SURVEY REPORT
TENNESSEE TOWN
TOPEKA, KANSAS
Intensive Phase II Survey – 2020

Prepared for the City of Topeka (Shawnee County) by Keenoy Preservation, St. Louis, Missouri
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INTRODUCTION

In 2019, the City of Topeka issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to conduct a Phase II Intensive Survey of the Tennessee Town neighborhood (Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas), situated approximately one mile west of downtown Topeka (Figure 1). Tennessee Town’s origins date to 1879 when Exodusters – many from Tennessee – established a community on the City’s western edge that soon thereafter became known as Tennessee Town. The Phase II survey area reflects the southern half of Tennessee Town as described below. The Phase I survey, which addresses the northern half of the neighborhood, was completed in 2019. This document specifically addresses the Phase II survey, completed in 2020.

The Tennessee Town Phase II survey area is bounded on the north by SW Munson Avenue, on the east by SW Clay Street, on the south by SW Huntoon Street and on the west by SW Washburn Avenue (Figure 2). Fieldwork completed in 2019 documented 115 properties within the study area. Two properties in the Phase II survey area are documented as constructed during the nineteenth-century. The neighborhood’s heaviest era of development (in relation to properties at least 50 years of age) occurred during the 1920s. While most properties are residential, the neighborhood also supports three commercial buildings, an electrical substation, a (former) public school building, four churches, a park, one clinic and 17 vacant lots. Appendix A provides a complete list of the inventoried buildings, architectural styles and proposed eligibility determinations.

One property, Shiloh Baptist Church at 1201 SW Buchanan Street, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP, 2018). Four properties within the survey area are recommended as potentially eligible for the NRHP. These include a building currently used as a residence that originally served as social hall and briefly a kindergarten (Jordan/Union Hall) at 1177 SW Lincoln Street; Lane Chapel at 1200 SW Lane Street; an early twentieth-century commercial complex at 1314-1318 SW Huntoon Street and Buchanan School at 1195 SW Buchanan Street. This latter resource, Buchanan School, was identified by the Kansas State Historical Society/Historic Preservation Office (KS-SHPO) as eligible for the NRHP in 2007. The survey area does not support a potential NRHP-eligible district.

The survey project was funded by a Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grant received by the City of Topeka from the KS-SHPO) and the National Park Service (NPS). The project was awarded to and completed by Keenoy Preservation (Ruth Keenoy and Terri Foley) of St. Louis, Missouri. The purpose of the survey was to document properties in the Tennessee Town neighborhood that appear potentially eligible for the NRHP and to determine whether the neighborhood may support a historic district.

This document provides an historical overview and contextual discussion about the neighborhood’s development and growth, as well as an architectural analysis of properties within

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the survey area. Also discussed within this document are NRHP recommendations and suggestions for future preservation activities based on the Phase II survey report findings.

Figure 1. Location Map, Tennessee Town neighborhood. City of Topeka, Kansas (Source: Google maps, 2020).
Figure 2. Tennessee Town neighborhood – Phase I and Phase II survey areas. Blue line divides the survey areas (Source: Shawnee County, KS, GIS).
**METHODOLOGY**

The Phase II Tennessee Town Intensive Survey was initiated in November 2019. On November 13, 2019, a public meeting was held at First Church of the Nazarene in Tennessee Town (1001 SW Buchanan Street). At the public meeting, the findings and recommendations related to the Phase I survey were presented (Jaime Destefano) and the Phase II survey was introduced (Keenoy). On November 14, Ruth Keenoy met with staff of the KS-SHPO to discuss the Phase II survey expectations. Photography of the Phase II survey area was completed on November 14-15 (Keenoy). Preliminary research was conducted at the Kansas State Historical Society (Topeka) and Shawnee County/Topeka Public Library during the week of November 11-15, 2019 (Keenoy).

Fieldwork consisted of digital photography of all properties (including outbuildings and vacant lots) within the survey area. Digital photos were uploaded to the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory (KHRI) online database (Foley). Survey forms (on the KHRI database) were completed for each inventoried property (Foley) as were individual site maps and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Keenoy).

Following the field inventory and research phases of the project, an historical overview was developed to support the assessment of potentially eligible properties within the survey area. Information utilized to complete the survey report was compiled utilizing information gathered during the research process, including (but not limited to) the Tennessee Town Phase I survey report, Topeka city directories, maps, previous survey data, and National Register nominations. The survey report was completed by Ruth Keenoy and Terri Foley.

Additional resources utilized to gather information and produce this document include guidelines/bulletins issued by the NPS thematic studies and general research regarding African-American migration, settlement patterns and neighborhoods. Online sources and digital historical records (including those provided by City of Topeka, Kansas Historical Society, University of Kansas, Library of Congress and United States Census Bureau) were utilized to assist in developing the historical content.

Activities throughout the project were coordinated with the KS-SHPO and City of Topeka to ensure that all available resources/repositories were utilized to support the findings and recommendations of the survey project. The Phase II Intensive Survey was completed per guidelines provided by the City of Topeka, KS-SHPO’s “Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Products Manual,” and National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Survey: A Basis for Preservation Planning.
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF TENNESSEE TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

The Phase II survey area comprises the southern half of the Tennessee Town neighborhood, which grew out of a community established in 1879 by Exodusters – former slaves (many from Tennessee) who moved to Kansas following the post-Civil War era of Reconstruction (1864-1877). The Phase II survey area is Tennessee Town’s oldest sector, situated in the King’s Addition subdivision. King’s Addition was laid out by Zenos King, a local bridge builder who filed the subdivision plat for development in 1869. Two years later in 1871, the City of Topeka annexed King’s Addition to its limits. As noted in Figure 3, the Phase II survey area is nearly identical to the boundaries for King’s Addition. While initial plans for King’s subdivision ended in a “bankrupt real estate deal,” this led to the neighborhood’s affordability for an estimated 500 Exodusters who settled here during the 1870s-1880s. Tennessee Town remains Topeka’s “oldest and most compact” African-American community. Much neighborhood history has been provided in the Phase I Tennessee Town Survey Report (Destefano, 2019). The historical overview in this document focuses on the Phase II survey area specifically.

Figure 3. King’s Addition is defined by the dashed blue line. The Phase II survey area is bounded by a solid purple line (Source: Shawnee County, KS, GIS).

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5 Miller, 127.
After the Civil War, African Americans began to migrate in large numbers to Kansas, which became established as a free state in 1861. News of the former territory’s anti-slavery rebellions led by John Brown in the 1850s had been well publicized, which gave rise to western migration patterns beginning in the 1860s. The flood of African-Americans arriving to Kansas grew much more rapidly following Reconstruction’s end, which left many in fear of a return to slavery. Population spikes support the exodus to Kansas. In 1860, the state supported an estimated 670 African-American residents. This number proliferated to 17,108 by 1870 and more remarkably to 43,107 by 1880.

Benjamin “old Pap” Singleton, an ex-slave from Tennessee, was one of the greatest promoters of Kansas to African-Americans. Singleton is credited with establishing a number of black communities in the state beginning in the 1870s. Initially, he planned to set up colonies in Tennessee but land prices proved too high. In 1877, Singleton and a business associate, Columbus Johnson, traveled to Kansas seeking – and finding – affordable land. This coupled with the state’s history of anti-slavery sentiment, fostered hopes for equality. Singleton subsequently established the Edgewood Real Estate Association and began promoting relocation trips through flyers, posters and speeches. Initially, Singleton settled African Americans in Cherokee and Dunlop Counties (1870s-1880s). In the 1890s, he began to bring groups of African-Americans to Topeka. While Singleton believed in equality for all African Americans, his assistance was not free and came at a price that many freed slaves could not afford.

Unlike Singleton’s carefully planned and executed migrations, the Exodusters were a more spontaneous migratory movement of former slaves seeking both a better life and an escape from the resurgent racism in the former Confederacy. Singleton had mixed feelings about the Exodusters. He undoubtedly felt sympathy for their poverty and empathy for their desire to leave the South, but they posed a threat to his colonies’ success.

Topeka’s first African-American immigrants arrived in the 1860s, settling near the Kansas River in an area known as “The Bottoms.” Some of the Exodusters who arrived in the 1870s settled in North Topeka, creating a community known as Remondsville. Near the intersection of Fifteenth and Adams Street, another Exoduster community, “Mud Town” was settled at about the same time. To support the rapidly rising African-American population, a group of black Kansans established the Colored State Emigration Bureau in 1879, which served to provide relief for the

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8 Matthew Reeves, “Singleton, Benjamin “Pap,” Civil War on the Western Border, Kansas City Public Library (Available at: https://civilwaronthewesternborder.org/encyclopedia/singleton-benjamin- %E2%80%9Cpap%E2%80%9D) Access date: 10 June 2020.
9 Nicole Etcheson, Bleeding Kansas Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 250.
10 Reeves.
11 Reeves.
12 Ibid.
Exodusters. Many black citizens hesitated in supporting the bureau, however because they, like Singleton, viewed the Exodusters as “disease-carrying vagabonds, if not outright inferior.”

The flow of Exodusters did not slow. In 1879, an estimated 7,000 African Americans were residing in Topeka with up to 300 more arriving weekly. While some moved further west, an estimated 3,000 remained permanently. While the promise of Topeka as a “City of Hope” did not materialize for many, Exodusters found the harsh environment and life in poverty far better than enslavement. Topeka’s opportunities were limited because far too many settled in the city than could have been anticipated. While some black citizens found jobs soon after arriving, this did not happen for the majority of Exodusters. The reality is that many African-Americans arrived poor and lived poorer during their early years in Topeka. Tennessee Town’s residents constructed make-shift shacks to provide a means of shelter until they could find jobs and build better homes. One of the earliest signs of permanency emerged with the construction of churches in the neighborhood.

Churches are the backbone of the African-American community. Organized black churches existed in the United States by the mid-1700s, comprised of free and enslaved congregants. After the Civil War, churches began to emerge as centers of activism – a place where African-Americans could meet without fear of retribution. Churches functioned as a “nurturing center for African-American identity.” The black church was a place of worship but more importantly, it was the community’s center for educational, political, social and business activities.

As an institution managed and owned by black people . . . [the church] by its very existence and democratic structure imparted racial pride and dignity, providing all parishioners of all classes the opportunity to participate in its meetings and rituals and to exercise roles denied them in the larger society.

By 1896, Tennessee Town supported four churches in the survey area – an African Methodist Church at 1182 SW Buchanan Street, an African Baptist Church at 1163 SW Buchanan Street, an African Congregational Church at 1163 SW Lincoln Street* and Shiloh Baptist Church at 1201 SW Buchanan Street. Of these congregations, Shiloh Baptist Church appears to be the earliest.

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15 Ibid, 14.
16 Ibid, 15-16.
18 Ibid.
20 Ibid, 17.
23 West, E:55.
The earliest Sanborn maps depicting properties in Tennessee Town date to 1889, at which time the only buildings illustrated were Buchanan School (constructed in 1895) and Shiloh Baptist Church (constructed in 1881; current church constructed in 1928) (Figure 4).26 Shiloh’s congregation was organized in 1879, immediately after the Exodusters settled in King’s Addition Topeka. Initially Shiloh’s congregants met in private homes until sufficient money was secured to purchase the lot at 1201 SW Buchanan Street in 1881. A small frame church was constructed soon afterward. A larger frame church replaced the 1881 building in 1900, providing additional space for the growing congregation. By 1903 “Shiloh owned three lots and two buildings, which were located at the corner of 12th and Buchanan streets, one of the most desirable sites in the city valued at between $12,000 and $15,000.”27 The current church on the parcel was constructed in 1928 and listed to the NRHP in 2018. Of note is that Shiloh – in addition to serving as worship center – also provided space for cooking and sewing classes offered by the church (Figure 5).28

Figure 4. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1889, Sheet 20 illustrates Buchanan School (left) and Shiloh Baptist Church (right). The dwelling behind the church was a parsonage (not extant). Map is not to scale.

27 Loughlin.
28 Ibid.
Another early church that played a role in Tennessee Town is just south of the survey area at 1247 SW Buchanan Street, Central Congregational Church. Established in 1888, the congregation’s first permanent pastor, Charles M. Sheldon, arrived to Topeka in 1879. Sheldon was white. He grew up as the son of a Congregational minister and was educated in the northeast. His move to Topeka came on the heels of meeting his future wife, Mary “May” Merriam. The Merriam Family was planning a move to Topeka when the couple met. May’s father, Everett B. Merriam, was a founding member of Central Congregational Church and secured Sheldon’s position as minister of the new church.  

Charles Sheldon considered himself a social reformer and in that role, was immediately drawn to his neighbors – the residents of Tennessee Town. Sheldon believed that black and white citizens could live together in harmony but like most white Americans, he also believed that to achieve such harmony, African Americans should mimic whites’ social customs. In 1890, Sheldon conducted a three-week “intensive” study of the neighborhood with the assistance of congregants and Washburn College students. Sheldon was “so appalled at what he had seen there that he was ready to undertake a major series of projects to help lead the settlement up from destitution.” While Sheldon and his neighbors may have differed on some issues, there was one aspect that both sides embraced equally – the value of education. Sheldon’s greatest accomplishment for Tennessee Town was spearheading the establishment of a kindergarten

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29 Miller, 125; Bearman and Mills, 109-110.
30 Bearman and Mills, 110.
31 Ibid, 110.
32 Miller, 125.
33 Ibid.
program, believed to be the first for black Topekans (Figure 6). Of note is that Sheldon may not have been the first to establish a school in the neighborhood. The city’s 1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map demonstrates that a frame Catholic school for “Negro” children existed in the survey area at the northeast corner of SW Huntoon and SW Buchanan Streets (not extant) (Figure 13).

Initially, Sheldon’s kindergarten students met in a frame building that still stands (currently used as a residence) at 1177 SW Lincoln Street (Figures 7 and 8). The structure was originally a social hall* built c. 1890 by Andrew (“Andy”) Jordan who resided at 1187 Lane Street. In 1893, Sheldon rented the building from Jordan, renamed it as Union Hall (temporarily). In 1895, a mission church was constructed at 1163 SW Lincoln Street (not extant). The 1895 mission church supported the kindergarten and also supported a library. On Saturdays, the mission church held manual training classes – sewing for girls and basket weaving for boys (Figure 9). While very few attended services at Sheldon’s mission church (which reported 18 members in 1896), the building’s educational role was highly valued by Tennessee Town’s residents.

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34 Patricia A. Michaels, “In their steps,” hers kansas (September 2003), 12.
35 Leroy A. Halpert, Across the Way (Topeka: Topeka Public Library, 1900), 5; Radge’s Directory of Topeka and Shawnee County (Topeka; Crane and Company), 1903. *The original use of Jordan Hall is described by some sources as a dance hall; others refer to the building as a social club.
36 Halpert, 6-15; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Topeka, 1913, Sheet 63.
37 Halpert, 29.
Figure 7. The property at 1177 SW Lincoln Street was rented for use as a kindergarten in 1893-1895, during which time the building was known as Union Hall (Source: Tennessee Town Neighborhood Improvement Association, https://tenntownnia.weebly.com/history.html, Access date: 10 June 2020).

Figure 8. Formerly Jordan/Union Hall, this building at 1177 SW Lincoln Street was the first home of Tennessee Town’s kindergarten and library (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).
The historical role of the African-American church as a center of education continues today, as demonstrated by Faith Temple Church of God at 1162 SW Lincoln Street. Founded by Levi Stitt in the 1920s, the stone building on the lot currently was constructed in 1951 and dedicated in 1952, replacing an earlier church. In 1976, Bishop Ronald K. Lassiter became pastor of Faith Temple; currently the congregation is pastored by Lassiter’s son, Ronnie. Following a fire in 1987, the stone church was remodeled for administrative purposes and a new sanctuary and school were constructed on the parcel. The property’s school wing supports the International Academy of Tennessee Town, a private primary school administrated by retired educator Sandra K. Lassiter (wife of Ronald Lassiter).

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41 Sandra Lassiter, Interview with Ruth Keenoy, 14 November 2019.
Topeka’s earliest record of educating African-American children dates to 1865 when the City rented a small frame building on the south side of Sixth Street between Kansas and Quincy Avenues for this purpose. In 1867, the City’s Board of Education was established, providing access to public education for all children – black and white. While Topeka’s high schools were not segregated, primary schools were and remained so until the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision ended the practice in 1954. Tennessee Town’s first public school building was Buchanan School, established in 1881. Initially, Buchanan School utilized “two rooms” of an unidentified building on Buchanan Street (possibly Shiloh Baptist Church) until a school building was erected. While the City purchased the lot at 1195 SW Buchanan Street for the school in 1882, a building was not constructed until 1885 (not extant) (Figure 9). Sometime prior to 1913, the four-classroom school was enlarged through the addition of a rear frame wing. This was followed by another expansion in 1920 that doubled the building’s classroom capacity. The building currently on the parcel was constructed in 1927, funded by an $850,000 bond passed to fund the construction of 22 new schools in Topeka, including four for African-American children.

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44 Fitzgerald, 48-49; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Topeka, 1913, Sheet 63.
45 Rosenblum (pages not numbered).
Most properties within the survey area are residential, constructed during the early twentieth century. As described in the Phase I survey report, Tennessee Town’s lots were narrow, 20-25
feet wide and 150-feet deep.\textsuperscript{46} While lot sizes account for some restrictions in housing size, Tennessee Town’s first inhabitants undoubtedly had their own ideas about housing styles and building patterns. Some dwellings in the neighborhood, such as the many frame Bungalows constructed in the 1920s-1930s, reflect popular architectural styles.\textsuperscript{47} Also represented in the neighborhood are shotgun plan dwellings – so named for their single-room width and narrow footprint.\textsuperscript{48} Described in the Phase I survey report as “often associated with temporary housing for mill workers and/or low-income residents,” shotgun dwellings are rooted in African building traditions.\textsuperscript{49} An extensive study of shotgun housing in New Orleans published in the 1980s explains the direct relationship between the city’s large numbers of early shotgun dwellings and the arrival of free Haitians during the late 1700s. Similar style housing has additionally been documented in western sectors of Africa.\textsuperscript{50} Based on such studies, it cannot be assumed that African building practices did not impact Tennessee Town’s early housing. The Exodusters undoubtedly brought customs and patterns based on their African roots. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1896 illustrate that most of the neighborhood’s dwellings south of SW 12\textsuperscript{th} Street were shotgun plan houses (\textit{Figure 13}).\textsuperscript{51}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{1896_map.png}
\caption{1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Topeka, Sheet 25. The narrow houses dominating the map appear to be shotgun plan dwellings.}
\end{figure}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{46} Destefano, 5.
\item \textsuperscript{49} Destefano, 19.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Topeka, 1896, Sheet 25.
\end{itemize}
Nine examples of shotgun dwellings remain in the Phase II survey – all but one date to the early twentieth-century and all have been altered with replacement siding. Four examples are two stories in height (Figure 14) and one (1169 SW Lane Street) reflects a humpback shotgun, which was a property type documented in the 1986 study (previously cited) of shotgun housing in New Orleans (Table 1).\textsuperscript{52} Shotgun dwellings on Washburn Avenue have a rear cross-gabled short wing, similar to examples illustrated on Buchanan Street in Figure 13.\textsuperscript{53}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Construction Date</th>
<th>No. of Stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1214 SW Buchanan Street</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1220 SW Buchanan Street</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1164 SW Lane Street</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1169 SW Lane Street</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>One/rear 2-story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1190 SW Lane Street</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1163 SW Lincoln Street</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1207 SW Lincoln Street</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1215 SW Lincoln Street</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1219 SW Lincoln Street</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1182 SW Washburn Avenue</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1186 SW Washburn Avenue</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example.png}
\caption{Example of a two-story shotgun plan dwelling at 1214 SW Buchanan Street (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{52} Upton and Vlach, 61-62.
\textsuperscript{53} Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Topeka, 1896, Sheet 25.
As noted in the example of shotgun plan housing, dwellings constructed by and for African-Americans frequently incorporated ethnic influences. Black leaders such as Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Dubois were influential in shaping black neighborhoods. Educated black leaders voiced a shared concept that an “orderly, enlightened, domestic environment” provided African-Americans better opportunities in terms of social acceptance, particularly in relation to white society. Early twentieth-century housing in Tennessee Town reflects similar housing types and styles seen in most working-class neighborhoods – black and white. Such impacts were perpetuated through “educational institutions, social service organizations, and media within the African-American community.”

While some sources were nationally distributed, such as W.E.B. Dubois’ publication *The Crisis,* others were local to Topekans, such as *The Topeka Plaindealer,* an African-American newspaper established by Nick Chiles in 1899.

Charles Sheldon perpetuated similar ideas in terms of what constituted a proper home for African-Americans. Sheldon’s attempts to shape the neighborhood went well beyond education. One example is the Tennessee Village Improvement Society established in 1898, which awarded “prizes . . . to the colored people of Tennesseetown in order to encourage them to cultivate the habits of industry and of beautifying their premises.”

The society was touted to have been approved by some of Tennessee Town’s ministers, as well as Andy Jordan, whose established relationship with Sheldon (having rented his hall to Sheldon for the kindergarten) may have had some influence. Sheldon’s ideas about improvements were not embraced by all, however, as noted by one response during the initial meeting held to organize the society.

One woman spoke saying that she was as clean and neat as anybody and she did not need to be told to improve her place. Besides she said she understood that there was a movement to prevent people from keeping hogs in Tennesseetown and she did not think any friend of the place should try to carry out such a plan, for hogs furnished a large part of the winter’s supply of food for the people.

It is not clear how long the improvement society remained in operation but it did hold contests for at least two years. Cash rewards were granted for a variety of activities, including “best and most productive” gardens; building, yard and fence improvements; and “best lots” replete with flowers and trees. In 1898, only 27 Tennessee Town residents participated. Cash seems to have been an incentive as the following year this number more than doubled to 79 entries.

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54 Mooney, 49.
55 Ibid, 53.
58 Ibid, 33.
59 Ibid, 34.
60 Ibid.
61 Halpert, 34.
The 1920s were a productive decade overall in relation to black home ownership and prosperity. In 1910 most Tennessee Town residents owned their own homes.\(^{62}\) This trend continued through the 1920s, ending with the onset of the Great Depression. Unlike white communities, which recovered rapidly after World War II, most black neighborhoods did not experience an equal socioeconomic surge.\(^{63}\) The postwar years mark the rapid departure of white middle-class families from inner cities known as “white flight,” which gave rise to the suburbs and federal policies that devalued housing owned by African-Americans.\(^{64}\) These were issues that would eventually impact Tennessee Town as it became increasingly difficult for African Americans to find and sustain equal opportunities in all aspects of life – jobs, education and housing.

The Phase II survey area, in addition to its large number of residential properties and historic church buildings, retains three commercial buildings – two are simple frame structures at 1314-1318 SW Huntoon Street constructed c. 1910-1935 (Figure 15). The other is a Tudor Revival style commercial building at 1232 SW Lane Street (Figure 16) constructed in 1927. Tennessee Town’s frame commercial buildings on SW Huntoon Street (1314-1318) are reminiscent of the neighborhood’s earliest commercial buildings. While the Phase II survey area never supported a large number of commercial properties, businesses were always a component of the neighborhood. The earliest were small, simple frame buildings void of architectural embellishments. Some businesses may have been conducted in residential properties. For example, in 1896 the survey area supported a dress maker (1174 SW Buchanan Street), a barber (1224 SW Buchanan Street) two general stores (1169 SW Buchanan and 1204 SW Lincoln Streets) and a grocery (1233 SW Buchanan Street). All of the buildings were frame and none are extant. Some of the smaller businesses such as the barber shop at 1224 SW Buchanan Street may have been residences.\(^{65}\) The building complex addressed as 1314-16 SW Huntoon Street is a good example of the types of commercial properties found in Tennessee Town prior to World War II. The property addressed as 1314-1318 SW Huntoon Street was originally three detached buildings (Figure 37). The complex includes a frame dwelling constructed c. 1910 (1316) that was altered for commercial purposes in the 1930s; a small frame flat-roof building later attached to the former dwelling (1314); and a small frame gable-front plan building (1318).\(^{66}\)

\(^{62}\) United States Census, Topeka (Shawnee County), Kansas, Ward 3, District 0169 (1910, 1920).

\(^{63}\) Ibid.


\(^{66}\) Ibid, 1913 and 1950, Sheet 64.
Figure 15. From right to left are two commercial buildings addressed as 1314-16 and 1318 SW Huntoon Street (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).

Figure 16. 1232 SW Lane Street was constructed in 1927 as part of Elmhurst Plaza (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2020).
In contrast to the small frame commercial buildings described above, the 1927 commercial property at the northeast intersection of SW Huntoon and SW Lane Streets is a Tudor Revival style building associated with a former shopping center, Elmhurst Plaza.\textsuperscript{67} Constructed near the intersection of SW Washburn Avenue and SW Huntoon Street, Elmhurst Plaza is a demonstration of how the automobile reshaped neighborhoods by expanding access to where people chose to live, work and shop. This became even more pronounced after World War II when postwar prosperity and the return of veterans fueled the construction of much needed new housing, creating suburban neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{68} Within the Phase II survey area, Elmhurst Plaza was supported by the extant property at 1232 SW Lane Street. Additional plaza properties within the survey area (no longer extant) included a dry cleaner at 1233 SW Lane Street and a grocery and drug store in the 1400 block of SW Huntoon Street (Figure 17).\textsuperscript{69}

![Figure 17. Another remnant of Elmhurst Plaza is located just south of the survey area at 1307 SW Huntoon Street (Photo: Keenoy, 15 November 2020).](image)

As discussed in the Phase I survey report, Tennessee Town experienced a “heyday between the 1940s and 1960s.”\textsuperscript{70} The Phase I survey report further indicates that the neighborhood began to decline as older property owners died and privately-owned homes gave way to tenancy.\textsuperscript{71} With declines in population and single-family home ownership, Tennessee Town attracted less investment and the neighborhood lost its commercial viability. This began to change when in the

\textsuperscript{69} Polk’s Topeka City Directory, 1929-30 (Kansas City, MO: R.L. Polk & Co.), 1930.
\textsuperscript{70} Destefano, 8.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
1970s, residents established one of Topeka’s first Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIAs) and applied for federal assistance through the Community Development Block Grant Program established in 1974.\textsuperscript{72}

Tennessee Town has seen a substantial shift in demographics since the 1990s. Census records of 1990 indicate that African Americans accounted for approximately 68% of the neighborhood residents. By 2010, white residents accounted for nearly 66% of the neighborhood’s population, including a higher number of middle-class homeowners. Many of the houses continue to be rental properties; however, this is quickly changing as the neighborhood has become more desirable to homeowners and families in recent years.\textsuperscript{73}

Through the work of Tennessee Town’s NIA and coordinated efforts with the City of Topeka, the neighborhood supports a number of redeveloped blocks that support contemporary housing. This includes the Tennessee Town Plaza Apartments constructed in the 1980s on SW Buchanan, Munson and SW 12\textsuperscript{th} Streets (\textit{Figure 18}) and replacement single-family housing and apartments constructed in the 1990s-2000s on SW Buchanan, SW Lincoln and SW Munson Streets (\textit{Figure 19}). While such investment has removed historic housing in the neighborhood, it has also reversed the neighborhood’s decline, shifting Tennessee Town into an area “considered a high priority for reinvestment.”\textsuperscript{74}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Figure 18. Tennessee Town Plaza Apartments, SW Buchanan Street (Photo: Keenoy, 15 November 2020).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{72} Tennessee Town Neighborhood Improvement Association, 8.
\textsuperscript{73} Destefano, 9.
\textsuperscript{74} Tennessee Town Neighborhood Improvement Association, 8.
Figure 19. Tennessee Town Plaza II, SW Buchanan Street (Photo: Keenoy, 15 November 2019).
ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Tennessee Town’s Phase II survey area is largely representative of popular housing styles of the 1910s – 1950s. The residential neighborhood’s era of construction extends from 1890 – 2016. The majority of properties within the Phase II survey area are single-family dwellings with exception of the following:

- Five (5) religious buildings at 1196 SW Buchanan Street (c. 1975), 1201 SW Buchanan Street* (1928; NRL 2018), 1200 SW Lane Street (c. 1925), 1162 SW Lincoln Street (1951) and 1196 SW Washburn Ave. (c. 1980).
- Three (3) commercial buildings at 1314-16 and 1318 SW Huntoon Street** (c. 1935) and 1232 SW Lane Street (1927).
- One (original use) public school building at 1195 SW Buchanan Street (1927).
- One (original use) social hall at 1177 SW Lincoln Street (c. 1890).
- One recreational/cultural property at 1211 SW Lane Street (2004).
- One medical building, a clinic at 1400 SW Huntoon Street (1976).
- One lot at 1188 SW Lane Street that holds an early twentieth-century residential garage (and previously held a single dwelling).
- Seventeen (17) vacant lots at 1225 and 1229 SW Buchanan Street, 1181, 1187, 1195 and 1237 SW Clay Street, 1116 Huntoon Street, 1163-67, 1170, 1196 and 1226 SW Lane Street, 1167 1185 and 1191 Lincoln Street and 1180 SW Washburn Avenue.

*Shiloh Baptist Church at 1201 SW Buchanan Street was not re-inventoried during the Phase II survey. **Two buildings identified as 1314-18 SW Huntoon Street were inventoried as a single resource.

Architectural styles within the Tennessee Town Phase II survey area include Colonial Revival (5 properties), Craftsman Bungalow (21 properties), Folk Victorian (1 property), Minimal Traditional (1 property), Modern Movement (3 properties), National Folk (20 properties), Mission (2 properties), Modern Movement (2 properties) Ozark Giraffe (1 property), Ranch (2 properties), and Tudor Revival (2 properties). Other architectural types found within the neighborhood include one (1) vernacular property, 28 properties classified as having “no applied style” and four (4) properties categorized as “other” (Table 2, Appendix A).

Twenty-eight (28) properties in the Tennessee Town neighborhood have not been assigned an architectural style or property type. Typical of many neighborhoods in the United States, housing was often constructed without reference to any specific style or builders incorporated minor details that fail to exemplify a true architectural style or movement. A few of the properties identified as having no style are non-residential. These properties are outlined in the table provided in Appendix A.
National Register eligibility recommendations based on the architectural characteristics documented in the Tennessee Town Phase II neighborhood survey are reviewed in the following section of this report entitled, “Survey Results and Recommendations.”

Table 2. Architectural styles/forms and number of examples in the Tennessee Town Phase II neighborhood survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architectural Style</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>SW Buchanan</th>
<th>SW Clay</th>
<th>SW Huntoon</th>
<th>SW Lane</th>
<th>SW Lincoln</th>
<th>SW Munson</th>
<th>SW Washburn</th>
<th>SW 12th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Revival</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsman/Bungalow</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk Victorian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Traditional</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Movement</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Folk</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Style</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ozark Giraffe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranch</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Park</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tudor Revival</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernacular</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Lots</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lot with garage/No Style</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Buildings/Lots</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NATIONAL FOLK (20 PROPERTIES)

Transportation of mass-produced building materials was challenging prior to establishment of the railroad. Most goods were shipped via water, which was less consistent and slower than train. Pre-railroad housing was generally unpretentious, constructed of locally available materials with little or no stylistic embellishment. The railroad era ushered in a completely new era of housing construction in America, impacting both construction techniques and the materials used for building. Trains shipped goods inexpensively to nearly every community, which accommodated builders of all economic classes. After arrival of the railroad, lightweight balloon or braced framing became readily available as did supplies such as machine-produced nails and milled wood siding. Such materials were easily purchased through mail order catalogs and could often be purchased locally as well. Out of this movement came National style housing, which features the following standard house forms: gable-front; gable-front-and-wing; hall-and-parlor; I-house; massed plan; side-gable; and pyramidal. Constructed of frame and often void of embellishment, National Folk housing was prevalent in the United States during the mid-nineteenth through the early twentieth century.75

75 McAlester and McAlester, 88-90.
National Folk housing typically includes the following features:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan Shape</td>
<td>Rectangular; irregular; square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>1, 2 or 2.5 stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Façade</td>
<td>Symmetrical; sometimes asymmetrical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof Type</td>
<td>Side or front gable; cross gable; pyramidal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td>Double-hung wood sash; small panes; symmetrical placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior</td>
<td>Wood siding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porches</td>
<td>Full-width porches; partial-width porches; one or full height; stoop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doors</td>
<td>Wood panel with glass; transoms; usually not distinctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Very little ornamentation if any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimney</td>
<td>Brick; varies in height</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 20. The National Folk movement is represented by 1169 SW Clay Street. The dwelling was constructed in 1924 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November, 2019).
FOLK VICTORIAN (I DWELLING)

The Folk Victorian style evolved from the National Folk movement and remained popular during the 1870s-1910s. Folk Victorian utilized simple house forms founded on the earlier residential buildings in the United States. The arrival of the railroad had much to do with the popularity of Folk Victorian style as it did with National Folk. Easy access to lumber and machine-manufactured ornamental detailing was appealing to most homeowners. These mass-produced embellishments were readily affixed to older dwellings (allowing homeowners to modernize older properties), as well as newly constructed homes. The affordability and ease of constructing Folk Victorian style dwellings gave rise to the style’s popularity, which remained during the railroad era. The style is represented nationally in rural and urban communities.76

Folk Victorian style housing typically includes the following features:

- **Plan Shape:** Rectangular; irregular
- **Height:** 1, 2 or 2.5 stories
- **Façade:** Symmetrical; sometimes asymmetrical
- **Roof Type:** Side or front gable; hipped
- **Windows:** Double-hung wood sash; small panes; symmetrical placement; sometimes a pediment over the window
- **Exterior:** Wood siding; sometimes brick
- **Porches:** Full-width porches; wraparound porches; one-story in height; spindle work detailing
- **Doors:** Wood panel with glass; transoms; usually not distinctive
- **Details:** Brackets under the eaves; spindle work
- **Chimney:** Brick; average height

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76 Ibid, 309-310.
Figure 21. 1179 SW Clay Street is a Folk Victorian style dwelling in the Tennessee Town neighborhood. The house was constructed c. 1920 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November, 2019).

**COLONIAL REVIVAL (5 PROPERTIES)**

During the first half of the twentieth century, American residential architecture was dominated by the Colonial Revival style. This style began to develop as an architectural favorite following the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, which celebrated the founding of the United States. After the exhibition, a group of architects (William Bigelow, Charles Fallen McKim, William Mead and Stanford While) accumulated measured drawings and sketches of Colonial-era dwellings while touring New England. Their endeavor initiated a “new” architectural design – Colonial Revival – “inspired by colonial precedents.” The acceptance and widespread use of the style is additionally associated with architect Robert Peabody, a partner at Boston, Peabody and Sterns. Peabody noted that the Queen Anne style shared many characteristics with Colonial Revivalism such as classical detailing, clustered chimneys and molded brickwork. Peabody and others marketed the Colonial Revival style as reflective of the American past. This awareness helped to extend the style’s popularity well into the twentieth century. Widespread incorporation of the style was spurred by balloon frame construction, as well as brick and stone veneers, which made housing more affordable. Colonial Revival remained fashionable for many decades (1880-1955), particularly in residential design. It was additionally promoted by the African-American press and manual training programs at black universities and schools.

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78 McAlester and McAlester, 326.
79 Ibid, 36-38.
80 Ibid, 185-186.
81 Mooney, 52-53.
Colonial Revival style housing typically includes the following features:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan Shape</td>
<td>Rectangular; sometimes irregular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>1, 2 or 3 stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Façade</td>
<td>Symmetrical; sometimes asymmetrical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof Type</td>
<td>Side gable; hipped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td>Double-hung wood sash; adjacent pairs; commonly offset by shutters; Palladian window; symmetrical placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior</td>
<td>Brick or wood siding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porches</td>
<td>Centered porch or stoop, full-width or may have wraparound; commonly with classical columns; simple railings and balusters, when present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doors</td>
<td>Wood panel with glass; sidelight and transoms; door surrounds with pediments, narrow columns or pilasters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Cornice decorated with dentils or modillions; dormers; porte-cochere; boxed wall junctions with restrained overhanging eaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimney</td>
<td>Tall and wide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 22. 1175 SW Clay Street is an example of a Colonial Revival style dwelling in the Tennessee Town neighborhood. The dwelling was constructed in 1915 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November, 2019).

MISSION (2 BUILDINGS – SCHOOL AND CHURCH)

The Mission style developed in California where the style’s “landmark examples” (i.e. Spanish missions) are located. The style was introduced in the late nineteenth century and by 1900, was becoming popular in residential design, perpetuated by architectural journals and builders’

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magazines. The Mission style was additionally showcased in catalog housing by the 1910s. Though most examples are situated in the southwestern United States, the style is found in most communities, particularly in early twentieth-century planned subdivisions and public buildings.83 One example in the survey area was constructed in 1927 as a public elementary school (Buchanan School) (Figures 12, 23, 37). Mission style detailing is illustrated through the building’s exterior brick walls and shaped parapet design, but overall is a restrained example of the style. Lane Chapel at 1200 SW Lane Street is another example of the Mission style in Tennessee Town which features a Mission style bell tower (Figure 30).

**Mission style commonly includes the following features:**

- **Plan Shape:** Square or rectangular; sometimes irregular
- **Height:** 1 to 2.5 stories; some examples feature Mission style bell towers
- **Façade:** Symmetrical or asymmetrical
- **Roof Type:** End gable and pyramidal are most common and often have a narrow visor; clay tile
- **Windows:** Double-hung; multi-sash common; windows are frequently grouped; quatrefoil designs are common
- **Exterior:** Stucco, brick or stone
- **Porches:** Single-story centered, off-center or covering the entire lower façade with arched openings
- **Doors:** Arched
- **Details:** Mission shaped parapets and/or dormers; some examples have Mission style bell towers
- **Chimneys:** Short or tall; slender; often obscured by parapet

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83 Ibid, 512.
The Tudor Revival style was created to adapt elements of Medieval and Tudor English prototypes constructed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The early style ranged from thatched roof folk cottages to grand manor houses. Tudor Revival became popular in the United States during the time that the Colonial Revival style reached its height of popularity in housing.\footnote{McAlester and McAlester, 354-358.} Earliest examples of Tudor Revival style housing in the United States date to the late nineteenth century. Most are substantial in size, closely imitating their precedents. This was modified by the middle-class during the early 1900s when construction materials became more affordable (such as balloon framing and masonry veneer). After World War I, the style was boosted by returning serviceman who associated Tudor Revival with their time abroad. Like the Craftsman Bungalow (described below), Tudor Revival was marketed in popular magazines, housing plan catalogs and travel publications. It was additionally endorsed by the Better Homes Movement of the 1920s for its affordability and modest size.\footnote{Arrol Gellner, \textit{Storybook Style: America’s Whimsical Homes of the Twenties} (New York: Viking Studio, 2001), 8.}

*Tudor Revival style housing typically includes the following features:*

- **Plan Shape:** Irregular
- **Height:** 1 to 2.5 stories
- **Facade:** Asymmetrical
- **Roof Type:** Commonly side gable (steeply pitched); less common front gable
- **Windows:** Tall narrow windows commonly in multiple groups; multi-pane glazing; casement windows
- **Exterior:** Brick, stucco or wood siding; often half-timbering; stone accents
- **Porches:** Stoop; arches found in entry porches; side porches occasionally
- **Doors:** Heavy board-and-batten with square or arched small windows in upper section; commonly arched
- **Details:** Façade dominated by one or more prominent steeply pitched cross gables; cut stone
- **Chimneys:** Usually large exterior chimneys; front or side of house; tall; multiple shaft or stepped chimneys; decorative chimney pots
Figure 24. 1205 SW Lincoln Street is an example of a Tudor Revival style dwelling. The above example was constructed in 1929 within the 1200 block of SW Lane Street and moved to its current location in 1977 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November, 2019).

CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW (21 DWELLINGS)

During the 1900s-1930, the Craftsman style was the most prevalent design for small residential dwellings constructed in the United States. It is also the most documented style in the Phase II survey with 21 properties representing the style. The Bungalow emerged in the 1890s, tailored primarily for resort cottages and rustic dwellings. Motivated by the Arts and Crafts Movement, the style was promoted for single family housing by two California architects in particular, brothers Charles S. and Henry M. Greene. The Greenes established their business in 1893 in Pasadena. By the early 1900s they had designed several Craftsman Bungalows that were modestly planned but “intricately detailed.” The Greenes’ innovative designs were frequently documented in popular magazines and builders’ catalogs including The Architect, Good Housekeeping, Western Architect, House Beautiful and Ladies’ Home Journal. 86 More than any other architectural influence of its era, the Craftsman Bungalow reflected American middle-class values. It was appreciated by architects, builders and home owners for its attractively rustic elements, open floor plan and affordability. 87 Additionally, it fit the “comfortable tasty framed cottage” ideal perpetuated by Booker T. Washington. 88 The Tennessee Town neighborhood in the Phase II survey holds one dwelling constructed in 2002 that mimics the historic Craftsman Bungalow style – 1235 SW Buchanan Street – demonstrating a recent resurgence in popularity.

86 McAlester and McAlester, 454.
88 Mooney, 54.
**Craftsman Bungalow style housing typically includes the following features:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan Shape</td>
<td>Rectangular or irregular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height</td>
<td>Usually 1-1.5 stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Façade</td>
<td>Typically asymmetrical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof Type</td>
<td>Gable, occasionally hipped; low-pitched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td>Double-hung wood sash; typically 3/1 or 4/1 vertical upper sash panes; small square windows; sometimes stained-glass and boxed bay windows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior</td>
<td>Wood siding brick; occasionally stucco or stone accents in piers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porches</td>
<td>Full-width porches, partial-width porches; roof supported by square or tapered columns/post on brick or stone piers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doors</td>
<td>Craftsman style; wood panel with lights in upper section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Wide unenclosed eave overhang; exposed roof rafters; decorative beams or braces under gables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimney</td>
<td>Commonly exterior; brick or stone, occasionally wood sided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 25](image.png)

**Figure 25.** More than any other style documented, the Tennessee Town Phase II survey is dominated by the Craftsman Bungalow style. 1216 SW Lincoln Street is an example constructed c. 1920 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2020).
MINIMAL TRADITIONAL (1 DWELLING)

The Minimal Traditional style is the earliest of several styles of Modern housing that found widespread acceptance among middle-class home owners prior to and after World War II. The style supplanted earlier dominant styles such as Tudor Revival and the Craftsman Bungalow, subsequently changing the field of housing construction during the early-to-mid twentieth century. The Minimal Traditional style began as an impressively simplified form that increased in popularity during the Great Depression and World War II, when building materials were in scarce supply. The style’s stripped-down appearance and lack of ornamentation is echoed in its nomenclature. Absence of embellished materials and the incorporation of smaller porches allowed rapid construction and affordability – more so than the styles that had previously dominated American residential design. Minimal Traditional housing remained popular through the 1950s when the Ranch style emerged as a dominant housing style. Minimal Traditional frequently incorporates elements of the Tudor Revival and/or Ranch styles, demonstrating its role as an early example of modernistic design. It was “a well-studied and thoughtful response to the most challenging conditions ever to affect home construction in the United States” and widely incorporated for this reason.89

80 McAlester, 588.
Minimal Traditional style housing typically includes the following features:

- **Plan Shape:** Rectangular, irregular
- **Height:** 1 to 1.5 stories
- **Façade:** Symmetrical; asymmetrical
- **Roof Type:** Side gable
- **Windows:** Double-hung wood sash; picture windows; shutters and awnings are common
- **Exterior:** Brick or wood siding; less frequently stone or asbestos shingles
- **Porches:** Usually stoop or partial-width with roof supported by decorative iron or slender wood posts
- **Doors:** Wood panel, commonly with lights in upper section
- **Details:** Minimal overhanging eaves, typically void of decorative details
- **Chimney:** Brick; exterior

Figure 27. 1187 SW Lincoln Street is an example of a Minimal Traditional style dwelling in the Tennessee Town neighborhood. This dwelling was constructed in 1948 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November, 2019).
RANCH* (6 DWELLINGS)

*Ranch is sometimes referred to as form of housing rather than a style. National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form (1990; revised 1997), identifies Ranch as a style associated with the Modern Movement. For the purposes of this report, Ranch is identified as a style, not a property type.

By the early 1950s, the Ranch style had surpassed previous styles in terms of its popularity. It was the most popular housing style of the post-World War II era during which time nine out of ten houses constructed were Ranch style dwellings. The style originated in the 1930s as an imitator of low, rambling Spanish Colonial Ranch housing developed in California, incorporating modifications adapted from Craftsman and Prairie Styles. California architect Cliff May is credited with creating the Ranch style, which he classified as the “dream house.” May’s Ranch style home was introduced in 1931 as a single-story dwelling exhibiting Spanish Colonial Revival influences and an integrated façade garage. He designed over 50 Ranch houses during the early- to mid-1930s, continuing to enrich and expand the style through the 1940s. While May’s design supported a single-car garage, later versions incorporated two-car garages and carports attached to one end of the façade. The garage and carport evolution symbolize the necessity of the automobile, particularly for those residing in outlying subdivisions where Ranch style housing was ubiquitous.

*Ranch style housing typically includes the following features:

- **Plan Shape:** Rectangular; L-shaped; irregular
- **Height:** 1 story
- **Façade:** Symmetrical; asymmetrical
- **Roof Type:** Hipped; side gable, cross hipped, front gable to side gable; low-pitched
- **Windows:** Double-hung (wood or metal), casement, large picture windows, sliding, occasionally bay windows; shutters and awnings are common
- **Exterior:** Brick, stone, wood siding (may be wide, horizontal or vertical) and aluminum/steel siding
- **Porch:** Full-width porches, partial-width porches and stoop; narrow wooden posts or iron posts
- **Doors:** Wood panel with glass, solid paneled door and outer storm/screen door; single or double doors
- **Details:** Wide projecting eaves; attached brick/stone landscape beds; privacy screen walls
- **Chimney:** Brick, stone or wood sided, large and typically off-center, may be perpendicular with façade
- **Garage:** One-or-two- car garage or carport, commonly attached at one end of the façade and integrated into the form of the house

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93 Ibid.
1233 SW Buchanan Street is an example of a Ranch style dwelling constructed in 1948 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).

MODERN MOVEMENT (1 DWELLING, 1 MEDICAL BUILDING AND 1 CHURCH)

Modern Movement influences (residential, commercial, government and religious) have been defined by many terms including: mid-century modern, contemporary and post-and-beam. Modern Movement buildings are those that break with pre-World War II styles and portray more recent design features. Modern styles are simplified in form, absent of applied ornamentation and emphasize functional design. One objective of the Modern Movement was to focus on bringing the outdoors into living and public spaces by integrating windows as walls. At the same time, the stylistic movement is also noted for its broad expanse of uninterrupted wall surfaces. Elements of the Modern Movement are derived from the residential designs of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Bauhaus, a German design school founded by Walter Gropius in 1919. Wright’s Usonian houses of the 1930s through the early 1950s are examples of his impact on the Modern Movement, while the Bauhaus – using the Arts and Crafts movement – attempted to streamline art, architecture and sculpture as “the new structure of the future.” Like the Ranch style, the Modern Movement reached its height of popularity during the 1950s, but the style did not

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95 McAlester, 629-630.
experience widespread acceptance. By the late 1960s, most architects and home owners considered the style unfashionable. Despite its brief lifespan, the movement did lead in design awards and was frequently featured in architectural magazines.\textsuperscript{97}

*Modern Movement buildings commonly include the following features:*

- **Plan Shape:** Irregular
- **Height:** 1 to 2 stories
- **Façade:** Asymmetrical
- **Roof Type:** Side gable; varied pitches
- **Windows:** Fixed, casement, ribbon windows; less common double-hung; wood or vinyl; single pane, less common multi-pane
- **Exterior:** Brick, stone, wood siding; variety of materials maybe be used
- **Porches:** Stoop or no porch
- **Doors:** Wood or metal doors; may have light or be solid
- **Details:** Mixed use of exterior building materials; slanted or curved roof line
- **Chimneys:** Brick, stone or wood sided
- **Garage:** In residential examples one-or-two-car garage commonly attached at one end of the façade and integrated into the form of the house

*Figure 29. 1161 SW Clay Street is a single-family Modern dwelling constructed in 1957. (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).*

\textsuperscript{97} McAlester, 632.
Certain vernacular buildings are commonly referred to as “giraffe stone” or “Ozark rock” buildings. This property type is characterized by its exterior – clad with slabs of stone arranged unsystematically with concrete mortar that is often darker than the stone. Varied in size, the stone slabs were usually laid on a concrete foundation and applied as a veneer over wood or concrete. The overall appearance when finished was giraffe-like in pattern and color, hence lending the style its nickname – Giraffe stone. Because most examples are found in the Ozark region of Missouri, the name is frequently extended to include both nicknames – Ozark and Giraffe. The style is an expression of local traditions and materials used in the building techniques of the region. Giraffe stone or Ozark rock cladding was used in various building types and styles – housing, commercial buildings, schools and churches. The survey area features one Ozark Giraffe building type, a church at 1162 SW Lincoln Street, constructed in 1951.

Figure 30. 1162 SW Lincoln Street is an Ozark Giraffe stone church constructed in 1951 (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).

VERNACULAR (I)

Vernacular architecture can be challenging to describe and is habitually categorized by what it is not. Vernacular architecture is not a high-style building designed by professional architects. More accurately, it is a type of skilled building construction handed down from one generation of builders or craftsmen to the next. This is achieved through an applied hands-on methodology evident through materials, form, and/or ornamentation. Vernacular is a term used to define a building type; not a building style. Vernacular architecture echoes the everyday life and experience of people within a culture or region. It is common place and simple in appearance to the point that examples are often overlooked. It is, however, a reflection on local culture and a significant contribution to architecture. One dwelling in the Phase II survey is identified as vernacular, 1174 SW Washburn Avenue, constructed 1984. While a contemporary dwelling, this example imitates the early shotgun plan dwellings that once dominated Tennessee Town’s residential landscape.

Figure 31. The contemporary dwelling at 1174 SW Washburn Avenue is a shotgun plan vernacular dwelling (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).

99 Upton and Vlach, xv-xvii.
SURVEY RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2019-2020, a Phase II Intensive Survey of the Tennessee Town Neighborhood in Topeka (Shawnee County), Kansas was conducted by Keenoy Preservation of St. Louis, Missouri. The survey identified 115 properties within the area bounded by SW Munson Avenue (north), SW Clay Street (east), SW Huntoon Street (south) and SW Washburn Avenue (west). A breakdown of the surveyed properties addresses, styles, construction dates and potential for listing in the NRHP is provided in Appendix A.

Table 3 identifies the number of properties within the survey area by decades of construction. Of note is Shiloh Baptist Church, listed to the NRHP in 2018, which was not re-surveyed and is not included in the total property counts. Most surveyed properties are residential, constructed after 1969. This finding indicates the rapidly changing physical landscape of Tennessee Town, which is becoming largely filled with contemporary multi-family and single-family housing. Additionally, a large number of buildings have been demolished in recent years, leaving the neighborhood with 17 vacant lots currently. Figure 32 illustrates the neighborhood’s construction periods by decade.

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<th>Decade*</th>
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<td>Pre-1900</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900 - 1909</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1910 – 1919</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 – 2016</td>
<td>31</td>
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</table>

*1316 SW Huntoon Street was constructed c. 1910. Because it is a component of a larger commercial complex, 1314-1318 SW Huntoon Street (constructed c. 1935); it has been counted for the decade of 1930-1939.
Figure 32. Map of property construction, by decade, in the Phase II Tennessee Town neighborhood.

The presence of churches has been constant in Tennessee Town. While congregational names have changed, as have buildings and in some cases locations, the neighborhood has always supported a significant number of churches. As noted in this document, at least four churches were constructed by the mid-1890s. Currently the neighborhood supports five religious properties: 1196 and 1201 SW Buchanan Street; 1200 SW Lane Street; 1182 SW Lincoln Street and 1196 SW Washburn Avenue. The neighborhood also supports a former public school building (1195 SW Buchanan Street) and one property currently functioning as a church and a school (1162 SW Lincoln Street).

The Phase II survey area does not support a National Register district. This is due to the fact that most properties 50 years of age or older have exterior replacement siding. Additionally, many lots in the neighborhood support new construction. Seventeen (17) parcels are vacant because dwellings or commercial buildings previously on the lots have been removed. The loss of original building fabric and recent demolition has resulted in an overall loss of integrity in terms of the survey area’s capacity to support a NRHP-eligible district.

Figure 33 illustrates properties that retain original exterior siding and may – in the future – contribute to a historic district. This figure also illustrates the locations of properties recommended as eligible for the NRHP.
Figure 33. Map of properties within the Phase II survey area that retain original siding and are considered to retain their architectural integrity.

**Properties Recommended as Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)**

Buildings in the Phase II survey area that are recommended as individually eligible for the NRHP include the following: 1177 SW Lincoln Street (Jordan/Union Hall), 1200 SW Lane Street (Lane Chapel/Church of God), an early twentieth-century commercial complex at 1314-1318 SW Huntoon Street and 1195 SW Buchanan Street (formerly Buchanan School; determined eligible for the NRHP by the KS-SHPO in 2007). These properties are described below. One property that was not re-inventoried, Shiloh Baptist Church at 1201 Buchanan Street, was listed to the NRHP in 2018 (Figure 5).

**Jordan/Union Hall – 1177 SW Lincoln Street**

Illustrated in Figures 7, 8 and below (Figure 28), the building currently used as a residence at 1177 SW Lincoln Street was constructed c. 1890 as Jordan Hall, a center of social activity for Tennessee Town residents. In 1893, the building’s name was temporarily changed to Union Hall when social reformer Charles M. Sheldon rented the property from owner Andy Jordan for use as a kindergarten and library. The kindergarten is believed to be the oldest program in Topeka that supported African-American children. As noted above, buildings that have non-historic siding are typically not considered eligible for the NRHP. In this situation, however; there are circumstances that appear worthy of considering the property eligible for the NRHP.

100 Halpert, 5.
In viewing the historic image noted in Figure 7 and comparing that image with recent photographs (Figures 8 and 28), it is evident that this is the building used as the Tennessee Town kindergarten in 1893-1895. The building appears to be the only extant property directly associated with Tennessee Town’s kindergarten. A subsequent mission church that served to house the school and library at 1163 SW Lincoln Street no longer stands. Due to the significance of this property in relation to the neighborhood’s early settlement period (1879-1900) and its ethnic association with the Exodusters who established Tennessee Town, the property appears eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (ethnic history and education). The building does not retain its original siding but current exterior siding does not diminish the property’s Criterion A significance.

![Image of 1177 SW Lincoln Street](image_url)

**Figure 34.** 1177 SW Lincoln Street is one of the neighborhood’s two oldest extant properties, constructed c. 1890 as Jordan Hall and used in 1893-1895 for the Tennessee Town Kindergarten and Library, Union Hall (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).

**LANE CHAPEL / CHURCH OF GOD – 1200 SW LANE STREET**

The stone church at 1200 SW Lane Street was constructed in 1925. The building originally supported a Church of God congregation and is currently known as Lane Chapel (Figure 35). Little historical information was found while conducting research for the survey area but regardless, the building is an excellent representation of its architectural style and is associated with the African-American residents of Tennessee Town. In this regard, the church appears eligible under Criterion A (ethnic history) and Criterion C (architecture). The Mission style church supports a rear pop-up wing reminiscent of the Airplane Bungalow (Figure 36). This type of plan is one found frequently in Topeka’s early twentieth-century housing stock but it may be a rare property type in relation to religious buildings. Additional research is recommended to
determine whether the church’s design is unique. Lane Chapel is a notable example of its type and style that retains integrity, rendering it potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Figure 35. Lane Chapel at 1200 SW Lane Street is an excellent example of a Mission style church that supported the African-American residents of Tennessee Town.
COMMERCIAL COMPLEX – 1314-16-18 SW HUNTOON STREET

SW Huntoon Street retains an early twentieth-century frame commercial building complex (1314, 1316 and 1318) that gained its current appearance c. 1935 (Figures 15 and 37). The small cluster of frame buildings originated as a single-family dwelling constructed c. 1910 (1316 SW Huntoon Street). In the 1930s, two small commercial shotgun plan frame buildings were constructed immediately east and west of the dwelling at 1314 (east) and 1318 (west) SW Huntoon Street. At some point after 1956, the small building addressed as 1314 SW Huntoon Street was adjoined to the former dwelling at 1316 SW Huntoon Street. The reason these commercial buildings appear to have been constructed and used commercially appears to be connected to the success of Elmhurst Plaza, constructed in 1927. This assumption is based on the fact that 1314 SW Huntoon Street initially operated as Elmhurst Grill. The former dwelling (1316 SW Huntoon Street) was used as a shoe repair shop, rented by C. Ray Pruett who resided on SW Lincoln Street and the small building at 1318 SW Huntoon Street was owned by Carl M. Bristow, a butcher.102 While these properties may not have ethnic associations (Bristow was Caucasian per census data), the buildings are unique and retain integrity. The property at 1314-1318 SW Huntoon Street appears significant under Criterion A: Commerce.

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102 Polk’s Topeka City Directory, 1940; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Topeka, Sheet 65, 1954; United States Census, 1940.
Figure 37. The frame buildings at 1314-18 SW Huntoon Street supported two stores and a restaurant in the mid-1950s (Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Topeka, Sheet 65, 1913 rev. 1954).

**Buchanan School – 1195 SW Buchanan Street**

The former Buchanan Elementary School, constructed in 1927 at 1195 SW Buchanan Street is an excellent example of an early twentieth-century public school building that served African-American children during Topeka’s era of segregation (Figures 12, 17 and 38). As noted previously, this building was constructed following passage of a bond for $850,000 to fund the construction of 22 schools – four to be designated for African-American children. While the bond did fund new buildings, it also provided a way “to enforce segregation.”

Topeka segregated its lower graded schools under a law passed in 1879 that allowed populated areas supporting more than 15,000 to do so; but the practice was not utilized equilaterally. In the case of Buchanan School, however; this building appears to have always functioned as a school restricted to African-American students. The school was closed following federally enforced desegregation per the Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954.

Buchanan School, previously identified by the KS-SHPO as eligible for the NRHP, appears eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A (ethnic history/education) and Criterion C (architecture). It is not only a representation of the struggles that African-Americans met in terms of equal access to education and civil rights; it is an excellent example of an early twentieth-century Mission/Prairie style school.

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103 Rosenblum (pages not numbered).
104 Ibid.
Figure 38. Buchanan School was constructed in 1927 for Tennessee Town’s African-American students (Photo: Keenoy, 14 November 2019).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further studies are recommended to document themes, persons and/or places related to Tennessee Town and/or Topeka’s African-American community as follows.

(1) A city-wide survey of shotgun plan dwellings to establish whether Topeka retains examples attributable to African-American settlement patterns.

(2) A city-wide survey of African-American churches constructed prior to passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to identify NRHP-eligible properties.

(3) A city-wide survey of parsonages supporting African-American churches. While the Phase II survey does not retain any examples, Sanborn Maps indicate that all (with exception of the mission church on SW Lincoln Avenue, Figure 9, constructed by a white congregation) supported parsonages located behind the churches. This pattern may be directly associated with the African-American community.

(4) North of Tennessee Town, the residence of Nick Chiles, who established Topeka’s African-American newspaper The Topeka Plaindealer appears significant. Located at 914 SW Buchanan Street, the dwelling was surveyed as part of the Old Town Neighborhood in 2005 but not identified as being owned by Chiles. If no other property in Topeka better reflects Chiles’ importance, this dwelling may be eligible for the NRHP.

(5) A study of white institutions and individuals who assisted Topeka’s Exodusters is recommended. This is merited by the existence of a Catholic school in the survey area, which appears to have predated Sheldon’s kindergarten. To date, the only documentation of the Catholic school relates to the City’s 1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. While Charles M. Sheldon’s work is well documented, other white Topekans may have played
important roles in the neighborhood’s early history. Additionally, much notice is given to Sheldon but based on Halpert’s book, there were others related to the church who did much of the work in Tennessee Town. These individuals may be important in documenting further history of the neighborhood.

(6) Faith Temple Church of God at 1162 SW Lincoln Street is not recommended as eligible for the NRHP due to a fire in 1987 that resulted in interior renovation, followed by the addition of two large wings that are attached to the south elevation. If future research supports that the church played a significant role, such as supporting civil rights activities prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, this may preclude the current determination regarding NRHP eligibility.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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United States Census. Shawnee County, Topeka (Ward 3, District 0169), 1910, 1940.


APPENDIX A: TABLE OF SURVEYED PROPERTIES
TENNESSEE TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PHASE II INTENSIVE SURVEY
(*Property appears individually eligible for the NRHP)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bldg. #</th>
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<th>Historic Function</th>
<th>Primary Style</th>
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*Moved to current parcel in 1977.

**Moved to current parcel in 2002.