

# **COLLEGE HILL HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY**



PREPARED FOR:  
The City of Topeka, Kansas

PREPARED BY:  
Rosin Preservation, LLC

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# **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Topeka (City) contracted with Rosin Preservation, LLC to conduct the first phase of an intensive-level survey of historic resources within the College Hill neighborhood. Originally developed by board members of nearby Washburn College, this roughly sixty-nine-acre area contains a cohesive residential neighborhood that emerged as one of the city's first suburbs.

The houses that line the east and west sides of College Avenue comprise the College Avenue Historic District (District) at the core of the College Hill neighborhood. The District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. Determining the possibility of expanding the boundaries of the District requires an understanding of the context of the entire neighborhood as well as an evaluation of extant resources. The City of Topeka Planning Department divided the College Hill neighborhood into four separate areas to be surveyed in phases. As the first phase of the project, Rosin Preservation surveyed Areas 1 and 2. Survey Area 1 occupies roughly fifty acres west of College Avenue and contains 153 primary resources (*Figure 1*). Survey Area 2 occupies roughly nineteen acres east of College Avenue and contains 67 primary resources (*Figure 2*). These rectangular survey areas contain resources typical of a residential neighborhood, primarily single-family residences. The majority of the primary resources, defined as single-family residences, multi-family apartment buildings, or commercial buildings, maintain their historic functions. Nearly seventy-five percent of the primary resources have auxiliary resources such as garages or outbuildings. The primary resources represent a range of construction dates, from 1893 to 2007. The majority were constructed between 1910 and 1929. They reflect the growth of the city, as families moved away from the commercial center and into less developed areas. They also reflect the growth of Washburn College as it developed houses on vacant land around its campus as an additional source of income.

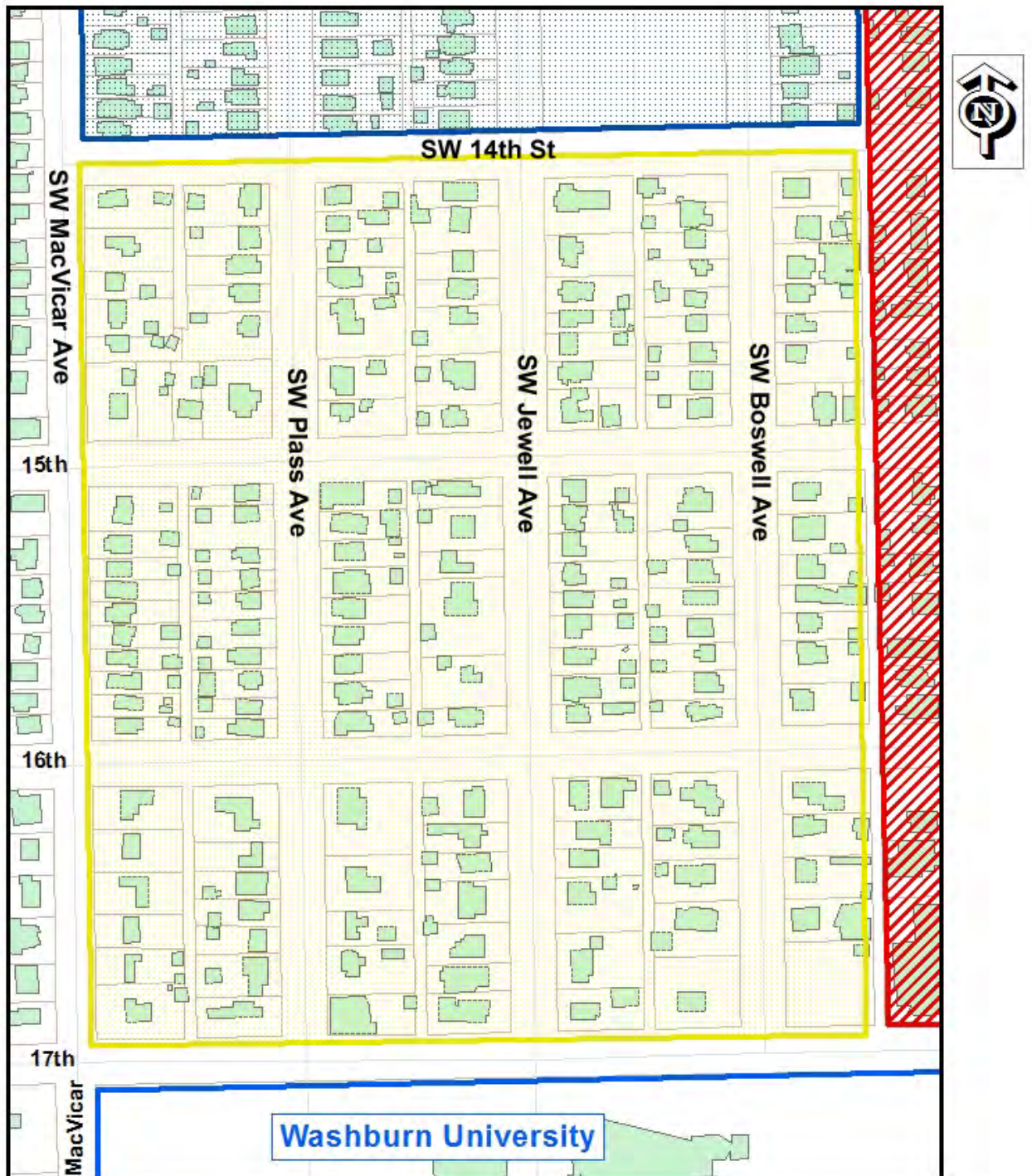
The College Hill Historic Resources Survey encompasses two objectives:

- 1) to identify, record, photograph, and evaluate through architectural/historic survey those individual properties and potential districts in the Survey Area that, on the basis of age, integrity and associations, meet the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and
- 2) to substantiate such assessments; and to identify and characterize those portions of the Survey Area which, on the basis of insufficient age or integrity, exclude them from consideration for nomination in the National Register of Historic Places and to substantiate such assessments.

During November and December 2014, Rosin Preservation principal Elizabeth Rosin, and associates Rachel Nugent and Lauren Rieke, and sub-consultant Brad Finch performed survey activities. Ms. Rieke and Mr. Finch completed field survey and photography. Ms. Nugent and Ms. Rieke entered data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Finally, Ms. Nugent and Ms. Rieke analyzed the data, prepared the historic context, developed survey recommendations, and prepared this report of findings.

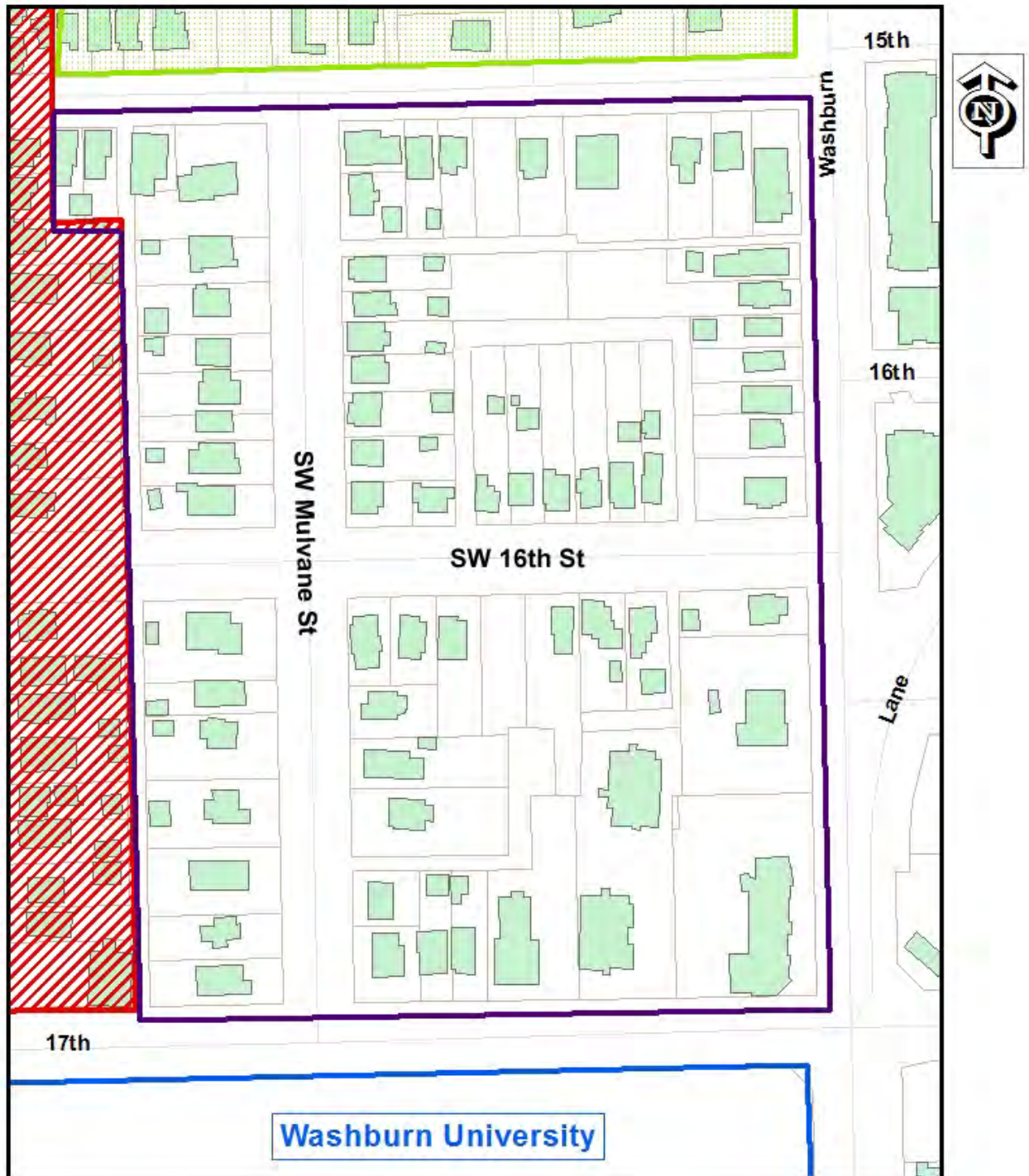


**FIGURE 1- SURVEY AREA 1**



Topeka Planning Department 2014

**FIGURE 2- SURVEY AREA 2**



Topeka Planning Department 2014



# **METHODOLOGY**

Rosin Preservation completed the College Hill Historic Resources Survey in conformance with the procedures for historic resources survey outlined in *National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Survey: A Basis for Preservation Planning* and the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office *Instructions for Completing the Architectural/Historic Inventory Form*. Evaluation of resources for significance was in accordance with *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

The scope of work included the following:

- Field survey and photography of individual properties.
- Archival research sufficient to develop a historic context for the Survey Area and to identify dates of construction (approximate to within five years) for all buildings surveyed.
- Compilation of physical and historical information in a database and preparation of a report that summarizes the findings.
- Preliminary identification of each resource's architectural style or property type, period of construction, and architectural integrity.
- Preliminary identification of all architecturally significant sites, objects, buildings, structures, and districts within the Survey Area.
- Evaluation and determination of properties and districts that appear eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Recommendations for future preservation of historic resources identified in the Survey Area.

## **FIELD SURVEY**

During field survey the consultants examined every resource in the Survey Area regardless of age, whether it had been previously surveyed, or its existing National Register designation. The team took high-resolution digital photographs and recorded information about the exterior physical appearance of each resource, specifically building materials, architectural style, and condition. Primary elevation photographs conform to standards for survey documentation set forth by the Kansas Historical Society (KSHS).

## **ARCHIVAL RESEARCH**

Historical research is critical to understanding the evolution of the built environment as well as the social history of the Survey Area. Research occurred concurrently with field survey and data review. This approach allowed the team to merge field and research data to create a strong and understandable relationship between the events in College Hill's history and its built environment, to develop a historic context for the Survey Area, and to establish dates of construction for individual properties.

A variety of primary and secondary resources provided background information about the people, buildings, and developments that created the residential community that exists in 2014. The consultants reviewed the existing National Register nomination for the College Avenue Historic District and written histories of the neighborhood and the City of Topeka. Primary sources, such as city directories, and newspaper articles obtained from the Topeka Room at the Shawnee County Public Library, were reviewed to understand the development of the Survey Area. Other sources included the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from 1913, 1923, 1932, 1950 and 1955, and aerial photographs. The Shawnee County Tax Assessor records provided approximate dates of construction, although these had to be verified through field survey and additional research.

## **COMPILATION OF DATA**

Rosin Preservation compiled survey information in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet provided by KSHS, which was then uploaded to the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory (KHRI) database. The database fields record each building's physical features (e.g., plan, materials, architectural style and/or property type, outbuildings, etc.) as well as historical information (e.g., date of construction, original and current function). When linked with digital records from past and future surveys, this database enhances the understanding of historic resources in College Hill.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The consultants analyzed three categories of data to identify contiguous historic districts and/or individual properties that appear potentially eligible for National Register listing. The following three categories address issues important in determining the significance of a property and its National Register eligibility.

- Architectural Style/Property Type
- Date of Construction
- Architectural Integrity

The “Survey Results” section of this report provides a detailed description of this analysis and the survey findings for each separate Survey Area.

### **ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS**

After compiling and reviewing the results of the field survey, Rosin Preservation analyzed architectural styles and vernacular property types by reviewing photographs and database information. Rosin Preservation assigned each building an architectural style and/or vernacular property type. *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia McAlester provided guidance for identifying properties by architectural style or building form and ensured the use of terminology consistent with National Register nomenclature.

### **ESTABLISHING DATES OF CONSTRUCTION AND PROPERTY HISTORIES**

Historic maps and atlases, an index of building permits, written histories of the area, and county tax assessor records provided starting points for determining dates of construction. When historic accounts, county tax records, and historic maps did not provide conclusive information, architectural style and comparison to similar buildings in the Survey Area were used to estimate construction dates.

### **EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY**

All properties eligible for listing in the National Register, whether for individual significance or as contributing elements to a historic district, must retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the period of time in which they are significant.<sup>1</sup> The National Park Service uses the following areas to define integrity. A property must retain integrity in a majority of these areas to be eligible for the register.

- **Location:** The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
- **Design:** The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- **Setting:** The physical environment of a historic property.
- **Materials:** The physical elements that were combined during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

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<sup>1</sup> A contributing property to a historic district does not have to meet the same threshold for integrity as an individual landmark, but it must retain enough fabric to contribute to the significance of the district. Properties contributing to a district that is significant in the area of architecture must retain a higher degree of integrity than properties in a district that is significant for associations with an important individual or with historical events or patterns of history.

- Workmanship: The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- Feeling: A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.<sup>2</sup>

Based on visual inspection, each building received an integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor reflecting how much of the original design, workmanship, exterior materials, and overall feeling of a past period of time remain.<sup>3</sup> The consultants employed a “glass half-full” approach to integrity evaluation, considering the reversibility of alterations as well as the quality of alterations. The following criteria served as the basis for rating architectural integrity in this survey.

#### Excellent

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- The exterior cladding material has not been altered;
- The majority of the building's openings are unaltered or were altered in a sensitive and appropriate manner using similar materials, profiles, and sizes as the original building elements;
- Significant decorative elements, including porches, are intact;
- Design elements intrinsic to the building's style are intact;
- The overall feeling or character of the building for the time period in which it was erected is intact. Changes over a period of time are sympathetic and compatible to the original design in color, size, scale, massing, and materials;
- Character-defining elements from the time period in which the building had significant associations with events or important individuals remain intact; and
- If over fifty years in age, the building appears to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or would be a contributing element to a historic district.

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: National Register Publications, 1998), 45.

<sup>3</sup> Architectural integrity differs from physical condition. A building with excellent integrity may be in very poor condition and, conversely, a building with very poor integrity may be in excellent condition.



### Good

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- Significant portions of original exterior cladding materials remain;
- Some alteration of original building openings or spaces has occurred using new materials and profiles, but not causing irreversible damage to the original configuration of openings and spaces;
- Significant decorative elements, including porches, remain intact;
- Alterations to the building are reversible and the historic character of the property could be easily restored;
- Additions to a secondary elevation are in an appropriate manner, respecting the materials, scale, and character of the original building design;
- The historic feeling or character of the building is slightly weakened by change or lack of maintenance; and
- The building would be a contributing element to a historic district and/or it might be independently eligible for register listing if restored in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

### Fair

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- Exterior cladding material has been altered or added; however, there is some indication upon visual inspection that if removed, enough of the original cladding material might remain that the property could be restored to its original appearance;
- The majority of the building's openings were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles, and sizes;
- Some alterations to significant decorative elements, including porches;
- Additions generally respect the materials, scale, and character of the original building design, but may be more difficult to reverse without altering the essential form of the building;
- Historic feeling or character of the building is compromised, but the property could be restored, although reversal of alterations and removal of inappropriate materials could be costly; and

- If restored in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and if the property has associations with a district's area of significance, the property might be a contributing resource to a historic district.

#### Poor

- The form and massing of the building were altered;
- Exterior materials were altered;
- The majority of the building's openings, such as windows and doors, were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles, and sizes;
- Multiple decorative elements, including porches, have been altered;
- Alterations are irreversible or would be extremely difficult, costly, and possibly physically damaging to the building to reverse;
- Later additions do not respect the materials, scale, or character of the original building design;
- The overall historic feeling and character of the building is significantly compromised; and
- Further investigations after removal of non-historic materials and alterations may reveal that the structure retains greater architectural integrity than originally apparent and should be re-evaluated.

## **NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY**

Following data analysis, the consultants made preliminary evaluations of all inventoried properties according to the criteria and standards for historic resources established by the National Park Service. This included a preliminary assessment of individual eligibility for listing in the National Register and/or as contributing elements to a National Register historic district.

### **EVALUATING NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY**

In addition to retaining integrity of their historic architectural design, properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places must meet certain criteria of historic significance. Historic significance is the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of a community, a state, or the nation. Information such as date, function, associations, and physical characteristics affect significance.

To be listed in the National Register, properties must have significance in at least one of the following areas.

- Criterion A: Association with events, activities, or broad patterns of history.
- Criterion B: Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Criterion C: Embody distinctive characteristics of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Criterion D: Have yielded, or be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The consultants analyzed data relating to the architectural integrity and historic significance of each surveyed property to identify contiguous districts and individual properties that appear potentially eligible for National Register listing.<sup>4</sup> Rosin Preservation used the following terminology to complete this analysis.

- **Individually Eligible** applies to properties that retain excellent architectural integrity and clearly represent associations with the established historic context(s). A property that independently meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation can also be contributing to a historic district if it falls within the district boundaries and has associations with the district's areas of significance.
- **Contributing to a District** applies to properties that do not retain sufficient integrity or associations to merit individual listing but would enhance the historic associations and the architectural qualities of a historic district. A National Register district is a significant concentration of sites, buildings, structures, or objects that are united historically or aesthetically by design, physical development, or historic events. Contributing properties do not have to be individually distinctive, but must contribute to a grouping that achieves significance as a whole. The majority of the components that define a district's historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. Contributing buildings typically have "Excellent" or "Good" integrity, although there may be occasions where resources with "Fair" integrity are contributing.
- **Non-Contributing to a District** applies to individual properties located within a historic district that have lost their historical integrity, were not present during the period of significance or do not relate to the documented significance of the district. Following KSHS policy, properties with non-historic siding were considered to be

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<sup>4</sup> SHPO staff makes official determinations of National Register eligibility for properties in Kansas.

non-contributing, despite associations with proposed areas of significance. Properties with non-historic siding should be re-evaluated for register eligibility if and when the non-historic siding is removed. In some cases, non-contributing buildings, those with integrity ratings of “Fair,” can be reclassified as contributing if alterations are reversed to reveal intact historic fabric and features.

- **Not Eligible** applies to individual properties that no longer possess historical integrity due to alterations or to properties that are located within a historic district but have lost their historical integrity, were not present during the period of significance, or do not relate to the documented significance of the district. Buildings with integrity ratings of “Fair” may become eligible as contributing resources if non-historic alterations are reversed.
- **Less than Fifty Years of Age** applies to properties that are less than fifty years old and have not reached the general threshold for National Register eligibility. The National Park Service considers fifty years to be the length of time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. The National Register Criteria do allow the designation of properties that are less than fifty years of age if they can document exceptional significance. For this Survey, the fifty-year cut-off was 1965. Buildings in this category that received integrity ratings of excellent or good may be eligible for the National Register once they reach fifty years.



# **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

## **THE CITY OF TOPEKA**

Six men founded the Topeka Town Association in 1854 and established the town on the south side of the Kansas River. In the 1850s a military road linking Fort Leavenworth in the east to Fort Riley passed through the area and brought more people through Topeka. Its location on the Kansas River made Topeka an ideal steamboat landing, bringing goods and people to the new settlement. With little competition from neighboring towns, the City of Topeka thrived in the mid-1800s. Railroad connections enhanced the city's economy from the earliest years of its founding. The Union Pacific Railroad constructed lines through the city in 1866. Founded in 1859, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway constructed lines from Topeka beginning in 1868 and headquartered in the city in 1872. By 1886, the Missouri Pacific and the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad constructed lines as well.<sup>5</sup>

The city incorporated in 1857 and in 1858 became the county seat of Shawnee County. When the Kansas Territory entered the Union as a free state in 1861, Topeka was designated the state capital. The town had a population of 700 in 1862.<sup>6</sup> Development of the railroads and the city's governmental associations helped to sustain the city's economy through the Civil War and in the period immediately following the war. Eugene, a town just north of Topeka across the Kansas River, was annexed in 1867, expanding the limits of the town.

The late-1800s brought a period of dramatic growth. By 1870, the population had skyrocketed to 5,000. It tripled in the following decade, and by 1890 had reached 35,000.<sup>7</sup> This exponential growth created a building boom throughout the city. Sixty-nine new additions were platted during this time, including Quinton Heights south of the city, and Highland Park southeast of the city. The city introduced street car lines along major thoroughfares such as Kansas Avenue and 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Several new additions, including College Hill, subsequently developed along these lines. In 1888 improvements to the city included three thousand new buildings, four miles of paved streets, twelve miles of sewer lines, and a new viaduct and power plant.<sup>8</sup> However, an economic decline in the 1890s halted construction in these new areas until the 1910s. Continued support and close association with what is now known as Washburn University, one of Topeka's first institutions of higher education, reduced the impact of this decline in the College Hill

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<sup>5</sup> Sally Schwenk, Kerry Davis and Cathy Ambler, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, "College Avenue Historic District, (Kansas City, Missouri, 2006), 70-71.

<sup>6</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 72.

<sup>7</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 72.

<sup>8</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 72.

neighborhood.<sup>9</sup> The college worked to expand the neighborhood as an additional source of income, thus ensuring its continued development.

Topeka recovered from the economic decline in the early 1900s and by 1910 the population reached 43,684.<sup>10</sup> The economy stabilized due to the diversity of industries such as agriculture and manufacturing. The city's position as the state capital with its associated governmental institutions also ensured a range of employment. Hospitals, treatment facilities, and asylums, including the state insane asylum established in 1875, further contributed to the economy of the city in the 1900s.<sup>11</sup>

New subdivisions approved in the 1920s either platted vacant land between existing subdivisions or expanded the city's boundaries with nine separate annexations. Upper- and middle-class residents began moving away from the city center to new suburban areas on the perimeter of the city, such as Westboro, located approximately one mile west of College Hill.<sup>12</sup> By 1930, the population reached 64,120.<sup>13</sup>

Between 1925 and 1950, very little development occurred in the city.<sup>14</sup> The City of Topeka suffered economically beginning in the 1920s and continuing into the Great Depression of the 1930s. A drought during this time led to further agricultural depression. Projects from the Works Progress Administration provided some relief. Although headquarters for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway remained in the city, the company relocated their manufacturing enterprises, leaving many vacant rail yards, and halting Topeka's status as a leading rail center in the region.<sup>15</sup> Reflecting this downturn, by 1940 the population had grown by only 3,000 residents within ten years to 67,833.<sup>16</sup> After the great building boom in the 1920s, little development occurred in the survey areas throughout the next few decades. Less than thirty of the surveyed houses date to the period from 1930 to 1965.

The economy revived during World War II as it shifted its services to support the country's efforts in the war. The establishment of Forbes Air Force Base in 1941 and the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in 1944 contributed to the economic recovery of the city.

Suburban development and an increasing use of the automobile brought great changes to the city in the 1950s and 1960s. As in cities across the country, the population grew dramatically, from

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<sup>9</sup> Washburn College became Washburn University in 1952. William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas*, originally published in 1883, online transcription, <http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/main/message.html>, (accessed 11 November 2014.)

<sup>10</sup> *Kansas Statistical Abstract, 2013*, 48<sup>th</sup> Edition. (Lawrence, Kansas: Institute for Policy and Social Research, 2014), 455.

<sup>11</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 74.

<sup>12</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 75.

<sup>13</sup> *Kansas Statistical Abstract, 2013*, 48<sup>th</sup> Edition, 455.

<sup>14</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 75.

<sup>15</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 75.

<sup>16</sup> *Kansas Statistical Abstract, 2013*, 48<sup>th</sup> Edition, 455.

just 78,791 in 1950 to nearly 120,000 in 1960.<sup>17</sup> This rapid growth spurred another building boom, and subdivisions spread into the rural farming areas that surrounded the city. These developments included both residential and commercial areas. Unable to compete with these larger shopping centers, the historic commercial areas in downtown Topeka subsequently declined.<sup>18</sup>

## HISTORY OF COLLEGE HILL

What is now known as Washburn University was founded as Lincoln College in 1865 through a 160-acre land donation from John Ritchie, a prominent Topeka investor. Due to the remote location of the donated site one-and-one-half-miles southwest of the city center and the lack of reliable transportation systems, classes opened in 1866 in a building in downtown Topeka.<sup>19</sup> In 1868, the school was renamed Washburn College following the establishment of a \$25,000 endowment from Ichabod Washburn.<sup>20</sup>

Plans to develop a campus on the donated land began in 1871, and the college grew steadily through the next two decades. During this time, president of the college Peter McVicar and the Board of Trustees organized a program of speculative land development on a portion of the college property as a means of providing supplemental income for the institution. The college was in need of funds because many of their 150 students attended on scholarship.<sup>21</sup> The Board of Trustees purchased additional parcels of land adjacent to the campus from A. W. Kinney, a local landowner. By 1878, Washburn College owned 480 acres of land, some of which was valued at

\$700 an acre, in addition to the endowment which had grown to \$60,000.<sup>22</sup> They reserved a portion of the land for future growth of the campus, leased some of the land, and sold the remainder to residential developers.

At the request of the college, surveyor J.B. Whitaker first surveyed and platted these streets in 1880, spurring development in these areas. The Plat A Addition in 1885 platted the east side of College Avenue, north of 15<sup>th</sup> Street, and along the north side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street. In 1887, surveyors platted Plat B Addition of College Hill, concentrated along both sides of Boswell Avenue

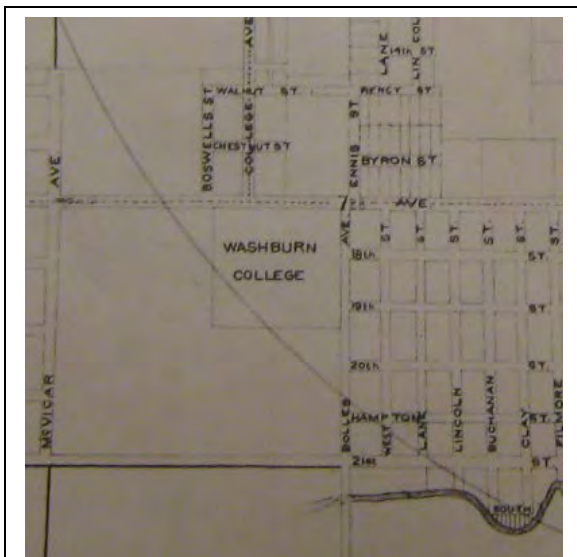


Figure 3. Plat Map, including College Hill Neighborhood 1887

<sup>17</sup> *Kansas Statistical Abstract*, 2013, 48<sup>th</sup> Edition, 455.

<sup>18</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 76.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Cutler. In 1952 the Board of Directors changed the name of the school from Washburn College to Washburn University.

<sup>21</sup> Cutler.

<sup>22</sup> Culter.

and the east side of Jewell Avenue and the west side of Mulvane Avenue. A map from 1887 shows only College and Boswell avenues and Chestnut (15<sup>th</sup>), Walnut (16<sup>th</sup>) and Euclid (17<sup>th</sup>) streets platted in the neighborhood (*Figure 3*).

The lots on these early plats are very narrow compared with the current property boundaries. Most of the houses appear to have been constructed on two to three lots as shown in the original plats. It is unknown whether the areas were re-platted or if lots were combined by individual owners. The oldest extant houses are located across the street from one another in the northwest corner of Survey Area 2 at 1501 SW Mulvane Street (c.1890) and 1504 SW Mulvane Street (started c. 1880). The house at 1501 SW Mulvane Street was constructed for Judge Franklin G. Adams, a leading figure in the community. The large lot originally extended the entire width of the block and featured a barn, chicken house and smokehouse.<sup>23</sup> Three sides of the house at 1504 SW Mulvane Street were constructed c. 1880 by J.R. Montgomery, but not completed until a later, unknown date (see below for more information).<sup>24</sup> Other early extant houses were constructed near the center of the neighborhood, on various lots along SW Boswell Avenue and SW Mulvane Street.

In selling the land, college leaders hoped to bring middle- to upper-class individuals and families to the area. These individuals would, in turn, support the college by offering room and board to students. In addition, the college deeded lands to professors in lieu of pay, further spurring construction. One such example is the parcel at 1620 Southwest Mulvane Street, in Survey Area 2, originally granted to Professor Joseph T. Lovewell.<sup>25</sup> Washburn College owned parcels concentrated on both sides of College and Southwest Boswell avenues between Huntoon and Southwest 17<sup>th</sup> streets.

The sale of these lots contributed to the financial success of the college for nearly thirty years, and the neighborhood thus became known as College Hill. In the early years of the neighborhood, houses were constructed for a specific owner. As it evolved, speculative houses were also constructed, namely by developer W.A. Neiswanger. A resident of the neighborhood, Neiswanger promoted development of the area by constructing houses in order to attract people to the neighborhood. He also renovated existing houses in the neighborhood.<sup>26</sup>

A more accessible form of public transportation aided development of the neighborhood beginning in the mid-1880s. President McVicar allied with the city to establish the City Railway Company, a street car line that came into the neighborhood along College Avenue. The railway

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<sup>23</sup> Hermione van Laer Adams, "College Hill, Past and Present," in *Shawnee County Historical Society, Bulletin #38*, (Topeka, Kansas: Shawnee County Historical Society, 1962), 5. (Survey Area 2, Resource #30, contributing)

<sup>24</sup> This house is potentially eligible for individual listing. (Survey Area 2, Resource #31, contributing)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 3. The existing house at 1620 Mulvane (Survey Area 2, Resource #52, noncontributing), was constructed c. 1910 and was later the home of Paul Lovewell.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 24.



brought both students and residents of the neighborhood to the shopping and commercial district in downtown Topeka.<sup>27</sup>

College Hill was still largely rural at this time and many in Topeka considered it as such until the 1900s. The first homes were constructed in the late 1880s, primarily along College Avenue and Southwest Boswell Avenue.<sup>28</sup> Some of the earliest houses in the neighborhood were farmsteads on large lots, with chickens, cows, and barns. The second phase of development occurred along 15<sup>th</sup> Street from Lincoln Street west to College Avenue. The third phase of construction concentrated on the north-south streets, including Southwest Mulvane Street.<sup>29</sup> This great building boom continued into the early-1890s with much of the area platted by 1898 (Figure 4). A sharp economic decline in

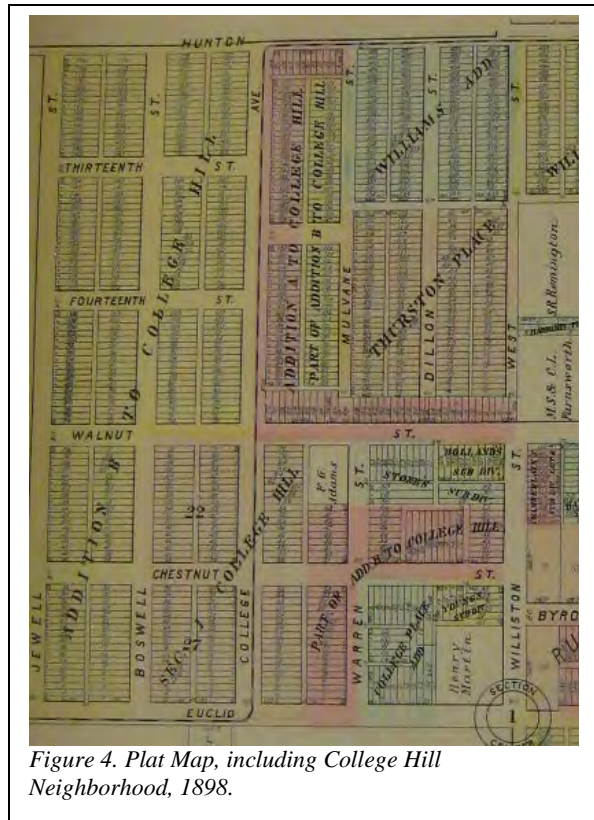


Figure 4. Plat Map, including College Hill Neighborhood, 1898.

the mid- to late-1890s impacted development. The decline was so abrupt, that some houses were never completed, especially along Mulvane Street from 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> streets, such as the house at 1504 Mulvane. Construction began in the 1880s on three sides of the house. The owner, Jay R. Montgomery then boarded up the north side of the house, and used it as a rental property after moving to California. In the 1930s it was remodeled and enlarged.<sup>30</sup> It is unknown whether other unfinished houses were demolished or completed.

Developers at Washburn College envisioned College Hill as a complete neighborhood that offered all of the amenities of the city. Because of its distance from downtown Topeka, the neighborhood offered services such as churches and schools for its residents and gained a reputation as a suburban area. Washburn College designated four lots at the southeast corner of College Avenue and Huntoon Street for a religious institution.<sup>31</sup> The neighborhood had a strong sense of community from the beginning, and published items such as the College Hill newspaper and a College Hill telephone directory. A commercial district developed on the east side of the neighborhood, near the intersection of 15<sup>th</sup> and Lane streets. Numerous businesses thrived

<sup>27</sup> Map of the City of Topeka, 1887, (Topeka, Kansas: Highland Park, 1887).

<sup>28</sup> Southwest Boswell Area is located in Survey Area 1.

<sup>29</sup> Southwest Mulvane Street is located in Survey Area 2.

<sup>30</sup> van Laer Adams, 4. George Mack, "College Hill Colonial" *Topeka Capital-Journal*, January 7, 1979, 41. 1504 Mulvane is located in Survey Area 2, Resource 31, contributing.

<sup>31</sup> Westminster Presbyterian Church first constructed a building on this site in the 1890s. When Westminster Presbyterian Church moved to its new building at 13<sup>th</sup> and Boswell in 1925, it vacated the earlier building. The Central Church of Christ demolished the 1890s church and constructed the existing building in 1935 with additions and alterations in c. 1955 and c. 1965.

throughout the years and provided services essential to the neighborhood such as groceries and drug stores. Additionally, early deed restrictions, which set a minimum cost of construction among other regulations, ensured continuity of houses throughout the neighborhood.

Due to its associations with Washburn College, the College Hill neighborhood developed a status as a progressive area, and “a community of culture and openness.”<sup>32</sup> Middle- and upper-class residents lived in the neighborhood, representing a variety of occupations, including professors, students, artists, real estate developers, writers, and teachers.

As Topeka grew, it expanded its infrastructure and services into areas on the outskirts of town. The City expanded its water system into the College Hill neighborhood in 1900. Paved brick streets soon followed, eventually covered with concrete and asphalt. Despite the infrastructure improvements, many of the parcels remained vacant through the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1904, there were only three houses on the 1600 block of Boswell Avenue.<sup>33</sup> McVicar acquired the area along the 1600 block of Plass and MacVicar avenues while he was president of the college, but it was not developed until after his death in 1903. Originally known as the Campus Front subdivision, as they developed, the blocks became part of the College Hill neighborhood.<sup>34</sup>

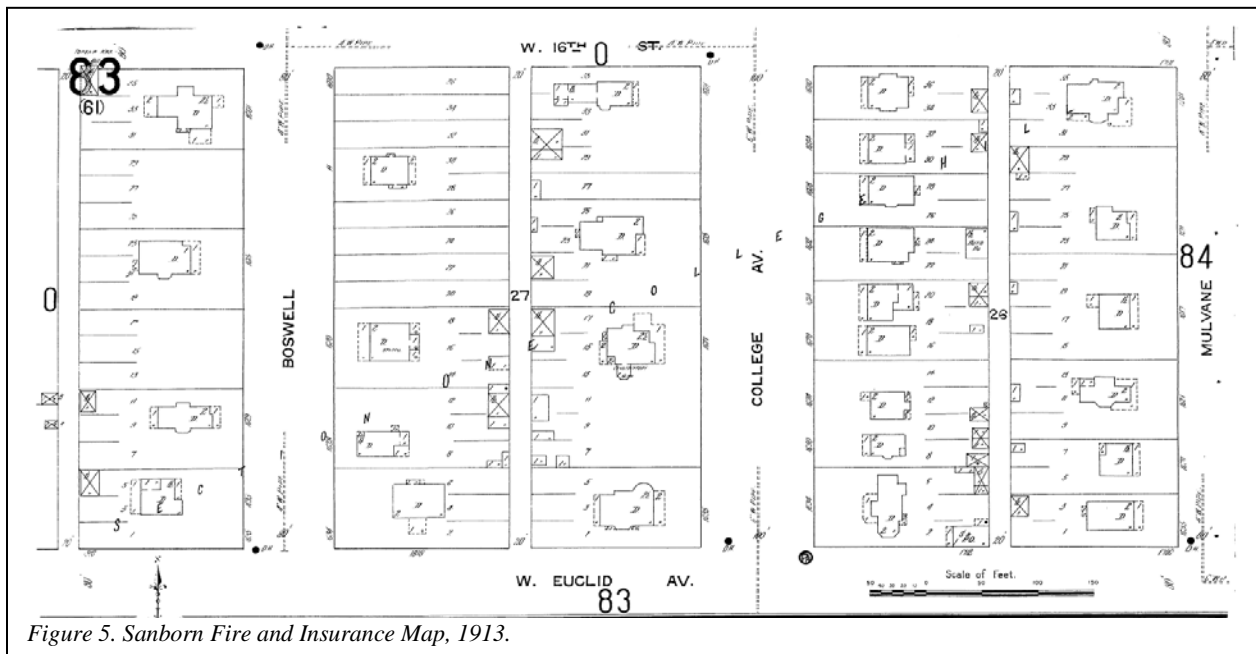


Figure 5. Sanborn Fire and Insurance Map, 1913.

A limited portion of the College Hill neighborhood appears on Sanborn Maps in 1913 (*Figure 5*). The houses are set back from the street at the center of the lots. One- to two-story dwellings with

<sup>32</sup> Schwenk, et. al., 85.

<sup>33</sup> George Mack, “McEachron home exterior remains the same,” *Topeka Capital-Journal*, no date. Vertical File- Streets- Boswell, Topeka Room, Shawnee Country Public Library, Topeka, Kansas.

<sup>34</sup> “Preview scheduled at Showhouse,” *Topeka Capital-Journal*, February 12, 1985, 6.

irregular footprints occupy each lot. Many of the lots along Boswell Street are vacant, though the parcels in the northwest corner of Survey Area 2 are entirely occupied.

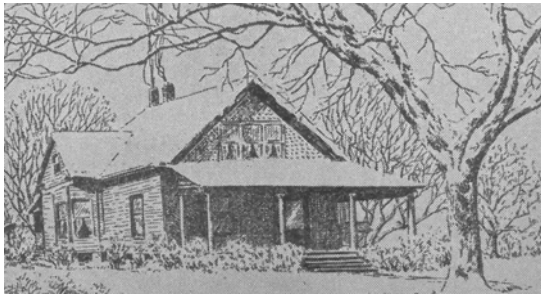


Figure 6. McEachron House, 1615 Boswell.  
Constructed c. 1920

Development in the College Hill neighborhood parallels Topeka's dramatic population growth. Over 100 new houses were constructed in the 1920s, the greatest period of growth in the neighborhood (Figure 6). MacVicar Avenue was the western boundary of the city limits at this time and some of the surrounding streets were still largely vacant. In 1923 only five houses stood on the 1600 block of Jewell Avenue.<sup>35</sup> The

lot at 1614 MacVicar, previously owned by a college Sorority, reverted to private ownership when the college allocated space on the campus for such activities.<sup>36</sup> The majority of the houses were owner-occupied by individuals with a range of occupations, including contractors, business owners, engineers, and physicians. A large number worked for the Santa Fe Railroad in various positions, such as clerk, superintendent, or civil engineer. Many of the owners had live-in housekeepers or rented rooms to students or other individuals.<sup>37</sup> Those associated with the college still lived in the area in 1924, such as Leon Schnacke, an administrator at the college who lived at 1400 Southwest Jewell Avenue.<sup>38</sup>

In the mid-twentieth century, prominent individuals resided in the neighborhood. Physicians associated with the Menninger foundation included as Dr. George and Mary Ann Penn who lived at 1529 Jewell Avenue.<sup>39</sup> Politicians included Senator Elwayne Pomeroy, who moved into the house at 1619 Jewell Avenue in 1963,<sup>40</sup> and prominent state politician John D. M. Hamilton who resided at 1616 Boswell Avenue.<sup>41</sup> College organizations, such as sororities and fraternities, utilized some houses in the neighborhood, such as 1501 Boswell Avenue which was occupied by the Kappa Sigma Fraternity as early as 1911.<sup>42</sup>

A map from 1942 shows that all of Survey Area 1 was zoned for single family residential, though the lots in the southern portion were slightly larger. Survey Area 2 was zoned for two-family residential.<sup>43</sup> The current neighborhood reflects these zoning regulations. Although still

<sup>35</sup> van Laer Adams, 34.

<sup>36</sup> van Laer Adams, 34.

<sup>37</sup> Hall's Topeka Directory and Street Guide, 1924.

<sup>38</sup> 1400 Southwest Jewell Avenue is located in Survey Area 1, Resource #49.

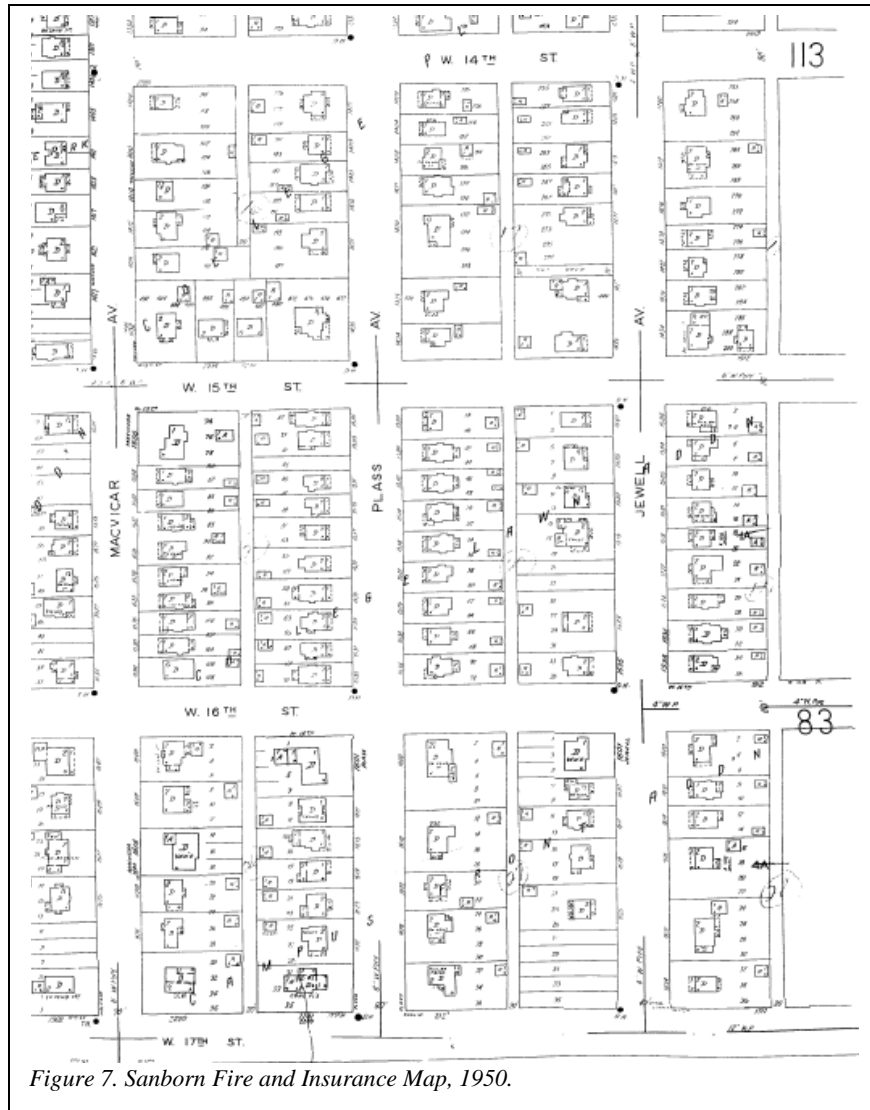
<sup>39</sup> George Mack, "Refined with time," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, February 3, 1980, 45.

<sup>40</sup> Charles Zin, "The house that flowers built," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, February 1, 1981, 41.

<sup>41</sup> George Mack, "Remodeling keeps home alive," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, no date. Vertical File- Streets- Boswell, Topeka Room, Shawnee Country Public Library, Topeka, Kansas.

<sup>42</sup> "College Hill Memories," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, October 5, 1980, 53.

<sup>43</sup> Harland Bartholomew and Associates, "City of Topeka, Kansas, District Map," (Topeka, Kansas, City Planning Commission, 1942).



primarily a neighborhood of single-family resources, the majority of the multi-family residences are in Survey Area 2, and although not constructed as multi-family resources, a handful of the previously single-family resources in Survey Area 2 have been sub-divided into apartments.

Sanborn Maps from 1950 show that few of the lots were vacant at this time. The houses are set back from the street at the center of the lots. They are one-two-story dwellings with irregular footprints and porches on the primary elevation. Most have garages or outbuildings. The number of outbuildings varies greatly- new garages were constructed, and many of the stables/ liverys were demolished. Sanborn Maps show few changes between the 1950 and 1955 (*Figure 7*). One new house was constructed in Survey Area 2, and a handful of new additions and outbuildings.

Today, most of the houses appear much the same as they do in the 1955 map. Many of the houses have similar footprints as the present day, though many now have additions constructed on the rear elevations. Several one- to two-story dwellings on large widely-spaced lots occupied

the area along 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Washburn Avenue in Survey Area 2. These have been demolished and replaced with new commercial and apartment buildings.

### **THE L.F. GARLINGHOUSE COMPANY**

The L. F. Garlinghouse Company was a leading house plan design company established in Topeka around 1907 by Lewis Fayette Garlinghouse. Initially focused on real estate, the company evolved into construction and design. It published its first house plan book titled *Bungalow Homes* in 1916.<sup>44</sup> The company quickly grew in the 1920s, as its plans were used for houses were constructed throughout the country. The company scaled back during the 1930s, eliminating its real estate department to focus solely on plan books. The plan books exhibited the most modern styles of the period, and therefore designs range from Bungalows to Art Moderne to Tudor Revival. By 1945 the company had sold over 600,000 house plans across the country. It grew to become one of the largest house plan book companies in the country, and continues to operate today.

Three of the houses in the Survey Area were constructed from Garlinghouse plans. These are 1630 Southwest Mulvane Street, 1416 Southwest Jewell Avenue, and 1534 Southwest MacVicar Avenue.<sup>45</sup> These houses illustrate a unique facet of Topeka's history and demonstrate the middle-class residences erected in the neighborhood beginning in the 1920s.

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<sup>44</sup> Douglass W. Wallace "The L.F. Garlinghouse Company: Ordering a Home Through the U.S. Mail," in *Bungalow Homes for the Nation: The L.F. Garlinghouse Co. of Topeka, Bulletin No. 83*, editors Max D. Movsovit and Jeanne C. Mithen, (December 2008), 16.

<sup>45</sup> 1630 Southwest Mulvane Street is located in Survey Area 2, Resource #54. 1416 Southwest Jewell Avenue is located in Survey Area 1, Resource #54. 1534 Southwest MacVicar Avenue is located in Survey Area 1, Resource #106.

# **SURVEY RESULTS**

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY AREA**

### **LOCATION AND SETTING**

The College Hill Historic Resources Survey (Areas 1 and 2) includes roughly sixty-nine acres in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas. It is located approximately one-and-one-half-miles southwest of the city center, directly north of Washburn University. This survey concentrated on two Survey Areas immediately adjacent to the College Avenue Historic District straddling College Avenue, the main thoroughfare of the neighborhood. The roughly fifty-acre Survey Area 1 contains 154 resources bounded by Southwest 14<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, the alley between Southwest Boswell and College avenues on the east, Southwest 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, and Southwest MacVicar Avenue on the west (*Figure 1*). The nineteen-acre Survey Area 2 contains 67 resources bounded by Southwest 15<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, Washburn Avenue on the east, Southwest 17<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, and the alley between College Avenue and Southwest Mulvane Street on the west (*Figure 2*). In total, the survey examined 218 primary resources, including single-family dwellings, apartment buildings, and commercial buildings, plus 169 additional resources, such as garages or sheds.

The survey areas are relatively flat, with some resources slightly elevated above the street. The orthogonal street grid follows the Topeka convention with numbered streets running east-west and named streets running north-south. Gravel or asphalt alleys, running north-south, bisect each block in Survey Area 1. The blocks in Survey Area 2 have L- or U-shaped alleys. The size and number of lots varies within each block. Concrete sidewalks line the north-south streets.

The survey areas are predominately residential. In Survey Area 1, two resources were constructed as residences and have been converted to commercial use by organizations associated with Washburn University. Survey Area 2 has mid- to late-twentieth century infill along the south and east perimeters. This infill includes three purpose-built apartment buildings, two mixed-use residential and commercial buildings, one residence and two commercial buildings. The surveyed resources illustrate a variety of residential property types and architectural styles constructed in Topeka. The resources date from shortly after the platting of the site to the completion of the most recent dwelling around 2014. Variations in the character and types of resources provide information about the historic patterns of residential development that occurred in the neighborhood and Topeka as a whole.

The majority of the resources are set back from the street, surrounded by open lawns. Mature deciduous and coniferous trees dots each lot. Wood or chain link fences enclose the rear portion

of some lots. Most properties have secondary resources such as garages or outbuildings. Some of these secondary resources reflect the style and materials of the primary resource; others are simple, utilitarian buildings.

Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century residential development characterizes both the Survey Areas. The resources represent a range of high style architecture and vernacular forms including Queen Anne, Craftsman, Prairie, Colonial Revival styles and National Folk Forms. Reflecting the time periods for these stylistic trends and a great building boom in Topeka, the majority were constructed between 1910 and 1929.

## **HISTORIC PROPERTY TYPES**

To assist in understanding the historic property types found in the Survey Areas, Rosin Preservation identified and surveyed properties based on their original function as well as their architectural style and/or vernacular building form/type. A property type is a set of individual resources that share physical or associative characteristics. Property types link the ideas incorporated in the historic contexts with the actual historic resources that illustrate those ideas. By examining resources according to (1) original function and (2) architectural style, the analysis addressed both shared associative (functional) characteristics as well as physical (architectural style/building form/type) characteristics.

### **ORIGINAL FUNCTIONAL PROPERTY TYPES**

Drawn from the National Register subcategories for function and use, the consultant identified different categories of historic building functions for the surveyed properties. While the functions of some buildings have changed from their original use, this analysis was based on the original building function. Figures 8 and 9 show the distribution of primary resources by historic function.

**Figure 8: ORIGINAL PROPERTY TYPES- SURVEY AREA 1**

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
RESIDENTIAL: SINGLE-FAMILY	150
RESIDENTIAL: MULTI-FAMILY	2
COMMERCIAL	0
UNKNOWN	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>153</b>

**Figure 9: ORIGINAL PROPERTY TYPES- SURVEY AREA 2**

TYPE	TOTAL
RESIDENTIAL: SINGLE-FAMILY	60
RESIDENTIAL: MULTI-FAMILY	5
COMMERCIAL	1
OTHER (MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL)	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67</b>

### **Residential Property Types**

Residential property types account for 98 percent of the resources in Survey Area 1 and 89 percent in Survey Area 2. Although these structures express a limited range of building forms and architectural styles, they provide considerable information about the influences that shaped the neighborhood as it grew throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century.

#### *Single-Family Residential Functional Property Type*

With 210 total such resources in Survey Areas 1 and 2, single-family dwellings account for nearly all of the property types surveyed. Their significance derives from the information they impart about the distribution and appearance of single-family dwellings erected in this community and reflect the variety of socio-economic groups dispersed throughout the neighborhood as it grew. This property type illustrates a variety of architectural styles and vernacular folk house forms that were popular during the era of their construction. All are detached dwellings located on rectangular lots platted on a grid system. The width of street frontage varies by lot. In general, the single-family residences are one- to two-and-one-half-story buildings constructed with masonry foundations; masonry, wood, stucco, or synthetic wall cladding; and asphalt shingle gable or hip roofs.

#### *Multi-Family Residential Functional Property Type*

Survey Areas 1 and 2 include eight multi-family properties. One is a duplex, the remainder have multiple units. The majority are multi-family resources located in Survey Area 2 and date from the late-twentieth century. The resources are set back from the street, similar to the surrounding single-family houses. For most properties, paved surface parking areas fill the remainder of the lot. The buildings have simple rectangular forms and restrained architectural styles. The rectangular buildings typically have concrete foundations and various types of cladding, flat roofs and minimal applied ornament. Most are slightly larger in scale in than the surrounding residential neighborhood, especially the more recent construction at the southeast corner of Survey Area 2.



### **Other Property Types**

This survey also identified one commercial building and one mixed-use commercial and multi-family residential building. Because the survey included so few examples of these property types, it is not possible to define characteristics for the buildings in each category. However, it is worth noting that all have exterior architectural treatments that reflect conscious design choices specific to their functions and periods of construction.

## **ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND FORMS**

Classifications based on shared physical attributes include categorization by architectural styles and/or vernacular building forms or types. The architectural styles and forms identified in the Survey Area and assigned to the properties follow the terminology and classifications accepted by the National Register of Historic Places program. This hierarchy and nomenclature relies heavily on the forms and styles discussed for residential buildings in *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia McAlester and the Transportation Research Board's report "A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing." *A Field Guide to American Houses* includes common vernacular forms of architecture adapted throughout the country under the category of "National Folk Houses."<sup>46</sup>

In 2012, the Transportation Research Board released the National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 723, titled *A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, (NCHRP Report 723). This report redefines Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split-Level dwellings as "forms" rather than "styles," using massing, layout, and shape rather than applied ornament and materials to inform classification.<sup>47</sup> The NCHRP Report was used to identify post-war dwellings in the Survey Areas.

The 220 buildings surveyed include 178 resources that represent a formal architectural style and 42 examples of building forms. The majority of resources are classified by their form because stylistic ornament was never part of the original design or has since been removed. Figures 10 through 13 show the distribution of properties by building style and type.

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<sup>46</sup> The term "vernacular" is used in its broadest application and refers to common local and/or regional building forms and the use of materials specific to a particular period.

<sup>47</sup> Emily Pettis et al., *A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 723, (Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board, 2012).

**Figure 10: ARCHITECTURAL STYLES- SURVEY AREA 1**

<b>STYLE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
PRAIRIE	48
CRAFTSMAN	34
COLONIAL REVIVAL	20
TUDOR REVIVAL	11
DUTCH COLONIAL REVIVAL	7
CLASSICAL REVIVAL	6
QUEEN ANNE	5
FOLK VICTORIAN	2
INTERNATIONAL	1
MISSION	1
MIXED	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>

**Figure 11: ARCHITECTURAL FORMS- SURVEY AREA 1**

<b>FORM</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
FRONT-GABLE	7
TRANSITIONAL RANCH	3
RANCH	3
MINIMAL TRADITIONAL	2
CLIPPED GABLE	1
OTHER	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>

**Figure 12: ARCHITECTURAL STYLES- SURVEY AREA 2**

<b>STYLE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
CRAFTSMAN	12
PRAIRIE	12
QUEEN ANNE	8
DUTCH COLONIAL REVIVAL	3
COLONIAL REVIVAL	2
CLASSICAL REVIVAL	2
NEOCLASSICAL	1
FOLK VICTORIAN	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>

**Figure 13: ARCHITECTURAL FORMS- SURVEY AREA 2**

<b>FORM</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
FRONT-GABLE	11
SIDE-GABLE	2
FLAT-ROOF COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL	2
CROSS-GABLE	2
HIP	2
FLAT ROOF MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	2
GAMBREL	1
RANCH	1
MINIMAL TRADITIONAL	1
FLAT-ROOF COMMERCIAL	1
SIDE-GABLE MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>

### **RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES**

Single-family residences were the dominant functional and architectural building type surveyed. The residential architecture of the Survey Areas represents a range of styles from the late-nineteenth-century Victorian styles through the Neo-Eclectic style with its postmodern interpretation of historical styles, as well as the gamut of nineteenth and twentieth century folk house forms.

#### **Victorian Period Residential Architectural Styles**

The Victorian Era in America (roughly 1860 to 1900) occurred during a time of rapid industrialization when building components were mass produced and easily shipped via the seemingly ever-expanding network of railroads.<sup>48</sup> Mail-order catalogues, plan books, and builders' guides helped to spread these styles quickly to cities and towns throughout the country. The flexibility provided by the newly popularized balloon frame allowed irregular floor plans, which was a departure from the traditional arrangements of square or rectangular "pens."<sup>49</sup> The availability of standardized lumber, provided by the local lumber yard or shipped in by rail, and mail-order trims produced forms that moved beyond the basic cube with protruding bays, multiple gables and towers ornamented with shingles, friezes, spindles, ornamental windows, and wrap-around porches.

The earliest residences in the Survey Areas were constructed beginning in the 1900s as new additions were platted. While many of these early dwellings are small, vernacular interpretations of popular architectural styles, there are several high-style examples of Victorian-era dwellings in the Survey Area, primarily the Queen Anne style. Other resources that date to this era represent the Folk Victorian style with simpler floor plans and more restrained ornament.

<sup>48</sup> Virginia McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 2014), 314.

<sup>49</sup> McAlester, 314.

### *Queen Anne*

The Queen Anne style was extremely popular in the Midwest during the late 1800s to about 1910, and was often used in smaller, more-rural communities such as Topeka up to World War I. The style came to America from England during the 1880s, evolved from a style developed by a group of nineteenth century architects. The style was named for Britain's Queen Anne, who reigned between 1702 and 1714 when classical ornament was often applied to traditional medieval structures.<sup>50</sup> A Queen Anne residence's most-character-defining feature is its overall form. The massing of Queen Anne homes features protruding cross-gables and turrets that contribute to an asymmetrical form. Additional exterior decoration was achieved through wall overhangs, voids, extensions and the application of a variety of materials. The earliest resource in the Survey Area, the Judge John Adams House at **1501 SW Mulvane Avenue**, c. 1893, exhibits the typical form and massing of the Queen Anne style. (Figure 14).



Figure 14. 1501 SW Mulvane Avenue. 2014.

As the Queen Anne style evolved, the emphasis on patterned wood walls became more pronounced. The one-story partial, full, or wrap-around porches that extended across the façades of these houses typically feature turned or jigsawed ornamental trim. Extensive one-story porches are common and accentuate the asymmetry of the façade. They always address the front entrance area and cover part or all of the front façade. It is not uncommon for these porches to extend along one or both sides of the houses. The most common configuration is the one- to one-and-one-half-story hipped roof with lower cross gables. Examples of this roof type in the Survey Areas include **1534 SW Boswell Street** and **1535 SW Boswell Street**. (Figure 15). While larger examples of this shape subtype commonly incorporate towers or turrets in their compact footprints, the examples of the hipped-roof-with-lower-cross-gable dwellings in the Survey Area have a more rambling, linear footprint. The Free Classic Queen Anne incorporates classical design elements such as the Palladian window, dentils, and classical columns. An example of the Free Classic decorative subtype is the house at 105 SW 15<sup>th</sup> Street.



Figure 15. 1535 SW Boswell Street, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> John C. Poppeliers, and S. Allen Chambers, Jr. *What Style Is This? A Guide to American Architecture*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003, 72.

### *Folk Victorian*

The Folk Victorian style reflects the simplification of earlier Victorian styles combined with the influence of other styles such as the Italianate or Gothic Revival. These dwellings are based on National Folk forms and were made possible with the advent of the railroad. Folk Victorian dwellings have simpler rectangular or L-shaped footprints and minimal ornament, often relegated to the porch and the gable ends. Several resources in the Survey Area exhibit elements of the Folk Victorian style, with slightly more ornament than a National Folk home. The house at **1812 15<sup>th</sup> Street** is an intact example of a Folk Victorian dwelling. (*Figure 16*).



*Figure 16. 1812 15<sup>th</sup> Street, 2014.*

### **Eclectic Period Residential Architectural Styles**

McAlester divides the Eclectic Period of American residential architecture into three sub-periods: Anglo-American, English, and French Period Houses; Mediterranean Period Houses; and Modern Houses. The Eclectic Movement drew inspiration from American Colonial-era architecture as well as the architecture of Europe. Designs emphasized strict adherence to stylistic traditions and minimal variation and innovation. During the same time period, and in contrast to the European and Colonial American-influenced designs, Modern houses also appeared. Dwellings in this subcategory represent the burgeoning impact of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School, and European modernism in the early twentieth century.<sup>51</sup> The National Register of Historic Places differentiates between the Revival styles of European and Colonial American antecedents and the distinctly American styles reflecting influences emanating from Chicago (Prairie School) and California (Arts and Crafts). Under the National Register classification of "Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals," McAlester's Anglo-American, English, and French Period Houses are synonymous with Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, Late Gothic Revival, Italian Renaissance, and French Renaissance styles. The National Park Service general category of "Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements" includes residential architecture in the Prairie School and Bungalow/Craftsman styles.

<sup>51</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988) 318-19. [update with newer edition]

## Anglo-American, English, and French Period Houses

### *Colonial Revival*

The term “Colonial Revival” refers to the rebirth of interest in the styles of early English and Dutch houses on the Atlantic Seaboard. The Georgian and Adams styles, often combined, form the backbone of the revival styles. Those built in the late nineteenth century were interpretations of the earlier colonial style, while those built from about 1915 to 1930 were more exact copies of



Figure 17. 1412 SW Jewell Avenue, 2014.

the earlier adaptations. As their use continued into the mid-twentieth century, the style became more simplified.<sup>52</sup> Thirty-two total resources express the Colonial Revival style in some way, though form or ornament. Many express the Dutch Colonial subtype of the Colonial Revival style, such as the residence at **1412 SW Jewell Avenue** (Figure 17). Character-defining features include the gambrel roof and symmetrical façade.

### *Tudor Revival*

Several residences in the Survey Area exhibit the Tudor Revival style. The Tudor Revival became immensely popular after World War I when new technologies made it easier to apply a brick or stone veneer to frame construction and returning veterans sought to recreate the architecture they had seen overseas. A steeply pitched roof defines Tudor revival. Cross-gables, decorative half-timbering, arched doors and openings, and prominent chimneys are also common. The residence at **1619 SW Jewell Avenue**, built in 1922, is an excellent example of a Tudor Revival style residence. (Figure 18).



Figure 18. 1619 SW Jewell Avenue, 2014.

<sup>52</sup> McAlester, 234-36.



## Modern Houses

### *Craftsman*

Craftsman houses date from circa 1905 through 1930. Most evolved from the early designs of Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene who practiced architecture in California from 1893 to 1914. The Greene's designed both elaborate and simple bungalow houses that incorporated designs inspired from the English Arts and Crafts movement and from Asian architecture. Popularized by architectural magazines and builder pattern books, the one-story



Figure 19. 1713 15th Street, 2014.



Figure 20. 1426 SW Jewell Avenue, 2014.

Craftsman house became popular nationwide during the early decades of the twentieth century as the most fashionable style for a smaller house. Identifying features include low-pitched roofs; wide eave overhangs, often with exposed roof rafters; decorative beams or braces under gables; and full- or partial-width porches supported by square piers.<sup>53</sup> Forty-six resources represent the Craftsman style in varying degrees. The low-pitched roof with exposed rafters, clipped front gabled porch, tapered square columns with piers and multi-light double-hung windows with vertical muntins on the house at **1713 15th Street** clearly exemplify Craftsman design. (Figure 19). The house at **1426 SW Jewell Avenue** is an excellent example of a home that references the Craftsman style through its open eaves and overall massing (Figure 20).

### *Prairie School*

Prairie School is a uniquely American architectural style that originated with Frank Lloyd Wright and other Chicago architects around the turn of the twentieth century. Pattern books spread the style throughout the Midwest over the next decade. Prairie School houses have a rectangular mass capped by a shallow gable or hipped roof. Banded windows, contrasting trim details between stories, and wide overhanging eaves underscore the strong horizontal emphasis of these design treatments.<sup>54</sup> This is the most prevalent style in the Survey Areas, representing 60 total resources. The shallow hip roof, oversized brackets and overhanging eaves identify the dwelling at **1506 SW Boswell Avenue** as a Prairie School design. (Figure 21).



Figure 21. 1506 SW Boswell Avenue, 2014.

<sup>53</sup> McAlester, 453-54.

<sup>54</sup> McAlester, 439-41.

## RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL FORMS

Throughout the nation's history, its citizens erected modest dwellings constructed of locally available materials without stylistic embellishments. The early colonists brought with them the building traditions of Europe and, using locally available materials, adapted them to their new communities. Frame buildings constructed of hewn timbers and covered with thin wood siding dominated the early folk building in New England, where massed plans more than one room deep became the norm. In the early settlements of the Tidewater South, frame houses that were one room deep became common. As settlement expanded to the West, the Midland tradition of log buildings evolved from blending the two Eastern traditions.

Simplified vernacular interpretations of Victorian forms (Folk Victorian) were popular throughout the country in the late nineteenth century. These were closely related to and often based on National Folk forms, representing more elaborate, high-style designs applied to the same forms. The character of American folk housing changed significantly as the nation's railroad network expanded in the decades from 1850 to 1890. Builders of modest dwellings no longer relied on local materials. Instead, railcars could rapidly and cheaply move mass manufactured construction materials (pre-cut lumber, nails, window and door frames, and ornamental details) from distant plants. It was not long until vernacular houses of light balloon or braced framing replaced hewn log dwellings. Despite the change in building technique and materials, the older folk house shapes persisted. The resulting houses were simple dwellings defined by their form and massing, but lacking identifiable stylistic characteristics. Even after communities became established, folk house designs remained popular as an affordable alternative to more ornate and complex architectural styles.<sup>55</sup> These traditional prototypes and new innovative plans comprise distinctive families of residential forms that dominated American folk building through the first half of the twentieth century.

Housing forms nationwide evolved once again following the lean building years of the Great Depression and World War II. While people flocked to metropolitan areas for employment opportunities, not all of them wanted the full urban living experience. Suburban development offered an appealing solution. Together, a general sense of prosperity, a housing shortage bolstered by high demand, and both government and private support for home ownership produced exponential growth of suburban areas. A surge in automobile ownership and the development of the federal highway system made an abundance of undeveloped land accessible for development.<sup>56</sup> As in previous decades, the modest size of the new housing forms and the use of mass-produced and/or prefabricated components made them affordable. Minimal Traditional dwellings evolved from earlier historical revival styles, while the Ranch house was a new form

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<sup>55</sup> McAlester, 89-90.

<sup>56</sup> Emily Pettis et al., *A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 723, (Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board, 2012), 50.



that reflected changes in attitude and aesthetics. Variations and iterations of these forms include Transition Ranch, Raised Ranch, Split-Level, and Split-Foyer.

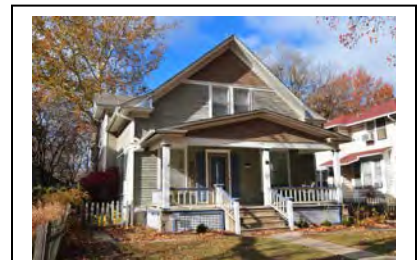
Few houses were constructed in College Hill in the mid- to late-twentieth century. Multi-family residential buildings have been constructed in the southeast corner of Survey Area 2 with the growth of Washburn College. Aside from the resources that are clearly identifiable as one of the postwar forms, the resources have simple forms and little or no ornament. Roof form and function are the primary characteristic used to identify these resources in the Survey Area. Thirty-one resources were identified by their roof type alone, including Gable-Front, Side-Gable, and Hipped types, and flat-roof commercial buildings.

### **Gable-Front**

The largest number of National Folk form houses, eighteen total resources in the Survey Areas, are the Gable-Front sub-type. The Gable-Front sub-type was popularized in two separate waves. The form initially grew from the Greek Revival movement of the 1830s-1850s and were reminiscent of temple forms. These houses were typically narrow, one- to two-story houses with steep roofs, well-suited for narrow city lots. The resource at **1510 SW 16<sup>th</sup> Street** (*Figure 22*) is an excellent example of this form. Between 1910 and 1930, the Gable-Front form evolved to reflect influences of the popular Craftsman style. These houses were one- to one-and-one-half-stories with shallow-pitched roofs, wide eaves and a wide front porch, as illustrated by the residence at **1431 SW Boswell Avenue** (*Figure 23*).



*Figure 22. 1510 SW 16th Street, 2014.*



*Figure 23. 1431 SW Boswell Avenue, 2014.*

### **Post-World War II Housing Types**

Following World War II, there was a distinct shift in American residential architecture. Modern styling and simplicity replaced the period architecture popular in the pre-war era. The 2012 NCHRP Report 723 outlines the national context for postwar housing and a process for identifying and evaluating the various property types that were constructed in great numbers during this time period.<sup>57</sup> The most common property types constructed between 1940 and 1975 include Minimal Traditional, Transitional Ranch, Ranch, Raised Ranch and Split-Level. Some designs reflected regional preferences; others resulted from new technologies and/or energy conservation parameters. Few examples of these housing types are found in the Survey Area.

<sup>57</sup> Pettis, 1-2.

### *Minimal Traditional*

Minimal Traditional dwellings evolved in the 1940s from the Tudor Revival style of the 1920s and 30s. The simplified version that evolved after the Depression typically retained the dominant front gable form and the exterior chimney while lowering the pitch of the roof, tightening the eaves and removing most of the decorative ornament. The facades feature a small inset entrance and asymmetrical fenestration, as can be seen at

**1634 SW Mulvane Avenue.** (*Figure 24*). Minimal

Traditional resources often exhibit overt Tudor Revival details, such as wood and stucco false half-timbering, that highlight this architectural influence. While compact in plan, these dwellings often incorporate an attached garage. The survey identified three dwellings that express the Minimal Traditional form.



*Figure 24. 1634 SW Mulvane Avenue, 2014.*

### *Transitional Ranch*

As explained by the name, the Transitional Ranch bridges the design gap between the Minimal Traditional dwelling and the true Ranch form. Also known as the Compact Ranch, this form has a small footprint and lack of ornament similar to the Minimal Traditional house paired with fenestration types and eaves similar to the Ranch. The house at **1629 SW Jewell Avenue** has the compact floor plan and large picture window common to the Transitional Ranch form. (*Figure 25*).



*Figure 25. 1629 SW Jewell Avenue, 2014.*

### *Ranch House*

The basic Ranch House is a low, wide one-story building with moderate to wide eaves. The low-pitched roof may be gabled or hipped; the façade may be symmetrical or asymmetrical; and the plan may or may not include an integrated garage. The survey identified three examples of the Ranch form. As illustrated by **1503 SW Washburn Avenue**, these simple dwellings have shallow roofs, asymmetrical facades; aluminum, vinyl, or asbestos shingle siding with brick or stone veneer, a variety of window types and sizes, and an attached garage. (*Figure 26*).



*Figure 26. 1503 SW Washburn Avenue, 2014.*

## DATES OF CONSTRUCTION

Using the building permit information provided by the Kansas State Historical Society, as well as the Jackson County Tax Assessor, city atlases, Sanborn Fire and Insurance Company maps, listings in city directories and architectural style, the consultants estimated dates of construction for the surveyed buildings. Dates of building additions, alterations, and outbuildings were not considered in the analysis. Figures 27 and 28 present the distribution of buildings by dates of construction.

**Figure 27: ESTIMATED DATES OF CONSTRUCTION- SURVEY AREA 1**

ERA	TOTAL	PERCENT
PRE-1900	0	0
1900 – 1909	8	5.25
1910 - 1919	39	25.5
1920 - 1929	94	61.5
1930 - 1956	11	7
1957-PRESENT	1	.75
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100</b>

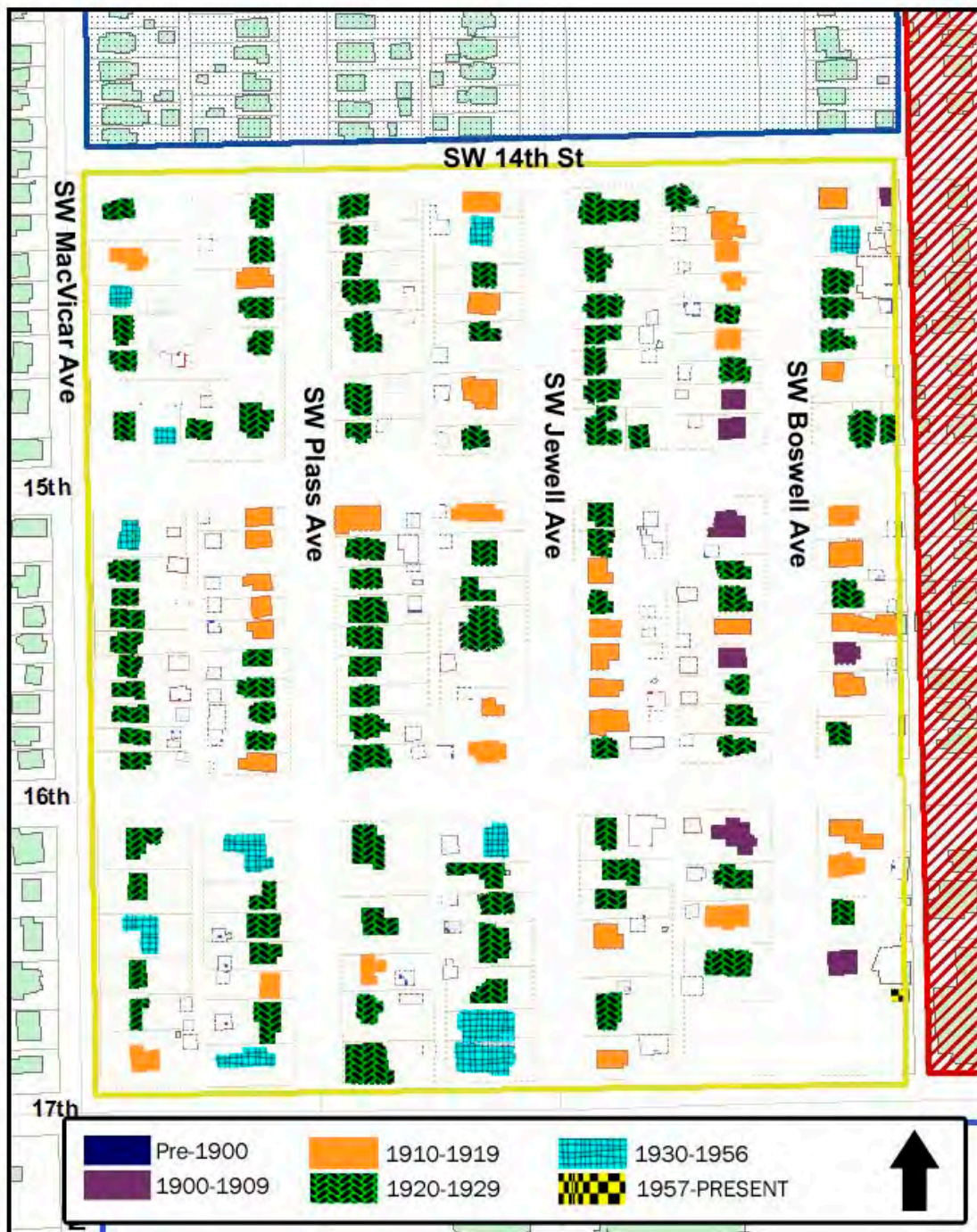
**Figure 28: ESTIMATED DATES OF CONSTRUCTION- SURVEY AREA 2**

ERA	TOTAL	PERCENT
PRE-1900	2	3
1901 – 1909	14	21
1910-1919	29	43.5
1920 – 1929	9	13.5
1930 - 1956	6	9
1957-PRESENT	7	10
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

It is interesting to note that there were two major construction periods in the College Hill neighborhood, each illustrating different architectural styles that together form the historic core of the city. The most active period of construction was from 1920 to 1929 with a smaller construction boom from 1910 to 1919. The entire city of Topeka grew during this period in the early twentieth century as the city expanded to new suburbs and new homes were erected in existing neighborhoods such as the Survey Areas in the College Hill neighborhood. While the number of resources constructed after 1929 is significantly fewer than the number of resources constructed before 1930, property owners regularly constructed new houses on vacant lots or to replace earlier houses up until 1956. There is a marked break in construction after 1956. It is more than a decade before another resource is constructed in either survey area.



**FIGURE 29- DATES OF CONSTRUCTION- SURVEY AREA 1**



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FIGURE 30- DATES OF CONSTRUCTION- SURVEY AREA 2



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## ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

All properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places must retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the period of time for which they are significant. As described above in the Methodology, each building received an integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. Figures 31 and 32 illustrate the results of the Integrity Analysis.

**Figure 31: ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY- SURVEY AREA 1**

INTEGRITY	TOTAL	PERCENT
EXCELLENT	110	72
GOOD	9	6
FAIR	1	.5
POOR	32	21
LESS THAN FIFTY YEARS OF AGE	1	.5
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>100</b>

**Figure 32: ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY- SURVEY AREA 2**

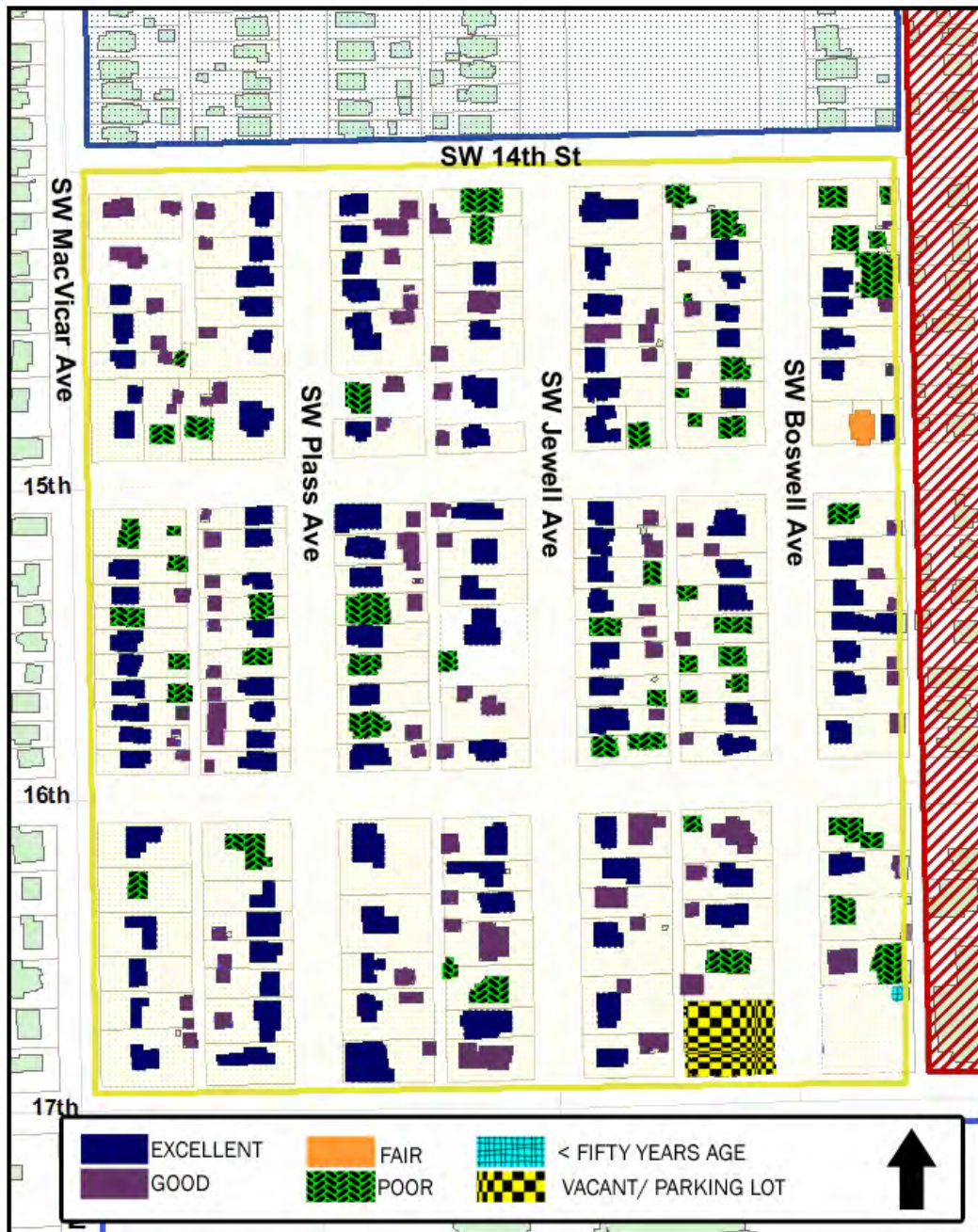
INTEGRITY	TOTAL	PERCENT
EXCELLENT	29	43
GOOD	1	1.5
FAIR	5	8
POOR	24	36
LESS THAN FIFTY YEARS OF AGE	7	10.5
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Integrity ratings represent a sliding scale of alterations to the historic fabric and the features of individual buildings. Both the quantity of changes and the reversibility of changes affected the ranking each building received. Buildings rated “Excellent” and some rated “Good” may be individually eligible for register listing if they also have significant associations that meet one or more of the National Register Criteria. Buildings that received an integrity rating of “Good” and some rated as “Fair” could be listed as contributing resources to a historic district. An integrity rating of “Poor” and in some cases “Fair” reflects the presence of numerous alterations that significantly diminish architectural integrity, regardless of historical significance. It is possible that many of the surveyed buildings rated “Fair” may retain some or all of their original historic fabric behind later alterations, such as siding, and if these changes were reversed they may improve their integrity ranking and register eligibility.



Survey Area 1 contains 110 resources identified as “Excellent” and ten identified as “Good.” Survey Area 2 contains twenty-nine resources identified as “Excellent” and one identified as “Good.” Thus these resources could be contributing to a potential expansion of the College Avenue Historic District.

**FIGURE 33- ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY- SURVEY AREA 1**



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**FIGURE 34- ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY- SURVEY AREA 2**



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# **SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

As documented in the Historic Context and in the Survey Findings, the resources in the College Hill Historic Resources Survey represent the development of the neighborhood beginning in the early 1900s. The built environment testifies to the rapid residential development that occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the entire city of Topeka was expanding. While this development was substantially complete by the 1930s, increased commercial development east of Washburn Avenue has begun to encroach on traditionally residential areas at the east end of Survey Area 2, replacing or modifying residential resources. Rosin Preservation offers the following recommendations for future preservation action.

## **NATIONAL REGISTER LISTED AND INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE RESOURCES**

One resource in the survey area (1434 SW Plass Avenue) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the Register of Historic Kansas Places under Criterion C for the area of Architecture. Rosin Preservation identified three resources potentially eligible for individual listing in the National or state register.

**1504 Mulvane Street:** This house is potentially eligible for individual listing under Criterion A for the area of Community Planning and Development. As the earliest property in the neighborhood, the house illustrates the history of development in the neighborhood, with construction beginning c. 1880, halting during the economic decline of 1890, and finishing c. 1910. W.A. Neiswanger, a local real estate developer, was integral to the early success of the College Hill neighborhood, completing construction of this house as well as other nearby houses. The house was then passed down through the generations of a single family for more than sixty years.

**2202 SW 17<sup>th</sup> Street:** This house is potentially eligible for individual listing under Criterion C for the area of Architecture as an excellent local example of the International Style. Architect Floyd Wolfenbarger designed this house for prominent local journalist and author Nelson Antrim Crawford in 1938. If this nomination was pursued, an assessment of interior integrity along with an investigation into the number and integrity of other International Style houses in the Topeka area would be necessary to determine if this house was truly individually eligible.

**1503 Washburn:** This house is potentially eligible for individual listing under Criterion C for the area of Architecture as an excellent example of the Ranch form, a distinct expression of Modern Movement residential design. Although the architect is currently unknown, the house was completed circa 1953. The first known occupant was Leo Kull of Kull

Sheet Metal Company and Scotch Cleaners and Laundry. If this nomination was pursued, an assessment of interior integrity along with an investigation into the number and integrity of other Ranch houses in the area would be necessary to determine if this house was truly individually eligible. As this residential form is ubiquitous in mid-century suburban areas, the construction of such a resource in an older neighborhood may be significant.

## **HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

A historic district is a grouping of resources that shares significant associations of history or architecture. These resources must be located in a concentrated geographical area to create a unified entity that is clearly distinct from the resources outside the district boundaries. Resources within a historic district can include individually distinctive resources (resources that might also qualify for individual register listing) as well as resources that lack the qualities of design or association to merit individual listing. District boundaries can encompass resources that lack integrity or association with the historic context and are considered “non-contributing,” although resources of this type must be a minority within the district.

Based on date of construction, architectural integrity, and historical associations, the survey data identified 150 primary resources that appear eligible for listing in a historic register, 69 resources that do not appear to be register-eligible, and one that is register-listed. While the resources lack the distinction necessary for individual listing, there are concentrations of resources with excellent or good integrity that could form National Register Historic Districts, or more likely, an expansion to the existing College Avenue Historic District. Resources with fair or poor integrity are scattered throughout the survey areas.

## **HISTORIC DISTRICT EXPANSION**

The College Hill Historic Resources Survey evaluated all of the buildings within the survey areas, individually and within the context of the surrounding streetscape. In a residential neighborhood, design and materials are important factors of integrity. The resource must retain sufficient form, stylistic elements, and historic material to communicate its time and place of construction. Together the surveyed resources reflect the continuum of residential development in the College Hill neighborhood and the development factors specific to this area.

The consultants identified Survey Area 1 as a contiguous group that retains historical and architectural integrity and appears to meet at least one of the four National Register criteria. Overall, Survey Area 1 encompasses buildings that retain excellent or good integrity. Resources with excellent or good integrity in Survey Area 2 are concentrated in the west half of the area. It displays an intact, cohesive grouping of resources that illustrate the development of the College Hill neighborhood. Because of the location bordering the existing district, the large concentration

of resources with architectural integrity, and the strong associations with historic contexts developed in the nomination, Survey Area 1 in its entirety and portions of Survey Area 2 appear to merit consideration as an expansion of the boundaries of the College Avenue Historic District. As a grouping, these buildings retain integrity of the setting, design, materials, and workmanship sufficient to convey feelings about and provide associations with the architectural character of College Hill as well as the historic contexts that support its significance.

The residential resources in these areas were constructed in the same time period and have the same character-defining features as the resources in the current College Avenue Historic District. The resources reflect the same patterns of development and illustrate the themes outlined in the historic contexts “Community Development Patterns of Topeka, Kansas” and “College Hill Neighborhood.” The expanded boundaries support the significance of the District under Criteria A and C in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Architecture. The expanded boundaries encompass some of the original plats for the neighborhood, and were developed through the efforts of Washburn University. Some were the residences of professors or staff at the college, further emphasizing the connection with the neighborhood. The resources exhibit the same range of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century styles and forms, primarily Craftsman, Prairie and National Folk Forms. The expanded boundaries include resources historically associated with the College Hill neighborhood, and as such, they form a cohesive district. Some resources are greater than fifty years of age and retain integrity, but were constructed outside the period of significance identified for the College Avenue Historic District. These could potentially contribute to a boundary expansion, as they illustrate the continued development of the District into the mid-twentieth century. The final dates for the period of significance would be re-evaluated when the subsequent survey phases are complete and information is gathered for the areas of College Hill north of 14<sup>th</sup> Street prior to proceeding with a nomination for a boundary increase.

The historic district boundary expansion would also extend the period of significance from c. 1930 to 1956, a logical end date for this area. This is the latest construction date for all of the resources that comprise the limited but regular building campaign that continued in this area after 1930. While there is a distinct break in construction dates for resources in the College Avenue Historic District (1930), the property owners in the surrounding area continued to construct single-family houses on the few remaining vacant lots until 1956, continuing the historic context of residential development.

#### General Registration Requirements

Resources eligible for listing as a contributing property to a historic district must retain the architectural and structural features that tie the resource to its original function, specified area(s) of significance, and period of significance. Alterations to primary building facades are acceptable

if they do not alter a significant portion of the façade, if the changes are reversible, and if the original appearance of the façade can be restored. Infill of original fenestration openings should not destroy or obscure the original openings and should be fully reversible. The resource should represent a style of architecture or a type, period, or method of construction and should retain sufficient integrity of design, materials, and workmanship to represent the style or the property type.

### Contributing Resources

One-hundred-fifty-one primary resources were identified as contributing to a potential historic district (119 and one register-listed in Survey Area 1, thirty in Survey Area 2, plus associated outbuildings). Although these resources do not retain sufficient integrity to merit individual listing on the historic register, they clearly communicate associations with broader historic contexts and areas of significance that apply to the wider area. The bulk of these residential resources were constructed from c. 1890 to the mid-twentieth century. They illustrate residential styles and forms popular during their respective eras of construction, such as Craftsman and National Folk Forms. The contributing resources retain their original form, with additions concentrated to the rear, and historic materials, such as wood windows and siding. The cohesive grouping of buildings remains in its original residential setting.

### Non-Contributing Resources

Sixty-nine primary resources were identified as potentially non-contributing to a historic district (thirty-three in Survey Area 1, thirty-six in Survey Area 2, plus associated outbuildings). Non-Contributing resources are those that have lost significant integrity and/or are less than fifty years of age and, therefore, do not merit consideration for National Register listing at this time. Most non-contributing resources have alterations to the exterior cladding such as the application of vinyl or asbestos siding. Some have additions on the primary elevation or alterations to the front porch that compromise the overall form. Other resources are less than fifty years old. In some cases, the historic material may be intact beneath the non-historic cladding. If the non-historic cladding is removed and the historic material is intact, these resources could be re-evaluated as contributing to a historic district. Resources constructed outside the period and areas of significance are concentrated at the southeast corner of Survey Area 2 and therefore not included. No resources built after 1965 (less than fifty years of age at the time of the survey) appear to meet criteria for exceptional significance.

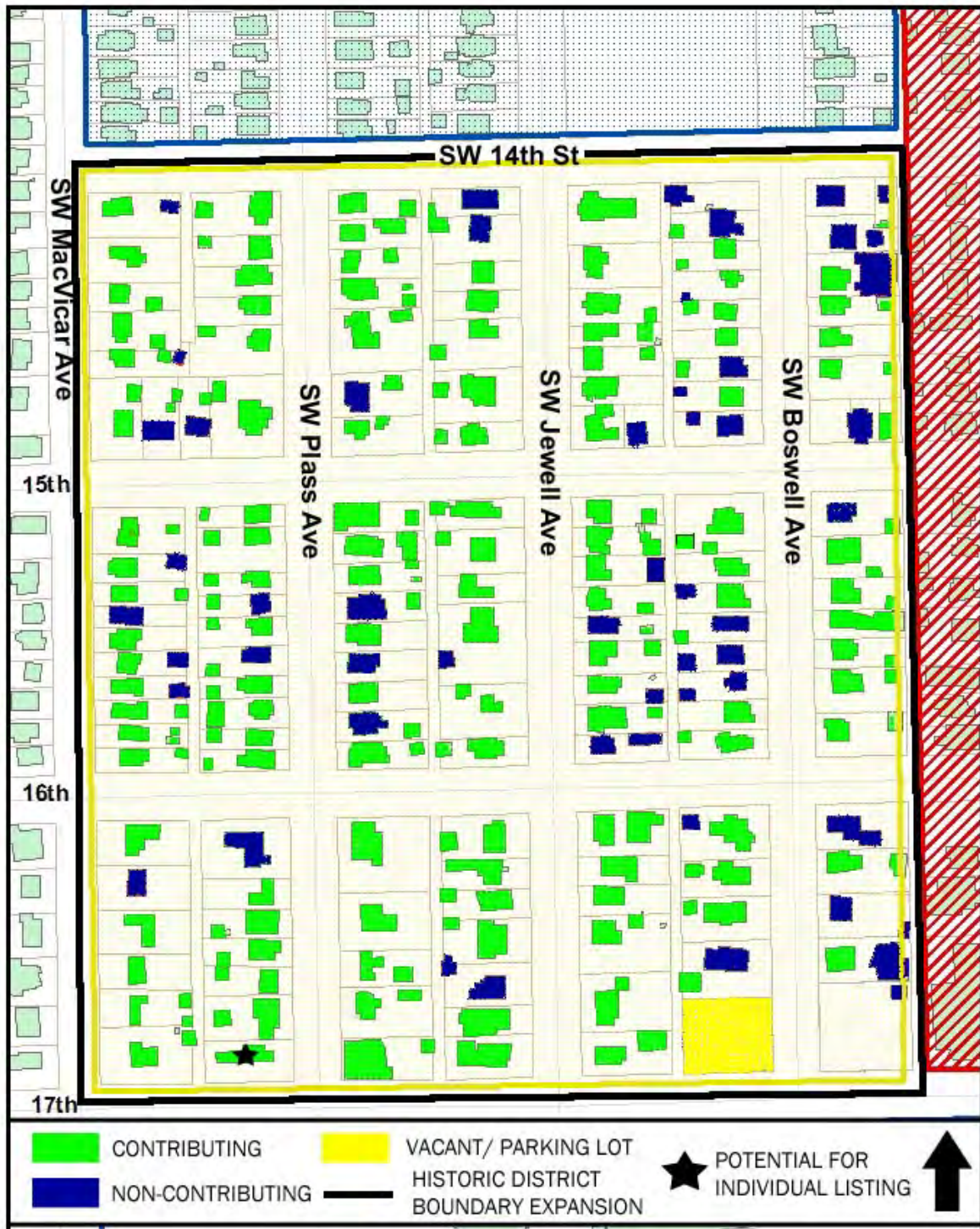
The potential College Avenue Historic District boundaries are as follows:

1. Expand the existing *College Avenue Historic District* to include all resources in Survey Area 1.
2. Expand the existing College Avenue Historic District to include all resources in Survey Area 1 and resources in Survey Area 2 along both sides of Mulvane Street and the 1700

block of SW 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The inclusion of resources on the south side of the 1600 block of SW 15<sup>th</sup> Street would depend on the contributing status of the resources on the north side of the street. This information will not be available until the completion of field work and recommendations for Survey Area 3.

Figures 35 and 36 identify resources by their potential for register listing.

**FIGURE 35- HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY EXPANSION RECOMMENDATION  
SURVEY AREA 1**



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**FIGURE 36- HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY EXPANSION RECOMMENDATION  
SURVEY AREA 2**



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## **LOCAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Rosin Preservation also recommends exploring the creation of a conservation district as a means to recognize and protect the historic character of Survey Area 2. Alterations to the form and cladding of many of the resources, as well as encroachment of newer buildings at the southeast corner of the area renders the architectural integrity of much of the survey area as poor or fair. The lack of a cohesive grouping of resources with excellent or good integrity would potentially render much of Survey Area 2 ineligible as part of a boundary expansion for the College Avenue Historic District, although a small section could be included (see above). As an alternative, Rosin Preservation recommends the creation of the aforementioned Conservation District.

The Conservation District is a tool used nationwide for maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods and providing protection to historic resources that do not retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the National or local registers. Locally designated, Conservation Districts can stabilize property values in older neighborhoods while protecting the unique qualities of these communities. Conservation Districts can also establish specific design guidelines to direct improvements that will upgrade historic resources to meet National Register criteria as contributing elements to a National Register and/or local district. For instance, non-historic siding is a common alteration that will preclude many properties from being listed as contributing resources. By creating a Conservation District prior to designating a historic district, the City can encourage property owners to reverse siding alterations, increasing the number of properties that are deemed contributing. In Conservation Districts, design review is limited to major changes (such as new construction, exterior alterations, and demolition). This provides protection against adverse changes to the visual context of the district, while encouraging property owners to make appropriate changes that reinforce the qualities that define the district.

To be designated as a Conservation District, a group of structures and/or landscape elements should have developed more than fifty years ago and retain distinctive architectural and historic characteristics worthy of preserving, although they may lack the historical, architectural, or cultural significance to qualify as a Historic District. A Conservation District may also be designated due to its identifiable setting, character, or association expressed through unifying exterior features.

The conservation of these areas can spur property owners to make appropriate changes and renovations to their buildings to improve the facades. With more improved facades, an area is more likely to be eligible for listing in the National Register. Many of the resources in Survey Area 2 retain their original form and setting. Most would be non-contributing to a historic district due to alterations of exterior cladding or large additions on the primary elevation. If additions were removed or historic cladding uncovered, this could change the status of the resource.



### **FUTURE IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION EFFORTS**

The Survey Area encompassed the southern portion of the College Hill neighborhood. A survey of the northern portion of the neighborhood, identified by the City as Survey Area 3 and Survey Area 4 could yield information about the development of the neighborhood and could provide expanded boundaries for the College Avenue Historic District.

Findings for Survey Areas 3 and 4 may reveal information that further supports the expansion of the College Avenue Historic District boundaries and the extension of the period of significance. Extension of the period of significance may require the re-evaluation of the few resources in the current district constructed in the 1960s as well as the development of the historic contexts to include this era.

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