

TUCSON'S ORIGINS HERITAGE SITE
West Cushing Street
Tucson
Pima County
Arizona

HALS AZ-26
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

**HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
TUCSON'S ORIGINS HERITAGE SITE**

HALS NO. AZ-26

Location: West Cushing Street, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona.

Northernmost corner: 32.217750, -110.983361
Easternmost corner: 32.217472, -110.982500
Southernmost corner: 32.209028, -110.987889
Westernmost corner: 32.213861, -110.988361
Source: Google Earth, WGS84

Owners: City of Tucson, Pima County, Rio Nuevo.

Significance: The Tucson Origins Heritage Site (TOHS) is one of the oldest continually inhabited places in the United States (U.S.). The site represents the convergence of cultures in a single location over thousands of years. Indigenous peoples chose this location for its proximity to water and fertile soils, Colonial Spaniards, following the Law of the Indies, settled at the site because of its proximity to previously-established indigenous settlements, and both Mexican American and European Americans chose this site for the same reasons. The TOHS has continued to be part of the local narrative since Tucson's founding in 1775.

Description: The TOHS is located one-half mile west of downtown Tucson. The site is situated immediately east of the Menlo Park neighborhood – a registered historic district in the National Register of Historic Places. The site is bounded on its eastern and southern side by the Santa Cruz River; on its western side by the base of Sentinel Peak, and on its northern side by West Cushing Street. Mission Lane intersects the site area, and runs along an east-west axis. The site is situated along the Santa Cruz River where the river bends east before continuing along a northwest-trending route. Mission Lane originally crossed the river and linked with Simpson Street on the east side of the river; currently the lane ends at South Melwood Avenue. The site is accessible from the west via South Grande Avenue, which also separates the site from Sentinel Peak. An elevated perspective from Sentinel Peak—also known as “A” Mountain—provides a full overview of the site area. Several major Tucson landforms are visible from the site: Mount Lemmon is visible to the northeast, and Mica Mountain can be seen towards the southeast.

The TOHS is composed of three distinct character areas that include: 1) the former San Agustín Mission Complex, 2) the reconstructed Mission Gardens with associated archaeological ruins (ruins of Warner's Mill and several pre-Hispanic indigenous bedrock mortars), and 3) the remains of a capped public landfill.

1) San Agustín Mission Complex

The San Agustín Mission complex is the northeastern component of the TOHS and covers 2.8 acres. This character area currently consists entirely of open, graded land, void of any buildings and vegetation. It is located immediately south of Avenida del Convento and Cushing Street, west of the Santa Cruz River, east of Menlo Park, and north of Mission Lane. The complex is on the western edge of the Santa Cruz River floodplain.

The Mission complex is no longer extant. However, stones outline where it once stood approximately 300 feet west of the Santa Cruz River. The complex originally consisted of a convento, chapel, and cemetery. The two-story adobe convento was incorporated into the eastern wall of the complex.¹ A chapel and a cemetery were adjacent to the western side of the convent and faced the southern wall of the complex. A granary adjoined the western wall of the mission complex. An 1880 photograph taken by Carleton Watkins shows the location of the Carrillo house, where Leopoldo Carrillo, one of Tucson's historic pioneers lived. The house was located just south of Mission Lane and faced north, towards the mission complex.²

Excavations by the Rio Nuevo Archaeology Project reveal historic and prehispanic indigenous³ pits along the eastern and southern side of the Mission walls. Two historic canals were discovered on the southern side of the Mission walls. Two canals dating to the Early Agricultural Period (2100 BCE – 50 CE) and one to the Hohokam period (500 CE – 1450 CE) are on the southwest side of the complex walls.

An interpretive sign stands near the termination of the paved portion of Mission Lane and provides information on the history of the site including an artist's rendering of the site's former indigenous habitation and the historic mission complex.

2) Mission Gardens

The Mission Gardens area is the westernmost site component, and is situated just west of the former San Agustín Mission complex. This component covers an area of 3.5 acres. Mission Gardens is a partial re-creation of the historic garden area associated with the San Agustín Mission.⁴ The gardens are

¹ Hard, Robert Jarratt and William H. Doelle. The San Agustín Mission Site, Tucson, Arizona. Cultural Resource Management Section, Arizona State Museum, [Tucson: University of Arizona, 1978], 20.

²Photograph, Carleton Watkin's visit to Arizona in 1880, Stereoview Collection (1860-1920) Box 2, Folder 31-46: Carleton Watkin's Main Photo Collection, Arizona Historical Society.

³ "Mission Garden Brochure." Mission Garden. Tucson: Friends of Tucson's Birthplace, n.d.

⁴ Thiel, J. Homer, and Jonathan Mabry, ed. "RIO NUEVO ARCHAEOLOGY, 2000-2003: Investigations at the San Agustín Mission and Mission Gardens, Tucson Presidio, Tucson Pressed Brick Company, and Clearwater Site." Technical Report No. 2004-11. [Tucson: Desert Archaeology, Inc., 2006].

operated by the Friends of Tucson's Birthplace. The contemporary gardens are surrounded by reconstructed adobe walls that once enclosed the gardens during its' Spanish occupation. The original garden walls were constructed of adobe with a stone foundation. Alongside the dirt path that leads to the entrance of the gardens, there is a terraced rock composition intended to emulate indigenous agricultural farming methods in the area.

The gardens are divided into multiple sections, with each section representing different periods of Tucson's agricultural history. Several sections focus on native plants and indigenous farming, starting from 2100 BCE. Several heritage gardens showcase crops introduced during Spanish Colonial and Anglo-American settlement. Gardens present plants grown by Chinese, Anglo, Yaqui, and African American ethnic groups. There is a subsection called "Tomorrow's Garden" that features new and emerging agricultural practices.

Roughly 190 feet west and across of the Mission Gardens are the historic ruins of Solomon Warner's Mill (ca. 1880), situated at the base of Sentinel Peak, on the west side of South Grande Avenue. South of the mill ruins are three bedrock mortar cups used for food grinding during the Native American habitation of the area.

Eight irrigation canals were identified in and around the garden area. Four of the eight canals predate Hispanic settlement. One of these prehispanic canals trends southeast to north, the second canal is situated west of the first, and ran south to north, the third canal dates from the Hohokam period (500 CE – 1450 CE), and ran from south to north; the fourth prehispanic canal ran from the southwest to the northeast. The four historic period canals include two situated east and south of the garden external walls, and two on the far western side of the Mission Garden.

3) Southern Landfill area:

The landfill is the southernmost component of the TOHS. This triangular-shaped area covers 28.7 acres. The Santa Cruz River forms the southeast and southwest boundary of the landfill area. South Grande Avenue forms a boundary between the landfill area and Sentinel Peak, which is just west of the site component. A Hohokam settlement was documented within the current landfill area; this settlement was destroyed during the creation of the landfill. The landfill possesses scattered historic trash debris that dates from the 1950s through 1960s.⁵

History: Introduction of Past and Current Uses

⁵ Thiel, J. Homer, and Jonathan Mabry, 1.7.

The TOHS is one of the oldest continually occupied settlements in the U.S., and has been a part of Tucson’s local narrative for at least 1,000 years. Situated adjacent to the Santa Cruz River, the site has hosted a diversity of cultural traditions. The earliest habitation dates for the site are associated with Native American farmers in 2100 BCE. Indigenous farmers lived at the site for generations, where they developed increasingly sophisticated agricultural techniques through European contact. The landscape was settled by the Spaniards in the 18th century. Jesuit Father Eusebio Kino spearheaded the introduction of Catholicism into the area, and the Mission San Agustín (Mission) was built on the site in 1771. Following the relinquishment of Spanish occupation, Mexican settlers occupied the area and used the landscape for ranching and farming; they established traditional Sonoran agriculture in the area. Finally, the site reflects the shift from Arizona as a territory to a state through changes in local agricultural practices.

After the Mission was abandoned, several significant events occurred that changed the landscape of the TOHS. During the late 19th century, an earthquake, as well as salvage of materials from the vacant Mission, coupled with increasing popularity of the location as a tourist destination (as documented in photographs dating from the 1880s to the early 20th century), hastened its destruction. In the 1950s, the site faced further destruction through clay mining and its designation as the new location for the City of Tucson’s sanitary landfill. The following timeline provides a breakdown of the historical events associated with the history of the TOHS.

Tucson Origins Historic Site Chronology (courtesy of the Friends of Mission Gardens)

2100 BCE - 50 CE	Early Agricultural Period
50 CE - 500 CE	Early Ceramic Period
500 CE - 1150 CE	Hohokam Preclassic Period
1150 CE - 1450 CE	Hohokam Classic Period
1697 CE - 1711 CE	Father Eusebio F. Kino, a Jesuit missionary, visited Tucson
1700 CE - 1750 CE	Several Jesuit priests lived at San Xavier del Bac
1767 CE	Jesuits expelled from New Spain; replaced by Franciscan Order
1775 CE - 1777 CE	Construction of the presidio
1777 CE - 1800 CE	Construction of San Xavier del Bac and San Agustín missions
1810 CE - 1821 CE	Mexican War of Independence
1827 CE	Spaniards expelled from Mexico and missions secularized
1828 CE - 1831 CE	San Agustín Mission abandoned
1846 CE - 1848 CE	Mexican American War
1854 CE	U.S. purchases Northern Mexico through the Gadsden Purchase
1869 CE	Leopoldo Carrillo begins constructing a house with convento building materials
1880 CE	Southern Pacific railroad completed in Tucson
1880 CE	Treasure hunters loot convento building
1887 CE	Major earthquake in Sonora
1887 CE	Tucson donates 200 acres to the Southern Pacific Railroad
1892 CE - 1906 CE	Chinese railroad workers grow gardens

1896 CE - 1961 CE	Tucson Pressed Brick Factory begins operation
1950 CE - 1960 CE	The City of Tucson repurposed the area as a sanitary landfill
1956 CE	University of Arizona performed salvage investigations at site
1987 CE	Proposal to re-route road through the mission site
1999 CE	Rio Nuevo legislation approved by voters
2007 CE - 2009 CE	Archaeological remediation initiated by Desert Archaeology and construction of Mission site begins ⁶

Indigenous Pre-Hispanic Habitation

Habitation of the TOHS can be traced to a Native American settlement. Recent archaeological work has identified the earliest settlements at this site to date to 2100 BCE.⁷ The earliest documented community living at the site consisted of a small village, of which seven pithouses were uncovered. These inhabitants placed their settlement high on a silty sandbar within the Santa Cruz River floodplain, and placed their agricultural fields lower down in the floodplain, in a similar manner to many other Early Agricultural Period (2100 BCE – 50 CE) sites⁸ in the Tucson Basin. The volcanic geomorphology of Sentinel Peak, located just west of the site, provided rich sedimentary runoff into the Santa Cruz River floodplain, making the area ideal for agriculture.⁹ Before the 20th century, the Santa Cruz River was a perennial water source with a fairly reliable flow and shallow banks, which enabled local communities to use irrigated agriculture there (this was prior to massive trenching and water diversions in the early 1890s¹⁰ that have since altered the river flow). While maize was farmed in the area, it was not the only crop utilized; early inhabitants utilized the full range of available local food resources. Archaeological analysis indicates that in addition to maize farming, early communities foraged cactus fruit, mesquite, and small starchy seeds such as amaranth, tansy mustard, and dropseed.¹¹ These native communities also hunted rabbits, mule deer, and several other large mammal species endemic to the area¹².

As indigenous settlements developed through the Early Ceramic period (50 – 500 CE) their reliance on agriculture increased, along with their crop diversity;

⁶ Friends of Tucson's Birthplace. "Timeline." Missiongarden.org.
<https://www.missiongarden.org/tucson-birthplace/history/>

⁷ Thiel, J. Homer, and Jonathan Mabry, ed. "RIO NUEVO ARCHAEOLOGY, 2000-2003: Investigations at the San Agustín Mission and Mission Gardens, Tucson Presidio, Tucson Pressed Brick Company, and Clearwater Site." Technical Report No. 2004-11. [Tucson: Desert Archaeology, Inc., 2006],1.1.

⁸ Thiel and Mabry, 22.2.

⁹ Diehl 1996, 17.

¹⁰ Diehl, Michael W, ed. Further Archaeological Investigations of the Rio Nuevo South Property, City of Tucson, Arizona. Technical Report No. 96-5. [Tucson: Center for Desert Archaeology, 1996],17.

¹¹ Diehl, Michael W, ed. Archaeological Investigations of the Early Agricultural Period Settlement at the Base of A Mountain, Tucson, Arizona. Technical Report No. 96-21. [Tucson: Center for Desert Archaeology, 1997],122.

¹² Diehl 1997, 123.

beans, squash, and cotton became integral crops to the area.¹³ Wild plant use decreased except for times of riverine unpredictability and famine.¹⁴ Archaeological evidence associated with continued settlement during the Early Ceramic period is less visible than the period preceding it; a pair of early ceramic pithouses excavated in the current Mission Gardens area are some of the few sites attributed to this period. By the time of the Hohokam Preclassic (500 – 1150 CE) and Classic (1150 – 1450 CE) periods, the area underwent further agricultural intensification through the construction of numerous large canals, and smaller sites appear to have been abandoned.^{15,16} While there is evidence of Hohokam habitation at the site during this time, much of it appears to be destroyed by the local landfill and other modern activities, due to their relatively shallow depths.¹⁷

The Hohokam cultural tradition ends at 1450 CE. The succeeding period, known as the protohistoric period (1450 CE–1694 CE), is little understood by archaeologists because of the lesser degree of material remains uncovered as compared to time periods before and after, due in part to a lack of documentation and modern disturbance.^{18,19} To date, there has been no evidence of protohistoric occupation at TOHS, but it is surmised that protohistoric peoples were utilizing this agriculturally rich area.

Spanish Occupation

The Spanish exploration and settlement of Arizona began at the end of the 17th century with the expansion of the mission frontier led by Father Eusebio F. Kino. Between 1697 and 1711. Kino passed through the Tucson area along the Santa Cruz River at least five times on journeys to show his superiors the northern frontier of Spanish territories²⁰. While in the region, Kino came across dispersed rancherias that were occupied by Piman-speaking people Kino called Sobaipuris.²¹ These inhabitants practiced agriculture²² and lived in above-ground jacal structures.²³ The rancheria inhabitants called the site “S-cuk Son”, which refers to the place’s location at the base of the Sentinel Peak, which was

¹³ Thiel and Mabry, 3.3.

¹⁴ Ibid, 618.

¹⁵ Diehl 1996,38.

¹⁶ Thiel and Mabry 2006, 4.197.

¹⁷ Thiel and Mabry, 4.46.

¹⁸ Ibid, 3.4.

¹⁹ Ibid, 4.46.

²⁰ Dobyns, Henry F. *Spanish Colonial Tucson: a Demographic History*. University of Arizona Press, 2016. 4.

²¹ Young, Monica Zappia. “The Spanish Colonial Experience and its effects on the Indigenous community of San Agustin Del Tucson: A case study of Spanish Colonial failure.” [Master’s thesis, University of Arizona, 2010], 16.

²² Thiel, J. Homer. "Life in Tucson, on the Northern Frontier of the Pimería Alta." In *New Mexico and the Pimería Alta: The Colonial Period in the American Southwest*, edited by Douglass John G. and Graves William M., 311-30. [Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2017], 312.

²³ Thiel and Mabry, 3.4.

called the “Black Mountain” by the site’s original inhabitants.²⁴ Kino identified this place as “San Cosme del Tucson” in his maps of the area.²⁵

During the late 1690s San Cosme del Tucson was established as a *Visita* (stopping place) for Jesuit missionary efforts along the Santa Cruz River.²⁶ During Kino’s visits to the Tucson Basin, he registered 4,700 local inhabitants and performed 89 baptisms within native communities.²⁷ In addition to registering and baptizing the local inhabitants for New Spain, Kino and his party handed out badges of office to the local chieftains.²⁸ While early Jesuit missionaries performed baptisms in the Tucson Basin area, there is little evidence they had any other effects on the local native culture during this time.²⁹ This lack of a visible Spanish influence is reflected by the absence of Old World agriculture and livestock in the indigenous population during the early half of the 18th century; European subsistence practices did not appear in the Tucson basin until the second half of the 1700s.³⁰

In 1701, San Xavier del Bac was established as a mission. The mission was presided over by Francisco Gonzalvo, who was poorly received by the local population. After a year of service, Gonzalvo abandoned his post due to Juaxona and Tunortaca tribal members having slaughtered the mission’s livestock.³¹ Gonzalvo died in 1702, and his missionary work had little-to-no lasting influence on the inhabitants of the area.³² After Kino’s death in 1711 there was very little Spanish interaction with the Tucson basin until the 1760s.

During the second half of the 18th century, the Spanish military forced 400 Sobaipuris to move to settlements along the Santa Cruz River. This action was an attempt to weaken the strength of Apache raids on smaller communities. Roughly 250 of these Sobaipuris were forcibly relocated to the TOHS area, which was named San Jose de Tucson at the time. This indigenous relocation laid the future groundwork for the San Agustín Mission and its accompanying facilities.³³

²⁴ Thiel, 312.

²⁵ Hard and Doelle 1978, 3.

²⁶ Young, 19.

²⁷ Dobyms, 6.

²⁸ Farish, Thomas Edwin. *History of Arizona, Volume I*. State of Arizona, 1915. 60.

²⁹ Dobyms, 5.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid, 6.

³² Young, 18.

³³ Ibid, 24.

In 1767, all Jesuits were expelled from New Spain, and the Franciscan order took control of the missions.³⁴ July 1768 marks the arrival of Friar Francisco Tomás Hermenegildo Garcés Maestro to the mission of San Xavier del Bac. While at San Xavier, Garces spearheaded the construction of the San Agustín Mission complex in Tucson with the aid of Father Bernard Middendorf. Father Middendorf arrived in Tucson in 1757³⁵, but fled to San Xavier after only a few months due to a rebellion by the Piman Indian parishioners; after his departure there was never a permanent residency at San Agustín.³⁶ By 1772, San Agustín church and residence housing were completed and the local community formed an *escolta* (mission guard). At this point the local population had begun raising livestock including horses.³⁷ Garcés traveled between San Xavier and Tucson and was also noted for his exploration and mission trips that extended throughout Arizona and into California.³⁸

In 1775, the Tubac presidio garrison was relocated to Tucson by Spanish order, which marked the recognition of Tucson as an official Spanish settlement. Presidio construction began in 1777.³⁹ After the completion of San Xavier del Bac in 1797, remodeling and new constructions were initiated at the San Agustín Mission. During this process the existing chapel was remodeled along with the construction of the Convento and outbuildings. The outer buildings constructed during this time included the walls surrounding the mission complex, the granary, and the original walls for the mission garden.⁴⁰

Mexican Period Occupation

The Spanish colonial program entered a state of turmoil between 1810 and 1821.⁴¹ In 1821, Mexico gained independence from Spain. Mexican settlers continued to utilize the area for farming, ranching, and mining activities along the Tucson Basin.⁴² These Mexican settlers demanded the same water rights that were previously held by Native Americans. A substantial portion of the water rights were held by the Mexican population by federal decree in 1827.⁴³ Through this, the Mexican settlers established traditional Sonoran agriculture in Tucson.

³⁴ Dobyns, 26.

³⁵ Diehl, Michael W, ed. Further Archaeological Investigations of the Rio Nuevo South Property, City of Tucson, Arizona. Technical Report No. 96-5. [Tucson: Center for Desert Archaeology, 1996], 90.

³⁶ Diehl, 90.

³⁷ Young, 30.

³⁸ Dobyns, 34.

³⁹ Young, 27.

⁴⁰ Diehl, 90.

⁴¹ Young, 34.

⁴² Thiel, J. Homer, and Jonathan Mabry, 3.4.

⁴³ Ibid, 22.6

The Mexican government secularized the missions in 1827.⁴⁴ The last religious ceremony at the San Agustín Mission was held prior to 1831⁴⁵, and the Mexican government expelled all Spanish friars from Mexico.⁴⁶ The San Agustín Mission was abandoned between 1828 and 1831.⁴⁷

Historian Monica Young (2010) states that the Pima Indian Village of 'S-cuk Son had already been abandoned by 1848, a few years prior to the incorporation of that land into U.S. territory in 1854.⁴⁸ It is surmised that many of Tucson's natives left for San Xavier del Bac, the Gila River, and other desert places to avoid increased Apache antagonism towards Spanish and Mexican settlements. As a result of the Gadsden Purchase, the U.S. government assumed a position of responsibility over the Pima Indian community living at San Xavier.

Transition to an American Territory

Throughout the 1860s, the Sobaipuri, Papago, and Pima Indians were encouraged to settle at permanent sites at San Xavier. In 1874, a federal executive order relegated land surrounding the mission as reservation land.⁴⁹ This series of coerced relocations was a major factor that contributed to the abandonment of San Agustín.⁵⁰ The population which occupied the presidio dwindled, with an 1852 count of less than 400.⁵¹ A sketch of "San Agustín del Pueblito" from 1852 shows that the convento roof was intact and the adjacent chapel was in "restorable condition" at that time.⁵² The Mission is believed to have fallen into ruins between 1862 and 1880⁵³; degradation of the site was significantly impaired by an 1887 earthquake.

The California gold rush and subsequent mining development in Arizona prompted an increase of southwestern migration.⁵⁴ Tucson's inclusion into the U.S. through the Gadsden Purchase of 1854 facilitated further Anglo-American

⁴⁴ Ibid, 22.6.

⁴⁵ Archaeology in Tucson. "San Agustin: The Original Tucson." Newsletter of the Institute for American Research: Vol. 1, No.3 Spring 1987.

⁴⁶ Thiel, 312.

⁴⁷ Archaeological Assessment of the Mission Road Extension: Testing at AZ BB:13:6 (ASM). Technical Report No. 87-6. Institute for American Research, Tucson.

⁴⁸ Young, 49.

⁴⁹ Hanlon, Capistran John. 1971. "Acculturation at San Xavier: Changing Boundaries of A Southwest Indian Community." Order No. 7125829, University of Colorado at Boulder, 23.

⁵⁰ Young, 49-50

⁵¹ MacLaury, Maria Isabel. 1989. "La Placita: Vantages of Urban Change in Historic Tucson." Order No. 1339280, The University of Arizona., 30

⁵² Officer, James E. 1987. Hispanic Arizona, 1536-1856. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

⁵³ Thiel, 50.

⁵⁴ MacLaury, 30.

circulation through southern Arizona. Despite the lack of a railroad line into Tucson until 1880, the region's incorporation into the U.S. immediately brought an influx of travelers through the area. The first large stagecoach line into Tucson in 1858 ushered in an era of rapid population change.⁵⁵ The town experienced a threefold population increase, from around 400 in 1852, to around 3,000 by 1871.^{56,57}

By 1871, the U.S. Government donated land for a town site at the request of a group of merchants, and Tucson was officially incorporated as an American city.⁵⁸ One of the merchants, Leopoldo Carrillo, purchased property on the southern side of the mission site in that same year.⁵⁹ Carrillo had already constructed a house in the late 1860s and may have been growing crops in the area as well. Carrillo incorporated roofing from the convento into his housing construction, which further exacerbated the degradation of the Mission remains.⁶⁰ By 1875, Solomon Warner, another prominent Tucson merchant, began to operate a grist mill in the western margins of the Mission area; this mill operated until the mid-1880s.⁶¹ The remains of this mill are visible just west of the mission garden.

Tucson issued a town charter in 1877; in that same year, the city donated 200 acres to the Southern Pacific Railroad Company in anticipation of a railroad.⁶² The Southern Pacific Railroad was completed in 1880 and ran directly through the town. From 1892 to 1905, about 35 Chinese railroad workers gardened in the area adjacent to Spruce Street at the base of Sentinel Peak. Archaeological work at this site revealed two storage barrels, an outdoor hearth, an activity surface, and trash-filled pits.⁶³ The foodstuffs found at the site suggests that the Chinese gardeners practiced a traditional Chinese diet; evidence implies that

⁵⁵ MacLaury, 30.

⁵⁶ Pye, Jeremy W. 2013. "Living on the Border: Health, Environment, and Multiculturalism in 19th Century Tucson." Order No. 3716944, University of Florida, 81.

⁵⁷ Pedersen, Gilbert J. "'THE TOWNSITE IS NOW SECURE': TUCSON INCORPORATES, 1871." *The Journal of Arizona History* 11, no. 3 (1970): 151-74, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/41695563. [accessed April 7, 2020]

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 82.

⁵⁹ Pima County Deed Record Book 1:527-529.

⁶⁰ Diehl, Allison and McCune, Marty 2019. Tucson Origins Historic Landmark Nomination Proposal. University of Tucson Historic Preservation Office, Tucson. 9.

⁶¹ Leighton, David. "Street Smarts: Tiny Tucson Street Bears the Name of a Major Influence on the Area." *Arizona Daily Star*. November 5, 2013. https://tucson.com/news/local/street-smarts-tiny-tucson-street-bears-the-name-of-a/article_b3a4b697-b2b6-50ff-a26e-51b1f73f3181.html.

⁶² Pye, 83.

⁶³ Thiel, 19.

the gardeners obtained dried fish from China and the Pacific Ocean to produce traditional cuisine.^{64,65}

Quintus Monier, a naturalized French immigrant, came to Tucson and created a private brickyard in 1896, on 25 acres just north of where the mission ruins stood⁶⁶. The brickyard was later incorporated as the Tucson Pressed Brick Company which created hydraulically pressed bricks. The brickyard supplied almost every notable construction project at the University of Arizona and most of the residential projects in Tucson until 1961.⁶⁷ In 1937, brickmaking demands resulted in the mission ruins being harvested for brick production.⁶⁸ Remains of the company include pieces of machinery, samples of bricks and tiles.⁶⁹

American Statehood

During the late 19th century, the Mission was looted by individuals drawn to treasure hunting.⁷⁰ The site was a popular congregation area, and tourism there became widespread, as illustrated from site photographs taken during the late-1800s and up through the early 1900s.

By the 1950s and 1960s, the City of Tucson repurposed the area as a sanitary landfill. Several residents attempted to save the site, but their concerns went unheeded. In 1956, the University of Arizona performed archaeological salvage excavations as a response to concerns regarding heritage loss. After the excavations were completed, large portions of the Mission were bulldozed. Roughly 80% of the Mission was destroyed due to the landfill and clay mining for brick production.⁷¹

⁶⁴ Diehl, Michael, Jennifer A. Waters, and J. Homer Thiel. "Acculturation and the Composition of the Diet of Tucson's Overseas Chinese Gardeners at the Turn of the Century." *Historical Archaeology* 32, no. 4 (1998): 19-33. Accessed March 16, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/25616643, 19.

⁶⁵ Diehl, Michael W, 2006, 4.3.

⁶⁶ Diehl, Michael W., and Allison Cohen Diehl. "Archaeological Investigations of the Tucson Pressed Brick Company, Tucson, Arizona." [Tucson: Center for Desert Archaeology, 1996]

⁶⁷ Thiel, J. Homer, and Jonathan Mabry, 3.7.

⁶⁸ Cosulich, Bernice. "Ancient Church Becomes Brick: Where Early Spaniards Worshipped and Died." Accessed: Arizona Historical Society.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 1.14.

⁷⁰ Elson, Mark D., and William H. Doelle 1987 Archaeological Assessment of the Mission Road Extension: Testing at AZ BB:13:6 (ASM). Technical Report No. 87-6. Institute for American Research, Tucson, 13.

⁷¹ Ibid, 4.46.

In 1987, a proposal to reroute Mission Road for future development⁷² was met with community resistance. Anthropologist and field historian Bernard Fontana later suggested that the site is “ideal for an interpretive archaeological exhibit, a cultural park and a museum, with the reconstruction of former buildings.”⁷³ The reroute proposal was vetoed and residents met with public officials in 1991 to discuss site restoration.⁷⁴ Proposition 400 was approved by the public in 1999, which focused on making the Mission complex a heritage destination. Rio Nuevo, a Tax Increment Finance District, was created to oversee the project. Construction of the heritage park was initiated in 2007 when archaeological remediation was done and a double adobe wall marking the Mission Garden was created. The reconstruction of the rest of the Mission complex was put indefinitely on hold in 2009.^{75,76} In 2009, concerned citizens attempted to address the termination and named themselves “Friends of Tucson’s Birthplace” (Friends). This heritage-focused organization was incorporated as an Arizona Corporation Commission in 2009 and became a non-profit 501(c)3 in 2010. Through the support of the Friends, Mission Gardens was re-created to appear as the Spanish Colonial garden that was once part of the original Mission complex. Today, the site features heirloom Sonoran Desert-adapted fruit orchards and vegetable gardens. It is currently available to the public as a heritage destination.⁷⁷

The southern section of the site which marks the Mission complex is currently vacant. Funded by Rio Nuevo, two proposals have articulated different ways to utilize the land. Both propose to remediate the landfill and create a park.⁷⁸ Although the land hosting the Mission complex has remained vacant, recent construction was conducted nearby. In 2019, Rio Nuevo oversaw the construction of the Caterpillar building (for Caterpillar Construction Company) just north of the Mission site between Cushing Street and the Santa Cruz River. Additional commercial development has occurred north of Cushing street. This development included the creation of the Mercado shopping districts, market-rate housing developments, and low-income senior housing.⁷⁹

⁷² Archaeology in Tucson. “San Agustin: The Original Tucson.” Newsletter of the Institute for American Research: Vol. 1, No.3 Spring 1987.

⁷³ Devine, David. Tucson: A History of the Old Pueblo from the 1854 Gadsden Purchase. 2015.

⁷⁴ Knight, M Susan. “Barrio residents ask the city to save ‘historical heart.’ *Arizona Daily Star*, February 6th ,1987.

⁷⁵ Jun, Teresa. “Rio Nuevo’s Tucson Origins Park Takes Shape.” *Kold News 13*, March 30th 2007.

⁷⁶ Ramirez, Raul.”Mission Garden’s New Tree of Life.” *Arizona Daily Star*, July 7th, 2012.

⁷⁷ Friends of Tucson’s Birthplace. “Mission Garden Project.” [Missiongarden.org](http://missiongarden.org).

<https://www.missiongarden.org/tucson-birthplace/mission-garden-project/>

⁷⁸ TIBO. “Two Prominent Proposals For The Base Of Sentinel Peak, Tucson’s Birthplace.” [Tiboaz.biz](http://tiboaz.biz).

<https://tiboaz.biz/2018/03/24/two-prominent-proposals-for-the-base-of-sentinel-peak-tucson-birthplace/>

⁷⁹Rio Nuevo. “Caterpillar’s Tucson Mining Center.” [Rionuevo.org](http://rionuevo.org)

<https://rionuevo.org/project/caterpillars-tucson-mining-center/>

While the Tucson Origins Heritage Site holds significant cultural importance to the city's past, and is one of the oldest continually inhabited places in the U.S., the significance of the site has been minimalized over the past century. Through the place's abandonment, industrial repurpose, and pressure for commercial development, only small vestiges of the site's past remain. Despite the marginalization of the TOHS, the past few decades have seen a renewed interest to preserve this site, particularly through the work of organizations such as Rio Nuevo and the Friends of Tucson's Birthplace. Sitting in the liminal space between abandonment and care, the TOHS embodies all the major phases of Tucson's and Arizona's history: Indigenous habitation, Spanish and Mexican occupations, the transition to a U.S. territory, and final establishment of a U.S. state.

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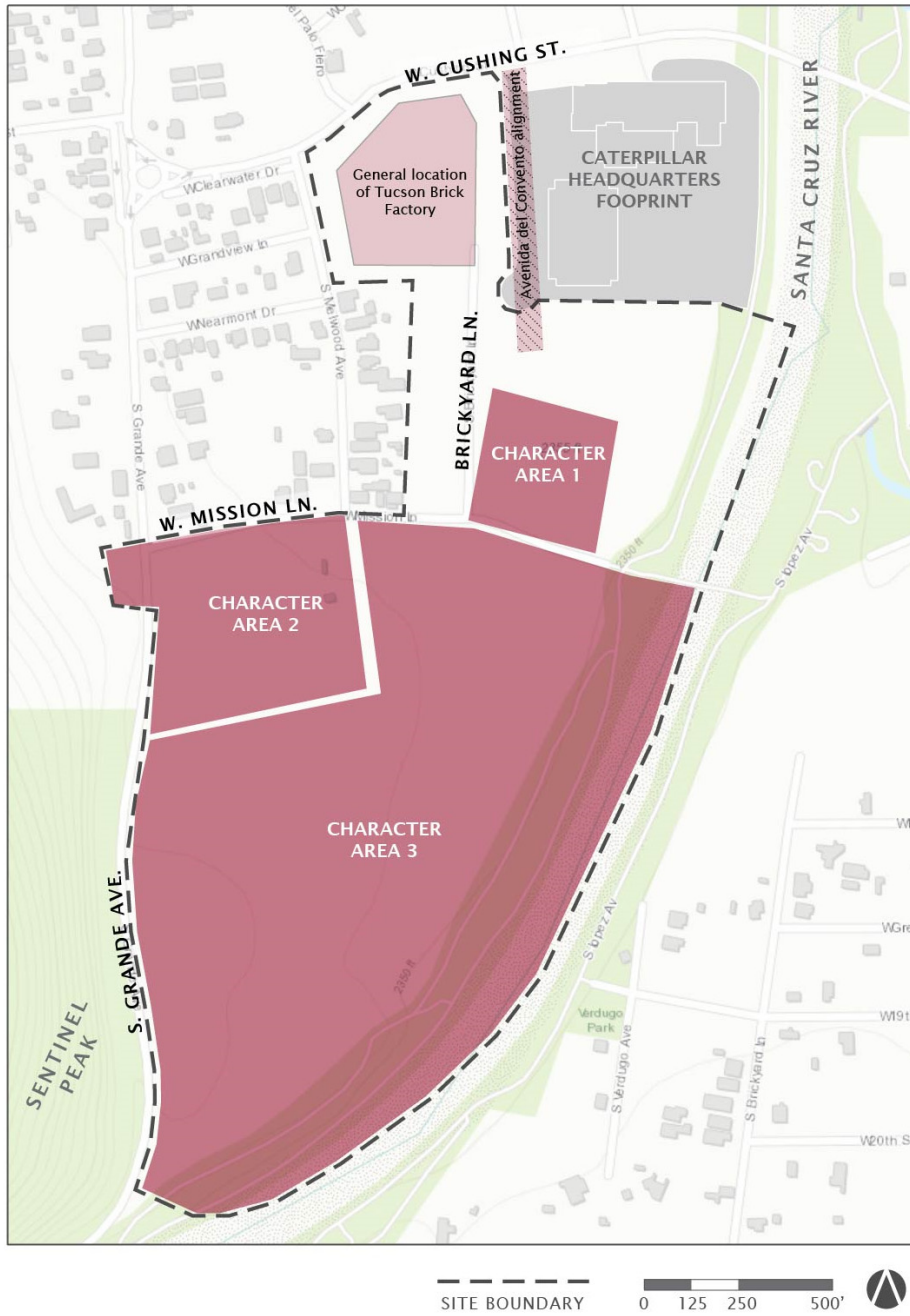
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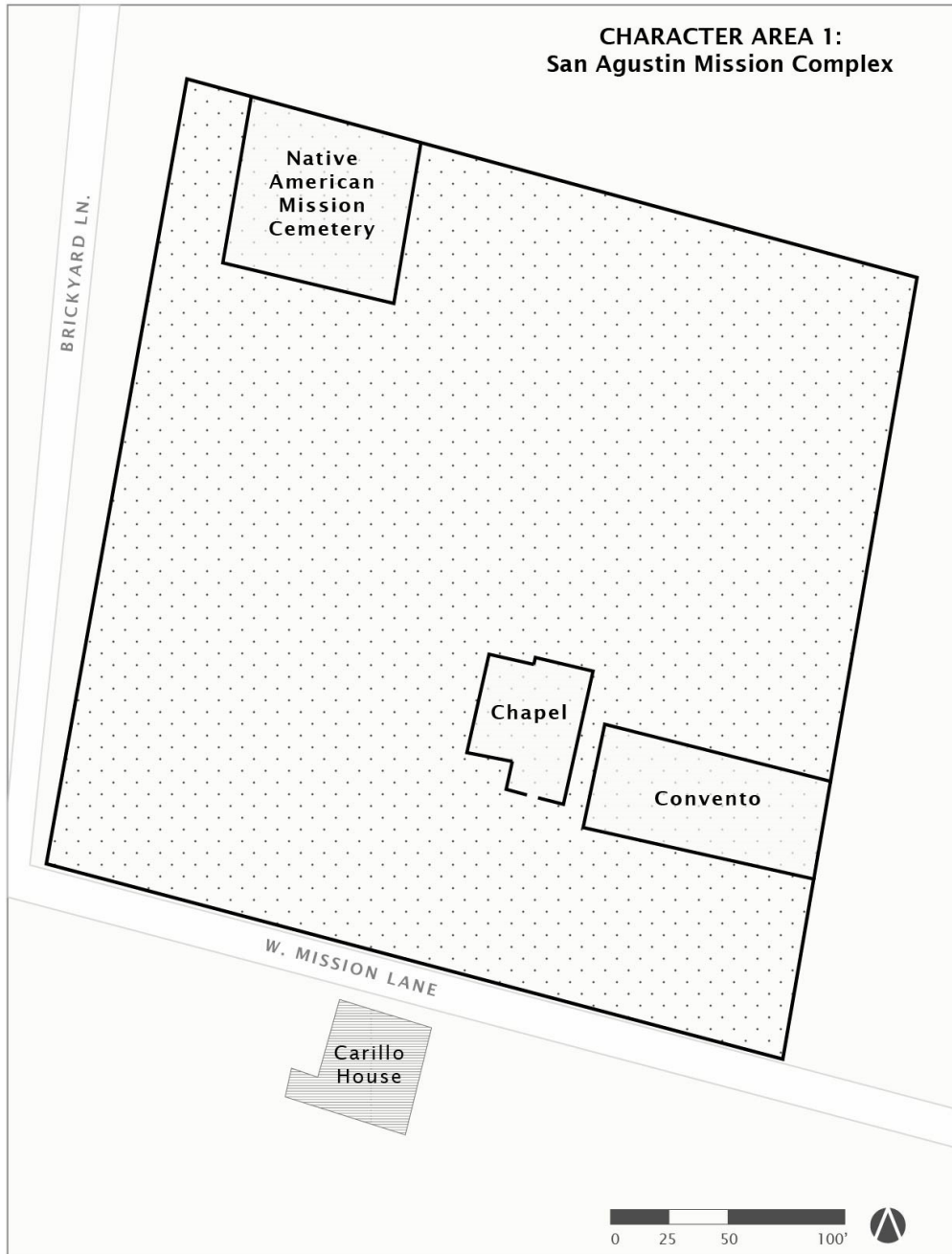
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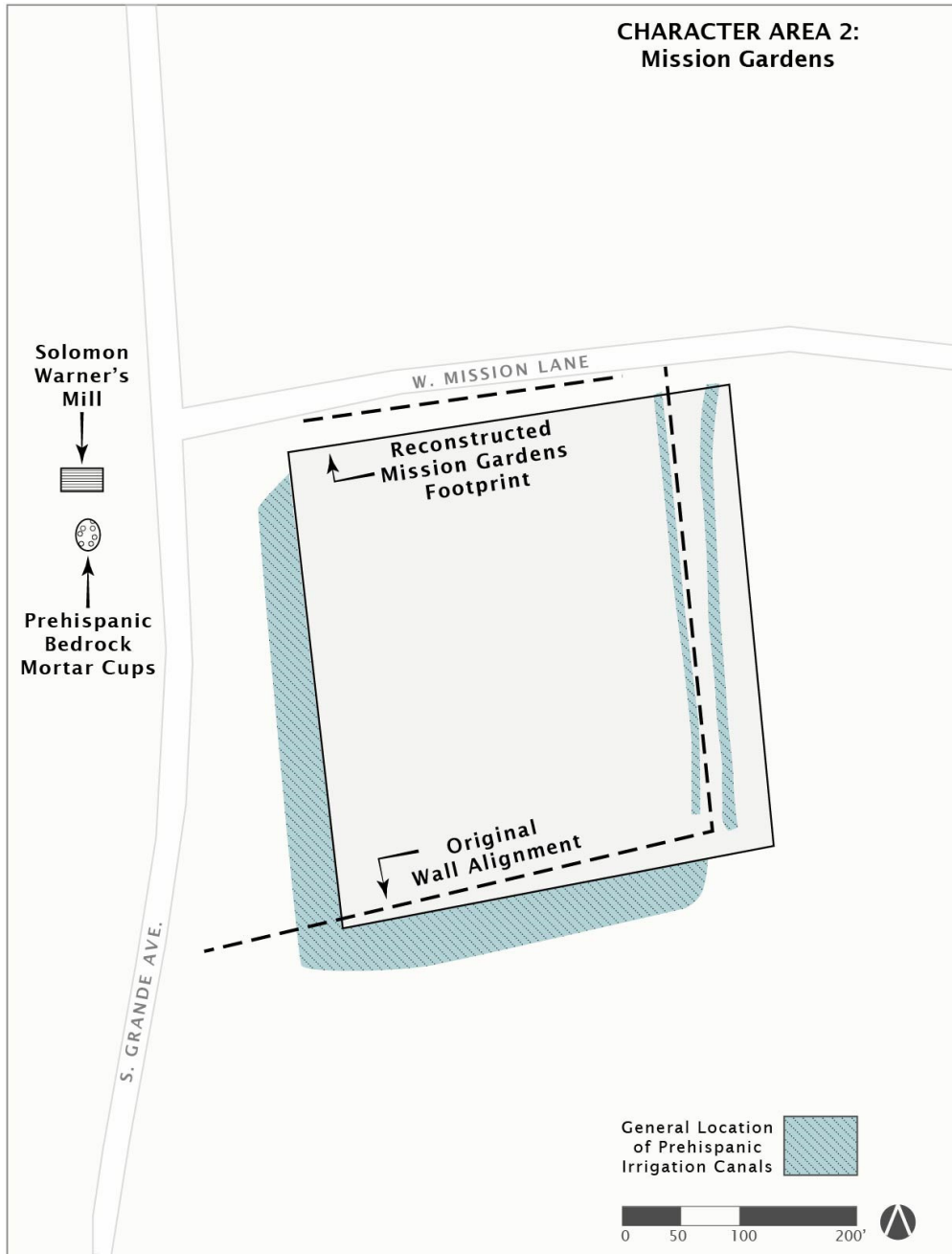
2020 HALS Challenge Entry: Vanishing or Lost Landscapes



Map of TOHS area, showing character areas. Character area 1 (Mission complex), character area 2 (Mission Gardens and Warner's Mill), and character area 3 (Landfill area) visible. (P. Cottrell-Crawford, 2020).



Map of the Mission Complex (Character Area 1) within the TOHS. Map shows locations of major historic features within and nearby character area. (P. Cottrell-Crawford, 2020).



Map of Mission Gardens and Warner's Mill (Character Area 2), illustrating notable features within the character area. (P. Cottrell-Crawford, 2020).



Illustrated rendering of a photograph by Charles Watkins (1880) taken from Sentinel Peak (“A” Mountain). View is looking east. Significant visible elements include Warner Mill, Mission Garden, Convento, Carrillo House, and irrigation from the Santa Cruz River. (P. Cottrell-Crawford, 2020)



3-D rendering of Mission San Agustín de Tucson, viewed from above. Aspect faces northeast. (A. Alabdullatif, 2020).



Tucson Origins Heritage Site as viewed from Sentinel Peak; view facing east. (J. Renaud, 2020).



Mission San Agustín site outline as viewed facing southeast. (J. Renaud, 2020).



Mission San Agustín site outline as viewed facing east. (J. Renaud, 2020).



Mission San Agustín site outline as viewed facing northeast, from landfill area. (J. Renaud, 2020).



Mission gardens with Sentinel Peak in background, viewed from landfill area with aspect facing west. (J. Renaud, 2020).



Close-up view of bedrock mortar south of Warner's Mill. (J. Renaud, 2020).



Pithouse replica of pre-Hispanic indigenous structures archaeologically documented at site. Aspect faces south. (J. Renaud, 2020).



Ruins of Warner's Mill, with Sentinel Peak visible in the background. Aspect faces west-southwest. (J. Renaud, 2020).