

**Consensus Determination of Eligibility for
Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center Complex Historic District
National Park Service, Flagstaff Area National Monuments
Coconino County Arizona**

HISTORIC DISTRICT NAME

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center Complex

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC CONTEXT

The NPS Modern architectural style and Mission 66 Developments throughout the National Park Service, 1945-1972

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

1965-1967

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sunset Crater Volcano¹ National Monument visitor center complex (Sunset complex), which was historically known as the “Headquarters Area for Sunset Crater National Monument,” is comprised of Mission 66 era properties that form an administrative center, visitor contact area, maintenance area and park housing for the monument. Located on U.S. Forest Service land approximately ½ mile west of the monument boundary, the Sunset complex is set in a ponderosa forest and cinder dune landscape. Architect Cecil Doty designed the Sunset complex in 1965, and construction of the Mission 66 development was completed by the fall of 1967. The Sunset complex has historic significance at the national level as an excellent example of a Mission 66 development that is exceptional among Mission 66 developments for three main reasons: 1) Unlike most Mission 66 visitor centers, the Sunset complex was located outside the monument to preserve the natural landscape around the park’s primary interpretive feature (the Sunset Crater Cinder Cone) by minimizing development in this area; and 2) Its original development was exclusively a Mission 66 design that did not build on any existing developments and; 3) The Sunset complex was designed by Cecil Doty, and represents an unusual design for this prominent NPS architect. Buildings contributing to the historic significance of the Sunset complex are one-story NPS-Modern-style buildings clad in wood shingles with lava rock water tables. Two of the buildings have large glulam structural systems that form dramatic angled profiles. The Sunset complex is comprised of six properties that contribute to the historic significance of the Mission 66 complex and thirteen non-contributing properties (Figure 1). Most of the contributing properties are in excellent condition and retain a high level of historic integrity, reflecting the original Mission 66 era location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Character defining elements of buildings in the Sunset complex include cedar shingle siding, window patterns, lava rock water tables, and the overall layout of the complex. Additionally, character-defining elements of the Visitor Center Building include the 1960s loft-style open floor plan, clerestory windows, and the folded plate roof over the entryway portico.

The following presents a list of contributing resources for the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument visitor center complex:

1. Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center building (No. 16/20) and public parking area (1967). An associated entryway terrace, walkways, a flagpole, lava rock planters and landscaping have been replaced and do not retain their historic integrity.

¹ Sunset Crater National Monument was renamed “Sunset Crater *Volcano* National Monument” in the 1990s. The present park name will be used throughout this document.

2. Maintenance and Storage Building (No. 27) south of the northwest wall of the visitor center and associated fenced/walled employee parking area compound east of maintenance building (1967)
3. Apartment Building (No. 18) and associated walkways and yards (1967)
4. Administrative Road System to the employee parking compound, water tower loop, and housing area loop (1965)
5. Water Tower (1965)
6. Old Pump House (1965)

The following presents a list of non-contributing resources in the immediate vicinity of the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument visitor center complex:

1. Residence Building No. 2 (1985 modular)
2. Detached garage associated with Residence Building No. 2 (1980s structure)
3. Residence Building No. 7 (1985 modular)
4. Detached garage associated with Residence Building No. 7(1980s structure)
5. Residence Building No. 12 (1978 modular)
6. Residence area Playground
7. Detached garage (1980s structure) associated with Residence 18A (Building 18)
8. Detached garage (1980s structure) associated with Residence 18B (Building 18)
9. New pump house (2001 structure)
10. WNPA shed (1980s structure)
11. Vehicle fuel tanks (1996 structures)
12. Hazardous Materials Storage Building (mid-1990s structure)
13. The employee parking area to the east of the visitor center

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed in 1965 and constructed between 1966 and 1967, the visitor center complex at Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, which includes the park's visitor center, maintenance shop, maintenance yard, and apartments, has historic significance at the national level as an excellent representation of National Park Service (NPS) Mission 66 planning and design. The largest multi-year construction event in NPS history, Mission 66 was a major effort by the NPS to upgrade the national parks to meet escalating demands in the post-World War II period, when the number of visitors to the parks dramatically increased. Initiated in 1956, the goal of the program was to substantially improve the parks by 1966, hence the name "Mission 66". Although Mission 66 officially extended from 1956-1966, the NPS has determined a 1945-1972 period of significance, a date range that covers the important design precedents of Mission 66 as well as later Mission 66 influenced resources (Allaback 2000). The Sunset complex period of significance ranges from 1965 to 1967.

Designed by NPS architect Cecil Doty, the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument visitor center is true to the Mission-66/NPS-Modern-style, blending modern materials in the International style with natural materials that harmonize the building with the surrounding landscape. Located approximately ½ mile west of the monument boundary on the Coconino National Forest, the building was positioned to offer views of the Sunset Crater cinder cone to the east and the San Francisco Peaks to the west– two important volcanic landscape features in the area. Original landscape designs included plans to remove trees in both directions to improve views of these features (Husted 1968), but these plans were never realized. The visitor center's location outside the monument was designed to preserve the natural environment and scenery inside the monument – an objective park managers documented in the park's Master Plan as early as 1948 (NPS 1948), and a central concern stated in NPS Director Wirth's original vision statement for the Mission 66 program (NPS 1956).

The Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument visitor center complex has significance under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development (park), Conservation, Entertainment/Recreation, and Politics/Government. It is also important for its association with the Mission 66 program, which represented a significant change in NPS planning, management, and architecture. Within the NPS system, Mission 66 was an over-arching program that resulted in the construction of new housing, maintenance areas, entrance stations, roads, parking lots, comfort stations, campgrounds and concessionaire buildings, as well as the design of a new NPS arrowhead and uniform. The most significant expression of Mission 66 philosophy, however, was the “visitor center,” a term coined by NPS planners to describe a property type that combined multiple visitor and administrative functions into one complex. Mission 66 historian Sarah Allaback has called the visitor center “the centerpiece of a new era in planning for visitor services in American national parks,” and a concept that greatly influenced the development of similar centers throughout state parks in the United States as well as national parks in the rest of the world (Allaback 2000).

The Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument visitor center complex also meets National Register Criterion C for its importance in the areas of architecture and community planning and development, and as an excellent example of the work of a master – NPS architect, Cecil Doty. The Service’s primary Mission 66 architect, “Doty is the individual responsible for the consistency of design that is the Park Service Modern style, and was instrumental in developing a modern visitor center design that would fulfill the programmatic demands of Mission 66” (Allaback 2000). As Allaback notes “Doty influenced nearly every visitor center built”.

Overall, the Sunset complex reflects several key elements of Mission 66 design. These include the advent of modern architecture into the parks, the use of terraces to provide significant views of natural features, the centralization of park services within one compound, a floor plan that segregates public areas from administrative areas, and the use of natural materials that reflect the surrounding landscape. Although the modern style of Mission 66 architecture had its critics, historian Sarah Allaback notes “Park Service Modern, as developed by Park Service designers during the Mission 66 era, became as influential in the history of American national and state park management as the Park Service Rustic style had been” (Allaback 2000).

The Sunset complex varies from the majority of Doty designed visitor centers. Allaback (2000) notes “Doty designed two visitor centers with unusual programs in the final years of Mission 66 [Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument and Curecanti National Recreation Area]. The visitor center at Sunset Crater [is] located some distance from the crater itself, [it] is the simplest possible in terms of circulation and use. It is essentially one big room with offices on one end and restrooms on the other. No effort is made to obtain a view or direct the visitor outside.” Doty’s design and the final location of the visitor center have been questioned ever since its completion.

Although the Sunset complex is less than 50 years old, it is eligible to the National Register under Criterion Consideration G as an exceptional example of NPS Mission 66 planning and Park Service Modern architecture in Arizona.

The boundary of the Sunset Complex (Figure 1) is described as follows: The northern boundary begins at edge of Forest Road 545 and the visitor center parking lot. The eastern boundary of the complex is defined by the administrative road system that leads to the employee parking area, housing area, and water tower. The western boundary of the complex is defined by the western wall of the visitor center, the western wall of the maintenance complex, the western

portion of the loop road of the housing area, and the western edge of the administrative road (including the pump house) that runs back to the water tower. The southern boundary of the complex is defined by the southern portion of the loop road that runs through the housing area, and the southern edge of the water tower.

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXT

Mission 66 was a large-scale effort by the National Park Service to upgrade the nation's parks in the period following World War II. In 1949, NPS director Newton Drury described the parks as "victims of war." "Neglected since the New Deal era improvements of the 1930s," observes historian Allaback, "the national parks were in desperate need of funds for basic maintenance, not to mention protection from an increasing number of visitors." In 1931, 3.5 million people visited the national parks; by 1948, that number had increased to almost 30 million. But, Allaback notes, "park facilities remained essentially as they were before the war" (Allaback 2000). Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument alone experienced an increase in visitation from 2,500 people in 1934, to 63,200 people in 1958. Contributing to the growth in the number of visitors after World War II was the post-war economic boom and the ability of more and more Americans to buy personal automobiles, enabling them to visit the nation's treasures. In response, the National Park Service needed new facilities to accommodate the crowds, and it needed those facilities designed in a way that would best protect the parks from resource damage.

National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth first conceptualized the idea of modernizing parks through a massive, multi-year redevelopment program in February 1955. Wirth requested a decade of funding, rather than the traditional year-by-year funding requests, "thereby ensuring money for building projects that might last many years" (Allaback 2000). As envisioned by Wirth, "Mission 66 would allow the Park Service to repair and build roads, bridges and trails, hire additional employees, construct new facilities ranging from campsites to administration buildings, improve employee housing, and obtain land for future parks . . . to elevate the parks to modern standards of comfort and efficiency, as well as an attempt to conserve natural resources" (Allaback 2000). On January 27, 1956, Wirth introduced the Mission 66 concept to President Dwight Eisenhower and his cabinet, where it received immediate approval. The program was officially presented to the American public the following month (Allaback 2000).

At the heart of the new Mission 66 program was the concept of a visitor center. The visitor center would act as a "one-stop" service unit, equipped with an information desk, uniformed ranger, lobby exhibits, illustrated talks, museum, library, and restrooms. The center also provided space for administrative offices, which were removed from the public areas and often accessed through a separate entrance. This type of design was a major departure from the earlier NPS concept of decentralized "park village," where different park functions were spread out in individual, rustic-style buildings. In an efficient and economic combination of services, the Mission 66 visitor center "brought these activities together in a single, large building intended to serve as a control point for what planners called 'visitor flow,' as well as a more efficient means of serving far larger numbers of visitors and cars in a more concentrated area" (Allaback 2000). Like a shopping center, the visitor center made it possible for people to park their cars at a central point, and from there have access to a range of services and attractions. To accomplish the wide-ranging goals of Mission 66, the NPS master planning process utilized teams with representatives from the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, ecology, natural history resource management, archeology, history and other fields (Koehler 1971). In 1956, an NPS outline titled "Mission 66: To Provide Adequate Protection of the National Park System for Human Use" proposed that 100 new visitor centers would be needed.

From an original request of \$786 million, Mission 66 eventually cost almost a billion dollars during its ten-year span, nearly four times the budget of the previous ten years (Wirth 1966). In addition to a new strategy for management, Mission 66 also resulted in a distinctive new type of NPS architecture that reflected the new ideas – a style Allaback (2000) says can be described as “Park Service Modern.” Modern architecture was the prevalent architectural style in the postwar period, and Mission 66 brought that design ethic to the national parks. Stripped of most ornamentation, modern architecture took advantage of new inexpensive materials and laborsaving techniques. The flexibility of modern architectural design also allowed for shapes and interior environments that could accommodate visitor flow, as well as offices and public spaces in the same building. By contrast, the rustic style that the NPS had used throughout the 1920s and 1930s was costly to build on a large scale and, aesthetically, would result in new natural surroundings because of their picturesque design and use of natural materials. Park Service Modern, notes Allaback, “reinterpreted the long-standing commitment to ‘harmonize’ architecture with park landscapes,” but accomplished that in a different way than rustic architecture. Rather than being designed as picturesque elements of the landscape, Mission 66 buildings were meant to be unobtrusive with their low horizontal profiles. In the same way, Mission 66 visitor centers were often constructed of stone and textured concrete that reduced visual contrasts with the landscape (Allaback 2000).

At Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, Mission 66 planners also addressed the inadequacy of the existing development. The monument had been established in 1930 but there had been little appropriation for development beyond a small visitor contact booth acquired from Lake Mead National Recreation Area and a trailer. For much of its pre-Mission 66 history, Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument had been operated as a sub-unit of Wupatki National Monument. Mission 66 meant a significant infusion of money into the park’s development. Under Mission 66, \$1,071,500 was proposed in 1958 for physical improvements to Sunset Crater Volcano and Wupatki National Monuments. These improvements included \$575,000 for scenic loop road improvements through the monuments, the Sunset Crater Volcano visitor center, utilities, Lenox Crater Trail, interpretive shelter, boundary fence, picnic area, warehouse-shop building, and equipment storage building (Superintendent Russell Mahan 1958 correspondence to Chief WODC). When it was completed in 1967, the Mission 66 visitor center complex at Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument was the park’s first visitor center. Prior to that time, visitors had obtained information primarily from a shared ranger position with Wupatki National Monument. The new visitor center also housed the park’s administrative operations, which previously had been located at Wupatki National Monument.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center Complex – Background

The Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument visitor center complex was conceptualized by the NPS’s principal Mission 66 architect, Cecil Doty, and reflects key elements of Mission 66 design including the architectural design and function of the building itself. However, the visitor center departs from the Mission 66 design philosophy that called for siting the visitor center near the park’s major resource, using terraces and window walls to provide significant views of natural features, and encouraging visitors to use adjacent amphitheaters, overlooks, and trails. As Allaback (2000) notes “Doty designed two visitor centers with unusual programs in the final years of Mission 66 [Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument and Curecanti National Recreation Area]. The visitor center at Sunset Crater [is] located some distance from the crater itself, [it] is the simplest possible in terms of circulation and use. It is essentially one big room with offices on one end and restrooms on the other. No effort is made to obtain a view or direct the visitor outside.” Doty’s design and the final location of the visitor center have been questioned ever since its completion.

Planning for the Sunset Crater visitor center was initiated in 1953 when 612 acres were set aside, under a Cooperative Agreement with the Coconino National Forest, for development of the administrative site and road access. In 1956 the Sunset Crater Mission 66 prospectus called for Sunset Crater to be the headquarters for both Wupatki and Sunset Crater National Monuments, and in 1957 a headquarters development, including a visitor center, maintenance yard, shop and employee quarters, was planned for a site at the intersection of Highway 89 and the entrance road to Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument.

However, a reliable and affordable water source could not be located at the proposed Highway 89 site. On May 8, 1959, Regional Director, Leo J. Diederich decided that Walnut Canyon National Monument would serve as the headquarters for the three monuments. Consequently the Sunset Crater plans were canceled.

In the fall of 1961, Regional Chief of Operations Jerome Miller concluded in a letter to Regional Director Diederich "because certain facilities [a well, four unit apartment building, and two new permanent residences] had now been built at Wupatki, the headquarters for Sunset Crater and Wupatki would now be at Wupatki." Miller states that the "site for the small district headquarters at Sunset Crater is now proposed on a flat bench [present site] in Section 21. . . on Forest Service land now under cooperative agreement" (Husted 1968).

By the spring of 1963, plans changed again. Regional Director Thomas J. Allen wrote to the Chief, Western Office of Design and Construction (WODC) "that at a meeting in February several aspects of the development planning [for the Sunset complex] were revised. It was decided to place the visitor center at a site on the north side of the parking area at the base of the Sunset Crater cinder cone in the monument. The building would contain slanted windows to afford a view of Sunset Crater Cinder Cone, and the lobby would have a darkened alcove with 40-seat capacity designed so that a film on volcanic eruptions would be part of the exhibits" (Husted 1968). The location of the employee residences and maintenance facility was not mentioned.

The General Development and Interpretation Plan Wupatki-Sunset Crater, revised October 1963, documents the final location of the Sunset Crater visitor center at its present site – a return to a decision made in 1961 to site the visitor center on a flat bench in Section 21 on the Coconino National Forest. The Cooperative Agreement between the Forest Service and the National Park Service setting aside 612 acres for the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument administrative development was renegotiated. In November 1966, a new memorandum of understanding was signed that permitted the National Park Service to "construct and maintain an administrative headquarters (including a visitor center) on 16 acres of land" near the monument. Four days after the Park Service finalized the location of the visitor center, Coconino National Forest representatives selected an area across the entrance road to construct the Bonito Campground. Sunset Crater/Wupatki Superintendent Russell Mahan recognized the campground as a "fly in the ointment that unless properly policed and maintained could be a reflection on the [National Park] Service" (Husted 1968).

On September 9, 1964, Superintendent Mahan prepared the Project Construction Proposal for the Sunset Crater visitor center for an estimated \$79,100. Additional information and justification regarding the Interim Master Plan and Developed Area Plan for the monument were submitted to the WODC. Based on the interim plan, National Park Service Architect Cecil Doty prepared the preliminary design for the Sunset complex in the spring of 1965. No record exists that that Doty visited Sunset Crater. However, he did visit Wupatki National Monument in 1961 in preparation for construction of the Wupatki visitor center. Doty most likely passed through

Sunset Crater on his way to Wupatki. At the time of his 1961 visit, Wupatki was identified as the headquarters for the two monuments and Sunset Crater Volcano as a small district headquarters.

In 1966, Doty transferred from the WODC to the Eastern Office of Design and Construction and, in May of that year, Architect Robert V. Simmonds, of the San Francisco Planning and Service Center (formerly WODC), prepared the working drawings for the Sunset complex's visitor center building and maintenance shop storage building based on Doty's preliminary design. Although no Interpretive Prospectus was prepared at this time, soft lighting from overhead windows on the north wall was planned (rather than direct sunlight) so that movies could be used in interpretation. An outdoor terrace was included so that views of Sunset Crater and the San Francisco Peaks could be enjoyed outside the visitor center. In late June 1966 Notice of Award to the Sanders Construction Company, Farmington, New Mexico, was signed for the construction of the visitor center and related buildings.

Indecision about where to locate the visitor center turned into controversy following its construction. NPS Director George B. Hartzog, Jr. visited Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument in the fall of 1967. He was so disturbed at the location of the visitor center that he commissioned a special study to determine why the visitor center was "so located and so oriented that a large mining scar. . . is plainly visible from the front terrace," and that "a Forest Service campground is located directly across the road from the visitor center" (Husted 1968).

The commissioned *Special Study of the Sunset Crater Visitor Center* (1968) concluded that: [1] "The Developed Area Plan, together with the accompanying Design Analysis should provide more guidelines for the architect and landscape architect; [2] The architect assigned to design a park building should in every case visit the site before starting to design that building or structure. If the site is changed, the architect should revisit the area to determine what new factors should be considered in designing the building; [3] Orientation of visitor centers should be given more thought. Certainly a view of the principal features of the area or an attractive view of the scenery is much to be preferred to facing the building toward the road and parking area; and [4] The Service should adopt a definite policy regarding the location of visitor centers within areas of the National Park System. The decision will be based principally on whether the visitor center should be located at or near the principal feature or where it is most accessible and convenient to the visiting public."

In response to the findings and recommendations of the Sunset Crater special study, NPS Southwest Regional Director Frank Kowski wrote to NPS Director Hartzog "Our final determination as to location of the headquarters area was based on two premises":

"One, that such a development could not be located within the Monument without detriment to the scenic and scientific features, and two the location chosen was based on available views of Sunset Crater and San Francisco Peaks. . . It has been our intention to interpret the Crater and its relation to the San Francisco Mountains by views from the terrace in front of the structure. We had always intended to undertake vista clearing in both directions and still plan to do so if the Forest Service will allow it."

DESCRIPTION

The Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center Complex

In keeping with the Mission 66 vision, Cecil Doty designed the administrative complex at Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument to centralize visitor facilities and park operations. The visitor center serves as the only public building in the Sunset complex. The visitor center welcomes

park visitors from the front parking area, while partially concealing other park facilities from the public. In addition to the visitor center building, Doty's original design for the Sunset complex included two other one-story buildings – a maintenance garage with a carport-style equipment storage area, and a two-unit apartment building (Figure 1). A “fence” built of 2x4 framing with cedar shingle siding and a lava rock water table formed wing walls extending from the visitor center and maintenance garage to make a rectangular enclosure around an employee parking area. In elevation the visitor center, maintenance yard, and shop appear as one unit, forming a compound. Immediately adjacent to this compound is an apartment building that is also part of the Sunset Mission 66 complex. The Sunset complex was designed around existing roads, but it represents the first true construction episode in the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument administrative area. Figure 1 shows the boundary of the National-Register-eligible Sunset complex site with all elements contributing to its significance as well as non-contributing features that were present at the time of original construction and non-contributing elements (in red) that have been added to the area since original construction.

Circulation

The Sunset complex is true to the Mission 66 vision that puts the visitor center at the heart of public facilities while providing separate but nearby spaces for other park operations. In an efficient and economic combination of services, the visitor center “brought these activities together in a single, large building intended to serve as a control point for what planners called ‘visitor flow,’ as well as a more efficient means of serving far larger numbers of visitors and cars in a more concentrated area” (Allaback 2000).

When it was completed in 1967, the Mission 66 visitor center at Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument was the park's first visitor center. Prior to that time, visitors had obtained information primarily from a shared ranger position with Wupatki National Monument. The Sunset complex, therefore, is unusual in that it did not build on previous developments, as did most other Mission 66 developments. As a result, Doty was not constrained by the need to combine new construction with existing facilities. The opportunity for design flexibility offered by a combination of the NPS Modern style and a lack of existing developments is reflected not only in the circulation of the simplicity of the main visitor center building, but also in the circulation of the entire Sunset complex, including other support facilities. For example, the visitors enter the public area by means of a parking area that runs along the monument highway. The visitor is then greeted by the visitor center's terraced entryway set in front of the visitor centers exhibit room, with its distinctive open floor plan. Other facilities, such as offices, maintenance areas, and residential areas are positioned behind the public area so that they are effectively hidden from public view. Likewise, inconspicuous cinder-covered roads leading to these support facilities are masked by tree cover and the public areas in the forefront of the visitor experience. Therefore, the design and circulation of the Sunset complex gives the illusion of a landscape with only minimal development, creating a greater sense of “harmony” with the natural setting.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center Building – Original Design

Designed by NPS architect Cecil Doty, the Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument visitor center complex blends modern materials in the International style with natural materials that harmonize the building with the surrounding landscape. With its angled walls covered in reddish-brown cedar shingles and its water table veneered with lava rock (vesicular basalt), the visitor center is reminiscent of the shape and colors of the volcanic cinder cones that surround it. The building's exhibits highlight the surrounding San Francisco Volcanic Field, with special attention to the Sunset Crater cinder cone for which the monument is named. Educational and interpretive experiences available at the visitor center include movies, hands-on displays, and exhibits featuring the culture history, geology, and biotic communities of the area.

Administratively reflecting the Mission 66 objective to centralize facilities at the parks, the Sunset complex serves as headquarters for the park's protection, interpretation, and facilities management staff with administrative offices, a maintenance area and residences as well as an information lobby and other public facilities.

The 2,111-square-foot visitor center represents the only public building in the Sunset complex. The building is a one-story rectangular building with two wings flanking a large central museum exhibit area (Figure 2). Visitors access the northeast-facing building from a long parking area running parallel with its front wall. The southeast wing encompasses administrative offices, and is divided into two rooms and a rear vestibule. Rooms in the southeast wing include the District Ranger's office and general office spaces for other employees and office equipment. Cubicle walls further divide the general office space. The northwest wing encompasses two restrooms, a boiler room, a janitor's closet, and a storage room. The buildings overall dimensions are approximately 79'11" NW/SE by 31'6" NE/SW with an entryway portico measuring 39'6" NW/SE by 11'10" NE/SW and two 3'10" x 8' bump outs on the rear (SW) elevation. The exhibit room, which measures 40' NW/SE by 24' NE/SW, is the first room entered from the front of the building. This room contains an information desk, retail space, and several exhibits. The ceilings in the exhibit room are vaulted, running tangent from 11-foot-high sidewalls and peaking at a point approximately 16 feet above the floor. The original design left the cedar tongue-and-groove ceiling exposed (Figure 3). In the restrooms and offices, a 9-foot-high sheetrock ceiling is supported by 2x6 joists.

The visitor center building's structural system consists of glulam posts and beams that form a vaulted ceiling and uninterrupted space in the public area or main room. This framing system also gives the building its architectural character, with angled walls that mirror the slopes of the Sunset Crater cinder cone. The building's foundation is comprised of a concrete slab floor surface and concrete block stem walls faced with a lava rock rough stone veneer. Subsurface concrete piers support the glulam posts. In addition to the glulam framing, sidewalls are standard platform framing. The roof is comprised of a series of bent plates that form five gabled dormers over a front entryway portico forming a "crinkled" roof portion. The footprint of the building is predominantly rectangular and encompasses a large museum exhibit area flanked by restrooms to one side and by offices to the other side. Exterior walls are covered with a combination of cedar tongue-and-groove siding and cedar shingle siding. The original roof was comprised of cedar shingles on 2x6 tongue-and-groove cedar roof deck over the main building, and copper sheet metal on decking over the portico. The original entryway walk and terrace was swept concrete with raised, lava rock planting beds dividing the center of the terrace lengthwise (Figure 1).

The northeast elevation of the building contains the double, out-swinging glass and metal doors flanked by two sliding windows. Approximately two feet above the doors and sliding windows is a horizontal high-light row of ten small hopper windows. On the southeast elevation, six three-pane windows shed light on the offices. On the southwest elevation is a metal rear entry door and a horizontal high-light row of ten small hopper windows.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Visitor Center Building – Changes and Condition

The Sunset Crater Volcano visitor center building has not been structurally altered since its original construction, and therefore retains a high degree of its historic integrity. Following are descriptions of noteworthy changes to the Sunset Crater Volcano visitor center building since its original construction. Changes not outlined here may include flooring replacement, painting, museum display installations and replacements, and installation or replacement of fixtures and appliances.

- Exhibit room ceiling – The exposed tongue-and-groove ceiling (Figure 3) was covered with rigid insulation and ceiling tiles attached to furring strips in the late 1970s. In the early 1990s, another layer of insulation and tiles was added to the existing ceiling tiles.
- Entrance area – The concrete walkway, terrace, and raised planting beds were replaced with brick walkways and terraces and a wood planting bed in 1983. The pedestrian traffic flow from the public parking area to the visitor center was changed in 1983 (compare Figures 1, 4, 5 and 6).
- Lighting – Track lighting was added to the exhibit room some time after 1975. Tracks were mounted directly to three of the four glulam beams.
- Roofing – The visitor center roof was originally covered with a combination of cedar shingles (over most of the roof) and sheet copper roofing (over the dormer area). Roofing was replaced with composite shingles twice since original construction. In the mid-1990s, roofing was again replaced with the brown-painted sheet metal roofing the building has now.
- Windows – In the mid-1990s, windows on the southeast elevation were replaced. The original windows were three-part windows with a central fixed sash and awning sashes on top and bottom (Figures 5 and 6). These windows were replaced with double-hung windows that fit the existing window rough openings. Interior wood trim was replaced during window replacement. The window replacement did not structurally alter the building.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Maintenance Area Description – Original Design

The Maintenance area original design was comprised of a one-story, one-room garage and an open, carport-style storage area (Figure 7). This area was designed for employee operations and is not open to the public. The maintenance garage is a square building measuring 26'8" northeast/southwest by 26'3" northwest/southeast with a hipped roof formed by four angled glulam posts and beams similar to those in the visitor center. Walls are 11'6" high. The southeast elevation has a large one-bay garage door (9' high), a metal entry door, and three high-light hopper windows. The original design included horizontal high-light rows of six small hopper windows at the top of the southwest, northwest, and the northeast elevations. The attached storage area originally had a low flat roof and was closed on three sides and open on the southeast elevation. This portion of the maintenance area was significantly altered in the 1980s (see below).

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Maintenance Area – Changes and Condition

With the exception of removal of roofing and modifications to the original fence to accommodate office windows, there has been little structural modification to the Maintenance storage area, which cannot be reversed. Therefore, this area of the Mission 66 complex retains most of its historic integrity. Following are descriptions of noteworthy changes to the Sunset Crater visitor center since its original construction. Changes not outlined here may include flooring replacement, painting, museum display installations and replacements, and installation or replacement of fixtures and appliances.

- Carport-style Storage Area – In the early 1980s, walls were built in the carport-style storage area to create office space, a lunchroom and an enclosed storage room (Figures 7 and 8). The flat roof of the carport was removed and a shed roof was added that raised the southeast elevation approximately four feet. During construction of the enclosure, the existing "fence" and the northeast wall of the Maintenance garage were left intact and used as walls for the new building. High-light windows on the northeast elevation of the maintenance garage were covered by the roof addition for the new enclosure.

- In the early 1990s, portions of the northwest wall of what was originally the carport area were altered to accommodate two sliding windows to provide natural light and ventilation to the maintenance offices.
- Additions to the fenced compound area – In the early 1980s, three shed roofs were built in the parking area compound to provide carport-style equipment storage areas. Roofs are supported by existing fence structures with added posts, and one wall was built to support a storage area in the south corner of the compound.
- Roofing – The maintenance shop was originally covered with cedar shingles. Roofing was replaced with composite shingles twice since original construction. In the mid-1990s, roofing was replaced with the brown-painted sheet metal roofing the buildings have now.
- Additions to the Maintenance Garage – A small utility room, measuring approximately 3' by 4,' was added to the northwest wall of the maintenance garage, with a door on the southwest elevation.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Apartment Building Description– Original Design

The apartment building is a one-story 1344-square-foot structure with one one-bedroom unit, one two-bedroom unit, and a laundry with a storage area. The original design of the building had cedar shingle siding as well as cedar shingle roofing on a hipped roof. The overall dimensions of the building are 56' northwest/southeast by 24' northeast/southwest. The 552-square-foot one-bedroom unit is divided into four rooms, and the 672-square-foot two-bedroom unit is divided into five rooms. The 120-square-foot laundry room is divided into three rooms, including two storage rooms.

The northeast (rear) elevation of the building faces a backyard area adjacent to the maintenance compound. The northeast elevation has three double-hung one-over-one windows, one double-hung two-over-two windows, and three doors – two entryways to the kitchens of each unit and one entryway to the laundry room. The southwest (front) elevation faces a front yard area adjacent to the housing area driveway. The southeast elevation has two front entryway doors, two three-part windows with a central fixed sash flanked by one-over-one double-hung windows, and two two-over-two double-hung windows. Southeast and northwest elevations are covered in cedar shingles and have no means of egress or other additional features.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument Apartment Building Description– Changes and Condition

The Sunset Cater Volcano National Monument Apartment building has not been structurally altered since its original construction, and therefore retains a high degree of its historic integrity. The only significant change to the building is the roofing. The original cedar shingle roofing has been replaced with composite shingles.

Administrative Road System – Original Design

The administrative road system was designed to provide access to the employee parking compound, the housing area, and the water tower and pump house. The road system is a combination of paved and unpaved roads comprised of a main single-lane road ending in a loop near the water tower and pump house with two spur roads – one providing access to the employee parking area compound and another providing access to the housing area loop. The road system is unpaved from the housing area south to the water tower and pump house loop.

Administrative Road System – Changes and Condition

The road system for the Sunset Complex retains a high degree of its historic integrity and visual character. Informal, unpaved spur roads have been added to the administrative road system, and many have been subsequently closed, however additions and alterations have been minor and ephemeral, and the road system still maintains the basic footprint of the original design.

Water Tower – Original Design

The water tower is 100 feet high and has a 50,000-gallon reservoir. A well originally supplied water to the tower. The well was abandoned in the late 1980s, and the Doney Park Water Company now supplies water to the tower.

Water Tower – Changes and Condition

Routine maintenance of the water tower and associated mechanical equipment does occur, however no significant changes have been made to the water tower since its construction in 1965. In 2000 a new pump house was constructed adjacent to the base of the tower; however, no significant alterations were made to the water tower.

Old Pump House –Original Design

The pump house is a 16 square-foot cinder block structure built in connection with the water tower in 1965. Original construction included a corrugated metal shed roof.

Old Pump House - Changes and Condition

The old pump house retains most of its structural integrity, however modifications to the structure have altered its visual character slightly, and these modifications are potentially reversible. In 2000, the exposed cinder block was covered with stucco and the shed roof was replaced with a metal gable roof.

Registration Requirements

The NPS theme study, *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* by Sarah Allaback (2000), provides a contextual basis for considering National Register eligibility of the over 100 Mission 66 visitor centers throughout the United States. Allaback (2000) outlines the registration requirements for Mission 66 visitor center complexes. To be eligible under Criteria A and/or C in the context of the Mission 66 era, according to Allaback (2000:273), properties should possess the following characteristics:

1. It should be a precedent of Mission 66 design (1945-1956), originally planned and built as part of Mission 66 (1956-1966), or built as part of the Parkscape program (1966-1972); and the property's period of significance should fall between 1945 and 1972.
2. The visitor center complex should retain most or all of the distinguishing characteristics of a Mission 66 design. It should be a centralized facility that includes multiple visitor and administrative functions within a single architectural floor plan or compound. Programming elements should include interpretive displays, space for slide shows and films, visitor contact areas, restrooms, and other public services. The visitor center should be intended to serve the public by interpreting scenery, natural resources, and cultural sites; and should be a major point of visitor arrival, orientation, and service.
3. It should possess physical integrity. It must have integrity evident through historic qualities including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
4. It should be a successful reflection of the principles of Park Service Modern style. Distinguishing characteristics of this style include: location that emphasizes efficient "visitor flow;" segregation of administrative areas from public areas; centralization of services; use of contemporary modern architecture stylistic elements; free floor plans;

integration of interior and exterior public spaces through the use of windows; wide often sheltered entryways that promote easy movement of crowds; views of park landscapes; location near a landscape of attraction to be interpreted; building profiles with low horizontal effect; buildings that “harmonize” with natural landscapes through the use of horizontality of massing, and color and texture of materials; L-shaped or rectangular buildings or around a central courtyard; use of native plants in landscaping; and Outdoor public spaces often incorporated into the visitor center.

Allaback (2000) notes that “For any property achieving significance within the last 50 years, National Register ‘Criterion Consideration G’ requires that the property must be of ‘exceptional importance’...” Therefore, a visitor center less than 50 years old should possess the following characteristics (in addition to meeting the registration requirements for Criteria A and C):

1. It should possess substantial physical integrity – held to higher standards than for properties older than 50 years, and elements critical to distinguishing the property’s artistic merit as an example of NPS Modern design should be unaltered.
2. The property should possess exceptional importance in one or more of the following ways:
 - a. as an outstanding example of the NPS Modern style
 - b. as the work of a regionally, nationally, or internationally recognized architect or firm working for NPS
 - c. as an example of distinctive programming, planning, or design that affected the evolution of the visitor center as a building type
 - d. as an essential part of Mission 66 development that had great importance in the history and development of an individual park
 - e. for association with events and activities that made contributions to the history of local communities or native groups

REFERENCES CITED

Allaback, Sarah

2000 *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type*. US Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Washington, D.C.

National Park Service

1948 *The Master Plan: Sunset Crater National Monument*. Document on File, Flagstaff Area National Monuments Archives.

National Park Service

1956 *Mission 66: To Provide Adequate Protection and Development of the National Park System for Human Use*. U.S. National Parks and Reserves. Washington, D.C.

Husted, James H.

1968 *Sunset Crater National Monument, Arizona: Special Study of Sunset Crater Visitor Center*. Division of New Area Studies and Master Planning, National Park Service. Washington, D.C.

Mahan, Russell

1958 *Memorandum July 2, 1958 from Superintendent Russell Mahan 1958 to Chief Western Office Design and Construction*. Flagstaff Area National Monuments Archives WUPA-12609.

Illustrations

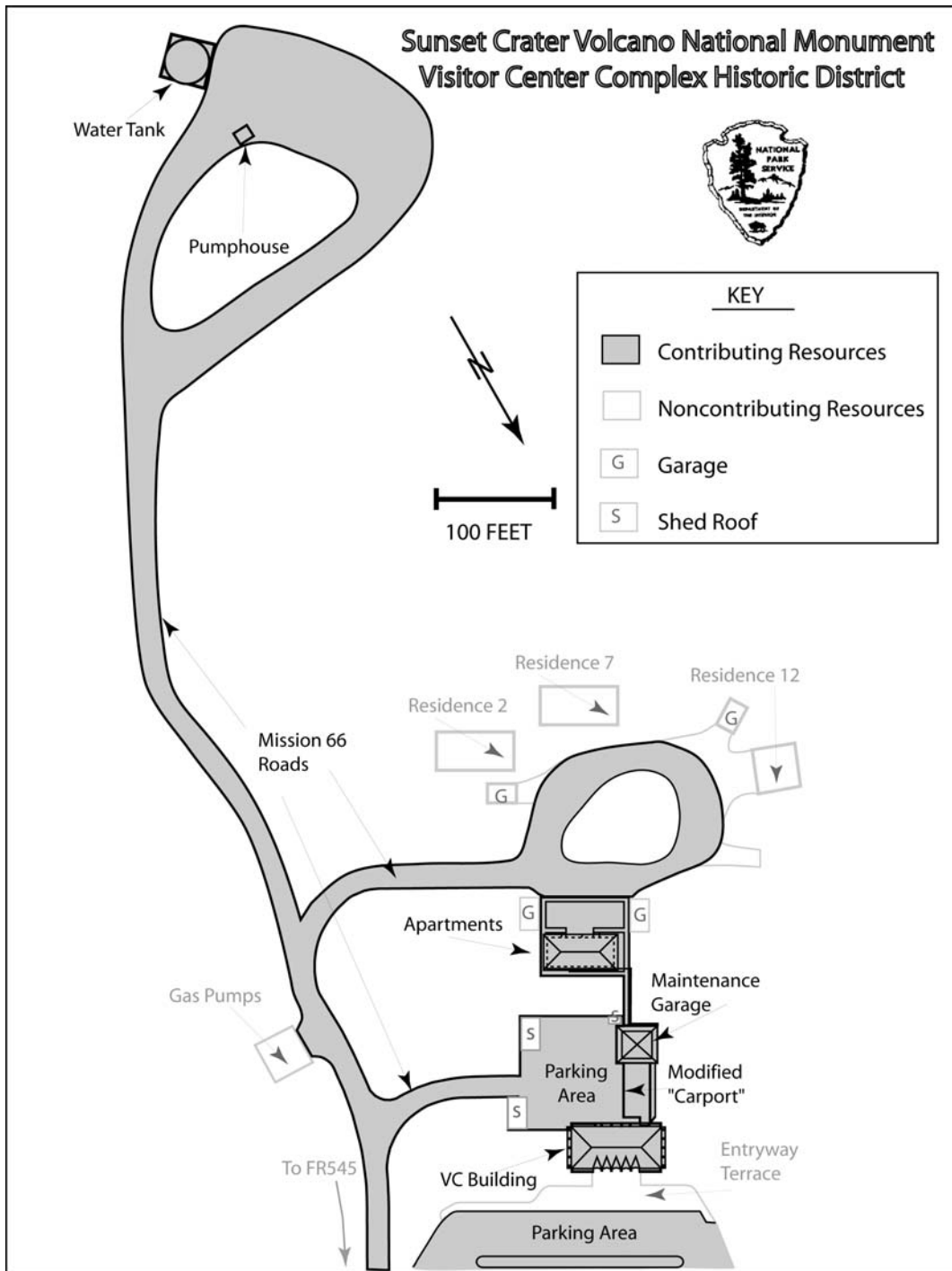


Figure 1. Plan of the Sunset Crater Visitor Center Complex showing contributing and some of the noncontributing resources.

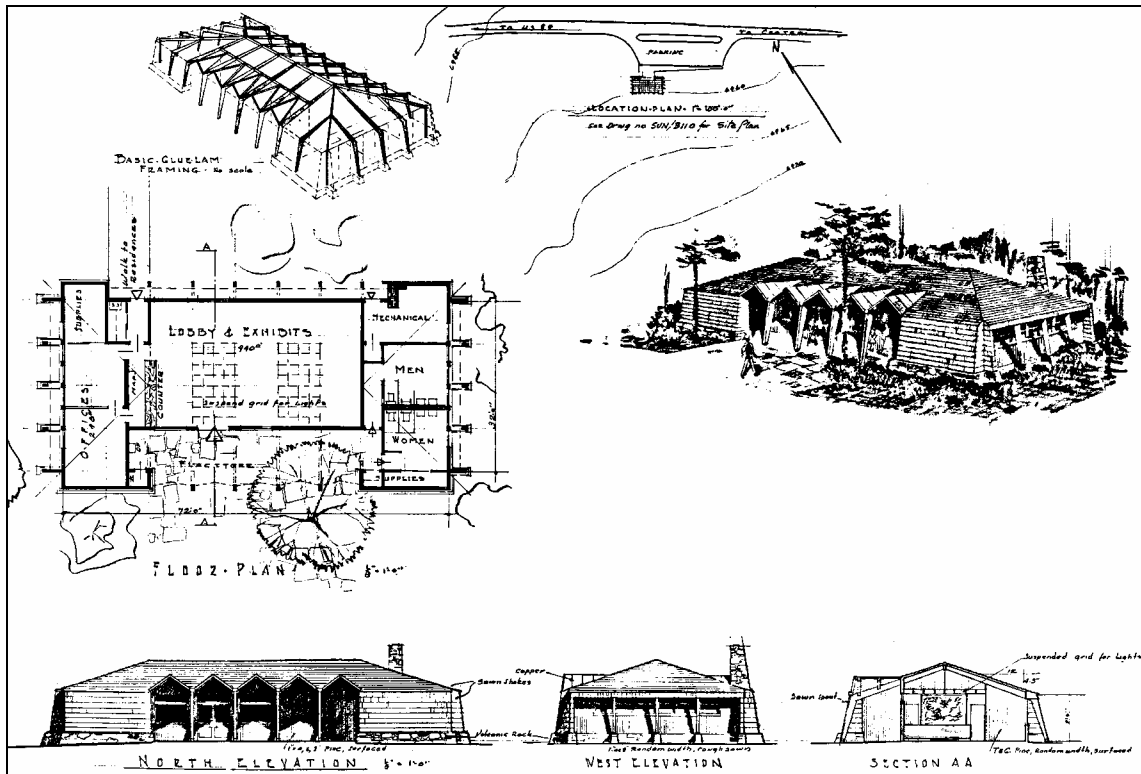


Figure 2. Perspective, plan, elevation, and section drawings - modified from Doty's original designs (NPS 1965).



Figure 3. Sunset Crater visitor center exhibit room interior (NPS 1968).

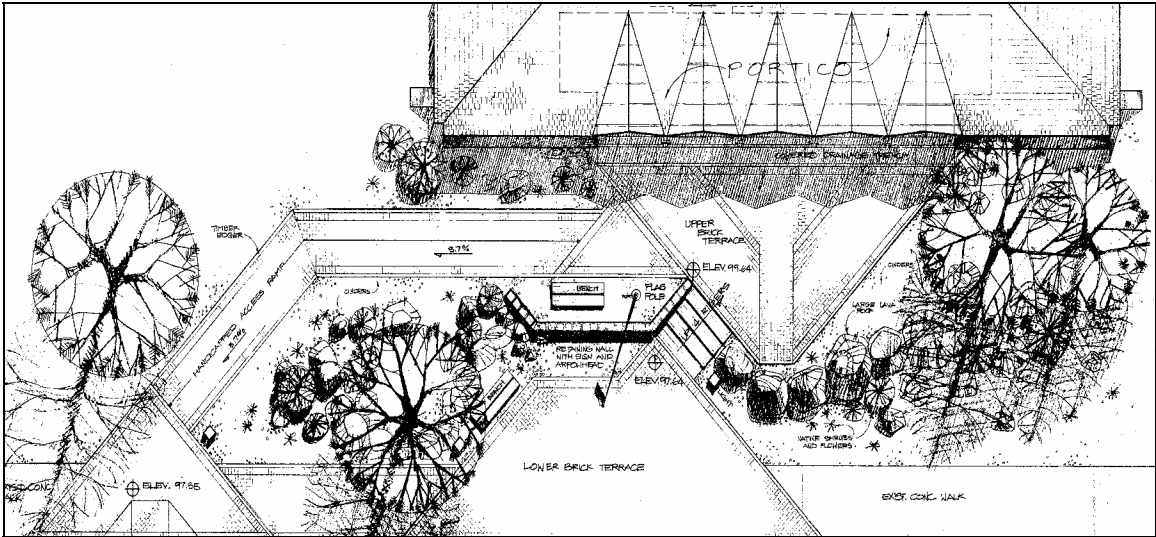


Figure 4. Front walkway, terrace, and landscaping, as designed in 1983.



Figure 5. Sunset Crater visitor center, looking west (NPS 1968). Note windows, walkway, and raised planters.



Figure 6. Sunset Crater visitor center, looking west (NPS 2003). Note windows and walkway.



Figure 7. Maintenance area before carport was enclosed (NPS 1967).



Figure 8. Maintenance area after carport was enclosed (NPS 2003). Also note shed in right foreground, also added in the early 1980s.



Figure 9. Two-unit apartment building (NPS 1967).



Figure 10. Two-unit apartment building (NPS 2003).