

SAM HILL WAREHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT A PRESCOTT HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

14.1 DISTRICT OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

14.1.1 Overview and History

The Sam Hill Warehouse is a unique cultural and historic resource which reflects the craftsmanship of the time it was built and reveals the importance of commercial activity in the history of early Prescott. The Warehouse is built adjacent to the old Santa Fe Railroad alignment a short distance west of the Depot and west of an abandoned railroad trestle.

The Sam Hill Warehouse was built around 1910 and is typical of commercial/industrial buildings of that time. It is built of brick masonry materials, supported by cut stone piers, broad wood beams and has a maple floor. Among its more significant features are the sliding wood service and freight doors opening onto the building's own railway siding. It also has a basement with storage and work areas.

The Warehouse is a unique structure to both Prescott and northern Arizona. It is one of the few remaining large commercial buildings of its era that has not been modified in any significant way. The building exhibits a high standard of workmanship unmatched by any other commercial building in the area.

The Sam Hill Warehouse was built to house goods and equipment sold at the Sam Hill Hardware Store on Whiskey Row (South Montezuma Street). The building thus provides a link between the downtown commercial district and the railroad connecting Prescott with the rest of Arizona.

The land in the district slopes away from the railway siding to the north and east. It is approximately 24,850 square feet (.57 acres) in size.

14.1.2 Location

The Sam Hill Warehouse is located on a small rise at the north end of Granite Street, between Granite and McCormick Streets. To the immediate southeast is an old Santa Fe railroad trestle, which spans Granite Creek. One must travel over the creek and under the trestle just prior to arriving at the district site. Granite Street terminates a short distance beyond the district, next to an Arizona Public Service (APS) storage yard and Miller Creek. The site can no longer be accessed by McCormick Street.

The boundary of the district, along with current zoning, is shown on Figure 14-1.



Sam Hill Warehouse - Early 1900s and Today

14.1.3 Formation of the Historic District

The district was formed as the result of a City ordinance in June of 1980; the local guidelines and standards for the district were approved by the Prescott City Council in September of 1996.

14.1.4 Prescott Preservation District Responsibilities

The Prescott Preservation Commission has review responsibilities for the Sam Hill Warehouse Historic District. The review process is required for any project requiring a building permit. Applicants are encouraged to meet with the City's Preservation Specialist prior to submission to answer any questions and obtain assistance in designing a historically compatible project.



Door Detail - North Elevation

14.2 DISTRICT QUALITIES AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

14.2.1 Architectural Overview

The Sam Hill Warehouse is a single-story brick structure with a partial basement. Constructed over a random ashlar granite foundation (exposed on the north elevation), the building is rectangular in plan with a pitched roof and stepped parapets at the gables. The warehouse is oriented with its longitudinal axis in an east-west direction on a moderately sloping (southwest to northeast) site. The building is 50 feet by 120 feet in size, which, with the basement, equate to 12,000 square feet of floor space.

The original brick is exposed on the north and east elevations; the south and west elevations have been covered with heavily textured stucco for many years. A ramp on the west end of the building still exists but is in poor condition. This ramp provides the primary current access to the building. The railroad grade is flat and covered with the same decomposed granite that exists elsewhere on the property. Much of the railroad siding no longer exists, except for a small portion at the east door of the south elevation.

Three freight entrances provide access to the warehouse, one centrally located on the west gable wall, and two on the south facade (the largest of these has been in-filled with windows). Each feature sliding door panels hung to the inside face of the wall. Two one-over-one sash windows occur at the southwest corner of the building, one each at the south and west walls. A brick chimney built to the outside of the south end of the west wall was added after 1924. Access to the basement is from the north side of the building through three symmetrically located segmental arched openings. All contain a pair of hinged wood doors.

The existing doors have been in-filled with metal storefront windows and doors with a bronze finish. The exterior wood encasements, however, have been retained. The west entry has a second inset set of doors, providing a small vestibule before entering the main space.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN

The roof structural system consists of 2 by 6 rafters over 4 by 6 purlins resting on modified Howe trusses. The trusses span the width of the building at 12 foot centers, and bear on double 2 by 6 plates on the north and south walls. The rafters extend over those walls forming an open eave and are finished with a 1x fascia.



East Elevation Sign - Before Restoration and After

Corrugated steel roofing over 1 by 6 spaced sheathing covers the roof framing and appears to be original. Six skylight openings exist uniformly on the roof, three on each slope. The original skylight framing and glazing has been removed and the openings are covered with translucent corrugated fiberglass sheets. The north and south edges of the roof have gutters.

The interior of the warehouse is a single volume separated only by a nonbearing brick wall located approximately at the center of the space. The roof, approximately 22 feet high at the ridge, is supported by a heavy timber post and truss structural system. The floor is finished in hardwood (maple) tongue and groove strips over a 2 inch wood subfloor.

The basement is partially finished with concrete floors, unplastered brick walls and open floor joists above. A series of granite piers support the posts and warehouse floor superstructure.

Various utilities are located behind a wood fence on the north side of the building and under the remaining loading dock on the south side. Large air handlers have been suspended from the wall on the east end of the south elevation. Better efforts should be made in the future to screen or enclose these utility systems.

Probably the most recognized feature of the building is the sign on the east elevation. The sign was recently restored and is in excellent condition. Painted directly on the exposed brick, the sign advertises the original use of the buildings with the words:

SAM.L. HILL
HARDWARE CO.
MINING SUPPLIES
MACHINERY - VEHICLES

Almost all original architectural features and details remain intact, although with varying degrees of physical and structural integrity. These features contribute to the overall architectural significance of the Warehouse, and should be preserved wherever possible. Rehabilitation treatments should be designed with the greatest sensitivity to these elements.

The Sam Hill Warehouse has been used for a variety of purposes since the railroad stopped operations in the 1970s. It is currently used by the Skyview School. Bathrooms and other modern conveniences have been added, but most of the original structure remains visible and intact, including the roof, structural supports, interior brick walls, and much of the original maple floor.

14.2.2 Landscape/Streetscape

Numerous bushes and trees of several varieties ring the perimeter of the district on the north, east and west edges. Large deciduous trees also are located next to the building on the north, south and west sides. Between the perimeter trees and the building is fine grained decomposed granite for vehicular access and parking.

The site is fenced on the north, east and west sides by a six foot chain link fence, part of which is topped by barbed wire where the district abuts the APS property.

14.2.3 Integrity

The Sam Hill Warehouse Historic District is in good condition, and what changes have been made are either compatible or can be reversed. The building is an outstanding example of early commercial architecture associated with one of the important proprietors and businesses of early Prescott.



Sam Hill Warehouse from Granite Street

14.3 DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

14.3.1 Opportunities Within the District

The Sam Hill Warehouse represents an era of construction, craftsmanship, commerce and context important to understanding the history of the area. The quality of the building, the style in which it was built, its link to the downtown and one of the most important early businesses in the area, and its association with the railroad all contribute to the importance of the district.

The relatively separated location of the building provides unique opportunities and challenges to the district. It is not subject to the development pressures and traffic problems of many districts in Prescott, but the location also discourages the general knowledge and appreciation of the resource. For this reason, such public uses as a school should generally be encouraged, while private uses may be discouraged. This must be determined on a case-by-case basis.

In terms of zoning, the district resides in the Flood Plain Conservation District (FPCD). According to the Zoning Code (47th Edition, December 1995) the purpose of this district is to:

“...preserve and protect areas of unique natural and scenic beauty, as well as those areas which also affect the public interest and well being from the standpoint of steep hills, ravines, washes, wooded areas, floodplains which have a direct bearing upon storm water runoff, flooding, erosion soil, natural watersheds, etc.”

New uses within an FPCD are severely restricted, and are allowed only for agricultural, picnic grounds, outdoor recreational uses and municipal uses. However, given the height of the district above Granite Creek, and the age and historic status of the building, this is not anticipated to impact the district beyond the types of uses to which the Warehouse might be put.

Business zoned parcels are immediately south of the district (across the old railroad right-of-way), but, given the context and location, this is not likely to present significant pressures on the Sam Hill Warehouse.

14.3.2 Specific District Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

The following represents a brief summary of recommendations for the Sam Hill Warehouse Historic District.

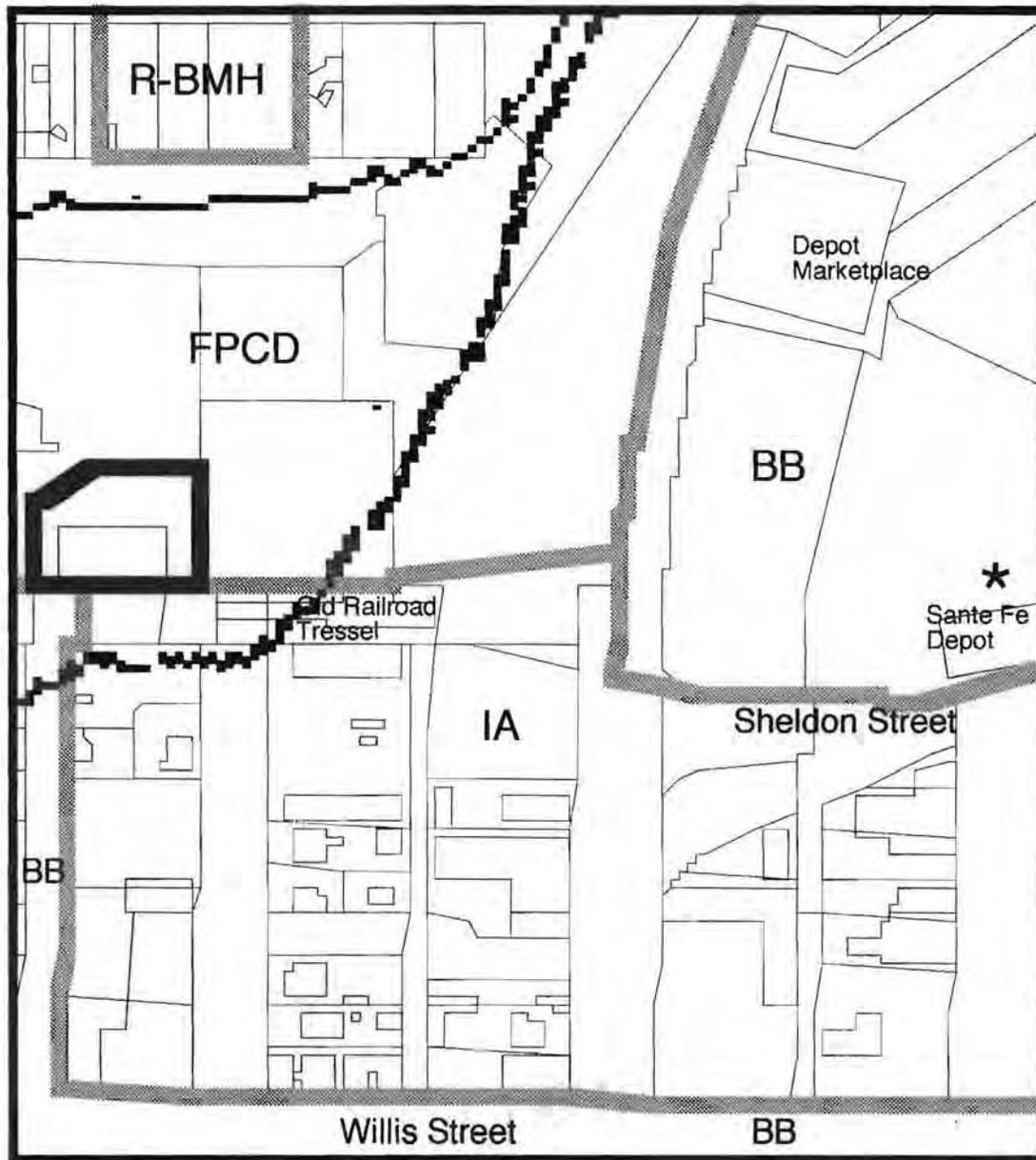
Table 14-1

Summary of Recommendations - Sam Hill Warehouse Historic District

<i>Item</i>	<i>Observation/Recommendation</i>
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retain historic elevations of the Sam Hill Warehouse; do not allow additions or significant alterations to the exterior• Retain existing primary access at the north-east corner of the property• Preserve existing historic exterior materials (especially the brick); do not allow metal, wood or vinyl siding, or additional stucco• Do not allow new openings in the building• Maintain primary access to the building at the west end• Repair/replace west exterior stairs and ramp using historically compatible materials• Continue to maintain the original interior sliding wood doors at the three freight entrances• Preserve wood doors at north elevation• Allow metal storefront application at the freight openings, but continue to preserve the exterior wood encasements• Encourage continued exposure of structural materials on the interior• Provide better screening of utilities; encourage placement of air handlers on grade; gather and screen random trash hoppers• Preserve the historic painted sign on the east elevation; any new signs must not dominate nor detract from this sign; do not allow landscape to obscure this sign

- Preserve remaining architectural and structural features to the greatest degree possible
- Streetscape/Landscape**
- Preserve existing landscape at property edge as a buffer, but better maintenance is required
 - Preserve trees at the building edge; additional landscaping here may be desirable if compatible with the building
 - Continue to use decomposed granite as primary site material - do not pave
 - Encourage north end of property as primary parking location for safety and circulation reasons
- District Opportunities**
- Promote continued use of the Sam Hill Warehouse Historic District for public or semi-public uses
 - Retain FPCD zoning, while monitoring proposed new uses

HISTORIC PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN



	Local District Boundary
	National Register Property
RBMH	Residential B - Mobile Home
BB	Business B
IA	Industrial A
FPCD	Flood Plain Conserv. District

Figure
 || 4' ||

Sam Hill Warehouse
 Prescott Historic Preservation District
District Boundary & Zoning
 Not to Scale