

Cultural and Historic Resource Acquisitions



Reconstruction work at Fort Lowell - Photo by Cultural Resources Office staff.

Fort Lowell

Site: 5.2 Acres

Acquired: 2006

Cost: \$3,000,000 (with \$500,000 for San Pedro Chapel)

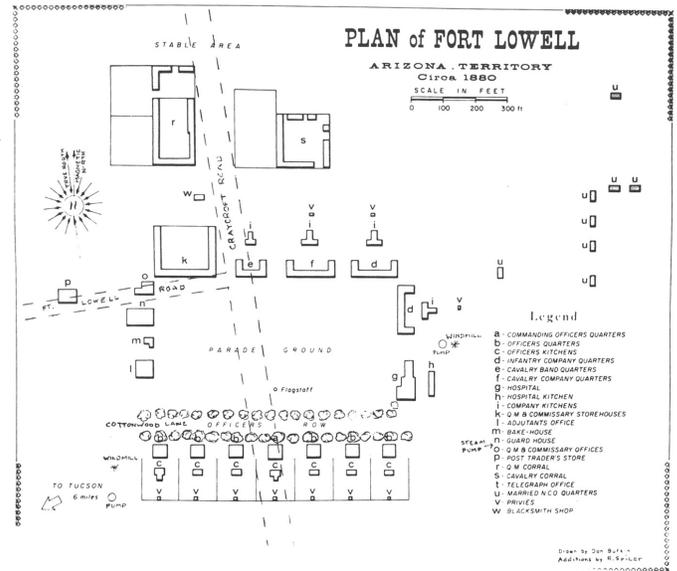
Fund: 2004 Bond Funds

Background

The intent of the acquisition was to use \$2.5 million of bond funding to purchase 5.2 acres (comprising the “Adkins Parcel”), and to incorporate them into the adjacent City of Tucson-owned Fort Lowell Park. The acquisition represented the last significant portion of the historic Fort Lowell still in private ownership, which, including more recent structures, contained three 1873 Officers’ Quarters buildings, one of which was relatively intact.

The Adkins Parcel acquisition process took an unexpected turn during negotiations, and in a unique three-way deal, a private developer purchased the Adkins property from its owner, then swapped the property to the City of Tucson in exchange for a City-owned property. An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the City of Tucson and Pima County provided for County participation in the project and included provision for the County to reimburse the City in the amount of \$400,000 of bond money toward archaeological data recovery on the developer’s new parcel. The City benefitted by receiving the Adkins Property through the land swap, while the County used only a portion of the bond funds to contribute to the acquisition. In exchange for the reimbursement, the City conveyed a Conservation Easement on the Adkins Property to the County, giving the County a real property interest that allowed expenditure of bond funds for planning and preservation.

After the San Pedro Chapel rehabilitation, \$2.1 million remained from the bond funds to be applied toward (1) planning for the entire Fort Lowell Park, and (2) preservation and rehabilitation of selected buildings on the Adkins Parcel.



Map showing layout of Fort Lowell circa 1880 (image adapted from Desert Archaeology, Inc., Technical Report No. 2009-02, May 7, 2009, Figure 7).

History

The U.S. Army moved Camp Lowell from Tucson to its current location in 1873. Renamed Fort Lowell in 1879, it was abandoned in 1891 following the end of the Apache campaigns. Many of the buildings fell into disrepair, and portions of the fort were sold-off. The Adkins family acquired a large portion of the fort in 1928, (the “Adkins Parcels”) and developed a business on the site where steel tanks were manufactured. The Adkins family handed over the site to the City of Tucson in the fall of 2006.

Together the City of Tucson and Pima County produced a Master Plan (2009) encompassing the entire Fort Lowell Park, followed by a Preservation Plan (2009) for the Adkins Parcel that represents the first phase of implementation of the Master Plan.



Proposed Officers Quarters showing stabilizing structure that defines and protects original building (from the Preservation Plan Adkins Parcel.)

Natural and Cultural Resources

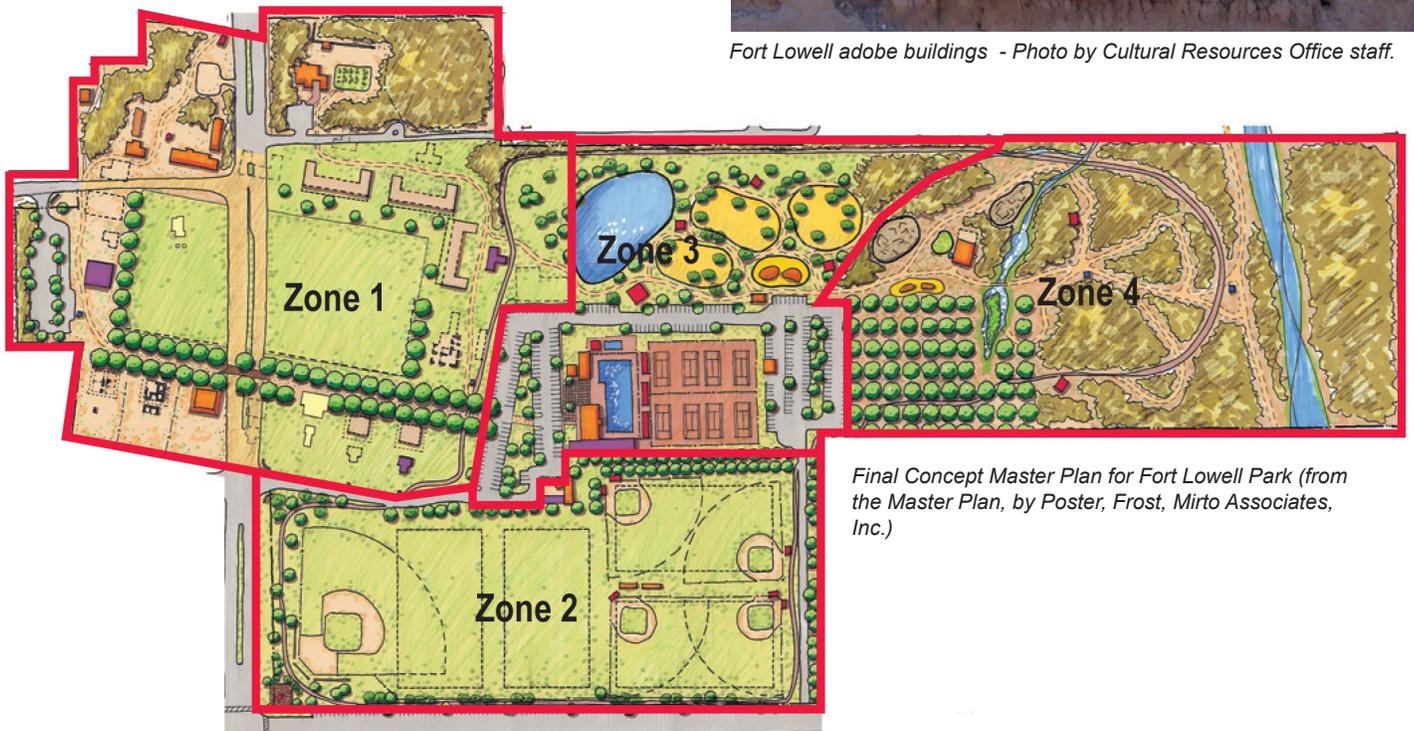
The Fort Lowell Park and vicinity is rich in both natural and archaeological resources. The best description of the entire Fort Lowell Park area is one of complex “layering”. Fort Lowell is situated on a rich archaeological prehistoric site, the “Hardy Site”, where extensive evidence of the former occupants has been discovered. The site was historically popular due to its proximity to the confluence of the Pantano Wash and the Tanque Verde Wash. The eastern portion of the park incorporates the Pantano Wash, where the land edges down into a riparian area. Twentieth century farming brought in orchards and other vegetation. Once a contiguous area, 20th century road development divided the fort into busy sections, creating challenges for wildlife and pedestrians alike.

Long Term Goals

The well-received Fort Lowell Park Master Plan has opted to create four distinct, yet integrated “zones” that organize the park into different uses as follows: Zone 1 - Fort Lowell Historic (which incorporates the Adkins Parcel and former Parade Ground), Zone 2 – Organized Sports Fields, Zone 3 - Swimming Tennis and Active Recreation, and Zone 4 – Pantano Wash Natural Area and Native American Interpretation.



Fort Lowell adobe buildings - Photo by Cultural Resources Office staff.



Final Concept Master Plan for Fort Lowell Park (from the Master Plan, by Poster, Frost, Mirto Associates, Inc.)