

Thematic Survey and Context of Mid-Century Modern, Non-Single-Family Residential Architecture, 1945 to 1975, in Topeka



The City of Topeka, Kansas
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
LIST OF FIGURES AND CHARTS.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES	iii
LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS.....	iii
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 OBJECTIVES	1
1.2 GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION	1
1.3 METHODOLOGY	4
SECTION 2: HISTORIC CONTEXT.....	7
2.1 COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.....	7
2.1.2. TOPEKA'S "ANNEXATION FEVER:" 1945-1975	11
2.1.3. FLOOD OF 1951	15
2.1.4. URBAN RENEWAL: 1956-c.1975.....	15
2.1.5. TORNADO OF 1966.....	19
2.2 ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT: 1945 TO 1975.....	26
2.2.1 OVERVIEW	26
2.2.2 MID-CENTURY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN TOPEKA	27
2.2.3 MID-CENTURY MODERN ARCHITECTURAL STYLES: 1945-1975.....	28
SECTION 3: SURVEY FINDINGS.....	82
3.1 CONSTRUCTION DATES	82
3.2 DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEYED RESOURCES BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA.....	82
3.3 HISTORIC FUNCTION	83
3.4 BUILDING CLASSIFICATIONS/ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES.....	83
3.5 MATERIALS	84
3.6 MID-CENTURY MODERN STYLES.....	85
3.7 ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS	87
3.7.10 MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENT BUILDINGS	105
SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS.....	107
4.1 INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATIONS	107
4.2 EXEMPLARY PROPERTIES CONSIDERED PRIORITIES FOR LISTING.....	112
BIBLIOGRAPHY	114
APPENDIX A: SURVEY INVENTORY	118

LIST OF FIGURES AND CHARTS

Figure 1. Geographical Distribution of Surveyed Properties.....	2
Figure 2. Map Showing Gradual Expansion of City Limits, c.1928	9
Figure 3. City of Topeka Map, c.1940-1942.....	10
Figure 4. Topeka Corporate Limit Population Changes by Districts 1910-1940	10
Figure 5. Topeka Growth	12
Figure 6. Proposed Keyway Urban Renewal Project Area, 1957.....	16
Figure 7. 1968 Rendering of the American Home Life Insurance Building.....	18
Figure 8. Map Showing Path of 1966 Tornado Through Topeka.....	19
Figure 9. Rendering of the New Stout Elementary School (177-4818).....	22
Figure 10. 400 SE 29 th Street (177-4827)	39
Figure 11. former Jayhawk Motel (177-3143), postcard	60
Figure 12. Merchant's National Bank Floor Plan	63
Figure 13. Merchants National Bank, Main Banking Area, 1969.....	64
Figure 14. Rendering of First National Bank, c.1975.....	64
Figure 15. Breakdown of Surveyed Properties (total 55) by Primary Exterior Material	84
Figure 16. Breakdown of Surveyed Properties (Total of 55) by Architectural Style.....	85

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Surveyed Properties That Do Not Meet Registration Requirements	108
Table 2. Properties Recommended Eligible for National Register Listing.....	110

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1. Circa 1950s Advertisement Reflecting Topeka's Growth.....	14
Photograph 2. Avondale East Elementary School, 1954.....	22
Photograph 3. Elliott White Concert Hall, Washburn College, 2019	25
Photograph 4. Topeka Capital-Journal Building (177-4839), c.1960s.....	28
Photograph 5. 1629 Medford Avenue (177-4820)	29
Photograph 6. Stout Elementary School	31
Photograph 7. Dr. Karl & Jeanetta Lyle Menniger Education Center (177-4683).....	31
Photograph 8. Merchants National Bank	33
Photograph 9. Kansas State Office Building	33
Photograph 10. 2900 MacVicar Avenue, front facade.....	34
Photograph 11. 2900 MacVicar Avenue, rear elevation.....	34
Photograph 12. Central National Bank (177-3273) at 800 SE Quincy Avenue	35
Photograph 13. Topeka-Capital Journal Building (177-4839) located at 616 SE Jefferson Street	36
Photograph 14. First National Bank (177-4863).....	36
Photograph 15. Kansas Judicial Center, 2004	37
Photograph 16. White Concert Hall (177-4819).....	38
Photograph 17. First Assembly of God (177-4852)	38
Photograph 18. First Christian Church (177-4858)	38
Photograph 19. Jayhawk Auto Dealership (177-4842).....	39
Photograph 20. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088)	40

Photograph 21. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088) Neon Sign	40
Photograph 22. Bobo's Drive-In, c.1950	41
Photograph 23. Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854).....	42
Photograph 24. 540 SE 29 th Street (177-4828)	42
Photograph 25. Grace Evangelical Brethren Church, gable end detail.....	44
Photograph 26. TWA Flight Center, JFK Interionational Airport	45
Photograph 27. Kansas State Teachers Association Building (17-4843).....	47
Photograph 28. Kansas Power & Light Company Building (177-3238).....	48
Photograph 29. Kansas State Office Building, red granite panels along ground floor and limestone panels on lower blocks.....	49
Photograph 30. Southern Bell Telephone Company Building (177-4837).....	49
Photograph 31. Example of a Decorative Concrete Block Screen Wall	49
Photograph 32. Brise-Soleil along façade of former Capital-Journal Building	50
Photograph 33. Interior Lobby of Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (177- 4837).....	50
Photograph 34. 2318 SW 10 th Avenue (177-4850), Floating Staircase.....	51
Photograph 35. VFW Post 1650 (formerly a restaurant), 177-4860	55
Photograph 36. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088)	55
Photograph 37. (former) Falley's Meat Market (177-4826)	56
Photograph 38. 400 SE 29 th Street (177-4827)	58
Photograph 39. 1903 NW Topeka Blvd (177-4832).....	59
Photograph 40. 117 NE US-24 Highway (177-4833).....	61
Photograph 41. Topeka Downtown Ramada Inn (177-3647), 2015.....	61
Photograph 42. Gage Bowl (177-4861)	62
Photograph 43. Gage Center Bowl Neon Sign	62
Photograph 44. HTK Architects Office, 2019	65
Photograph 45. 220 SW 33rd Street, 2019	65
Photograph 46. Merchants National Bank.....	65
Photograph 47. Faith Lutheran Church (177-4857)	67
Photograph 48. First Congregational Church Sanctuary, 1949.....	68
Photograph 49. Interior of Faith Lutheran Church Sanctuary	68
Photograph 51. First Christian Church, Sanctuary – Communal Table, Pulpit, and Baptismal	69
Photograph 50. Interior of Sanctuary of First Christian Church (177-4858).....	69
Photograph 53. Otterbein Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4821).....	70
Photograph 54. Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854).....	70
Photograph 55. First Assembly of God (177-4852)	71
Photograph 56. Highland Park High School, 1950	72
Photograph 57. Washburn University Music and Arts Department, Garvey fine Arts Center	73
Photograph 58. Henderson Learning Center, nd.....	74
Photograph 59. Topeka Rail Depot.....	74
Photograph 60. Cage Center Post Office.....	76
Photograph 61. Park Plaza Apartment (177-4847).....	77
Photograph 62. Jackson Towers, 2004	77
Photograph 63. First Congregational Church (177-4821), c.1950.....	86

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVES

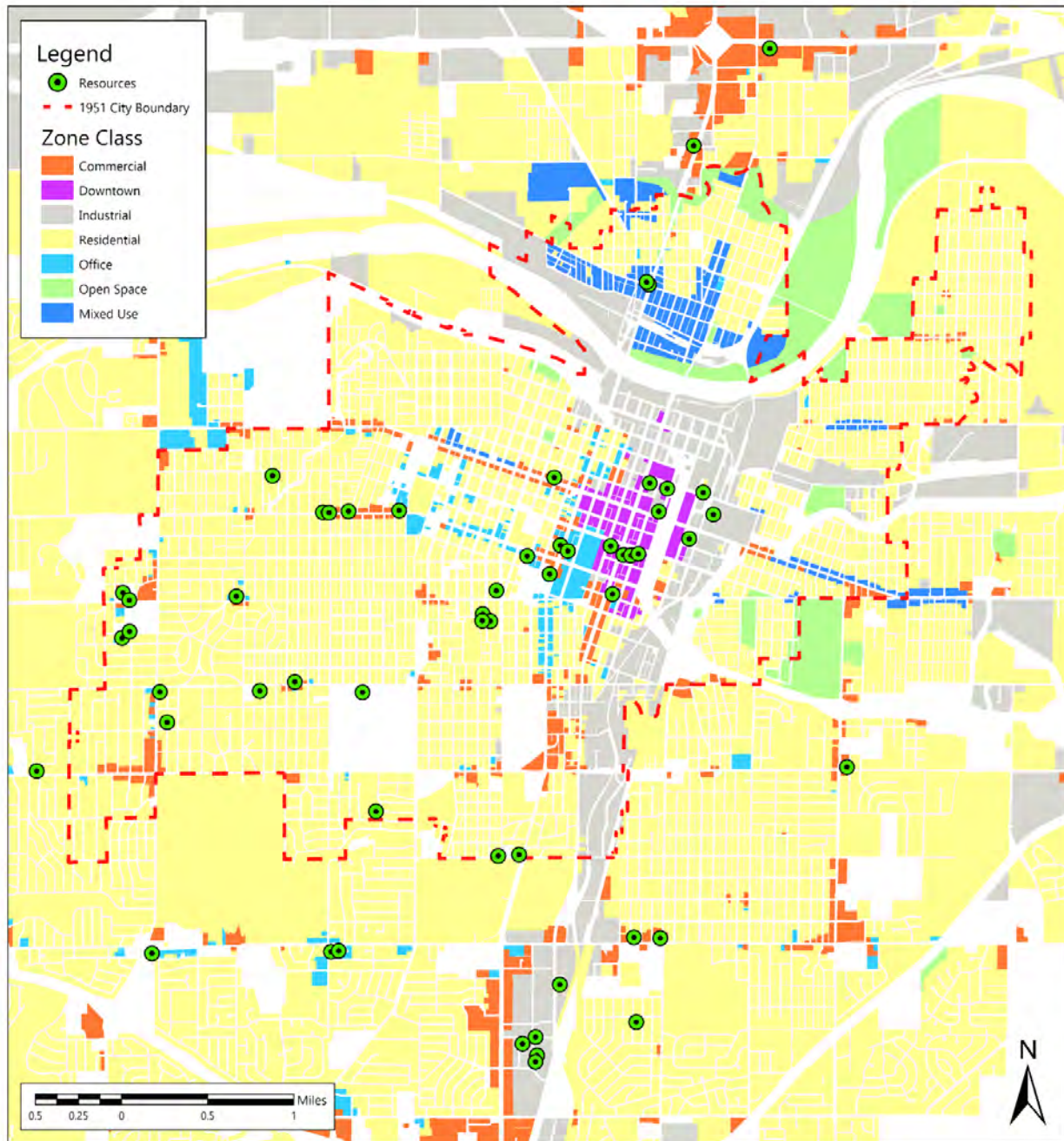
Initiated by the City of Topeka and the Kansas Historical Society (“KHS”), the Topeka Mid-Century Modern Non-Residential Survey Project was funded as part of an effort to survey a collection of Mid-Century Modern non, single-family residential architecture constructed within the City of Topeka between 1945 to 1975. The list of the properties to survey for this project is not all-inclusive. The City of Topeka contains a much larger number of non-single-family residential architecture; however, the selected properties were chosen from their apparent potential for architectural significance. In 2019, the City contracted JLD Preservation Consulting, LLC (“JLD Consulting”) to conduct a survey of 55 properties within the City that were pre-selected by the Topeka Planning Department. The selected properties encompass a range of building types and mid-century Modern architectural styles. The purpose of this project is to develop a thematic context for evaluating and listing mid-century Modern architecture within the City of Topeka. In addition to the survey of the pre-selected resources and the development of the historic context as presented in this report, this grant-funded project includes the production of a thematic National Register of Historic Places (“NRHP”) Multiple Property Documentation Form (“MPDF”), and the preparation of individual NRHP nomination forms for the former HTK Architects office building (177-4822) and the Park Plaza Apartments (177-4847).

Appendix A is a spreadsheet of the surveyed resources. The spreadsheet contains data for each resource that helps to place each property within its greater thematic context and area of significance. Such data includes the assigned KHS inventory number, address, historic name, historic use, property type association, Modernist architectural style, primary materials, NRHP recommendations and areas of significance (if applicable). A thumbnail photograph of each resource is also included on the inventory for convenience purposes.

1.2 GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

While the majority of the properties surveyed as part of this project occur within the heart of the City, the present corporate city limits is considered the overall survey area. The survey was limited to a select number of properties; however, additional notable mid-century Modern architecture likely occur throughout the entire city that might be evaluated for the NRHP at a later date. The building type and design of Mid-Century Modern architecture is oftentimes tied to the location within which it is sited. Figure 1 depicts the approximate corporate limits of the city of Topeka c.1950. All of the surveyed properties occur within these boundaries. The map shows current zoning districts, which are similar to the core “sub-areas” of the City in the 1950s. These include downtown, residential, commercial, industrial, and office. The distribution of each of the surveyed properties within these districts is shown on the map.

Figure 1. Geographical Distribution of Surveyed Properties



Downtown District

The downtown district is the smallest of the subareas yet contains the highest concentration of significant Modern Movement buildings surveyed during the course of this project. The majority of this sub-area is occupied by the *South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District*, which was listed on the National Register in 2015. Interstate-70 and the multi-track railroad corridor serve as the eastern boundary of the downtown district, separating it from

the industrial sub-area to the east. SW 3rd Street forms the northern boundary, near the downward curve of Interstate-70. The downtown district extends as far west as SW Topeka Boulevard and to SE 10th Avenue to the south, both high-trafficked thoroughfares within the City. The downtown district is the center of government (local, state, and federal) and major businesses within the City. As such, several of the resources surveyed within this district are among the largest and tallest. Scattered among the monumental architecture within the downtown district are smaller commercial buildings. Collectively, these building types form a cohesive business core within the heart of the City. Much of the mid-century development within the downtown district is a result of Urban Renewal.

Office District

The “office” sub-area might be considered an extension of the downtown district. However, unlike downtown, this area is generally characterized by moderate- to large-size office buildings. The office sub-area occupies approximately four blocks near the southwest corner of the downtown district and includes the monumental Kansas State Capital Building. As illustrated on Figure 1, this sub-area expands in multiple directions along the high-trafficked routes that lead into and from the downtown business district. These routes include SW 10th Avenue, SW Topeka Boulevard, and SW 6th Avenue. A scattering of roadside commercial architecture is interspersed along these routes. The larger of the office buildings tend to be sited closest to the downtown district.

Industrial District

Topeka’s Industrial sector generally follows along the multi-track railroad corridor running east of the downtown district and extends north of downtown to the Kansas River. Not surprising, this sub-area is largely characterized by railroad and shipping buildings, as well as various industrial enterprises.

Commercial District

The commercial sub-area of Topeka is dispersed throughout the City, particularly along the primary transportation routes and surrounding busy intersections. Here, the commercial development is frequently associated with the increase in automobile ownership and offers convenient automobile access and parking lots. Among the surveyed mid-century commercial buildings located along these stretches include automobile dealerships, drive-in and walk-in restaurants, banks, and a bowling alley, as well as a variety of other business types.

Residential District

The residential sub-area is by far the largest sector of the City. This sub-area includes the National Register-listed *Holliday Park Historic District*, *Potwin Place*, and *College Avenue*. The residential sector of Topeka extends from the downtown and industrial districts in all directions. In north Topeka, a small residential sector is separated from downtown by the Kansas River and a stretch of mixed-use development along the river. As the City expanded

throughout the postwar years, the residential sectors expanded outward, oftentimes annexing earlier neighborhoods/communities into the City. Among those neighborhoods include Oakland near the northeast corner of the City, Highland Park to the southeast, Belmont to the east, and Westboro to the west, among others. The Washburn University campus is located within a residential sector west of downtown. However, for purposes of this study, it is classified within the “mixed-use” sub-area. Similarly, stretches of commercial development occur along prominent roadways that travel through the residential sub-areas. Single-family residential predominates within the residential sub-areas. However, duplexes and multi-family apartment buildings frequently occur. Large community churches also appear throughout the residential sub-areas. Many of these churches are mid-20th century construction and are reflective upon Topeka’s dramatic population boom during the post-World War II years.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

Prior to the start of the survey project, the City compiled a list of 55 noteworthy buildings that might bear significance to the architectural heritage of Topeka. The selected Modern period properties, which range in date from 1945 to 1978, were provided to Jaime Destefano of JLD Consulting prior to the field survey. The Modern period is defined by the post-World War II development beginning in 1945 and ending in 1975. Although the National Register typically requires that a property reach 50 years of age to be considered eligible, the period of significance was extended to account for a full three decades after World War II. Development in Topeka continued through the 1960s and likely includes later resources that might be potentially eligible for the NRHP in the coming years. Research, documentation, and methods adhere to the requirements outlined in the KHS *HPF Products Manual*; National Register Bulletin 24, *Guidelines for Local Survey: A Basis for Preservation Planning*; and National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

Meetings

Throughout the week of November 10, 2019, JLD Consulting attended various meetings arranged by Tim Paris, Historic Preservation Planner. JLD Consulting and Mr. Paris met with KHS staff to discuss project objectives and overall scope of work. Meetings were held with local architectural firms who are known to have been prolific during the period of significance in Topeka. Civium was founded in 1946 as Griest & Ekdahl and is responsible for the design of five known Mid-Century Modern buildings that were surveyed during this project: 1) First Congregational Church at 1701 SW Collins Street; 2) the former Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Headquarters at 220 SE 6th Avenue; 3) Avondale East Elementary School at 455 SE Golf Park; 4) Church of the Brethren (now Grace Methodist) at 2627 SW Western Avenue; and 5) First National Bank (presently Equity Bank) at 3825 SW 29th Avenue. A rendering of Equity Bank and blueprints for the Southwestern Bell building and Church of the Brethren were provided to the City and JLD Consulting for review. HTK Architects was founded in 1958 in Topeka. Two of the surveyed properties are known to be HTK designs: 1) the Intrust Bank building at 1035 SW Topeka Boulevard; 2) an office building at 3310 SW Harrison Street; and the former HTK Architects office at 2900 SW MacVicar. Copies of

the building plans for the HTK Architects office were provided. The building is one of two properties that will be nominated to the NRHP as part of this grant project.

On November 15, 2019, JLD Consulting attended the Topeka Landmarks Commission meeting to discuss the project and answer questions.

Background Research

Prior to the field survey and research at local repositories, JLD Consulting performed preliminary research available on the internet. Each of the 55 pre-selected properties were mapped in Google Earth to assess their distribution across the various subareas, or districts, of the City. The Kansas Historic Resources Inventory (“KHRI”) was reviewed online to identify other properties that were previously surveyed that might contribute to the development of the thematic context. KHRI revealed hundreds of previously surveyed properties constructed during the period of significance. Based on a partial review of KHRI, several properties were found to be potentially significant and/or beneficial to a broader understanding of mid-century Modern development within the City during this period. For example, the pre-selected list of properties did not include examples of Brutalist architecture, a significant Mid-Century Modern architectural style. Similarly, while the list of properties includes a variety of different building types, only two-story apartment buildings were included. KHRI revealed c.1970 apartment towers (Jackson Towers and Landmark Plaza) that are potentially significant as later, mid-century residential construction that are likely a result of Urban Renewal relocation and may warrant further research. The following properties were identified during the review of KHRI that are potentially noteworthy buildings but were not surveyed during this project.

- 177-3410, Church of the Assumption School, 735 SW Jackson Street, constructed 1954, contributing resource to the Church of the Assumption Historic District
- 177-3235, Capital Federal Building, 700 S. Kansas Avenue, constructed 1961, noncontributing element to the South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District due to lack of integrity. However, it is a good illustration of a mid-century Modern tall office building in the downtown district
- 177-2218, Credit Union 1 Building, 610 SW 10TH ST, constructed 1970
- 177-3395, Dairy Queen, Walk-Up Store, 1700 SW MEDFORD AVE, constructed 1948
- 177-2159, Drive-In and Diner, 1301 SW 6th Street, constructed c.1960
- 177-3217, Woolworth Building, 627-631 S KANSAS AVE, constructed 1948, contributing element to the South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District
- 177-2120, Herbert R. Lundgren Elementary School, 1020 NE FOREST AVE, constructed 1949, recommended as eligible in the 2004 Topeka School Survey
- 177-2219, Holland Student Service Center, 918 SW 10th Street, constructed c.1955
- 177-2710, Jackson Towers, 1122 SW Jackson Street, constructed 1970
- 177-2969, Kansas Judicial Center, 1100 SW HARRISON ST, 1972
- 177-2830, Landmark Plaza Apartments, 1000 S KANSAS AVE, c.1970
- 177-4812, Mount Olive Methodist Episcopal Church, 1196 SW BUCHANAN ST, 1975
- 177-5400-01953, Townsite Plaza, 534 S. Kansas Avenue, 1969

During the week of November 10, 2019, JLD Consulting conducted background research concurrently with the field survey. Research was conducted at the Topeka Room

Survey and Recordation

During the week of November 10, 2019, JLD Consulting conducted the intensive-level field survey of the 55 pre-selected properties. Fieldwork was conducted from the public right-of-way; however, in some instances, permission to access interior lobbies was obtained. Unfortunately, due to security concerns, photographs in bank lobbies were not permitted. High resolution digital photographs of each resource and its overall setting were taken during the field survey. Field observations were recorded, focusing particularly on the building materials, architectural types and stylistic elements, and degree of historic integrity. Each resource was assigned a Survey Sequence Number.

Between December 2019 and March 2020, JLD Consulting entered survey information for each resource into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet provided by KHS. Upon completion of the spreadsheet, the information was uploaded to the KHRI database. JLD Consulting then uploaded digital photographs, site plans, Sanborn maps (when applicable), and historic photographs or construction drawings if available. In addition to the database, JLD Consulting prepared a secondary spreadsheet with thumbnail photographs, address, assigned KHRI number, date of construction, building material, associated property type, architectural style, NRHP recommendation, and area(s) of significance (if applicable). The spreadsheet is included as Attachment A.

Development of Thematic Context and NRHP Evaluation Requirements

Throughout the course of the project, JLD Consulting developed a preliminary historic context of Mid-Century Modern architecture in the city of Topeka. Properties were categorized by date of construction, building type, or function, and style. Architects, if known, of individual resources are documented to identify prolific Mid-Century Modern architects practicing in Topeka. The development of the thematic context resulted in the identification of two significant themes in which to evaluate a property for eligibility to the NRHP. Based on survey observations and the apparent degree of integrity and potential significance, recommendations were made for NRHP-eligibility. Additional research and interior observations would be required in order to place the property within the greater context of mid-century Modern architecture in Topeka. This thematic study and historic context statement will assist future nominations to the NRHP for properties that meet the registration requirements resulting from this study.

SECTION 2: HISTORIC CONTEXT

Two historic contexts were developed to best establish the significance of mid-century Modern architecture in the City of Topeka. These include:

- 1) Post-World War II Community Planning and Development: 1945 to 1975
- 2) Architectural Trends of Topeka's Mid-Century Modern Architecture: Forms, Materials, Styles, and Modernist Architects in 1945 to 1975

Each context might assist readers and researchers in analyzing and evaluating historic resources by placing them within broader events and trends in Topeka throughout the mid-20th century. The contexts do not present a comprehensive history of Topeka but offer sufficient information to better interpret the broader patterns impacting the City's Modernist architecture during the period of significance.

The period of significance, 1945 to 1975, includes a time of tremendous population growth and expansion of the City of Topeka. Not only were the residential sectors expanding outward but non-residential areas experienced renewed building activities largely resulting from the rapid rise in automobile ownership, rebuilding campaigns following the 1951 flood and devastating tornado in 1966, as well as Urban Renewal programs during the late-1950s and 1960s. By the 1970s, the population began to lag and new building activity lull. Further, by the mid-1970s, Modern architecture was shifting towards a "new Modern" that would generally not fit well within the theme of Mid-Century Modern building trends.

2.1 COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Topeka at mid-century was a relatively small city comprised of its historic downtown south of the Kansas River and a handful of annexations that began as early as the 1850s. The community historically known as Eugene was annexed into the City of Topeka in 1857. Throughout the latter years of the 19th century, a number of additional annexations occurred including Young's, Horne's, Ritchie's and Huntoon's Additions.

The area that is presently known as "East Topeka" was a principal residential sector of Topeka in the 19th century. The 6th Street corridor, historically known as Liberty Highway and bisecting East Topeka, was once the only entrance into the city by means other than river or rail. In 1889, much of East Topeka, extending from the Shunganunga Creek east to the Topeka Cemetery, was annexed into the city.¹ In addition to East Topeka, a neighboring city known as Potwin Place and the developing area of Aurburndale to the west were annexed in 1899.²

The history of planning in Topeka has its beginnings circa 1920. Shortly following the first World War, the rapid development of the automobile focused public attention toward the

¹ East Topeka Community, "East Topeka Neighborhood Revitalization Plan," An Element of the *Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan 2020*, City of Topeka-Shawnee County, Kansas, 2002; pages 2 to 4.

² Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

inadequacy of city street systems. It became evident that more street capacity was necessary to accommodate the large number of motor vehicles. In order for Topeka to maintain its leadership among progressive Kansas cities, road widenings and improvements were necessary. A rational plan of development for the entire city was paramount. The 6th Street corridor, which served as a primary transportation route into the city, became US Highway 40. The highway resulted in a tremendous increase in automobile traffic through the city. It was lined with commercial businesses aimed at attracting motorists. Some of America's earliest examples of motor courts and hotels survive along the corridor.³

In addition to improved transportation routes, the "automobile brought the filling station and garage, which sometimes sought locations that were destructive to established residential developments."⁴ Zoning during this period was in its infancy and employed primarily as a means to regulate the use of private property. In 1921, Topeka became one of the first cities in the middlewest to adopt a comprehensive zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance was prepared as a part of a comprehensive City Plan, which included recommendations for major streets, transit, public recreation facilities, railroads, and the grouping of public building. The plan was completed in 1922.⁵

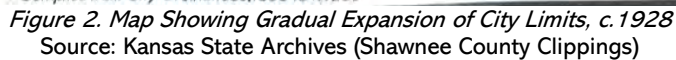
The 1921-22 plan included city boundary extensions proposed by Topeka's Planning Board. As planned, annexations would occur along the city's northern, eastern, and western edges. Among those include the neighborhoods of Washburn Park and Collins Park to the west, and the Quintin Heights-Steele neighborhood, located in south-central Topeka, approximately 2 ½ miles south of downtown. The city of Oakland, northeast of Topeka, was annexed on March 1, 1926. By 1930, the city encompassed 10.6 miles with a population of 64,120.⁶ The following map illustrates the gradual annexations of the City Limits through 1928.

³ East Topeka Community, "East Topeka Neighborhood Revitalization Plan," An Element of the *Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan 2020*, City of Topeka-Shawnee County, Kansas, 2002; pages 2 to 4.

⁴ Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *Comprehensive Plan of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas*, (Topeka, KS: 1945); page 9.

⁵ Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *Comprehensive Plan of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas*, (Topeka, KS: 1945); page 9.

⁶ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.



According to a 1945 Comprehensive Plan of Topeka and Shawnee County, the 1940 census revealed a decline in urban growth throughout the 1930s throughout the county. However, the census confirmed extensive decentralization of cities and towns, with substantial population gains in suburban communities and unincorporated areas adjacent to large municipalities.⁸ The desire to live in the country while continuing to make a living in the City, coupled with systems of taxation and methods of building finance, contributed substantially to this trend in decentralization, which was particularly the case in Topeka. Figure 4 illustrates the growth in population between 1910 to 1940 in districts across the city. As demonstrated, the downtown core experienced a slight decline whereas populations within the adjacent suburbs steadily increased. The greatest change in population

⁸ Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *Comprehensive Plan of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas*, (Topeka, KS: 1945); page 10.

distribution between 1930 and 1940 occurred within the Highland Park community to the south.

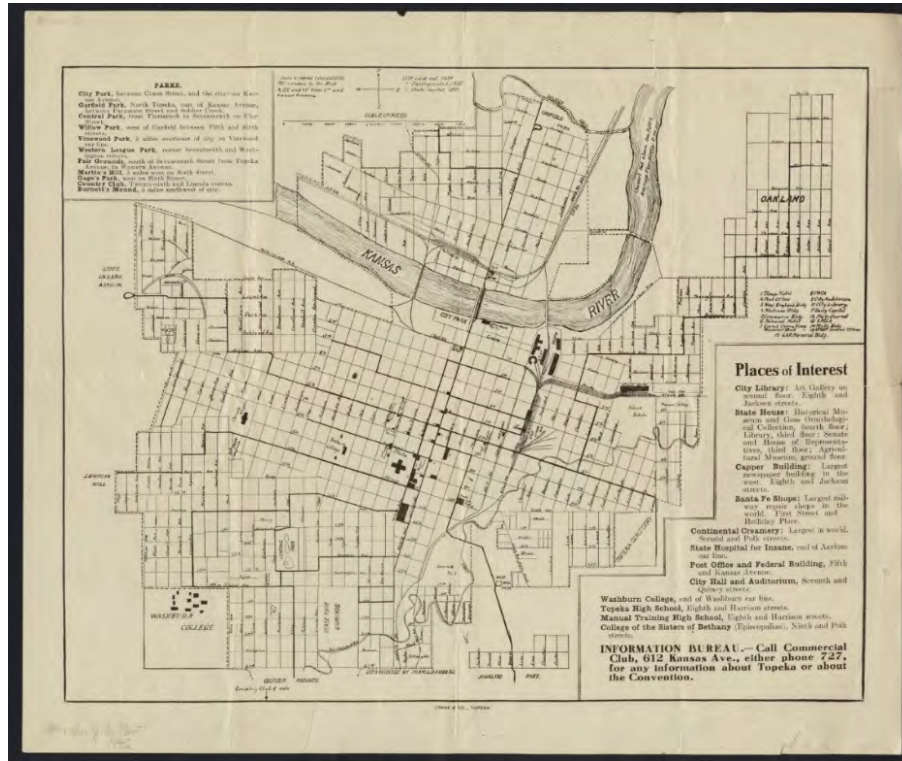


Figure 3. City of Topeka Map, c.1940-1942
Source: Kansas Memory

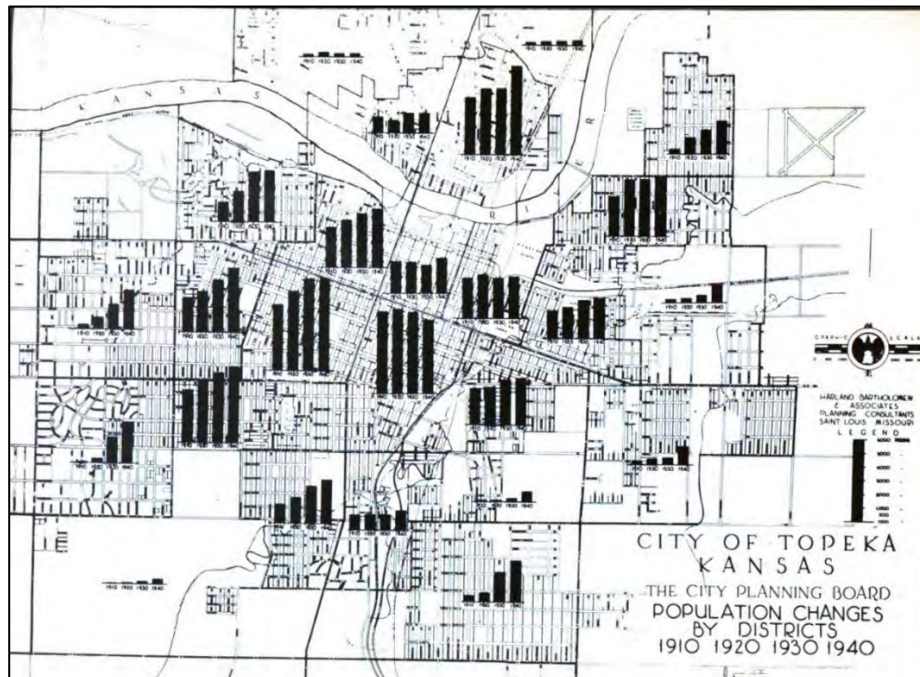


Figure 4. Topeka Corporate Limit Population Changes by Districts 1910-1940
Source: 1945 Comprehensive Plan

In addition to documenting trends in the overall population growth and distribution in the decades leading up to 1940, the 1945 Comprehensive Plan also makes reference to the black populations of the City. The plan confirms the generally low economic status of the African American community, with their residential enclaves described as “blighted” with “bad living conditions.”⁹ In 1945, there was a number of well-defined African American districts in Topeka. The largest was located between Quincy Street, the Santa Fe Railroad and Fourth Street. Further to the south, on either side of the railroads and Shunganunga Creek are other areas where African Americans predominated in the years leading up to and following World War II. A large population was also located within the vicinity of Munson Avenue and Lincoln Street, as well as smaller areas in North Topeka near the railroad tracks.¹⁰ What is historically known as the “Bottoms” occupied land along the south bank of the Kansas River, just north of downtown.

Among the goals of the 1945 Comprehensive Plan was to establish a plan to control new growth in order to “keep it within an area that can be supplied with public services at a reasonable cost.”¹¹ Further, the “decadent areas of the cities should be re-planned and rebuilt on a scale sufficiently large to insure them future stability. Those sections, which are not yet slums, but over which blight has spread must be rehabilitated and made more attractive as residential areas.”¹² Thus, the 1945 Comprehensive Plan established a plan for the future growth and development of Topeka throughout the mid-20th century.

2.1.2. TOPEKA’S “ANNEXATION FEVER:” 1945-1975

Following World War II, Topeka experienced an unprecedented period of population growth and expansion. A number of factors contributed to this dramatic increase. Nationwide, the period from 1945 to 1975 was considered a “boom for single-family residential construction, suburbanization, and the realization of the American dream of home ownership.”¹³ Between 1945 and 1954, more than 13 million houses were constructed across the country. Among those, 80% were built in the suburbs of metropolitan areas and only 20% within cities.¹⁴ This housing boom was stimulated in part by affordable mortgages for returning veterans. At the same time, the jump in post-war births, known as the “baby boom,” catapulted the national population. Such is the case in Topeka where its adjacent suburbs continued to strengthen and were absorbed into the City’s corporate limits. In 1944, the city’s economy was given another boost when the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company

⁹ Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *Comprehensive Plan of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas*, (Topeka, KS: 1945); page 19-20.

¹⁰ Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *Comprehensive Plan of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas*, (Topeka, KS: 1945); page 19-20.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹² *Ibid.*, 11.

¹³ Emily Pettis, et al., *A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, Washington, DC: Mead & Hunt for the Transportation Research Board, 2013; p.49.

¹⁴ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier. The Suburbanization of the United States*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985; p.283.

built an impressive plant in North Topeka. By 1950, the corporate limits of Topeka encompassed 12.5 square miles with the population reaching 78,791.¹⁵

Another significant factor in Topeka's population growth following World War II was the operation of Forbes Air Force Base, located approximately 3 miles south of downtown. Following the attack at Pearl Harbor, the United States mobilized its armed forces and civilian workforce. Within 2 weeks, fifteen (15) airfields were activated across Kansas, including the Topeka Army Airfield, located at Pauline, a small town on the south outskirts of Topeka. The base opened on August 22, 1942 and was designed to accommodate 5,000 men.¹⁶ The base became a staging area for Liberator crews sent to Europe and Africa. After the War, it served briefly as headquarters for the army's Air Transport Command, which lasted only one year. In May of 1947, it was announced that the base would close. However, by late 1948, the base reopened as the Topeka Air Force Base with 4,700 airmen. It was renamed the following year to Forbes Air Force Base. Throughout the 1950s, the base grew with the presence of the Strategic Air Command. In 1959, it became home to nine intercontinental ballistic missiles and by 1961, Forbes Air Force Base "had become the most powerful air force installation in the world; it being the only base with the combination of a strategic reconnaissance wing, a bombardment wing, and an operational missile unit."¹⁷ Operations shifted throughout the 1960s and on September 30, 1973, the base closed for the final time. Today, it is a converted business park and modern airport with the Kansas Air National Guard and United States Army Reserves.

Year	Area square miles	Pop.
1860	1	759
1870	1	5,790
1880	2	15,452
1890	9	31,007
1900	9	33,608
1910	10.6	43,684
1920	10.6	50,022
1930	10.6	64,12
1940	11.6	67,833
1950	12.5	78,791
1960	36.4	119,484
1970	47.4	125,011
1980	49.5	118,690
1990	57	119,883
2003	58.7	122,377

Figure 5. Topeka Growth

Source Department of Planning

The presence of the Forbes base from the late-1940s through the 1960s contributed substantially to the population growth and renewed expansion and annexation of residential sectors of Topeka. The planning efforts in Post-World War II-era Topeka adopted standards laid out in the *Topeka and Shawnee County Comprehensive Plan* completed in 1945. An "annexation fever" swept across Topeka during the 1950s, more than doubling the area of the City from 12.5 square miles in 1950 to 36.4 square miles by 1960.¹⁸ Figure 5 reflects the population boom numbers and extend of city expansion beginning in the 1940s.

In February of 1955, a committee was established to study potential additional annexations into the corporate limits of Topeka. In October of that year, the committee recommended that the city initiate an ambitious program that would extend the city limits south to Forbes Air Force Base; eastward beyond Lake Shawnee; westward to Security Benefit Hill; and

¹⁵ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

¹⁶ Greg Hoots, *Images of America: Topeka*, Arcadia Publishing, 2010; Chapter 5.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

northward nearly four miles north of Highway 24.¹⁹ The first annexation included 3.6 square miles, which was the largest single annexation to date. This particular annexation increased the city's land area by 22 percent and the city's population by 11 percent. On January 2, 1957, Highland Park was annexed into the City, bringing the site to 27.6 square miles. Several additional annexations occurred in 1958 and 1959.

The annexations included existing neighborhoods and/or suburbs like that of Highland Park. It also included areas that were relatively undeveloped and would emerge as cohesive mid-century residential neighborhoods. Among the mid-20th century neighborhoods to develop in Topeka include Highland Crest in the southeast sector of the City. The neighborhood is bounded by SE 29th Street, SE. California, SE. 37th, and S. Kansas Avenue. Developed for Forbes Field military personnel after World War II, the neighborhood began declining in the 1960s when the military reductions were implemented.²⁰ Principal roads connecting downtown and the numerous residential sectors gradually became lined with wayside commercial architecture and small office buildings. Much of the commercial development was aimed at attracting the substantial increase in post-World War II automobile owners (*see* Architectural Context).

Travelling in a north-south direction, Topeka Avenue (now Topeka Blvd.) has long been a critical artery through the center of the City and ultimately played an important role in the expansion of the city and the built environment. During the early-20th century, the road became a section of US Highway 75. In the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration erected a bridge along Topeka Avenue across the Kansas River, providing a second bridge connecting downtown and North Topeka. The bridge served both city traffic and travel along US Highway 75.²¹ Passing just west of Forbes Airfield, during Topeka's post-war "annexation fever," the highway played an important role in enabling the City to expand southward. The highway provided a convenient transportation route from the Airfield, through downtown, and into North Topeka. The suburban residential development resulting from the Airfield and post-War population increase was largely guided by the route of US Highway 75 as it traveled southward. Concurrently with residential growth, commercial strips, shopping centers, and office buildings emerged in high numbers along the highway. Among the distinct Modernist buildings to develop along the highway as the city expanded southward is the former White Lakes Mall, Topeka's first mall. Construction commenced on a 500,000 square foot, fully-enclosed shopping center in 1963. Developed by Topeka's Keith Meyers, the mall opened in 1964 with two anchors: Sears, with an attached Auto Center, and J.C. Penney, which included a freestanding (10,000 square foot) Auto Center and was one of the first "New Generation" Penney's stores.²² Today, the mall is mostly abandoned and in a deteriorating condition. During the 1980s, a new Highway 75 bypass was erected and Topeka Avenue was changed to Topeka Boulevard. Despite no longer

¹⁹ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

²⁰ Katie Moore, Five Things to Know About Hi-Crest, *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 10 September, 2017.

²¹ The bridge was replaced in 2008 due to deterioration; Kansas Memory <https://www.ksks.org/index.php?url=km/items/view/215553>

²² Mall Hall of Fame [http://mall-hall-of-fame.blogspot.com/2008/03/white-lakes-mall-southwest-topeka_20.html#:~:text=Developed%20by%20Topeka's%20Keith%20Meyers, Penney%20encompassed%20154%2C400%20square%20feet](http://mall-hall-of-fame.blogspot.com/2008/03/white-lakes-mall-southwest-topeka_20.html#:~:text=Developed%20by%20Topeka's%20Keith%20Meyers, Penney%20encompassed%20154%2C400%20square%20feet;); accessed July 2020.

having a highway designation, the road continues to be a primary transportation route through the city.



Photograph 1. Circa 1950s Advertisement Reflecting Topeka's Growth

In 1962, a preliminary land use plan for the Topeka-Shawnee County Regional Planning Area was prepared. The plan was partially financed through an urban planning grant from the Housing and Home Finance Agency, under provisions of Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended. According to the plan, by the 1960s, the obvious signs of extensive population growth throughout the county were visible - new residential areas constructed, new shopping centers, new buildings planned for downtown, and the construction of new highways and by-pass routes.²³ Much of this growth occurred within and

immediately surrounding the city of Topeka. Guided by the city's 1945 *Comprehensive Plan* the 1962 regional plan, continued expansion of the city ensued throughout the 1960s.

During the 1960s, the city experienced a steady increase of 2 to 3 square miles each year, bringing the total land to 47.4 square miles by 1970.²⁴ The following decade (1970 to 1980) the City only annexed an additional 2.1 square miles and the population declined by approximately 5 percent. It is believed that this decline is associated with the closure of Forbes Air Base in 1973 as thousands of military families were relocated.

From the Post-World War II years through the mid-1970s, the physical built environment of Topeka was largely guided by the rapid increase in population growth and large annexations into the corporate limits. This period is recognized for the collection of cohesive mid-century residential sectors and the development of new commercial corridors, government, religious, and educational facilities that resulted from city planning efforts and patterns of development experienced nationwide in and around metropolitan areas.

In addition to city planning efforts in Topeka, three significant events during the mid-20th century impacted much of the city's built environment - the flooding of the Kansas River in 1951, the Urban Renewal Program, and a destructive tornado in 1966. Though numerous historic buildings and neighborhoods were affected by these events, multiple impressive mid-century Modern buildings came about as a direct result.

²³ Topeka-Shawnee County Regional Planning Commission, "Preliminary Land Use Plan for the Topeka-Shawnee County Regional Planning Area: Master Plan Report 3," August 1962.

²⁴ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

2.1.3. FLOOD OF 1951

July 13, 1951 has been called by some as Black Friday. Recognized as the “flood of the Century,” the great flood inundated much of the City of Topeka and 100s of other cities and small communities along the Kansas River Basin. The Kansas River rose to cover nearly all of the City north of the river. In Topeka alone, 7,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed. The flood damage costs in Topeka reached \$34 million. Seventeen thousand (17,000) Topekans were forced to evacuate their homes and 4,000 refugees took shelter at Topeka’s Municipal Auditorium.²⁵ The banks of the river were fully inundated with North Topeka hit the hardest. The historically black neighborhood known as the “Bottoms” and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway yards to the west were nearly completely destroyed.

The residential sector of East Topeka was largely spared by flood waters. However, as a direct result of the flood, the Army Corps of Engineers erected a levee along the banks of the Shunganunga Creek in East Topeka. The project channelized the flow of water through the creek but also resulted in the loss of several streets that once connected to surrounding neighborhoods. This action “began a process of isolating East Topeka from downtown and areas further west.”²⁶ Similar scenarios likely occurred across the City resulting in the decline or destruction of historic neighborhoods and buildings. Ultimately, the flood had a tremendous impact on both the physical built environment of Topeka, as well as its mid-20th century development.

2.1.4. URBAN RENEWAL: 1956-c.1975

Following World War II, and continuing into the early-1970s, planning efforts focused on the revitalization of aged and decaying inner cities. Urban Renewal has its roots in the Housing Act of 1949, which established federal financing for slum clearance (title I), expanded Federal Housing Administration mortgage insurance program (Title II), and set aside federal funds to expand the public housing to 800,000 units over a six year period (Title III). By 1954, only 1/4 of the units were erected.²⁷

As amended in 1954, the Housing Act mandated that municipalities submit a “workable program” for redevelopment while de-emphasizing public housing goals for those displaced by slum-clearance programs.²⁸ Ultimately, the Federal Housing Act passed in 1954 allowed state entities to design redevelopment programs to accomplish the federal “mission of preventing the physical deterioration of good neighborhoods in urban areas as well as

²⁵ Tim Hrenchir, “Topeka Saw Severe Flooding 65 Years Ago This Week,” *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 12 July 2016.

²⁶ East Topeka Community, “East Topeka Neighborhood Revitalization Plan,” An Element of the *Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan 2020*, City of Topeka-Shawnee County, Kansas, 2002; p.6.

²⁷ Digital Scholarship Lab, “Renewing Inequality,” *American Panorama*, ed. Robert K. Nelson and Edward L. Ayers, accessed June 1, 2020, <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/renewal/#view=0/0/1&viz=cartogram&text=about>.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

addressing blighted neighborhoods through rehabilitation where possible or clearance and redevelopment of areas designated as slums.”²⁹ The primary objective of the Urban Renewal program was to use both federal and municipal funding to acquire deteriorating urban areas and encourage private redevelopment. “Densely built and highly centralized,” many of the nations’ declining downtown business districts and neighborhoods became ready targets for clearance and redevelopment.”³⁰



Figure 6. Proposed Keyway Urban Renewal Project Area, 1957

Source: Urban Renewal Vertical File, Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library

Urban Renewal in Topeka

Shortly following the passing of the amended Housing Act in 1954, the City of Topeka and local business leaders embarked on a study of the urban core to ascertain whether Urban Renewal would be beneficial to the City.³¹ In 1956, a landmark Urban Renewal program was initiated and Topeka’s Urban Renewal Authority (URA) was formed. The URA was charged with the development of an Urban Renewal plan required for the application for federal funding, which would support two-thirds of project costs.³² The URA identified 38 blocks in the northeast corner of downtown in need of redevelopment and Urban Renewal funding (Figure 6). This area extended from Crane Street south to 8th Avenue and Kansas Avenue east to Adams Street. This area, named the Keyway Urban Renewal Area, encompassed portions of the downtown and industrial sub-areas, as well as some residential enclaves. The anticipated project cost was estimated at 20 million dollars. Several of the blocks within the Keyway Area were intended for the construction of Interstate 70, which was still in the planning phase.

²⁹ Rachel Nugent, “South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form,” National Park Service, 2015.

³⁰ Longstreth, Buildings of main street, p. 7-8

³¹ Ibid.; and, Gene Byer, “Savings and Loan leader Urges Slum Action,” *Topeka State Journal*, 15 March 1956, *City Planning – Urban Renewal 1956-1959*, Vertical File, Topeka Room, Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library.

³² Rachel Nugent, “South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form,” National Park Service, 2015.

Due to much opposition and overly ambitious plans, by 1958, the project area was reduced to include blocks north of 6th Avenue.³³ The URA approved the program in 1958 at a cost of \$16.2 million for appraisal and acquisition of property. The URA further identified 26 businesses within the project that would not be required to relocate because their function conformed to the redevelopment objectives of the project.³⁴

Unfortunately, much of the Keyway Urban Renewal Project Area was occupied by predominantly black neighborhoods. Among those was “the Bottoms,” the city’s oldest black neighborhood. The Bottoms, located on the southern bank of the Kansas River, suffered much damage as a result of the 1951 flood and was in declining condition. Prior to construction of the highway, which began March of 1961, 3,000 residents of the Bottoms were displaced and their homes demolished. The displaced people were not immediately relocated or offered any assistance after being forced from their homes. In 1961, the Community Resources Council (CRC) joined the newly formed Topeka Housing Authority in planning for a public housing project. Following accusations from the community of wide-scale discrimination regarding the Urban Renewal Project, the CRC facilitated a series of community conversations concerning Urban Renewal and minority housing in Topeka. The following year, construction of the city’s first public housing project began. Pine Ridge Manor would not open until 1965, several years following the initial displacement of thousands of residents within the Keyway Urban Renewal Project Area.³⁵

The Keyway Project, which included the construction of US-70, also effectively separated the industrial area of the City to the east from the commercial and government districts to the west. By the end of 1962, a remaining seventy acres of the Keyway Project Area was made available for private purchase and redevelopment, with thirty-five (35) acres designated for light industrial uses and 25 acres for commercial.³⁶ Hundreds of local and national companies expressed interest in purchasing land within the redevelopment area. Each company was required to submit to the URA detailed plans with their proposals.

By 1966, only four of the 27 blocks of the Keyway Project were commercial businesses, the remaining blocks were light industrial.³⁷ By March of 1966, 95% of the Urban Renewal areas was under development, \$2.5 million in land sold, and commitments for an addition in \$11 million in redevelopment. Because most of the area was redeveloped light industrial, the City experienced a rapid increase in employment opportunities. Hallmark Cards purchased four entire blocks to employ 1,200 people.³⁸

The new development in the Keyway Urban Renewal Avenue changed the scale and character of downtown Topeka. Several blocks were demolished and replaced by I-70, which created

³³ “Committee Hears a Report on Topeka Urban Renewal,” *Emporia Gazette*, 25 March 1966.

³⁴ Rosin Preservation, LLC, “Downtown Topeka Historic Resources Survey,” prepared for the City of Topeka, Kansas, 2012; p.40.

³⁵ Community Resources Council, “CRC History,” <https://crcnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CRC-timeline.pdf> accessed March 2020.

³⁶ “For Sale Sign Goes Up on Keyway Land,” *Topeka Daily Capital*, 19 December 1962, *City Planning – Urban Renewal 1959-*, Vertical File, Topeka Room, Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library.

³⁷ “Committee Hears a Report on Topeka Urban Renewal,” *Emporia Gazette*, 25 March 1966.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

a distinct separation of downtown between the commercial and government area and the industrial sector to the east. The buildings constructed as a result of the Keyway Project included both large and small. They were most often free-standing commercial and industrial blocks employing Modernist design features and materials popular during the mid-20th century. Among the large-scale projects in the Keyway Urban Renewal Area include the Ramada Inn hotel and convention center complex (1964) adjacent to the east of the new highway; a one-story Montgomery Ward's department store in the 300 block of South Kansas Avenue (1966); and the Fidelity State Bank at 600 South Kansas Avenue (1967).

Townsite Plaza Redevelopment Area

By 1964, plans were underway for the redevelopment of 2 ¼ blocks at the southwest corner of the Keyway Project Area, west of the new highway. Named the Townsite Plaza Urban Renewal redevelopment area, it comprised the blocks between 4th and 6th Streets and Kansas Avenue and Monroe.

In 1968, the American Home Life Insurance company submitted a bid to the Topeka Urban Renewal Agency for the construction of its home office (Figure 7). URA Director, John Harbes, said the building would close the “last gap” facing Kansas Avenue in the Townsite Plaza Urban Renewal redevelopment area.³⁹ According to a 1968 article in the *Topeka State Journal*, the American Home Life Insurance building was to be the 6th building assured for Townsite Plaza. In addition to the American Life Insurance Building, which was not completed until 1970, the First National Bank (1968), including its multi-story parking garage, and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (1969) had plans for Townsite Plaza. The Thacher Inc. Building (1967) was already complete, and the “Federal Building, which includes the post office, and the relatively new Duffen's Optical Co. Building have been slated to remain in the area since initial planning.”⁴⁰



Figure 7. 1968 Rendering of the American Home Life Insurance Building
Source: Photograph of original rendering hanging on interior wall

Development within the Urban Renewal Areas likely inspired new construction on nearby blocks as part of the city's revitalization efforts. A number of new buildings within close proximity to the Keyway project area were erected and are contemporaneous with Topeka's Urban Renewal program. Among those include Capital Federal Savings & Loan headquarters

³⁹ Alta Huff, “Life Firm Makes UR Tract Bid,” *Topeka State Journal*, 25 September, 1968.

⁴⁰ Alta Huff, “Life Firm Makes UR Tract Bid,” *Topeka State Journal*, 25 September 1968.

at 700 S. Kansas (1961); Kansas Power & Light Company Building at 818 S. Kansas (1962); Macy's Department Store at 800 S. Kansas (1965); Merchants National Bank at 800 SW Jackson (1969); and the Topeka Savings Association Bank at 800 SE Quincy (1973). Opposite the new interstate, the Topeka Capital-Journal office building was built at 616 SE Jefferson Street in 1963.

2.1.5. TORNADO OF 1966

On June 8, 1966, only 15 years after the great flood, Topeka faced yet another devastating natural disaster. Registered as an unprecedented F5 tornado, the storm traveled from the southwest of the city to the northeast, causing the deaths of 17 people. The tornado was on the ground for 34 minutes with a damage area of 21 miles long and 1 ½ miles wide. The damage resulting from the tornado surpassed \$104 million. The storm crossed downtown, damaging the Kansas State Capitol dome, destroying the multistory National Reserve Building, and damaging a number of public and private office buildings. The tornado caused massive damage across the City, including much of Washburn University campus.⁴¹ The college lost 600 trees and 5 buildings. Rebuilding campaigns quickly ensued across the City and the Washburn campus. Much of the city's mid-century Modern architecture is attributed to the tornado and subsequent rebuilding.

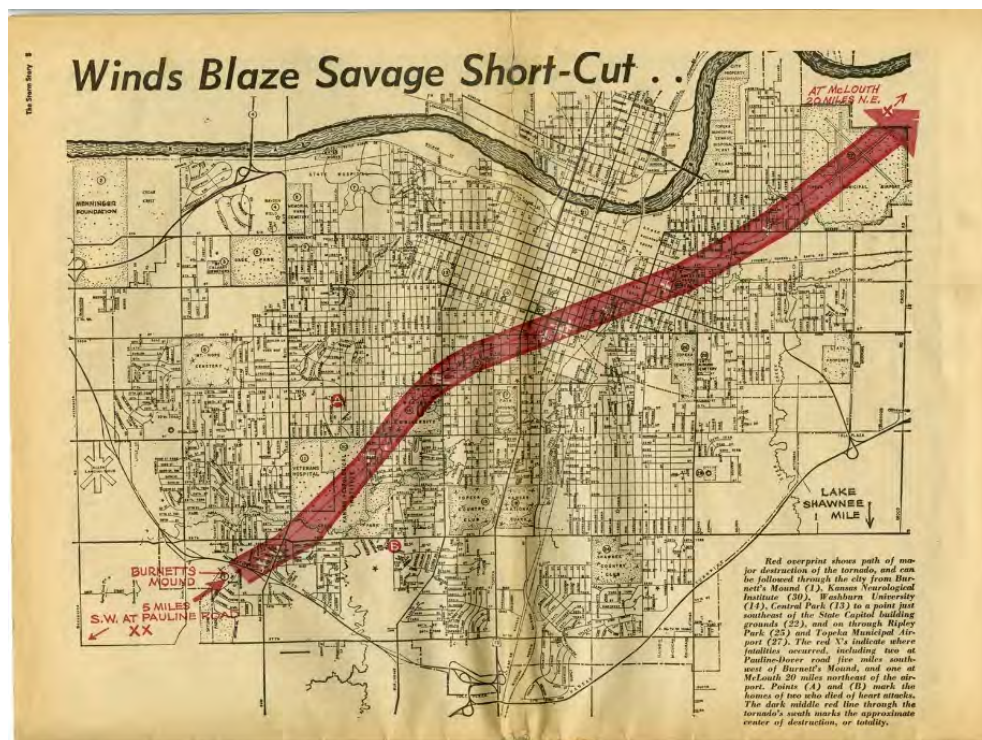


Figure 8. Map Showing Path of 1966 Tornado Through Topeka
Source: Topeka Capital-Journal Archives

⁴¹ Kansas Historical Society. "Topeka Tornado 1966," kansapedia, 2011; <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/topeka-tornado-1966/17242> accessed May 2020.

Long-term, the tornado resulted in the decline of many residential sectors where residents were forced to relocate. Such is the case in East Topeka where the northwest corner of the neighborhood was devastated. According to one resident, the area in the path of the tornado in East Topeka has never fully recovered.⁴² Beginning in the early-1960s, the Highland Crest neighborhood, which developed in the 1950s, was already declining due to reductions of the Forbes Air Base. For families displaced by the tornado, Highland Crest was seen as an economical option for home ownership and renting.⁴³

2.1.6. INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH

Education

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the country's educational system underwent a significant transition fueled largely in part to changes in school-age populations and economic conditions. Following World War I, the increase in the number of school-age children resulted in a building boom of Progressive Era schools during the 1920s. School construction came to an abrupt halt with the Great Depression yet rebounded by New Deal Era programs providing federal funds for the construction and improvement of school facilities. Wartime once again temporarily impacted school expansion as school construction during World War II was minimal.⁴⁴

The post-World War II baby boom and suburbanization fueled the need for additional and larger school buildings. By 1950, the federal government was faced with growing concerns of the status of public educational facilities and the "responsibilities of the federal government in addressing the growing need for school facilities to educate an increasing number of school-age children."⁴⁵ Congress passed Title 1 of Public Law 815, which provided for a nation-wide study of school facilities. The legislation provided funds to assist states in the survey of existing facilities and the identification of current and future needs.⁴⁶ The survey ultimately resulted in the modern school facility and public education system that we see today, which largely came about as a result of the post-World War II baby boom.

In Kansas, the survey of school facilities portrayed strained resources when faced with the post-War baby boom. Subsequently, the 1950s saw a tremendous increase in the construction of new and larger schools statewide. As suburbanization dramatically increased in metropolitan areas, new schools were located near neighborhoods rather than in the city

⁴² East Topeka Community, "East Topeka Neighborhood Revitalization Plan," An Element of the *Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan 2020*, City of Topeka-Shawnee County, Kansas, 2002; p.6.

⁴³ Katie Moore, Five Things to Know About Hi-Crest, *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 10 September, 2017.

⁴⁴ Brenda Spencer, "Historic Public Schools of Kansas, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form," United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005; Section E page 4.

⁴⁵ Brenda Spencer, "Historic Public Schools of Kansas, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form," United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005; Section E page 4.

⁴⁶ Department of Public Instruction, *Kansas Study of School Building Facilities An Inventory of Existing Public School Facilities, Needs, and Resources as Reported by 3,568 School Districts*, Conducted by the Department of Public Infrastructure, Adel F. Throckmorton, State Superintendent. Topeka, 1952. AND Brenda Spencer, "Historic Public Schools of Kansas, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form," United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005.

centers. According to the *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* Multiple Property Documentation Form ("MPDF"), "the advent of the suburban school brought not only a change in the location of schools, but also a drastic change in the appearance of schools"⁴⁷ (see Architectural Context). The new sprawling Modern schools required much larger sites located on the outskirts of cities or in rural areas. In 2004, among the existing Kansas schools, 303 were built in the period between 1942 and 1955.⁴⁸

As Topeka's population skyrocketed following World War II and its metropolitan area pushed outward with suburbanization and the "annexation fever" of the 1950s, the City embarked on a plan to consolidate schools and erect new facilities in the City's residential sectors. Among the known post-War era public schools built in Topeka during this period include the Herbert R. Lundgren Elementary School (1949) in the Oakland Neighborhood; East Indianola Elementary School (1950) in North Topeka; Highland Park High School (1950) in Highland Park; Southwest Elementary School (1951) adjacent to the early-20th century Westboro neighborhood; and Quinton Heights Elementary School (1953) in the Quinton Heights-Steele neighborhood.⁴⁹ Stout Elementary School (177-4818) was completed in 1955 in the Valley Park Neighborhood, southwest of downtown.

In 1954, two elementary schools were completed in the Avondale district southeast of downtown. According to articles in the *Topeka Capital-Journal* in 1953, the two schools were planned to accommodate the growing number of students in the Avondale District, the majority of whom were children of military personnel. Avondale East was to serve the Beck-Utah Addition (also known as Highland Crest), and Avondale West was to serve the Likens-Foster Addition, just east of Burlingame Road.⁵⁰ The two schools survive as reflections of the City's post-World War II boom and the establishment of large, mid-century neighborhoods where schools were necessary to accommodate the high number of students. Avondale West is noted for its association to Merrill Ross, a ground-breaking Topeka educator. Ross was a pilot in World War II with the Tuscegee Airmen. Following World War II, he taught African American children in Topeka's segregated school system, becoming principal of Washington Elementary School in 1954. That same year, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down the historic Brown v. Board of Education decision ending racial segregation in public schools. In 1962, Ross became principal of Avondale West Elementary, making him Topeka's first African American principal of a predominantly white school.⁵¹

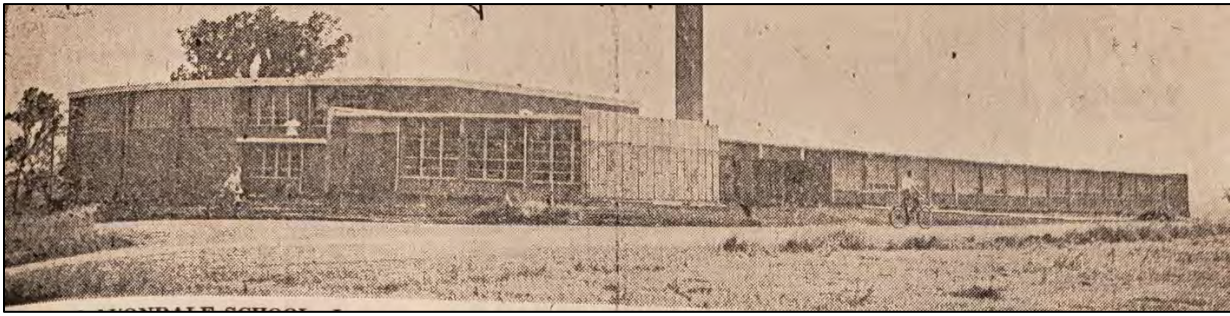
⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Spencer 2005; Section E page 4.

⁴⁹ These schools were identified through a search of KHRI previously surveyed properties. As such, they may not account for all public schools constructed in the city limits during the period of significance.

⁵⁰ "School Dedication Today," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 1 November, 1954; "West Avondale to Start Work Soon on This New Building," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 24 December 1953; "Second New Avondale School," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 24 December, 1953; "Second Avondale Twin to Be Dedicated Monday by State Superintendent," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 6 November, 1954.

⁵¹ Tim Hrenchir, "Groundbreaking Topeka Educator was Born 100 Years Ago This Month," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 11 December 2019.



Photograph 2. Avondale East Elementary School, 1954
Source: Topeka Capital-Journal August 18, 1954



Figure 9. Rendering of the New Stout Elementary School (177-4818)
Source: Topeka Capital-Journal, October 16, 1954

By the 1960s, growing concerns with overlapping school districts, separate treatment of elementary and high schools, and obvious disparities of rural schools compared to those within metropolitan areas “led to the most comprehensive school legislation in the history of the state.”⁵² In 1963, legislation was passed that divided the entire state into school districts providing education for grades 1 to 12 and House Bill 377, as amended by the Senate, provided the procedure to create unified schools districts. As a result of the 1963 legislation, 794 non-unified districts were reorganized and 139 unified districts were established. The legislation (with revisions/expansions in 1965) “established the basic school district pattern that remains in use today with unified districts in charge of all schools in a given district (there are currently 304 unified school districts). The 1966 constitutional amendment established the organizational structure for the Kansas Board of Education that remains in effect today.”⁵³ While the 1960s legislations largely benefited the rural and small communities across the State, Topeka’s school system and districting was established in the prior decade. In Topeka, which encompassed a large metropolitan area with distinct residential sectors, the newly constructed schools built in the Post-War Era were

⁵² Brenda Spencer, “Historic Public Schools of Kansas, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form,” United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005; Section E page 13.

⁵³ Brenda Spencer, “Historic Public Schools of Kansas, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form,” United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005; Section E page 14.

neighborhood schools. While some reorganization and re-districting likely occurred in the 1960s, construction of new schools within the city virtually ceased.

School Segregation

In the 1890s, Topeka annexed a rural district located to the southwest known locally as the Lowman Hill District. Because Lowman Hill was a rural district at that, it did not have segregated schools. Following its annexation, it remained integrated until it was destroyed by fire in 1900. The district then implemented segregation, forcing the 50 African American children living in the area to attend classes in an “old building that had been moved to the original site of the burnt-out school and outfitted with second-hand furniture. The district then built a new school for the 130 white children.”⁵⁴ This decision ultimately led the William Reynolds case in 1901 when he tried to enroll his 8-year old son in the new school reserved for whites. Reynolds complaint stated the following:

“Because of race and color, and for no other reason whatever, his child has been and is excluded from attending school in said new building by the express order and direction of said board...thus putting publicly upon the plaintiff and his child the badge of a servile race, and holds them up to public gaze as unfit to associate, even in a public institution of the state, with other races and nationalities, in violation of the thirteenth and fourteenth amendments to the constitution of the United States”⁵⁵

Reynolds lost his case and his son was forced to attend the segregated school. The school board reportedly argued that the “new school building was larger and more centrally located in order to accommodate the white children, who outnumbered the African American children living in the area.”⁵⁶ The Reynolds case ultimately reveals that as early as 1901, white children enjoyed the benefits of newer, neighborhood schools, whereas black children were forced to attend segregated schools, many of which were small and aged facilities located further distances from their homes.

By 1950, the Topeka school system had 22 elementary schools (9.6 percent black), six junior high schools (9.9 percent black), and one senior high school (7.6 percent black). Between 1931 to 1958, Topeka had one, integrated senior high school – Topeka Senior high School. Racial segregation of students at the elementary level, however, was strictly adhered to. Only four schools were maintained for black students – Buchanan, McKinley, Monroe, and Washington. Each of the schools were located in predominantly black neighborhoods with many students being brought in from throughout the system. Among the 18 white elementary schools, only five were located in predominantly white areas, “while the remaining thirteen schools, though reserved exclusively for whites, were located in racially mixed neighborhoods.”⁵⁷ In 1950, the all-white schools were much more crowded, yet Topeka did not utilize the available classroom space in the black schools to relieve the overcrowding.

⁵⁴ Jean Van Delinder, “Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Part 2,” *Prologue Magazine*, Spring 2004, Vol. 36, No. 1

⁵⁵ Court record statement taken from Delinder 2004

⁵⁶ Delinder 2004.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Despite desegregation resulting from the momentous Brown v. Board of Education decision of 1954, racial segregation was largely sustained over the next thirty years as district boundaries were continuously shifting. In 1955, three former all-black elementary schools remained 100 percent black with only one percent attending former all-white schools. As city boundaries expanded to the south and west, two additional high schools were added: Highland Park Senior High School, which was acquired through annexation in 1959, and Topeka West Senior High School, which opened in 1961. According to the 1960 census, the largest concentration of Topeka's black population resided midway between Topeka High and Highland Park. A simple modification to the school district boundary would have brought the black enrollment at Highland Park to 50 percent, while also alleviating overcrowding at Topeka High. Instead of reorganizing and redistricting, the Topeka School Board chose to build a third high school (Topeka West) at the western fringe of the growing city, assigning to it only 2 black children and 702 white students.⁵⁸

In 1974, twenty years after Brown v. Board of Education, the Topeka school system (USD #501) continued to underutilize its predominantly black schools while the white schools remained overcrowded. Two schools, McClure and Potwin, remained all-white. On September 10, 1973, a class action (Johnson v. Whittier) was filed "on behalf of all black children who were then or had during the past ten years been students of elementary and junior high schools in East Topeka and North Topeka." The complaint focused more so on the equality of facilities rather than the distribution of students. The case claimed that the predominantly white children in West and South Topeka received "vastly superior educational facilities and opportunities, including buildings, equipment, libraries and faculties, than could be obtained by students in the areas of East Topeka and North Topeka, which contained higher percentages of minority students." Johnson failed to qualify as a class action suit, yet it led to an investigation by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) into racial disparities of the Topeka public schools.

After the HEW investigation, the organization prepared to withhold federal funding to Topeka schools for noncompliance to desegregation. HEW brought further attention to the ways in which the Topeka Board of Education "sought to circumvent desegregation."⁵⁹ The decision ultimately led to the reopening of the Brown case in 1979 in an attempt to prove re-segregation of Topeka's schools was a result of deliberate actions of the USD #501 to separate its more affluent citizens (predominantly white) in the western suburbs from the less affluent (predominantly black) residents in East Topeka. The school board designed and built schools to limit access to its new facilities to those residing in the western suburbs, leaving most of the city's African Americans relegated to East Topeka's aging and inferior schools.⁶⁰ Ultimately, African Americans were both geographically bound to inferior schools and economically limited. Most lacked the financial resources to purchase houses in areas that would provide them access newer and better schools. Lawsuits and efforts to resolve the racial disparities of the city's school system continue. In recent years, consolidation and re-districting have resulted in the closure of some of Topeka's schools, including Avondale

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

East, which closed its doors in 2013. The resolution to close the school states that the USD 501 “has found and determined that the closing of Avondale East School building would improve the school system of the unified school district by allowing the district to operate more efficiently, lessening disparities in class size among elementary schools and enhancing educational offerings for all students.”⁶¹

Washburn University

Located southwest of downtown, Washburn University was founded as Lincoln College in 1865. The founders offered a three-year high school curriculum in addition to college. The college struggled through the Civil War economically. The school name was changed to Washburn College in 1878. Today, the school occupies 160 acres of land in Central Topeka. At the end of 1941, the United States entered World War II and the Washburn campus was transformed into a Navy officers training facility. Following World War II, returning veterans were eager to receive a college education, paid for by the government under the GI Bill. Enrollment soared and the school’s funding increased dramatically. The university built housing for married veterans and their families. Additional classroom space was needed for the influx of students. Six impressive new buildings were erected on campus between 1946 and 1960. These include the Veterans housing (1946), Memorial Union (1951), Morgan Hall (1955), married student housing (1958), Carruth Residence Hall (1959), and Stoffer Science Hall (1960).



Photograph 3. Elliott White Concert Hall, Washburn College, 2019

On June 8, 1966, the devastating F5 tornado that swept across the city resulted in the total loss of five buildings on campus and 600 trees. Among those lost include Rice Hall, Boswell Hall, MacVicar Chapel, Crane Observatory, and the Thomas Gymnasium. All were built prior to World War II. The University embarked on a five-year rebuilding campaign that included the construction of the Memorial Union addition (in progress prior to tornado), the west wing of Morgan Hall (1967), Garvey Fine Arts Center (1968, was in planning stages prior to tornado), Law School (1969), and the Henderson Learning Center (1971).⁶² The Garvey Fine Arts Center (177-4819) was dedicated in 1968 and includes the Elliott White Concert Hall, the Washburn Theater (Neese Gray Theater), and the

music and art department. Since the late-1970s, Washburn University switched from rebuilding to growing with numerous buildings constructed from 1978 through the 2000s.

Religion

Although the automobile allowed for easier movement and decreased the need for resources located within close proximity, suburbanites continued to prefer that community resources

⁶¹ Ann Marie Bush, “USD 501 Votes to Close Avondale East School,” *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 16 February, 2012.

⁶² Martha Imparato, “Chapter 2: Washburn University History,” prepared by Mabee Library Special Collections Librarian/Archivist

be located close-by. Among those resources included schools, community centers, parks, and churches/religious facilities. In Topeka, Modernist churches began popping up in the many residential sectors of the City. As Topeka's suburban growth skyrocketed following World War II, so too did the number of religious facilities. As with the "neighborhood schools" built during the 1950s, churches were erected within the residential areas of the city throughout the mid-20th century. In the earlier neighborhoods where churches may have already been established, they were either replaced or added on to. The new churches tended to be located along principal streets connecting surrounding neighborhoods. The churches contained large parking lots to accommodate the suburbanites preference to driving. In many instances, the church property was a sprawling campus with amenities such as educational units, office space, playgrounds, and grassed yards.

2.2 ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT: 1945 TO 1975

2.2.1 OVERVIEW

Modern Architecture, or Mid-Century Modern, might be considered an umbrella term used for resources sharing characteristics commonly occurring in post-World War II American architecture, particularly in commercial and institutional buildings. Changes in construction methods, materials, and styles characterized post-World War II era architecture nationwide. Among the common design elements characterizing mid-century Modern architecture is the general rejection of ornamentation and references to the past. Building materials and methods reflect technological advancements of the age and emphasize function over form, and "design based on expressing structure and use."⁶³ Concrete became a primary building material, including pre-cast, aggregate, and pre-stressed. Aluminum and stainless steel were favored over other metals due to their durability and sleekness.

Modernist architecture would "convey meaning by the very lack of ornament."⁶⁴ It was an era marked by a transformation from classical symbolism and masonry massing towards steel and glass construction to "celebrate innovation, freedom, and flexibility."⁶⁵ Although references to the past were generally avoided, classical traditions often endured, or evolved.

Modernism has its roots in the International Style as it evolved in Europe during the 1920s. Modernism grew out of the art and architectural reform movements that came together in the Bauhaus School of Design in Weimer, Germany. The Bauhaus sought to steer artists and architects towards "building of the future." This philosophy carried strong associations with political reforms, socialism, and mandates to embrace the machine age.⁶⁶ It was not until the Post-World War II era that American architects began embracing Modernism. According to Meghan Hogan's *The Future of Modern*, the Movement was a "salute to the postwar era

⁶³ Peter Meijer Architect, "Thematic Survey of Modern Movement Non-Residential Architecture, 1945-1975, in St. Louis City," City of Saint Louis Cultural Resources Office, 2013; p.14.

⁶⁴ Rifkind p.104

⁶⁵ Rifkind p.104.

⁶⁶ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, "Oil and Gas Building National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form," National Park Service, 2013; page 8.

itself, spearheaded by architectural giants such as Mies van der Rohe, Eero Saarinen, and Philip Johnson. At the height of its popularity, the sweeping curves, sheets of glass, and absence of ornament signaled change.”⁶⁷ Following the War, the increased use of industrially-produced materials and building components ultimately led to the adoption of a “machine” aesthetic in building design that is evident among a variety of Mid-Century Modern styles and sub-styles. Ultimately, in the United States, the “advanced technologies and the development of pre-fabricated materials, combined with Urban Renewal programs at the federal, state, and local levels, greatly impacted the social changes, design innovations, and expressive influences on the built environment.”⁶⁸

2.2.2 MID-CENTURY DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN TOPEKA

Non, single-family, residential mid-century development of Topeka largely coincides with the tremendous population growth and suburbanization the City experienced following World War II. The decentralization of downtown and increased suburbanization ultimately led to the establishment of new residential sectors. In the age of the automobile, principal streets connecting residential neighborhoods to one another and downtown emerged throughout the City. Along these streets, wayside commercial architecture embracing Modernist design were erected in high numbers. Small- to mid-sized office buildings were also built along these commercial corridors. Community resources such as schools and churches, both reflecting Modernist elements in their design, popped up throughout the residential sectors of the city. While the majority of the mid-century residential development was single-family, a handful of multi-family apartment buildings were built within the heart of the residential suburbs. Among those include a grouping of late-1940s, two-story garden apartments along SW Fillmore and Western Avenues near 12th and 13th Streets. These buildings, which are located in late-19th century neighborhoods, also adopted mid-century designs elements, specifically the International Style. In the downtown and industrial areas, Urban Renewal programs allowed for slum clearance and redevelopment. It is in these areas where we see large-scale Modernist architecture. Several buildings within close proximity to the Keyway Project Area are contemporaneous with the city’s Urban Renewal program and efforts to revitalize downtown. Among those include the former Topeka Capital-Journal office at 616 SE Jefferson, east of the newly constructed Interstate 70. The distribution of Topeka’s Modernist architecture, including distinct building types, is largely a result of suburbanization and annexations, increased automobile use, and federal and local government programs.

⁶⁷ Megan Hogan, “the Future of Modern: Federal Architecture in an Era of Change,” in *Common Ground* (Spring 2009), p.28

⁶⁸ Peter Meijer Architect, “Thematic Survey of Modern Movement Non-Residential Architecture, 1945-1975, in St. Louis City,” City of Saint Louis Cultural Resources Office, 2013; p.



Photograph 4. Topeka Capital-Journal Building (177-4839), c. 1960s
Source: Kansas Memory

2.2.3 MID-CENTURY MODERN ARCHITECTURAL STYLES: 1945-1975

Modernist architecture embraced technological advances in materials and construction methods while rejecting applied ornamentation and references to the past. Modernist designs focused on “simplicity, spatial clarity, and maximizing interior exposure to daylight.”⁶⁹ Nationwide, a variety of Modernist sub-styles emerged which will be discussed in greater detail. Many buildings are simply reflective of Modern Movement architecture. These are properties that reflect modernist trends and characteristics associated with the Modern period yet are not strongly defined by a specific style or sub-style.

Modernist design within Topeka falls into two umbrella philosophies - conservative and radical. Sub-styles embracing conservative Modernism include the International Style, Wrightian, and New Formalism. Radical Modernist, which gained popularity by the late-1950s, include Neo-Expressionism, Brutalism, Exaggerated Modern, and Googie. These radical sub-styles were sculptural in appearance, “with each style expressing sculpture in a different manner.”⁷⁰

Descriptions and characteristics of each Modernist sub-style follows. It should be noted that specific modern styles have not yet been universally accepted by architectural historians. However, the following descriptions presents styles that frequently occur among a variety of publications and sources. For purposes of this study, the styles best illustrate the wide spectrum of Mid-Century Modern non-single-family residential architecture in Topeka.

⁶⁹ Peter Meijer Architect, “Thematic Survey of Modern Movement Non-Residential Architecture, 1945-1975, in St. Louis City,” City of Saint Louis Cultural Resources Office, 2013; p.90.

⁷⁰ Heritage Architectural Associates, “Ohio Modern: Preservation our Recent Past, Dayton and Surrounding Area Survey Report,” prepared for the Ohio Historic Preservation Office of the Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 135.

A. Streamline Moderne (1925-1950)

While highly popular during the 1930s, Streamline Moderne commercial design endured through the mid-1940s. Unlike the Art Deco style, which evoked a machinelike appearance, Streamline Moderne “developed from the processes of designing and selling machines themselves.”⁷¹ Ironically, the Great Depression helped to launch a growing profession of industrial designers. These designers were challenged to develop visually-appealing designs to give the positive impression of “up-to-date,” “technologically advanced,” and the “shape of things to come” into the mind of buyers.⁷² The challenge was not restricted to buildings, but included a wide spectrum of objects such as trolley cars and kitchen appliances. Although streamlining began as a “futuristic wrapper for mechanical products,” it quickly became a dominant form of architectural expression, particularly among small commercial buildings and roadside commercial architecture. During a period of economic hardship, Streamline Moderne “could be relied upon to evoke exciting, positive associations that could be exploited for wayside selling.”⁷³ Among the characteristics of Streamline Moderne architecture include:



Photograph 5. 1629 Medford Avenue (177-4820)

- One-story buildings
- Horizontal emphasis and orientation
- Anchored to the ground
- Asymmetrical facades
- White is predominant color
- Rounded edges
- Corner windows
- Glass block walls
- Mirrored panels
- Ribbon band of windows with metal frames
- Stringcourse along coping of wall
- Flat roofs
- Curved canopies
- Smooth wall finish
- More utilitarian and functional metals like aluminum, chrome, and stainless steel used for door and window trim, railings, and balusters
- Metal double-hung or casement windows
- Occasional circular porthole, oculus, round windows on main or secondary elevations
- References to the sea/the ocean: curves, horizontal vectors and lines, and light blue finishes like aquamarine, azure, baby blue, cyan, teal, and turquoise

B. International Style (1940s-1970s)

Post-World War II era American architecture embraced European Modernism that first emerged in the 1920s. European Modernism was heralded as a movement towards rationality in architecture, rather than stylistic embellishment. Founded in 1906 in Weimar, Germany, the Bauhaus school of design set out to teach artists and architects to collaborate

⁷¹ Chester H. Liebs, “Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture,” Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1985, reprinted 1995, p.55.

⁷² Liebs 1995, p. 56.

⁷³ Liebs 57.

towards the “building of the future.”⁷⁴ By the 1920s, the Bauhaus focused on a design with strong associations to political reform and socialism, while unifying art and the progressive advancements in building methods. This movement evolved into what came to be known as the International style. Prior to World War II, traditional International Style, or European Modernism, was characterized by: 1) machined metal and glass framework, with flat neutral (generally white) surfaces with ribbon windows; 2) an emphasis on horizontality; 3) functional and flat roofs; 4) frequent use of cantilever for balconies and upper stories; 5) use of “pilotis” – or slender poles – to raise the building mass, making it appear to float above the landscape.⁷⁵

The popularity of the International style in America is attributed to the teachings of Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe. Both were directors of the Bauhaus school and both fled from Germany to America after the Nazis took power. Gropius became director of Harvard’s graduate school of architecture, and Mies van der Rohe became director of the architecture program at the Armour Institute in Chicago. Their many disciples spread across America, disseminating the philosophy of abstract modernism in architecture and design. While abstract modernism in America was growing in popularity by the close of the 1930s, it was not until the post-World War II era that the International style became the standard for American commercial and institutional design.⁷⁶

Following World War II, the International style evolved into a broader modern movement emphasizing technology and expression of construction methods, materials, exposed structural elements, and simplicity of form. The style was highly popular through the late-1950s. Although the style was evident well beyond the 1950s, many critics felt that the International Style was bland, monotonous, and cold. This was particularly the case in the later examples of corporate office buildings.⁷⁷

Identifying features of International style in America

- Modern structural principles and materials: concrete, glass, and steel
- Occasional skeleton-frame construction, exposing its structure
- Rejected non-essential decoration
- Ribbon windows and corner windows
- Glass curtain walls
- Balance and regularity
- Flat roof, without ledge

⁷⁴ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Louisiana Architecture: 1945-1965, Modernist Triumphant – Commercial and Institutional Buildings, September 2009, revised February 2010.

⁷⁵ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Louisiana Architecture: 1945-1965, Modernist Triumphant – Commercial and Institutional Buildings, September 2009, revised February 2010.

⁷⁶ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Louisiana Architecture: 1945-1965, Modernist Triumphant – Commercial and Institutional Buildings, September 2009, revised February 2010.

⁷⁷ Peter Meijer Architect, “Thematic Survey of Modern Movement Non-Residential Architecture, 1945-1975, in St. Louis City,” City of Saint Louis Cultural Resources Office, 2013; p.90-91.

- Metal mullions and smooth spandrel panels separating large, single-pane windows between floors

Stout Elementary School is an exemplary example of the International style applied to educational buildings. The former Dr. Karl & Jeanetta Lyle Menniger Education Center (177-4683) is an intact, two-story office building built in the International style. The former Kansas State Office Building (Docking Building, 177-3153) is another fine example of the International Style applied to a tall government office building.



Photograph 6. Stout Elementary School



Photograph 7. Dr. Karl & Jeanetta Lyle Menniger Education Center (177-4683)

International Style Sub-Type: Miesian (1950s-1970s)

The Miesian sub-style is based on the designs of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, leader of the International Style movement. Miesian buildings feature minimalist designs and utilize curtain wall construction methods. Miesian interior spaces were left open, creating adaptable spaces. The style was very popular among multi-story office building design. The style is characterized by clean lines and functionality. Its

proponents advocated the principles of “rational clarity and intellectual order.”⁷⁸ Emphasis was placed on the structural grid, skeleton construction method, “resulting in a design that was logical, regular, and ordered.”⁷⁹ Miesian buildings feature a grid-like, steel-framed exterior. Additional design features include:

- “Miesian glass box”
- High-rise buildings are boxy and completely devoid of ornamentation
- Overall Sense of Symmetry
- Modular grid “balancing the essential horizontality of the International style with the vertical thrust of tall buildings”⁸⁰
- Skeletal construction, Steel beams, concrete, columns, spandrels, and curtain wall
- Ground floor often set back behind a series of pier, creating a visual effect of the building “floating”

In Topeka, the Merchants National Bank Building (177-3265) is a fine example of a Miesian-inspired tall office building. Both are located within the downtown district

⁷⁸ Heritage Architectural Associates, “Ohio Modern: Preservation our Recent Past, Dayton and Surrounding Area Survey Report,” prepared for the Ohio Historic Preservation Office of the Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 134.

⁷⁹ Heritage Architectural Associates, “Ohio Modern: Preservation our Recent Past, Dayton and Surrounding Area Survey Report,” prepared for the Ohio Historic Preservation Office of the Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 200.

⁸⁰ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Louisiana Architecture: 1945-1965, Modernist Triumphant – Commercial and Institutional Buildings, September 2009, revised February 2010.



Photograph 8. Merchants National Bank



Photograph 9. Kansas State Office Building

C. Wrightian style (1935-present)

Evolving from the design principles of the Prairie School advocated by renowned architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, the Wrightian style focused on organic architecture and materials. Among the identifying features of Wrightian design include:

- Dominant horizontal or vertical lines with cantilevered broad eaves
- Flat or shallow-pitched roofs, often with dentillated or outward projecting fascia boards
- Man-made materials such as glass, concrete, and steel juxtaposed with traditional materials such as stone and wood
- When concrete or stucco is applied, it is generally smooth
- Battered walls

- Piers which taper downward towards their base
- Solid balcony railings
- Integration of nature into the design

Among the mid-century modern properties surveyed, only one reflects Wrightian influences. The architect-designed building located at 2900 MacVicar Avenue uses a combination of concrete and wood. It features an open interior space with a window wall integrating the natural setting into the design of the building. In addition, a small garden with bridge and water feature were incorporated into the design along its front facade.



Photograph 10. 2900 MacVicar Avenue, front facade



Photograph 11. 2900 MacVicar Avenue, rear elevation

D. New Formalism (1955-1970)

New Formalism emerged in the mid-1950s in response to modernism's austerity of functionalism and rejection of historic precedents and ornamentation. The style is recognized for its abstract design while employing simplified elements of classical architecture. Early proponents of the style and leading advocates include Edward Durrell Stone, Philip Johnson,

and Minoru Yamasaki, all of whom achieved earlier prominence working within the International Style. These individuals strove to reestablish architecture as an art.⁸¹

- Strict symmetry
- Flat projecting rooflines
- Smooth, white or light wall surfaces
- Use of arch, stylized classical columns, and entablatures
- Use of the colonnade
- Application of historically expensive materials such as travertine, marble, or granite as a thin veneer or non-traditional paneling
- Ornament in the form of screens or grills using modern materials (metal, cast stone, or concrete)

In Topeka, examples of New Formalist design include the Central National Bank (177-3273), the former Topeka-Capital Journal Building (177-4839), and the First National Bank (177-4863). Constructed in 1975, the latter is a late representation of New Formalist design and features a massive concrete roof that draws upon Neo-Expressionism (*see below*).



Photograph 12. Central National Bank (177-3273) at 800 SE Quincy Avenue

⁸¹Heritage Architectural Associates, "Ohio Modern: Preservation our Recent Past, Dayton and Surrounding Area Survey Report," prepared for the Ohio Historic Preservation Office of the Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 200-201.



Photograph 13. Topeka-Capital Journal Building (177-4839) located at 616 SE Jefferson Street



Photograph 14. First National Bank (177-4863)

Radical Modernist Sub-Styles

E. Brutalism (1960-1970)

Brutalist architecture rejected the modern conservatism dominating mid-century design. Brutalist Style architecture placed an emphasis on mass, weightiness, roughness, and solidity. The most common design element of Brutalist architecture is the use of concrete. Concrete is a simple, pliable material “which responds to the genuine architectural expression, but still very clear and remarkable once dry.”⁸² The style has been most commonly used in the design of institutional buildings, such as libraries, courthouses, and public housing.

⁸² Patina Lee. “Brutalist Architecture – What Does it Really Stand For?” *Widewalls*, June 26, 2016 <https://www.widewalls.ch/brutalist-architecture/>

- Heavy cantilevered blocks and massive appearance
- Boxy forms
- Exposed slabs of rough concrete
- Deeply recessed windows
- Broad expansive walls
- Brawny, muscular presence

The Topeka Mid-Century Modern Survey did not identify any buildings reflecting the Brutalist Style. However, the Kansas Judicial Center (177-2969) in Topeka is an excellent example of Brutalist design constructed in 1972.



Photograph 15. Kansas Judicial Center, 2004
Source: KHRI Database (177-2969)

F. Neo-Expressionism (1950-1970)

Neo-Expressionism emerged as a rejection of the modern ideals of the International Style. The style was based on an earlier movement of Expressionism in Europe following World War I. Architects strived to evoke an emotional, not an intellectual response. The overall design is often sculpture-like, avoiding strict geometric shapes. Innovation of building materials such as concrete, plastics, and laminates were often incorporated into the design. Because each Expressionist structure was extremely individual, the 'style' does not adhere to a single set of standards. Common elements of Neo-Expressionism include:

- Asymmetry
- Sweeping curves
- Illusion of leaning structural supports
- Sharp-pointed gables
- Expression of design and new forms
- Large-scale, thin-shell concrete structures that typically have curving, organic shapes

A number of surveyed properties in Topeka reflect elements of Neo-Expressionism. The American Home Life Insurance Company Building (177-5400-01947) is an exemplary

illustration of Neo-Expressionism with its curving wings. Unlike most Neo-Expressionist designs, however, this example maintains overall symmetry similar to New Formalist ideals. White Concert Hall (177-4819) at Washburn University also reflects the use of Neo-Expressionism in the design of theaters. Religious facilities exhibiting the style include the First Assembly of God sanctuary (177-4852) and the First Christian Church (177-4858).



Photograph 16. White Concert Hall (177-4819)



Photograph 17. First Assembly of God (177-4852)



Photograph 18. First Christian Church (177-4858)

G. Exaggerated Modern (1955-1965)

Exaggerated Modern is a Modernist sub-style emphasizing exaggerated features: soaring, cantilevered roofs, expansive and often canted storefronts, and sculptural elements like precast concrete, steel trusses, etc. The style is “resolutely exuberant, commercial, and auto-oriented.”⁸³ Exaggerated Modern dominated American roadside architecture. It should not be confused with the term “Googie,” a design phenomenon that depicts kitschy scientific imagery popular in the 1950s (see below).

- Exaggerates the structural components of the building
- Typical of commercial architecture
- Sweeping cantilevered and oversized rooflines
- V-shaped columns
- Zig Zag roofline
- Curvaceous geometric shapes
- Common materials: steel, glass blocks, plastic, stone



Figure 10. 400 SE 29th Street (177-4827)

In Topeka, wayside commercial architecture reflecting Exaggerated Modern stylistic influences is plentiful. Two former dealerships in Topeka reflect elements of Exaggerated Modern. The building at 400 SE 29th Street (177-4827) is characterized by its prominent zig-zag roofline. The roof is cantilevered to form a canopy along the front of the showroom. The former Jayhawk Automobile Dealership at 700 SW 6th Avenue (177-4842) is a more restrained illustration of Exaggerated Modern. Rather than an exaggerated roofline, here, a flat roof is cantilevered above a cornered, canted visual front. Its interior entryways are enhanced by glass block sidelights.



Photograph 19. Jayhawk Auto Dealership (177-4842)

⁸³ Joe Sipowicz, “What is Exaggerated Modern,” *The Fullerton Harpoon*, 11 May, 2009.

Exaggerated Modern Sub-style: Googie

Googie architecture might be considered a sub-style of Exaggerated Modern. It shares many characteristics of Exaggerated Modern yet brings it a step further towards a futuristic and playful aesthetic.

- Playful popular cultural interpretation
- Related to the automobile and growing consumer culture
- Advertising
- Futurist and influenced by space-age designs
- Convey American confidence and progress
- Cutouts

In Topeka, buildings inspired by Googie design generally feature restrained elements of the style. The Hanover Pancake House (177-3088) features a zig-zag roof line that projects from the facade to form a protuberant canopy characterized by futuristic diamond-shaped panels with orange and yellow enameling. A massive neon sign advertising the restaurant evokes a space-age design reminiscent of the Jetsons.



Photograph 20. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088)



Photograph 21. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088) Neon Sign

Among the most recognizable mid-century roadside architecture adopting Googie design elements is Bobo's Drive-In (177-3402), constructed in 1948. While the building itself is modest in its design with its flat, cantilevered roof and glassed visual front, it is topped by a large neon element aimed to attract passing motorists.



Photograph 22. Bobo's Drive-In, c.1950

H. A-Frame (1950s-1970s)

The A-Frame is more so a building form rather than an architectural style. Its ascendancy in popularity coincided with an economic expansion that brought about vacation homes. The building form was most common among residential construction. It was advertised as affordable and “aesthetically refreshing,” and offered an “exotic architectural alternative” to a traditional dwelling.⁸⁴ The building is characterized by its overall “A” form with steeply sloping roof that extends all the way to the ground. It is generally 1 ½-stories tall with an open floorplan. The structural system of the A-Frame building allows for the elimination of the two side walls. Although the A-frame was most prominent among residential design, it was also used in much smaller numbers for small commercial businesses, as well as churches. Many mid-century churches used the A-frame form for their grand sanctuary spaces, oftentimes truncating the gable roof with short side walls.⁸⁵

Topeka has a number of mid-century modern A frame buildings ranging from small automobile dealerships to impressive, architect-designed churches. The Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854) is an excellent illustration of a mid-century church sanctuary employing the A-Frame design. It was designed by Ek Dahl, Davis, and Depew and features a truncated roof with short side walls. The 1958 sanctuary addition of the Faith Lutheran

⁸⁴ Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, “A-Frame,” <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/a-frame>; accessed February 2020.

⁸⁵ Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, “A-Frame,” <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/a-frame>; accessed February 2020.

Church (177-4857) is another example of A-frame design. A small automobile dealership building located 540 SE 29th Street (177-4828) also employs the use of an A-frame form.



Photograph 23. Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854)



Photograph 24. 540 SE 29th Street (177-4828)

2.2.4 COMMON MID-CENTURY MODERN MATERIALS, CONSTRUCTION METHODS, AND DISTINCT ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

From the beginnings of Modern architecture, building materials and assembly systems, were significant to the design of modern architects and “to the performance of their buildings.”⁸⁶ Building design aligned itself with industrial production, with exterior aesthetics embracing advances in civil engineering and industrialization. During World War II, wartime shortages of building supplies such as wood, rubber, steel, iron and aluminum forced architects to adjust to typical building practices and innovations. Plastics, aluminum, and concrete, among other materials, were advanced during wartime and continued to be used in post-war years.⁸⁷

GSA’s study, *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism*, briefly describes the benefits of advanced technologies that brought about Modernist design. While the study is directed towards federal building programs of the mid-20th century, the construction materials and methods discussed largely apply to a variety of building types and functions from this period. Unlike the architecture of previous eras, elements of buildings could now be fabricated in factories and assembled on-site. This allowed for mass production and construction with these materials—whether executed in prefabricated elements or constructed on-site—was significantly less expensive than in previous eras. “Concrete, plastics, and aluminum proved to be doubly beneficial, as they were extremely economical and were suitable for aesthetic trends of the times.”⁸⁸

Common building materials and construction methods frequently occurring in mid-century Modern architecture are described here. The list is not all-inclusive but details some of the more popular materials and methods.

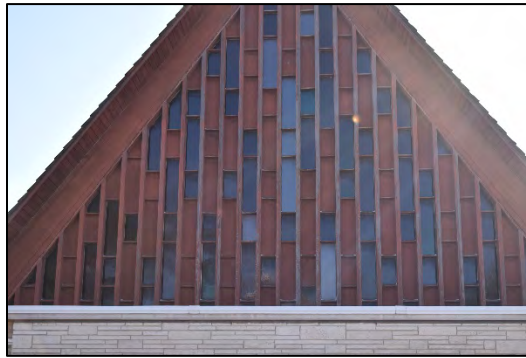
A. Laminated Wood

Shortages of wood during the war led to the development of new and improved materials including glued laminated timber and plywood. Construction plans for the Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854) in Topeka, both laminated wood and plywood were incorporated into the design of the sanctuary. Designed by Ekdahl Davis and Depew and completed in 1962, the interior exposed arches of the sanctuary are laminated, and the exterior gable ends feature plywood panels to enhance aesthetics.

⁸⁶ Henry Moss, “The Materials and Building Components of Modern Buildings,” *Metropolis*, 12 October, 2012; <https://www.metropolismag.com/architecture/preservation/materials-building-components-modern-buildings/> accessed May 2020

⁸⁷ Lisa Mausolf, “Mid-20th Century Architecture in NH: 1945-1975,” prepared for NH Employment Security, 2012; p.46.

⁸⁸ GSA Center for Historic Buildings, *Growth, Efficiency, and Modernism: GSA Buildings of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s*, 2000-2001; page 31.



Photograph 25. Grace Evangelical Brethren Church, gable end detail

B. Plate Glass

Among the more widely used materials of mid-century commercial architecture are plate glass windows. Plate glass was the “perfectly clear covering for the open front that became so prevalent” among both Main Street commercial buildings and wayside commercial architecture.⁸⁹ The open front, or visual front, refers to the use of large windows allowing pedestrians and motorists interior views. The use of open fronts was used in a variety of commercial structures including theaters, gas stations, restaurants, and shops.⁹⁰

C. Brick

While brick is not considered a “new” building material or construction, its use in Modernist design reveals an important shift “to emphasize the material as a planar element without decorative corbelling or other details.”⁹¹ Throughout the United States, the use of brick was not as prevalent as other materials. However, in Topeka, brick remained a common building material throughout the mid-century, particularly for school construction and the small- to mid-sized office buildings. In addition to the typical red brick of older buildings, buff-colored, white, and tan brick veneers grew in popularity among Topeka’s non-residential mid-century architecture.

D. Concrete

Finished Concrete. Similar to brick, concrete was far from a “modern” material; however, the Modern Movement was responsible for its emergence as a finish material on buildings beyond simply utilitarian structures. Precast concrete first emerged prior to 1900. However, it wasn’t until the post-World War II years when it became a leading construction material for a wide range of building types. Precast concrete enabled architectural panels to be made off-site, resulting in efficient and cheaper construction while maintaining architectural

⁸⁹ Carol Dyson, “Mid-Century Commercial Modernism: Design and Materials,” presentation part of *the Mid-Century Modern Structures: Materials and Preservation Symposium*, April 14-16, 2015.

⁹⁰ Carol Dyson, “Mid-Century Commercial Modernism: Design and Materials,” presentation part of *the Mid-Century Modern Structures: Materials and Preservation Symposium*, April 14-16, 2015.

⁹¹ Peter Meijer Architect, “Thematic Survey of Modern Movement Non-Residential Architecture, 1945-1975, in St. Louis City,” City of Saint Louis Cultural Resources Office, 2013; p.94.

aesthetic. In some instances where the architect might want to showcase the first floor, or public space, and entrance of a building, they might elect for an aggregate exterior.



Photograph 26. TWA Flight Center, JFK International Airport

Reinforced Concrete and Pre-Stressed Concrete. The use of concrete has a long history, yet its lack of tensile or flexible strength prevented its use as a prominent construction material. In 1860, S.T. Fowler developed a process of embedding metal bars within the concrete to resist stresses. In doing so, a wider range of construction applications was possible. It was not until the 1890s when the process of reinforcing concrete was refined and used for commercial construction. Not only did reinforced concrete offer fire-proof construction, the modern advancements increased resistance to freezing and improved

workability. The “plastic, malleable qualities of pour-in-place concrete offered exciting new design possibilities.”⁹² Architects were now free to experiment with a variety of forms from cubic and rectilinear to “free flowing and expressive in nature.”⁹³ Advancements in reinforced concrete further allowed for thin shell construction, which employed thinner concrete slabs and shapes. New forms emerged, such as parabolic arches and hyperbolic paraboloid roof structures. The Sydney Opera House in Australia is among the most recognizable structures built of concrete. In the United States, notable thin-shell reinforced concrete buildings include the TWA Flight Center in New York. Although Topeka does not contain exaggerated monumental architecture such as the Sydney Opera House and TWA Flight Center, reinforced concrete was a highly common construction method throughout the mid-20th century.

Continued efforts to increase the tensile strength of concrete eventually led to the advent of pre-stressed concrete. Attempts at **pre-stressed concrete** occurred as early as the mid-1880s. However, due to shrinkage of the concrete, these early efforts at pre-stressing failed. Pre-stressed concrete is concrete that has had internal stresses introduced to counteract the tensile stresses that will occur once a building is constructed. The stress is usually imposed by tendons of individual hard-drawn wires, cables of, or bars of high strength alloy steel. Pre-stressed concrete works well when joining large, precast segments to span long distances. Modern pre-stressed concrete did not arrive in the United States until 1949 when Belgian engineer Gustav Magnel delivered a number of lectures on the subject. Shortly thereafter, American engineers designed the first pre-stressed bridge in the country – the Walnut Lane Bridge in Philadelphia (1951).⁹⁴ The 1950s witnessed a boom in pre-stressed

⁹² Peter J. Arsenault, FAIA, “Designing with Concrete in the 21st Century,” AIA Continuing Education Center, Architecture and Construction, December 2016.

⁹³ Arsenault 2016.

⁹⁴ Gray & Page, Inc., “Ohio Modern: Preserving Our Recent Past Statewide historic Context,” prepared for Ohio Historical Society, 2010; p. 153.

concrete construction. Builders employed smaller, pre-stressed members in the construction of commercial buildings, parking structures, and schools.

E. Curtain Wall Construction

Curtain wall technology dates back to the 1909 Boley Building in Kansas City, which is accredited as the first building to use an all glass exterior wall system. During World War II, numerous aluminum factories Popped up to support the war effort. At wars end, these factories developed techniques to simplify the curtain wall system. Thus, the use of this construction system quickly spread across the nation. The first major example of the Curtain Wall system was the Equitable Savings & Loan Building in Portland, Oregon, designed by architect Pietro Bellushi in 1948. The 12-story building became the world's first to be fully air-conditioned. It quickly set the standard for the development of post-war skyscrapers and small-scale office buildings alike.⁹⁵

The curtain wall system is comprised of a prefabricated exterior wall sheathing of glass and aluminum hung to their frames. The wall itself is non-loadbearing, “can be made of virtually any combination of non-structural materials that meet insulation, wind-load, and aesthetic requirements.”⁹⁶ The curtain wall system is a repetitive grid of vertical aluminum mullions and horizontal rails. Panels, or spandrels, divide the large expanses of glass. The spandrels are aligned along the floor and ceiling frames. The early spandrels were made of heat-strengthened opaque glass with colored ceramic. Later spandrels were metal panels, precast concrete panels, asbestos panels, porcelain enamel, tile, Masonite, and stone veneer, among other materials. By the late 1960s, the curtain wall was gradually replaced with a more smooth, slick exterior application.⁹⁷

In Topeka, the former Kansas State Office Building (177-3153) is among the most impressive examples of a multi-story building with an aluminum-and-glass curtain wall. This building is steel-framed with reinforced concrete. A much smaller illustration of the use of a curtain wall system is the Kansas State Teachers Association Building (177-4843). The two-story building features multiple sections characterized by curtain walls with wide panels separating the floors.

⁹⁶ Dahp, “Curtain Wall: 1948-1965,” department of archaeology and historic preservation, nd; <https://dahp.wa.gov/historic-preservation/historic-buildings/architectural-style-guide/curtain-wall> accessed May 2020.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*



Photograph 27. Kansas State Teachers Association Building (17-4843)

F. Steel Fabrication

Prior to World War II, the steel industry was highly advanced in engineered structures such as bridges and railroads, as well as high-rise buildings. Technological advances continued through the 1950s enabling the development of electric arc welding, which replaced the riveting technique used throughout the 1920s skyscraper construction. Steel beams and structural elements also became part of the exterior of a building.

G. Articulated Frame

By the 1960s, functional building designs were becoming based more on the fundamental frame of the building, while highlighting a company's desire for efficiency and success. Building innovations in wind bracing and fire proofing allowed for distinctive building designs that highlighted a building's framework. Articulated frame buildings typically are constructed using three types of construction methods: curtain wall, steel, and concrete. In all three variations, the design of the building emphasizes its frame, placing a strong emphasis on the structural bones and mass.⁹⁸

The Kansas Power & Light Company Building (177-3238) reflects a concrete articulated frame tall office building in Topeka. Here, the weight of the concrete structural grid is transferred from the upper stories to large concrete columns at the base.

⁹⁸ Gray & Pape, Inc. "Ohio Modern: Preserving Our Recent Past Statewide Historic Context," Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 144.



Photograph 28. Kansas Power & Light Company Building (177-3238)

In addition to the materials and construction methods frequently represented among mid-century modern non-residential architecture, a variety of distinct design elements are often employed.

Thin Stone Veneer was often used for non-load-bearing purposes. The most common thin stone veneers include granite, marble, travertine, limestone, and slate. Generally not exceeding two inches in thickness, the material was often applied to the façade of a building and provided the appearance of a load-bearing masonry. Thin stone veneers were used as early as the 1930s. It was not until the 1950s, however, when composite building panels became common. One of the first high-profile buildings to feature a marble veneer is the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, DC.⁹⁹ In Topeka, the Central National Bank (177-3273) features a smooth, thin stone veneer applied to its exterior to enhance its “classical modern” aesthetic (Photograph 12).

⁹⁹ Gray & Pape, Inc. “Ohio Modern: Preserving Our Recent Past Statewide Historic Context,” Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 1455-156.



Photograph 29. Kansas State Office Building, red granite panels along ground floor and limestone panels on lower blocks



Photograph 30. Southern Bell Telephone Company Building (177-4837)

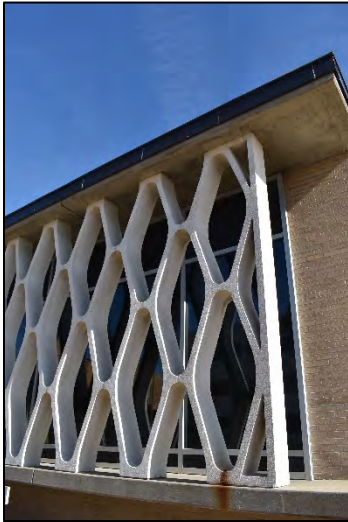
Pilotis are column supports that raise a building's mass above open ground levels. The pioneer of modern pilotis was Le Corbusier, who used them both functionally as ground-level supporting columns, and philosophically as a "tool for freeing the rigidity of traditional plan layouts."¹⁰⁰ Topeka's Merchants National Bank (177-3265/Photograph 8) employs the use of pilotis at ground level. Here, the pilotis give the appearance that the building is floating above the first floor. The pilotis provide a protected walkway around much of the building. Similarly, the Southern Bell Telephone Company Building (177-4837) features

pilotis along the first floor of its principal facades. The heavy concrete columns permit ground-level space to be given over to glass-fronted storefronts and a setback entry.

Decorative Concrete Block. Concrete block was first developed in the early-20th century as an inexpensive building material that was easy to manufacture and install. It was commonly used for building foundations but was also used as the principal construction method. In the latter instance, exterior walls were exposed concrete block and most often are associated with utilitarian construction and wayside commercial architecture. During the 1950s, the traditional concrete block was transformed from a basic building material to a decorative feature oftentimes associated with brise-soleils and screen walls. Brise-soleil was a design element made popular during the mid-20th century. It is a fixed or movable device, designed to block the direct entrance of sunlight into a building or outdoor space. It not only contributed to climate control but



Photograph 31. Example of a Decorative Concrete Block Screen Wall



Photograph 32. Brise-Soleil along façade of former Capital-Journal Building

also gave depth and richness to the flat surface of the modern façade. Screen walls are a type of brise-soleil commonly providing shade and privacy to outdoor space, carports, and garages. The screen walls are most often constructed of brick or decorative concrete block.

A unique design element of Topeka's former Capital-Journal Building (177-4839) is the decorative concrete screen wall along its façade. Here, the entire façade is shaded by the full-height screen wall, which is comprised of large, pre-cast diamond-shaped concrete brise-soleil.

Canted windows. Post-war architects often tilted glass walls outward from the base. Canted windows are usually seen in motel lobbies, storefronts, gas stations, and fast-food restaurants. The use of canted windows in Topeka is common and most often occurs on the smaller roadside commercial buildings. The former Jayhawk Auto Dealership office (Photograph 19) is a good representation of the use of canted windows.

Built-In Planters. Built-in planters are most often associated with Modernist residential architecture; however, they were frequently incorporated into the design of office buildings, both large and small. Planters were often installed along the base of exterior walls, around entryways, and stairs. The planters helped to anchor the structure to the landscape. Interior lobbies of office buildings, banks, apartment buildings and larger commercial buildings may also feature built-in planters in the original designs. Such is the case with Topeka's Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (Photograph 34).



Photograph 33. Interior Lobby of Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (177-4837)

Floating Staircase. Flights of stairs without risers or sideboards, often cantilevered from a wall so that the treads appear to float without support, embody the space-age aspirations of the era. Floating staircases occur most frequently in modern residences and office buildings. In central lobbies, the floating staircase often extends to an open second floor hallway with balustrade that overlooks into the lobby below.



Photograph 34. 2318 SW 10th Avenue (177-4850), Floating Staircase

2.2.5 MODERN BUILDING FORMS AND TYPES

Mid-century Modern designs were employed to a wide range of building forms and types nationwide. In most instances in Topeka, the building type, or form, is directly tied to its historic function or geographic location. This study aims to identify specific classifications of building types, or forms, as they relate to Modernist design trends and philosophies in Topeka. In some cases, a distinct building type includes multiple sub-types. For example, office buildings occur in varying sizes. As such, office buildings are broken down based on their perceived size and height. Similarly, the rise of automobile ownership and improved transportation following World War II, coupled with the City's unprecedented population boom, resulted in what might be considered commercial strips alongside primary arteries. The commercial architecture that arose was often designed to attract motorists. These buildings are classified as "wayside commercial" and are further broken down based on either their distinct type or historic function.

For each building classification presented here, reference is made to a good representation of the type based on observations made during this field survey. The classifications presented here include building types that were not included in the pre-selected property list for this study. However, they are included as distinct building types, or forms, that were popular nationwide throughout the mid-20th century. Thus, it is possible that such building types may occur in Topeka but have not yet been surveyed or identified through research. In instances where a classification is not represented by the surveyed properties, reference is made to previously surveyed properties on KHRI or properties identified through additional research.

A. WAYSIDE COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Prior to World War II, the dramatic increase in automobile ownership inspired the establishment of wayside commercial development. In his book *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, Chester Liebs defines this early roadside development as an “approach strip” located along the fringes of downtown sectors. They acted as first-stop markets for those travelling into town. The approach strip quickly became the “undisputed marketplace of the motor age.”¹⁰¹ Among the many business along these “strips” were gas stations, restaurants, car dealerships and auto repair shops. Commercial development slowed during war years as the federal government imposed restrictions on many of the businesses operating on the roadside strip including cars, rubber tires, and gasoline. At wars end, the roadside strip experienced renewed prosperity, yet significant changes to its makeup were apparent. After the war, suburbanization was considerable, and the collection of subdivisions and tract developments created new communities. The former approach strips were adapted to accommodate the needs of residents of the new communities. According to Chester Lieb, “supermarkets, auto dealers, and a wide range of other retailers, from hardware stores and dry cleaners to clothing outlets and florist shops, intermixed with the older hot dog stands, filling stations, produce stands, souvenir boots, and motor courts.”¹⁰² Unlike the commercial blocks in downtown, where buildings featured attractive storefronts and little setback from the pedestrian sidewalks, the postwar commercial strip was characterized by deep setbacks and large convenient parking lots to attract customers.¹⁰³

1) Shopping Center/Strip Mall

Among the distinct building types that emerged on the approach strips and post-War roadside strips was the shopping center, or strip mall. The concept of the roadside shopping center originated as early as the 1920s. Prior to World War II, a scattering of neighborhood shopping centers appeared nationwide. It was not until the Post-War years that the number of shopping centers skyrocketed. The automobile culture of the 1940s and 1950s moved Americans away from the urban areas into the suburbs. Retailers often relocated their department stores to more affordable property allowing for the construction of abundant parking lots.

The strip mall, or shopping center, is most often a single building containing multiple retail spaces for a variety of businesses.¹⁰⁴ They are typically linear in design with an L- or U-shaped form. As the number of stores increased, the strip mall took on a campus-like quality consisting of an outdoor shopping plaza. During the 1950s, a new concept, the indoor mall, came into fruition. The shopping mall is an enclosed, climate-controlled shopping spaced, with several large stores connected by shop-filled corridors. By the 1970s, the concept of the mall grew into the much larger

¹⁰¹ Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*, John Hopkins University Press, 1995; p. 27.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 1995; p. 28.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1995; p. 26-28.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 1995; p. 28-31.

regional mall. In addition to stores, the regional mall included restaurants, cinemas, and ice-skating rinks, among other appealing amenities.¹⁰⁵

Shopping centers and strip malls were not among the pre-selected properties to survey for this project. However, Topeka likely contains a handful of intact examples along prominent arteries connecting suburban residential neighborhoods.

2) Roadside Restaurants

The rise in automobile ownership and suburbanization further impacted the concept of “fast food.” The most recognizable of the early fast food restaurants was the diner, which included a range of small restaurants from main-street cafes to highway cafes. Beginning in the 1930s, most diners adopted a streamlined modern design suggestive of speed. These “modular lunchrooms,” often appearing as a railroad car, were generally comprised of a lunch counter with stools and tables and booths arranged to offer greater privacy.¹⁰⁶ Following the Great Depression and World War II, automobile ownership in America skyrocketed. The impacts of automobile travel on restaurant layout and design is unprecedented. According to Jakle and Sculle’s *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*, this evolution began with restaurateurs attracting motorists by offering the ease of parking lots and other automobile-related amenities. Quickly, new services were introduced to further entice travelers. The site arrangement, façade treatments, sign configurations, and internal arrangement of space were among the many evolving elements that established “distinctive restaurant prototypes” that captured “the American imagination – building designs that, in retrospect, symbolize the nation’s emergent automobility.”¹⁰⁷

Jakle and Sculle classifies roadside “fast food” restaurants from the mid-20th century into three distinct designs: drive-in, the outdoor walk-up, and the indoor walk-up. In addition, full-service dine-in restaurants are associated with wayside commercial architecture where the convenience of parking lots attracted customers.

- The **drive-in** evolved from the roadside food stand concept. Following the war, drive-in restaurants shared one important architectural element – the canopy, which sole purpose was to “shade in-car eating where food was delivered on trays by carhops.”¹⁰⁸ Drive-in layouts varied, but three principal spaces could always be found: a canopy-covered driveway adjacent to the building, a kitchen, and a carhop station linking the kitchen and parking lot. Most drive-ins were rectangular in form; however, round, octagonal, and hexagonal forms were popular as well.

¹⁰⁵ Gray & Pape, Inc. “Ohio Modern: Preserving Our Recent Past Statewide Historic Context,” Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 126-127.

¹⁰⁶ John Jakle & Keith A. Sculle, *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1999; p.36-37.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1999; p.41.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 1999; p.54

Drive-ins were popular among teenagers and fit nicely into “cruising” routines. They were places for teens to congregate.

- In an attempt to reduce operating costs by eliminating the need for carhops, new “**walk-up**” restaurants evolved. Customers would be served from windows and ate in their vehicle or at picnic tables provided by the business. Many of the walk-up restaurants were pre-fabricated steel-frame construction covered with glass and porcelain enamel. During winter months, the service window might include a portable glass vestibule. The walk-up restaurants were set apart from the earlier traditional roadside food stand in that they usually featured a highly mechanized kitchen for rapid food production.

The walk-up restaurants were ideal for the development of franchises seeking distinctive architectural forms, color schemes, and ornamentation to attract customers. The “golden arches” of McDonald’s remains one of the most easily recognizable design features to a franchise chain in America.

- The **Indoor Walk-up Restaurant** grew in popularity during the 1960s. Franchisers sought to make restaurants more attractive and comfortable. Dining rooms, or enclosed eating areas, were added to the traditional walk-up restaurant; however, customers continued to order at the window or an indoor counter. The indoor walk-up restaurant is usually surrounded by a parking lot and is a small block containing a kitchen, window or service counter. In some instances, a small number of booths might be arranged at the entrance.
- The **dine-in** restaurant includes both diners and full-service restaurants. While full-service restaurants with dining rooms was not a new concept, traditional restaurants were primarily restricted to the downtown Main Street districts and oriented toward pedestrian traffic. What classifies the modern dine-in restaurant as roadside architecture is its parking lot and siting within close proximity to vehicular traffic. The dine-in restaurant expands upon the indoor walk-up concept. Roadside diners typically include a kitchen, counter service with stools, and a dining area arranged along the front of the store. Unlike the walk-up restaurant, the counter service in a diner is typically a full-service dining experience. The full-service dine-in restaurant differs from traditional diners in that it is oftentimes larger in scale and lacks a service counter. While this type of restaurant first occurs along prominent highways prior to World War II, they typically serviced tourists passing through town. Postwar dine-in restaurants, on the other hand, are often sited along busy roads within suburban areas, attracting repeat local clientele.

Mid-20th century wayside restaurants in Topeka encompass the classifications of both “fast food” restaurants and full-service dine-in. The former indoor walk-up restaurant at

Among the most recognizable Modern wayside restaurant in Topeka is Bobo's Drive-In (177-3402), constructed in 1948. Today, Bobo's is a combination of both a drive-in and walk-up with a small number of booths arranged at the front entrance. An early photograph of Bobo's (Photograph 23) suggests that it was originally a walk-in diner with service counter and small number of booths. The drive-in canopy was



Photograph 36. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088)



Photograph 35. VFW Post 1650 (formerly a restaurant), 177-4860

likely added to accommodate an increased customer base and automobile owners in the area. Its drive-in features a prominent flat metal canopy with concrete median and period light fixtures. The landmark Hanover Pancake House (177-3088) has been in operation since 1969 and continues to serve as a local diner within downtown Topeka. A massive neon sign attracting customers is sited in the parking lot near the road. A large full-service dine-in restaurant (177-4860) was constructed on SW Lakeside Drive in a residential neighborhood in west Topeka in 1960. Its current owners, a VFW, indicated that the building was once a steakhouse. The building is set within a large parking lot and adopts Neo-Expressionism in its design. It features curving exterior walls and a prominent curving canopy. The interior contains a large open dining area and separate bar at ground level, and another diner area with bar in a basement.

3) Supermarket

The evolution of supermarkets was well underway by the mid-1930s. Trade publications made recommendations for building new stores and converting old ones into "modern, high-volume self-service cash-and-carry markets."¹⁰⁹ The concept of the efficient self-service store as a machine was rapidly growing in popularity prior to World War II. The interiors were remodeled with long and narrow banks of shelves. Flooring evolved from bare-wood to brightly colored linoleum tiles. Meat markets were converted to self-service. By 1950, after almost two decades of innovation of layout, fixture and display design, the interior of the supermarket was basically standardized.

In addition to the evolution of the interiors of the supermarket, from 1935 to 1950, the exterior design underwent important changes as well. The Streamlined Moderne

¹⁰⁹ Liebs; p. 127.

style provided an up-to-date aesthetic for many supermarkets nationwide. A popular visual front of the supermarket was a large horizontal window extending across the façade. This visual front allowed passersby to the activities inside the store. Elaborate signage was no longer the norm. With exception to the visual front, remaining walls were simply treated, laid in brick or concrete block.¹¹⁰

By 1953, 17,000 supermarkets were operating nationwide. By the mid-1950s, the majority of supermarkets were constructed primarily along suburban commercial strips with large parking lots. Standardization of the supermarket led to a sense of “sameness” where the experience at one store was the same at another. In an attempt to become more visible from speeding cars, many supermarket operators “began to inject visual adrenaline into the outward appearance of their structures.”¹¹¹ Exaggerated Modern influences became vogue among supermarket design. Dramatic rooflines and canopies became common, as well as a massive pole-mounted signs.



Photograph 37. (former) Falley's Meat Market (177-4826)

The 1960s saw an increasing negative popular opinion to the Exaggerated Moderne design of supermarkets. Trade journals encouraged retailers to adopt an Environmental Look and promoted the use of stone, wood, and cedar shakes. While the exterior of the supermarket grew more subdued, the interiors were becoming more visually aggressive. Constructed in 1962, the former Falley's Meat Market (177-4826) in Topeka reflects restrained Exaggerated Modern influences visible by its prominent zig-zag canopies. Otherwise, the building reflects the trend in the 1960s towards a more subdued exterior.

Despite these changes, during the 1970s, the popularity of the supermarket was in decline. The population was leveling off, energy costs were rising, and more families were dining-out at restaurants, especially fast-food franchises. In addition, smaller food outlets and convenience stores were growing in popularity. By the end of the 1970s, new construction of supermarkets was lessening, a trend that continued through the 1980s.

¹¹⁰ Liebs; 127-130.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

4) Filling Stations

Following World War II, the design of gas stations changed dramatically when, in 1947, Californian George Ulrich built the nation's first self-service gas station. The experiment was so successful that 25 similar operations existed in Los Angeles the following year. These early self-service stations typically occupied a one-acre corner lot at busy intersections and had multiple pumps. By the 1950s, many of the smaller independent gas stations converted to self-service. To compete with the major brands such as Shell and Texaco, these independent stations incorporated Exaggerated Modern stylistic influences to attract customers. In his publication *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, Chester Liebs details design trends of the 1950s that were in direct response to increased competition:

“ By the late-1950s, numerous attention-getting features, from jutting V-shaped canopies and expanded visual fronts to wide over-hanging eaves sporting florescent bulbs (which reflected off shiny walls at night, transforming the structures into white luminous cubes) were being actively used to visually energize the basic box. These changes were carefully orchestrated to make stations look more modern without drastically altering their basic form – a low-cost means of updating while still conserving the inherent trademark value of the older designs.”¹¹²

According to Liebs, by the 1960s, gas stations were becoming scapegoats in the public's growing outrage against the automobile's adverse impacts to the built environment. In response to the criticism, gas station design shifted toward the house motif which was popular throughout the early-20th century. Instead of the bungalow or English cottage, the new gas stations resembled the popular ranch houses and Colonial Revival style. The porcelain-enameled cladding gave way to wood, brick, and synthetic stone.

Most gas stations by this time not only offered gas pumps but also operated as a service-station providing oil changes and tune-ups. However, by the 1970s, a rise in discount stores selling do-it-yourself parts steered motorists to at-home servicing. The service part of the gas station was slowly losing business. Across the country, a good number of the earlier filling and service stations were renovated into restaurants, insurance agencies, and stores, among other businesses.¹¹³ In many cases, the old service station made for an excellent convenience store. Service bay openings were sealed and covered, lifts removed, and grease pits filled in. The self-service pumps were often connected to meters on the sales counter inside the station. By the 1980s, this “store with gas” concept was in full swing nationwide.

Mid-Century Modern filling stations are not among the pre-selected properties surveyed for this project. However, Topeka likely includes a good collection of such facilities scattered throughout the city, particularly along high-trafficked arteries.

¹¹² Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*, John Hopkins University Press, 1995; p. 110-111.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 114.

5) Car Dealerships

The history of the Modern car dealership dates back to the turn-of-the-20th century when automobiles first came to market. Car manufacturers granted selling rights to local entrepreneurs and the first dealerships began popping up along the nation's Main Streets. In many cases, entrepreneurs erected new buildings to house their operations. These Main Street buildings generally conformed to traditional commercial design yet the storefronts were much larger with interior views into vehicle showrooms. Eventually, a new type of commercial district emerged farther outside of town – the automobile row. Here, multiple adjacent showrooms formed a whole new Main Street specific to the sale of automobiles.

The Great Depression and World War II resulted in the end to new-car production. While the auto showroom declined, the service business boomed as the demand for spare parts and mechanical work skyrocketed. At war's end, the nation experienced renewed prosperity in the auto industry. Demand for new cars soared and dealers strived for more eye-catching showrooms. Post-World War II dealers left the old automobile rows to relocate to even larger lots farther out of town and along high-trafficked arteries. The sprawling one-story showrooms no longer conveyed prestige as with the earlier 20th century buildings. They were designed to attract speeding motorists. The most notable design feature of the new auto showrooms was the new-car display – a large, glare-free window through which a new car was presented. The new facilities often included a parts department. The service wing was usually the largest part of the building. Used cars were frequently lined in open lots with broad canopies. Prominent neon signs further enticed the passerby.¹¹⁴

By the late 1940s, utilitarian Modern with plain surfaces, visual fronts, and ribbon windows was the most popular design of post-World War II automobile dealerships. Throughout the 1950s, Exaggerated Modern design was the widely accepted design for automobile showrooms along commercial strips.



Photograph 38. 400 SE 29th Street (177-4827)

Another phenomenon that took place by the mid-1950s was the emergence of the roadside showroom and “automobile supermarket.” Such a facility was a place selling large volumes of cars at drastically reduced prices. They tended to lack enclosed buildings, replacement parts, and repair shops. The dealers would line the cars up in rows as if they were used cars, string banners across the lot, and sell vehicles at discount prices. Oftentimes, massive neon signs served as the only form of marketing. In Topeka, the former Jayhawk Auto

¹¹⁴ Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*, John Hopkins University Press, 1995; p. 86-90.

Dealership (177-4842) is an excellent illustration of a small-scale roadside dealership with an outdoor showroom and small administrative office. The office is distinctly influenced by Exaggerated Modern-stylistic design elements. Further, the dealership lacks a service center and was used solely for the sale of vehicles. By the 1960s, dealers became increasingly reliant on mass marketing of the automobile. Cars, rather than buildings, were the primary means of attracting customers. However, the sales-and-service building of the larger, authorized dealers endured. The building was now set back from the road and the large open area in front of the structure packed with rows of vehicles.¹¹⁵ An example in Topeka reflecting this trend is a former dealership with attached service center located at 400 SE 29th Street (177-4827) and constructed in 1970. Here, the building has a substantial setback with a large parking lot. Unlike the more restrained dealerships during this period, the design of the 29th Street dealership features an exaggerated, zig-zag roof line.

6) Car Wash

Following World War II, car washes popped up in large numbers along the nation's growing commercial strips. Car washes initially began as self-serve facilities with drive-thrus and/or canopies. Cleaning supplies might be purchased from the business owner on-site. A self-service car wash was often associated with a gas and service station. In 1946, the advent of the first true automation of the modern car wash occurred in the form of a conveyor belt system with overhead water sprinkler and mechanical blower. Advancements in automation continued through the 1950s, and by the 1960s, new features included recirculating water systems, tire washing methods, and wraparound brushes. In the 1970s, the automatic wheel cleaner became another feature of the automated car wash. The recession that hit in the 1970s ultimately slowed the progress of the automated car wash. It was not until the 1980s when car wash technology flourished.



Photograph 39. 1903 NW Topeka Blvd (177-4832)

While most car wash businesses adopted automation, many remained simple self-service facilities. Ultimately, the stylistic exterior design of car washes follows similar trends to that of gas stations. In Topeka, a car wash with attached retail or service center is located at 1903 NW Topeka Blvd. (177-4832). Constructed in 1945, the car wash is an unautomated, drive-thru self-service facility. It has four wash bays and an exaggerated zig-zag roof.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.90-93.

7) Roadside Motels and Hotels

The post-World War II era saw significant changes in motorist tourism. Specifically, the highly popular motor courts of the 1930s quickly gave way to roadside motels and larger hotels. The individual cabins typical of the 1930s motor courts were replaced by a single building comprising several rooms. These long, low structures were less costly to construct.¹¹⁶ The building was often laid out parallel to the highway in straight lines, V shapes, or crescents. Three basic configurations of motels and hotels were common throughout the mid-20th century – courtyard, strip, and multi-story block. Courtyard motels are typically one-story, sprawling buildings arranged in an L-shape or U-shape creating an open courtyard. Strip hotels often feature multiple, one- or two-story buildings arranged in a linear alignment with parking between buildings. The multi-story block contain multiple floors to increase capacity

Motels and hotels constructed during the mid-20th century were typically basic in their design. Exaggerated Modern, Googie, or New Formalist design elements were often applied on the exterior; however, most post-war motels shared the stripped-down functionalism seen in other roadside businesses. Increased demand no longer required the “architectural theatrics” to lure customers. However, by the 1950s, competition increased considerably, and designers followed the trend toward Exaggerated Modern with soaring roofs and “space-age theatrics.”¹¹⁷

Built in the 1950s at the interchange of US-24 and Highway 75 in North Topeka, the former Jayhawk Motel (Figure 11) is an excellent example of a V-shaped, courtyard-type motel. Rather than exaggerated design features, this building embraces classic Colonial Revival-style influences. At the intersection of the two sprawling, gabled wings is a two-story block with cupola and window dormers. This block likely served as the office on the first floor. The building was remodeled in the 1990s as a bank.¹¹⁸



Figure 11. former Jayhawk Motel (177-3143), postcard

Also constructed c.1950 along US-24 in North Topeka is a modest one- and two-story motel (177-4833) - unadorned and minimalist in its design. The building is rectangular and features a separate office building connected via a flat canopy. The former motel is presently used as an apartment.

¹¹⁶ Leibs; p.181-182.

¹¹⁷ Leibs; p.183.

¹¹⁸ The Jayhawk Hotel was not surveyed as part of this project.



Photograph 40. 117 NE US-24 Highway (177-4833)

By the 1960s, the numerous hotel franchises and chains that emerged during the 1950s were designing much larger and taller facilities. The Ramada Corporation had developed their own design standard for some of their hotels – “Williamsburg-Colonial Revival style.”¹¹⁹ Built in 1965 along 6th Avenue near downtown, the Topeka Downtown Ramada Inn (177-3647) was designed by Hughes, Knight, and Remele. The three-story brick-veneer hotel adopts the Colonial Revival style theme of the Ramada Corporation. According to the KHRI survey, the hotel was historically identified as a Motor Inn yet contains many amenities as modern-day hotels such as meeting rooms, swimming pool, and an elegant entrance lobby. In 1976, a large 12-story tower was added to the hotel.



Photograph 41. Topeka Downtown Ramada Inn (177-3647), 2015

B. BOWLING ALLEYS

The period from 1940 to 1960 is often referred to as the “golden age of bowling” due to the massive popularity increase. By 1945, bowling was a billion-dollar industry in America. It was during this golden age when the first commercial fully automatic pin-spotter was launched. League bowling soared in the 1960s and early-1970s and the number of sanctioned bowling alleys in the United States reached 12,000 by the mid-1960s. Bowling alleys were frequently sited near shopping centers within large parking lots. Googie-inspired exterior features and neon signs attracted customers, while interiors often included an array of entertaining features such as snack bars, billiard rooms, and cocktail bars.

¹¹⁹ From KHRI inventory form (177-3647)

In 1961, Gage Center Bowl (177-4861) and Gage Bowl North began operations in Topeka. Both were sited towards the rear of large parking lots along high-trafficked arteries. Restrained Googie-inspired design elements of each building include a zig-zag canopy along the primary entrance and a theatrical signboard comprised of diamond-shaped synthetic panels. A vibrant neon sign luring customers to the bowling alley was placed near the road. In 2011, Gage Bowl North closed its doors. Gage Central Bowl continues as a bowling alley, recently upgrading their automation system. Only two bowling alleys survive in Topeka – Gage Center Bowl and West Ridge Lanes on Westport Drive.¹²⁰



Photograph 42. Gage Bowl (177-4861)



Photograph 43. Gage Center Bowl Neon Sign

C. BANKS

The banking industry experienced unprecedented growth following World War II, due largely in part to the fiscal and housing boom. As mortgage, automobile, and personal loans increased banking profits, the design of newly built banks strived to attract customers by presenting the image of modernity and friendly convenience. Bank architect Perry Coke Smith stated in 1945 that the “new bank must be open, friendly, warm and un-imposing; a minimum of obstructions between the customer and the bank’s representative who serves him...”¹²¹ Modernist designs were well-suited for the new banks in offering an open, friendly atmosphere. Modern design also conveyed a sense of “up-to-date” efficiency, oftentimes offering a drive-thru service window for convenience. Banks further employed large signs to

¹²⁰ Steve Thompson, “Gage Bowl North to Close,” *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 29 May, 2011.

¹²¹ Perry Coke Smith, “What Bankers Want of Their Buildings,” *Architectural Record* 97 (March 1945): 88-89 AND Deborah Slatong and William G. Foulks, “Preserving the Recent Past 2,” Historic Preservation Education Foundation, National Park Service, 2000; p. 2-45.

further the Modern design. This is especially the case for banks with multiple branches where a shared sign design was beneficial.

The interior design of the new “Modern” banks required larger public areas with considerable natural lighting. Simple low service counters were often straight, circular, or saw-toothed. Throughout the 1950s, banks were generally boxy, asymmetrical, curtain-walled massings. Screen walls or anodized aluminum grills often adorned the exteriors. By the 1960s, however, the design of banks took on more unusual forms. In the early 1960s, many architects employed Neo-Expressionism in their bank designs. Scalloped roof overhangs, aggregate finishes, and attenuated columns were frequently used, and precast concrete was a prominent feature among 1960s bank buildings. The more futuristic banks leaned toward a varied structural expression. Circular banks became a highly popular form for banks during the 1960s. By the mid-1960s, “bank buildings appear with oval-, football-, fan-, and diamond-shaped plans.”¹²² These futuristic bank buildings often featured exaggerated roof forms such as hyperbolic paraboloids and inflated domes.

In Topeka, a number of new Modernist banks were built in the downtown, residential, and commercial areas of the city during the 1960s and early-1970s. The Merchant’s National Bank Building (1969) is a unique example of a tall office building erected for a prominent financial institution in the heart of downtown Topeka. The main banking floor features a large open banking lobby with lounge area, vault, and small offices. With the exception of the Merchant’s National Bank Building, the majority of the banks constructed during this period are smaller, single-story buildings with drive-thru windows.

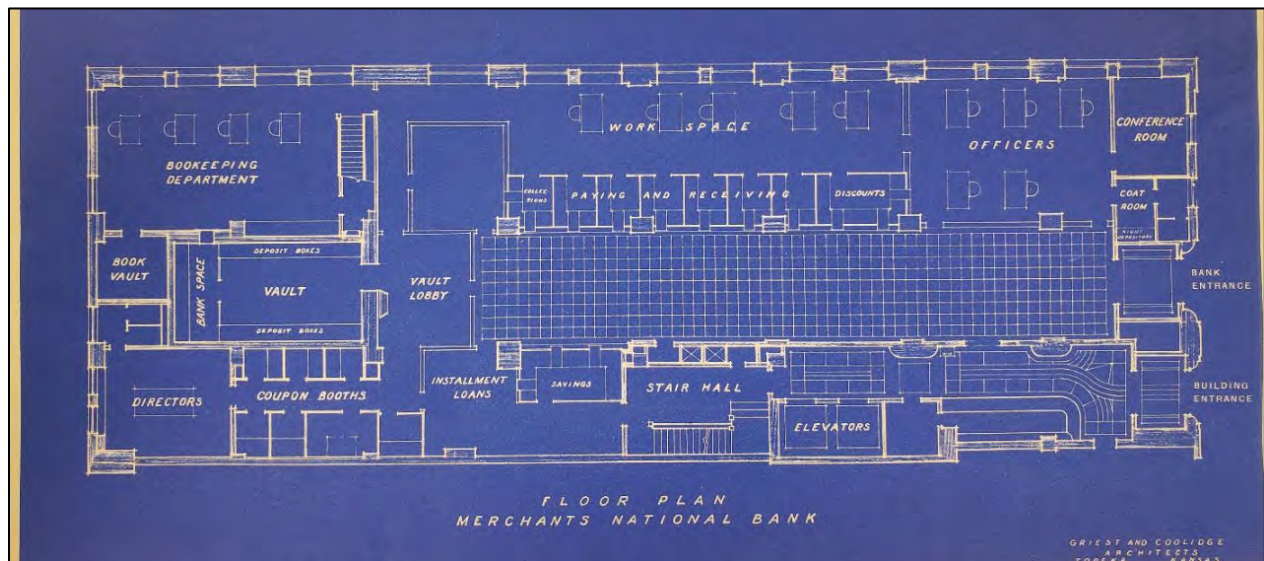


Figure 12. Merchant’s National Bank Floor Plan

¹²² Deborah Slatong and William G. Foulks, “Preserving the Recent Past 2,” Historic Preservation Education Foundation, National Park Service, 2000; p. 45-47.



Figure 13. Merchants National Bank, Main Banking Area, 1969
Source: Topeka Room Vertical File

The Central National Bank (177-3273), constructed in 1973, and Intrust Bank (177-4834), completed in 1960, are excellent illustrations of circular bank buildings. The Intrust Bank is indicative of Neo-Expressionism with its round form and zig-zag roof line, whereas the Central National Bank embodies elements of New Formalism with a domed ceiling and columned arcade. Designed by Ekdahl, Davis, Depew, Persson and completed in the mid-1970s, the First National Bank (177-4863, Figure 14) is a later representation of New Formalism in bank building design. It features a symmetrical form with a heavy concrete, cantilevered roof that appears to be floating above a central block fully enclosed by window walls. Each of the three banks contains drive-thru windows with canopies and prominent banking lobbies with natural lighting.



Figure 14. Rendering of First National Bank, c. 1975
Hanging on bank lobby wall

D. OFFICE BUILDINGS

The classification of office buildings is somewhat subjective. In some instances, individuals might consider a building as a small office, whereas others might classify it as mid-sized or large. In general, the overall form, height, and business size should be considered when assigning a specific sub-type for office buildings. In most cases, the size of the office building is tied to its geographic sub-area. For purposes of this study, office buildings encompass

government offices, one large bank (Merchants National Bank), and small and large businesses.



Photograph 44. HTK Architects Office, 2019

Small Office. This building category is generally characterized by one- and two-story, rectangular blocks. It is typically associated with small businesses and local government departments. They might provide space for multiple businesses but generally serve a single entity. The small office most often occurs within the “office” sub-areas of the City, specifically the areas along primary roads leading from downtown through the commercial and residential sectors.



Photograph 45. 220 SW 33rd Street, 2019



Photograph Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. Building (177-4837)

Moderate to Large Office. The large office building is typically associated with moderate-sized businesses and corporations, as well as local government agencies. This office building is most often between 2 to 9 stories in height with a simple overall rectangular or square form. In some cases, the building might have one or two projecting wings. It might also be a large, sprawling single-story building such as the Topeka-Capital Journal building (177-4839). The moderate- to large office building typically provides space for a single entity. However, it may have been intended to accommodate multiple businesses, corporations, or government departments.



Photograph 46. Merchants National Bank

Tall Office. The tall office building is one that exceeds 9 stories in height. These are generally located within the downtown district or office district at the south end of downtown. The tall office building is characterized by its overall vertical massing within a dense downtown setting. Those constructed during the mid-20th century typically adhere to the Modernist philosophy of function versus form.

F. RELIGIOUS FACILITIES

Following World War II, religious congregations quickly recovered from the wartime economy and government-imposed restrictions of prior years.¹²³ Both attendance and membership increased dramatically at wars end and the construction of new churches spread into the rapidly developing in suburbs. Nationwide, billions of dollars were spent on church architecture. According Gretchen Buggeln's *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*, church congregations "shaped their investment in bricks and mortar to match their contemporary spirit, often choosing modern architecture."¹²⁴ Congregations sought revolutionary buildings - churches for Today.

The design of contemporary religious facilities in the post War-era was influenced by a wide range of sources including design books, religious periodicals, professional architectural journals, national denominational bodies providing consulting services, and large conferences attended by architects, church leaders, manufacturers, and artists.¹²⁵ In 1940, church architects formed the Church Architecture Guild to guide church building committees in the design of their new facilities. By 1959, the Guild had upwards of 150 members, estimated to be responsible for 1/3 of the new churches in the United States.¹²⁶ The majority of the Guild members were Modernist architects. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s additional organizations were formed specifically for church architecture. Similarly, many church denominations established architecture committees to advise congregations and suggested architects for the building committee.¹²⁷ Ultimately, the majority of postwar churches relied heavily upon the wishes of the church building committee and the relationship between the architectural design to the church mission.

The siting of a new church and acknowledgement of a phased development frequently played an important roll in the planning process for the construction of modern and contemporary church. The *siting* of the church was an important aspect in the early planning phases. The placement of the church was not only concerned with benefiting a church's current membership but was considered in the effectiveness of attracting new members. This is especially the case in suburban areas where passers-by might be steered toward an well-landscaped, inviting church that is open to the entire community. Selection of a site was largely steered by zoning regulations, proximity to well-traveled roads, and available space for a sizeable parking lot and yard-like settings – almost residential in nature.¹²⁸

In the *Suburban Church*, Beggeln discusses the "first unit" church building that was often the first building to be erected on the church site. This building was the core of a newly

¹²³ While this section applies to all religions and associated facilities, for purposes of this study, the discussion is specific to churches. However, all religious facilities likely share exterior Modernist design trends and development patterns during the period of significance.

¹²⁴ Gretchen Buggeln, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015; Kindle Loc 208.

¹²⁵ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 526.

¹²⁶ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 672.

¹²⁷ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 526-1091.

¹²⁸ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 1942.

formed congregation in the suburbs when memberships and budgets remained generally low. The “first-unit” building was intended as a temporary structure until membership and budget allowed for a larger, permanent sanctuary. According to Buggeln, “the best first-unit buildings would be worshipful and coherent yet flexible and adaptable.”¹²⁹ In many cases, when funds permitted, a new sanctuary would later be built, with the “first-unit” building adapted as a fellowship hall, or other church-related facility.



Photograph 47. Faith Lutheran Church (177-4857)

In Topeka, the Faith Lutheran Church (177-4857) reflects incremental growth patterns typical of postwar church facilities in the residential areas of the city. In 1949, the church erected the “first-unit” building – a modest, gabled structure. Less than a decade later, in 1958, the congregation built an impressive Modernist, A-Frame sanctuary addition. The earlier sanctuary was remodeled into various meeting rooms. Photograph 49 depicts the 1949 sanctuary in the front with the much larger 1958 sanctuary at the rear. Similarly, the Trinity Presbyterian Church (177-4859), which was formed in 1953, erected a fellowship hall in 1954. The hall

acted as the church sanctuary until 1959 when a large sanctuary addition was constructed. The addition reflects Neo-Expressionism in its design.

Church Design

By the 1950s, two architectural styles were popular among new church construction. Colonial Revival was a traditional American style characterized by red brick exteriors, white pillars, and a prominent steeple. At the opposite spectrum of Colonial Revival was a modern, or contemporary, approach to the design of churches. Church reformers “urged that new churches must offer a fresh solution to the needs of the day, a solution that should grow organically out of contemporary life and culture.”¹³⁰ While Colonial Revival-styled churches were popular nationwide throughout the mid-20th century, the use of Modernist designs and exaggerated forms was adopted by a wide range of congregations, including the more conservative theologies. By 1958, reportedly half of the new churches nationwide were Modern in design. The extent to which Modernism was embraced in church design often depended upon its denomination. Postwar church architecture was to reflect its relationship to devotion and spiritual experience, and “some denominations were more audacious than others.”¹³¹ Thus, the overall design of the church began with the interior arrangement of space of the worship *space*.

¹²⁹ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 1978.

¹³⁰ Gretchen Buggeln, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015; Kindle Loc 245.

¹³¹ Rifkind 1998; p.191.



Photograph 48. First Congregational Church Sanctuary, 1949

Provided by Civium Architects

The worship space, or sanctuary, is the heart of the modern church, particularly those in a suburban setting. Postwar church design was largely steered towards placing more emphasis on communal worship and encouraging full and active participation. In addition to the outward expression of the church to evoke a sense of community, it was also deemed necessary to alter the interior worship space. According to Mark Torgerson's *An Architecture of Immanence*, "one could sense the immanence of God to a significant degree in many modern churches because of the implementation of directives emerging from both the liturgical renewal movement and the modern architecture movement."¹³²

In her book, *Contemporary American Architecture*, Carole Rifkind acknowledges the difficulties in categorizing the variety of Modernist church architecture. However, she classifies postwar religious architecture by overall building plan 1) axial orientation for ritual-oriented congregations, and 2) centralized for evangelical congregations. The *axial plan* of the mid-20th century church architecture followed the rectangular form of the early Christian basilicas. The traditional plan was longitudinal, where the congregant would enter through a narthex before entering a long nave, or sanctuary. Ritual reforms of the 1950s and 1960s encouraged a greater closeness between the priest and congregants. The A-frame church is one of the most recognizable axial plan mid-century church (see below). Architects also resulted in experimenting with square and diagonally-oriented plans while maintaining a linear progression from an entrance hall to the nave.



Photograph 49. Interior of Faith Lutheran Church Sanctuary

Alternatively, *centralized plans* embody the "spirit of the Protestant Reformation, Colonial meeting house" where an emphasis is placed on congregational seating and the pulpit rather than the altar.¹³³ During the postwar era, the centralized plan was accepted by almost all denominations. Taking into account the needs of the church building committee, architects experimented with circular, square, hexagonal, and cross-axial plan to inspire individual commitment of the congregant, a sense of community, and active participation.¹³⁴

Topeka's Mid-Century Modern churches include representations of both the axial and centralized

¹³² Mark A. Torgerson, *An Architecture of Immanence: Architecture for Worship and Ministry Today*, Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007; p.96.

¹³³ Rifkind 1998; p.206.

¹³⁴ Rifkind 1998; p.206.

plans. However, the axial plan seems to be more prolific. Constructed in 1949 and designed by architects Griest & Ekdahl, the sanctuary of the First Congregational Church is a fine example of a traditional axial plan. Another excellent illustration of an axial plan is the Faith Lutheran Church (177-4857) sanctuary addition completed in 1958.



Photograph 51. Interior of Sanctuary of First Christian Church (177-4858)



Photograph 50. First Christian Church, Sanctuary – Communal Table, Pulpit, and Baptismal

The centralized plan is best represented by the First Christian Church (177-4858). Here, rather than a distinctive aisle, pews are arranged in a U-shape around a central pulpit and communion table. The interior arrangement of pews and design of the sanctuary were specifically designed with a theological premise. A print of the sermon preached in 1969 upon the opening of the sanctuary offers congregants a detailed explanation of the design of specific features of the sanctuary. The seating arrangement was designed to express the conviction that the church is one community, not two. “Here, the congregation or family of God gathers about the Lord’s table for worship. There is no special sacred area that is railed off and separated from the people.”¹³⁵ The communion table is located at the center of the sanctuary, beneath the steeple lantern. Light from the lantern falls directly on the communion table. In doing so, the emphasis is placed on conveying the Communion of the Lord’s Supper and the reason people gather for. The pulpit is placed near the communion table “in the midst of the people.”¹³⁶ The minister is not separated from the people, but among the people. The choir, deacons, and elders do not have a separate seating area, or choral. They sit among the people in the pews. The baptismal is

placed at the front of the sanctuary and projects into a large open narthex. In doing so, congregants would walk around the baptistry rather than walking through it. Thus, “the arrangement of our baptistry declares what we believe about this sacrament, and in a baptismal service every candidate literally acts out this truth.”¹³⁷ Finally, the sanctuary is adorned by 12 art-glass windows that outline the faith of the Christian community.

¹³⁵ David M. Bryan, “The Reason Why: An Interpretation of the architecture and symbolism of our sanctuary,” Sermon preached in the First Christian Church, Topeka, September 14, 1969 – a print of the sermon provided by the Church.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

With the overall plan of the worship space established, architects and building committees were free to experiment with Modernist expressive designs, materials, and construction techniques. Religious buildings and complexes are among the postwar era's most advanced designs and were often the most prominent expression of modernism within a community. Distinct Mid-Century Modern styles, or forms, oftentimes used in church design include International style, New Formalism, Neo-Expressionism, and A-Frame. The International style was frequently used for education wings. A unique illustration of an International style sanctuary in Topeka is the Otterbein Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4821). Here, the concrete building with brick-veneered sanctuary features rows of multi-light, full-height windows. A prominent cut stone block with large stained-glass window projects from the façade. The projection likely houses the altar or chancel.



Photograph 52. Otterbein Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4821)



Photograph 53. Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854)

The **A-frame** church was highly popular nationwide throughout the mid-20th century. Its overall design tended to balance the needs of religious traditions, aesthetic and theological concerns, the professional ideals of architects, and budgetary allowances. A-frames quickly became one of the most common postwar church types. American A-frame churches ranged from simple, prefabricated structures to grandiose, architect-designed buildings. Integral towers or steeples often adorned the exterior, as well as an “independent vertical element, such as a bell tower.”¹³⁸ In Topeka, an example of the latter is found at the Faith Lutheran Church (177-4857). Here, the

1959 sanctuary addition is an A-frame design with a Modern Movement free-standing stone tower. In many cases, architects lifted the steeply pitched roof over low side walls, allowing for the setting of ribbon windows to provide natural lighting. An exemplary representation of an architect-designed A-frame church in Topeka is Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854). Completed in 1962, the church was designed by prominent Topeka architecture firm Ekdahl, Davis & Depew. By the mid-1960s, its popularity was running out of favor among architects, however, they continued to be built.

¹³⁸ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 2105.



Photograph 54. First Assembly of God (177-4852)

Among the most distinctive illustrations of Neo-Expressionism in Topeka is the First Assembly of God church constructed in 1954. Its sanctuary features sweeping curved exterior walls and a prominent attached tower with attached cross. The tower emphasizes the expressionism in the design of the church. It is much taller than the sanctuary and attached, International style wings. It features a sweeping upward curve and is almost concave in overall form. Another excellent interpretation of Neo-Expressionism is the hexagonal form of the First Christian Church (177-4858, Photograph 55). Its form is well-suited for the centralized plan of its

sanctuary. According to the sermon preached in 1969 when the sanctuary was first opened, the form of the church is structural and utilitarian. Here, the ground dips gently from the building and a courtyard to the south. This intentional design feature was to elevate the place of worship within the larger church complex.¹³⁹

G. EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS

The design of school facilities changed dramatically during the postwar years. The baby boom required the need for much larger public schools and the substantial increase in public schools nationwide required cost-efficient designs. New construction materials and techniques provided inexpensive, lightweight construction that featured wide flexibility for interior spaces.¹⁴⁰ The new schools most frequently reflected the popularity of Modernist design. Specifically, the International style was ideal to meet the functional needs of the school at a low cost. Characterizing design features of schools from the mid-1940s to the early 1960s include sprawling horizontal facilities, flat roofs with deep overhangs, minimal ornamentation, long bands of windows, asymmetrical composition, clerestories, skylights, covered walkways, and courtyards. Landscaping and site planning took on a more dominant role as the relationship between indoor and outdoor space emphasized. Ultimately, the mid-century school design emphasized functionality and practicality.¹⁴¹

According to the Multiple Documentation Form of *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*, postwar school design focused more so on plan forms rather than architectural style. Breaking away from the multi-story blocks of the Progressive Era in education, postwar school buildings experimented with new plans such as the finger or wing plans, open and flexible plans, and campus plans with multiple connected buildings. The schools became more community-centered and were often located near homes and neighborhoods rather than in city

¹³⁹ Bryan 1969.

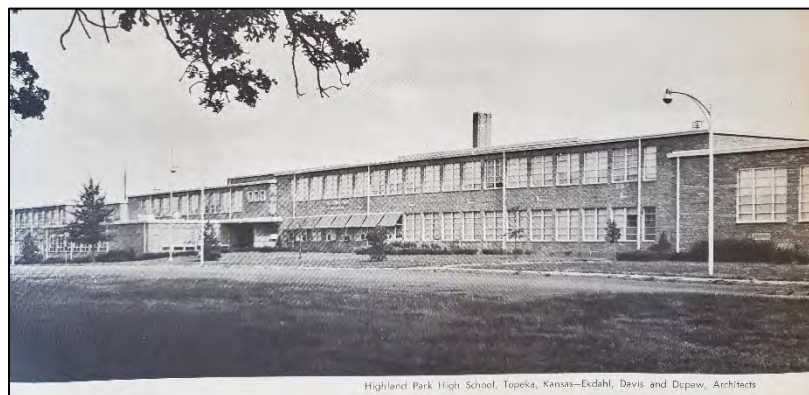
¹⁴⁰ Brenda Spencer, "Historic Public Schools of Kansas, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form," United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005.

¹⁴¹ Abigail Christman, "Colorado's Mid-Century Schools, 1945-1970 National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form," National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 2016; Section E Page 26

centers.¹⁴² Mid-century schools were often sprawling, one-story facilities requiring larger lots. This trend in school design applied to all types of schools including elementary, junior high, and high schools.

The Historic Public Schools of Kansas multiple property documentation form classifies schools by locale (country, city, and town). For purposes of this study, educational facilities fall under the “city school” classification. There are three types of city school property types found throughout Kansas, including Topeka. These include the city-graded schools, high schools, and education-related structures. The postwar city grade schools, or elementary schools, were designed specifically for grades K-6. These schools reflect the modern emphasis on plan form with minimal architectural distinction. The high school classification includes junior high, which were originally built as small high schools, influenced by the same education standards. Postwar high schools generally featured a gymnasium, auditorium, kitchen, and a cafeteria. Here again, plan configuration was emphasized in the design. High schools were often viewed as a campus plan with multiple buildings. Like elementary schools, mid-century junior high and high school buildings are most often sprawling facilities, one- or two-story in height.¹⁴³

In Topeka, the sprawling schools constructed throughout the mid-20th century are long and low, similar to the popular ranch houses often characterizing the neighborhoods within which the schools were built. According to an article in the *Topeka Daily Capital* in 1954, the design planned for the new Stout Elementary School is be a “one-story ranch type building with general exterior suited to the neighborhood it will serve.”¹⁴⁴ Topeka’s mid-century schools are linear with one or two projecting wings. All appear to be concrete construction with brick veneers. The two elementary schools surveyed for this project (Avondale East and Stout Elementary) are both one-story with ribbon windows. Designed by Griest & Ekdahl and built in 1950, Topeka’s Highland Park High School, initially known as Rural High School No.10 is a fine two-story representation. All reflect the functionalism in design emphasized by the International style.



Highland Park High School, Topeka, Kansas—Ekdahl, Davis and Dopew, Architects
 Photograph 55. Highland Park High School, 1950
 Photograph provided by Civium Architects

¹⁴² Spencer 2005; Section E Pages 24-25.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, Section F page 30-33.

¹⁴⁴ “Name to Honor A.J. Stout,” *Topeka Daily Capital*, 6 April, 1954.

Washburn University

Washburn University experienced tremendous growth in the postwar years. As such, its campus is dotted by several mid-century Modern buildings construction from 1946 to 1960. Among those, the Stoffer Science Center (1960) best exemplifies the International Style used for higher education buildings. As a result of the 1966 tornado that destroyed much of its campus, Washburn University embarked on a large-scale building campaign through the early-1970s. Among the new buildings include the west wing of Morgan Hall (1967), the Garvey Fine Arts Center (1968), the Law School (1969), and the Henderson Learning Center (1971).¹⁴⁵

The Garvey Fine Arts Center (177-4819) was dedicated in 1968 and includes the Elliott White Concert Hall, the Washburn Theater (Neese Gray Theater), and the music and art department. As previously discussed, the Elliott White Concert Hall is a fine representation of both New Formalism and Neo-Expressionism with its symmetrical form and curving walls. The Washburn Theater is reinforced concrete construction and round in form. The two-story music and art department is inspired by the Modern Movement yet does not necessarily conform to a distinct Modernist style. The building is three stories and concrete construction with a cut stone exterior. Unlike the International Style, the window configuration places an emphasis on the vertical with narrow vertical bands of windows separated by projecting narrow pilasters. The Henderson Learning Center, built in 1971, is a large-scale concrete building on campus that reflects a Brutalist design.



Photograph 56. Washburn University Music and Arts Department, Garvey fine Arts Center

¹⁴⁵ Martha Imparato, "Chapter 2: Washburn University History," prepared by Mabee Library Special Collections Librarian/Archivist



Photograph 57. Henderson Learning Center, nd
Source: Washburn.edu

H. RAILROAD-RELATED BUILDINGS



Photograph 58. Topeka Rail Depot

Topeka has long been a convergence point for transportation modes, particularly the railroad. Topeka was the original of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe. Following World War II, the ATSF was embarking on a building campaign to modernize its infrastructure and image. In 1950, a new Topeka passenger depot was built (177-4840). The building is indicative of Mid-Century Modern architecture embodying a combination of Streamline Moderne and the International Style. The building is long and low with a flat roof featuring wide overhanging eaves. The Topeka depot is similar to others constructed by the

railroad during its post war building campaign including those in Lawrence and Hutchinson, Kansas and La Junta, Colorado.¹⁴⁶ Unlike those examples, which are constructed of brick, the Topeka depot is clad in an off-white stone cut into squares. Unique features of the Topeka depot include panoramic corner windows, glass blocks, streamlined metal lettering, and terrazzo flooring. Rows of paired windows are separated by cut stone panels and framed by bands of molded concrete. This element further emphasizes the horizontal lines of the building. The entryway is enhanced by a vertical row of large, square cut stone windows that are deeply recessed. In 2006, the depot was reopened after owner, BNSF Railway, undertook a remodeling that included new ceiling tile, painting, and a new water fountain.

I. GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

As the country enjoyed increased levels of prosperity during the postwar years, government agencies at the national, state, and local levels had the resources to expand and modernize their facilities. The monumental Classical-inspired civic architecture of earlier years was spoiled due to its association with the Nazi government buildings in Germany. The Modernist styles were recognized as progressive and enlightened, prominent themes of postwar America. Thousands of government buildings were constructed throughout the country in

¹⁴⁶ The Great American Stations, <https://www.greatamericanstations.com/stations/topeka-ks-top/> accessed February 2020.

the 1950s and 1960s, with the majority favoring Modernist tenets.¹⁴⁷ Another benefit of modern design was its overall efficiency and low cost. Oftentimes, modern government buildings and private-sector buildings are much more similar in appearance than in any other previous style of architecture.

Completed in 1957, the Kansas State Office Building is an intact and unique example of Modern Movement architecture applied to a public office building. For purposes of this study, the building is classified as a tall office building in that it adopts similar construction techniques and materials.

Post Offices

Following World War II, the United States Post Office Department had to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population and the massive migration to the suburbs. While the prewar facilities aimed to create a federal presence, the postwar post office were designed for efficiency to accommodate an exponential increase in mail.¹⁴⁸

Building designs typically featured two styles of post office: International and Colonial Revival. The International Style predominated as it was both functional and economical. The largest post office facilities tended to be located within close proximity to a city center. The majority of the new post offices, however, were smaller in scale and serviced the ever-expanding suburban residential areas. Stylistic guidance for postal facilities was lacking until the late-1950s. Design manuals demonstrated a Modern aesthetic in the form of the International Style.¹⁴⁹ A stylistic manual, *Building Designs*, was published by the Post Office Department in 1959 that gave examples of acceptable design. The desire was that post offices be built as Modern buildings “focusing on efficiency and clean lines.”¹⁵⁰ The brochures contained artist renderings, schematic plans, and suggested materials for posts offices ranging in size from 1,000 to 12,000 square feet. The designs were adaptable and suitable for all climates. The plans all called for flat roofs; exterior wall materials of aluminum or stainless-steel framed window walls with stone, brick veneer, or precast concrete; aluminum or stainless-steel entrance doors; metal or wood fascia with cement plaster soffit canopies above truck bays; an interior partition between the box lobby and post office lobby of glass and metal trim; and vinyl or terrazzo interior floor material.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Rifkind 1998; 105-106.

¹⁴⁸ URS Group, Inc, “USPS Nationwide Historic Context Study: Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971,” a draft report for the U.S. Postal service, 2012; p.2-1.

¹⁴⁹ URS Group, Inc, “USPS Nationwide Historic Context Study: Postal Facilities Constructed or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971,” a draft report for the U.S. Postal service, 2012; p.2-84.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*; p. 2-86.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*; p. 2-86-87.



Photograph 59. Cage Center Post Office

Topeka's suburban post offices constructed between 1945 and 1975 generally adhere to the recommended design plans and materials. Completed in 1966, the Cage Center Post Office (177-4855) is an excellent illustration of International-style inspired federal post office construction within a residential area. Its interior arrangement of space and materials appear to retain a good degree of historic integrity as well.

J. APARTMENT BUILDINGS

While this study focuses primarily on non-residential architecture constructed between 1945 and 1975 in Topeka, the larger, multi-family apartments share similarities in design, construction methods, and materials as commercial and office buildings. Mid-20th century multi-family apartments in Topeka range from two-story garden apartments in the city's residential sectors to tall residential blocks in a downtown or commercial setting. The garden apartments tend to be brick-veneered and adopt the International style in their design. They are typically 2-stories with an L- or T-shaped form and flat roof. Long cantilevered concrete bands might frame the entranceway or distinguish between the two floors. Rows of ribbon windows frequently frame the principal entryway. The entrance tends to be located at the juncture of two projecting wings. Here, interior lobbies often feature a central staircase and metal mailboxes on the wall. Parking might be provided by a long, detached carport with flat roof at the rear of the property. Constructed in 1957, the Park Plaza (177-4847) and Central Park Apartments (177-4846) are excellent representations of International-style garden apartments in Topeka. Designed by Carl Ossman & Associates, the two apartments are nearly identical in design.



Photograph 60. Park Plaza Apartment (177-4847)

Constructed in 1969, the eight-story Jackson Tower (177-2710) is believed to be a public housing project built in the wake of Topeka's Urban Renewal program. The building is clearly inspired by the International Style with long rows of windows along each floor. Nearby at 1000 S. Kansas Avenue is the 1971 Landmark Plaza Apartments. This 10-story highrise also adopts the International Style in its design. Its date of construction suggests that it was historically low-income housing associated with Urban Renewal relocations.



Photograph 61. Jackson Towers, 2004
From KHRI Digital Record (177-2710)

2.2.6 TOPEKA'S MODERNIST ARCHITECTS: 1945 TO 1975

This section explores the various architects and firms known to have contributed to the mid-century Modern architecture of Topeka from 1945 to 1975. The list is likely not comprehensive but includes architects identified through research and a review of previously surveyed properties. Below each description is a list of known properties associated with the architect or firm. In some cases, a noted property was not surveyed as part of this study but was identified through a review of KHRI previously recorded properties. A building with an asterisk indicates that it was surveyed during this project.

H&T Architects/HTK Architects

HTK Architects began in 1958 when Glen Horst and Joe Terrill first opened H&T Architects in downtown Topeka. A few years later, Gary Karst joined the firm and it became HTK Architects. Their first education project was the Sunny Elevation Elementary School in Topeka (presently Auburn Washburn District Office), completed in 1959. Since 1958, HTK has been a leading architectural firm in Topeka and throughout Kansas, designing a wide range of buildings from civic, corporate, healthcare, public education, higher education, military, religious, and sports facilities. Today, the firm has more than 30 employees.

Mid-century Modern Surveyed properties in Topeka

- * Prudential and State Farm Insurance Office Building, at 220 SW 33rd Street (177-4825), 1960
- * Bank at 1035 SW Topeka (177-4834), 1960
- * Office Building at 3310 SW Harrison Street (177-4864), c.1965
- * HTK Architects Office Building at 2900 McVicar (177-4822), 1966

Robert S. Slemmons Architects, Topeka

Robert Sheldon Slemmons (1922-2007) graduated in 1948 with a degree in architecture from the University of Nebraska. Upon graduation, he moved to Kansas where he became Chief Designer and Project Architect for the State of Kansas, and later State Architect. In the mid-1950s, he joined architect John A. Brown to form Brown-Slemmons Architects in Topeka. Upon Mr. Brown's retirement in 1959, Slemmons started Robert S. Slemmons A.I.A. and Associates.

Mid-century Modern Surveyed properties in Topeka**Brown-Slemmons Architects:**

- * Kansas State Office Building, 1957

Robert S. Slemmons Architects:

- * First Christian Church (177-4859)
- Topeka Presbyterian Manor, 1963
- Trinity Presbyterian Church

Griest & Ekdahl (later Ekdahl, Davis, & Depew), Topeka

Theodore R. Griest was born in 1898 in Colorado and graduated from the School of Architecture at Kansas State University in 1923. He began as a draftsman for Thomas W. Williamson. He was later a chief designer for the Williamson firm. By 1930, Griest was credited for a new high school in Topeka, as well as others in Randolph, Curtis, Crane, and Clay. In 1937, Griest formed his own firm, Griest and Coolidge (1937-1942). He later partnered with Oscar S. Ekdahl (1946-1956). Griest was elected as a Fellow of the AIS. He retired in 1956. Ekdahl was a graduate and faculty member of the School of Architecture at Kansas State University. Upon the retirement of Griest in 1956, Ekdahl formed Ekdahl, Davis, & Depew (1956-1971), which, in 1971, became Ekdahl, Davis, Depew, Persson. In 2019, Civium architects and planning is recognized as the successor of Griest & Ekdahl.

Mid-century Modern Surveyed properties in Topeka**Griest & Ekdahl (1946-1956)**

Herbert R. Lundgren Elementary School (177-2120), 1949

Highland Park High School (177-2121)

Highland Park Elementary School, date unknown

*First Congregational Church (177-4821), 1949

Ekdahl, Davis, & Depew (1956-1971)

*Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854), 1962

*Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (177-4837), 1969

Highland Park High School addition (1956)

Shawnee County Club, date unknown

Most Pure Heart of Mary Church, date unknown

Ekdahl, Davis, Depew, & Persson (1971-2004)

*First National Bank (177-4863), 1975

Thomas W. Williamson (Williamson-Loebsack), Topeka

(*Taken from Historic Public Schools of Kansas MPDF*) <Thomas Wilson Williamson (1887-1974) graduated from Topeka High School in 1907, attended the University of Pennsylvania, and returned to Topeka in 1911. He worked in the state architect's office for a short time and spent one year working for Topeka architect, John F. Stanton before opening his own firm in 1912. Williamson was called the "grand daddy of Kansas architects" in a 1952 *Topeka Capital* article. The article referred to Williamson's firm, with a staff of 46 architects, draftsmen, and engineers, as "one of the best-known and most successful architectural firms in the mid-west;" at that time, the firm was the oldest established architectural practice in Topeka and the second oldest in the state. From the beginning, Williamson specialized in designing school buildings. A 1915 newspaper article documented his school projects of the past year: a two-story brick high school at Burlington, a stone high school in Toronto, Buffville School and auditorium, township high schools in Westphalia and Delia, a high school at Caney and in Greeley, and a high school/grade school in Tonovay. Topeka schools designed by Williamson include Sumner, Clay, Monroe, Randolph, and Curtis Junior High. Topeka High School is recognized as one of Kansas' best examples of the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture. The school was selected by the National Education Association as the second best high school physical plant in the United States shortly after it was completed. A 1928 article credited the firm with design of 175 buildings across the state and the 1952 *Topeka Capital* biography stated that more than 61,500 Kansas children attended classes in buildings designed by Williamson.>

Throughout his career, Williamson operated as the firm of Thomas W. Williamson & Company, Thomas W. Williamson, Victory H. Loebsack & Associates, and later as the Williamson-Loebsack & Associates. In Top designed by Williamson's firms referenced in the *Historic Kansas Public Schools* MPDF, the firm also designed the Church of Assumption School (177-3410) in Topeka. The Modernist school reflects elements of the International Style and was

completed in 1954. Avondale East Elementary School, which was surveyed as part of this project (177-4853). The sprawling, one-story International-style school was completed in 1954.

Mid-century Modern Surveyed properties in Topeka

Church of Assumption School (177-3410), 1954

*Avondale East Elementary School (177-4853), 1954

W.E . Glover (Glover and Newcomb), Topeka

(Taken From *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* MPN) <Walter Earl Glover was born in 1889 at Terre Haute, Indiana, and moved to Topeka at the age of 14. He received his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Illinois. He served in the architectural department of the United States Navy, stationed in Washington, DC in World War I. He opened his architectural practice in Topeka in 1919. E.E. Newcomb, a Kansas native who had been practicing in New York, came to Topeka and partnered with Glover in 1946. Glover was known for his design of public buildings; prominent commissions included the Charles M. Sheldon Community House, Stormont Hospital, Security Benefit Building (1930), Menniger Foundation West Campus, the Wabaunsee (1932), and Johnson (1946) county courthouses, and the Marion Municipal Building (1938). He also designed the Westboro suburban shopping center and many residences in Topeka. Glover designed a number of public schools in Topeka and northeast Kansas including Valley Park School, Disney School, and the East Topeka Junior High School (1936).>

Mid-century Modern Surveyed properties in Topeka

Church of Assumption School (177-3410), 1954

*Stout Elementary School (177-4848), 1955

Westboro Suburban Shopping Center (date unknown)

Eicholtz & Groth – 800 SE Quincy Street (New Formalism)

William Dean (Bill) Groth (1932-2014) was born in Wichita, Kansas in 1932. He graduated from Kansas State University with a B.S. degree in Architecture and his first job was in Topeka with Williamson-Loebsack Architects where he helped in the design of many schools. He joined George Eicholtz in his architectural firm and became a partner. The firm was renamed Eicholtz and Groth Architects. The firm designed or was involved in the design of many buildings in Topeka and other parts of Kansas. Groth was Capitol Complex Architect from 1986 – 1998 and Statehouse Architect from 1998 – 2001. Bill was instrumental in designing the restoration and renovation of the Kansas State Capitol Building in Topeka, now considered one of the most beautiful capitol buildings in the country.¹⁵²

Mid-century Modern Surveyed properties in Topeka

*Topeka Savings Association (177-3273), 1973

¹⁵² William D. Groth, Obituary 2014, Trinity Presbyterian Church

*Thacher Building (177-4838), 1967
Washburn University Morgan Hall addition, 1967

Additional architectural firms known to have contributed to Topeka's Mid-Century Modern architecture include the first of **Van Doren, Hazard, Stallings and Schnacke**. The firm is known to have designed the Merchants National Bank (177-3265) in 1969 and the American Home Life Insurance Building (177-5400-01947) completed in 1970. Both are two of the most impressive illustrations of Modernist design in Topeka. **Carl Ossman & Associates** designed a handful of buildings throughout the mid-20th century in Topeka. Among those include a 79-bed nursing facility at the Topeka Veteran's Administration hospital circa 1970.¹⁵³ The firm is also noted for designing two adjacent garden apartment buildings in 1957 – Central Park Apartments (177-4846) and Park Plaza Apartments (177-4847).

¹⁵³ "New VA Long-Term Nursing Home on Tap," *The Marysville Advocate*, 30 July 1970.

SECTION 3: SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1 CONSTRUCTION DATES

Construction dates of the 55 surveyed properties span the period of significance: 1945 to 1975, with one resource dating to 1978. The breakdown of the resources by construction date do not necessarily reflect trends in development of the City of Topeka; however, it does indicate that some of the city's most notable mid-century Modern buildings were constructed in the 1960s. A city-wide survey of all non-single-family residential architecture dating to the period of significance would be necessary to provide a comprehensive analysis of mid-century Modern architecture as it relates to patterns of development.

- 1945-1949: 5 resources
- 1950-1959: 13 resources
- 1960-1969: 32 resources
- 1970-1975: 4 resources
- 1978: 1 resource

3.2 DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEYED RESOURCES BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The majority of the surveyed properties are located within the 1951 City Limits, with only a handful occurring within the expanded boundary, particularly south of downtown. A total of seven (7) properties were surveyed within the downtown sub-area. These include tall office buildings, banks, and a small diner. Fourteen (14) surveyed buildings are located within the commercial sub-areas, particularly along primary roadways leading to and from the downtown district. The office sub-area included eight (8) surveyed properties, all of which are small- to large-sized office buildings, including two banks. Within the industrial sectors of the City, a total of ten (10) properties were surveyed including a train depot, fire station, supermarket, a carwash, and small- to moderate-sized office buildings. Thirteen (16) buildings were surveyed within the residential sectors of the City. Among those include four garden apartments, two schools, and seven churches.

Urban Renewal Areas

Among the properties surveyed for this study, a total of four are located within the limits of the Keyway Urban Renewal Project Area - American Home Life Insurance Company Building (177-5400-01947), completed in 1970; the Thacher Building (177-4838), completed in 1967; former Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. Building (177-4837), completed in 1969; and the Topeka Fire Department Headquarters and Fire Station No. 3 (177-4841), which was completed in 1960. The latter was constructed in the very early stages of the Urban Renewal program in Topeka. While it may be associated with the planned redevelopment of the area, it is a government-owned facility and does not fall within the parameters of traditional construction resulting from Urban Renewal architecture in Topeka during the late-1960s.

3.3 HISTORIC FUNCTION

Among the 55 surveyed properties, the majority are commercial-related with a total of 30 examples. These include professional offices and organizations, banks, and restaurants. The two entertainment-related properties include a bowling alley and the Garvey Fine Arts Center at Washburn College. The facility includes the interconnected White Concert Hall, the Washburn Theater, and the school's music and art department. Among the three (3) government-related resources are a fire station, post office, and administration building. The transportation resources include a railroad depot and roadside car dealerships. The historic function of two properties is unknown.

- COMMERCIAL – 30 resources
- RELIGIOUS – 7 resources
- EDUCATION – 2
- GOVERNMENT – 3 resources
- MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENT/CO-OPS – 4 resources
- RECREATION AND CULTURE – 2 resources
- HEALTHCARE – 1 resource
- TRANSPORTATION – 4 resources

3.4 BUILDING CLASSIFICATIONS/ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

For purposes of this study, the surveyed properties were classified by their building type as it relates to mid-century Modern architecture. In many instances, the building type is directly tied to its historic use and geographic location. Similarly, a particular Modernist style is oftentimes associated with the building type on which it is applied. Of the 55 surveyed properties, JLD Consulting identified the following building classifications that best exemplify the wide range of distinctive property types in Topeka. The listed classifications may not account for the entire spectrum of mid-century Modern buildings within the City and it is probable that additional building types dating to the period of significance occur throughout the City.

- RELIGIOUS FACILITIES, 7 resources
- PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2 resources
- FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, 4 resources
- RAILROAD PASSENGER DEPOT, 1 resource
- FIRE STATION, 1 resource
- GARDEN APARTMENTS, 4 resources
- UNITED STATES POST OFFICE,¹⁵⁴ 1 resource

¹⁵⁴ While a post office might fall under the “office building” classification, a nationwide historic context study of United States postal facilities constructed between 1940 and 1971 was conducted in 2012. Any evaluation of such facilities for purposes of National Register eligibility should adhere to the study's recommended registration requirements; URS Group, Inc., “USPS Nationwide Historic Context Study: Postal Facilities Constructed Or Occupied Between 1940 and 1971,” prepared for the US. Postal Service, September 2012.

- BOWLING ALLEY, 1 resource
- HIGHER EDUCATION/THEATER, 1 resource
- OFFICE BUILDINGS
 - Small Office, 6 resources
 - Moderate to Large (2-9 stories), 10 resources
 - Tall Office Building (10+ stories), 4 resources
- WAYSIDE COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
 - Car Dealership, 3 resources
 - Supermarket, 1 resource
 - Car Wash, 1 resource
 - Combination Drive-In and Walk-Up Restaurant, 3 resources
 - Dine-In Restaurant, 2 resources
 - Indoor Walk-Up Restaurant, 1 resource
 - Roadside Motel, 1 resource

3.5 MATERIALS

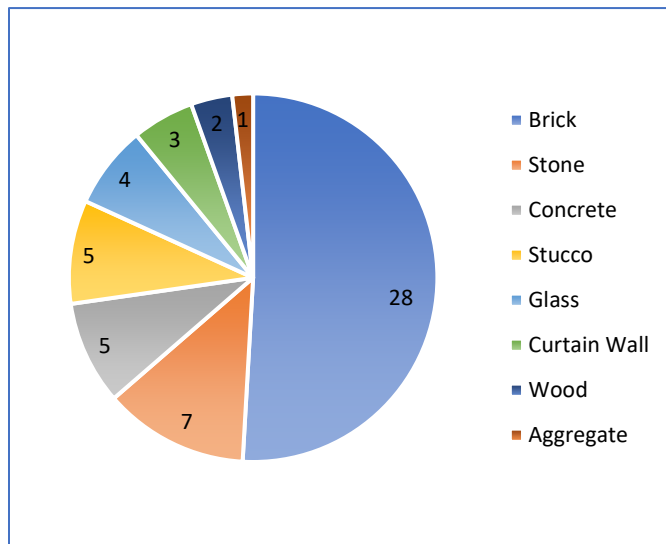


Figure 15. Breakdown of Surveyed Properties (total 55) by Primary Exterior Material

Advancements in materials and construction methods contributed substantially to the evolution and design of Modernist architecture throughout the mid-20th century. Nationwide, concrete increasingly became a dominant exterior material, as well as glass. The latter includes large aluminum-framed storefronts, full-height window walls, and curtain walls. Among the 55 surveyed properties, a combination of exterior materials often characterizes a Modernist design. However, for purposes of this study, each building is identified by its principle exterior material. In most cases, the exterior material does not reflect the overall construction method and material

of a building. Brick and stone veneer is common and likely are applied to concrete and/or steel frames. This is especially the case among the larger buildings.

The data shows that 28, or 50.1%, of the 55 surveyed properties feature brick as a primary exterior material. For at least half of those properties, the brick appears to be a veneer applied to the principal construction material. This is especially the case for the larger buildings. In a survey of Mid-century resources, where one would typically anticipate concrete as a leading primary exterior material, the high percentage of brick suggests a regional preference for the material. Second to brick in frequency is stone with 7 surveyed properties.

With only one exception (the Topeka Passenger Depot), the stone is in the form of a veneer – either cut stone or stone paneling. The First Christian Church (177-4858) features a beautiful cut limestone exterior. Concrete and stuccoed exteriors are the next prevalent materials, each with 5 examples. It is probable that the stuccoed buildings are concrete construction. Three (3) of the concrete buildings are constructed of concrete block. The exteriors of 4 buildings are dominated by glass window walls. In particular is the First National Bank (177-4863). An additional 3 buildings are characterized by their distinctive curtain wall exteriors. The American Home Life Insurance Company Building (177-5400-01947), constructed in 1970, features unique aggregate exterior walls on some faces, and curtain walls on other elevations. Typically used to convey an environmental look or to integrate with nature, wood is a rare building material for non-residential construction in Topeka. Only 2 buildings feature wood exteriors – the HTK Office Building (177-4822), which is a rare non-residential building reflecting elements of the Wrightian style; and a former A-frame automobile dealership (177-4854).

3.6 MID-CENTURY MODERN STYLES

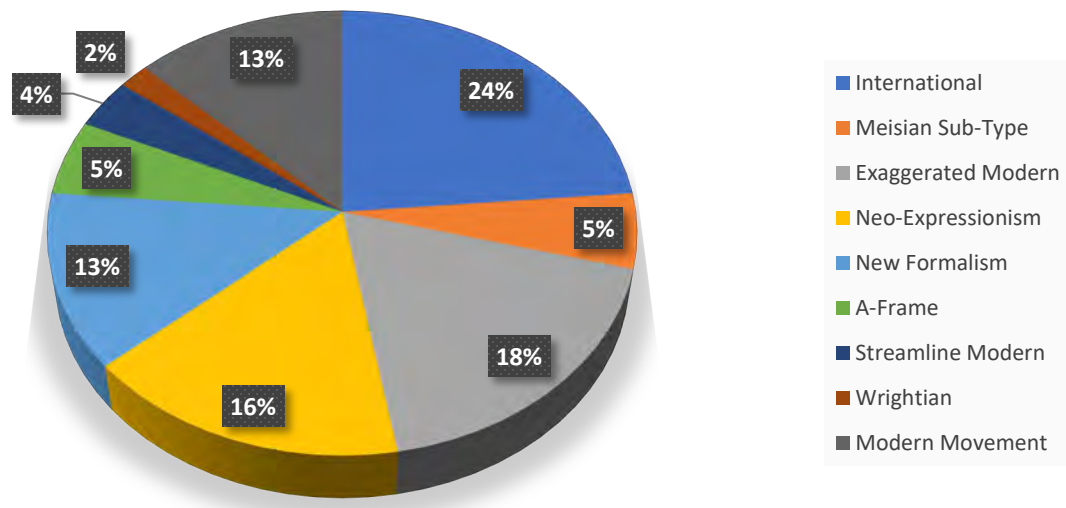


Figure 16. Breakdown of Surveyed Properties (Total of 55) by Architectural Style

Architectural styles of the Mid-Century Modern movement were defined in Section 2 “Architectural Context.” Representations of each style surveyed during this study were also presented in the architectural context. The following chart provides a breakdown of the 55 surveyed properties by Mid-Century Modern style. The International Style, the most recognizable Mid-Century Modern architectural style nationwide, accounts for 13, or 18%, of the surveyed properties. International style appears to have been a preferred style among Topeka’s architects during the postwar years. The style was not limited to a single property type or use. In Topeka,

influences of the International style are found on all sizes of office buildings, public school architecture, churches, and government buildings. In addition to the 13 International-style buildings, three (3) surveyed properties are identified as Meisian, a sub-type of the International style typically associated with tall office buildings and curtain walls.

Second to the International Style in number of occurrences is Exaggerated Modern with 10 surveyed examples, four (4) of which reflect Google-style influences. Not surprising, all but one (Gage Center Bowl) fall under the wayside commercial architecture classification and include restaurants, a small office building, car dealerships, and a former supermarket (Falley's Meat Market). While Gage Center Bowl (177-4862) is classified as an recreational resource, its construction and operation is closely tied to its roadside location and expansive parking lot.

Neo-Expressionist buildings account for 9 buildings surveyed for this study. Among these buildings, expressionist design features are relatively restrained. The style was used for a range of property types including churches, small to large office buildings, a round bank, Elliot White Concert Hall, and the American Home Life Insurance Building. The latter being an excellent representation of the style with prominent curving wings. It's unique in that this example is symmetrical in its overall design.

Seven (7) surveyed buildings reflect New Formalism in their design and include small to large office buildings and two striking bank buildings. The 55 surveyed properties also included 3 A-frame designs, two reflecting Streamlined Moderne, and 1 adopting a natural Wrightian design. Seven (7) of the surveyed properties have characteristics associated with the Modern period but are not strongly defined by any one style. Among those include small-to moderate-sized office buildings, the Topeka Fire Department Headquarters (177-4841), constructed in 1960, and the First Congregational Church (177-4821). Typically, buildings that fall under the classification of Modern Movement are modest in their design such as the small office building located at 4201 SW 15th Street (177-4856). The First Congregational Church (177-4821), however, is an impressive architect-designed church that clearly reflects Modernist design elements but does not appear to conform to a defined style.



Photograph 62. First Congregational Church (177-4821), c.1950

3.7 ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Significance

The property types related to the historic contexts presented in Section 2 include buildings associated with the influence of Modern design principles in Topeka between 1945 and 1975. To be considered eligible for the National Register as a significant representation of Mid-Century Modern non, single-family residential architecture in Topeka, the property should possess significance in at least one of the two historical themes, or contexts, presented in this study- 1) Community Planning and Development and 2) Architecture. In many instances, an individual property might convey additional significance that would qualify it for listing in the National Register under Criterion A such as its contributions to the growth and development of Topeka's commerce or to the city's public education system.

Modern resources may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of Mid-Century Modern architecture in Topeka during the period of significance (1945-1975). The resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant resource reflective of that person's significance as it relates to mid-20th century development in Topeka.

Resources may be eligible under Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and/or Engineering if they reflect significant design principles of Modernist architecture constructed in Topeka between 1945 and 1975. These properties might be significant for representing a distinctive design, form, style, or construction technique. They may be significant for possessing high artistic values or are well-preserved examples of building types and design characteristics popular during the period of significance.

Integrity

The property should further retain a good degree of its historic integrity. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. The evaluation of integrity is oftentimes subjective, but should always be based upon an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. The National Register recognizes seven aspects, or qualities, to be considered when evaluating integrity. A property must always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects, and it is necessary to determine which of these aspects is paramount for a property to convey its significance.

Seven Qualities of Integrity

- **Location** – the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event took place
- **Design** – the composition of elements that constitute the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property
- **Setting** – the physical environment of a historic property that illustrates the character of the place

- **Materials** – the physical elements combined during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property
- **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

To be eligible under Criterion A, the property should retain a high degree of integrity in location, setting, feeling, and association. Original street layout, lot sizes, setbacks, sidewalks, and street trees might all contribute to the overall sense of place of the property. Under Criterion C, Mid-Century Modern architectural development primarily evolved from the technological advancement of materials and construction methods made available after World War II. As such, when evaluating non-residential, Mid-Century Modern architecture in Topeka, the design, materials, and workmanship of a property are extremely important aspects of integrity. For Modernist properties that are modest in design, generally lacking in distinctive stylistic influences, should retain its historic facades and majority of its features. As viewed from the street, one should be able to recognize the visual integrity of the building plan, or form. Original materials, fenestrations, symmetry/asymmetry, and exterior finishes should be evident. Ultimately, the building should be identifiable to the time when it was constructed.

Property Types

Nine property types, some with multiple sub-types, have been identified through this survey project as exhibiting significant historical and architectural associations with Mid-Century Modern design trends in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. Future surveys and National Register nominations may add to the spectrum of property types. The property types are outlined below, followed by specific registration requirements. The physical description of each property type is detailed in Section 2, Architectural Context.

- 1) Wayside Commercial Architecture
 - Shopping Center/Strip Mall
 - Roadside Restaurants
 - Drive-In
 - Walk-Up
 - Indoor Walk-Up with Dining
 - Dine-In
- 2) Bowling Alley
- 3) Financial Institution
- 4) Office Buildings (includes government administration)

- Small (1-2 stories)
 - Moderate to Large (2-9 stories)
 - Tall Office Buildings (10+ stories)
- 5) Religious Facilities
 - 6) Public Schools
 - 7) Higher Education Buildings
 - 8) Transportation-Related
 - 9) Government (non-administration)
 - 10) Multi-Family Apartments

3.7.1 WAYSIDE COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Wayside commercial architecture from 1945 through 1975 is indicative of the increase in automobile ownership, population growth, and suburbanization in postwar America. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most potentially eligible Modernist wayside commercial architecture will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, wayside commercial architecture may be considered significant if it is directly related to postwar COMMERCE in Topeka, or if it was the location of an important business. It might be eligible in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT if it represents the influence of Modernist design principles in shaping the built environment along Topeka's high-trafficked roadways. An intact grouping of wayside commercial buildings reflecting Modernist design principles may be considered eligible collectively as a *district* if they form a cohesive roadside commercial strip characteristic of postwar suburbanization and increased automobile ownership. Modern commercial architecture may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person's significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. Wayside commercial architecture may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. In particular, they may possess distinctive design, form, or construction technique. They may be significant because they possess high artistic values or are well-preserved examples of building types and design characteristics that were typical or popular during the period of significance.

Integrity: Integrity of design, location, materials, and workmanship are particularly important in conveying a commercial property's Mid-Century Modern attributes. Location within a parking lot and setback from roadways is also of particular importance as it relates to business owner's attempts to attract customers through the ease of vehicular amenities and parking lots – a critical aspect of the development of wayside commercial architecture during the mid-20th century.

Assessing Alterations: Among the most common alteration made to the wayside commercial architecture in Topeka is the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic on primary elevations and storefronts. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is also problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. The roof design of wayside commercial architecture is a prevailing feature of Mid-Century Modern commercial design. The roofline, whether flat, zig-zag, butterfly, etc. should be original to the building. Overhanging roofs should not be altered and the repair of aluminum fascia and/or enameled paneling should not be replaced within incompatible materials. In most instances, incompatible alterations to visual fronts and roofs will likely render a building ineligible. In the case of drive-in restaurants, the canopy is an important Modern-era characteristic, in the event that the drive-in canopy is removed or heavily altered, the property would likely not be considered to retain integrity. Additions to a property that obscure primary elevations or minimize its character-defining features will render a building ineligible.

3.7.2 BOWLING ALLEYS

Bowling alleys constructed in Topeka from 1945 through 1975 are indicative of the increase in automobile ownership, population growth, and suburbanization in postwar America. They further reflect the dramatic rise in popularity of the sport. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation. The registration requirements for bowling alleys more or less match those of wayside commercial architecture. However, as an entertainment-related facility, a bowling alley has slight variations in their evaluation.

Property Type Significance: Most potentially eligible Modernist bowling alleys will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, bowling alleys may be considered significant if it is directly related to postwar COMMERCE in

Topeka, or if it was the location of an important business. It may be eligible in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT if it represents the influence of Modernist design principles in shaping the built environment along postwar suburban roadsides. It may also be significant in the area of ENTERTAINMENT/CULTURE as emblematic of the “golden years of bowling” in American suburbs when advancement in equipment technologies, coupled with increased population and motorists, contributed to an unprecedented rise in the popularity of the sport. Modernist bowling alleys may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person’s significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. Bowling Alleys may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE and/or ENGINEERING if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. In particular, it may possess distinctive design, form, or construction technique. They may be significant because they possess high artistic values or are well-preserved examples of building types and design characteristics that were typical or popular during the period of significance.

Integrity:

Integrity of design, location, materials, feeling, workmanship, and setting are particularly important in conveying the Mid-Century Modern attributes of a bowling alley. Location within a parking lot and setback from roadways is also of particular importance as it relates to business owner’s attempts to attract customers through the ease of vehicular amenities and parking lots – a critical aspect of the development of wayside commercial architecture during the mid-20th century. As such, its surrounding setting is also an important attribute. The interior design and materials of a bowling alley are of considerable importance in reflecting trends in Modernist design, arrangement of space, and bowling technologies.

Assessing Alterations:

Among the most common alteration made to the Mid-Century Modern bowling alley is interior remodeling that alters the historic arrangement of space and amenities and upgrades bowling lane equipment. If these modifications occurred during the period of significance, they would contribute to the historical significance of the property and reflect the evolution of bowling alleys throughout the mid-20th century as bowling

alley technologies advanced and the needs of clientele change. In the event that these modifications occurred after the period of significance, the use of incompatible replacement materials, the removal of lanes, and a significant change to the arrangement of interior space may render a property ineligible. Among the most common alteration made to the exterior of bowling alleys is the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic on primary elevations, entryways, or visual fronts. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is also problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. The roofline is a prevailing feature of Mid-Century Modern commercial design, including bowling alleys. The roofline, whether flat, zig-zag, butterfly, etc. should be original to the building. Overhanging roofs should not be altered and the repair of aluminum fascia and/or enameled paneling should not be replaced within incompatible materials. In most instances, incompatible alterations to visual fronts and roofs will likely render a building ineligible. Bowling alleys frequently feature exaggerated or Googie-inspired advertising and signage elements to attract passing motorists. In the event that this design feature is the only exterior element characterizing the property as Modernist in its design, the element should be well-maintained. If repaired, materials should be in kind and not compromise the theatrical visual effect for which they were designed. If incompatible materials are used for repair that compromise the intended aesthetic of the feature, the property may be rendered ineligible. This is only the case if the advertising element is the primary feature reflecting Modernist design.

3.7.3 FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The architecture of individual bank buildings in Topeka from 1945 through 1975 reflects distinctive Modernist design elements and construction methods. Further, many adopt a drive-thru banking system to provide a convenient method of banking for the rapidly increase in motorists. Although the construction of new banks in Topeka during the period of significance occurred in high numbers, many are heavily altered or lack distinctive Modernist design principles. A small number of banks constructed in Topeka during this period reflect distinctive Modernist styles and construction methods. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most potentially eligible Modernist bank buildings in Topeka will be locally significant, although there may be examples

where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, bank architecture may be considered significant if it is directly related to postwar COMMERCE in Topeka, or if it was the location of a specific financial institution that played an important role in the City's postwar economy through 1975. Modern bank buildings may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person's significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. Bank Buildings may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE and/or ENGINEERING if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. In particular, they may possess distinctive design, form, or construction technique. They may be significant because they possess high artistic values or are well-preserved examples of building types and design characteristics that were typical or popular during the period of significance.

Integrity:

Integrity of design, location, materials, and workmanship are particularly important in conveying a bank building's Mid-Century Modern attributes. The location of a bank building, whether within a downtown area or along commercial/office sectors connecting residential neighborhoods, oftentimes dictates its overall design. Location within a parking lot and placement of a drive-thru (attached and detached) are also of particular importance as it relates to the institution's attempt to offer convenient banking methods – a critical concern of business owners during the mid-20th century. In terms of design, the interior arrangement of space and central lobby, and its stylistic design elements that create a distinctive Modernist aesthetic are critically important in assessing its historic integrity.

Assessing Alterations:

Among the most common alteration made to bank architecture is the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic on primary elevations and principal entryways. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is also problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. The roof design of bank

buildings often reflects its overall construction method and is a prevailing feature of Mid-Century Modern design. The roofline, whether flat, domed, zig-zag, butterfly, etc. should be original to the building. Overhanging roofs should not be altered and the repair of fascia should not be replaced with incompatible materials. In most instances, incompatible alterations to visual fronts and roofs will likely render a building ineligible. The design of bank buildings during the mid-20th century aimed to present an open, friendly atmosphere with natural interior lighting. The interior arrangement of space was largely guided by this philosophy. Alterations to the interior, particularly the central lobby and banking area, should maintain an open plan. Repairs to service counters, vaults and safety deposit boxes, and other important features of the Mid-Century Modern bank should not alter original materials. If alterations to the interior of the bank change to a significant degree the architect's intended design and materials, the building may be rendered ineligible. This is particularly the case when coupled with exterior alterations. Additions to a property that obscure primary elevations or minimize its character-defining features will render a bank building ineligible.

3.7.4 OFFICE BUILDINGS

Office buildings constructed in Topeka from 1945 through 1975 comprise three sub-types: the small office building (1-2 stories), moderate- to large- office building (2 to 9 stories), and tall office buildings (10+). Tall office buildings are distinctly unique in their construction methods and design. As such, government administration buildings exceeding 10 stories fall into the "tall office building" classification. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most potentially eligible Modernist office buildings will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, office buildings may be considered significant if it is directly related to postwar COMMERCE in Topeka, or if it was the location of an important business influential in Topeka's economy. It might be eligible in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT if it represents the influence of Modernist design principles in shaping the built environment in Topeka's downtown, developing commercial strips, and expanding suburbs. In some instances, office buildings constructed during the period of significance may be directly related to city planning efforts, particularly Urban Renewal programs. Modern office buildings may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with

individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person's significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. An office building may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE and/or ENGINEERING if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. In particular, they may possess distinctive design, form, or construction technique. They may be significant because they possess high artistic values or are well-preserved examples of building types and design characteristics that were typical or popular during the period of significance.

Integrity:

Integrity of design, location, materials, and workmanship are particularly important in conveying an office building's Mid-Century Modern attributes. Its location, whether in downtown, office/business, or suburban areas is important in conveying trends in development among the various office building types. For example, the small office buildings tend to be situated along small-scale commercial corridors adjacent to residential suburban development. Alternatively, tall office buildings are most often built in high-density downtown areas where limited acreage required verticality and taller buildings.

Assessing Alterations:

Among the most common exterior alteration made to the Mid-Century Modern office buildings in Topeka is the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic on primary elevations, ground-level visual fronts, and principal entryways. Repairs or alterations made to curtain wall windows, framing, and spandrels should not alter materials. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. Additions to a property that obscure primary elevations or minimize its character-defining features will render a building ineligible. Common design trend of Modernist office buildings is a generally open floorplan that can easily be adjusted by installing interior, non-load-bearing walls. Such interior modifications may **not** compromise the building's integrity. However, if irreversible modifications occur in the large, open lobbies and public spaces at ground-level, and the intended use of the space, distinctive design

features, and materials are altered, the building may be rendered ineligible.

3.7.5 RELIGIOUS FACILITIES

During the postwar period, many existing congregations expanded their facilities or commissioned new buildings to accommodate the dramatic increase in population following the War. Similarly, as suburbanization fueled the expansion of the City, new congregations were established within communities. Throughout the postwar years through the 1960s, churches expanded to larger campuses with prominent main buildings, oftentimes with ancillary school buildings. The new religious development occurred in both residential neighborhoods and on major boulevards. Most are sited within large lots with expansive lawns and parking lots. Modernist designs and stylistic influences dominate post-World War II religious' architecture, oftentimes with dynamic forms, rooflines, and fenestration patterns. When the worship space, or sanctuary, is sited within a larger religious campus, the buildings within the campus may collectively qualify as a historic district if deemed significant and intact. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Ordinarily, religious institutions or facilities shall not be considered eligible for the National Register unless they are integral parts of districts that meet the criteria, or they meet the requirements of Criteria Consideration A: a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance.

Property Type Significance: Most potentially eligible Modernist religious facilities will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. In accordance with Criteria Consideration A, Topeka's Mid-Century Modern religious buildings must derive its primary significance from its historical importance or its distinctive architectural design. Under Criterion A, religious facilities may be considered significant if it is directly related to postwar COMMUNITY PLANNING IN DEVELOPMENT in Topeka. In such instances, the property may be indicative of the impressive suburbanization during the postwar years and the growing trend for suburbanites to establish important community resources within close proximity. Mid-Century Modern religious facilities may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person's significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. A religious property may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE and/or ENGINEERING if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. In particular, they may possess

distinctive design, form, or construction technique. They may be significant because they possess high artistic values or are well-preserved examples of building types and design characteristics that were typical or popular during the period of significance.

Integrity:

Integrity of design, location, setting, materials, and workmanship are particularly important in conveying Mid-Century Modern attributes of a religious facility. The location and setting, particularly among those erected in suburban areas on sites with large parking lots, are important in conveying trends in suburbanization and community development. The design of religious facilities in the postwar era occurred during a period when many denominations strived to create a sense of progressive unity. Modernist design was essential to the evolving theologies following World War II. As such, the design, choice of materials, and workmanship are essential in conveying the significance of Modernist principles in religious architecture.

Assessing Alterations:

Among the most common exterior alteration made to the Mid-Century Modern church is the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic on primary elevations and principal entryways. In most cases, dramatic roofs and building shapes and forms characterize the building as a distinctive Mid-Century Modern architectural style. If repairs to the roof or exterior walls alter their original form, the building would be rendered ineligible. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. Additions to a property that obscure primary elevations or minimize its character-defining features will render a building ineligible. The interior design of worship spaces, or sanctuaries, is equally as important as the exterior. In fact, the interior plan of the sanctuary, which most often includes a narthex or entry lobby, often dictates the ultimate design, or form, of the building as a single entity. Much thought is taken into consideration when planning the interior space of the sanctuary, orientation and placement of aisles and pews, alters, and baptistries, among other features. Materials are specifically chosen by building committees based on theological principles. As such, if alterations have been made to the narthex and/or sanctuary that include the insensitive

replacement of materials and significant rearrangement of space, the building may be rendered ineligible.

3.7.6 PUBLIC EDUCATION

Education-related buildings constructed during the period of significance are typically one- and two-story structures with flat roofs and an emphasis on the horizontal. Most are sprawling facilities employing elements of the International Style. In particular, most public schools of this period feature recessed entrances and banks of windows lighting interior classrooms. In Topeka, public schools include elementary, junior high, and high school and fall under the classification of “city school” as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form for *Historic Public Schools in Kansas*. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most eligible Modern public schools will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, a public school may be considered significant if it is directly related to postwar COMMUNITY PLANNING IN DEVELOPMENT in Topeka and represents the influence of Modern design principles in defining the historic architectural character of neighborhoods. Most, if not all, may be considered eligible in the area of EDUCATION if they are directly tied to the modern-day educational system and its response to the postwar baby boom, suburbanization, and continued city expansion throughout the period of significance. They further might reflect the evolving attitudes of educational leaders and professional practices. Mid-Century Modern public schools may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person’s significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. A public school property may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, and/or LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. It may be significant for distinctive design, form, or construction technique because it possesses high artistic values, or is a well-preserved example of public-school design characteristics that were typical during the period of significance.

Integrity: Integrity of design, location, materials, and workmanship are particularly important in conveying a public school’s Mid-

Century Modern attributes. In addition, the setting of the school building is important to consider when assessing integrity. Its orientation oftentimes reflects traffic and parking patterns. Further, the character of its surrounding setting, particularly residential in nature, should also be considered. Modern public-school campuses may be considered eligible as a single historic district if the majority of the buildings reflect Modernist design elements, were constructed during the period of significance, and retain integrity.

Assessing Alterations:

The most visible alteration to the city school is the replacement of original windows, a change made as early as the 1960s in some schools. The degree to which the replacement windows are compatible with the historic character of the building varies widely. According to the MPDF for *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*, “dark reflective glass and downsized openings are common window treatments.”¹⁵⁵ Modern school design most often features long rows of windows reflective of the International Style. This design feature is usually the single-most important character-defining element of the building. Per the MPDF, windows should not generally be blocked in or covered, and replacement windows should retain and reuse the original masonry openings. This assessment also applies to repairs to, or replacement of windows. In order for a Mid-Century Modern public school to be eligible, it should retain its overall massing and basic exterior form. Additions that overshadow, or diminish, the scale and form of the original may render it ineligible. Modernist school buildings most often feature flat roofs. Altering the form of the roof will render the building ineligible. Any distinctive ornamentation and detailing, which is rare among International Style schools, should be retained. Finally, interior remodeling is acceptable as long as the modifications retain the basic corridor configuration. Per the MPDF, “the conversion of major spaces such as the gymnasium to new uses may be acceptable provided that the structure still retains a high degree of integrity.”¹⁵⁶

3.7.7 HIGHER EDUCATION BUILDINGS

Higher education-related buildings constructed in Topeka during the period of significance generally occur on the campus of Washburn University and are a direct result of postwar expansions and re-building campaigns following the 1966 tornado that destroyed much of the campus. These buildings may include large facilities specifically used as a school building,

¹⁵⁵ Spencer 2005; Section F Page 34.

¹⁵⁶ Spencer 2005; Section F Page 39.

residence halls, school departments, administration buildings, and entertainment and cultural facilities. Most are large facilities employing distinctive Modernist designs. In particular, the buildings constructed to accommodate classrooms or specific educational departments frequently reflect the International Style with flat roofs and long banks of windows lighting interior classrooms. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most eligible Modern higher education-related buildings will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, a Modern higher education property may be considered significant in the area of EDUCATION and/or ENTERTAINMENT/CULTURE if it reflects the evolving attitudes of educational leaders and professional practices, as well as efforts made to promote culture and entertainment on campus. Mid-Century Modern higher education buildings may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person's significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. A higher education building may be eligible under Criterion C in the areas of ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, and/or LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. It may be significant for a distinctive design, form, or construction technique because it possesses high artistic values, or is a well-preserved example of design characteristics that were typical during the period of significance.

Integrity: Integrity of design, location, materials, and workmanship are particularly important in conveying a Mid-Century Modern attributes of higher education-related buildings. Its campus-like setting should also be taken into consideration when assessing the integrity of an individual building.

Assessing Alterations: Similar to public schools, the most common alteration to the higher education buildings designed for classroom instruction is the replacement of original windows. The degree to which the replacement windows are compatible with the historic character of the building varies widely. Sometimes dark reflective glass and downsized openings are common window treatments. Modern school design, which often include those associated with higher education, feature long rows of windows reflective of the International Style. This design

feature is usually the single-most important character-defining element of the building. As such, windows should not be blocked in or covered, and replacement windows should retain and reuse the original masonry openings. This assessment also applies to repairs to, or replacement of, doors. In general, all high education-related buildings, regardless of use, should retain its overall massing and basic exterior form. Modernist education buildings most often feature flat roofs. Altering the form of the roof will render the building ineligible. Any distinctive ornamentation and detailing should be retained. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is also problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. In most instances, incompatible alterations to principal entryways, including incompatible windows and doors, will likely render a building ineligible. Additions to a property that obscure primary elevations or minimize its character-defining features will render a building ineligible. Finally, interior remodeling is acceptable as long as the modifications retain the basic corridor configuration. The conversion of major spaces such as the gymnasium to new uses may be acceptable provided that the structure still retains a high degree of integrity. In some cases where a building functions as a cultural or entertainment purpose, its overall form, plan, and arrangement of space is dictated by its specific use. For example, the Elliot White Concert Hall is notable for its interior lobby and auditorium design, including its unique acoustical enhancements. Thus, interior modifications to the buildings should not compromise these design elements and historic materials.

3.7.8 TRANSPORTATION-RELATED ARCHITECTURE

This property type comprises buildings constructed between 1945 through 1975 specifically for the purpose of providing public transportation – bus stations and railroad passenger depots. Both sub-types, particularly the railroad depots, were common nationwide prior to World War II. However, the desire to present a modern and progressive aesthetic during the postwar years, existing passenger depots and bus stations were either updated or new facilities were constructed altogether. In Topeka, there are no known bus stations dating to this period, however, it is possible that such a facility is extant and would fall under this associated property type when evaluating it for the National Register. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most potentially eligible Modernist public transportation centers and stations will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a

higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, they may be considered significant if it is directly related to trends in TRANSPORTATION growth and development during the period of significance. Similarly, it may be significant in the area of COMMERCE if it was the location of an important business that contributed to Topeka's economy from 1945 to 1975. A bus station may be eligible in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT if it represents the influence of Modernist design principles in shaping the built environment along Topeka's high-trafficked roadways. Modern transportation centers may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person's significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. A Modernist transportation center may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE if it conveys significant design principles of Modernist architecture. In particular, it may reflect distinctive design, form, or construction technique because it possesses high artistic values or is a well-preserved example of building types and design characteristics that were typical or popular during the period of significance.

Integrity:

Integrity of design, location, materials, workmanship, and association are particularly important in conveying a transportation center's Mid-Century Modern attributes. Considering the integrity of association, the building should continue to convey its historical association as a transportation center, particularly through its historic signage, lettering, and/or advertising elements.

Assessing Alterations:

Common alterations to modern transportation centers would be similar to that of wayside commercial architecture. Among the problematic alterations include the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic on primary elevations and principal entryways. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is also problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. The roof design of wayside commercial architecture is a prevailing feature of Mid-Century Modern commercial

design. Rooflines of transportation centers from the period of significance are most often flat, drawing from the International Style. The overall roof form should not be altered. In doing so would render the building ineligible. This also applies overhanging, or cantilevered roofs. The repair of aluminum fascia and/or enameled paneling should not be replaced within incompatible materials. Exterior historic advertising, signage, and letter should be preserved. Removing, or inappropriately altering, these features may not necessarily render the building eligible, but coupled with other exterior alterations that compromise the building's historical association will be problematic. The interior of transportation centers is an important element to consider when evaluating integrity. The interior arrangement of space is an important feature that reflects not only its association as a transportation center but popular Modernist design elements including materials. Repairs or remodeling to the waiting area and/or ticketing counter should not include incompatible replacement of materials, particularly the ticketing counter. Further, when one enters the building, the waiting area and ticket counter should be recognizable as such and should continue to reflect Modernist design principles. Should the materials and important design features be removed or significantly altered the building may be rendered ineligible.

3.7.9 GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS (NON-ADMINISTRATION)

This property type specifically comprises non-administration government buildings constructed between 1945 through 1975. These include all buildings that would not otherwise be categorized as an “office building.” Only two such properties were included in the pre-selected property list to be surveyed for this study – a fire station (177-4841) and a United States Post Office (177-4855). Due to trends in development throughout the period of significance and the city’s “annexation fever,” there are undoubtedly numerous extant representations throughout Topeka. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most potentially eligible Modernist non-administrative government buildings will be locally significant, although there may be examples where additional research could justify a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A, they will likely be considered significant because they are directly associated with a GOVERNMENT entity – local, state, or federal – and, therefore, are reflective of various government efforts to meet the needs of a growing a population. Similarly, it might be eligible in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT if it represents the influence of Modernist design principles in shaping the built environment as Topeka

rapidly expanded outward and its population soared throughout the mid-20th century. Such expansions and suburbanization required necessities such as fire stations and post offices to accommodate the growing population and expansion areas. Modern commercial architecture may be eligible under Criterion B if they are associated with individuals who made significant contributions to the broad patterns and trends of development in Topeka from 1945 to 1975. In such instances, the resource must be demonstrated to be the best extant property reflective of that person's significance as it directly relates to the Mid-Century Modern development. Non-administrative civic architecture may be individually eligible under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE if they convey significant design principles of Modernist architecture. In particular, they may possess distinctive design, form, or construction technique. They may be significant because they possess high artistic values or are well-preserved examples of building types and design characteristics that were typical or popular during the period of significance.

Integrity:

Integrity of design, location, materials, workmanship, and association are particularly important in conveying Mid-Century Modern attributes of non-administrative government architecture. These facilities are often built to provide specific services to the city's residents (fire protection, mail service, etc.). In most cases, this property type requires a unique interior plan to efficiently and effectively function and serve its purpose. The building, interior and exterior, is easily recognizable for its unique function. As such, the building's ability to convey its mid-century association is essential.

Assessing Alterations:

Among the most common alteration made non-administrative civic architecture in Topeka is the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic on primary elevations and principal entryways. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is also problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. Roofs are usually flat, oftentimes with overhanging eaves or cantilevers. These elements should not be altered, and the repair of aluminum fascia and/or enameled paneling should not be replaced with incompatible materials. In most instances, incompatible alterations to visual fronts will likely

render a building ineligible. In the case of fire stations, garage bay openings should not be infilled. In the event that this is unavoidable, the infill material should emphasize the original opening and its historic purpose - glass windows or doors might accomplish this.

The interior arrangement of space should not be altered. This is oftentimes an important aspect of the design and was greatly considered in early planning phases. Based on the property's specific function, significantly altering the interior plan may render the building ineligible. The interior of fire stations should remain recognizable as a firehouse. In combination, modifications and/or incompatible repairs will likely render the building ineligible. Mid-century post offices - whether suburban or urban, a large distribution center or small local mail center - are distinctly recognizable. The numerous design manuals that circulated throughout the postwar years resulted in nationwide consistency in interior layouts based upon the scale of operation. Significant alterations to the arrangement of space may render the property ineligible if distinct service areas are not recognizable. It is strongly encouraged that PO boxes and service counters remain intact in order to convey its historical association as a post office.

3.7.10 MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENT BUILDINGS

The property types with potential to represent significant trends in multi-family residential housing in Topeka include Garden Apartments and Mid- to High-Rise Apartment buildings. Only properties with demonstrated significance and integrity are eligible for designation.

Property Type Significance: Most Modern apartment buildings will be locally significant; however, there may be examples where more research could demonstrate a higher level of significance. Under Criterion A in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT an apartment building may be considered significant if it is directly related to postwar suburbanization, city annexations, and the rapid increase in population. It may also be significant if it is directly associated with specific city planning efforts such as Urban Renewal programs and Federal Housing Projects. Groupings of Mid-Century Modern apartment buildings, such as a multi-building housing project, may collectively be significant as a district if it is an early postwar illustration of federally assisted housing projects in Topeka. Under Criterion C, an apartment building may be significant in the area of ARCHITECTURE as a good example of a Mid-

Century Modern architectural style precedent and/or the work of a significant architect. Similarly, a property may be eligible in the area of ENGINEERING if it successfully reflects a distinctive Mid-Century Modern construction method or technique.

Integrity:

Integrity of design, location, materials, and workmanship are particularly important in conveying an apartment buildings' Mid-Century Modern attributes. Garden apartments are frequently sited within residential sectors of the city and its surrounding setting is also important in conveying its picturesque character. Alternatively, the mid- and high-rise apartment buildings are typically constructed in the downtown and commercial sectors and their surrounding setting does not hold as much sway in assessing integrity.

Assessing Alterations:

Among the most common alteration made to Modernist apartment buildings in Topeka is the interior alteration of individual units. In the event that primary corridors and shared spaces, such as central lobbies and stair halls, are maintained, interior modifications should **not** render a property ineligible. Alternatively, if the interior arrangement of shared spaces is significantly altered and hallway doors are replaced with incompatible doors, these alterations may compromise the overall integrity of the property. Problematic exterior modifications may include the replacement of doors and windows that use incompatible materials, alter fenestration patterns, and/or modify or infill openings. These alterations are particularly problematic when occurring at principal entryways. Both sub-types within this property type are characterized by International Style window rows. Altering this fenestration would render a property ineligible. Irreversible repairs or replacement of exterior surfaces with incompatible materials is also problematic if the changes are to such an extent that the exterior materials and design no longer reflect Modernist principles. The flat rooflines should be maintained. Overhanging roofs should not be altered and the repair of fascia should not be replaced with incompatible materials. Additions to a property that obscure primary elevations, entryways, or minimize its character-defining features will render a building ineligible.

SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

The mid-20th century in Topeka witnessed an unprecedented increase in population and expansion. Topeka maintains an impressive collection of Modernist architecture that reflects this significant period in its history. Recognizing not only the architectural importance of these resources but also their significance in demonstrating this extraordinary period of growth and development should be a focus among community leaders, planners, and preservationists. Among the objectives of this study is the evaluation of the 55 pre-selected properties for National Register eligibility based on the registration requirements presented in Section 3.

Evaluating for potential historic districts reflecting a high percentage of Mid-Century Modern, non-residential architecture is difficult unless a city-wide windshield survey is conducted. Based on this study, one potential district to consider might include buildings within the Keyway Urban Renewal Project Area.

4.1 INDIVIDUAL NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATIONS

Based upon field observations and the registration requirements detailed in the previous section, each of the 55 surveyed properties was evaluated for potential individual NRHP eligibility. Recommendations are based on exterior observations only, however, in some cases, interior access was permitted into the open public spaces such as lobbies. A total of 6 buildings were not assessed primarily due to the apparent minimal use of Modernist design elements. In these instances, interior observations are recommended to better determine the building's architectural significance as it relates to Mid-Century Modern non-residential architecture. Two of the properties that were not assessed, Elliott White Concert Hall (177-4819) and the USPS Gage Center Station (177-4855), appear to meet exterior eligibility requirements. However, due to their unique property type, evaluating the interior design, materials, and arrangement of space is paramount in confirming its significance and degree of integrity. As such, these two properties are identified as "potentially eligible."

Thirteen (13) of the 55 surveyed properties do not appear to meet the eligibility requirements. This recommendation is largely due to incompatible repairs and alterations, as well as large-scale additions that overwhelm the Modern building. In some cases where the building is relatively intact and retains a good degree, it simply lacks architectural distinction as a good illustration of Mid-Century Modern design. This is especially the case for some of the properties reflecting Modern Movement design elements but typically do not conform to a distinct Modernist style or design. The following table provides a list of properties that do not appear to meet the eligibility requirements.

Table 1. Surveyed Properties That Do Not Meet Registration Requirements

KHRI No.	Address	Direction	Street	St. Type	Date	Historic Name (If Applicable)	Associated Property Type	Modernist Style
177-4820	1629	SW	Medford	AVE	1949		Unspecified	Streamlined Moderne
177-4823	3410	SW	Van Buren	ST	1967	Creditor's Service Bureau Building	Large Office Building	Modern Movement
177-4824	3400	SW	Van Buren	ST	1978		Large Office Building	International Style
177-4830	1005	NW	Topeka	BLVD	1960		In-door Walk-up Fast Food	Exaggerated Modern
177-4831	1015	NW	Topeka	BLVD	1960		Combo Drive-Up and Indoor Walk-Up Fast Food	Exaggerated Modern
177-4832	1903	NW	Topeka	BLVD	1945		Car Wash and Auto Supply	streamlined Moderne
177-4835	901	SW	Topeka	BLVD	1964		Bank	Modern Movement
177-4841	324	SE	Jefferson	ST	1960	Topeka Fire Department Headquarters and Fire Station No. 3	Fire Station	Modern Movement
177-4848	1710	SW	10th	AVE	1965	Professional Building	Large Office Building	Modern Movement
177-4850	2318	SW	10th	AVE	1962		Large Office Building	Neo-Expressionist
177-4856	4201	SW	15th	ST	1968		Small Office	Modern Movement
177-4857	1716	SW	Gage	BLVD	1948	Faith Lutheran Church	Church	A-Frame
177-4859	4746	SW	21st	ST	1954	Trinity Presbyterian Church	Church	Neo-Expressionist

Among the 55 surveyed properties, a total of 36 appear to meet registration requirements. One property, the Kansas State Office Building (177-3153) was previously determined eligible is has an individual National Register nomination pending. The First National Bank (177-4863) was constructed in 1975 and would typically not meet NR eligibility requirements due to its age. However, it falls within the period of significance of Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka. It is an exceptionally unique representation of Modernist design and appears to retain a high degree of integrity, including its interior arrangement of space.¹⁵⁷ As such, this property appears to meet the necessary requirements as presented in Section.

It should be noted that these are recommendations only. Additional research may be necessary to determine an individual property's significance. Construction drawings and meetings with architects may yield information pertaining to a property's method of construction. Additionally, interior spaces should be examined to identify distinctive Mid-Century Modern building and design methods, as well as materials. Interior observations may prove that a building recommended in this study as meeting registration requirements does not maintain sufficient integrity.

Table 2 provides a list of surveyed properties that appear to meet the registration requirements.

¹⁵⁷ For security reasons, documentation of the interior of the First National Bank Building was not permitted. However, the surveyor obtained access to the open lobby and mentally noted its apparent degree of integrity.

KHRI No.	Address	Direction	Street	St. Type	PID	Construction Date	Historic Name (If Applicable)	Historic Function	Building Classification	Modernist Style	Primary Building Material or Construction Method	Architect (if known)
177-4818	2303	SW	College	AVE	1411202002028000	1955	A.J. Stout Elementary School	Education - School	Public School	International Style	Brick	Glover & Newcomb
177-4821	1701	SW	Collins	ST	1410204006001000	1949	First Congregational Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	Modern Movement	Brick	Griest & Ekdahl
177-4822	2900	SW	MacVicar	AVE	1461302002022000	1966	HTK Architecture Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Small Office	Wrightian	Wood	HTK Architects
177-4683	2209	SW	29th	ST	1461302002023.01-0	1956	Dr. Karl & Jeanetta Lyle Menninger Education Center	Health Care - Medical Business/Office	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	International Style	stone veneer	
177-4825	220	SW	33rd	ST	1341803001004000	1960	Prudential and State Farm Insurance Office Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Small Office	New Formalism	Stucco	
177-3394	3120	S	Kansas	AVE	1341802001012000	1962	Falley's Meat Market	Commerce/Trade - Business	Supermarket	Exaggerated Modern	Brick	
177-4827	400	SE	29th	ST	1330704016005000	1970		Transportation - Road-Related (Vehicular)	Car Dealership	Exaggerated Modern	Brick	
177-4829	2020	SE	29th	ST	1320403017015000	1965		Unknown	Small Office	Exaggerated Modern	Brick	
177-3153	915	SW	Harrison	ST	1093103008001000	1957	Kansas State Office Building	Government - Government Office	Tall Office Building	Meisian	curtain wall	Brown-Slemmons
177-4834	1035	SW	Topeka	BLVD	1093103015008000	1960		Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Bank	Neo-Expressionism	Glass and Concrete	HTK Architects
177-3088	1034	S	Kansas	AVE	1093104018007000	1969	Hanover Pancake House	Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	Dine-In Restaurant	Google	brick	
177-3238	818	S	Kansas	AVE	1093104010002000	1962	Kansas Power & Light Company Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Tall Office Building	Meisian	Concrete	
177-3273	800	SE	Quincy	ST	1093104009004000	1973	Topeka Savings Association	Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Bank	New Formalism	Glass and Concrete	Eicholz & Groth
177-3265	800	SW	Jackson	ST	1093104011002000	1969	Merchants National Bank	Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Tall Office Building	Meisian	Curtain Wall, precast concrete and steel frame	Van Doren, Hazard, Stallings and Schnacke
177-4837	220	SE	6th	AVE	1093101021006000	1969	Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	New Formalism	concrete, aluminum-framed windows, bronze-tinted spandrels, aggregate cladding on first floor	Ekdahl, Davis, & Depew
177-4838	217	SE	4th	ST	1093101021001000	1967	Thacher Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	New Formalism	brick	Eicholz & Groth
177-5400-01947	400	S	Kansas	ST	1093101020001000	1970	American Home Life Insurance Company Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	Neo-Expressionism	aggregate concrete exterior, curtain wall, decorative plastic coral-like ceiling in lobby	Van Doren, Hazard, Stallings and Schnacke
177-4839	616	SE	Jefferson	ST	1093203006002000	1963	Topeka Capital Journal Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	New Formalism	brick, concrete screen wall	
177-4840	500	SE	Holliday	PL	1093203003001000	1950	Santa Fe Railway Co.	Transportation - Rail-Related	Railroad Depot	International and Streamline Moderne	Stone	
177-4842	700	SW	6th	AVE	1093102018014000	1953	Jayhak Motor Co.	Transportation - Road-Related (Vehicular)	Car Dealership	Exaggerated Modern	concrete block	
177-4843	715	SW	10th	AVE	1093103013001000	1954	Kansas State Teachers Association	Commerce/Trade - Organizational	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	Neo-Expressionism	Curtain Wall	
177-4844	1221	SW	Western	AVE	0973604025010000	1961	Kevin Arms Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick	
177-4845	1300	SW	Fillmore	ST	1410101014002000	1963	Cowan Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick	

KHRI No.	Address	Direction	Street	St. Type	PID	Construction Date	Historic Name (If Applicable)	Historic Function	Building Classification	Modernist Style	Primary Building Material or Construction Method	Architect (if known)
177-4846	1301	SW	Fillmore	ST	1410101013001000	1957	Central Park Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick	Carl Ossman & Associates
177-4847	1275	SW	Fillmore	ST	1410101002012000	1957	Park Plaza Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick	Carl Ossman & Associates
177-4849	2200	SW	10th	AVE	0973602024012000	1960	Hogan Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Small Office	Modern Movement	brick	
177-3402	2300	SW	10th	Ave	0973501038012000	1948	Bobo's Drive-In	Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	Combo Drive-Up and Indoor Walk-Up Fast Food	Googie	Glass and Synthetics	
177-4851	2915	SW	8th	AVE	0973501029002000	1954	Otterbein Evangelical United Brethren Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	International Style	brick and concrete	
177-4852	500	SW	27th	St	1330702021011000	1962	First Assembly of God	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	Neo-Expressionism	Brick	
177-4853	455	SE	Golf Park	BLVD	1341801016001000	1954	Avondale East Elementary School	Education - School	school	International Style	brick and concrete	Williamson-Loeb sack
177-4854	2627	SW	Western	AVE	1411201029002000	1962	Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	A-Frame	Cut stone exterior, plywood and glass panels, laminate wood (interior)	Ekdahl, Davis, & Depew
177-4858	1880	SW	Gage	BLVD	1410203007001000	1969	First Christian Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	Neo-Expressionism	limestone veneer	Robert S. Slemmons Architects
177-4860	1216	SW	Lakeside	DR	0973503025003000	1960		Commerce/Trade	Dine-In Restaurant	Neo-expressionism	brick	
177-4861	4142	SW	Huntoon	ST	0983404011001000	1961	Gage Bowl	Recreation and Culture	Bowling Alley	Googie	brick veneer	
177-4862	4140	SW	Huntoon	ST	0983404011001000	1960		Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	Combo Drive-Up and Indoor Walk-Up Fast Food	Googie	brick, neon signage	
177-4863	3825	SW	29th	ST	1451501001001000	1975	First National Bank - First West Facility	Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Bank	New Formalism	Glass, concrete, aggregate	ekdahl, Davis, Depew, & Persson

4.2 EXEMPLARY PROPERTIES CONSIDERED PRIORITIES FOR LISTING

Although this study identified numerous properties that appear to meet the registration requirements for listing in the National Register, a select few are exemplary illustrations of Modernist design and/or construction methods. Each feature distinctive design elements that make it stand out above others within the same property type classification. It is recommended that these properties be considered priorities for listing in the National Register and property owners encouraged to pursue listing. Among these notable properties include:

- 1) A.J. Stout Elementary School (177-4818)
- 2) Avondale East Elementary School (177-4853)
- 3) Commercial/Residential Building, 1629 Medford Avenue (177-4820)
- 4) First Congregational Church (177-4821)
- 5) HTK Architects Building (177-4822)*
- 6) Kansas State Office Building (177-3153); listing pending
- 7) Intrust Bank (177-4834)
- 8) Hanover Pancake House and its Neon Sign (177-3088)
- 9) Kansas Power & Light Company Building (177-3238)
- 10) Topeka Savings Association (177-3273)
- 11) Merchant's National Bank (177-3265)
- 12) Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (177-4837)
- 13) American Home Life Insurance Company Building (177-5400)
- 14) Topeka Capital Journal Building (177-4839)
- 15) Santa Fe Railway Passenger Depot (177-4840)
- 16) Jayhawk Motor Company Dealership (177-4842)
- 17) Kansas State Teachers Association (177-4843)
- 18) Park Plaza Apartments (177-4847)*
- 19) Otterbein Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4851)
- 20) First Assembly of God (177-4852)
- 21) Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854)
- 22) First Christian Church
- 23) Gage Bowl (177-4861)
- 24) First National Bank (177-4863)
- 25) Drive-In/Walk-Up Restaurant, 4140 Huntoon Street (177-4862)

*This property will be nominated as part of this study's grant project.

4.3 ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Conduct city-wide windshield survey to identify potential historic districts that include a high percentage of intact buildings exhibiting distinctive Mid-Century Modern styles, design features, and/or construction techniques.
- 2) A comprehensive survey of Mid-Century Modern architecture of the Washburn University campus might identify prominent buildings reflecting distinctive Modernist

design elements. Such buildings should be evaluated for National Register eligibility and considered for listing.

- 3) Downtown Topeka was last surveyed 2011-2012. Due to the passage of time, it is recommended that downtown be re-surveyed and evaluated for the National Register. Several of the buildings within the downtown survey area might now meet the 50-year age requirement and be considered an important reflection of Modernist design. The results of the survey may suggest a possible boundary expansion and extension of the period of significance (and re-naming) of the *South Kansas Avenue Historic District*.
- 4) Additional research and interior observations of the entirety of the Garvey Fine Arts Center, including the concert hall, Washburn Theater, and the music and arts building, should be conducted to formally evaluate the complex for listing on the National Register. It is possible that the facility may hold significance at the State level.
- 5) Submit individual Multiple Property Documentation Forms (MPDF) to the National Register for exemplary illustrations of Mid-Century Modern architecture in Topeka presented in Section 4.2
- 6) Consider Multiple Property Listing (MPL) of thematic groupings of resources. Possible themes may include religious architecture, financial institutions, apartment buildings, and Urban Renewal-related buildings.
- 7) Educating the public on the significance of Mid-Century Modern architecture and appropriate rehabilitation and maintenance practices. Property owners, and future potential investors, of eligible properties should be made aware of the benefits of Federal Rehabilitation Credits. This program is not only financially beneficial, but it encourages proper rehabilitation practices to maintain integrity and architectural distinction.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY INVENTORY






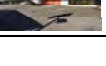

MID-CENTURY MODERN, NON, SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE: A HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY









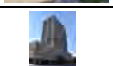



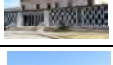




TOPEKA, SHAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS















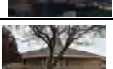

INEVENTORY OF SURVEYED PROPERTIES






SURVEYED BY: JAIME L. DESTEFANO OF JLD PRESERVATION CONSULTING, LLC

OCTOBER 2019 TO JUNE 2020

KHRI No.	Address	Direction	Street	St. Type	PID	Construction Date	Historic Name (If Applicable)	Historic Function	Building Classification	Modernist Style	Primary Building Material or Construction Method	Architect (if known)	Area(s) of Significance	NRHP Recommendations	Photograph
177-4818	2303	SW	College	AVE	1411202002028000	1955	A.J. Stout Elementary School	Education - School	Public School	International Style	Brick	Glover & Newcomb	Education, Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4819	1700	SW	Jewell	ST	1410103001001000	1968	Elliot White Concert Hall	Recreation and Culture - Theater	Theater	Neo-Expressionism, International, and New Formalism	Cut Stone Veneer			Not Assessed	
177-4820	1629	SW	Medford	AVE	1410201034011000	1949		Commerce/Trade - Business	Unspecified	streamlined moderne	Stucco			No	
177-4821	1701	SW	Collins	ST	1410204006001000	1949	First Congregational Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	Modern Movement	Brick	Griest & Ekdahl	Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4822	2900	SW	MacVicar	AVE	1461302002022000	1966	HTK Architecture Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Small Office	Wrightian	Wood	HTK Architects	Architecture	Yes	
177-4683	2209	SW	29th	ST	1461302002023.01-0	1956	Dr. Karl & Jeanetta Lyle Menninger Education Center	Health Care - Medical Business/Office	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	International Style	stone veneer		Architecture	Yes	
177-4823	3410	SW	Van Buren	ST	1341803005007000	1967	Creditor's Service Bureau Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	Modern Movement	Brick			no	
177-4824	3400	SW	Van Buren	ST	1341803005005000	1978		Commerce/Trade - Professional	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	International Style	Brick			No	
177-4825	220	SW	33rd	ST	1341803001004000	1960	Prudential and State Farm Insurance Office Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Small Office	New Formalism	Stucco		Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-3394	3120	S	Kansas	AVE	1341802001012000	1962	Falley's Meat Market	Commerce/Trade - Business	Supermarket	Exaggerated Modern	Brick		Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-4827	400	SE	29th	ST	1330704016005000	1970		Transportation - Road-Related (Vehicular)	Car Dealership	Exaggerated Modern	Brick		Commerce, Transportation, Architecture	Yes	
177-4828	540	SE	29th	ST	1330704018004000	1960		Unknown	Car Dealership	A-Frame	Wood			Not Assessed	
177-4829	2020	SE	29th	ST	1320403017015000	1965		Unknown	Small Office	Exaggerated Modern	Brick		Architecture	Yes	
177-4830	1005	NW	Topeka	BLVD	1093001013008000	1960		Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	In-door Walk-up Fast Food	Exaggerated Modern	Concrete Block			No	
177-4831	1015	NW	Topeka	BLVD	1093001013008000	1960		Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	Combo Drive-Up and Indoor Walk-Up Fast Food	Exaggerated Modern	Concrete block			No	

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177-4832	1903	NW	Topeka	BLVD	1042002009007000	1945		Transportation - Road-Related (Vehicular)	Car Wash and Auto Supply	streamlined moderne	Stucco			no	
177-4833	117	NE	Highway 24		1041704002021000	1953	Motel	Commerce/Trade	Roadside Motel	International Style	Stucco			Not Assessed	
177-3153	915	SW	Harrison	ST	1093103008001000	1957	Kansas State Office Building	Government - Government Office	Tall Office Building	Meisian	curtain wall	Brown-Slemmons	Government, Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Individual Listing Pending	
177-4835	901	SW	Topeka	BLVD	1093103009001000	1964		Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Bank	Modern Movement	Stucco			no	
177-4834	1035	SW	Topeka	BLVD	1093103015008000	1960		Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Bank	Neo-Expressionism	Glass and Concrete	HTK Architects	Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-3088	1034	S	Kansas	AVE	1093104018007000	1969	Hanover Pancake House	Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	Dine-In Restaurant	Googie	brick		Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-3238	818	S	Kansas	AVE	1093104010002000	1962	Kansas Power & Light Company Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Tall Office Building	Meisian	Concrete		Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-3274	823	SE	Quincy	ST	1093104010008000	1951	Southwestern Bell Telephone	Commerce/Trade - Business	Tall Office Building	International Style	Brick			Not Assessed	
177-3273	800	SE	Quincy	ST	1093104009004000	1973	Topeka Savings Association	Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Bank	New Formalism	Glass and Concrete	Eicholz & Groth	Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-3265	800	SW	Jackson	ST	1093104011002000	1969	Merchants National Bank	Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Tall Office Building	Meisian	Curtain Wall, precast concrete and steel frame	Van Doren, Hazard, Stallings and Schnacke	Commerce, Community Planning & Development (Urban Renewal), Architecture	Yes	
177-4837	220	SE	6th	AVE	1093101021006000	1969	Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	New Formalism	concrete, aluminum-framed windows, bronze-tinted spandrels, aggregate cladding on first floor	Ekdahl, Davis, & Depew	Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-4838	217	SE	4th	ST	1093101021001000	1967	Thacher Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	New Formalism	brick	Eicholz & Groth	Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-5400-01947	400	S	Kansas	ST	1093101020001000	1970	American Home Life Insurance Company Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	Neo-Expressionism	aggregate concrete exterior, curtain wall, decorative plastic coral-like ceiling in lobby	Van Doren, Hazard, Stallings and Schnacke	Commerce, Community Planning & Development (Urban Renewal), Architecture	Yes	
177-4839	616	SE	Jefferson	ST	1093203006002000	1963	Topeka Capital Journal Building	Commerce/Trade - Business	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	New Formalism	brick, concrete screen wall		Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-4840	500	SE	Holliday	PL	1093203003001000	1950	Santa Fe Railway Co.	Transportation - Rail-Related	Railroad Depot	International and Streamline Moderne	Stone		Transportation, Architecture	Yes	
177-4841	324	SE	Jefferson	ST	1093202012003000	1960	Topeka Fire Department Headquarters and Fire Station No. 3	Government - Fire Station	Fire Station	Modern Movement	Stone			no	
177-4842	700	SW	6th	AVE	1093102018014000	1953	Jayhak Motor Co.	Transportation - Road-Related (Vehicular)	Car Dealership	Exaggerated Modern	concrete block		Commerce, Transportation, Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	

KHRI No.	Address	Direction	Street	St. Type	PID	Construction Date	Historic Name (If Applicable)	Historic Function	Building Classification	Modernist Style	Primary Building Material or Construction Method	Architect (if known)	Area(s) of Significance	NRHP Recommendations	Photograph
177-4843	715	SW	10th	AVE	1093103013001000	1954	Kansas State Teachers Association	Commerce/Trade - Organizational	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	Neo-Expressionism	Curtain Wall		Education, Architecture	Yes	
177-4844	1221	SW	Western	AVE	0973604025010000	1961	Kevin Arms Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick		Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4845	1300	SW	Fillmore	ST	1410101014002000	1963	Cowan Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick		Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4846	1301	SW	Fillmore	ST	1410101013001000	1957	Central Park Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick	Carl Ossman & Associates	Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4847	1275	SW	Fillmore	ST	1410101002012000	1957	Park Plaza Apartments	Domestic - Multiple Dwelling	Garden Apartment	International Style	brick	Carl Ossman & Associates	Community Planning and Development, Architecture	yes	
177-4848	1710	SW	10th	AVE	0973602030004000	1965	Professional Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	Modern Movement	Brick and pre-cast concrete panels			no	
177-4849	2200	SW	10th	AVE	0973602024012000	1960	Hogan Building	Commerce/Trade - Professional	Small Office	Modern Movement	brick		Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-3402	2300	SW	10th	Ave	0973501038012000	1948	Bobo's Drive-In	Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	Combo Drive-Up and Indoor Walk-Up Fast Food	Googie	Glass and Synthetics		Commerce, Community Planning & Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4850	2318	SW	10th	AVE	0973501038010000	1962		Commerce/Trade - Professional	Large Office Building (2 to 9 stories)	Neo-Expressionism	brick, floating staircase, indoor plantbed			no	
177-4851	2915	SW	8th	AVE	0973501029002000	1954	Otterbein Evangelical United Brethren Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	International Style	brick and concrete		Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4852	500	SW	27th	St	1330702021011000	1962	First Assembly of God	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	Neo-Expressionism	Brick		Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4853	455	SE	Golf Park	BLVD	1341801016001000	1954	Avondale East Elementary School	Education - School	school	International Style	brick and concrete	Williamson-Loeb sack	Education, Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4854	2627	SW	Western	AVE	1411201029002000	1962	Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	A-Frame	Cut stone exterior, plywood and glass panels, laminate wood (interior)	Ekdahl, Davis, & Depew	Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4855	1430	SW	Woodhull	ST	1420301001004000	1966	United States Post Office, Gage Center Station	Government - Post Office	Post Office	International	brick			Not Assessed	
177-4856	4201	SW	15th	ST	1420301009003000	1968		Commerce/Trade	Small Office	Modern Movement	brick			no	
177-4857	1716	SW	Gage	BLVD	1410203004003000	1948	Faith Lutheran Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	A-Frame	Cut stone exterior			No	
177-4858	1880	SW	Gage	BLVD	1410203007001000	1969	First Christian Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	Neo-Expressionism	limestone veneer	Robert S. Slemmons Architects	Community Planning and Development, Architecture	Yes	

KHRI No.	Address	Direction	Street	St. Type	PID	Construction Date	Historic Name (If Applicable)	Historic Function	Building Classification	Modernist Style	Primary Building Material or Construction Method	Architect (if known)	Area(s) of Significance	NRHP Recommendations	Photograph
177-4859	4746	SW	21st	ST	1420303010031000	1954	Trinity Presbyterian Church	Religion - Religious Facility	Church	Neo-Expressionism	brick			no	
177-4860	1216	SW	Lakeside	DR	0973503025003000	1960		Commerce/Trade	Dine-In Restaurant	Neo-expressionism	brick		Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-4861	4142	SW	Huntoon	ST	0983404011001000	1961	Gage Bowl	Recreation and Culture	Bowling Alley	Googie	brick veneer		Entertainment/Culture, Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-4862	4140	SW	Huntoon	ST	0983404011001000	1960		Commerce/Trade - Restaurant	Combo Drive-Up and Indoor Walk-Up Fast Food	Googie	brick, neon signage		Commerce, Community Planning & Development, Architecture	Yes	
177-4863	3825	SW	29th	ST	1451501001001000	1975	First National Bank - First West Facility	Commerce/Trade - Financial Institution	Bank	New Formalism	Glass, concrete, aggregate	ekdahl, Davis, Depew, & Persson	Commerce, Architecture	Yes	
177-4864	3100	SW	Harrison	ST	1341803004003000	1965		Commerce/Trade - Professional	Small Office	New Formalism	brick	HTK Architects		Not Assessed	