

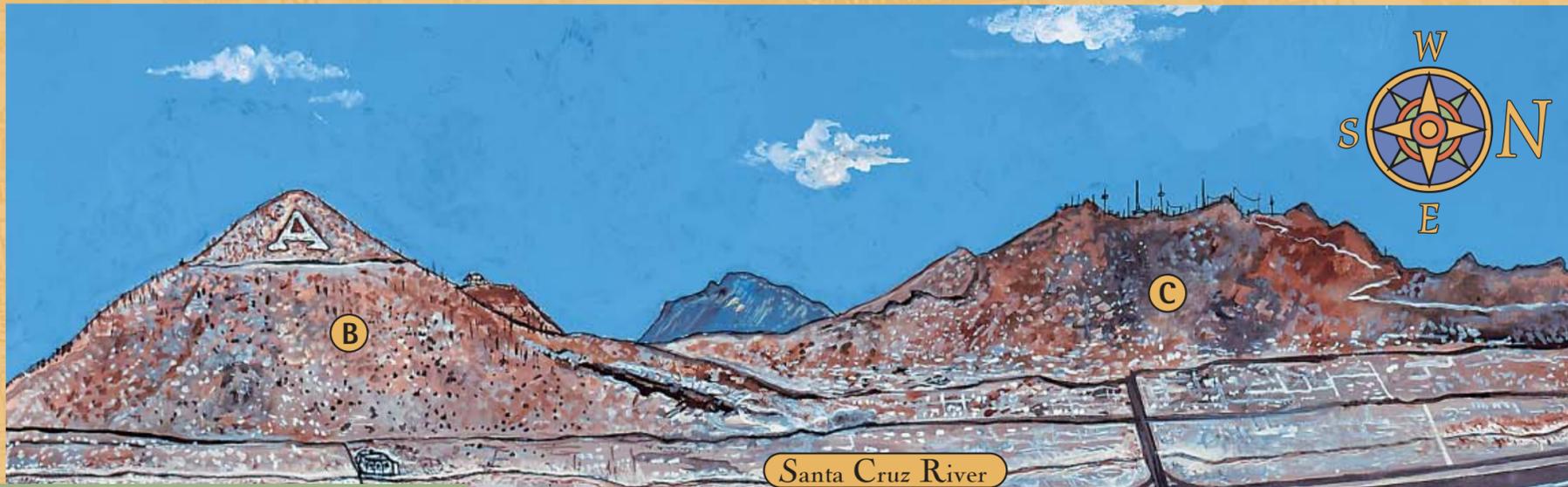
The Presidio Trail

A Historical Walking Tour
of Downtown Tucson

This historical walk, designed as a loop, begins and ends at the intersection of Church and Washington Streets, the north-east corner of Tucson's historic presidio. The complete walk (about 2 1/2 miles in length) takes 1 1/2 to 2 hours, but it can, of course, be done in segments, beginning and ending wherever you like.

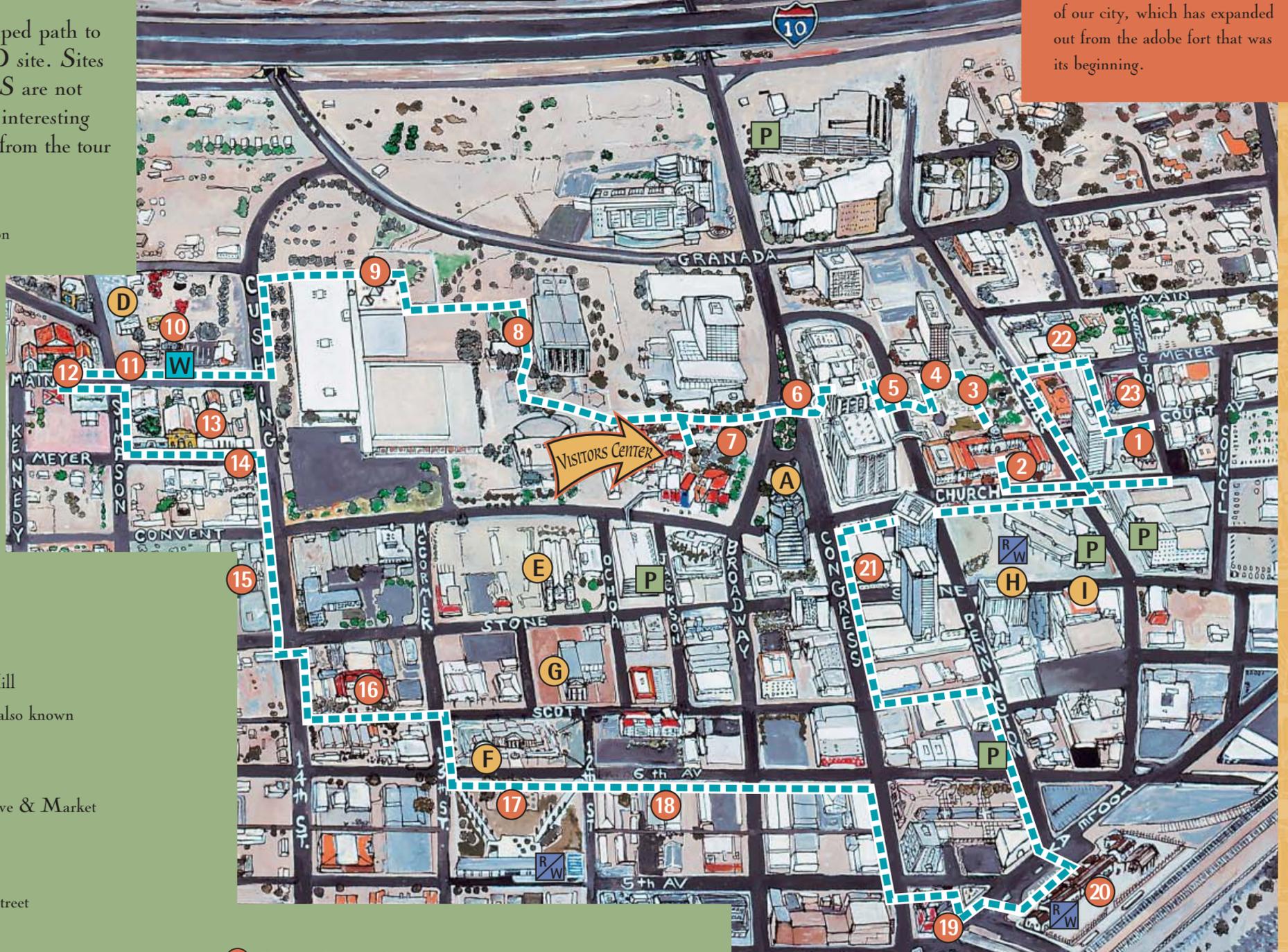
More than 20 restaurants are within a few blocks of the walk, providing plenty of opportunities for lunch or a break. Most of the sites on the tour are marked with historical plaques that provide additional information.

Enjoy this walk through the heart of our city, which has expanded out from the adobe fort that was its beginning.



Just follow the turquoise striped path to visit each **NUMBERED** site. Sites designated with **LETTERS** are not directly on the tour, but are interesting locations that can be viewed from the tour route or are close by.

- 1 Presidio San Agustín de Tucson
- 2 Pima County Courthouse
- 3 Mormon Battalion Sculpture
- 4 Soldado de Cuera (Leather Jacket Soldier) Sculpture
- 5 Allande Footbridge
- 6 Garcés Footbridge
- 7 Gazebo in Plaza de Mesilla (La Placita)
- A Francisco "Pancho" Villa Statue
- 8 Sosa-Carrillo-Frémont House
- 9 Jácome Art Panel at Tucson Convention Center
- B Sentinel Peak/"A" Mountain
- C Tumamoc (Horned Lizard) Hill
- 10 El Tiradito (The Castaway), also known as The Wishing Shrine
- 11 La Pilita
- D Carrillo Gardens/Elysian Grove & Market
- 12 Carrillo Elementary School
- 13 Teatro Carmen
- 14 Ferrin House (now Cushing Street Bar & Restaurant)
- 15 Barrio Viejo Streetscape
- 16 Temple of Music & Art
- E St. Augustine Cathedral
- 17 Armory Park
- F Former Carnegie Library, now the Tucson Children's Museum
- G Scottish Rite Cathedral
- 18 International Order of Odd Fellows Hall
- 19 Hotel Congress



- 20 Historic Railroad Depot
- H Pioneer Hotel Building
- I Arizona Historical Society Downtown Museum
- 21 Fox Theatre
- 22 Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block
- 23 Telles Block (now Old Town Artisans)

- P Parking
- W Water Fountain
- R/W Restroom/Water Fountain

Tucson is generally warm and sunny even in winter, so it is advisable to take water and wear a shady hat.

Map by Wolf Forrest

1 PRESIDIO SAN AGUSTÍN de TUCSON

On August 20th, 1775, Lt. Col. Hugo O’Conor, an Irishman serving in the Spanish Army, established a fort, 11 acres in size, in what is now downtown Tucson. With the exception of a small Spanish chapel across the Santa Cruz River at the foot of “A” Mountain, this was the first European structure in Tucson. By the 1780s, when the fort was completed, it consisted of 10-foot-high adobe walls and two corner towers, each 20 feet high. This fort marked the northwestern edge of the Spanish frontier in Arizona. The northeast corner of the presidio is being reconstructed on its original site at Church and Washington.

2 PIMA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Built in 1929 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, this building features a beautiful blue-tiled dome and elegant courtyard. The east wall of the presidio (Stop No. 1) is marked with a granite strip in the red tile walkway inside the courtyard. An actual piece of the original presidio wall can be seen in the Assessor’s Office on the south side of the courtyard.

3 MORMON BATTALION SCULPTURE

This bronze statue commemorates the day in 1846 when Mormon soldiers entered Tucson on their way to California to fight in the Mexican War. The Spanish-speaking citizenry, in spite of being nervous about these armed outsiders, treated the soldiers to a fiesta. One of the Mormon soldiers joined in the fun by playing his fiddle (note fiddle case on north side of statue).

4 SOLDADO DE CUERA (LEATHER JACKET SOLDIER) SCULPTURE

This Spanish soldier stands in the battle uniform typical of the late 1700s. The leather vest (7 layers of rawhide) could stop an arrow. The leggings protected him from thorns. His shield helped to deflect arrows and his 10-foot-long lance was the premier weapon of the day.

5 ALLANDE FOOTBRIDGE

This bridge, crossing Pennington St., is dedicated to Don Pedro de Allande y Saabedra who was appointed one of the first commanders of the presidio in 1777. Allande personally financed the early construction efforts at the presidio, which was the largest in the Southwest.

6 GARCÉS FOOTBRIDGE

This bridge, across Broadway, commemorates Father Francisco Garcés, the Franciscan priest who rode north from Tubac with Lt. Col. Hugo O’Conor in 1775 to found the presidio in

F Former CARNEGIE LIBRARY Now the TUCSON CHILDREN’S MUSEUM

Built in 1900 this building has survived fire and the loss of much of its ornamentation. The massive bench at the front was designed by California architect Bernard Maybeck and sculpted by world-famous sculptor Benjamin Bufano in honor of Arizona’s pioneer settlers.

6 SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL

Designed by Henry Trost, this unusual building was built in 1915 in a variety of Neoclassical styles. The building facade, of brick and terra cotta, is Roman Revival with Greek Revival Ionic capitals. The building houses Masonic organizations and is not open to the public.

18 INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS HALL

This early 20th century commercial building once housed a spacious dance hall on the second floor. The Odd Fellows have been an active social club since 1891 in Tucson as well as a charitable group whose goals include helping fellow community members in times of need. The building now houses a restaurant as well as art and photography galleries and studios.

19 HOTEL CONGRESS

Built in 1919 across from the railroad depot, this hotel was popular with winter visitors. It became famous in 1934 when members of John Dillinger’s gang rented rooms. While they were there, the building caught fire and the gang paid some firemen to carry their bags outside. The firemen didn’t open the bags but wondered why they were so heavy; the bags contained submachine guns and bulletproof vests. The gang was recognized from a *True Detective Mysteries* magazine and soon arrested. This hotel flourishes today and includes a popular restaurant and active night spot.

20 HISTORIC RAILROAD DEPOT

Built in 1907, the depot was restored in 2004 to its 1942 appearance. In addition to a functioning passenger train lobby, it houses office space, a restaurant, a gift gallery, and an excellent small museum highlighting transportation. Historic steam locomotive #1673 is located at trackside. A life-size sculpture of Wyatt Earp and “Doc” Holiday marks the 1882 incident ending with the death of Frank Stilwell near the first depot.

Tucson. He explored throughout the region and died in 1781 during an Indian uprising.

7 GAZEBO IN PLAZA DE MESILLA (La Placita)

This is a replica of the original 1880s bandstand in the plaza and is the site where the stagecoach would gallop into town from Mesilla, New Mexico, or San Diego along the old El Camino Real (the Royal Road). Often, Apache arrows would be embedded in the stagecoach from encounters along the trail. La Placita is a collection of shops and offices built in the 1970s on the site of an old Tucson neighborhood as part of urban renewal.

A FRANCISCO “PANCHO” VILLA STATUE

Through the wrought iron fence a commanding statue of Pancho Villa is visible on a grassy area in the center of Broadway. The statue was given to Tucson by Mexico in 1981, with a wry sense of irony considering Pancho Villa made outlaw incursions into southern Arizona.

8 SOSA-CARRILLO-FRÉMONT HOUSE

This house museum was once owned by the Sosa-Carrillo families; the oldest part of the structure was built as early as the 1850s. It was briefly used as the residence of members of the family of General John C. Frémont, who was appointed the Territorial Governor in 1878. This Sonoran row house contains an excellent example of a *zaguan*, a central hall leading from the front to the rear yard. The mission fig in the courtyard was probably planted in the 1700s.

9 JÁCOME ART PANEL AT TUCSON CONVENTION CENTER

This panel, depicting the arrival of the Spanish, used to be displayed on the front of the Jácome Department Store in downtown Tucson. When that store was demolished in the 1970s, the Jácome family donated the art to the new convention center.

B SENTINEL PEAK/“A” MOUNTAIN

To the west you will see a basaltic peak adorned with the letter “A.” This was once a lookout for Spanish and Native American sentinels, who watched for raiders approaching the presidio and mission. The “A” was added in 1915, in a burst of University of Arizona student enthusiasm, as the result of a football victory over Pomona College. The O’Odham name for the mountain, pronounced Schook-schon, means “at the black base.” This is the source of the name Tucson.

H PIONEER HOTEL BUILDING

Built in 1928 in the center of the downtown business district, this hotel catered to the social elite. In the mid-20th century Harold and Margaret Steinfeld, owners of a large downtown department store lived in the penthouse. A disastrous fire severely damaged the building in December 1970, and among the 29 victims were the Steinfelds. The fire hastened the decline of downtown Tucson, which is reviving today with the help of the ambitious Rio Nuevo redevelopment project.

I ARIZONA HISTORICAL SOCIETY DOWNTOWN MUSEUM

Located just across from the Tucson Main Library, this small museum tells the fascinating story of downtown Tucson.

21 FOX THEATRE

After being closed for 30 years, this grand Art Deco movie theater has just been restored to its former greatness. Originally designed for vaudeville and silent movies, this became Tucson’s preeminent movie theater. It was the site of the world premier in 1939 of the film *Arizona* starring William Holden and Jean Arthur. It is planned to be used for both screen and stage events.

22 TUCSON MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORIC BLOCK

Built in 1973, this museum features modern, western, and Pre-Columbian art. Five historic homes are on its grounds. The Fish-Stevens homes, the Romero house, and the Casa Córdova, all built in the 1860s, are classic Sonoran row houses. Casa Córdova displays Mexican and Territorial period rooms, as well as the Nacimiento, a Mexican Nativity Scene, generally open from November to April. The Mission Revival style Corbett house was built in 1907 by one of Tucson’s first lumber dealers.

23 TELLES BLOCK (now OLD TOWN ARTISANS)

Almost this entire block is defined by attached Sonoran row houses, with a large, shady courtyard on the interior. These structures have had a variety of incarnations, including homes during the late 1800s, a lumber yard, and a gas station. In addition, the blacksmith shop of the Spanish-era presidio was very likely located here. Now these old adobe buildings house 11 different artisans shops as well as a restaurant.

C TUMAMOC (HORNED LIZARD) HILL

This hill, located just north of “A” Mountain, means “horned lizard” in the Tohono O’odham language. In an O’odham legend a giant horned lizard suddenly began eating people. The O’odham prayed to their god I’itoi to help them. I’itoi heard them and turned the lizard into a rocky hill. Now Tumamoc is the home of the University of Arizona’s Desert Laboratory, founded in 1903. This hill is the site of the longest continuous botanical monitoring plots in the Sonoran Desert. In addition, the hill was used by indigenous people for farming and other purposes for several thousand years and is an important archaeological site.

10 EL TIRADITO (THE CASTAWAY) also known as THE WISHING SHRINE

This shrine is typical of small shrines in many communities in Mexico, where people come to burn candles and pray, asking for help with their problems. One legend associated with this shrine involves a tragic love triangle in the 1870s, with a husband killing his wife’s lover. A priest would not let the man be buried in the consecrated cemetery so local people lit candles at this location to pray for his soul.

11 LA PILITA

This adobe structure is a small museum and store selling items made by the students at the nearby Carrillo Elementary School (Stop No.12). Inside are projects about local history created by the children. The mural on the south wall tells the story of the Hispanic community.

D CARRILLO GARDENS/ELYSIAN GROVE & MARKET

To the west along Simpson St. was an artesian spring (El Ojito) that was the source of drinking water for the community in the 1800s. An enterprising local citizen, Leopoldo Carrillo, built a dam to form a lake and planted gardens with shade trees and roses, and the place became a popular amusement park. This was a very popular site for a picnic or a Sunday stroll. In 1887 a tremendous earthquake shook southern Arizona causing the artesian spring and the lake to dry up. When the water disappeared after the earthquake, it left behind a small fertile hollow. Trees eventually grew in the area and homes were built in a neighborhood called Elysian Grove. One of the adobe buildings became a popular market; today it is a private home with a beautiful garden in the rear.

12 CARRILLO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This elementary school, built in 1930 in the Mission Revival style, was named for Mexican businessman Leopoldo

Carrillo. On the walls of the school’s hallway are historical photographs of the former Carrillo Gardens and the lake.

13 TEATRO CARMEN

This adobe building named for the wife of its builder, Carmen Soto Vásquez, has an interesting and checkered history. Opened in 1915, it began as a theater devoted to staging dramatic works in Spanish, then it became a movie theater, boxing arena, garage, and Elks Lodge.

14 FERRIN HOUSE (now CUSHING STREET BAR & RESTAURANT)

This old adobe home was built in the 1860s by tailor Joseph Ferrin and his wife Therese. Therese and the Ferrin’s daughter Clara were instrumental in building the first synagogue in Arizona on south Stone Ave. A store was added to the residence in the 1880s; the structure now operates as a family-owned restaurant and bar.

15 BARRIO VIEJO STREETSCAPE

These adobe buildings along Cushing Street, built in the Sonoran row-house style in the late 1800s, are part of Barrio Viejo, Tucson’s oldest neighborhood. On the front of No. 124, note the decorated canales, long metal spouts that direct rainwater away from the adobe walls.

16 TEMPLE OF MUSIC & ART

This 1927 theater, constructed on behalf of The Saturday Morning Music Club, brought a flourishing musical scene to Tucson including world famous artists such as Jascha Heifetz. Built in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, this building features an inviting courtyard with a fountain. The building was restored in 1990 and is a popular theater venue, renowned for its excellent acoustics.

E ST. AUGUSTINE CATHEDRAL

Begun in 1896, this Spanish Colonial Revival style church has a magnificent sandstone facade. In an unusual tribute to local flora and fauna the facade features a saguaro, yucca, horned lizard and various cacti. Housed within the vestibule is one of the bells from the Spanish-era presidio.

17 ARMORY PARK

During and immediately after the Civil War this was the camp where soldiers were bivouacked. Because the civilian neighbors considered the soldiers’ behavior excessively rowdy, the camp was eventually moved out of town to its current location on Craycroft Road and renamed Fort Lowell. Three monuments are located here honoring those who fought in the Spanish-American War, WWI, and with the Mormon Battalion in 1846.

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Support provided by

Mayor Robert Walkup
Councilmember José Ibarra
Councilmember Carol West
Councilmember Karin Uhlich
Councilmember Shirley Scott
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Don Martin, Friends of Downtown
La Cocina Restaurant at Old Town Artisans
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