

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549

INITIAL STATEMENT OF BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

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OMB APPROVAL  
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OMB Number: 3235-0104  
Expires: September 30, 1998  
Estimated average burden  
hours per response.....0.5  
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Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,  
Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or  
Section 30(f) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

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1. Name and Address of Reporting Person\*  
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Benton, William P.  
-----  
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Parklane Towers West, Suite 1610  
-----

(Street)

3 Parklane Blvd.

Dearborn MI 48126  
-----  
(City) (State) (Zip)

-----  
2. Date of Event Requiring Statement (Month/Day/Year)

12/11/97

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3. IRS or Social Security Number of Reporting Person (Voluntary)

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4. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol

Sonic Automotive, Inc. (SAH)  
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5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer  
(Check all applicable)

- 10% Owner
  - Director
  - Officer (give title below)
  - Other (specify below)
- 

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6. If Amendment, Date of Original (Month/Day/Year)

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7. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)

- Form filed by One Reporting Person
  - 
  - Form filed by More than One Reporting Person
- 

<TABLE>  
<CAPTION>

TABLE I--Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned  
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4.	1.	2.	3.	
	Title of Indirect Security Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) (Instr. 5)	Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4)	Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	Nature
<S>	None	<C>	<C>	<C>

</TABLE>

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 5(b)(v).

(Over)  
SEC 1473 (9-96)

FORM 3 (continued)

<TABLE>  
<CAPTION>

TABLE II--Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned  
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4)	Exercise Price of Derivative Security	Ownership Form of Derivative Security Conversion or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5)	Security: Direct Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5)
	Date Exercisable and Expiration Date	Amount or Number of Shares			

