

THE TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting to be held via video conference

A G E N D A

Thursday, September 10, 2020

5:30 PM

- I. Roll Call
- II. Approval of Minutes –August 13, 2020
- III. Announcement of Potential Conflicts
- IV. **CLGR 20-15 by Louis Weishaar, 221 SW Greenwood Ave.,** requesting State Preservation Law Review for the placement of a 5' privacy fence enclosing the rear yard on the property. This property is listed as a "contributor" to the historic integrity of the Potwin Place National Historic District.
- V. **CLGR 20-16 by Rodney Kenner, 407 SW Greenwood Ave.,** requesting State Preservation Law Review for the placement of a 4' aluminum, and an 8' wood privacy fence enclosing the rear yard on the property. This property is listed as a "contributor" to the historic integrity of the Potwin Place National Historic District.
- VI. **Presentation of the Topeka's Mid-Century Modern Multiple Property Documentation Form and Nomination -**
Jaime Destefano, JLD Preservation Consulting
- VII. **Volunteers to serve on 2020 HPF Grant Project Consultant Selection Committee-**
Selection Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, September 17, 2020 @ 2:00 p.m.
- VIII. Adjournment



ADA Notice: For special accommodations for this event, please contact the Planning & Development Department at 785-368-3728 at least three working days in advance.

TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, July 9, 2020

Holliday Office Building | 620 SE Madison | 1st Floor Holliday Conference Room

Roll Call

Members Present: David Heit, (Chair), Grant Sourk, Donna Rae Pearson, Melina Stewart, Paul Post, Mark Burenheide, Dave Frederick, Christine Steinkuehler, Cassandra Taylor (9)

Members Absent: (0)

Staff Present: Tim Paris, Dan Warner, Kris Wagers

Chairman David Heit called the meeting of the **Topeka Landmarks Commission** to order with nine members logged into video conference.

Mr. Heit explained that staff requested an additional case be added to the agenda and that the agenda be re-order to hear the cases first then the presentation on Tennessee Town Historic Resource Survey.

Motion by Mr. Sourk, **Second** by Ms. Pearson. **APPROVED** 9-0-0

Approval of Minutes from July 9, 2020

Motion by Mr. Sourk; **second** by Mr. Post. **APPROVED** 9-0-0

Announcement of potential conflicts –

Ms. Stewart explained that she has been working with CLGR20/13 Foulston Law Office so she will abstain from voting.

CLGR 20/11 by Central Church of Christ, 1260 SW College Ave., requesting State Law Review for the placement of an Electronic Message Center monument sign on their property. This property is listed as a “non-contributor” to the historic integrity of the College Avenue National Historic District.

Mr. Paris presented the staff report and recommendation for approval. Following discussion regarding the property and the proposed cabinet material, Mr. Burenheide made a **motion** for a finding that the proposed sign to be placed onto the property located at 115 SE 6th Avenue will not damage or destroy the historical integrity of the structure or the surrounding College Avenue National Historic District. **Second** by Mr. Sourk. **APPROVAL** (9/0/0)

CLGR 20/13 by Foulston Law Firm, requesting State Law Review for the placement of a non-illuminated wall sign affixed above the central ground-level door frame of the structure’s 2nd level on property located at 822-824 S Kansas Avenue. This property is listed as a “contributing property” within the nomination of the South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places.

Mr. Paris presented the staff report (attached as an addendum to the agenda packet) and recommendation for approval. Representing the applicant, Ken Price was logged in to the video conference and available for questions.

TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION MINUTES

Mr. Heit complimented Mr. Price on the renovations that have been made to the building and several commissioners agreed. **Motion** by Mr. Sourk to find that the proposed sign and its placement on the property located at 822-824 S. Kansas Avenue is consistent with the recommendations outlined in the Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines, and will not damage or destroy the historical integrity of the structure, or the surrounding South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District; **second** by Ms. Taylor. **APPROVAL** (8-0-1 with Ms. Stewart abstaining)

Presentation of the Phase #2 Tennessee Town Historic Resources Survey by Ruth Keenoy, Historic Preservation Specialist

Mr. Paris introduced Ms. Keenoy and she gave a presentation on the completed survey. Following the presentation, Ms. Pearson thanked Ms. Keenoy for providing a different perspective on Tennessee Town and incorporating some history that is generally not spoken about. Ms. Pearson expressed concern about possibly attributing too much to Reverend Shelden and also had some suggestions for future projects.

Mr. Paris explained that the completed study can be used to assist in future decisions and as background for requesting future grants and also in seeking to have Topeka included in the World Heritage Site designation.

Discussion and Determination of Historic Signs as Specified by Topeka Sign Regulations, Chapter 18.10 of Topeka Municipal Code

Mr. Paris recapped last month's discussion and some of the changes brought on by the updated sign code. He reviewed the Criteria for the Consideration for the Designation of Historic Signs which was included in the agenda packet, stating that it is an elaboration of what was codified as eligibility criteria. He suggested that the checklist could be used to assist in determination of eligibility for historic designation. Mr. Warner stated that the staff will use the checklist as a tool to assist in writing their report and recommendation to the commission. Mr. Paris encouraged the commission to let him know their thoughts on the checklist and recommendations for additions or changes. It was agreed that the information and checklist will be helpful

Mr. Sourk pointed out that current signs are not required to come into conformance with the new sign code until October 1, 2031 so he wasn't sure why property owners would come to the commission seeking the ability to be deemed eligible historic designation. Mr. Warner explained that the sign code will require signs to come into conformance with the new code if there are alterations made (see code for detail of the requirements) and also suggested that some may simply wish to have their sign deemed

TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION MINUTES

eligible. Mr. Paris suggested that the source of most considerations will likely come from businesses changing.

Additional discussion ensued regarding what signs might be eligible and criteria for eligibility. Mr. Warner suggested that the “checklist” be used for a while to determine what changes might be helpful and then at some point be finalized and adopted by the commission. Mr. Heit asked if staff anticipated it being something that each commissioner complete and submit for the record and Mr. Paris said no, it's more for staff to use as guidance in determining a recommendation and commissioners in evaluating the recommendation.

Administrative Approvals

Mr. Paris said that staff had administratively approved a new sign face for Jong's Thai Kitchen (formerly Café Holliday). Mr. Heit stated that the DRC had reviewed some interior modifications required in a house on Taylor. Mr. Paris explained that the DRC had suggested the stair rail be retained and that Fran Hug (COT Development Services) is reviewing for ADA compliance. Mr. Heit added that the house could be eligible to re-claim its historic status if some modifications were made (or removed).

Adjourned at 6:59PM

**CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT
KANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION LAW
PROJECT REVIEW REPORT
TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

CASE NO: CLGR20-15

by: Louis Weishaar

Project Address: 221 SW Greenwood Avenue

Property Classification: *Contributing Property* to the Holliday Park National Historic District.

Standards: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines

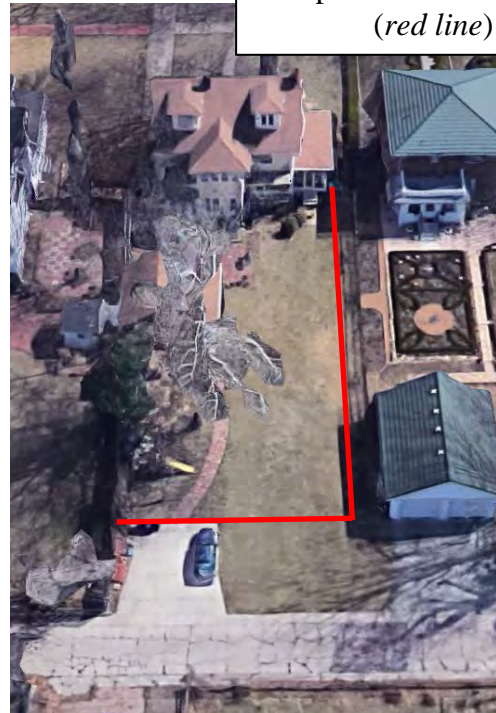
Attachments: Site Plan ☒ Elevations ☐ Arch./Const. Plans ☒ Pictures ☐

PROPOSAL: This proposal is to erect a 5' wooden privacy fence to enclose the rear yard of the property located at 221 SW Greenwood Avenue. The rear yard is currently not enclosed by fencing. This structure is listed as a "contributing property" within the nomination of the Potwin Place National Historic District.

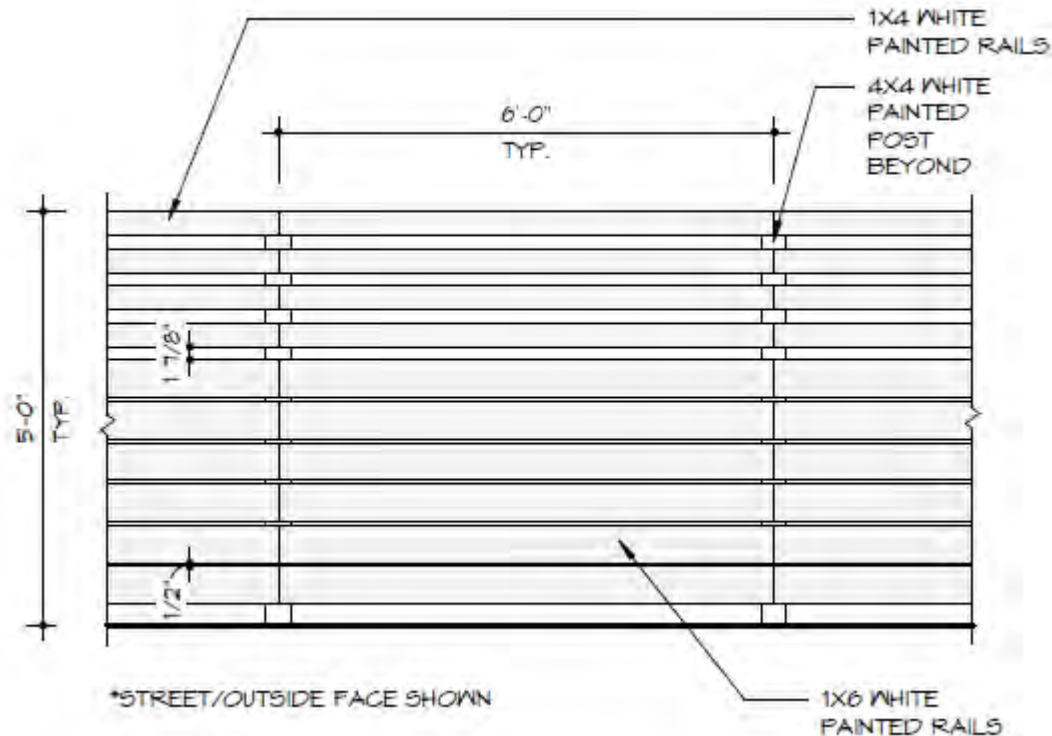
BACKGROUND: The National Register Nomination for the Potwin Place National Historic District describes this home as a built in 1909, with side gables in the Period Colonial style of architecture. The home retains above average integrity, yet does feature a rear alteration.



221 SW Greenwood Ave.



Proposed Fence Location
(red line)



REVIEW SUMMARY: The Kansas State Historic Preservation Office requires that all projects occurring on any property listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places be reviewed for their affect on the listed property and the surrounding district. State law (K.S.A. 75-2724) establishes that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation be used to evaluate changes proposed to any property that is individually listed, or is located within an historic district. The following is an analysis of the application of each Standard to the proposed project.

Standard 1. *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

Analysis: No change in use of this property is proposed in conjunction with this project.

Standard 2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

Analysis: No historic materials will be removed or altered in conjunction with this project.

Standard 3. *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

Analysis: No aspects of this project are proposed that will create a false sense of historic significance. A painted, wooden privacy fence, located in the rear yard, is deemed appropriate for the historic district's period of significance.

Standard 4. *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

Analysis: No features of this home or property are proposed for removal or physical alteration. The proposed fence can easily be removed in the future with no residual damage caused to the home or property.

Standard 5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

Analysis: No distinctive features, finishes, or construction techniques will be removed or altered in conjunction with this project proposal.

Standard 6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

Analysis: No features of this home or property are proposed for removal or physical alteration. The proposed fence can easily be removed in the future with no residual damage caused to the home or property.

Standard 7. *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

Analysis: N/A

Standard 8. *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

Analysis: N/A

Standard 9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

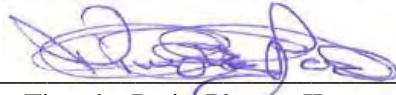
Analysis: The proposed fence is consistent with the appropriate style, materials, and configuration for the early 20th Century period of significance for this historic district. No existing historic materials will be damaged or altered in conjunction with this project.

Standard 10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

Analysis: The proposed fence can easily be removed in the future with no residual damage caused to the home or property.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: In the performance of this review under KSA 75-2724, Staff is recommending a finding that the proposed fence to be placed onto the property located at 221 SW Greenwood Ave., **will NOT damage or destroy the historical integrity of the structure, or the surrounding Potwin Place National Historic District.**

Prepared by: _____



Timothy Paris, Planner II

APPEAL TO THE GOVERNING BODY: If the Landmarks Commission determines that the proposed fence will damage or destroy the historic integrity of the property and/or the surrounding historic district, the applicant may appeal to the governing body. It will be incumbent upon the governing body to make a determination, after consideration of all relevant factors, that: (1) there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the placement of the fence as proposed; and (2) that alternatives to the project include all possible planning to minimize harm to the property and the district that may result from those alternatives.

Suitable grounds for appeal under the Kansas Preservation Act, include any project that:

- Enhances vitality in the streetscape, and is of benefit to adjacent historic properties;
- Emphasizes historic character and, though not in full compliance with the Secretary's Standards, adequately addresses the preservation and appropriate treatment of existing historic fabric;
- Is compatible with and enhances the overall character of the historic district;
- Exhibits exceptional design quality;
- Has no negative impacts to the historic district's primary contributing historic buildings of high integrity; and
- Mitigates any adverse effects on other contributing historic buildings.



CITY OF
TOPEKA

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION

620 SE MADISON | 3RD FLOOR | TOPEKA KS 66607 | 785-368-3704

RECEIVED AUG 10 2020

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES USE ONLY: DATE 8/10/2020 PERMIT FEE: \$ 33.00

APPLICATION # 202008104562

SUBMIT ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO:
DSDPermits@topeka.org

FENCE PERMIT APPLICATION

Owner of Property: _____
 _____ Print _____ Signature _____ Phone _____

Fence Address: _____ LSW@HTKARCHITECTS.COM

Legal description: Lot: _____ Block: _____ Subdivision: _____

Address of owner (if different): _____

Contractor: _____ Phone: _____

Contractor Address: _____

Type of fence material: Wood Chain Link Plastic Split Rail
 Other – description of fence: _____

Proposed height of fence: Front _____ Side 1 _____ Side 2 _____ Rear _____

Is this fence located on a corner lot?* Yes No

Is the property located in a Designated Historic District or Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD)? Yes No

If yes, what Historic District / NCD? _____

Please provide a site plan on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper indicating property lines, dimensions and locations of fence, buildings, rights-of-way, utility, drainage or other easements, scale and north arrow.

- **Maximum height limitation of fence – front – 4 feet & rear 8 feet**
- **Fence is to be placed on private property and may not be placed in the city's right-of-way, which is approximately 1 foot back of an existing public sidewalk.**

*** on corner lots, fences cannot be placed in the 40 foot sight distance triangle.**

The City will require the immediate removal of any fence placed or located within drainage, utility or other easements, which materially interferes with the use of the easement. Upon notice by the City, the owner at the owner's expense shall remove the fence. If the owner fails to remove the fence, then the City shall cause its removal and the property owner shall be responsible for all removal costs.

The City shall not be responsible for any damage caused to a fence or its removal, which may result from the repair or maintenance of any drainage easement or the repair or maintenance of any utilities located in utility easement.

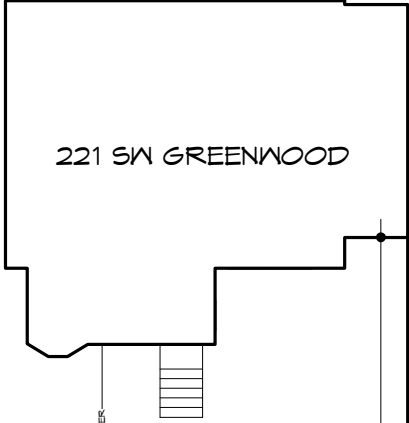
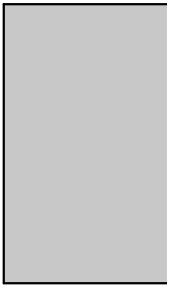
The property owner understands and agrees to indemnify and hold the City harmless for damage, claims, costs, suits, judgments and expenses specifically including attorneys' fees of any nature whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the construction, repair or maintenance of a fence. The city's failure to immediately enforce its rights in relation to its easements shall not constitute a waiver of its right to do so and shall not prevent the City from causing the removal of a fence, which materially interferes with the use of a City easement.

In consideration for the permission to construct the fence specified in the fence permit application, the undersigned property owner hereby agrees to be bound by all the terms and conditions contained in this fence application:

Signature of owner LSW

APPROVALS:

Traffic:	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____
Engineer:	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____
Planning:	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____
Historical (if applicable):	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____



PROPERTY LINE

5' TALL PAINTED
WOOD FENCE;
HORIZONTAL
SLATS W/
VERTICAL POSTS
APPROX. 6' O.C.

PROPERTY LINE

ALLEY

49'-2"

96'-0"

23'-0"

WATER

GAS

SEWER

SEWER

SEWER

SEWER

SEWER

SEWER

SEWER

SEWER

1

221 GREENWOOD - SITE PLAN

1" = 20'-0"

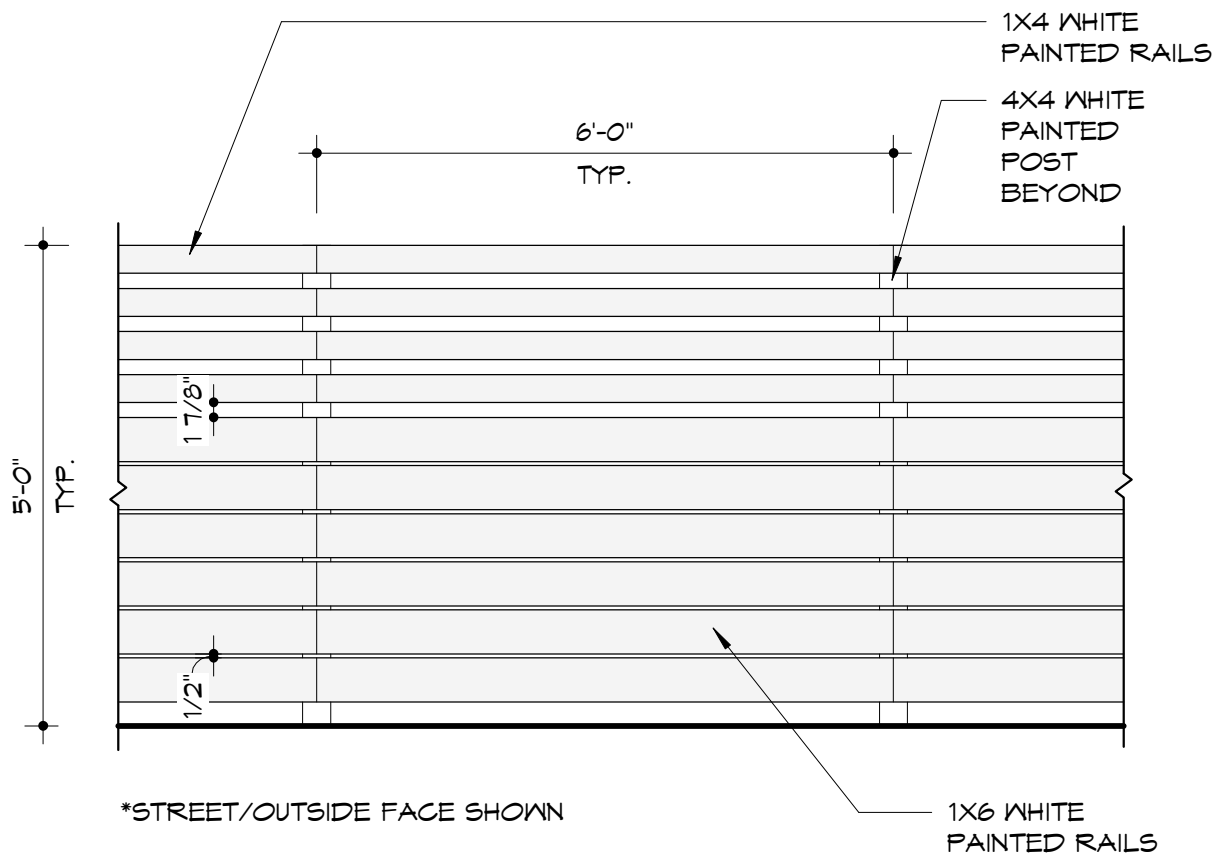


SHEET CONTENTS:
• SITE PLAN

SHEET NUMBER:

221 SW GREENWOOD AVE - FENCE ADDITION

AS101



1 TYPICAL FENCE ELEVATION

1/2" = 1'-0"

221 SW GREENWOOD AVE - FENCE ADDITION

SHEET CONTENTS:
• TYP. FENCE ELEVATION

SHEET NUMBER:

AS 102



**CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT
KANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION LAW
PROJECT REVIEW REPORT
TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

CASE NO: CLGR20-16

by: Rodney Kenner

Project Address: 221 SW Greenwood Avenue

Property Classification: *Contributing Property* to the Holliday Park National Historic District.

Standards: Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines

Attachments: Site Plan [X] Elevations [] Arch./Const. Plans [] Pictures [X]

PROPOSAL: This proposal is to erect two types of fencing to enclose the rear yard of property located at 407 SW Greenwood Ave. The rear yard is currently not enclosed by fencing. This structure is listed as a "contributing property" within the nomination of the Potwin Place National Historic District.

BACKGROUND: The National Register Nomination for the Potwin Place National Historic District describes this home as a built in 1886, with intersecting gables in the Period Colonial style of architecture. The home retains above average integrity, yet does feature a rear alteration.



REVIEW SUMMARY: The Kansas State Historic Preservation Office requires that all projects occurring on any property listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places be reviewed for their affect on the listed property and the surrounding district. State law (K.S.A. 75-2724) establishes that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation be used to evaluate changes proposed to any property that is individually listed, or is located within an historic district. The following is an analysis of the application of each Standard to the proposed project.

Standard 1. *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

Analysis: No change in use of this property is proposed in conjunction with this project.

Standard 2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

Analysis: No historic materials will be removed or altered in conjunction with this project. The use of the aluminum fencing to enclose the rear yard along the street frontage will have a minimal visual presence, yet will be complimentary and compatible with the property's historic character.

Standard 3. *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

Analysis: No aspects of this project are proposed that will create a false sense of historic significance.

Standard 4. *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

Analysis: No historic features of this home or property are proposed for removal. The proposed fence can easily be removed in the future with no residual damage caused to the home or property.

Standard 5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

Analysis: No distinctive features, finishes, or construction techniques will be removed or altered in conjunction with this project proposal.

Standard 6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

Analysis: No features of this home or property are proposed for removal or physical alteration. The proposed fence can easily be removed in the future with no residual damage caused to the home or property.

Standard 7. *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

Analysis: N/A

Standard 8. *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

Analysis: N/A

Standard 9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

Analysis: Both proposed materials with this project are consistent with the appropriate style, materials, and configuration for the early 20th Century period of significance for this historic district. That section of fence proposed for 8' in height will be minimally visible from the street, and will not impose harm to the property's historic character.

Standard 10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

Analysis: The proposed fence can easily be removed in the future with no residual damage caused to the home or property.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: In the performance of this review under KSA 75-2724, Staff is recommending a finding that the proposed fence to be placed onto the property located at 407 SW Greenwood Ave., **will NOT damage or destroy the historical integrity of the structure, or the surrounding Potwin Place National Historic District.**

Prepared by: _____



Timothy Paris, Planner II

APPEAL TO THE GOVERNING BODY: If the Landmarks Commission determines that the proposed fence will damage or destroy the historic integrity of the property and/or the surrounding historic district, the applicant may appeal to the governing body. It will be incumbent upon the governing body to make a determination, after consideration of all relevant factors, that: (1) there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the placement of the fence as proposed; and (2) that alternatives to the project include all possible planning to minimize harm to the property and the district that may result from those alternatives.

Suitable grounds for appeal under the Kansas Preservation Act, include any project that:

- Enhances vitality in the streetscape, and is of benefit to adjacent historic properties;

- Emphasizes historic character and, though not in full compliance with the Secretary's Standards, adequately addresses the preservation and appropriate treatment of existing historic fabric;
- Is compatible with and enhances the overall character of the historic district;
- Exhibits exceptional design quality;
- Has no negative impacts to the historic district's primary contributing historic buildings of high integrity; and
- Mitigates any adverse effects on other contributing historic buildings.



CITY OF
TOPEKA

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION

620 SE MADISON | 3RD FLOOR | TOPEKA KS 66607 | 785-368-3704DEVELOPMENT SERVICES USE ONLY: DATE 8/27/2020 PERMIT FEE: \$ 33.00
APPLICATION # 202008274926SUBMIT ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS TO:
DSDPermits@topeka.org

FENCE PERMIT APPLICATION

Owner of Property: Rodney Kenner

Print

Signature

913-481-7889

Phone

Fence Address: 407 SW Greenwood AveKENNER.RODNEYM@GMAIL.COMLegal description: Lot: 7 Block: n/a Subdivision: C W POTWIN SUB

Address of owner (if different): _____

Contractor: none

Phone: _____

Contractor Address: _____

Type of fence material: ☒ Wood ☐ Chain Link ☐ Plastic ☐ Split Rail☐ Other – description of fence: Aluminum FenceProposed height of fence: Front _____ Side 1 4 feet Side 2 _____ Rear 8 feetIs this fence located on a corner lot? ☒ Yes ☐ NoIs the property located in a Designated Historic District or Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD)? ☒ Yes ☐ NoIf yes, what Historic District / NCD? Potwin

Please provide a site plan on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper indicating property lines, dimensions and locations of fence, buildings, rights-of-way, utility, drainage or other easements, scale and north arrow.

- Maximum height limitation of fence – front – 4 feet & rear 8 feet
- Fence is to be placed on private property and may not be placed in the city's right-of-way, which is approximately 1 foot back of an existing public sidewalk.

* on corner lots, fences cannot be placed in the 40 foot sight distance triangle.

The City will require the immediate removal of any fence placed or located within drainage, utility or other easements, which materially interferes with the use of the easement. Upon notice by the City, the owner at the owner's expense shall remove the fence. If the owner fails to remove the fence, then the City shall cause its removal and the property owner shall be responsible for all removal costs.

The City shall not be responsible for any damage caused to a fence or its removal, which may result from the repair or maintenance of any drainage easement or the repair or maintenance of any utilities located in utility easement.

The property owner understands and agrees to indemnify and hold the City harmless for damage, claims, costs, suits, judgments and expenses specifically including attorneys' fees of any nature whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the construction, repair or maintenance of a fence. The city's failure to immediately enforce its rights in relation to its easements shall not constitute a waiver of its right to do so and shall not prevent the City from causing the removal of a fence, which materially interferes with the use of a City easement.

In consideration for the permission to construct the fence specified in the fence permit application, the undersigned property owner hereby agrees to be bound by all the terms and conditions contained in this fence application:

Signature of owner

APPROVALS:

Traffic:	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____
Engineer:	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____
Planning:	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____
Historical (if applicable):	Approved _____	Date _____	Disapproved _____	Date _____

Property Map

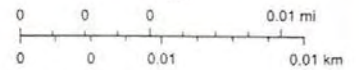


8/26/2020, 9:58:29 AM

Parcels

Roads

1:334



SNCO GIS
All map data subject to Shawnee County GIS data disclaimer. Parcel lines are not survey accurate and should not be used for legal purposes.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 1

Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-
Family Residential Architecture in
Topeka, 1945-1975

Name of Property
Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

NR Reference Number

State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ☐ additional documentation ☐ move ☐ removal
☐ name change (additional documentation) ☐ other

meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

Signature of Certifying Official/Title:

Date of Action

National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ additional documentation accepted
- ☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 2

Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka, 1945-1975

Name of Property
 Shawnee County, Kansas

County and State

NR Reference Number

INTRODUCTION

The Topeka Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architectural Survey, conducted between October 2019 and June 2020 by architectural historian, Jaime L. Destefano, documented 55 historic resources dating from 1945 to 1975. The resources were pre-selected by Topeka's Landmarks Commission as notable and distinctive Modernist architecture spanning a wide range of property types. The goals of the survey were to document Topeka's overall growth patterns during the post-World War II boom period; record the 55 significant, pre-selected buildings, and develop a guide for the identification and National Register evaluation of individual properties that were not included in the 2019-2020 survey. Topeka in the mid-20th century witnessed an unprecedented increase in population and growth. This multiple property documentation form provides a framework within which to consider the significance of non, single-family residential Modernist architecture in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas.

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

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 lulled. 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.

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC CONTEXT: POST-WORLD WAR II COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT: 1945-1975

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,

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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 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.

Non-residential construction in the 1930s and 1940s was mostly limited to government buildings. The lull in downtown development during this time is due largely in part to the Great Depression and America's entering of World War II. By 1940, Topeka had reached an area of 11.6 square miles with a population of

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.

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.

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67,833.⁷ By 1940, the corporate city limits included North Topeka on the north side of the Kansas River; the Oakland annexation at the northeast corner; the city cemetery at the southeast corner; Quinton Heights to the south; and Washburn College at the southwest corner. The western edge extended to include McVicar, High, and Summit Avenues. Lowmans Mill was adjacent to the west of the city limits and the State Insane Asylum adjacent to the northwest. Figure 1 shows the city limits c.1940 at which time Highland Park remained a separate community south of the city.

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

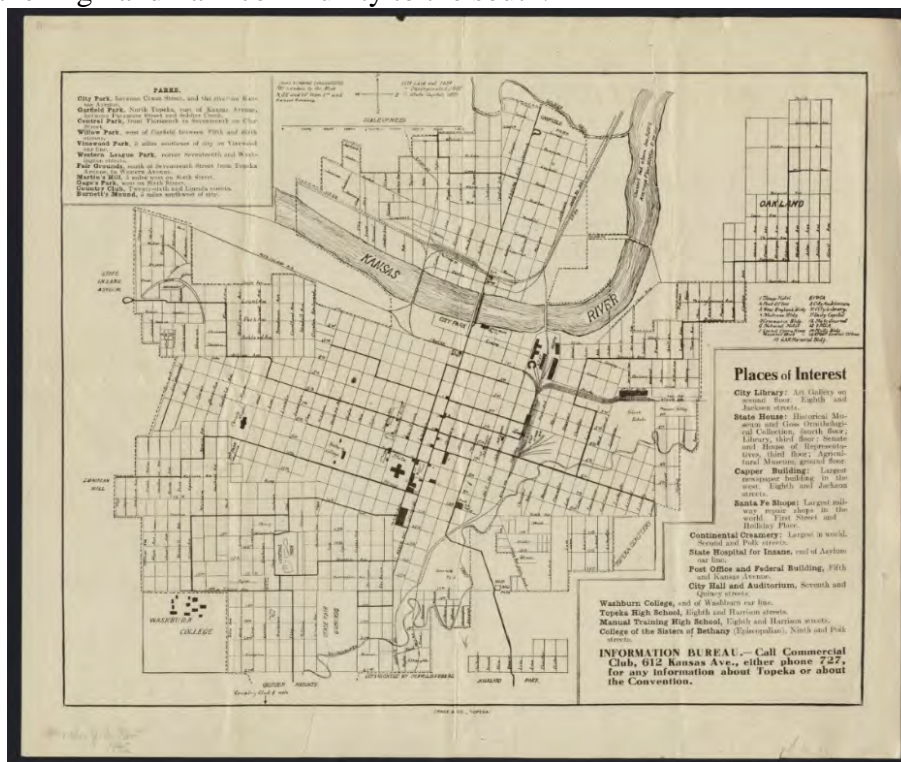


Figure 1. City of Topeka Map, c.1940-1942

Source: Kansas Memory

⁷ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

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

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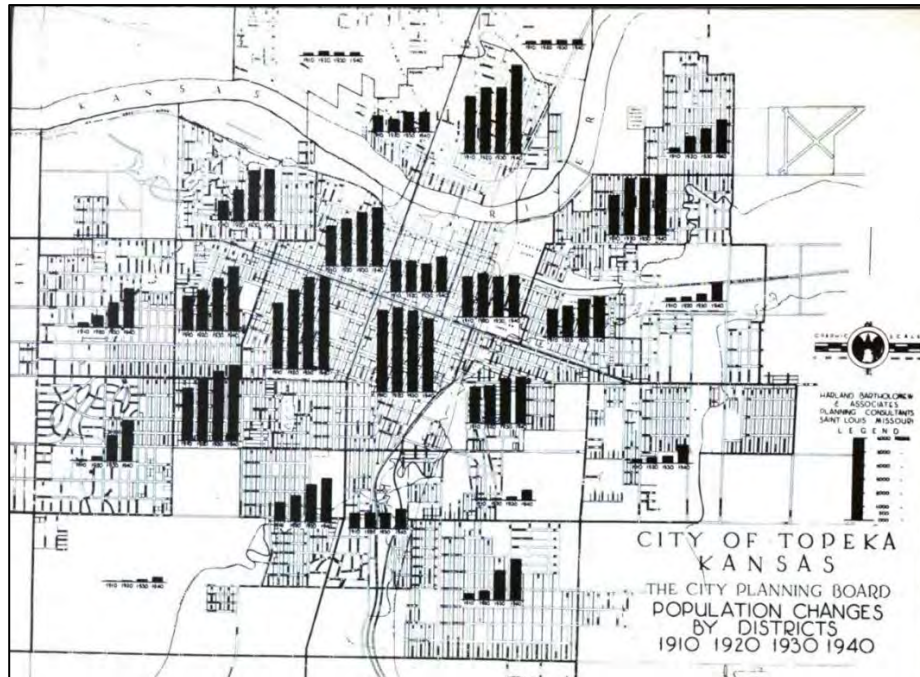


Figure 2. Topeka Corporate Limit Population Changes by Districts 1910-1940
Source: 1945 *Comprehensive Plan*

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

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.

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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.

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 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

From the Post-World War II years through the mid-1970s, the physical built environment of Topeka was largely steered by the city’s existing road system, 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.

A 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

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.

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.

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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 thriving business park and modern airport.

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

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 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

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

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

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.kshs.org/index.php?url=km/items/view/215553>

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

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.

In addition to the years of annexation and trends in post-war development, 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.

Flood of 1951

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.

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.

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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.

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 ¼ 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 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’

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.*

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

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declining downtown business districts and neighborhoods became ready targets for clearance and redevelopment.”³⁰

Urban Renewal in Topeka



Figure 3. Proposed Keyway Urban Renewal Project Area, 1957

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

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. 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

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.

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.

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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 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

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.*

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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

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 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.

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 the tornado and subsequent rebuilding.

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.

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

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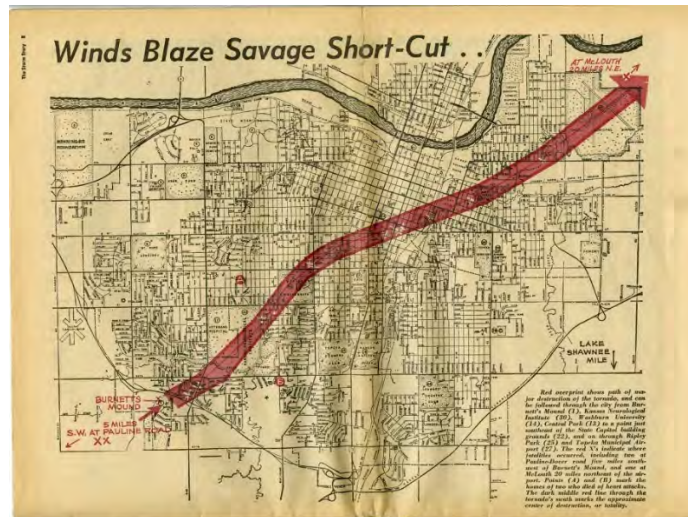


Figure 4. Map Showing Path of 1966 Tornado Through Topeka
Source: *Topeka Capital-Journal* Archives

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

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

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.

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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 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

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.

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.

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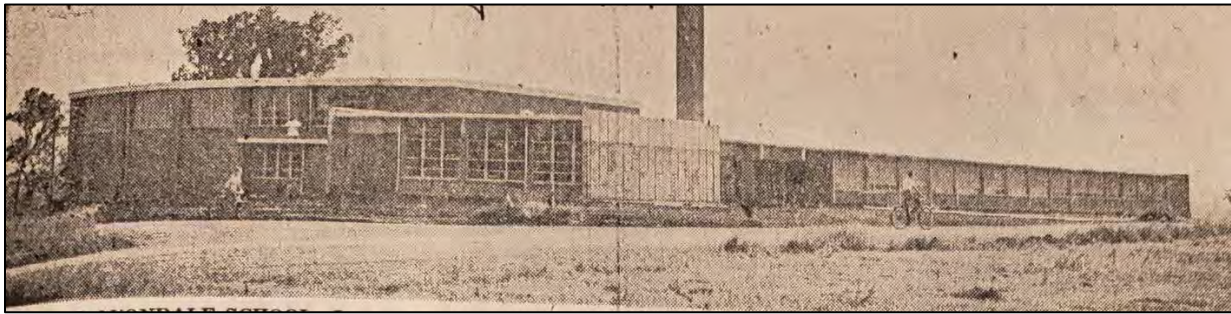
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Road.⁵⁰ The two schools survive as reflections of the City's post-World War II boom and the establishment of large, mid-century neighborhoods where schools were necessary to accommodate the high number of students. Avondale West is noted for its association 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



Photograph 1. Avondale East Elementary School, 1954
 Source: Topeka Capital-Journal August 18, 1954



Figure 5. Rendering of the New Stout Elementary School (KHS 177-4818)
 Source: Topeka Capital-Journal, October 16, 1954

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.

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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 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

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.

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.

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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.

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

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

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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 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 Topeka’s suburbs. 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).

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

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

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

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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 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.

ASSOCIATED HISTORIC CONTEXT: ARCHITECTURAL TRENDS OF TOPEKA'S MID-CENTURY MODERN ARCHITECTURE: FORMS, MATERIALS, STYLES, AND MODERNIST ARCHITECTS FROM 1945-1975

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.

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.

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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 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

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, 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 large-scale Modernist architecture occurs. 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 building (KHS #177-4839) 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.

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

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.

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Photograph 2. Topeka Capital-Journal Building (177-4839), c.1960s
 Source: Kansas Memory

Mid-Century 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.

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A. Streamline Moderne (1925-1950)



Photograph 3. 1629 Medford Avenue (KHS #177-4820)

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:

- 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

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.

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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 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

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.

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- Glass curtain walls
- Balance and regularity
- Flat roof, without ledge
- Metal mullions and smooth spandrel panels separating large, single-pane windows between floors

In Topeka, 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.



Photograph 4. Stout Elementary School



Photograph 5. 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

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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 former Kansas State Office Building (Docking Building, KHS #177-3153) is a fine example of the International Style applied to a tall government office building. Another excellent illustration of Miesian-inspired architecture in Topeka is the Merchants National Bank Building (KHS# 177-3265). Both are located within the downtown district of Topeka.



Photograph 6. Merchants National Bank

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.

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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

In Topeka, the use of Wrightian design principles occurred primarily among residential design. Only one known commercial building reflecting the Wrightian style is the architect-designed building located at 2900 MacVicar Avenue (KHRI #177-4822), which employs a combination of concrete and wood. The former office of HTK Architects, the building 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 7. 2900 MacVicar Avenue, front façade

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Photograph 8. 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*).

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.

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Photograph 9. Central National Bank (177-3273) at 800 SE Quincy Avenue



Photograph 10. Topeka-Capital Journal Building (177-4839) located at 616 SE Jefferson Street



Photograph 11. First National Bank (177-4863)

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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.

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

Few Brutalist buildings were constructed in Topeka. The most notable representation of the style is the Kansas Judicial Center (KHS #177-2969) constructed in 1972.



Photograph 12. 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

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

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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 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 (KHS #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 (KHS #177-4852) and the First Christian Church (KHS #177-4858).



Photograph 13. White Concert Hall (177-4819)

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Photograph 14. First Assembly of God (177-4852)



Photograph 15. 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

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

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Figure 6. 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 16. Jayhawk Auto Dealership (177-4842)

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 (KHS #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.

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Photograph 17. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088)



Photograph 18. Hanover Pancake House (177-3088) Neon Sign

Among the most recognizable mid-century roadside architecture adopting Googie design elements is Bobo's Drive-In (KHS #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 19. Bobo's Drive-In, c.1950

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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 Ekdahl, Davis, and Depew and features a truncated roof with short side walls. The 1958 sanctuary addition of the Faith Lutheran Church (KHS #177-4857) is another example of A-frame design. A small automobile dealership building located 540 SE 29th Street (KHS #177-4828) also employs the use of an A-frame form.



Photograph 20. Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854)

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.

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Common Mid-Century Modern Materials, Construction Methods, and Distinct 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.

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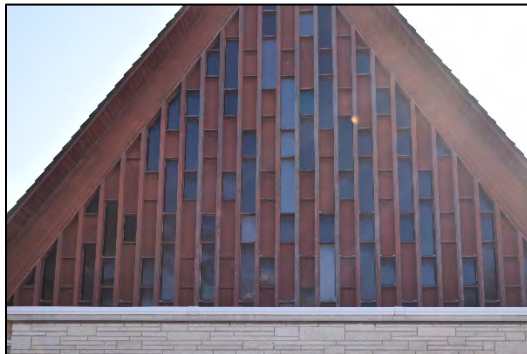
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Photograph 21. Grace Evangelical Brethren Church, gable end detail

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 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.

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.

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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 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 war's 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 Belluschi 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-

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.

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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.



Photograph 22. Kansas State Teachers Association Building (KHS #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.

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.*

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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.



Photograph 23. Kansas Power & Light Company Building (KHS #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

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

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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).



Photograph 24. Kansas State Office Building, red granite panels along ground floor and limestone panels on lower blocks

Pilotis are column supports that raise a buildings 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 provides 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 also gave depth and richness to the flat surface of the modern façade. Screen walls

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

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

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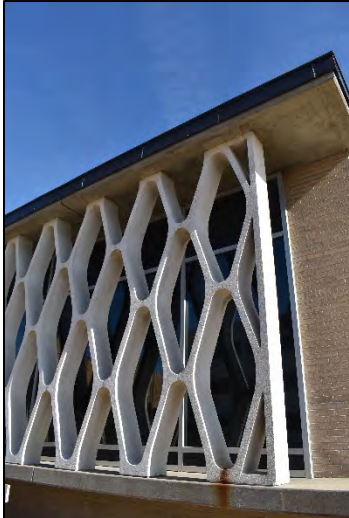
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Photograph 25. Brise-Soleil along façade of former Capital-Journal Building

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 (KHS #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 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 26. Interior Lobby of Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (KHS #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.

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Photograph 27. 2318 SW 10th Avenue (177-4850), Floating Staircase

Modern Building Forms and Types in Topeka: 1945 to 1975

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. The 2019-2020 *Mid-Century, Non-Single-Family Residential Architectural Survey* aimed 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.¹⁰¹

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

¹⁰¹ For each building classification presented in this nomination, reference is made to a good representation of the type based on observations made during the 2019-2020 architectural survey. The classifications also include building types that were not included in the pre-selected property list the 2019-2020 survey. 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.

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“undisputed marketplace of the motor age.”¹⁰² 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.”¹⁰³ 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.¹⁰⁴

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.¹⁰⁵ 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 regional mall. In addition to stores, the regional mall included restaurants, cinemas, and ice-skating rinks, among other appealing amenities.¹⁰⁶

Topeka’s first shopping mall was the White Lakes Mall, constructed in 1964 near the intersection of SW Topeka Blvd/US Highway 75 and SW 37th Street. Developed by Topeka’s Keith Meyers, the mall was 500,000 square feet and fully enclosed. It had two primary “anchors” including Sears and J.C. Penney, both contained a large auto center. The interior of the mall was characterized by wide open hallways flanked by smaller retailers, high ceilings, and pleasing gardens and water

¹⁰² Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*, John Hopkins University Press, 1995; p. 27.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1995; p. 28.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 1995; p. 26-28.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 1995; p. 28-31.

¹⁰⁶ Gray & Pape, Inc. “Ohio Modern: Preserving Our Recent Past Statewide Historic Context,” Ohio Historical Society, 2010; page 126-127.

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features. A large parking lot provided convenient parking for the growing number of motorists. Completed in 1967 at the mall was a large freestanding movie theater.

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.¹⁰⁷ 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.”¹⁰⁸

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.”¹⁰⁹ 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. 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

¹⁰⁷ John Jakle & Keith A. Sculle, *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1999; p.36-37.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 1999; p.41.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 1999; p.54

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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.

Among the most recognizable Modern wayside restaurant in Topeka is Bobo’s Drive-In (KHRI #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 suggests that it was originally a walk-in diner with service counter and small number of booths. The drive-in canopy was 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 (KHRI #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 (KHRI #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

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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.”¹¹⁰ 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 hardwood 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 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.¹¹¹

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.”¹¹² Exaggerated Modern influences became vogue among supermarket design. Dramatic rooflines and canopies became common, as well as a massive pole-mounted signs.

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; p. 127.

¹¹¹ Liebs; 127-130.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

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4) Filling Stations

Following World War II, the design of gas stations changed dramatically when, in 1947, Carlifornian George Urich 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.”¹¹³

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.¹¹⁴ 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.

The Mid-Century Modern Non- single-Family Residential Architectural Survey in 2019-2020 did not include fillings stations. However, Topeka likely includes a good collection of such facilities

¹¹³ Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*, John Hopkins University Press, 1995; p. 110-111.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 114.

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scattered throughout the city, particularly along high-trafficked arteries.

5) Car Dealerships

The history of the Modern car dealership dates 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.¹¹⁵

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.

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 Dealership (KRHI #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,

¹¹⁵ Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*, John Hopkins University Press, 1995; p. 86-90.

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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.¹¹⁶ An example in Topeka reflecting this trend is a former dealership with attached service center located at 400 SE 29th Street (KHRI #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.

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. (KHRI #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.

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.¹¹⁷ 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 contains 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

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*; p.90-93.

¹¹⁷ Leibs; p.181-182.

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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.”¹¹⁸

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.¹¹⁹



Figure 7. 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.

By the 1960s, the numerous hotel franchises and chains that emerged during the previous decade 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.”¹²⁰ Built in 1965 along 6th Avenue near downtown, the Topeka Downtown Ramada Inn (KHRI #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. The hotel was historically identified as a Motor Inn yet contains many amenities of 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.

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.

¹¹⁸ Leibs; p.183.

¹¹⁹ The Jayhawk Hotel was not surveyed as part of this project.

¹²⁰ From KHRI inventory form (177-3647)

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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.

In 1961, Gage Center Bowl (KHRI #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.¹²¹

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, warn and un-imposing; a minimum of obstructions between the customer and the bank’s representative who serves him...”¹²² 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 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.”¹²³ 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

¹²¹ Steve Thompson, “Gage Bowl North to Close,” *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 29 May, 2011.

¹²² 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.

¹²³ Deborah Slatong and William G. Foulks, “Preserving the Recent Past 2,” Historic Preservation Education Foundation, National Park Service, 2000; p. 45-47.

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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.

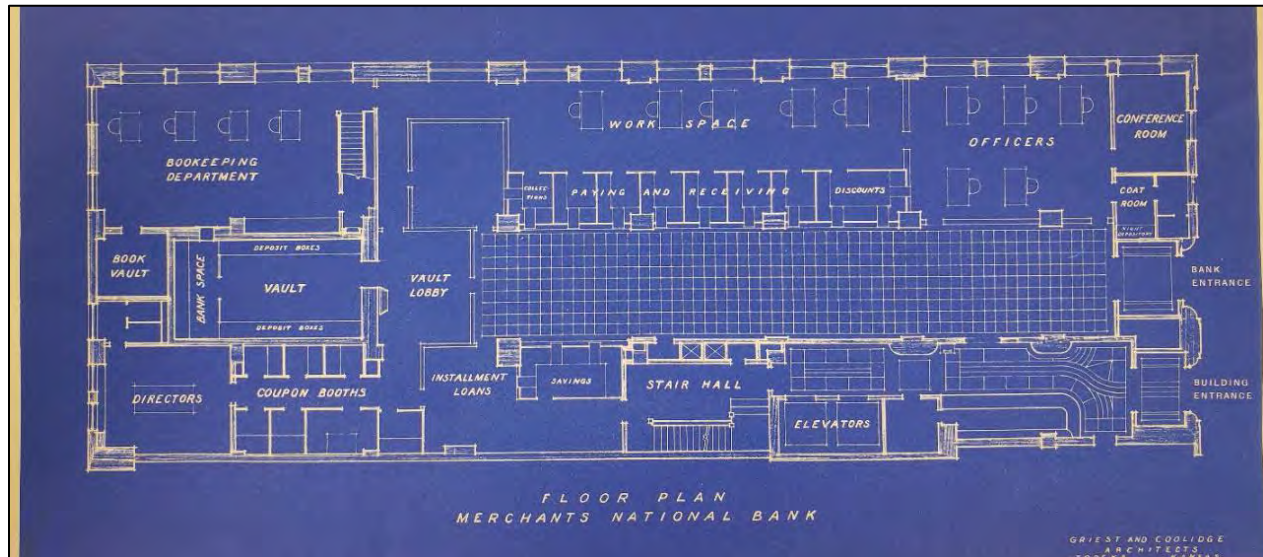


Figure 8. Merchant's National Bank Floor Plan



Figure 9. Merchants National Bank, Main Banking Area, 1969
Source: Topeka Room Vertical File

The Central National Bank (KHRI #177-3273), constructed in 1973, and Intrust Bank (KHRI #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 (KHRI #177-4863), 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.

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Figure 10. Rendering of First National Bank, c.1975
Hanging on bank lobby wall

D. OFFICE BUILDINGS

The classification of office buildings might be considered subjective. In some instances, one 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 nomination, office buildings encompass government offices, one large bank (Merchants National Bank), and small and large businesses.

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 28. 220 SW 33rd Street, 2019



Photograph 29. 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 (KHRI #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.

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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. The Merchants National Bank (KHRI #177-3265) is an excellent representation of a tall office building.

F. RELIGIOUS FACILITIES

Following World War II, religious congregations quickly recovered from the wartime economy and government-imposed restrictions of prior years.¹²⁴ 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."¹²⁵ 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.¹²⁶ 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.¹²⁷ 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.¹²⁸ 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 a 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

¹²⁴ 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.

¹²⁵ Gretchen Buggeln, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015; Kindle Loc 208.

¹²⁶ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 526.

¹²⁷ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 672.

¹²⁸ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 526-1091.

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parking lot and yard-like settings – almost residential in nature.¹²⁹

In the *Suburban Church*, Buggeln 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 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.”¹³⁰ 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.

In Topeka, the Faith Lutheran Church (KHRI #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 (KHRI #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.”¹³¹ 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.”¹³² Thus, the overall design of the church began with the interior arrangement of space of the worship *space*.

¹²⁹ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 1942.

¹³⁰ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 1978.

¹³¹ Gretchen Buggeln, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015; Kindle Loc 245.

¹³² Rifkind 1998; p.191.

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Photograph 30. 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."¹³³

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 31. 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 congregate seating and the pulpit rather than the altar.¹³⁴ 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.¹³⁵

Topeka's Mid-Century Modern churches include representations of both the axial and centralized plans. However, the axial plan seems to be more prolific. Constructed in 1949 and designed by architects Griest & Ekdahl, the

¹³³ Mark A. Torgerson, *An Architecture of Immanence: Architecture for Worship and Ministry Today*, Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007; p.96.

¹³⁴ Rifkind 1998; p.206.

¹³⁵ Rifkind 1998; p.206.

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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 (KHRI #177-4857) sanctuary addition completed in 1958.



Photograph 32. Interior of Sanctuary of First Christian Church (KHRI #177-4858)

The centralized plan is best represented by the First Christian Church (KHRI #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."¹³⁶ 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."¹³⁷ 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."¹³⁸ Finally, the sanctuary is adorned by 12 art-glass windows that outline the faith of the Christian community.

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 (KHRI #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 alter or chancel.

¹³⁶ 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.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

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Photograph 33. Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (177-4854)

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 (KHRI #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.



Photograph 34. First Assembly of God (177-4852)

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.¹⁴⁰

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

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

¹³⁹ Buggeln 2015; Kindle Loc 2105.

¹⁴⁰ Bryan 1969.

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construction that featured wide flexibility for interior spaces.¹⁴¹ 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.¹⁴²

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 centers.¹⁴³ 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.¹⁴⁴

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.”¹⁴⁵ 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 &

¹⁴¹ Brenda Spencer, “Historic Public Schools of Kansas, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form,” United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005.

¹⁴² 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

¹⁴³ Spencer 2005; Section E Pages 24-25.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*; Section F page 30-33.

¹⁴⁵ “Name to Honor A.J. Stout,” *Topeka Daily Capital*, 6 April, 1954.

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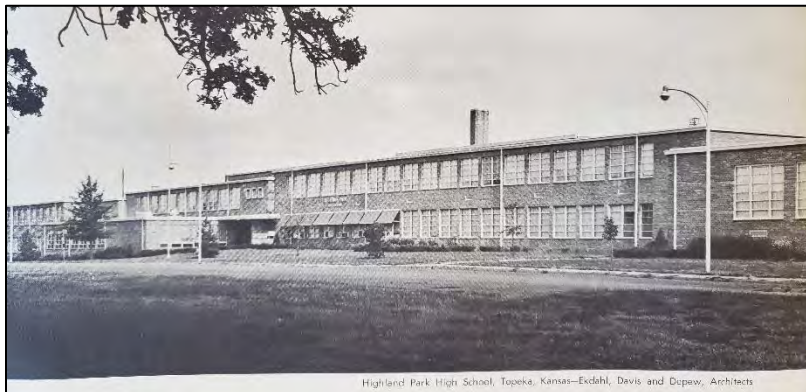
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Ekdahl and built in 1950, Topeka's Highland Park High School, initially known as Rural High School No.10 is a fine two-story representation. All reflect the functionalism in design emphasized by the International style.



Photograph 35. Highland Park High School, 1950
 Photograph provided by Civium Architects

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).¹⁴⁶

The Garvey Fine Arts Center (KHRI #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.

¹⁴⁶ Martha Imparato, "Chapter 2: Washburn University History," prepared by Mabee Library Special Collections Librarian/Archivist

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Photograph 36. Henderson Learning Center, nd
 Source: Washburn.edu

H. RAILROAD-RELATED BUILDINGS

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 (KHRI #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.¹⁴⁷ 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 the 1950s and 1960s, with the majority favoring Modernist tenets.¹⁴⁸ 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

¹⁴⁷ The Great American Stations, <https://www.greatamericanstations.com/stations/topeka-ks-top/> accessed February 2020.

¹⁴⁸ Rifkind 1998; 105-106.

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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.¹⁴⁹

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.¹⁵⁰ 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.”¹⁵¹ 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.¹⁵²

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 (KHRI #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

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.2-1.

¹⁵⁰ 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.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*; p. 2-86.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*; p. 2-86-87.

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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 (KHRI #177-4847) and Central Park Apartments (KHRI #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 37. 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 high-rise 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 38. Jackson Towers, 2004
From KHRI Digital Record (177-2710)

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Topeka's Modernist Architects: 1945 to 1975

As a conclusion to the architectural context, 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 is not among the 55 pre-selected properties for the 2019-2020 Mid-Century Modern Survey in Topeka, but was identified through a review of KHRI previously recorded properties. A building with an asterisk indicates that it was surveyed during the 2019-2020 survey.

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

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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 a 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, Greist formed his owned 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,

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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. Loebsock & Associates, and later as the Williamson-Loebsock & 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 Johson (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-Loebsock Architects where he helped in the design of many schools. He joined

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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.¹⁵³

Mid-century Modern Surveyed properties in Topeka

*Topeka Savings Association (177-3273), 1973

*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 1970.¹⁵⁴ 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).

WORKING INVENTORY – MODERNIST BUILDINGS IN TOPEKA, KANSAS

Properties Surveyed During the 2019-2020 Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architectural Survey in Topeka

Commerce-Related:

1629 Medford Avenue (KHRI #177-4820) (1949)

HTK Architecture Office Building (KHRI #177-4822), 2900 MacVicar Avenue (1966)

Creditor's Service Bureau Building (KHRI #177-4823), 3410 SW Van Buren Street (1967)

3400 SW Van Buren Street (KHRI #177-4824) (1978)

Prudential and State Farm Insurance Office Building (KHRI #177-4825), 220 SW 33rd Street (1960)

Falley's Meat Market (KHRI #177-3394), 3120 S. Kansas Avenue (1962)

Car Dealership (KHRI 177-4827), 400 SE 29th Street (1970)

Car Dealership (KHRI #177-4829), 2020 SE 29th Street (1965)

Restaurant (KHRI #177-4830), 1005 NW Topeka Blvd. (1960)

Car Wash and Auto Supply (KHRI #177-4832), 1903 NW Topeka Blvd. (1945)

Motel (KHRI #177-4833), 117 NE Highway 24 (1953)

Bank (KHRI #177-4835), 901 SW Topeka Blvd. (1964)

Bank (KHRI #177-4834), 1035 Topeka Blvd. (1960)

Hanover Pancake House (KHRI #177-3088), 1034 S. Kansas Avenue (1969)

¹⁵³ William D. Groth, Obituary 2014, Trinity Presbyterian Church

¹⁵⁴ "New VA Long-Term Nursing Home on Tap," *The Marysville Advocate*, 30 July 1970.

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Kansas Power & Light Company Building (KHRI #177-3238), 818 S. Kansas Avenue (1962)
Southwest Bell Telephone Company Building (KHRI #177-3274), 823 SE Quincy Street (1951)
Topeka Savings Association (KHRI #177-3273), 800 SE Quincy Street (1973)
Merchants National Bank (KHRI #177-3265), 800 SW Jackson Street (1969)
Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building (KHRI #177-4837), 220 SE 6th Avenue (1969)
Thacher Building (KHRI #177-4838), 217 SE 4th Street (1967)
American Home Life Insurance Company Building (KHRI #177-5400-01947), 400 S. Kansas St (1970)
Topeka Capital Journal Building (KHRI #177-4839), 616 SE Jefferson Street (1963)
Jayhawk Motor Company Dealership (KHRI #177-4842), 700 SW 6th Avenue (1953)
1710 SW 10th Avenue (KHRI #177-4848) (1965)
Hogan Building (KHRI #177-4849), 2200 SW 10th Avenue (1960)
Bobo's Drive-In (KHRI #177-3402), 2300 SW 10th Avenue (1948)
2318 SW 10th Avenue (KHRI #177-4850) (1962)
4201 SW 15th Street (KHRI #177-4856) (1968)
Restaurant (KHRI #177-4860), 1216 SW Lakeside Drive (1960)
Gage Bowl (KHRI #177-4861), 4142 SW Huntoon Street (1961)
Restaurant (KHRI #177-4862), 4140 SW Huntoon Street (1960)
First National Bank (KHRI #177-4863), 3825 SW 29th Street (1975)
3100 SW Harrison Street (KHRI #177-4864) (1965)

Government Buildings

Kansas State Office Building (KHRI #177-3153), 915 SW Harrison Street (1957) PENDING
INDIVIDUAL NOMINATION

Topeka Fire Dept. Headquarters/Station No. 3 (KHRI #177-4841), 324 SE Jefferson St. (1960)
Gage Center Station Post Office (KHRI #177-4855), 1430 SW Woodhull Street (1966)

Religious:

Grace Evangelical United Brethren Church (KHRI #177-4854), 2627 SW Western Avenue (1962)
First Assembly of God (KHRI #177-4852), 500 SW 27th Street (1962)
Otterbein Evangelical United Brethren Church (KHRI #177-4851), 2915 SW 8th Avenue (1954)
First Congregational Church (KHRI #177-4821), 1701 SW Collins Street (1949)
Faith Lutheran Church (KHRI #177-4857), 1716 SW Gage Blvd (1948)
First Christian Church (KHRI #177-4858), 1880 SW Gage Blvd (1969)
Trinity Presbyterian Church (KHRI #177-4859), 4746 SW 21st Street (1954)

Education-Related:

A.J. Stout Elementary School (KHRI #177-4818), 2303 SW College Street (1955)
Avondale East Elementary School (KHRI #177-4853), 455 SE Golf Park Blvd. (1954)

Transportation-Related (Passenger)

Santa Fe Railway, Topeka Passenger Depot (KHRI #177-4840), 500 Holliday Place (1950)

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Apartment Buildings:

Kevin Arms Apartments (KHRI #177-4844), 1221 SW Western Avenue (1961)
Cowan Apartments (KHRI #177-4845), 1300 SW Fillmore Street (1963)
Park Plaza Apartments (KHRI #177-4847), 1275 SW Fillmore Street (1957)

Other

Elliot White Concert Hall (KHRI #4819), 1700 SW Jewell Street (1968)
Menninger Education Center (KHRI #177-4683) 2209 SW 29th Street (1956) PENDING INDIVIDUAL
NOMINATION
Kansas State Teachers Association (KHRI #177-4843), 715 SW 10th Avenue (1954)

**Additional Notable Mid-Century Modern Properties Identified through Research and Earlier
Surveys**

Kanas Judicial Center (KHRI #177-2969), 301 SW 10th Avenue (1972)

Church of the Assumption School (KHRI #177-3410), 735 SW Jackson Street (1954), contributing
resource to the *Church of the Assumption Historic District*

Capital Federal Building (KHRI #177-3235), 700 S. Kansas Avenue (1961) noncontributing element to
the *South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District* due to lack of integrity.

Credit Union 1 Building (KHRI #177-2218), 610 SW 10TH ST (1970)

Dairy Queen, Walk-Up Store (KHRI #177-3235), 1700 SW MEDFORD AVE (1948)

Drive-In and Diner (KHRI #177-2159), 1301 SW 6th Street (c.1960)

Woolworth Building (KHRI #177-3217) 627-631 S KANSAS AVE (1948), contributing element to the
South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District

Herbert R. Lundgren Elementary School (KHRI #177-2120), 1020 NE FOREST AVE (1949)

Holland Student Service Center (KHRI #177-2219), 918 SW 10th Street (1955)

Jackson Towers (KHRI #177-2710), 1122 SW Jackson Street (1970)

Kansas Judicial Center (KHRI #177-2969), 1100 SW HARRISON ST (1972)

Landmark Plaza Apartments (KHRI #177-2830), 1000 S KANSAS AVE (c.1970)

Mount Olive Methodist Episcopal Church (KHRI #177-4812), 1196 SW BUCHANAN ST (1975)

Townsite Plaza (KHRI #177-5400-01953), 534 S. Kansas Avenue (1969)

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(former) Jawhawk Motel (KHRI #177-3143), US Highway 24

Highland Park High School (1950)

Shawnee County Club, date unknown

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ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Significance

The property types related to the historic contexts presented in Section E 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 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 contribution 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

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- **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

Ten property types, some with multiple sub-types, were identified during the 2019-2020 *Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architectural Survey* 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 E, Architectural Context.

- I. **Wayside Commercial Architecture**
 - Shopping Center/Strip Mall
 - Roadside Restaurants
 - Drive-In
 - Walk-Up
 - Indoor Walk-Up with Dining
 - Dine-In
- II. **Bowling Alley**
- III. **Financial Institution**
- IV. **Office Buildings (includes government administration)**
 - Small (1-2 stories)
 - Moderate to Large (2-9 stories)
 - Tall Office Buildings (10+ stories)
- V. **Religious Facilities**

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- VI. Public Schools
- VII. Higher Education Buildings
- VIII. Transportation-Related
- IX. Government (non-administration)
- X. Multi-Family Apartments

Name of Property Type: 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

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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.

Name of Property Type: Bowling Alley

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,

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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 alterations 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

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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.

Name of Property Type: 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

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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

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building ineligible.

Name of Property Type: 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.

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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.

Name of Property Type: 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

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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

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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 though 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.

Name of Property Type: 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

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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

¹⁵⁵ Spencer 2005; Section F Page 34.

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integrity.”¹⁵⁶

Name of Property Type: 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, 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

¹⁵⁶ Spencer 2005; Section F Page 39.

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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.

Name of Property Type: 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.

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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

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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.

Name of Property Type: Government Buildings (Non-Administrative)

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 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

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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

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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.

Name of Property Type: 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

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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 within incompatible materials. Additions to a property that obscure primary elevations, entryways, or minimize its character-defining features will render a building ineligible.

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G. Geographical Data

The 2020 city limits of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The survey of 1945-1975 non, single-family residential resources in Topeka involved the survey and documentation of 55 buildings pre-selected by the Topeka Landmarks Commission as notable properties conveying a wide range of Modernist styles and building types. The buildings pre-selected by the Landmarks Commission for the survey was not all-inclusive. Several additional notable mid-century buildings in Topeka were previously documented and excluded from the 2019-2020 survey project. Others survive that have not yet been documented.

The Modernist period in Topeka 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 1970s and likely includes later resources that might be potentially eligible for the NRHP in the coming years.

The historic context statement is based on research performed by the principal investigator, Jaime Destefano, during the 2019/2020 architectural survey. Research was conducted at the Topeka Room of the Shawnee County Public Library and the Kansas Historical Society State Archives. Additional resources reviewed include Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, City Directories, and the Shawnee County Tax Assessor Records. These assisted in confirming dates of construction, historic building footprints and materials, as well as early businesses and property owners. Available City development and management plans were reviewed to obtain a greater understanding of the outward expansion of the City during the mid-20th century, including patterns of development and Urban Renewal initiatives.

The principal investigator, Jaime Destefano, attempted to identify additional notable buildings within the city limits that contribute to the City's expansive collection of Mid-Century Modern resources. The Kansas Historical Society Inventory ("KHRI") was accessed to review previously documented historic resources dating to the period of significance. KHRI revealed hundreds of previously surveyed properties constructed between 1945 and 1975. 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. Further research might confirm that these two buildings are a direct result of Urban Renewal relocation initiatives. The additional properties identified through the KHRI review are included in the Working Inventory presented in Section E.

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The principal investigator attended meetings with local architectural firms known to have contributed to the Mid-Century Modern architectural heritage of Topeka. The meetings were arranged by Tim Paris, Topeka Historic Preservation Planner. Civium Architects, which was founded in 1946 as Griest & Ekdahl, is responsible for the design of five known Mid-Century Modern buildings that were surveyed during the 2019-2020 project (see Section E, *Modernist Architects*). HTK Architects was founded in 1958 in Topeka. Four of the surveyed properties are known to be HTK designs, including the former HTK Architects Office Building at 2900 SW MacVicar Avenue.

This National Register multiple property document can be utilized by interested citizens or groups to propose or prepare a range of National or Kansas Register nominations. Two individual National Register nominations for surveyed properties are pending listing – the Dr. Karl & Jeanetta Lyle Menninger Education Center (KHRI #177-4683), constructed in 1965 in the International Style; and the Kansas State Office Building (KHRI #177-3153), a tall office building completed in 1957 and reflecting Miesian principles. Two additional properties will be individually nominated as part of this multiple property documentation nomination: the HTK Architects Office Building (#177-4822), constructed in 1966; and the Park Plaza Apartments (KHRI #177-4847), completed in 1957.

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

 X New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Mid-Century Modern Non-Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka, 1945-1975

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Community Planning and Development in Topeka: 1945-1975

Architectural Trends of Topeka's Mid-Century Modern Architecture: Forms, Materials, Styles, and Modernist
Architects from 1945 to 1975

C. Form Prepared by:

name/title	<u>Jaime Destefano</u>		
organization	<u>JLD Preservation Consulting, LLC</u>		
street & number	<u>231 Riverside Drive</u>		
city or town	<u>Nashville</u>	state <u>TN</u>	zip code <u>37206</u>
e-mail	<u>JLD.PreservationConsulting@gmail.com</u>		
telephone	<u>404-694-2066</u>	date <u>July 2020</u>	

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Signature of certifying official

Title

Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Mid-Century Modern Non Single-Family Residential
Architecture in Topeka, 1945-1975

Kansas

Name of Multiple Property Listing

State

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Create a Table of Contents and list the page numbers for each of these sections in the space below.

Provide narrative explanations for each of these sections on continuation sheets. In the header of each section, cite the letter, page number, and name of the multiple property listing. Refer to *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* for additional guidance.

Page Numbers

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

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(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

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I. Major Bibliographical References

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(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1: 60-100 hours (generally existing multiple property submissions by paid consultants and by Maine State Historic Preservation staff for in-house, individual nomination preparation)
- Tier 2: 120 hours (generally individual nominations by paid consultants)
- Tier 3: 230 hours (generally new district nominations by paid consultants)
- Tier 4: 280 hours (generally newly proposed MPS cover documents by paid consultants).

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting reports. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name HTK Architects Office Building

Other names/site number Golden Rule Remodeling; KHRI #177-4822

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975

2. Location

Street & number 2900 SW MacVicar Avenue

City or town Topeka

State Kansas Code KS County Shawnee

Code SN

Zip code 66611

not for publication
vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO

Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

HTK Architects Office Building
Name of Property

Shawnee, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
2	1	structures
2	0	objects
5	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Wrightian

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: WOOD/cedar

Concrete

roof: Asphalt

other: Glass

HTK Architects Office Building
Name of Property

Shawnee, Kansas
County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources, if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary

The HTK Architects Office Building, located at 2900 SW MacVicar Avenue in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas, is a single-story building on a raised basement. Designed by HTK Architects in 1966, the building served as the firm's professional office until 2013 when they relocated to downtown Topeka. The building is a rare example of Wrightian-inspired office buildings in Topeka. The building combines Modernist construction methods, materials, and principles with the "organic" design elements often employed by Frank Lloyd Wright, particularly the integration of nature into the overall design. The rectangular building with flat roof is characterized by contrasting broad reinforced concrete exterior walls, vertical cedar board siding, and expansive window walls. The building and site demonstrate a clear integration of nature into the design. The interior of the building consists of gypsum walls, ceilings, and carpeted floors. This nomination includes the entire property on which the HTK Architects Office Building was built due to the clear integration of nature into its overall design. The building remains relatively unchanged since its construction, retaining the Modernist design elements employed by HTK Architects. The few alterations include pushing the recessed entry door further out to accommodate a small interior lobby, and the addition of a kitchen, bathroom, and closet to the basement. Despite these alteration, the original design intent is very much intact. In addition to the building, the property includes two contributing structures and two contributing objects that are contemporaneous to the construction of the building. The property includes one non-contributing structure – a decorative wood privacy fence built post-2016 to conceal a non-historic handicap ramp.

Elaboration

Setting and Site: The HTK Architects Office Building is located in the northeast corner of Kansas in the city of Topeka, which is sited along the southern bank of the Kansas River. Topeka is similar to many Midwest towns with an older urban core surrounded by newer suburban sprawl. The office building is located within the South Topeka Area neighborhood, which and is roughly bounded by SW Gage Boulevard, SW 29th Street, SW Burlingame Road, and I-470 to the south. The building is located approximately 3.25 miles southwest of downtown Topeka at the southwest corner of the intersection of SW MacVicar Avenue and SW 29th Street. This intersection is characterized by a small collection of office buildings within a largely residential sector of the city associated with the City's post-World War II "Annexation Fever." The property is located at 2900 SW MacVicar Avenue. Adjacent to the east are two 1960s small- to moderate-sized office buildings, including the Menninger Education Center (KHRI #177-4683), which was constructed in 1965 and has an individual National Register nomination pending. The surrounding residential neighborhood similarly dates to the 1960s and features a good collection of ranch houses.

The HTK Architects Office Building is centrally sited within a 0.58-acre parcel of land (Figure E). The building rests atop a small hill that slopes downward toward the intersection. The property is irregular in shape and characterized by a natural setting that is partially wooded with a creek bed or natural drainage feature meandering in a northwesterly direction toward the intersection of the two roads. A low stone retaining wall follows the southwestern edge of the drainage. A stone bridge with metal railing crosses the creek bed, connecting the property to the rear of the office buildings to the northeast. It is believed that the bridge and retaining wall are contemporaneous with the 1960s development of this area and are both contributing structures to the property.

The small office building is oriented in a north-south direction, parallel to SW MacVicar Avenue. The building is setback from MacVicar Avenue by 40 feet, whereas its setback from the busier SW 29th Street is approximately 130 feet. The siting of the building atop a hill and its deep setback from SW 29th Street creates a more residential and natural setting than the two office buildings to the northeast that front SW 29th Street. The HTK Building faces south toward a small paved parking lot.

The exterior design and landscaping immediately surrounding the building evokes a deliberate attempt to incorporate nature into the design of the property. Along the front of the building is an 8-foot wide raised planting bed framed by bush-hammered concrete. A wooden walkway bridge extends from the center of the façade (south), crossing above the planting

HTK Architects Office Building

Name of Property

Shawnee, Kansas

County and State

area. A concrete handicap ramp (post-2016) extends along the western plant bed and a concrete sidewalk is along the eastern plant bed, wrapping around the east side of the building. Both the ramp and sidewalk connect to the parking lot to the south (Figure F). The northern side of the parking lot is lined with a concrete sidewalk. Between the concrete pathways, the yard is grassed with two mid-century light fixtures comprised of a simple round metal post and a large round globe that is tinted. The light fixtures are original to the building and shown on both the 1966 construction plan and architect rendering of the building (Figures I and J). As such, the light fixtures are considered contributing elements to the property. An approximately 4-foot high wooden privacy fence wall is along the western half of the front garden bed and walkway. This was installed in the c.2016 renovations to conceal the handicap ramp. The wall is not part of the original design, and therefore, is a non-contributing structure on the property.

Along the east side of the building, a decorative wooden fence separates concrete steps from the wall of the building, apparently concealing exterior electrical equipment. At the base of the steps was historically a small Japanese garden that was replaced with a square concrete patio during the c.2016 renovations of the building conducted by the present owners, Golden Rule Remodeling. At the north end of the patio is a raised U-shaped concrete bench wall and rectangular fire pit. North of the building, the natural partially wooded setting continues to contribute to the intended "organic" design of the building.

Exterior: The HTK Office Building is approximately 40-feet by 40-feet with a flat, built-up gravel roof with wood fascia. The building is one-story; however, due to the natural sloping down towards the rear (north), raised basement walls are exposed. The building rests on a reinforced concrete slab foundation with concrete and steel beams and piers. The basement exterior is exposed rusticated bush-hammered concrete walls visible on all elevations save but the façade. The main level, or first floor, cantilevers slightly above the raised basement. The building is characterized by its window walls along the front façade (south) and rear (north) elevations, as well as its contrast in exterior materials. Specifically, the vertically-oriented cedar siding on the first floor contrasts with the rusticated concrete walls along the basement. The architect's use of the rusticated bush-hammered concrete walls further enhances the natural feel of the building. The weathering of the concrete blends nicely with the surrounding natural setting and gives the appearance of a rock wall.

The front façade is symmetrical with a recessed central entryway flanked by tinted window walls. The window walls are framed by beams with wood fascia and are comprised of four bays of insulated sliding doors. The entry door was replaced in 2019 by a single-leaf glass door with a wide, single-light sidelight. The original door was located further to the north, which created a longer wooden walkway crossing the raised plant beds. During the 2019 renovation, the door was pushed forward to accommodate a small interior lobby. The west elevation lacks windows or door openings.

The first floor of the north elevation features a full-width window wall comprised of five bays of insulated sliding doors. At basement level, a set of five fixed windows with metal frames occupies the western half of the wall. Projecting from the west end of the rear elevation is a rusticated concrete wall. The wall acts as a privacy fence at the rear of the building. Similarly, the exterior wall occupying the eastern half of the rear extends approximately 10 feet from the east elevation. Here, the wall provides privacy to the outdoor patio on the east elevation.

On the east elevation, a large, multi-light garage bay door is located at the basement level. Its opening is original to the building and designed for a sliding door. The garage bay door was installed during the recent renovations. Perpendicular to the north of the door, a prominent rusticated concrete screen wall extends from the basement. The west elevation reveals a partially raised basement. The west wall of the basement extends approximately 10 feet from the south elevation, acting as a screen wall. The south elevation reveals a full-height basement with a rusticated concrete wall and a window wall comprised of five, metal-framed panes.

Interior: The interior of the HTK Architects Office Building retains its overall arrangement of space and design elements. The first floor rooms are arranged around a central reception area, and the large open drafting room occupies the full rear third of the floor. The approximate 8-foot ceilings are painted gypsum board panels and the floors are concrete. In some spaces, recent carpeting was installed atop the concrete floor. Interior walls are primarily drywall; however, side walls of the drafting room, office, conference room, and lobby are clad in the same vertical cedar siding as the building's exterior. Among the most distinguishing features of the interior is the use of red birch for the cabinetry, doors, and base.

Upon entry into the building from the main entrance on the front façade is a narrow entry lobby with walls clad in the vertical siding matching the exterior cladding. The lobby was historically a covered extension of the wooden walkway that crosses the raised plant beds along the front of the building. The c.2016 remodel pushed the primary entry door northward approximately four to five feet to accommodate the small waiting area. The lobby is carpeted.

HTK Architects Office Building

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Directly south of the entryway and lobby is the central reception area. Here the walls are drywall and floors carpeted. The conference room and office on either side of the lobby each contain two sets of sliding window walls. Adjacent to the north of the office is a narrow hallway with a concrete block eastern wall. Opposite this wall is a concrete vault presently used for storage. The hallway is carpeted with full-height red birch cabinets and a small kitchenette that is original to the design. The hallway leads to open drafting room occupying the north end of the first floor. The row of sliding glass doors along the north wall provide extensive natural lighting into the space. Two long rows of fluorescent lighting spans the ceiling. According to the construction drawings, the architects provided framing for a future 30-inch wide stair hall within the drafting room. The stairs were reportedly installed in the 1960s. Recent renovations removed the stairs.

At the basement level, the floors are concrete and interior steel support posts exposed. The majority of the basement walls are original vertical cedar siding matching the exterior wood siding on the first floor. The basement is primarily an open space. Ghost marks on the concrete floor that form a rectangular shape indicate the location of a former set of stairs leading from the drafting room above. The window wall on the north end of the basement strongly integrates the surrounding environment into the space, as well as provides abundant natural lighting. Recent building renovations included the addition of a kitchen, bathroom, and storage room to the basement. The kitchen occupies the south end of open space, flanked on either side by the bathroom and storage room. The walls of the additions are drywall.

Alterations: Modifications to the HTK Architects Office Building occurred during the recent renovations undertaken by the present owner, Golden Rule Remodeling. The majority of the modifications occur in the basement. Specifically, the basement features a new entry door and a garage bay door that replaced the original sliding doors. Also in the basement, the stairs leading from the drafting room on the first floor were removed and the kitchen, bathroom, and storage room installed. On the first floor, the location of the entry door was pushed forward to accommodate the small lobby and the door replaced. Within the drafting room, low walls, which are removable, were installed to create private cubicle space. Landscaping modifications include the addition of the concrete handicap ramp, the decorative wood fence/wall to hide the ramp, and the wooden enclosure of possible electrical equipment on the east elevation. In addition, the former Zen/Japanese garden was replaced with the present concrete patio with fire pit and concrete bench.

Integrity: The HTK Architects Office Building has not moved since its construction. Therefore, it retains its historic **location**. Landscaping alterations are minor and done primarily for aesthetic purposes to conceal necessary modern installations including the handicap ramp and exterior electrical or plumbing equipment. The patio addition might be considered a modern upgrade to the earlier Zen garden. The changes within the interior of the building are minor and do not affect the form, space, structure, and overall style of the property. Thus, the integrity of **materials**, **workmanship**, and **design** remain intact. The HTK Architects Office Building was built at a time during the 1960s when many buildings in the surrounding neighborhood were constructed, including office buildings fronting SW 29th Street. The area is a combination of residential, light commercial, and office construction. Despite minimal infill construction within the area, its overall **setting** remains largely intact and continues to reflect a mixed suburb contemporaneous with Topeka's extensive expansion throughout the mid-20th century. The building strongly reflects Modernist aesthetics of mid-century design, particularly the use of modern materials and building methods, and the Wrightian principles of incorporating the natural environment into the design. Together, the building, its setting and landscape elements maintain the historic **aesthetic** intended by the architects. The building was designed by prolific Topeka architects, HTK Architects, to serve as their office. The firm was the only tenant of the building for nearly 55 years, when in c.2016, they relocated their office to downtown to accommodate an expanding business. The building continues to be remembered for its **association** with the firm. Further, the new owners, who specialize in architectural remodeling, have maintained the building's use as a professional office.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Architecture

Period of Significance

1966

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

HTK Architects

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Considerations (justification)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Summary

The HTK Architects Office Building is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under the *Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka* context as an excellent example of the Small Office property type. It is nominated under Criterion C as a unique local example of Modernist architecture incorporating Wrightian principles that emphasize the integration of the natural environment into the building design. The building's overall functional form, flat roof, curtain walls, and exposed reinforced concrete walls are all distinguishing design features of Modernist architecture, specifically the International Style. The architects further incorporated components of Frank Lloyd Wright's theory of "organic architecture." The walls of sliding glass doors not only provide considerable natural lighting but are a deliberate attempt to bring the outdoors inside. The rusticated concrete exterior walls at basement level and the use of cedar cladding on the first floor further the natural aesthetic of the building. The same exterior cedar siding is used on interior walls – another "organic" design element to bring the outdoors in. The use of exterior rusticated concrete walls at the basement create the appearance of stone walls with the wood-clad first floor cantilevered above. Additional Wrightian-inspired design elements include a de-emphasized recessed entry door, distinct zones distinguished by exterior material (wood/concrete), and walls extending beyond the building to create private outdoor space. Finally, the overall design of the building includes a raised planting bed along the front façade with a wooden walkway and bridge crossing over. An original Japanese garden was replaced with a modern concrete patio with fire pit. The stone bridge at the rear of the property, which spans multiple property lines, further reflects the builder's attempt to encourage people to enjoy a natural park-like setting between office buildings. The office building, along with original landscape elements, retain a high degree of integrity.

Elaboration

Neighborhood History

The City of Topeka was first settled in the winter of 1854 when Cyrus K. Holliday and Charles Robinson traveled along the Kansas River in search of a new site for a second Kansas colony. An ideal location for the future colony was discovered on a low bluff, on the south side of the Kansas River. The settlement was named Topeka, which was incorporated as a city on February 14, 1857, with a population of 450 residents. The following year, the county seat was moved from Tecumseh to Topeka, and in 1861, the city became the permanent location of the state capital.¹

Throughout the late-19th and early-20th centuries, the city limits expanded outward as small villages, neighborhoods, and undeveloped areas were annexed into the city. By 1890, the city's population exceeded 35,000 residents, with new streetcar suburbs emerging across the city. By 1940, Topeka had reached an area of 11.6 square miles with a population of 67,833.² The corporate city limits included North Topeka on the north side of the Kansas River; the Oakland annexation at the northeast corner; the city cemetery at the southeast corner; Quinton Heights to the south; and Washburn College at the southwest corner. The western edge extended to include McVicar, High, and Summit Avenues. Lowmans Mill was adjacent to the west of the city limits and the State Insane Asylum adjacent to the northwest.

¹ Susan Ford, "Country Club Addition Neighborhood Historical Survey and Report," prepared for the City of Topeka, Kansas, March 5, 2018.

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

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.”³ 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.⁴ 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 built an impressive plant in North Topeka. The presence of the Forbes Air Base south of downtown from the late-1940s through the 1960s further contributed to the population growth and renewed expansion and annexation of residential sectors of Topeka. By 1950, the corporate limits of Topeka encompassed 12.5 square miles with the population reaching 78,791.⁵ An “annexation fever” swept across Topeka during the 1950s, more than doubling the area of the City to 36.4 square miles 1960.⁶

As the City expanded, distinct neighborhoods and wayside commercial corridors emerged. This is especially the case in South Topeka Neighborhoods where the HTK Architects Office Building is located. With the exception of a few scattered additions and neighborhoods, the area within which the office building is located remained predominantly rural until after World War II when the postwar baby boom and “annexation fever” expanded the city’s suburban neighborhoods. The Shunganunga Creek runs through the area a short distance north of the property. Four large parks (Felker, Wells, Warren, and Big Sunga), totaling more than 300 acres, are located within the South Topeka Neighborhood area. The area consists of post-war and later subdivisions, apartment complexes, schools, and several churches. Light commercial and office buildings are located along the busier thoroughfares. Constructed in 1966, the HTK Architects Office Building and its associated neighborhood are indicative of the post-World War II suburban expansion of the city of Topeka and its continued development through the 1960s.

Architecture⁷

Topeka boasts an impressive collection of Modernist architecture including a wide range of building types and distinct stylistic influences. The multitude of Mid-Century Modern buildings in Topeka is attributed not only to the “annexation fever” of the post-war period, but also the 1951 Flood, a F-5 tornado that destroyed much of the City in 1966, and Urban Renewal programs. Collectively, these four events greatly impacted the City’s built environment, with much of the new construction adopting the popular Modernist principles of the era. The HTK Architects Office Building is indicative of the impressive expansion of the City throughout the mid-20th century. Although the 1966 tornado passed just north of the property, the construction of the building does not appear to be a result of the tornado.

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

³ 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.

⁴ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier. The Suburbanization of the United States*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985; p.283.

⁵ Topeka Capital-Journal, “Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas,” *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

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

⁷ The majority of the Architectural Context is taken from the *Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975* Multiple Property Documentation Form, prepared by Jaime Destefano, the author of this nomination.

emphasize function over form, and “design based on expressing structure and use.”⁸ 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.”⁹ 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.”¹⁰ 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.¹¹ 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 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.”¹² 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.”¹³

Modernist design in Topeka generally 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. The HTK Architects Office Building is a later representation of conservative Modernist design. The building reflects elements drawn from the International Style and the Wrightian philosophies.

The International Style was popular nationwide from the 1940s through the 1970s, becoming the standard for American commercial and institutional design.¹⁴ The style emphasized technology and expression of construction methods, materials, exposed structural elements, and simplicity of form. It is from the International style that other Modernist styles, or sub-styles, are derived. Identifying features of the International style include the use of modern structural materials (concrete, glass, and steel), flat roof, balance and regularity, ribbon windows and glass curtain walls, and the general rejection of non-essential decoration. The majority of Modernist buildings in Topeka reflect some degree of International Style design features.

The Wrightian style, advocated by renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright, emphasized organic architecture and materials and the integration of nature into a building’s design. Among the identifying features of Wrightian design include the use of man-made materials such as glass, concrete, and steel juxtaposed with traditional materials such as stone and wood; flat roof; emphasis on the horizontal; natural

⁸ 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.

⁹ Rifkind p.104

¹⁰ Rifkind p.104.

¹¹ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Oil and Gas Building National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form,” National Park Service, 2013; page 8.

¹² Megan Hogan, “the Future of Modern: Federal Architecture in an Era of Change,” in *Common Ground* (Spring 2009), p.28

¹³ 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 Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Louisiana Architecture: 1945-1965, Modernist Triumphant – Commercial and Institutional Buildings, September 2009, revised February 2010.

interior lighting; distinct building zones often distinguished by contrasting materials; a de-emphasized entry; broad overhanging eaves; cantilevering; exterior walls extending beyond the building; and battered walls and tapered piers. The siting of the building within the natural setting was important in Wrightian principles. Similarly, landscaping features are often incorporated in an attempt to integrate nature into the design of the building.

Constructed in 1966, the HTK Architects Office Building was built during the later years of the Modern Movement and adopts a variety of the stylistic influences of the International Style and Wrightian principles. The International Style is visible in the overall functionality of the building, its simple boxy form, flat roof, curtain wall, reinforced concrete exterior, and substantial use of glass.

The building is best characterized by its Wrightian influences and its emphasis on the integration of nature into the building design. The walls of sliding glass doors not only provide considerable natural lighting to the interior but are a deliberate attempt to design a workspace where the exterior walls could quite literally be moved, inviting the outdoors inside. The rusticated concrete exterior walls at basement level and the use of cedar cladding on the first floor further the natural aesthetic of the building. The same exterior cedar siding is used on interior walls – another “organic” design element used to bring the outdoors in. The use of exterior rusticated concrete walls at the basement also create the appearance of stone walls with the wood-clad first floor cantilevered above. Additional Wrightian-inspired design elements include a de-emphasized recessed entry door, distinct zones distinguished by exterior material (wood versus concrete), and walls extending beyond the building to create privacy for employees to enjoy the outdoor space. Finally, the overall design of the building includes a raised planting bed along the front façade with a wooden walkway and bridge crossing over. An original Japanese garden was replaced with a modern concrete patio and fire pit. The stone bridge at the rear of the property, which spans multiple property lines, further reflects the builder’s attempt to encourage people to enjoy a natural park-like setting between office buildings. The office building, along with original landscape elements, retain a high degree of integrity.

HTK Architects occupied the office building at 2900 SW MacVicar for nearly 50 years before relocating to a large office downtown. In 2013, the building was acquired by Henry McClure. In 2016, Golden Rule Remodeling acquired the property, undertaking an impressive restoration of the building and property that honored the original architects’ historic design and landscape elements.

The HTK Architects Office Building is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture. The building remains in its original location and retains its historic integrity and character-defining features. Further, the building is a rare illustration of Modernist architecture in Topeka that draws upon Wrightian principles and is the only known non-residential example in the City. The building meets the eligibility requirements for Small Office Buildings as outlined in the *Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka*.

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.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Destefano, Jaime L., *Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975* Multiple Property Documentation Form, prepared for the City of Topeka, 2019-2020.

Falk, Bryan, Falk Architects, "2209 SW 29th Street National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form," National Park Service, August 2019.

Ford, Susan. "Country Club Addition Neighborhood Historical Survey and Report," prepared for the City of Topeka, Kansas, March 5, 2018.

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

Pettis, Emily 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.

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.

(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 39.014614 -95.70606
Latitude: Longitude:

3 _____
Latitude: Longitude:

2 _____
Latitude: Longitude:

4 _____
Latitude: Longitude:

OR

UTM References

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1 _____
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Located in the Moss subdivision in the Southwest Topeka Area neighborhood, Block A, Lot 7+ and N70 of Lot 8, in Section 13, Township 12, Range 15. Beginning at the northeast corner of the lot at SW 29th Street and thence southeasterly 195 feet, thence southwesterly 60 feet. The boundary then continues in a southerly direction for approximately 70 feet. The boundary then travels west approximately 112 feet to form the southern boundary of the property. The boundary then travels in a northerly direction approximately 252 feet to the northwest corner of the property. The boundary then travels 24 feet in an easterly direction along SW 29th Street to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated boundary includes the entire parcel which is historically associated with the HTK Architects Office Building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jaime L. Destefano, MSHP

organization JLD Preservation Consulting LLC

date July 21, 2020

street & number PO Box 445

telephone 404-694-2066

city or town Fentress

state TX

zip code 78622

e-mail JLD.PreservationConsulting@gmail.com

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Matt Vicent, Golden Rule Remodeling

street & number 2900 SW MacVicar Avenue

telephone 785-232-2439

city or town Topeka

state Kansas

zip code 66611

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

Name of Property: HTK Architects Office Building
City or Vicinity: Topeka
County: Shawnee State: Kansas
Photographer: Jaime Destefano, MSHP
Date Photographed: November 13, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 20. Front Façade (South Elevation), photographer facing north
- 2 of 20. Front Façade (South Elevation), photographer facing north
- 3 of 20. Southeast Oblique, photographer facing northwest
- 4 of 20. Southwest Oblique, photographer facing northeast
- 5 of 20. Northwest Oblique, photographer facing southeast
- 6 of 20. North Elevation, photographer facing south
- 7 of 20. East Oblique, photographer facing northwest
- 8 of 20. Raised Plant Beds along Front Façade (south elevation), photographer facing west
- 9 of 20. Rear patio, stone retaining wall, and stone bridge, photographer facing northeast
- 10 of 20. Interior reception, photographer facing northeast
- 11 of 20. Interior reception and waiting lobby, photographer facing southeast
- 12 of 20. Conference Room, photographer facing southeast
- 13 of 20. Front Office, photographer facing southeast
- 14 of 20. Drafting Room, photographer facing northwest
- 15 of 20. Drafting Room, photographer facing east
- 16 of 20. Drafting Room, photographer facing southwest
- 17 of 20. Work Room Cabinetry, photographer facing southwest
- 18 of 20. Hall and Kitchenette, photographer facing northeast
- 19 of 20. Basement, photographer facing northwest
- 20 of 20. Basement – Modern Kitchen and Small Room Additions, photographer facing south

Figures

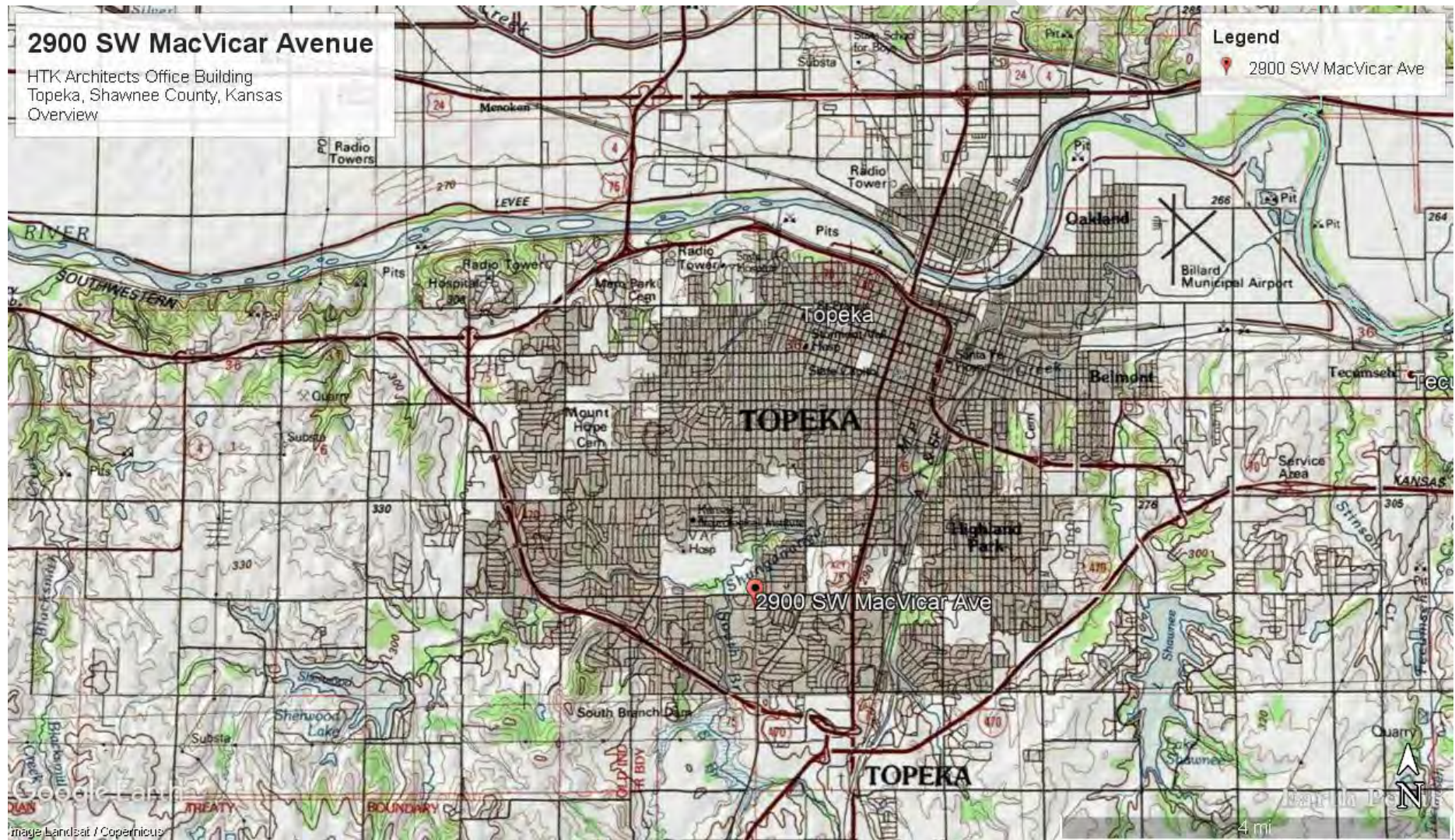
Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.

- a. HTK Architects in Front of Their New Office Building, 1966
- b. Topographic Map
- c. Enlarged Topographic Map

- d. Aerial Map
- e. Enlarged Aerial Map with Building Coordinates
- f. Site Plan showing Exterior Photograph Locations
- g. Interior Floor Plan with Photograph Locations – First Floor
- h. Interior Floor Plan with Photograph Locations - Basement
- i. 1966 Architect Rendering
- j. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Site Plan
- k. Construction Drawing, 1966 – First Floor Plan
- l. Door Schedule and Room Finish Schedule
- m. Construction Drawing, 1966 - Foundation Plan
- n. Construction Drawing, 1966 – First Floor Framing Plan
- o. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Exterior Elevations
- p. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Typical Wall Section
- q. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Entrance Stair Detail
- r. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Aluminum Sliding Glass Door Details
- s. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Interior Door Detail
- t. Construction Drawing, 1966 – East Elevation of East Storage Unit with Kitchenette
- u. Construction Drawing, 1966 – West Elevation of West Storage Unit
- v. Construction Drawing, 1966 – East Elevation of Workroom Cabinets
- w. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Beam & Columns Details



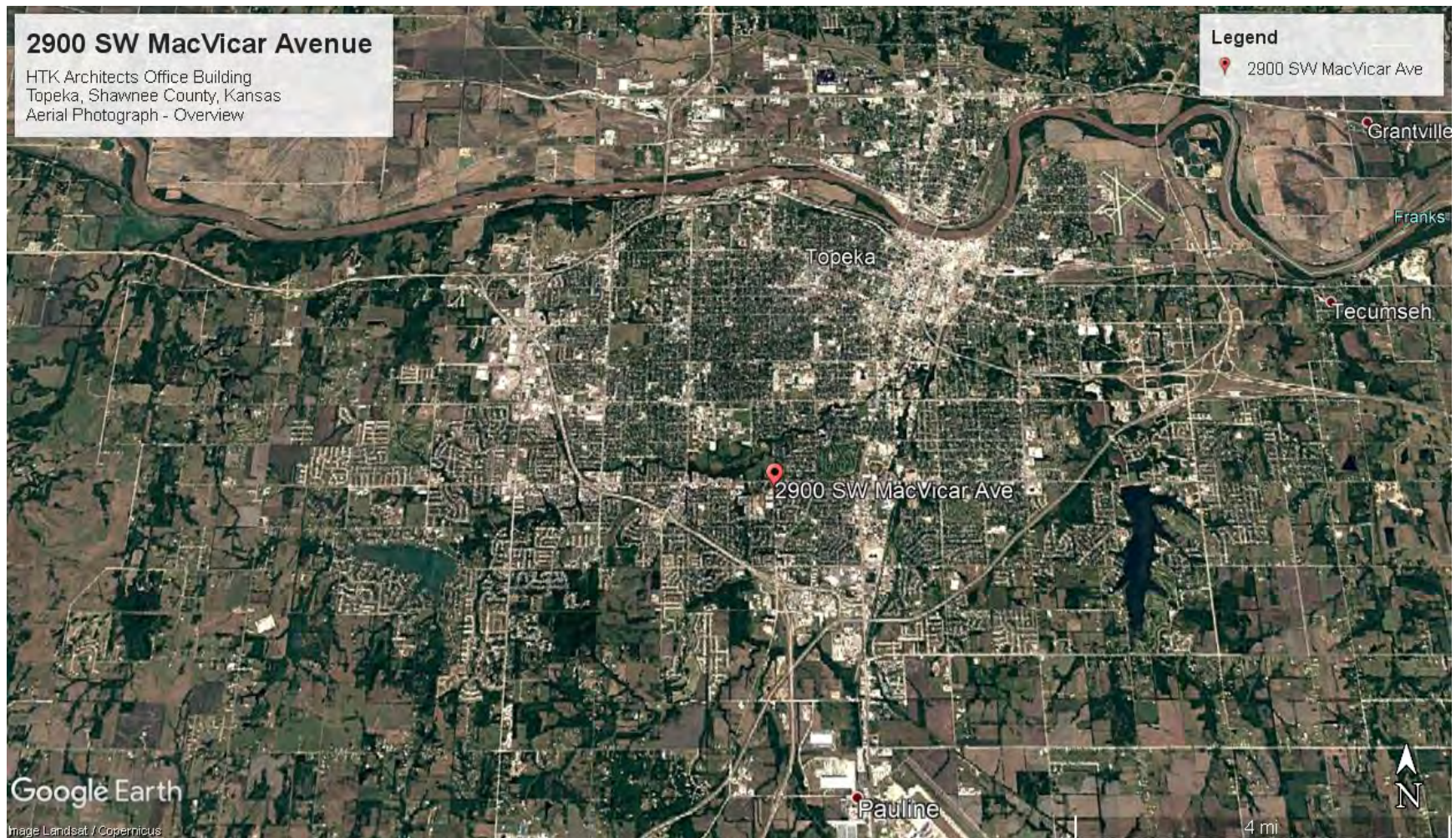
A. 1966 Photograph of HTK Architects in Front of Their New Office Building, 1966



B. Topographic Map – Overview



C. Enlarged Topographic Map Showing Building Location



D. Google Earth Aerial Photograph – Overview

2900 SW MacVicar Avenue

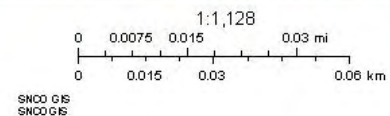


2/12/2020, 9:35:12 AM

Parcels

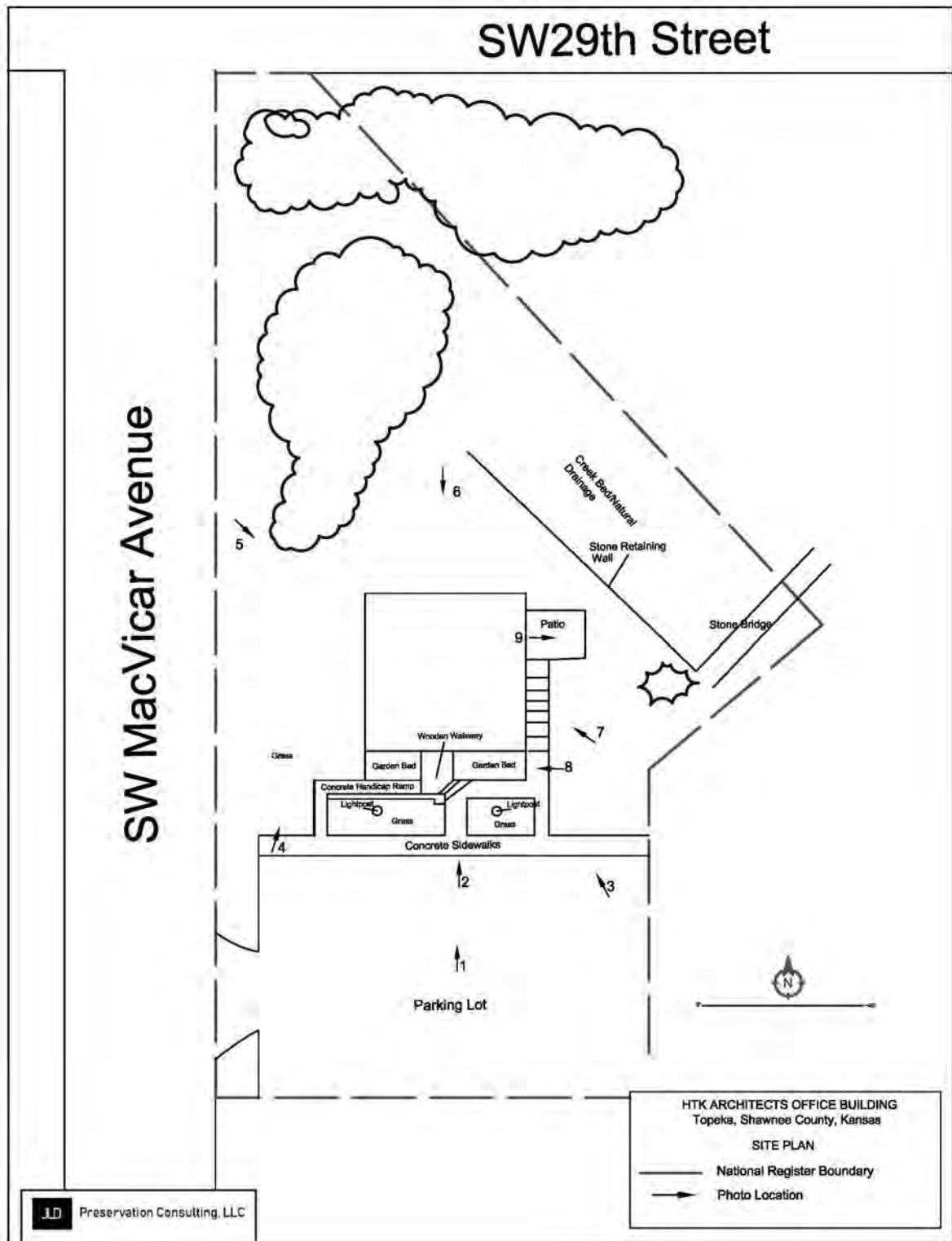
* Approximate Center of Building

Coordinates:
Latitude 39.014614
Longitude -95.70606

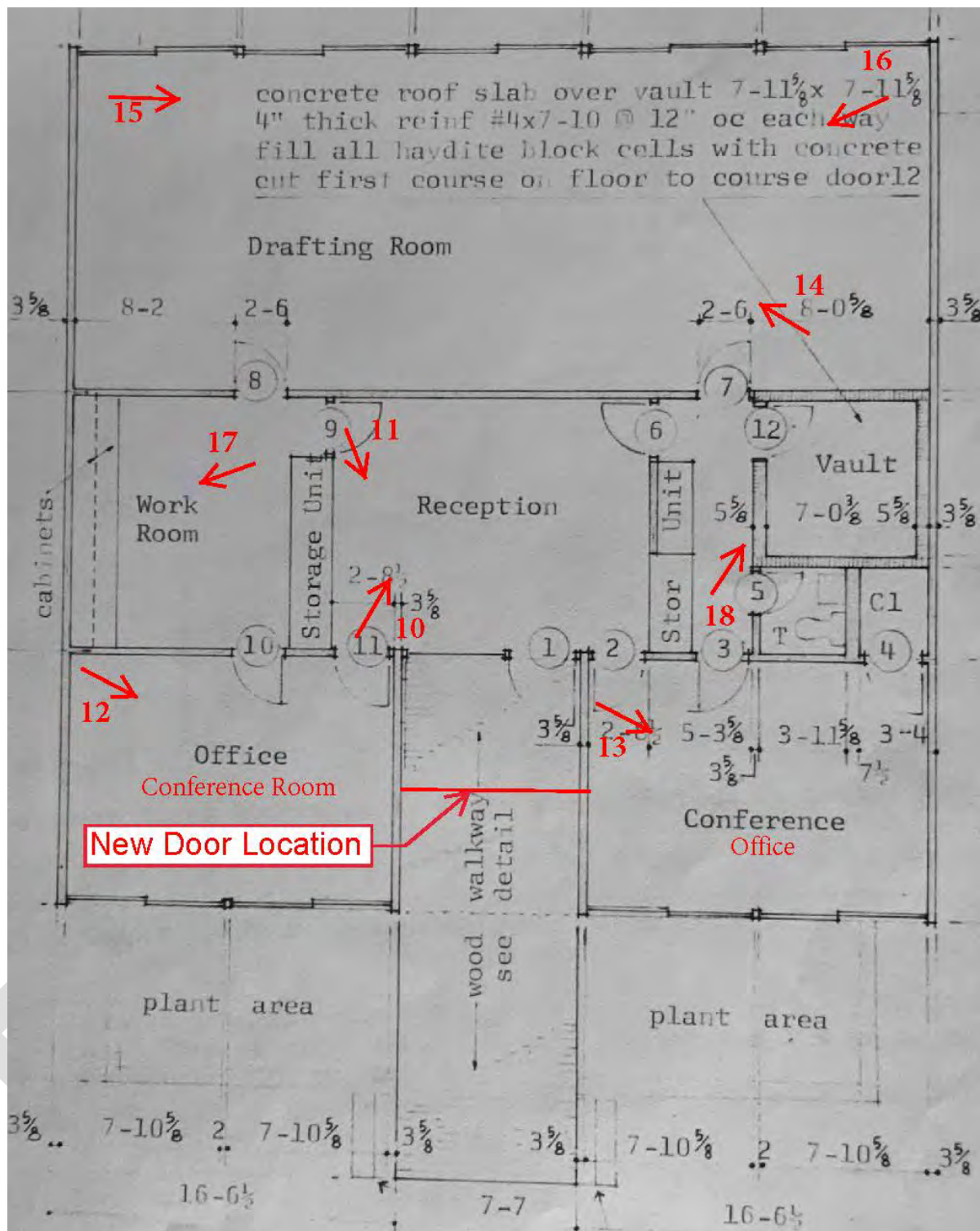


All map data subject to Snohomish County GIS data disclaimer. Parcel lines are not necessarily accurate and should not be used for legal purposes. SNCO GIS

E. Parcel Bounding with Building Coordinates and Aerial Underlay



F. Site Plan with Exterior Photograph Locations

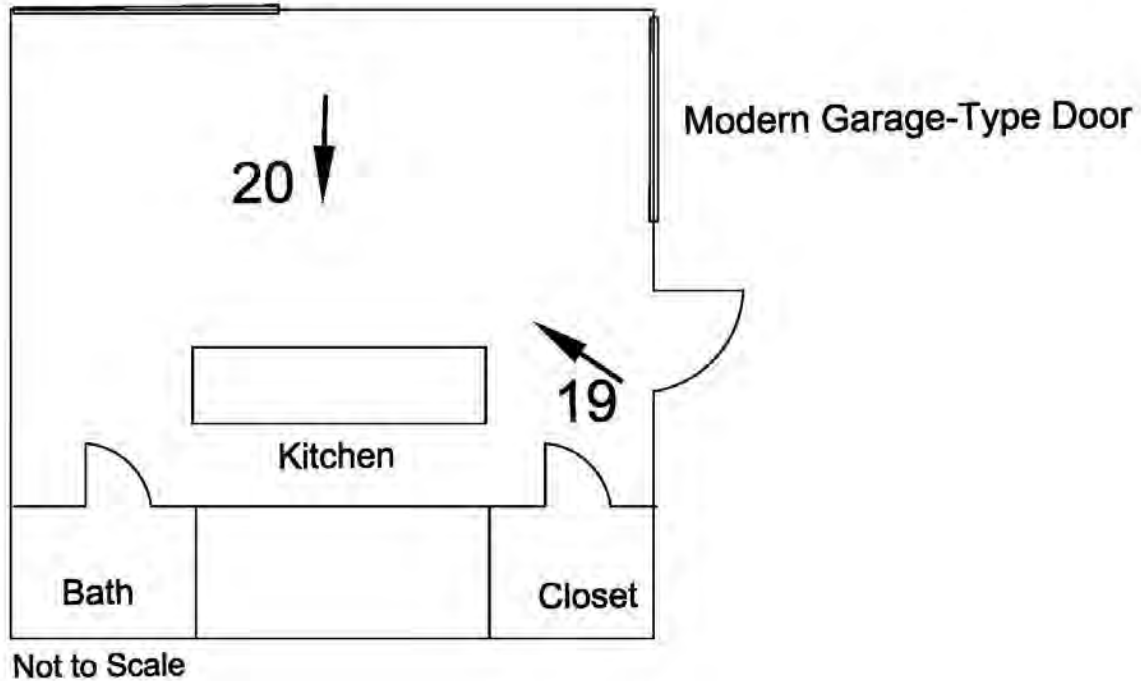


G. Original Interior Floor Plan (1966) with Photographs
Changes: The entry door was shifted forward to accommodate small lobby; Conference Room and Office locations changed

HTK Architects Office Building
Name of Property

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5 Full-Height Windows



H. Sketch Map of Basement with Interior Photographs

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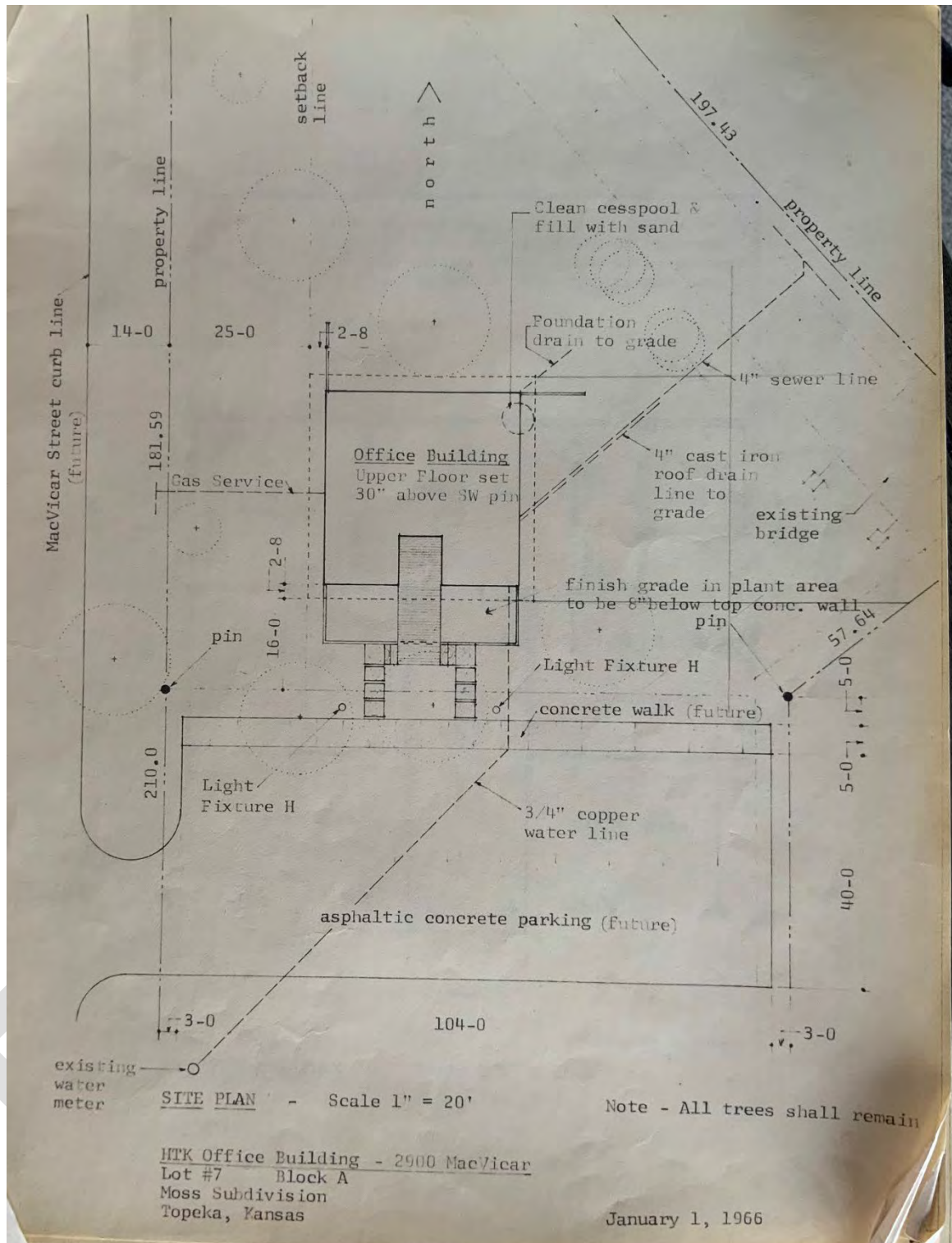
I. Architect Rendering of HTK Architects Office Building, 1966

HTK Architects Office Building

Shawnee, Kansas

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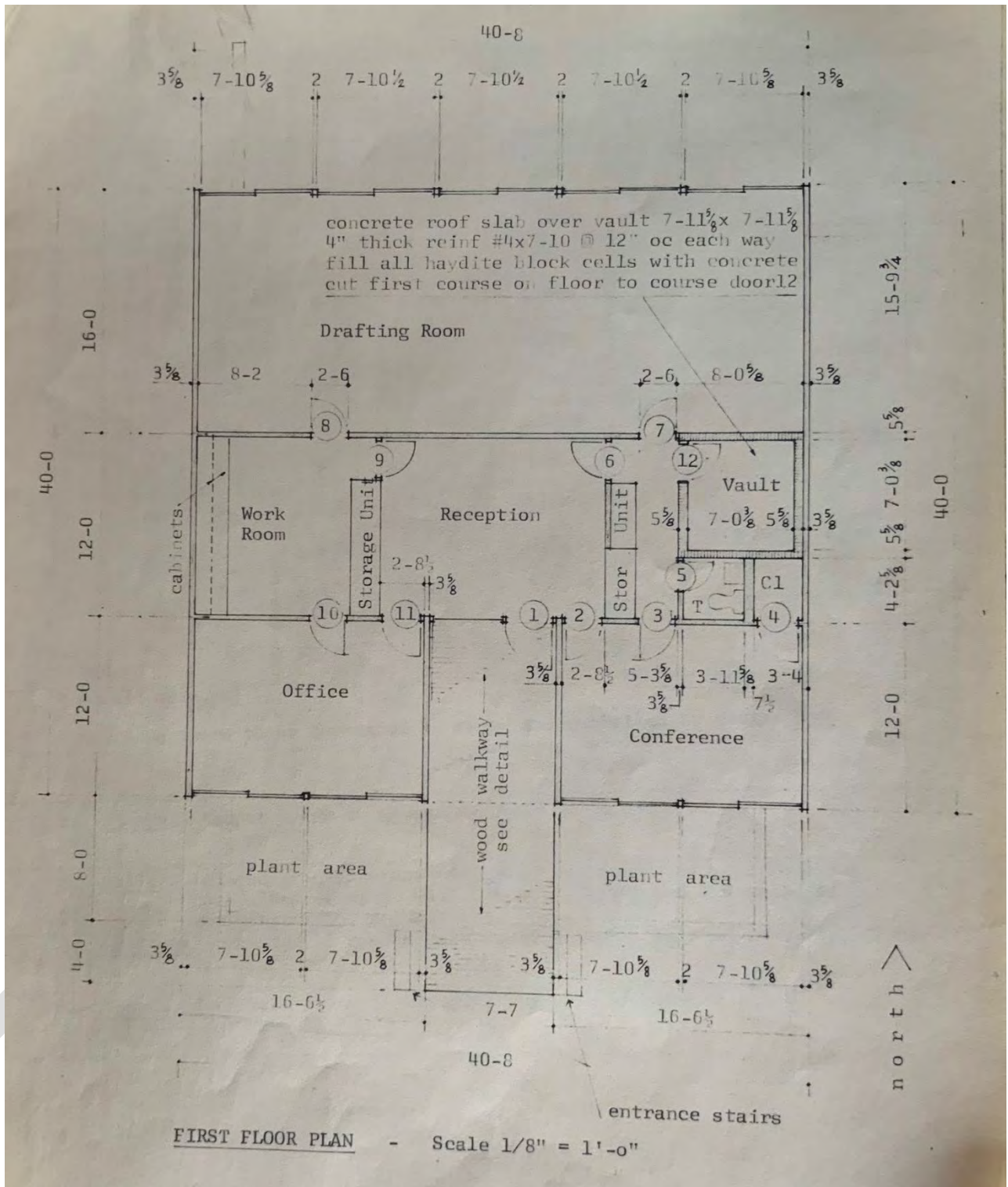
J. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Site Plan

HTK Architects Office Building

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K. Construction Drawing, 1966 – First Floor Plan

HTK Architects Office Building

Name of Property

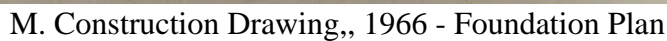
Shawnee, Kansas

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DOOR SCHEDULE							
Number	Width	Height	Thickness	Door Mtl	Frame Mtl	Core	Remarks
1	3-0	8-0	1 3/4	Birch	Birch	S	
2	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
3	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
4	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
5	2-0	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
6	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
7	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
8	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
9	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
10	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
11	2-6	8-0	1 3/8	Birch	Birch	H	
12	2-6	6-8	1 3/4	H.M.	H.M.	-	* 3 hr fire door
13	3-0	6-8	1 3/4	Birch	W.Pine	S	
* Amweld or equal							
NOTE: Hardware to be furnished by owner and installed by contractor							
ROOM FINISH SCHEDULE							
1.	<u>Floors</u> - Carpet by owner except concrete in vault.						
2.	<u>Walls</u> - Painted 1/2" gypsumboard drywall except painted haydite block both sides of vault walls, & ext. siding @ E & W walls of conference room and office.						
3.	<u>Ceilings</u> - Painted 1/2" gypsumboard drywall except painted concrete in vault.						
4.	<u>Base</u> - Birch base below 1/2" drywall. No base at haydite block.						

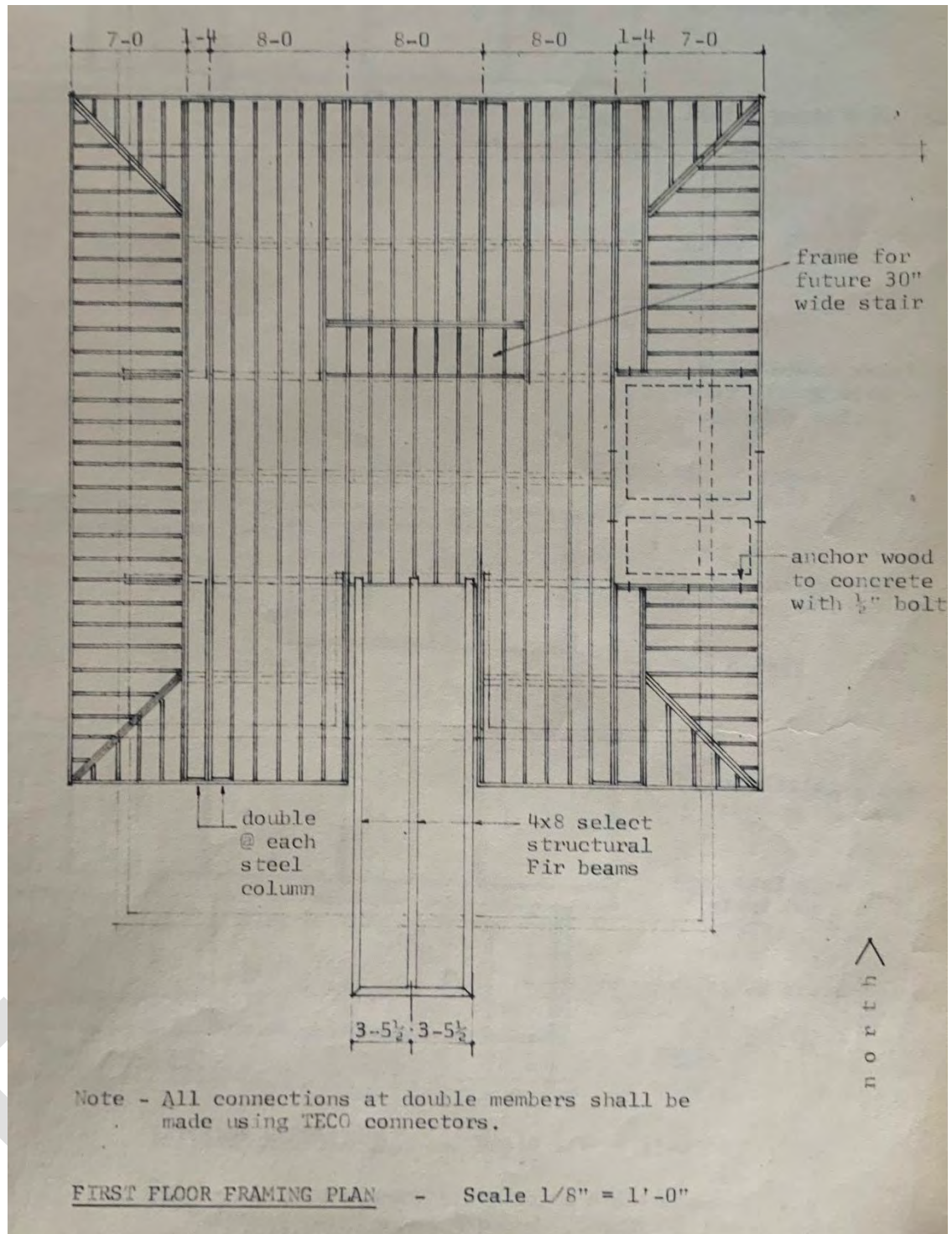
L. Door Schedule and Room Finish Schedule

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Name of Property

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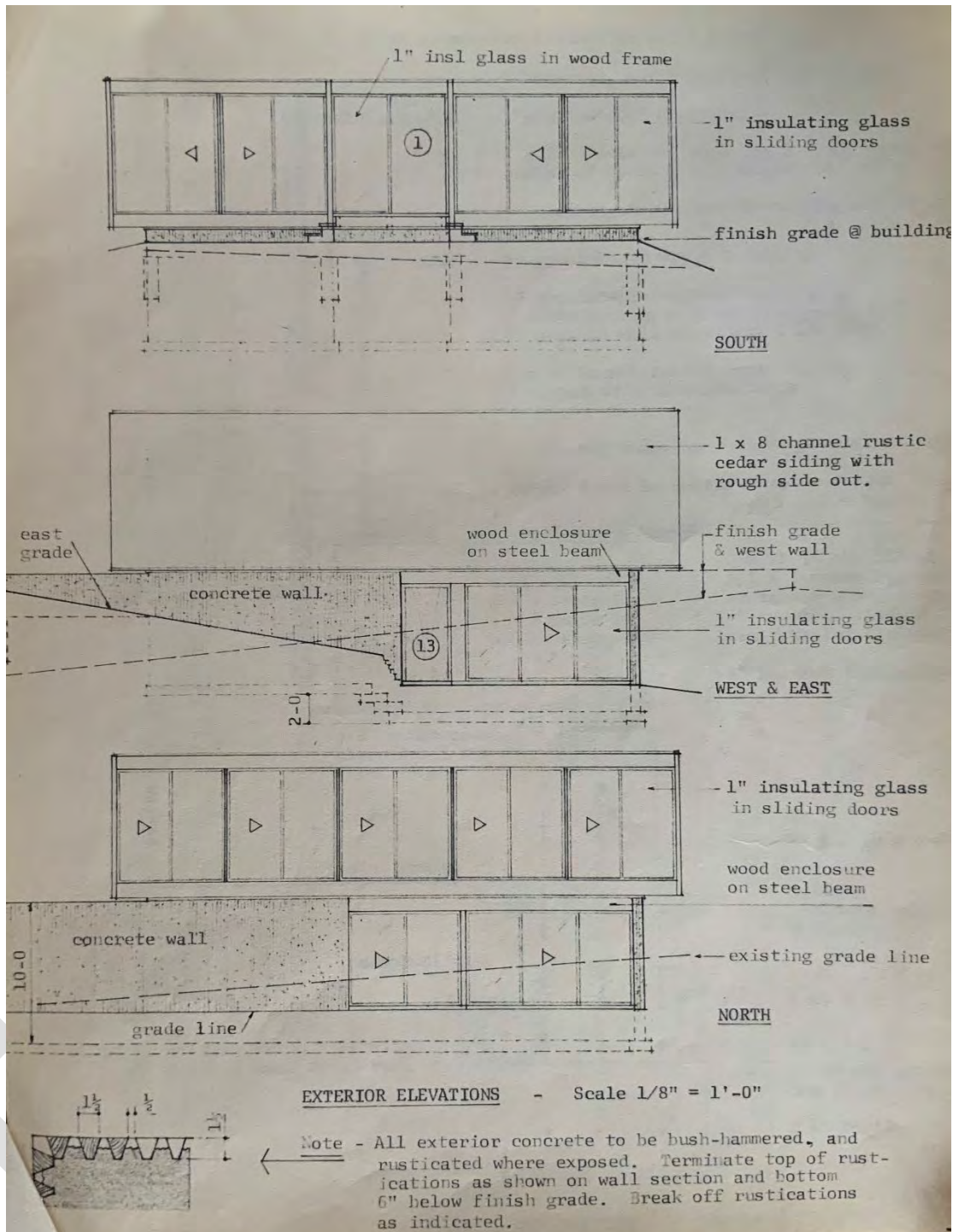
N. Construction Drawing, 1966 – First Floor Framing Plan

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O. Construction Drawing, 1966 - Exterior Elevations

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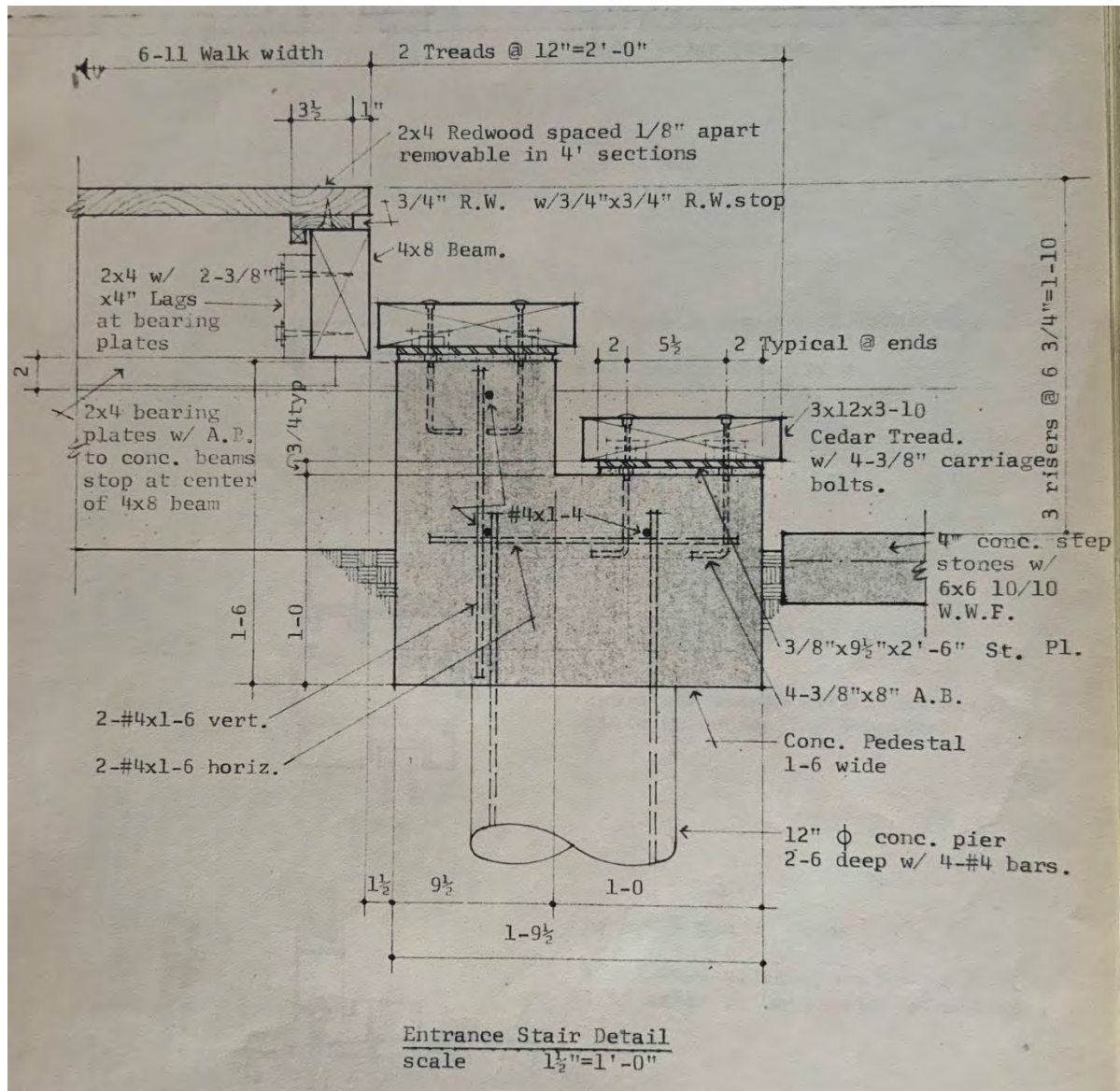
P. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Typical Wall Section

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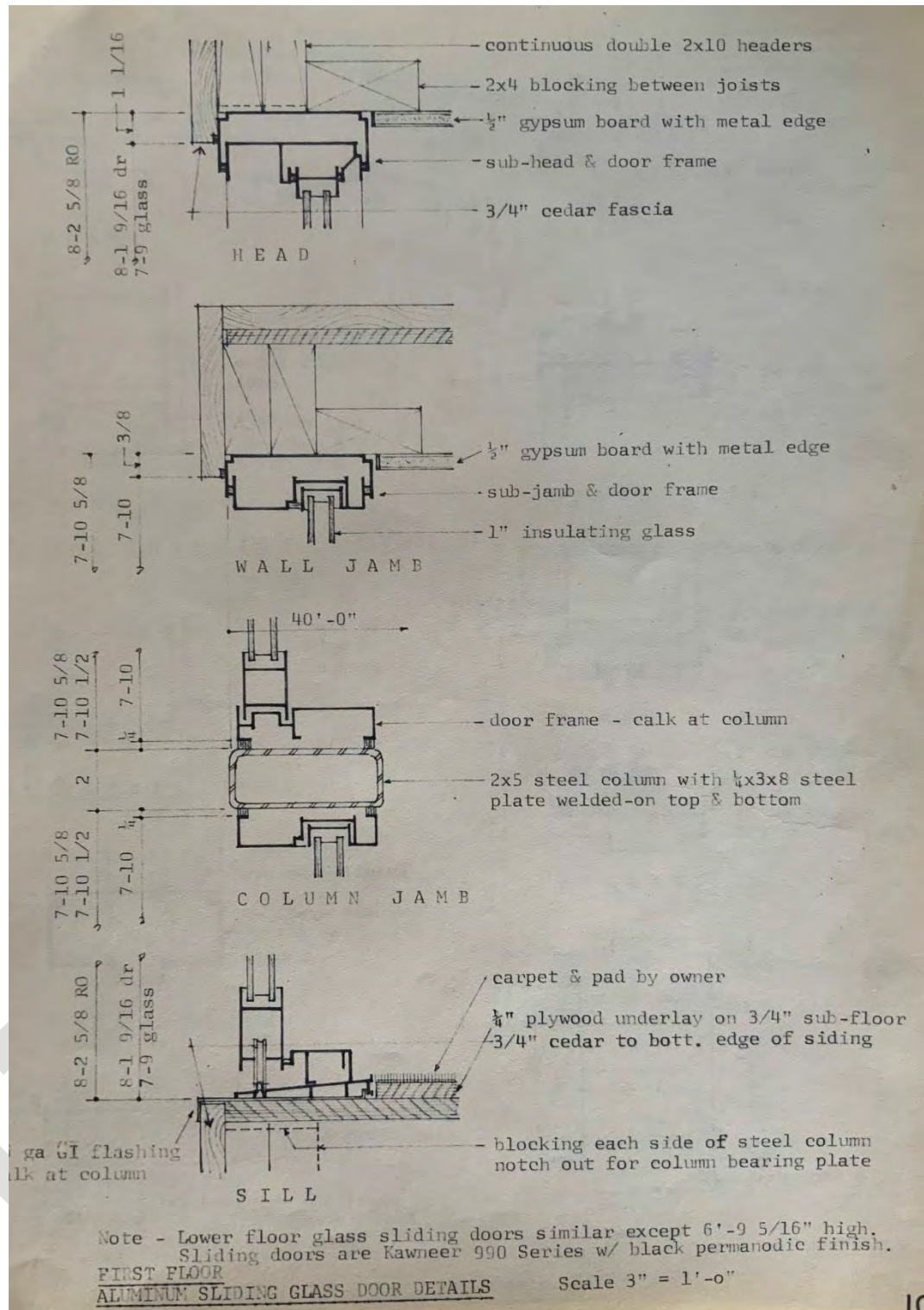
Q. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Entrance Stair Detail

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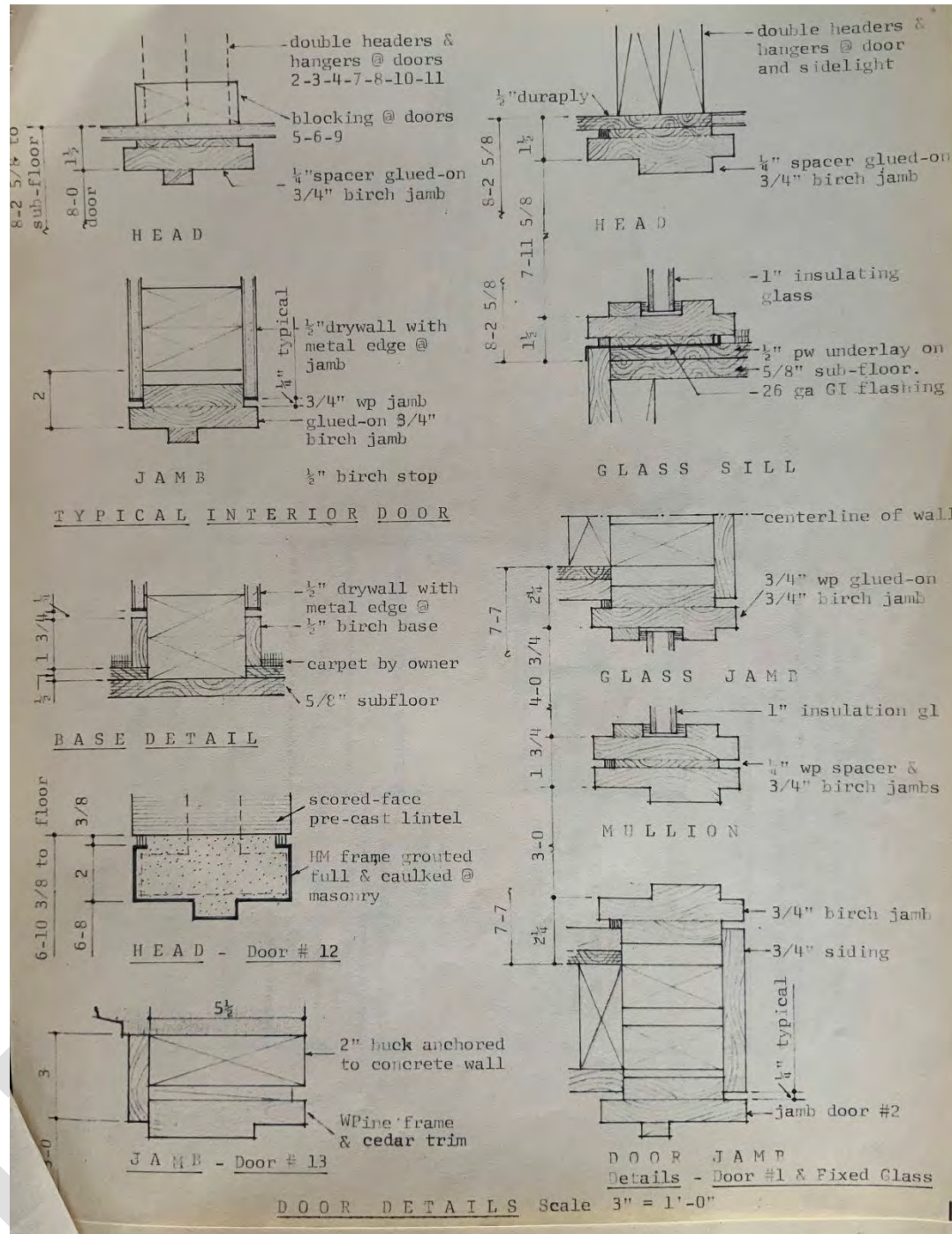
R. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Aluminum Sliding Glass Door Details

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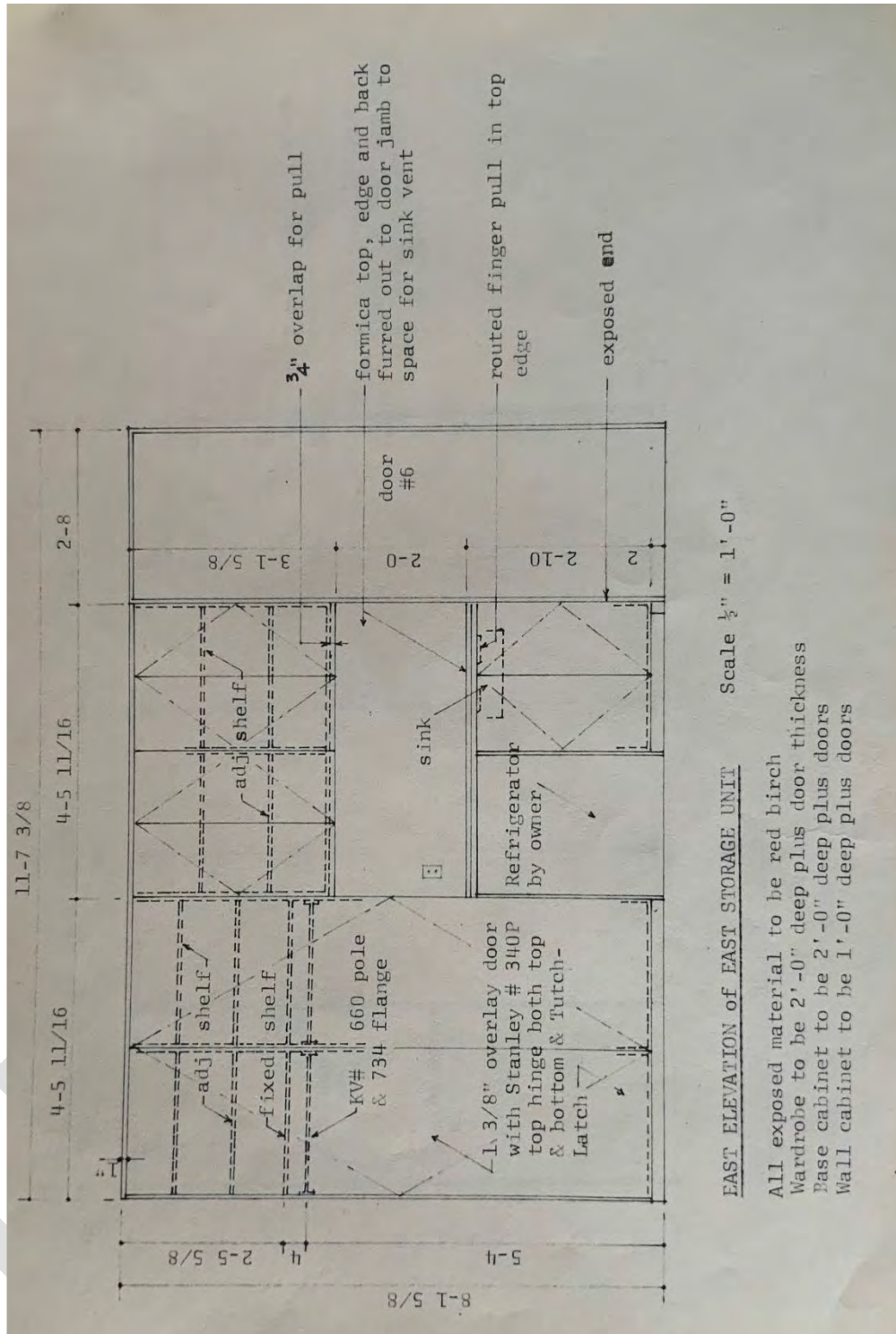
County and State



S. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Interior Door Detail

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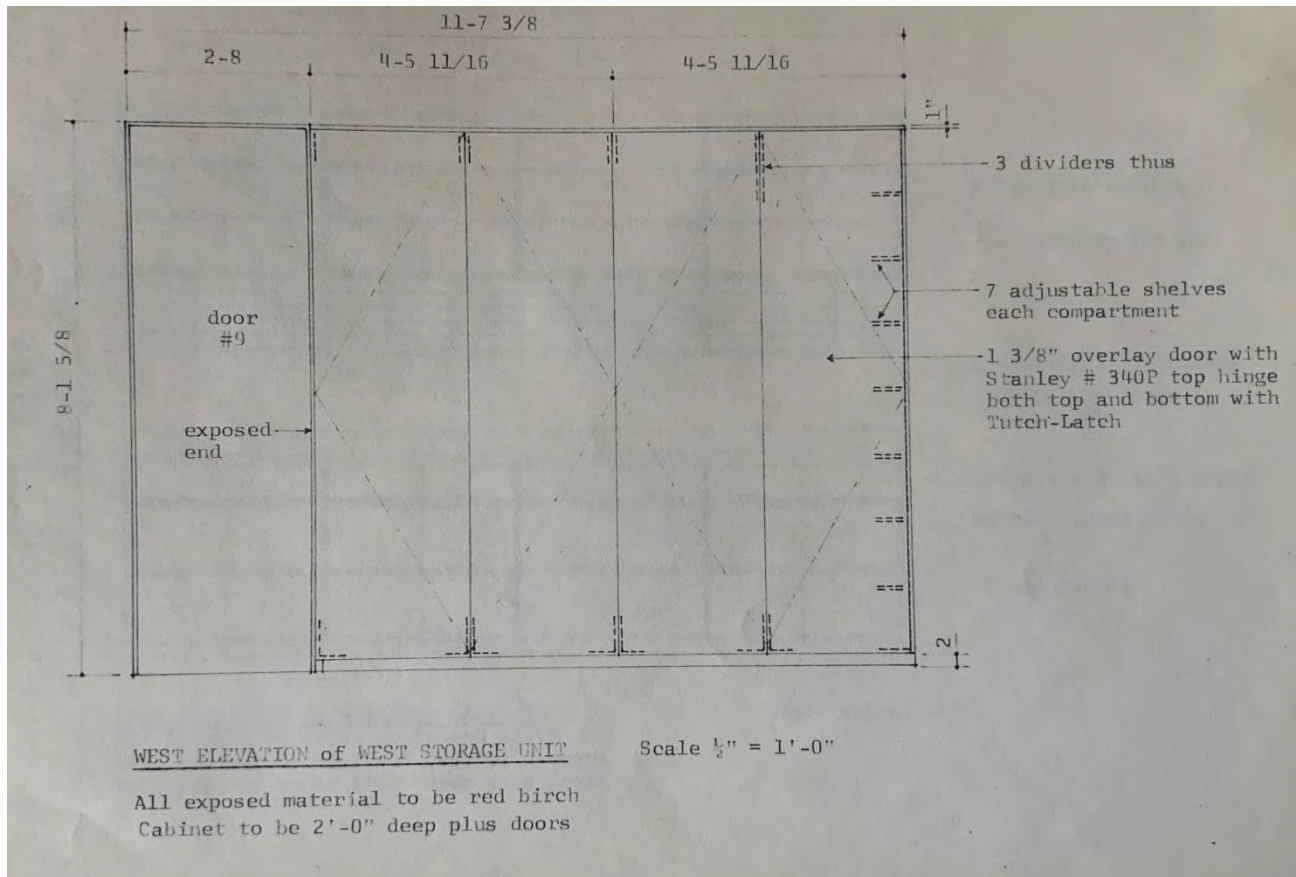
T. Construction Drawing, 1966 – East Elevation of East Storage Unit with Kitchenette

HTK Architects Office Building

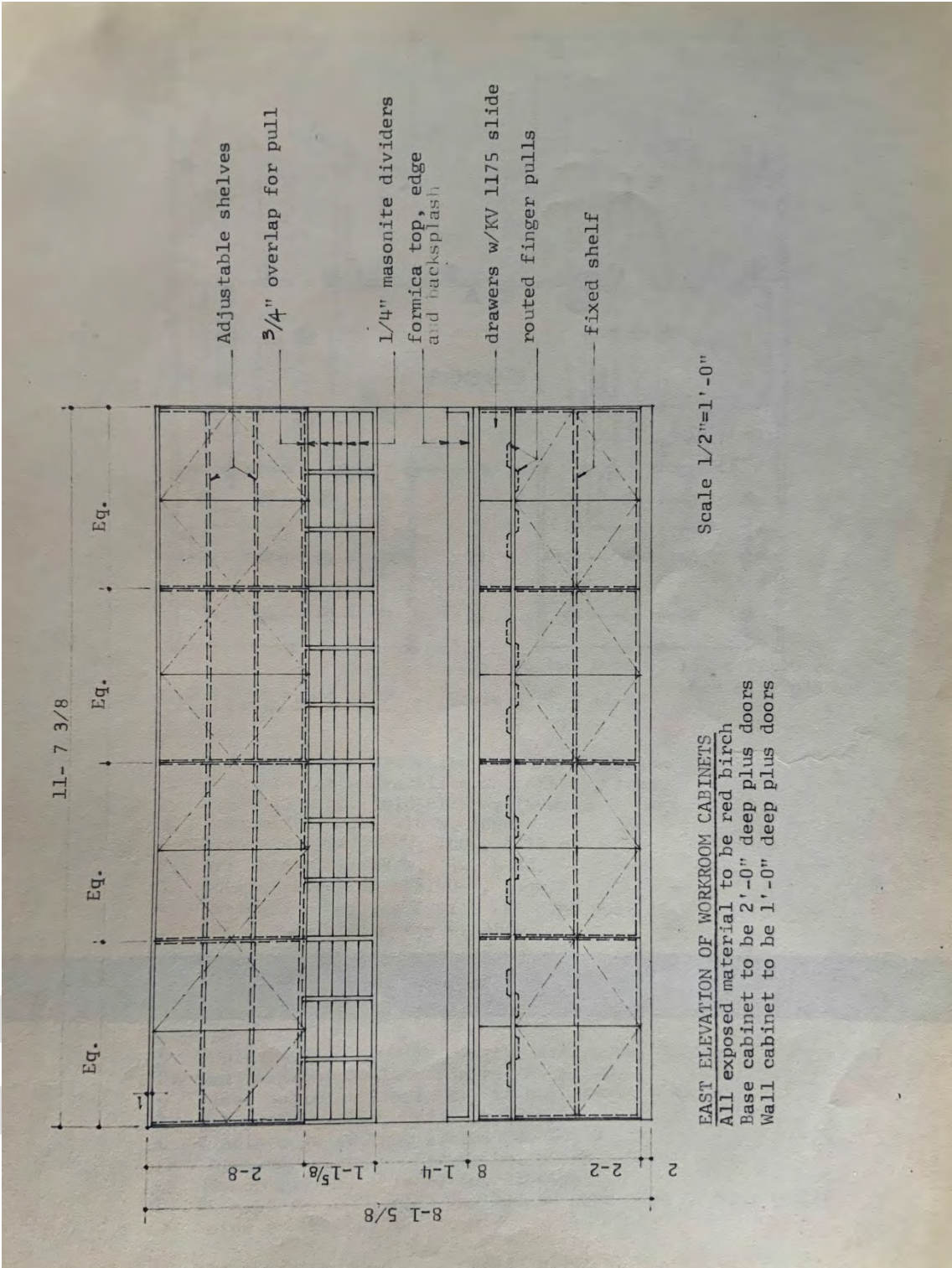
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U. Construction Drawing, 1966 – West Elevation of West Storage Unit



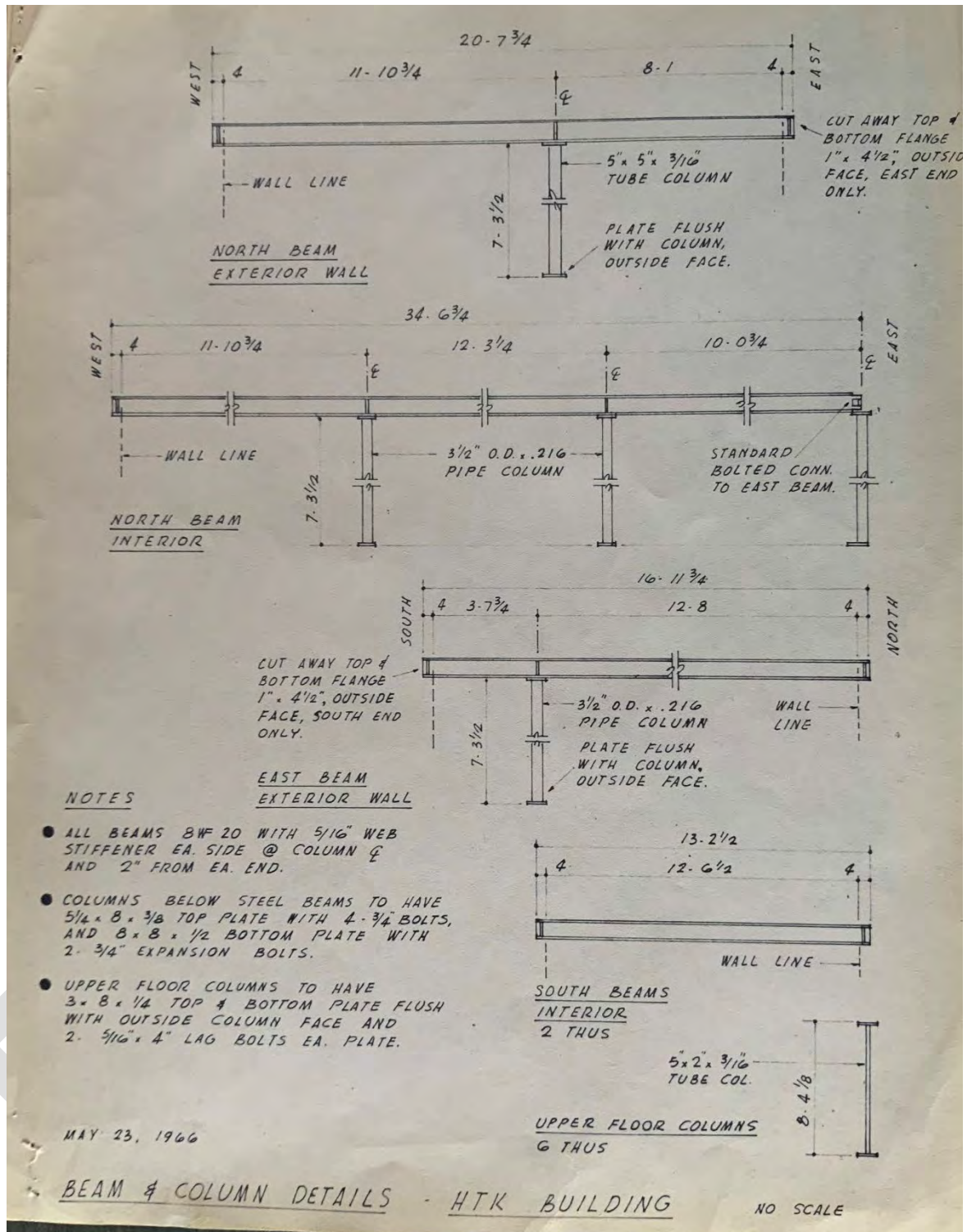
V. Construction Drawing, 1966 – East Elevation of Workroom Cabinets

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W. Construction Drawing, 1966 – Beam & Columns Details

HTK Architects Office Building

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name Park Plaza Apartments

Other names/site number KHRI #177-4847

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975

2. Location

Street & number 1275 SW Fillmore Street

City or town Topeka

State Kansas Code KS County Shawnee

Code SN

Zip code 66604

not for publication
vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide x local Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B x C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO

Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Park Plaza Apartments

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/International Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

roof: Built-Up Gravel

other: Glass, Wood

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources, if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary

Constructed in 1959 and designed by architects, Carl G. Ossmann & Associates, the Park Plaza Apartment building is an excellent representation of a post-World War II garden apartment designed in the International Style. Located between two historic neighborhoods in Topeka (Central Park and Holliday Park), the two-story T-shaped building is situated at the northwest corner of the intersection of SW Fillmore and SW 13th Streets. The building contains 14 apartments with varying floorplans. The building's sprawling massing; flat roof; groupings of ribbon windows with rectangular panels and canopy; blond brick construction; and overall lack of ornamentation are characteristic of the International Style of post-World War II Modern Movement architecture. The exterior remains unaltered since its construction and continues to convey the building's original design. The overall interior configuration remains largely intact. Character-defining features include the primary entryway and lobby, stairways, hallways, original plaster walls, and oak wood doors and flooring. The stairways retain original light fixtures – round globes hanging from the ceiling. In some cases, individual apartments are remodeled with modern carpeting, cabinetry, and bathroom materials. However, several apartments retain their original arrangement of space, flooring, cabinetry, and pink-tiled bathrooms. The property includes a large, multi-car carport dating to the original apartment construction. The carport retains its original mid-20th century design, including a flat metal roof with wide overhanging eaves and decorative metal screen walls at each end.

Elaboration

Setting and Site:

The Park Plaza Apartment building is located at 1275 SW Fillmore Street in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas. The site is located approximately ¾-mile southwest of downtown Topeka. It is sited within the historic Throop's Addition, a portion of which comprises the Central Park Neighborhood and park to the south. The historic Holliday Park neighborhood is located to the north. The southern boundary of the property forms the northern side of Central Park. The park itself is located one block southwest of the Park Plaza Apartment. The apartment occupies the property at the northwest corner of the intersection of SW 13th Street and SW Fillmore Street within a predominantly single-family residential neighborhood. Surrounding this intersection are two additional contemporaneous garden apartment buildings, including the Central Park Apartments (KHRI #177-4846), which was designed in 1957 by Carl G. Ossman & Associates, the same architect who later designed the Park Plaza Apartment. The two buildings are nearly identical in their design and materials. Additional multi-family apartment buildings dating to the mid-20th century are located one- and two-blocks east of Park Plaza.

The residential streets are arranged in a gridded street plan and are characterized by relatively wide right-of-ways with mature street trees separating the road and concrete sidewalks. The streets are paved with stone curbing. SW Fillmore Street features historic brick paving. An alley is west of the property and conforms to the gridded street layout.

The Park Plaza Apartment building is oriented east toward SW Fillmore Street and does not deviate from the setback of its neighbors. The massing of the building with a T-shaped form where the side wings are significantly setback from the central block, is compatible with the scale of the neighborhood although larger than the individual single-family dwellings. While the surrounding residential neighborhoods generally date from the late-19th to early-20th century, the rapid post-War population growth of Topeka and the operations of nearby Forbes Air Base influenced the neighborhoods' built environment. A scattering of mid-20th century housing dots the neighborhood, including the collection of 1950s garden apartments surrounding the intersection and along nearby streets. The primary distinction of the Park Plaza Apartments when compared to the surrounding neighborhood, is its distinguishable Modernist design in form, fenestration, material, and overall lack of ornamentation. Its predecessor, the Central Park Apartments, shares this Modernist design.

The Park Plaza Apartment building is centrally located within a 0.57-acre grassed lot. A multi-car carport is located at the rear of the property, following along the rear alley. The detached carport (contributing resource) is separated from the apartment building by approximately 30 feet of grassed landscape with a few mature shade trees. A concrete sidewalk leads from the carport to a rear entry door of the apartment building. The building's primary entryway is inset and oriented

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to the southeast toward the corner of the intersection. Concrete sidewalks at the corner form landscaping surrounding a historic flagpole. At the northwest corner of the "square," a concrete sidewalk extends in a northwesterly direction to the principal entryway.

Exterior:

Constructed in 1959, the Park Plaza Apartment is T-shaped with a large central block and recessed wings projecting to the north and south. The northern wing is slightly shorter in width than the southern wing. The two-story building is reinforced-concrete construction with exterior walls of brick laid in a common bond pattern. The exterior brick is contrasting buff-colored and reddish brown. The building has a flat roof of built-up gravel or asphalt. The building sits on a concrete foundation. The garden apartment is characterized by its groupings of ribbon windows on the first and second floors. The groupings are recessed, and each floor framed by wooden canopies extending slightly from the wall and roof. The canopy mimics cantilevered design elements characteristic of Modernist architecture. The canopy features a wide wood fascia.

The front façade (east) of the central block is four bays (W, 2W, 2W, W) on each floor. Windows are one-over-one, double-hung, horizontal wood sash with simple brick sills. The north and south elevations of the central block contain two windows with a set of recessed ribbon windows where each floor has a projecting canopy above. The ribbon windows are set at the junction of each projecting wing and contain five windows. Each window is comprised of a large square fixed light with a rectangular awning window below. Above and below each window is a rectangular wood panel. The windows are wood-framed. On the south elevation of the central wing, the canopy is cornered above the recessed entryway, connecting to the canopy that frames additional sets of ribbon windows on the east elevation of the south wing. Here, the five ribbon windows on each floor match those on the central wing. South of the ribbon windows on the east elevation are two individual windows. Here, the north windows are square two-light awnings. With the exception of the recessed entryway, the north wing features a similar fenestration on its east elevation to that of the south wing.

The north and south elevations of the wings contain four single windows at each floor. The rear is characterized by a two-bay (W, W) slightly projecting bay flanked on either side by two sets of ribbon windows (5 windows each) separated by a brick wall. Directly north of the projecting bay on the first floor is an exterior, glazed entry door.

The primary entryway on the façade is slightly recessed. It features an original entry door with three horizontal lights. The door is flanked on either side by sidelights containing three large windows with heavy wood surrounds. Above the entry door and each sidelight is a rectangular wood panel. Above the entryway on the second floor, the fenestration is similar save but the entry door. Here, the central window is a glass louver. The cornered entry canopy is partially open with vertical wooden boards span the opening. This design feature allows for a degree of natural lighting at the entrance.

Interior:

Shared interior spaces include the main entry lobby, two stairways, hallways, and a laundry room on the first floor. A sitting room occupies the public space above the entry lobby on the second floor. The finishes in the shared spaces are simple with little to no ornamentation. Floors are carpeted and walls and ceilings plastered. The stairway railings are plastered balustrade walls topped by oak railings. Original light fixtures hang from the lobby and sitting room and feature a simple round shade suspended by a thin metal bar. Hanging light fixtures in the stair halls are round globes also suspended by thin metal bars. The entry lobby features original built-in mailboxes and the oak doors leading to each apartment contain the original attached metal apartment number. The small laundry room features original ceramic tile floors and glazed tile base.

Park Plaza contains a total of 14 apartments, seven on each floor. Some of the individual apartments have undergone remodeling. Original layout and materials of the remodeled apartments may be altered. Apartments vary in size and configuration. Historically, each apartment was one or two bedrooms with a single bathroom, kitchen, and storage cabinets. The larger living rooms occupy the interior space opposite the sections of ribbon windows. The large windows provide ample natural lighting into the living room. Interior apartment doors are oak with oak frames. Similarly, kitchen cabinetry and full-height closet doors are stained oak. Flooring in the apartments is historically oak floorboards. In some instances, an individual apartment is carpeted. A unique feature of the apartments is the bathroom with pink, glazed ceramic tiling along the sink area and within the shower., as well as a pink ceramic sink.

However, the overall interior design and configuration of the Park Plaza Apartments remains relatively unaltered, particularly within the shared spaces.

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The basement of the building is accessed from the north wing. The stairs leading to the basement are concrete with a quarter-turn landing. The basement has concrete flooring and is used for storage units and electrical equipment. Historically, the building was heated by coal. The original coal bin door is located within the basement. Its small metal door reads "The Donley Brothers Co. Cleveland, Ohio."

Carport:

The existing carport is original to the 1957 construction of the Park Plaza Apartment building and is considered a contributing resource to the property. The one-story metal structure has a flat metal roof with wide overhanging eaves supported by metal posts. The carport is open are. The north and south ends of the carport feature metal screen walls.

Integrity:

Remarkably, the Park Plaza Apartment retains a high degree of historic integrity on both the interior and exterior. There are no known alterations to the exterior of the building or its historic site plan and arrangement of buildings. Original features and features in the interior are largely intact in common areas and many of the apartments. The interior shared space, such as the lobby, stairs and hallways, are slightly modified with the installation of carpeting atop the original hardwood floors. This modification is considered reversible where the removal of the carpeting likely reveals the original flooring beneath.

Although permission to access the interior apartments is limited, much of the original materials and arrangement of space is intact. Several of the apartments have likely undergone remodeling that altered the interior space of the apartment, materials, and design. However, Apartment #23 (confirm) reveals the original footprint and design features of the individual apartments. The building is good condition. It retains a good degree of its historic integrity of **location, setting, feeling, materials, design, and workmanship**. It continues to serve as a multi-family garden apartment and, therefore, maintains its historic **association**.

Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975:

The Park Plaza Apartment building is classified as a "Multi-Family Apartment Building" associated property type as defined in the *Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975* MPS and clearly conveys the defining characteristics of post-World War II Modern apartment buildings. The Park Plaza Apartment meets the general requirements defined in the MPS. The two-story building was constructed in 1957 as a multiple dwelling having 14 apartments with the T-shaped garden apartment building. The building retains its exterior massing, unique configuration, and design elements characteristic of the International Style. The Park Plaza Apartment is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under the *Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975* Multiple Property Documentation Form as a representative example of the *Multi-Family Apartment Building* Property Type and is an intact and well-preserved illustration of post-World War II Modernist multi-family architecture.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Architecture

Period of Significance

1959

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Carl G. Ossman & Associates

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the Park Plaza Apartments is 1957 – the building's date of construction.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

None

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Summary

Constructed in 1959, the Park Plaza Apartments at 1275 SW Fillmore Street in Topeka is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development as an intact illustration of garden apartments constructed to accommodate an unprecedented population growth during the post-World War era. While several mid-20th century suburban neighborhoods developed throughout the City as the corporate limits expanded westward and southward, a handful of apartment buildings were erected within the earlier neighborhoods. Among those neighborhoods is the Throop's Addition in central Topeka, just southwest of downtown, which began development in the late-19th century. Park Plaza Apartments is also a rare example of a private residential cooperative to be formed by a small group of wealthy Topekans in the 1950s. The three known cooperatives (Park Plaza, Central Park (KHRI #177-4846), and Lakeside Apartments) partnered with architectural firm Osmann & Associates for the design of the luxury apartments.

Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent representation of the International Style that dominated post-World War II design across the United States. The two-story garden apartment is characterized by its brick exterior, flat roof and sprawling, T-shaped form. Its rows of ribbon windows framed by cantilevered canopies and the overall lack of ornamentation further reflect the International Style principles of the Modern Movement in architecture. The apartment building is recognized as an excellent representation of garden apartments designed by established Topeka architects Osmann & Associates.

The Park Plaza Apartments is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under the *Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975* Multiple Property Documentation Form (Destefano, 2020) as a representation of a *Multi-Family Apartment Building* Property Type. It is significant under Criteria A and C as a low-rise apartment building in the Throop's Addition that is indicative of the City's impressive post-War population growth and expansion; and is a well-preserved illustration of a garden apartment incorporating Modernist design elements, specifically the International Style. It is further significant as a rare surviving example of a private apartment cooperative in Topeka.

Elaboration

Neighborhood History

The City of Topeka was first settled in the winter of 1854 when Cyrus K. Holliday and Charles Robinson traveled along the Kansas River in search of a new site for a second Kansas colony. An ideal location for the future colony was discovered on a low bluff, on the south side of the Kansas River. The settlement was named Topeka, which was incorporated as a city on February 14, 1857, with a population of 450 residents. The following year, the county seat was moved from Tecumseh to Topeka, and in 1861, the city became the permanent location of the state capital.¹

Throughout the late-19th and early-20th centuries, the city limits expanded outward as small villages, neighborhoods, and undeveloped areas were annexed into the city. By 1890, the city's population exceeded 35,000 residents, with new streetcar suburbs emerging across the city. Among the early additions to the city was Throop's Addition, a residential suburb that first occurs on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps by 1889. The Throop's Addition is located one block southwest of the Holliday Park neighborhood (NR-Listed 2002), which began development in the 1880s. Throop's Addition extended west and southwest to include the impressive 15-acre Central Park. Plans for the park began in 1899 when the property was sold to the City by Dr. John McClintock. Throop's Addition quickly experienced significant development as a streetcar suburb of Topeka. It extended the gridiron street layout of the earlier surrounding neighborhoods. Streets were characterized by brick paving and stone curbing lined by sidewalks with planted trees. Trolleys once ran along the

¹ Susan Ford, "Country Club Addition Neighborhood Historical Survey and Report," prepared for the City of Topeka, Kansas, March 5, 2018.

residential streets, connecting the neighborhood to downtown Topeka. Throop's Addition developed primarily by single-family, middle- to -upper-middle class dwellings enjoying spacious lots. Among the most notable dwellings within the neighborhood is the Chester B. Woodward House (KHRI 177-5400-0561, NRHP-listed 1992), completed in 1924 at 1272 SW Fillmore Street. The impressive Tudor Revival houses is across the street from Park Plaza Apartments. The Throop's Addition continued to develop throughout the early-20th century and was nearly fully built out by World War II.

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."² 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.³ 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 built an impressive plant in North Topeka. The presence of the Forbes Air Base south of downtown from the late-1940s through the 1960s further contributed to the population growth and renewed expansion and annexation of residential sectors of Topeka. By 1950, the corporate limits of Topeka encompassed 12.5 square miles with the population reaching 78,791.⁴ An "annexation fever" swept across Topeka during the 1950s, more than doubling the area of the City to 36.4 square miles 1960.⁵

In response to the ever-increasing population, low-rise apartment buildings were built throughout the city, particularly in the developing suburbs. In some instances, such as that of Park Plaza, apartment buildings were built in older neighborhoods characterized by late-19th and early-20th century single-family residences. These earlier neighborhoods generally lacked driveways, with rear alleyways providing access to secondary structures such as carriage houses and garages. It was not until the post-War years when automobile ownership skyrocketed that integral garages and driveways were introduced. Thus, in an effort to maintain the historic aesthetic of the neighborhood and avoid on-street parking, a large carport was sited alongside the rear alley.

A small collection of 1950s and 1960s low-rise apartment buildings are located within the vicinity of the Park Plaza Apartments. These include the Central Park Apartments (1957; KHRI #177-4846) at the southwest corner of the intersection of SW 13th and SW Fillmore Streets; the former Cowan Apartments (1963; KRHI #177-4845) at the southeast corner of the same intersection; and the Kevin Arms Apartments (1967; KHRI #177-3326) at 1221 SW Western Avenue. The siting of these apartment buildings suggests that this area of the Throop's Addition was facing development pressures resulting from the rapid post-War population boom. They also suggest that the earlier dwellings which they replaced were in a declining condition. In siting these apartments here, the overall make-up of this area of the neighborhood changed from single-family to a combination of both single-family dwellings and multi-family apartments.

Private Cooperative Housing

Housing cooperatives are collectively owned and managed by their residents, who own shares in a nonprofit corporation. The corporation generally holds the title to the property and grants proprietary leases to residents. Prospective purchases to own shares in the property must be approved by the co-op board. Oftentimes, the cooperative examines income-to-debt ratios of potential buyers and may conduct background checks. When a member of the co-op decides to sell their shares, the board must approve the buyer prior to the sale. The board can reject applicants due to their finances or a refusal to abide by the association's rules and regulations.⁶

² 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.

³ Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier. The Suburbanization of the United States*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985; p.283.

⁴ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

⁵ Topeka Capital-Journal, "Topeka at 150: Celebrating the Sesquicentennial of the Capital City of Kansas," *Topeka Capital-Journal*, 2004.

⁶ Lester Davis, "Condo vs. co-op: Know the differences before buying one," *The Washington Post*, 31 January 2018.

The first housing cooperatives started in New York City in the late-1800s. The early cooperative dwellings were marketed towards citizens in high income brackets who “wanted the advantages and economies of individual home ownership without all of the responsibilities.”⁷ By 1925, housing cooperatives had been constructed in sixteen cities in the United States, the majority of which were high-income. Prior to the days of “fair housing laws,” it was “not uncommon for cooperatives to reject membership to persons who were perceived not of the right racial, ethnic, or religious background.”⁸

The Stock Market crash in 1929 brought about the near standstill of the cooperative movement in the United States. The luxury cooperatives were hit especially hard due to excessive mortgaging and promoter profits, as well as high vacancy rates. Generally, the more affordable lower income cooperatives survived the Depression. Following World War II, the economy was booming. One significant change that took place in the post-War years with the enactment of *Section 216 of the IRS code* in 1942, which allowed income tax deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes for cooperative members.⁹ A resurgence of upper/middle-income co-ops nationwide following World War II. The National Housing Act of 1950 insured blanket mortgages held on cooperatives and rental communities. That same year, Section 213 was added to include middle-income cooperatives. The legislation spurred the formation of approximately 45,000 cooperative units nationwide.¹⁰

Topeka’s tremendous population growth during the post-War years and outward suburban expansion spurred the development of small middle-class cooperatives throughout the city. Three known such cooperatives were formed during the 1950s including the Central Park Apartments in 1957, Lakeside Apartments in 1958, and the Park Plaza Apartments in 1959. A newspaper article in 1959 announces the construction of the Park Plaza Apartments:

“ Construction of a \$250,000 co-op apartment building at 1275 Fillmore is scheduled to begin in early October. Carl G. Ossman, Topeka architect, is designer and developer of the project. Ossman said the new building is being constructed in response to a demand for more cooperative housing in Topeka. The 14 units will be of the ‘own-your-own’ type. Under this cooperative plan, each tenant owns his apartment and contributes a fee monthly toward the up-keep of the building and grounds. Funds are handled by an elected board of directors.”

– *Topeka State Journal* July 18, 1959

Park Plaza Apartments, Inc. was incorporated on September 9, 1959 as a non-profit organization with the purpose to provide “housing on a non-profit basis, and, in pursuance thereof, to acquire, own, improve, develop, operate, manage, sell, convey, pledge, assign, mortgage, lease or rent any real estate and any personal property.”¹¹ According to the articles of incorporation, the organization was incorporated by five individuals: Fred C. Noller, W. B. Case, Mary W. Strain, Mary L. Marsh, and Carl G. Ossmann. Ossmann was also recognized as the Registered Agent for the organization. An affidavit dated August 22, 1961 indicates that Carl Ossmann was sworn in as treasurer of Park Plaza. Carl G. Ossmann is not only a founder of the Park Plaza co-op but is recognized as the lead architect for the three known cooperative apartment buildings constructed in Topeka in the 1950s. It is presumed that Ossmann thus had shares in all three of the co-ops during their early years.

Following its incorporation, the Park Plaza Apartment building began construction on a site located directly across SW 13th Street from the Central Park Apartment cooperative. The site for the building is a tract of land once occupied by the three-story home of Marcus A. Low, general attorney for the Union Pacific railway. The home was built in 1902. It was later purchased in 1937 by Topeka criminal lawyer, Edward Rooney where he lived until his death in 1956. The home was in a state of disrepair and was razed. Some of its building materials were salvaged prior to its removal.¹²

According to former co-op shareholder, Paul Prece, shareholders must meet an age requirement of at least 55 years; no pets of any kind are permitted in the building; and carpeting is required on the second floor to lessen unwanted noise on

⁷ “A History of Housing Cooperatives,” National Cooperative Law Center, <http://nationalcooperativelawcenter.com/national-cooperative-law-center/the-history-of-housing-cooperatives/3/> accessed July 2020.

⁸ “A History of Housing Cooperatives,” National Cooperative Law Center, <http://nationalcooperativelawcenter.com/national-cooperative-law-center/the-history-of-housing-cooperatives/3/> accessed July 2020.

⁹ “A History of Housing Cooperatives,” National Cooperative Law Center, <http://nationalcooperativelawcenter.com/national-cooperative-law-center/the-history-of-housing-cooperatives/3/> accessed July 2020.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Certificate of Articles of Incorporation, Park Plaza Apartment, Inc. 9 September 1959.

¹² Park Plaza Apartments, Inc. historical flyer.

the first floor. Apartments were intended as “luxury apartments,” each containing two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen, and bathroom (see Figure H).¹³ As the building was a direct result of the formation of the co-op, residents/shareholders were able to choose added amenities to their apartments. Such upgrades might include a fireplace or specific hardware. For example, one resident requested that a fireplace salvaged from the former Rooney House be installed in their apartment.¹⁴

The Park Plaza Apartment has remained a private housing cooperative since its incorporation in 1959. While residents and shareholders have come and gone over the years, the cooperative maintains an executive board of five members, and all members are given equal say in approval of future shareholders. According to former resident and President Paul Prece, Park Plaza conveys a sense of a “big house” and “community.” Among the three known contemporaneous co-ops in Topeka, Central Park and Park Plaza are sited adjacent to one another in a central Topeka neighborhood that is generally characterized by its late-19th and early-20th century single-family housing. The Lakeside Apartment cooperative was erected in a west Topeka neighborhood that developed as a post-World War II suburb. Lakeside no longer operates as a co-op, having recently been used as a nursing home. All were designed by Topeka architect Car. G. Ossmann.

Architecture

Topeka boasts an impressive collection of Modernist architecture including a wide range of building types and distinct stylistic influences. The multitude of Mid-Century Modern buildings in Topeka is attributed not only to the “annexation fever” of the post-war period, but also the 1951 Flood, a F-5 tornado that destroyed much of the City in 1966, and Urban Renewal programs. Collectively, these four events greatly impacted the City’s built environment, with much of the new construction adopting the popular Modernist principles of the era. The Park Plaza Apartment survives as a well-preserved illustration of a Modernist low-rise apartment building constructed within an historic neighborhood amongst late-19th and early-20th century single-family houses. It is a superb example of the International Style applied to a multi-family apartment building.

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. Modernist architecture is based on the rational use of modern materials, functionalist planning, and the rejection of historical precedents. 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.”¹⁵

Modernist architecture would “convey meaning by the very lack of ornament.”¹⁶ 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.”¹⁷ 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.¹⁸ 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 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.”¹⁹

¹³ Paul Prece. Telephone Interview. Interviewer – Jaime Destefano, July 2020.

¹⁴ Park Plaza Apartments, Inc. historical flyer; AND Interview with Jane Nichols, co-op shareholder. August 4, 2020.

¹⁵ 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.

¹⁶ Rifkind p.104

¹⁷ Rifkind p.104.

¹⁸ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Oil and Gas Building National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form,” National Park Service, 2013; page 8.

¹⁹ Megan Hogan, “the Future of Modern: Federal Architecture in an Era of Change,” in *Common Ground* (Spring 2009), p.28

The International Style was popular nationwide from the 1940s through the 1970s, becoming the standard for American commercial and institutional design.²⁰ The style emphasized technology and expression of construction methods, materials, exposed structural elements, and simplicity of form. It is from the International style that other Modernist styles, or sub-styles, are derived. The majority of Modernist buildings in Topeka reflect some degree of International Style design features. Identifying features of the International style include the following:

- Modern structural principles and materials: concrete, glass, and steel
- Balance and regularity
- 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
- Metal mullions and smooth spandrel panels separating large, single-pane windows between floors

Constructed in 1959, the Park Plaza Apartments is a classic example of the International Style. The two-story building is constructed of re-enforced concrete with a brick exterior. It features a flat roof and an overall emphasis on horizontal lines. While the building form is a traditional T-shape with a central block and flanking wings, the cornered main entryway at the juncture of the central block and south wing reflects Modernist inspiration. The building lacks exterior ornamentation and is best characterized by its horizontal bands of windows framed by cantilevered canopies on each floor. The ribbon windows are nearly full height on each floor and feature spandrel panels and lower horizontal hopper windows – classic International Style design features. While the Modern Movement window framing systems were most often metal, the windows at Park Plaza Apartments feature wood sash and wood frames. According to an artist rendering of the building, the architect intended that the secondary windows (those not part of the ribbon windows) to be comprised of three horizontal lights. However, according to a photograph immediately following the 1966 tornado, which caused minimal damage to the building, the windows were the same as those occurring today and are historic.

Another unique design feature of the building is its cornered entryway flanked by wide multi-light transoms and a multi-light curtain wall above. Additionally, the entryway features a prominent cantilevered canopy that extends above a wide entry stoop. The International Style was often considered stark and unappealing to later generations, yet the Park Plaza Apartments features additional “touches” that contribute to its aesthetically pleasing design.

While Topeka boasts a large collection of International Style buildings, only a small number of low-rise apartment buildings employ the use of International Style design principles. Designed by the same architect, the neighboring Central Park Apartments shares a similar exterior design; however, it is believed to have undergone a substantial interior remodeling. The third co-op apartment building, Lakeside Apartments, is located in west Topeka in a mid-20th century neighborhood. The former co-op was dissolved, and the building recently used as a nursing home facility. While the three buildings are remarkably similar in their exterior design, the Park Plaza Apartment retains a higher degree of integrity on the interior.

Carl G. Ossmann & Associates

Carl Ossmann & Associates designed a number of buildings statewide during the mid-20th century, including a handful of institutional buildings and garden apartments. In addition to the Park Plaza, Central Park, and Lakeside Apartments in Topeka, the firm also designed the Quinton Heights Elementary School (KHRI #177-2117) in 1953 in Topeka. The school was designed in the International Style and is a sprawling one-story brick building with rows of windows. Another known school designed by Ossmann & Associates is the Baileyville Highschool in Nemaha County (KHRI #131-218) in 1952. The school is yet another illustration of the firm’s preference of the International Style during the 1950s. Carl Ossmann is also known to have designed the Flint Hills Rural Electric Cooperative headquarters (1959-1960), and the 79-bed nursing

²⁰ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Louisiana Architecture: 1945-1965, Modernist Triumphant – Commercial and Institutional Buildings, September 2009, revised February 2010.

facility (1970) at the Topeka Veteran's Administration hospital.²¹ Ossmann was a prolific architect throughout the state and he briefly assumed the temporary position of acting state architect in September 1977, a position he held until August of 1978.²²

Summary

The Park Plaza Apartments is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development. Its construction in 1959 within a late-19th and early-20th century neighborhood speaks toward the need to accommodate a rapidly growing post-War population in Topeka. In response to a growing demand for more cooperative housing in Topeka, architect and developer, Carl G. Ossmann spearheaded the formation of the Park Plaza Apartment cooperative, along with two others in Topeka during the 1950s. Park Plaza Apartments is also significant under Criteria C for Architecture. The building remains in its original location and retains its historic integrity and character-defining features. Further, the building is a well-preserved illustration of a Mid-Century Modern, low-rise apartment in Topeka that draws upon the International Style. The building meets the eligibility requirements for multi-family apartment buildings as outlined in the *Mid-Century Modern, Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka*.

²¹ "Ossman is Architect for Flint Hills Reca," *Council Grove Republican* (Council Grove, Kansas), 3 April 1959; AND "New VA Long-Term Nursing Home on Tap," *The Marysville Advocate*, 30 July 1970.

²² Mercury News Service, "Cool Appointed Acting Architect," *The Manhattan Mercury* (Manhattan, Kansas), 9 August 1978.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Certificate of Articles of Incorporation, Park Plaza Apartment, Inc. 9 September 1959.

Davis, Lester, "Condo vs. co-op: Know the differences before buying one," *The Washington Post*, 31 January 2018.

Destefano, Jaime L., *Mid-Century Modern Non, Single-Family Residential Architecture in Topeka: 1945-1975 Multiple Property Documentation Form*, prepared for the City of Topeka, 2019-2020.

"A History of Housing Cooperatives," National Cooperative Law Center, <http://nationalcooperativelawcenter.com/national-cooperative-law-center/the-history-of-housing-cooperatives/3/> accessed July 2020.

Hogan, Megan. "the Future of Modern: Federal Architecture in an Era of Change," in *Common Ground* (Spring 2009).

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

Mercury News Service, "Cool Appointed Acting Architect," *The Manhattan Mercury* (Manhattan, Kansas), 9 August 1978.

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

Nichols, Jane – Cooperative President. Interview by the author, Jaime Destefano. August 4, 2020.

"Ossman is Architect for Flint Hills Reca," *Council Grove Republican* (Council Grove, Kansas), 3 April 1959

Park Plaza Apartments, Inc, brief historical write-up by the cooperative.

Pettis, et al., Emily *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.

Prece, Paul – former co-op President. Interview by the author, Jaime Destefano. July 2020.

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency

____ previously listed in the National Register
____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
____ designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.
(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>39.043004</u> Latitude:	<u>-95.689697</u> Longitude:	3	<u> </u> Latitude:	<u> </u> Longitude:
2	<u> </u> Latitude:	<u> </u> Longitude:	4	<u> </u> Latitude:	<u> </u> Longitude:

OR

UTM References

____ NAD 1927 or ____ NAD 1983

1	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing	4	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Located in the Throop's Addition in the central Topeka, Lot 511 at Fillmore Street, including lots 513, 5151, 517, 519, and 521 in Section 1, Township 12, Ranger 15. Beginning at the northeast corner of the property at SW Fillmore Street thence in a southerly direction 152 feet, thence westerly 160 feet. The boundary then continues in a northerly direction for approximately 152 feet. The boundary then travels 160 feet in an easterly direction along to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated boundary includes the entire parcel which is historically associated with the Park Plaza Apartment.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jaime L. Destefano, MSHP
organization JLD Preservation Consulting LLC date August 5, 2020
street & number PO Box 445 telephone 404-694-2066
city or town Fentress state TX zip code 78622
e-mail JLD.PreservationConsulting@gmail.com

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Park Plaza Apartments, Inc.; Jane Nichols Representative
street & number 701 SW Gage Blvd. telephone 785-608-2759
city or town Topeka state Kansas zip code 66604

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

Name of Property:	Park Plaza Apartments
City or Vicinity:	Topeka
County: Shawnee	State: Kansas
Photographer:	Jaime Destefano, MSHP
Date Photographed:	November 11, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 20. Front Façade (South Elevation), photographer facing north
- 2 of 20. Front Façade (South Elevation), photographer facing north
- 3 of 20. Southeast Oblique, photographer facing northwest
- 4 of 20. Southwest Oblique, photographer facing northeast
- 5 of 20. Northwest Oblique, photographer facing southeast

- 6 of 20. North Elevation, photographer facing south
- 7 of 20. East Oblique, photographer facing northwest
- 8 of 20. Raised Plant Beds along Front Façade (south elevation), photographer facing west
- 9 of 20. Rear patio, stone retaining wall, and stone bridge, photographer facing northeast
- 10 of 20. Interior reception, photographer facing northeast
- 11 of 20. Interior reception and waiting lobby, photographer facing southeast
- 12 of 20. Conference Room, photographer facing southeast
- 13 of 20. Front Office, photographer facing southeast
- 14 of 20. Drafting Room, photographer facing northwest
- 15 of 20. Drafting Room, photographer facing east
- 16 of 20. Drafting Room, photographer facing southwest
- 17 of 20. Work Room Cabinetry, photographer facing southwest
- 18 of 20. Hall and Kitchenette, photographer facing northeast
- 19 of 20. Basement, photographer facing northwest
- 20 of 20. Basement – Modern Kitchen and Small Room Additions, photographer facing south

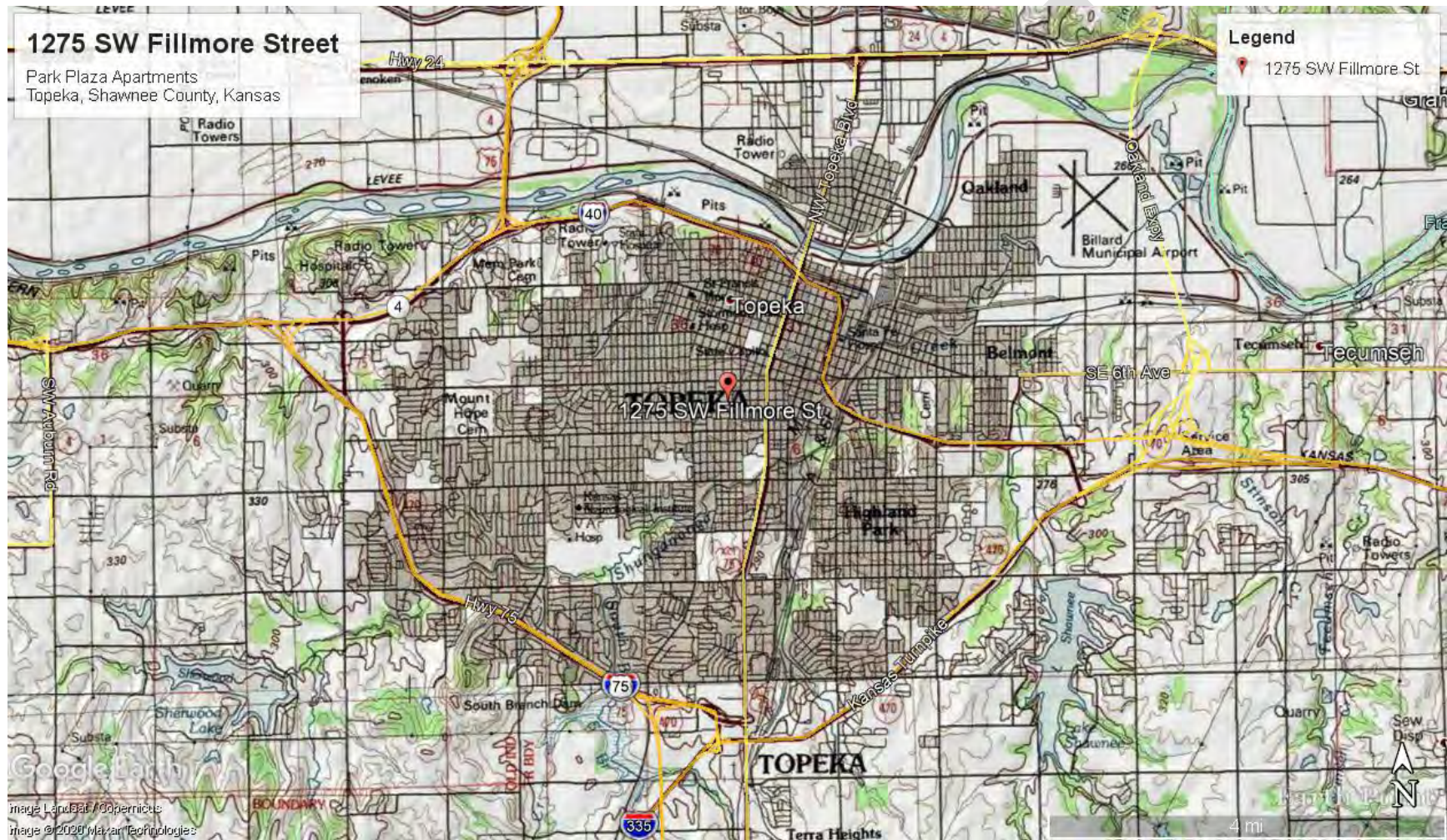
Figures

Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.

- a. Architect Rendering
- b. Topographic Map
- c. Enlarged Topographic Map
- d. Aerial Map
- e. Enlarged Aerial Map with Building Coordinates
- f. Site Plan showing Exterior Photograph Locations
- g. Interior Floor Plan with Photograph Locations
- h. Floor Plan of Typical Apartment
- i. Park Plaza Apartments, Inc Information and Articles of Incorporation

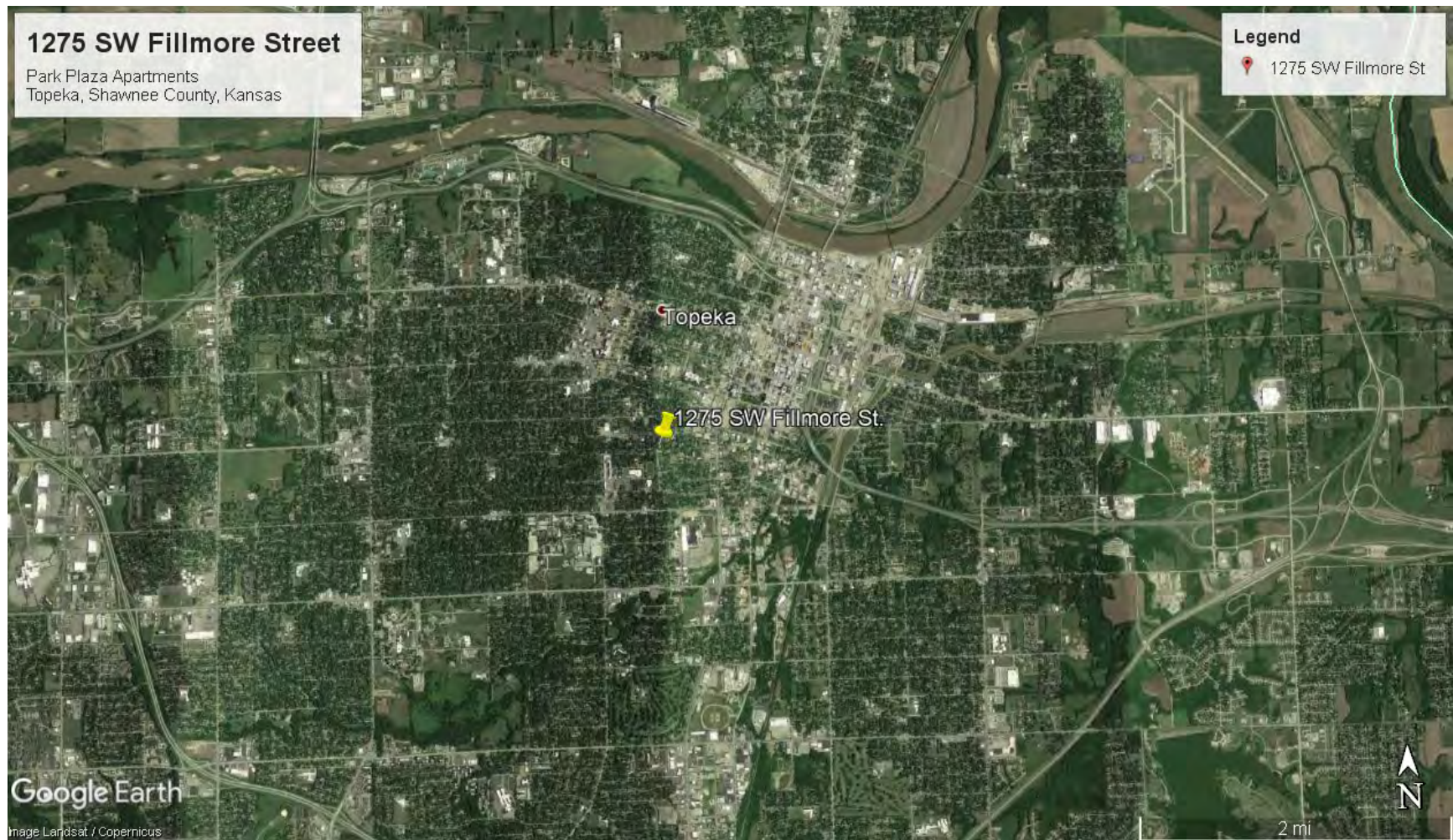


Figure 1. Architect Rendering of Park Plaza Apartments, 1959





C. Enlarged Topographic Map Showing Building Location



D. Google Earth Aerial Photograph – Overview

Park Plaza Apartments



8/5/2020, 11:53:57 AM

Subdivisions

Parcels

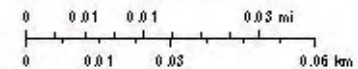
* Approximate Center of Building

Coordinates:

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Longitude: -95.689697

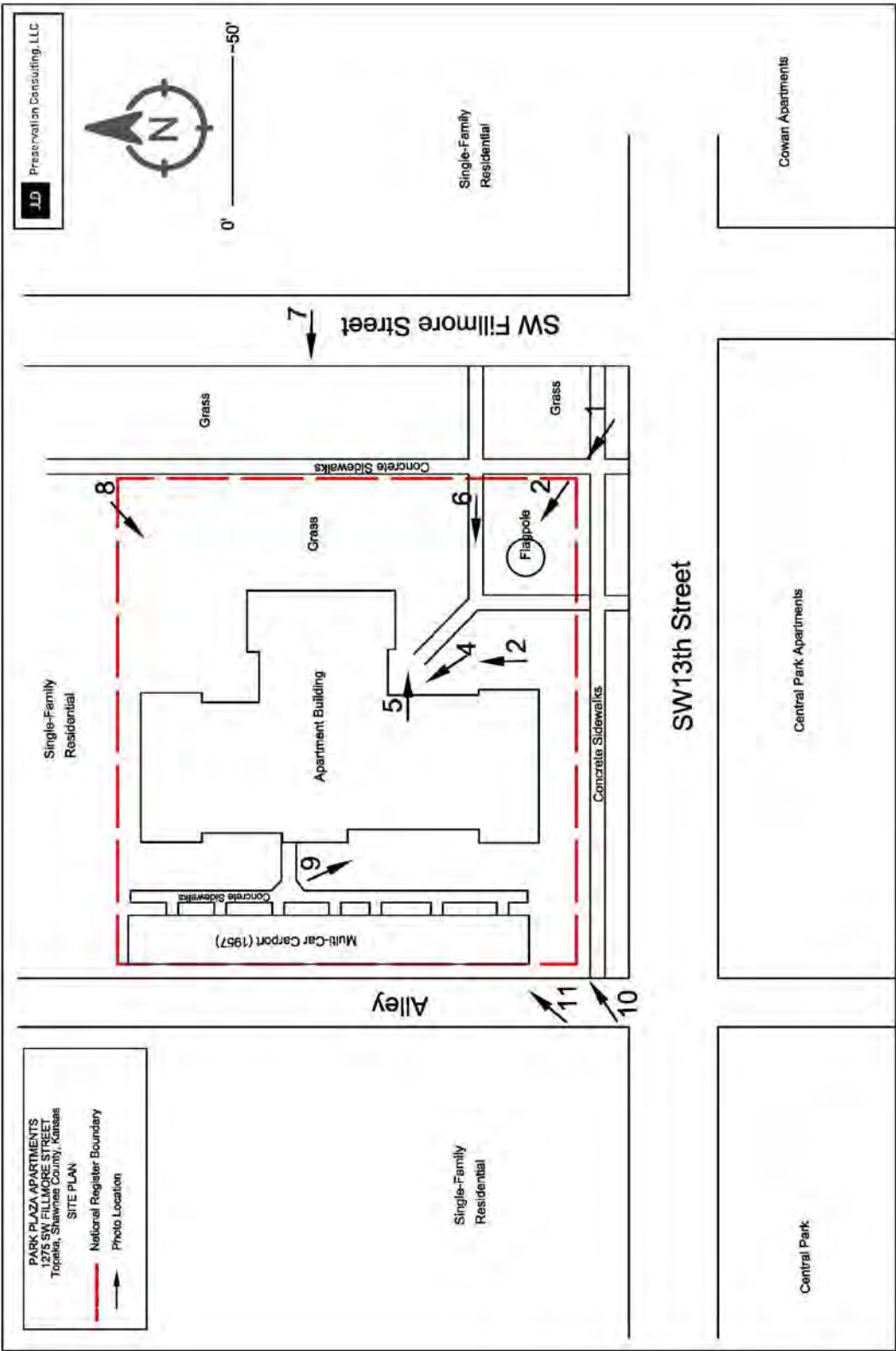
1:1,458



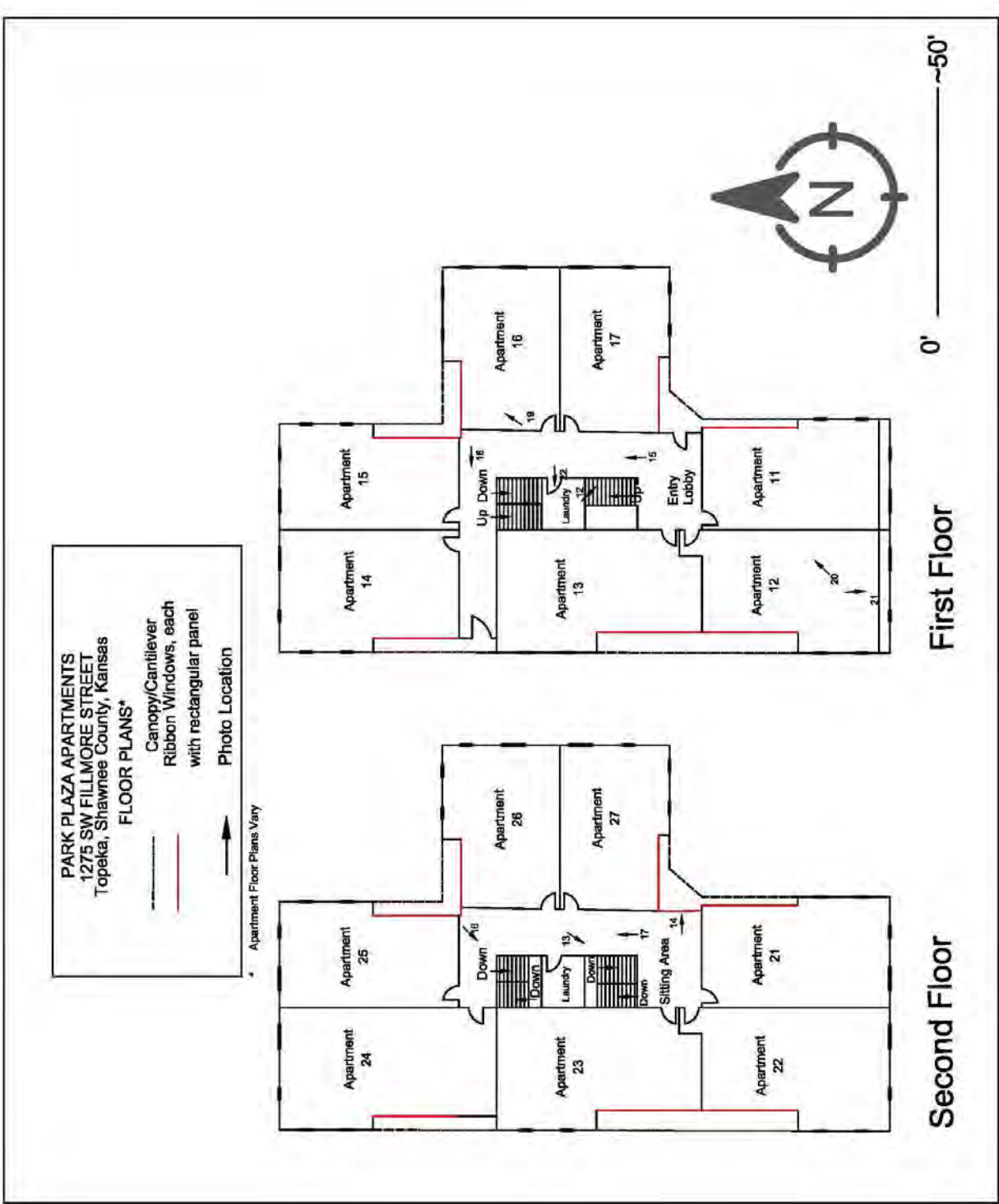
ENVO GIS

All map data subject to Shawnee County GIS data disclaimer. Parcel lines are not survey accurate and should not be used for legal purposes.

E. Parcel Bounding with Building Coordinates and Aerial Underlay



F. Site Plan with Exterior Photograph Locations



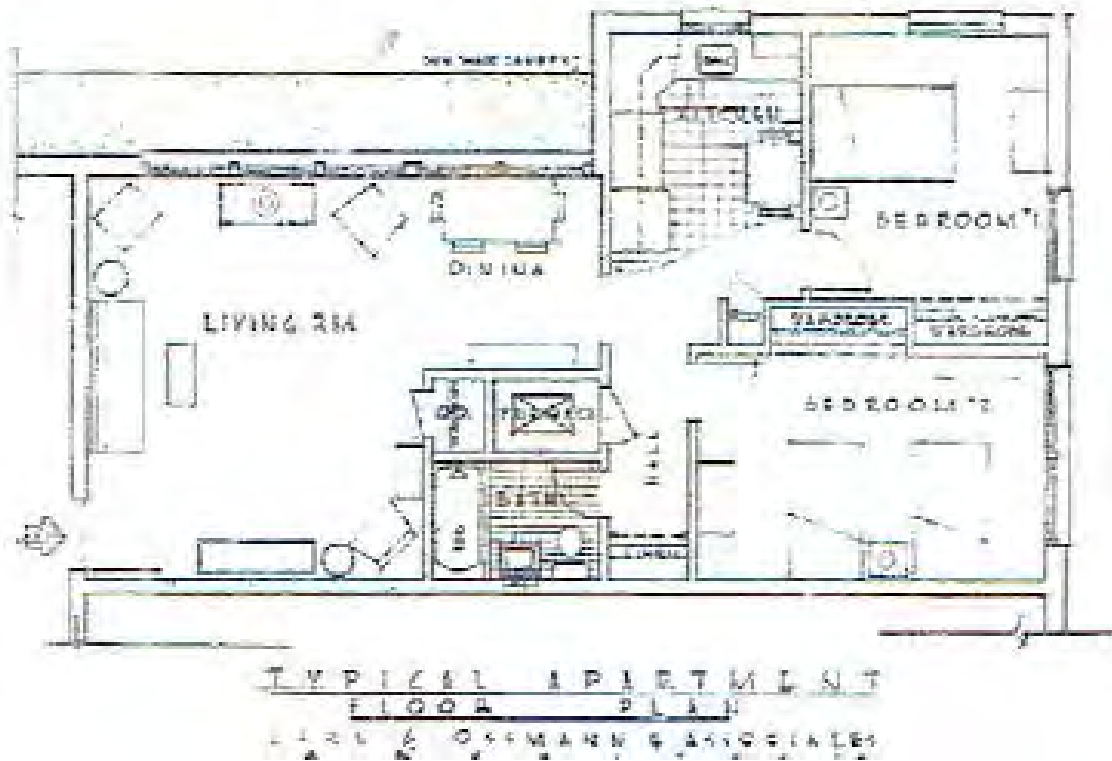
G. Original Interior Floor Plan (1966) with Photographs

Park Plaza Apartments

Name of Property

Shawnee, Kansas

County and State



H. Architect Drawing of Typical Apartment Layout, 1959
Source: Park Plaza Apartment, Inc. Historic Information (see Figure I.)

- I. The following documents include the Park Plaza Apartments, Inc. Historical Information and Articles of Incorporation, as well as an Affidavit naming Carl Ossmann as Treasurer

Park Plaza Apartments

Name of Property

Shawnee, Kansas

County and State

Park Plaza Apartments, Inc.

1275 SW Fillmore Street
Topeka, Kansas



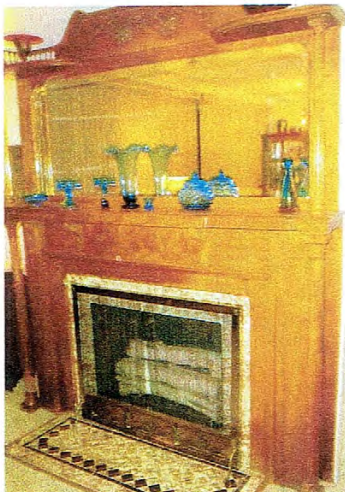
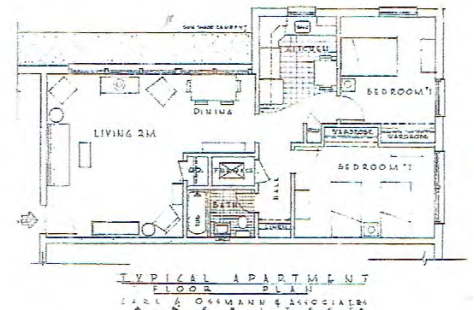
"Construction of a \$250,000 co-op apartment building at 1275 Fillmore is scheduled to begin in early October.

Carl G. Ossman, Topeka architect, is designer and developer of the project. Ossman said the new building is being constructed in response to a demand for more cooperative housing in Topeka.

The 14 units will be of the 'own-your-own' type. Under this cooperative plan, each tenant owns his apartment and contributes a fee monthly toward the up-keep of the building and grounds. Funds are handled by an elected board of directors."

Topeka State Journal July 18, 1959

Park Plaza Apartments sits on the tract of land that once was the three story home of Marcus A Low, general attorney for the Union Pacific railway. The home was built in 1902 at a cost of \$100,000. The Low home was brought in 1937 by Topeka criminal lawyer Edward Rooney where he lived until his death in 1956. The home was in a state of disrepair and was salvaged then removed.



Fireplace salvaged from Rooney house for Apt. 15.



Aftermath of Topeka tornado, June 8, 1966.

Park Plaza Apartments

Shawnee, Kansas

Name of Property

County and State

As directed by the Board of Directors of Park Plaza Apartments, Inc., copies of the Charter, By-Laws, and certain corporate papers are bound and made available to each stockholder for reference and use.

September 2, 1959: First meeting of Incorporators

September 9, 1959: First meeting of Incorporation

Articles of Incorporation
(filed September 9, 1959)

Park Plaza Apartments

Name of Property

Shawnee, Kansas

County and State

CERTIFICATE

or

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

(The Certificate or Articles of Incorporation should be attached here, or copied in full.)

PARK PLAZA APARTMENTS, INC.

We, the undersigned, incorporators, hereby associate ourselves together to form and establish a corporation NOT for profit under the laws of the State of Kansas.

FIRST: The Name of the Corporation is Park Plaza Apartments, Inc.

SECOND: The Location of its Principal Place of Business in this state is 1275 Fillmore Street, Topeka, Shawnee.

THIRD: The Location of its Registered Office in this State is 921 Topeka Avenue, Topeka, Shawnee.

FOURTH: The Name and Address of its Resident Agent in this State is Carl G. Ossmann, 921 Topeka Avenue, Topeka, Shawnee.

FIFTH: This Corporation is organized NOT for profit and the objects and purposes to be transacted and carried on are: To provide housing on a non-profit basis, and, in pursuance thereof, to acquire, own, improve, develop, operate, manage, sell, convey, pledge, assign, mortgage, lease or rent any real estate and any personal property.

To borrow money and issue evidence of indebtedness therefore in furtherance of the above objects and purposes; and to secure the same by mortgage, deed of trust, pledge, or other lien.

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To enter into, perform and carry out contracts of any kind necessary to, or in connection with, or incidental to the accomplishment of any one or more of the above purposes, and to do all things incident thereto.

To have and to exercise all other rights, powers and privileges granted by law to such corporations in this state.

The corporation shall have authority to issue capital stock.

SIXTH: The total amount of capital of this corporation is Two Hundred Thirty Eight-Thousand and no/100 Dollars: and the total number of shares into which it is divided is as follows: 2380 shares of common stock, class---par value One Hundred Dollars each.

Statement of all or any of the designations and the powers, preferences and rights and the qualifications, limitations or restrictions thereof, in respect to any class.

All shares shall have the privileges and restrictions accorded to them by the by-laws, and by the laws of the State of Kansas.

The private property of the stockholders shall never be subject to the payment of any debts, liabilities or obligations of this corporation.

Statement of Grant of Authority, as may be desired to be given to the Board of Directors, if given.

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The Directors shall have all general powers and duties given to them by the laws of the State of Kansas, including the power to manage the business affairs of the corporation, and shall have such other special powers and duties as are prescribed from time to time by the bylaws.

The power to adopt the original by-laws shall be vested in the stockholders; and the power to amend, alter or repeal the by-laws shall be vested in the Board of Directors, subject to the power of the stockholders to amend, alter or repeal the by-laws, as provided by law.

The conditions of membership shall be fixed by the by-laws.

The corporation and its existing shareholders shall have the right to purchase and acquire the stock of a selling stockholder before the sale thereof to a non-stockholder.

SEVENTH: The Amount of Capital with which this Corporation will commence business is Two Thousand Eight Hundred and no/100 Dollars.

EIGHTH: The Names and Places of Residence (P.O. Address) of each of the Incorporators:

Fred C. Noller	1301 Fillmore Street	Topeka, Kansas
W. B. Case	601 Merriam Court	Topeka, Kansas
Mary W. Strain	1251 Topeka Avenue	Topeka, Kansas
Mary L. Marsh	1023 Buchanan Street	Topeka, Kansas
Carl G. Ossmann	1260 Randolph Street	Topeka, Kansas.

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My Comm. Expires: May 14, 1963.

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AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF KANSAS,
COUNTY OF SHAWNEE, SS.

CARL G. OSSMANN, of lawful age, being first duly sworn, upon his oath states:

He resides in Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas.

He is the treasurer of Park Plaza Apartments, Inc., a Kansas corporation, with its registered office located at 921 Topeka Avenue, Topeka, Kansas.

The amount of capital which the Articles of Incorporation state will be paid in before the corporation commences business, being the sum of \$2,800.00, has been fully paid to him as such treasurer.

Carl G. Ossmann
Carl G. Ossmann

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 10th day of
September, 1959.

Harold Brites
Notary Public

My Comm. Expires: August 22, 1961


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NRO 53-13	KANSAS SECRETARY OF STATE
	Change of Registered Office or Agent by a Not-For-Profit Corporation
CONTACT: Kansas Office of the Secretary of State	
Memorial Hall, 1st Floor 120 S.W. 10th Avenue Topeka, KS 66612-1594	(785) 296-4564 kssos@sos.ks.gov www.sos.ks.gov

0822 01 053 013 \$20.00	FILED BY KS SOS 08-22-2013 11:07:21 AM FILE#: 0298513
 03618187	

i INSTRUCTIONS: All information must be completed or this document will not be accepted for filing.
Please read instructions sheet before completing.

1. Business entity ID number: <i>This is not the Federal Employer ID Number (FEIN)</i>	0298513		
2. Name of corporation: <i>Name must match the name on record with the Secretary of State</i>	Park Plaza Apartments, Inc.		
3. State/Country of organization:	KS		
4. The new name of the resident agent and address of the registered office in Kansas: <i>Address must be a street address A P.O. box is unacceptable</i>	Capital City Bank Name: Street Address: 1701 SW Gage Blvd Kansas City: Topeka State: KS Zip: 66604		
5. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of Kansas that the foregoing is true and correct and that I have remitted the required fee.			
Signature of authorized officer Mark L. Burenheide		Date (month, day, year) 8/19/2013	
Name of signer (printed or typed)			

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.