

RESOLUTION 34-2024

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BENSON, ARIZONA, ADOPTING AN HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN AND DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO IMPLEMENT THE PLAN AND RETURN WITH FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION

WHEREAS, the Federal National Historic Preservation Act issued grants to facilitate the ability of local governments to identify places of local historic significance, and Arizona State Parks & Trails awarded a portion of the Federal Government's grant funds it received to Benson; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Benson have long recognized the importance of preserving historic improvements of significance in the City; in 1989, the Mayor and Council adopted Ordinance 319, which established landmarks and historic districts in the City; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council have identified that the benefits of preserving important elements of historic Benson include to promote the economic, cultural, educational, and general welfare of the public; to protect and enhance the landmarks and historic districts which represent distinctive elements of Benson's historic, architectural, and cultural heritage; to foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past; to protect and enhance Benson's attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to the economy thereby provided, and to ensure the harmonious, orderly, and efficient growth and development of the City while respecting its historical foundation; and

WHEREAS, historic preservation further prevents out of context changes to ensure the continuity of unique character of the community, while at the same time providing a boost to the economy of the City including through increasing the number of jobs available locally; and

WHEREAS, City staff has worked with a consultant, Logan Simpson, to develop an Historic Preservation Plan for the consideration of the Mayor and Council, which plan is intended to serve as a planning tool for the preservation of the City of Benson's distinct community character as the community changes and grows; the plan identifies specific challenges related to the historic preservation within the City and makes recommendations together with specific action items on how to implement the recommendations. A copy of that proposed plan is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Benson, Arizona, adopting the Historic Preservation Plan developed by Logan Simpson and directing the City Manager to implement the Historic Preservation Plan.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED affirming the City's continuing participation in the National Register of Historic Places program to recognize historic properties that are significant to the history of Benson.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED directing the City Manager to investigate the zoning tools recommended in the Plan under "Recommendation 2" to help ensure the continuing protection of historic buildings listed in the Benson Historic Property Register and to encourage alterations according to specific design guidelines and to return to Mayor and Council with her findings and recommendations.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED directing the City Manager to identify partnering organizations such as Benson Clean and Beautiful, Inc., and the Benson Historical Museum to develop programs to educate and inform community members about historic preservation disciplines and to continue to promote and educate about the history of Benson.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED declaring that the provisions of the Historic Preservation Plan are severable such that if any portion of the plan is determined to be unenforceable then the City shall continue to enforce the balance of those policies.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BENSON, ARIZONA, this 12th of August 2024.




JOE A. KONRAD, Mayor

ATTEST:



VICKI L. VIVIAN, CMC, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



DeCONCINI McDONALD YETWIN & LACY, PC
City Attorney
By Paul A. Loucks

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN CITY OF BENSON

Benson, Cochise County, Arizona
Prepared for the Benson Historic Preservation Commission



L O G A N S I M P S O N

East Main Street

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City of Benson
Citywide Historic Preservation Plan
Cochise County, Arizona

Prepared for:
City of Benson Historic Preservation Commission



Prepared by:
Logan Simpson
51 West Third Street, Suite 450
Tempe, Arizona 85281



L O G A N S I M P S O N

Logan Simpson Report Number: 225418
June 2024

City of Benson Citywide Historic Preservation
Plan

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City of Benson Historic Preservation
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L O G A N S I M P S O N



The City of Benson
Historic
Preservation Plan,
is funded in part by
an Arizona State

Parks & Trails, State Historic Preservation Office
Certified Local Government (CLG) subgrant
program (project # 4422012.1). The historic
preservation plan was prepared by Logan
Simpson working closely and collaboratively with
the City of Benson staff, Historic Preservation
Commission (HPC) members, and community
members who participated in the public
meetings.

The completion of this historic preservation plan
would not have been possible without the
assistance of Abbie Johnson, Permit
Technician/Engineer Aide for the City of Benson
and the members of the HPC. Their invaluable
knowledge and passion allowed Logan Simpson
to integrate the intangible heritage that is
associated with the City into this plan. Their
assistance with archival research, photographs,
and community expertise was integral to the
completion of this plan. A special thanks to
Arizona SHPO staff for consistent support
throughout this project.

The activity that is the subject of this material has been
financed in part with Federal funds from the National
Historic Preservation Act, administered by the National Park
Service (NPS), U.S. Department of the Interior for Arizona
State Parks & Trails, State Historic Preservation Office.
However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily
reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of the
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Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior,
National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington D.C.

Cover photo: S. Friedman, "East Main Street," n.d., Benson
Historical Museum, Photograph.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Historic Preservation Plan was prepared by Logan Simpson, a cultural resource management firm engaged by the City of Benson (City) with the assistance of the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPO) Certified Local Government (CLG) pass-through grant program. Logan Simpson staff worked closely with the City of Benson planning department staff and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in the development of this document.

This Historic Preservation Plan is designed to serve as an important planning tool for the preservation of the City of Benson's distinct community character as the community changes and grows. Specific challenges relating to historic preservation within the City are addressed and recommendations were developed in conjunction with community input to guide and augment the historic preservation program. This plan is designed to inform and encourage a connection to the distinctive archaeological and historic resources within the community. As a result of this Historic Preservation Plan study and development, the City of Benson:

- Identified potential historic resources within the community.
- Summarized the information available on the currently designated historic resources within the City.
- Developed specific historic preservation goals that reflect the community's vision for preservation within the City that:
 - Encourages the identification and designation of historic resources.
 - Promotes a balance between preserving existing historic buildings and encouraging appropriate new development and economic growth.
 - Supports public engagement in the stewardship of local historic resources.
- Created a prioritized action plan to successfully implement the recommendations.



Figure 1. View of the San Pedro Bridge in Benson, no date (Benson Historical Museum)

INTRODUCTION

“Preservation is simply having the good sense to hold on to things that are well designed, that link us with our past in a meaningful way, and that have plenty of good use left in them.” – Richard Moe, *President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation 1993-2009*.

Historic preservation is the identification, evaluation, and protection of significant historic and archaeological resources. It is an essential practice by which a community achieves broader environmental, social, and economic goals. Historic preservation promotes sustainability and conservation through the reuse of existing resources and creates vibrant communities that draw tourism and foster inclusivity. It stimulates the local economy through creating jobs, revitalizing downtowns, attracting investment, and promoting tourism. Intangibly, historic preservation substantially contributes to an enhanced quality of life for members of the community.

First enacting its historic preservation ordinance in 1989, the City of Benson made historic preservation a public policy by creating formal criteria and a procedure through which historic resources could be identified, designated, and protected. Since that time, the City has endeavored to preserve the places that anchor Benson’s unique identity, leading to the preparation of this Historic Preservation Plan – a first for the City. This plan integrates historic preservation methodology and strategies within the broader framework of municipal planning.

This Historic Preservation Plan builds on the past achievements of Benson’s historic preservation program and envisions the future of preservation in the City as it experiences new growth and challenges. The goals and recommendations offered in this plan are designed to augment the current historic preservation program in the City and enhance the protection of the resources which afford Benson its unique identity. The plan is compatible with City strategies and objectives designed to foster a healthy business environment, improve quality of life, and celebrate Benson’s heritage. This historic preservation plan does not change the legal rights of property owners, nor does it revise any existing codes or ordinances applicable to any property. Although this is a non-regulatory document, it is consistent with the purpose and goals of Benson’s Historic Preservation Ordinance, which is a part of City code. The City of Benson is committed to preserving its historic resources as invaluable markers of its community identity.

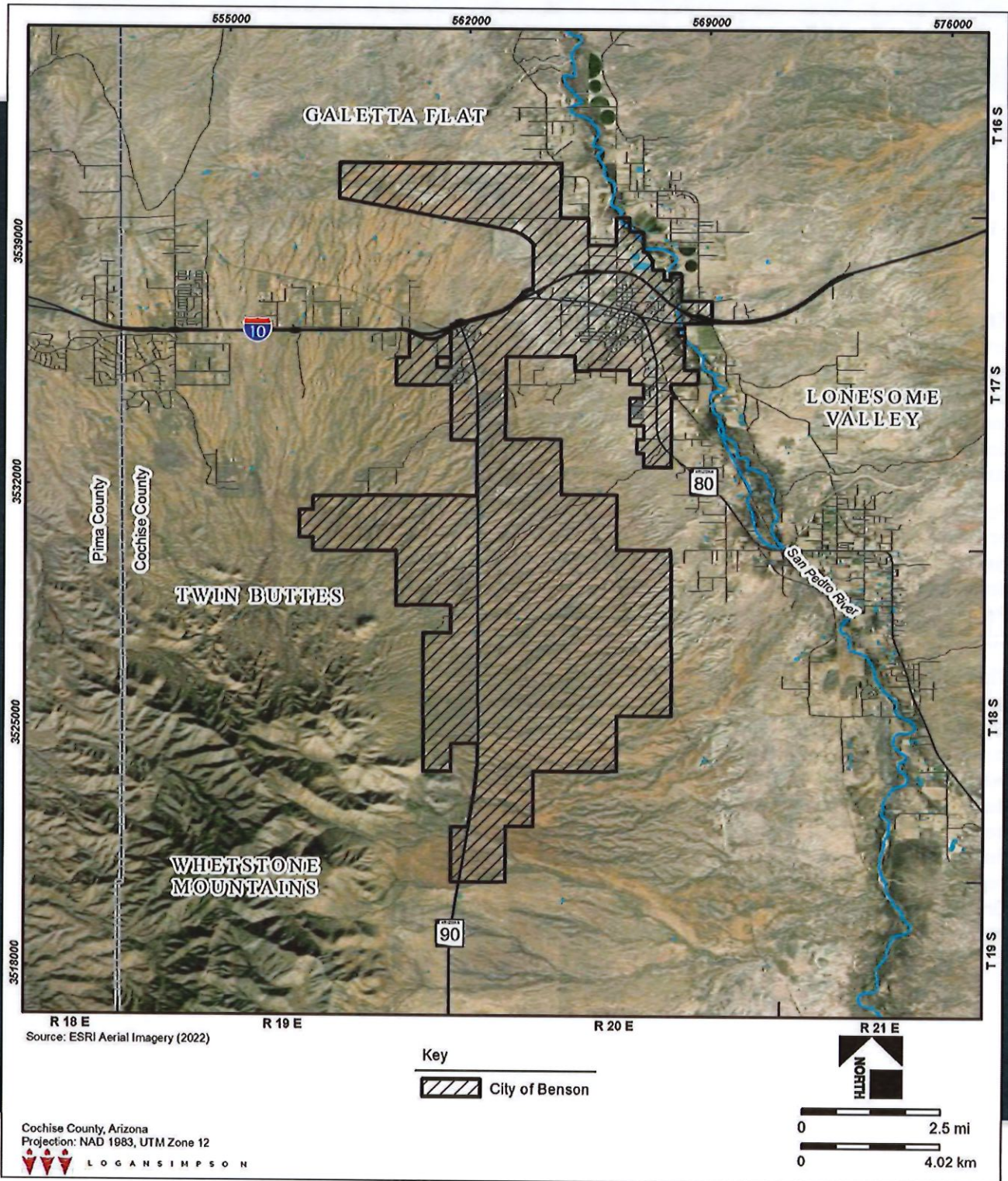


Figure 2. City of Benson showing development concentrated immediately west of the San Pedro River.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AS PUBLIC POLICY

“The power of place will be remarkable.” – Aristotle, *Physics, Book IV*.

Federal and State Public Policy

Federal regulations encouraging the preservation of historic and cultural resources gained traction in the United States during the twentieth century under the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt, a noted outdoor enthusiast. Federally, this started with the Antiquities Act of 1906 (54 U.S.C. §§320301-320303), the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 (39 Stat. 535, 16 U.S.C. 1), and the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461-467), which established laws, policies, ordinances, and agencies dedicated to the protection of the natural, cultural, and historic resources in the United States. These pieces of legislation originated due to a growing recognition and concern of the need to protect natural, cultural, and historic resources from demolition.¹ Sentiments of conservation and preservation mounted during the 1950s and 1960s when rapid and booming development occurred throughout the United States after World War II. The growth the nation experienced during the mid-twentieth century led to the construction of the Interstate Highway System, the introduction of suburban sprawl, and the launch of numerous urban renewal projects that altered the character of the country.²

Under President Lyndon B. Johnson, a special committee was convened in 1965 to study the situation of historic preservation in the United States.³ In a report, titled “With Heritage So Rich,” the committee found that the National Park Service’s Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) program, began in 1933, surveyed and documented roughly 12,000 buildings and places of historic or architectural significance over its history and, yet, due to the lack of legal protection, half of the identified sites were destroyed or irreparably damaged by the time of the report.⁴ These findings contributed to a push for the federal government to intervene and enact a comprehensive preservation law that addressed processes needed to preserve historic resources and formalized the responsibilities of local, state, and federal governments in regard to the identification, documentation, and preservation of historic resources.⁵ These efforts culminated with the October 15 1966 passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (Public Law 89-665, 80 Statute 915).

The legal basis for historic preservation at the local level was solidified in 1978 by the United States Supreme Court in the landmark case *Penn Central Transportation Co. v. City of New York* (438 U.S. 104). Penn Central Transportation Co., owner of Grand Central Station, proposed redevelopment that involved the destruction of the building, designated as a New York City Landmark in 1967, in order to construct a new 55-story office building. In response, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission rejected the proposal, but offered to allow a transfer of development rights permitting the owner to sell the air space above the station. Penn Central Transportation Co. considered this unjust compensation and filed a lawsuit against New York City. In the ruling, the Supreme Court recognized historic preservation as a valid

¹ “National Historic Preservation Act,” National Park Service, last updated December 1, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/national-historic-preservation-act.htm>.

² National Park Service, “National Historic Preservation Act.”

³ National Park Service, “National Historic Preservation Act.”

⁴ National Park Service, “National Historic Preservation Act.”

⁵ National Park Service, “National Historic Preservation Act.”

public purpose and determined that the designation of the Grand Central Station by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission did not constitute a regulatory taking of the property as historic preservation was a legitimate function of the local government.⁶

Federal and state regulations serve to ensure that developments in the built environment consider the impacts to cultural resources and require measures to be implemented to avoid or mitigate impacts, with exceptions for projects located on private land without any form of public jurisdiction.

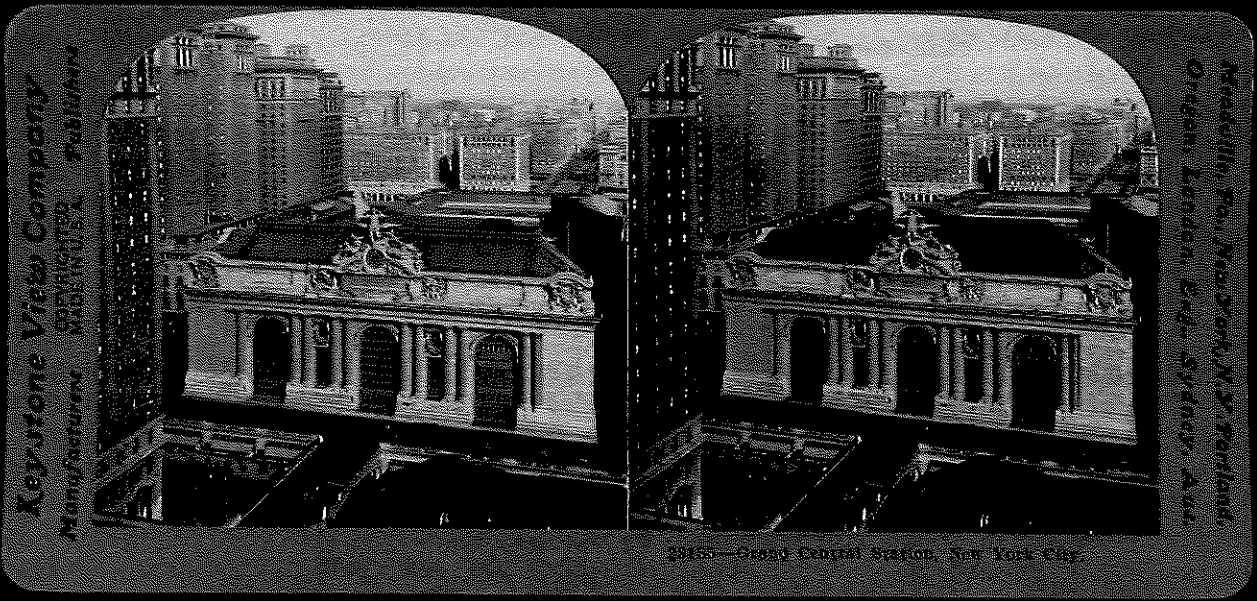


Figure 3. 1920 Stereograph of Grand Central Station, New York City by the Keystone View Company (Library of Congress).

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

Passed in 1966, the NHPA serves as the most comprehensive historic preservation legislation at the federal level. The legislation was largely a response to the widespread destruction of historic properties due to the dramatic expansion of the interstate system in the mid-twentieth century. The NHPA established a network of State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) in respective states to assist with establishing a list of properties significant to the history of the nation, work with federal agencies to avoid destruction or negative impacts to those properties, and to administer a program of grants-in-aid to preserve those properties for the future. The legislation also established a list of National Historic Landmarks (NHL) and a criteria for their designation.

In order to determine a list of properties significant to the history of the nation, the NHPA established the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) as a national inventory of historic resources. The

⁶ National Park Service, "National Historic Preservation Act."

National Register is maintained by the National Park Service (NPS), an agency housed in the United States Department of the Interior. The NHPA created a defined set of criteria against which, "districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association," are evaluated. Historic properties can be significant for:

- A. An association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. An association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or a representation of the work of a master, or possession of high artistic values, or are representative of a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Yielding, or may likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.⁷

Historic resources that meet one or more of the above listed criteria are eligible for inclusion in the National Register. Cemeteries, birthplaces, graves, religious properties, relocated buildings or structures, reconstructed buildings, commemorative properties, and properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years are typically ineligible for inclusion, but may qualify if they are integral components of districts or if they meet one of the Criteria Considerations.

The National Register is an honorary designation for a historic resource. Listing in the National Register does not place any additional restrictions upon private property owners, however, the NHPA determines a process for legal protections from projects with a federal nexus that may adversely impact historic properties. This process, referred to as Section 106 Compliance, offers the only form of legal protections for properties listed in the National Register. According to Section 106 of the NHPA (54 §U.S.C. 300101 et seq. and 36 CFR §800), any federally funded or federally permitted work, referred to as an undertaking, that could potentially impact a property listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the National Register is required to be reviewed by the appropriate federal agency before work commences. This includes identification of historic and cultural properties, including Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP). Should it be determined that the proposed work would result in an adverse effect to a historic property, the agency must work with SHPO and other impacted stakeholders to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts.

As the lead preservation agency, the NPS has developed professional standards for the preservation and protection of historic resources. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* addresses four primary treatments for historic properties: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Of the four treatments, rehabilitation is the most commonly used as it is the, "process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."⁸ There are ten Standards for Rehabilitation that provide direction in making appropriate changes as part of a rehabilitation project:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

⁷ National Park Service (1990, rev. 1997), *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 2.

⁸ 36 CFR 67.2.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.⁹

These standards promote best practices in stewardship of historic properties so that heritage is upheld for future generations. The standards apply to all proposed pass-through grant projects assisted through the National Historic Preservation Fund and are used by many preservation programs when reviewing alterations to historic properties. Local governments often utilize the standards when reviewing changes to historic properties within their jurisdictions or when crafting community-specific design guidelines.

Other Federal Regulations

Federal regulations that may be associated or interact with historic preservation and the Section 106 Compliance process include, but are not limited to:

- American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (Public Law No. 95-341, 42 U.S.C. §1996)
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C §§3001 et seq.)
- Clean Water Act, Section 404 (33 U.S.C. §1344)
- Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. §§470aa et seq.)
- Executive Order 13007
- Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f) (Title 49, U.S.C. §303)

Arizona State Historic Preservation Act

The Arizona State Legislature created the Arizona Register of Historic Places (State Register) with A.R.S. §41-511 in 1974. This register was designed to recognize and designate properties that were significant within the state, but not eligible for listing in the National Register under the NHPA, which then only included properties of national significance. In 1980, the NHPA was amended to allow listing properties that were significant at the state and local levels. Properties forwarded for National Register consideration are now added to the State Register during the review process.

⁹ Anne E. Grimmer, ed., *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services, 2017), 76.

The State Historic Preservation Act of 1982 (A.R.S. §41-861 et seq.) requires state agencies to identify and protect historic properties. Commonly referred to as Title 41, each state agency is required to locate, inventory, protect, and nominate properties all properties under the ownership or control of the agency that meet the specified criteria to the State Register. State agencies are required by the legislation to provide the Arizona SHPO an opportunity to comment on any agency project plans that may impact properties either listed, or determined eligible for listing, in the State Register. The State Historic Preservation Act requires state agencies to implement Tribal consultation policies to guide their work with federally recognized Tribes in Arizona. State agencies must seek input from Tribal officials before undertaking any action or policy that either will, or is reasonably believed to, impact a Tribal community or Tribal community members.¹⁰

Arizona Antiquities Act

The Arizona Antiquities Act (A.R.S. §41-841 et seq.) prohibits the excavation of historic or prehistoric sites on state, county, or municipal land without the written permission of the director of the Arizona State Museum (ASM). Discoveries of sites or objects that are fifty years, or older, and human remains, must be reported to the director of ASM and applicable Tribes. Protection, recovery, and transfer of custody of American Indian human remains, funerary objects, sacred ceremonial objects, or objects of cultural patrimony are mandated for discoveries on state lands (A.R.S. §41-844) and private lands (A.R.S. §41-865).

The Private Property Rights Protection Act

The Private Property Rights Protection Act (Proposition 207) was an Arizona state ballot initiative approved in 2006 that requires agencies and municipalities to compensate landowners when a land use regulation results in a diminution in a landowner's property value. The applicability of Proposition 207 to historic overlay zoning is not known as the law does not clearly identify such action as a regulatory taking. The law does limit instances of eminent domain enacted by governments to ones in which private property is put to a "public use," however, public benefits of economic development is not included in the definition of "public use." As a response, many municipalities adopted some form of waiver that applicants must sign prior to processing any zoning-related action, such as historic designation, that exempts the agency from legal action pursuant to Proposition 207. It is worth noting that Benson's historic preservation ordinance prohibits a property being listed in the Benson Historic Property Register without owner consent.

Benson's Historic Preservation Ordinance

The City of Benson enacted a Historic Preservation Ordinance in 1989. Ordinance 319 amended the city's zoning regulations to include Section 24, the Historic Preservation Ordinance, relating to the establishment of landmarks and historic districts in the City of Benson. The purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance is to:

- To promote the economic, cultural, educational, and general welfare of the public.
- Protect and enhance the landmarks and historic districts which represent distinctive elements of Benson's historic, architectural, and cultural heritage.
- Foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past.
- Protect and enhance Benson's attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to the economy thereby provided.
- Ensure the harmonious, orderly, and efficient growth and development of the City.¹¹

¹⁰ Historic Preservation. Arizona Revised Statutes §41-861 et. seq. (1982).

¹¹ City of Benson Ordinance 319 § 24-1 (1989).

The ordinance created the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and designates the number, length of tenure, and responsibilities of the members along with establishing requirements such as monthly meetings. The ordinance specifies responsibilities of the HPC, which include surveying significant historic, cultural, and architectural landmarks in the city; establishing criteria; recommending designations, funds usage, and acquisition; increasing public awareness; and approving or disapproving applications for certificates of appropriateness (COA).

Benson Historic Property Register

The Benson Historic Preservation Ordinance provides a process for the designation of buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts within the city limits of Benson that are considered significant to the history of the community. While the NRHP and the Benson Historic Property Register utilize similar criteria, the process and effects of listing differ, creating distinct, yet complementary preservation processes.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance specifies that the HPC may recommend to the Benson City Council that an individual property may be designated as a historic landmark if it:

1. Possesses special character or historic or aesthetic interest or value as part of the cultural, political, economic or social history of the locality, region, state or nation; or
2. Is identified with historic personages; or
3. Embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style; or
4. Is the work of a designer whose work has significantly influenced an age; or
5. Because of a unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood,
6. And the owner(s) of the property concur with the designation.

A property or district must meet one of the above listed criteria *and* be concurred upon by the property owner(s) in order to be considered eligible as a local historic landmark. The criteria for evaluating properties within the community of Benson is purposefully designed to incorporate properties that have significant community value that may be associated with aspects of intangible heritage.

The HPC holds public hearings to review proposals for historic landmarks designations, and ultimately refers its decisions to the Benson City Council for enactment of a final designation.

Once a historic resource or district is designated as a local historic landmark and included in the Benson Historic Property Register, the property is subject to protections designed to prevent any inappropriate exterior alteration, reconstruction, demolition, or new construction without first obtaining a COA from the HPC. The ordinance specifies that these protections do not apply to the interior of the building, unless they are open to the public, or to architectural features that are not visible from a public street or alley. A property owner may obtain a COA through an application process. The HPC holds public hearings to review COAs and issue decisions.¹² The HPC bases their evaluation of the proposed alteration upon the following specified criteria listed in the ordinance:

1. Properties which contribute to the character of the historic district shall be retained, with their historic features altered as little as possible;
2. Any alteration of existing properties shall be compatible with its historic character, as well as with the surrounding district; and

¹² City of Benson Ordinance 319 § 24-5 and 24-6.

3. New construction shall be compatible with the district in which it is located.

The ordinance continues to provide considerations regarding the principle of compatibility:

1. The general design character and appropriateness to the property of the proposed alteration or new construction.
2. The scale of the proposed alteration or new construction in relation to the property itself, surrounding properties, and the neighborhood.
3. Texture, materials, and color and their relation to similar features of other properties in the neighborhood.
4. Visual compatibility with surrounding properties, including proportion of the property's front façade, proportion and arrangement of windows and other openings within the façade, roof shape, and the rhythm of spacing of properties on streets, including setback.
5. The importance of historic, architectural or other features to the significance of the property.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance specifies criteria and a process for hardship applications for applicants whose COAs for proposed demolitions or alterations have been denied by the HPC.¹³ The ordinance also includes a section on preventative and regular maintenance and repair for historic buildings.¹⁴ Provisions in Section 24-9 recognize code enforcement of the ordinance and provisions in Section 24-11 stipulate a procedure for processing code violations in relation to designated historic properties. It is important to note that Section 24-11 specifies that demolition of a designated historic property by neglect is considered a violation of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The ordinance provides a process for appeals of HPC decisions in Section 24-12.

Other Applicable City Ordinances and Initiatives

General Development Plan (2015)

The City's General Development Plan, adopted by City Council in 2015 by Resolution 8-2015, is designed to be a "long-range, comprehensive expression of the desired direction of the City."¹⁵ With regards to land use, considerations and strategies to afford various types of land uses are provided to ensure retention of visual character, protection of property values, and quality of life for community members. Specific land use goals and objectives relating to historic preservation include:

- Objective 1.3: Create a "design manual" as a guide for understanding and enhancing the City's built environment.
- Objective 1.4: Construct civic structures, institutions and common areas that establish a 'sense of place' and a high level of community pride.
- Objective 1.5: Encourage infill development that is compatible with existing land uses and structures.
- Objective 4.1: Enhance the historic aspects of the community by encouraging historic preservation and rehabilitation of commercial buildings.
- Objective 4.2: Create a unique, distinctive identity for the Downtown through uniform signage, design guidelines, landscaping, street lighting and other amenities.

Discussed in the plan are challenges and recommendations for successful fulfilment of the above objectives.

¹³ City of Benson Ordinance 319 § 24-7 and 24-8.

¹⁴ City of Benson Ordinance 319 § 24-10.

¹⁵ City of Benson General Development Plan, 2015, 1.

It is proposed that the re-development of 4th Street as a historic downtown district will better define, anchor, and enhance the community character of Benson. Challenges, however, include the current opposition to alterations of existing building features and the high cost associated with assuming control of the 4th Street right-of-way from the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). Recommendations for a larger historic district to encompass 4th Street along with the NRHP-listed Apache Powder and Benson Historic Barrio districts are provided as a method to meet the defined goals and objectives. The plan encourages the City to create a historic overlay district and implement design guidelines to preserve community character.

Relevant land use policies included in the plan are:

- Land Use Policy 1: Maintain the existing commercial corridors and nodes as the primary sites of commercial development.
- Land Use Policy 2: Begin efforts to develop 4th Street as a “Historic Downtown Corridor.”
- Land Use Policy 3: Develop a Historic Design Guidelines for the desired Historic Districts with attention paid to the businesses residences and other local features that connect the city to its heritage.
- Land Use Policy 4: Continually review and update the Benson Zoning Regulations to be consistent with current community needs and with the adopted General Development Plan.
- Land Use Policy 8: Encourage the re-use of vacant sites and under-utilized properties in the commercial core of the City.

Strategic Action Plan (2024)

Benson’s Strategic Action Plan for Fiscal Years 2024-2025 is a tool designed to outline specific steps, tasks, and goals necessary to achieve the strategic focus areas of fiscal sustainability, economic growth, city organization, community quality of life, and infrastructure and facilities. The plan is designed to help the City implement its vision of, “Serving the people of Benson by effectively planning for growth, providing for a safe environment, quality transportation, reliable utilities, enhanced recreation opportunities, competent administration, a healthy business climate, a positive self-image, cooperation with other levels of government, while maintaining fiscal responsibility.”¹⁶

Under the Economic Growth focus area, the plan outlines five guiding principles used to develop action items designed to facilitate the achievement of Benson’s economic goals. These guiding principles state:

1. Guiding Principle 1: Streamline the City’s development services to efficiently support local economic development.
2. Guiding Principle 2: Establish a long-range planning vision e.g., general plan, water and sewer master plan, transportation master plan, land use plan, that incorporates citizen and stakeholder input to provide a road map for strategic economic development, infrastructure and budget planning.
3. Guiding Principle 3: Focus on strategic economic development pursuits that will increase local jobs, generate additional sales tax revenue and create demand for supporting businesses.
4. Guiding Principle 4: Foster support of local businesses through ongoing engagement and communication to ensure City policies and priorities support their long-term success.
5. Guiding Principle 5: Develop and implement a collaborative Economic Gardening strategy with local

¹⁶ City of Benson Strategic Action Plan, 6.

businesses.

These guiding principles are accompanied by an action item to facilitate the implementation of policy or procedures to achieve the defined objectives. These action items include:

- Update Business Licenses – include Vendor Licenses.
- Develop a program to promote Benson as a destination.
- Examine City codes and incentives that promote economic development.
- Economic Development Strategic Plan

As historic preservation is a multifaceted practice that is integrated into City policy and procedure, these guiding principles and accompanying action items relative to economic growth are critical components of the objectives outlined in this study.

Benson as a Certified Local Government

In 1980, the federal government amended the NHPA to include the Certified Local Government (CLG) program (54 §U.S.C. 302501 et seq. and 36 CFR §61). This program is designed to be a partnership between the NPS, SHPO, and a municipality permitting these entities to work collaboratively towards goals of identifying, evaluating, preserving, and protecting local historic resources. Under the federal legislation, SHPOs assist in administering the program for participating municipalities within their respective states.

Title 54 U.S.C. specifies requirements of municipalities seeking to become certified as a CLG. These requirements include:

1. Establishing a qualified historic preservation commission.
2. Enforcing appropriate state or local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties.
3. Maintaining a system of survey and inventory of local historic resources.
4. Facilitating public participation in the local preservation process, include participation in the National Register nomination process.
5. Following additional requirements outlines by the state-specific CLG procedures

Once certified by the NPS, a CLG becomes an active partner in historic preservation at the state and federal levels. Due to the requirements necessary for certification, CLGs are regarded as having special expertise in historic preservation and are awarded benefits in the form of funding and technical assistance to augment local preservation efforts. CLGs are important stakeholders involved in the Section 106 Compliance process as their special expertise in historic preservation and local involvement is valuable in the mitigation process.

Benson attained CLG status in 1991. The city's nine-member HPC is appointed by the city's elected officials and carries out the duties specified in the Historic Preservation Ordinance. As a CLG, Benson is responsible for maintaining a process for the inventory of historic buildings with the jurisdiction of the city, ensuring public participation in the ordinance-defined processes, and participating in the National Register nomination process.

As a CLG, Benson is eligible to receive federal pass-through grants through the AZ SHPO to fund survey and planning preservation projects.

BENEFITS OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

“We shape our buildings; thereafter, our buildings shape us.” – Winston Churchill, *British Prime Minister 1940-1945; 1951-1955.*

The practice of historic preservation is situated at the nexus of the diverse array of disciplines that contribute to daily life in a community. Tangibly, historic preservation contributes to the economic foundation of a community by providing spaces for small businesses, supporting heritage tourism, and increasing property values. Less tangible, historic preservation produces sustainable communities with vibrant historic character. Intangibly, historic preservation solidifies the unique character of a community which serves as a foundation for an individual ‘sense of place’ that contributes to a high quality of life for individual community members.

The value of an individual building does not emerge solely from within the property boundaries, but from the larger context in which it is located.¹⁷ The economic impact of historic preservation provides a degree of protection to these assets as local regulations that prevent out of context changes ensure the continuity of unique character in a community. With this continuity of character, communities have the advantage of creating revitalized downtowns, promoting heritage tourism, attracting growth, and fostering a climate that supports small businesses. This, in turn, creates jobs, boosts property values, and provides economic resilience.

One of the most quantifiable benefits of historic preservation is its direct impact on housing and as a local economy booster through tourism. Findings indicate that heritage tourism visitors stay longer, visit more places, and spend more per day than tourists with no interest in historic resources.¹⁸ On an economic level, this manifests as more jobs through hiring locally for projects; revitalized commercial areas; improved property values; and investments from private entities and government entities at the local, state, and federal levels. Historic preservation also serves as a significant contributing factor in providing housing in a community. In a recent survey of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 44% of millennials surveyed desired to reside in historic, character rich neighborhoods. Nationally, despite accounting for only one-third of all homebuyers, millennials constituted 59% of all buyers of houses constructed prior to 1912 and 43% of all buyers of houses constructed between 1912 and 1960.¹⁹ Historic buildings provide a stable, affordable housing stock, often located in neighborhoods that are walkable, and attract younger generations that provide valuable contributions to a community.

Historic preservation produces sustainable communities through the reuse of existing historic buildings. The reuse of historic buildings prevents the carbon emissions from vehicles and machinery used to extract raw materials and construct new buildings; prevents unnecessary waste from landfills; and preserves natural landscapes. This, in turn, helps conserve materials, preserve past workmanship which rendered many older buildings energy efficient, lessens a resource’s environmental impact, and reduces the carbon footprint of a city.²⁰

¹⁷ PlaceEconomics, *Twenty-Four Reasons Historic Preservation is Good for your Community*, PlaceEconomics, January 2020, <https://www.placeeconomics.com/resources/twenty-four-reasons-historic-preservation-is-good-for-your-community>, 4.

¹⁸ PlaceEconomics, *Twenty-Four Reasons*, 4.

¹⁹ PlaceEconomics, *Twenty-Four Reasons*, 13.

²⁰ City of Phoenix, “Preserve Historic Phoenix,” Resolution No. 21289, January 2015, 14, https://www.phoenix.gov/pddsites/Documents/hp/pdd_hp_pdf_00185.pdf.

By comparison, the aesthetic, symbolic, cultural, and intangible benefits of historic preservation are difficult to quantify, yet these values remain significant to a community and are a necessary component to a high-quality of life for residents. Historic preservation aims not to freeze communities in time, but to accommodate and foster growth of communities such that the historic character and quality of the community is not diminished or subject to out of context changes. While not all benefits of historic preservation are fiscally quantifiable, intangible benefits enhance community life through cohesive character and the creation of a sense of place for individuals and the community as a whole.

Historic preservation promotes an enhanced sense of place through the preservation and reuse of places that serve as physical connection to a community's past. Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso in their study, *Senses of Place*, define sense of place as, "the relation of sensation to emplacement; the experiential and expressive ways places are known, imagined, yearned for, held, remembered, voiced, lived, contested and struggled over; and the multiple ways places are metonymically and metaphorically tied to identities."²¹ Simply stated, as people shape the places in which they live, so, too, do they shape themselves.²² One method through which communities solidify this sense of place is through the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic elements of their community that serve as tangible reminders of a collective past. These elements can include buildings, structures, landscapes, and even entire neighborhoods.

Arizona's history is richly reflected in Benson. Its connection to the broader historic narrative of southern Arizona remains an integral component to understanding the significance of the region. The city's sense of place not only situates it within the broader narrative of the region, but it also highlights Benson's exceptionality and value on an individual level. Historic preservation allows for the continuation of these characteristics by safeguarding and preserving significant architecture and reinforcing the heritage of the City. These significant spaces connect the local community and visitors to Benson's past, present, and future. By identifying, designating, and preserving important resources, the City of Benson is acknowledging and protecting the importance of its historic fabric and engaging as a steward of its legacy.

²¹ Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso, *Senses of Place*, Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1996, 11.

²² Feld and Basso, *Sense of Place*, 11.



Figure 4. View of 4th & San Pedro Streets in 1906. This glimpse of Railroad Era Benson shows the use of wood frame construction techniques with false fronts. (Benson Historical Museum)



Photograph 1. Current view of 4th Street, looking southwest (Cindy Allen)

HISTORY OF THE CITY OF BENSON

“How will we know it’s us without our past?” – John Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath*

Benson, Prior to Incorporation

The area around Benon is known as the San Pedro River Valley, a fertile floodplain that has an early history associated with agriculture. Prior to Spanish exploration and settlement, the San Pedro River Valley was home to the Hohokam and Salado cultures, and their descendants.²³ Early peoples used the river, which runs north-south along Benson’s present-day eastern boundary, to build their communities.²⁴ The region came under Spanish control in the eighteenth century, before being turned over to Mexico in the nineteenth century.

Before the land fell under the jurisdiction of the United States (U.S.), Americans traveling through the region as settlers from neighboring states, along with the US government, set out to create better established trails that could reach California. One of these early trails was formed at the start of the Mexican American War in 1846 by the Mormon Battalion. The group was tasked with creating a route from Santa Fe, New Mexico to San Diego, California. During that journey it passed through the general area of where Benson was ultimately established.²⁵ This early incursion by American interests was soon followed by other groups, who created new routes across the desert, followed by the establishment of Army posts and forts along them. By the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, the U.S. officially gained a large portion of Mexico’s northern territory that was then divided into several territories, including the New Mexico territory.²⁶ Five years later, with the Gadsden Purchase of 1853, the United States obtained further land south of the Gila River, thereby establishing the current-day southern border with Mexico.²⁷ This final transferal of land brought the San Pedro River Valley into the United States.

Developments to the area were quickly undertaken, including the construction of a relay station to aid in crossing the river just north of Benson and the improvement of an already established wagon road, one that followed the general path of the old Mormon Battalion route that connected Texas to California through the future site of Benson.²⁸ In 1857, the Butterfield Overland Trail was routed through the area that would later be incorporated as Benson. Commissioned by the U.S., the trail was a significant stagecoach route that linked Memphis, Tennessee and St. Louis, Missouri to San Francisco, California and was used to transport passengers and mail. Only in use until 1861 when the Civil War disrupted transportation, the route was a significant link between the American West and the rest of the U.S.

During the 1860s, a small group of American and Mexican settlers began to homestead the area, bringing further agriculture to the banks of the San Pedro River, in an area north of present-day Benson, colloquially

²³ Janet H. Parkhurst, Ralph Comey, and Karen DeLay, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Benson Historic Barrio,” (Tucson, Arizona: Janet H. Strittmatter Inc., Ralph Comey Architects, July 19, 2010), 14.

²⁴ Parkhurst, Comey, and DeLay, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Benson Historic Barrio,” 14.

²⁵ William S. Collins, Melanie Sturgeon, and Robert Carriker, *The United States Military in Arizona, 1846-1945*, (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona State University for the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, May 1993), 10-12.

²⁶ Michael D. Doubler, *I Am the Guard: A History of the Army National Guard, 1636-2000*, (Arlington, Virginia: Army National Guard, 2001), 92-93.

²⁷ Collins, et al., *The United States Military in Arizona, 1846-1945*, 8.

²⁸ Parkhurst, Comey, and DeLay, 14.

known as Tres Alamos.²⁹ By the start of the Civil War the future territory of Arizona boasted a population of 6,482.³⁰ The Civil War irrevocably realigned the borders of the New Mexico Territory and set in motion the creation of Arizona. In 1862, the Confederacy horizontally divided the territory through the center, designating the southern portion as Arizona.³¹ Arizona's involvement during the Civil War was fairly limited due to its small population and distance from the main conflict in the east. It served primarily as a waypoint through which the Confederacy could reach the resources of California by land.³² Military engagements within the territory included skirmishes between California and Texas troops in and around Tucson, along with clashes at Stanwix Station and at La Paz near Yuma.³³ After the Union gained full control of the territory in 1862, it overrode the Confederate bifurcation of the New Mexico territory and redrew the boundary line going north to south by creating the Arizona Territory with the Organic Act of 1863.³⁴

The remainder of the nineteenth century was a period in which the settlement of the territory of Arizona intensified. In the San Pedro River Valley area, the early settlements grew due to an increase in mining operations in the area, improved development of the river through the use of irrigation ditches, the continued use and maintenance of the wagon road as a major avenue of travel through the southern region of the territory, and proximity to the border of Mexico and nearby states.³⁵ In 1880, the town of Benson was formally established south of Tres Alamos.³⁶

Railroad Era (1880-1910)

In 1880, the Southern Pacific Railroad was laid through Benson, bringing stable transportation and the only transcontinental connection to that region of Arizona.³⁷ Named after Judge William S. Benson, a friend of Southern Pacific Railroad president Charles Crocker, Benson was selected as the site for the railroad to cross the San Pedro River as there was already an established wagon route through the area and nearby settlements. Benson became a major regional hub as it featured stagecoach routes, the railroad, and facilitated the movement of products from nearby mining operations and districts. This status as an important transportation center was furthered with the introduction of two more railroad lines, the New Mexico and Arizona Railroad in 1882 and the Arizona Southeastern Railroad Company in 1894, becoming "...the only point in Arizona served by three independent railroad lines."³⁸ An 1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows the rapid development of the city in the decade following its establishment (Figure). By 1890, the population of Benson had already reached 348.³⁹

Benson was an important stop in southeastern Arizona for travelers traveling by stagecoach to Tombstone or other regional towns. Employment and commerce in Benson were aided by nearby mining operations, such as the ones in Clifton and Bisbee in the Galliuero and Rincon mountains. Mining products were shipped

²⁹ Parkhurst, Comey, and DeLay, 14.

³⁰ This early census more than likely did not take into account the Native American populations that had resided in the region for millennia. U.S. Census Bureau, "Census Bulletin, Twelfth Census of the United States, Population of Arizona by Counties and Minor Civil Divisions, No. 6, 1900," (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, October 17, 1900), 1.

³¹ Collins, et al., 8.

³² Department of Emergency and Military Affairs, "Civil War in Arizona," Last modified March 2016, 1, <https://dema.az.gov/army-national-guard/military-museum/publications/civil-war-arizona>.

³³ DEMA, "Civil War in Arizona," 2.

³⁴ Collins, et al., 8.

³⁵ Parkhurst, Comey, and DeLay, 14.

³⁶ Parkhurst, Comey, and DeLay, 14.

³⁷ Janet S. Gibson and Janet H. Strittmatter, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Historic Architectural Properties in the Benson, Arizona Survey Area," (Tucson, Arizona: Johns & Strittmatter Inc., August 16, 1993), E-1.

³⁸ Gibson and Strittmatter, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Historic Architectural Properties in the Benson, Arizona Survey Area," E-1.

³⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, "Census Bulletin, No. 93, Population of Arizona, 1880-1890," (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, July 11, 1891).

via wagon to Benson from which the products were loaded onto railcars. The arrival of the railroad also necessitated retail spaces, hotels, saloons, stables, restaurants, and housing to service the increasing number of travelers and residents in the town. Thirty years after its establishment, the Town of Benson had already surged to a population of 1,035 in 1910, with the greater Benson precinct reaching a total population of 1,218.⁴⁰ Even when a series of fires destroyed sections of Benson's early development between 1883 and 1904, the town rebuilt and continued to grow.⁴¹ Due to the ready availability of goods and the influx of outsiders traveling by rail, buildings in Benson followed trends popular in other parts of the country rather than local styles. The materials that were used in Benson's architecture were largely transported in, such as wood frame construction techniques that used dimensional lumber, particularly redwood, from California.⁴² Lightweight, wood-frame construction with wood siding dominated in Benson. This contrasted with other pre-railroad Arizona communities in which adobe construction predominated. Commercial development in Benson was largely concentrated along the southern side of East 4th Street and oriented toward the railroad to facilitate the needs of travelers and passing business.

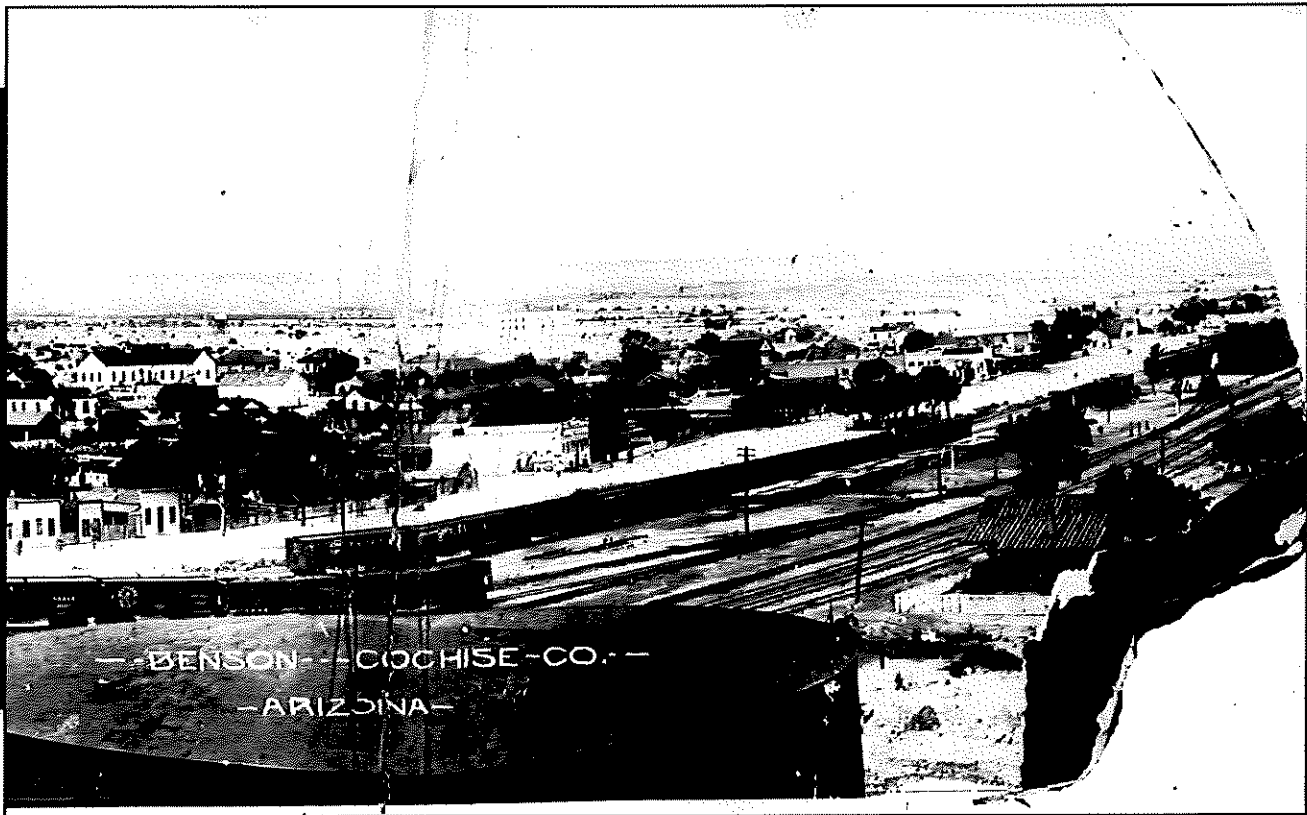


Figure 5. View of the SPRR and 4th Street in 1903. The Hi Wo Company Grocery is visible as the white, single-story building in the middle of the photograph (Courtesy of Benson Historical Museum).

⁴⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, "Supplement for Arizona, 1900-1910," (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1910), accessed January 16, 2024, 573, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1910/abstract/supplement-az.pdf>.

⁴¹ Gibson and Strittmatter, E-2.

⁴² Gibson and Strittmatter, E-2.

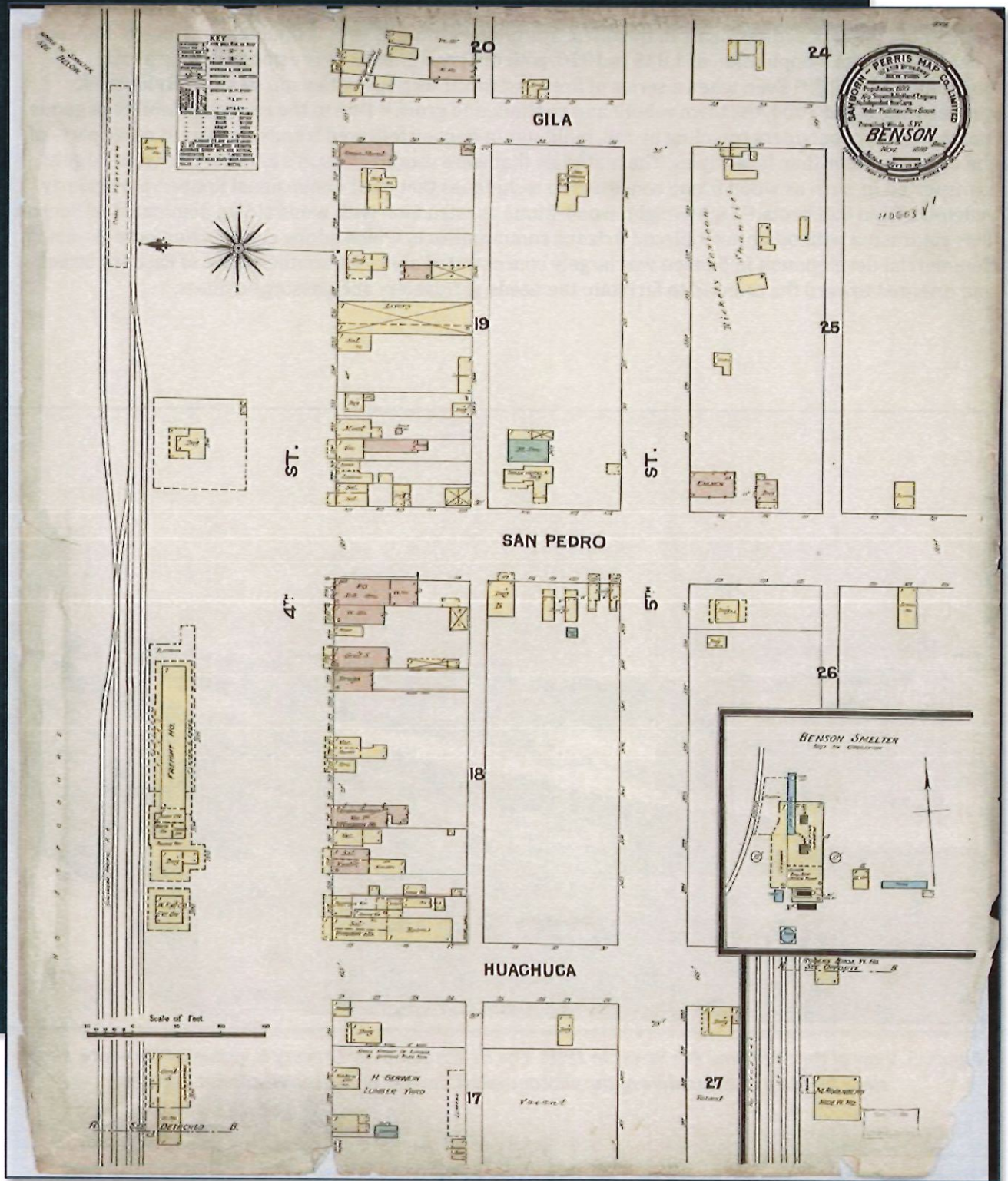


Figure 6. 1890 Sanborn Fire Insurance map depicting the historic core of Benson. The Southern Pacific Railroad can be seen to the left. (Library of Congress).

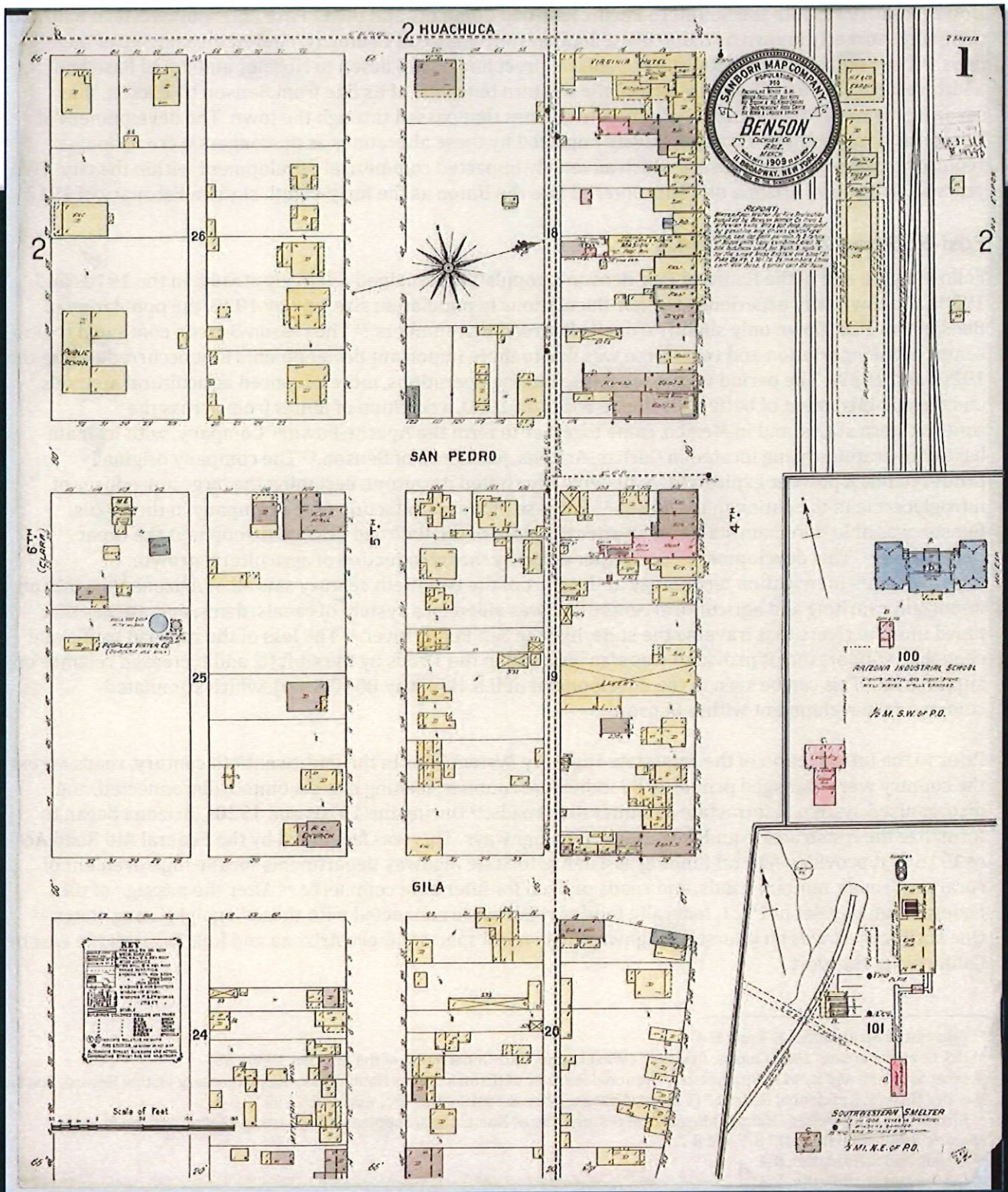


Figure 7. 1909 Sanborn Fire Insurance map depicting the historic core of Benson. The proliferation of wood frame buildings (designated by the color yellow) along 4th Street is evident. (Library of Congress).

However, in 1910, both the Southern Pacific Railroad Company and the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad Company, formerly known as the Arizona Southeastern Railroad Company, altered the courses of their lines.⁴³ The Southern Pacific Railroad opened a direct line from Tucson to Nogales and the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad Company moved the western terminus of its line from Benson to Tucson, thus severing the ties of two out of the three railway lines that passed through the town. The development of Benson as a railroad town was negatively impacted by these alterations as passengers were no longer required to pass through Benson, which adversely impacted commercial development within the city. Two years after the loss, Arizona officially entered into the Union as the forty-eighth state in February of 1912.

Post-Railroad Era (1910-1942)

Following the end of the Railroad Era, Benson's population remained relatively steady. In the 1910s and 1920s, the town only experienced minor fluctuations in population size, and by 1930, the population of Benson was 925, down only slightly from its Railroad Era numbers.⁴⁴ The reason Benson continued to be a center of transportation and commerce was due to three important developments that occurred during the 1920s and 1930s. The period witnessed larger mining operations, more advanced agricultural methods, and the establishment of better developed roads. In 1920, a coalition of mines from across the southwestern states, and in Mexico, came together to form the Apache Powder Company, with its main base of operations being located in Curtiss, Arizona, just south of Benson.⁴⁵ The company originally produced black powder explosives, but eventually shifted its output, becoming the largest producer of nitroglycerine in the nation in the 1930s.⁴⁶ Because of the introduction of the company in the 1920s, Benson was able to remain stable, even after the close of the Railroad Era and throughout the Great Depression.⁴⁷ This development was further aided by the introduction of agricultural growth. Improvements in irrigation technology at the start of the twentieth century saw all of Arizona turn into an important ranching and agricultural center that was aided by a system of canals, dams, and ditches that tapped into the rivers that traverse the state, like the San Pedro River.⁴⁸ The loss of the railroad traffic and economic support that it provided was also lessened in the 1920s by the shift to, and increased reliance on, automobiles. This can be seen in the development of U.S. Highway 80 (U.S. 80), which stimulated commercial development within Benson.

Prior to the introduction of the Interstate Highway System later in the mid-twentieth century, roads across the country were managed primarily by individual counties, leading to a disjointed, disconnected, and disorganized system of intrastate and interstate roads.⁴⁹ During the 1910s and 1920s, Arizona began to formalize the construction and development of highways. This was facilitated by the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916 as it provided federal funding assistance to State highway departments for the improvement of rural post roads, military roads, and roads utilized for interstate commerce.⁵⁰ After the passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1921, federally funded roads were connected with those in neighboring states.⁵¹ One such project was an interstate highway that would span southern Arizona and link Texas in the east to California in the west.

⁴³ Gibson and Strittmatter, E-3 and E-4.

⁴⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, "1930 Census, Arizona," (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1930), 98.

⁴⁵ Janet S. Gibson and Janet H. Strittmatter, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Supplementary Listing Record, Apache Powder Historic Residential District," (Tucson, Arizona: Johns & Strittmatter Inc., August 16, 1993), 8-1.

⁴⁶ Gibson and Strittmatter, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Supplementary Listing Record, Apache Powder Historic Residential District," 8-1 and 8-2.

⁴⁷ Gibson and Strittmatter, 8-1.

⁴⁸ Gibson and Strittmatter, E-4.

⁴⁹ Demion Clinco, "Historic Arizona U.S. Route 80, Historic Highway Designation Application," (Tucson, Arizona: Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation, May 2016), 4.2.

⁵⁰ Richard F. Weingroff, "Creation of a Landmark: The Federal Aid Road Act of 1916," Federal Highway Administration, 61.

⁵¹ Clinco, "Historic Arizona U.S. Route 80, Historic Highway Designation Application," 4.2.

The idea of a southern, cross-country interstate was planned by the federal government throughout the 1910s and 1920s, with names being proposed such as the Borderland Route/Ocean-to-Ocean Highway in 1912, the Dixie Overland Highway in 1914, the Old Spanish Trail in 1916, and the Bankhead Highway in 1920.⁵² These early iterations of the highway combined already established and named routes, but it wasn't until 1925 that the route was officially designated U.S. 80.⁵³ The U.S. 80 was advertised as an all-weather highway that expanded across the entire width of the lower states of the country, including California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, with a total of 540.9 miles of highway being built within Arizona.⁵⁴ The U.S. 80 has its roots in numerous eras of early Arizona history, with sections of its Arizona alignment having been established by settlers and forty-niners on the way to California, by the Mormon Battalion during the Mexican-American War, and from the U.S. Army and railroads creating roads during the second half of the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ The stretch of highway within Arizona passed through Douglas, Lowell, Bisbee, Tombstone, Benson, Tucson, Florence, Mesa, Phoenix, Buckeye, Gila Bend, Sentinel, and Yuma.⁵⁶ U.S. 80 became an important southern route, one that brought economic stability and opportunities to smaller communities along its path.

The section of U.S. 80 in Benson follows the alignment of the old wagon road and with the improvement of the interstate highway, Benson once again became an important stop on a transcontinental transportation line.⁵⁷ Improvement of the road during the 1920s and 1930s brought new commerce and new types of buildings, such as motor lodges, auto camps, and gas stations. In 1924, Benson Town was incorporated into the partially redistricted Cochise County, further solidifying its status as an important town within the region.⁵⁸

⁵² David Rookhuyzen, "US 80: Mother of Arizona highways," Arizona Department of Transportation, November 10, 2020, <https://azdot.gov/adot-blog/us-80-mother-arizona-highways>.

⁵³ Rookhuyzen, "US 80: Mother of Arizona highways."

⁵⁴ Clinco, 4.2.

⁵⁵ Rookhuyzen, "US 80: Mother of Arizona highways."

⁵⁶ Rookhuyzen, "US 80: Mother of Arizona highways."

⁵⁷ Arizona Highway Department, "Photograph of United States Highway 80 in Benson (Ariz.)," Arizona State Archives Historic Photographs, 1936, 98-2725.jpg, Arizona Memory Project, Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records,

⁵⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, "1930 Census, Arizona," 93.



Figure 8. "Photograph of United States Highway 80 in Benson (Ariz.)" from 1936 (AZ Memory Project, 98-2725.jpg).

Interstate Highway Era (1942-1979)

The national highway system gained further traction in the 1930s when the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1938 began the process of evaluating the possibility of a six-route toll network that would expand across the nation, three going north-south and three going east-west.⁵⁹ Although the study found that a free highway system would be feasible and the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944 authorized the "National System of Interstate Highways," it wasn't until after the end of the Second World War that the modern interstate system was developed.⁶⁰ In Arizona, the post-war period was one of significant population growth. Between 1940 and 1950, the state grew by fifty percent to a population of 750,000, and by 1970 it had more than doubled to 1.8 million.⁶¹ This trend of exponential growth could also be seen in the City of Benson. In 1950, the city had grown to a population of 1,440, a fifty percent increase from the reported 962 total in 1940.⁶²

Across the nation, local and state governments, along with the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO), began to work with and submit recommendations to the Public Roads Administration (PRA) on routes and standards the new interstate highway system should follow.⁶³ Throughout the 1950s,

⁵⁹ Richard F. Weingroff, "Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956: Creating the Interstate System," *Public Roads*, vol. 60, no. 1, (Summer 1996), no pagination, <https://highways.dot.gov/public-roads/summer-1996/federal-aid-highway-act-1956-creating-interstate-system>.

⁶⁰ Weingroff, "Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956: Creating the Interstate System."

⁶¹ Mark E. Pry and Fred Andersen, "Arizona Transportation History," (Tempe, Arizona: History Plus, for the Arizona Department of Transportation, December 2011), 57, <https://azdot.gov/research-reports/arizona-transportation-history>.

⁶² U.S. Census Bureau, "1950 Census, Arizona," (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1950), table 6.

⁶³ Weingroff, "Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956: Creating the Interstate System."

funding was provided by Congress in a series of acts to further the interstate highway project, the most important of which was the Federal Highway Act of 1956 which provided funding for the interstate system to be built over 13 years.⁶⁴ With the introduction of funding for the interstate highway system, Arizona began to plan for the replacement and supplementation of its then existing highway system. U.S. 80, which experienced the heaviest traffic of any highway within Arizona, was to be replaced by Interstate 10.⁶⁵ Work on Arizona's interstate highway system began in 1957, with a majority completed by 1972.⁶⁶ In 1977, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)⁶⁷, "...approved Arizona's request to remove the U.S. 80 designation from all but the section between the New Mexico state line and Benson. Both Arizona and New Mexico would petition in 1989 to remove the U.S. 80 designation between Benson and Anthony, New Mexico. The remaining stretch in Arizona became State Route 80.⁶⁸ Although the I-10 includes a bypass along the northern boundary of the city, Benson did not lose its connection to the highway system, and it remains an important transportation junction in southeastern Arizona today.

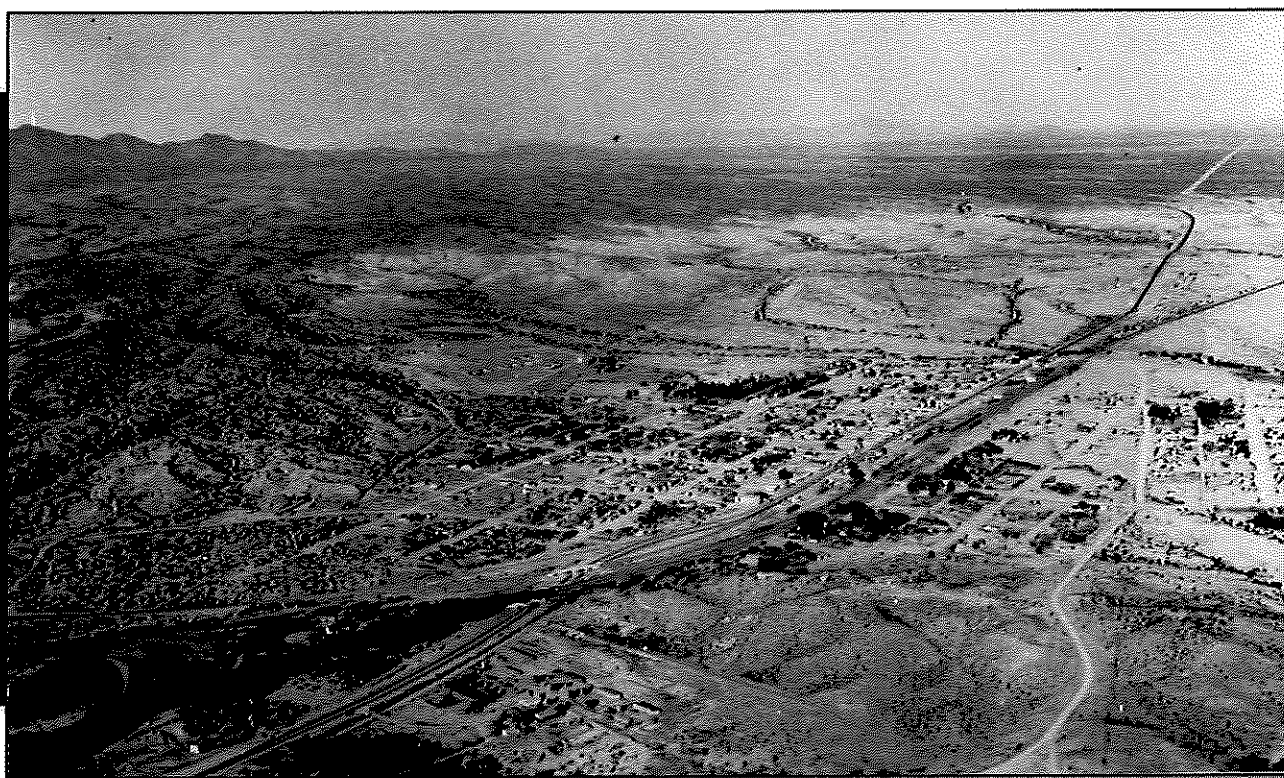


Figure 9. Aerial view of the City of Benson, looking southwest, 1948 (Courtesy of Benson Historical Museum)

⁶⁴ Weingroff, "Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956: Creating the Interstate System."

⁶⁵ Pry and Andersen, "Arizona Transportation History," 61; Rookhuyzen, "US 80: Mother of Arizona highways."

⁶⁶ Pry and Andersen, 61-63.

⁶⁷ The AASHO was renamed the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) on November 13, 1973 to reflect a broadened mission that encompassed different modes of transportation.

⁶⁸ Rookhuyzen, "US 80: Mother of Arizona highways."

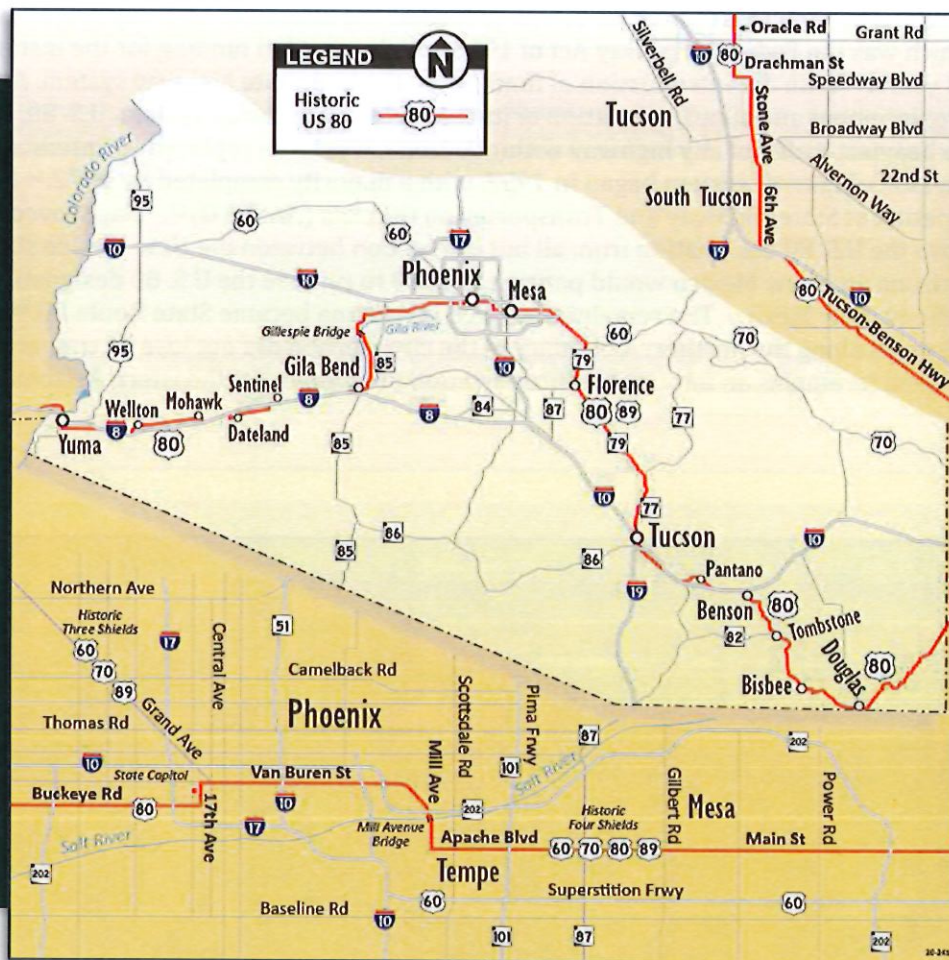


Figure 10. Map of Historic U.S. 80 overlaid on top of a current highway map (ADOT, “U.S. 80: Mother of Arizona highways”).

Architecture in Benson

Architecture in Benson is reflective of the periods of development spurred largely by the historic transportation connections that supported city growth and expansion. During the early railroad era in Benson, a majority of buildings were wood framed, with a limited number constructed of brick or adobe. The arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1880 brought imported materials and building traditions. Dimensional redwood lumber, imported from California, contributed to Benson’s initial building boom. Characteristic of other railroad “boom towns” across the American Southwest, Benson’s earliest buildings were primarily wood framed with wood siding. Modest houses averaged 12 feet by 25 feet and commercial buildings ranged from 20 feet by 40 feet to 25 feet by 60 feet.⁶⁹

Commercial buildings were strongly related to the railroad in materials and physical orientation. Characteristic of other American cities, Benson’s commercial core was the focus for activities as it provided a third space for residents outside of home and place of work. Benson’s commercial core was focused on

⁶⁹ Johns & Strittmatter Inc., *Historic Architectural Properties in the Benson, Arizona Survey Area, Multiple Property Submission*, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, (Arizona 1994), E 1.

the south side of 4th Street across from the passenger depot which was situated on the north side of 4th Street. The lots upon which the commercial buildings were situated were of a standard size – in Benson, these were typically 25 feet wide by 150 feet deep extending south from 4th Street. The street was separated from the row of adjacent buildings by a narrow sidewalk that provided the primary pedestrian access to the buildings.



Figure 11. The intersection of 4th and Huachuca in the City of Benson c. 1942 (Courtesy of the Benson Historical Museum).

The railroad influenced the architecture of the 4th street commercial core by facilitating the interaction of residents and visitors with the third spaces. Most commercial buildings constructed during this period were wood-framed with adobe or brick masonry used occasionally. Exterior façades were commonly false-fronts with stepped parapets to distinguish one building from the next. Buildings were commonly clad in stucco or wood siding and had large display windows with a central entry and transom. Façades commonly extended above the display windows to provide space for ornamentation or advertising, alluding to a more urban appearance. Originally, the sidewalk would have been covered by porches that extended from the façades. This commercial arrangement was common in new American towns during their early development, but the distinctive facades provided the City a unique identity.

Early forms of residential buildings were commonly wood frame vernacular forms such as front-gabled

shotgun, front-gabled “L,” and hall and parlor. As Benson grew with the expansion of the Southern Pacific Railroad and addition of new rail lines between 1880-1910, more sophisticated forms and styles appeared. The Colonial Revival style was the most commonly applied architectural style to residential buildings in Benson during this period, although National Folk and Victorian styles were also used. Common design features included symmetry, square plans, and pyramidal roofs. Entries were centrally placed on the primary elevation and were often accentuated with a porch covering or other decorative element. Although typically employing masonry as a construction material, Colonial Revival style as seen in Benson utilized wood frame construction techniques and was easily applied to the earlier vernacular forms.

In the post-railroad era within Benson (1910-1942), changes to the local economy spurred by the departure of railroad interests and the proliferation of the automobile influenced changes in architectural development. The arrival of the automobile and the national and state highway systems in the 1920s brought about new automobile-related building types, such as fueling stations and auto courts. This period also saw the arrival of manufacturing and agricultural interests in Benson and prompted the construction of additional residential buildings to house workers and their families. This shift in economic influences was accompanied by a shift in residential architectural style from Colonial Revival, National Folk, and Victorian styles to Craftsman and Eclectic styles. The Craftsman style was popularized throughout the United States during the 1910s-1920s as it could be mass produced by contractor builders. The style was most commonly applied to the bungalow form and was widely popular as it permitted a significant amount of customization. Other styles constructed in Benson during this period include Mission Revival to Tudor Revival styles, mirroring the Eclectic movement found throughout the United States during the early twentieth century.

While new styles and materials were evident, Benson still presented a quaint image to visitors. The 1940 Works Progress Administration *Arizona: The Grand Canyon State, A State Guide* noted the character of Benson: “The town, built along the highway, consists mostly of arched and flat-topped adobes, and frame false-fronted structures, some of which are gray in age...”⁷⁰ In the postwar era, I-10 was routed north of Benson and US80. This directed traffic and travelers north of the City, away from the commercial core. Commercial architectural developments in the city utilized modern materials, such as concrete masonry units, and followed popular architectural trends, such as the International style. Similar to elsewhere in Arizona in the postwar era, newly constructed homes were in the popular Ranch and Minimal Traditional styles, using wood framing or concrete masonry units. Housing developments expanded to the north and south of the commercial core of the City. Beginning in the 1990s, manufactured homes were interspersed throughout these developments.

The routing of I-10 north of the City deterred large-scale development associated with highway traffic within city limits. Due to this, the architectural character of Benson remains largely as described in 1940 Works Progress Administration publication, with false-fronted commercial buildings as a testament to Benson’s territorial roots. Residential developments remain reflective of Benson’s development periods as a pre-railroad stagecoach stop, railroad hub, important link in the US highway system, and postwar community. Pre-railroad wood-framed gable-front vernacular homes, early twentieth century Craftsman styled bungalows, and postwar Ranch and Minimal Traditional residences coexist to create a community reflective of its comprehensive historic narrative.

⁷⁰ Workers of the Writers’ Program, Works Progress Administration. *Arizona: The Grand Canyon State, A State Guide*. New York: Hastings House, 1940, 382.

Themes for Further Research

Prior topics, such as the Railroad Historic District and the Apache Powder Historic Residential District, have led to Benson's railroad and mining resources being listed into the National Register in 1994.⁷¹ Benson's Historic Barrio, which narrates the story of Mexican Americans, was previously researched and listed in the National Register in 2011.⁷² There are, however, a breadth of topics for future research and analysis. In addition to the topic of transportation covered within this historic preservation plan, the subjects of agricultural development, tourism, and cultural/ethnic heritage should be explored in future studies and context statements as they are important themes to the history of Benson.

The importance of the railroad in the nineteenth century, followed by the introduction of major highway systems in the twentieth century, made Benson an important stop for tourists and travelers along the rails and roads. Benson persisted and adapted to the changes in transportation, and tourism was one of the main avenues for the city to endure during times of economic uncertainty. Overnight lodging, like motor lodges, gas stations, and tourist destinations, such as museums, the Coronado National Forest, gift shops, Kartchner Caverns State Park, and others, were established during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as travel through the region grew.⁷³ The significance of these patterns of development and their importance relative to the built environment of Benson should be researched and documented.

Moreover, alongside the previously researched Mexican American community, there are other communities that remain present within the City of Benson. These include, but are not limited to, Native Americans, Asian Americans, African Americans, and European immigrants. These groups were historically a part of the community and contributed to the city's growth, development, and cultural and ethnic heritage. It is recommended that research and context statements related to these groups be considered and undertaken in future surveys.

Expanded documentation of these research themes allows for a more accurate and comprehensive foundation for interpreting Benson's historic and cultural resources. Development of future context statements is encouraged and should be used to evaluate associated historic and cultural resources. The evaluation of anticipated newly age-eligible properties and the reevaluation of previously inventoried properties is encouraged, and it is also recommended that properties nearing historic-age eligibility (50 years or older) be considered when planning future themes for research.

⁷¹ Janet S. Gibson and Janet H. Strittmatter, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Benson Railroad Historic District," (Tucson, Arizona: Johns & Strittmatter Inc., August 16, 1993); Janet S. Gibson and Janet H. Strittmatter, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Supplementary Listing Record, Apache Powder Historic Residential District," (Tucson, Arizona: Johns & Strittmatter Inc., August 16, 1993).

⁷² Janet H. Parkhurst, Ralph Comey, and Karen DeLay, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Benson Historic Barrio," (Tucson, Arizona: Janet H. Strittmatter Inc., Ralph Comey Architects, July 19, 2010).

⁷³ City of Benson, "Tourism," accessed February 12, 2024, <https://www.bensonaz.gov/departments/information/tourism.php>.

PRESERVATION IN BENSON

“In the end, our society will be defined not only by what we create, but by what we refuse to destroy.” – John Sawhill, *president and CEO of The Nature Conservancy and 12th President of New York University 1975-1979.*

Historic property designation in Benson is limited to resources listed in the National Register either as an individual resource or a contributing resource to a historic district. Currently, there are no properties listed in the Benson Historic Register. Benson has three National Register-listed historic districts and six individually listed National Register properties that are associated with the railroad-era development of the city.

Currently Designated Historic Resources

Apache Powder Historic Residential District

Benson currently boasts the Apache Powder Residential Historic District, listed in the National Register in 1994. The historic district is located southwest of the primary commercial corridor on East 4th Street and is situated within a larger residential development. The district totals 4.3 acres and includes buildings and structures constructed during the 1920s by the Apache Powder Company, a large local explosive manufacturing firm that operated a plant nine miles southeast of Benson in the early 1920s. The listed historic district includes nine contributing buildings, seven contributing garages, and Apache Park. The district was found locally significant under *Criterion C: Architecture* for the period of significance 1925-1942 as an excellent example of the Craftsman Bungalow and Period Revival architectural styles that were popularized in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.⁷⁴



Photograph 2. 209 West 6th Street displays a Mission Revival style in the Apache Powder Historic District (Cindy Allen).

⁷⁴ Janet S. Gibson and Janet H. Strittmatter, “National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Supplementary Listing Record, Apache Powder Historic Residential District,” Tucson, Arizona: Johns & Strittmatter Inc., August 16, 1993.

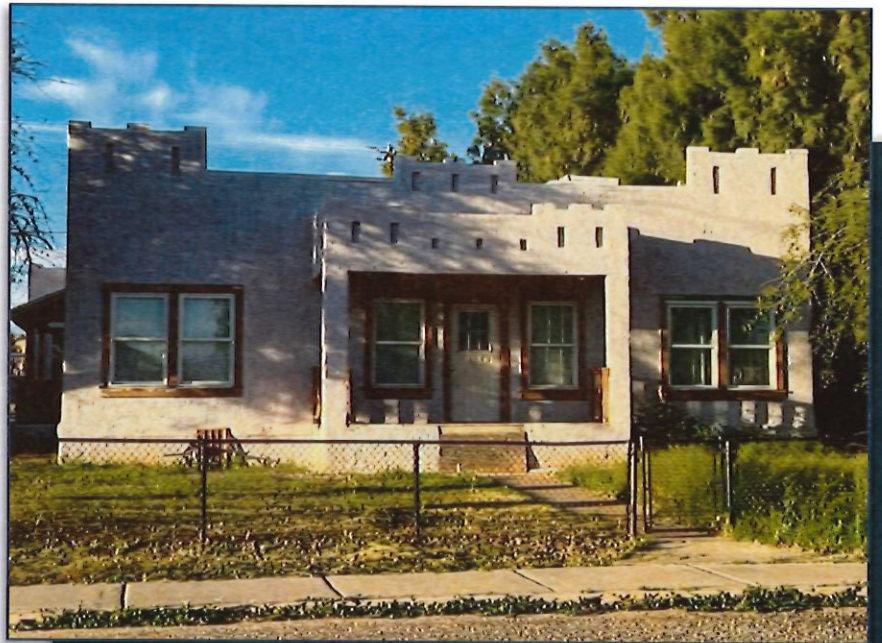
Table 1. Historic resources listed in the National Register as part of the Apache Powder Historic District.

Address	Architectural Style	Date Constructed	Eligibility
143 West 6 th Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1936	Contributing
143 West 6 th Street Detached Garage	N/A	n.d.	Contributing
157 West 6 th Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1924	Contributing
157 West 6 th Street Detached Garage*	N/A	n.d.	Contributing
161 West 6 th Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1922	Contributing
161 West 6 th Street Detached Garage	N/A	n.d.	Non-contributing
173 West 6 th Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1925	Contributing
173 West 6 th Street Detached Garage	N/A	1990	Non-contributing
189 West 6 th Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1927	Contributing
189 West 6 th Street Detached Garage	N/A	n.d.	Contributing
193 West 6 th Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1924	Contributing
193 West 6 th Street Detached Garage	N/A	n.d.	Contributing
209 West 6 th Street	Mission Revival	1925	Contributing
209 West 6 th Street Shed	N/A	1925	Non-contributing
243 West 6 th Street	Spanish Eclectic	1924	Contributing
243 West 6 th Street Detached Garage	N/A	n.d.	Contributing
243 West 6 th Street Storage Building	N/A	n.d.	Non-contributing
255 West 6 th Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1924	Contributing
255 West 6 th Street Storage Building	N/A	n.d.	Contributing
Apache Park	N/A	c. 1925	Contributing

*Resource is no longer extant



Photograph 4. View of 193 West 6th Street showing the Craftsman Bungalow architectural style found in the Apache Powder Historic District (Cindy Allen)



Photograph 3. View of 243 West 6th Street showing the Spanish Eclectic, or Spanish Colonial Revival, architectural style found in the Apache Powder Historic District (Cindy Allen)

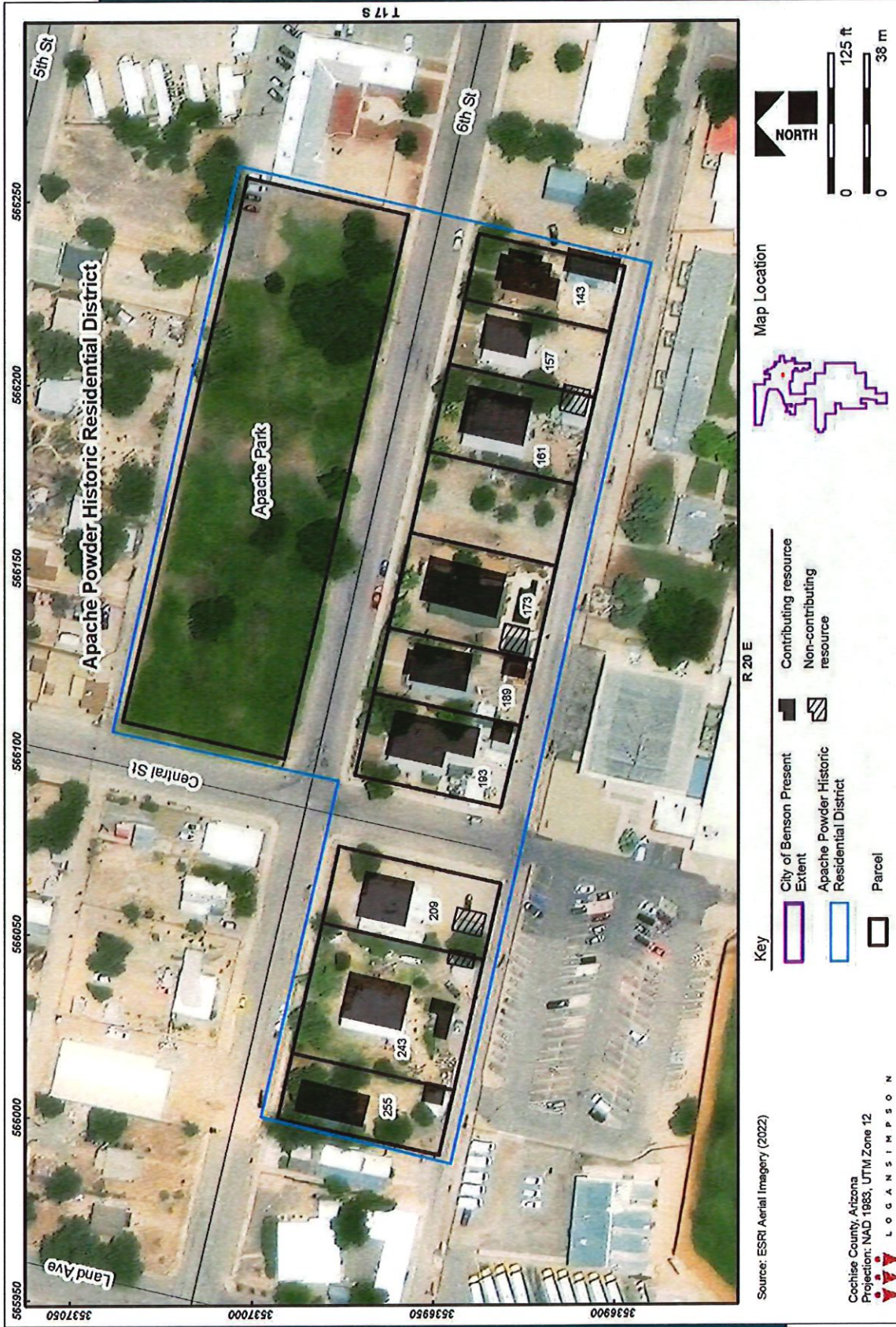


Figure 12. Map of the Apache Powder Historic Residential District with contributing and non-contributing resources identified.

Benson Railroad Historic District

The Benson Railroad Historic District was listed in the National Register in 1994. The historic district is situated north of the primary commercial corridor on East 4th Street and the railway. The boundaries of the historic district are Lots 1-16, Block 13 and Lots 1-5, Block 12. The district was found to be locally significant for *Criterion C: Architecture* for the period of significance 1880-1910. When listed, the district displayed architectural styles that reflected Benson's role as a secondary transportation and trade center in Cochise County. The wood frame construction and late 19th and early 20th century architectural styles are reflective of the early history of Benson as a railway hub city. Since its original designation in the early 1990s, the district has suffered some losses to the buildings within its boundaries.



Photograph 5. View of The Arnold Hotel at 253 East 3rd Street

Table 2. Historic resources listed in the National Register as part of the Benson Railroad Historic District.

Address	Architectural Style	Date Constructed	Eligibility
201 East 3 rd Street	Colonial Revival	1893-1910	Contributing
201 East 3 rd Street Outbuilding	N/A	c. pre-1993	Non-contributing
223 East 3 rd Street	Frame Vernacular	1880-1890s	Contributing
235 East 3 rd Street	Frame Vernacular	1880-1890s	Contributing
241 East 3 rd Street	Frame Vernacular	1880-1890s	Contributing
253 East 3 rd Street (Hotel Arnold)	Colonial Revival Style	1907-1908	Contributing
253 East 3 rd Street (Hotel Arnold) Rear Addition	N/A	c. pre-1993	Non-contributing
East 3 rd Street Carriage House*	Adobe Vernacular	1886-1910	Contributing
267 East 3 rd Street*	Frame Vernacular	1880-1890s	Contributing
East 3 rd Street (side gabled dwelling) *	Frame Vernacular	1880-1890s	Contributing
285 East 3 rd Street*	Colonial Revival	1880	Contributing
305 East 3 rd Street	Queen Anne	1880-1910	Contributing
305 East 3 rd Street Outbuilding	N/A	1951	Non-contributing
305 East 3 rd Street Outbuilding	N/A	n.d.	Non-contributing
305 East 3 rd Street Detached Garage	N/A	c. post-1993	Not assessed
North San Pedro at alley (row house) *	Commercial	c. 1900	Contributing

*Resource is no longer extant



Photograph 6. 305 East 3rd Street



Photograph 7. 201 East 3rd Street.



Figure 13. Map of the Benson Railroad Historic District with contributing and non-contributing resources identified.

Benson Historic Barrio

The Benson Historic Barrio was listed in the National Register in 2011. The historic district is located south of the primary commercial corridor on East 4th Street and remains situated within a semi-rural residential district. Historically, the barrio included other occupancy types like educational, institutional, and small-scale commercial buildings. Today, the district consists of primarily residential dwellings with dispersed vacant lots, but does retain non-residential occupancies, such as the Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church. The district was found locally significant under *Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage: Hispanic*, *Criterion A: Transportation*, *Criterion A: Community Planning & Development*, and *Criterion C: Architecture* for the period of significance 1880-1956.

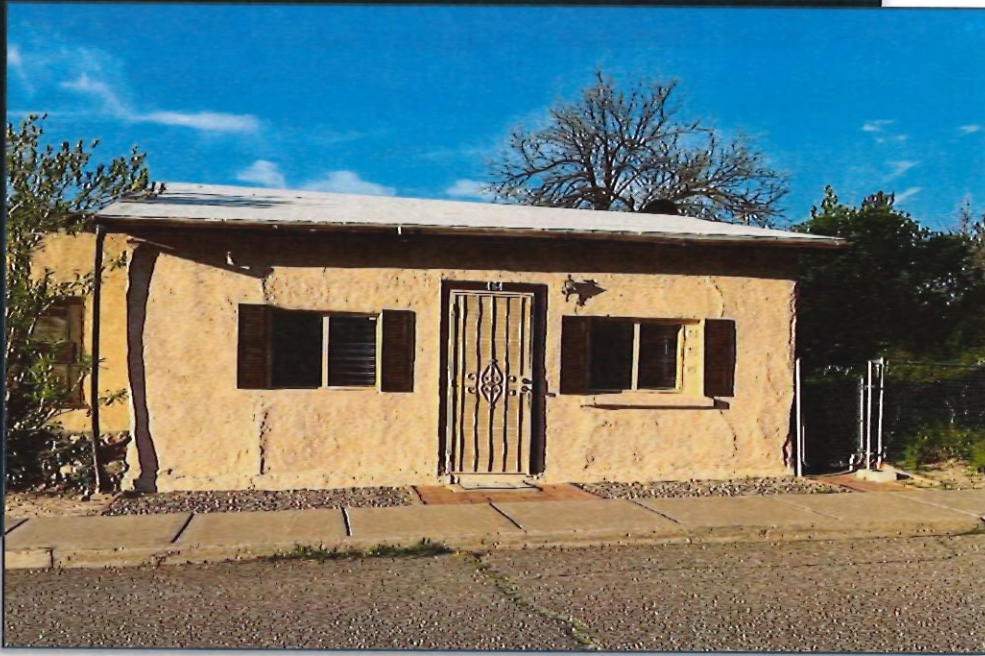
The district is significant for its association with the history of Mexican American residents in Benson. Mexicans and Mexican Americans arrived in Benson during the agricultural and railroad eras in the late 19th century and historically contributed to Benson’s architectural, economic, and social fabric. The district retains thirty-two contributing buildings and one contributing structure that showcase vernacular forms found during the late 19th and early 20th centuries for residential and commercial occupancies. The district is found significant for its association with early Mexican American architectural characteristics such as vernacular styles and yardscapes. The barrio serves as a significant component of Benson’s community development.

Table 3. Historic resources listed in the National Register as part of the Benson Historic Barrio.

Address	Architectural Style	Date Constructed	Eligibility
163 San Pedro Street	Side-gable vernacular	1988	Non-contributing
307 & 325 E. 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1973	Non-contributing
337 East 5 th Street	Vernacular Barn	n.d.	Non-contributing
345 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1900	Contributing
351 East 5 th Street	Gable-front vernacular	1900	Contributing
369 East 5 th Street*	Gable-front vernacular	1900	Contributing
371 East 5 th Street*	Side-gable vernacular	1925	Contributing
387 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1925	Contributing
393 East 5 th Street*	Gable-front vernacular	1905	Contributing
403 East 5 th Street	Gable-front vernacular	1966	Non-contributing
411 East 5 th Street*	Gable-front vernacular	1910	Contributing
400 Block East 5 th Street	Vernacular shed	1930	Contributing
419 East 5 th Street	Gable-front vernacular	1928	Contributing
427 East 5 th Street	Gable-front vernacular	1905	Contributing
463 East 5 th Street	Gable-front vernacular	1900	Contributing

Address	Architectural Style	Date Constructed	Eligibility
Jail (Parcel 12323177)	Vernacular jail	1915	Contributing
476 East 5 th Street	Side-gable manufactured	1990s	Non-contributing
481 East 5 th Street	Side-gable manufactured	1990s	Non-contributing
505 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1940	Non-contributing
572 East 5 th Street	Cross-wing vernacular	1944	Contributing
550 East 5 th Street	Pyramidal vernacular	1930	Contributing
546 East 5 th Street*	Gable-front vernacular	1910	Contributing
534 East 5 th Street	Vernacular-side gable	1945	Contributing
526 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1916	Contributing
512 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1932	Contributing
504 East 5 th Street	Hip-roof vernacular	1905, 1940	Contributing
498 East 5 th Street	Parapet-commercial vernacular	1936	Contributing
482 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1925	Contributing
480 East 5 th Street	Gable-commercial vernacular	1936	Contributing
478 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1905	Contributing
464 East 5 th Street	Side-gable vernacular	1939	Contributing
452 East 5 th Street*	Side-gable vernacular	1928	Contributing
412 East 5 th Street	Cross-wing vernacular	1940	Contributing
418 East 5 th Street	Gable-front vernacular	1900, 1957	Contributing
408 East 5 th Street	Gable-commercial vernacular	1925	Contributing
383 East 5 th Street*	Side-gable vernacular	1950	Contributing
386 East 5 th Street	Mid-Century Modern	1948	Contributing
374 East 5 th Street	Gable-block/wing vernacular	1900	Contributing
362 East 5 th Street	Gable-front vernacular	1956	Contributing
203 Block East 5 th Street	Vernacular commercial, Modern influence	c. 1970	Non-contributing
203 South San Pedro Street	Craftsman Bungalow	1937	Contributing

*Resource is no longer extant



Photograph 8. View of 464 East 5th Street (constructed in 1939) as a typical example of the side-gable vernacular type prevalent throughout the Benson Historic Barrio (Cindy Allen).



Photograph 9. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church at 386 East 5th Street (constructed in 1948) in the Benson Historic Barrio.

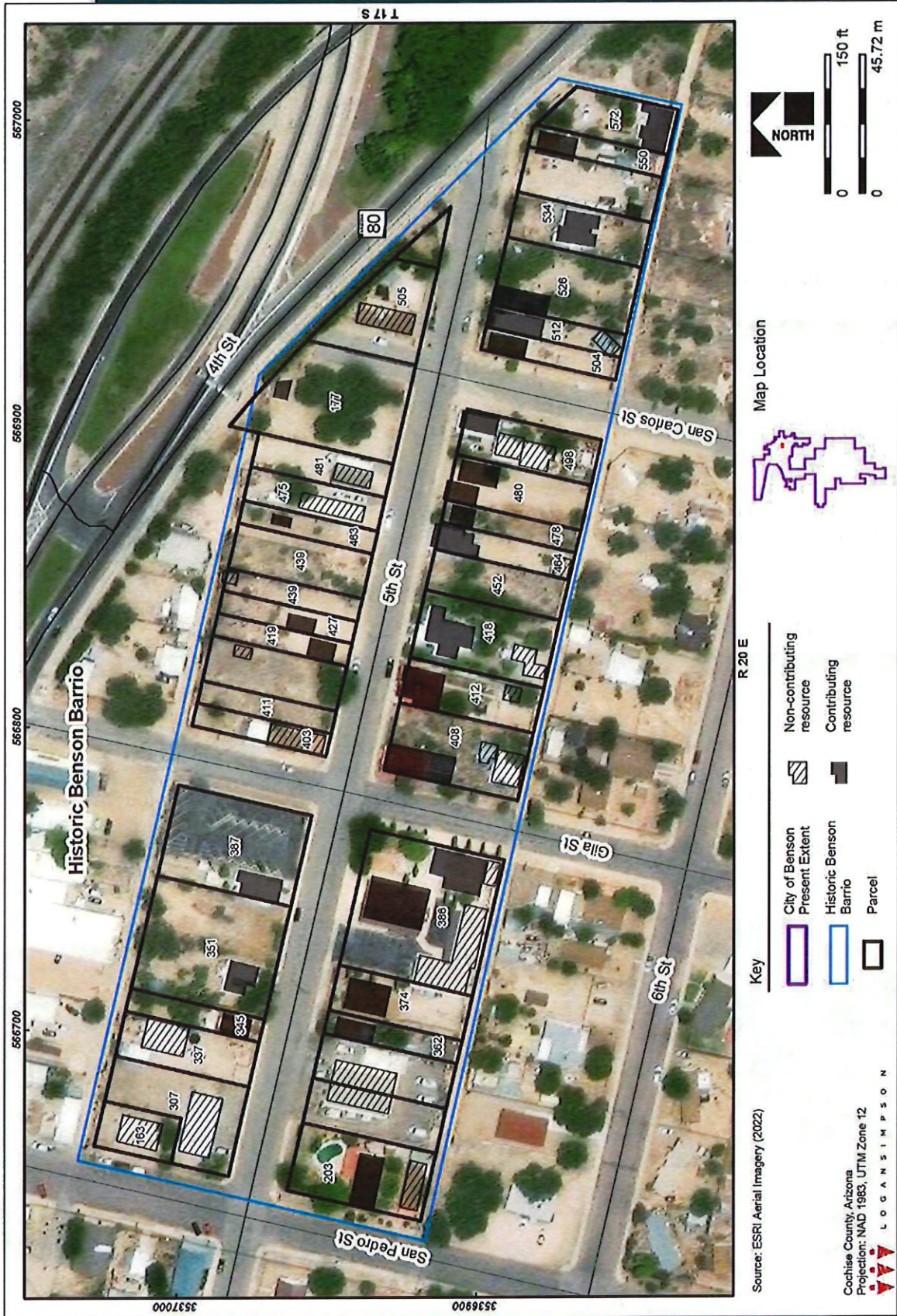


Figure 14. Map of the Historic Benson Barrio with contributing and non-contributing resources.

Individually Listed Resources

A Multiple Property Submission (MPS) for Historic Architectural Properties in Benson was approved and accepted by the Department of the Interior in 1994. The document provides historic context for the architectural styles found in Benson from 1880-1942. The resources nominated as a part of the MPS are reflective of the city's role as a secondary transportation and trade center in Cochise County. Architectural styles focused upon in the document are reflective of the early development of Benson as a railroad town 1880 and 1910 to its role as a junction point in the national and state highways systems in the 1920s.

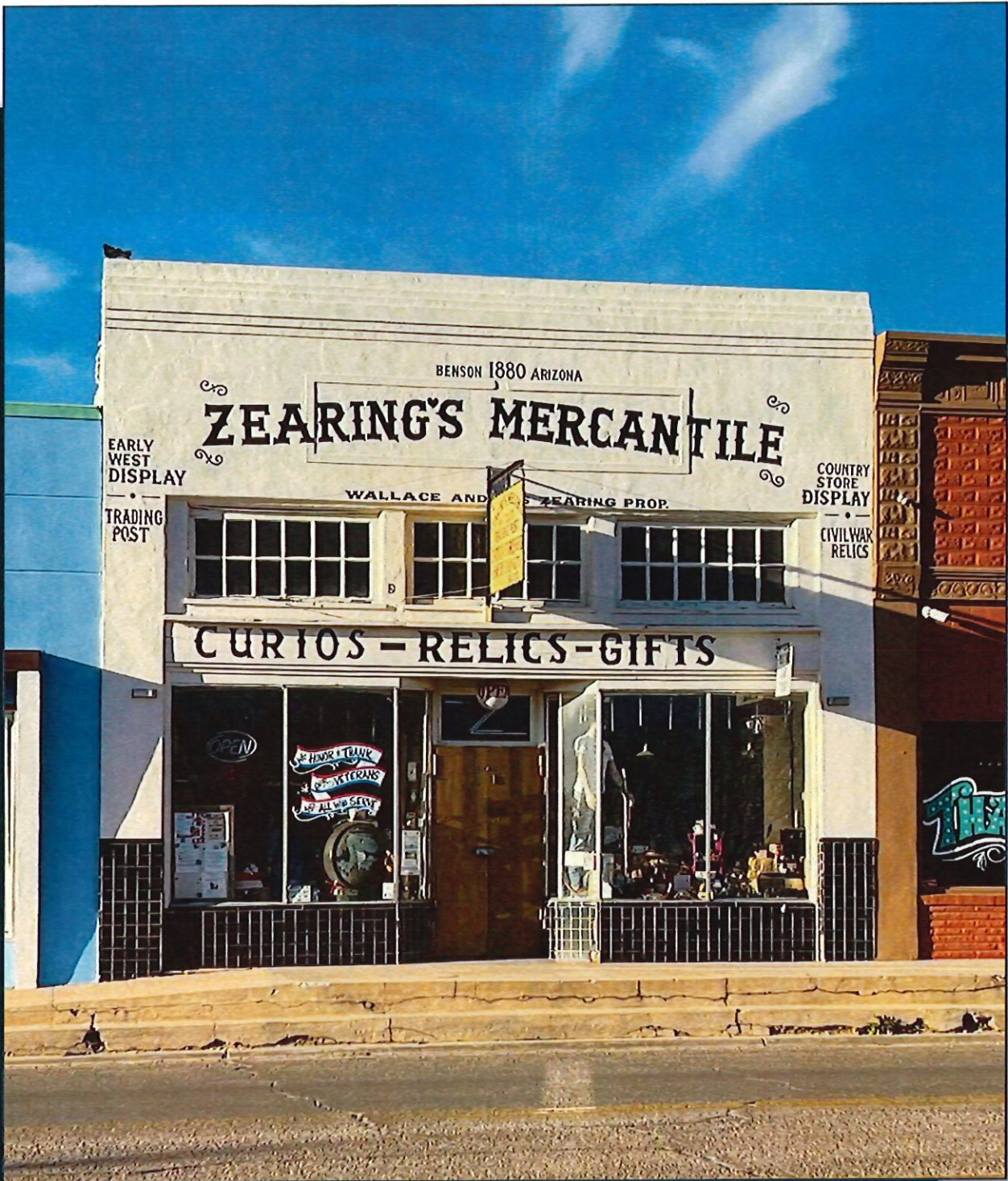
Table 4. Individually listed resources in the National Register designated by the Benson Multiple Property Submission in 1994.

Resource Name	Address	Criterion	Date Constructed
Oasis Court	363 West 4 th Street	C	1930-1933
Hi Wo Company Grocery	398 East 4 th Street	C	c. 1896
Max Treu Territorial Meat Company / Zearing's Mercantile	324 East 4 th Street	C	1886
W.D. Martinez General Merchandise Store / Benson Museum	NW corner of East 5 th Street and San Pedro Street	C	1910
Redfield / Romine House	146 East 6 th Street	C	1930
Smith/Beck House	425 S. Huachuca Street	C	1907

The current National Register-listed historic resources throughout Benson are largely reflective of the initial development period associated with the arrival of the railroad and expansion of Benson as a significant transportation and trade center. Resources are reflective of early construction materials and techniques that proliferated along the railroad route of the late 19th and early 20th century, such as adobe and wood framing. Collections of adobe and wood frame buildings remain prevalent throughout the city, concentrated along the 4th Street commercial corridor. A few of the remaining historic resources from this period are increasingly rare examples of Craftsman and Eclectic architectural styles as applied to the American Southwest.



Photograph 10. Benson Historical Museum at 180 South San Pedro Street.



Photograph 11. Zearing's Mercantile (1886) located at 324 East 4th Street (Cindy Allen).

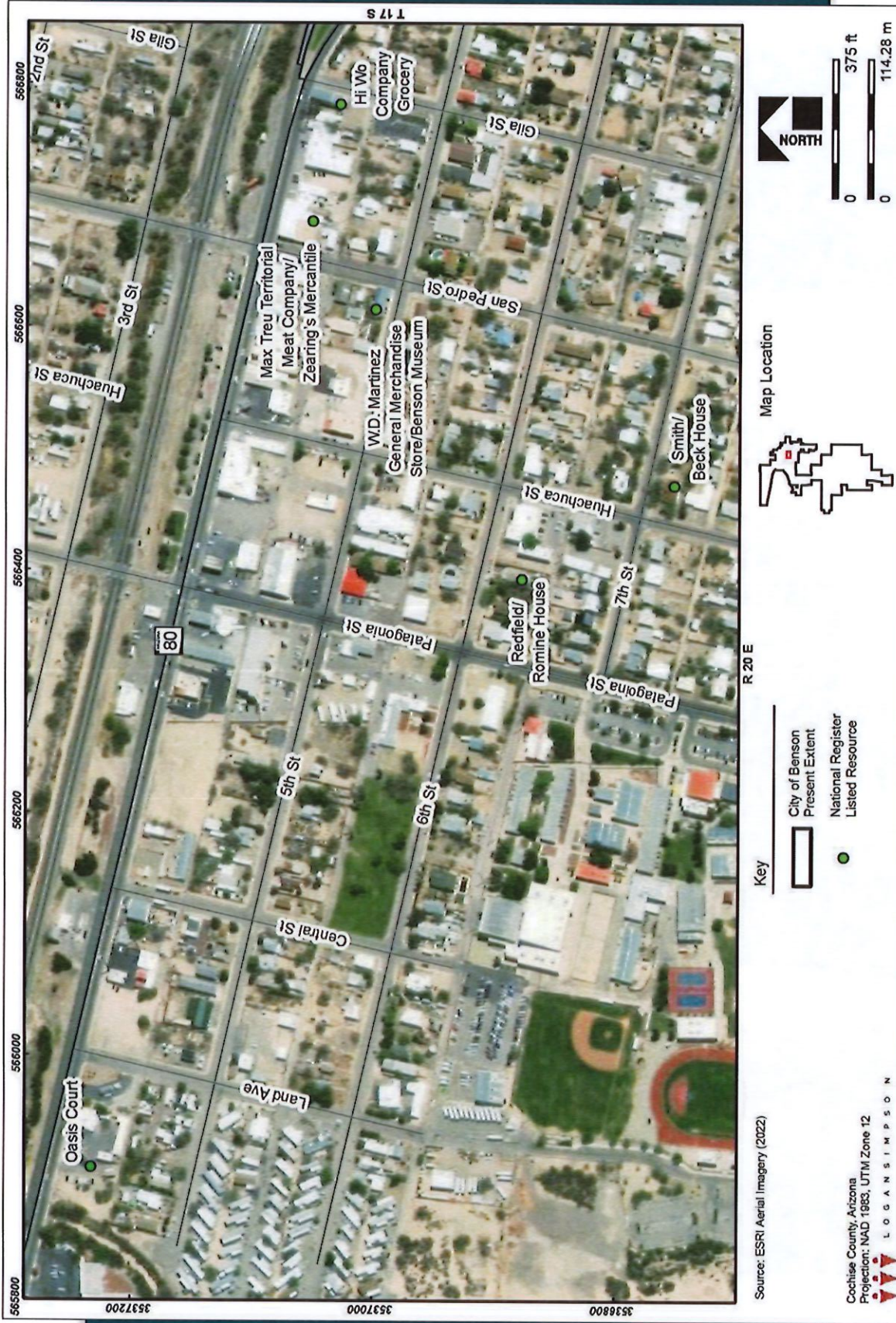


Figure 15. Map of individual National Register listed resources in Benson.

Surveyed and Potential Historic Resources

Four previous surveys of historic resources in Benson were conducted prior to creation of the National Register nominations that designated the historic districts and individually listed resources in the City. The total number of surveyed resources are included in the table below, with a corresponding survey year. The most recent survey was conducted in 2005 for the Benson Historic Barrio Historic District.

A significant portion of the potential historic resources eligible for local and/or National Register listing are located along the primary historic commercial strip of 4th Street. While these resources have been altered since original construction, it was ascertained that some modifications to the exterior facades and interior spaces are removable and may be covering historic fabric. Further, at the local level, Benson's historic preservation ordinance provides significance criteria that allows for listing a resource that, "represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood."⁷⁵ These resources may be eligible for listing in the Benson Historic Property Register with property owner consent.

Table 5. Surveyed properties within the City of Benson.

Address	Date Surveyed	Survey Report
201 East 3 rd Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
223 East 3 rd Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
235 East 3 rd Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
241 East 3 rd Street	1993	Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
253 East 3 rd Street (Hotel Arnold)	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
East 3 rd Street Carriage House	1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
267 East 3 rd Street	1993	Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
East 3 rd Street (side gabled dwelling)*	1993	Benson Railroad HD
285 East 3 rd Street*	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
305 East 3 rd Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Benson Railroad HD
112 West 3 rd Street	1991	Architecture of Benson
196 East 4 th Street	1993	Benson MPS
264 East 4 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
292 East 4 th Street	1993	Benson MPS
298 East 4 th Street	1993	Benson MPS
330 East 4 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
324 East 4 th Street	1993	Architecture of Benson Benson MPS
378 East 4 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
398 East 4 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
363 West 4 th Street	1993	Benson MPS
256 East 5 th Street	1993	Benson MPS
278 East 5 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
288 East 5 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
307 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
325 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
337 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio

⁷⁵ City of Benson Ordinance 319 § 24-3.a.1 (1989).

Address	Date Surveyed	Survey Report
345 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
351 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
362 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
369 East 5 th Street*	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
371 East 5 th Street*	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
374 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
386 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
387 East 5 th Street	1991, 2005	Architecture of Benson, Benson Historic Barrio
393 East 5 th Street*	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
403 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
408 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
411 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
412 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
418 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
419 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
419 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
427 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
452 East 5 th Street	1991, 2005	Architecture of Benson, Benson Historic Barrio
463 East 5 th Street	1991, 2005	Architecture of Benson, Benson Historic Barrio
464 East 5 th Street	1991, 2005	Architecture of Benson, Benson Historic Barrio
475 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
478 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
480 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
481 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
482 East 5 th Street*	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
498 East 5 th Street	1993, 2005	Benson MPS, Benson Historic Barrio
504 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
505 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
512 East 5 th Street	1991, 2005	Architecture of Benson, Benson Historic Barrio
526 East 5 th Street	1991, 2005	Architecture of Benson, Benson Historic Barrio
534 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
546 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
550 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
572 East 5 th Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
167 West 5 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
189 West 5 th Street	1991	Architecture of Benson
211 West 5 th Street	1991	Architecture of Benson
101 East 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
146 East 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
166 East 6 th Street*	1991	Architecture of Benson
258 East 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
143 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD
157 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD
161 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD
173 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD
189 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD

Address	Date Surveyed	Survey Report
193 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD
209 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD
242 West 6 th Street	1991	Architecture of Benson
243 West 6 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS, Apache Powder HD
255 West 6 th Street	1993	Apache Powder HD
298 East 7 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
347 East 7 th Street	1991	Architecture of Benson
230 East 8 th Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
176 South Central Avenue*	1991	Architecture of Benson
425 South Huachuca Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
183 East Pearl Street	1993	Benson MPS
North San Pedro at alley (row house)*	1993	Benson Railroad HD
NW corner of East 5 th and San Pedro Street (Benson Historical Museum)	1993	Benson MPS
163 South San Pedro Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
203 South San Pedro Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
245 South San Pedro Street	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
371 South San Pedro Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
372 South San Pedro Street	1991, 1993	Architecture of Benson, Benson MPS
435 South San Pedro Street	1993	Benson MPS
476 South San Pedro Street	1991	Architecture of Benson
Apache Park	1993	Apache Powder HD
Jail	2005	Benson Historic Barrio
Utility Company	2005	Benson Historic Barrio

*Resource is no longer extant

A windshield survey was conducted on May 2, 2023 as part of the development of this Historic Preservation Plan. The goal of the survey was to identify areas within the city that include historic resources that are potentially eligible for designation at the local, state, and/or national levels. The survey was not a building-by-building survey. Rather, it was designed to broadly assess the cultural and architectural characteristics of the community. Potential historic properties identified by the Benson HPC were assessed for their age, significance, and integrity. The HPC identified the following buildings as potentially eligible for National Register and/or Benson Historic Property Register listing:

Page's Palace

Constructed in 1927 at 250 East 4th Street, Page's Palace is a familiar sight located in the commercial downtown area of Benson. The building is wood frame and features a distinctive wood shake primary façade on its north elevation. Although constructed in the post-railroad era, it is compatible with the design of Benson's early development as it remains reflective of the narrow lot widths with buildings extending south from 4th Street. Despite the extensive alteration to the exterior façade, the building remains a significant piece of history for community members. It is possible that elements of the historic façade may be extant under the current material.



*Figure 16. Page's Palace on 4th Street and San Pedro looking west, 1949
(Courtesy of Benson Historical Museum).*



Photograph 12. Page's Palace at 250 East 4th Street (Cindy Allen).

Page's Palace is eligible for listing in the Benson Historic Property Register as it meets Criterion 1 and 5 in Benson's historic preservation ordinance as it possesses historic interest and value as part of the economic and social history of the locality and serves as a familiar visual feature of the neighborhood

The Horseshoe

The Horseshoe has been serving the community since 1936. Originally operating out of a single-story adobe building, the Horseshoe Café was rebuilt in 1948 as a wood frame, two story building at 154 4th Street. Despite subsequent alterations to the exterior, the Horseshoe Café remains a familiar feature of the City, serving locals and visitors alike. Its iconic neon signage remains a landmark in the community.

The building is eligible for listing in the Benson Historic Property Register with owner consent as it meets Criterion 1 and 5 in Benson's historic preservation ordinance as it possesses historic interest and value as part of the economic and social history of the locality and serves as a familiar visual feature of the neighborhood. Further research is recommended to accurately determine eligibility for listing in the National Register.

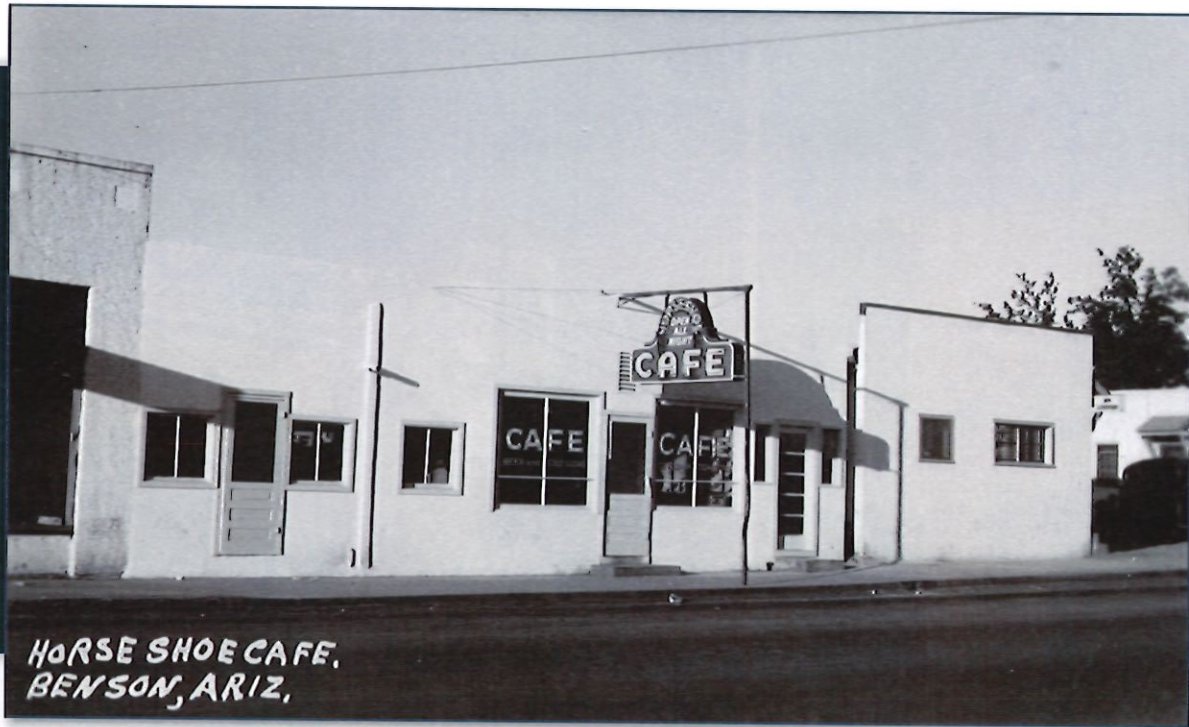


Figure 17. The original Horseshoe Cafe building, circa pre-1948 (Courtesy of Benson Historical Museum)



Figure 18. Post-1948 view of The Horseshoe along 4th Street (Courtesy of Benson Historical Museum).

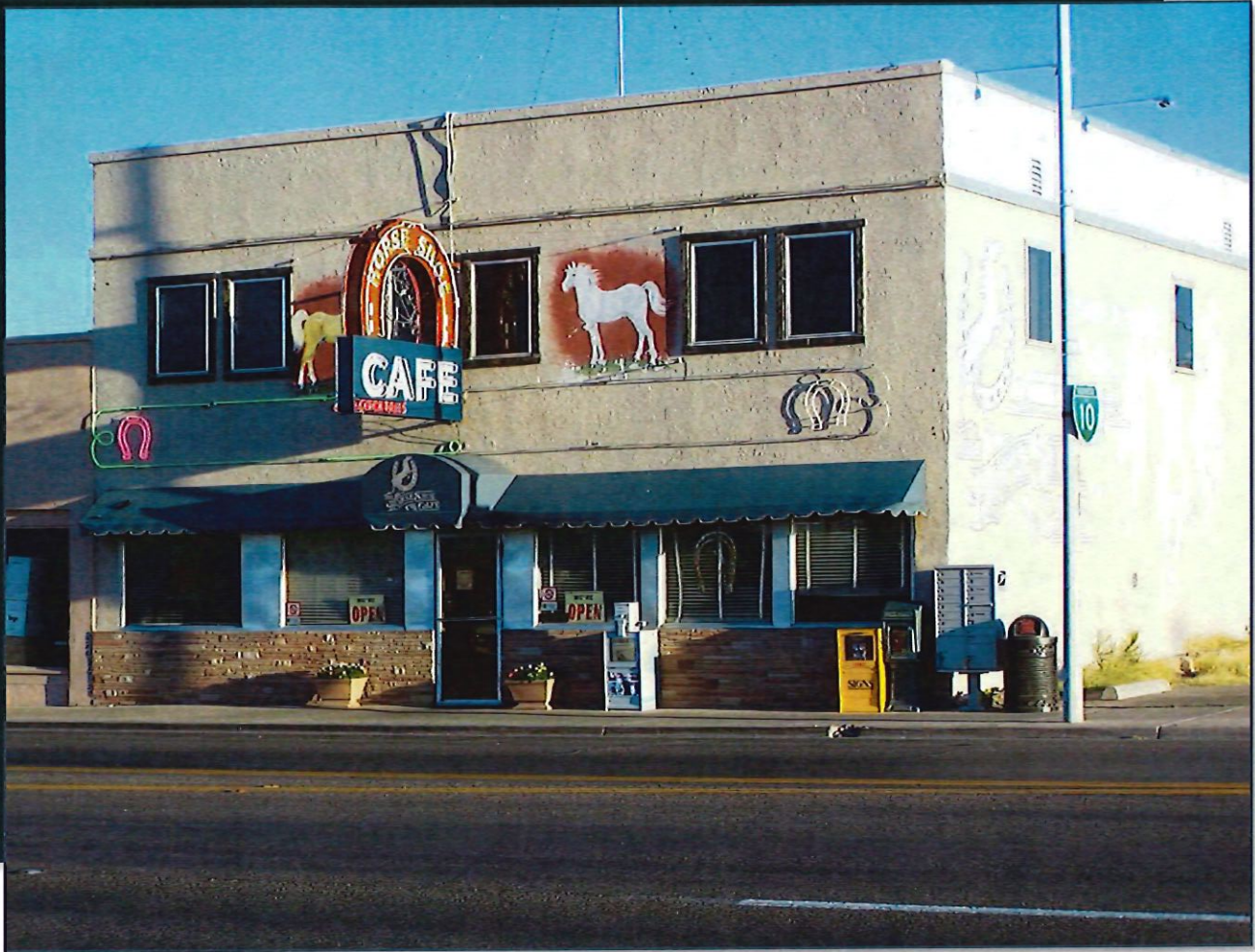


Figure 19. The Horseshoe (Courtesy of City of Benson).

Old Benson Ice Cream Stop

The Old Benson Ice Cream Stop is located at 102 West 4th Street and is a good example of a resource in Benson that meets the fifth significance criteria listed in the historic preservation ordinance as it represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood. Constructed in the postwar era in the International style, the Old Benson Ice Cream Shop is a good example of how local historic preservation should aim to celebrate and protect the places that are significant to a community.



Photograph 13. The Old Benson Ice Cream Stop at 102 West 4th Street (Cindy Allen).

256 East 5th Street

This residence, constructed in 1909, remains a good example of Railroad Era residential architecture in Benson. The residence is constructed of wood frame and clad in composite siding and topped with a steeply pitched asphalt shingle hip roof.

Despite the alteration of the roofing material from wood shingle to composite shingle and the enclosure of the porch, the residence retains its character defining features that associate it with a Folk Colonial Revival style. This building may be eligible for listing in the Benson Historic Property Register with property owner consent as it embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the Colonial Revival architectural style and possesses special character and historic value as part of the cultural history of the locality and region. The residence may be eligible for listing in the National Register, but further investigation is recommended.

7th Street Residential Historic District

There is a potential residential historic district located in the neighborhood south of 4th Street that was part of the 1907 town plat of Benson. The potential district is roughly bounded by 6th Street to

the north, Dagoon Street to the east, 8th Street to the south, and Huachuca Street to the west, however, further research is recommended to determine if a larger district would be merited. The area contains a concentration of residential historic resources that retain architectural characteristics reflective of the Post-Railroad Era in Benson. Architectural styles featured include Colonial Revival, Folk Victorian, National Folk, and Craftsman styles. The potential district is interspersed with Ranch style residences that were later, post-war additions to the neighborhood. This collection of early twentieth century architectural styles directly associates Benson with its Post-Railroad Era history and conveys significance associated with architectural development facilitated by materials imported by the railroad. These resources remain a valuable component of local and state history. Example potential contributing resources include 365 South Huachuca Street (constructed 1926), 345 South Huachuca Street (constructed 1926), 224 East 6th Street (constructed 1928), 372 South San Pedro Street (constructed 1918), 298 East 7th Street (constructed 1907) and the 7th Street Cemetery.

This district is eligible for listing in the Benson Historic Property Register with property owner consent as it is a collection of buildings that embody the distinguishing characteristics of several architectural styles and possess special character and historic value as a part of the cultural and social history of the locality and region. The district is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Architecture and potentially Criterion A: Community Planning and Development. More research is recommended prior to drafting of a nomination. It is recommended that the current Benson MPS be utilized when conducting research and drafting the nomination.

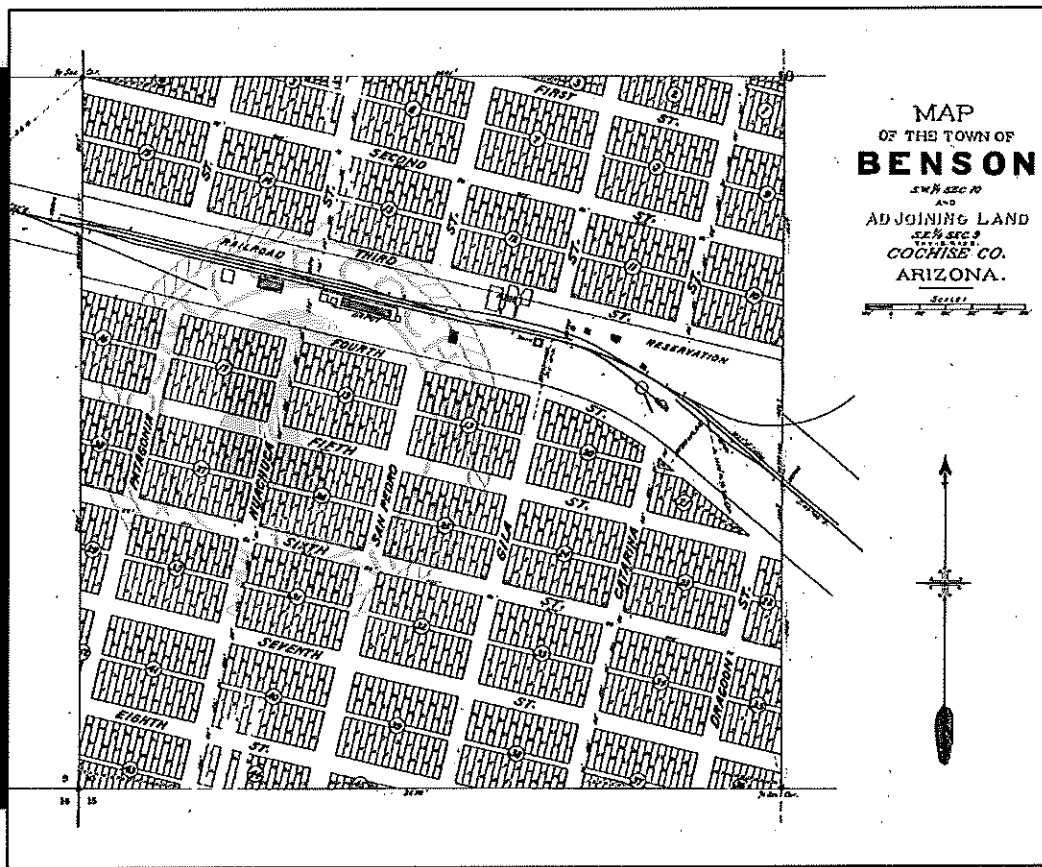


Figure 20. 1907 Plat of the City of Benson (Cochise County Property Assessor)

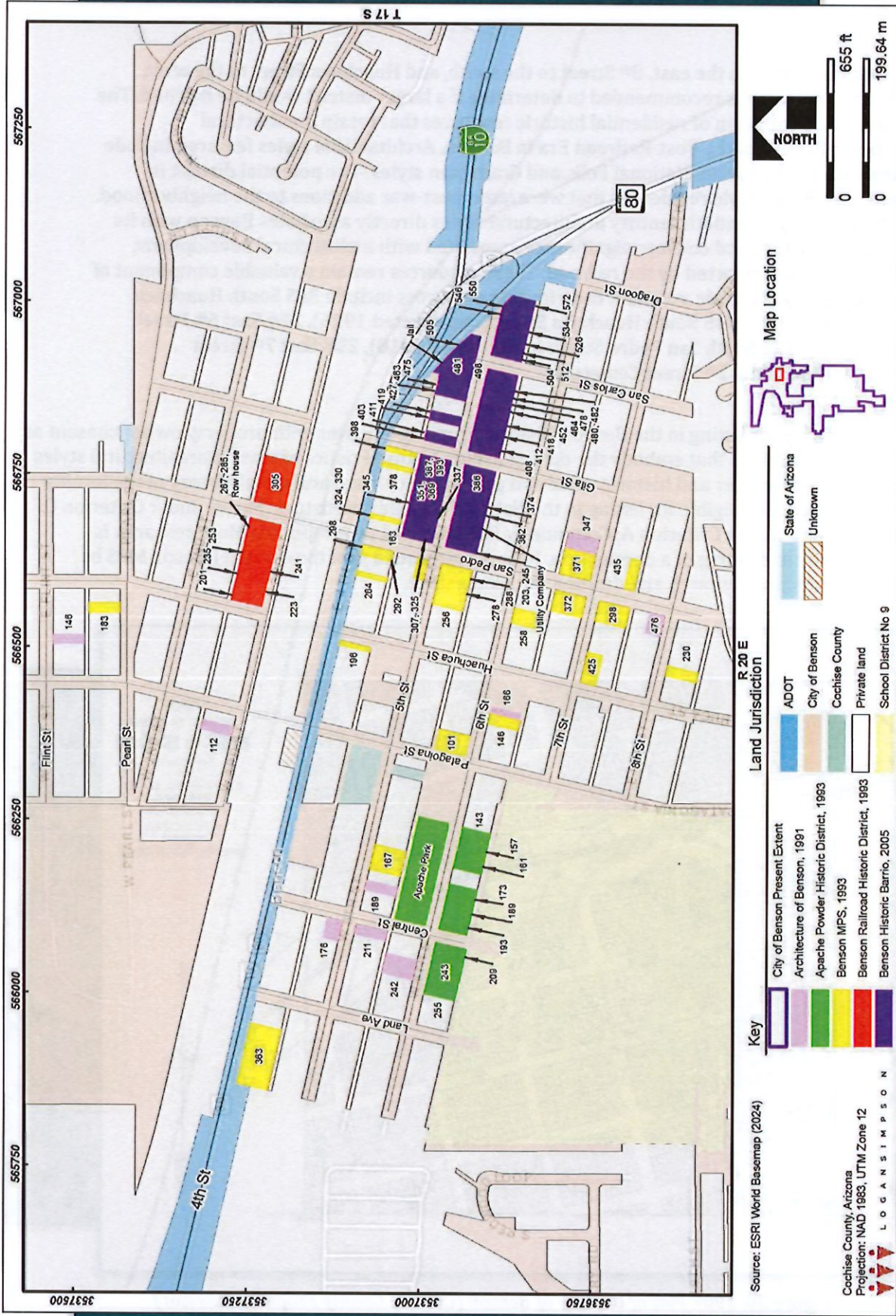


Figure 21. Map of previously surveyed resources in Benson, designated by tax parcel. Date specifies year of most recent survey.

Existing Conditions

The primary entry corridors into Benson are Interstate 10 (I-10), State Route 80 (SR 80; also referred to as 4th Street), and State Route 90 (SR 90). The I-10 corridor spans east-west and traverses the northern portion of the city, serving as the community's direct connection to the City of Tucson approximately 48 miles to the northwest. The SR 90 corridor travels south-north through the southeast portion of Benson through primarily a rural setting. The route provides access to Kartchner Caverns State Park and its northern terminus is a junction with I-10.

SR 80 serves as the backbone of the commercial corridor in Benson. Running north-south, then west where it joins I-10, SR 80 serves as Benson's connection to southern Arizona cities such as Tombstone and Bisbee. As the route travels north from Tombstone, the City has a semi-rural character defined by vast open space with a mix of mid-century and early twenty-first century mixed-use development. As SR 80 turns west through the City, it becomes East 4th Street and serves as the primary commercial corridor for the City. Development is concentrated on the south side of the roadway and involves primarily commercial spaces with a sidewalk. These buildings comprise the "historic core" of the city and reflect Benson's earliest development as a railroad town. The north side of the roadway features the railway and some mixed-use development. Throughout this commercial corridor, the City strongly exhibits its "small-town" setting by featuring largely single story development with false-front shopfronts and a walk-able street.

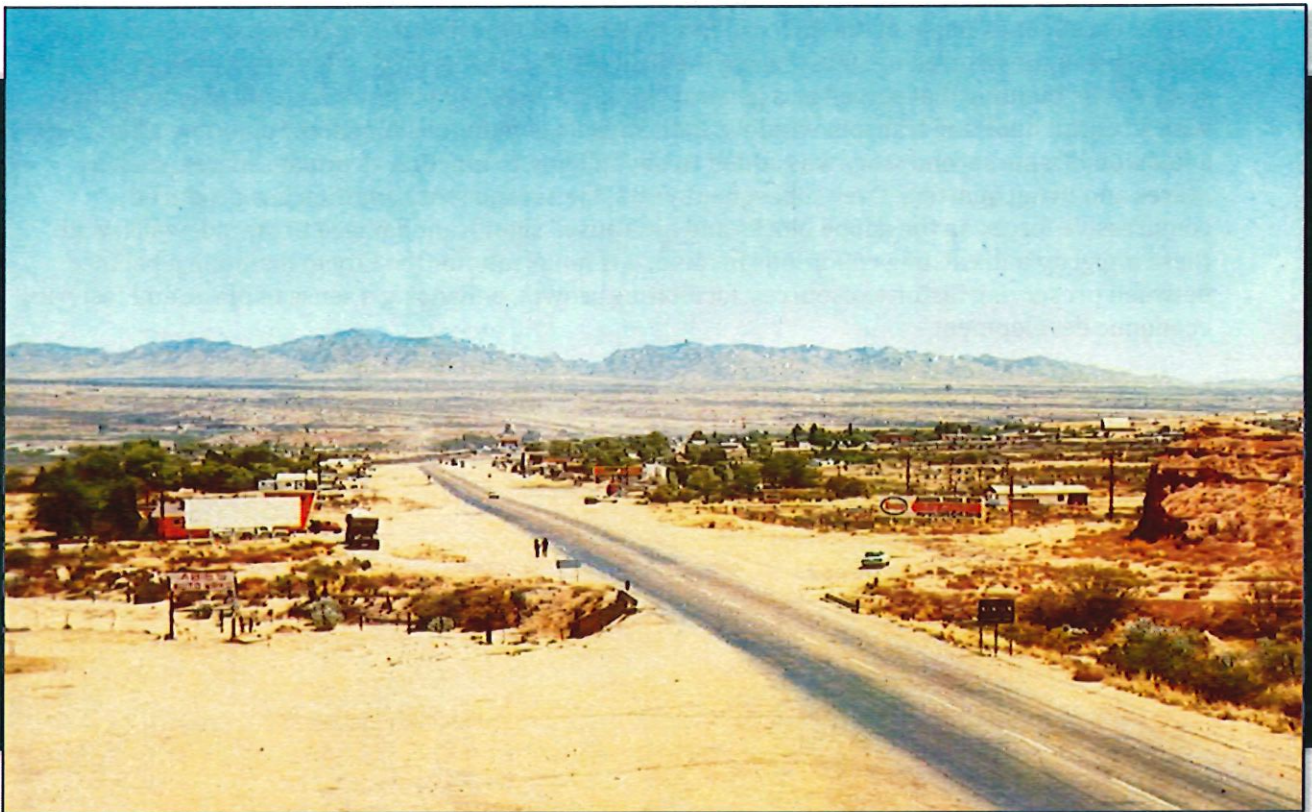


Figure 22. Entrance into Benson via US 80 from the west, n.d. (Courtesy of Benson Historical Museum)

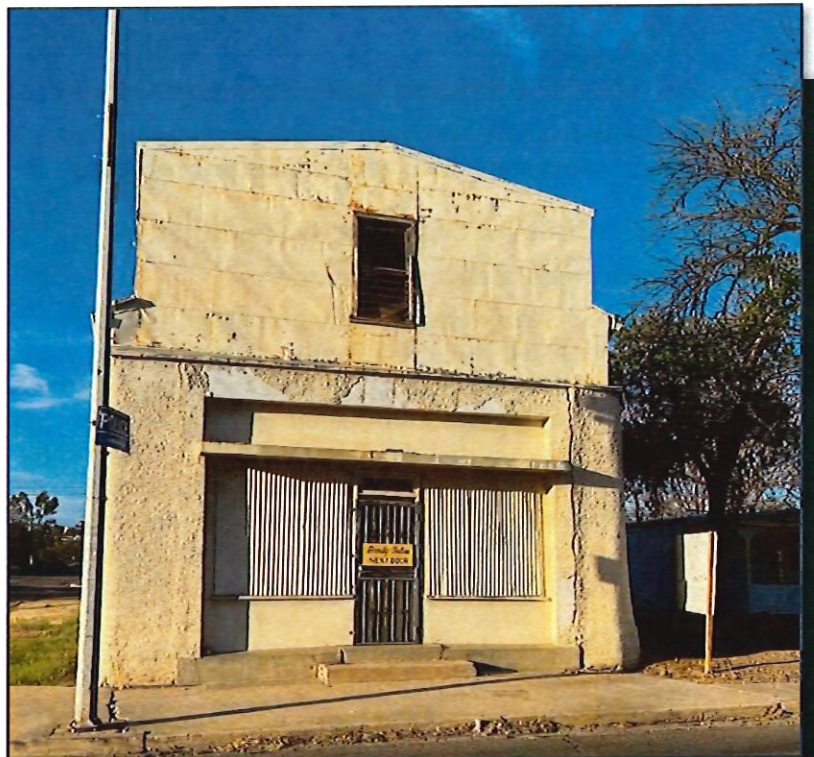
Benson's small town commercial corridor (4th Street) is intersected by a secondary corridor (Ocotillo Avenue). Pre-World War II neighborhoods remain situated to the north and south of these commercial corridors. South from Huachuca Street and San Pedro Street, the development is characterized by curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs that emerged in the immediate post-World War II era. A significant amount of the City is characterized by undeveloped land along SR 90 and near the airport which has been incorporated into the City following annexations beginning in 1988.

Today, many historic resources exhibit a wide range of historic integrity. Many resources remain in excellent condition and display character defining features that directly associate them with Benson's stages of development. Despite the poor condition of some historic resources, a high degree of integrity is largely maintained that conveys tangible ties to the history of the City and expresses a unique community character. This is achieved through integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. On a smaller scale, the integrity of many historic resources that have not been listed in the Benson Historic Property Register and thus subject to local protections, have been harmed by neglect and incompatible alterations. Common incompatible alterations observed include non-original siding; replacement windows, roofs, and roofing materials; and additions that adversely impact the historic character of the resource. Incompatible alterations to historic resources in the historic core of the community have adversely impacted the historic integrity of these resources and influenced the character of the area.

The Hi Wo Company Grocery, in particular, remains a significant building to the City of Benson that is in derelict condition. Listed in the NRHP in 1994, the building is locally significant under Criterion C as an excellent example of the Railroad Era commercial type. Located at 398 East 4th Street, the building was constructed in 1896, during the Railroad Era. It was originally constructed as a single-story adobe building that served as a general store. The building featured large display windows with a central door and transom window, indicating its commercial function. Sometime after 1919, a Redwood frame second story was added to the building to function as private spaces, such as offices and living quarters. Over subsequent years, the second story addition has produced compressive forces on the adobe blocks and has caused significant damage to the sidewalls. With these integrity and existing conditions in mind, it is important for the City to maintain a balance between preserving historic resources, facilitating growth, enhancing a sense of place, and fostering economic development.



Photograph 14. View of the mural on the east elevation of the Hi Wo Company Grocery at 398 East 4th Street. Mural by Doug Quarles, June 2016 and sponsored by Benson Beautification, Inc. (Cindy Allen).



Photograph 15. The Hi Wo Company Grocery (1896) at 398 East 4th Street, north elevation (Cindy Allen).

Challenges

Several challenges to historic preservation in Benson were identified in the City's General Development Plan. Most notably, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) currently controls the 4th Street right-of-way. The General Development Plan notes that the cost of assuming control from ADOT is considerable and this presents a significant challenge in balancing growth and development with preservation. This challenge is accompanied by community preferences associated with resistance to alterations of existing building features along this corridor.

The integration of new development and reconciliation of incompatible alterations on existing buildings was identified as a challenge by the HPC and Logan Simpson. As Benson expands to the west, a challenge is presented to balance the exiting character with newly arriving residents, newly constructed homes, and the arrival of necessary additional commercial properties. This challenge presents an opportunity to integrate new residents and architectural forms into the "small-town" setting that characterizes Benson. This is a special opportunity to use the 4th Street commercial corridor and surrounding historic neighborhoods to anchor the City's identity.

As the legal protection of historic properties is largely in the hands of private property owners, financial incentives that encourage preservation pose a significant challenge to the community. Without the means for private property owners to fund preservation efforts, conducting historic preservation in Benson poses financial challenges. It is encouraged for the City to identify opportunities to partner with private property owners to this end.

Preservation-Related Incentives and Grant Programs

The state and federal governments have developed incentives to assist in the restoration, maintenance, and rehabilitation of historic resources.

Arizona State Historic Property Tax Program

Non-Income-Producing Properties

The State of Arizona maintains a property tax reduction program for non-income-producing properties listed in the NRHP either individually or as a contributing resource to a historic district. The State Historic Property Tax (SPT) program offers a substantial reduction (35-45%) in the state property tax assessment of eligible owners. A precise figure is dependent upon conditions specific to the area. As part of the program, the owner enters into a fifteen-year agreement that requires maintenance of the property to preserve the integrity of its historic features. If an owner plans to commence work on the property that will impact its public appearance, SHPO must be contacted for review and comment prior to project initiation. All projects are reviewed according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The program is administered by the AZ SHPO in conjunction with the county assessor's office. The AZ SHPO determines program eligibility and monitors property maintenance associated with the fifteen-year agreement and the county assessor enacts tax classification changes, manages issues of property value, and tax calculation. Applications can be obtained from the Cochise County Assessor's Office or the AZ SHPO. More information is available at: azstateparks.com/state-historic-property-tax-reclassification-spt-for-owner-occupied-homes.

Commercial Properties

For income producing properties, the State Property Tax Program is a rehabilitation-based program that affects property taxes for properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This program can be combined with the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive Program. Through the program, the County Assessor's Office completes an assessment of the property as is. Over the following ten years, the improvements are taxed at 1% instead of the normal commercial rate. It is worth noting that, without a substantial rehabilitation, the program will have little to no effect upon the property tax. As with the non-income-producing property SPT program, all work must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and be preapproved by SHPO. More information is available at: <https://azstateparks.com/tax-incentives-program>.

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive

The federal historic preservation tax incentive program is administered by the Technical Preservation Services division of the NPS and the Internal Revenue Service in partnership with the AZ SHPO. This program provides a federal tax credit equivalent to twenty percent of qualified rehabilitation expenses for certified historic building rehabilitation projects. For these projects, buildings must be listed, or eligible for listing, in the NRHP. More information is available at: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/index.htm>.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION GOALS & OBJECTIVES

“It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future.” – William Murtagh, first Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places.

Local Preservation Program Goals, Objectives & Priorities

As a result of this study, three historic preservation goals were created in order to create recommendations for Benson’s historic preservation program. Each goal is followed by a list of objectives that are the reasons why the community seeks to realize the historic preservation goal. As historic preservation is an interdisciplinary practice, the following goals and objectives encompass wide-ranging aspects of community life. The following goals were developed in collaboration with the HPC, local stakeholders, and community members.

Goal 1

To enhance the distinct community character of Benson through the identification, preservation, and protection of significant historic and archaeological resources.

Objectives

- Identification of significant historic and archaeological resources aids in long range planning. Detailed documentation of existing resources provides federal and state agencies, local officials and staff, and community members with important information when considering community development projects. Collection of documentation regarding individual buildings and structures informs the establishment and implementation of historic zoning overlays so that the historic character of Benson may be celebrated and preserved.
- The preservation and protection of historic and archaeological resources for present and future generations provides a tangible link to Benson’s past and cultural heritage.
- The preservation and protection of historic properties and archaeological sites enhances community character and strengthens a sense of place by retaining tangible elements of Benson’s unique story.
- Preserves Benson’s “small-town” urban setting and perpetuates walkable community, enhancing quality of life.

Goal 2

Integrate historic preservation planning with City goals and objectives to enhance tangible community heritage and foster economic vitality.

Objectives

- Integration of historic preservation planning with City goals and objectives will assist with the re-development of the 4th Street Corridor as the downtown historic core. Implementation of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation helps to retain the character defining features of the City's historic resources such that these characteristics enhance the tangible aspects of community heritage.
- Integration of historic preservation planning with City goals and objectives facilitates integration into broader public policy and land use planning.
- Successful integration facilitates the achievement of aspects of the FY24-25 Strategic Action Plan vision statement by effectively planning for growth, creating a positive self-image, cooperating with other levels of government, and supporting a healthy business climate.
- Ordinance implementation and participation in the National Register program recognizes and celebrates Benson's historic resources and provide the necessary tools to integrate historic preservation considerations into cohesive city planning.
- Integrated planning efforts facilitate the creation of design guidelines that incorporate historic preservation elements which contribute to a unique identity, sense of place, and preserve intangible links to community heritage (Objective 4.2 GDP).
- Promotes sustainability through the retention, rehabilitation, and reuse of existing historic buildings, particularly along the 4th Street commercial corridor (Objective 4.1 GDP). Continues efforts to develop 4th Street as a "Historic Downtown Corridor".⁷⁶
- Integration of historic preservation elements into planning and community development processes encourages infill that is compatible with the historic character of the community, strengthening Benson's identity and sense of place (Objective 1.5 GDP).

⁷⁶ Land Use Policy 3, p11.

Goal 3

Prioritize and improve public engagement in preservation activities and cultivate community stewardship of resources.

Objectives

- Public engagement with historic preservation planning and implementation serves to promote a positive self-image (FY24-25 Strategic Action Plan vision statement).
- Public engagement with Benson's historic preservation resources solidifies a sense of place and fosters community pride (Objective 1.4 GDP).
- Encourages reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings (Objective 4.1 GDP).
- Supports quality of life (FY24-25 Strategic Action Plan).
- Promotes Benson as a destination and fosters economic development (FY24-25 Strategic Action Plan).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations provide a framework for the role of historic preservation in shaping the future of the City of Benson. These recommendations were formed as part of a collaborative process with community members to address current challenges and desires as Benson grows and expands. These recommendations advance the City's historic preservation goals and objectives through information gathering, policy implementation, and public outreach and support. It should be noted that any policy recommendation requiring action by City Council or voter approval must follow the adoption process as required by the City of Benson.

Recommendation 1

Benson's existing historic and archaeological resources are essential elements that define the distinct community character. The City should maintain up-to-date documentation of extant historic and archaeological resources and their contribution to community character.

Action Items

1. Create a methodical system of survey and inventory at regular intervals. A re-survey every ten years is recommended. It is recommended that Benson begin this process with a survey and inventory of the 4th Street commercial corridor. Following this survey, it is recommended that Benson survey the neighborhoods to the south of the 4th Street corridor and west of the Benson Historic Barrio as the 2023 windshield survey determined that these neighborhoods retain a significant number of historic resources.
 - a. It is recommended that the HPC have a yearly agenda item that addresses either the survey of a new group of resources or the resurvey of an existing historic district.
2. Continue to pursue CLG pass-through grants from the AZ SHPO to assist in the financing of survey and planning efforts.
3. Ensure historic resources such as roadways, bridges, landscapes, and railroad infrastructure are included within surveys. Consider the multifaceted aspects of the built environment and the significance of a variety of resource types associated with Benson's development and culture.
4. Create additional historic context studies related to important historical themes and people groups important to Benson's history. These studies are intended to augment property designations to the local register and/or National Register by enabling the Benson HPC and community members to interpret and evaluate historically significant properties. It is recommended that historic context studies focus on the theme areas of transportation, commerce, and ethnic heritage.

5. Expand the Benson MPS to include a post-World War II context to provide a framework to interpret and evaluate historic resources from this time period.

Recommendation 2

The City should facilitate the protection of Benson's historic and archaeological resources and promote compatible new development.

Action Items

1. Utilize established procedures in the Benson's Historic Preservation Ordinance to locally designate properties to the Benson Historic Property Register with property owner consent.
 - a. Create an internal formalized document to nominate properties to the local register. The form should be publicly available and include information such as property location, current appearance, historic appearance, and information about past alterations. The form should prompt applicants to articulate how the proposed property meets the significance requirements listed in the Benson Historic Preservation Ordinance in Section 24-3.
2. Continue to participate in the National Register of Historic Places program to recognize historic properties that are significant to the history of Benson.
 - a. Following the survey and inventory of the 4th Street commercial corridor, it is recommended that this be examined for local register and National Register eligibility as a historic district. If SHPO determines the district eligible for listing in the National Register, ADOT would be required to participate in the 106 Compliance process prior to commencing work that may impact historic resources.
 - b. As subsequent surveys are conducted, resources should be evaluated for eligibility either individually or as a district.
3. Explore the inclusion of provisions relating to archaeological resources in Benson's historic preservation ordinance.
4. Collaboration between the HPC, City staff, and elected officials to update zoning code to create a specific zoning overlay that applies to historic buildings that are listed in the Benson Historic Property Register with owner consent. The zoning overlay should include provisions that protect alterations to historic resources that have been locally designated with the consent of the property owner. The overlay zoning classification should be applied in addition to the base or land-use zoning classification, refrain from impacting use, and add historic design review to the normal review process when building permits are requested.
5. Collaboration between the HPC and relevant City staff to update zoning code to create a historic conservation overlay classification. Provisions should be included that encourage alterations according to specific design guidelines approved by the HPC and City Council that aim to preserve the historic character of the defined area. This classification should be

distinct from the historic building zoning classification as the historic conservation overlay is typically tailored towards groupings of historic buildings that lack the significance and/or integrity necessary to meet the National Register criteria for listing and/or the significance criteria listed in the Benson Historic Preservation Ordinance, but still merit preservation as they contribute to the historic character of the community.

- a. Develop a Historic Conservation Overlay District for the 4th Street commercial corridor with particular attention devoted to the businesses, residences and other local features that connect the city to its heritage.⁷⁷
 - b. Following the subsequent survey and evaluation of historic resources in Benson, it is recommended that an assessment be given if individual resources, or a collection of resources, would be eligible for local/National Register designation and/or a formal historic zoning overlay.
6. Develop Historic Conservation Overlay District design guidelines to facilitate cohesive character and compatible new development in the historic 4th Street commercial corridor. Design guidelines should include recommendations that abide by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and include specific design guidelines that are tailored to the City of Benson's historic character.
 7. Create local incentives to encourage historic preservation. Incentives can be monetary or non-monetary. Examples include: a local register plaque program, yearly historic preservation award, or façade easement program. Non-fiscal programs foster community pride and solidify a sense of place. Additional incentives should be identified and implemented.

Recommendation 3

The preservation of historic and archaeological resources ensures associations with the tangible heritage of the City's architectural, social, and cultural history. The City should prioritize and improve public engagement in preservation activities and cultivate community stewardship of its resources.

Action Items

1. Encourage property owners of non-income producing properties listed in the National Register to participate in the Arizona State Historic Property Tax Program. Owners of income-producing properties should be encouraged to explore the Federal Historic Preservation and State Historic tax programs.
2. The HPC and city staff should collaborate to create public events to celebrate National Historic Preservation Month in May of each year. It is recommended that events include walking tours, workshops, social media engagement, and recognition

⁷⁷ Land Use Policy 4., p11.

by City Council.

3. Emphasize transparency by making historic preservation materials readily available to community members. It is recommended that the Historic Preservation Ordinance be accessible via Benson's historic preservation webpage. Information regarding the local historic preservation designation and certificate of appropriateness review process should be readily available and clearly readable with the respective standards emphasized. It is also recommended that the properties listed in the Benson Historic Property Register and the National Register be clearly identified and listed on the webpage.
4. Collaborate with local organizations and stakeholders to educate and inform regarding a variety of historic preservation disciplines. Work with Benson Clean and Beautiful, Inc., Benson Historical Museum, and other organizations to continue to promote and educate about the history of Benson. Work with local realtors to educate and inform them on local historic resources so that they can better assist and inform their clients.
5. Initiate regular dialogue with neighboring CLGs, the Arizona Preservation Foundation, and the Arizona Historical Society.
6. Consult with Tribes regarding future development and archaeological resources within the City is encouraged. The following link provides recommended tools to facilitate consultation: <https://sites.google.com/view/az-consultation-toolkit/consultation-map>

ACTION ITEMS

The following action items are designed to provide a specific path forward to implement the recommendations provided in this historic preservation plan. The goals below are prioritized with a timeframe provided in which to begin the process for each task item. Responsibilities are specified, with the assumption that community members and stakeholders are involved according to established City procedures. It is recommended that the HPC have a quarterly agenda item that reflects upon the below action plan and assesses progress toward the defined goals.

The City should document extant historic and archaeological resources and their contribution to community character.

Table 6. Action Items for Recommendation 1.

Item	Priority	Timeframe (years)	Responsibility	Objective(s) Met
Apply for CLG pass-through grant to fund survey projects.	High	1	City staff	2
Conduct a historic resource survey of the 4th Street commercial corridor.	High	1	HPC	1, 3
Conduct a historic resource survey of the 7th Street potential historic district.	Medium	2-4	HPC, City staff	1, 3
Complete a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the 4th Street corridor.	High	2-3	HPC, City staff	1, 3
Create additional historic context studies.	Medium	3	HPC	3, 4
Amend Benson MPS to include post-World War II context.	Low	3-5	HPC	3, 5
Determine a systematic approach to survey new neighborhoods and update existing surveys at fixed intervals.	Medium	2	HPC, City staff	1, 2, 3

The City should facilitate the protection of Benson's historic resources and promote compatible new development.

Table 7. Action Items for Recommendation 2.

Item	Priority	Timeframe (years)	Responsibility	Objective(s) Met
Create a Benson Historic Property Register application form.	High	1	HPC, City staff	1
Locally list properties that meet the criteria listed in the historic preservation ordinance to the Benson Historic Property Register with property owner consent.	High	1-2	HPC, City staff, City Council	1
Update zoning code to create a specific classification for resources listed in the Benson Historic Property Register.	High	1-2	HPC, City staff, City Council	4
Update zoning code to create a specific classification for Historic Conservation Overlay Districts.	High	1-2	HPC, City staff, City Council	5
Update the 4th Street Commercial Corridor zoning classification in include the Historic Conservation Overlay.	High	2-3	NPC, City staff, City Council	5
Continued participation in the National Register of Historic Places program through the suggestion of eligible resources and preparation of nominations in collaboration with the community.	Medium	Ongoing	HPC	2
Explore the inclusion of provisions relating to archaeological resources in Benson's historic preservation ordinance.	High	1-3	HPC, City staff, City Council	3
Develop design guidelines for the 4th Street Commercial Corridor Conservation District including guidelines for compatible new development.	Medium	3-5	HPC, City staff, City Council	5, 6
Create local incentives to promote and encourage historic preservation.	Medium	1-3	HPC	7

The City should prioritize and improve public engagement in preservation activities and cultivate community stewardship of its resources.

Table 8. Action Items for Recommendation 3.

Item	Priority	Timeframe (years)	Responsibility	Objective(s) Met
Promote the Arizona Historic Property Tax Program for eligible property owners.	High	1-2	HPC	1
Continue efforts to create and promote public events for Historic Preservation Month in May.	Medium	Yearly	HPC	2
Make information regarding Benson's historic preservation program publicly accessible via Benson's webpage.	Medium	1	City staff	3
Collaborate with local organizations and stakeholders to educate and promote historic preservation.	Medium	Ongoing	HPC	4
Consult with Tribes regarding future development and archaeological resources.	High	Ongoing	HPC, City staff, City Council	5

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Benson, Cochise County, Arizona. Sanborn Map Company, Nov, 1890, 1909. Map. https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn00134_002/.

APPENDIX A

National Park Service Guidance

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties:

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part1-preservation-rehabilitation.pdf>

Restoration and Reconstruction Guidelines:

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part2-reconstruction-restoration.pdf>

Technical Preservation Services Preservation Briefs

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/preservation-briefs.htm>

Arizona State Historic Preservation Office Resources

Federal Tax Program:

<https://azstateparks.com/tax-incentives-program>

Arizona Historic Property Tax Program:

<https://azstateparks.com/state-historic-property-tax-reclassification-spt-for-owner-occupied-homes>

Arizona Commercial Properties Tax Program:

<https://azstateparks.com/tax-incentives-program>

Links to Benson National Register Nominations

Benson Multiple Property Submission:

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail/ac77f8c4-06a5-41bb-8dca-83febd03907f>

Benson Railroad Historic District:

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail/b21c5e1c-7a08-4e8e-8ede-4968569fe749>

Apache Powder Historic Residential District:

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail/6daaf2f9-ecd9-4789-bf53-50191f43420e>

Benson Historic Barrio:

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/75609666>