. The 2026 survey of the El Solana indicated that this building was the office for the park and may be what the 1952 construction date is in reference to. The earliest official reference to the El Solana can be found within the *NWC Rocketeer* periodical in 1967. Thus, the founding for the El Solana is estimated to have occurred between 1952 and 1967 and is therefore assumed to have been established c.1960.

There is one primary entrance and one primary exit into and out of the park from Brown Road, at either end of the one-way "U"-shaped driveway/circulation through the park. The entrance is located at the southern end of the "U," and the exit is at the northern end. There only landscaping elements are trees denoting the boundary of each unit; the land is cleared of vegetation at the entrance of the park and in the immediate vicinity of the park. These same trees are visible in the 1971 historic aerial photograph and were noted during the 2026 survey to be mature trees. Individual units line both sides of the driveway, comprising both sides and the center of the "U" shape. A small, one-story building with concrete block walls and a metal roof is located in the center of the park with the word "OFFICE" painted on the side. This may be the 1952 improvement the Kern County Assessor recorded. A single trailer building facing Brown Road, centered in the parcel between the driveway entrance and exit, may have supported the El Solana in some administrative capacity as it is the only street-facing building within the park. This building features a covered porch with wood supports, vinyl horizontal-sliding windows with simple profiles, and vertically oriented corrugated metal exterior cladding. A section of the building appears to be constructed over a poured concrete platform. This may be the 1966 improvement the Kern County Assessor's office recorded.



Figure 4.1 1661 N Brown Road, view toward west.

4.2 1520 Second Street

The residential property at 1520 Second Street is rural property in Inyokern with a single, large shed, the function of which is unknown. The Kern County Assessor's office does not recognize any improvements on the property; however, the shed was recorded during this survey. The shed is visible on historic aerial photographs and historic maps beginning with a 1971 historic aerial photograph. The only topographic map to note structures within Inyokern before 1971 is the 1943 topographic map, which showed a different street layout than what is present. A structure on the 1943 map was noted to be in the same general area as the present building; however, the structure on the map is oriented along a northeast/southwest axis, while the extant building is oriented along a north/south axis. Since the structure depicted on the map likely does not represent the present shed structure, the shed was likely constructed when the streets were reconfigured and is therefore assumed to have been constructed c.1950.

The shed was constructed in the northeastern corner of the parcel with a western primary façade. The building is approximately 1,800 square feet, and features a moderately pitched, side-gabled, corrugated metal roof, and vertically oriented corrugated metal exterior walls. The corrugated metal on the roof has since been stripped in most areas, leaving only asphalt tarp along the majority of the top. Along all sides of the building are wide projecting eaves with visible wood rafters and wood ventilation panels in the under-eave areas of the side façades. The primary façade features a centered open space that has since been covered with wood board, with corrugated metal cladding on the walls on either side. The sides of the building both feature single, centered windows that have been boarded by wood, obscuring the materials. The rear façade of the building is presently obscured by overgrown vegetation and is inaccessible due to refuse. What is visible, however, is a central entrance doorway with some asymmetrical spaces for windows on either side, but the doors and windows have been removed and replaced by wood panels. A chain link fence was constructed on the northeast corner of the parcel around the building, beginning on the southern façade and expanding to the end of where Second Street was once located (Figure 4.2).



Figure 4.2 1520 Second Street, view toward northeast.

4.3 6546 Orchard Avenue

The residential property at 6546 Orchard Avenue is a single-family residence constructed in 1940 in Inyokern. This residence is approximately 1,500 square feet and was constructed in the Minimal Traditional style. It features a moderately pitched, side-gabled, corrugated metal roof, and stucco exterior cladding and horizontal wood cladding in the under eaves. The primary façade faces Orchard Avenue to the south, and features a large, covered porch. The porch is supported by wood beams and features a shade covering that obscures the view of the primary façade. The east façade features replaced, vinyl vertical-slider and horizontal-slider casement windows. The east façade also features a second entrance into what appears to be a rear, enclosed porch area. This entrance featured a metal screen door and a porch light, adjacent to a metal slab, likely supporting the unpaved driveway area. The west façade similarly features a metal screen door, with windows that appear to date to the mid-century and are vinyl horizontal-sliding windows. The rear of the building features another metal screen obscuring the entrance door. There are wide, extending eaves on all sides of the residence, with visible wood rafters in the rear of the building. There is no sidewalk and little landscaping. The vegetation in the front yard is overgrown, and there is a single tree, likely for shade (Figure 4.3).



Figure 4.3 6546 Orchard Avenue, view toward northwest.

4.4 1509 N Brown Road

The residential property at 1509 N Brown Road is a single-family residence constructed in 1947 within Inyokern. The residence is approximately 1,800 square feet and was constructed in the Minimal Traditional style. While there are some elements and façades of the residence that are visible from the public right-of-way, a full view of the residence was obscured due to overgrown vegetation and refuse. The building was constructed within an irregularly shaped trapezoidal lot, is deeply set-back, and occupies the entire northern half. The primary façade faces east toward Brown Road and features rough stucco exterior cladding, a recessed entranceway, and simple-profile, horizontal-sliding aluminum windows. Other visible details include a metal, side-gabled roof, with attic ventilation visible in the under-eaves. The residence features a concrete block, or large, brick chimney, and an extending covered patio area to the south of the residence. It appears that an addition was constructed to the northern section of the residence, as this section features vertical wood-plank exterior walls and vertical sliding sash windows. A detached garage was constructed facing Brown Road, located to the south of the residence, just beyond the end of the covered rear patio area. This garage features patterned stucco exterior cladding, a front-gabled metal roof, and a pull-up garage door composed of vertical wood plank (Figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4 1509 N Brown Road, view toward west.

4.5 1447 N Brown Road

The residential property at 1447 N Brown Road in Inyokern contains four buildings: one primary residence and associated shed, and two secondary residences, all constructed in 1944. The primary residence, Building One, faces Brown Road and features an associated shed to the south of the property by the corner of the property line. A secondary residence, Building Two, was constructed on the southwest corner of the intersection of Orchard Avenue and Broadway, with one entrance facing south and another entrance facing east. Another secondary residence, Building Three, was constructed to the south of Building Two with multiple entrances facing north and south (Figures 4.5.1-4.5.3).

Building One and Shed

Building One is a single-family residence constructed in 1944. The residence is about 1,800 square feet and was constructed in the Minimal Traditional style. It features a moderately pitched, cross-gabled, asphalt-shingle roof with brick exterior walls, horizontal wood cladding in the under-eaves, and a brick chimney. The primary façade faces Brown Road as that is where the current primary entrance appears to be located. It is likely that the primary façade had originally been the north façade, based on the emphasis and placement of the entrance on that façade which is recessed, features a porch light, and is located at a corner, which is common for Minimal Traditional-style entrances. This is no longer the primary entrance as it is currently enclosed by a concrete brick wall. The majority of the windows are covered with plywood, and the windows that are visible are newly constructed picture windows and vertical sliding casement windows. The primary entrance door is a single, flat, wooden door. The other doors of the residence are not visible. The original rear of the residence features a covered porch with wood supports that is semi-enclosed by what appear to be plaster walls. There are wide extending eaves on all sides of the building. It appears that a driveway once connected to Brown Road south of the residence within the parcel; remnants of the asphalt are visible under the vegetation.

A shed structure was constructed in the rear corner of the property at an unknown time before 1972, and features a shed roof, overhanging wide eaves with visible rafters, a primary entrance on the east facade that is boarded over, and a window on the north façade that is also boarded over. The exterior of the shed features vertical wood plank walls, and the roof appears to be constructed with wood material as well. This shed has not been maintained in recent years and is now in poor condition.

Building Two

This building is a single-family residence constructed in 1944. The residence is about 1,200 square feet and was not constructed in a specific architectural style, rather it is evocative of a general residential vernacular form and materials. It features a moderately pitched, front-gable, asphalt-shingle roof with brick exterior walls and a small attached shed area composed of vertical wood cladding. The primary east façade has a small concrete path leading from the door toward Building Three. The majority of the windows and all of the doors have been removed from the residence. The remaining windows are wood, vertical sliders with simple profiles. A porch light was once located above the primary entrance. An attached wooden shed is present on the south side of the residence and is also roofed with asphalt shingle with no discernable break along the roofline and features visible wood rafters. The rest of the building features wide extending eaves on all sides.

Building Three

This building is a duplex residence constructed in 1944. The residence is about 2,250 square feet and was not constructed in a specific architectural style, rather it is evocative of a general residential vernacular form and materials. It features a moderately pitched, side-gable, corrugated metal roof with brick exterior walls. There does not appear to be a primary façade; however, a small circulation path connects the entrances facing north to Building Two. All of the windows have been boarded up and are not visible. The doors all are fiberglass with raised panels. The under-gable area features vents. The building features wide extending

4.0 Description of Potential Historical Resources

eaves on all sides, under which wood board is visible. The north and south façades are symmetrical, and feature two entrances, centered on either side, with two windows each. While described by the Kern County Assessor's office as a duplex, it is possible that this building may have supported four separate rooms, given that there are four separate entrances. A wood fence was once constructed along the property line and has since been removed. It appears that this wood fence once enclosed the northwestern corner of the property for privacy.



Figure 4.5.1 1447 N Brown Road (Building One), view toward northwest.



Figure 4.5.2 1447 N Brown Road (Building Two), view toward northwest.



Figure 4.5.3 1447 N Brown Road (Building Three), view toward northwest.

4.6 1429 N Brown Road

The residential property at 1429 N Brown Road is a rural property in Inyokern. The Kern County Assessor's office does not recognize any improvements on the property; however, a trailer home was recorded during the survey which is visible on historic aerial photographs and historic topographic maps. This building is first visible on a 1971 historic aerial photograph and remains visible on subsequent historic aerial photographs and was noted on the 1972 topographic map. This parcel is oddly shaped and was constructed in an upside-down "L" shape, with one segment connecting Brown Street to Broadway. A fence is visible along the parcel boundary since the 1971 historic aerial photographs and in subsequent aerial photographs. It is unclear when the building was placed on the parcel. The 1943 topographic map does not indicate that there were any structures or residences constructed on the city block on which 1429 N Brown Road is located. The trailer was likely placed at an unknown time between these dates. It most closely resembles trailer design from the 1960s and is thus assumed to have been placed c.1960.

The building is oriented laterally within the parcel along Brown Road on a north/south axis. It generally features a metal roof and corrugated metal exterior walls and what appears to be a composite material exterior cladding in some areas. The primary entrance into the building also faces Brown Road and features a covered front porch area with wood porch supports and wood railing. A ramp was constructed from the ground to the porch area, with wood hand-rails on either side. There are several windows along the primary façade, all of which are vinyl, simple-profile windows that are either horizontally sliding or vertically sliding. There is one louvered window and one window with wood shutters on either side. The north-facing side of the building features one simple-profile, vertical-sliding aluminum window, and the south-facing side of the building features one, simple-profile, vertical sliding vinyl window with wood shutters on either side. The rear of the building features an additional entrance and multiple examples of simple-profile, horizontal-sliding vinyl windows (Figure 4.6).



Figure 4.6 1429 Brown Road, view toward southwest.

4.7 101 Ash Avenue

Two buildings are located at 101 Ash Avenue in Inyokern: one residential and one commercial building. The single-family residence was constructed in 1932 and faces Ash Avenue, and the commercial storage building was constructed in 1993 and faces Brown Road.

The single-family residence is approximately 750 square feet and constructed without reference to a specific architectural style, rather it represents a general residential vernacular form dating to the early twentieth century. The residence features a moderately pitched, side-gabled, asphalt-shingle roof and wide horizontally oriented wood panel exterior cladding. The rear section, likely an addition, features stucco and vertically oriented wood board exterior cladding. The primary façade faces Ash Avenue and is asymmetrical as the windows and the door are not centered along the façade. The primary façade windows are vertical sliding vinyl windows with shutters and appear to have been replaced in recent years. The design of the primary entrance door is obscured by a metal screen door and features an exterior light fixture. The side of the original residence facing Brown Road features two vertical sliding wood windows with thick wood frames, with vents in the under-gable area. The rear addition features two fixed windows with thick wood frames. The side of the original residence facing west features only one vertical sliding wood window and vents in the under-gable. The addition features only one wood casement window with a thick wood frame. The rear façade features an additional entrance into the residence with an exterior light fixture; however, the material of the entrance door is obscured by a metal screen door. A casement, simple-profile, wood window is extant to the left of the door, and the lower section of the rear façade is covered with corrugated metal. There are wide, extending eaves on all sides of the residence, with visible wood rafters in the rear of the building. No sidewalk is present on either side of the building. Elements of landscaping in the front lawn of the building include a wood fence, a grass lawn that has become overgrown, and mature trees that provide privacy and shading.

This commercial building was constructed in 1993, and features four garage spaces with rolling garage doors, and a large driveway facing Brown Road. It is likely that the residence originally supported an orchard or similar agricultural use, due to the year it was constructed, the large parcel of land, and the presence of mature trees on the property. Presently, it is not apparent from street views that the commercial garage building and the residence are on the same parcel or are otherwise connected in any way (Figures 4.7.1 and 4.7.2).



Figure 4.7.1 101 Ash Avenue, view toward south.



Figure 4.7.2 Commercial storage building (1993) at 101 Ash Avenue, view west from Brown Road.

4.8 1401 N Brown Road

The commercial property at 1401 N Brown Road is a single-story commercial building in Inyokern, likely constructed c.1935. Although the Kern County Assessor's office notes the year built as 1959, the building appears in older historic photographs. The earliest dated photograph of the building was taken in 1951; however, earlier undated photographs from the 1940s also depict the building. As there was an addition to the building, it is likely that the 1959 date is the blended effective year of the original date of construction and the date of the addition—a typical practice of Assessors. Therefore, the building was likely constructed sometime between the 1930s and early 1940s. This building was constructed without reference to a specific architectural style, rather it was constructed in an early twentieth-century commercial vernacular form, typical of roadside commercial buildings. The building features two sections: the original c.1935 section, and the 1959 addition.

The original c.1935 section of the building features a flat roof and brick exterior walls on all sides. A decorative brick cornice line features a pattern created by holes in the bricks along the primary and rear façade. The southwest façade of the building faces the intersection of (what is now) Brown and Inyokern roads, creating an angled edge of the building in response to the shape of the parcel. This southwestern façade features a door and two windows on either side of the door. The door and window are presently boarded up with wood plank, obscuring the style and materials of the features. One unboarded window is a horizontal sliding fiberglass window with an exterior thick wood frame. This is the contemporary primary entrance; however, the east façade facing Brown Road includes the original primary entrance. This façade is symmetrical, with a central section that now is clad in wood plank. Historic photographs have revealed that this section was once an open garage area, and the wood plank was likely recently added when the building was converted from its most recent use as an auto shop to its present use as a commercial store. The upper section of the façade in this area is raised to allow for space within the garage, and also stylistically conforming to the stepped brickwork façades commonly found in commercial buildings from this era. A window has since been constructed in the center of the wood plank wall, similar to the window by the present entrance into the commercial store as it is a horizontal sliding fiberglass window with an exterior thick wood frame. On either side of the enclosed garage shop area are separate entrances into the interior of the commercial store. The doors are not original to the building; however, both feature glass window panels on the top and raised panels on the bottom. On either side of the doors are windows, one of which is original to the building. This is the only original window and is a casement window with a thick wood frame and four square panels along the top of the window, a common design feature of windows from the era in which it was constructed. This window is located on the southernmost side of the façade and is south of two square windows that replaced a larger rectangular window that was a similar size to the other windows. The two square windows are casement windows with thick wood exterior frames. The two windows on the northern side of the façade are the most recently replaced windows. These horizontal sliding fiberglass windows feature thin wood exterior frames and appear to have been replaced in recent years. The rear façade of the building features minimal architectural details beyond the continuation of the brick design. However, a few details of note include two boarded windows, one within the old garage/shop area and one in the northern section of the building, and a slightly recessed rear entrance area with a door that is presently obscured by refuse (Figures 4.8.1 and 4.8.2).

The 1959 addition to the building features minimal architectural details, and functions primarily as a garage, intended to support the commercial building when it still functioned as a gas station/auto shop. This addition was constructed in a trapezoidal shape, responding to the constraints of the parcel on which it was constructed, which itself is a long trapezoidal shape. The addition features a flat roof, and concrete block exterior walls on all sides. The primary façade faces Brown Road, and features one metal, rolling garage door only on the southernmost side of the façade. Likely in response to the brick work of the original c.1935 commercial building, the southeastern and northeastern corners of the addition feature off-set concrete

blocks, creating a stepped pattern up the sides. The addition extends farther to Brown Road than the original building, creating a south-facing façade on the addition with one entrance. This entrance features what appears to be a flat, wood door with a transom window that has since been boarded. The north façade of the addition is composed nearly entirely of a rolling, metal garage door. The rear façade features a wall that rises higher than the wall of the primary façade and features no design details (Figure 4.8.3).



Figure 4.8.1 1401 N Brown Road, view toward northwest.



Figure 4.8.2 Inyokern c.1950; 1401 N Brown Road visible in detail of postcard, .



Figure 4.8.3 Addition (1966) to 1401 N Brown Road, view toward south.

4.9 1353 N Brown Road

The commercial property at 1353 N Brown Road is a commercial property that serves as a gas station and convenience store for the community of Inyokern. It is a single-story stucco and brick building with a rectangular footprint that was originally constructed in 1946. The building has a flat roof with no eaves and limited fenestration. The primary, north façade is defined by a set of glass metal-frame doors that are slightly recessed and situated toward the eastern edge of the façade; it is primary in that it provides the central entrance to the store and more direct access from the gas station pumps. There are two wooden advertisement displays on the north façade and four on the east that mimic windows with wooden shutters to convey a false sense of window fenestration. The west façade is brick with no windows or doors, but there is a shed roof addition that was added at an unknown date. The south façade is smooth stucco with no windows but has a single metal door on its western edge. The east façade, clad in smooth stucco, is the most embellished with an angled vertical wood cornice, brickwork on the bottom third portion of the wall, a recessed central entryway with a single metal-framed glass door, and the aforementioned false window displays. A flat, wide roof canopy with rounded corners shelters a set of gas pumps located to the north end of the lot and building (Figure 4.9).



Figure 4.9 1353 N Brown Road, view toward southeast.

4.10 6509 Locust Avenue

The residential property at 6509 Locust Avenue is a single-family residence located in Inyokern. The building was constructed in 1953 and is a single-story house with a front gable, moderately pitched roof clad in asphalt shingles and with narrow eaves. There is a wooden picket fence surrounding the property's front perimeter and a concrete path leading to the main entrance. The primary, north façade is characterized by a central front door with a wooden screen that sits underneath a covered porch. The porch is covered by a front-gable extension clad in scalloped vertical wood paneling and supported by stone and wood posts. The building was constructed with exposed two-tone tinted concrete blocks that remain unpainted and were laid in a running bond pattern. There are four original wood-framed sash windows on the primary façade, two on either side of the front door. The west façade has a chimney toward the southern edge and four replacement vinyl windows. The south façade was not visible, but the east façade also had four vinyl windows and a side door, although the material of the door was unclear. Limited changes appear to have been made to the primary façade; however, all other original windows throughout the building have been replaced (Figure 4.10).



Figure 4.10 6509 Locust Avenue, view toward southwest.

4.11 1312 Broadway

The residential property at 1312 Broadway is a single-family residence located in Inyokern. The building was constructed in 1973 and is a single-story house with a shed roof that is clad in asphalt shingles and has narrow eaves. The property is surrounded by a large wooden fence on all sides, except for a small portion along the driveway where there is metal gate. The primary, south façade is characterized by a covered porch that features a double archway made from the rough stucco wall. While the front door was not visible, other fenestration includes three horizontal sliding aluminum windows and a stamped rolling vinyl garage door. The east and west façades both have no doors, but each have two aluminum-framed horizontal-sliding windows. The north façade is defined by a centrally placed brick chimney, two separate back doors, and three horizontal sliding aluminum windows. There are no apparent changes that have been made to the building since its original construction (Figure 4.11).



Figure 4.11 1312 Broadway, view toward north.

4.12 6521 Sunset Avenue

The residential property at 6521 Sunset Avenue is a single-family residence located in Inyokern. Originally constructed in 1958, it exhibits some elements of the Ranch style. This is a single-story L-shaped building with a low-pitched gable roof. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles and has moderately extended eaves and a single wooden rafter in the peak of the front gable. The primary, north façade is characterized by a wood-panel front door and three large horizontal-sliding aluminum-framed windows. There is a wooden garage door with a rectangular design in the wood. There are no windows or doors on either the east or west façades and the south façade was not visible from the public right-of-way. There appear to have been no changes made to the building since its original construction (Figure 4.12).



Figure 4.12 6521 Sunset Avenue, view toward southwest.

4.13 6517 Sunset Avenue

The residential property at 6517 Sunset Avenue is a single-family residence with detached garage located in Inyokern. The building was originally constructed in 1960 and has elements of the Ranch style. The single-story rectangular building with a side-gable roof has wide eaves, wooden rafters, and asphalt shingles. The building is clad in horizontal wood panels and has decorative wood shutters with a diamond pattern on the primary façade. Other characteristics of the primary façade include a single door entryway on the western edge, and two large horizontal-sliding aluminum windows. The west façade has two horizontal-sliding aluminum windows, and the east façade has no windows or doors. While the south façade was not visible, the detached garage located to the south of the main house has a square metal rolling garage door and a central single door entryway. No changes appear to have been made to either building since the original construction (Figure 4.13).



Figure 4.13 6517 Sunset Avenue, view toward south.

4.14 6513 Sunset Avenue

The residential property at 6513 Sunset Avenue is a single-family residence and a detached garage located in Inyokern constructed in 1953. The house is a single-story rectangular building with a side-gable roof that is clad in asphalt shingles and has moderately extending eaves that is void of any stylistic references. A metal fence extends along the front perimeter of the property, a portion of which is chain-link. The primary, north façade is defined by a single front door with a metal screen located in the center, flanked by a picture window and what appear to be four-light casement windows on the east, two four-light wood-framed casement windows to the west, and a tripartite fixed or horizontal-sliding window at the far east end of the north façade. Two horizontal-sliding windows are located on the west façade. The east façade has a wood-paneled single door on its southern edge and a wood-framed square window on its northern edge. The south façade was not visible, and the garage was obscured but it has a side-gable roof with wide eaves and wooden rafters (Figure 4.14).



Figure 4.14 6513 Sunset Avenue, view toward south.

4.15 109 Sunset Avenue

The residential property at 109 Sunset Avenue is a single-family residence located in Inyokern constructed in 1948. The house is a single-story smooth stucco rectangular building with a side-gable roof and front-gable covered porch. The primary, north façade is defined by the large, covered porch supported by three arches typical of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The wooden front door is aligned within the central arch and is flanked on either side by two aluminum vertical-sliding replacement windows. There are also two more aluminum vertical-sliding windows on the eastern end of the façade. The west façade was not visible, but the east façade also has an aluminum horizontal-sliding window and a sliding glass door. The south façade has two aluminum vertical-sliding windows and a single, metal rear door. A low stucco courtyard wall lines the front of the parcel, characterized by curved segments punctuated by short, capped posts. The primary changes that have been made to the building since its original construction are the replacement of original windows and doors and recladding of the roof with asphalt shingles, which was likely originally red-clay tile (Figure 4.15).



Figure 4.15 109 Sunset Avenue, view toward south.

4.16 1233 N Brown Road

The commercial site at 1233 N Brown Road is a commercial property located in Inyokern with three buildings all constructed in 1936. While research revealed limited information about the property, it is likely the buildings were historically used for commercial purposes (Figures 4.16.1-4.16.3).

Building One

The primary building on the property is located on the west end of the parcel furthest from Brown Road. It is a single-story building with elements of Tudor Revival style and a double-gable roof with a shed extension clad in asphalt shingles. While the primary, south façade was not visible from public right-of-way, the north façade features two single-wooden doors with their own set of concrete steps. There are four boarded-up square windows in total along the façade, one in the peak of each gable and one next to each door. There appear to be no windows or doors on the west façade, but the east façade is characterized by a single door in the center and two boarded-up windows, one on each side of the door.

Building Two

Building Two is located approximately in the center of the parcel between Buildings One and Three. It is a single-story wood-frame rectangular building clad in thin horizontal wood boards with a front-gable roof. The primary, west façade is defined by a single door with a metal screen on the western edge and two boarded-up square windows. The south façade has a large boarded-up rectangular window, and the northern façade has one boarded-up square window and a small wooden projection that likely held a utility appliance. The east façade is characterized by three square windows, two of which are boarded up, but one of which has iron bars in front of it.

Building Three

Building Three is located on the east side of the parcel closest to Brown Road. It is a single-story wood-frame rectangular building clad in thin horizontal wood boards with a shed roof. The primary, south façade is defined by various fenestrations that have been boarded up; there are 14 in total, five of which are likely doors. The east façade has no windows or doors, but the north façade has six square windows and three horizontal rectangular windows that have all also been boarded up. Lastly, there are two doors and two small square windows in the west façade that have also been covered in wooden boards.



Figure 4.16.1 1233 N Brown Road (Building One), view toward south.



Figure 4.16.2 1233 N Brown Road (Building Two), view toward northwest.



Figure 4.16.3 1233 N Brown Road (Building Three), view towards northwest.

4.17 6564 Sierra Avenue

The residential property at 6564 Sierra Avenue is a single-family residence located in Inyokern constructed in 1951. It is a single-story Minimal Traditional building constructed with exposed tinted concrete block laid in a running bond pattern with a side-gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. The primary, north façade is defined by a central entrance with a small front-gable porch roof supported by slender wooden posts sheltering a single wooden and screen door. Two steel multi-pane casement windows flank the entrance; the east window is a pair of four-light windows while the west window is a set of three four-lights. The east façade has a large brick chimney and one wood-framed fixed window. The east façade has a single wooden door, two wood-framed windows, and one horizontal-sliding vinyl window; the south façade was not visible. No major changes appear to have been made to the building aside from the replacement of one window (Figure 4.17).



Figure 4.17 6564 Sierra Avenue, view toward south.

4.18 1201 N Brown Road

The residential property at 1201 N Brown Road is a single-family residence with elements of Modern style and a mobile home located in Inyokern. The single-family residence was constructed in 1961; the date of the mobile home is unknown. The single-family residence has a rectangular footprint and a side-gable roof with a low pitch and clad in metal. The primary, east façade is defined by a recessed entryway with a single metal door and approximately four sets of metal-framed horizontal-sliding windows. The north façade has a small square vinyl-framed horizontal-sliding window, and the south façade has no windows or doors. The west façade was not visible (Figure 4.18).



Figure 4.18 1201 N Brown Road, view toward southeast.

4.19 6331 Sunset Avenue

The residential property at 6331 Sunset Avenue is a single-family residence in Inyokern constructed in 1950. The building is a single-story rectangular building clad in vertical wood panels and has a hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles. While the building is set far back from public view in the center of the parcel, it is clear that there is a single door on the south façade and a front gable shed to the west of the main house. Only the primary façade was visible and additional architectural features were difficult to observe (Figure 4.19).



Figure 4.19 6331 Sunset Avenue, view toward north.

4.20 1244 N Dera Street

The residential property at 1244 N Dera Street is a single-family residence with elements of Contemporary style constructed in Inyokern in 1978. The building is a vernacular single-story rectangular building with vinyl siding and a side-gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. The building was difficult to view from the public right-of-way, but the primary, north façade appears to be defined by a central single door with four vertical-sliding vinyl windows. The property is surrounded by a chain-link fence, and the other façades of the house were not visible or accessible (Figure 4.20).



Figure 4.20 1244 N Dera Street, view toward southwest.

4.21 1249 N Nadine Street

The residential property at 1249 N Nadine Street is a vernacular single-family residence with elements of Contemporary style in Inyokern constructed circa 1980. It is a single-story rectangular building with vertical panel cladding and a side-gable roof clad in vinyl. The primary, north façade is characterized by a single metal front door and approximately four likely metal-framed windows. The other façades were not accessible or visible from the public right-of-way (Figure 4.21).



Figure 4.21 1249 N Nadine Street, view toward west.

4.22 APN 084-02-11-0

No street address has been assigned to APN 084-02-11-0 in Inyokern. The building within the parcel was constructed in 1978 with elements of Contemporary style. It is a vernacular single-story rectangular building clad in vertical wood panels with a side-gable roof. The fenestration on the north and west façades includes metal-framed vertical-sliding windows and a metal-framed sliding-glass door. The other façades were not accessible or visible from the public right-of-way (Figure 4.22).



Figure 4.22 View towards the west of APN 084-02-11-0.

4.23 5831 Delbert Street

The residential property at 5831 Delbert Street is a single-family residence in Inyokern constructed in 1982. The building was far outside of public view, but the primary, north façade was partially visible. It is a single-story rectangular building with a side-gable roof clad in asphalt shingles. The fenestration includes horizontal-sliding windows and there appears to be a brick chimney on the center of the rear façade (Figure 4.23).



Figure 4.23 5831 Delbert Street, view toward south.

4.24 1372 Comet Street

The residential property at 1372 Comet Street is a single-family residence constructed in 1981. It was not visible from the public right-of-way as it is located behind a fence with many trees obscuring the building from view. It is a rectangular plan single-story building (Figure 4.24).



Figure 4.24 1372 Comet Street, view toward west.

4.25 5527 Graaf Avenue

The residential property at 5527 Graaf Avenue is a single-family residence with elements of Modern style in Inyokern constructed in 1970. It is a single-story rectangular building with vertical paneling and corrugated plastic roofing. It was only partially visible from the public right-of-way. It has a covered driveway supported by decorative metal posts with spiral centers. The fenestration includes metal-framed horizontal-sliding windows (Figure 4.25).



Figure 4.25 5527 Graaf Avenue, view toward west.

4.26 1511 Comet Street

The residential property at 1511 Comet Street is a single-family residence with a house and detached garage and elements of Modern style in Inyokern constructed in 1963. The house is a single-story rectangular building clad in corrugated metal. The primary, east façade is defined by a raised covered porch with metal railings and posts. There is limited fenestration aside from the double metal front door and small square aluminum-framed window on the south side of the façade. The other façades were difficult to view from the public right-of-way, but there appears to be no windows or doors on the south façade. The detached garage is a front-gable rectangular building with horizontal wood panel cladding. The north façade of the garage features a rolling garage door, metal-framed horizontal-sliding window, and single door (Figure 4.26).



Figure 4.26 View west of 1511 Comet Street

4.27 1540 N Mercury Street

The residential property at 1540 N Mercury Street is a single-family residence with detached garage and elements of Contemporary style in Inyokern built in 1981. The house is a single-story building clad in vertical wood panels. It has a side-gable roof with a covered entry and asphalt shingles. While fenestration includes vinyl horizontal-sliding windows on all visible façades, there are no visible doors from public view. There is a large garage door in the center of the primary, west façade on the garage. There appear to be no changes made to the building since its original construction (Figure 4.27).



Figure 4.27 View of 1540 N Mercury Street, view toward west.

4.28 5631 Inyokern Road

The residential property at 5631 Inyokern Road is a single-family residence without any stylistic elements in Inyokern built in 1978. The building is a single-story rectangular house. It is clad in horizontal vinyl panels with a side-gable roof and asphalt shingles. The primary, east façade was not visible, but the north façade has two large metal-framed square windows with decorative vinyl shutters. The west façade is characterized by two metal-framed horizontal-sliding windows and a back door that is covered by an awning and wooden lattice (Figure 4.28).



Figure 4.28 5631 Inyokern Road, view toward west.

4.29 Inyokern Substation

The Southern California Edison substation, known as the Inyokern Substation, was constructed to the northeast of the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern, and east of the present intersection of the new alignment of U.S. Highway 395 and Inyokern Road (Route 178). The parcel is approximately 95,400 square feet, and includes the many various wires, towers, and equipment that support the operations of the electrical substation. Multiple transmission lines run from this substation, including 33kV, 115kV, and 220kV electric lines that service the communities of Inyokern, Ridgecrest, and NAWS China Lake as well as aid in the transmission of power across the Indian Wells Valley. In addition to the electric equipment, there are two sheds constructed within the fenced area of the substation. One shed, Building One, is located in the northwest corner of the substation, and the other shed, Building Two, is located in the southwest corner of the substation. The substation is enclosed by a chain-link fence along the perimeter of the property (Figures 4.29.1-4.29.3).

Building One

Building One is a small, approximately 200-square-foot, shed located in the northwest corner of the substation. Although the construction date of this shed is not clear, it is first visible in a 1971 historic aerial photograph, and the small details of its construction were noted during the field survey to resemble utilitarian sheds from the mid-twentieth century. This shed was likely constructed during or after the improvements made at the substation in 1962 and is thus given a c.1960 construction date. The shed features vertically oriented corrugated metal exterior walls, a flat metal roof, and was constructed on a poured concrete foundation. The function of the shed is not clear, but because it appears to be equipped with some exterior utility equipment, it likely directly supports the operations of the substation.

Building Two

Building Two is a larger, approximately 1,800-square-foot, shed located in the southwest corner of the substation. This shed was constructed between 2022 and 2025, replacing a smaller shed that was constructed around 2021. The use of the shed is not clear. Unlike Building One, the utilities found along the exterior are primarily air conditioning units, and the shed features one louvered window on the south-facing façade; therefore, it likely supports the personnel of the substation in some capacity.



Figure 4.29.1 Inyokern Substation view north from Highway 178.



Figure 4.29.2 Inyokern Substation, with recent shed visible on the left. View toward north.



Figure 4.29.3 Inyokern Substation with mid-century shed in the center, view toward northeast.

4.30 U.S. Highway 395

The road that would eventually become U.S. Highway 395 is first visible on the 1915 USGS topographic map. On this map, it was depicted as running along the same alignment as the Southern Pacific Railroad, which was at that time referred to as the Owenyo Branch. It is likely that the road was created alongside the railroad for ease of navigation and accessibility, primarily to connect the various towns and agricultural areas that were established along the railroad tracks. When efforts were made to establish the “Three Flags Highway” in the early 1930s, this segment of road was chosen as the most direct way to connect the areas east of the Sierra Nevada mountain range through the Indian Wells Valley to Southern California via Lancaster. The road was likely chosen due to its relatively straight alignment, especially in comparison to Route 6 which was a winding route along the edge of the Sierra Nevada Mountains (Figures 4.30.1 and 4.30.2).

After U.S. Highway 395 was adopted in 1933, the segments in the Mojave Desert, including the segment that passed through Inyokern, were immediately eyed for improvements due to the harsh climate and the immediate need for the segments to support both commercial traffic and tourist traffic (and eventually military traffic). The first reported improvements of the segment of U.S. Highway 395 between Johannesburg and Owens Valley occurred in 1936, where the road was resurfaced and widened (*Inyo Independent* 1936). During World War II, construction and improvements halted across California due to the war effort, and the initial alignment, improvements, and widening of this segment of the highway remained intact for a number of years. However, the harsh climate of the desert and the heavy use of this segment led locals to call for improvements by the early 1950s. By 1954, an engineer for District IX confirmed that a survey would be conducted on the segment between Inyokern and Brown to relieve the need for maintenance on Route 395 and Route 6 (which at the time ran parallel and doubled maintenance efforts) (*The Bakersfield Californian* 1954) (Figure 4.30.3).

The first major alteration and realignment of U.S. Highway 395 in this area of the Indian Wells Valley was recommended in 1956 and completed in February 1958 by Schroeder and Company (*Bridgeport Chronicle-Union* 1956; Foley 1958). Considered the first modernized section of highway in the whole of District IX, a segment of U.S. Highway 395 was relocated north of Inyokern to meet the junction with U.S. Highway 6 near Brady’s. The new alignment followed the original alignment through Inyokern, then swung northwesterly approximately 0.4 mi. north of Inyokern, and continued about 4.6 mi. to Brady’s Junction with U.S. Highway 6. This realignment effectively combined U.S. Highway 6 and U.S. Highway 395, and eliminated the sharp, right-angle along U.S. Highway 395 at Brown that, at the time, required a left turn by northbound travelers (*Bridgeport Chronicle-Union* 1956) (Figure 4.30.4).

The next major realignment of U.S. Highway 395 in the Inyokern area began in 1960 after the state freeway-express system was established in 1959. By July of 1960, the California Highway Commission adopted plans that would relocate and improve U.S. Highway 395 in Kern and San Bernardino counties. Specifically, U.S. Highway 395 was to be aligned for approximately 11 mi. along a new, more direct route that would bypass the communities of Inyokern and Johannesburg. The new alignment would begin approximately 1.1 mi. south of Johannesburg and would re-join the present alignment about 1.5 mi. north of Inyokern. This alignment would follow the grading of an already existing service road for transmission lines that was first in use in 1912 and regularly used by locals as a shortcut to Ridgecrest. The estimated cost at the time of proposal was \$2,267,000 (approximately \$25,000,000 in 2026 adjusted for inflation), and it was noted that while approved, construction depended on the availability of highway funds (*Redlands Daily Facts* 1960). It was not until 1965 that the project was open for bids, and Santa Fe Engineers, Inc. of Lancaster was chosen to construct the new alignment in December 1965, with construction beginning in 1966 (*San Bernardino County Sun* 1965). This alignment is the present alignment of U.S. Highway 395 by Inyokern (Figure 4.30.5).

4.0 Description of Potential Historical Resources

Some improvements that were made to U.S. Highway 395 near Inyokern after realignment include construction of a bridge and guard rail on the segment of U.S. Highway 395 that crosses over Brown Road (the original alignment of U.S. Highway 395) and the construction of a “safety roadside rest” about 0.5 mi. south of the junction with Route 178 (this roadside rest stop no longer appears to be extant) (*Kern Valley Sun* 1969a, 1969b). The last major improvement to the area occurred in 1972, when an interchange was approved for construction between Route 395 and Route 178, which would make it more efficient for drivers along U.S. Highway 395 to access the town of Inyokern. The original segment of U.S. Highway 395, now called Brown Road, still presently retains the original alignment.



Figure 4.30.1 U.S. Highway 395 south of Inyokern. View toward north.



Figure 4.30.2 U.S. Highway 395 north of Inyokern. View toward north.

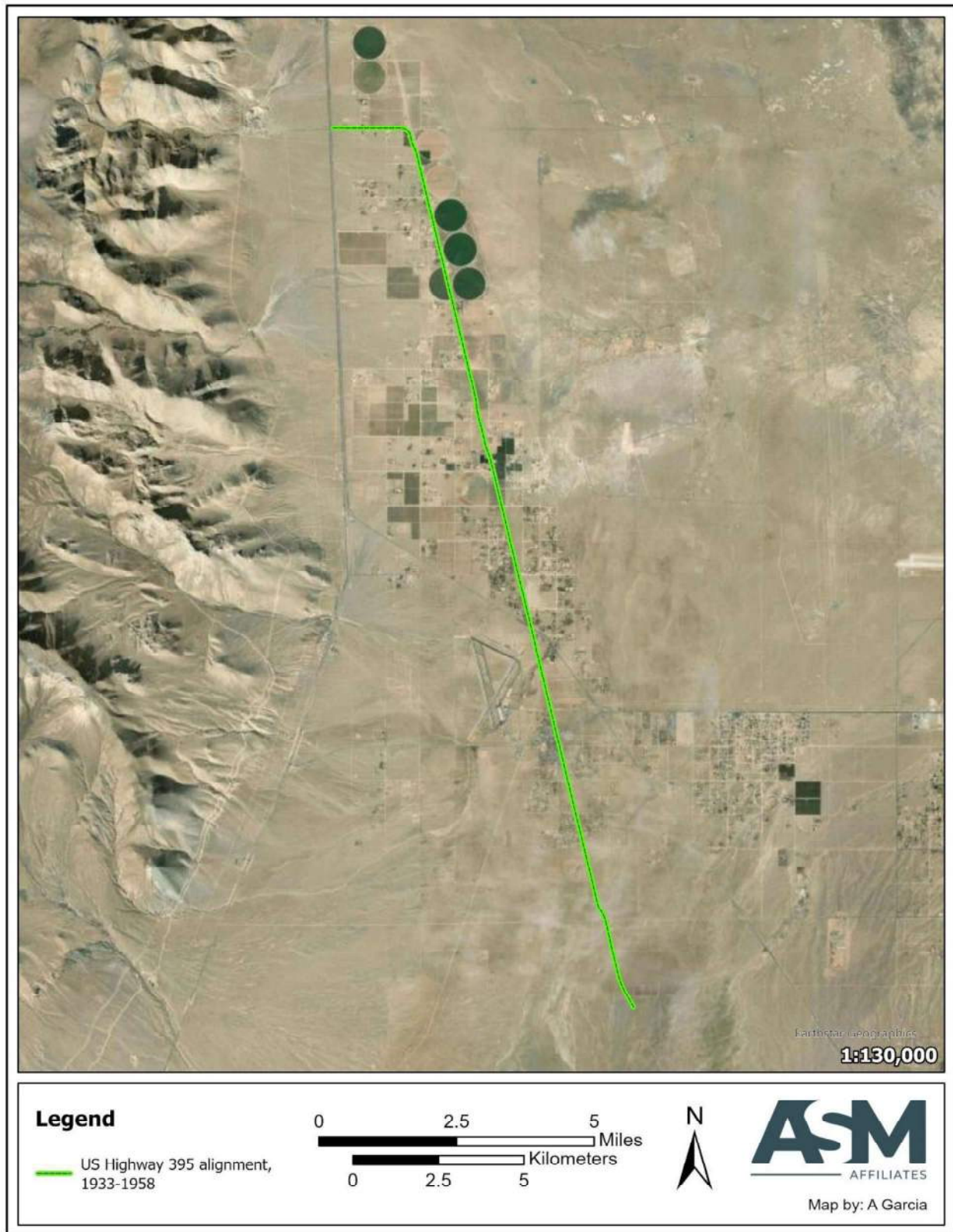


Figure 4.30.3 Map of U.S. Highway 395 alignment, 1933–1958

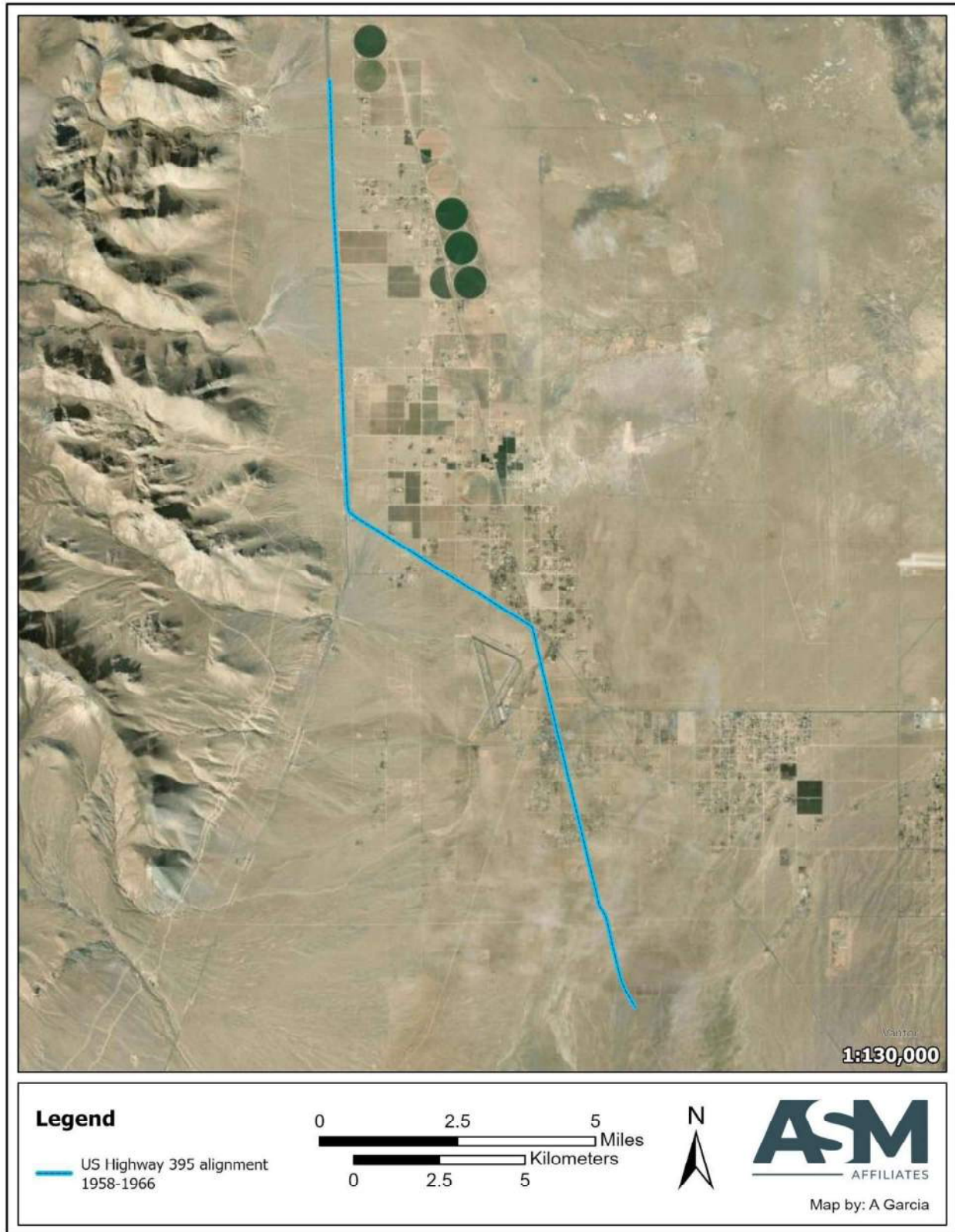


Figure 4.30.4 Map of U.S. Highway 395 alignment, 1958–1966

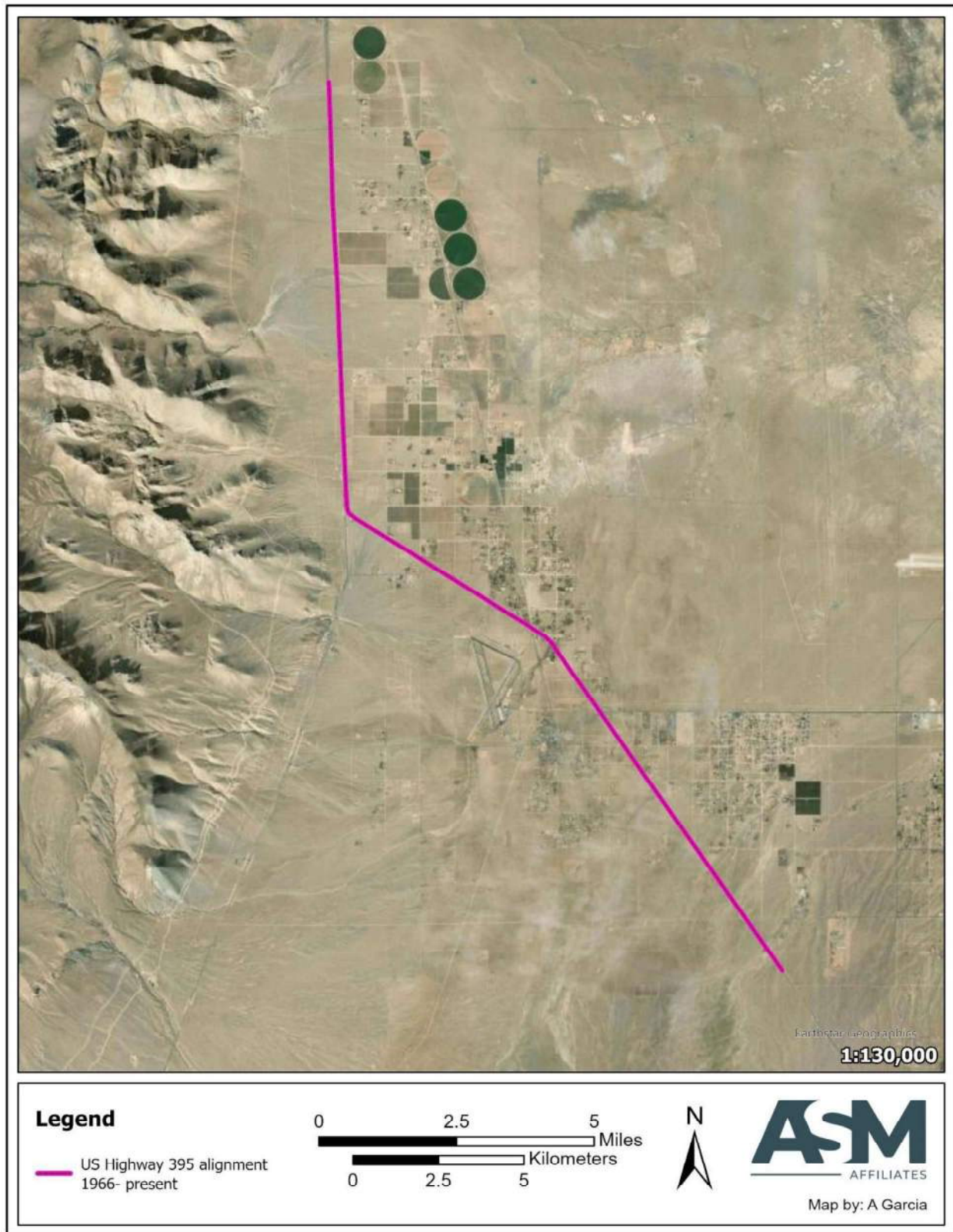


Figure 4.30.5 Map of U.S. Highway 395 alignment, 1966–present

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5.0 EVALUATION OF ELIGIBILITY

In this HRTR, 30 properties containing a total of 40 buildings or structures are individually evaluated for their eligibility for the CRHR and as CEQA historical resources (Table 3).

Table 3. Properties Evaluated for Historical Significance within the API

APN	Address	Property Type	Year Built	No. of Buildings on Parcel	Eligible for CRHR or CEQA Historical Resource
084-040-02-1	1661 N Brown Road	Trailer Park	c.1955	2*	No
084-040-32-8	1520 Second Street	Agricultural Shed	c.1950	1	No
084-040-17-9	6546 Orchard Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1940	1	No
084-040-29-4	1509 N Brown Road	Single-Family Residence	1947	2: Residence & garage	No
084-152-02-4	1447 N Brown Road	Single-Family Residences / Duplex	1944	3	No
084-152-05-7	1429 N Brown Road	Non-Permanent Trailer Residence	c.1960	1	No
084-140-02-9	101 Ash Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1932	1	No
084-140-09-4	1401 N Brown Road	Commercial Building	c.1935	1	No
084-090-13-3	1353 N Brown Road	Commercial Building	1946	1	No
084-060-15-0	6509 Locust Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1953	1	No
084-211-14-3	1312 Broadway	Single-Family Residence	1973	1	No
084-211-02-8	6521 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1958	1	No
084-211-03-6	6517 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1960	1	No
084-211-04-4	6513 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1953	2: Residence & garage	No
084-211-05-1	109 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1948	1	No
084-211-14-3	1233 Brown Road	Commercial Buildings	1936	3	No
084-212-25-7	6564 Sierra Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1951	1	No
084-212-09-1	1201 Brown Road	Non-Permanent Trailer Residence	1961	1	No
084-021-01-3	6331 Sunset Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1950	1	No
084-021-02-1	1244 N Dera Street	Single-Family Residence	1978	1	No
084-021-06-2	1249 N Nadine Street	Single-Family Residence	c.1980	1	No
084-021-10-4	N/A	Single-Family Residence	1978	1	No
084-022-19-3	5831 Delbert Street	Single-Family Residence	1982	1	No
352-310-32-0	1372 Comet Street	Single-Family Residence	1981	1	No
352-310-23-9	5527 Graaf Avenue	Single-Family Residence	1970	1	No
352-310-14-8	1511 Comet Street	Single-Family Residence	1963	2: Residence & garage	No
352-310-15-5	1540 N Mercury Street	Single-Family Residence	1981	2: Residence & garage	No
352-310-11-4	5631 Inyokern Road	Single-Family Residence	1978	1	No
352-502-23-1	Inyokern Substation	Infrastructure	c.1912	1	No
	U.S. Highway 395	Linear Resource	1933/1966	1	No

*There are two permanent buildings recorded in the Kern County Assessor's office. However, there are 48 lots with one RV or Mobile Home each within this parcel.

5.1 1661 N Brown Road / El Solana RV and Mobile Home Park

There is limited additional information regarding the history of the El Solana RV and Mobile Home Park (El Solana). The park was designed north of the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern. The 1943 topographic map reveals that the present location of the park was once the location of an unimproved service street that led to the nearby Inyokern Airport and intersected with a branch of Second Street that arched toward what was then U.S. Highway 395. It was likely when this section of the town of Inyokern was re-developed and the roads shifted that the El Solana was established. This timeline aligns with other structures in the vicinity that were constructed after the roads were shifted, all of which appear to be constructed in the 1950s and 1960s. It is likely that the park became more attractive to potential residents after U.S. Highway 395 was re-aligned, as the less busy road would provide more privacy, leading to an uptick of structures in the 1960s even though the origins of the space were from earlier.

The El Solana, 1661 N Brown Road, has never before been evaluated for the CRHR. ASM then considered whether the El Solana is eligible under any CRHR criteria.

ASM first considered whether the El Solana was associated with a specific event marking an important moment in the history of Inyokern or was associated with a pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the residential development of Inyokern and the Indian Wells Valley. The El Solana was established sometime between 1952 and 1967 and was constructed just outside of the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern. Inyokern was notable during this era for providing a more rural alternative for housing for those who did not wish to reside in the more suburban communities of Ridgecrest. This park is exemplary of that, as it provides a location for non-traditional residential structures that support rural living. This park is the only example of an RV and mobile home park within the community of Inyokern and is presently one of two examples of an RV and mobile home park within the Inyokern/Ridgecrest area. The second is located along Inyokern Road between the present alignment of U.S. Highway 395 and Ridgecrest and appears to have been founded at an unknown time between 1972 and 1974. While an RV and mobile home park is not a common resource found within the community of Inyokern, research did not reveal that it represents an important moment in the development of Inyokern. Other trailer residences were placed in parcels throughout the community of Inyokern during the same era, and the trailer residence is not a rare or uncommon resource within the community. As such, the presence of the trailer park within the community of Inyokern is less significant than in other communities where trailer homes are found only within the confines of an RV or mobile home park. Research did not reveal that the El Solana was the site of any historic events. Therefore, because the establishment and use of the park did not significantly contribute to the history or development of the town of Inyokern, ASM recommends the El Solana as not eligible under CRHR Criterion 1.

Research did not reveal that the El Solana, or any of the individual parcels located within the El Solana, is associated with any historically significant individuals. It is therefore recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2.

ASM then assessed whether the El Solana embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master. The El Solana retains the following common character-defining features of mobile home parks: small lots with a narrow street, uniform set-back and placement of the mobile homes on the lots, one-story mobile homes with metal exterior wall surfaces and flat or widely pitched gable roofs, limited parking spaces adjacent to mobile homes, and a central office building. It does not, however, retain the following common character-defining features of mobile home parks: a patterned development, a main entrance gate, and a fence surrounding the property. Because it does not retain all the identified common character-defining features of a mobile home park, it is not the best or a good example of mobile home parks. Additionally, research did not reveal that the construction or use of mobile home parks are important to the history of Inyokern, nor did research reveal that there are elements of construction

of the park that are unique to Inyokern or that utilize local resources. Research additionally did not reveal that a master architect or master builder was associated with the construction, design, or development of the property. As such, ASM recommends El Solana not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3.

Finally, the El Solana is a common property type that does not have the potential to provide information about history or prehistory that is not available through historic research. Therefore, ASM recommends the property not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4.

As such, the El Solana is recommended not eligible under any CRHR criteria nor is it a CEQA historical resource.

5.2 1520 Second Street

The building associated with the address of 1520 Second Street was constructed within an oddly shaped parcel that resembles an upside down “L” shape. This may be due to the evolution of this particular area above Orchard Avenue. The 1943 topographic map shows that Second Street previously split into two roads forming a “Y” shape just north of where the street currently ends; one road veered to the northeast to connect to (then) U.S. Highway 395, and the other road veered northwest as an unimproved service road. A structure with a northeast/southwest axis is depicted on that 1943 topographic map in approximately the same area as the present building. However, it is unlikely that structure is the present building due to its location relative to one of the diagonal alignments of the “Y” shaped road. It is more likely, especially considering the odd shape of the parcel, that the structure was constructed after the roads were reconfigured in this area, sometime between 1943 and 1971 (based on visible observation and available historic photographs or maps of the property). The building is a shed that appears to have been used for agriculture and was historically connected to a residence on the parcel that was demolished before 1971. ASM considered whether this building, due to its size and age, was a residence rather than a shed and associated with homesteading in the area after the 1940s. However, the Kern County Assessor’s office did not retain any information regarding a structure or residence on the parcel. Most likely, the building associated was constructed as a large shed, thus not requiring the permits that would trigger a recorded assessment.

The property at 1520 Second Street has never before been evaluated for the CRHR. ASM then considered whether 1520 Second Street is individually eligible under any CRHR criteria.

ASM considered whether 1520 Second Street was associated with a specific event marking an important moment in the history of Inyokern or was associated with a pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the development of Inyokern. 1520 Second Street was constructed as a shed at an unknown time between 1947 and 1971. This shed was constructed just above the general borders of the historic area of the town of Inyokern and may have been associated primarily with agriculture and the homesteading efforts in the Indian Wells Valley between the 1930s and the 1950s. However, the full context for the shed has been lost as the land is no longer in active use and historic photographs did not relay the original use of the building. The 1971 aerial photograph reveals the remnants of a foundation that (according to the 1943 topographic map) was likely once a residence which the shed supported as a secondary structure. Nearby residences that also appeared to have supported agriculture were constructed between the 1930s and the 1950s, and the shed associated with 1520 Second Street was one of many buildings constructed within Inyokern around the same time. Research did not reveal this shed was the first of its kind to be constructed in the area, nor was it the site of any historic events. As such, because the construction of the shed did not individually significantly contribute to the history or development of the town of Inyokern, ASM recommends 1520 Second Street not eligible under CRHR Criterion 1.

Research did not reveal that 1520 Second Street was associated with any historically significant individuals. It is therefore recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2.

ASM then assessed whether 1520 Second Street embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master. 1520 Second Street is a one-story shed, likely related to agricultural use, which has not been officially recorded as an improvement by the Kern County Assessor. The structure is primarily utilitarian, and as a result, retains no reference to any specific architectural styles and retains minimal examples of design. Research did not reveal that any type of agricultural shed or structure was identified as particularly important to the history of Inyokern, nor did it reveal that there are elements of the construction of the shed that are unique to Inyokern or utilize local resources. Research additionally did not reveal that a master architect or master builder was associated with the construction, design, or development of the property. As such, ASM recommends 1520 Second Street not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3.

Finally, 1520 Second Street is a common property type that does not have the potential to provide information about history or prehistory that is not available through historic research. Therefore, ASM recommends the property not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4.

As such, 1520 Second Street is recommended not eligible under any CRHR criteria nor is it a CEQA historical resource.

5.3 6546 Orchard Avenue

There is limited information available about the history of the building at 6546 Orchard Avenue. The given construction year of 1940 appears to be correct, as a structure is indicated in its present location on the 1943 topographic map. The structure appears on subsequent maps as well. The 1973 topographic map indicates that this residence was once one of 11 structures (likely all residences) on the block above Orchard Avenue between Brown Road (then U.S. Highway 395) and Second Street. Of these, only four are extant, including 6546 Orchard Avenue. Because this residence was constructed within a smaller parcel in 1940, it is unlikely that it was constructed in association with agriculture. It is more likely that it was one of many residences constructed within the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern in response to the need for housing after the establishment of NAWS China Lake.

The property at 6546 Orchard Avenue has never before been evaluated for the CRHR. ASM then considered whether 6546 Orchard Avenue is individually eligible under any CRHR criteria.

ASM considered whether 6546 Orchard Avenue was associated with a specific event marking an important moment in the history of Inyokern or was associated with a pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the residential development of Inyokern and the Indian Wells Valley. Orchard Avenue was constructed in 1940 within the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern. It was likely constructed in association with the population increase that resulted from the presence of the military and the subsequent need for housing, as it was one of many residences constructed within the block and around the same time period, and there was no visible evidence of agriculture within the parcel or the property on historic aerial photographs or presently. Although this residence was constructed during the peak of residential development in Inyokern, it does not reflect specific qualities that would make it a unique contribution to residential development in comparison to other residences from the same era. It was not the first residence constructed in the area, nor did the construction of the property individually significantly contribute to the residential development of the town of Inyokern. As such, because the construction of the property did not individually significantly contribute to the history or the development of the town of Inyokern, ASM recommends 6546 Orchard Avenue as not eligible under CRHR Criterion 1.

Research did not reveal that 6546 Orchard Avenue is associated with any historically significant individuals. It is therefore recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2.

ASM then assessed whether 6546 Orchard Avenue embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master. 6546 Orchard Avenue is a single-family residence constructed in 1940 in an example of Minimal Traditional style. It features a one-story, rectangular plan, medium pitched roof, wood lap accent, double-hung windows, an entry porch with wood supports, and minimal exterior detailing. However, it lacks character-defining features commonly associated with the style such as shallow eaves, stone accent, picture windows, projecting three-sided oriel, a shallow entry porch, and fixed wood shutters, and as such, is not a good example of the style. Other residences that were constructed in a similar style can be found within Inyokern and within the nearby community of Ridgecrest. These residences provide a better example of the style in a local context, as visually they are more immediately associated with Minimal Traditional style. Research did not reveal that Minimal Traditional style was particularly important to the residential development of Inyokern, nor are there elements of the style that are unique to Inyokern or utilize local resources. Finally, research did not reveal that a master architect or master builder was associated with the construction, design, or development of the property. Therefore, ASM recommends the property as not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3.

Finally, 6546 Orchard Avenue is a common property type that does not have the potential to provide information about history or prehistory that is not available through historic research. Therefore, ASM recommends the property not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4.

As such, 6546 Orchard Avenue is recommended not eligible under any CRHR criteria nor is it a CEQA historical resource.

5.4 1509 N Brown Road

There is limited information available about the history of the building. The given year of construction of 1947 appears to be correct, as the building is not visible within the 1943 topographic map, and is visible for the first time in 1971 historic aerial photographs. The structure appears on subsequent maps as well. The 1973 topographic map indicates that this residence was once one of 11 structures (likely all residences) on the block above Orchard Avenue between Brown Road (then U.S. Highway 395) and Second Street. Of these, only four remain extant, including 1509 N Brown Road. This topographic map shows an additional structure constructed below the present location of 1509 N Brown Road; however, it is unclear if the parcel has since been expanded and the structure that was once there was demolished, or if the second building refers to the garage of 1509 N Brown Road.

This residence is one of the few residences from this era of Inyokern's residential development to include a detached garage building. The majority of residences within Inyokern retain unpaved driveways and covered car port areas. The 1947 year of construction indicates that this residence was constructed during the peak of the population boom that resulted from the military installation and was likely constructed to accommodate the increasing presence of military personnel and their families.

The property at 1509 N Brown Road has never before been evaluated for the CRHR. ASM then considered whether 1509 N Brown Road is individually eligible under any CRHR criteria.

ASM considered whether 1509 N Brown Road was associated with a specific event marking an important moment in the history of Inyokern or was associated with a pattern of events that made a significant contribution to the residential development of Inyokern and the Indian Wells Valley. 1509 N Brown Road was constructed in 1947 within the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern. It was constructed during the initial population boom of Inyokern during the 1940s as a result of the presence of the military installation and the subsequent need for housing. As such, it was one of many residences that were constructed within the historic boundaries of the town of Inyokern at around the same time. Research did not reveal that this residence was the first to be constructed in this area or the first of its type, nor did research reveal that the property was the site of any significant historic events. Therefore, because the construction of the property did not individually significantly contribute to the history or development of the town of Inyokern, ASM recommends 1509 N Brown Road as not eligible under CRHR Criterion 1.

Research did not reveal that 1509 N Brown Road is associated with any historically significant individuals. It is therefore recommended not eligible under CRHR Criterion 2.

ASM then assessed whether 1509 N Brown Road embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master. 1509 N Brown Road is a single-family residence constructed in Minimal Traditional style. It features the following common character-defining features of the style: it is one-story with a rectangular plan, and retains a brick chimney, a medium-pitched roof, and minimal exterior detailing. However, it lacks other character-defining features commonly associated with the style such as wood lap and/or stone accents, double-hung windows, an entry porch with wood supports, picture windows, projecting three-sided oriel, and fixed wood shutters. As a result, 1509 N Brown Road is not a good example of Minimal Traditional style. Other residences constructed in a similar style can be found within Inyokern and Ridgecrest and can provide a better example of the style in a local context as they retain more character-defining features and are more immediately associated with Minimal Traditional form. Research did not reveal that Minimal Traditional style was a particularly important architectural style in the history of Inyokern, nor are there elements of the style that are unique to Inyokern or utilize local resources. Finally, because research did not reveal that 1509 N Brown Road was constructed by a master architect, ASM recommends the property as not eligible under CRHR Criterion 3.

Finally, 1509 N Brown Road is a common property type that does not have the potential to provide information about history or prehistory that is not available through historic research. Therefore, ASM recommends the property not eligible under CRHR Criterion 4.

As such, 1509 N Brown Road is recommended not eligible under any CRHR criteria nor is it a CEQA historical resource.