

SANTA FE DEPOT HISTORIC DISTRICT A PRESCOTT HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

17.1 DISTRICT OVERVIEW AND HISTORY

17.1.1 Overview and History

The Santa Fe Depot in Prescott is significant for its historical association with the Santa Fe, Prescott and Phoenix Railroad and its builder, Frank M. Murphy; and for its architectural value as the largest and best preserved Prescott building designed in the Mission Revival style.



Santa Fe Depot, 1910 and Today

Prescott was first connected to the Atlantic and Pacific (now the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe) Railroad on December 31, 1886. This line, known as the Prescott and Arizona Central Railroad, was constructed by Thomas S. Bullock with the support of Territorial Governor Frederick A. Tritle and a county bond subsidy of \$292,000. This was possible because Prescott was then the Territorial Capital. Six months later, on July 4, 1887 the Maricopa and Phoenix Railroad was completed, making Phoenix also accessible by rail. Although the desirability of connecting Prescott and Phoenix was known it had to wait for the development effort of Frank Murphy.

In 1891 Murphy inherited a substantial interest in the Congress Mine northwest of Wickenburg from Joseph "Diamond Joe" Reynolds. Mr. Reynolds' intention to connect this mine with the railroad system was passed to Frank Murphy and his brother Nathan Oaks Murphy (two term Territorial Governor). Their ability to construct the Santa Fe, Prescott and Phoenix Railroad was fostered by three factors: first, Bullock's first line fell into debt and disrepair following the moving of the Capital to Phoenix; second, the Sixteenth Territorial Legislature passed a twenty-year tax exemption law for new railroads; and third, despite the nation wide "Panic of 1893," Frank Murphy was successful in raising the eastern capital necessary to fund the north-south railroad originally planned by Reynolds.

In 1892 construction was begun south from Ash Fork and entered Prescott on April 23, 1893. Passing southwest through Congress and Wickenburg, the new first class line reached Phoenix on February 28, 1895.

The headquarters for the line was located in Prescott and by 1906 Murphy felt that extensive improvements were necessary at the rail yard and depot. On March 6 he appeared before the City Council and urged them to help him in the purchase of additional land and in the disposal of storm water from the depot area. During the summer the storm drain was constructed but the necessary land was not secured until November.

In March, 1907 the plans for the new depot were ready, undoubtedly prepared by the architects of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad in their popular Mission Revival style. This and other Californian and South-western railroads popularized this style following its promotion at the 1893 Colombian Exposition in Chicago. The Depot is the largest and best example of this style in Prescott. The fireproof reinforced concrete depot was completed in September of 1907 and it has occupied its prominent position at the foot of Cortez Street ever since.

Although not as old as the railroad itself, the Santa Fe Depot symbolizes the impact of this transportation mode on Prescott and adds identity and character to the community through its regional Mission Revival design.

17.1.2 Location

The Santa Fe Depot is located at the far north end of Cortez Street. Since the original Townsite was laid out on a grid pattern, the view down most streets in historic photographs is simply of street and sky, flanked by historic structures of various styles. Thus, the location of the Depot was a definite terminus not only in terms of the view along Cortez Street, but it also defined the northern edge of town for many decades. Although originally bordered to the immediate north by the railroad tracks and the rail yard, today this area is occupied by the Depot Marketplace, a commercial area selling goods and services necessary for the modern era.

The boundary of the district, along with current zoning, is shown on Figure 17-1.

17.1.3 Formation of the Historic District

The district was formed as the result of a development agreement between the City of Prescott and the builders of the Depot Marketplace. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in February of 1988, and the local ordinance establishing the district was passed in March of the same year.

17.1.4 Prescott Preservation District Responsibilities

The Prescott Preservation Commission has review responsibilities for the Santa Fe Depot 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.



Santa Fe Depot Before Renovation - South Elevation



Santa Fe Depot Before Renovation - North Elevation; Railroad Tracks in Foreground

17.2 DISTRICT QUALITIES AND DESIGN ELEMENTS

17.2.1 Architectural Overview



*Santa Fe Depot After Renovation
- View to Northwest*

The Santa Fe Depot is a symmetrical two story building constructed of plastered reinforced concrete and measuring 100 feet (east to west) by 35 feet (north to south). An interesting example of the Mission Revival style, the building features a medium sloped gabled roof with mission tile and stepped curvilinear gable parapets with concrete caps. A 12 foot wide covered veranda with a concrete walk extends completely around the building. Arched portals with cast accents are present at each of the four corners. The cross gable projects north five feet and south 12 feet and is topped by the stepped curvilinear parapets. These projections emphasize the two main entries (track side and street side). A one story wing measuring 20 feet by 34 feet extends to the east. This was once terminated by a 40 foot high smoke stack which has been demolished.

The south facade, facing onto Sheldon Street, features a central double door entry with side lights and transom. Each door has one light and two panels with a transom above. The second story projects over the veranda supported by corner piers and adjacent simplified Doric columns on concrete bases. The second floor has five "one over one" double hung windows grouped in a recessed panel with a concrete sill. A semicircular niche with hood molding is centered in the gable. Between the entry massing and the corner arched portals the veranda features articulated post and beam construction with Doric columns on wing walls. An original decorative iron railing defines the second story deck. The main body of the building features equally spaced "one over one," wood frame double hung windows with concrete sills. The open eave is detailed with projecting rafters and a hidden gutter.

The north facade faces the tracks and has the same features and detailing as the south facade. However, the cross gable projection extends only five feet out from the building and the veranda entry is detailed as a one story parapet with a concrete cap. Also, the name "PRESCOTT," in upper case letters, is centered above the entry.

The east and west gables have small central semicircular niches with concrete sills and hood moldings. Each incorporates a plain chimney. Windows, railings, verandas and corner portals are similar to the remainder of the building.

The exterior concrete is textured with plaster in a heavy stippled finish. The original freight doors are still visible on the east wing of the building. Freight doors also remain on the north and east sides of the main building, but are in an open position on the inside of the wall to allow entry doors for new tenants. Also evident are round corner protectors at the base of each freight entry, along with iron jamb guards set into the plaster.

Internally, the ground floor was originally laid out with a central men's waiting room. To the west was the ladies' waiting room and the ticket office with a vault and public restrooms. Opening from the men's waiting room to the east was the baggage department. The one story wing to the east was originally used as an office for Wells Fargo and a boiler room (the building has no basement). The first floor ceiling height is twelve feet while the second floor measures ten feet six inches.

Two stairways on the east and west side of the central space lead to the second floor which served as offices for the railroad. On the northwest corner was the draughting room with a vault (above the ticket office vault located on the ground floor). In the southwest corner was the office of the chief engineer and superintendent W.A. Drake, who supervised the construction of the building for the company. A hallway connected these offices with the attorney's office and led into the central portion of the building used for general office work. The east portion was occupied by the conductors and contained offices for the telegrapher, the dispatcher and the train master.

The building provides approximately 8,820 square feet of useable interior space.

17.2.2 Landscape/Streetscape

The original Depot contained little or no landscape areas. Since its renovation in 1990, a landscape buffer has been added along Sheldon Street. Additional landscaping is planned for neighboring buildings under construction to the immediate north. Parking areas are available to the east and west of the Depot.

The setting of the Depot is significant not only from Cortez Street to the south, but also from the east as one approaches from Sheldon Street, and from the west from various points along Montezuma Street. The building is also prominently located above the Depot Marketplace to the north. Thus, with four visible elevations, any use of the Depot must exercise great care in maintaining historic integrity.

17.2.3 Integrity

The Santa Fe Depot Historic District is in good condition as the result of its sturdy construction and sensitive renovation in 1990. The building has been fully leased to several businesses and has one long-term anchor tenant. The building is an excellent example of the Mission Revival style in Prescott and reflects the aspirations of the town's early citizens.

17.3 DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

17.3.1 Opportunities Within the District

The Santa Fe Depot has always been a focal point for Prescott, whether in sending or receiving men back from war, greeting visiting dignitaries (including one President), or simply in conducting the daily business of the town. The surrounding area was also affected, spawning various railroad support facilities, worker's housing and other functions to serve the needs of the trains. With few exceptions, most of these are now gone, including the rails themselves. The Depot remains as the largest and most significant symbol of an era when roads were few and much of the livelihood of early Prescott depended upon what came and went through the portals of the Santa Fe Depot.

In 1988, the City of Prescott entered into a development agreement with the owners of the Depot who were also seeking to construct the Depot Marketplace. This agreement set the design standards for the future use and appearance of the building, including a signage code. Significant among the stipulations were the following:

- The City shall have design review of the entire Santa Fe Depot project.
- The Railroad Center (the developers) will complete nomination of the Depot to the National Register of Historic Places and to a local Prescott Preservation District.
- The Railroad Center will rehabilitate the Depot in accordance with Secretary of the Interior standards.

Two additional stipulations of importance deal with the appearance of adjacent construction and signage. The Covenants, Codes and Restrictions (CC&Rs) of June 1990 stipulate that "[b]uildings shall be of high quality and designed architecturally and aesthetically compatible and harmonious with all other buildings in the shopping center (signage and colors included)." Areas within "Parcel B" (the district) shall also be designed to "be the same or compatible with the Depot" (Rezoning Ordinance 2177, effective July 12, 1990), the design of which has been described above.

The current zoning of the Depot as Business "B" (BB) is consistent with the use of the building, so long as incompatible uses are not allowed. However, the Declaration of Restrictions and Grant of Easements of June 4, 1990 addresses this issue. It states that the following uses are not permitted anywhere in the Center under the development agreement: bars; taverns; cocktail lounges; adult book or pornographic video stores; automotive maintenance or repair facilities; warehouses; car washes; entertainment or recreational facilities or training or educational facilities; leasing or sale of any boat, motor vehicle or trailer; industrial purposes; or any nuisance which includes loud music or rancid odors. The above documents should be ref-

erenced for additional requirements and stipulations such as height restrictions in the Depot Marketplace.

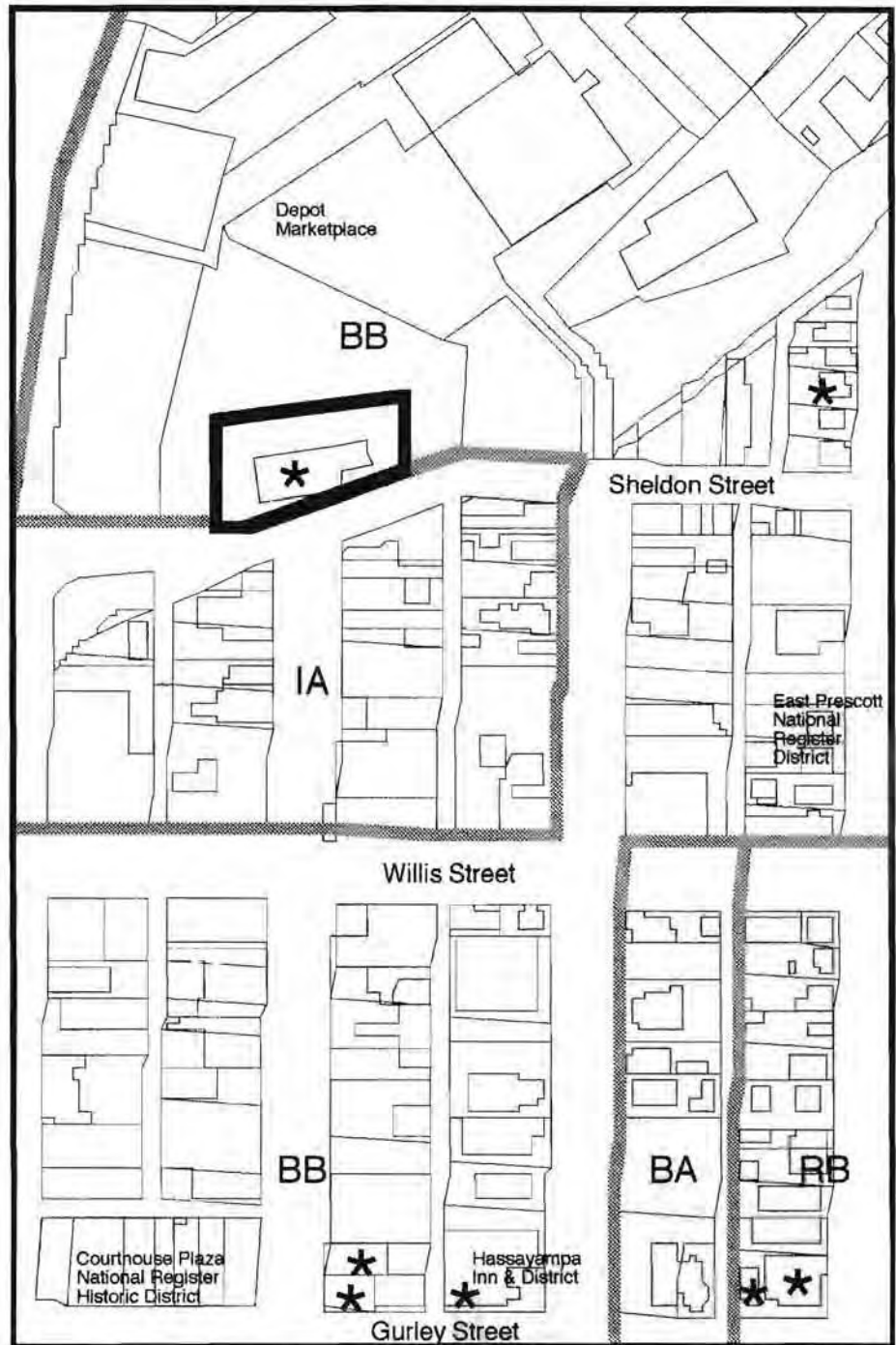
17.3.2 Specific District Recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

The following represents a brief summary of recommendations for the Santa Fe Depot Historic District.

Table 17-1
Summary of Recommendations - Santa Fe Depot Historic District

<i>Item</i>	<i>Observation/Recommendation</i>
Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain historic setbacks and buildings relationship to the site• Preserve historic identity and character of the existing building; retain historic scale, massing, materials, siting, character and details of buildings in the Santa Fe Depot Historic District• Preserve historic exterior wall materials; do not allow wood, metal or vinyl siding• Encourage scale consistent with existing structures and styles• Encourage double-hung windows with pane design to match existing (see text)• Use mission clay tiles on roof• Encourage wood for replacement doors and windows• Discourage skylights and utilities on roofs visible from the public right-of-way• Carefully evaluate proposed uses for conformity and compatibility with the main building• Ensure compliance with Development Agreements, CC&Rs and Declaration of Restrictions
Streetscape/Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preserve and enhance landscaping on Gurlley Street and within newly developed areas to the immediate north• Maintain historic integrity and streetscape of the building from all sides• Use landscape to enhance (not cover) historic resources
District Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage continued use of the Santa Fe Depot as professional office and commercial space, flanked by a compatible shopping center that does not detract or compete with the historic image of the Depot• Disallow incompatible uses in the historic district (see text)



—	Local District Boundary
*	Property Listed on the National Register
RB	Residential B
BA	Business A
BB	Business B
IA	Industrial A

Figure
17-1

Santa Fe Depot
Prescott Preservation District
District Boundary & Zoning

Not to Scale