

NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION SUMMARY SHEET

Property: Pascua Cultural Plaza

Location: 785 W. Sahuaro, Tucson

Ownership: Public

Nomination Preparer: Public – City of Tucson

Description: The Pascua Cultural Plaza is a roughly rectangular dirt lot, approximately 1.44 acres in size, located within the confines of Pascua Village in Tucson. Once on the outskirts of Tucson's developed area, the plaza is now surrounded by commercial and industrial development. The plaza is bordered by a modern church that replaced the original building constructed of railroad ties and with an open front. The plaza was also originally surrounded by small houses, a communal kitchen, and other structures. Modern buildings now surround the plaza and are not considered contributing elements. Although it is of modern construction, the church is recommended to be a contributing element, as its symbolic location and role in ritual are endemic to the property's significance. Two objects located within the plaza are relatively permanent crosses made of mesquite or cottonwood and standing about four feet in height. The material of these crosses has been replaced as they deteriorated. Also in the plaza are two low dirt mounds and an area of blacked earth, the sites of particular ceremonial events.

Significance: The Pascua Cultural Plaza is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A for its association with the culture of the Pascua Village and community. Founded in 1921, the Pascua Village is the oldest formally established Yoeme community in the Tucson area. The Yoeme were a people who left their native lands in Mexico and migrated to the United States to avoid persecution. Since 1921, the plaza has served as the cultural center of the Yoeme people and the site of their community activities and ceremonies.

Suggested Level of Significance: Local

Letters of Support:

*City of Tucson Historic + Cultural Resources Dept. } prior
Tucson Historical Commission } drafts*

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

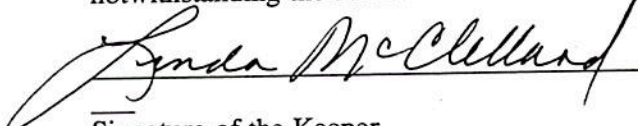
NRIS Reference Number: 04001032

Property Name: Pascua Cultural Plaza

County: Pima State: Arizona

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



September 22, 2004

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 6 Function or Use

The following subcategories are hereby entered for Religion and Landscape under Historic and Current Functions. No subcategory is entered for Social since none of the subcategories are appropriate to describe the community activities that have traditionally taken place here.

- Religion: Ceremonial site
- Landscape: Plaza
- Religion: Religious facility

The Arizona State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- **+ Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

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Listed 9/22/04

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Pascua Cultural Plaza

other names/site number _____

FINAL
JUNE 2011
FROM SHPO

2. Location

street & number 785 W Sahuaro St. not for publication

city or town Tucson vicinity

state Arizona code AZ county Pima code 019 zip code 85705

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property ___meets ___does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

Signature of Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

- I, hereby certify that this property is:
- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register
 - removed from the National Register
 - other (explain): _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many as apply)

Category of Property
(check as many as apply)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	5	building(s)
1	0	site
0	0	structure
0	1	object
4	6	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Religion _____
- Social _____
- Landscape _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- Religion _____
- Social _____
- Landscape _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ _____
- Spanish Colonial Revival _____
- OTHER/ no style _____

- foundation Concrete _____
- walls Concrete, stucco _____
- Roof WOOD/ plywood; SYNTHETICS _____
- other _____
- _____
- _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
 B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
 C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
 D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Religion
Social History
Education
Ethnic Heritage/ Native American

Period of Significance

1921- present (2004)

Significant Dates

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
 B removed from its original location.
 C a birthplace or a grave.
 D a cemetery.
 E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
 F a commemorative property.
 G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Yoeme

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other (Pascua Yaqui Tribe)

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 1.70 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	12	501440	3568080	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Gayle Hartman, Archaeological and Historical Consultant			date	4 April 2004
organization				telephone	520-325-6974
street & number	2224 E 4 th St.			zip code	85719
city or town	Tucson	state	AZ		

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	City of Tucson, Parks and Recreation Dept.			telephone	520-791-4873
street & number	900 S Randolph Way			zip code	85716
city or town	Tucson	state	AZ		

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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				state	<u>Arizona</u>

Section 7: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary Paragraph

The Pascua Cultural Plaza is a rectangular dirt lot, approximately 1.70 acres in size, located within the confines of Pascua Village in Tucson, Arizona. The attached USGS map [Tucson Quadrangle 7.5 minutes] shows the location of the site (Map 1) and the attached aerial photograph provides a recent aerial view of the plaza and its surroundings (Map 2). This plot of ground has served as the location for ceremonial activities since Pascua Village was founded in 1921. Included, as part of this nomination, are three Contributing Elements, the chapel on the plaza's west side and the community kitchen and fiesta ramada/dancing ramada on the plaza's south side. The chapel, formally known as the *Capilla* San Ignacio de Loyola/Chapel of St. Ignatius of Loyola (referred to henceforth as the "capilla"), is the fourth capilla at this location and was built in 1970-71. The community kitchen and fiesta ramada were built in the early 1970s. Although none of these buildings exceeds 50 years in age they are considered Contributing Elements because of the traditional parts they play in the activities that make the plaza the cultural and religious center of the community. The plaza (with the capilla, community kitchen, and fiesta ramada included as Contributing Elements) is being nominated under the "Site" category because it is the location of significant events and because this location possesses historic and cultural value.

On the north and south sides of the plaza are other elements classified as Noncontributing: concession stands, a children's building, an administrative building, a multipurpose building, public bathrooms, and an outdoor sculpture.

Brief History of Village and Plaza

Pascua Village is the oldest formally established Yoeme (also known as Yaqui) community in Tucson and the surrounding area. The name "Pascua" was given to the community because the idea for it was supposedly conceived on Easter Sunday, 1921 (the word "Pascua" is Spanish for Easter). Yoeme people had begun to immigrate from southern Sonora into southern Arizona as early as 1882 to avoid persecution by the Mexican government. Yoeme traditional history suggests that there was a Yoeme presence in northern Sonora and southern Arizona even earlier. By the early 1900s several hundred lived in and around Tucson. The village of Pascua was established when a Tucson real-estate broker, A.M. Franklin; a banker, John Metz; U.S. district attorney, Kirke Moore; and a Mayo Indian, Juan Muñoz (called Juan Pistola) conceived the idea of finding a place where Yoeme could live together in a single community. The primary motive was apparently to settle as many as possible of the Yoeme already living in the Tucson area in a single place so that federal officials could keep a closer eye on their activities. To that end, Franklin offered a 40-acre parcel on the northwest edge of Tucson, which was to be sold in small lots to Yoeme families. A portion of the acreage was identified as

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common property to be used as a plaza for ceremonial purposes for the immediate community, that is, the Yoeme families. Only 20 families moved in initially, but by the spring of 1921 the plaza began to be the site of ceremonies, which continue at that location to this day.

The legal history of the village and plaza from the 1920s to the present is a complicated one, which is not particularly relevant to this nomination. However, some specifics relating to the plaza are summarized here. The original plaza, set aside in 1921, measured 190 feet north-south by 240 feet east-west (45,600 square feet). On the eastern edge of the plaza was a dirt street running north-south, Calle Central, and to the east of that were six residential lots (Lots 17-22). It is important to note that this eastern area has been used for ceremonial activities since 1921 even though it was not formally a part of the original plaza. During ceremonies the street was blocked off from vehicular use, and both the street and the vacant lots were incorporated into the ceremonial activities. In fact, the Judas Pyre, a large area of blackened earth where an effigy of Judas is burned each year during the Easter Ceremony, has remained in the same location since 1921. The plot of land included in this nomination, then, includes the original 45,600 square-foot plaza plus the 17,100 square feet that were the residential lots, and the 11,400 square feet that were the street for a total of 74,100 square feet.

Also, it is worth noting that the ownership of the plaza as well as most land within the village has changed several times since the early 1920s. The original plaza, according to a 20 September 1974 memo from the Office of the City Engineer to the Tucson City Parks Department, became city property by virtue of being annexed into the City of Tucson in March 1959. At an uncertain date in the early 1960s, as a result of nonpayment of taxes, the Marshall Foundation became the owner of Lots 17-22 to the east of the original plaza. In 1971 the foundation sold its holdings to a local corporation called "Mexican, American, Yaquis, and other," often referred to as MAYO, for \$41,250.00. On 9 August 1978 these lots were sold by MAYO to the Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Tucson. On 10 June 1985 they were conveyed from the Roman Catholic Church to the City of Tucson. The Catholic Church had held the land "in trust for religious purposes on behalf of the Yaquis [sic] Indian Tribe" (Deed recorded on 27 June 1985, Office of the Pima County Recorder, Book 7564, Book 376).

On 3 September 1985 the Mayor and Council of the City of Tucson adopted Ordinance No. 6295 allowing Calle Central in Blocks 5 and 6 of the Pascua Subdivision to be vacated as city right-of-way (Recorded in Office of the Pima County Recorder, Book 4, Page 11 of Maps and Plats). Thus, the areas to the east of the original plaza legally became part of the plaza in 1985. But, as was noted above, since the original plaza, the street, and the residential lots have been used for ceremonial purposes since 1921, the entire plaza as it is configured today is what is being included in this nomination.

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Description of Plaza

Although the plaza itself has changed little in appearance or function since 1921, its setting and the buildings that surround it have seen considerable change. In 1921 the original plaza and village were located on the northwest outskirts of Tucson in a rural area adjacent to an irrigation canal (Map 3). Now the plaza and village are located within a commercial and industrial section of urban Tucson; the irrigation canal is long gone. The plaza was bordered in the past on its west edge by a simple, open-fronted chapel made of railroad ties and with a wooden tower that supported a large bell standing near its northeast corner (Additional Document 1). On the south side were a simple community kitchen, and a ramada used for traditional ceremonial dances and containing a prayer altar site. Nearby were simple homes made of adobe bricks, wattle and daub, or sheet metal. All are now gone. The capilla, kitchen, and ramada have all been replaced in their same locations. Thus, the entire property retains its historic integrity and continues to play its role in the ceremonial and social life of the Yoeme people. The plaza also plays a landscape function as a centrally located park/plaza, where local residents, both adults and children, socialize and recreate.

Although the plaza is basically an area of empty dirt, it does contain small objects that, although not permanent, play important roles in the ceremonial activities that occur there. (These are considered neither Contributing nor Noncontributing Structures, but are discussed as integral parts of the plaza.) The most conspicuous objects are two relatively permanent crosses made of mesquite or cottonwood and standing about four feet in height. On occasion, when these crosses deteriorate, they are replaced by identical new crosses. The so-called "church cross" or "*cruz mayor*" (Photo 1) is embedded in the ground 50 feet to the east of the capilla while the "fiesta cross," also embedded in the ground, is located to the north of the fiesta ramada. These and other crosses that are more temporary always occupy the same locations within the plaza. As these objects are temporary, they are not included in the permanent resource count.

Two low dirt mounds, one adjacent to the fiesta cross and one adjacent to one of the temporary crosses near the north end of the capilla, have special significance. These are the locations where "camps" are established during the Easter Ceremony, where participants rest and where regalia are stored while not in use.

Near the eastern edge of the plaza is a large area of blackened earth (Photo 2). This is the spot known as the Judas Pyre where, on the Saturday before Easter Sunday, cultural regalia such as swords, daggers and masks are burned along with a life-size or larger than life-size effigy of Judas, the leader of the Fariseo Society.

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Description of Site

Contributing Elements

Three buildings at Pascua Cultural Plaza are being treated as “Contributing Elements” to the site because they play important roles in the cultural and religious activities for which the plaza is being nominated. They are (1) the church or chapel, generally referred to as the *Capilla San Ignacio de Loyola*/Chapel of St. Ignatius of Loyola on the west end of the plaza, including the covered space on its north end called the *guardia* (guard house), (2) the common kitchen on the south side of the plaza, and (3) the *fiesta ramada* also on the south side of the plaza.

In Edward H. Spicer’s *Pascua: A Yaqui Village in Arizona*, published in 1940, pg. 13, these buildings are briefly described as follows:

There is a large plaza, surrounded by a wire fence, in which are the three buildings necessary to a Yaqui *fiesta*—the church (constructed of discarded railroad ties), the common kitchen (made of remnants of tin and metal roofing from the city dump), and the dancing *ramada* (of adobe bricks). The church and the dancing *ramada* both have open fronts to permit religious processions and dancing groups to pass in and out. Beside the church rises a wooden tower surmounted by a large bell that is rung before every ceremony and at the time of every death.

A sketch map of Pascua Village, dated “Spring 1937” appears as a large fold-out following pg. 14 of *Pascua: A Yaqui Village in Arizona*. A small portion of that map depicting the plaza, the capilla, the kitchen, and the ramada is reproduced here as Additional Document 2.

Discussions of these three buildings follow:

1. Capilla San Ignacio de Loyola: The capilla that is currently standing at the west end of the Pascua Cultural Plaza is the fourth capilla in that location. Limited information seems to be available, either in published or oral history form, regarding the precise dates of construction or details of construction of the first three. The current capilla was built in late 1970 and early 1971. All have stood in precisely the same location and, overall, have been constructed in a similar fashion.

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Photographs of the first and second capillas show they were one-story structures with an open front (facing east) and with one or more large bells either in bell towers integrated into the building or in a freestanding bell tower (Additional Document 1). According to Avertano Olivas of the Pascua Neighborhood Center staff, the third capilla, constructed after the second was demolished in 1967, was a short-term, temporary structure.

As was noted above, the first capilla (constructed in 1921 or 1922) was built of railroad ties. From available photographs it appears to have been of very simple construction, completely open on the east side, and with a low, slightly sloping, pitched roof, with the gable end facing east toward the plaza. A single cross was attached to the horizontal supporting beam just below the roof at the front of the structure, rising above the roofline. A wooden bell tower, with a single large bell, stood at the northeast corner of the church.

When the first capilla was torn down and replaced by the second is unknown, but was likely in the early 1950s. This tentative conclusion is reached on the basis of statements by Edward Spicer in the "Introduction" to *With Good Heart* by Muriel Thayer Painter. He notes, on pg. xx, that, "...it was this building [the capilla of old railroad ties] that served as the center for most of the ceremonies recorded by Mrs. Painter." He notes further, on pg. xv, that her observations were focused on the period between 1939 and 1954. Thus, presumably the second capilla was built near the end of that period.

The second capilla, which was torn down in 1967 according to a dated photograph, was built of adobe bricks covered with white stucco. Based on photos of the second capilla during demolition and on a newspaper article (*Arizona Daily Star*, Sept. 19, 1970), the second capilla had two bell towers at the northeast and southeast corners each topped by a small cross, and very likely had a larger cross above the center of the open east side. It also had two arched open doorways on the east side as does the current structure.

As was mentioned above, the third capilla was very short term; it was apparently built in early 1970 (*Arizona Daily Star*, 19 Sept. 1970). Little is known about its construction except that it had an open front and served the same functions as the earlier structures. In the same *Arizona Daily Star* article mentioned above it is described as a "crude lean-to." Arcadio Gastelum, President, San Ignacio Yaqui Council, described it as being made of plywood and having a tin roof.

The current capilla is a one-story cement block building with a flat, built-up roof; the exterior is covered with white stucco (Photos 3 and 4). It measures 61 feet 11 inches north-south and 40 feet 6 inches east-west (the north-south measurement includes the guardia). As was noted above, this capilla was built in

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late 1970 and early 1971. According to the *Arizona Daily Star*, 19 Sept. 1970, the construction goal was to break ground on October 1, 1970, and to have the capilla ready for the Lenten ceremonies of 1971. According to the same article, the financial goal was to raise \$20,000 from the local business community, with volunteer labor to be contributed by the Yaqui community. Other improvements in the village at that time were being promoted by the federal Model Cities program, which had committed \$25,000 to build sewer lines into Old Pascua and another \$100,000 to light the streets. The building consists of two components: the capilla proper, which is a single, large room open to the east, and the guardia, a smaller open-fronted room immediately to the north. The capilla has a poured concrete floor covered with vinyl asbestos tiles; the guardia has a dirt floor.

The open-fronted capilla has a rectangular entry portal, 20 feet across, centered in the east wall of the capilla proper. This main opening is flanked by two smaller arched portals, each 4 feet wide. These are all open to the outside; that is there are no doors. For security purposes, these openings can all be closed with sliding metal gates painted blue. On its east side the capilla has a curved pediment, rising toward the center above the built-up roof and topped by a large black-painted metal cross. At its highest point, the façade rises to a height of about 17 feet, with the central cross rising to about 25 feet. Two bell towers, each about 22 feet tall, are incorporated into the front of the building, located at the north and south ends of the capilla proper (Photo 5). Each contains a single, large bell. Each tower is topped by a small, black-painted metal cross with decorative filigrees. On the exterior front wall, above the main portal are four, evenly spaced decorative elements of white-painted metal filigrees that serve as flag holders. During the Easter Ceremony they hold the United States flag, the Arizona state flag, the Mexican flag, and the Yaqui flag. Centered above the main portal is a small niche containing a plaster statue of San Ignacio.

The ceiling of the capilla is relatively low and is covered with white sheets of acoustical tiles. In the ceiling are 10 panels of fluorescent lights, flush with the ceiling, arranged in three rows. There are two interior doors: one near the center of the south wall opening into the children's facility and one at the west end of the north wall opening into the guardia. There are no windows or other wall openings except for three small vents in the north wall.

The interior is furnished simply with two rows of wooden benches serving as pews and facing a large altar. The altar consists of a bare wooden table about nine feet in length, covered with cloth. The color of the cloth changes, depending on the ceremony. On the altar are crucifixes, statues of Mary, Jesus, and San Ignacio as well as *limosna* (donation) bowls and many candles. On the wall behind the altar is a large crucifix; also on the walls are numerous religious paintings (Photo 6).

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The guardia is a simple, open room with a low roof sloping down slightly toward the north; it measures 17 feet 3 inches north-south and 40 feet 6 inches east-west. It is divided into a western part and an eastern part by a white-painted concrete block wall with a double door in its center. When the doors are closed the western part becomes an enclosed room that is used for the storage of ceremonial regalia. At the roof's highest point, on its south end where it abuts the capilla proper, it is about 11 feet high. The large opening on the east side facing the plaza is 13 feet 9 inches across. The guardia has no windows; it can be accessed by a door in the north wall of the capilla (Photos 7 and 8).

- Community Kitchen (Bldg. No. 1): The kitchen was built slightly earlier than the current capilla. According to Arcadio Gastelum, President, San Ignacio Village Council, the current kitchen was already under construction at the time the construction of the fourth capilla began in late 1970. At present, the kitchen is the center portion of a long building, separated into three distinct portions by two breezeways and located on the south side of the plaza. All parts of this long building are constructed of concrete block and have a flat wood roof. The eastern part houses the fiesta ramada and the western part houses concession stands (both discussed below). The walls of the kitchen and the concession stands are covered with stucco painted white while the fiesta ramada has no stucco. The entire building has a flat wood roof supported by open beams laid north-south. The beams and the underside of the roof that extends out from the building on the north side are painted blue.

The kitchen consists of two parts: an enclosed room on the west and an open-fronted room on the east (Photo 9). The enclosed room, which is entered by a double door in its north wall, is divided into an eating area and an area containing the kitchen facilities. It measures 30 feet 3 inches north-south and 45 feet 4 inches east-west. This room has a concrete floor covered with vinyl asbestos tiles and has windows on its south side. It also has a door on the south side opening into Calle Matus. There are murals on the outside of the kitchen's south and west walls (Photos 10 and 11). To the east is an open-fronted room that is considered to be the outdoor portion of the kitchen. It contains large-scale barbecue equipment that is permanently installed. It has no north wall but is open to the plaza; the south wall rises only to a height of 5 feet with chain link fencing rising above the wall about another 3 feet. The north-south dimension of this open room is the same as the enclosed portion of the kitchen; the east-west dimension is 13 feet 3 inches. This open room has a dirt floor.

Adjacent to the north wall of the kitchen is a large woodpile used for ceremonial fires in the plaza. It is surrounded by a tall chain-link fence painted blue (Photo 9).

- Fiesta Ramada/Dancing Ramada (part of Bldg. No. 1): The fiesta ramada was built about 1971. According to Arcadio Gastelum, President, San Ignacio Yaqui Council, it was built slightly later than

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the kitchen and at the same time as the concession stands. It is directly east of the kitchen and separated from it by an 8-foot-wide, dirt-floored breezeway. It is also built of concrete block but is not stuccoed; instead the concrete block itself is painted white. It is also an open-fronted building measuring 28 feet north-south and 30 feet east-west. It has a dirt floor and, when not in use, is closed across the front (the north side) with a 4-foot-tall chain link fence (Photo 12). The ramada was slightly expanded to its current configuration in 2000. At that time a breezeway was added between the ramada and the kitchen, and the ramada itself was enlarged to the east, making the dancing area bigger.

Noncontributing Elements

Four buildings, a component of a fifth, and an outdoor sculpture are considered noncontributing structures to this nomination. The oldest of these, the concession stands, were built in about 1971, while the others were constructed between 1978 and about 2000. Unfortunately, all the construction dates are not known precisely, but it is clear that none of these structures exceeds 50 years in age. More importantly, the functions of the buildings are not related in any important way to the cultural and religious activities for which the plaza is being nominated. The sculpture is aesthetically pleasing and is an important symbol of Yaqui heritage, but also does not play a role in the cultural and religious activities that occur on the plaza.

All of these buildings are similar in construction in that they are one-story and constructed of concrete block. All have concrete floors. All except the concession stands have built-up roofs. The concession stands, as noted above, are roofed with a flat wood roof supported by open beams and painted blue on the underside. The buildings and the sculpture are described very briefly below in the order they were constructed.

1. Concession Stands (part of Bldg. No. 1): The concession stands are the western end of the long building that also includes the community kitchen and the fiesta ramada. They are west of the community kitchen, separated from it by a covered breezeway that is 8 feet wide. The building measures 16 feet 1 inch north-south and 75 feet 3 inches east-west. Like the kitchen, this building is constructed of concrete blocks covered with white stucco. The building consists primarily of six small rooms or booths, each with a door on the south side that opens onto Calle Matus (Photo 13). On the north side, facing the plaza, each booth has a wooden upper wall, some of which can be opened (Photo 14). On the east end of this building are bathrooms. A covered portico extends 8 feet 4 inches out from the front (north side) of the building. The stands are separated from the kitchen by a concrete-floored breezeway that is 15 feet 8 inches across. A mural, painted by children, is on the outside of the west wall; it is entitled "Our Yaqui Culture" and dated 1998 (Photo 15).
2. Children's Recreation (Bldg. No. 2): According to Luis Lara, Supervisor, Capital Planning, City of Tucson, this building was built in 1978, to house the children's social service programs. It abuts the

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south end of the capilla and measures 40 feet 2 inches north-south by 40 feet 6 inches east-west (Photos 16 and 17). It has two doors, one on the east side opening into the plaza and one on the south side. The interior is divided into three rooms; on the north wall of the main room is a door opening into the church interior. The only windows are on the south and west walls. A small children's playground occupies the southwest corner of the plaza property between the children's building and the concession stands.

- Administration (Bldg. No. 3): This building houses the administrative offices for Pascua Neighborhood Center and, according to Luis Lara, Supervisor, Capital Planning, City of Tucson, was also built in 1978. Construction drawings for this building are dated 12 May 1978. The building basically consists of one large room in the central and western part of the building and a second room on the east end. A small bathroom is in the northwest corner of the east room. The front of the building faces south into the plaza and has a narrow, covered portico with two doors, one opening into the main room and one opening into the east room. There are windows on the north and south sides. The building measures 22 feet north-south and 50 feet 8 inches east-west (Photos 18 and 19).
- Multipurpose Building (Bldg. No. 4): This building, in the southeast part of the plaza, was built in 1986 according to Luis Lara, Supervisor, Capital Planning, City of Tucson. It measures 47 ½ feet north-south by 93 ½ feet east-west. The building has a north-facing entrance on its northwest corner with doors opening out onto a triangular-shaped covered portico. There are windows on the north and east sides (Photo 20). On the east end of the north side is a large loading door. The windows are covered with metal security grates painted blue and the loading door is painted blue. The portico is enclosed by masonry pillars and is also secured by blue-painted metal gates (Photo 21). The building's interior is primarily a single large room, but also has a kitchen and bathroom along the south wall and a storage room on the east wall. Brick pavers cover the floor of the portico and extend outward from the west and north sides of the building. The eastern portion of the south wall is enclosed by a stuccoed, concrete block wall about 7 feet tall. There are three doors in the south wall of the building.
- Sculpture: An elaborate and highly symbolic outdoor sculpture stands on the north edge of the plaza, near its center. It consists of concrete columns that support metal beams. The columns are either painted or covered with colorful mosaic tiles. The sculpture was a result of the 1994 Christmas In April project. Called "The Old Pascua Gateway," the sculpture was designed by students from the University of Arizona College of Architecture, under the direction of Dean Robert Hershberger, in collaboration with the San Ignacio Yaqui Council. The "Gateway" was constructed on 16 April 1994 by members of the community and Pima Community College. It serves as an identifier of historic Old Pascua and symbolizes and honors the essence of the Yaqui people (Photo 22).

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The tree at the center of the sculpture symbolizes the Prophecy of the Talking Tree. The metal beams located above the columns represent both the branches of this tree and the rays of the sun, with the columns acting as symbols of each of the five Enchanted Yoeme Worlds: Wilderness World, Flower World, Enchanted World, Night World, and Dream World.

6. Public Bathroom (Bldg. No. 5): Immediately to the west of the administration building is a small public bathroom. According to Avertano Olivas of the Pascua Neighborhood Center staff, it was built around 2000. It is a freestanding building separated by a distance of 5 feet from the administration building and measuring 22 feet north-south and 24 feet east-west. The building opens to the south with a covered portico leading into the men's and women's facilities; the opening can be closed with blue-painted metal gates. The building has no windows (Photo 23).

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No. 8 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary Paragraph

Since 1921, when Pascua Village was officially established on what was then the northern outskirts of Tucson, the plaza, capilla, fiesta ramada, and kitchen have together been the focus of Yoeme traditional religious, cultural, and social events. The plaza qualifies for National Register status under Criterion A for its association with the traditional cultural practices of the Yoeme (Yaqui) people. The dances, processions, and other ceremonial activities that occur there are a critical part of Yoeme life and tradition. They are very significant in keeping Yoeme heritage alive; they serve to teach young tribal members of their unique past and their traditional way of life. In addition, they enrich the lives of all who view the ceremonies and in so doing learn about Yoeme culture. "Areas of Significance" include religion, social history, education, and Native American ethnic heritage. In addition to being significant as a "Site," the plaza and three Contributing buildings fit well into the definition of a Traditional Cultural Property where "significance is derived from the role the property plays in a community's historically rooted beliefs, customs, and practices" (*Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties*, National Register Bulletin, 1998, pg. 1).

Discussion of Significance

Among the Yoeme, as with many other non-Western cultures, the practice of religion, the furtherance of social lifeways, and the education of the young in cultural traditions are intertwined, and it is within the plaza that the majority of the activities occur that promote these components of culture. The paramount function of the plaza is as a religious/ceremonial location. The ceremonies that take place on the plaza are both pre-Christian and Christian in origin and are conducted to honor or bless events and/or persons, who may be Yoeme or non-Yoeme.

Ceremonial Overview

The Christian ceremonies stem from the teachings of the Jesuit Andrés Pérez de Ribas who entered Yoeme country in what is now southern Sonora in 1618. He and the missionaries who followed him taught Christianity by dramatizing events, including those of the Easter season. Over time these Christian dramatizations were combined with ancient traditions that centered on the connection of the Yoeme to the plant and animal world and to the spirit of the Earth. In that world man could communicate with animals, and special powers were inherent in the forest, in animals, and in dreams.

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Ceremonial fiestas occur throughout the year but there are four that are of the greatest importance; that is, the number of participants is large and virtually everyone in the village attends. These are (1) The Day of the Finding of the Holy Cross on May 3, (2) Name Day of St. Ignatius (San Ignacio) of Loyola on July 31, (3) Day of All Saints on November 1 and 2 and (4) Holy Week, or Easter, in March or April. Most Yoeme ceremonial events begin on a Friday evening and go through Sunday afternoon. The most complex event (Holy Week), however, which is generally referred to as the Easter Ceremony, is initiated on Ash Wednesday and continues through Easter Sunday. The Easter Ceremony, which in essence is an extraordinarily complicated pantomime of the death and resurrection of Jesus, includes both pre-Christian and Christian themes melded together in a way that is uniquely Yoeme. For example, two types of dancers, the Deer Dancers and the Pascolas (literally "old men of the fiesta") exemplify the pre-Christian traditions while others, such as Caballeros and Fariseos, represent Christian components of the Easter pageant. It is this ceremony by which the Yoeme are best defined to the non-Yoeme world that surrounds them, and it is within the plaza that most Easter Ceremony events occur, as well as those of the other ceremonial fiestas.

Preparations for the Easter Ceremony begin with the plaza being raked clean and the capilla being refurbished. During the lengthy and complex ceremony that follows, the plaza becomes, in essence, the stage for the dances, songs, sermons, mock battles, pantomimes, and costumed processions. Processions typically enter the plaza on its southeastern edge and exit at the northeast corner although some circle the ramada on the south edge of the plaza.

Perhaps the most dramatic procession occurs on the Saturday before Easter Sunday. In this procession the ceremonial *Chapayeka* society carries a straw figure of Judas through the plaza to be burned on the Judas Pyre, the area near the eastern edge of the plaza. With the burning of the Judas figure as well as the masks, swords, and other ritual paraphernalia that represent evil, the community is delivered from the powers of darkness and good triumphs. After the final events of Easter Sunday, the Easter altar in the capilla is dismantled and the plaza becomes, until the next ceremony, a plain dirt lot for parking cars, playing catch, and chatting on a picnic bench.

Significance of Portions of the Plaza

Although the plaza may appear as an undistinguished dirt lot to the uninitiated observer, to the Yoeme it is a location of paramount importance, containing objects and areas of special significance. As described in "No. 7, Narrative Description," the most obvious objects are the two crosses made of mesquite or cottonwood.

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The crosses serve as the entries to portions of the plaza considered to be holy areas as well as to the capilla. Persons must pay their respect at the crosses before entering the holy areas. The crosses are decorated with paper flowers for the Fiesta of the Holy Cross. Flowers play an important role in Yoeme ceremonialism, and according to Yoeme belief, provide year around protection against evil.

During ceremonial occasions, several locations within the plaza take on special importance. These are the portions of the plaza between the church cross and the capilla, and the fiesta cross and the fiesta ramada. At these special times, no spectators should enter these areas without reverence to the participants, each other and the ceremonies. These holy areas are locations where guardian angels descend and take prayers to heaven. The holy areas extend as far as the light of candles or lanterns reaches. Beyond the light evil lurks.

The small dirt mounds adjacent to the church cross and the fiesta cross and the Judas Pyre on the east end are also ritually significant.

In addition to the crosses, mounds, and the Judas Pyre, there are other locations within the plaza of special significance. However, these areas are not identified in any permanent physical sense, instead, they are primarily located only in the minds of the ceremonial participants. Two such areas, identified by impermanent lines of ash on the ground, are called "santo tebat" or holy ground. These are the portions of the plaza between the church cross and the capilla, and the fiesta cross and the fiesta ramada. During ceremonies no spectators should enter these areas without reverence to the participants, each other and the ceremonies. Also in this category is an area in the northwest corner of the plaza that is considered part of the open-fronted guardia. Here ceremonial participants, including young children who are just learning their ceremonial roles, spend the night on certain occasions. Finally, on Holy Saturday (the day before Easter Sunday) the central portion of the plaza becomes a mock battleground that is delineated with cottonwood sprigs. These are laid on the ground in two long lines a few feet inside the north and south boundaries of the plaza. The space inside becomes sacred ground, which non-participants are not allowed to enter.

Thus, the plaza is both culturally significant and sacred ground in an all-encompassing sense. It is the location at the heart of Yoeme life in Pascua Village where events occur that are integral components of centuries-old Yoeme cultural traditions.

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Significance of Contributing Elements

Criterion Consideration A

All buildings are currently owned by the City of Tucson on behalf of Pascua Village; none is owned by a religious institution. The capilla, fiesta ramada, and community kitchen are included here as Contributing Elements because as Spicer (1940:13) points out in *Pascua: A Yaqui Village in Arizona*, these “are the three buildings necessary to a Yaqui fiesta.” The capilla serves as an extension of the plaza. It is located in its traditional site at the east end of the plaza and it retains the basic architectural elements of all earlier capillas. It is in the capilla where blessings occur, the *maestro* (the lay spiritual leader) preaches, and the soldiers are housed. It is the most strictly religious of the three Contributing Structures but it is not a consecrated church.

The Capilla San Ignacio de Loyola might be described as the focal point of the plaza; it can be thought of as being the village altar with the entire plaza taking on the larger role of a “church” where participants gather to participate in the traditional events that bind the community together. The capilla’s role is one imbued with age-old practices that have amalgamated the Christian and traditional worldview.

The first thing a ceremonial participant does upon entering the plaza is to go to the cruz mayor, make the sign of the cross, then enter the capilla, kneel at the altar, and ask for blessing. It is within the capilla where the holy figures reside, and where prayers are sent heavenward. Also, it is within the capilla that all ceremonial business is discussed.

The portion of the capilla referred to as the guardia (guardhouse or barracks) also continues to fulfill its traditional role, described earlier, even though earlier guardias consisted of temporary structures. The guardia houses all religious paraphernalia for the *tropa* (the soldiers or Fariseos). All ceremonial business of the *tropa* is conducted inside the guardia and during ceremonial events the members sleep inside and immediately adjacent.

The fiesta ramada, which contains both an altar and a location for traditional dances, fulfills roles both as a Christian and a pre-Christian site. Functioning almost like a small capilla, the fiesta ramada is the location where certain important parts of the ceremonial ritual occur, with the most well-known players being the deer dancers and *pascola*. The ramada, especially the portion where the deer dancers dance, is thought of as belonging to the “forest world.” The pascolas are also part of the Yoeme homeland — a place “in which man and animals could communicate and could come to common understanding” (Painter 1986:411).

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The role of the kitchen is less overtly religious but serves as the place for communal food preparation, an important part of the ceremonial tradition. The kitchen fulfills a traditional function of promoting community cohesion by providing a place where members of the community and visitors gather to prepare food and eat during events. This is especially important during Lenten Season when participants may stay overnight to be involved in overnight fiestas or for several days. In addition, visitors come from other communities, and all need to be fed.

Criterion Consideration G

As was discussed in “No. 7 Narrative Description,” earlier versions of all these buildings were first built at this site in 1921-22. The earlier buildings were made of simpler materials: in the case of the capilla, the first was of discarded railroad ties, the second of adobe, and the third of scrap lumber and plywood. The earlier kitchens and fiesta ramadas were apparently also of scrap materials. All the earlier buildings stood in very nearly the same locations as the current buildings and all served the same functions as they do at present.

Even though the three buildings are considered as “contributing” to the purposes for which the plaza is being nominated, they play a secondary role to the plaza itself. The capilla and fiesta ramada serve as ceremonial extensions of the plaza while the kitchen plays a community role. The age of these buildings is much less significant than their function in Pascua ceremony.

Significance to the General Public

The ceremonial events that occur on the Pascua Cultural Plaza have attracted the interest of the general public, especially within the Tucson community, virtually since they began at this location in the early 1920s. As early as 1927, the Tucson Chamber of Commerce produced a brochure entitled *Yaqui Indian Dances* summarizing the Easter Ceremony and including an invitation to attend from Francisco Matus, *Jefe de los Yaquis, Barrio Pascua* (chief of the Yaquis, Pascua Community) (Additional Document 3).

Interest has not lessened over time. An article by *Tucson Daily Citizen* columnist, Don Schellie, dated 20 March 1970, juxtaposes “The Ageless Sounds of Pascua Village” with the modern world. He speaks of the

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ancient sounds—the flute, drum, and clatter of wooden swords and knives, noting that “they are sounds of another age that reach through time to soften the grinding, harsh noises of the world today” (Additional Document 4).

From the 1920s to the present, the Yoeme have graciously allowed public attendance but at the same time have prohibited photographs, sketches, and recordings. Their traditional ceremonial events continue to attract large crowds, an endorsement of the multicultural heritage of Tucson and southern Arizona.

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Arcadio Gastelum, President, San Ignacio Yaqui Council

Peter Acuña, youth representative, San Ignacio Yaqui Council

Emilio Caiz, employed by San Ignacio Yaqui Council

Marcelina Tapia Flores, born in Pascua Village in 1927

Marcelino Flores, planner, Pascua Yaqui Tribe

Maria Mendoza, born in 1937 in Pascua Village, representing the community

Roberto Rios, Director, Development Services Division, Pascua Yaqui Tribe

Rebecca Tapia, Supervisor, Pascua Neighborhood Center

Francisco Valencia, born in Pascua Village, *capitan of the tropa* (captain of the soldiers) for Pascua Village

Juan Valencia, elder, San Ignacio Yaqui Council

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No. 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The plaza is bordered on the north by Sahuaro Street, on the west by Olivas Lane, on the south by Calle Matus, and on the east by private residences. The only access into the plaza for motorized vehicles is located at the northeast and southeast corners and empties into Sahuaro Street and Calle Matus. On the east the plaza is bordered by two private residences and their yards, separated from each other by a public easement, approximately 15 feet wide, which allows pedestrian access to the east side of the plaza. Calle Central, a north-south street, abuts the plaza just east of its center on its southern edge, but does not continue through the plaza itself. The nearest major thoroughfare is Grant Road, which runs east-west one block north of the plaza. The plaza measures 190 feet north-south by 390 feet east-west.

Boundary Justification

The boundary for this nomination includes not only the plaza itself but also the structures on the south, west, and north sides of the plaza. (These are discussed in "No. 7 Narrative Description.") Thus, both Contributing and Noncontributing structures are included. This has been done for two reasons:

- (1) To include as Contributing Structures those buildings that add to the cultural and historical value of the site, and
- (2) To include in the nomination the ground under the Noncontributing Structures, thus providing some protection to the integrity of the plaza as a whole if and when the Noncontributing Structures are demolished.

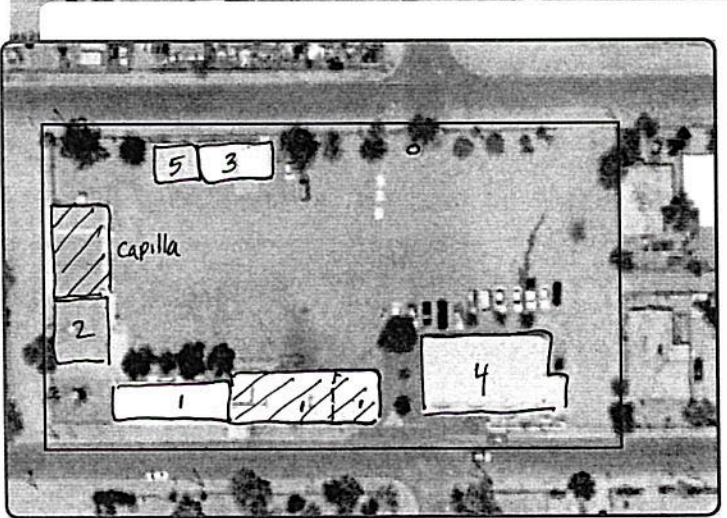
In addition, as was noted in "No. 7 Narrative Description," the entire plaza is being nominated, including what used to be Calle Central and six residential lots at the plaza's eastern edge. This is being done because these areas have long been considered part of the plaza and have been used for the same ceremonial purposes as the land originally designated as the plaza.

map 2.


Pascua Cultural Plaza - Pascua Village

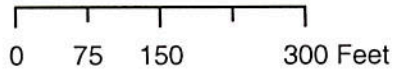
785 West Sahuaro

Tucson Arizona



 Contributor

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