Welcome to the
Downtown Tempe Walk Through History

Tours will focus on the original Tempe town site and will include descriptions of the development of the community within the broad patterns of state growth and development. Centennial information will also be distributed at the event.

Hayden Butte and Town Lake Tour

Walk around the base of A Mountain (Hayden/Tempe Butte), hear details about the Hayden Flour Mill and its renovations, receive information about the Mill Avenue Bridge and visit the remains of the Ash Avenue Bridge abutment at Tempe Beach Park. This tour is just over a mile and involves some dirt paths.
Tempe Bakery - Hackett House
401 – 405 West 4th Street
This building is the oldest fired brick building in Tempe, and perhaps possesses the most original integrity of any territorial commercial building in Maricopa County. It has a majority of the original material remaining from the time of its construction, dating to the territorial period. THPR 3

Tempe Depot (Macayo’s)
300 South Ash Avenue
Depot Cantina was constructed by the Arizona & Eastern Railroad companies in 1924 to replace the former station which had been destroyed by fire. The railroad and its holdings, including the depot, were purchased by Southern Pacific in 1925. By the 1970s, passenger rail traffic had been discontinued and the depot sat vacant. The City of Tempe acquired the property and offered it for redevelopment.

Olde Towne Square
120 – 180 South Ash Avenue
This unusual project combines new office, meeting, and display space with offices in reconstructed historic structures. Five historic-era houses were disassembled, moved and reconstructed for modern office use, then combined with a new two-story office building and arranged around a public square. The square aspires to “turn-of-the-century” ambience, featuring “gas lamps”, a Victorian-style gazebo, brick pavers, ornamental ironwork and mature trees.

Gonzales/Martinez House
302 West 1st Street
Built in 1880 by Ramon Gonzales, the house is one of only three remaining structures associated with the first ten years of Tempe's history. Jesus Martinez acquired the property in 1892. The property has remained in family ownership for the last 90 years. The building is a rare local example of a house type illustrative of the early life style and settlement era.

1912 Railroad Bridge
Salt River and Ash Avenue
The Salt River Union Pacific Bridge is significant not only because of its age and size, but also because of its durability in the face of heavy flooding, which destroyed three previous bridges in this location. It is on the site of the earliest railroad crossing of the Salt River. The present bridge was built in 1912 on the old 1905 piers. This structure has dependably served the railroad for 100 years.

Ash Avenue Bridge Abutment
180 West Rio Salado Parkway
The abutment is all that remains of the Ash Avenue Bridge. The Ash Avenue Bridge was the first major highway bridge to cross the Salt River. It provided Tempe and Mesa with the first dependable crossing to Phoenix for wagons and automobiles. After its construction, it was severely damaged by a flood of the Salt River. This event led to the construction of the Mill Avenue Bridge. THPR 12
In 1927, a band stand was erected using cobblestones. In 1934, the Tempe Beach committee, headed by Garfield Goodwin, began construction of a cobblestone wall around the entire park and the development of the stadium bleachers. This use of cobblestones is unique and once extended to all of the park structures. With construction of a new swimming pool in the 1960s, much of this cobblestone work was lost. *THPR 12*

Tempe Beach Park has been the main gathering place for Valley residents and visitors since its development in the early 1920s. At its earliest stages, the major attraction at Tempe Beach Park was Arizona’s first Olympic-sized pool, built in 1923. Even through the dark days of the Great Depression, Tempe Beach Park remained the Valley’s most popular recreational venue, expanding to include a baseball diamond, a cobblestone bathhouse and bleachers. *THPR 8*

This residence was originally built for Charles Trumbull Hayden and his family. Over a series of additions, many more rooms were added to the building to transform it into a boarding house for travelers coming to Tempe. It was restored in 1924 and was opened as a restaurant, which was named La Casa Vieja (The Old House). *THPR 11*

The Hayden Flour Mill is significant as the oldest continuously-used industrial site in the Salt River Valley, for its association with the Charles Trumbull Hayden family, who founded and operated the mill for three generations, and as the most important community industry through the settlement and development periods of Tempe’s history. The Hayden Flour Mill was the larger of the only two operating mills in the state in the 1980s, but was closed permanently in March 1998. *THPR 34*

The Tempe (Old Mill Avenue) Bridge is among the oldest automobile crossings on the Salt River in the Phoenix metropolitan area, and has been in continuous use since its completion in 1931. It was the major transportation link in three transcontinental highways (U.S. Routes 60, 70, and 80) and Arizona’s only north-south route, U.S. Route 89, until the freeway system was begun in the 1950s. *THPR 8*

Hayden Butte Preserve is a valuable recreational venue that includes Sonoran desert vegetation, wildlife, rock outcrops, and archaeological, paleontological and historical resources. The butte itself accommodates many uses and features while still maintaining its overall historic character and identity, much as it has through many different cultural periods. *THPR 34*