

# Phase 1 Historic Resource Study for 19 West Birch Avenue in Flagstaff



Prepared for  
Capri, Inc.

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**Capri, Inc.**

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## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Cornerstone Environmental Consulting, LLC (Cornerstone), was contracted by Capri, Inc. to conduct a Phase I Historic Resource Study for the proposed Hilton Graduate Hotel and Parking Garage Project pursuant to City of Flagstaff Zoning Code, Section 10-30.30.050.A. The Graduate Hotels are almost exclusively located in college towns and have a focus on celebrating university traditions and local culture. To facilitate the construction of the hotel, the project proponent plans to demolish all existing buildings, structures, and associated infrastructure on the parcel. While the current building is not planned to be utilized the proponent intends to utilize pieces of the exterior façade in construction features. The proposed project entails the redevelopment of the 0.49 acres located at 19 West Birch Avenue in the City of Flagstaff, Arizona. Two adjacent parcels, APN 100-19-007 and 100-19-008-A, will also be impacted by the demolition and construction, and have been researched and reported on by Cornerstone in two earlier letter reports presented to the City of Flagstaff.

Cornerstone evaluated the building's significance and recommends that the building is significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A for its association with the Native American civil rights movement in the City of Flagstaff involving the Flagstaff Police Department and Flagstaff Municipal Court, with sufficient integrity to qualify for eligibility. The court cases and subsequent American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) investigations are a pivotal moment in the recognition of the inequality among the citizens of Flagstaff and residents of Coconino County. The building is further recommended significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion D for its expression of vernacular midcentury architectural design, with sufficient integrity to qualify for eligibility, although this likely does not extend to NRHP Criterion C eligibility.

Given the building's recommended eligibility under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A, Cornerstone recommends that mitigation include the incorporation of the building's history, the history of Native Americans in Flagstaff, and a discussion of the struggle for equality into the new construction in the form of a plaque, historic photographs placed in the lobby, and incorporation of some of the Malpais stone from the original building in a cornerstone as a remembrance of the historic building and of these significant events. Given the building's recommended eligibility under City of Flagstaff Criterion D, further documentation such as architectural elevation drawings may also be appropriate.

## 1.0 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The building at 19 West Birch Avenue (APN 100-19-004-A; Photograph 1; Figure 1; Figure 2; Figure 3; Figure 4; Figure 5) was built in 1951 and functioned as the Flagstaff City Hall, Fire Department, and Police Department and jail until 1980 when the civil departments began to move out of the building. As City Hall the building housed City Council, the mayor's office, water department, the city engineer, and the city clerk at different times. Cornerstone Environmental Consulting, LLC (Cornerstone) was contracted by Capri, Inc. to conduct a Phase 1 Historic Resource Study (HRS) for the building on the parcel pursuant to City of Flagstaff Zoning Code, Section 10-30.30.050.A.

Cornerstone evaluated the building's significance and recommends that the building is significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A for its involvement in the social and political movements related to Native American treatment within the City of Flagstaff, specifically by the Flagstaff Police Department and Flagstaff Municipal Court. The court cases and subsequent American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) investigations are a pivotal moment in the recognition of the inequality among the citizens of Flagstaff and residents of Coconino County. It is further recommended significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion D for its expression of vernacular midcentury architectural design.

Given the building's recommended eligibility under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A, Cornerstone recommends that mitigation include the incorporation of the building's history, the history of Native Americans in Flagstaff, and a discussion of the struggle for equality into the new construction in the form of a plaque, historic photographs placed in the lobby, and incorporation of some of the Malpais stone from the original building in a cornerstone as a remembrance of the historic building and of these significant events. Given the building's recommended eligibility under City of Flagstaff Criterion D, further documentation such as architectural elevation drawings may also be appropriate.

**Street Address:** 19 West Birch Avenue; formerly 120 North Beaver Street

**APN:** 100-19-004-A (0.49 acres)

**Subdivision:** Flagstaff Townsite (Flagstaff 2011)

**Block:** 19

**Lots:** 13 through 18

**Construction Date:** 1950–1951

**Period of Significance:** 1882–1975

**Building Period of Significance:** 1951–1975

**Property Type:** Commercial



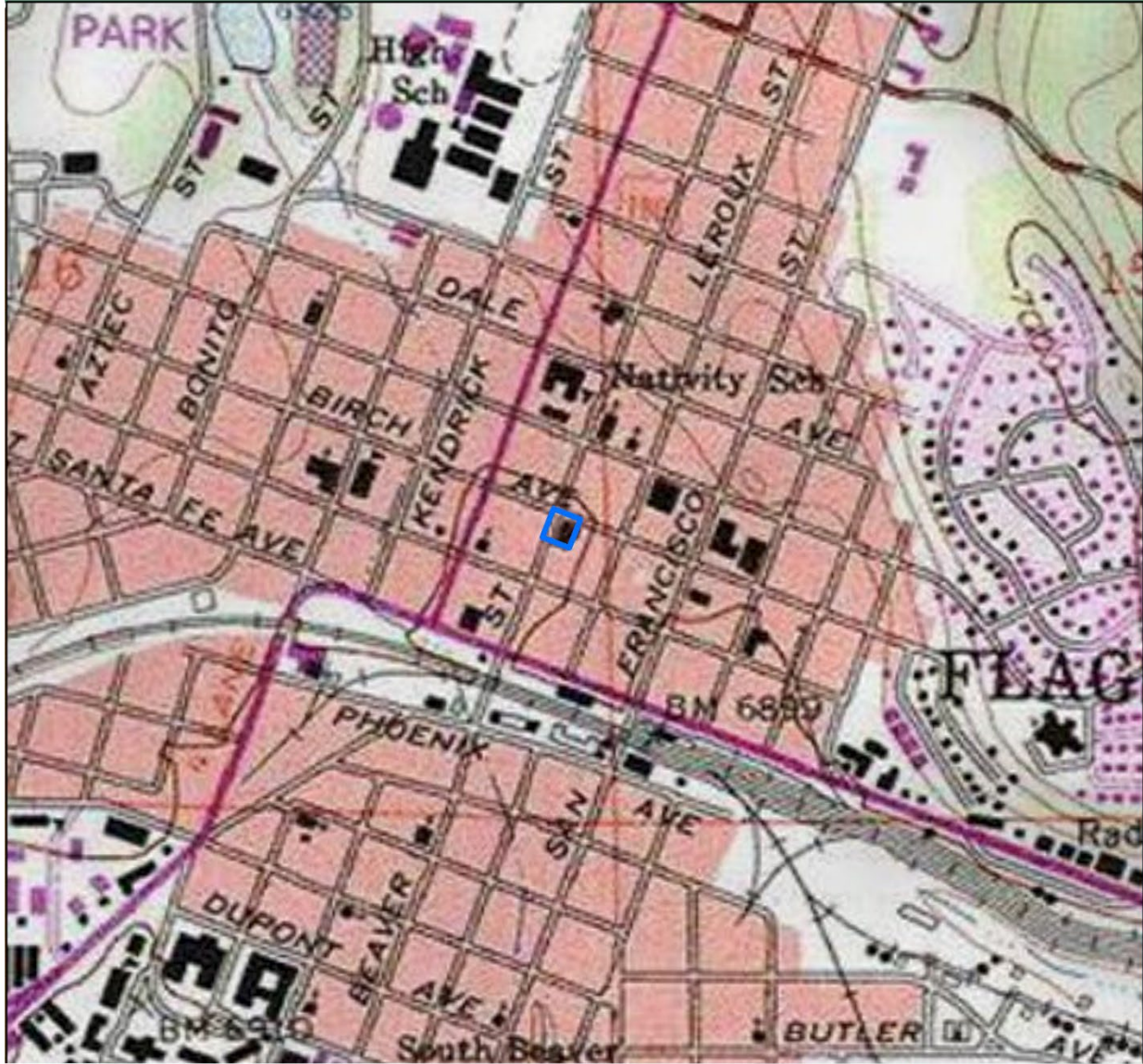
*Photograph 1. Northeast facing photograph of the west face of the building, showing the entrance to what was once City Hall.*



*Figure 1. The City Hall building as it appeared newly constructed (Arizona Daily Sun 1951).*

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N



Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Ave Historic Resource Study**

(USGS 1962)

Project Location Map

Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:8,000

**LEGEND**

 Project Area



Figure 2. Topographic map showing the project area.

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N

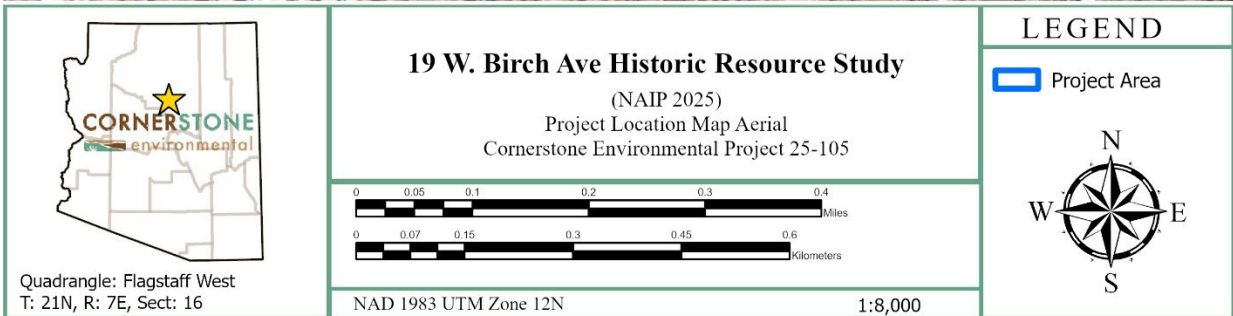
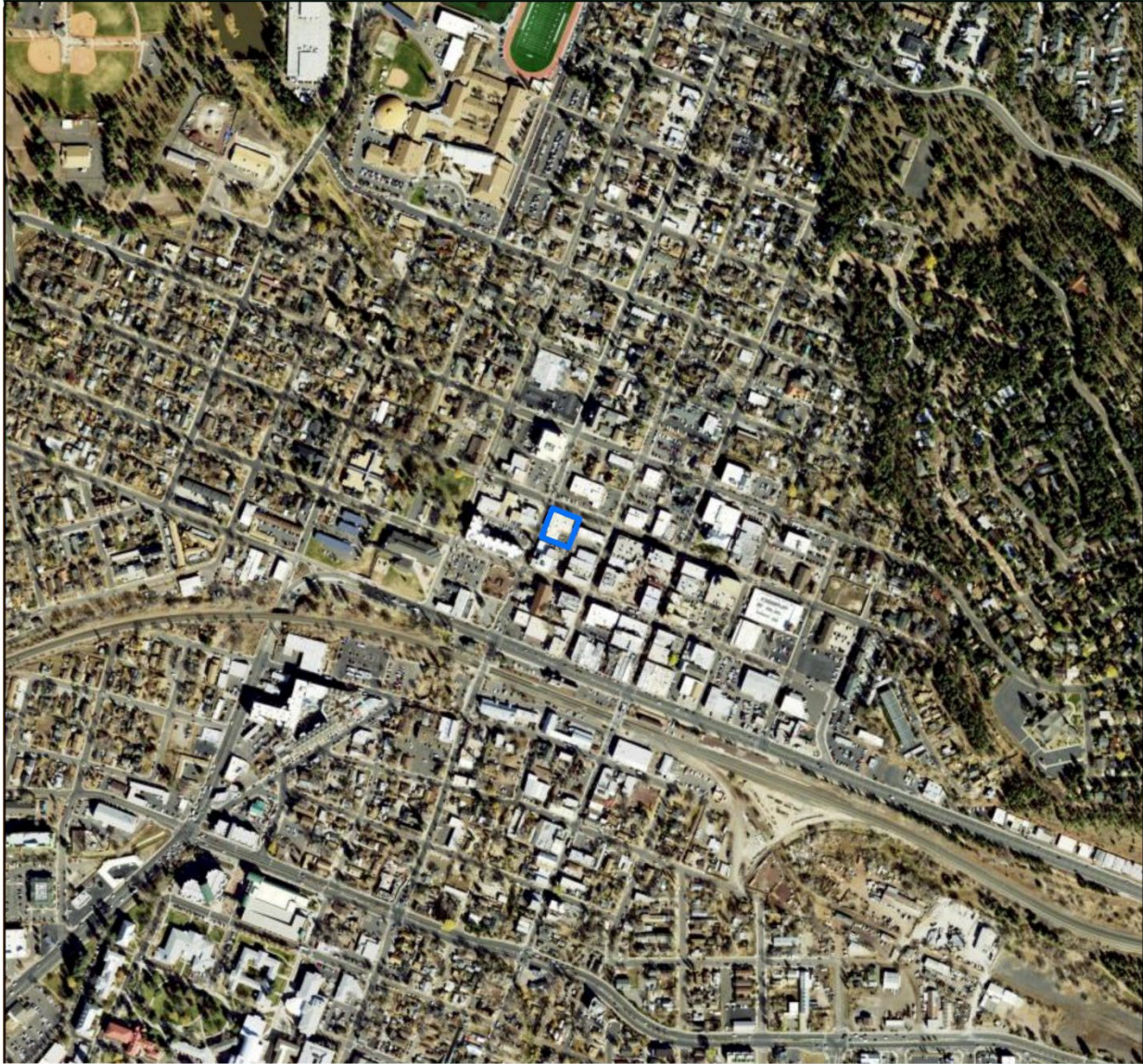
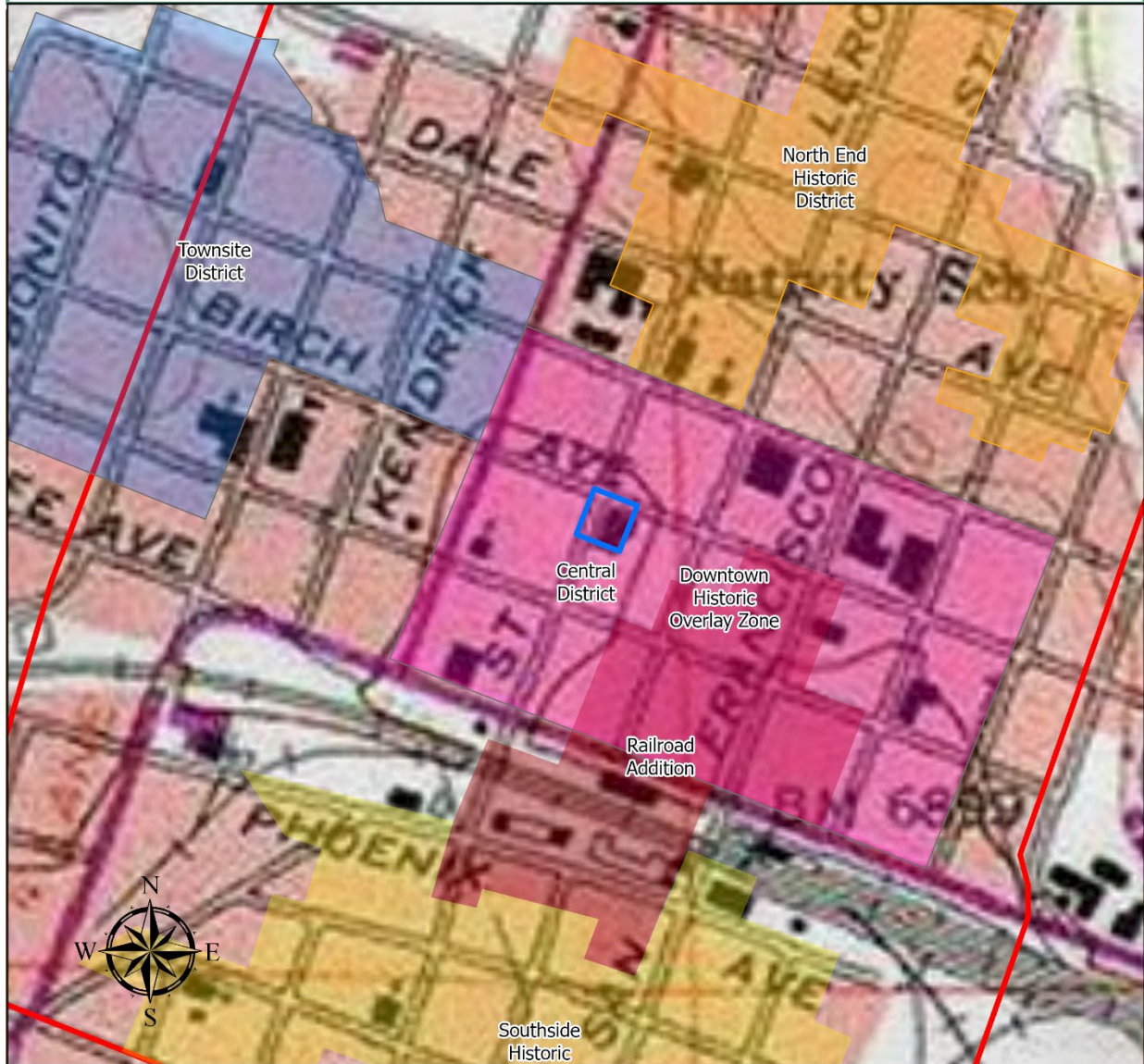


Figure 3. Aerial imagery showing the project area.

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N



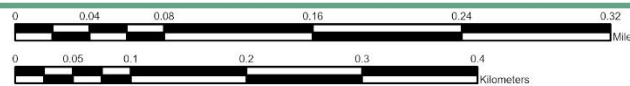
Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Ave Historic Resource Study**

(USGS 1962)

Historic District Map

Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:5,000

**LEGEND**

- Project Area
- Central District
- North End Historic District
- Railroad Addition
- Southside Historic District
- Townsite District
- Downtown Historic Overlay Zone

Figure 4. Topographic map showing the various historic districts around the project area.

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N

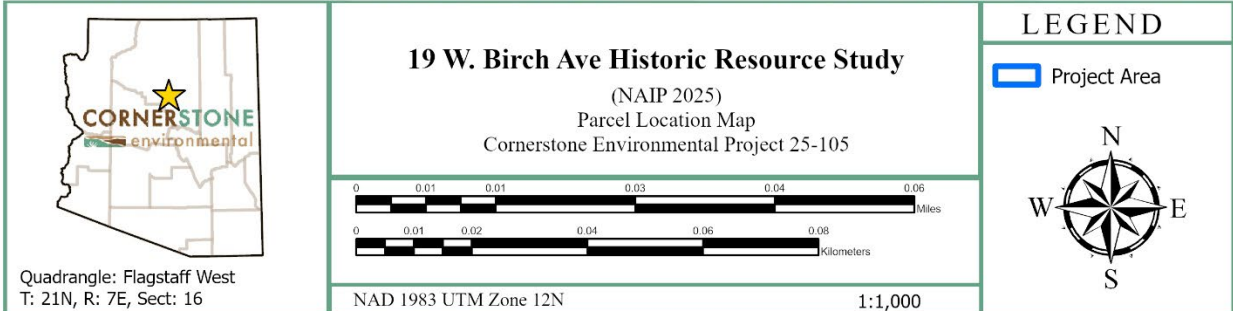


Figure 5. Aerial imagery showing the project area and studied building.

## **2.0 REGULATORY CONTEXT**

The purpose and content of a Phase 1 HRS is outlined in the Heritage Preservation Division of the City of Flagstaff Zoning Code. As stated in the Zoning Code (30.30-10), a Phase 1 HRS shall evaluate the significance of identified and potential historical resources, assess identified and potential impacts, provide measures to mitigate major impacts on said resources, and advise whether Phase 2 Historic Resource Studies should be required.

The building at 19 West Birch Avenue was identified as 50 years of age or older and as a potential historical resource and was evaluated for significance and integrity to determine if it constituted a significant historical resource per the Flagstaff Zoning Code. The determination of significance for cultural resources is defined in Flagstaff Zoning Code (30.30-13) are summarized below and discussed further in *8.0 Evaluation of Significance and Integrity*.

The criteria for determining the significance of a historic resource are based on the potential of the historic resource to contribute to our understanding of the past. A resource has potential if it was already determined to have potential previously (City of Flagstaff Criterion A), if it is associated with significant past persons or events (City of Flagstaff Criterion B), if it represents an example of work from an important individual (City of Flagstaff Criterion C), it significantly embodies a distinctive characteristic or style of a type, period, region, or method of construction (City of Flagstaff Criterion D), or if it has yielded or will yield information important to scientific research (City of Flagstaff Criterion E).

Evaluation of significance and integrity and application of the NRHP Criteria was conducted in accordance with the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of the Interior and National Park Service in U.S. Secretary of the Interior *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation* (NPS 1983) and *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (NPS 2002).

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

The Phase 1 HRS for 19 West Birch Avenue entailed archival research, fieldwork, evaluation, and report preparation by Cornerstone Principal Investigator Caitlin Stewart, Senior Project Manager Jack W. Treichler, Assistant Project Manager Samuel Hemsley, Archaeologist Samuel Mitchell, and Archaeologist Jordan Lee. Cornerstone conducted research by searching digital and physical historical records and visiting the subject property.

Archival and secondary research was conducted with the goal of establishing a building construction timeline and site history, and to identify significant events that may have occurred on the property. Research methods were based on the National Park Service guidance outlined in *National Register Bulletin 39: Researching a Historic Property* (NPS 1998). A variety of topics were thoroughly researched to identify significant events that may have occurred at the property. Topics that produced a null result were not included in the report but are mentioned here as they were checked. Several hurdles were encountered during the research limiting the results. The most notable is that in 1970, a clogged sewer caused flooding in the basement of 19 West Birch Avenue, destroying most of the stored city records that were in the basement. These records likely included architectural plans for the building, Municipal Court records, arrest and bond records, personnel files, police reports, receipts, and more. These records were unfortunately lost and therefore could not be accessed by Cornerstone (Figure 6). Further, Cornerstone was informed that Municipal Court records were not kept extending back to the period of significance. To supplement the loss of these records, other sources, listed below, were extensively searched to provide clues to the building’s construction timeline, history, and to identify significant events that occurred in the

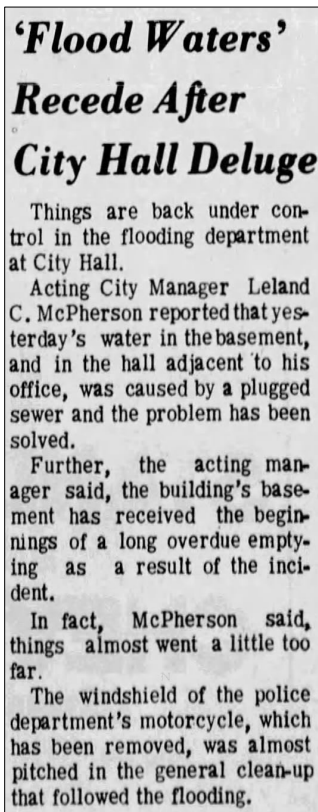


Figure 6. Article describing the damage to City Hall and clean-up efforts after a flood in the basement of 19 West Birch Avenue.

building, particularly newspaper articles which largely focus on events and timelines that were important to residents of Flagstaff during the period of significance.

The following list details the types of documents and sources that were consulted during the course of this study:

- Northern Arizona University (NAU) Cline Library’s Special Collections and Archives, and Colorado Plateau Archives
- Flagstaff Public Library archives
- The Arizona Memory Project collection;
- Public records from the City of Flagstaff
- Aerial photographs (1959 to the present)
- City of Flagstaff/Coconino County plat maps (1878, 1889, 1909, 1919/1925, and 1939)
- Coconino County Recorder’s Office and Assessor’s Office deed, tax assessment, and property records
- Existing cultural/historical resource studies and historic contexts
- Flagstaff City Directories (1929–1989 [some years missing from record])
- Flagstaff Telephone Directories (1930–1989 [some years missing from record])
- Historical topographic maps
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps (1901, 1910, 1916, 1943, 1948, and 1956)

- Arizona Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights 1977 report
- Newspaper archives including:
  - o Arizona Daily Sun
  - o The Coconino Sun

Fieldwork was conducted on February 20, 2025, by Jack Treichler, Samuel Hemsley, and Samuel Mitchell. The subject parcel was visited to identify and document potential historical resources. Digital photographs were taken to document the building.

## **4.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The story of Flagstaff is a story shared by many railroad towns throughout the United States. Encouraged by large federal land grants which granted vast swaths of acreage to railroad companies, the companies established vital arteries connecting the eastern and western coasts of the United States together. To help finance the continued construction and expansion of the railroads, the companies would subdivide and sell the land granted to them by the government to interested settlers (Paradis 2003). In this manner the Federal Government was able to solidify control over the western United States and simplify logistics, the railroad companies were able to both acquire the land needed for expansion and fund said expansion, and settlers were given easy access and ample opportunity to purchase or acquire land. Because of the importance of the railroad as the means of access to these newly exploitable areas, the railroad would understandably play a key role in community development (Paradis 2003).

Flagstaff's Railroad Addition Historic District has its origins in the New Town that was established in 1882 because of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad (later known as the Santa Fe Railroad) not being able to reach the location of Old Town, which was set up along Antelope Spring, due to a steep grade. As a result, New Town was set up along a newly constructed sandstone depot where the train could stop, approximately a half a mile east of Old Town. Street grids were planned and laid out and New Town began to grow as people relocated to take advantage of the economic opportunities that proximity to the depot would bring (Paradis 2003). The two towns would continue to grow for the next few years, with settlers coming from as far away as New York and Kansas, until Old Town experienced a severe fire in 1884. As a result of the fire damage, recovery efforts, and people relocating to the other town site, New Town swiftly began to outpace Old Town in growth, and Old Town was no longer seen as the "true" Flagstaff townsite (Cline 1976; Janus 1979; Paradis 2003).

In a turn of fate, New Town itself was impacted by fires in 1886 and 1888. As a result of the fires, new construction was required to use brick or stone to help minimize the impact of further fires, and water infrastructure was put into place to help fight any fires that may arise (Janus 1979; Paradis 2003). The

fires and the growth associated with them also opened new opportunities for immigrants into the town, as the Babbitt brothers first arrived in 1886 shortly after the fires were quelled (Cline 1976). The town continued to grow, with buildings spreading out from the railroad depot. The Post Office from Old Town relocated to New Town, and the Bank of Flagstaff was organized and established in 1887 by Thomas McMillan (Janus 1979). As all new constructions now utilized more permanent, fireproof materials, the structural nature of the town structures shifted from wood and canvas to brick and stone.

In 1888, David Babbitt, then owner of a lumber yard and hardware business located on the corner of San Francisco and Aspen, began to buy out nearby merchants, such as P.J. Brannen. David partnered with his brother George Babbitt and formed the Babbitt Brothers Trading Company. Soon after, their brothers William, Charles, and Edward arrived to help expand and manage the swiftly growing company, which quickly became the leading merchant in the area through profits from cattle, trading posts, and real estate in Flagstaff and the surrounding areas (Cline 1976). The company office was a two-story brick and sandstone building which replaced the hardware store and was expanded over the years as the company grew (Janus 1979). The company building would become and remain a Flagstaff landmark, even after the company closure in 1987 (Paradise 2003).

In 1891, Governor John Irwin announced the formation of Coconino County, which was split from part of the existing Yavapai County. Flagstaff was chosen as the county seat for the new county and the town was fully incorporated in 1894, with Flagstaff's first City Hall and courthouse being erected shortly thereafter. By 1890 Flagstaff had developed a fire department, fully realized water infrastructure, and telephone and electrical power services (Cline 1976; Janus 1979).

Other industries and factors began to influence Flagstaff's economic development in the 1890s. A red sandstone quarry located to the east of town began to operate fully and was fulfilling material contracts for large cities such as Chicago and Los Angeles. In 1894, Percival Lowell located his observatory onto the mesa located to the west of the town center, which is now known as Mars Hill. Lowell's scientific observations contributed to putting Flagstaff on the map, though this was through scientific endeavor rather than economic growth.

Tourism also began to play an important role in Flagstaff's economic development by 1895, when a stage line ran between Flagstaff and the Grand Canyon three times a week, and the influx of summer tourists seeking to escape the heat caused serious housing shortages in the town during the summer months. In 1899 the Flagstaff Normal School (now known as Northern Arizona University) opened its doors, and

this along with several private and public schools in the town provided centers of education (Cline 1976; Janus 1979).

Flagstaff continued to steadily grow into the 1920s, with the Babbitts expanding their business portfolio and real estate, establishing a brick warehouse and three-story garage in 1915, and with competitors springing up such as Fred Hensing and Sam Finely who opened commercial ventures in large, commercial buildings in 1912 and 1915 respectively. These new constructions further changed the character of downtown, with Sam Finely's commercial building being the first three story tall building in the entire county, while also introducing a wave of new architectural styles into the area, such as Tudor and Greek Revival (Janus 1979; Paradis 2003).

This growth was swiftly followed by a slump, as Flagstaff was affected by the prohibition-era economic slump which impacted the rest of the country, and many buildings became abandoned or began to fall apart. To help combat this slump, the townsfolks constructed a new train depot at Leroux Street and established the Hotel Monte Vista in 1928. The increasing importance of the automobile was also of great benefit to Flagstaff, as Santa Fe Avenue would become part of the Old Trails National Highway system and later become Route 66, a vital artery bringing thousands to and through Flagstaff (Janus 1976).

However, the increasing use of automobiles also meant that the train depot locations were no longer vital nodes for commerce and tourists, and because of this change development soon stopped within what is now the Flagstaff Railroad Addition Historic District and focused instead along the corridor of Route 66, which was becoming increasingly accessible (Janus 1979).

Along with the rest of the state, Flagstaff experienced a growth spurt after World War II, approximately doubling in size. Route 66 was used intensively to transport troops and materials during World War II, and following the war, the all-weather road became popular for "open road adventure" as it became more accessible for travel and recreation (Kirvan and Rogge 2006). Sawmill production increased in the 1950s and the railroad built a marshalling yard in 1957 on the east side to ship materials to the Glen Canyon Dam construction site at Page. The population of the "City in the Pines" increased 138% in the 1950s, helped by the annexation of 48 square miles in 1957–1959. It had become a college town with increasing enrollment at what had been Arizona State College. In 1966, the college became Northern Arizona University. Through the 1960s and 1970s, Flagstaff struggled to attract higher paying jobs as the timber industry collapsed. Nor could it accommodate the increased automobile traffic that came with growth. In the 1980s it had a makeover, closing the old cowboy saloons and creating upscale neighborhoods and

trendy art galleries, boutiques and bistros downtown. Tourism and the hospitality industry eventually made more money for the community than manufacturing forest products (Lucas 2010). As Flagstaff grew after World War II, the need became apparent for reasons discussed below for the expansion of city offices and facilities, including City Hall, the Police Department, and Fire Department.

#### ***4.1 FLAGSTAFF CITY COUNCIL***

The Flagstaff City Council is the legislative and executive body of the City of Flagstaff. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, the City Council of Flagstaff was often limited to one to three individuals, and the office of Vice Mayor was yet to be established. This smaller size was likely a result of the smaller size of Flagstaff historically, and as the city grew the council grew to meet the increased demands and complexity. Other key players in the civic structure of the town in this early period were the Town Marshal, also elected during the town elections, and the Town Clerk.

Interest in developing an updated city charter for Flagstaff arose after Winslow, Arizona, updated their own city charter to better accommodate the city's growing needs. In May of 1958, Flagstaff, also a rapidly growing city, put together a commission to research the possibility of updating their city charter. The commission was headed by Senator Rober W. Procnow and consisted of a 14-person board of freeholders with some input by the Flagstaff City Council, which was operating at 19 West Birch at this time. Several important topics were discussed, such as term length, the roles and responsibilities of the elected officials, and the best methods to ensure voter representation (Arizona Daily Sun 1958a).

The modern City Council size varies, but generally consists of one mayor, one vice mayor, and three to seven council members, all elected. The elected council has the authority to appoint a City Manager, who is charged with enacting the policies legislated by the council. The mayor and vice mayor are recognized as political heads of the city but are ultimately members of the legislative body and do not hold veto power. The council is responsible for setting policy, approving city budgets, and determining the city tax rates while the City Manager also oversees Sustainability, Public Affairs, Water Services, Engineering and Capital Projects, and Community Development divisions within the City of Flagstaff and reports directly to the City Council (City of Flagstaff 2025). This method of governing, known as a council-manager form of city government, was established in Flagstaff in 1958 when the city was rechartered; prior to this Flagstaff was governed by the mayor-council system (Arizona Daily Sun 1958b).

Regardless of the time period, the City Council was charged with the day-to-day running of the city, drafting policy, and crafting long-term plans for the city. Mayors often made proclamations stating that an upcoming week of the month would be dedicated to a specific cause such as cleaning up the town or

creating an employment drive to help employ the physically disabled (Arizona Daily Sun 1951). Other than acting as a notice and increasing the attention brought to a subject, these proclamations carried very little weight.

Newspaper articles show a constant stream of notices of new taxes, elections, and public hearings which carry on to, through, and past the period of significance for the studied building. Some consequential legislation that came into effect during the building's period of significance was the establishment of the first city ordinances which set Flagstaff down the path to become a Dark Sky city. The city ordinance, the Anti-Searchlight Bill, which was passed in 1958, stipulated that the commercial use of searchlights, often used for advertising or other commercial promotions, was banned within the city limits (Arizona Daily Sun 1958). In 1973, Flagstaff would implement further city ordinances which directed streetlamps and some commercial signage to direct the light downwards and minimize light scatter, further minimizing light pollution in the night sky (Arizona Daily Sun 1973). Occasionally disgruntled community members would attend meetings to protest zoning and budget proposals brought forth for various city plans (Arizona Daily Sun 1971a).

During the building's time as a civic building there were 11 Mayors:

- 1948 – 1952 Henry L. Hutchison
- 1952 – 1954 Kenneth Switzer
- 1954 – 1956 Edward T. Kerley
- 1956 – 1958 Peter J. Lindemann
- 1958 – 1960 Charles J. Saunders
- 1960 – 1968 Rollin W. Wheeler
- 1968 – 1974 Sylvan L. Harenburg
- 1974 – 1975 William S. Erwin
- 1975 – 1976 Dale Nations
- 1976 – 1980 Robert Moody
- 1980 – 1984 Paul Babbit Jr.

The mayor position comes with a two-year term of office, but past mayors were sometimes reelected to serve additional terms, as occurred with Rollin W. Wheeler, Sylvan L. Harenburg, Robert Moody, and Paul Babbit Jr., for instance.

Mayor Rollin W. Wheeler was a particularly notable individual, serving four sequential mayoral terms. Mayor Wheeler is the longest serving mayor in the history of Flagstaff and the first Charter Mayor to be elected after the establishment of a new City Charter in 1958, during the tenure of Mayor Saunders. Prior to Mayor Wheeler's election as mayor, he was employed as a high school teacher, coach, and counselor, a position he retained during his civic employment, as well as a City of Flagstaff council member between 1952 and 1960.

As the first mayor under the new charter, Mayor Wheeler was instrumental in shaping the role and establishing precedent for future mayors to follow. Under the new charter the mayor only had a vote in case of ties, however Mayor Wheeler would often let his preference and reasoning for a specific measure be known, even when he was unable to provide a vote for the matter. Mayor Wheeler spent much of his time in City Hall, working around the clock and was always available during times of crisis and urgency providing necessary leadership and direction. During his term Mayor Wheeler often focused on parks development and recreational programs, an interest that would be ultimately rewarded with the renaming of the Civic Plaza Park to Wheeler Park in 1984 (Arizona Daily Sun 1984).

#### ***4.2 FLAGSTAFF MUNICIPAL COURT***

During the 1950s through 1980s, the building at 19 West Birch Avenue housed the Flagstaff Municipal Court. In Arizona, Municipal Courts, also known as Magistrate Courts and City Courts, have limited jurisdiction and handle minor offenses and violations within city limits, small claims, landlord-tenant disputes, and preliminary hearings for more serious crimes. Superior Courts have broader jurisdictions, handling felony trials, appeals, and can hear cases from across the state. The Superior Court, first constructed in the 1890s, is located on 200 North San Francisco Street, and is still in use today as the Coconino County Superior Court. The municipal courtrooms in 19 West Birch were located on the second floor of the building. Chief City Magistrate William C. Brady, City Magistrates Ramon Otero Jr, Associate Magistrate A. R. Brown, and Court Administrator Robert Wininger were some of the prominent judges presiding over the Flagstaff Municipal Court at 19 West Birch Avenue. In the early 1970s, the courtroom underwent remodeling. Improvements during this remodel, designed by architect Clee Edgar, include the addition of microphones, seating for the public, and seating for the council members, attorneys, city manager, clerk, and treasurer (Figure 7). The court was reported to still lack jury rooms, meaning that the entire courtroom needed to be cleared for jury deliberations. As Flagstaff continued to expand, this was no longer suitable. The Municipal Court was eventually moved to 211 West Aspen Avenue in 1985 which offered additional offices, storage spaces, jury rooms, and several divisions of courtrooms for the city to operate out of (Arizona Daily Sun 1985).

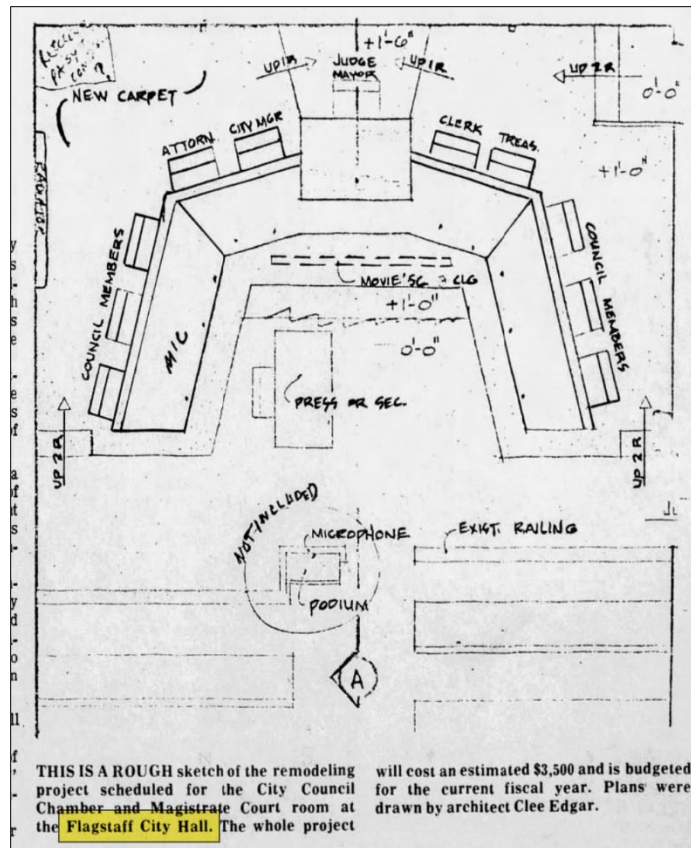


Figure 7. Remodeling plans for the Magistrate Court room at City Hall (Arizona Daily Sun 1971).

### 4.3 FLAGSTAFF POLICE DEPARTMENT

During the 1950s through 1970s, the building at 19 West Birch Avenue housed both the City of Flagstaff Police and Fire Departments in dedicated wings of the building. At the time, Flagstaff was small enough that all three organizations (the City Hall, Police Department, and Fire Department) were small enough to be operated out of the same building and did not require separate facilities. Prior to moving into the 19 West Birch Avenue building, all three organizations were also based in the prior City Hall building which was located a block south on 16 North Leroux Street. One of the main motivators for the construction of the 19 West Birch City Hall was the poor conditions and unacceptable subsequent treatment of the accused housed in the previous Police Department and likely court system. Additionally, the Police Department has had the longest usage of the building as they remained in the building until 2000, after the new City Hall was constructed in 1980.

The City of Flagstaff Police Department and Jail were housed in the building at 19 West Birch Avenue from 1951 until 2000, when it moved to new facilities on Sawmill Road. The jail at 19 West Birch was considered the City Jail, differentiated from the larger County Jail located on the same lot as the Coconino Superior Court. The city jail was the first facility officially completed at the 19 West Birch Avenue building, finishing in April of 1951, and began operating before the City Hall component of the building itself was completed and opened (Arizona Daily Sun 1951a). The City Jail would serve as temporary housing for arrestees as they awaited transfer to the Coconino County Jail, or as they awaited trial in the Flagstaff Municipal Court for petty crimes, low-level misdemeanors, and vehicular violations was also located at 19 West Birch Avenue. Upon its construction in 1951, the City Jail had space for a total of 47 prisoners in bunks and 10 to 20 more in a “tank”, or a holding cell with no beds. The general cell block was stated to have 16 bunks, and a chain gang dormitory with 18 bunks. There were also two cells constructed for male juveniles, two cells for females, and eight cells for adult female prisoners. Additionally, one padded cell with space for one prisoner was included (Arizona Daily Sun 1951b).

By 1952 the Flagstaff Police Department consisted of nine full time police officers with three squad cars, a relatively small but well-equipped force with up-to-date equipment including radio receivers (Shock



*Figure 8. Police Captain Elmo Maxwell, left, presents Police Chief William Epperson, right, with a watch (Arizona Daily Sun 1960).*

1952). Two Police Department Chiefs were employed during the building's period of significance. William Epperson, who served between 1945 and 1963, and Elmo Maxwell, who took over from Epperson in 1963 and acted as the Police Chief until 1980 (White 2023; Figure 8). In 1963, the original architect of the building, Robert Blakey, was commissioned by the city to expand the jail facilities and offices, to incorporate a dark room, and to update the existing plumbing and electrical systems (Arizona Daily Sun 1963; Blakey 1963). During these renovations, the exterior of the building was altered including the replacement of all windows, some of the roof, and replacing sections of the Malpais basalt façade that were deteriorating (Blakey 1963).

#### ***4.4. FLAGSTAFF FIRE DEPARTMENT***

The Flagstaff Fire Department operated out of the southern wing of the 19 West Birch Avenue building, which operated as the Fire Department headquarters, and by 1952 consisted of three full-time employees and 13 volunteers, with equipment consisting of a 750 gallon per minute (gpm) pumper truck, a 500 gpm



*Figure 9. A Flagstaff Fire Department firetruck pulling out of the 19 West Birch Avenue garage (Alexander 2017).*

We cannot leave a discussion of the Flagstaff fire department without a word about the old air horn or klaxon which used to summon the volunteer firemen to fires, which at the same time by code telling them — and the rest of the community — where the blaze was. Each area of town had its code, and this was blasted out on the big horn. Everybody in town, as far as I know, had copies of the code, so they could know where the blaze was and also drive out to see the fun, and get in the way, sometimes seriously. Now of course the fire calls go through a different system and the firemen get the word without delay, without the air horn and are on their way.

Most oldtimers, I am sure, will join me in saying that we are very glad that old air horn is no longer used for that purpose! During its day, it must have turned an awful lot of hair prematurely grey, frightened countless infants into fits, sobered up drunks, disrupted the harmony and peace of our community, and certainly made sure that not a person in town was asleep for very long when there was a fire anywhere in town.

We regret the passing of some of the old features of our town, but that fire department air horn, that gargantuan dying calf, is not among them!

*Figure 10. Newspaper article describing the enthusiastic removal of the fire horn from 19 West Birch (Arizona Daily Sun 1977).*

pumper truck and two hose trailers with 500 ft of hose each (Figure 9). A fire horn, part of the original building at 19 West Birch Avenue, was mounted from 1951 through 1977 in a tower or cupola atop the roof. The fire horn would summon volunteer firemen to the scene of a blaze and alert residents to the location of a fire by sounding off a series of codes. The horn also sounded off every day at noon, making it a recognizable landmark to the people of Flagstaff for the 20 years that it was in use. Not everyone appreciated the shrill sound of the fire horn, however, and it is described in a 1977 article regarding its decommissioning: “We regret the passing of some of the old features of our town, but that fire department air horn, that gargantuan dying calf, is not among them!” (Arizona Daily Sun 1977; Figure 10). A second fire station, Fire Station No. 2, was constructed in the Sunnyside neighborhood in 1945 and serviced the eastern side of the city (Arizona Daily Sun 2010). By 1959 the Fire Department had expanded along with the city, and 23 paid employees and 17 volunteers were employed by the department, but employees worked at both this station and the east side station. Increased population and growth meant increased risk of fire, and the department responded to 177 calls in 1959. By 1964 the department had been unionized, and by 1965 increased demand necessitated a 56-hour work week for the majority of the employees. The training process for new employees became more

formalized, and new fire fighters were required to attend a two-week fire academy. By 1970, yearly calls to the Fire Department exceeded 500, and the City Council noted that the current Fire Department

infrastructure was inadequate for the rising demand and plans for a third fire station were drawn up. Through 1975 demand remained roughly the same, and other than fluctuation between the 40-hour work week and 56-hour work week the department would remain the same (Arizona Daily Sun 2010). The Fire Department would operate as one of Flagstaff's fire departments out of 19 West Birch Avenue until February of 1980, when the station was closed, and a new station was constructed on the east side of Flagstaff replacing the older one constructed in 1945 (Velotta 1980).

#### ***4.5 OTHER FACILITIES AND CITY OFFICES***

19 West Birch Avenue also held offices for other city facilities and officials, including offices for the water department, the city engineer, and the city clerk. Residents of Flagstaff could pay their water bills in the building; participate in local and general elections as it was a designated polling location; and attend planning and zoning meetings, City Council meetings, and other public hearings to voice their opinions on proposals set forth for the city (Arizona Daily Sun 1977a; Arizona Daily Sun 1952; Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Co. 1956). Other important city offices, such as the Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce, were at other locations.

#### ***4.6 SOCIAL HISTORY***

The social history and movements during the building's period of significance were a complicated time in American History with the emergence of groups associated with civil rights, anti-war protests, Vietnam War protests, the feminism movement, and the environmental movement as a small sample. The building's associated contribution or association with many of these movements was seemingly limited based on newspaper articles, oral histories, and the remaining civic records. This is not to say that these events were not occurring in Flagstaff or that these movements were not impacting the local population but rather that other locations such as the Northern Arizona University campus and the County Courthouse were more common locations for the expression. A long-time previous Flagstaff Chief of Police, Pat Madden described that during the Vietnam War, occasional demonstrators were seen walking by the building, but the larger demonstrations were being held elsewhere in town. Specifically, he remembered a large protest on San Francisco Street that had to be broken up (Pat Madden, personal communication, June 30, 2025).

One social movement that the residents of 19 West Birch were active participants in was the Native American Civil Rights Movement. Flagstaff has a long and well-documented history of discrimination against its Native American citizens and neighbors. This history is both a reflection of a larger nationwide historical context but also the result of Flagstaff being a "bordertown" to the Navajo Nation Reservation.

Practices occurring in Flagstaff during the period of significance include systemic discrimination, homelessness, predatory legal practices, redlining, stigma, exploitation, and racism.

One of the larger events that occurred in Flagstaff relating to the Native Americans Civil Rights Movement was the protest, arrest, and subsequent investigations following a protest at the 1972 All-Indian Pow Wow (Figure 11). The All-Indian Pow Wow was devised by a group of Anglo-American businessmen in 1929 with financial interests in the draw of the event. The event was initially put on by the City of Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce but went under private management around 1934 and eventually back into the hands of the city in the early 1970s. The event included Native Americans putting on traditional dances, rodeos, and selling arts and crafts. Native American tribes came from across the Southwest to participate and were primarily housed by camping at the City Park (now Thorpe Park). The event was traditionally put on around the Fourth of July and drew large crowds with upwards of 10,000 visitors (Cline n.d.). To put the economic impact into perspective the average attendance at the current Flagstaff Fourth of July celebration averages 10,000 visitors in 2025, with a local population much larger than that of the one in 1972. The event was touted as a means of acknowledging Native customs of ceremony, song, and dance but “in reality, local service organizations and the business community leveraged Native culture for profit” (Arizona Historical Society 2020).

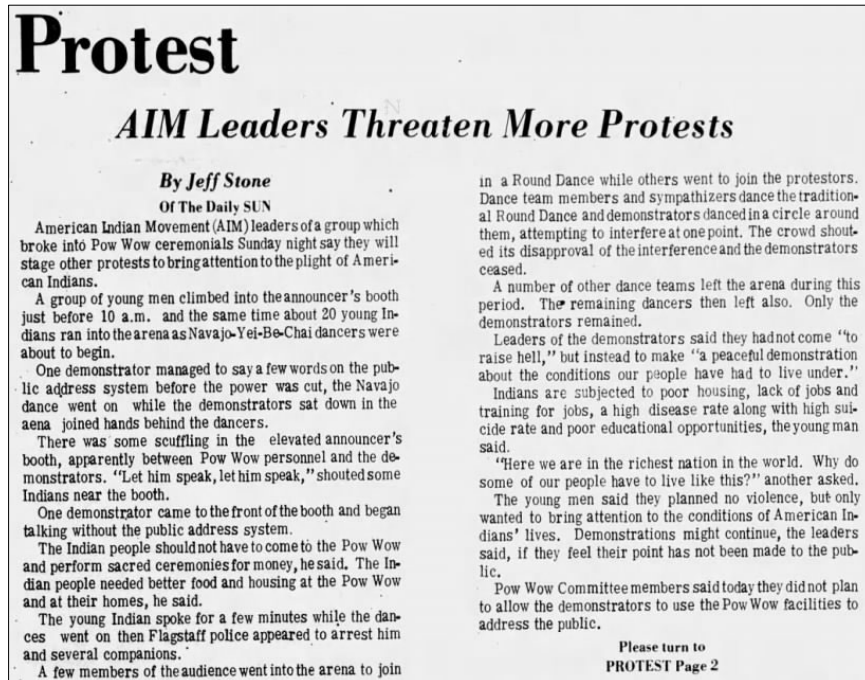


Figure 11. Article describing a protest by the American Indian Movement in Flagstaff, ending with the arrest of protesters by the Flagstaff Police Department (Arizona Daily Sun 1972).

While many people remember the event fondly, the experience was anything but universal. An interview with Catherine Talakte about the Pow Wow initially describes the event as one that while exciting and full of family and reunions it was also tainted by a consistent hum of discrimination and mistreatment. Talakte discuss Natives being beaten and hauled off by the Flagstaff City Police: “even at the time I didn’t think that was right- as a kid” (Talakte 2012). She specifically recalls an event where the grave of a Native American child was found buried behind the City Park during the Powwow. Talakte mentions that she did not think it was ever solved but that she knew it was there. Oddly, hundreds of newspaper articles were reviewed, and no mention of the child’s death or investigation were reported.

While many of these actions were expected by participants, things took a dramatic shift during the 1972 event when members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) protested the event. It was reported that seven members of the AIM movement grabbed the microphone and tried to stop the dancing, but they were arrested and charged with rioting and inciting a riot, although no riot was reported to have occurred (Figure 12). The individuals arrested included Vernon Bellecourt, Patrick Easchief, Eduardo Molina, Rick Two Elk, Robert Burnette, Andrew Kelly, and Leroy Keams. The individuals were arrested by the Flagstaff Police Department and were likely held at 19 West Birch for a day or two until they were moved to the larger Coconino County Jail, as was the practice at the time. The individuals were initially held at \$20,000 bail each, a palpably exaggerated sum for the crimes, especially considering all the felony charges were lowered to three misdemeanor charges which held a 30-day sentence for each of the arrested.

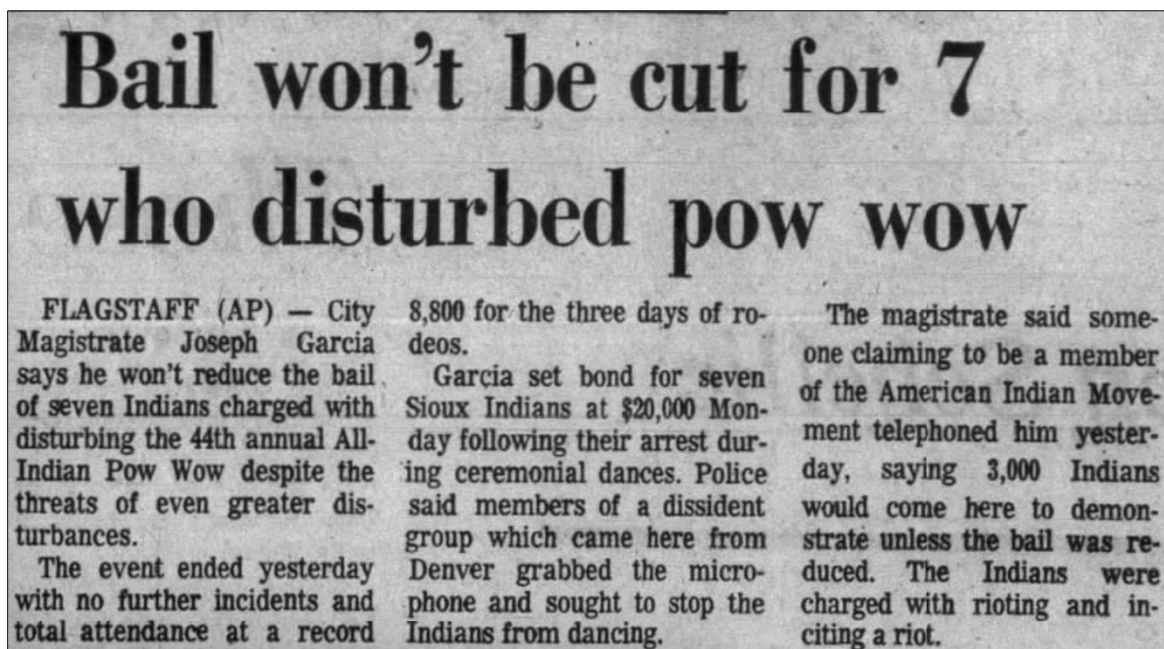


Figure 12. Newspaper article describing bail for the AIM protestors. Tucson Citizen July 5, 1972.

Following the release of the seven individuals, AIM started small protests in other towns in Arizona and gave testimony of their mistreatment by the City of Flagstaff to agencies in Phoenix calling for investigations. This prompted several investigations into the treatment of Native Americans by the City of Flagstaff, and more specifically the Flagstaff Police Department and Municipal Courts.

In 1972, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights held public hearing in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Phoenix, Arizona. A report summarizing these testimonies indicated that little testimony was given at the Phoenix hearings regarding police brutality, with the exception of the 1972 AIM protest in Flagstaff where “protesters were reportedly subjected to excessive bail (\$25,000 apiece), racial slurs, and police brutality” (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1973:40).

This Commission report and the actions against the AIM protestors instigated an investigation of the Flagstaff Municipal Court and Flagstaff Police Department in 1975. While other towns were investigated, the report was aimed at Flagstaff in the end as the committee felt “the city best illustrated the problems the confront American Indians from arrest through sentencing” (Arizona Advisory Committee 1977:iii). The initial investigation was met with challenges as the commission found very few Native Americans were willing to come forward to discuss their interactions with police officers or officers of the court either because they did not want to resurrect a bad memory or feared reprisals from law enforcement (Arizona Advisory Commission 1977:9). However, several documented cases of predatory practices, brutality, racism, and discrimination were presented.

One incident included John Thompson, Sr. a Native American who was pulled over for driving on the wrong side of the road and the Flagstaff Police Officer demanded \$12 with no citation being presented. When Mr. Thompson stated he only had \$7, he was told that if he didn’t produce \$12 in five minutes he would be taken to jail. Mr. Thompson’s wife who was with him found a friend to write a check for \$5, but the police officer would not accept the check and arrested Mr. Thompson, then stated he was intoxicated, and brought him to jail. Due to the arrest and incarceration on a minor traffic offense, Mr. Thompson sought out legal counsel. His counsel, Mr. Gibson wrote the Chief of Police, discussing how steps were missed in the arrest process but also expressed discomfort with the intoxication allegation that only appeared after Mr. Thompson could not produce the full \$12. This was a damaging claim against Mr. Thompson who had been the minister of a church for 28 years. Chief Maxwell responded in summary with: "It is regretful that Mr. Thompson feels he was abused both verbally and physically, however this was not the intention of the officer. Also, there are always two sides to every story." When asked about this incident by the Arizona Advisory Committee, Chief Maxwell stated “if they had a complaint they should go to court” (Arizona Advisory Commission 1977:10), which Mr. Thompson did in 1975.

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ARIZONA

HENRY LEE BEGAY, JOHN THOMPSON and PHILLIP BEGAY, individually and on behalf of all other persons similarly situated, Plaintiffs, vs. CITY OF FLAGSTAFF, a municipal corporation; the FLAGSTAFF POLICE DEPARTMENT, municipal department; and ELMO E. MAXWELL, Chief of the Flagstaff Police Department; J. MOTT, an officer of the Flagstaff Police Department; RICHARD LUNDBERG, an officer of the Flagstaff Police Department; and RICHARD MONTOYA, an officer of the Flagstaff Police Department, individually and in their official capacities, Defendants.

Pursuant to stipulation by the parties, it is hereby ordered that:

1. The term "minor traffic offenses" as used in this Order, is defined as follows:
  - a) Those violations of chapter 6, title 28, A.R.S., which are defined as misdemeanors for which the penalty is prescribed in A.R.S. 28-491 (B) and
  - b) Those violations of chapter 6, Title 28, A.R.S., which are defined as misdemeanors for which the penalty is prescribed in A.R.S. 28-1031 (b).
2. Defendants City of Flagstaff, the Flagstaff Police Department, and Elmo E. Maxwell shall cease and desist permanently from the practice of requiring individuals who are cited for a minor traffic offense within the City of Flagstaff to post a bond "at the time of citation," and shall cease and desist from arresting, finger-printing, photographing, booking and incarcerating or detaining on a pre-trial basis said individuals when the offense involved is a minor traffic offense, or is otherwise not punishable by incarceration.
3. Defendants City of Flagstaff, the Flagstaff Police Department, and Elmo E. Maxwell shall cease and desist permanently from the practice of requiring Arizona residents cited for a minor traffic offense who reside on an Indian Reservation within the State of Arizona to post a bond at the time of the citation without being eligible for pre-trial release solely because of their status as residents of an Indian Reservation.
4. Defendants City of Flagstaff, the Flagstaff Police Department, and Elmo E. Maxwell shall cease and desist permanently from refusing to grant pre-trial release on personal recognizance to American Indians who live on an Indian Reservation within the State of Arizona who are cited for a minor traffic offense within the City of Flagstaff, solely because they are American Indians who live on a Reservation.
5. Defendants City of Flagstaff, the Flagstaff Police Department, and Elmo E. Maxwell shall accept bonds and personal checks of American Indians who reside on an Indian Reservation within the State of Arizona on the same basis as bonds and personal checks of Arizona residents who live off the Reservations.
6. Defendants City of Flagstaff, the Flagstaff Police Department, and Elmo E. Maxwell shall include the provisions of this Order in the Flagstaff City Police Manual, shall instruct all Flagstaff City Police Department members to abide by the provisions of this Order, and shall have this Order published in the Arizona Daily Sun, the Arizona Republic, the Navajo Times, and Quo'Toati, in such a manner as to provide reasonable notice to those persons affected by this Order.
7. These terms shall be complied with within sixty days of this date of this Order.
8. This case shall be dismissed as soon as the defendants have complied with paragraph 6 of this Order.

DATED: March 2, 1977.

Approved as to form:  
William P. Copple  
United States District Judge

Figure 13. Newspaper article stating the result of suit against City of Flagstaff and Flagstaff Police Department for false arrests and unjust treatment of Native Americans (Arizona Daily Sun 1977).

The court case, Henry Lee Begay, John Thompson, and Phillip Begay vs. City of Flagstaff, Flagstaff Police Department, Elmo Maxwell as Flagstaff Police Chief, and J. Mott an officer of the Flagstaff Police Department, was filed in Federal Court in 1975 but dismissed in 1977 on the condition that several regular practices of the Flagstaff Police Department cease and desist within sixty days. Those practices that were found to be occurring and ordered to stop included (Figure 13):

- Requiring individuals who are cited for minor traffic offenses within the City of Flagstaff to post bond "at the time of citation"
- Arresting, finger-printing, photographing, booking, and incarcerating pre-trial individuals for offenses that are not punishable by incarceration
- Requiring residents of Reservations to post bond without being eligible for pre-trial release solely because of their status as Native Americans
- Not accepting the same tender (e.g. checks) from Native Americans for bond

Another civil rights violation found during the Arizona Advisory Commission's investigation was that of Norman Jensen, a Navajo who was attending a summer school at Northern Arizona University. During the predawn hours of 1975, and NAU security officer broke into Jensen's room without a warrant and arrested him on rape without providing any Miranda rights. He was not allowed to clothe himself and was taken to the Flagstaff Community Hospital and then the Coconino County Jail, although his arrest was conducted by the Flagstaff Police Department. That evening after protesting his treatment, he was informed verbally by the Flagstaff Police Department that he must sign a waiver releasing the

Flagstaff Police Department of any liability for false arrest or they would not release him. He agreed and signed the waiver so that he could go home. The Flagstaff Police Department told Jensen at that time that his arrest was a mistake and would not appear in the newspaper. Regardless of these promises or the fact that his arrest was unlawful, it was reported and published in the Arizona Daily Sun on July 29, 1975, and was something that followed Jensen through his life despite having committed no crime.

In addition to these specific cases, the investigation found that Native American arrests were excessive compared to their proportion of the population. Approximately, 40% of individuals arrested by the City of Flagstaff were Native American, although they only represented 5.1% of the population. The discrimination occurring at 19 West Birch were not limited to the Police Department but were also found to be prevalent in the Municipal Court system as well. Primary issues were continuations of illegal police practices, but other concerns noted by the investigation included:

- None of the judges or magistrates were attorneys or had attended law school; only Judge Brady and Judge Garcia had any legal training and constituted one-week judicial conferences.
- Over 93% of defendants in one of the observed courts plead guilty and were overwhelmingly Native American
- En Masse arraignments with no interpreters for non-English speaking Native Americans
- Lack of access to public counsel
- Enforcement of illegal bonds
- Disproportionate dismissal of Native Americans as jurors

At the time that this report was released, a report by the northern chapter of ACLU on the 1976 Flagstaff Pow Wow was included as an appendix. This report included observations on what improvements had been made by the Flagstaff Municipal Court and Flagstaff Police Department regarding treatment of Native Americans. The report felt that the Municipal Court, specifically Judge Brady, had made serious efforts to address the concerns of the ACLU and Arizona Advisory Commission. The report did feel that Judge Brown was still refusing release without bond and less consistent in dismissing questionable charges. Additionally, translators were available for County arrests but still not those in the City.

The ACLU report found vast improvements in the Sheriff's Department and the booking process at County Jail. However, this praise did not extend entirely to the Flagstaff Police Department who appeared divided on enacting the requested civil rights changes. Excessive force was the first topic discussed, and examples were provided from the event. On July 2, 1976, the arrest of a Native American Harold Micahel

Adams was observed by ACLU observers. During this arrest, Flagstaff city police officers surrounded the suspect, shoved him, pushed him, and shouted slurs at him. After the third incident Mr. Adams pointed a finger at a police officer to try to get them to stop and he was subsequently “knocked to the floor and physically abused for a length of time far beyond what would have been necessary to subdue even a violent prisoner,” (Arizona Advisory Commission 1977:B-2). The attack was violent and disturbing enough that another law enforcement official was heard saying “this has to stop.”

The ACLU report also discusses observing discriminatory arrest practices such as Native Americans being arrested for drinking from open containers while standing next to white residents who were not arrested for the same action.

## **5.0 SITE AND BUILDING HISTORY**

In 1886 the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad Company transferred a large swathe of land containing the subject property to M.E. Daggs, a member of a prominent sheepherder family in Flagstaff. In 1891, Lots 16, 17 and 18 of Block 19 were under the ownership of John Daggs and Belle Daggs, who sold the property to W. Averill Daggs. The following years saw Lots 16, 17, and 18 change hands numerous times due to a variety of lawsuits, ultimately going to Hugh McCrum in 1898 as a result of a lawsuit between the Daggs family and himself over delinquent payments. McCrum would then sell the lots to J. W. Francis in 1899, who retained the lots until 1903 when they were sold to Hugh Campbell. Campbell retained the property until 1917, when it was sold to John C. Kelly. Kelly would keep ownership of the property until the lots were transferred to the First National Bank of Arizona. The other lots which pertain to the property, Lots 13, 14, and 15, were sold back and forth during the early 1890s, swapping hands from the Daggs, to the Riordan Merchant Company, to Henry Fulton in 1894, who also held property in the adjacent lots to the east of the studied building. The same year, Fulton would receive a tax certificate from the Territory of Arizona against the lots. Ownership after this juncture is unclear due to missing or incomplete records until the 1950s, when the City of Flagstaff acquired the lots prior to the construction of the studied building.

The old City Hall building with associated wings/additions is currently the only building located in the study area (APN 100-10-004-A). Several different, older buildings were located in the parcel from at least 1890 through 1948, according to Sanborn maps from 1890, 1892; 1895, 1901, 1910 1916, and 1948, as well as the 1919–1925 City of Flagstaff plat map (Figure 17; Figure 18; Figure 19; Figure 20; Figure 21; Figure 22; Figure 23). A large three-room stable building existed on the property from at least 1890 to at least 1916 before it was removed. Between 1890 and 1892 two small outbuildings, possibly sheds, are

present on the east side of the parcel. In 1916 two cabins were present on the property, though they appear to have been demolished by 1948. The 1948 Sanborn map shows a two-room dry cleaning building as being present in the northwest corner of the property.

The subject property was constructed between 1950 and 1951 to replace the old City Hall (Photograph 2), which was previously located at 16 North Leroux Street. Work began on July 17, 1950, after the contract for the construction was awarded to King-Hoover Construction of Phoenix, Arizona for \$152,692.00 and the jail equipment was awarded to Decatur Iron and Steel Company of Decatur, Alabama for \$25,447.00 (Arizona Daily Sun 1950). However, no information on who specifically assisted in the creation of the stone façade was found in any of the historic research.

A new City Hall was commissioned due to the poor conditions at the old City Hall and the need for more space as Flagstaff continued to grow starting as early as 1949. A poor rating of the unsanitary conditions at the Police Department were also cited contributing to the need for a new City Hall, and while the City supported the need for improved facilities it did state that the unsanitary conditions were not the fault of the department but blamed the Native Americans held there (Arizona Daily Sun 1949; Figure 14). The new City Hall was officially opened at the end of 1951. The old City Hall building was no longer in use by city officials by 1952, when private businesses moved into the building. The construction of the new City Hall was funded in part by a bond issue and the city's postwar projects fund. The new City Hall is typically referenced with the address 120 North Beaver Street, since the building's main entrance is on this street.



*Photograph 2. Photograph of the initial stages of construction of City Hall in 1951 (Babbit 1950).*

**MAYOR URGES . . .**  
*(Continued from Page One)*  
 that many unsanitary conditions exist about us, and that much of our equipment and things that we have to work with are far below the standard that we would like to have.

"All in all, it is apt to cause us to stand back and get a general perspective of the over-all situation — and wonder if we are actually making progress toward a bigger and better city or have we permitted ourselves to get into a rut wherein we have forgotten proper preparations and safeguard which is permitting unsanitary conditions and slum conditions to outweigh the better, more comfortable and more beautiful side of our growth and progress.

"Then in taking stock of our position, mere logic causes us to scan the personality and ideologies of those who are making their feelings and desires known. All are doubtless sincere in their actions, but it is necessary for us who hold considerable responsibility toward remedying situations, to ask ourselves just how far we can go toward satisfying everyone in his particular idea, and at the same time represent the majority in that which may be their objective for the city.

"It is also possible that some look upon their elected and appointed representatives with a cooperative eye and some with a critical eye.

"We must immediately take the stock of our equipment with which we have to work and the available finances and possibilities of obtaining additional finances with which to accomplish those things which we decide are the most important and deserving of the funds which are always limited, keeping always in mind the taxpayer is to receive consideration and is protected by statute.

"One of the first things a city councilman does when he is elected to that office is to acquaint himself with necessities of the city and improvements which would be nice to have, and then as soon as he starts to put some of these desires into realities, he begins to find out that the required funds are mighty hard to get and those funds which are available must be used for purposes which he considers the most necessary, although he would really like to provide all of the improvements suggested to him.

"In a recent letter published in the *Arizona Sun*, it was noted that a local group had observed the bad condition of the city jail. I warrant you that every city councilman for a number of years in the past has known that the present jail is entirely inadequate and a shameful situation but they were unable to do anything about it, merely for the lack of necessary funds to provide a proper one.

"As to the dirty condition of the jail mentioned, it is believed that the present police department is doing about as well as they can with a prisoner janitor. The place is cleaned daily and sprayed with insecticide three and four times a week, and that is an improvement over previous police departments.

"It has even been suggested that sheets be put on the beds to cover the inmates.

experience in handling drunks will readily inform you that just a few drunk Indians will reduce your sheets to shreds and the shreds will be compactly stuffed in the toilet bowl, thereby adding to your troubles.

"In fact it might be explained that the two cells at the city hall are only used for housing the prisoner before he has been taken to court for trial, and generally is in his most filthy condition and would probably be better off without any furniture or bedding to come in contact with a drunk or sick man, and when it is considered that approximately 100 men in such condition go through the two cells in one month, it should be understood that the place will get a little dirty at some time during the day or night, even though the cells are cleaned regularly once a day.

"It is believed that any group which conscientiously believes in improvement to the city jail could do a service to the community by actively requesting and supporting the city council in procuring funds through a bond issue, taxation or otherwise for the construction of an adequate city hall building which would include a proper jail, an adequate fire station, and adequate administrative offices.

"It is also believed that any group which conscientiously has constructive motives in mind and does not harbor a mandatorily critical attitude toward officials, could

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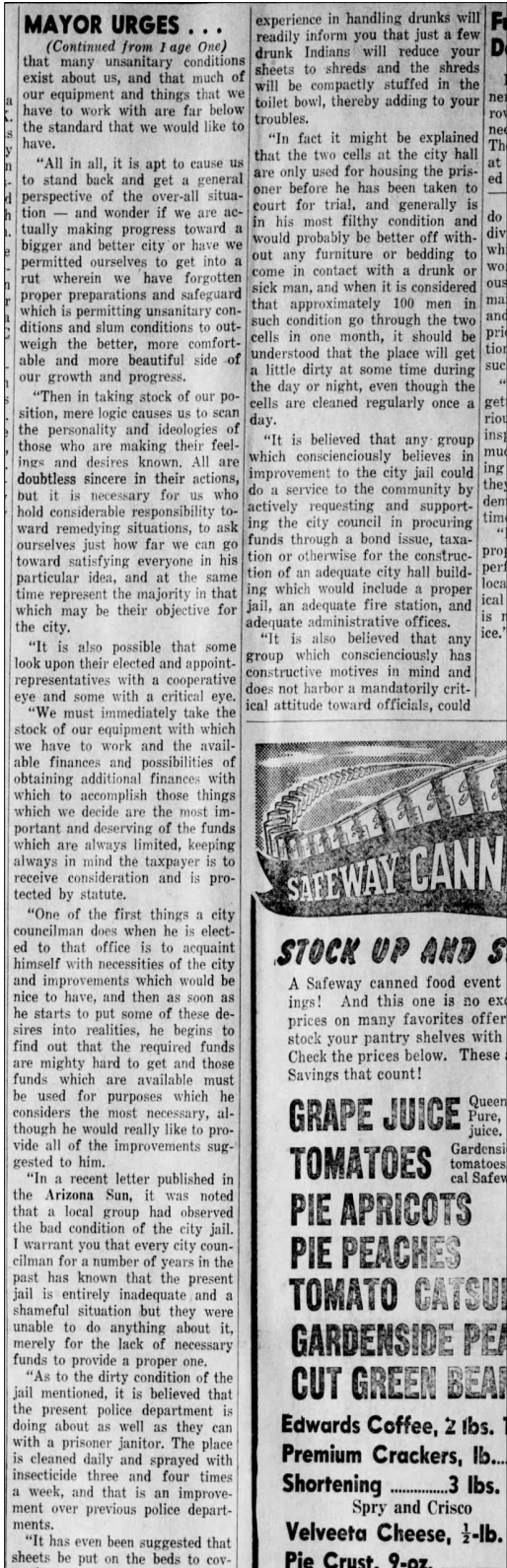


Figure 14. Newspaper article discussing the need for a new City Hall and the conditions of the Police Department (*Arizona Daily Sun*)

Newspaper articles discuss the construction of the City Hall building beginning in July of 1950, construction was completed in 1951, and the first City Hall meeting was held in December of that year (*Arizona Daily Sun* 1950; 1951). The building is visible in a 1956 Sanborn map in approximately its current form (Figure 24). The building is visible in a 1959 aerial photograph in approximately its current form, apart from some differing roof utilities and the installation of a canopy in the southeast corner of the building (Figure 25; Faure 1959).

In 1982 a decision was made by the Flagstaff City Council to construct a new City Hall, located at 211 West Aspen Avenue (*Arizona Daily Sun* 1982). The decision was made because of outdated facilities at 19 West Birch, and the lack of space and accessibility to the disabled in the courtrooms. Additionally, many city officials' offices were located throughout downtown Flagstaff, dispersed randomly in makeshift offices, making it difficult for city officials to commute and communicate as they were traveling between buildings and offices constantly. The new City Hall would consolidate city services into one building (*Arizona Daily Sun* 1982a; Figure 15). The new City Hall would also solve parking issues downtown, as city officials were parking on the streets, or in paid lots, and the new City Hall plans had a large employee parking lot, offering convenience to the employees, and more public parking spaces available downtown. The City Hall was completed in 1983, and the majority of city officials moved out of the 19 West Birch location. At the time of the new City Hall construction, the majority of government employees were working out of a makeshift, converted furniture store and other small buildings downtown. The 19 West Birch location was considered for private sale or to be levelled as a parking lot

but ultimately it was determined that they would renovate the location for continued use by the Police Department and Municipal Court. The building underwent major renovations in 1982, totaling over \$250,000. These renovations included making the building accessible with the addition of wheelchair ramps and an elevator (the Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] would be passed in 1990), as well as updating heating systems, adding two court rooms, and removing the bay doors that housed fire engines (Arizona Daily Sun 1981; Arizona Daily Sun 1982; Arizona Daily Sun 1985a; Figure 16). The Police Department and Jail would remain until 2000, when the department began to move to new facilities located on Sawmill Road. After the relocation of the Police Department, the building ceased to be a civic building and would be rented out to various commercial entities.

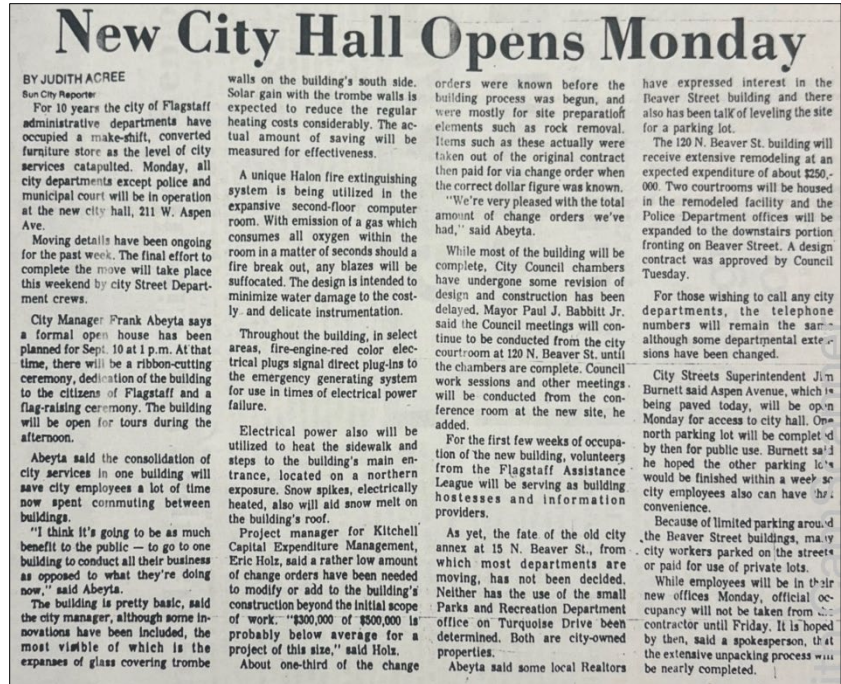


Figure 15. Newspaper article discussing the opening of new City Hall in 1982 (Arizona Daily Sun 1982).

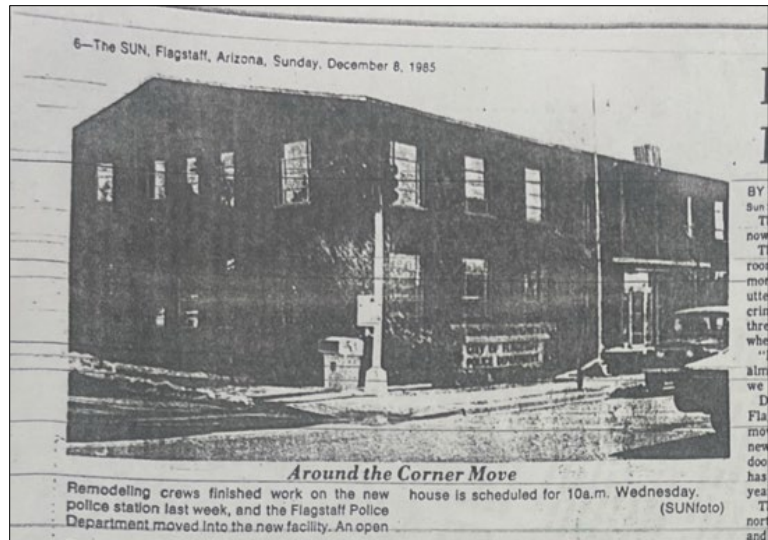
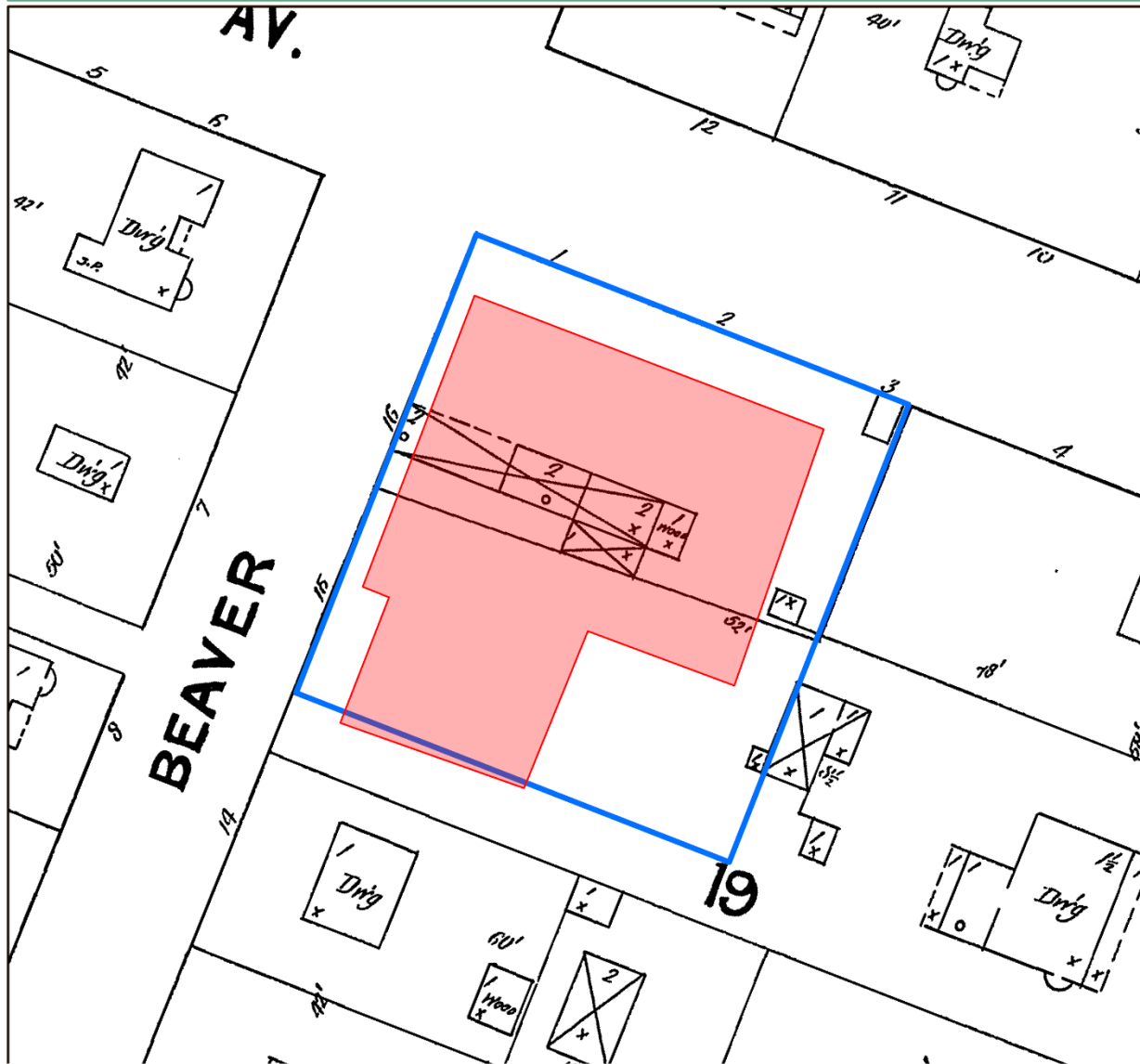


Figure 16. Photo showing the finished renovation of the Police Department in 1982, when the department moved locations in the building from 19 West Birch and into what used to house the municipal offices at 120 North Beaver (Arizona Daily Sun 1985a).

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N

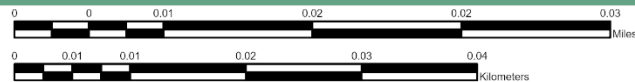


Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Street Historic Resource Study**

(Sanborn Map Company 1948)  
1890 Sanborn Map

Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:500

**LEGEND**

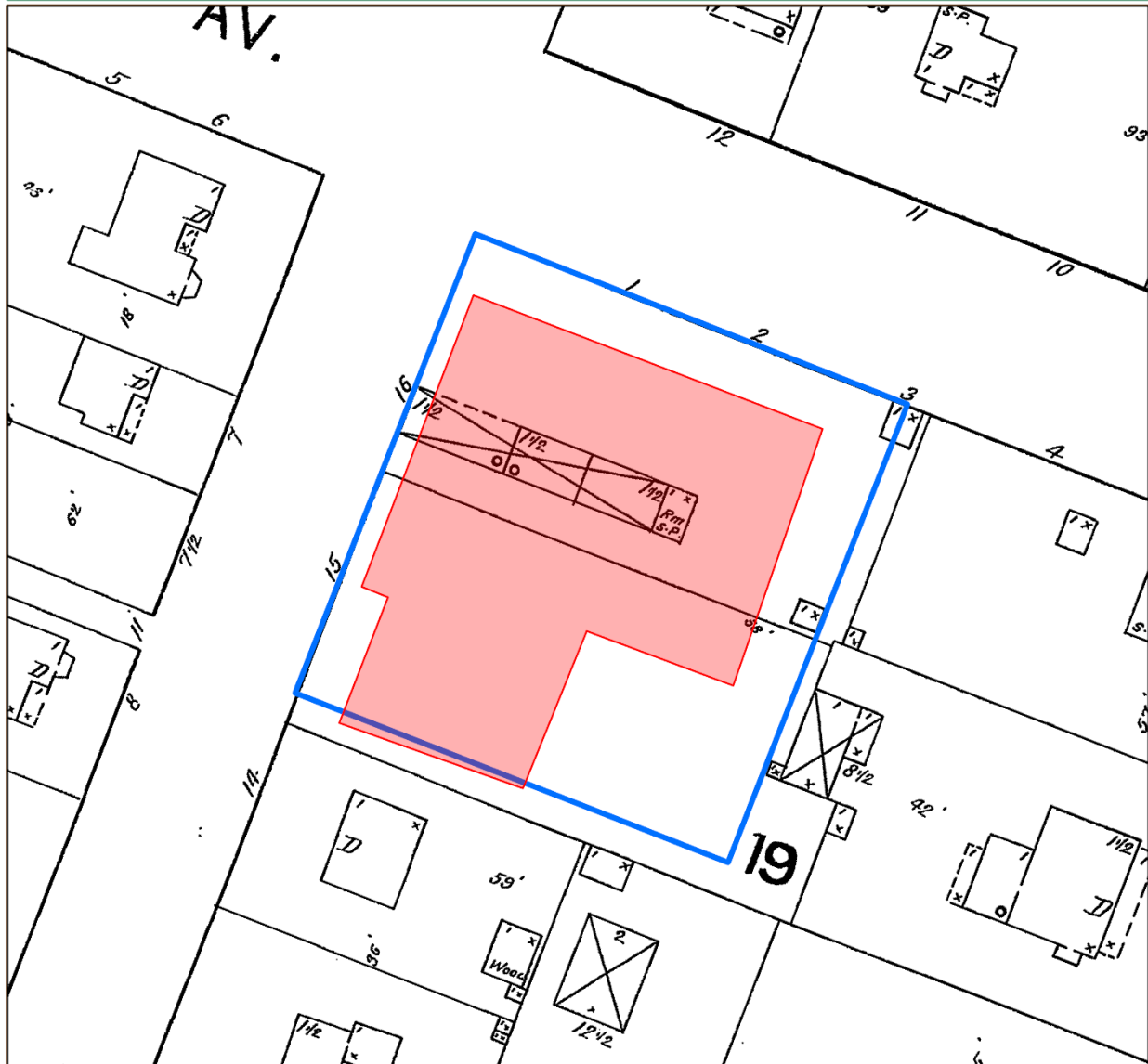
- Modern Building Footprints
- Project Area



Figure 17. 1890 Sanborn map showing a horse stable and two small outbuildings on the property.

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N



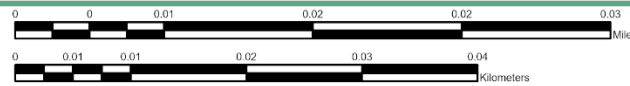
Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Street Historic Resource Study**

(Sanborn Map Company 1948)

1892 Sanborn Map

Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:500

**LEGEND**

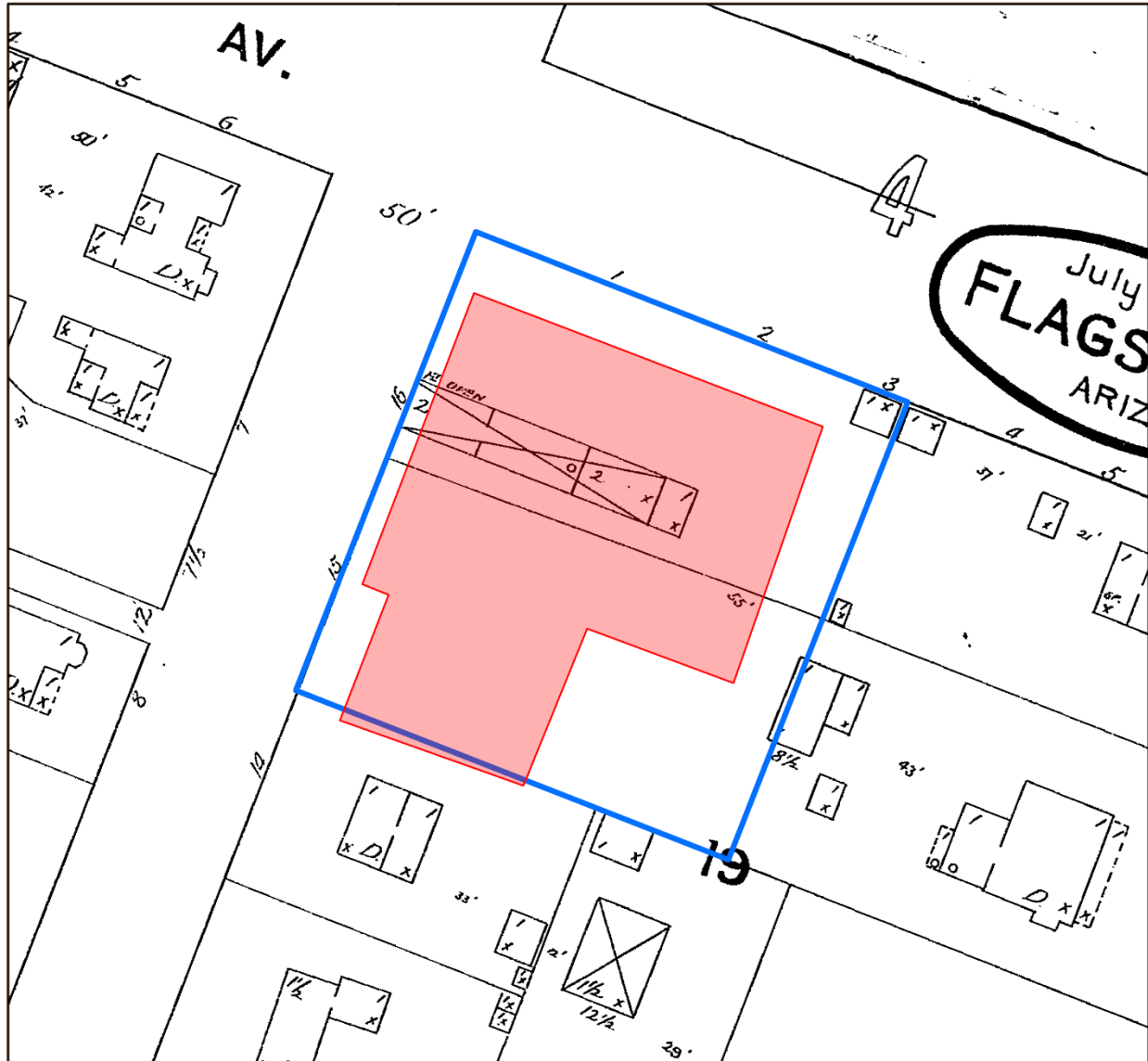
- Modern Building Footprints
- Project Area



Figure 18. 1892 Sanborn map showing a horse stable and two small outbuildings on the property.

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N



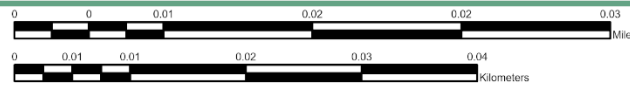
Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Street Historic Resource Study**

(Sanborn Map Company 1948)

1895 Sanborn Map

Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:500

**LEGEND**

- Modern Building Footprints
- Project Area



Figure 19. 1895 Sanborn map showing a horse stable and one small outbuilding on the property.

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N

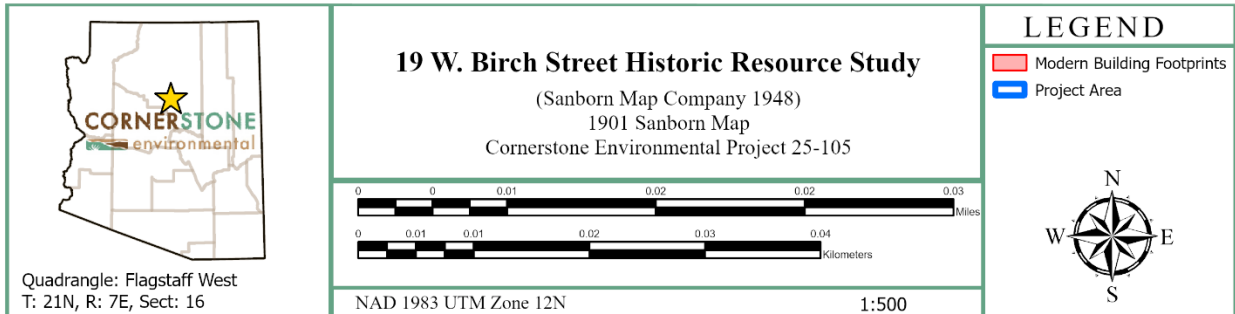
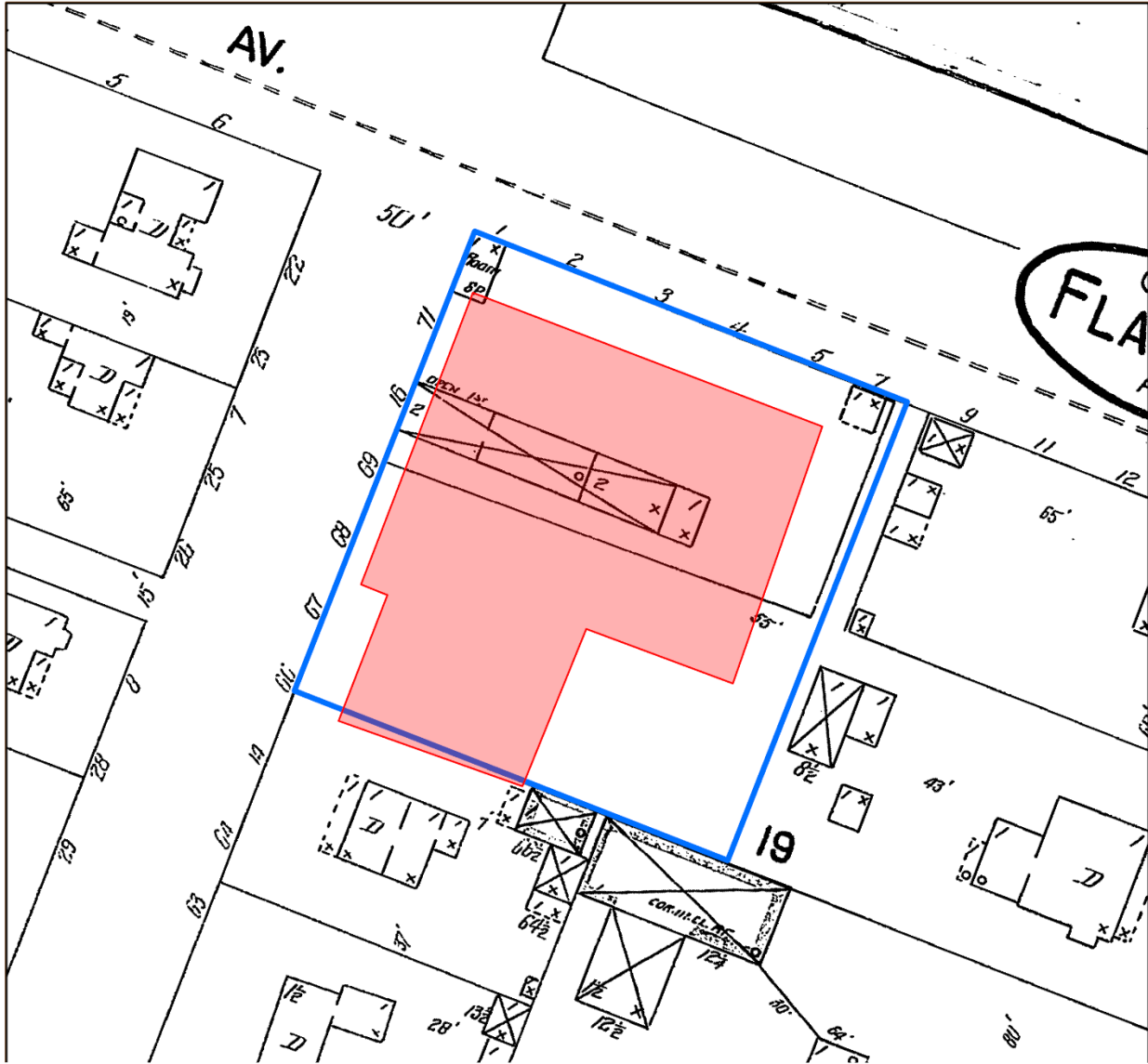
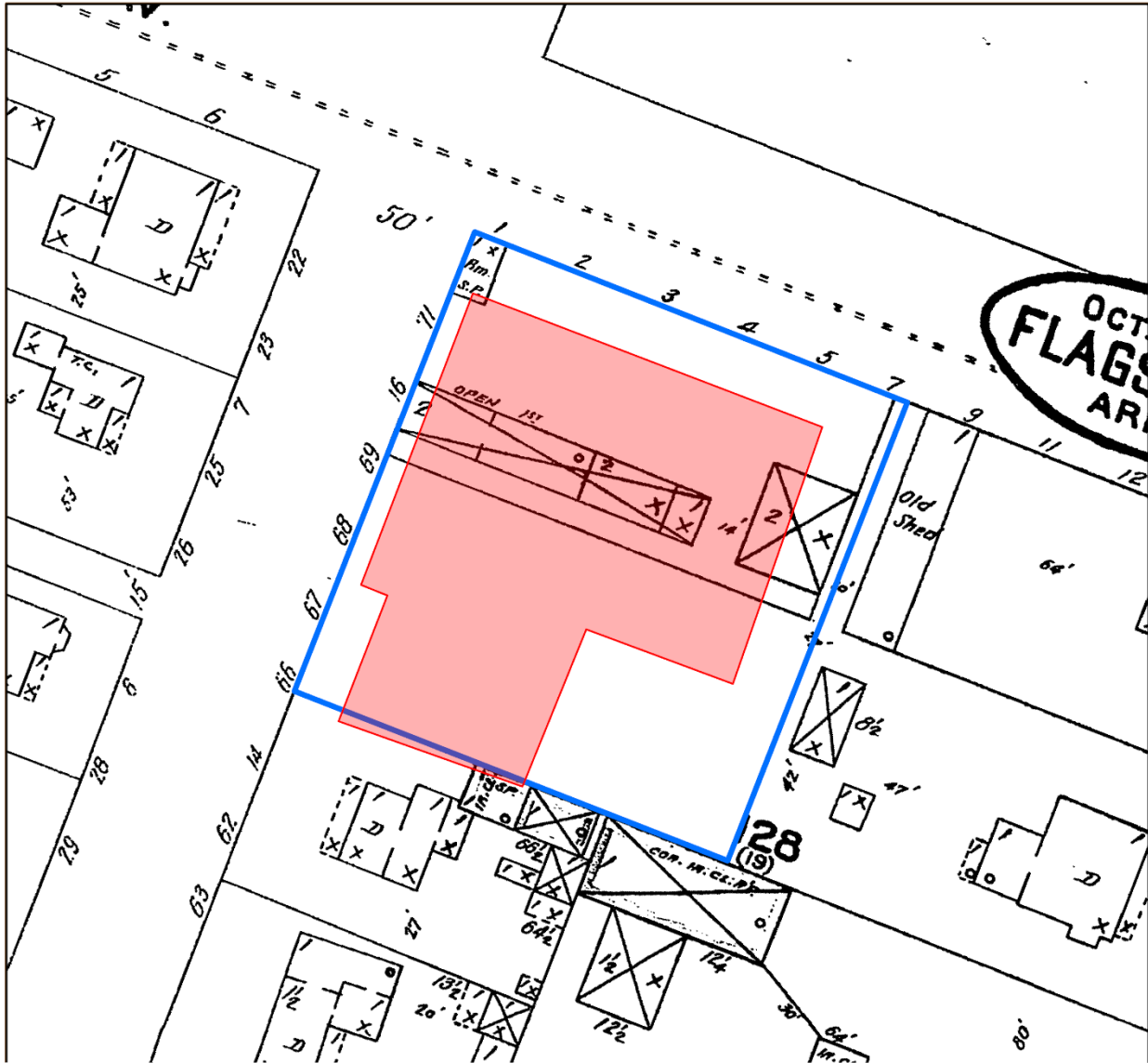


Figure 20. 1901 Sanborn map showing a horse stable, a one room structure, and a small outbuilding on the property.

**Project Locator**

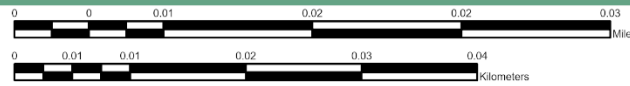
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NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N



Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Street Historic Resource Study**

(Sanborn Map Company 1948)  
1910 Sanborn Map  
Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:500

**LEGEND**

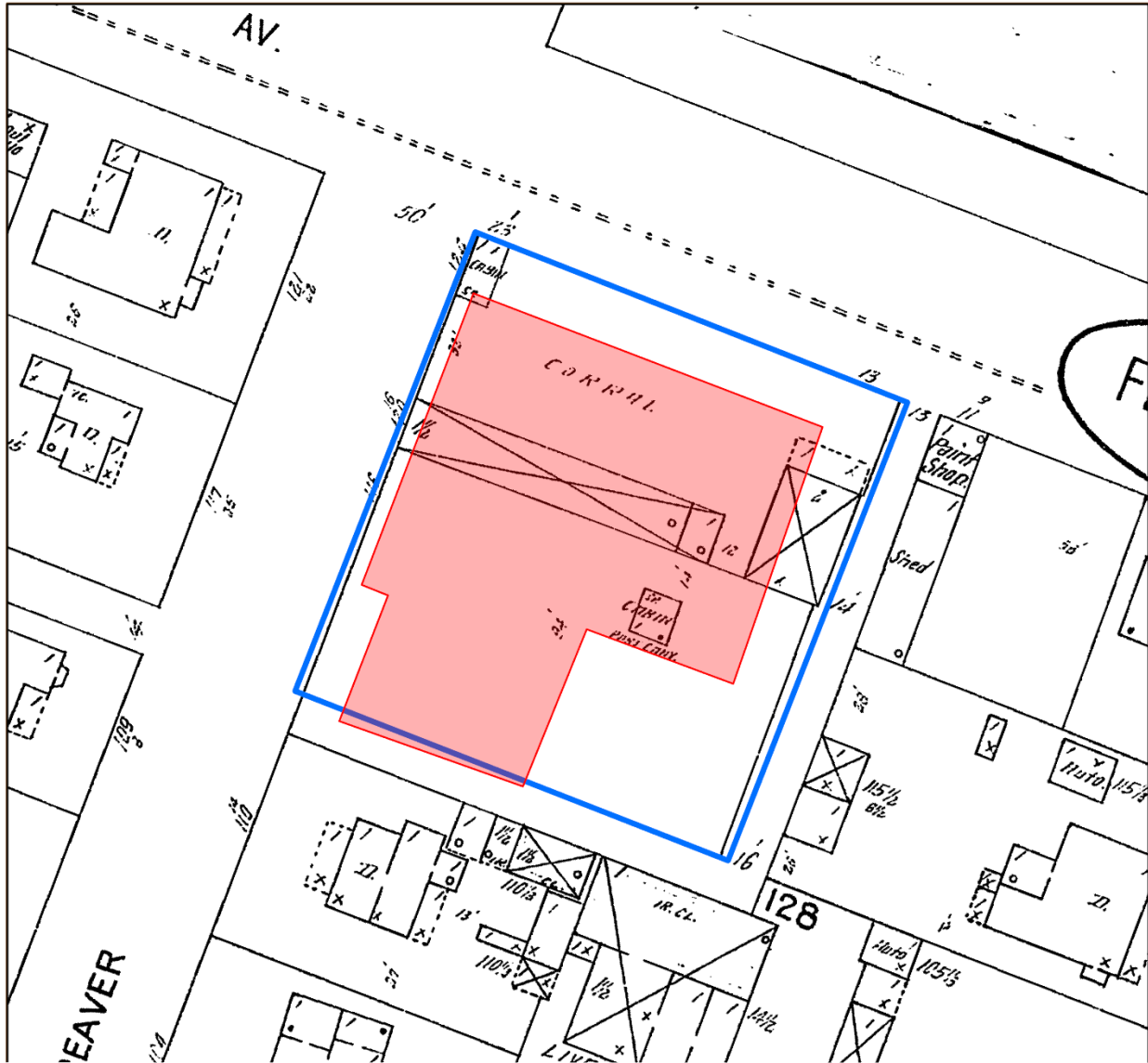
- Modern Building Footprints
- Project Area



Figure 21. 1910 Sanborn map showing two horse stables and a small one room structure on the property.

**Project Locator**

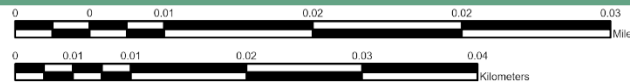
NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N



Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Street Historic Resource Study**

(Sanborn Map Company 1948)  
1916 Sanborn Map  
Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:500

**LEGEND**

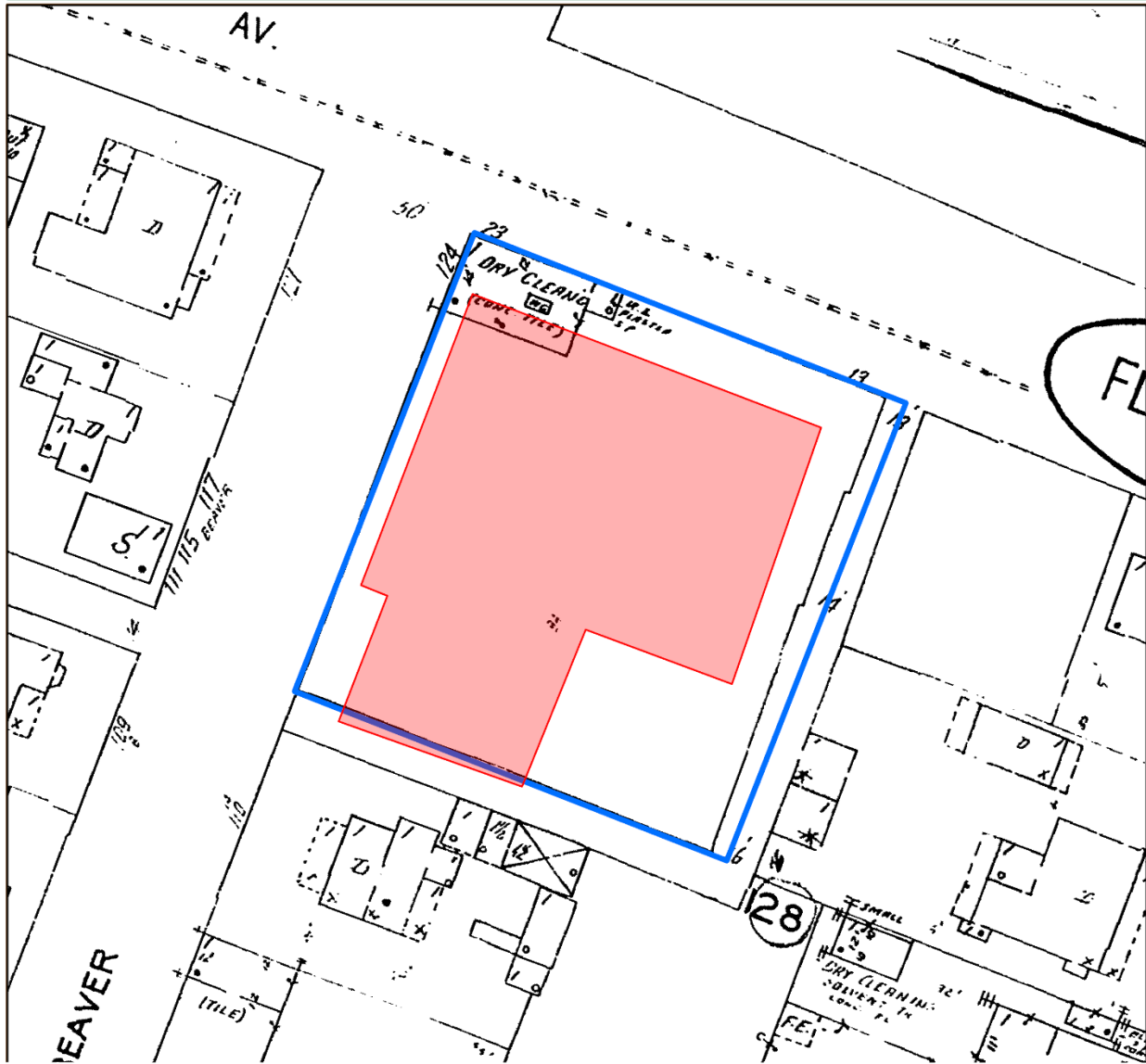
- Modern Building Footprints
- Project Area



Figure 22. 1916 Sanborn map showing two horse stables, a single room structure, and a single room cabin on the property.

**Project Locator**

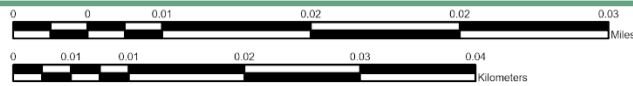
NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N



Quadrangle: Flagstaff West  
T: 21N, R: 7E, Sect: 16

**19 W. Birch Street Historic Resource Study**

(Sanborn Map Company 1948)  
1916 Sanborn Map, Revised 1948  
Cornerstone Environmental Project 25-105



NAD 1983 UTM Zone 12N

1:500

**LEGEND**

- Modern Building Footprints
- Project Area



Figure 23. 1948 Sanborn map showing a dry-cleaning building on the property.

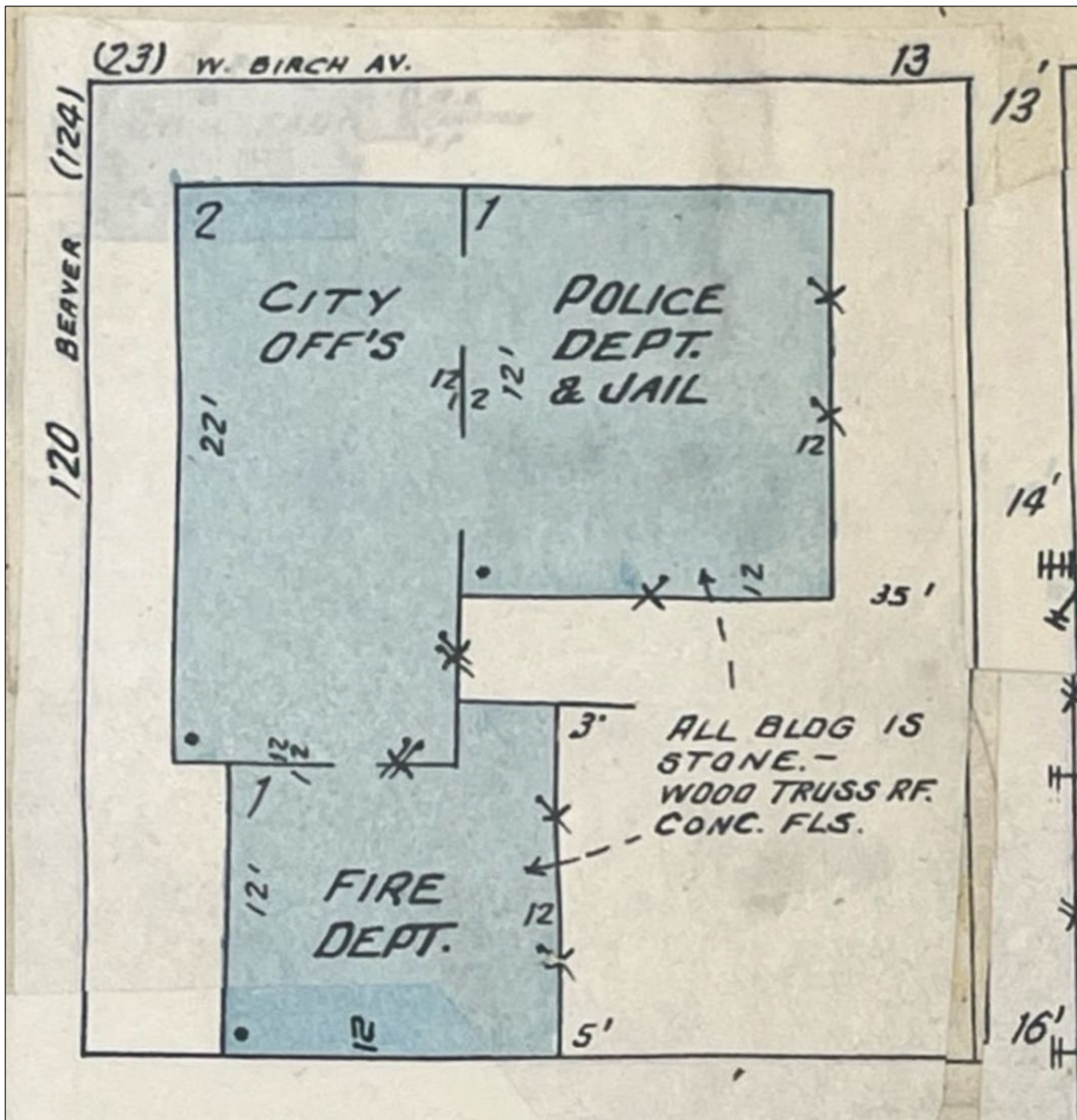


Figure 24. 1956 Sanborn map of downtown Flagstaff showing the layout of the City Hall building at 19 West Birch Avenue.

**Project Locator**

NW: 12N 440891m E, 3895378m N  
NE: 12N 440931m E, 3895362m N  
SW: 12N 440874m E, 3895335m N  
SE: 12N 440914m E, 3895319m N

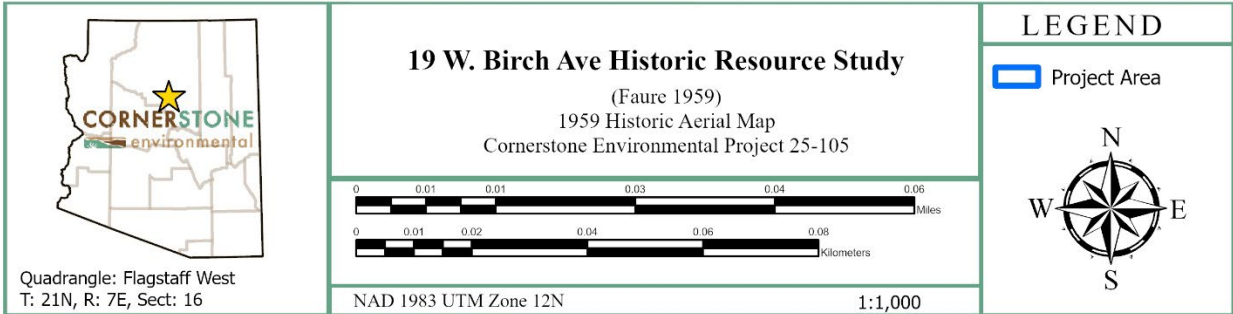


Figure 25. Historic aerial imagery from 1959 showing the project area and studied building.

## 6.0 ARCHITECTURE

The studied building at 19 West Birch Avenue was designed by architect Robert Otway Blakey III, a Phoenix based architect. Blakey was born in Alabama and moved to Arizona in 1947 and began a career as a civil and commercial architect. Blakey was highly active in the 1950s, not only working on the Flagstaff City Hall building, but also the Verde Valley Branch of the Bank of Arizona building in Cottonwood, Arizona; a fire station building for the City of Prescott in 1956; and a community hospital located in Wickenburg, Arizona, also in 1956 (Arizona Builder and Contractor 1955;1956). Some of these buildings, such as the Verde Valley Building, are still standing. Blakey was working during the height of popularity of the International Style of architecture and his buildings, such as the Flagstaff City Hall and the Verde Valley Branch of the Bank of Arizona building, reflect this.

International Style architecture has its origins in 1920s France and Germany where European architects broke from traditional ornamental styles to develop a functional, unornamented style with a strong emphasis on geometric shapes. The architectural style would continue developing in Europe for the next decade before making its first appearance in the United States in the 1930s. From there, the architectural style gained in popularity and quickly dominated new construction for the next several decades, before falling off in popularity in the 1970s. Diagnostic features of International Style consist of rectangular forms, flat roofs, general lack of ornamentation or decorative details, the presence of ribbon windows, curtain walls of glass, cantilevered projections, smooth wall surfaces, and an asymmetrical façade (Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission 2015). International Style often eschews decorative or non-functional design elements, focusing instead on the functional use and presentation of space, and often incorporates an interior-volume-focused design.

Structures designed solely with International Style architecture are uncommon, but between the 1920s and 1970s many civic and commercial buildings incorporated aspects of International Style architecture into building designs, and the studied structure is no exception. The building at 19 West Birch Avenue was constructed with—and still exhibits—an emphasis on geometric shapes, an interior-volume-focused design, relatively flat/planar wall surfaces, an asymmetrical layout, few ornamental flourishes, cantilevered projections, and some ribbon windows, all aspects of International Style design. However, the building also displays non-International Style design elements, such as the Malpais basalt façade, ornamental corrugated sheet metal components, and sloped prow-gabled roofs. The original structure also had a roof tower or cupola that housed the air horn for the Fire Department (Figure 26). Thus, while the building was designed using the standard stylistic design language at the time, it displays a more organic, Flagstaff vernacular form thanks to these flourishes.



*Figure 26. Photograph of the building during its period of significance, from 1961 City of Flagstaff telephone directory.*

Original architectural plans could not be found for this report, so it is unknown precisely if or how much the constructed building differed from Blakey's original vision. A published rendering of the proposed structure from 1950, however, closely resembles the building visible today (Figure 27). The most notable difference is the presence of the roof tower or cupola that housed the fire horn and was removed in 1977 (Arizona Daily Sun 1977). This rendering also only depicts two garage bays for the fire department, while three were ultimately constructed. The drawing does not depict Malpais façades, though it is unclear if this is an artistic choice or a reflection of previous design intentions.

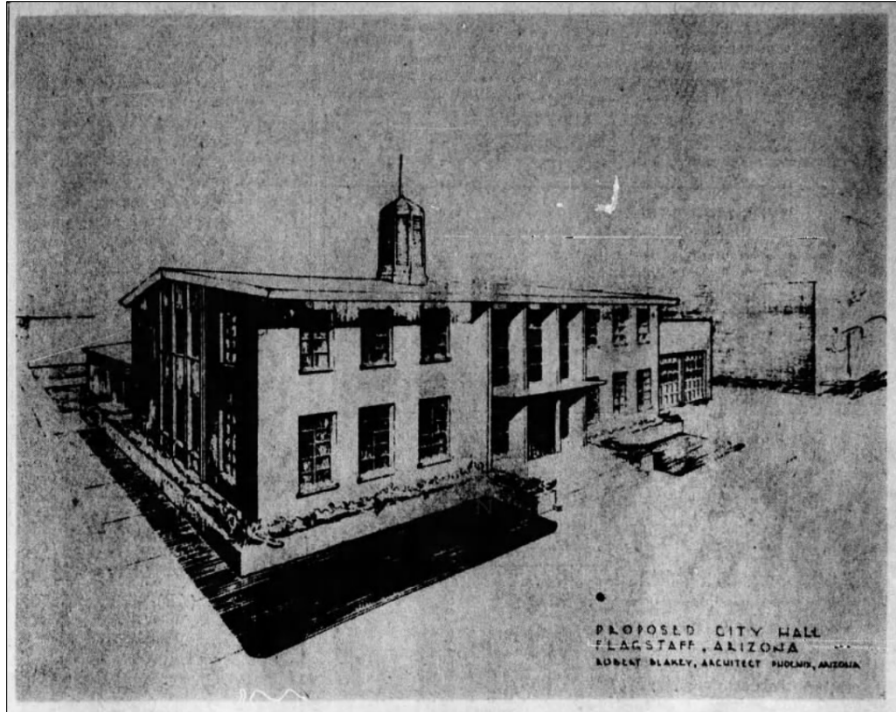


Figure 27. Published rendering of the proposed building (*Arizona Daily Sun* 1950)

## 7.0 ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The City Hall building as it exists today consists of one central section and two wings, with a partial second story and partial basement (Figure 28). The construction combines elements of the International Style architectural movement, seen with the use of ribbon windows and volumetric floor design, with elements of a more local, vernacular Flagstaff style, as evidenced by the Malpais basalt used in the building façades. A construction contractor confirmed the Malpais used here is an outer cladding and not structural (Jim O’Connell, personal communication June 12, 2025).

The City Hall was housed in the central portion of the building, the Flagstaff Police Department was housed in the eastern wing, and the Flagstaff Fire Department was housed in the southern wing. Based off the County Assessor’s Office floorplan sketch, the City Hall portion of the building measures 46 feet (ft) by 91 ft, the Fire Department measures 56 ft by 54.5 ft at its maximum width and the Police Department portion measures 64 ft by 59.5 ft. A complete second story is present in the central portion of the building and approximately matches the dimensions of the first floor. The dimensions of the basement are approximately 29 ft by 25 ft and it is roughly L-shaped.

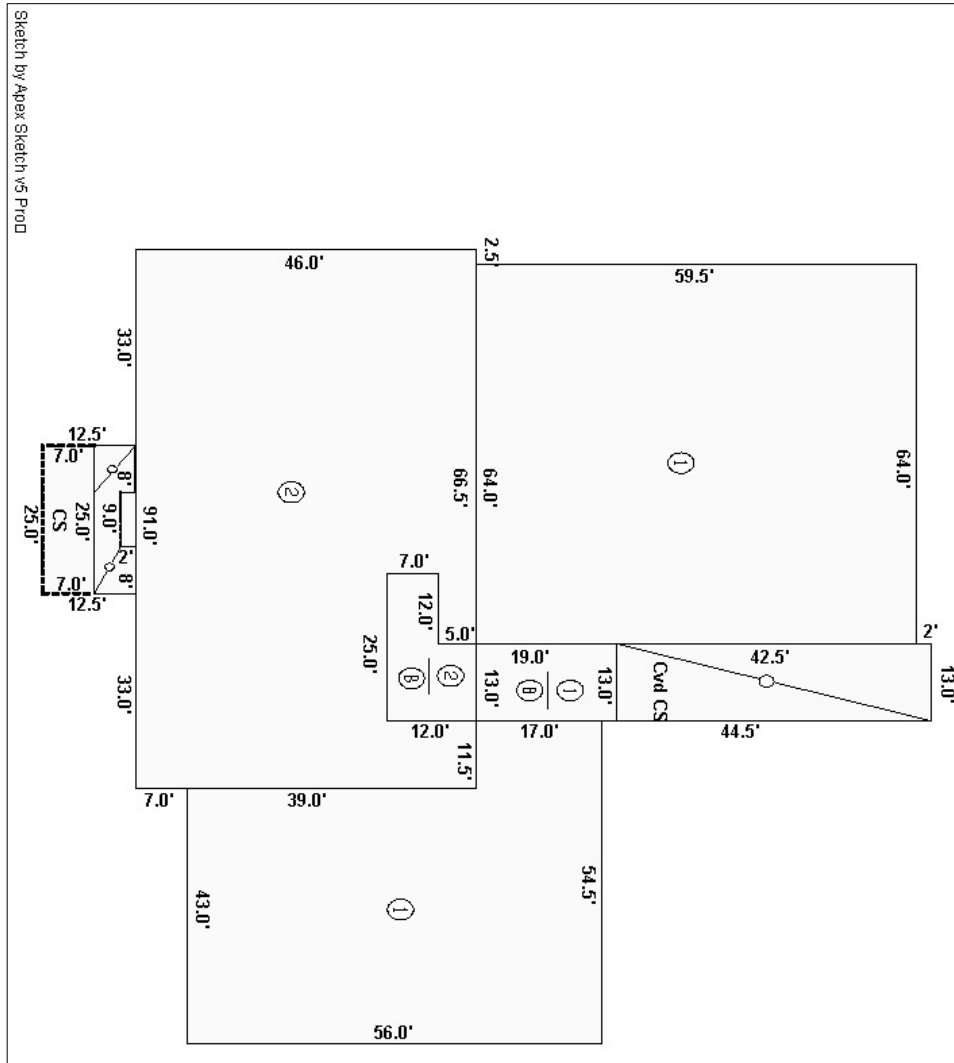


Figure 28. Plan view sketch map from the County Assessor's Office of the first floor of the studied building, with north oriented towards the top of the page.

The exterior of the central section of the building, which was formerly City Hall, consists of a Malpais basalt façade (Photograph 3). Twelve three-part float glass windows are present on the west-facing northern and southern sides of the elevation, with six windows on the first floor and six windows on the second floor. Three larger three-part float glass windows are present on the west facing portion of the second floor. A glass doored entryway, with a cantilevered canopy and two adjacent three-part float glass windows form the main entrance into the building on the west face. A set of three concrete steps and a ramp with metal pipe railings lead up to the entryway. The north facing elevation of the central section consists of dual Malpais basalt and corrugated sheet metal façade with 10 float glass windows, five on the first floor and a matching five on the second floor (Photograph 4). The southern facing elevation is adjoined to the Fire Department wing and is Malpais basalt. Malpais basalt planters are present at the base of the north, west, and south facing façade. A modern Malpais basalt signage structure is present on the

property off the northwest corner of the building. The roof of the central portion is slightly slanted, forming an open gable roof with a slight prow to the north and south gables.

The exterior of the southern section of the building, which formerly housed the fire department, consists of Malpais basalt façade which is present on all exterior sides of the section. The section has a slightly slanted shed style roof, which slopes down to the east. The western façade exhibits three float glass ribbon windows running horizontally north-south across the façade, just above a glass door entryway.



*Photograph 3. West elevation of the studied building at 19 West Birch Avenue, the City Hall and Fire Department portions of the building are visible.*

Two three-part float glass windows are present on either side of the entry way, and the entire assemblage of ribbon windows, entrance, and float glass windows are framed by horizontal and vertical metal beams, which have been painted light brown. Two Malpais basalt planters, on each side of the entry way, are present (Photograph 5). The south facing façade contains a metal security door leading into the building, and three two-party wired safety glass windows spaced evenly along the façade (Photograph 6). The east facing façade has three two-part wired safety glass windows, and an inset doorway leading into the building.

The exterior of the eastern portion of the building, which formerly housed the Police Department and jail, consists of a Malpais basalt façade with the east facing side featuring a façade of tan painted corrugated sheet metal underneath the eave of the roof. This section has a slightly gabled roof, sloping down to the north and south. The northern elevation exhibits a glass door entryway into the building, with a two-part float glass window to the right of the entrance. An east-west ribbon window is present along the easternmost side of the northern elevation. The east facing elevation consists of a metal door entryway, a pair of adjoined two-part float glass windows, and two separate two-part float glass windows (Photograph 7). Modern parking signage is affixed to the Malpais basalt façade, and some electrical wiring fixtures are present along both the façade and corrugated sheet metal. The south-facing portion of this section has an



*Photograph 4. North elevation of 19 West Birch Avenue, showing the north entryway into the building.*

extension of the gabled roof which forms an overhang which is supported by four metal beams with concrete footers (Photograph 8). A wooden entry door is present near the western extent of the elevation, with a series of concrete steps and metal railings leading to the entry way. To the west of the entryway is a wired safety glass window, and to the east is a set of three evenly spaced float glass windows.



*Photograph 5. East facing photograph showing the entryway to southern portion of the building which once housed the fire department.*



*Photograph 6. South facing exterior of the former fire department, which exits into an alleyway.*

The interior of each section or wing contained specialized infrastructure to match the needs of the respective department, with City Hall having offices and meeting chambers to conduct city business, the Fire Department having a garage with large bay doors for the fire trucks, with the Police Department having jail cells and evidence lockers. The small basement present within the building housed the city records vault. Significant architectural changes have occurred since the 1980s, when the building ceased to be a civil structure. The central portion of the building, where City Hall operated, has been remodeled and now houses various private commercial or private entities including an artist studio, a church, and an insurance office. Original floor plans or photographs of the central portion are unavailable, so it is unknown how much deviation from the original form the remodeling introduced. An elevator is present in the center of the area and connects to the second floor (Photograph 9). A series of desks and counters, likely modern, is present immediately upon entering the building through the west entrance. A series of birchwood and metal safety rails run parallel up the staircase. Two bathrooms, and a water fountain and present along the northern wall of the central section. A polished concrete staircase, likely the original staircase for the building, is present to the north of the entryway and desks and leads up to the second floor, which contains several offices and meeting rooms for commercial tenants.

The southern wing which previously housed the Fire Department has undergone significant remodeling and is currently the office of an engineering firm. The garage bay doors and garage area have been removed or otherwise remodeled to an extent where no evidence of the existence of the garage area remains in either the exterior or interior of the building, apart from the framing of the garage bays (Photograph 10). All interior areas of this wing have been remodeled and modernized with modern office fixtures and furniture, and the wing no longer retains any elements which point to the wing's previous life as Flagstaff's Fire Department.

The east wing, which once housed the Flagstaff Police Department, has also undergone a level of modification. The former jail cell area still remains, but the area has been renovated and is currently a metalsmithing studio. All assorted utilities, furnishing, or structural elements that would suggest that the wing once functioned as a police department and jail facility have been removed.

The basement level is constructed from reinforced concrete and is roughly L-shaped. Two access stairways are present, one in the southern wing and the other on the far western side of the central wing. In the northeastern corner of the basement a Diebold Incorporated vault is present, consisting of a Diebold steel vault door and reinforced concrete room (Photograph 12). The vault was likely installed during the initial construction of the building and was used to house City Hall records and receipts. Utility line

access corridors are present in the corners of the basement and likely run throughout the extent of the building footprint but were not fully explored due to light and safety concerns.

The basement level has undergone interior modification as well. At some point after the construction of the basement a series of false wooden walls were erected in the northern part of the basement, roughly a foot away from the original reinforced concrete walls. These walls have the effect of separating the northern portion of the basement from the southern portion. The wooden wall appears to have been used for server and internet cable infrastructure and does not appear historic. An elevated floor has been added to the northern side of the basement, possibly to combat flooding, and this has raised the walkable surface by roughly a foot. The elevated floor has a cut out by the vault door to allow for the functional use of the door. Evidence of prior flooding in the form of water damage and rust is visible on the vault door in the basement. A circular hole present in one of the vault walls, which has since been boarded and grated over, suggests that at some point the vault was broken into. No newspaper articles for this event were found in the archives. Small portions of the basement ceiling are damaged and chipped, allowing for observation of the original rebar rods and conglomerate stones used in the construction of the reinforced concrete.

The windows, doors, and ceiling light fixtures in all areas of the building appear to have been updated during the remodeling efforts, and a birch wood trim is present throughout the structure, possibly a decorative feature inspired by the street the building is located on (Photograph 13). A variety of window types are present in the building. Exterior windows, particularly on the facing west side of the building, are in ribbons, a common feature of International Style architecture. The exterior windows appear to have been replaced at some point and have modern fixtures and frames. Interior windows, such as those present in the office spaces of the building, are a mix of common float glass windows, and wired safety glass windows. While the wired safety glass windows would make sense in the context of a fire department and police facility, the windows are a common fire resistance safety installation and are present in areas that would have been heavily remodeled and are likely later additions to the structure. No exterior signage for the civic departments remains on the property.

Doors appear to be modern steel frame doors (Photograph 14) likely placed or replaced during remodeling. The southwestern section of the building, where the Fire Department was once housed, has had modern glass doors installed in two sets along the west side of the building, forming a small vestibule before entering the building proper. Ceiling light fixtures commonly feature a white plastic case with a wooden “lace” matching the birch trim found



*Photograph 7. East elevation of 19 West Birch Avenue, showing the east facade of the former police station.*



*Photograph 8. South facing façade of the former fire department, showing the extension of the roof which forms a canopy.*



*Photograph 9. Elevator in the central area of the building connecting to the second floor.*



*Photograph 10. The entryway and lobby of the engineering firm which occupies what would have once been the Fire Department garage, facing west through what was formerly a garage bay door.*



*Photograph 11. A room in the former Police Department, which is now used as a metalsmith workshop, facing east.*



*Photograph 12. The basement vault room which was once used to hold city records and receipts.*



*Photograph 13. One of the former jail cells in the former Police Department. The decorative overhead light fixtures are a modern addition and have a birch wood trim.*



*Photograph 14. South facing photograph showing the south entrance to the former Police Department.*

throughout the building and are present in rooms, such as the jail cell, where they are out of place given the original purpose of the room. Wooden railings have been constructed around the stairwells and appear mismatched to the stairway itself. The railings were likely installed to be compliant with updated safety codes.

Overall, remodeling efforts appear to have focused on an office “feel” to reflect the modern usage of the building. As a result of these remodeling efforts, the southern and eastern wings of the building no longer retain a feeling of being a fire department or police department and jail facility. The remodeling appears to have had a less significant impact on the central wing that once housed City Hall, though the lack of accurate records of the original internal layout of the central wing makes this determination difficult. The internal structure of the building could not be examined comprehensively, so the condition of the original structural materials or the possibility that some additional original features remain is currently unknown. Key external modifications include the removal the fire horn tower, filling in of the garage door bays, and modifications to the Malpais façade.

## **8.0 EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE AND INTEGRITY**

The subject property is within the Flagstaff Downtown Historic Overlay Zone. According to communications with the City of Flagstaff, this zone is an overlay used for planning and development though it has not been evaluated nor nominated for the NRHP. The property is immediately adjacent to the Railroad Addition Historic District. This district designates one of the oldest and most central areas of historic Flagstaff and partially overlaps with the Downtown Historic Overlay Zone.

This report uses the Railroad Addition Historic District to provide historic context for the evaluation of significance and integrity (Janus 1979). The period of significance for the Flagstaff Railroad Addition Historic District is 1882–1975, beginning with the establishment of New Town in 1882, which would form the core of the district, and ending 50 years prior to this study in 1975. The City Hall building was constructed in 1951 and ceased to be used as City Hall in the 1980s. The possible areas of significance are Social History and Government (City of Flagstaff Criterion B; NRHP Criterion A), Significant Persons (City of Flagstaff Criterion C; NRHP Criterion B), and Architecture (City of Flagstaff Criterion D; NRHP Criterion C). The property is not eligible under City of Flagstaff Criterion A, as the property is not currently listed or eligible on the National Historic Landmark, NRHP or Arizona Register of Historic Places (ARHP).

For a resource to be considered significant it must be at least 50 years old and meet at least one Criterion for Evaluation (City of Flagstaff Criteria A, B, C, D, or E; NRHP Criteria A, B, C, and D, respectively)

by being associated with an important historical context and have been built and used within the appropriate period of significance for the identified theme (NPS 2002). The period of significance is the time period in which properties eligible for the National Register must be demonstrated to have been associated with the appropriate theme. The ARHP utilizes the same criteria and process for determining significance. For means of ease of communication, NRHP Criteria and City of Flagstaff Criteria will be used throughout this report. The NRHP Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR § 60.4) are as follows:

*The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:*

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or*
- B. That are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or*
- C. That embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguished entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.*

The City of Flagstaff's criteria for determining the significance of cultural/historical resources are similar to that of the NRHP but are not an exact replica. The criteria are defined in Flagstaff Zoning Code (30.30-13) as the following:

*The criteria for determining the significance of a cultural resource are based on the potential of the cultural resource to contribute to our understanding of the past.*

- 1. A cultural resource is significant if:*
  - a. It is eligible as a National Historic Landmark, or for the National Register of Historic Places, or the Arizona Register of Historic Places; or*
  - b. It is associated with events or persons in the architectural, engineering, archeological, scientific, technological, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of the City, the State of Arizona, or the United States of America; or*
  - c. It represents the work of, or for, an important individual; or*
  - d. It embodies distinctive characteristics of type, period, region, artistic values or methods of construction, including being the oldest of its type or the best example of its type; or*
  - e. It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information needed for scientific research, such as important archaeological resources.*
- 2. A resource is generally not significant if:*
  - a. It is less than 50 years old at the time of application; or*

- b. The features, materials, patterns, and relationships that contributed to its significance are no longer present or no longer have integrity.*
- 3. Requirement to Meet the Criteria, Regardless of Age: Properties that are 50 years old are not automatically significant. In order to be significant, all resources, regardless of age, must be demonstrated to meet the criteria for determining the significance of a cultural resource.*

As previously stated, the possible areas of significance are Social History and Government (City of Flagstaff Criterion B; NRHP Criterion A), Significant Persons (City of Flagstaff Criterion C; NRHP Criterion B), and Architecture (City of Flagstaff Criterion D; NRHP Criterion C). All the information potential of the site has been exhausted by site visits and archival research, and it is highly unlikely that the building itself can offer additional research potential, so it is not evaluated here under City of Flagstaff Criterion E (NRHP Criterion D).

### ***8.1 SOCIAL HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT***

For a property to be eligible under City of Flagstaff Criterion B or NRHP Criterion A, it must be associated with significant events in Flagstaff or national history. To understand the historic context of a property it is evaluated within its appropriate area(s) of significance. The former City Hall building is most associated with the areas of Social History and Government, although it also touches on areas such as Commerce, Law, and Community Planning and Development.

The City Hall was the seat of local government—although not all city offices were based in it—and as such it is broadly associated with the development of civic government in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century. The building housed the Flagstaff City Council, and while all actions taken by the Council during their use of the building during its period of significance were impactful, examined individually, they do not constitute significant events in the wider development of Flagstaff. Legislation such as the Anti-Searchlight bill, for instance, which would later go on to develop into the dark sky ordinances of modern Flagstaff, were just being developed during the building’s period of significance. Furthermore, these pieces of legislation are better represented by the affected properties themselves, such as Lowell Observatory, rather than the civic center that is the studied building.

The subject property also housed the Flagstaff Police Department, Municipal Court, and city jail. The actions of these entities precipitated the first large scale investigation of unequal and predatory practices towards the Native American population of Flagstaff and Coconino County. The court case brought against the City of Flagstaff and the Flagstaff Police Department in 1975 led to a formal investigation by the ACLU in 1976 and while changes were not documented and rates of false arrests, excessive force,

unequal application of bonds, and sentencing of jail time for offenses that do not require jail time continued, this was a pivotal event in Flagstaff history as a recognition of inequality amongst its citizens. While some of these court cases and investigations occurred after the period of significance of this study (1951–1975), they are a continuation of and response to events that occurred during the period of significance and so are included in this evaluation. While these local events were associated with AIM and a growing national awareness of Native American rights, research has not shown that events in Flagstaff were pivotal to the broader national movement, nor that the subject property itself is associated in strong ways with the national trend. AIM protest leaders, for example, were likely only held at the city jail briefly before being transferred to a county facility.

Because of this association with significant local historical events related to Social History and Government, the property is recommended significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A.

## ***8.2 SIGNIFICANT PERSONS***

Research for this study included former Flagstaff mayors, members of City Council, Police and Fire Department chiefs, and other potential city staff. This included people of note such as mayor Rollin W. Wheeler, city manager Clarence T. Pulliam, and police chiefs William Epperson and Elmo Maxwell. None of the persons associated with the building during its period of significance were found to be significant enough to meet the requirements of the above criterion. Most civic individuals' actions during this time consisted of essential day-to-day functions of the city. This is not to say that individuals working at the City Hall were not providing important contributions, but that they were being implemented in other locations and ways.

Individuals housed at the city jail were either not significant enough or not associated with the property in substantial enough ways for it to qualify under this criterion. The individuals arrested during the 1972 AIM protest included Vernon Bellecourt, Patrick Easchief, Eduardo Molina, Rick Two Elk, Robert Burnette, Andrew Kelly, and Leroy Keams. Several of these individuals went on to have impactful contributions to the Native American Rights Movement and while their experiences with 19 West Birch led to acknowledgment and eventual changes to discrimination and discriminatory practices in Flagstaff, their time at the property itself was limited to holding prior to transfer to the Coconino County Jail where they were held and eventually served out their 30 day sentences.

Research found no influential works or events occurred on the property associated with any significant individuals. While it is undeniable that members of the city government were instrumental in the

functioning of the city, and that noted individuals were briefly incarcerated in the building, archival records fail to demonstrate a significance large enough to warrant the building being significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion C or NRHP Criterion B.

### ***8.3 ARCHITECTURE***

To be significant under the area of Architecture (City of Flagstaff Criterion D; NRHP Criterion C) a building must embody distinctive characteristics or methods of construction of a particular style or represent the work of a master. As discussed above, the old City Hall is an example of International Style architecture, with the addition of some local Flagstaff stylistic choices, such as the addition of a Malpais basalt façade. Along with a degree of historic integrity, character-defining elements and architectural features that should be maintained for an International Style building include: rectangular forms, often with round projections; a flat roof; lack of ornamentation or decorative details; ribbon windows; cantilevered projections, such as overhangs or balconies; smooth wall surfaces; and an asymmetrical façade (Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission 2015). The building at 19 West Birch Avenue possesses some of these features, though it does not strictly adhere to them. International Style architecture was quite common between the 1920s and 1970s, both nationally and (to an extent) locally, and while the studied building was designed using the standard stylistic design language at the time, it displays a more organic, Flagstaff vernacular form thanks to the Malpais façade, sloping prow-gabled roof, and other flourishes.

More standardized examples of International Style architecture in downtown Flagstaff include the Post Office building at 104 North W.C. Riles Street (which also displays Malpais construction) and the building at 220 North Leroux Street that currently houses the Coconino County Public Fiduciary. Other examples of Malpais construction—including structural use, rather than just a façade—are still present in Flagstaff and are listed on either the City, State, or National Registers. These include the South Beaver School at 506 South Beaver Street, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church at 302 South Kendrick Street, the icehouse building at 201 East Birch Avenue, and the house at 310 South Beaver Street. The current Flagstaff City Hall also displays Malpais.

Whether the building represents the work of a master rests on the stature of its architect, Robert Blakey. Research for this study has shown that Blakey was a known civil and commercial architect and was cited in Arizona trade journals at the time (Arizona Builder and Contractor 1955; 1956) but has not revealed any particular significance to his legacy or works. Rather than being “a figure of generally recognized greatness” in his field (NPS 2002:20), Blakey appears to have been somewhat of a journeyman architect of his time and place. Some of his other works are discussed above in *6.0 Architecture*.

Original design plans for the building could not be obtained for this report, so it is unclear exactly how much deviation the building underwent in its construction from the original vision of the architect, although based off published renderings it appears any changes were minimal. The building was further modified both during and after the period of significance, including notably the removal of the fire horn tower or cupola. Regardless, the building still retains and conveys its fundamental utilitarian International Style design language expressed in a more organic, vernacular form befitting a public-facing civic building of its time. While other buildings in Flagstaff display similar architectural elements, few others display them in this combination and at the scale and stature of the former City Hall building. Because of these factors, the building is recommended locally significant under the area of Architecture (City of Flagstaff Criterion D). The specificity of these factors along with changes to the interior (see below) make it likely not significant under NRHP Criterion C.

## ***8.4 INTEGRITY***

Integrity is defined as the ability of a property to convey its significance. Cornerstone recommends the subject property locally significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A for the involvement of the Flagstaff Police Department, Municipal Court, and city jail in the social and political movements related to Native American treatment within the City of Flagstaff; and under City of Flagstaff Criterion D for architecture. Integrity is discussed here to support our conclusions and recommendations. For City of Flagstaff eligibility evaluation, only exterior integrity is considered. For NRHP evaluation, greater emphasis is typically given to exterior integrity, but interior integrity is still assessed. Both are discussed and differentiated here. The seven aspects of integrity are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and are evaluated below.

**Location.** This is the place where a property was constructed. To retain this aspect, a historic property must be in the same place in which it was built; the relationship between a property and its historic associations is typically destroyed if a property is moved (NPS 2002). The City Hall building is in its original location of construction. As the relationship between the property and its historic location is maintained, the property has a *strong* level of integrity of location.

**Design.** Design refers to the physical elements of a historic property “that create its form, plan, space, structure, and style” (NPS 2002:44). While it is likely that the architect Blakey’s original vision of the building is still present and remains partially, it is currently not possible to evaluate how accurate the construction was to his vision. Changes to the exterior include filling in the Fire Department bays, the enthusiastic removal of the fire horn tower, and the replacement and addition of Malpais façade in the 1980s (Blakey 1963; Arizona Daily Sun 1977). The interior was extensively remodeled after the period of

significance, though some original elements and basic volumes likely remain. Due to these changes, the building's exterior integrity of design is present but *diminished*, and its interior integrity of design (only relevant for NRHP evaluation) is *weak* but not lost.

**Setting.** The location of a property is complemented by its *setting*, which is the surrounding physical environment of a historic property. Setting refers to the character of a property within its natural and built environment. The setting surrounding the building has changed over the decades (for at least some of the period of significance there were residential homes across the street to the west) but it retains similar elements to those that were present during the building's period of significance, namely an active downtown neighborhood. Therefore, the aspect of integrity of setting is *diminished* but not lost.

**Materials and Workmanship.** *Materials* is an aspect of integrity that addresses the physical elements that were used during a particular period of time and in a particular way to create a historic property. The materials used to construct a property reveal availability, style preferences, technologies, and traditions. A property must retain the key exterior materials dating from the period of significance for that property in order to have integrity of this aspect (NPS 2002). Closely related to materials is *workmanship*, which may be applied to a property as a whole or its individual components. Workmanship is the "physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory" (NPS 2002:45). The additions and remodels outside of the period of significance have negatively affected the aspects of workmanship and materials, however, many original elements likely remain such as the basement concrete, the vault, and the Malpais basalt facades. The building's exterior integrity of workmanship and materials is present but *diminished*, and its interior integrity of workmanship and materials (only relevant for NRHP evaluation) is *weak* but not lost.

**Feeling.** Integrity of *feeling* is a property's ability through its physical features to convey its historic character (NPS 2002). Often, feeling is the result of several aspects of integrity that, when taken together, relate a property's place within a historical framework and period of significance. One measure of feeling is if someone who frequented the property during its period of significance would recognize the property if they were there today. Due to remodeling, city workers or incarcerated individuals would likely no longer recognize most of the interior of the building, and thus integrity of feeling is *lost* on the interior (only relevant for NRHP evaluation). On the exterior, however, despite some changes over time (such as the filling in of the Fire Department garage bays), the building still has the feeling of a public civic structure such as a city hall and thus retains a *strong* aspect of feeling on the exterior.

**Association.** Association is the direct connection between a historic property and an important historic event or person. A property retains integrity of association if it is in the place where the event occurred and is “sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer” (NPS 2002:45). This aspect is often evaluated by the summed ability of the other aspects of integrity to convey the property’s association. Considering only exterior integrity for purposes of City of Flagstaff evaluation, the building has a present but *diminished* association with the themes of Social History and Government. Considering exterior and (to a lesser extent) interior integrity for purposes of NRHP evaluation, the building has a slightly more *diminished* but still present association with the themes of Social History and Government.

## **9.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The subject building was utilized as City Hall, the Fire Department, the Police Department, and Municipal Court for the City of Flagstaff between 1951 and 1980, after which various civic operations began to move to other properties around the city. Some offices such as the housing authority were already in different buildings. To determine whether the subject building meets City of Flagstaff or NRHP Criterion of significance, Cornerstone examined archival records discussing the actions of the Flagstaff City Council and the Fire Department and Police Department employees during the building’s period of significance.

Cornerstone evaluated the building’s significance using the various criteria established above. Cornerstone recommends that the building is significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A for its associations with the areas of Social History and Government, with sufficient integrity to qualify for eligibility. Cornerstone also recommends the building significant under City of Flagstaff Criterion D for its architectural qualities, with sufficient integrity to qualify for eligibility, although this likely does not extend to NRHP Criterion C eligibility.

Given the building’s recommended eligibility under City of Flagstaff Criterion B and NRHP Criterion A, Cornerstone recommends that mitigation include the incorporation of the building’s history, the history of Native Americans in Flagstaff, and a discussion of the struggle for equality into the new construction in the form of a plaque, historic photographs placed in the lobby, and incorporation of some of the Malpais stone from the original building in a cornerstone as a remembrance of the historic building and of these significant events. Given the building’s recommended eligibility under City of Flagstaff Criterion D, further documentation such as architectural exterior elevation drawings may also be appropriate.

## **10.0 PREPARER'S QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Caitlin Stewart, M.A., RPA (Principal Investigator)**

Ms. Stewart is an archaeologist and historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in the disciplines of Prehistoric and Historic Archaeology as well as Architectural History. She has over 19 years of experience in the profession with experience in the U.S. Southwest and U.S. Southeast regions in the context of survey, excavation, historic preservation, data recovery, and project management. Ms. Stewart has assisted in NRHP nomination forms for historic homesites and prehistoric districts. She has compiled and written a comprehensive manuscript on the Civilian Conservation Corps of Mississippi and recently published an article on an early ranching cabin and later ranger station on the Arizona Strip. In addition to her published works, Ms. Stewart has also instructed students on completing the Arizona SHPO Historic In-use structure forms and HABS/HAER reports. Her areas of interest include the Civilian Conservation Corps, early ranching, and early mining in Arizona. Ms. Stewart received her M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Mississippi, where she created a geospatial approach to determining the number of individuals present in prehistoric cemetery contexts. During her time in Mississippi, she worked on dozens of projects including architectural histories for historic homesteads, plantations, tenant housing, and public architecture. She received her B.A. from Western Kentucky University where she completed her undergraduate thesis on the documentation of Mt. Moriah Cemetery, which was established in 1862 and is the oldest African-American cemetery in Warren County, Kentucky. Her field school was the documentation of an Antebellum home in Kentucky, with one of the state's first on property kilns.

### **Jack W. Treichler, M.A., RPA (Project Manager)**

Mr. Treichler is an archaeologist and historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in the disciplines of Prehistoric and Historic Archaeology. He has over ten years of experience in the U.S. Southwest and Great Basin regions in the context of survey, excavation, and historic preservation, with specific focus on archaeological survey and project management in northern and central Arizona. He has worked with numerous historical properties related to aviation, homesteading, mining, timber extraction, ranching, the Civilian Conservation Corps, railroad construction, and other infrastructure development. This has involved field documentation of historical properties, archival research into these properties and the themes surrounding them, and analysis of their significance and integrity for purposes of inclusion in the NRHP. He has authored numerous Cultural Resource Management reports and has presented and published articles on historic archaeology. Mr.

Treichler received an M.A. in Anthropology from Northern Arizona University, where his research examined prehistoric landscape relationships in northern Arizona using geographic information systems boundary effects analysis. He received a B.A. in Archaeology from Dickinson College where he focused on classical archaeology and languages—specifically ancient Greek and its written precursor Linear B. His training included excavation and ground-penetrating radar at the citadel and lower town of Bronze Age Mycenae.

**Samuel C. Hemsley, M.A., RPA (Preparer)**

Mr. Hemsley is an archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards in the disciplines of Prehistoric and Historic Archaeology. He has over six years of experience in the U.S. Southwest regions in the context of survey, excavation, and historic preservation with a specific focus on archaeological survey in northern Arizona. He has worked with historical properties involving ranching, timber extraction, and mining. This has involved field documentation of historical properties, archival research into these properties and the themes surrounding them, and analysis of their significance and integrity for purposes of inclusion in the NRHP. He has authored several Cultural Resource Management reports. Mr. Hemsley received an M.A. in Anthropology from Northern Arizona University, where his research examined the use of LiDAR technology in survey in the jungles of Belize. He received a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley and has participated in archaeological field schools in southern California and Belize.

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