

201

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 an item does not apply to the property being nominated, 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 Snowflake Townsite Historic District

other name/site number Snow Flake

2. Location

street & number: Portion of 18 blocks west of Stinson and south of 4<sup>th</sup> St. North  not for publication  
city/town: Snowflake  vicinity  
state: Arizona code: AZ county: Navajo code: 017 zip code: 85937

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments).

James W. Stinson ASHPD 2/20/98  
Signature of certifying official Date

ARIZONA STATE PARKS  
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

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): \_\_\_\_\_

2 Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
[Signature] 3/24/98

**Property Name**  
Name of Property

Snowflake Townsite Historic District

**County, Arizona**  
County and State

Navajo, Az

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property Category of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building (s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
43	44	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

6

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Residence

Commercial

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Residence

Commercial

Not in use/ Vacant

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

National Folk

Bungalow

Gothic Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

Concrete

walls

Brick

roof

Asphalt shingles

other

Cut stone

**Narrative Description**

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

**Property Name**  
Name of Property

Snowflake Townsite Historic District

**County, Arizona**  
County and State

Navajo, Az

**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.

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1873-1947

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1878

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**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

Name of Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Property Name**  
Name of Property

Snowflake Townsite Historic District

**County, Arizona**  
County and State

Navajo, Az

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Approx. 35.5

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	<u>12</u>	<u>584775</u>	<u>3819335</u>	3	<u>12</u>	<u>584265</u>	<u>3818470</u>
2	<u>12</u>	<u>584770</u>	<u>3818485</u>	4	<u>12</u>	<u>584360</u>	<u>3818865</u>

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 Robert Graham, Senior Architect

organization Alliance Architects, L.L.C. date September 1997

street & number 2601 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street #308 telephone (602) 274-9777

city or town Phoenix state: AZ zip code 85004

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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 time for reviewing instruction, 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   7   Page 1

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

**SUMMARY**

The Snowflake Townsite Historic District is found within the rural town of Snowflake in east-central Arizona. It is comprised of a central core area within the larger 20 block area of the original townsite. Snowflake was founded in 1873 and experienced a continuous level of development through 1947, establishing the period of significance. The district contains residential and commercial buildings of various styles reflecting the historic appearance and development patterns prevalent in Snowflake and other Mormon-settled towns of the region. The town has two different characteristics as represented in the historic district. The residential portion is a low-density development with many rural qualities and features. The commercial area of Main Street is a high-density development with more of a "city" atmosphere. Although the district has suffered some intrusion of modern development, the rural landscape elements, block plan and visual dominance of historic buildings unify its appearance. The area within the district retains much of its original character whereas other areas outside the district have been developed or altered or have a lesser density of historic buildings.

**DESCRIPTION**

Snowflake and its sister town, Taylor, are in a narrow valley along Silver Creek, hemmed by mesas and surrounded by rolling hills, 3 miles north of the northern boundary of the Sitgreaves National Forest and thirty miles south of the Santa Fe Railway's main line across northern Arizona.

Snowflake is laid out in the typical "City of Zion" pattern as followed in many Mormon-settled communities with large square blocks and wide streets that form a north/south and east/west grid pattern. There were twenty blocks in the original townsite each containing 4 lots 198 feet on a side with streets 99 feet wide or half the width of a lot. Originally the east/west streets had names corresponding to town settlers. They are currently numbered consecutively and designated north or south depending on their relationship to Center (for example 1<sup>st</sup> Street North or 1<sup>st</sup> Street South.) The north/south streets are named Stinson, Main, Miller, Hulet, and West. This central 20 block area of town was designated the urban core and sold as "city" lots; this gave a more urban character than the typical Arizona Mormon colony. The original quarter-block lots were eventually subdivided into smaller units and modern homes and businesses were built. As a result major historic buildings tend to be located on corners, with more modern infill between.

As a whole, the district includes the finest residences and the commercial area of the town. The district grew around the Mormon church which occupies a central block on the west side of Main Street. Dominant contributing properties within the district on Main Street include the Mormon Church [S-69] (#9) and the John A. Freeman [S-67] (#11) home on the northwest corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street North and Main Street. The Freeman house is placed on a large lot to the north of the church. Stone construction, balustraded porch and its pointed arches typify the Gothic Revival style. The church, built in 1938 and altered in 1943, is centrally placed with a vast lawn facing Center and Main Streets with parking off of Miller. This large grassy area gives Main Street an open, almost park like feeling between Center Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Street North. This two story Colonial Revival style

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   7   Page   2  

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

church is ornamented with stonework details and keystones above doors and windows. Its gable roof is intersected with gables at the entry dormer. Although there are other commercial and residential properties on Main Street, portions of Main Street particularly outside the district boundary have suffered intrusions of modern development.

Although Main Street is the primary location of the district's commercial buildings another small commercial area exists on the southwest corner of Center and Miller, also located near the church. The only contributing property of the two historic commercial buildings on the block is the historic Bushman store [S-10] (#7). This structure was produced of locally-made concrete blocks in 1914 when merchant Homer F. Bushman moved to Snowflake from St. Joseph.

Many significant historic buildings are located on the blocks encompassing the Church. On the southeast corner of Center and Miller is a pre-railroad folk style log cabin [S-1] built c. 1900 and measuring 15' by 12'. Log homes were among the first type of wood structures built in Snowflake prior to the availability of cut lumber.

A property once associated with the church and in proximity to it is the historic Tithing Office [S-107] (#6). Built c. 1892 in the Greek Revival style, this current residence is located on the northwest corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street North and Miller. Also in this area is an excellent example of Georgian Colonial Revival, the Jesse Smith House [S-7] (#2). On the southwest corner of Center and Hulet and made from locally provided brick this property displays ornate eave moldings with columns and wood work at the porch. The Jessie Smith House is now a Museum.

Residential properties surround the Church on the north, west and south. Away from Main Street, the district has a rural-residential character. Although the district has suffered some intrusion of modern development, the rural landscaping elements of the streetscape unify its appearance. With mature trees and manicured landscape the district is carried through these areas of recent development.

East of Main Street along Stinson, many significant properties are located. At the southeast corner of the district is placed the two story Baird House [S-39] (#21). This home was built by Joseph Ramsay c. 1895 and is in the Greek Revival style. Made of red brick with polychrome and projected brick details, this property is an intact example of a once-common house type in Snowflake. The focus at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street North and Stinson is the Stinson/Flake Ranch [S-52] (#16). Built in 1875, this Greek Revival property is an example of early use of adobe when other materials were not yet available. At the north end of that same block is the James M. Flake House [S-53] (#15). The three story house is an outstanding local example of the Second Empire style. The property's exterior decoration alludes to the agrarian nature of the community through the use of carved horse's heads and numerous appearances of a horseshoe motif in the exterior brickwork.

The east side of Stinson has an agricultural association. The land to the east of these homes are open fields which maintain a rural atmosphere helping to define the eastern boundary of the district. At one time these were farms with significant acreage separating the properties. As lots were split and developed, modern construction advanced. These homes are not as refined as the properties across the street. A National Folk-

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   7   Page 3

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

Pyramidal Roof house and three Bungalows (#20) are contributing properties to the district on the east side of Stinson.

Characteristically associated with the east side of Stinson is the farm and field that borders the north side of the district (#14). This agricultural area on the northeast corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street North and Main Street contains a farmhouse, barn and field. At one time this space functioned as a farm, relating it historically to the settlement of Snowflake.

Several blocks southwest of the church are the present school facilities. Miller has been closed south of 1<sup>st</sup> Street South making room for game fields and the school campus. Although the school is not part of the district, its openness impacts the environment. The two contributors to this area of the district are the Stake Academy [S-32] and the Fish building [S-33] (#1). Placed in the 200 block of south Hulet, both are represented in neoclassical style with dark red sandstone sheathing. The two story Stake Academy has Ionic columns at the raised central entry and stone arches and lintels over window openings. The Fish building, constructed between 1936 and 1938 has PWA modern influence with sandstone quoining at corners. These buildings are important to the Snowflake historic district because of they represent the significance of education in the community.

The general character of the district cannot be typified by a single property. National Folk, Greek Revival, Victorian Eclectic and Bungalow variants are the principal historic styles. The typical streetscape, however, can be characterized. The placement of properties in the district are haphazard, reinforcing no particular facade lines or organizational pattern. Agricultural outbuildings abound, as do fences of various materials. Open fields, gardens and orchards are also important recurring elements.

The integrity of most of the contributing properties in the district is high. Alterations, while they occur, are generally limited to small additions, new roofing materials and window replacements. Noncontributing properties include both modern properties and altered historic properties. Modern homes vary from ranch houses of the 1950s to modern "builder's vernacular" homes and permanently-fixed mobile units. Although there seems to be many properties that are not eligible included in the district, the majority of the noncontributing homes are substantially similar to the historic homes in the area. These properties are placed randomly on the lot not enforcing any particular pattern or consistency. In most cases, the landscape and overall character of the non-contributing property adds to the historic atmosphere of the district.

The area within the district has not been surveyed for archaeological resources. There is no basis at this time for evaluating the likelihood of the existence of significant archaeological resources within the district. None are known to exist.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

Section Number 7 Page 4

**CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES**

Survey Site Number	Address	Approx. Construction Date	Description
S-1	SE corner Center & Miller	c. 1900	Log house- Pre-railroad Folk
S-2	2 <sup>nd</sup> lot W. of Main/ S. on Center	c. 1925	Bungalow
S-3	14 W. Center	c. 1915	Bungalow
S-6	128 W. Center	c. 1912	Neoclassical- Janet Smith Residence
S-7	SW corner of Center and Hulet	c. 1906	Colonial Revival- Jesse Smith Residence
S-8	129 W. Center	c. 1918	Bungalow- F.W. Ericksen Residence
S-9	111 W. Center	c. 1920	Bungalow
S-10	36 S. Miller	c. 1914	Commercial- Bushman Store
S-11	00 block S. Miller	c. 1915	Commercial- Herald Building
S-14	18 N. Miller	c. 1920	Bungalow
S-16	SWC 1 <sup>st</sup> St. N/Miller	c. 1915	Bungalow
S-27	NWC Stinson & 1 <sup>st</sup> St. South	1883-86	Greek Revival- John R. Hulet Residence
S-29	61 S. Hulet	c. 1930	Tudor revival
S-30	130 S. Hulet	c. 1915	Bungalow
S-31	51 S. Hulet	c. 1890	Victorian Eclectic
S-32	SWC Hulet & 1 <sup>st</sup> St. South	c. 1913	Neoclassical- Stake Academy
S-33	200 Block S. Hulet	1936-8	Neoclassical/PWA influence- Fish building
S-39	80 E. 2 <sup>nd</sup> St. South	c. 1895	Greek revival- Baird House
S-40	260 S. Stinson	c. 1910	Neoclassical- Ellen O. Willis House
S-44	181 S. Stinson	c. 1910	National folk- pyramidal roof
S-45	151 S. Stinson	c. 1920	Bungalow
S-46	131 S. Stinson	c. 1920	Bungalow
S-47	82 E. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. South	1895	Victorian Eclectic- Nettie Rencher Home
S-48	10 S. Stinson	c. 1890	Victorian Eclectic
S-50	NWC Center/Stinson	1890	Greek Revival- Webb house
S-51	SWC Stinson/1 <sup>st</sup> St. North	c. 1900	National folk- front gable
S-52	102 N. Stinson	1878-80	Greek revival- Stinson/Flake ranch
S-53	SWC Stinson/2 <sup>nd</sup> St. North	1895	Victorian 2 <sup>nd</sup> Empire- James Flake house
S-54	187 N. Stinson	c. 1920	Bungalow influence
S-55	200 block N. Stinson	unknown	Vernacular
S-56	288 N. Stinson	c. 1915	Neoclassical influence
S-59	300 block N. Main St.	c. 1910	National folk -side gable



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number 7 Page 5

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

S-60	NEC Main St./ 3 <sup>rd</sup> St. North	c. 1930	Bungalow
S-61	221 N. Main St.	c. 1930	Bungalow
S-64	127 N. Main St.	1890	Greek revival- Osmer D. Flake house
S-67	NWC 1 <sup>st</sup> St. North/Main St.	1893	Gothic revival- John A. Freeman home
S-68	107 N. Main St.	c. 1910	Bungalow
S-69	48 N Main St.	1938/1943	Colonial revival-LDS church
S-70	15 S. Main St.	c. 1915	Bungalow
S-73	181 S. Main St.	c. 1910	Colonial revival
S-107	120 W. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. North	c. 1892	Greek revival- Tithing Office
S-110	77 W. 2 <sup>nd</sup> St. North	1889	Greek revival-Charles L. Flake house
No #	24 N. Stinson	c. 1915	Bungalow

**NONCONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES**

Survey Site Number	Address	Approx. Construction Date	Description
S-28	62 S. Hulet 30 S. Hulet 100 block S. Hulet 12 S. Miller	c. 1890	Victorian folk- August O. Smith house
S-15	40 N. Miller 56 N. Miller SWC Miller/Center	c. 1925	Bungalow  Current Tithing Office
S-108	80 W. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. North 141 N. Miller 157 N. Miller 38 S. Main St. 00 block N. Main St. 00 block N. Main St.	c. 1915	Bungalow
S-66	123 N. Main St. 153 N. Main St. 301-305 N. Main St. 309 N. Main St. 311 N. Main St. 327 N. Main St. 160 S. Stinson	1912	Commercial- Flake Bros. Store

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   7   Page 6

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

140 S. Stinson  
110 S Stinson  
00 block S. Stinson  
20-14 S. Stinson  
14 N. Stinson  
150 N. Stinson  
17 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. North  
30 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. N  
14 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. N  
12 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. N  
40 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St. N  
56 W. 1<sup>st</sup> St. N  
64 W. 1<sup>st</sup> St. N  
55 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St. N  
34 E. 1<sup>st</sup> St. N  
162 W. Center  
118 W. Center  
127 W. Center  
00 block W. Center  
10 E Center  
40 E. Center  
14 E. Center  
40 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. S  
44 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> St. S

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

## **National Register of Historic Places**

### **Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   8   Page   7  

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

#### **Narrative Statement of Significance**

##### **Summary**

The town of Snowflake as represented in the Snowflake Townsite Historic District is an excellent example of typical settlement patterns of Mormons in Arizona in the late 1800s and their continued prosperity in these settlements. Further, the district illustrates the pattern of growth and development in Snowflake and the strategies which allowed the community to survive difficult times. The district is significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for its relationship to the patterns of development and settlement of Mormon towns in eastern Arizona.

##### **Historical Overview**

The settlement of Snowflake can be divided into five periods. The first period encompasses the beginnings of the Mormon colonization movement in northeast Arizona to the establishment of the community of Snowflake. The second period includes the town's early development. The third period, 1910-1920, includes the years of prosperity. An agricultural depression and the Great Depression constitute the fourth period. The last period encompasses development since 1945.

##### **Mormon Settlement of Silver Creek and the Establishment of Snowflake: 1878**

The founding of Snowflake occurred in 1878 as part of the Mormon commitment to build an "intermediate pier" between Utah and a second Seat of Zion in the Sonora Valley of Mexico. The land bridge became a chain of colonies from Utah to southern Arizona. The history of Snowflake's founding is typical and illustrative of the Mormon settlement in Arizona.

James Pearce began the colonization process for the Silver Creek Valley when he answered the call from Mormon Apostle Erastus Snow, the church official in charge of the Arizona colonization effort, to go and help colonize northeastern Arizona. He entered the Silver Creek Valley in January 1878, and stopped at James Stinson's ranch. There he found Stinson, who had begun to develop his land in 1873 and had about three hundred acres under cultivation, eager to sell. The \$18,000 price proved too high so Pearce moved on up the valley about three miles and decided to set up camp there. By Christmas Day, 1879 many families had settled around the Pearce camp and were in the process of building a community soon to be known as Taylor, three miles south of the future Snowflake townsite.

Snowflake had its beginnings in the summer of 1878 when William Jordan Flake began scouting for a new home. He also found James Stinson, and began to negotiate a price for the ranch. Taking advantage of Stinson's wish to sell, Flake was able to bring the price down to \$12,000, payable in Utah cattle in three annual installments, making the ranch his home. The Stinson/Flake Ranch [S-52] (#16) house still exists, as the oldest building in the Snowflake Townsite Historic District at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Street North and Stinson. Flake left to contact Erastus Snow, to seek his counsel and his blessing. At Snow's urging the townsite adopted a limited form of communalism which saw the Stinson ranch divided into city lots and first- and second-class farm plots.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 8

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

The land was subdivided in conformance with church practice, which was based upon a close interpretation of the utopian "City of Zion" plan put forward by Joseph Smith. . The townsite was named in honor of Erastus Snow and Mr. William Flake, resulting in Snowflake.

### Early Development of Snowflake 1878-1910

As settlers moved into Snowflake, the residential areas of the town bloomed. Over one third of the existing homes in the Snowflake Townsite Historic District were built during this period. The local building materials available varied. Most of the first homes were made of logs or adobe. By the late summer of 1879 between twenty-five and thirty log homes had been erected in Snowflake. Most of these original homes have been lost or radically altered, being replaced with newer homes as economics allowed. One log cabin [S-1] remains on the corner of Center and Miller. The John A. Freeman house [S-67] (#11) on Main Street built in 1893 was made of locally-produced brick first burnt in or about 1884. Locally quarried stone was occasionally used to construct early dwellings, and as the foundation material of many buildings. In the early 1900s, as construction technology advanced, cast concrete blocks, resembling cut stone, made their appearance.

The LDS church sent skilled artisans to help with the settlement of new colonies and taught their skills to eager pioneers. Joseph Fish was a self taught carpenter, brick layer, shingle maker, cabinet maker and surveyor. His friends and acquaintances gladly did his farm work to get him to build their homes. Another well known accomplished designer and builder was Allen Frost. He built the brick, two story Charles Flake house [S-110] (#5) on the southeast corner of Second street North and Miller. Joseph Ramsay was the designer of the Baird house [S-39] (#21) built of polychrome brick in 1895. Ralph Ramsay was a wood carver that worked for James Madison Flake on his three-story, eighteen-room home [S-53] (#15). Ralph Ramsay carved a horse's head and a large horseshoe to adorn the home in the middle of the third-story gable. Of the sixteen homes built during this time period, seven were in the Greek Revival style and four were Victorian. These artisans have significantly contributed to the rich architectural history of Snowflake.

The first church in Snowflake was the Stinson/Flake Ranch [S-52] (#16); later the largest log building became the first combination school and church. By 1883 Snowflake had the first brick building on the creek, a church 35x65 feet with a ceiling 20 feet high, constructed with locally burnt brick, and known as the Stake House. This building was placed in the same location as the current Mormon church. The tithing office [S-107] (#6), a necessary structure to the Mormons, was built c. 1892 in the Greek Revival style. This brick structure is located on an adjacent block to the church at 120 West 1<sup>st</sup> Street North.

The Snowflake founders experienced challenging times in the fall of 1884. Fearing religious and political threat, territorial officials used a federal law against polygamy to bring charges against five Mormon leaders. Much to the colony's shock and dismay, they were convicted with three being sentenced to the federal penitentiary in Detroit, Michigan, and William J. Flake and James N. Skousen being sent to the territorial prison in Yuma. Other Mormon leaders with plural wives feared additional prosecutions and fled the territory, with most bound for Mexico and a few returning to Utah.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number 8 Page 9

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

The following year the Mormon communities along Silver Creek were in financial difficulty, having been found to be trespassing on lands belonging to the Aztec Land and Cattle Company. The company demanded payment or removal. Altogether seven sections of land were involved that belonged to Aztec. The church in Salt Lake City made the down payment and helped with the subsequent shortfalls, while the residents of Snowflake and Taylor were assessed \$12.50 an acre if they lived or farmed on Aztec land and \$6.25 an acre if they settled on government land. With cash and in-kind produce converted to cash, they had to pay the land and cattle company \$4.50 an acre for the 4,480 acres in question. For the residents of Snowflake it was an especially bitter pill to swallow, as they had, in effect, to buy their homes and farms twice, once for Utah cattle and once for scarce hard currency.

Perhaps Snowflake's greatest architectural masterpiece was begun during this post-depression period when the stake Board of Education decided in early 1898 to build a large brick Stake Academy. In February 1899, Allen Frost was named academy architect and submitted plans to the Board of Education. Construction began that year, but insufficient funds delayed completion. Frost passed away June 1, 1901, and did not see his masterpiece completed. In August 1901, church authorities in Salt Lake City contributed \$1,000 to finish the building, and it opened for classes in September 1901. The Stake Academy burned down in 1911 and was replaced by the current structure built in 1911-13 [S-32](#1).

John R. Hulet and his family came to Snowflake in January 1879, along with his father-in-law Jesse N. Smith, whom Apostle Erastus Snow had recently appointed to the presidency of the newly created Eastern Arizona Stake of Zion. In 1881 he assisted in founding both the Snowflake Cooperative Store and the Arizona Cooperative Mercantile Institution (ACMI), the Mormon-run trading association with headquarters in nearby Woodruff. In 1883 Hulet became Snowflake's postmaster and followed the typical western pioneer pattern of combining the roles of storekeeper and postmaster. In the mid 1880s Hulet built a Victorian brick home on the northwest corner of Center and Hulet [S-27] (#4). By 1885 he was managing both cooperative operations, and the following year the companies were merged into one operation. Hulet became secretary, treasurer, and superintendent of the ACMI and by 1901 was its largest stockholder.

Like their brethren in Utah who pioneered the scientific development of community irrigation systems in the West, the pioneers of Snowflake and neighboring Taylor together began to construct diversion dams, main canals, and multiple delivery laterals to bring water to their land. With just twelve inches average rainfall each year and a short growing season at their 5,600-foot elevation, irrigation was as necessary as breathing, and "every able-bodied man" turned out to participate in this "total community" effort.

In early 1882 men from Snowflake and Taylor assembled a new Silver Creek damsite below the Mormon community of Shumway and began digging a new ditch to serve both communities. A dispute arose over which community had the better right to the water. A commission of LDS arbitrators from outside the stake decided that the waters of Silver Creek would be shared, but that Snowflake residents, by virtue of a superior right, would pay \$3 per share of water used for both farm plots and city lots, and Taylor people \$5 per

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 10

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

share "until a sufficient amount of means is raised." This created some antipathy between the two towns. In December 1888, the water arbitration commission ruled unanimously that sufficient water had been developed and delivered for both communities, and they therefore equalized the rates for water assessments.

On January 21, 1893, the Articles of Incorporation of the Snowflake and Taylor Irrigation Company were filed with the Apache County Recorder and the Secretary of State for Arizona Territory. Through the years the irrigation company has played a vital role in the lives of both communities. Unfortunately, most irrigation ditches and other features have been covered over and thus little of the importance of water to early development can be seen in today's historic district. Remaining agricultural features such as fields, orchards, and private irrigation ditches must suffice to represent this theme.

### Years of Prosperity: 1910-1920

By 1910, with community improvements and new homes adding to the prosperous appearance of the local landscape, Snowflake boasted a population of about five hundred people. Almost half of the standing properties in the Snowflake Townsite Historic District were built in this ten year period. The two commercial buildings, the Herald building [S-11] and the Bushman store [S-10] (#7) and most of the bungalows in the district were constructed at this time. The Bank of Northern Arizona counted deposits and assets of about \$75,000, and three general merchandise stores served the needs of the community and surrounding countryside. The Snowflake Stake Academy had been rebuilt in 1913 and a two-story addition was built to accommodate the growing number of secondary students from throughout the stake, and the community presented an attractive appearance composed of wide streets bordered with irrigation ditches and lined with cottonwoods and poplars; neat, tidy homes surrounded with orchards, gardens, and flower beds; and the town itself, "an oasis in the desert," surrounded with cultivated fields and pastureland.

The decade of the teens saw the continued growth of modern community services, new businesses, population, and the residential housing stock in Snowflake. Probably the single most important event was the completion of the Daggs Reservoir in 1914, which has been characterized as "the largest collective effort ever undertaken in the area." Its completion allowed even more agricultural land to be brought into production and more intensive use of water for specialized crops. Most importantly, however, it added vital protection from serious flooding to the Snowflake and Taylor diversion dams.

As the first American troops began to go into battle in France in the fall of 1917, the Apache Railway began construction of its line from Holbrook, on the main line of the Santa Fe, to Cooley, today's McNary, in the White Mountains of Arizona. The Apache Railway was organized to bring cut lumber from the new sawmill being built at Cooley to the transcontinental railroad at Holbrook, and Snowflake would be a major stopping place on the way into the mountains. The railroad tracks reached Snowflake in early September 1918, and the next day the first freight for Snowflake merchants arrived by rail. It was the beginning of a new era for the community, and not even the war or the Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918 could dampen the town's spirits. On September 23, 1918, the first cattle ever shipped from Snowflake left on twelve cars bound for the

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

Section Number 8 Page 11

Kansas City stockyards. Cattle shipping and its attendant industries, such as feeding and pasturing operations, developed in the town and surrounding pasturelands and added significantly to the local economy. In that same year yellow brick was imported from Gallup, New Mexico, contributing to the variety of building materials available.

The Snowflake and Taylor Irrigation Company brought electric lights to Snowflake, Taylor, and Shumway during World War I, when the company began installing a hydro-electric power plant at the Chummy Grist Mill in June 1918. The plant and attendant equipment cost the irrigation company \$25,000 and the first electricity was turned on November 8, 1918, just three days before the armistice ending the war.

By 1920 Snowflake's population had grown to more than 750 people, a 50% increase over 1910. Snowflake by reason of its urban environment which facilitated a higher density and its important commercial and church-related positions in the area, would see greater growth in the years ahead. By 1930 Snowflake's population had seen a 65% increase to more than 1,250.

Due to a cotton boom created by war inflation many Taylor residents moved to the Mesa-Lehi area of the Salt River Valley and became overnight cotton barons. So many dairy farmers sold their herds and turned their dairies into cotton ranches that there was a major shortage of cream. The Salt River Valley creameries shipped two carloads of dairy cattle to Snowflake to distribute among local farmers willing to go into the dairy business and supplied area ranchers with good dairy stock to begin increasing the herds. They also agreed to take all the cream these new dairymen could produce. This was the beginning of what would become a major agricultural industry for the area in the late 1920s.

**Years of Depression and War, 1920-1945**

Snowflake had benefited greatly from the generally prosperous economic conditions of the teens and from the new businesses in their midst, especially the Apache Railway, and had seen important advances in modern municipal services. National economic conditions turned sour with a precipitous deflation of commodity prices which had been severely over-inflated by the world war. Cattle prices dropped rapidly, timber sales slumped, and hay and grain sold for a fraction of their wartime highs. By 1921 a severe agricultural depression gripped the United States and caused significant bank failures across the country. The Bank of Northern Arizona closed its doors on July 29, 1921, and forced a series of foreclosures on area ranchers and farmers. It may have been the Roaring Twenties for urban America, but for rural America it was a decade of hard times and a slow climb back.

To compound the economic problems experienced within the Snowflake Stake of Zion in the early 1920s, the LDS church decided to close its stake academies "where a state school could easily be formed." Local elders tried to persuade Salt Lake City that the stake had an insufficient tax base to support a high school and all its mandated programs and curricula, but their protestations fell upon deaf ears. Church officials promoted the establishment of a unified high school district. By virtue of the Snowflake Stake Academy being

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

Section Number 8 Page 12

available, Snowflake became the site of the new high school. The new high school opened in the fall of 1924 and proved both an attractive community amenity and an economic boon to Snowflake. In 1938 an addition was made to the high school. The combined efforts of the WPA, the State of Arizona, and local volunteer labor had produced an important addition to the community. Eventually named for long time principal Silas L. Fish, the one-story white sandstone building [S-33] sits not far from the red sandstone Stake Academy [S-32] (#1). Together they represent the importance of education to the Mormon communities and to the heights which cooperative effort and hard work can raise a community's achievements.

After several difficult years in farming and stockraising during the early 1920s, local economic conditions began to improve through the cooperative efforts of local farmers and ranchers. Surplus farm production proved a problem until the organization and construction of the Snowflake Canning Factory in 1923. Built to help process and market the excess production of local farms which could not be sold as fresh produce, the plant was set up to handle corn, beans, tomatoes, fruits, and meats, and was soon producing three hundred cans per day. In 1924 the Cooperative Marketing Association was established to help coordinate what crops should be grown and how they should be marketed, and the new organization planned to utilize the new canning factory in their efforts. The next year the cannery upgraded its equipment to process five hundred cans per day and proved to be a successful adjunct to fresh produce production for years to come.

Lumbering also staged a recovery during the mid- to late-1920s, and a spur line of the Apache Railway was built from Snowflake to the Standard Lumber Mill near Deer Springs in 1928 to take out the production from new logging operations. The mill ran until 1939 when the contracted forest tracts were expended.

This general improvement in farming and ranching operations in the Snowflake and Taylor area helped stimulate the local economies and prompted Alma Frederickson to buy the Snowflake and Taylor Electric Company from the irrigation company in 1926. Two conditions of the contract called for an improvement in the electrical system and the furnishing of domestic water to Snowflake and Taylor. Frederickson formed a new company called the Navajo Light and Power Company, drilled for water, struck a good source at 170 feet, and began laying pipe and building a pump and storage facility. By July 1, 1927, Snowflake residents had water in their homes.

The Great Depression was not an easy time for the residents of Snowflake, but they probably had a better time of it than their counterparts in urban America. They had gardens, orchards, chickens, access to cattle and hogs, and the wherewithal to feed themselves and their less fortunate neighbors if need be. Farmers and ranchers barely staved off bankruptcy and foreclosure. Some men left to work on projects for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Works Progress Administration (WPA), and the Public Works Administration (PWA). Others left to spend the summer shearing sheep in Wyoming and Montana. Still others found work on federal projects close to home. In 1936 the irrigation company received a grant from the PWA to improve the power system.



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

Section Number 8 Page 13

In the depths of the Great Depression, the community decided that a new church was needed after more than fifty years of expanding, repairing, maintaining, and worshipping in their old pioneer chapel. Bolstered by a \$25,000 grant from church officials in Salt Lake City, a building fund committee began the arduous task of raising money in the teeth of general and severe hardship. Raising money proved difficult, and delays occurred, but by the summer of 1938 construction had begun on the new church, which was designed to incorporate the old Stake House into the structure. The white sandstone used in construction was quarried north of Snowflake and cut and laid by local stonemasons. On July 2, 1939, the massive stone church, which had cost \$60,000, was formally dedicated.

In use for just two and a half years, a fire destroyed the new Stake House in late November 1939. Plans were developed immediately to rebuild the chapel reusing the stone walls that remained in place and adding improvements developed since the building had been first designed. The recreation hall was ready for the Pioneer Day dance on July 24, 1943, and the new Stake House [S-69] (#9) was dedicated on August 29, 1943.

**Post War Development: 1945-Present**

After World War II, Snowflake continued in its relative prosperity and slow but steady growth. The new pulp and paper mill of Southwest Forest Industries changed the local economics dramatically in the early 1960s. The forest products company began looking for a site in the late 1950s near their pulpwood sources with a good water supply, and a site fifteen miles west of Snowflake was chosen. Forty million dollars was invested in the plant, and a branch line of the Apache Railway was built to serve the facility. Completed in 1961, the plant employed 300 mill workers and 400 lumberjacks, truck drivers, and other support staff. With its initial configuration, the plant produced 500 tons of container board and newsprint each day. The mill then employed 535 employees, produced 155,000 tons of newsprint and 258,000 tons of container board each year, and generated annual sales of \$145 million.

A major influx of new residents who worked at the mill swelled the population's of Snowflake and Taylor. Snowflake's numbers climbed from 982 in 1960 to 1,977 in 1970. With the first influx of workers who came to build the plant, schools became crowded, and both school boards cast about for solutions. Unfortunately for Taylor, the new mill resided within the Snowflake district boundaries and could offer no tax help in building a new school. The obvious solution was a consolidation of the districts, and the Snowflake board made such a proposal to the Taylor Board of Trustees. Still the old rivalries persisted. At the first consolidation election on February 18, 1960, the proposal was narrowly defeated. Fortunately the school boards also persisted, and cooler heads prevailed. Through a petition drive to annex the Taylor district to that of Snowflake, Taylor had become a part of the Snowflake Consolidated School District Number 5. A bond issue was floated and passed which provided funds for a new junior high school, and in 1963 the school was built between the two towns in "no man's land," in an area called the Belly Button. Economic necessity had triumphed over old wounds.

With the continued expansion of the Southwest Forest plant in the mid-1970s, Snowflake population

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   8   Page 14

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

continued to climb. Snowflake grew from 1,977 in 1970 to 3,510 in 1980. By now economics usually won over the old rivalry, and in 1986 the towns combined their police forces into a more efficient single unit.

This period from about 1950 up until the present day is responsible for most of the intrusive elements which have appeared within the Snowflake Townsite Historic District. These developments have mostly taken from the form of modern homes filling lots in-between historic homes, and in commercial redevelopment along Main Street.

**Historic Context**

**Planning and Development of Mormon Settlements in Eastern Arizona, 1872-1948**

The Mormon settlers were searching for land apart from the dominant Gentile community on which to build an "intermediate pier" of the land bridge between Utah and a second Seat of Zion in the Sonora Valley of Mexico. That land bridge became a chain of colonies stretching from St. George, Utah, in the north to St. David, Arizona, in the south. The colonies along the Little Colorado River became the first pioneering settlements in what the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) called a "profound doctrinal commitment" to expansion and a "far flung movement" to create a Gathering of Zion in Mexico. The founding of Snowflake is part of that movement, and the story offers examples of how the colony began.

Founding and development of Mormon communities in Arizona from 1872 to 1948 can be generalized by a few common characteristics, many of which are seen in Snowflake. Traits such as wide streets and roadside irrigation ditches are typical. The 99 foot wide streets are evident but the ditches have been filled. The wide streets and ditches became an early part of Mormon town planning as a result of Brigham Young's awareness of the need for dependable village irrigation and wagon accessibility. Open field landscape along with a higher percentage of brick dwellings and a substantial brick or stone ward chapel are also typical Mormon features.

Like most of Arizona's Mormon settlements, Snowflake was planned and constructed in general accordance with Brigham Young's "City of Zion" pattern for founding new towns on the American frontier. The Zion plan was a pattern for a utopian community which embodied the Mormon ideals in community living, while being infinitely expandable (in theory) to facilitate the Mormon colonization of the western United States. The plan specified a system of square blocks and wide streets ideal for agrarian living (plenty of fields and room to turn the wagons). In its finished form, the plan even specified different types of lots and different areas of the one-square-mile city; creating an urban center surrounded by farmland, in a theoretically balanced proportion. The plan was to be built on one square mile of land subdivided into ten-acre blocks (660'x660'). These were separated by 132-foot streets and subdivided into 66-foot wide, ½ acre lots. Also specified were lot and block layout, building setbacks, planting, and other details. Laying out Snowflake, Apostle Erastus Snow followed the plan closely. Snow laid out a townsite in the typical pattern with large square blocks and wide streets that formed a north/south and east/west grid pattern. There would be twenty blocks in the town, each containing four lots 198 feet on a side, and the streets would be 99 feet wide or half the width of a lot.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   8   Page 15

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

Few if any of the particular details of the "City of Zion" plan were actually implemented in most of Arizona's Mormon settlements. Snowflake was an exception; the guidelines of the plan were followed more closely than in other Mormon towns in Arizona. Similar approaches to town planning are evident in the nearby Mormon-settled towns of Eagar, Taylor, and St. Johns, among others. These towns were laid out in the pattern of large square blocks with wide streets keeping the basic concept of the "City of Zion" intact. In Snowflake not only were the blocks and streets in accordance with the plan, the specified lot and block layout was also followed.

Snowflake's central 20-block core filled in with many new homes through the early decades of the 20th century. The original quarter-block lots were successively subdivided into smaller units, which today appear quite random. In the early years of the century, lands around the central core, previously earmarked for agricultural uses, also were subdivided and developed with housing. But this peripheral area remained lower-density and less formal than the original residential center.

**Period of Significance**

The beginning of the Period of Significance coincides with the establishment of the Stinson Ranch in 1873. The Ranch house from this period remains, in altered form. The year 1878 is significant as the founding of Snowflake. The Period of Significance ends with the arbitrary 50 year cut-off for National Register eligibility (1947), as the town has developed continuously to the present day.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number   9   Page 16

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   9   Page 17

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Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   9   Page 18

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number   9   Page 19

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section Number   10   Page 20

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

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## **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

See attached boundary map

## **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary of the Snowflake Townsite Historic District is largely defined by the street scapes of the town surrounding the central LDS church. The eastern boundary is defined by fields and modern buildings while including contributing historic structures. The inner southern boundary is placed along the school property. The southwest portion of the district includes two historic school buildings. The west and north boundaries are defined by street scape. The northeast boundary includes a historic field which also contributes to the overall appearance of the district.

The entire district is defined on all sides by modern or historically altered properties. The area within the district boundaries retains the historic rural charter of Snowflake while that outside does not. Within the commercial area along Main Street, several modern properties are included in order to encompass the historic resources while eliminating as many intrusions as possible.



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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

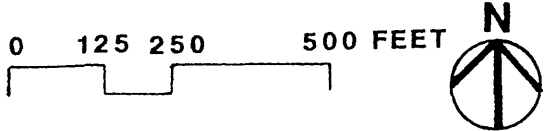
Section Number PHOTOS Page 21

Snowflake Townsite Historic District  
Snowflake, Navajo County, AZ

Photographer: C. Keeling  
Date: July 1997  
Location of Original Negatives: Alliance Architects, L.L.C.  
2601 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 308  
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

Photo #	Site #	Description	View
1	S-33/S-32	Fish Building/ Stake Academy	NW
2	S-7	Jesse Smith Residence	S
3	S-8	F.W. Ericksen Residence	SE
4	S-27	John R. Hulet Residence	NW
5	S-110	Charles L. Flake House	S
6	S-107	Tithing Office	N
7	S-11/S-10	Herald Building/Bushman Store	N
8	S-70	Bungalow	SE
9	S-69	LDS church	SW
10	S-68	Bungalow	NE
11	S-67/S-69	John A. Freeman House/ LDS church	SW
12	S-64	Osmer D. Flake House	SE
13	S-61	Bungalow	NE
14	S-59/S-60	National Folk/Bungalow	SE
15	S-53	James Flake House	SW
16	S-52	Stinson/Flake Ranch	NW
17	S-51	National Folk	SW
18	S-50	Webb House	NW
19	S-47	Nettie Rencher Home	N
20	S-44/S-45	National Folk/Bungalow	NE
21	S-39	Baird House	NW

# SNOWFLAKE TOWNSITE HISTORIC DISTRICT



## SYMBOL KEY

- CONTRIBUTING PROPERTY
- NON-CONTRIBUTING PROPERTY
- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- PHOTO KEY

