COURTHOUSE PLAZA HISTORIC DISTRICT A NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT

8.1 DISTRICT OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

8.1.1 Overview

The Courthouse Plaza Historic District, a National Register District, is a rectangular area of roughly 17 acres situated in the center of Prescott. Gurley, Cortez, Goodwin and Montezuma Streets pass through the district and establish the parameters for the various types of land use. Two types of development occur in the district: first, the commercial areas surrounding the Plaza, which are distinguished by a lack of setbacks from either the front or side, and second, the Yavapai County Courthouse, which is located in the center of a large rectangular park, well back from the streets. The park is in the middle of the area and is surrounded on all four sides by continuous street front development.

The plan for Prescott prepared by Robert Groom and Van Smith in 1864 followed two practices common to nineteenth century American town planning. First, the streets were laid out in a gridiron pattern without regard for the irregular topography of the land. Second, several blocks were reserved for public uses. In Prescott one centrally located block was set aside for the County Courthouse.

As the Seat of one of the four original Arizona counties, Prescott assumed prominence as the political and economic center for a vast area. This prominence was well symbolized in the decision to surround the Courthouse Plaza with commercial lots. Within a decade of its creation these properties were well developed, and in 1878 the construction of a courthouse completed the scheme. Over the next several decades the most distinctive change in the district was a replacement of older frame buildings with masonry structures. In 1900 this process was greatly accelerated by a fire which completely destroyed the northern and western part of the commercial area. On the strength of a prosperous economy, many of the businesses were in new quarters within a year. Because of the prominence of gambling and drinking establishments in this part of the district it has been historically known as "Whiskey Row." The opposite side of the plaza has its own unique character as the setting for several banks and office buildings. Mercantile houses, grocery stores, drug stores, jewelers, stationery stores, a lumber company and a livery stable were also located around the plaza during these early vears.

The arrival of the railroad also impacted development, creating a business corridor between the Depot and the Plaza (along North Cortez Street). However, the integrity of the plaza remained intact and its primacy in the



Yavapai County Courthouse; Original Structure Built 1878, Today's Building Built 1916; Roughrider Statue Installed 1907



community was not seriously threatened. After the mining depression of 1905 building activity slowed sharply, and, with the exception of replacing the Courthouse in 1916 and constructing a post office in the 1930s, no major changes took place in the plaza through the 1960s. Construction of City Hall on the southeast corner of the district in 1962 introduced a contemporary design to the area and several gasoline stations were located in the southwest section. Some of the old buildings have been plastered or covered with aluminum siding over the years but some of the siding has recently been removed. However, the integrity of the original fronts is recoverable and the architectural pattern is intact. The Courthouse Plaza District has survived as one of the few of its type in Arizona to reach maturity and stabilization.

The district slopes gently from southeast to northwest toward Granite Creek which flows south to north a short distance to the west. The district includes two major arterials in Gurley and Montezuma Streets. Montezuma Street is under the jurisdiction of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) as Highway 89. The district includes 25 contributing properties, including some of the largest and most historic buildings in Prescott.

Other historic neighborhoods are nearby reflecting the historic context of the Courthouse Plaza. Historic districts adjacent or close to the Plaza include East Prescott, Hassayampa, Union Street, South Prescott Townsite and West Prescott. In all, there are more than 12 National Register and Prescott Preservation Historic Districts within a few blocks of the Courthouse Plaza.



Bashford-Burmister Building; Before 1900 (Pre-Fire); the Building Built After the Fire Still Stands Today

8.1.2 Location

The boundaries of the district are the alleys behind each of the four major streets (Gurley, Cortez, Goodwin and Montezuma) and are extended to take in the properties on the outside corners of the four intersections.

The district contains portions of 10 blocks and comprises a total of 43 parcels. The boundary of the district is shown on Figure 8-1.

8.1.3 History of the District

A disastrous fire on the night of July 14, 1900, changed the face of downtown Prescott. Starting in a room in the Scopel Hotel on the southwest corner of Goodwin and Montezuma Streets, the fire quickly jumped across Goodwin Street and proceeded to consume all of the buildings on "Whiskey Row," leveling the entire block, including some 25 saloons and all of the bawdy houses. The fire burned almost everything in its path to Granite Creek and Willis Streets, a total of over 80 businesses.

Of the buildings standing on the Plaza at the time of the fire, only a few remain, including the Prescott National Bank (103 North Cortez Street), the Bank of Arizona (101 East Gurley Street), the Knights of Pythias Buildings







Gurley Street, 1930s, 1952 and Today

(105 South Cortez Street) and the City Jail and Fire Station (117 West Goodwin Street). Though some of the Plaza buildings were built of brick, many were wood frame, thus the destruction was nearly complete. Prescott had suffered fires before, but the pluck and courage of its merchants and residents pitched in to rebuild, this time of more substantial means including brick, concrete and stone. Within three days construction was underway and burned out merchants were open and doing a brisk business in tents, corrugated metal buildings and hastily constructed sheds on the Courthouse lawn.

The economy was sufficient to support a major reconstruction of the commercial properties around the Plaza after the fire. Many of the commercial structures were insured, and even for those business owners who were uninsured, loans were readily available and building materials were quickly ordered and received by rail. Professional architects and builders were employed and the availability of imported craftsmen, machinery and building elements resulted in a clear manifestation of an attitude toward professional and permanent commercial structures.

Most of the Courthouse Plaza Historic District buildings were constructed within the three years after 1900. Many were built with stability and appearance in mind in a style typical of early 20th Century commercial buildings - one, two or three stories with zero setbacks and simple brick facades decorated with brick coursing and pediments.

Some buildings were architecturally outstanding, such as the Palace Hotel (116-122 South Montezuma Street), the Burke Hotel (102-110 South Montezuma Street), and the Wilson Block (102-104 North Montezuma Street), but all presented a united front to the Courthouse Plaza, resulting in a unique streetscape which is substantially intact.

For nearly half a century the leaders of Arizona had also been the leaders of Prescott and their leadership and influence shaped the Territory and the community. As the economy fluctuated these leaders applied their skills, expertise and resources to make their community the best it could be. This pride and spirit of unity which rebuilt downtown Prescott, along with curtailed growth, has been one of the reasons it remains one of the most original downtown districts in Arizona. The common determination which resulted in the rebuilding of a better Prescott is one of the reasons the Courthouse Plaza Historic District buildings remain today, nearly 100 years after a town of about 3,500 people started over after having lost \$1.5 million to a devastating fire. Their spirit has given the citizens of Prescott an irreplace-able and invaluable asset of history which must not be destroyed.

The district represents a cohesive history of architectural development in early Prescott. Several variations of popular commercial architectural styles of the era are well represented within the boundaries of the Courthouse Plaza. These styles give the district a distinct sense of historic and architectural cohesiveness.



8.1.4 Formation of the Historic District

The district qualifies for the National Register under criterion "A" for its association with the development of Prescott and criterion "C" as a cohesive grouping of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial architecture. Twelve properties in the district are already listed in the National Register as a component of the Prescott Territorial Buildings Multiple Resource Area (MRA) Nomination (1978) (one property has since been demolished).

The Courthouse Plaza Historic District was intended to be included as part of the MRA Nomination of 1978. However, through an administrative error by the National Park Service, the listing was inadvertently left out. Site surveys of the district were reconducted in June 1987, and the nomination was officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places in April of 1994. Buildings listed as contributing and noncontributing are shown on Figure 8-2.

8.1.5 Prescott Preservation District Responsibilities

As a National Register District, properties within the Courthouse Plaza Historic District are not subject to project review by the Prescott Preservation Commission. Input from the Commission is nevertheless encouraged to maintain the historic integrity of the district. Applicants are encouraged to meet with the City's Preservation Specialist prior to beginning a project to answer any questions and obtain assistance in designing a historically compatible project. The City may investigate options to protect the neighborhood and should consider the nature of the area when reviewing proposed projects. A petition to make the district a local (Prescott) Preservation District is currently pending.

8.2 DISTRICT QUALITIES AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

8.2.1 Architectural Overview

Buildings within the district are generally rectangular in plan and symmetrical in massing. With the primary exception of the Yavapai County Courthouse, buildings in the district are distinguished architecturally by the manner in which their respective facades are treated. Parcel widths (and the corresponding buildings) are generally in multiples of 25 feet (25, 50, 75 and a few at 100 feet and higher). Building heights vary from one to three stories without regard for width. Individually, buildings may be either horizontal in proportion (e.g., Sam Hill Hardware, 156 South Montezuma Street) or vertical (e.g., Knights of Pythias Building, 105 South Cortez Street).

The style of ornament employed on the buildings is extremely varied. In many cases the detailing is so abstracted from original models that traditional classification is not feasible. Nevertheless, the commercial blocks



Whiskey Row (South Montezuma Street) - View to the South



Hotel St. Michael with Thumb Butte in the Background - View West

are usually distinguished by brick or a combination of two masonry materials (such as brick and stone), topped by some form of cornice, and inset with tall and narrow fenestrations. Many structures incorporate wide storefronts on the first floor, usually inset from the front elevation. A few buildings are obviously eclectic in the design of their facades. The Place Hotel (116-122 South Montezuma Street), Masonic Temple (105-107 North Cortez Street), US Post Office (101 West Goodwin Street) and Yavapai County Courthouse are all products of the Classical Revival. The St. Michael Hotel (102-110 South Montezuma Street) and the Bank of Arizona Building (101 East Gurley Street) could be classified as Romanesque Revival and Second Renaissance Revival, respectively. Window treatment is especially important in the later two structures.

Characteristically, no building is particularly sympathetic to the adjoining properties. Roof lines, wall surfaces, and fenestration patterns are seldom the same in adjacent structures. However, this does not suggest that the buildings are unrelated. With the single exception of the Courthouse, the rest of the buildings have several common denominators. Most important, each building occupies the entire width of its parcel up to the front property line. Each facade was constructed of masonry (although some of these fronts have been plastered and otherwise covered); windows occur on every floor and are a main feature of the facade; the massing of the building is rectangular; and the facade is always articulated by decorative elements derived from styles popular around the turn of the century.

The historic patterns of development within the district can be seen on Figure 8-3. Existing land use within the district is shown on Figure 8-4, and existing zoning is illustrated on Figure 8-5.

8.2.2 Landscape/Streetscape

The District retains none of the native vegetation. According to historic documents, the site for Courthouse Plaza was identified due to its relatively flat, treeless terrain that did not have the many rock outcroppings found in surrounding areas.

It is interesting to note that the original layout of the streets surrounding the Plaza were 100 feet wide. Although this looks unusual in old photographs taken before the coming of the automobile, it served a practical purpose - it allowed mule-drawn wagons in the downtown commercial area to turn around without backing up.

The streets include granite curbs and the landscaped areas at the Courthouse have granite edgings. The sidewalks in all locations except the Courthouse are in poor condition and need repair or replacement. The City of Prescott is preparing a Downtown Enhancement Program to improve various public amenities such as sidewalks, street furniture, historic lamp posts, landscaping and crosswalk and intersection enhancements. Every effort should be taken by the Prescott Preservation Commission to ensure that



the Downtown Enhancement Plan is compatible with the historic character of the area.

8.2.3 Integrity

The contributing structures in the Courthouse Plaza Historic District are, with few exceptions, intact examples of their representative styles. Alterations have occurred to a number of the buildings and a few have been demolished. Some alterations have compromised the integrity of the building, but in several cases the alterations are reversible. A few buildings postdate the historic period. Many of the buildings are in substantially the same condition as when they were first constructed, reflecting a strong pride of ownership. The Courthouse Plaza Historic District possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

There are 19 properties identified as having "good" integrity; 7 properties are listed as "fair," and 17 are "poor" (5 of these are vacant or parking lots). The integrity of the various parcels is illustrated on Figure 8-6.



Union Block, Corner of Gurley and Cortez Streets

8.3 DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

8.3.1 Elements Worthy of Preservation

The Courthouse Plaza Historic District retains much of its original character and has a good proportion of contributing buildings, both of which provide a strong sense of time and place. Development trends have made an impact on the district, as several structures have been lost over the years to such uses as parking lots and gas stations. However, most of the historic buildings have evolved gracefully over time, accommodating new uses, owners and tenants without sacrificing historic integrity. The land use pattern remains primarily commercial, with a variety of other uses of which government predominates. In fact, three of the larger buildings in the district, including two of the most important, are owned by governmental agencies. These are the Yavapai County Courthouse (owned by Yavapai County, along with the grounds surrounding the Courthouse), the US Post Office (owned by the federal government) and City Hall (owned, of course, by the City of Prescott). It should be noted that the City of Prescott and the Prescott Preservation Commission have no legal jurisdiction over the County or the federal government in the use or appearance of their buildings.

Despite the loss or degradation of some resources, many of the historic structures have been well-maintained, offering excellent examples of their various architectural styles. Historic buildings are continually being renovated and used for original or compatible purposes (two notable recent examples include the "Bashford Courts" (Bashford-Burmister Building, 130 West Gurley Street) and the "Balentine Building" (Wilson Block, 102-104 North Montezuma Street). The district offers a useful tool for understanding



Whiskey Row (South Montezuma Street); Looking North

the early development of Prescott, the lifestyles of its citizens and for studying changes in architectural styles.

The Courthouse Plaza Historic District is cohesively linked by the way the structures relate to each other in terms of scale, setback, massing, materials, color, and craftsmanship. The following discussion identifies the major elements of the district worthy of preservation and that should be considered for rehabilitation, restoration and infill projects.

Separate design guidelines for the district have been prepared for the district in the event that the current movement to designate the Courthouse Plaza as a Local Preservation District are successful. The discussion in this Master Plan largely parallels that in the Design Guidelines, which may be consulted for additional information.

Siting of the Building(s)

The building setbacks surrounding the Courthouse Plaza are one of the district's most distinguishing features. All of the contributing buildings, as well as most of the noncontributing structures, have zero setbacks at both the front and sides of the building. The notable exception is the Yavapai County Courthouse.

To maintain this historic pattern, all setbacks should be zero for at least 50 percent of the first floor facade and 100 percent of the second and third floor facades, including the roof line. This allows up to one-half of the first floor facade to be "inset" under the second floor facade, providing shelter, public safety and additional commercial display space. No door should swing into the public right-of-way (the sidewalk). However, there is no requirement regarding the depth, angle or shape of the inset.

Likewise, setbacks should be zero for all side yards for the entire height and length of the building. Rear yard setbacks must be in conformance with the current zoning code.

Although the zoning code allows a number of uses within the district, some uses should be discouraged as they endanger the pedestrian use of the sidewalk and are incompatible with the character of the district. The first floor facing the Plaza shall be pedestrian oriented and used for functions that are accessible only by foot (stores, offices, entertainment, banking, etc.). No uses should be permitted that allow or encourage automobiles to traverse the property or cross the public sidewalk. This includes parking lots, garages, facilities with drive-throughs or drive-up windows, etc. Automobile access should allowed at the back of the property for service to the building. Parking, however, should be discouraged anywhere on the property.

The possibility of a mid-block crossing along Montezuma Street has been suggested to provide access to existing public parking or a potential park-

ing garage on the east side of Granite Street. If done carefully and correctly, this can provide safer and more convenient pedestrian access to the Plaza while retaining the historic facade of Whiskey Row. However, any public access point must provide the appearance of a compatible building. No "holes" or breaks in the architectural continuity of the west side of Montezuma Street are acceptable and the demolition of historic buildings to accommodate the passage is not allowed. The inclusion of small shops or vendors inside the accessway is acceptable and encouraged.

Streetscape/Landscape

Landscaping provides shade, visual relief, scale, color, and, in the case of deciduous trees, a changing appearance throughout the year. However, since buildings are required to have a zero setback, landscaping on private property is not possible in the district.

Landscaping, including trees, shrubs and ornamentals, should not be allowed at the front of the building within the front property line. Hanging plants suspended from the structure are permitted and encouraged. Landscaping within the district is limited to the public right-of-way and the entire block surrounding the Yavapai County Courthouse. The combination of large lawn areas and mature shade trees at the Courthouse provide a unique public gathering space throughout the year. Due to the age of many of the tress, the County's existing tree replacement program should continue to be pursued through a qualified landscape architect or horticulturist.

As mentioned earlier, the City of Prescott is undertaking a Downtown Enhancement Program that will impact the streetscape and landscape of the downtown district. These efforts should be monitored carefully to ensure compatibility with historic resources. For example, sidewalk repair and replacement is a potential part of the overall plan. However, care should be taken to ensure that historic parts of the old sidewalk are preserved, such as the tiles in the sidewalk spelling out "Sam Hill's" in front of 156 South Montezuma Street and the glass blocks cast into the entry of The Palace (116-122 South Montezuma Street).

All of the properties surrounding the district can still be accessed by alleys. This has taken a large burden off the front of the lot to accommodate service. The alleys are also heavily used by pedestrians, resulting in an often unsightly and sometimes dangerous condition. Efforts should be taken to improve both the appearance and function of the alleys, perhaps through such efforts as the Downtown Enhancement Program.

Building Size and Scale

The rapid reconstruction of the Courthouse Plaza after the fire of 1900 is part of Prescott lore. However, when the "new" buildings were built, it wasn't in the quick, inexpensive manner of construction that often preceded the fire. The structures were intended to be not only fire-resistant, but also to



Tree-Lined Sidewalk at the Courthouse Plaza



Courthouse Plaza Looking East in the Late 1890s

convey a grace and solidity that reflected the optimism and outlook of the times, as well as a sense of triumph over adversity and of overcoming the frontier. It is from this era that Prescott has received most of its rich architectural heritage, particularly in and around the Plaza. A significant part of this in this district is the relationship of building width to height to attempt to achieve the balance between elegance and endurance.

Parapets (a vertical extension of the facade above the roof) are an important part of the massing of a building in the Courthouse Plaza Historic District. All buildings, regardless of width or height, are required to have a parapet at least four feet above the roof. The guidelines below assume an average story height of 12 feet (which includes space for structural elements and mechanical equipment), plus the minimum four foot parapet. An extra four feet is allowed to accommodate taller ceiling heights or taller parapets. For example, a one story building at 12 feet per story, plus the parapet and the optional four additional feet would range from 16 to 24 feet in total height.

Although the width of most of the buildings facing the Courthouse Plaza are in multiples of 25 feet, the following guidelines apply regardless of building width.

- One-story buildings shall be between 16 and 24 feet in height (as measured from the front sidewalk to the uppermost part of the roof line)
- Two-story buildings shall be between 28 and 36 feet in height
- Three-story buildings shall be between 40 and 48 feet in height
- No building shall be greater than 48 feet in height

As a general rule, the wider the building, the taller it should be. For example, a one-story building on a 25 foot wide parcel should be closer to 16 feet in height, while a one-story building on a 75 foot wide parcel may be closer to the 24 foot height limit. This principal also applies for two and three story buildings.

Despite the variation in architectural styles, no roofs or roof materials are visible on any building in the district from the front elevation. This practice of accentuating the architecture of the front facade over the roof is typical of the period during which most of the district was built.

All roofs should be "flat" with a low pitch, draining to the back of the building. Parapets at the front elevation are required to "hide" the roof. No roof, roof material or mechanical equipment mounted on the roof shall be visible from the front elevation. The color of the roof material should be an earth tone or match the color of the building to reduce glare to taller neighboring buildings. It should be noted that the shape and design of the front parapet is not stipulated. It may be flat, triangulated or even rounded as long as it is sufficiently tall to conceal the roof behind it.



Doors and Windows

Doors and windows play an important role in the historic architecture of the Courthouse Plaza. The overall mass of the buildings is balanced by an open and accessible first floor and doors and windows with a strong vertical orientation. This design was also partly in response to climatic conditions before the advent of air conditioning. For example, doors with transoms (operable openings above the doors) coupled with double hung windows allowed breezes to travel across the tops of rooms to dissipate warm air. This combination of style and practicality should be respected in historic areas.

The first floor only may include "storefront" openings. Storefronts, when used, may extend into and include all of the inset areas defined above. The storefronts should have opaque (solid) bottom panels approximately one and one-half to three feet high. The individual glass panes should have a vertical orientation as defined below. Fixed transom panels above the doors and windows up to the bottom of the interior finished ceiling are encouraged. Transoms do not need to be operable.

All non-storefront doors and windows should have a vertical orientation in design. That is, the height of each opening should be at least one and one-half times the width (i.e., a 3 foot wide window must be at least 4-1/2 feet tall). All windows in the second and third stories should be between two and four feet in width. No single opening in the second and third floor should exceed four feet in width.

Windows should be single or double hung in design. Casement windows are also acceptable if they meet the vertical orientation criteria. Sliding, awning, hopper and jalousie windows are not acceptable.

Large, continuous openings on the first floor are encouraged, but are not mandatory. The combination of doors and windows may be up to 75 percent of the front elevation.

The way in which openings (doors and windows) are set in an elevation has a great deal to do with the mass, style and gracefulness of a building. A building may be correct in the height-to-width ratios given above, but the improper organization of walls and openings can give the appearance of either being "fragile" on the one hand or too imposing on the other. The arrangement of doors and windows was a very important element in the original design of the historic buildings in the district.

Windows in the district tend to have a strong vertical emphasis. Most original windows were constructed of wood. Larger openings consist of groupings of vertical windows rather than a monolithic horizontal window, although groupings are never more than two, or three in a Palladian pattern. The vertical window design is a subtle pattern that adds continuity and rhythm to the neighborhood. This pattern should be maintained and horizontal and



Masonic Temple, 105-107 North Cortez Street (1907); Neo-Classical Revival; Front Facade Divided at Second Floor, Pedimented Entry, Large Upper Story Columns and Pilasters Support a Richly Designed Pediment



Bank of Arizona Building, 101 East Gurley Street (1901); Second Renaissance Revival; Rusticated Stone on First Floor with Fired Brick on Upper Floors, Rectangular Windows with Semicircular Lights Above the Ground Floor Windows, Deep Architraves with Connecting String Course and Stone Sills, Corbeled Brick Cornice, Bulging Column at Corner Entry

sliding windows are not allowed. The predominate pane design is "oneover-one" for all architectural styles, although "two-over-two" is also acceptable.

Non-storefront windows should be located singularly whenever possible, however, groupings of not more than two windows is acceptable but should be set into the facade a minimum of 2 to 4 inches. For example, see the grouping of windows at the upper floors of the Hotel St. Michael (102-110 South Montezuma Street) and the Union Block (104-110 West Gurley Street). The maximum separation between openings should be no greater than 10 feet.

The space between windows should be between one-half and one and onehalf the width of the opening. For example, if a window opening is four feet wide (one four-foot window or two, two-foot windows) then the wall surface to the next opening would be between 2 and 6 feet.

The distance from the edge of a window to the corner of a building shall be a minimum of one and one-half the width of the opening. For example, a three foot wide window requires a minimum separation of at least 4-1/2 feet to the edge of the building. In no case shall the distance from an opening to the edge of a building be less than 3 feet.

On the second and third floors, the maximum opening or glazed area shall be 50 percent as measured horizontally or vertically. Horizontal measurements shall be from edge to edge of the building. Vertical measurements shall be from the finished floor of the second story to the roof line.

The bottom of windows shall be a minimum of 1-1/2 feet and a maximum of 4 feet above the finished floor at all stories. On first floor storefronts, the width of the storefront may not exceed 19 feet on 25 foot parcels and 25 feet on all other parcels.

A wide variety of combinations is possible under these criteria. The object is to provide a pattern of openings in the facade wall that maintains the overall rhythm and order of the historic buildings. Contributing buildings to the district which vary from the above guidelines are exempt. However, all new construction and major renovation to front facades that seek to alter the existing window pattern must comply.

Materials

The materials of any structure contribute significantly to its character and is often the first identifying element of a building. Much of the character of the buildings in the Courthouse Plaza Preservation District has as much to do with the use of materials as it does with siting and massing. Thus, the compatible use of materials is strongly encouraged to continue the design theme established almost 100 years ago.



Wall materials are the major component of the facade design. They may be used in a variety of combinations to provide interest and variety. The focus should be on using materials that provide the same sense of stability and permanence that has been a part of the Courthouse Plaza since the turn of the century.

The use of brick or stone masonry is required. Masonry may be either structural or veneer. Smooth-faced concrete masonry units and "slump" block are not acceptable. "Split-face" block is acceptable if used with an integral color. Stucco is not acceptable except for existing buildings where the material has become historic in its own right. Stucco is not acceptable on new construction or major remodels except as an accent material. Wood is not acceptable except as an accent material (trim, cornices, etc.).

New or existing facades shall not be covered in stucco, gunite or any other sprayed or applied material. New or existing facades must not be sheathed in wood, metal or vinyl.

The facade material must be left in a natural condition with no glazing, paint or other applied finish. Masonry material should use integral or natural color. Wood may be stained or painted. Stucco accents may be painted. All colors should be of neutral tones, compatible with the building design and the entire district.

The use of wood for doors, windows and storefronts is strongly encouraged. Vinyl-clad wood is acceptable if the material gives the appearance of wood. Aluminum or bare metal is not acceptable for any application. Steel may be used on doors and windows if painted a compatible color with the rest of the building.

The details of a facade can add character, vitality and even humor to the building design. When carefully done, details provide a sense of craftsmanship that can be appreciated from almost any distance. Details need not be elaborate nor ornate to be effective. They can range from simple brick patterns at the roof line or window openings, to the whimsical faces cast into medallions near the top of the Hotel St. Michael.

The use of details is encouraged in the district, insofar as the design is compatible and consistent with the character of the building and the district as a whole. Details should generally be constructed of materials already present in the building. For example, if the building facade is primarily brick, then different patterns of the brick may be considered. If different materials are used, they should be complementary to the primary material. The use of details should be part of the overall rhythm of the design. They should add, and not detract, from the overall visual interest of the building.

Details may include, but are not limited to, the following: cornices (a projection at the top of a wall); friezes (areas below the cornice which may contain additional detailing); pediments (a triangular element resembling a gable at



Levy Building, 112 South Montezuma Street (1901); Romanesque Revival Influence; Brick Structure with Four Columns at Base, Three Upper Windows Have Semi-Circular Tops Connected by Brick Eyebrows, Detailed Brick Cornice Echoes Design Theme



Hotel St. Michael, 102-110 South Montezuma Street (1901); Second Renaissance Revival Influence; Brick Structure with Some Rusticated Stone Work, Numerous Shops at First Floor Have Open Storefronts, Windows are Rectangular on the Second Floor and Rounded on the Third, Third Floor Windows are Also Recessed within Arched Bays, Wide Bracketed Wood Cornice at Top the building crown); accentuated lintels (the area above an opening) or sills (the area below an opening); columns; parapet copings (caps at the top of the wall); arches above openings, brackets (a projection from a wall used to support a cornice); and corbeling (outward stepping at the top of a wall to form a ledge).

Classical, Classical Revival and other historic details are permitted if done in the correct historic stylistic proportions and in a manner consistent with the character of the district. Victorian details and elements, however, are not acceptable as they represent a time period prior to when most of the buildings in the district were constructed. The following examples of details is provided for reference:

- Cornice: Chamber of Commerce (Old City Jail and Firehouse), 117 West Goodwin Street; Hotel St. Michael (Hotel Burke), 102-110 South Montezuma Street
- Frieze: Steward's Shoes (Knights of Pythias Building), 105 South Cortez Street
- Pediment: The Palace, 116-122 South Montezuma Street; Masonic Building, 105-107 North Cortez Street); Yavapai County Courthouse
- Accentuated Lintels: US Post Office, 101 East Goodwin Street
- Accentuated Sills (and Lintels): County Bank (Bashford Block), 102 West Gurley Street
- Columns: The Palace, 116-122 South Montezuma Street; US Post Office (Pilasters), 101 East Goodwin Street); Yavapai County Courthouse
- · Copings: Wells Fargo Bank (Bank of Arizona), 101 East Gurley Street
- Arches: Chamber of Commerce (Old City Jail and Firehouse), 117 West Goodwin Street; Matt's Saloon (Levy Building), 112-114 South Montezuma Street
- Brackets: Wells Fargo Bank (Bank of Arizona), 101 East Gurley Street; Chamber of Commerce (Old City Jail and Firehouse), 117 West Goodwin Street
- Corbelling: Buffalo Montana, 142 South Montezuma Street; Bashford Courts (Bashford-Burmister Building), 130 West Gurley Street
- Brick Detailing: Matt's Saloon (Levy Building), 112-114 South Montezuma Street

Open Space

The formal open space in the district is the Courthouse Plaza itself. The mature landscaping, statuary, gazebo and fountain all contribute to the character and history of the district. These combine to form a comfortable human scale environment in the center of the city. Also contributing to this are the wide parkways along Cortez and Montezuma Streets. This image should be maintained through the continued maintenance and upkeep of the Plaza.

Other Miscellaneous Elements

Signage, when properly applied, can be an important element that adds to the overall design. Too often, however, signage is applied to historic buildings without consideration of the architecture of the building or character of the district.

Signage in the Courthouse Plaza Historic District in all cases should complement, and not detract, from the building. Signage shall be used for identification only, and not for advertising. All signage should be placed flat against the facade. One suspended perpendicular sign per building is permitted if it complies with the rest of the requirements of these Guidelines.

One perpendicular sign per business activity is also permitted under the awning or first floor inset. The sign shall not extend more than 30 inches from the building. Signage painted directly on the facade is permitted if done in a historically compatible style. Signage painted on window glazing is acceptable and encouraged.

All signage, except signage painted on windows, whether painted, flat or suspended shall be counted in the total allowable area under the current signage code. No flashing, revolving or roof-mounted signs are permitted. No sign shall extend above the top of any part of the roof line.

Many historic buildings include insets or other areas within the facade design specifically for signage. Where this condition exists, the signage shall be constrained within this area and shall not extend beyond the provided borders.

Lighting for applied signage shall be by incandescent fixtures only. Lettering may be painted or individually cut figures. Neon may be used for lettering if set into individually cut channel-type figures. Box-type or cabinet signs are not acceptable. Translucent panels shall not be used. Fluorescent lighting is not acceptable in any application, either exposed or as a back light.

Awnings provide several functions for commercial areas such as the Courthouse Plaza. First, they provide shade during warm weather and cover during rain; second, they provide an inviting, human scale to the front of a building that looks sheltering and inviting; third, awnings provide an opportunity for color and variety to the building elevation; and fourth, they provide a place for appropriate business identification at the street level. The use of awnings in the district has been widespread over the years, as evidenced by historic photographs. Most original designs, in fact, assumed their use and incorporated the configuration into the building.

The use of canvas or fabric awnings is encouraged at all locations in the district. Metal awnings, including aluminum, are not acceptable.



Prescott National Bank, 102 East Gurley Street (1901-1902); Neo-Classical Revival; Fired Brick with Stone Accents on Exterior, Identical Entries on South and West Sides are Flanked by Classical Columns Supporting and Entablature, String Course Wraps the Building as an Extension of the Entablature, Brick Cornice





Palace Hotel, 120-126 South Montezuma Street (1901); Neo-Classical Revival; Native Grey Granite, Iron and Pressed Ornamental Brick Structure, Large Central Pediment, Classical Columns, Rectangular Windows at the Second Floor in a Palladian Motif. First floor awnings may extend over the public right-of-way (sidewalk). The width of first floor awnings may be up to the width of the storefront and/or inset. The color should match or be complementary to the primary color of the facade; the color must not distract from the facade. Second and third floor awnings are also encouraged. One awning should be used for each window, although one awning may cover not more than two windows at a time.

Awnings should be flat with an angle of approximately 45 degrees from the sidewalk to the facade. Curved awnings are permitted but are not encouraged. Some historic buildings include awning bands set into the front facade, usually just above the storefront. These should be used whenever possible to provide a historically correct configuration. New construction should also include awning bands into the design.

Demolition within the Courthouse Plaza Historic District should not be permitted unless one or more of the following conditions are met:

- · The building is a noncontributor to the historic district; or
- The condition of the building has deteriorated beyond the point where it can be rehabilitated in an economically viable manner. Rehabilitation shall be determined to be "economically viable" when the costs of renovation are 50 percent or less than the cost of new construction of a similar building in size, use and height; or
- The condition of the building is such that it becomes a public nuisance because of safety, aesthetics or condition.

The deliberate neglect of a building to allow it to meet any of the above criteria ("deterioration by neglect") voids the application of the criteria in allowing demolition.

No buildings within the district should be demolished for a parking lot, park (public or private) or any other type of open space. If a buildings(s) is demolished for access to public parking on Granite Street, the access shall be enclosed on the Montezuma Street elevation to give the impression that a building still occupies the property.

If a building is demolished, with the official consent of the Prescott Preservation Commission, it shall be replaced with a building of similar massing and scale to contributing buildings in the district. The guidelines set forth in this document shall in all cases be followed for new construction to maintain the character of historic downtown Prescott.

8.3.2 Threats to District Integrity

Past Projects

The Courthouse Plaza has always been a commercial and governmental area and therefore is not subject to the commercial conversion pressures



that exist in other historic neighborhoods. However, the type, size and appearance of potential commercial structures is of significant concern. This is evidenced by such uses as gas stations on the Plaza which are architecturally and functionally incompatible.

Other projects which have compromised historic integrity are those applied to remodels or new/infill construction. Many of these parcels are currently listed as noncontributors to the district.

Elements of past projects that are incompatible with the district include inappropriately stuccoed exteriors, partial or full sheathing of buildings, removal or significant alteration of elements of specific architectural styles, aluminum windows, inappropriate storefront materials, incompatible signage and metal awnings.

Future projects

The previously mentioned Downtown Enhancement Program has the potential to significantly improve the appearance of the public right-of-way within the Courthouse Plaza Historic District. All efforts must maintain the integrity of existing resources and should complement the character of the area. For example, improvements should not use a "Santa Fe" or "Palm Springs" approach by introducing elements that are historically foreign to the area. This will affect decisions on landscaping (deciduous shade trees appropriate to the climate versus Palo Verdes or palm trees), paving (simple gray concrete bordered by brick versus large expanses of integral colored stamped concrete), and street furniture (simple, comfortable looking metal or wood versus ornate, carved or multicolored fixtures).

Since Montezuma Street is under the jurisdiction of the State of Arizona as Highway 89, coordination should occur to monitor and provide input concerning ADOT plans for this corridor as they could relate to historic resources. Other coordination with the City is required concerning routine street and sidewalk replacement and repair. The City, in particular the Public Works Department, and the Prescott Preservation Commission should work together to ensure that future projects are compatible with the individual buildings and the entire district.

Circulation and Parking

The issues of circulation and parking in downtown Prescott are difficult to address in a historic preservation master plan. Many studies and trial efforts have been undertaken by the City to improve traffic flow and increase the availability of parking in and around the Plaza.

The most ambitious of these efforts may be the effort to construct a threestory parking garage on Granite Street, west of Montezuma Street and "Whiskey Row." If successful, this would greatly increase traffic on Gurley and Goodwin Streets as cars enter and exit from the garage area. This would



Knights of Pythias Building, 105 South Cortez Street (1892-1894); Late Nineteenth Century Commercial High-Rise; Tall Windows Banded by Rough Stonework, Rusticated Stone Finish Above the First Floor, Pressed Metal Comice



US Post Office, 101 East Goodwin Street (1932-1934); Neo-Classical Revival; Coursed Stonework on First Floor with Arched Openings, Brick Upper Floors with Large Pilasters, Center Section Steps Out From Main Facade to Reduce Mass, Large Cornice with Rail

also accelerate a possible pedestrian access in the mid-block area of Montezuma Street.

Even without the garage, Gurley and Montezuma Streets serve as arterials for a large part of the city and thus carry a very heavy load of traffic. Although many local residents bypass the Plaza through the use of side streets, circulation and traffic in the area will continue to increase and be an issue to deal with.

Regardless of the future of these issues, all potential solutions must be weighed against the impact to historic resources. This is justified because it is these resources that bring so many people, local and tourists, to the Courthouse Plaza in the first place.

The enjoyment and appreciation of the Courthouse Plaza is heavily dependent upon experiencing it on foot. The scale, details and ambiance cannot be understood from an automobile, which is why the Plaza always seems to be full of people day and night throughout the year. Thus, every effort must be given to ensure the safety and quality of the pedestrian experience. This may mean the sacrificing of a few parking spots or other traffic conveniences, but it must be done.

Proximity to Other Land Uses

The Courthouse Plaza has always been the heart of Prescott. Around it sprang early businesses, commercial areas and surrounding residential neighborhoods, all of great character and beauty. As such, the Plaza is linked to these areas socially, architecturally, functionally and historically as an excellent example of an integrated, working downtown area. Within the Plaza or very close to it are nearly every land use found within Prescott, many of which have remained for most of this century and longer. These include commercial and business uses, hotels, entertainment functions, banks, restaurants, museums, the library, churches and governmental offices.

Unfortunately, the success of many downtowns have lead to their downfall in terms of historic resources. As the community continues to grow, the need and demand for increased commercial and business space also increases. The pressures for larger, taller and incompatible buildings around the downtown is likely, which could cause a serious threat to the integrity of the district.

Threats to the character of the district can be primarily anticipated to result from the following conditions:

Commercial pressures will cause increased pressure for larger commercial ventures, which could threaten the integrity of the district.

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- Demolition of historic resources to make way for larger commercial and business uses. This degrades the scale of the district and results in the loss of historic resources.
- Incompatible additions, alterations or modifications to individual buildings.
- New construction or modifications that are greater than 48 feet in height (the current zoning allows 100 feet throughout most of the district).
- The acquisition of several properties by a single developer to make way for a larger project, such as large office buildings.
- Projects that are incompatible with the historic district but are allowed under the current zoning code (see following discussion).

Zoning

The various uses and allowances of the current zoning code present the most serious threat to the integrity of the Courthouse Plaza Historic District.

The district consists of Business "B" (BB) with a small amount of Business "A" (BA) in the southeast corner (only City Hall resides in the BA classification). The following description is an overview of the district zoning; for a full description see the City of Prescott Zoning Code.

BB zoning is the classification for general commercial, entertainment and light manufacturing. It also includes apartments and height allowances of up to 100 feet.

BA zoning is a basic business classification for "neighborhood commercial" and apartments. It has more restrictions than BB or commercial designation.

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Yavapai County Courthouse (1916); Neo-Classical Revival; Rusticated Native Grey Stonework on Bottom Floor with Cut Granite on Upper Floors, Similar Entries on All Four Side with Colossal Classical Columns Supporting a Heavy Ornamental Pediment, Significant Statuary on North, South and West Sides - the Oldest of Which is the "Roughriders" Statue Installed in 1907

Table 8-1 District Zoning Classifications

Item	Business A	Business B
Building Height Limitation	50 Feet, Max.	100 Feet, Max.*
Building Site Area	Business: None Residential: 50 Percent	Business: None Residential: 60 Percent*
Yards, Front	Business: None Residential: 15 Feet	Same as BA
Yards, Side	Business: None Residential: 3-10 Feet	Same as BA
Yards, Rear	Business: 10 Feet Residential: 10-15 Feet	Same as BA
Accessory Buildings	None*	15 Percent*
Screening	6 Foot Wall Next to More Restrict. Zoning	Same as BA

* Additional stipulations attached to this requirement. See Zoning Code.

Source: City of Prescott Zoning Code, 47th Edition, December 1995.

The 100 foot allowance under the BB zone is clearly incompatible with the scale and character of the Courthouse Plaza. With the exception of the Courthouse itself, all of the buildings in the district are less than 45 feet in height, and most are much smaller than that. A limit of three stories and 48 feet in height should be implemented immediately to preserve the character of the district (see discussion above on recommended building heights).

There are no lot coverage limits for BB and BA, which is appropriate given the recommendations for full coverage in the district. The same is true for setbacks, as zero setbacks should be required for front and side yards. A 10 foot rear yard setback is required and recommended.

The zoning code also allows a number of uses within the BA and BB classifications that are incompatible with the historic nature of the Courthouse Plaza Historic District. These incompatible uses include, but are not limited to, those outlined in the following table.



Chamber of Commerce Building (Old City Jail and Fire House), 117 West Goodwin Street; Romanesque Revival Influence; Heavy Native Stone at Base with Smoother Stone at Upper Floor, Arched Openings, Large Projecting Wood Cornice

Table 8-2 Incompatible Zoning Uses Permitted

Zoning

Incompatible Uses

Business A & B

Apartments, planned area developments, adult day care centers, ambulance service, auditoriums, day care group home, fraternity/sorority houses, hospitals, public utility buildings, schools, bungalow courts and dwelling groups, parking lots, home occupations, manufactured housing or mobile home parks, cemeteries, crisis centers, supervisory shelter care, group foster homes, agricultural produce markets, appliance sales and service, auction/swap meets, battery charging and repair, catering (mobile), cleaning and dyeing shops and plants, clothing manufacturers, conservatories/green houses, dry wall supply, grocery stores, laundries, manufacturing, mini-storage, mortuaries, movers, plumbing shops, poultry shops, recreational vehicle storage yards, recreational vehicle parks, service stations, taxi cab service, tire shops, trade schools, upholstery shops, automobile garages, beverage bottling, bus terminals, feed stores, fender and body repair, fuel stores, hot tub rentals, mail order facilities, roofing contractors and retail, skating rinks, sheet metal shops, shooting galleries, sign shops, wooden storage sheds (retail).

Miscellaneous Uses: Baseball batting cages.

Conditional Uses: Manufactured housing or mobile home parks, automobile and trailer sales, bowling alleys, modern steam laundries, ceramic manufacturing, automobile garages, stockpiling of soils, tire recapping, publishing/printing, miniature golf courses, adult entertainment businesses, crematoriums, car washes, automobile leasing, shuttle services, family game centers, palm readers, psychic interpreters, tattoo parlors, manufacturing of ice, aluminum garden furniture manufacturing, light machine shops, cabinet shops, carpenter shops, carpet cleaning plants, archery shooting range, ornamental iron works.

Pressures on historic neighborhoods are often the result of incompatible zoning. These pressures include land uses inconsistent with the historic pattern. Other problems include generous allowances that encourage demolition of historic resources and variances that allow dramatically different new development such as mobile home parks. In addition, there are a number of potential uses which can be immediately identified as incompatible within a historic district such as the Courthouse Plaza, such as car washes and adult-oriented businesses.

Many of the allowed uses permit automobile-oriented commercial activities, such as drive-through facilities with large parking lots, that conflict with the traditional street front and pedestrian orientation of the historic buildings. Likewise uses should be discouraged that require large parking lots to meet public demand or the zoning code. Often, the demolition of historic buildings is required to meet the need for such on-site parking demands, thus hamstringing preservation efforts.

Due to the threat of incompatible development and height allowances it is recommended that the BB zone be rezoned to BA with the height restrictions and land use recommendations provided in this Master Plan.

8.3.3 Opportunities Within the District

As one of the first parts of Prescott to develop, grow and prosper, the Courthouse Plaza has remained the heart of not only Prescott, but of the entire region. The historic events, people and buildings associated with the district are related and represented here and are still manifest in the layout and architecture preserved for us today. The layout of the district and the assemblage of several excellent examples of various commercial styles provides a picture of what life was like for the early residents of the Territorial Capital.

Given this history, the ideal continued use for the district would be as a solid commercial area with selected compatible uses, such as government. Changes to the zoning code or rezoning of some of the district is necessary to ensure this. As Prescott continues to grow, pressures will increase for incompatible, inconsistent or over scaled commercial or business development.

8.3.4 Specific District Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

The following represents a brief summary of the recommendations discussed above.

Table 8-3

Summary of Recommendations - Courthouse Plaza Historic District

Item

Observation/Recommendation

Siting

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- Require zero setbacks at the front property line for at least 50 percent of the front facade. Require zero setbacks for the entire second and third floor elevations.
- Allow up to one-half of the first floor to be "inset" from the front property line
- Require zero setbacks for side yards for the entire height and length of the building

- Do not allow doors to swing into the public right-of-way
- Do not allow uses which allow or encourage automobiles to traverse the property or cross the public sidewalk; discourage parking anywhere on the property
- Allow a mid-block crossing on Montezuma Street only if it does not break the architectural continuity of Whiskey Row. Do not allow the demolition of historic structure to accommodate the access

Streetscape/Landscape

- Do not allow landscaping on private property
- Limit landscaping to the Courthouse Plaza and public right-of-ways
- Continue the tree replacement program at the Courthouse Plaza
- Coordinate with efforts to produce and implement the Downtown Enhancement Program
- Encourage continued alley use for service to take the burden off of the front of the property; encourage and coordinate safer alley use by pedestrians

Building Size and Scale

- Adhere to historic height ranges for one, two and three story buildings (see text)
- Encourage historic building proportions as stipulated in the text
- Require the use of parapets for all buildings; no part of the roof or any mechanical equipment on the roof should be visible from the public right-of-way

Doors and Windows

- Locate doors consistent with the historic pattern (see text)
- Allow only double- or single-hung windows or casements, with pane design of "one-overone" or "two-over-two"
- Allow and encourage "storefront" openings only at the first floor; storefronts should have opaque panels at the bottom and should have a vertical orientation; allow up to 75 percent of the first floor to be "open"
- Encourage transoms above doors and windows extending to the bottom of the finished ceiling
- Emphasize vertical orientation on windows; encourage locating windows singularly; use up to two vertical windows for a larger opening versus a large horizontal window (see text for vertical orientation and size criteria)
- Require window spacing (vertical and horizontal) consistent with the historic pattern (see text)

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Open Space

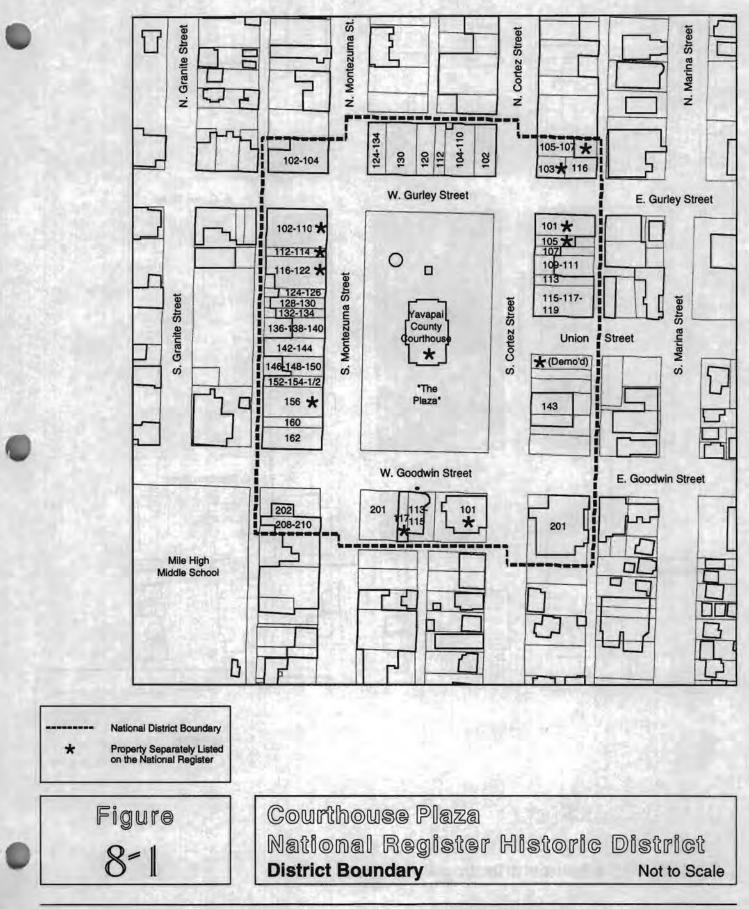
Other Misc. Elements

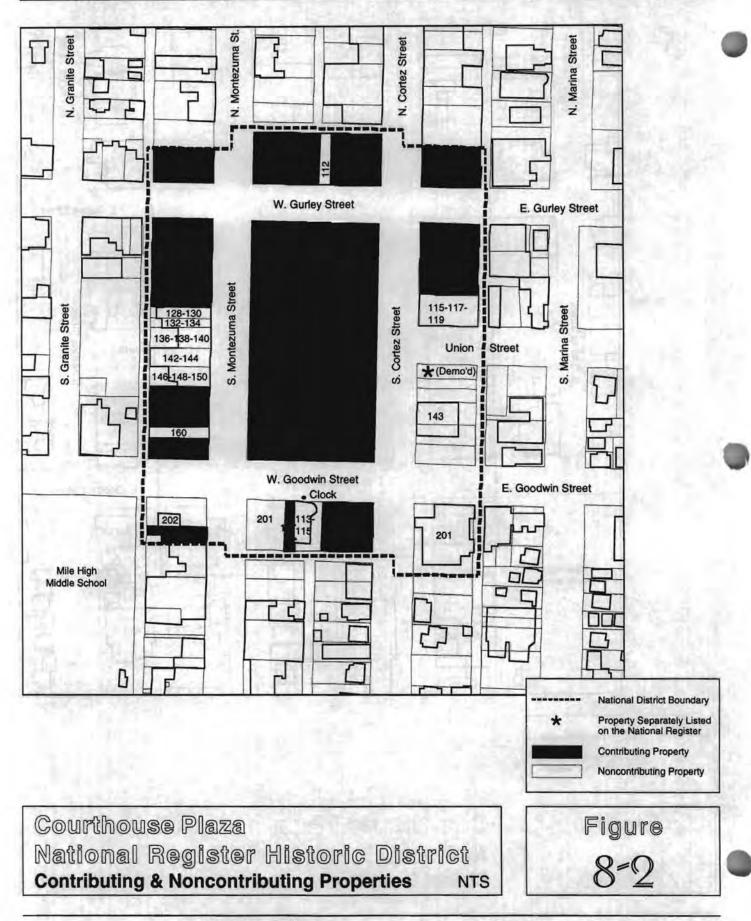
- Require a minimum of three feet from the edge of an opening to the edge of the building
- Allow storefronts up to 19 feet wide on 25 foot wide parcels and up to 25 feet on wider parcels
- Require brick or stone as the major exterior material
- Do not allow stucco on buildings except where the material has become historic in its own right
- Do not use wood except as an accent material
- Do not allow historic materials to be covered or sheathed with stucco, gunite or any other sprayed or applied material; new or existing buildings must not be sheathed in wood, vinyl or metal
- Leave facade materials in natural condition without painting or glazing; wood and stucco trim may be painted
- Use only integral and natural colors of a neutral tone, compatible with the building and the district
- Use wood for doors, windows and storefronts; vinyl-covered wood and steel are acceptable under certain conditions (see text); aluminum or bare metal is not acceptable for any fenestration application
- Encourage detailing in the design; details must be historically consistent with the district and generally constructed of materials already on the building (see text for listing and examples of details)
- Encourage continued use of the Courthouse Plaza as a public gathering place
- Use historically consistent signage; use only flat against the building; not flashing, revolving or roof-mounted signs are permissible (see text)
- Use incandescent or neon lighting for signage; box, cabinet or fluorescent signs are not acceptable
- Encourage the use of fabric awnings throughout the district
- Integrate awnings into the overall design of the building (see text)
- Do not allow demolition in the district unless certain conditions are met (see text)
- Replace demolished building with building of massing and scale to contributing buildings in the district

Future Projects	Monitor the development of the Downtown	
 The design of the sector of the	Enhancement Program; encourage only his-	
	torically consistent enhancements (see text)	
	· Coordinate with ADOT on any changes/modi-	
	fications to Highway 89 (Montezuma Street)	
	Keep all existing alleys open and usable	Parmenta Statementation of
	Work with the City Public Works Department	
	to ensure that any public improvements are	
station and states of the second	compatible with the historic district	
	Closely monitor variance and zoning change	
	requests	一 新教学 4
Circulation and Parking	• Monitor potential for a parking garage on Gran-	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
males of a little contract	ite Street	
manual terminant is state-office	Ensure historically compatible treatment of any	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
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	ments for the Courthouse Plaza District	
grade designed a	Weigh any traffic and circulation options	and section in the second
	against the potential impact to historic struc-	the second s
	tures	1800-rs. 25
s 'n brooken hen bein, wich	Encourage the use and enjoyment of the	and the second second
- tornar all here all	Courthouse Plaza by foot	
		Author's Youngest Daughter in
Proximity to Other Land Uses	 Monitor development pressures that could 	Front of the Yavapai County
2011 U/A	occur as Prescott continues to grow	Courthouse
Zoning	Modify the zoning code to reduce the incon-	
-040	sistencies that currently exist between the	
a company was a Screetland	code and the historic district. Issues to be	
- The second of a stranda	addressed include building height and set-	
	backs	
	 Consider rezoning BB to BA with additional 	
and time freedor of reason defined a black completing and a black of a state of the state of the state of the state of the state of the	height restrictions as outlined in this Master	
	Plan; allow no building to exceed 48 feet in	
	height	
	 Encourage continued zero setbacks for front 	
	and side yards, with full lot coverage except	
	as limited by current zoning at the rear yard	
	 Disallow incompatible uses in the historic dis- 	
- Contraction of the second	trict (see text and tables)	
District Opportunities	Promote continued use of the Courthouse	
m in the age do not the	Plaza Historic District as a cornerstone com-	
	mercial and business area with historically	
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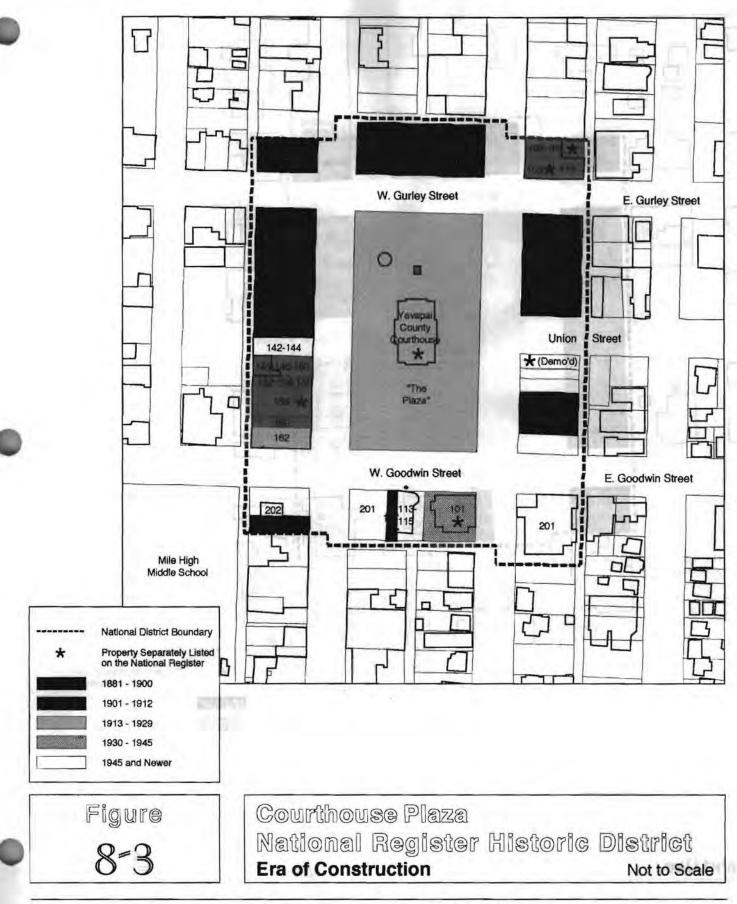
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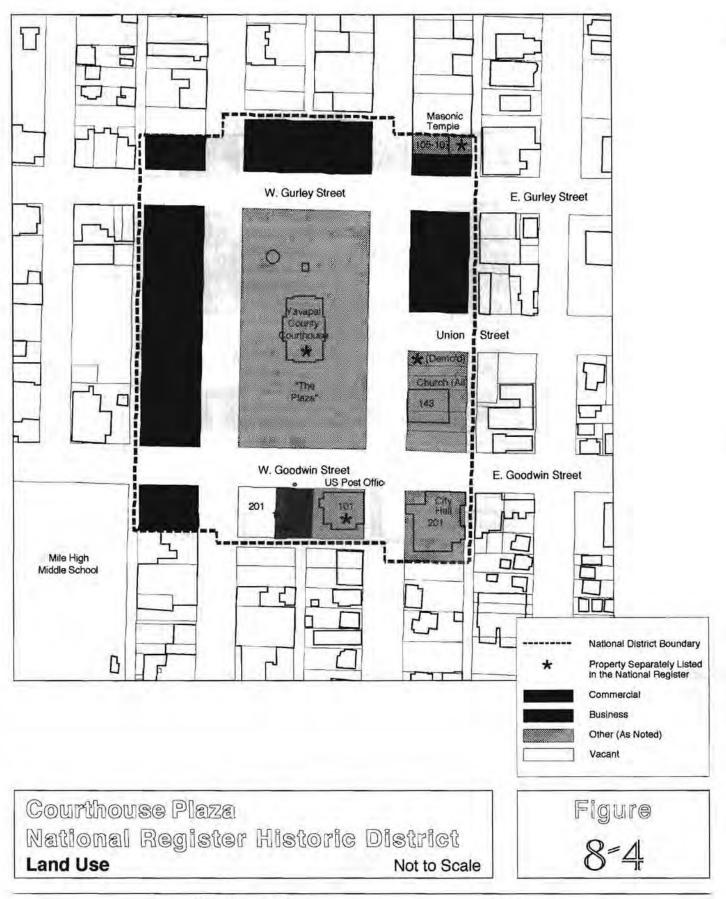




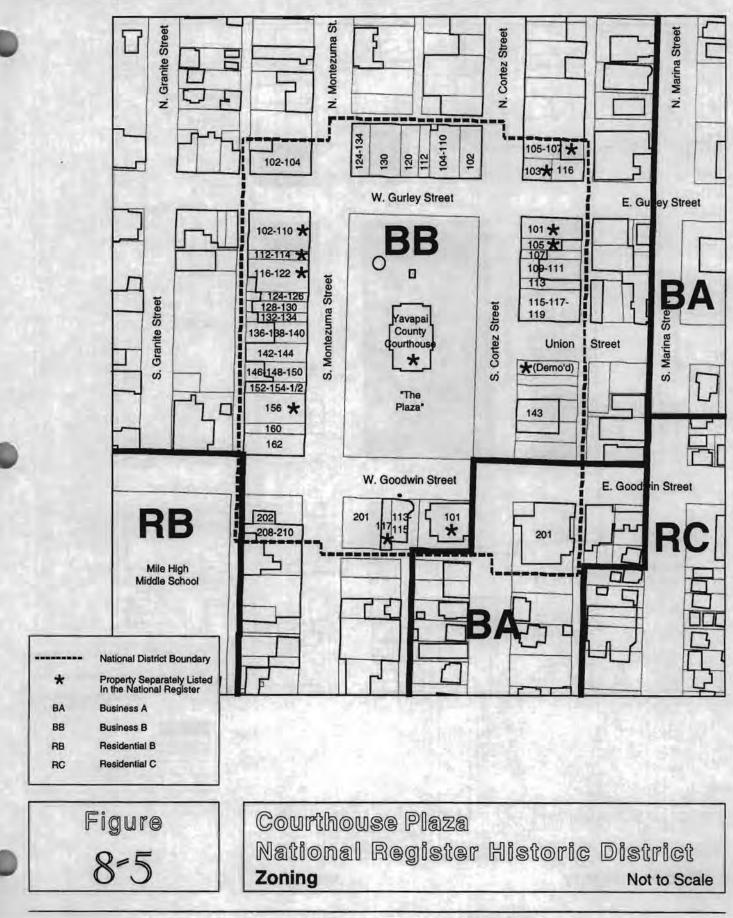
Courthouse Plaza

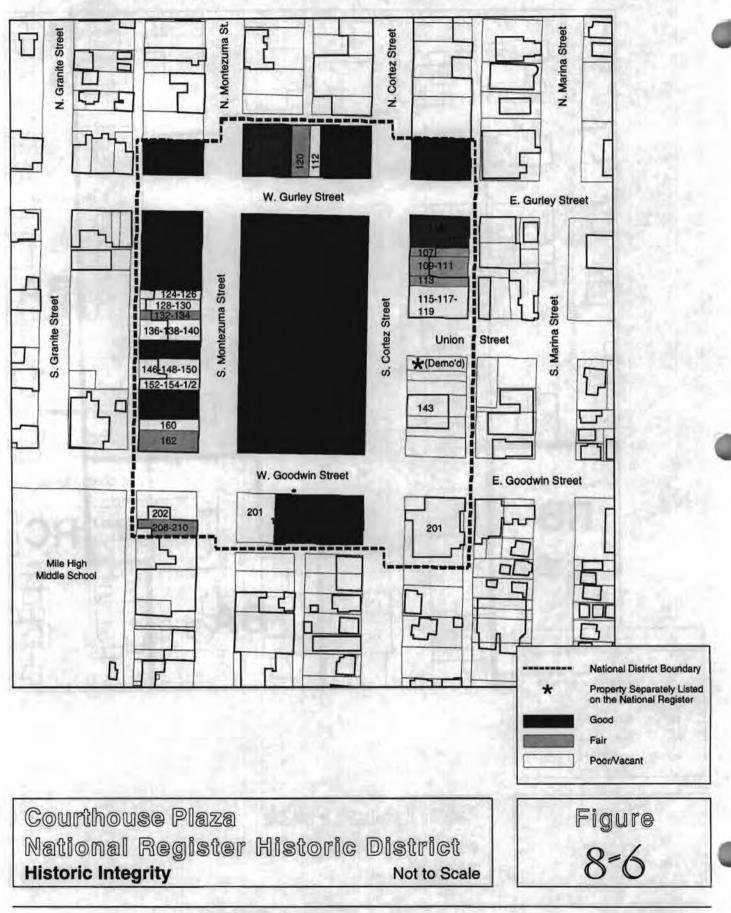
HISTORIC PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN





HISTORIC PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN





Courthouse Plaza