

UNION STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT A PRESCOTT HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

15.1 DISTRICT OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

15.1.1 Overview and History



Union Street Historic District, Yesterday and Today

The Union Street Historic District is located on the south side of Union Street between Marina and Alarcon Streets. The four houses which make up the district were all built in the 1890s and are exemplary of upper class housing in Prescott during that period. They also reflect three architectural styles which dominated that period: Queen Anne, Victorian and Territorial Frame. All four houses share common characteristics which give the District a sense of cohesiveness of design and materials. Each structure is of wood frame construction and stands two to two and one-half stories high. Three of the four houses have asymmetrical massing on a basically rectangular floor plan and all have horizontal siding as the primary exterior surface. Each roof is either hipped and/or gabled and two of the houses have turrets. These characteristics are typical of architectural styles of the 1890s.

The Union Street District is unique to Prescott because it is one of the few remaining blocks in the City where historic houses outnumber newer structures. It is the only block where all of the structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Although the sense of cohesiveness of this block extends somewhat to the 300 block of Union Street (east of Alarcon Street), several intrusions in the form of remodeled homes, additions to homes without consideration of older design components, and a general lack of upkeep to yards and homes hinder this block from being included in this district.

A further indication of the uniqueness of this district is its location. Known as the "Nob Hill" of Prescott, this block sits on a very steep slope of land overlooking the downtown area. Each home has vistas of Granite Mountain, Thumb Butte and the National Forest. Most nearby homes are smaller in size and massing and are not nearly as impressive as the four on this block.

Because each home was owned by a wealthy merchant in early Prescott, the best workmanship and most creative design skills were used. Some residences mixed so many different styles (Queen Anne, Shingle Style, Victorian, Gothic, Eastlake, etc.) that they are best classified as "Victorian Melange." A paragraph from The Territorial Architecture of Prescott, Arizona best describes typical features of these homes:

"Residences of this period were highly sculpted and ornate. Massing was typically asymmetrical, although floor plans included both irregular and rectangular shapes. In terms of proportions the middle territorial residences were clearly vertical but they lacked the thrust of earlier designs. Even the towers seldom extended upward as clearly independent elements. Materials were used in combination on the exterior with lower surfaces done in clapboard or shingles. Roofs were most commonly gabled with a variety of ridge heights. Hip roofs and gambrel roofs were to be found occasionally. Details were usually small and classical in derivation; they were frequently supplemented with jigsawed and turned ornament in the carpenter built tradition. Bay windows, turrets, Palladian windows, dormers, "L"-shaped verandas, and bracketed columns were major design elements."

The success and progress of early Prescott was largely due to the investment of time, energy and money by local ranchers and merchants. During the 1890s mining increased, mills and smelters were built and the local railroad connected with the Southern Pacific line. Reflective of this wealth, many new buildings, both residential and commercial, were built during this time.

Among the most impressive residences in the town were those located on "Nob Hill," the southern side of the 200 block of Union Street. This block had originally been reserved for the Territorial Capital, but was sold and subdivided when plans were begun for the capital in Phoenix in 1893 (the Capital have moved from Prescott to Phoenix in 1889). The four homes now standing were named for their residents and are more fully described below:

Jake Marks Residence - 203 Union Street

Jake Marks was a wealthy cattle rancher, wholesale liquor dealer and mine owner. His home, designed by architect W.R. Norton of Phoenix and constructed in 1894, is one of the four prominent residences built on "Nob Hill" during the 1890s.

C.A. Peter Residence - 211 Union Street

C.A. Peter was cashier at the Bank of Arizona at the time he built his home on Union Street in 1898. The house is designed in the later phase of the Queen Anne style.

Henry Goldwater Residence - 217 Union Street

Henry Goldwater was one of the Goldwater brothers who were prominent merchants in the territorial period. Goldwater's house (built in 1894) was designed by W.R. Norton and built by S.E. Patton, a local Prescott contrac-



Jake Marks Residence, 203 Union Street (1894)



Marks Residence, Front Porch Detail

tor (in 1905 Norton was to win the competition for the design of the second Gila County Courthouse). Stylistically the building is of interest for its emphasis on the enveloping quality of the external surfaces and disregard for major features such as turrets and gables.



C.A. Peter Residence, 211 Union Street (1898)

Lawler/Hetherington Double House - 223 & 225 Union Street

The Lawler/Hetherington Double House is noteworthy as a building type for its association with John ("Jack") Lawler. Lawler was a miner, capitalist, and real estate developer who transformed the Union Block into "Nob Hill." In 1893 he sold lots to Henry Goldwater, Jake Marks and C.A. Peter for use as residential sites. He retained the northeast corner of the block for himself, and on that property he built a 12-room double house for \$6,000 in 1894. Upon its completion the building was occupied by the families of M.A. Lawler (John's brother) and Robert Hetherington. Although other double houses were built in Prescott, none was situated in such a prestigious location. The building is also interesting for its plain character in a period of rich architectural form.

15.1.2 Location

As mentioned, the district occupies the entire 200 block of the south side of Union Street. It is one block from the Courthouse Plaza and the many business, entertainment and government functions located there. The house is also located one block south of Gurley Street, one of the busiest commercial corridors in Prescott. The district is located near numerous other historic buildings and districts in the area, reflecting its prime location and context within early Prescott.

The boundary of the district, along with current zoning, is shown on Figure 15-1.

15.1.3 Formation of the Historic District

The district was formed as the result of the Prescott Multiple Resource Area (MRA) survey and nomination of 1978. The ordinance establishing the local district was completed in November of 1980, and the local guidelines and standards for the district were approved by the Prescott City Council in September of 1996.

15.1.4 Prescott Preservation District Responsibilities

The Prescott Preservation Commission has review responsibilities for the Union Street 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.

15.2 DISTRICT QUALITIES AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

15.2.1 Architectural Overview

Jake Marks Residence - 203 Union Street

The Marks Residence is a two-story wood frame building with an irregular floor plan. Horizontal sheathing is used on the exterior vertical surfaces, with painted decorative shingles used in the upper gables. The roof form is principally a truncated hip with an off-center gable, and is covered by wood shingles. A round turret is located on the northwest corner of the house. It is framed by a one-story veranda which curves around the front to the side. The Marks residence was built in 1894 and is currently used as a bed-and-breakfast hotel. Its architectural style is Queen Anne interpretation. Several additions have been made to the east and south elevations which do not contribute to historic character of the house.

Windows have a vertical orientation and occur in single, paired or triple groupings. Pane design is "one-over-one" on both floors, with ten panels at the top of the upper pane on the second floor windows (this reduces to three on the turret windows). The house has three brick chimneys and two dormer windows on the north truncated hip. Additional details include dentil blocks on both floors and square porch posts turned in the middle half.

Access to the property is at the southwest corner from Marina Street. The landscape is in fair condition, but the parkways are poorly maintained. A white picket fence on top of an 18-inch concrete wall borders the property on the north and west sides.

C.A. Peter Residence - 211 Union Street

The Peter Residence is a two and one-half story wood frame structure of asymmetrical massing on a rectangular floor plan set on an exposed granite foundation. The roof is hipped with an off-center gable. Horizontal siding is used on the vertical exterior surfaces. Exterior details include fan light windows in the gables, decorative brick work on the chimneys, vertically patterned mullions in the windows and a decorative porch on both floors of the front elevation. The Peter residence was built in 1898 and is currently used as a single-family residence and part-time studio and gallery. Its architectural style is Queen Anne interpretation.

The porches and balconies contain numerous historical references, including starburst patterns in the upper rails and a subtle "U"-shaped arch in the first floor rails derived from the insertion of cut dowels between the vertical members. The second floor porch is supported by simple square columns with carved brackets; the first floor porch is supported by narrow Doric columns. The building has two large brick chimneys that are among the most ornate in Prescott. The shingled roof has one large dormer in the front hip and is topped by a scalloped ridge.



Henry Goldwater Residence, 217 Union Street (1894)

Vehicular access is along a gravel driveway at the western edge of the property. The front is enclosed by a 2 foot high white concrete wall that also serves as a partial retaining wall. The landscaping is mature and in excellent condition. The parkway is covered with grass and is also in good condition.

In May, 1997 the Prescott Preservation Commission approved a addition to the rear of the house that will include a garage and artist's studio.

Henry Goldwater Residence - 217 Union Street

The Henry Goldwater Residence is a two and one-half story wood frame structure. The massing is irregular off of a basically rectangular plan. Horizontal siding and shingles are used on external surfaces. The porch on the northeast corner has been significantly altered. A conical roof form and curved wall on the northwest corner of the house suggests the presence of a turret without actually generating one. The Goldwater residence was built in 1894 and is currently being used as apartments. Its architectural style is Victorian melange.

Windows are a variation on a "one-over-one" theme, including upper panes with 12 panels or vertical diamond patterns. Stained glass transoms are located above the front first floor openings. Windows are single or paired. Shingles decorate the upper ends of gables, and corbels support a second floor extension on the north elevation. The chimney is brick but has been painted and topped by a metal smoke funnel. The shingled roof is crowned by a simple wood ridge turned up at the ends. Dentil blocks wrap around the cornice of both floors. The entry porch is supported by simple square posts and rails. Another porch exists on the second floor at the south elevation.

The entry is along the western boundary leading to a large detached garage and studio at the back of the lot. A recent addition, this structure is an excellent complement to the historic house. A wrought iron fence on a granite base forms the front property line. The landscaping is mature and in good condition. The parkway is grassed and is also in good condition.

Lawler/Hetherington Double House - 223 & 225 Union Street

The Double House is a two story wood frame structure with symmetrical massing. A common wall divides the house along the north-south axis. Entry to the respective dwelling units is from either the east or west side. The entry is marked by a porch under a second story extension. The porch has been enclosed on the east unit. The roof is of low profile, with the central portion being hipped and secondary portions being either hipped or gabled. Ornamental detailing is not present. Clapboard is used as the primary exterior material. The Lawler/Hetherington House was built in 1894 and is currently used for professional offices. Its architectural style is Territorial Frame.



Lawler/Hetherington Double House, 223 & 225 Union Street (1894)

The windows have a strong vertical orientation and are located singly. The pane design is uniformly "one-over-one." The second floor porch over the west entry has been enclosed but can be recovered. Two simple chimneys extend above the asbestos tile roof.

A wire fence borders the property on the north and east edge. Access is at the southeast corner from Alarcon Street. The landscape is in poor condition on the property and in the parkways at Union and Alarcon Streets.

15.2.2 Landscape/Streetscape

The landscape of the individual houses has been documented. The properties reside on the upper side of Union Street, which has a separated grade from Marina Street to Pleasant Street. Parallel parking is along the front of the properties.

15.2.3 Integrity

The Union Street Historic District is in generally good condition, and many of the changes that have been made are either compatible or can be reversed. A clear pride of ownership is evident along the street, consistent with the obvious care that went into their construction. The buildings, individually and collectively, are intact and excellent examples of the various styles that were popular in late 19th century Prescott, and reflect the lifestyles of several of Prescott's early prominent citizens.

15.3 DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

15.3.1 Opportunities Within the District

The homes along Union Street have been recognized as some of Prescott's finest homes since they were built over 100 years ago. The district occupies a prominent and dominating hilltop east of the Courthouse Plaza and was in the center of early Prescott life. It is still close to many attractions of central Prescott and is easily accessible.

Traffic and development trends, however, may result in pressure to the Union Street Historic District that can threaten the integrity of the area. The block bordered by Union, Alarcon, Goodwin and Marina Streets is entirely residential in architecture and residential uses also occur to the east. Other adjacent development includes churches to the west and northwest and the County Justice Complex (including the jail) to the north across Union Street. All of these serve as buffers to the district, but pressures could increase due to the proximity of the buildings to the downtown and Gurley Street. These pressures have already been felt in the district: the Marks Residence is a bed-and-breakfast hotel; the Peters Residence is a home but also contains a studio; the Goldwater Residence is used for apartments; and the Lawler/Hetherington Double House is used for professional offices.



The Marks Residence

Elements Worthy of Preservation Threats to District Integrity



The Peters Residence

Zoning, however, presents the most serious threat to the district. Business "A" (BA) zoning is a basic business classification for "neighborhood commercial" and apartments and has height allowances of up to 50 feet. Other concerns with this classification are lot coverage, setbacks and clearly incompatible uses.

The district is bordered by additional BA to the north up to Gurley Street, Residential "C" (RC) to the east and south, and Business "B" (BB) to the west at the Courthouse Plaza. The following description is a brief overview of the district zoning; for a full description see the City of Prescott Zoning Code.

**Table 15-1
District Zoning Classifications**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Business A</i>	<i>Residence C</i>
Building Height Limitation	50 Feet, Max.	3 Stories, 40 Feet Max.
Building Site Area	Business: None Residential: Same as RC	50 Feet Wide, Min. Apartments 50 Percent
Yards, Front	Business: None Residential: Same as RC	15 Feet, Min.
Yards, Side	Business: None Residential: Same as RC	10 Percent of Yard Width*
Yards, Rear	Business: 10 Feet Residential: Same as RC	15 Percent of Lot Depth*
Accessory Buildings	None*.	20 Percent of Lot, Max.
Screening	6 Foot Wall Next to More Restrict. Zoning	6 Foot Wall Next to More Restrict. Zoning

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

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

The 50 feet allowance is too large for the BA zone. None of the homes approach 40 feet in height despite their Victorian-era origins. A limit of three stories and 40 feet in height should be implemented immediately to preserve the character of the district.

The BA zone also presents a problem given the context of the neighborhood. If these resources are lost, they could be replaced under the current zoning by business or commercial uses that would have no limit on lot coverage. Given the generous setbacks and spacious yards of the homes on

Union Street, this would be completely incompatible with the neighborhood. Consideration should be given to rezoning the district to RC, which borders it on two sides. The zero setback requirement in the BA zone is incompatible. This is another reason why consideration should be given to rezoning this area.

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

Table 15-2
Incompatible Zoning Uses Permitted

<i>Zoning</i>	<i>Incompatible Uses</i>
Business A	<p>Apartments, bungalow courts and dwelling groups, parking lots, adult day care centers, agricultural produce markets, appliance sales and service, ambulance service, auctions, auditoriums, bars, battery charging and repair, cemeteries, public utility buildings, cleaning and dyeing shops, clothing manufacturers, conservatories/green houses, copy shops, department stores, drug stores, dry wall supply, electronic equipment sales and supply, furniture (new/used), grocery stores, hardware stores, hotels (other than bed-and-breakfasts), laundries, manufacturing, mini-storage, movers, plumbing shops, poultry shops, recreational vehicle storage yards, recreational vehicle parks, retail stores, second hand stores, service stations, movie studios, taxi cab service, theaters, tile shops, tire shops, trade schools, upholstery shops, video sales/rental outlets.</p> <p>Miscellaneous Uses: Planned area developments, baseball batting cages.</p> <p>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.</p>

Pressures on historic neighborhoods are often the result of incompatible zoning. These pressures include increased parking demands, denser development, increased traffic, and land uses inconsistent with the historic pattern. Other problems include generous multi-family allowances that en-



The Goldwater Residence

courage 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 residential neighborhood, such as car washes and adult-oriented businesses.

Many of the allowed uses in the residential neighborhoods permit automobile-oriented commercial uses, such as drive-through facilities with large parking lots, that conflict with the traditional street front and pedestrian orientation of the historic buildings. It should be stated that business and commercial reuse of historic priorities, such as those along Union Street, is often a valid and practical modern application of these buildings. However, these uses must be carefully reviewed to ensure that the reuse does not destroy the character of the area through indirect means (such as traffic and the paving of front yards and parkways). 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. Allowing BA uses in this neighborhood would cause serious permanent harm to the character of the entire district.

15.3.2 Opportunities Within the District

The Union Street Historic District has remained an upper-class neighborhood since the 1890s. Located near the heart of Prescott, the stately homes occupy a prominent hilltop visible from most parts of town. The district has retained a remarkable amount of integrity and looks essentially the same as it did when Arizona was still a Territory.

The ideal continued use for the district would be similar to its present and historic condition. Changes to the zoning code or rezoning of the district is necessary to ensure this. As Prescott continues to grow, pressures will increase for incompatible development in historic areas.

The use of residential properties for conversion to office space or other compatible uses can occur in this district, using a great deal of care. Any such use must not destroy or disrupt the essential character of the historic neighborhood. This would include not only the building, but also such things as parking, pavement, landscaping, signage and streetscape.

15.3.3 Specific District Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

The following represents a brief summary of recommendations for the Union Street Historic District.

Table 15-3
Summary of Recommendations - Union Street Historic District

<i>Item</i>	<i>Observation/Recommendation</i>
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain historic scale, massing, materials, siting and character of the homes in the Union Street Historic District, respective of their original individual style • Retain historic setbacks at all locations • Discourage garages as part of main structure (place detached at side or rear of property) • Preserve historic wood siding; do not allow stucco or metal or vinyl siding • Maintain historic treatments of columns, rails, chimneys, corbels, fascias and other historic details (see text for descriptions) • Encourage scale consistent with existing structures and styles • Maintain historic orientation of front door/walk • Maintain residential street emphasis in design • Encourage double-hung windows with vertical orientation, with pane design to match existing (see text) • Use wide trim around fenestrations to match existing • Encourage varied and historically consistent color palettes • Encourage asphalt "architectural style" replacement shingles in the roof if wood shingles are not permitted; discourage asbestos shingles • Encourage wood for replacement doors and windows • Do not allow automobile parking in the parkways • Encourage stem walls with raised porches; face the stem wall with historically appropriate material • Encourage continued use of existing driveways • Discourage skylights and utilities on roofs visible from the public right-of-way • Carefully evaluate additions for conformity and compatibility with the historic main house; additions to existing buildings should be to the rear of the property to maintain the front facade
Streetscape/Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve existing trees and mature landscaping on the properties; provide increased maintenance where required

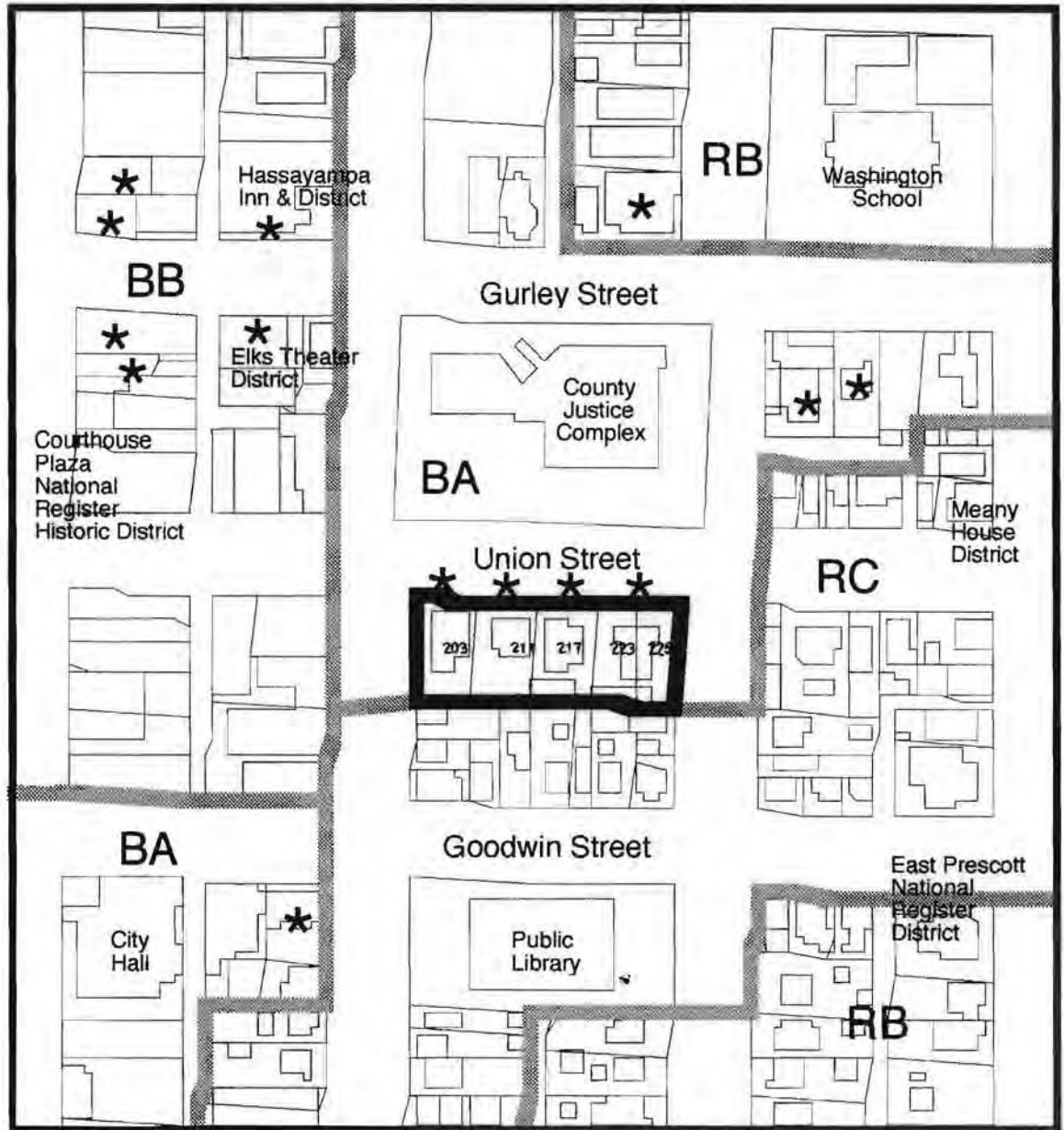
- Encourage grass in parkways; discourage pavers or other impermeable treatments
- Require parkway improvements and maintenance as part of any new development agreement, especially those that change the use of residential structures
- Encourage gravel versus pavement for driveways
- Encourage picket wood or wrought iron fences at the front property line; discourage wire or chain link; keep front fence at or below three feet in height
- Use landscape to enhance (not cover) historic resources

District Opportunities

- Promote continued use of the Union Street Historic District for residential-scaled buildings used for dwellings or other compatible uses
- Work with the City Public Works Department to ensure that any public improvements (such as sidewalks) are compatible with the historic district
- Monitor development pressures that could occur from the downtown or Gurley Street; monitor variance and zoning change requests
- Consider rezoning BA to RC to protect one of the oldest and best maintained neighborhoods in Prescott
- Discourage uses that require a significant increase in automobile traffic and parking
- Disallow incompatible uses in the historic district (see text and tables)
- Encourage compatible commercial and business office conversions

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION MASTER PLAN



	Local District Boundary
	National Register Property
RB	Residential B
RC	Residential C
BA/BB	Business A/B

Figure
15-1

Union Street
Prescott Historic Preservation District
District Boundary & Zoning
Not to Scale