

# Historic North Topeka East Neighborhood Plan



## Topeka, Kansas



An Element of the City of Topeka Comprehensive Plan  
December, 2013



# HISTORIC NORTH TOPEKA EAST

Topeka, Kansas



## Neighborhood Plan

An Element of the  
**Topeka Comprehensive Plan**  
A Cooperative Effort By:  
The Historic North Topeka East  
Neighborhood Improvement Association  
&  
Topeka Planning Department



ADOPTED:  
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# I. INTRODUCTION

## Background

In the fall of 1996, the North Topeka on the Move Association (NOTOMA) completed the Strategic Action Plan to Revitalize North Topeka. Following this, in 1998 NOTOMA and the City of Topeka partnered on a more comprehensive, resulting in the “Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan,” adopted by City Council in August, 1999.

## 1999 Plan Accomplishments

Historic North Topeka is now a booming area of the city and has gone through a major transition since 1999.

The business district, now known as the NOTO Arts District, has grown to 29 shops including restaurants, art galleries, art studios, antique and curiosity shops. Today, as many as 2,300 people attend the First Friday monthly Art Walks. The streetscape and facades along North Kansas Avenue has been improved through programs with the City.

The Great Overland Station Museum, opened in 2004 as a railroad heritage museum, is now also the home to the Kansas Hall of Fame, the historic railroad park, the All Veterans Memorial and Corridor of Flags, and the Annual Railroad Days Festival, an event which attracts over 4,000 visitors to the Station.

Just to the south of the Station, the Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Department has acquired property along the north bank of the Kansas River and intends to establish a Riverfront Park, complete with trails and other recreational activities. The City of Topeka has devoted funds through its Transient Guest Tax to specifically help fund this project.

The Topeka Rescue Mission is expanding its services and doubling its capacity; very shortly the Mission will have space for over 1,000 daily visitors.

Other improvements have been made throughout the neighborhood as well. Business owners have improved the landscaping around their properties, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the area. Traffic circulation has been improved with the Curtis Flyoff, Sardou Flyoff, and Sardou Bridge improvements. The Garfield Park pool completed major renovations in 2011 and the Neighborhood Improvement Association has been awarded grants that have gone for additional park improvements. And, Curtis Junior High has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been renovated for low- to moderate-income senior housing.

## PURPOSE

In 2012, the Historic North Topeka East Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA) applied to the City of Topeka for Stages of Resources Targeting (**SORT**) funding. In early 2013, the Topeka City Council approved the Historic North Topeka East (**HNTE**) Neighborhood to be one of two designated neighborhoods to receive planning assistance in 2013 and implementation funding in the following two years.

Whereas the previous plan covered the entire North Topeka area, this plan update focuses on the southern area of Historic North Topeka East—from N. Topeka Boulevard east to the Kansas River, and from Garfield Park south to the Kansas River.

The purpose of the Historic North Topeka East Plan Update is to provide long-range guidance and feasible alternatives to the City, its agencies, residents, and private/public interests for the future revitalization of HNTE. It establishes a 10-15 year vision with appropriate strategies and implementation measures for land use, housing, urban design, parks, commercial districts, infrastructure, and circulation. This Plan provides the policy basis from which to identify appropriate zoning, capital improvements, and programs to implement it.

### **Relation to Other Plans**

The Plan is a comprehensive community-based approach to neighborhood planning that constitutes an amendment to the Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan and is regularly monitored, reviewed, and updated as needed. It is intended to balance neighborhood needs with city-wide objectives and be consistent with goals of existing and future elements of the Comprehensive Plan including Downtown, Transportation, Economic Development, and Trails Elements.

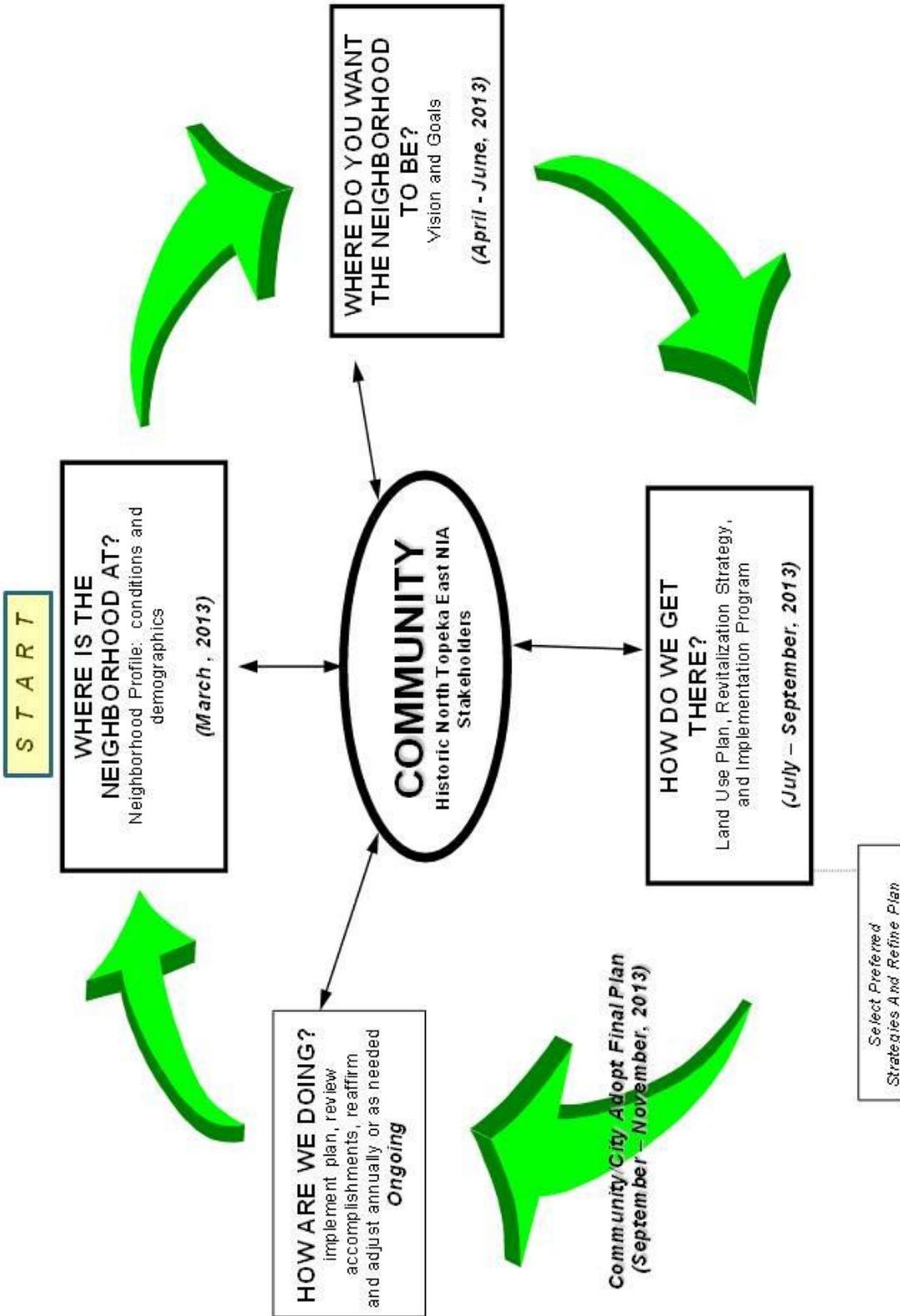
## **PROCESS**

This document has been prepared in collaboration with the Historic North Topeka East NIA, with input from residents, and other stakeholders in the neighborhood as well. Beginning in the spring of 2013, planning staff conducted a property-by-property land use and housing survey of the neighborhood and collected pertinent demographic data. This “state-of-the-neighborhood” information was shared and presented during the kickoff meeting on April 10. The steering committee, comprised of neighborhood volunteers, met five times over the summer and looked in-depth at issues such as goals and guiding principles, land use and zoning, circulation and parks, NOTO and the Riverfront, and selected SORT Target Areas. Updates on the planning process were also given at the May and July NIA meetings. A compass meeting was then held on August 14 to make sure the plan and the steering committee’s recommendations were on the right course.

A summary of the final plan was presented to the community and the Planning Commission at a confirmation/wrap-up meeting held on October 16, 2013 at the Garfield Community Center. A public hearing was held before the Planning Commission on October 28, 2013 and it was adopted by the City Council on December 17, 2013.

All property owners in the Historic North Topeka East planning area were specifically notified of public meetings twice during the planning process. Attendees of the first public meeting were notified a third time, for the Compass Meeting. Other owners in the potential rezoning areas were notified by mail a third time. A total of 10 meetings in the neighborhood were held with citizens and Planning staff to develop the plan.

# Historic North Topeka East Neighborhood Plan



## II. NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

### SETTING AND CHARACTER

#### Location

Historic North Topeka East is located along the north bank of the Kansas River, approximately one mile from the Capitol in downtown Topeka. The planning area is bound by the Kansas River to the east and south, the old Soldier Creek channel to the north and NE Topeka Boulevard to the west. The planning area comprises approximately 742 acres.

The community is intersected by one major north-south thoroughfare—N. Kansas Avenue—and bordered by another—N. Topeka Boulevard. These connect to the downtown south of the Kansas River by way of two bridges at N. Topeka Boulevard and NE Quincy Street. The community is surrounded by residential land uses to the north and west, with commercial uses and green space dominating the street front along N. Topeka Boulevard.

#### History

Historic North Topeka can be referred to as a crossroads in the settling of the West. In 1849, three brothers named Joseph, Achan and Louis Pappan moved to what is now North Topeka and began a ferry service across the Kansas River for Oregon Trail travelers. Pappan's Landing rested somewhere in the vicinity between Topeka Boulevard and Harrison Street and was also utilized as a segment by John Brown's followers on the Underground Railroad. The first African-American churches in Topeka were established just north of the river.



Originally called “Eugene” by its founders William Curtis (grandfather of Charles Curtis, Vice President of The United States during the Hoover Administration) and Louis Laurent, the town was laid out on the north side of the Kansas River in 1865, near the landing of the Pappan's Ferry. The first passenger train in Topeka rolled through North Topeka in 1866 when there were only a handful of houses and a few stores. Shortly thereafter in 1867, the area was annexed into the City of Topeka. Once the railroad arrived,

the community began to grow with the construction of a flourmill, hotels, saloons, banks, homes and schools. In 1869, after several previous floating bridges were swept down the river, a permanent structure was built connecting North Kansas Avenue to South Kansas Avenue. After that North Topeka was booming with development, including the construction of the Union Pacific Passenger Depot and Place Hotel built at the southwest corner of Kansas Avenue and Railroad Street in 1872. The following was printed in the North Topeka Times describing North Topeka before the turn of the century:

*“A more live and energetic class of businessmen cannot be found in the whole state of Kansas. Broad streets, tastily built houses and a busy thoroughfare present indisputable evidences of present activity and future growth of this ‘city over the river.’”*

The community is made up of more than 35 different subdivisions, beginning with Eugene’s Addition in 1867. Lots sizes range from 25’ x 130’ to 25’ x 175’ with the exception of Eugene’s Addition which is typified by 75’ wide lots. The streets in Historic North Topeka typically lie within 60’ wide rights-of-way, except Topeka Boulevard and Kansas Avenue, which are 100’ and 80’, respectively.

The history of the community is filled with frequent floods, the most notable occurring in 1903 and 1951. After the floods of 1903 and again in 1908, a dike system was built to protect North Topeka from future floods and restore confidence in the community. However, in 1951 a major flood once again inundated the community, causing tremendous damage. Many homes were razed or left uninhabitable following the flood and were often replaced by mobile homes as a low-cost alternative to traditional site-built homes. Concurrently, suburban development trends were also accelerating migration from inner city neighborhoods to outlying areas. In an effort to encourage redevelopment, much of the area was “up-zoned” from its base zoning of single-family and two-family districts, to zoning districts that allowed multiple-family dwellings and highly intensive commercial and industrial uses. The Army Corps of Engineers built a new levee system in the mid-50s to protect the area from flooding and reassure property owners. A decline in population was soon followed by a decline in neighborhood business activity years later when the Kansas Avenue Bridge was rebuilt in the mid-60s and relocated to Quincy Street thus bypassing the traditional business district on Kansas Avenue. Many historic buildings from the turn of the century still exist in Historic North Topeka, although most are in need of rehabilitation.



The Kansas Avenue business district has morphed from supporting construction businesses and bars in the early 2000’s, to the home of the NOTO Arts District today. The 1927-edition of the Union Pacific Depot, moved to the west side of Kansas Avenue in line with the Capital building, has been revitalized as the Great Overland Station Museum. Three structures within the planning area are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Great Overland Station, the North Topeka Baptist Church, and Curtis Junior High School. In addition, the Segar Place at 1132 NW Harrison Street is listed as a Topeka Local Landmark.

In 2000, the Historic North Topeka East area was rezoned to reflect the Future Land Use Map of the 1999 Plan. This created a mixed-use district of varying intensities primarily south of Gordon and along Kansas Avenue. Industrial uses—other than those currently grandfathered in—are now

limited to the area south of the railroad tracks and east of the Quincy Bridge. The remaining neighborhood areas are now classified as Low-Density Residential.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS\***

**\* All tables and maps are found in Appendix A and B**

### **Health**

The Neighborhood Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes a neighborhood health rating system for all the neighborhoods in Topeka. This uses five categories—Poverty Level, Public Safety, Residential Property Values, Single Family Homeownership, and Boarded Houses—to assign a health rating to each Census Tract Block Group. The HNTE planning area falls in two block groups. The block group for the southern half of the planning area covers the area from Morse Street to the Kansas River and was rated an “Intensive Care” neighborhood in 2011, one of only four such areas in the city. The northern half contains parts of two block groups, both which were rated as “At Risk.”

### **Land Use**

The HNTE Planning Area contains 741.8 acres, with 180.8 of those acres being public right-of-way (Table 1). The neighborhood is mostly residential, accounting for 65% of the parcels and 39.3% of the total land area. Most of the residential is single-family; however, the next highest residential land use are homes that have been converted to apartments. Open Space/Recreational land comprises the highest percent of total land area with 53.2%. This is due to the large vacant tracts that border the Kansas River on the east side of the planning area, providing open space and a natural buffer. One interesting example of the accomplishments of the 1999 Plan is shown in the Commercial-Mixed Use category. This category increased 400% since 1999, from 3 parcels to 12 in 2013.

Map 1 shows the existing land uses within HNTE. Commercial and Mixed Use development is predominantly located along North Kansas Avenue, consistent with the future land use plan developed in the 1999 Plan. Industrial uses are mainly located between of Laurent Street and the Kansas River. A major land use change has occurred in the northwest area of the neighborhood with the old Curtis Junior High being converted to senior and affordable housing units. Residential uses fill most of the remaining neighborhood. Previous zoning allowances are still seen throughout the neighborhood in the form of mobile home sites and courts. Circling the neighborhood is an open space and greenway—Garfield Park, old Soldier Creek, and the Kansas River levee.

### **Zoning**

After the 1951 flood in North Topeka, Historic North Topeka East was “up zoned” for industrial and multi-family uses in an attempt to prompt redevelopment. However, a rush of new high intensity land uses did not develop. One of the goals of the 1999 Plan was to “down zone” to bring back neighborhood uses. In 2000, the neighborhood was rezoned based on the future land use map in the 1999 Plan. Now, HNTE is predominantly residential throughout the north half and predominantly mixed use in the southern half. There is still some industrial zoning located along the railroad tracks in the southern portion of the planning area. This and all of the current zoning areas are shown in Map 2 with a breakdown of land uses described in Table 1.

## **Housing Density**

The overall housing density in Historic North Topeka East is fairly high at 6.2 dwelling units per acre for residential purposes. However, due to the open space along the Kansas River and the industrial uses south of Laurent, the overall density drops to 1.7 for all land (Table 2).

## **Housing Conditions**

Residential structures were evaluated on their structural condition by Planning staff in March 2013. This was done through a rubric that ranked minor, intermediate, and major deficiencies based on the severity of the problem and the results are shown in Table 3. Over 75% of the residential structures were Sound or had Intermediate Deficiencies. The other 24.9% showed more severe deficiencies, indicative of deteriorating conditions. These individual results were aggregated by block to show overall trends throughout the neighborhood, shown in Map 3.

## **Tenure**

Historic North Topeka East continues to have a high percentage of renter-occupied housing, as it did when the 1999 Plan was completed. However, in 1999, the entire North Topeka planning area had 59% of all units occupied by renters. Today, 49% of all residential units are renter-occupied, compared to 47% being owner-occupied. Vacant units—for sale, abandoned, or boarded—account for the remaining units as shown in Table 4. This data was aggregated by block to show homeownership trends throughout HNTE (Map 4).

## **Environment/Public Safety**

The City of Topeka's Codes Enforcement Unit provided data on nuisance and housing codes violations in the Historic North Topeka East neighborhood during 2012 (Map 5). These cases include issues such as inoperable vehicles, accumulations of junk and debris on a property, or structural concerns. While there are high violation areas throughout HNTE, the Northwest area of the neighborhood shows a higher instance of violations than the others.

Public safety was measured by the number of Part 1 crimes per block (Map 6). These include crimes such as murder, aggravated assault, rape, theft, burglary, and robbery. In 1999, there were blocks that had up to 11-41 crimes per block. However, there was a large shift in these types of indicator crimes throughout HNTE. During 2012, the highest occurrence of these major crimes were just 6-10 crimes per block, and both of the blocks with this higher value were areas with a higher-than-average concentration of people—the Pioneer Curtis Homes redevelopment and the commercial blocks at Fairchild and Kansas Avenue.

## **Infrastructure**

The original town site of North Topeka was laid out in 1865; much of the area retains the historic feeling from its early history and can use this as an advantage. However, historic infrastructure rarely attracts nostalgic feelings and this, too, is still present in Historic North Topeka East. Blocks near the main thoroughfares have been renovated with repaving, sidewalks, curb and gutter, and storm drain improvements. Blocks in the interior sections of HNTE have not been as fortunate. Many streets lack sidewalks or the sidewalks are in significant disrepair, forcing people to walk in the streets. Streets in the northeast corner of the planning area are as narrow as 15' and rely on ditch drainage to move storm water.

Map 7 illustrates the infrastructure of HNTE, showing both the completeness and the condition. The central blocks around Kansas and Quincy show the best infrastructure in the planning area. All four "corners" show the need for major repairs or replacement.

### **Development Activity**

Much of the development in Historic North Topeka East occurred during the early days of the community with the 1950's showing the last major period of new construction. This was due, in part, to the Flood of 1951. According to the Shawnee County Appraiser's website, 705 properties list the year the building was built. Of these, only 26 (4%) have improvements built after 1960.

HNTE has not seen much development activity since the 1999 Plan was completed (Map 8). There have been many more demolition permits issued since 2000 than new residential construction. One new site built home has been added, through the Infill Housing Program, using both HOME and Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding. In addition to this new site built home, one manufactured home has been added as well.

While single family home construction has been lagging, there has been a substantial investment in affordable housing and senior housing with the completion of the Pioneer Curtis Junior High facility. This renovated historic junior high school and grounds added 59 affordable residential units. It dramatically improved the blocks and brought new households back to the neighborhood.

### **Property Values**

According to information provided by the Shawnee County Appraiser's Office, the median value of single-family homes in HNTE was a little over \$31,000. Multi-Family converted homes were valued slightly higher, at \$33,000. Mobile home sites and courts are valued at the cost of the land, with the mobile home not counting as an improvement, and so were significantly lower than site built homes at \$2,900. Multi-family housing averaged the highest property values, \$332,870, due in part to the high property value of the Pioneer Curtis Junior High project. Additional information can be found in Table 5.

### **Circulation**

A diverse street network provides pedestrian and vehicular circulation in Historic North Topeka East. It is intersected by one principal arterial street (Topeka Boulevard), three minor arterial streets (Quincy, Kansas and Morse) and two collector streets (Tyler and Gordon). The Topeka Boulevard, Kansas Avenue and Sardou Avenue bridges provide access to areas south and east of the Kansas River. HNTE is served by one bus route with three stops located in the planning area.

One major circulation issue raised during the 1999 Plan concerned the railroad tracks that separate the Great Overland Station, Topeka Rescue Mission, and the Riverfront from the rest of HNTE. This line has 75-85 trains per day, frequently stopping traffic and pedestrians. Over the years, there have been several pedestrian fatalities here, with two occurring in 2013 alone.

Two additional circulation issues were raised in the 1999 Plan and have since been addressed—posting “No Trucks” signs around the NOTO area on North Kansas Ave. and improving access to HNTE and Little Russia through the Northeast Curtis and Sardou Fly Offs.



## Public Facilities

Historic North Topeka East has six public facilities and areas: Garfield Park and Community Center, Quincy Elementary School, Veterans Park, Fire Station No. 1, and the Charles Curtis Greenway.

The Garfield Community Center provides the main community facility for indoor and outdoor recreation and has park facilities including outdoor grills, playground, picnic areas, a shelter house, and a swimming pool. The swimming pool received significant improvements completed in 2011, featuring a renovated bath house, an open flume slide, a tot slide, a mushroom waterfall, shade structures, spray features, floatable water features, and a diving well.

Quincy Elementary School is located just south of Garfield Park at the north of the planning area. This school serves just over 250 students with data in Table 6 showing the economic indicators of this student population. Quincy Elementary has the fourth highest rate of economically disadvantaged students of all of the schools in USD 501. The state of Kansas averages 48.8% of students that are economically disadvantaged; 93.8% of Quincy students fall in this category. Reading and math scores also fall below the averages for the state and USD 501.

## SOCIOECONOMIC TRENDS

**\*Refer to Appendix A for Socio-Economic Tables (Table 7-Table 9)**

The Historic North Topeka East planning area is located in Census Tract 8 and includes all of Block Groups 3 and 4, and a small part of Block Groups 1 and 2. The socioeconomic data was extrapolated from the 1990, 2000 and 2010 United States Censuses, with tables located in Appendix A. The neighborhood lost 829 people between 1990 and 2010, losing 16% between 1990 and 2000 and 21% between 2000 and 2010. HNTE saw a steady loss of population along all ethnicities. The overall number of total households decreased 33% during this 20 year period, with the most dramatic loss occurring between 2000 and 2010. The total number of female-headed households with children under the age of 18 decreased between 1990 and 2000 by 11% but increased nearly 300% between 2000 and 2010.

The population of nearly all age groups in HNTE declined, with the exception of adults aged 45-54 which continuously increased between 1990 and 2010. Between 1990 and 2000, all age categories decreased except for adults 35-44 and 45-54. From 2000 to 2010, children 10-14 years and 15-19 increased, in addition to adults 45-54. This may show a trend of families with children moving back into the neighborhood.

Economically, the average household income (**AHI**) in HNTE has increased to \$24,300 but is still lagging behind Topeka's AHI. The AHI for HNTE actually increased at a higher rate than Topeka's between 1990 and 2000 but fell even further behind from 2000 to 2010. This could be due in part to the Great Recession and the Housing Crisis in 2007 impacting this community more so than the rest of the Capital City. Regardless, this community is more economically disadvantaged now than it was in 1990.

## PROFILE SUMMARY: NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Historic North Topeka East, once a thriving residential community capable of supporting its own business district, has lost its original character to the effects of several devastating floods and urban-to-suburban migration patterns. The result is a community with vast potential, but in dire

need of re-investment. Many positive changes have occurred since the 1999 Plan, but there is still much more that needs to be addressed. The preceding sections have identified the following opportunities and needs, which are summarized below.

#### Strengths/Opportunities

- The traditional small town design found in HNTE, if restored to its original character, could be an attractive alternative to suburban living with shopping and entertainment within walking distance from residential areas and the close proximity to downtown.
- The area has retained its original low-density residential character despite being zoned for multiple-family and highly intensive nonresidential uses for the better part of 50 years.
- The area has retained many of its historic residential and commercial buildings, although many are in need of rehabilitation. North Kansas Avenue is the only intact traditional commercial district in Topeka.
- NOTO has become an economic development engine, adding businesses along N. Kansas Avenue and assisting the development of the artistic community. The First Friday art event draws 1,500 visitors to Historic North Topeka on the first Friday of every month.
- The Great Overland Station museum represents a destination anchor for the Kansas Avenue business district.
- The substantial investment going into the renovation of the Great Overland Station could attract people and new investment to the community's historic commercial district on N. Kansas Avenue.
- The large number of vacant lots presents an opportunity for new in-fill housing development.
- Residential blocks in the community boast relatively low crime on average.
- The riverfront offers significant development potential and an opportunity to redefine Topeka's and North Topeka's regional image.

#### Needs/Constraints

- The low density of population in HNTE, which is due in large part to a preponderance of vacant parcels and non-residential land uses, presents a constraint to developing a critical mass of population that can thrive as a traditional urban community and be better able to support commercial services.
- 25% of all residential structures exhibited major deficiencies.
- 47% of the housing units are owner occupied.
- Mobile homes and vacant lots, which together account for 7% of the parcels in HNTE, are scattered throughout traditional residential neighborhoods with a median property value more than 10 times less than the surrounding homes.
- Three building permits were issued in Historic North Topeka East from 1999 – 2013 in contrast to the 45 demolition permits issued.
- The population in HNTE decreased by 34% from 1990 – 2010.
- 94% of students at Quincy Elementary are economically disadvantaged.
- Declining population, homeownership, and concentration of low income households are a combination signaling potentially devastating economic, educational, and social divestiture in the community.
- Perception that the area is prone to flooding.

Historic North Topeka East is one of the oldest and most diverse areas in Topeka. The area is rich in history and still exhibits many characteristics of its original traditional small town design.

However, the effects of several devastating floods forever altered its original character. Today the areas' hidden qualities remain largely undiscovered, with numerous vacant lots, dilapidated building conditions, and a declining population more dependent on other areas of Topeka for basic services. The residential areas have suffered from the blighting influences of industrial uses and heavy truck and railroad traffic. These factors have eroded any homeowner confidence in the community. With the recent renovation efforts on the Great Overland Station and the activity in NOTO, much attention is once again focused on the area. It is this renewed interest in conjunction with a new neighborhood vision that, if capitalized on, will help to revitalize the historic business district, riverfront area, and surrounding residential areas and to redefine Historic North Topeka East's image as a viable mixed-use community of choice.

### III. VISION AND GOALS

#### VISION 2025

In 2025, a vibrant Historic North Topeka is envisioned with a strong NOTO arts district, a successful Great Overland Station Museum, and a rediscovered riverfront open for community gatherings and recreation. Most of the historic building fronts along N. Kansas Avenue have been restored to their original grandeur, the sidewalks are full of patrons during the evening, and former residential homes have been adaptively re-used for businesses. Nearby residential areas seem fresh with new in-fill housing and homeowners, and former residents have returned to in-town living to retire in the renovated Curtis and Grant school buildings/grounds or raise their families. School enrollment and test scores are steady after reaching their all-time peak several years ago. The just completed I-70 viaduct through Downtown has put Historic North Topeka on the “map,” giving its residents, businesses, and visitors direct Interstate access and identity. No longer is the area’s image viewed with skepticism and doubt – nobody knocks Historic North Topeka anymore because knocking it would be a knock against yourself. Renewed pride and commitment to the area shows in every Topekan.

#### GOALS & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Historic North Topeka Stakeholders Committee identified six primary ingredients to achieving this vision: land use, circulation, Great Overland Station District, housing, community character and design, and infrastructure. These “mini-visions” have been articulated into goal statements for each topic and are supported by “guiding principles”, or instructions, on achieving the goals.

#### LAND USE

##### Goal

*Establish a predictable pattern of land use that preserves the viability of residential neighborhoods, accommodates services for residents, and promotes a destination-oriented mixed-use center and riverfront.*

##### Guiding Principles

- Identify single-family residential preserves and protect them from encroachment of incompatible land uses.
- Concentrate commercial activity within neighborhood friendly nodes and limit “strip” development not compatible with traditional neighborhood design.
- Condense industrial districts and lessen negative impacts industrial-type uses have upon stable residential, commercial, or “image” areas.
- Allow for the re-imagination of the area surrounding NOTO and the Great Overland Station.
- Develop a system of quality-designed open space that links a variety of uses and users and takes advantage of the riverfront.
- Encourage mobile home development as part of planned unit developments and outside of traditional neighborhood settings.

## **NOTO/RIVERFRONT**

### **Goal**

*Develop an urban entertainment, dining, retail, cultural, and living district that utilizes assets of N. Kansas Avenue business district, Great Overland Station, riverfront, and historic buildings.*

### **Guiding Principles**

- Encourage a mixed-use urban environment that promotes “in-town” living while limiting creation or expansion of industrial uses.
- Restore historic building fronts and retain integrity of block frontage on N. Kansas.
- Maintain public streetscape improvements that complement the area’s character and entice investment.
- Develop a destination riverfront area that compliments the historic nature of Historic North Topeka.
- Promote a “walkable” setting and pedestrian-oriented development.
- Improve pedestrian connections from N. Kansas Avenue to the Great Overland Station
- Recruit destination-oriented uses and plan for expansion of district beyond N. Kansas Avenue
- Enhance and maintain the NOTO Board to oversee NOTO business promotion.
- Encourage and support a diversity of cultural, recreational, and commercial attractions for young and old, residents and visitors alike.

## **CIRCULATION**

### **Goal**

*Provide a safer, greater, and more efficient means of access to, from, and within Historic North Topeka that will connect a diverse mix of land users.*

### **Guiding Principles**

- Eliminate heavy truck traffic from the NOTO area and establish alternate heavy truck routes without unreasonably impacting residential areas
- Improve routing of non-local traffic into Historic North Topeka and the NOTO/Riverfront area.
- Develop a recreational trail system that is linked to a regional trail system.
- Improve pedestrian connections and safety.
- Establish bikeway connections to other areas of the City to enable alternate means of transportation.
- Promote destinations to non-residents through wayfinding signage.

## **HOUSING**

### **Goal**

*Increase density of population and quality of housing options, both market-rate and affordable, that stabilizes the housing market.*

### **Guiding Principles**

- Establish design standards for new in-fill housing and rehabilitation that compliments the historic architectural elements of the neighborhood and maintains affordability.
- Upgrade housing and neighborhood conditions to retain and attract more homeowners.
- Target larger strategic blocks for in-fill housing compatible with the neighborhood and concentrate rehabilitation improvements around them.
- Establish neighborhood networks to help homeowners, especially the elderly, maintain their property
- Promote adaptive reuse of commercial buildings for loft apartments.

## **CHARACTER**

### **Goal**

*Communicate a notable image and unique experience of place by building off of physical and cultural heritage.*

### **Guiding Principles**

- Ensure that new development is compatible in scale, materials, and character with surrounding buildings.
- Maintain urban form and traditional neighborhood design principles.
- Establish gateways, edges, and streetscapes that reflect a positive first image and compliments the area's historic character.
- Protect and promote historically significant structures, district, views, and places.
- Provide an appropriate setting to "tell the story" of the area's prominence in local history.

## **PUBLIC FACILITIES**

### **Goal**

*Upgrade and maintain public facilities to ensure confidence in the future of Historic North Topeka.*

### **Guiding Principles**

- Maintain 100-year minimum flood protection from the Kansas River and its tributaries.
- Ensure that proper drainage systems and urban infrastructure is in place.
- Develop and maintain a parks system appropriate to meet the needs of the population in Historic North Topeka

## IV. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Historic North Topeka East Future Land Use Plan (see Map 9) graphically illustrates a conceptual guide for future development of the neighborhood that embodies the vision and goals presented in Section III. The map illustrates preferred land use concepts and is explained more fully in the descriptions below. The following land uses, zoning districts, and housing densities are the “maximum recommended” and do not preclude lower-intensity land uses, zoning districts, or housing density levels.

### LAND USE PLAN CATEGORIES

**Residential – Low Density (Traditional):** This category comprises blocks where the highest concentrations of cohesive single-family uses exist without a significant mixing of two/multiple-family or non-residential uses. The “traditional” designation refers to a primarily single-family district consisting of traditional neighborhood design elements, such as higher densities, frame or “stick-built” houses with porches, historic architectural styles, street and alley systems, narrower lot frontages, and a pedestrian friendly environment in proximity to schools, shopping, parks, etc. that predominated neighborhood development prior to World War II. These areas were originally developed as part of a traditional single-family neighborhood and have realistic potential to sustain this as the predominate character. Non-traditional elements such as “ranch-style” lot layouts and mobile homes/parks are not conducive to retaining the integrity of the area’s desired character and should be prohibited. New single-family in-fill development may use attached or “townhouse” design units to achieve a higher density within the Focus Area.

Primary Uses: Single-family dwellings (detached, attached)  
Zoning Districts: R-2 (Single Family)  
Density/Intensity: 5-7 dwelling units/acre

**Residential – High Density:** This category is applied exclusively to the redesigned Pioneer Curtis Junior High School. Although this is an interior block, this adaptive reuse preserved a historic building. Any future high density residential developments should occur in the X3 Mixed Use-NOTO district, which allows a higher number of units/acre.

Primary Uses: Multi-family dwellings (5+ units)  
Zoning Districts: Planned Unit Development  
Density/Intensity: 18 dwelling units/acre (net)

**Office:** This category applies to those offices located throughout North Topeka. Offices looking to locate in North Topeka should be encouraged to use sites along major thoroughfares or in existing Mixed Use areas. Additional expansion of office uses into the residential portion of the neighborhood is discouraged.

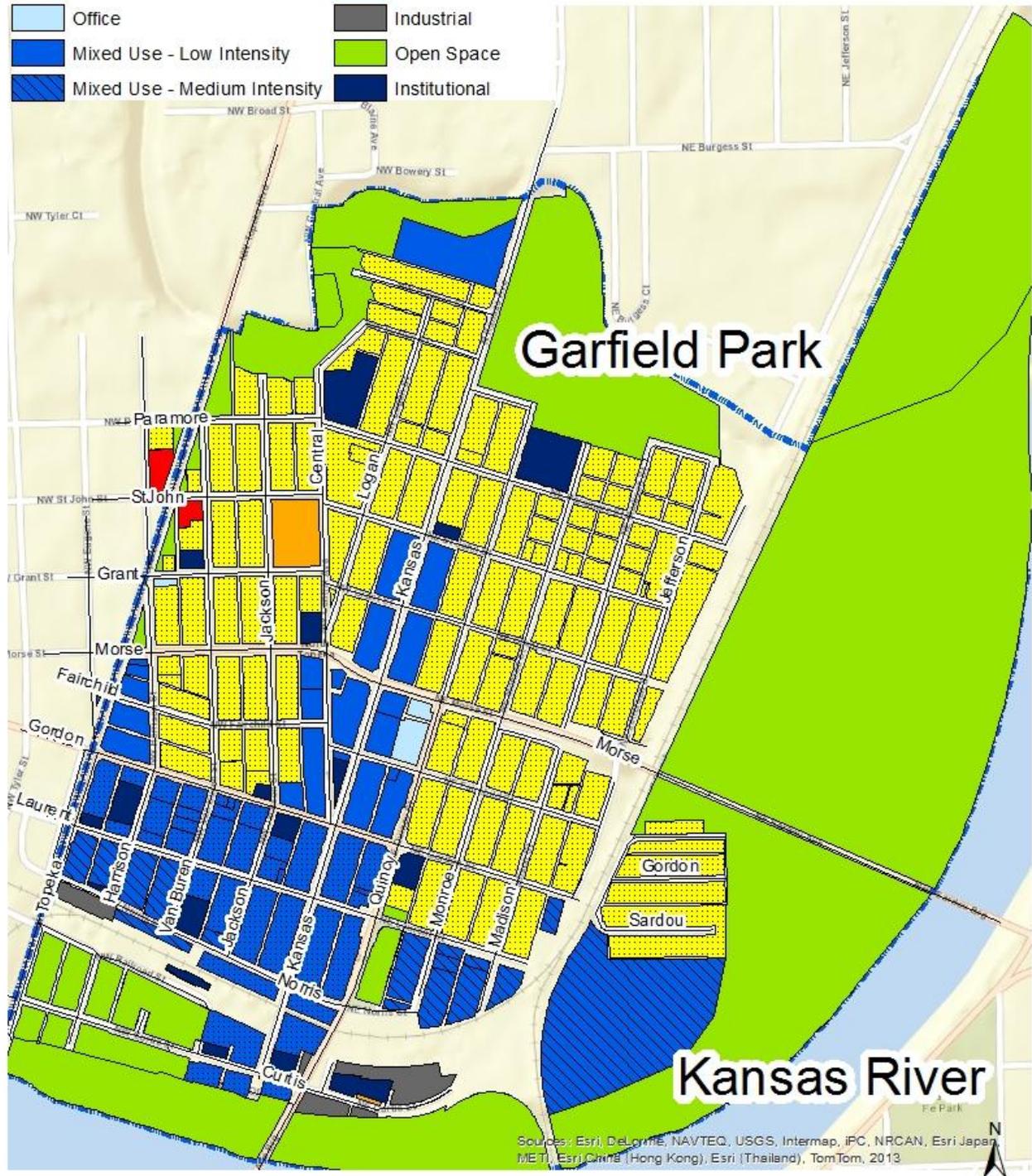
Primary Uses: Office  
Zoning Districts: O&I-1, (Office and Institutional)  
Density/Intensity: Low

Map 9: Future Land Use Map

# Historic North Topeka East Future Land Use Map

## Legend

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Residential - Low Density    |  Mixed Use - NOTO |
|  Residential - High Density   |  Commercial       |
|  Office                       |  Industrial       |
|  Mixed Use - Low Intensity    |  Open Space       |
|  Mixed Use - Medium Intensity |  Institutional    |



Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, IPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2013

**Commercial – Low Intensity:** This category allows for limited commercial facilities to serve as convenient services to a residential neighborhood or a limited geographic area of the community. Shops in this district should be useful to the majority of the neighborhood residents, should be economically supportable by the nearby population, and should not draw community-wide patronage. Site and design standards should be high along image corridors.

Primary Uses: Neighborhood Commercial  
Zoning Districts: C1  
Density/Intensity: Low

**Mixed Use – Low Intensity:** This district facilitates a compatible mixed use activity center within a traditional residential neighborhood. The district includes a balance of compatible residential, office, civic, and neighborhood commercial retail/service uses of low to moderate intensity that complement and support dense neighborhood residential areas and pedestrian usage with quality urban design.

Primary Uses: Mixed  
Zoning Districts: X1; no higher than C-2  
Performance Standards: Yes  
Density/Intensity: 5-7 units/acre, low

**Mixed Use – Medium Intensity:** This district facilitates a mixed use area that transitions from a higher intensity industrial use area to lower intensity neighborhood-scale residential areas and includes a balance of compatible residential, office, commercial service, and light industrial uses.

Primary Uses: Mixed  
Zoning Districts: X2  
Performance Standards: Yes  
Density/Intensity: 5-7 units/acre, low

**Mixed Use – NOTO:** This district facilitates a destination-oriented mixed use district in the area known as the North Crossings area of North Topeka that serves as the northern cultural anchor of downtown. The objectives of the district include:

- Improving the area as a 24-hour destination for positive urban cultural, entertainment, community, and residential experiences that highlight the historic origins of Topeka’s waterway and railways;
  - Redeveloping vacant and under-utilized properties through encouraging appropriately scaled in-fill development;
  - Encouraging retention and attraction of businesses, workplaces and residences through adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings;
  - Improving the quality of urban design in the area and on individual parcels;
- Primary Uses: Mixed – commercial retail/service and residential, public facilities



Zoning Districts: X3  
Performance Standards: Yes  
Density/Intensity: 8-20 units/acre, medium-high

**Industrial:** The purpose of this designation is to concentrate industrial-type uses into districts as far removed from viable residential areas as possible. These areas are more conducive to industrial development due to their proximity to the Union Pacific rail lines, existing heavy-industrial uses, and access to routes that bypass residential neighborhoods.

Primary Uses: light, heavy industrial  
Zoning Districts: I-1 (Light Industrial), I-2 (Heavy Industrial)  
Density/Intensity: High

**Institutional:** This designation applies to a range of land uses that support the neighborhood population's needs. These uses include churches, schools, cultural destinations, and shelters. Quincy Elementary School, The Great Overland Station, and the Topeka Rescue Mission fall into this category.

Primary Uses: institutional  
Zoning Districts: as applicable to surrounding area  
Density/Intensity: Low

**Open Space:** This category designates several existing green space uses – Garfield Park, Charles Curtis Greenway and Family Cemetery, McKinley Park – as well as several potential new green space uses to accommodate passive and recreational activities as well as community centers and public space. This designation is applied to hard-to-develop, underutilized, or vacant “spaces” needed to preserve focal points, gateways, view sheds, natural drainage systems, trail development, nature preserves and buffering requirements.

Primary Uses: park, open space, trails, floodways  
Zoning Districts: R-2 (Single-Family), OS-1  
Density/Intensity: Very Low



# V. REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

## THEMES

### **1. Destination Known: Linkages within a Metropolitan Hub**

Historic North Topeka and its environs are reminiscent of a “small town” atmosphere. Of course this is what Mr. Laurent and Mr. Curtis may have had in mind when they laid out the charming town of Eugene. The area was planned and has functioned to be somewhat independent at times from the rest of the Topeka. For revitalization efforts to succeed, Historic North Topeka needs to be viewed more as a destination that as an extension or northern anchor of downtown and therefore, the region as a whole. However, it should not be viewed solely as a destination to visit—it should also be a destination where people want to live.

### **2. Synergy: Mix, Mass, and Mesh**

Successful revitalization of an area occurs where the total becomes greater than the sum of its parts. For example, somebody fixing-up their house stimulates others to fix up their house and pretty soon the entire block is fixed up and everybody on the block receives a greater return on their investment. This so-called synergy is a dynamic of well-planned and targeted investments into a defined area.

By definition, no singular project—such the Great Overland Station or NOTO —can be a true catalyst for an area’s revitalization unless there are two or more elements it is in contact with. In a downtown or mixed-use district, an essential mix of ingredients (employees, residents, customers, tourists, etc.) in sufficient amounts/densities (critical mass) need to be in contact (the mesh) with one another to enable true synergistic effects to take place (Urban Land Institute, 1998). With the NOTO arts district and Great Overland Station laying the foundation for the area’s synergy, it must come in contact more with 1) each other, 2) a transformed riverfront and 3) a revived residential neighborhood to be true catalysts in the area’s revitalization.

### **3. Standards: Take Pride in Assets**

Historic North Topeka conveys an identity that is embodied in its very name. Without promoting, preserving, or taking pride in the historic assets and characteristics that make this area unique, revitalization efforts are sure to fail. It has been noted that there is nothing wrong with Historic North Topeka that can’t be fixed with what is right about Historic North Topeka. Actions that detract from the integrity of its historic character or “small town” appeal will only serve to make revitalization of the area much more difficult. New development should complement, not detract, from existing styles. In addition, new investment will be most encouraged in the long term when standards are in place to retain the area’s unique character.

### **4. Brownfields to Greenfields: A Rediscovered Waterfront**

The nearly 300+ acres between the levee and the railroad tracks is largely comprised of open industrial uses or underutilized open space. An opportunity to return the riverfront to the public for their enjoyment and recreation exists that could provide another point of entry for Topekans and non-Topekans to rediscover their heritage and what makes this community so special. The riverfront is the scene of many historic events and sits at the door front to the city skyline. Re-discovering the waterfront and making it user-friendly to the public will only further a re-defined image for North Topeka and Topeka as a whole.

## 5. It All Ties Back to the Neighborhood

The first four themes listed in this section can be viewed separately as goals to obtain in and of themselves. However, the blending of this and the application of each to the surrounding community creates a vibrant and lively neighborhood. For example, combining an exciting destination with community pride and a historic focal point and weaving that into the residential fabric of the neighborhood creates a memorable place where people want to live, work, and play. The combination of these five themes plus the integration of the neighborhood and the impetus of the SORT Grant will energize both the community and complete these four supporting themes.



## TARGET AREA STRATEGIES

### Target Concept and Principles

Neighborhoods make up the fabric of a city, but blocks make up the fabric of a neighborhood. When the fabric is strong, the city or the neighborhood is strong. If the fabric becomes frayed, wears down and tears, the city or neighborhood becomes weak and susceptible to accelerated decay. The most successful strategies in neighborhood revitalization involve the repairing and re-weaving of this fabric. To do this, a neighborhood revitalization strategy must protect key assets or anchors, isolate weaknesses, and re-position them as strengths. The Target Area Concept Map depicts these current features in Historic North Topeka East as defined below:

**Anchor** – These are rigid points of support that give a neighborhood its identity. They are long-term community investments that draw people to them as destination thereby lending stability to the area and making them desirable for residential investment (e.g., schools, churches, parks, shopping, etc.).

**Strength/Potential** – These areas are the relatively strongest blocks of a neighborhood that exhibit staying power and/or recent investment. These are also underachieving areas that have the potential to become strengths or anchors given an appropriate stimulus.

**Weakness** – In general, weaknesses are areas that have the highest concentrations of negative conditions such as low homeownership, vacant/boarded houses, poverty, substandard infrastructure, and high crime. The more concentrated these are, the greater social problems occur and the more entrenched they become. Diluting their concentration gives surrounding areas a greater chance to revitalize on their own.

Spatial relationships play a dynamic role in the overall concept. Spread too thin, anchors or areas of strength will fail to influence beyond their natural reach leaving poorly performing areas little hope of turning around on their own. Conversely, much like a shopping mall where the stores between two anchors will benefit from greater pedestrian traffic, weaker blocks isolated between two closely placed areas of strength will be prone to more investment because they are “attaching” themselves to something more stable and desirable. In a similar fashion, a neighborhood can only be re-woven back together if the new threads (i.e., investment) are attached to something worth attaching itself to for the long-term. If you try to attach new threads to a frayed piece of fabric, you will ultimately and more quickly fail in its purpose to mend.

If the new investment is “public dollars”, the most effective and fair use of such an investment in a neighborhood is to **maximize the impact and transformation of the neighborhood**. Spreading out dollars throughout a neighborhood dilutes its effectiveness and impact. Combining the same amount of dollars for infrastructure and housing investments into a targeted 3-5 block area will give that area a much better chance to transform itself and become a another strength upon which to build. The more areas of strength or fewer areas of weakness for a neighborhood, the better it will be. The keys to this concept are that the targeted area will have an even greater chance to succeed if it can:

- attach itself to an anchor and/or area of strength (protect assets)
- address a significant need or weakness (transform)
- provide a benefit to the greatest number of people possible (can include image)
- leverage private investment to the greatest extent possible (sustainable)

All of those factors should go into selecting the priorities for which “target area” is first, second, third, etc. And if done correctly, the targeted public investment will lead to its highest and best purpose – to re-establish market forces and stabilize property values. Simply put, this means that if you put money into your house you will get that money out at the time of sale. The matrix below rates each proposed target area with the general targeting principles. Ratings are High (3), Medium (2), and Low (1).

	West Central	Pioneer Curtis Jr. High	East Central	Northeast	Little Russia
<b>Attach to Strengths and Protect Assets</b>	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low
<b>Significant Need/Weakness</b>	High (At Risk)	Medium	High (At Risk)	Medium	High (At Risk)
<b># of People Benefit</b>	High	High	High	Low	Medium
<b>Leverage and Sustainable</b>	High	Medium	Low	High	Low
<b>Total</b>	12	10	9	8	7

### Proposed Target Areas

During the planning process, the residents and participants realized that all of the HNTE planning area needed help. From infrastructure upgrades to housing improvements, every street had some need that could be met with the SORT funds. However, as they all realized, there was only a finite amount of funding allocated to their neighborhood. It was necessary to step back and look objectively at the entire neighborhood to see which blocks were most in need and had the most potential. Six rating factors were used to evaluate each block to see which area was most in need:

- Housing Conditions
- Home Ownership (Tenure)
- Code Violations
- Major Part 1 Crimes
- Infrastructure
- Pre-1915 Residential Structures (Appendix C, Map 10)

These rating factors were each mapped at the beginning of the planning process with the results averaged per block, and the maps were overlaid to see which blocks consistently scored low (Map 11). This allowed a pattern to emerge for areas that were in need but, based on their proximity to Anchor Areas and Strength/Potential Areas, had the highest potential for responding to public investment (Map 12).

Based on the Target Area Map, the highest priority target area should be the West Central Target Area (**WCTA**). This area is positioned near the blossoming NOTO district and benefits from being on two main east-west thoroughfares. In addition, it is between two relatively stable areas of the community—the Kansas/Morse/Monroe/St. John blocks and the Morse/Harrison/Gordon/Topeka blocks. By focusing SORT improvements in WCTA, the projects will be visible to both residents and visitors to NOTO. This can go a long way in changing the misconceptions about North Topeka and increase the desirability of the entire neighborhood. In addition, there are a relatively high number of homeowners in this area so the influx of public monies will stimulate private investments into additional properties extending beyond the target area.

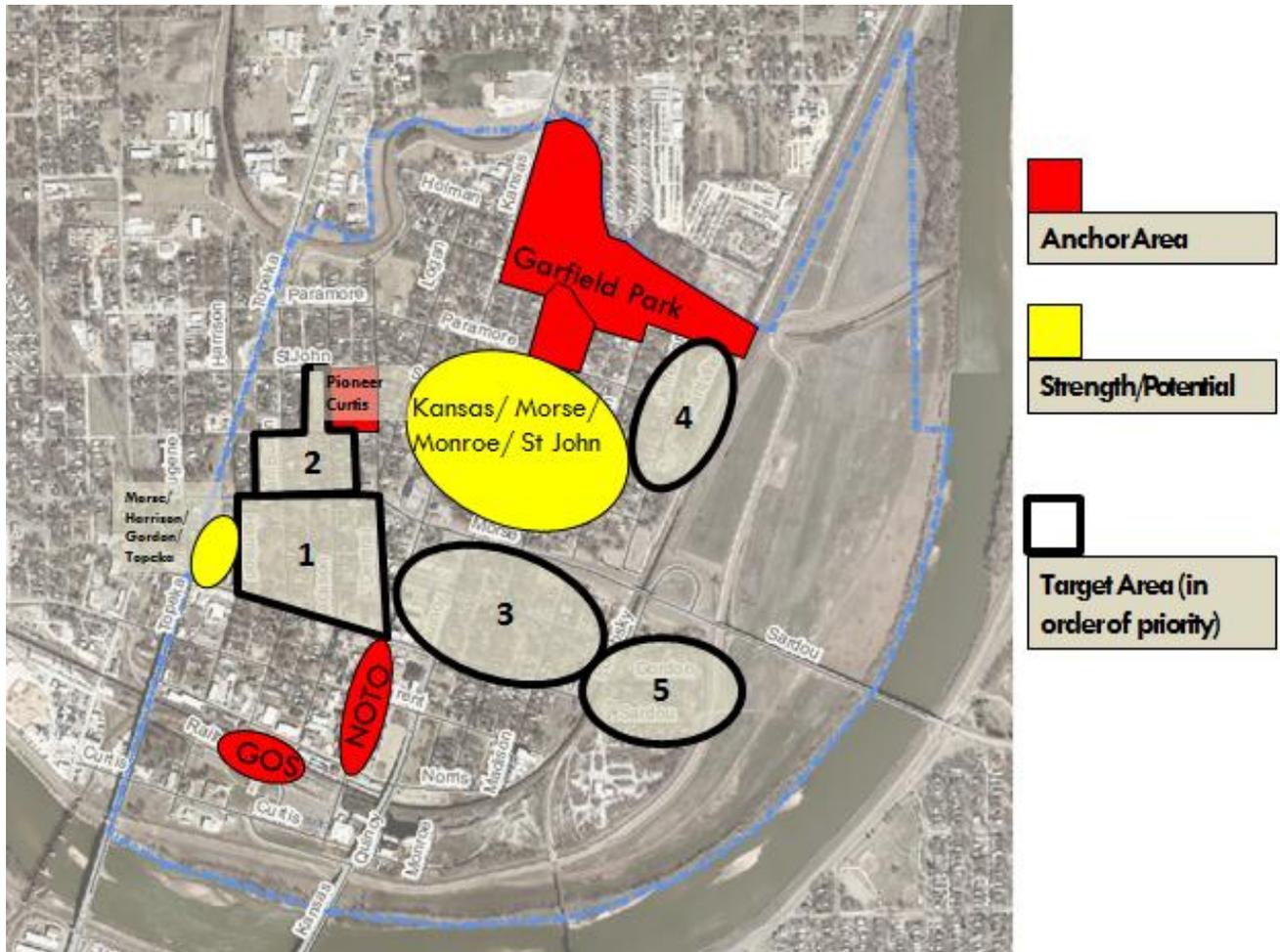
The secondary target area should be the Pioneer Curtis Junior High Target Area. This area, too, scored high in the needs assessment and will benefit from the stability provided by the Pioneer Curtis Junior High Anchor Area. Although this area lacks the proximity and drive by traffic associated with NOTO, Morse will provide good visibility to enhancements and improvements to this area.

The idea behind targeting is to focus a critical mass of improvements in a concentrated number of blocks so that it stimulates additional investment by adjacent property owners, increases property values, and leaves behind a visible transformation of the area. If the improvements are not visible enough, then the stabilization of that area is marginalized and investments to the area will not be leveraged. Each Target Area may require a different set of strategies for improvement. Ultimately, public funding is limited for improvement and some of the strategies outlined for these areas will not be made in a sufficiently timed manner for the improvements necessary.



Detailed descriptions below describe the proposed Target Areas based on their recommended order of priority. The most significant needs within each Target Area should be adequately addressed before moving on to the next area.

Map 12: Target Area Concept Map



- 1) **West Central Target Area**  
*Pro:* Central location; high visibility; old residences; already seeing some benefits from NOTO development  
*Con:* Just a few blocks have immediate needs; the adjacent blocks are low-moderate need
- 2) **Pioneer Curtis Jr. High Target Area**  
*Pro:* Already seeing redevelopment; moderate home ownership  
*Con:* Not many old residences
- 3) **East Central Target Area**  
*Pro:* Moderate-high need  
*Con:* Moderate exposure; low homeownership; not as much immediate need
- 4) **Northeast Target Area**  
*Pro:* High need  
*Con:* Limited exposure; low homeownership
- 5) **Little Russia**  
*Pro:* High need  
*Con:* Low visibility/localized area; low homeownership; low impact

## 1. West Central Target Area

### *Location*

This area lies along NW Gordon, a major thoroughfare leading to NOTO and is a highly visible target area. It is bordered by NW Gordon, NW Morse, NW Harrison, and NW Central. Building conditions for these blocks showed intermediate deterioration but tended to have a moderate amount of homeownership. Improvements here will be apparent both to the residents, neighboring streets, and visitors to the area. A main thought behind applying the SORT funding to a neighborhood is to stimulate private dollars being invested. By locating the primary target area here, it will have a high impact on the surrounding neighborhood through perception and visibility.



### *Infrastructure*

This section of Historic North Topeka East is in need of street, sidewalk, and alley repairs. There are brick streets along NW Jackson St in the 1000 and 1100 blocks that have been patched with asphalt that need to be repaired and returned to good condition. Additionally, there are brick sidewalks along NW Jackson, NW Central, NW Van Buren, NW Harrison, and NW Fairchild that are in need of repair (see Map 18). Curbs along NW Jackson are made of stone but need repair in some sections. Stone curbs should be preserved wherever it is in good conditions. Where stone curbing is required because of deterioration, concrete curbing should be used per City Engineering standards to mirror the existing stone curbing. This plan recommends retaining and protecting the integrity of the existing brick and stone infrastructure in the streets and sidewalks of this Target Area.

The alleys in this target area are graded gravel and are filled with potholes. All alleys here should be concreted to improve circulation, drainage, and image. However, prior to alley reconstruction, the sewer lines in the alleys should be evaluated to determine needed repairs or maintenance.

### *Housing*

Housing improvement strategies should include a combination of:

- Interior and exterior rehabilitation of many existing owner-occupied homes;
  - Exterior rehab of some renter-occupied homes;
  - Conversion of some renter-occupied homes into owner-occupied homes;
  - Demolition of selected vacant, sub-standard homes in combination with the major rehabilitation of adjacent owner-occupied homes or with infill development of owner-occupied homes.
- 
- ✓ This area is bordered by the NOTO Anchor and relatively stable blocks to the west.
  - ✓ The Kickoff Meeting survey showed that the residents of HNTE value the historic structures in their community. There are also a substantial number of intact houses from pre-1920, brick sidewalks, and a brick street, all adding to the historic feel of this target area.



- ✓ Many of the streets in this area are in need of resurfacing and the sidewalks are either non-existent or in need of repair.

#### Street Improvements/Sidewalks

- NW Central (1000-1100)
- NW Jackson (1000 block)
- NW Harrison (1100 block)
- NW Van Buren (1000 block)

#### Sidewalks

- NW Fairchild (200-400 blocks)
- NW Van Buren (1000-1100 blocks)
- NW Harrison (1000 block)
- NW Jackson (1100 block)

## **2. Pioneer Curtis Junior High Target Area**

*Location* This area lies to the north of Morse and is adjacent to the Pioneer Curtis Junior High Anchor Area. It includes the 1200 and 1300 blocks of NW Jackson St, the 1200 block of NW Van Buren St, the 200-400 blocks of NW Grant St, and the 300 block of NW St. John St. This development has significantly improved the old Curtis Junior High block—improvements now need to be made to the streets and housing surrounding Curtis so as to tie it in to the fabric of the neighborhood. Applying SORT funding here will support the private investments made thus far and encourage owners to improve the surrounding properties as well.



#### *Infrastructure*

This section of Historic North Topeka East is in need of street, sidewalk, and alley repairs. There are brick streets along NW Jackson St in the 1200 and 1300 blocks that have been patched with asphalt that need to be repaired and returned to good condition. Additionally, there are brick sidewalks along NW Jackson, NW Central, and NW Van Buren that are in need of repair. This plan recommends retaining and protecting the integrity of the existing brick and stone infrastructure in the streets and sidewalks of this Target Area.

The alleys in this target area are graded gravel and are filled with potholes. All alleys here should be concreted to improve circulation, drainage, and image. However, prior to alley reconstruction, the sewer lines in the alleys should be evaluated to determine needed repairs or maintenance.

#### *Housing*

Housing improvement strategies should include a combination of:

- Interior and exterior rehabilitation of many existing owner-occupied homes;
- Exterior rehab of some renter-occupied homes;
- Conversion of some renter-occupied homes into owner-occupied homes;
- Demolition of selected vacant, sub-standard homes in combination with the major rehabilitation of adjacent owner-occupied homes or with infill development of owner-occupied homes.

- ✓ Pioneer Curtis Junior High has been renovated; by improving the blocks close to it, it would be possible to build off its' success and to keep the improvements blossoming outward.
- ✓ Some blocks in this area have relatively high owner-occupied housing.
- ✓ This is located on a major street way and would be used by people accessing Pioneer Curtis Junior High—that amount of visibility of improvements here would help in changing the perception and associations with Historic North Topeka East.

#### Sidewalks

- NW Van Buren (1200 block)
- NW Grant (200-400 blocks)
- NW Jackson (1200-1300 blocks, brick)



### **3. East Central Target Area**

#### *Location*

This target area encompasses the blocks north of Gordon, east of Quincy, and south of Morse. There is not as much visibility here than in the first two target areas, as Morse is the only major thoroughfare. Though this is proximal to NOTO and the stabilizing Kansas/Morse/Monroe/St. John blocks to the north, the area does not have its own factor to draw people and attention to projects occurring within. Projects in this target area should be completed after significant progress has been made in the primary and secondary target areas.

#### *Infrastructure*

This section of Historic North Topeka East is in need of street, sidewalk, and alley repairs. The 1100 block of NE Jefferson lacks sidewalks, curbs and gutters. Prior to any road reconstruction, the utility infrastructure underneath the road should be evaluated and replaced if necessary. Additionally, there are brick sidewalks along NE Monroe, NE Gordon, and NE Fairchild that are in need of repair. This plan recommends retaining and protecting the integrity of the existing brick infrastructure in the sidewalks of this Target Area only if they fall within the environs of a designated state or national historic property, a Historic District, or a Local Landmark.

The alleys in this target area are graded gravel and are filled with potholes. All alleys here should be concreted to improve circulation, drainage, and image. However, prior to alley reconstruction, the sewer lines in the alleys should be evaluated to determine needed repairs or maintenance.

#### *Housing*

Housing improvement strategies should include a combination of:

- Interior and exterior rehabilitation of many existing owner-occupied homes;
- Exterior rehab of some renter-occupied homes;
- Conversion of some renter-occupied homes into owner-occupied homes;
- Demolition of selected vacant, sub-standard homes in combination with the major rehabilitation of adjacent owner-occupied homes or with infill development of owner-occupied homes.

- ✓ These are single family residential blocks but many of the houses show major deterioration and dilapidation.
- ✓ The blocks to the south of the target area have shifted to primarily industrial use.
- ✓ Home ownership is still very low in this area (~18-45%) but has actually improved since 1999.

Street Improvements

- NE Jefferson (1100 blocks)

Sidewalks

- NE Gordon (100-400 blocks)
- NE Fairchild (200-400 blocks)
- NE Madison (1000-1100 blocks)
- NE Monroe (1000-1100 blocks)

**4. Little Russia**

*Location*

Little Russia had been isolated from the rest of the HNTE community, with access only by crossing the railroad tracks, until the flyoff was constructed from the Sardou Bridge in 2001. The streets are narrow and Sardou Street dead-ends without a turnaround. Because of the isolated nature of this section of HNTE, combined with the lower visibility and a lower potential impact, it is recommended that improvements to this area begin after the majority of improvements are made in the previous target areas.

*Infrastructure*

This section of Historic North Topeka East is in need of street, sidewalk, and alley repairs. The 500 block of Fairchild lacks sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and needs repairs on antiquated utilities underneath the road. Prior to any road reconstruction, the old utility piping should be replaced.

The alleys in this target area are graded gravel and are filled with potholes. All alleys here should be concreted to improve circulation, drainage, and image. However, prior to alley reconstruction, the sewer lines in the alleys should be evaluated to determine needed repairs or maintenance.

*Housing*

Housing improvement strategies should include a combination of:

- Interior and exterior rehabilitation of many existing owner-occupied homes;
- Exterior rehab of some renter-occupied homes;
- Conversion of some renter-occupied homes into owner-occupied homes;
- Demolition of selected vacant, sub-standard homes in combination with the major rehabilitation of adjacent owner-occupied homes or with infill development of owner-occupied homes.

Street Improvements

- NE Fairchild (500 block)

Sidewalks

- NE Gordon (500 block)



## 5. Northeast Target Area

### *Location*

This target area is encompassed by NE Madison St, NE Grant St, NE Jefferson St, and NE Paramore St. It lacks significant sections of infrastructure, such as sidewalks, standard street widths, and curbs and gutters. It is also located near three strong areas: Garfield Park, Quincy Elementary School, and the Kansas/Morse/Monroe/St. John blocks. However, it is also extremely isolated and removed from major roads. This significantly limits the impact and promotion of projects located in this area. Therefore, major improvements to this area should be considered after completion in the previous target areas.

### *Infrastructure*

This section of Historic North Topeka East is in need of street, sidewalk, and alley repairs. The 1300 through 1500 blocks of NE Jefferson lacks sidewalks, curbs and gutters. Prior to any road reconstruction, the utility infrastructure underneath the road should be evaluated and replaced if necessary.

The alleys in this target area are graded gravel and are filled with potholes. All alleys here should be concreted to improve circulation, drainage, and image. However, prior to alley reconstruction, the sewer lines in the alleys should be evaluated to determine needed repairs or maintenance.

### *Housing*

Housing improvement strategies should include a combination of:

- Interior and exterior rehabilitation of many existing owner-occupied homes;
- Exterior rehab of some renter-occupied homes;
- Conversion of some renter-occupied homes into owner-occupied homes;
- Demolition of selected vacant, sub-standard homes in combination with the major rehabilitation of adjacent owner-occupied homes or with infill development of owner-occupied homes.

### Street Improvements

- NE Jefferson (1300-1500 blocks)
- NE St. John (400 block)
- NE Grant (400 block)

### Sidewalks

- NE Madison (1300-1500 blocks)
- NE Paramore (400-500 blocks)

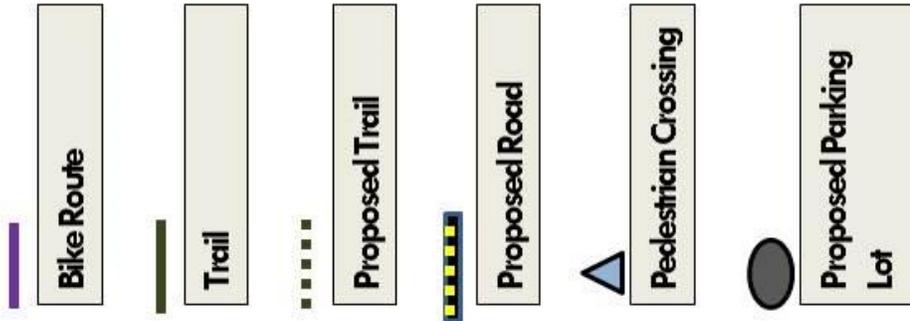
## NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE STRATEGIES

### CIRCULATION PLAN

The Plan's goals and guiding principles translate into the following major recommendations for circulation as illustrated on Map 13:

- Specially designed wayfinding signage is needed to help draw attention to the Great Overland Station and NOTO and should be placed at key points directing traffic to and from Gordon Street, N. Kansas Avenue, and the Curtis Flyoff.
- Heavy truck traffic should be minimized in the NOTO/Riverfront area. This traffic has largely diminished due to the decreasing industrial activity in this area. Large trucks that still do come to this area make use of the Curtis Flyoff to avoid traveling through the NOTO area. No heavy truck traffic should be allowed in the 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue.
- Additional parking should be added to support the growth of the NOTO, Great Overland Station, and Riverfront areas. The existing parking capacity in the N. Kansas Avenue area is comprised of roughly 150 on-street spaces on N. Kansas Avenue and side streets and a 225 space parking lot (if redesigned) at the foot of the Kansas Avenue bridge. Other lots could be added on N. Kansas Avenue or on Norris Street.
- Bikeways and bike paths need to link Historic North Topeka East to the bike and trail network throughout Topeka. The Topeka Bikeways Master Plan shows a route traveling through North Topeka that will be implemented with the Phase 1 funding, awarded in 2013. This route will mostly consist of “sharrows” – on-street pavement markings indicating that the travel lane is a shared lane between cars and bicycles.
- If the railroad abandons the current railroad bridge west of the Topeka Boulevard Bridge, Shawnee County should acquire the bridge as part of the trail network.
- Pedestrian linkages throughout the community need to be developed. Some places in need of improvement are:
  - across the railroad tracks at Norris and Kansas
  - along the levee of the Kansas River
  - connecting Old Solider Creek Trail to the Levee Trail
  - along paths connecting parking lots behind storefronts to the interior of N. Kansas Ave.

Map 13: Circulation Plan



## **SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS**

The Shawnee County Health Agency applied for a Safe Routes to Schools planning grant in 2013. This grant would look at a two-mile radius around Quincy Elementary School which would cover much of the Historic North Topeka East planning area. Several factors weighed into identifying this school as their project area: a high percent of economically disadvantaged students; a high student obesity rate; and Quincy being a low performing school, which is now a USD 501 “School of Interest.” In addition, collaboration between Quincy Elementary and the NOTO Arts District has led to students going to NOTO for art programs, which also supports the need for the Safe Routes planning grant.

This planning grant would be the first step in plans for advancing safety in this area. From this, the goal is to create a master plan for the area and then to apply for funds for infrastructure improvements. These would include crosswalks, signage, and sidewalks.

In 2011, the City of Topeka Planning Department completed a study looking at the impacts on neighborhoods if USD 501 closed elementary schools. This study looked at a range of factors to rank the importance of a local school to a neighborhood.

- Median property values adjacent to the school compared to the neighborhood
- Homeownership adjacent to the school compared to the neighborhood
- Percent of students in the school area attending other schools
- Neighborhood Health ranking
- School building re-use potential

Out of all the elementary schools, Quincy Elementary School would have the greatest negative impact upon its neighborhood if closed.

## **NORTH CROSSINGS**

The mixed-used North Crossings district combines the NOTO Arts District, Great Overland Station site, riverfront, and historic blocks south of Gordon Street between Topeka Boulevard and Quincy Street into a unified theme district based on the area’s prominence in Topeka/national history. These historic “crossings” – Pappan’s Ferry established in 1849 led to Topeka’s founding and eventually helped African-Americans escape into freedom on the Underground Railroad, the crossing of the first train through Topeka in 1865, and the crossing of western settlers along the Oregon Trail – all took place within this geographic setting. Today, it is envisioned that this area can become a new crossings for Topekans and visitors alike to learn about this historic setting while having fun doing it. It provides an identity to be celebrated by invigorating it with a new future while still rooted in its past prominence.

Accommodations should be made for new investment to further invigorate the district if blended appropriately. Four new development ventures are initially envisioned for the entertainment district to facilitate its growth: (1) continue supporting and expanding the NOTO Arts District (2) continue developing the Great Overland Station Museum, (3) a Riverfront Park and (4) a Pedestrian Overpass

## NOTO

*Any place left primarily to tourists ceases to be a real place and eventually loses its appeal even to tourists*

Roberta Brandes Gratz, *The Living City*

Most mid-sized to large cities are reviving obsolete warehouse and commercial districts into “old town” mixed-use restaurant/bar, entertainment, shopping, and living areas. Whether it is Kansas City’s River Quay, Oklahoma City’s Bricktown, or Lincoln’s Haymarket, these areas all try to recreate urban marketplaces festive for tourists and locals alike. They all are intimate places steeped in history that were cut-off from the city’s central business district, but whose buildings remained intact representing opportunities to re-adapt them into new ways of enjoying our urban spaces. Once an attraction is established and commercial uses follow, a residential component is phased in making them true urban marketplaces with 24-hour activity. Topeka’s traditional downtown provides for some opportunity for this, but lacks an intimate setting or “district” that is walkable and cohesive. A district has not yet evolved in Topeka that could attract and retain younger adults that would compare to Lawrence’s downtown, Manhattan’s Aggieville, or Kansas City’s Westport.

In 1999, Topeka’s most adaptable area for such a mixed-use entertainment district was centered on and around the historic 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue. Since then, this district has been transformed into the NOTO Arts District. Over 200,000 square feet of ground floor space exists within these two blocks of attached buildings with uses including artist studios and galleries, antique shops, restaurants, fine jewelry, plumbing, and window repair. The district was once the hub of community of life in North Topeka—particularly prior to the 1951 flood—where residents came to shop and do business, forming a vibrant north end of Topeka’s Kansas Avenue corridor. Now, it is reaching out to the rest of the Capitol City and beyond as an artistic destination and shopping experience. Since its inception in 2008, NOTO has seen 29 new businesses move into the historic blocks of N. Kansas Avenue, with more being added as spaces are renovated. The historic atmosphere of the area lends itself to pedestrian traffic through the continuous storefronts, the wide sidewalks inviting passersby, the variety of shops, and the inviting streetscape.

The key to the success of any mixed-used district is in its diversity. To truly be sustainable for the long-term, the arts district must position itself to have supportive and complimentary uses expanding the reasons to be there and length of the stay without compromising the original charm and character inherent to what attracted people there in the first place. Below are strategies to continue improving on the advances made in NOTO.

- Restore and maintain historic quality and pedestrian-orientation to buildings/streetscapes. An urban entertainment district works best where people are attracted because the place is “real”. That means keeping building forms, styles, and infrastructure true to their original feel and building off of the peculiarities of the area (see Design Guidelines and Illustration #1). In addition, dwellings that have been identified as homes of past railroad engineers, etc. could be saved and threaded into museum exhibits for the Great Overland Station.
- Seek out “destination” uses such as restaurants, micro-breweries, live entertainment, galleries, or recreational venues that will attract non-residents. Entrepreneurs need to be encouraged to locate businesses here that can be new attractions as well.
- Improve comfort-level. Safety is a major concern for most people not familiar with the area. An atmosphere of safety could be created by improving streetscapes, lighting,

storefronts, and visible security that can improve people's comfort-level. Security patrols or "ambassadors" could be utilized. The best assurance for safety remains in attracting a critical mass of users.

- Encourage adaptive re-use of buildings for residential and artist purposes. N. Kansas Avenue commercial buildings should be encouraged to re-use second/third story space for loft apartments. Likewise, historic non-commercial structures, particularly the residences in the 800 block of Jackson Street, should be preserved if not for housing then workspace, bed and breakfast, or other viable use. Likewise, old advertising signs on buildings could be re-painted. Artist space is almost non-existent in Topeka and the buildings could be pursued for living, work, and gallery space.
- Minimize heavy truck circulation (see Circulation Plan)
- Create a central gathering or civic space
- Provide for physical expansion in the future
- Maintain and encourage non-entertainment employment activity (e.g., smaller industrial businesses) to maintain daytime activity and potential retail customer base.
- Ensure that merchants/businesses do not monopolize convenient on-street parking spaces on N. Kansas Avenue. As success of new businesses grow in the area, parking will become premium. There are currently 150 on-street spaces in the 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas and on cross streets within a 1/2 block. This number will likely be slightly reduced when streetscape improvements are made. While parking lots are planned for, these on-street spaces will be the first to be filled and should be reserved for customers only with no curb cuts allowed.
- Capitalize on the opportunities provided through heritage tourism. Essential to this would be a visitors' center to serve as a "base of operations" for visitors by providing information, restroom facilities, and other services essential to supporting tourism.

## **GREAT OVERLAND STATION MUSEUM**

Railroad Heritage, Inc. led the efforts to preserve and restore Topeka's historic Union Pacific Railroad station with \$3.4 million in federal ISTEA grants combined to \$2.6 million of matching private funds.

Permanent exhibits at the Great Overland Station chronicle the history of Topeka, the four railroads that served Topeka, Fred Harvey and the Harvey House Empire, and the history of the site (e.g. the native Kanza, the Oregon Trail and Charles Curtis). The Fink Exhibit Gallery displays touring and special exhibits that change 3-4 times per year. Hands-on activities for children are found in "Choo-Choo Junction" where kids climb onto the Big Red Caboose, dress in period clothing or create fluorescent art at the Flo-Graphix booth. Children also love the two locomotive simulators and the huge model train display. Trained docents lead tours and freight trains rumbling by add to the visitor experience. The Railroad Park at the Great Overland Station is currently under development (2013) outside the east end of the GOS. The Railroad



Park, consisting of the historic Santa Fe depot from Welda, KS and four historic train cars, will extend to North Kansas Avenue, thus providing a more direct physical link for visitors and patrons to travel between the GOS to the NOTO Arts District.

In addition to its function as a museum, the Great Overland Station is the site of dozens of weddings, receptions, prom parties, corporate celebrations and meetings throughout the year. The elegant Grand Waiting Room and historic Dining Room provide unique backdrops for community gatherings inside, while the All Veterans Memorial and Corridor of Fifty Flags create a memorable scene for special outdoor events. The annual Topeka Railroad Festival is held at the Station each year in August, and patriotic events commemorate Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

Although, the building itself is physically separated from the entertainment district by two rail lines, it is a destination attraction that can act as an entertainment anchor for the district if better linked both visually and physically. Visitors from all 50 states and more than 40 foreign countries have found their way to the Great Overland Station—however, visitorship needs to increase. With the development of the Railroad Park at the Great Overland Station, new and returning visitors are projected to increase. Continued growth of the NOTO Arts District can have a positive impact on visitorship at the Great Overland Station as more people are drawn to the area, and museum visitors can create demand for services on N. Kansas Avenue. The synergy of retail and restaurant business in NOTO combined with a museum that offers exhibits and children’s activities has great potential that can ultimately lead to increased success for the entire area. The area south of the Station is more appropriately linked to future efforts to redevelop the riverfront (see Riverfront).

## **THE RIVERFRONT**

The area generally south of the Great Overland Station between the Kansas Avenue and Topeka Boulevard bridges comprises the Kansas riverfront on the north bank. In this area on the north side of Curtis Street, the Topeka Rescue Mission operates its Family and Children building on the northwest corner of N. Kansas Avenue and Curtis Streets and operates its main facility on the northeast side of that intersection. The Union Pacific Railroad retains ownership of the area where its control tower is situated, the old Gamble Robinson building, as well as the right-of-way for its tracks. On the south side of the tracks, this extends on as far as the fence between the UP tracks and the Great Overland Station. Of the remaining properties in this area, five are each individually owned. Railroad Heritage, Inc. controls the remainder of the property north of Curtis Street.

On the south side of Curtis Street, a fly-off from the Kansas Avenue Bridge down to Curtis Street was built by the City of Topeka in 2006 to provide vehicular and pedestrian access to the bridge. The remaining land on the south side of Curtis Street has been acquired by Shawnee County Parks and Recreation for development as the Riverfront Park.

Design plans for the Riverfront Park envision an Oregon Trail theme with a gradually-rising walkway to the top of the levee, broad trail along the top of the levee with “Prairie Schooner” features for seating and outdoor interpretive exhibits, a water feature and an amphitheater. Funding for the riverfront park has been provided by a dedicated ½ cent transient guest tax which has thus far been used to develop the design plan for the park and to acquire the property. This funding source will sunset in 2015 unless renewed. It is not expected to provide

enough funding by that time to fully implement all the features of the riverfront park, but a start can be made. This landscaped urban green space would provide an ideal setting for family and community events spilling out from the Great Overland Station to the north as well as an ideal picnic or recreation area for NOTO patrons.

**Vehicular access** – Vehicular access to the area has been improved through the construction of the Curtis Flyoff. Direct access to NOTO is limited and occurs only at N. Kansas Avenue; users of this crossing are subject to frequent delays caused by the two active rail lines located between the Great Overland Station and NOTO. Another access route exists from Tyler Street and Curtis Avenue—however, this, too has an at-grade rail crossing on the same lines as the N. Kansas Avenue crossing.

**Topeka Rescue Mission** – Another 2.8 acres are owned by the Topeka Rescue Mission to operate the city’s major homeless programs for men women, and children. Their main facility houses 100-110 men per night. It’s sister facility across N. Kansas Avenue, the Hope Center, has beds for 150 women and children, with many more staying on cots throughout the facility. The Mission recently purchased the Bailey Building on the east side of the Kansas Avenue bridge—when this facility is renovated, it will hold up to 120 people per night, house a new kitchen facility, a clinic, and adult education classes.

The Great Overland Station Museum, beautiful skyline and Capitol views looking back across the Kansas River, and its frontage on the waterfront, all make this an ideal location to plan for future “greenfield” development.



It is proposed that a major urban park be established south of the Great Overland Station to the waterfront. It could be a logical extension for festivals and events held in conjunction with the Great Overland Station's programming (e.g., Railroad Days). As circulation in this district is improved, the riverfront park would be an ideal green space setting for city and regional events to take place and to make the river a new destination for Downtown. Access to an improved levee-walk with lighting, benches, etc., outdoor skating rinks, an amphitheater for outdoor music and stage productions, and sites commemorating historical events is also envisioned.

The Riverfront Park concept has been a project years in the making. At the Historic North Topeka East Kickoff Planning Meeting, this was the only item listed in the 1999 Plan that received an "F" grade (Appendix C). However, the City has been working over the last several years to implement this part of the 1999 North Topeka Plan. Dedicated City Transient Guest Tax dollars have been used to acquire many of the properties needed to make this into a feature destination. When this tax expires in 2014, in addition to properties already acquired, there will be approximately \$500,000 reserved for this park.

Unfortunately, due to the consolidation of the City and Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Department, buildings on the Riverfront Park project site are now in use. The Shawnee County Parks Department is unable to vacate these buildings until new facilities are constructed. This, combined with the budget cuts in the 2014 County budget, makes the future timeline for the completion of Riverfront Park uncertain.

Extension of the bed tax or other possible funding alternatives (e.g. sales tax) needs to be seriously considered to "finish" the City's first Riverfront Park.

#### **BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS**

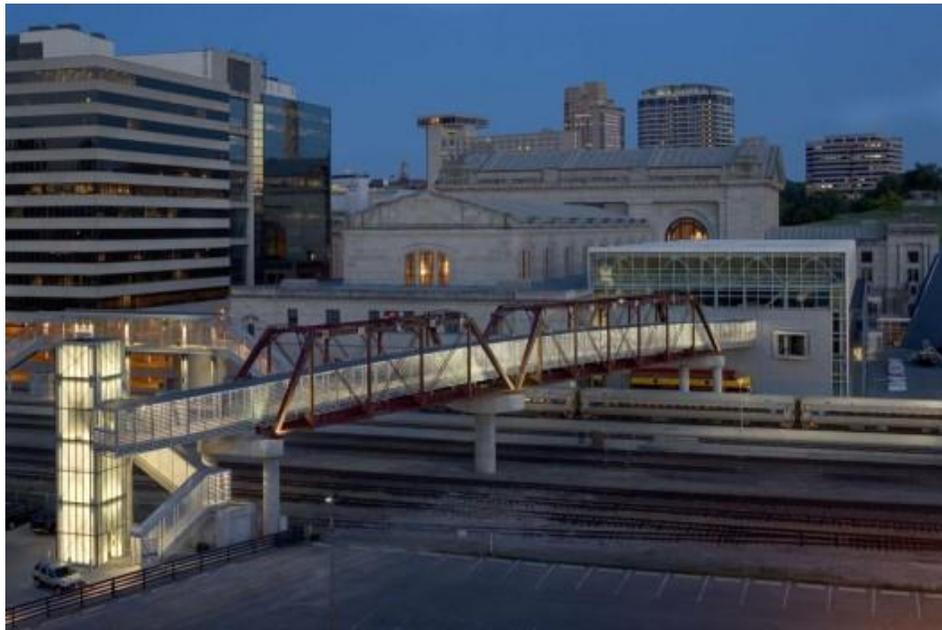
In order for the N. Kansas Avenue entertainment district to be positively impacted by the Great Overland Station Museum and vice a versa, an overpass spanning the railroad tracks along Kansas Avenue is recommended to facilitate a safe and unimpeded flow of bike and pedestrian traffic (see Map 13 for location).

This overpass would serve a two-fold purpose: 1) safe access between the entertainment district and riverfront district, and 2) a view platform. The safe access of pedestrians, persons with disabilities, and bicyclists who want to cross the tracks would be ensured with a ramp and pathway crossing the tracks. Station Museum patrons could park north of the tracks off of Norris without having to worry about getting stuck waiting for a train to clear. Likewise, those that do cross over the bridge would be treated to an ideal viewing experience from a secure platform where they could not only see the trains go by, but also feel them as they rumble underneath them. This sensory experience can be another part of the overall attraction to the Great Overland Station. This structure should be high enough for train clearance (25'), be architecturally compatible to the Station, and designed for natural surveillance to eliminate any hiding spots and to ensure a safe, welcoming atmosphere. Elevator access is not preferred due to the increased construction and maintenance costs, and capacity limitations, but should at least be explored during the design phase.

Two options are present regarding the exact siting of the structure—adjacent to the street, or in the right-of-way resulting in closing this portion of N. Kansas Avenue to vehicular traffic. With either option, sufficient ground would be needed to ensure the access ramps are ADA compliant.

Currently, the intersection of N. Kansas Ave and the Union Pacific railroad tracks is an at-grade crossing with flashing lights and automatic gates. This is an active rail line, with 80 trains estimated per day. Traffic is frequently stopped at this location as trains cross and the train whistles echo throughout North Crossings and the Historic North Topeka East neighborhood (current Federal Railroad Administration regulations require four horn blasts prior to a train entering a public at-grade crossing.) There have been two pedestrian fatalities at this intersection in 2013, in addition to fatalities in years past. Limited parking in the district—combined with the close proximity of attractions in the district and an increasing number of visitors—will require greater connectivity between NOTO and the Great Overland Station/Riverfront area.

It is the recommendation of this plan that the City should partner with the Union Pacific and stakeholders in North Crossings to implement improvements to the N. Kansas Avenue at-grade crossing while promoting a walkable and bike-friendly district uniquely tailored to meet the needs of the users. This may include safety studies and their implementation, funding for a bike/pedestrian bridge or linkages, increased parking in proximity to bike/ped linkages, and integrating art/architecture into any bridge structure. Design options for a bridge, regardless of its location, must include stakeholder and community input so that the structure is a destination itself because of its design, a point of pride with the community, financially feasible, and blends well within the historic character of the area. Below is an example of the Freight House pedestrian bridge in Kansas City that exemplifies these qualities.



## **NORTH CROSSINGS MASTER PLAN**

Even just looking at the last decade, much has changed in the North Crossings area. The area has transformed from industrial uses to a shopping and cultural destination. The key stakeholders in the North Crossings—NOTO, the Great Overland Station, the City of Topeka, Shawnee County Parks and Recreation, the Topeka Rescue Mission, and the Riverfront Authority—all have plans of expanding their operations in the near future. Additionally, the Riverfront Park is poised to become a reality and the Riverfront Authority has hired a consultant to, among other things,

encourage high quality public and private development along the River. All of these activities are bringing more visitors and more development pressure to the North Crossings area. The coordination of these activities and appropriate support facilities are essential to the continuing success of this location. This Plan recommends the creation of a more detailed North Crossings Master Plan to describe the future of this area, including the following goals:

- Traffic and pedestrian circulation patterns
- Ensure the safety and the perception of safety through design elements (CPTED, lighting, etc.)
- Utilize wayfinding signage to capitalize and enhance the synergy of NOTO, the Great Overland Station, and the Riverfront
- Expand the area's capacity by installing new surface parking lots with sensitive design elements (landscaping, buffering, attractive lighting)
- In addition to function and form, include artistic or historic elements in infrastructure
- Expand and enhance the current park and green space facilities
- Collaborate with the Union Pacific Railroad on the repurposing of industrial properties under their ownership to uses that enhance the district
- Improve secondary routes into the district, including the Laurent-Quincy-Norris loop designated as a bike route on the Topeka Bikeways Master Plan

## **CHARACTER AND IMAGE**

*The kind of culture that can maintain reasonable human commitments takes centuries to create but only a few generations to destroy.*

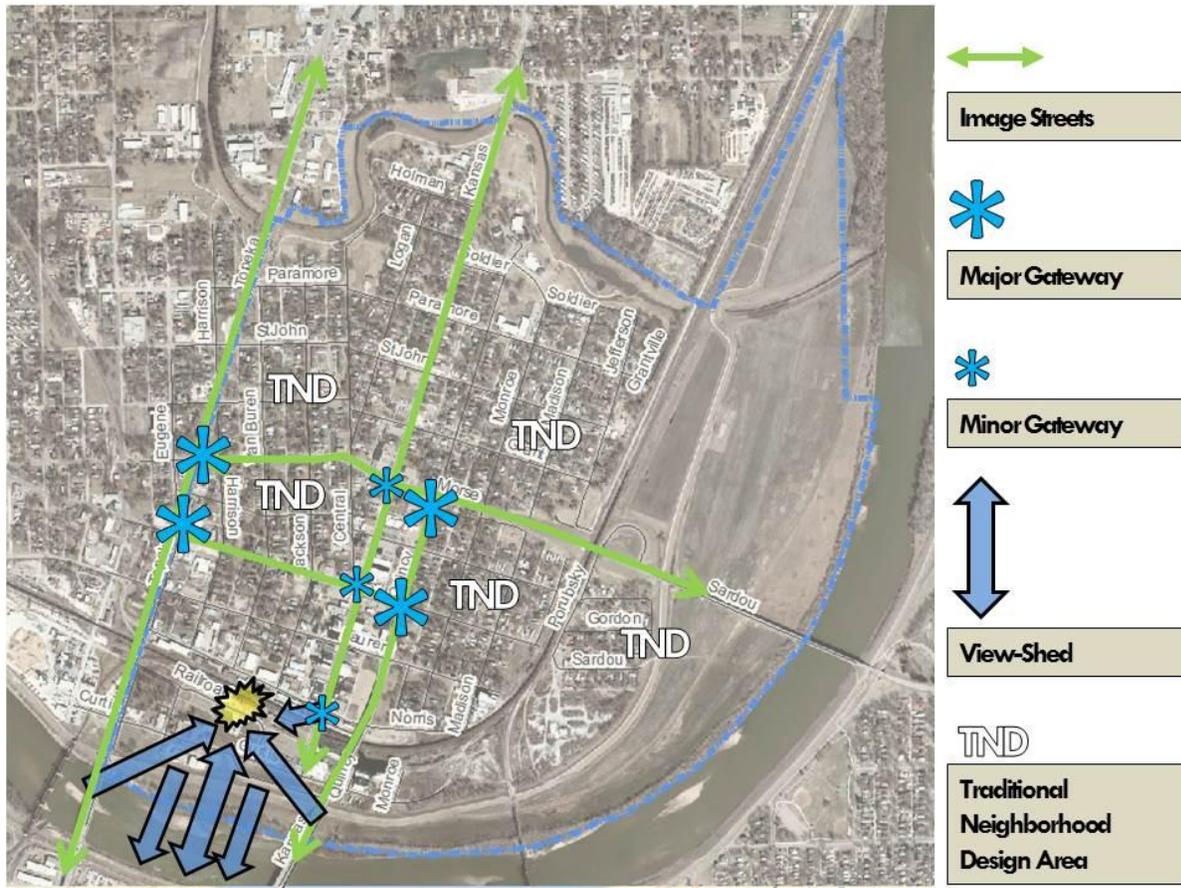
James Q. Wilson, *The Moral Sense*

The enormous appeal and potential of Historic North Topeka East lies within preserving and restoring the period building styles and intimate street settings of traditional neighborhoods that predated post-World War II development. This generation of North Topeka has become stewards to this legacy and finds itself faced with the question of "how?" Surveys show that much of this legacy has been lost already to deterioration and neglect. With many of the buildings evoking turn-of-the-century attributes, ways to protect the area from further loss of character need to be pursued. Value, in both property and community, is lost when these elements are not maintained. Education is essential to recapturing these neglected treasures, as well as maintaining existing and creating new treasures. Good design does not have to cost any more than less sensitive design. Understanding what constitutes appropriate design for the area will empower the community to pass this legacy on to the next generation.

## **URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

Why do some places affect us so mysteriously and forcefully while others don't? The urban design framework describes an "anatomy" of place and how spatial elements can be enhanced to function together for successful revitalization (Map 14). It describes elements of our everyday environments that can alter the quality and perception of an area. Urban design "clues" for the Planning Area are broken down into traditional neighborhood design, districts, edges, views, landmarks, streetscapes, and paths.

Map 14: Urban Design Framework



1. Traditional Neighborhood Design

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) elements are reminiscent of small towns or villages that capture a real sense of community. Historic North Topeka East is blessed with many of these same elements of a traditional neighborhood since it was originally laid out as a small town itself. Identifying, promoting, and expressing these elements are a major factor in reviving this “new” image and returning market stability to property values. Some of the more relevant components to TND include the following:

- Size and density – A complete, walkable neighborhood unit is best accommodated in an area of 40-160 acres at an average density of 5+ units per acre. This provides for a critical mass of people in close proximity to daily services and activities.
- Internal balance of housing, jobs, and services – Traditional neighborhoods were developed around a full range of daily activities. They provided places for people to live, work, and play.
- Identifiable neighborhood center – A civic focus and informal gathering place for residents/users of the area fosters community socializing, celebrations, and identity.
- Streets for both people and cars – Neighborhood streets are public places meant to comfortably accommodate all forms of transportation, including pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Human-scaled building types – Small lot platting, variety of building articulations fronting the street at eye-level, and front porches that promote social interaction are types of “human-scaled” elements that generate a cohesive urban pattern.

## 2. Districts

Districts are classified as smaller sub-areas of a Planning Area or neighborhood that represent a cohesive grouping of like uses and character that may have physically or mentally-defined boundaries. Crossing over district boundaries should be noticeable and are typically marked by changes in land use. Districts for the Neighborhood include Residential, Mixed Use, NOTO, and the Riverfront.

## 3. Edges

Edges refer to a neighborhood’s appearance at its boundaries or exterior. These are the most visibly-prominent areas of the neighborhood because they typically border heavily traveled streets and convey a continual impression of a neighborhood. Edges can be broken down into gateways and image streets/areas:

- Gateways – Gateways are a district’s “front door” into the community. They greet one’s entry into a district and give the first impression of an area. They can be designed at pedestrian or vehicle-scales and can include prominent buildings as well as landscape, signage, or focal point treatments. Major gateways are the key entry points into Historic North Topeka which occur at Quincy/Laurent, Quincy/Morse, Topeka/Gordon, and Topeka/Paramore. Secondary gateways occur at Kansas/Morse, Kansas/Gordon, Quincy/Laurent, and Topeka/Morse.
- Image Streets/Areas – Since streets are public spaces, the more frequently used streets act as further image identifiers of a place. The same can be said for non-street public spaces as well. In Historic North Topeka, key image streets include Topeka Boulevard, N. Kansas Avenue, Quincy Street, Gordon Street, and Morse Street. In addition, areas that will be more frequently used or draw more attention of people include the area around the Great Overland Station, the riverfront (particularly as seen from the bridges), and the Garfield Park/Quincy Elementary School area.

## 4. Views/Landmarks

Views of visually arresting landscapes, be it a single structure, group of buildings, or natural formations, can be a transforming experience that prompts a highly positive connection to a certain place. Historic North Topeka offers several prized view-sheds that, if protected and capitalized upon, can open up new “windows” to previously obscured landmarks offering completely new experiences of place. These view-sheds include:

- View to Capitol dome – Van Buren Street looking south of Gordon; Great Overland Station looking south
- View to Great Overland Station (see picture) – Alley between Van Buren and Jackson looking south of Gordon; Norris Street/Kansas Avenue looking west; Topeka Boulevard and Kansas Avenue bridges looking northeast and northwest, respectively; Curtis Street looking north between Jackson and Van Buren
- View to Kansas River – Topeka Boulevard and Kansas Avenue bridges looking northeast and northwest, respectively; top of levee looking south, east, and west; elevated view looking south of Great Overland Station

- View to Downtown skyline – Most north-south streets looking south between Topeka Boulevard and Kansas Avenue; top of the levee

### 5. Streetscapes

The area between the building walls and the street can be defined as the streetscape. With buildings traditionally parallel to the street, a streetscape is the building fronts and the street together. The character or quality of a streetscape is dependent upon the quality of the street, the buildings that front it, and the combined effect of the two. (Sec. F – Design Guidelines)

#### Urban Design Recommendations:

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) elements can be translated into performance measurements that will benchmark how well the neighborhood is doing in reestablishing itself as a traditional neighborhood:

- The number of dwelling units needs to increase by 100 units. While the Pioneer Curtis Junior High project added 59 units, and two news homes have gone into HNTE, there were 47 demolition permits issued since 1999.
- Allow people to live, work and play in the same proximity. Mixed Use zoning has been applied to 15.8% of the land in the planning area and allows for this to develop.
- Develop a community-gathering place in conjunction with the Great Overland Station and NOTO
- Establish building design guidelines for residential and commercial in-fill development (see Design Guidelines under V, Character and Image)

Other key urban design strategies that will take advantage of Historic North Topeka East’s inherent qualities include:

- Focus revised “historic” neighborhood signage and landscape elements at major gateways and reflect higher quality development at all gateway points complimenting historic character of area.
- As a priority, focus major rehabilitation efforts and new in-fill development along image streets/areas while removing blighting influences.
- Encourage the “greening” of current brownfields that define Historic North Topeka edges, images

### 6. Paths - (see Section V, Circulation Plan)

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Historic North Topeka East has been a community since 1865 and historic architecture can be seen throughout its streets. Many of the houses were constructed prior to 1915 (Map 10) and the 800 and 900 blocks of N Kansas Ave. were included in the 2012 Downtown Topeka Historic Resources Survey. With the increased opportunities associated with Historic Tourism as well as HNTE’s historic resources in the Great Overland Station and NOTO, several opportunities exist to preserve this neighborhood’s historic charm.

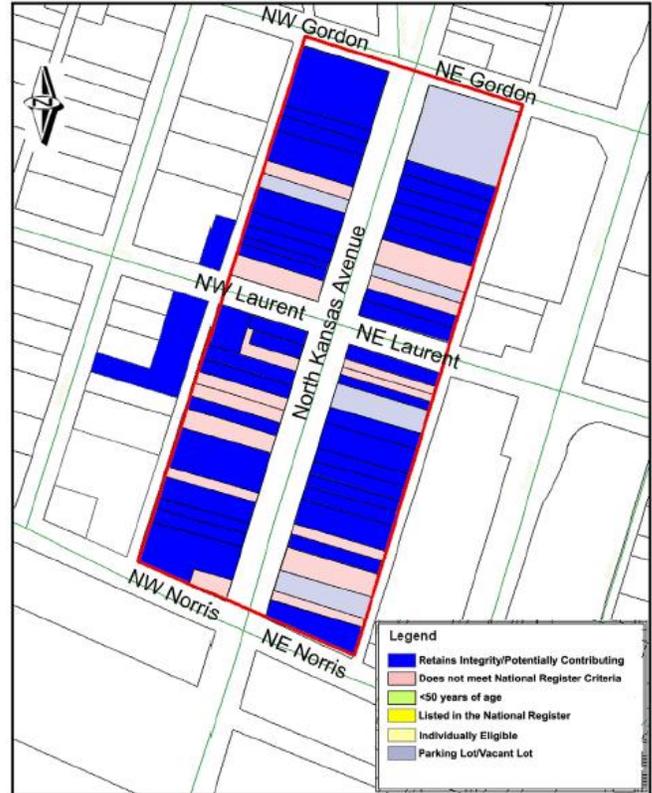
#### *2012 Downtown Topeka Historic Resources Survey*

A survey was recently completed through the Planning Department in 2012 by Rosin Preservation LLC (with funding from the State Historic Preservation Office) of properties along North and South Kansas Ave that comprise the historic commercial corridor. This was done to create a comprehensive inventory to identify buildings that should be preserved and historic districts that could be established. The survey identified 40 properties along N. Kansas Ave that either retained their historic integrity or were potentially contributing to the historic environment. The 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue, the heart of the NOTO arts district, was found to have

sufficient integrity to warrant a state/national historic district. Any successfully listed properties or districts would qualify for financial incentives such as state and federal historic tax credits. Further consideration of a district should be pursued in collaboration with the property owners as this is the most significantly intact grouping of historic commercial buildings remaining in Topeka.

*Neighborhood Conservation District*

The Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) is a zoning overlay district that could be thought of as “Historic District-Lite.” While it still looks at protecting the properties within it, it mainly focuses on preventing incompatible new construction or development. It can be tailored to the specific needs and can focus on preserving particular aspects of the neighborhood. As this is tailored to the neighborhood’s desires, it could be specified for new construction or extended to substantial additions to existing buildings as well. This can be specified for selected blocks that retain historic attributes or character or to larger areas as well. There is an extensive amount of latitude and flexibility with this preservation tool that could greatly benefit the Historic North Topeka East planning area.



**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**COMMERCIAL AND MIXED USE:**

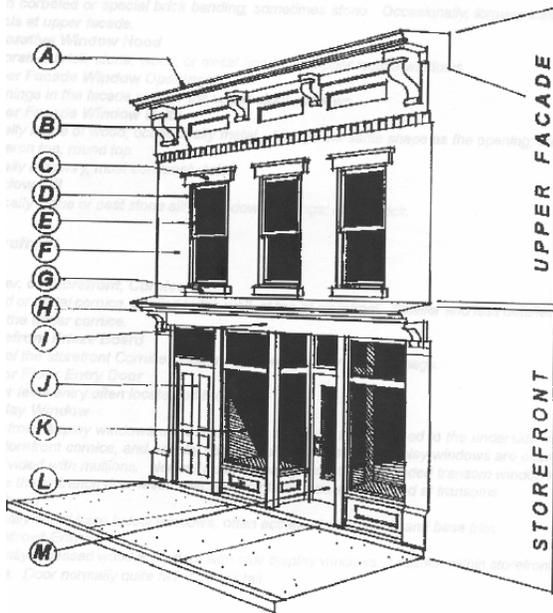
Commercial and mixed-use buildings of historic character and sufficient integrity are primarily found in the 800, 900, and 1000 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue. The Great Overland Station, listed on the National Register, should also be looked at as a model for new and renovated commercial/mixed-use buildings. These and other commercial buildings within the planning area that have potential for local or national listing should adhere to basic guidelines below for rehabilitation as demonstrated by Illustration 2, and Illustration 3.

1. Street Facades and Rehabilitation

- Original facades, including windows and openings, should be retained.
- Encourage removal of applied siding treatments, metal fasciae and canopies wherever possible.
- Repair damage from siding treatments and rejuvenate upper facades hidden by treatments. Siding treatments often tend to preserve the façade in good condition. If architectural elements (e.g., upper and lower cornices) have been removed or damaged, reconstruct/restore original elements.
- Maintain or reconstruct large storefront windows. Original storefront windows usually begin at 18”-24” above the ground and extend to the underside of the second floor.

- NEVER paint unpainted brick or sandblast brick to remove paint. If painted, colors should visually relate to building elements and neighboring facades (i.e., earth-tones). Placement of colors should be based on the existing hierarchy of detail: base and major/minor trim colors. Base color is the upper wall surface and storefront piers.

**Illustration 1: Traditional Storefront**



- A. Upper Cornice
- B. Brick Decoration
- C. Window Hood
- D. Window Openings
- E. Window Units  
Always the same shape as window openings.
- F. Masonry Wall
- G. Window Sill
- H. Storefront Cornice
- I. Storefront Frieze Board  
Common location for sign
- J. Upper Floor Entry Door
- K. Display Window  
Normally clear glass separated from window transom w/ mullions. Extends to underside of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.
- L. Bulkhead  
Normally wood based below windows, accented w/ panels and base trim.
- M. Storefront Entry  
Typically recessed door with side display windows.

- New windows should fit the size and shape of their original openings. Mirrored or smoked-glass windows should not be used since they are not original materials and detract from the district's character.
- Maintain original decorative stone details, window hoods, cornice brackets and woodwork whenever possible.
- Awnings or canopies should be of traditional design, preferably cloth, and not unusually large or awkward in shape. Avoid excessive signage on awnings, back-lit awnings, and round awnings.
- Keep the size of signs modest and locate them at the storefront cornice line; they may overhang the public right-of-way if they do not obscure architectural details or dominate the building. Avoid plastic materials on the exterior of signs since this is not a traditional material. A well designed and maintained building is as much of an advertisement for a business as the sign itself.
- Avoid permanent fences visible from street frontages or public areas that are chain-link or wire. Barbed wire should not be permitted in a non-industrial district.

## 2. New Construction

- All building designs should be compatible with the major elements of historic architecture along the N. Kansas Avenue mixed-use district and the Great Overland Station: red brick buildings with limestone or grey concrete trim are desirable.

- Buildings should be set back from the street uniformly to present a continuous façade line along the street, except that minor recesses, projections for entries, and similar elements may be acceptable.
- Human scale elements along the street front should be included within the building's design.
- The desired height of buildings should not exceed forty (40) feet.
- The street grid system and views of the Union Pacific Depot and Capital need to be preserved.
- Parking lots should have CPTED ("crime prevention through environmental design")-approved design elements, interior landscaping, and be located behind buildings in the interior of blocks, or side yards to the maximum extent feasible.
- Mechanical or electrical equipment should be hidden or screened from street level view.
- Design guidelines for commercial and mixed-use structures should at a minimum be applied to the NOTO District with consideration given to "expansion" or "riverfront" areas for new construction.

### 3. Streetscapes

Streetscape guidelines would apply to N. Kansas Avenue (500-1000), gateways and other "image" streets identified under the Urban Design Framework. Some major recommendations for the 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue include:

- Pedestrian Bump-outs – Located at intersections and mid-block crossing to shorten pedestrian crossing distances, slow traffic, and visually deter heavy truck traffic. These bump-outs should include space for raised landscaped planters that are slightly setback from the curb at intersections and mid-block crossing.
- Overhead Gateway Signage – Located at Gordon and Norris for gateway affect and to deter heavy truck traffic.
- Sidewalks – The possibility exists for the 10' wide sidewalks to be extended up to 18' to provide for outdoor display, dining, planter, and/or street furniture space. New sidewalk concrete should be laid with brick paver trim and brick paver treatments at intersections, crosswalks, and any extensions of the sidewalk.
- Shade Trees – Shade tree plantings should be spaced from intersection to intersection judiciously so that storefronts are not obscured to any great extent, but that a pleasant walking environment is provided; at a minimum, intersections and mid-block crossings should have multiple plantings.
- Lighting – Existing street lights are spaced at a 100' interval. Since the fluted poles retain a desired character, they should remain to provide vehicular light. Pedestrian lighting that is historically compatible could either be spaced mid-point between the street lights or attached to the street lights with an arm bracket overhanging the sidewalk. In addition, metal placards or signs could be placed on light poles at pedestrian level scale with the district name on them. Interchangeable canvas banners could be placed higher up on the street light poles announcing different events.
- Street Furniture – Benches and trash receptacles should be historically compatible to building architecture and placed at appropriate intervals along the sidewalk. They should also be of a durable construction to minimize vandalism.

## **CPTED Guidelines**

Safe Streets and the Police Department can help the neighborhood determine which property configurations discourage criminal activity. These methods, known as CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) follow four basic principles: access control, surveillance, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance.

### **Access control:**

- This involves designing streets, sidewalks, building entrances, and neighborhood gateways to clearly indicate transitions from the public environment to semi-private and private areas.

### **Surveillance:**

- A design principle that maximizes the visibility of people, parking areas, vehicles, and site activities. Strategies involve the strategic placement of windows, doors, walkways, parking lots, and vehicular routes.

### **Territorial reinforcement:**

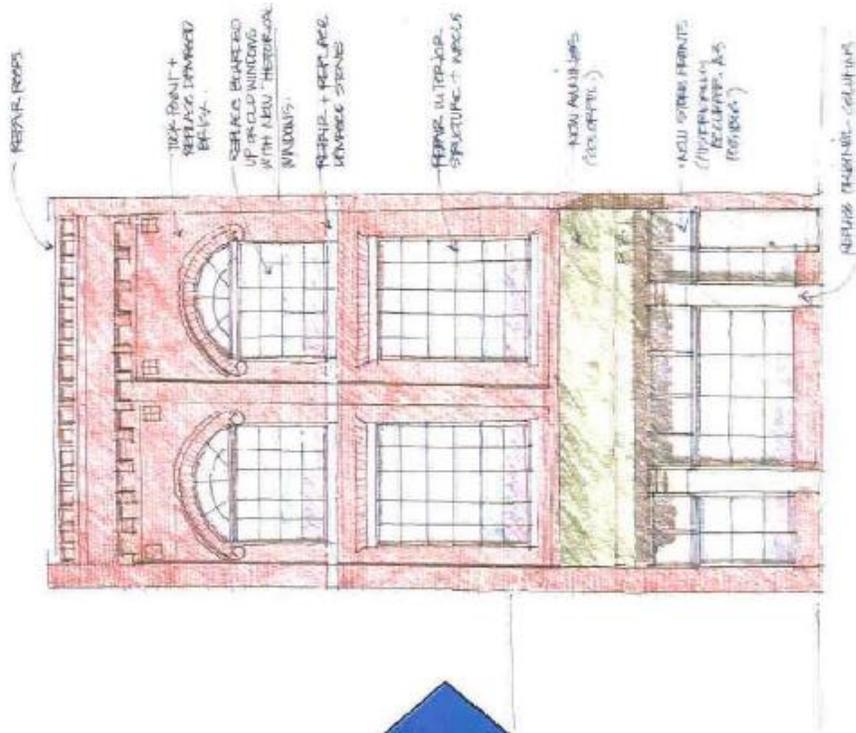
- Sidewalks, landscaping, and porches help distinguish between public and private areas. This helps users display signs of “ownership” that send “hands off” messages to would-be offenders.

### **Maintenance:**

- This addresses management and maintenance of space. Proper upkeep (mowing grass, trimming trees and landscaping, picking up trash, repairing broken windows and light fixtures, and painting over graffiti)
- Helps signal that a location or facility is well cared for and therefore would be inhospitable to a criminal
- It also signals that an owner, manager, or neighbor is watching out for the property and could spot illegal behavior.

[www.ncpc.org](http://www.ncpc.org)

Illustration 2: Commercial Building Design Guidelines (831 N. Kansas Ave.)



**AFTER**

**BEFORE**

Illustration 3: Commercial Building Design Guidelines (816 N. Kansas Ave)

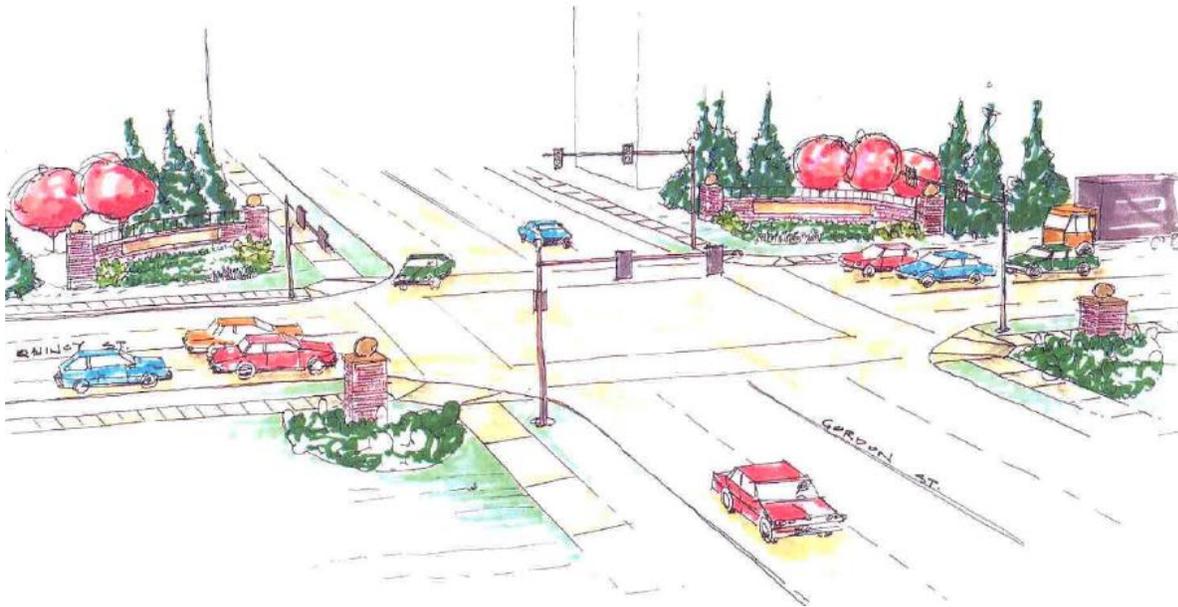
**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



#### Illustration 4: Major Gateway



#### RESIDENTIAL

Historic North Topeka East exhibits many residential architectural styles prevalent at the turn of the century and pre-1930 era. The design of houses was dictated by the narrow lots, resulting densities, and materials available. The key to understanding and applying design guidelines lies in assessing the existing inventory and establishing key design standards that will fit within a traditional neighborhood.

Here are three examples of traditional architectural styles found throughout the neighborhood:

##### Folk Victorian (1870-1910)

- Gable-front-and-wing subtype without Victorian detailing
- Cross gable roofing with steep pitch
- Can be 1 or 2 stories
- Wooden posts atop brick piers supporting porch that is length of wing
- Bay window with 1-over-1 double hung sash
- Common in Southern states
- Gable-fronts are prominent in Little Russia



##### Craftsman (1905-1930)

- Bungalow with low-pitched front-gable roof
- Decorative brackets support overhanging eaves; roof rafters usually exposed
- One-and-a-half story
- Full or partial width porch supported by wood post sitting atop brick piers extending to ground
- Wood clad with horizontal shingles
- Center entry and rear garage



### Queen Anne (1890-1910)

- Very late variant of Queen Anne style
- Two-story gable façade with cross-gable roof
- Horizontal wood clapboards with fish-scale shingling
- Pediment marking entry over full length porch
- Wood posts atop painted brick piers extending to ground
- Balustrade provides railing for porch

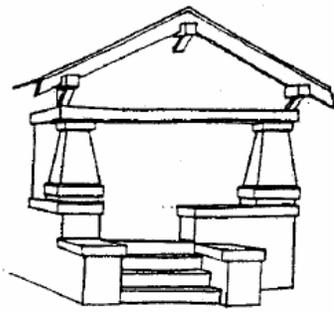


Various other styles throughout the neighborhood include Gothic Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Italianate, Homestead, and other minimal traditional styles. Together, these provide context for guiding renovations of existing traditional-style homes and construction of new in-fill dwellings. Several basic design elements should be followed in order to maintain a neighborhood's character:

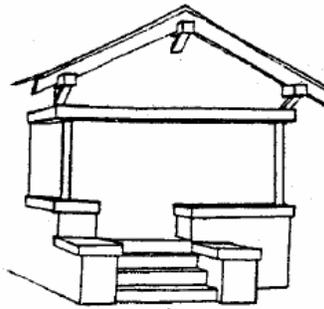
#### 1. Massing and Form

Massing generally refers to how a given amount of space is reflected in a building's design. For example, the space could be a rectangular box with no porch and a flat roof, OR two smaller boxes of uneven height and a full length covered front porch with front-gable roof. The form would determine how the building is positioned on the lot. This is typically dictated by lot design and setbacks from property lines. In order to retain the area's character, several guidelines should be followed in Historic North Topeka related to massing and form:

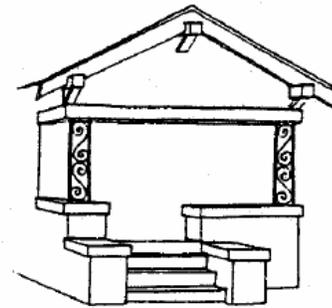
- The height, width, and general proportions of a building should generally conform to other buildings in the neighborhood. That would include a building frontage narrower than its depth with a visible main front from street, elevation of floor above ground, and a proportional front porch.
- The ratio of wall surface to openings should be consistent with traditional buildings in the neighborhood. This includes width and height of window and door openings. Enclosure or re-positioning of original window placements should be avoided. Size and proportion of window space to façade should be kept consistent with neighborhood
- Buildings should be of vertical or non-directional appearance so that horizontal lines are minimized. Flat wall surfaces, particularly frontages, should be avoided.
- The slope, massing, and configuration of the original roof should be maintained. Roof pitch should be kept within range of predominate building style. Low gable, domed, A-frame, and shed-vaulted roof shape are not preferred.
- Additions to traditional dwellings should be complimentary and subservient to the main structure.
- Front doors should be accentuated and painted/stained.
- Garages should be built in the rear yard behind the residence or to the side in proportion to the main structure. Attached/detached garages should be consistent with the character of the block and meet CPTED principles (see page 46)
- Historic details – balconies, covered porches, decorative shingles, bracketed eaves, columns, balustrades, arches, turrets, etc. – should be in proportion with the building and considered on contemporary designs only where appropriate.



*Yes – solid and sound looking original elephantine wood/stucco columns that match house*



*Avoid – steel pipe columns are structurally adequate, but do not look sturdy to hold up the house*



*Avoid – wrought iron style columns are out of place on a bungalow porch and may not be structurally sound*

## 2. Materials

- The use of natural materials or those that take on the appearances of nature materials are strongly advised. The front and side facades are the most visible sides and should be protected. Appropriate facade materials – brick, wood siding, stucco, and cut stone (if original) – should be used.
- Wood siding, trim, and detailing should be painted, stained, or otherwise protected if intact and restored if deteriorated or missing whenever possible.
- Avoid metal or plastic window frames. Dark tinted, smoked, or reflective glass should not be used since they are not original and diminishes the district's character.
- Roof materials should consist of wood shingles, composition shingles, slate, clay, or other similar materials deemed appropriate. Roll roofing, built up tar and gravel, or plastic roofing materials are typically not appropriate unless a roof is not visible from public areas.
- Exceptions to these guidelines may be deemed appropriate if a new house is manufactured off-site, but meets the massing and form guidelines above.
- Attached single-family housing, or townhouse design, may be appropriate if within an acceptable area according to the land use plan or adjacent to image or arterial streets. Mid-block attached housing should be discouraged.

Design guidelines for residential structures should at a minimum, be applied to identified blocks with sufficient historical integrity (e.g., primarily >50 yrs. old) within the Target Area. If desired by the community, the area may be expanded to adjacent residential blocks of the Planning Area. An example of what infill housing would look like following these guidelines is depicted in Illustration 5.

## Illustration 5: Housing Infill Design Guidelines



### HOUSING

A neighborhood is in many ways defined by its housing. The housing portion of this revitalization strategy is designed to change the perception of the Historic North Topeka housing market to residents and non-residents alike by improving the supply of existing housing and creating a greater demand for market-rate housing.

Housing Rehabilitation – Community perception of the housing market affects the confidence of local residents in investing in the neighborhood. When a market is perceived to be in a declining state or when property values/rents cannot adequately support new investment, maintenance of properties is deferred and disinvestment begins. Activities therefore should be geared towards improving the existing housing stock in the community. With 43.8% of the residential properties in the community exhibiting either major or intermediate deficiencies (see Table 3) the need for a more targeted rehabilitation program is apparent. The following strategies could help achieve this objective:

- Identify strategic blocks to concentrate rehabilitation efforts: Map 12, the Target Area Concept Map illustrates the location of blocks that present new housing opportunities through the SORT program. These blocks and the blocks surrounding them should be targeted for more concentrated rehabilitation efforts within the community. This should be coordinated with the in-fill housing activities discussed below and in the implementation section.

In the aftermath of the 1951 flood, the demand for housing in Historic North Topeka East was declining and disinvestment in the housing stock began. In an effort to encourage redevelopment in the area, many traditional residential blocks were rezoned to multiple-family and industrial zoning districts, which permitted the use of mobile homes. As older, dilapidated houses were razed, they were often replaced with mobile homes as a low-cost alternative to the larger site-built homes in the community. This practice resulted in an incompatible land use arrangement and further discouraged homeowner investment of the existing frame houses. With the adoption of the Comprehensive Zoning Regulations in 1992, mobile homes were no longer permitted in the zoning districts found in HNTE. However they continue to exist in the neighborhood as legal non-conforming uses. No new mobile home sites should be approved.

There are programs available to help qualified individuals purchase, repair, or rehab their homes. The following programs are administered with federal funds through the Housing and Neighborhood Development (HND) of the City of Topeka on an income-eligible basis for low/moderate income households.

- **Housing Rehabilitation** - This HND program is intended for both low-income owner and renter-occupied properties in need of interior and exterior repairs within selected target areas. Additional funding is geared towards owner-occupied units. Funds may also be provided to assist with lead-paint controls and weatherproofing. The assistance, however, may be available to properties that have documented historic significance and are in need of exterior repairs.
- **Emergency Repairs** - Emergency home repair assistance (primarily repairs that are of an immediate health or safety nature) can be provided for low income owner- occupants throughout the neighborhood. This assistance is intended for higher cost, major emergency repairs. Minor maintenance and repairs remain the primary responsibility of the homeowner.
- **Accessibility Modifications** - This assistance is available to income-qualified persons with disabilities throughout the City, whether they are owner-occupants or tenants. This assistance is intended to provide access into and out of the home. The priority is to build exterior ramps, widen doorways, and provide thresholds.
- **KDOC Affordable Housing** - Project is a cooperative venture with the Kansas Department of Corrections, in which KDOC provides women inmates, tools and equipment to form two (2) crews for the rehabilitation of affordable housing units and Low-Mod Income Area infrastructure sidewalk improvements.
- **TOTO-II** - Assistance is provided as a 2nd mortgage, deferred loan subsidizing the purchase and rehab costs of a home for families at or below 80% of median income. While the program is available Citywide, it is structured to encourage home purchases in at-risk and intensive care areas. Homeownership and debt counseling assistance are provided by **Housing and Credit Counseling Inc.** Lending institutions participate by managing the maintenance escrow.
- **Neighborhood Revitalization Program** - The City offers a 10-year 95% property tax rebate for improvements that increase the value of the property by more than 10%. The rebate period can be extended up to 15 years for historic landmark properties.

Improvements must be consistent with the adopted design guidelines for the neighborhood. The City’s Planning Department administers the program.

## **COMMUNITY BUILDING AND INITIATIVES**

Community building and initiatives are essential to revitalizing a neighborhood. Residents have the innate knowledge of what needs to be fixed in their neighborhood—these grassroots programs allow this knowledge to become organized so that action can be taken to address problems. By seeing the change they can accomplish within their own community, residents can become empowered and strong in knowing that they can shape the future of their neighborhood. Some principles of community building include:

- Build on community strengths
- Support families and children
- Foster broad community participation
- Forge partnerships through collaboration

Collaboration is essential. For programs to succeed and for the residents of Historic North Topeka East to become fully engaged, there needs to be collaboration and cooperation between all the stakeholders. Many groups have interest in improving the community and have the skills to achieve this. Below are a few community building concepts, though the list is by no means exhaustive.

## **NEIGHBORS-HELPING-NEIGHBORS**

The “broken window” theory states that the presence of even the slightest traces of neglected property, such as broken windows, can cause a ripple effect in which other adjacent property owners lose confidence in the neighborhood or where criminals begin to prey upon areas that “don’t care.”

This could be addressed through volunteer neighbors-helping-neighbors programs, where the community comes together to help the elderly, disadvantaged, or those otherwise unable to maintain their property on their own. Organizing a group and neighborhood contact to coordinate a program such as this would help address minor code violations and other maintenance issues that bring down the appearance of the neighborhood. This idea was brought forward by the community during the first public meeting and was voted as an issue that the community wants to address.

## **COMMUNITY GARDENS**

One way of addressing vacant properties and rebuilding community spirit is to reuse vacant properties as community gardens. Community gardens can be developed within city park space or as a temporary use for the property when larger park projects are being phased in. Not only do community gardens provide a social aspect for the neighborhood but they also provide access to healthy food and healthy choices. They also increase the number of neighbors keeping an eye on their neighborhood and watching out for each other. Neighboring cities have created programs that lease community garden space to non-profit groups who donate produce to local food pantries. Whether a formal process such as this is explored, or just a neighborhood hobby project that allows neighbors and youth to come together, a community garden concept should be explored as a viable option for reducing the number of vacant lots and increasing the number of eyes on the community.

## FARMERS MARKET

Another avenue for community building in Historic North Topeka East would be to explore a farmers market on a trial basis in order to acclimate both vendors and customers to the North Crossings environment. This could be established at minimal cost with no dislocation of existing businesses on public properties within Historic North Topeka East and have good access from Topeka Boulevard or Kansas Avenue south of the river. An exciting potential exists to develop an extensive market site south of the tracks which would be highly visible from the two bridges.

## PARKS

Existing	Size (ac.)	Type	Recommendations
1. Garfield Park	23.7	Community- active and passive	Connect Solider Creek Trail to Levee Trail. Maintain and upgrade as premier community park in North Topeka.
2. Charles Curtis Greenway	5.8	Linear - passive	Acquire properties as opportunities arise and complete greenway as buffer on heavily traveled image corridor
3. Veterans Park East	2.0	Special use – passive and active	Could be offered in land swap for business relocation for future park space. Save NE corner of Quincy/Laurent for gateway effect.
4. Veterans Park West	0.4	Special use – passive	Redesign to provide parking and potential Farmers Market space. Veterans Park can be consolidated with WW I-II monuments in a more prominent and worthy setting.
5. Levee Trail	1.7 miles (0.4 miles between bridges)	Linear recreational –	An urban trail has been established on top of the Kansas River levee. Future improvements to the trail between the Kansas and Topeka Blvd Bridges could include lighting, benches, and turnouts to support higher usage for strolling, viewing, and gathering. It is part of Topeka's regional trail system.

Proposed	Size (ac.)	Type	Recommendation
6. Neighborhood Park - Primary Target Area	1-3	Neighborhood Park – passive	Would provide recreational opportunities in a local park where neighborhood families could walk to without having to cross major arterial streets.
7. Riverfront Park south of Great Overland Station	14-20	Regional	Brownfield to greenfield project that would establish regional gathering place for events related to Great Overland Station. Could include levee

			trail, historic landmarks, and outdoor facilities for music, ice skating, etc. Would require industrial business relocation and improved vehicular and pedestrian access.
8. Sardou Recreation/ Nature Trail Park	98.0	Special Use/ Open Space	Replace farming use to support kite flying, model airplane, and/or athletic field use. Explore use of creek inlet for canoe launch area. Preserve natural vegetation and habitat area along river.
9. Kansas River Open Space	84.0	Open Space – passive	Grow back to natural state of vegetation and habitat; add possible nature trail.

Map 15: Parks and Public Facilities

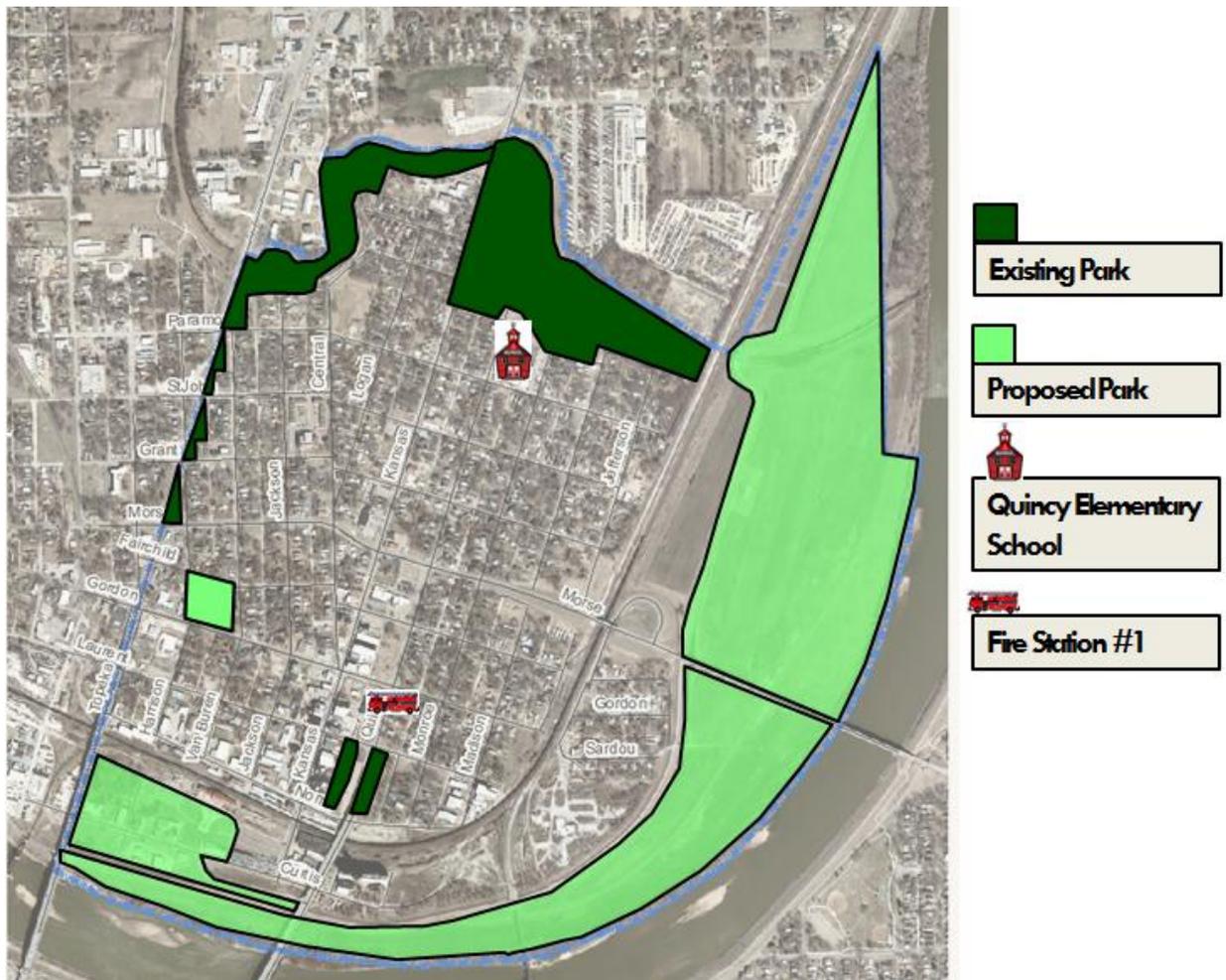
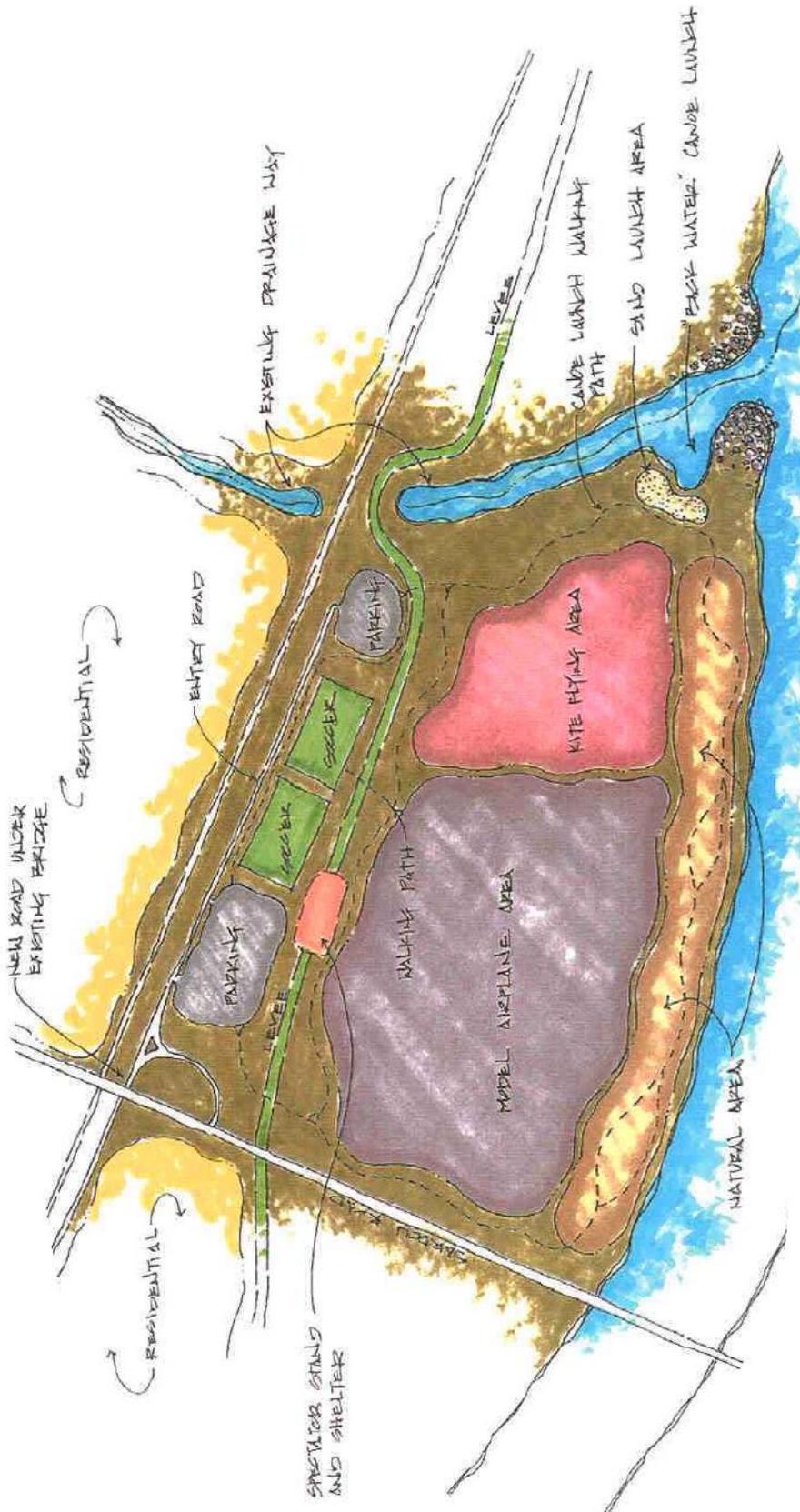


Illustration 6: Sardou Recreation/Nature Park



## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Sidewalks, Curb, and Gutter – All blocks within the planning area should be completed for sidewalks and curb/gutter work. Some areas of the neighborhood are devoid of these basic urban infrastructure services and have no way to revitalize the housing development on those blocks without these basic services. Some blocks border on slum conditions and are impassible for pedestrians because of the lack of curbs/gutters.
- Brick Street and Sidewalk Policy – In 2011, the City of Topeka adopted a “Brick Street, Alley, and Sidewalk Policy” to identify and preserve brick features within the city. It requires that anyone who disturbs an existing exposed brick street repairs it with like materials and patterns. NW Jackson St is identified within this policy as a brick street designated for preservation. Brick sidewalks that require repair in areas longer than 15’ can be replaced with concrete unless preservation is recommended in Neighborhood Plan.

This Plan recommends that brick streets and stone curbs be preserved and maintained throughout the Historic North Topeka East neighborhood. Brick streets that have been patched with asphalt should have the patches redone with brick. Brick sidewalks falling within the environs of a designated state or national historic property, a Historic District, or a Local Landmark should remain and be repaired with brick.

- Storm Sewer Improvements – The Fairchild Pump Station in Little Russia was built in 1927 but is currently offline. It was identified to be abandoned by the Army Corp of Engineers’ Kansas River Levee study. Any improvements needed will be designed and implemented by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- Kansas River Levee – The Army Corps of Engineers completed a 3-year Feasibility Study that looked at the need to provide a minimum of 100-year flood protection for all the Topeka levee units. The project is moving forward to the design phase. The North Topeka Unit protects the Planning Area from River flooding and needs upgrading to provide a high level of flood protection.
- Central Avenue Cul-de-sac – This empty cul-de-sac provides an opportunity to tie the vibrancy of NOTO into the neighborhood setting. The opportunities for reimagining the interior aesthetics of the cul-de-sac are profound. Civic art created by NOTO artists could rise prominently from the center of this traffic feature, welcoming travelers both to NOTO and to the Historic North Topeka East neighborhood. Landscaping could further accentuate this feature. This is also a prominent crossing for the Bikeways Master Plan that traverses through Historic North Topeka East, adding even more to the multitude of viewers who would see this display.

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION

*"Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still."*

-Chinese Proverb

After completing the planning process, action and implementation are essential. After identifying goals and target areas, the next logical step is taking action to achieve those goals. The implementation section of a plan identifies specific steps to be taken and by whom, and places a timeline on completing these steps. This allows for progress of the community's vision to be tracked and evaluated. This section should be used by all stakeholders to guide their decision-making in implementing the priorities of the Plan.

### KEY ACTION PRIORITIES

The meetings with the Steering Committee brought up ideas for implementing specific strategies and actions in this Plan. The community was surveyed at the final meeting to determine their priorities for action. The actions below are organized based on the rankings received at that meeting and are not necessarily inclusive of all potential actions, but a checklist of some of the more significant actions that should be taken.

#### 1. Do These First

- Union Pacific Railroad/N. Kansas Ave. Pedestrian Crossing
- Wayfinding signs
- Rehab historic housing

#### 2. Do These Next

- Pave/repair alleys
- Repair/construct new sidewalks with a preference for stamped concrete
- Start/complete the Riverfront Park
- Incorporate NOTO art into the neighborhood along main roads

#### 3. Do These After the Above Has Been Completed or Stalled Out

- Reconstruct/repair streets
- Brick street repair
- Infill housing
- Neighborhood park in the west central neighborhood (N. Topeka Blvd and Morse)
- Community garden

## TARGET AREAS

The tables below show the cost and timing of infrastructure improvements for the proposed target areas and other infrastructure recommendations of the plan. By combining several major actions within a concentrated area of a neighborhood, a greater cumulative impact can be realized than if they were dispersed throughout the larger planning area. In this manner, it is intended that multiple target areas can be worked on in various stages of completion. Once the first area is “finished”, the majority of the public investment can then be shifted to the second area, then the third, etc.

**Important Note:** The priorities and costs estimates for infrastructure and housing rehabilitation projects in the neighborhood are provided for *informational purposes only* and should not be relied upon for future costs or as actual bids for future projects. Increases in material costs, overhead and labor can change greatly in a short period of time. Funding is subject to availability as provided by federal grants and the governing body, and allocations change annually. The housing costs in the following tables represent subsidies from City Consolidated Plan funding (CDBG/HOME) and are intended to leverage private dollars. Costs for infrastructure and parks reflect City of Topeka capital costs from sources typically found within the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP), unless otherwise indicated. Cost assumptions are detailed at the bottom of this section.

### West Central Target Area

Total Street Reconstruction	Cost	Source	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years
NW Central (1000-1100)	\$312,525	GO Bonds, ½ Cent Sales Tax			
NW Van Buren (1000 block)	\$311,744	GO Bonds, ½ Cent Sales Tax			
NW Jackson (1000 block)	\$228,412	GO Bonds, ½ Cent Sales Tax			
<b>Mill and Overlay</b>					
NW Harrison (1100 block)	\$42,140	GO Bonds, ½ Cent Sales Tax			
<b>Sidewalks</b>					
NW Fairchild (200-400 blocks)					
Concrete	\$83,065	GO Bonds			
NW Van Buren (1000 block)					
Concrete	\$12,934	GO Bonds			
NW Jackson (1100 block)					
Concrete	\$4,301	GO Bonds			
NW Van Buren (1100 block)					
Concrete	\$25,186	GO Bonds			
NW Harrison (1000 block)					
Concrete	\$29,798	GO Bonds			
<b>Alleys</b>					
Van Buren/Jackson (2 blocks)	\$160,000	GO Bonds			
Jackson/Central (2 blocks)	\$160,000	GO Bonds			
Morse/Harrison	\$80,000	GO Bonds			
Morse/Central	\$80,000	GO Bonds			
<b>Neighborhood Park</b>					
Morse and Harrison	\$200,000	CDBG, GO Bonds			
<b>Housing Rehabilitation</b>					
Primary and Secondary Areas	\$509,000	CDBG, HOME			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,239,105</b>				

### Pioneer Curtis Jr. High Target Area

Sidewalks	Cost	Source	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years
NW Van Buren (1200 block)					
Concrete	\$37,752	GO Bonds			
NW Jackson (1200-1300)					
Concrete	\$32,593	GO Bonds			
NW Grant (200-400 blocks)					
Concrete	\$75,933	GO Bonds			
<b>Alleys</b>					
Van Buren/Jackson (2 blocks)	\$160,000	GO Bonds			
Jackson/Central	\$80,000	GO Bonds			
<b>Housing Rehabilitation</b>					
Primary and Secondary Areas	\$509,000	CDBG, HOME			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$895,278</b>				

### East Central Target Area

Total Street Reconstruction	Cost	Source	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years
NE Jefferson (1100 block)	\$239,324	GO Bonds			
<b>Sidewalks</b>					
NE Fairchild (200-400 blocks)					
Concrete	\$75,673	GO Bonds			
NE Gordon (100-400 blocks)					
Concrete	\$145,851	GO Bonds			
NE Madison (1000-1100 blocks)					
Concrete	\$27,603	GO Bonds			
NE Monroe (1000-1100 blocks)					
Concrete	\$68,776	GO Bonds			
<b>Alleys</b>					

Quincy/Monroe (2 Blocks)	\$160,000	GO Bonds			
Monroe/Madison	\$160,000	GO Bonds			
Madison/Jefferson	\$160,000	GO Bonds			
<b>Housing Rehabilitation</b>					
Primary and Secondary Areas	\$509,000	CDBG, HOME			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,546,227</b>				

### Northeast Target Area

Total Street Reconstruction	Cost	Source	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years
NE Jefferson (1300-1500 blocks)					
1300 Block	\$162,298	GO Bonds, ½ Cent Sales Tax			
1400-1500 Blocks	\$621,085	GO Bonds			
NE St. John (400 block)	\$144,952	GO Bonds			
NE Grant (400 block)	\$188,941	GO Bonds			
<b>Sidewalks</b>					
NE Madison (1300-1500 blocks)					
Concrete	\$96,000	GO Bonds			
NE Paramore (400-500 blocks)					
Concrete	\$55,453	GO Bonds			
<b>Alleys</b>					
Madison/Jefferson (3 blocks)	\$240,000	CDBG, GO Bonds			
<b>Housing Rehabilitation</b>					
Primary and Secondary Areas	\$509,000	CDBG, HOME			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,017,729</b>				

### Little Russia

Total Street Reconstruction	Cost	Source	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years
NE Fairchild (500 block)	\$421,500	GO Bonds			
<b>Sidewalks</b>					
NE Gordon (500 block)					
Concrete	\$11,878	GO Bonds			
<b>Alleys</b>					
Fairchild/Gordon	\$80,000	GO Bonds			
Gordon/Sardou	\$80,000	GO Bonds			
<b>Housing Rehabilitation</b>					
Primary and Secondary Areas	\$509,000	CDBG, HOME			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,102,378</b>				

### Projects Outside of Target Areas

Project	Cost	Source	1-3 Years	3-5 Years	5+ Years
Bike/Pedestrian Bridge at N. Kansas Ave and RR	\$2,500,000	UPRR, KDOT, CIP			
North Crossings Master Plan	\$30,000	MTPO			
Wayfinding Signage	\$20,000	Transient Guest Tax, CDBG			
Riverfront Park	\$2,000,000	Transient Guest Tax, ½ Cent Sales Tax			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,550,000</b>				

Assumptions (costs are approximate)

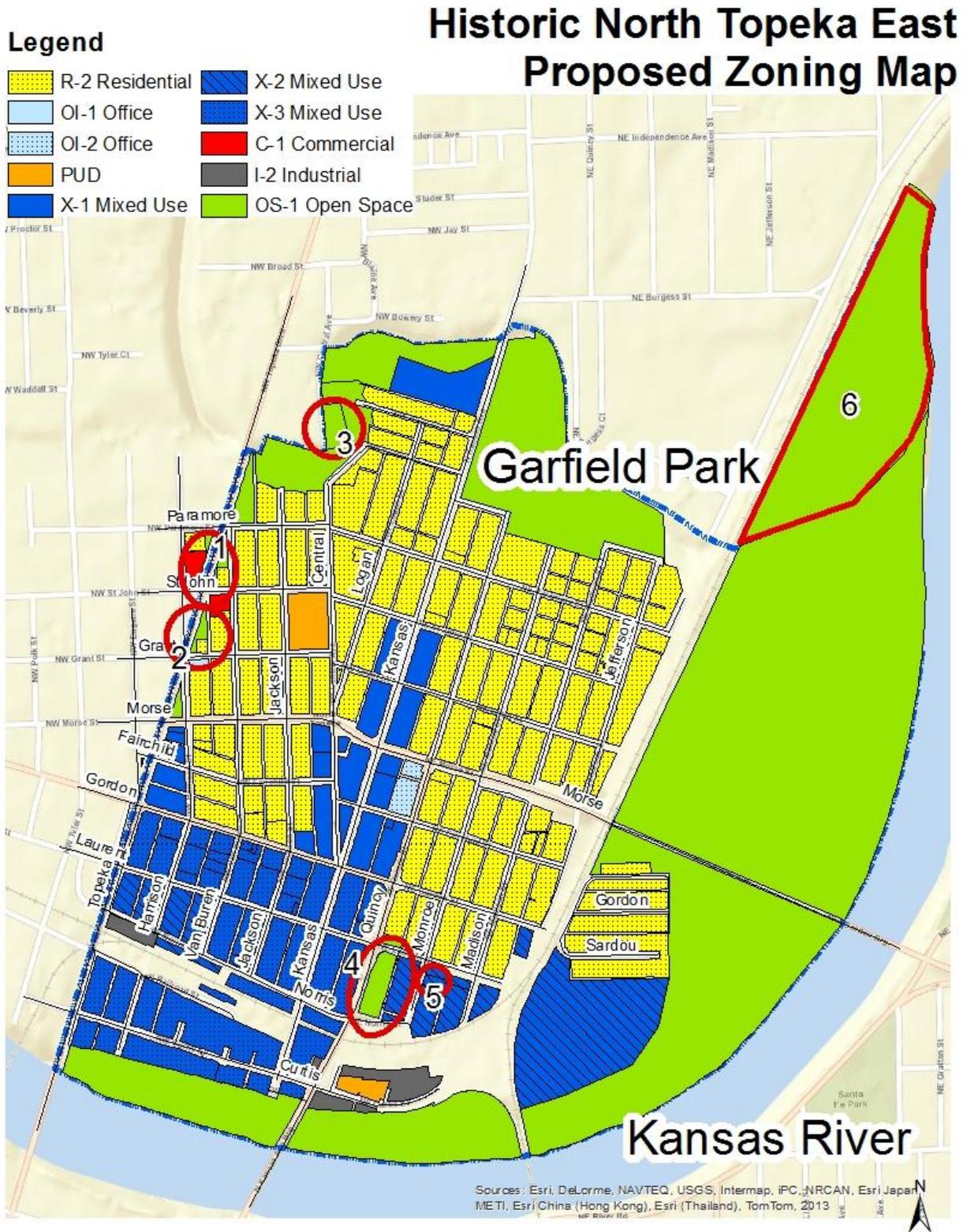
- Alleys (not including sewer costs) = \$80,000/block
- Sidewalks (concrete) = \$32 per linear foot; one side of the street
- Sidewalks (brick) = \$90 per linear foot; one side of the street

## REZONING

There are a few areas within Historic North Topeka East where the current zoning is inconsistent with the Future Land Use Plan. For example, East Veteran's Park is currently zoned X2 but is used as Open Space. The same is true for the open space north of Old Soldier Creek between the railroad tracks and the River—it is zoned I-2 but is used as Open Space. A rezoning should be initiated by the Planning Commission to reflect as such (See Map 18 for the Proposed Zoning Map).

- 1) A neighborhood commercial node is appropriate at the intersection of N. Topeka Blvd and NW St. John. To accomplish this, the vacant parcels on the southeast and northwest sides of this intersection should be rezoned to C-1 Commercial, as supported by the Planning Objectives in the Comprehensive Plan and recommended in the Historic North Topeka East Future Land Use Plan.
- 2) The greenway along N. Topeka Blvd should be extended southward.
- 3) This section along Old Soldier Creek Trail is currently subdivided and zoned for residential; as it is owned by the City of Topeka and is part of the Old Soldier Creek Trail, it should be rezoned as Open Space.
- 4) Veterans Park East, at Quincy and Monroe, should be rezoned as Open Space to reflect its current use.
- 5) All of the parcels in the Mixed Use district south of Gordon and east of Quincy should be Mixed Use- Medium Intensity. The lone R-4 parcel should be rezoned to this classification.
- 6) The parcel east of the railroad tracks and north of Old Soldier Creek should be rezoned as Open Space to reflect its current use.

Map 16: Proposed Zoning Map

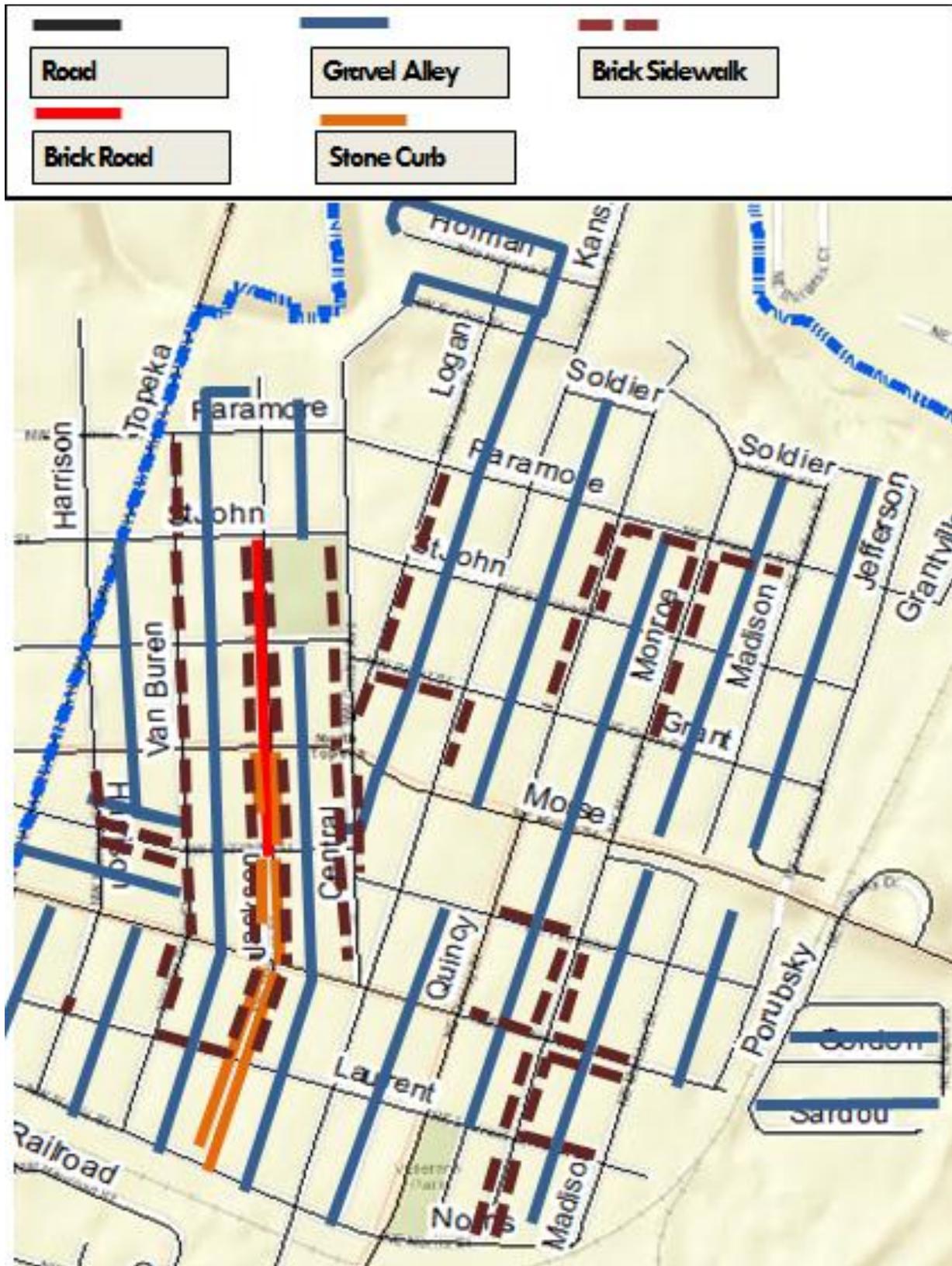


Map 17: Primary Target Area



\* Based on a rating of "deteriorated" during the building survey

Map 18: Brick Street, Sidewalk, and Alley Condition Map



## VII. APPENDIX A: TABLES AND CHARTS

Table 1: Land Use – Historic North Topeka East

Land Use	Parcels	% Total	Acres	% Total Area
Commercial	82	7.5%	25.8	4.6%
Commercial - Mixed Use	12	1.1%	2.8	0.5%
Industrial	42	3.8%	24.1	4.3%
Institutional	16	1.5%	12.9	2.3%
Mobile Home Court	15	1.4%	5.0	0.9%
Mobile Home Site	24	2.2%	4.5	0.8%
Office	5	0.5%	3.9	0.7%
Open Space/Recreational	12	1.1%	298.5	53.2%
Residential - Single-Family	674	61.4%	129.6	23.1%
Residential - Multi-Family	5	0.5%	4.5	0.8%
Residential - Two-Family	2	0.2%	0.6	0.1%
Residential - Multi-Family (c)	31	2.8%	6.7	1.2%
Parking/Utilities	7	0.6%	3.4	0.6%
Vacant	170	15.5%	38.1	6.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>560.4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
			<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>560.4</b>
			<b>Public Right of Way</b>	<b>180.8</b>
			<b>Total Area</b>	<b>741.8</b>

Table 2: Housing Density - Historic North Topeka East

Housing	# Units	% Total	Total Acres	Units/Acre
Single-Family	674	71.55%	129.6	5.2
Multi-Family	118	12.53%	4.5	26.2
Two-Family	4	0.42%	0.6	6.7
Multi-Family (c)	83	8.81%	6.7	12.4
Mobile Home Court	39	4.14%	5	7.8
Mobile Home Site	24	2.55%	4.5	5.3
<b>Net Density (Residential)</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>150.9</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Net Density (All)</b>	<b>942</b>		<b>560.4</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Gross Density (w/ ROW)</b>	<b>942</b>		<b>741.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>

**Table 3: Housing Conditions - Historic North Topeka East**

Housing Conditions (properties)	<b>Total—752</b>	
Sound	422	56.19%
Intermediate Deficiencies	143	18.91%
Deteriorating	187	24.90%

**Table 4: Home Ownership - Historic North Topeka East**

Housing Ownership	<b>Total—752</b>	
Owner-Occupied Units	353	46.94%
Renter-Occupied Units	365	48.54%
Vacant Units	34	4.52%

**Table 5: Median Residential Property Values - Historic North Topeka East**

Median Appraised Property Values (2013)	
Single-Family	\$31,695
Multi-Family	\$332,870
Two-Family	\$47,195
Multi-Family (c)	\$33,149
Mobile Home Court	\$13,600
Mobile Home Site	\$2,970

**Table 6: Quincy Elementary School**

Category	State of Kansas			District 501			Quincy School		
	State 2003	State 2012	Change	District 2003	District 2012	Change	Quincy 2003	Quincy 2012	Change
Economically Disadvantaged Students	37.5%	48.8%	11.3%	58.8%	76.5%	17.7%	85.1%	93.8%	8.7%
Attendance	94.8%	95.2%	0.4%	92.3%	95.1%	2.8%	93.2%	95.2%	2.0%
ELL Students	5.1%	10.3%	5.2%	2.7%	8.2%	5.5%	22.0%	36.3%	14.3%
Reading-- % @ Prof and Above	65.7%	87.7%	22.0%	65.7%	70.1%	4.4%	50.0%	58.1%	8.1%
Math-- % @ Prof and Above	53.9%	86.1%	32.2%	53.9%	70.6%	16.7%	65.6%	68.6%	3.0%

**Table 7: Population and Race - Historic North Topeka East**

	2010	2000	% Change 2000-2010	1990	% Change 1990-2000
Population	1595	2028	-21%	2424	-16%
Gender					
Female	744	1026	-28%	1247	-18%
Male	851	1002	-15%	1177	-15%
Race					
White	1209	1802	-33%	2140	-16%
Black	97	52	87%	114	-54%
Other	116	79	46%	170	-53%
Hispanic Origin	337	146	131%	179	88%
Non-Hispanic Origin	1258	1882	-33%	2245	-44%
Employed	897	1370	-35%	576.73	138%
Unemployed	698	624	12%	1847	-66%

**Table 8: Age - Historic North Topeka East**

Age	2010	2000	% Change 2000-2010	1990	% Change 1990-2000
Under 5 years	60	147	-58.8%	217	-32.6%
5 to 9 years	86	133	-34.8%	177	-25.1%
10 to 14 years	133	99	34.1%	115	-13.6%
15 to 19 years	130	118	10.5%	161	-27.0%
20 to 24 years	134	142	-5.7%	163	-13.1%
25 to 34 years	176	274	-35.9%	347	-21.0%
35 to 44 years	129	342	-62.3%	327	4.5%
45 to 54 years	294	266	10.3%	245	8.6%
55 to 59 years	88	98	-9.8%	99	-0.6%
60 and Over	365	410	-11.0%	573	-28.3%
Total Persons	1595	2028		2424	

**Table 9: Households - Historic North Topeka East**

	2010	2000	%Change 2000-2010	1990	% Change 1990-2000
Households	646	868	-25.58%	971	-10.59%
Families	394	478	-17.56%	614	-22.09%
Female-Headed (no husband)	142	105	35.68%	191	-45.20%
w/child <18	202	51	294.87%	106	-51.88%
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2000</b>	%Change 2000-2010	<b>1990</b>	% Change 1990-2000
Topeka Avg. Household Median Income	\$40,342	\$35,928	12.29%	\$26,774	34.19%
HNTE Avg. Household Median Income	\$24,396	\$25,286	-4.51%	\$18,023	41.74%
HNTE's %MHI	60.5%	70.4%		67.3%	
Housing Units	900	972	-7.36%	1084	-10.33%

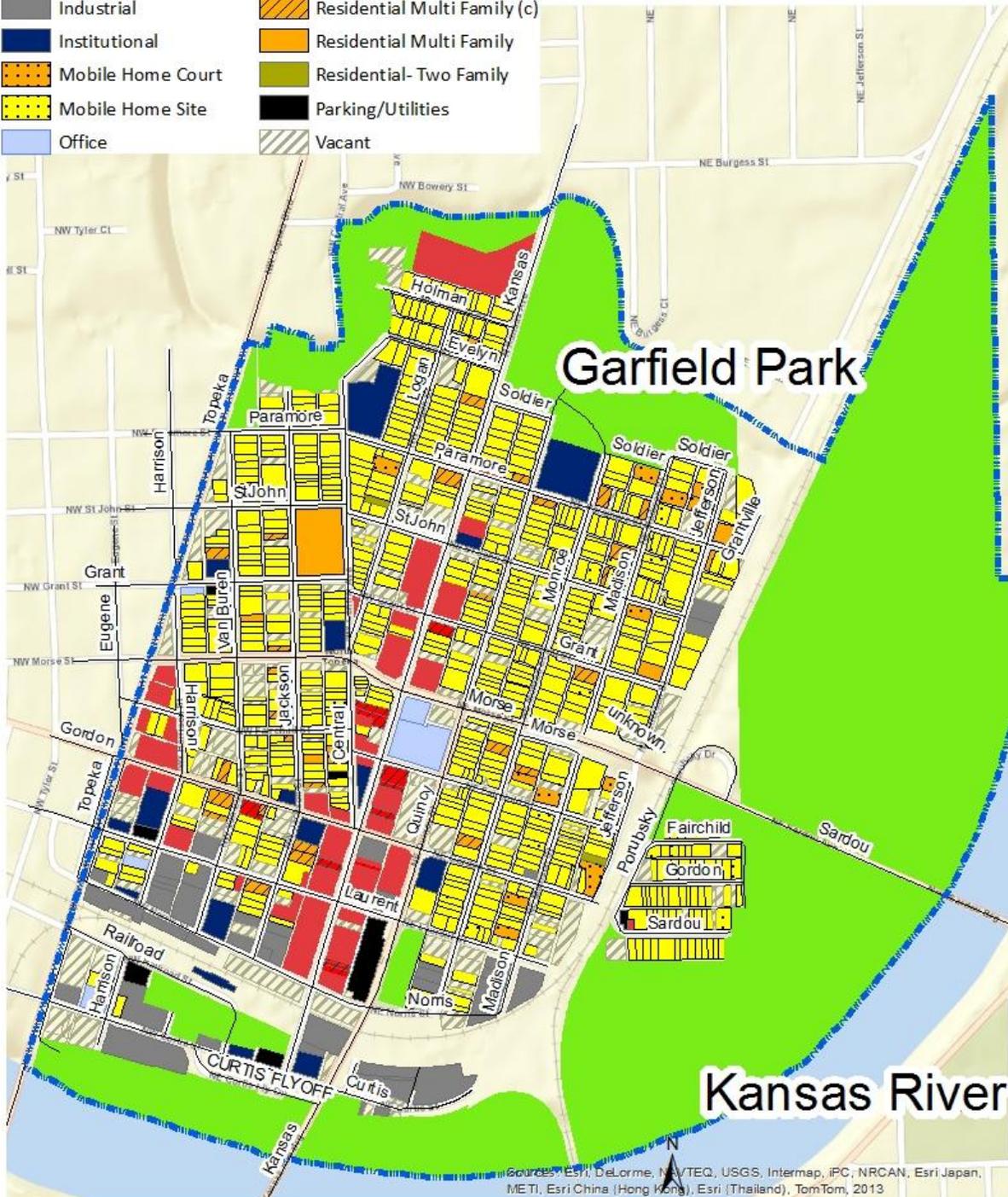
# VIII. APPENDIX B: MAPS

Map 1: Land Use

## Legend

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Commercial           |  Open Space/Recreational      |
|  Commercial Mixed Use |  Residential Single Family    |
|  Industrial           |  Residential Multi Family (c) |
|  Institutional        |  Residential Multi Family     |
|  Mobile Home Court    |  Residential- Two Family      |
|  Mobile Home Site     |  Parking/Utilities            |
|  Office               |  Vacant                       |

## Historic North Topeka East Planning Area

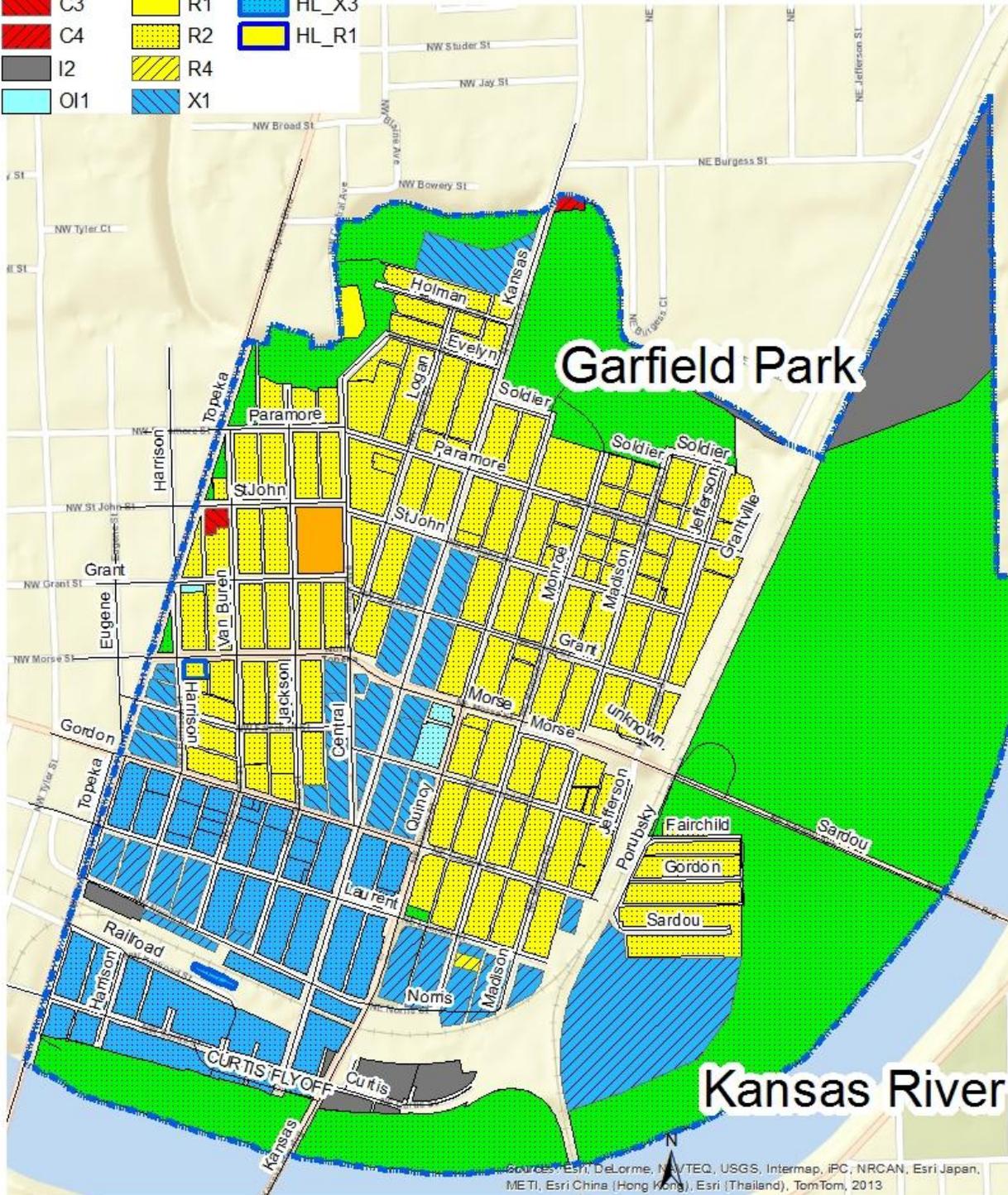


Map 2: Zoning

**Legend**

 OS1	 OI2	 X2
 HL_R2	 PUD	 X3
 C3	 R1	 HL_X3
 C4	 R2	 HL_R1
 I2	 R4	
 OI1	 X1	

# Historic North Topeka East Planning Area



Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, IPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2013

Map 3: Housing Conditions - Historic North Topeka East

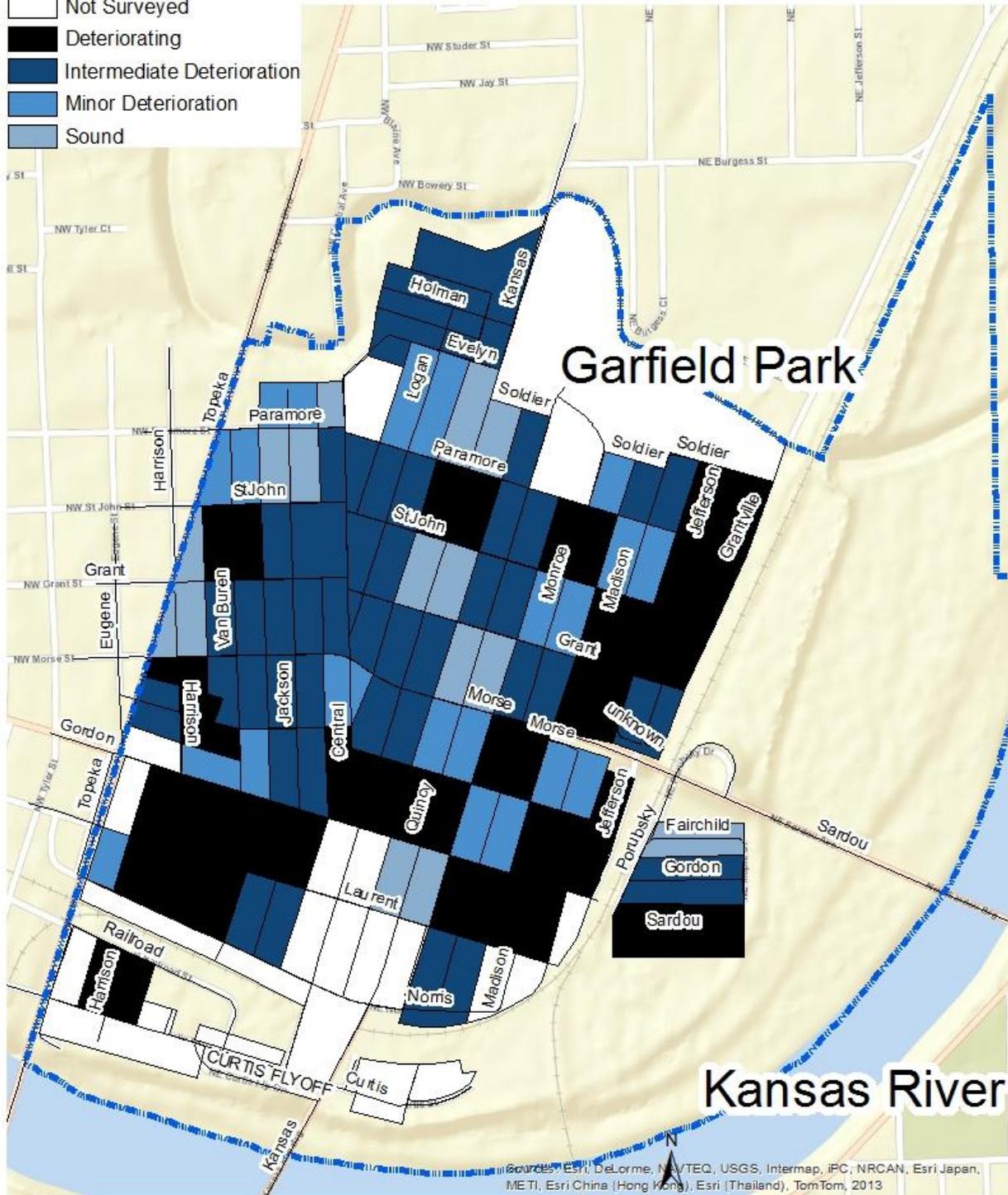
**Legend**

**Housing Conditions**

**Structure Condition**

- Not Surveyed
- Deteriorating
- Intermediate Deterioration
- Minor Deterioration
- Sound

# Historic North Topeka East Planning Area



Map 4: Home Ownership - Historic North Topeka East

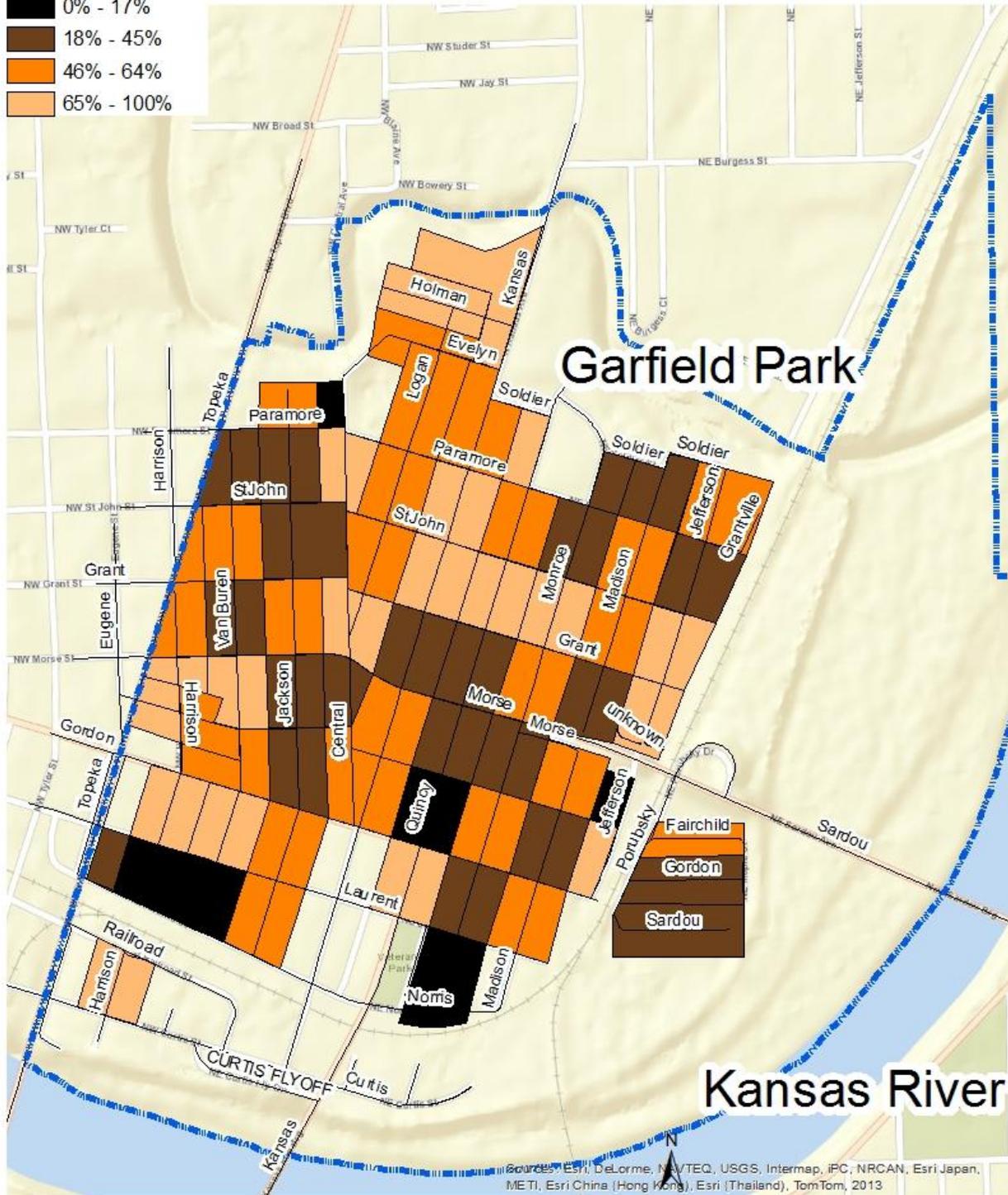
**Legend**

**Home Ownership**

**Owner Occupied**

- 0% - 17%
- 18% - 45%
- 46% - 64%
- 65% - 100%

# Historic North Topeka East Planning Area

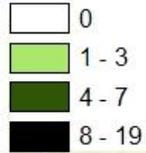


Map 5: Code Violations - Historic North Topeka East

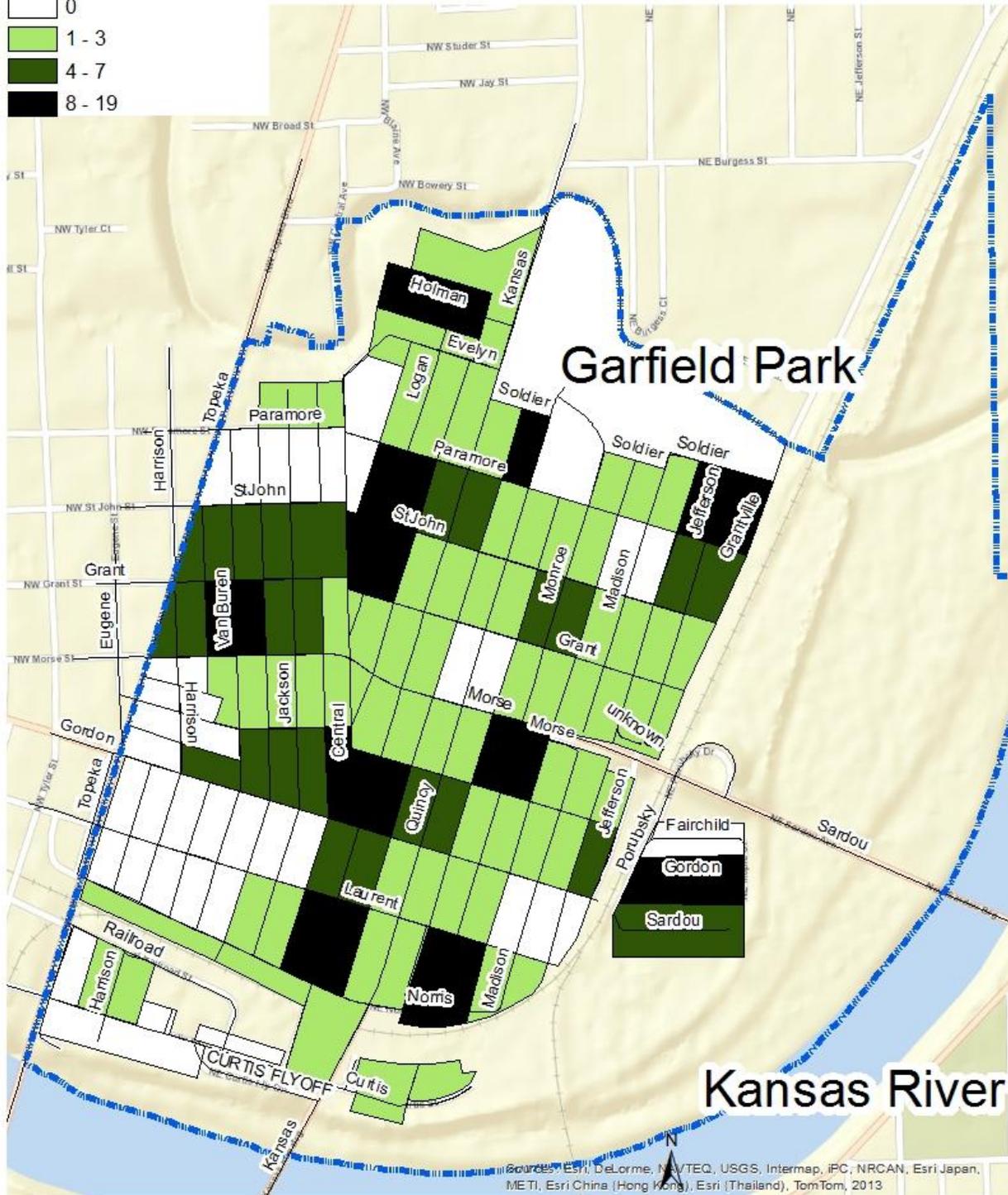
**Legend**

**Code Violations**

**Number of Code Violations**



# Historic North Topeka East Planning Area

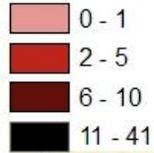


Map 6: Major Crimes - Historic North Topeka East

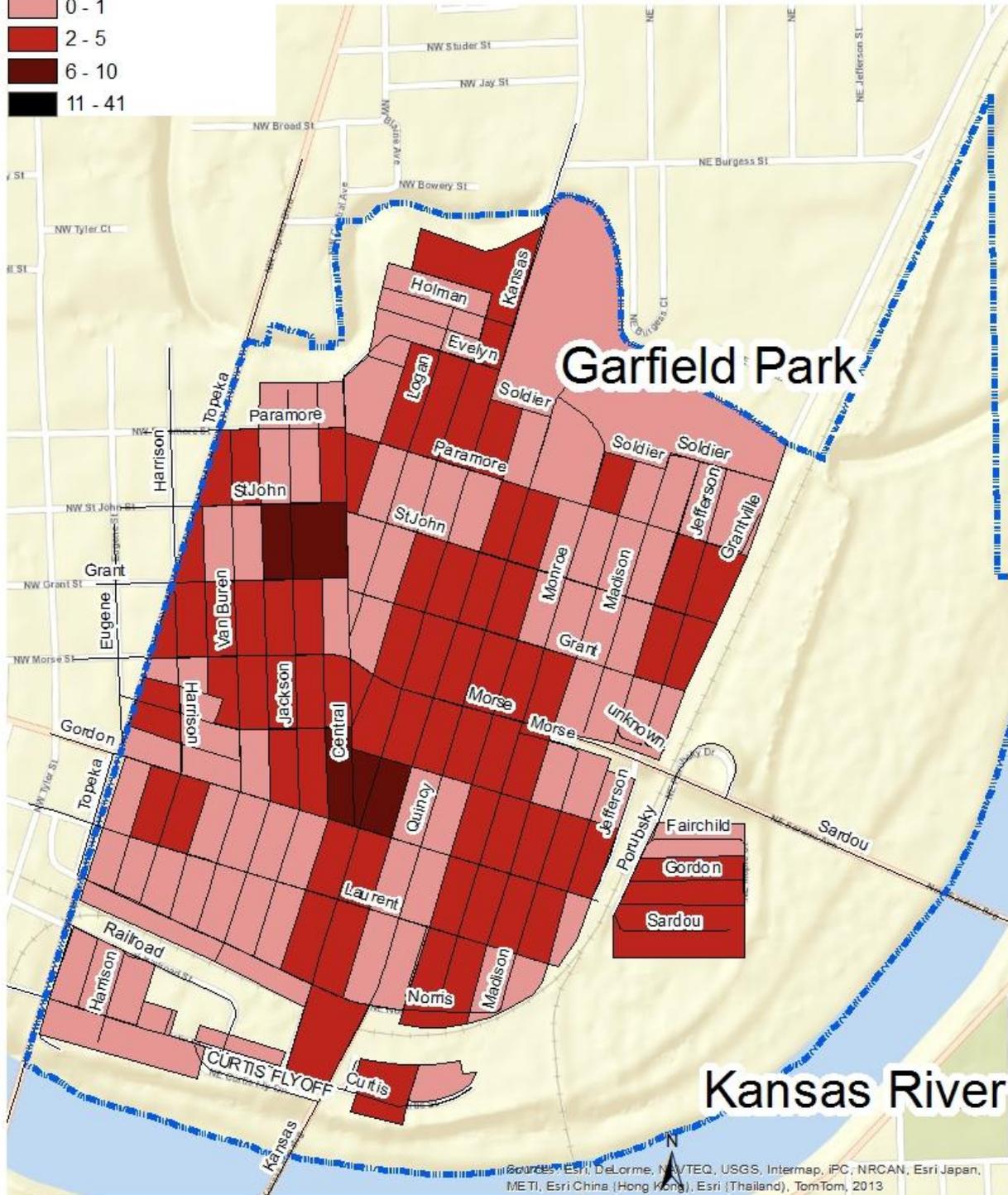
**Legend**

**2012 Crimes**

**Number of Part One Crimes**



# Historic North Topeka East Planning Area



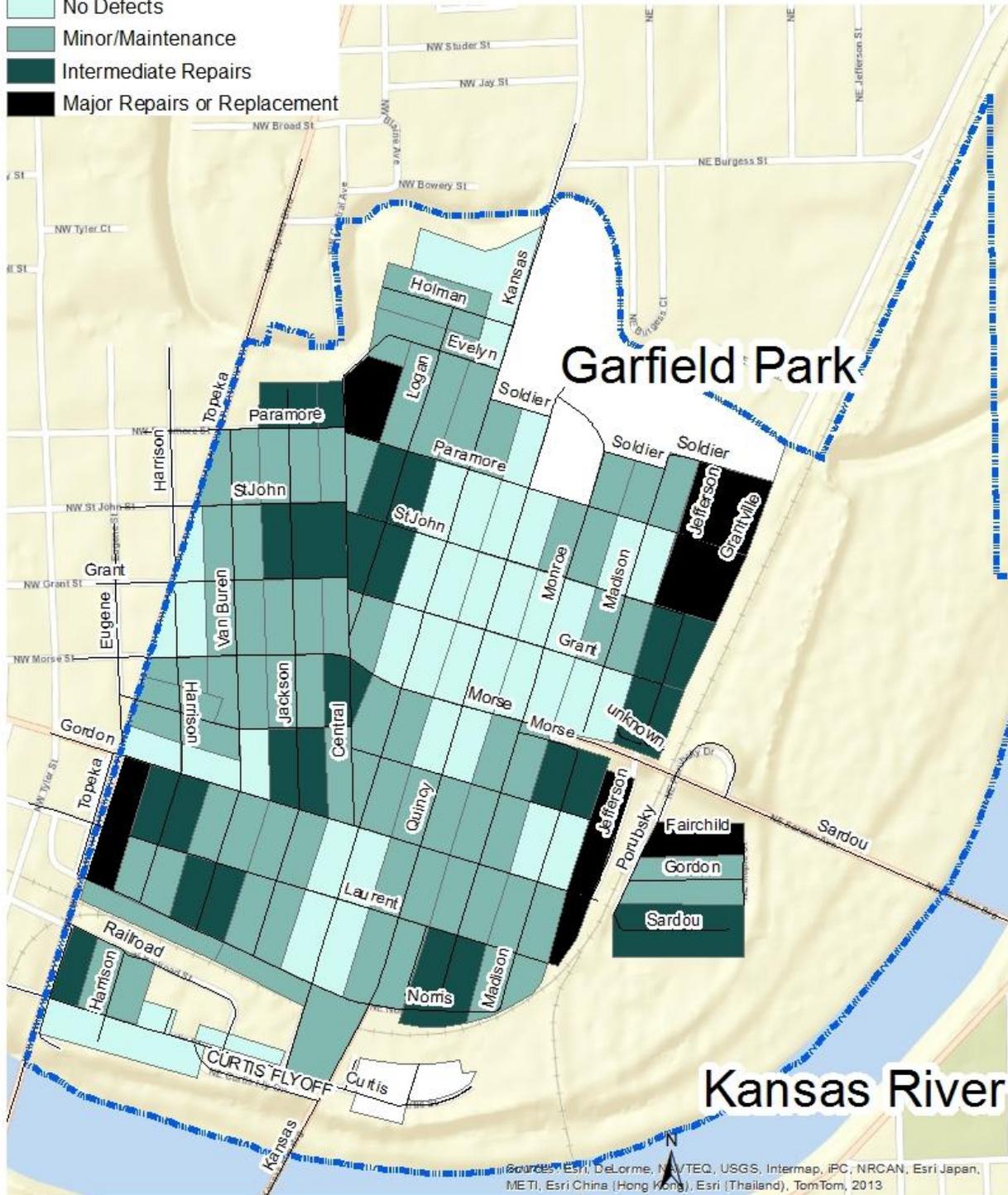
Map 7: Infrastructure - Historic North Topeka East

**Legend**

**Infrastructure**

- Not Surveyed
- No Defects
- Minor/Maintenance
- Intermediate Repairs
- Major Repairs or Replacement

# Historic North Topeka East Planning Area

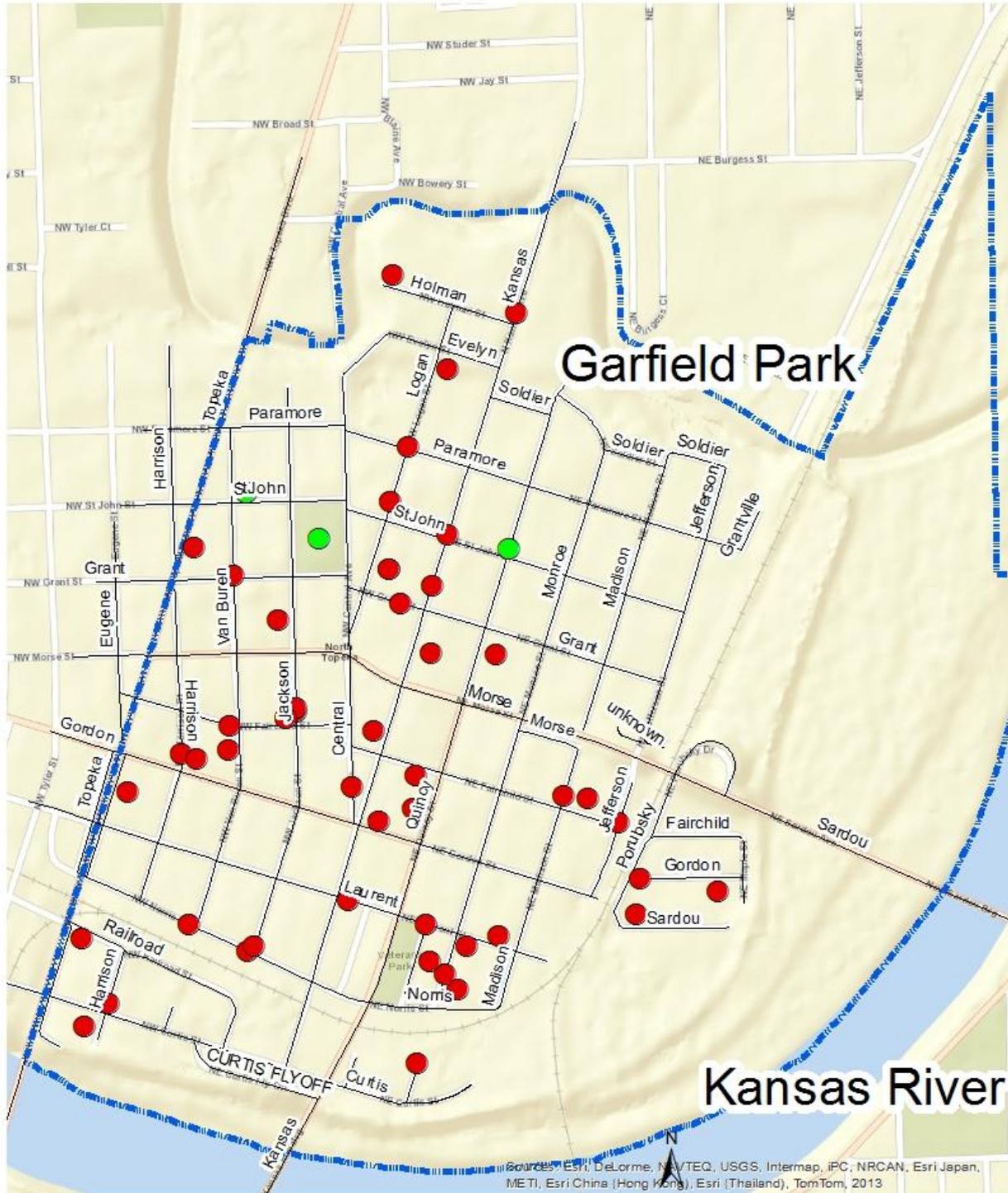


Map 8: Development Activity 1999-2013 - Historic North Topeka East

### Legend

- Residential Building Permit
- Demolition Permit

## Historic North Topeka East Planning Area

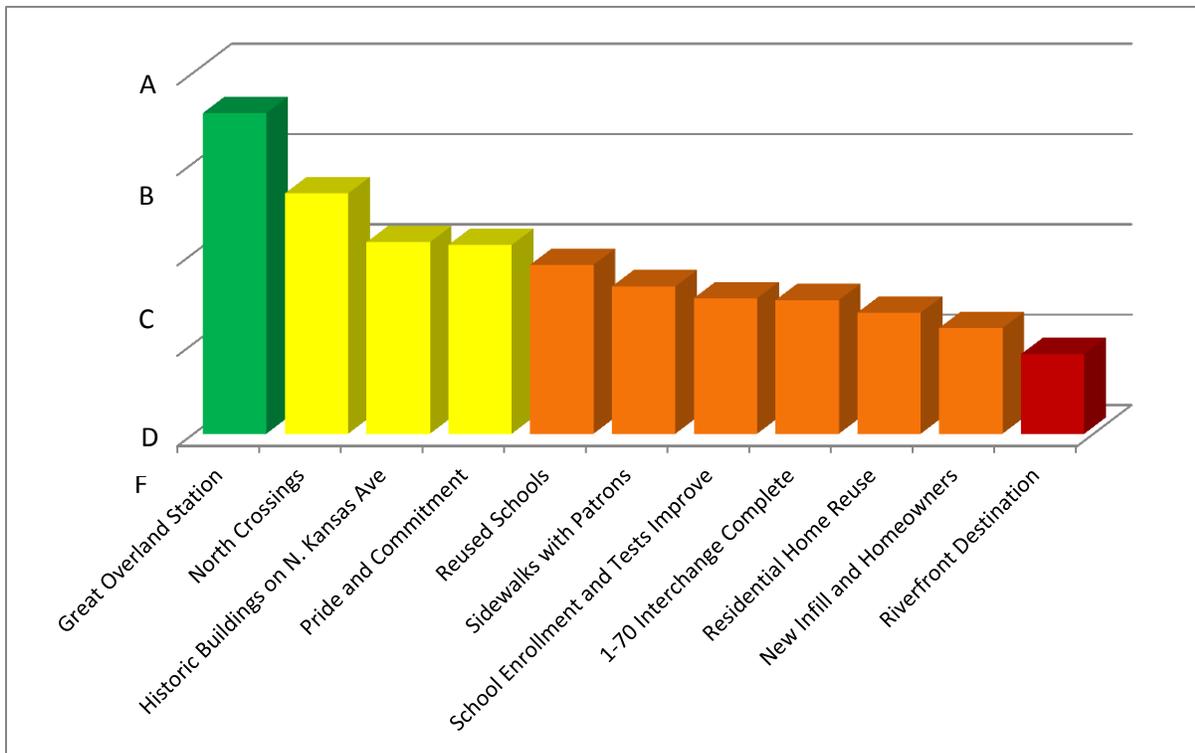


## IX. APPENDIX C: MEETING SURVEY

At the Historic North Topeka East Kickoff Meeting, participants were asked to complete two surveys regarding the 1999 Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan—one grading the Plan’s Vision Statement and one prioritizing the Plan’s Goals. We received 33 surveys and the results show a wide range of how different people view the same neighborhood.

The Vision Statement from the 1999 Plan was broken down into 11 statements and participants were asked to grade each statement on a scale from “A” to “F” or mark the statement as “Done!” A grade of an “A” was the highest grade and an “F” was a failing grade. The results were tallied and are shown on the next page. The Great Overland Station was the highest score and earned the only “B.” This may not seem like a high grade, but in comparison, there was only one “F” in the class as well—development of the Riverfront park area. This shows that in general, participants recognized some progress has been made in the other nine statements, as they were graded with “C’s” and “D’s.”

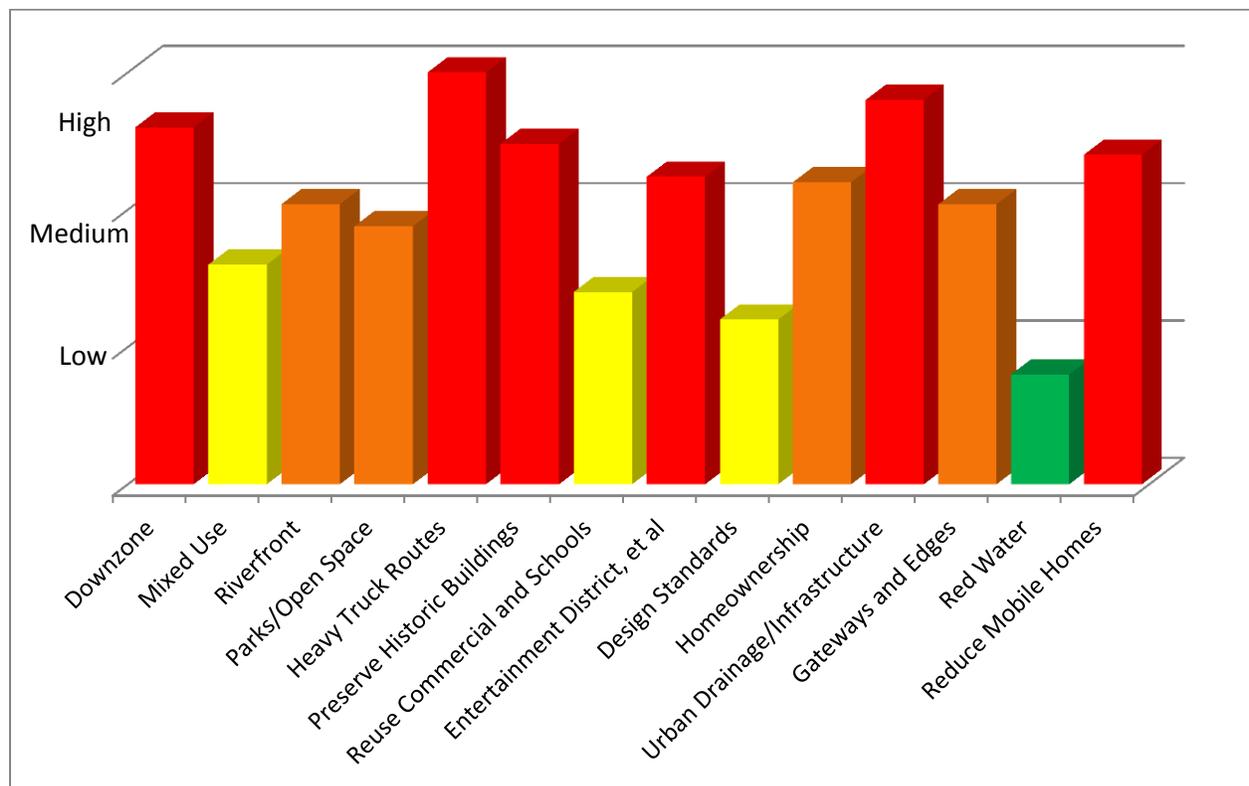
Grade	Statements
A	None
B	Great Overland Station
C	North Crossings; Historic Buildings on N. Kansas; Pride and Commitment
D	Reused Schools; Sidewalks with Patrons; School Enrollment and Tests; I-70 Interchange; Residential Home Reuse; New Infill and Homeowners
F	Riverfront



The “Recipe for Success” was based on the Goals and Objectives section of the 1999 Plan. Key themes or elements were pulled from this section and listed as the “Ingredients for Success.” Participants were then asked to rank these ingredients according to the Priority they felt should be given. Priority 1 was the highest priority level and Priority 3 was the lowest. There was also the option of marking the ingredient as “Already Done!”

Priority	Ingredients
<b>Done!</b>	Red Water
<b>High</b>	Heavy Truck Routes; Urban Drainage/Infrastructure; Downzone; Preserve Historic Buildings; Reduce Mobile Homes; Entertainment District, et al
<b>Medium</b>	Homeownership; Riverfront; Gateways and Edges; Parks/Open Space
<b>Low</b>	Mixed Use; Reuse Commercial and Schools; Design Standards

One interesting theme that came out of this activity regarded ingredients that have already been completed. Ingredients such as Heavy Truck Routes, Downzoning, and Mixed Use were implemented based on the 1999 Plan. However, the majority of participants did not rank these as “Done.” This could mean that they want to see continued progress in these areas or that they do not want to lose the gains made.



Since preservation of historic buildings ranked as a high priority in the survey, it was decided to use this as a factor in identifying the Target Areas. The map below was used to identify blocks with the highest number of residences built before 1915.

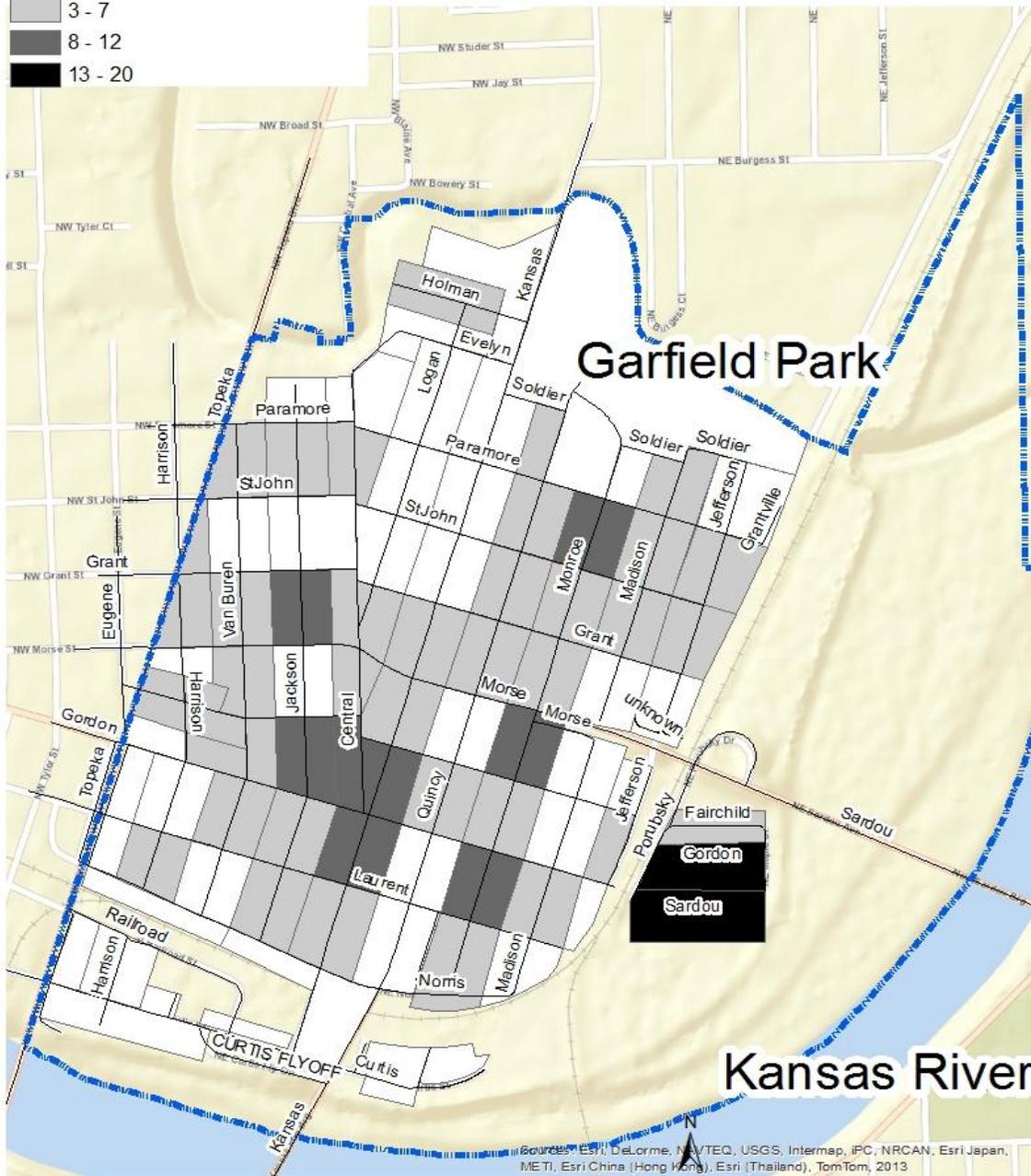
Map 10: Pre-1915 Residences

**Legend**

**Residences Built Before 1915**

- 0 - 2
- 3 - 7
- 8 - 12
- 13 - 20

**Historic North Topeka East Planning Area**



# X. APPENDIX D: HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE SURVEYS

## Criteria Used to Evaluate Housing Structural Defects

**Minor Defects** – deficiencies corrected during the course of regular maintenance.

- Missing shrubbery or bare spots on lawn, trash and garbage accumulation
- Deteriorated or lacking window screens.
- Weathered paint, minor painting needed.
- Wear on or light damage to steps, window and door sills, frames and porches.
- Weathering of mortar and small amounts of loose, missing material between bricks.
- Cracked window panes, loose putty.
- Handrails deteriorated or missing.
- Missing splash blocks at foot of down spouts.
- Lacking porch lights.

**Intermediate Defects** – deficiencies serious enough to require more extensive repair than required by regular maintenance.

- Gutters or drain spouts rotten or parts missing.
- Sagging, cracked, rotted or missing roofing, overhang or lattice work.
- Foundation or bearing walls cracked or sagging or with loose, missing material.
- Erosion of landscape due to improper drainage, abandoned vehicle, cracked or uneven sidewalks.
- Deteriorated fencing with loose or missing material.
- Rotted, cracked or sagging porches, columns, door frames and stairways.
- Cracked or missing material from chimney.
- Broken or missing window panes and/or rotted window sills.
- Peeling or cracked paint, complete paint job needed.
- Damaged or missing air vents in foundation.

**Major Defects** – condition of structural components which can be corrected only by major repairs.

- Holes, open cracks, rotted or missing material in foundations, walls, roofing, porches, columns, etc.
- Sagging or leaning of any portion of house indicating insufficient load bearing capacity: foundation, walls, porches, chimneys.
- Defective conditions caused by storms, fires, floods or land settlements.
- Inadequate or poor quality material used in permanent construction.
- Inadequate conversion for use involved.
- Major deteriorated or dilapidated out building or garage.
- Evidence of a lack of, or inadequate indoor plumbing such as no roof vents.

**Category**

**Definition**

**Buildings/Properties**

***Minor Deficiencies  
(Sound)***

No major defects and no more than 1 intermediate defect and less than 4 minor defects. (3 points)

***Intermediate Deficiencies***

No major defects with 2 or more intermediate defects; no major defects with 1 intermediate defect and 4 or more minor defects. (2 points)

***Major Deficiencies***

1 to 4 (5+ is dilapidated) major defects in combination with intermediate or minor defects. (1 point)

**Blocks**

***Sound***

Average 3.0 – 2.5 points per block

***Minor Deterioration***

Average 2.49 – 2.0 points per block

***Intermediate Deterioration***

Average 1.99 – 1.5 points per block

***Significant Deterioration***

Average less than 1.5 points per block

## Infrastructure Rating System

### Criteria used for Evaluation:

#### **Sidewalks:**

- 3= No defects in sidewalk
- 2= Minor defects- partially overgrown with weeds and grass or broken, cracked (< 25% disrepair/substandard)
- 1= Intermediate defects- Completely missing segments within that block area, broken and cracked segments, completely overgrown with weeds and grass (> 25% disrepair)
- 0= Major defects- No sidewalks

#### **Curbs and Gutters**

- 3= No defects in curbs and gutters
- 2= Minor defects- Covered up by weeds (< 25 % disrepair/substandard); not draining (standing debris)
- 1= Intermediate defects- Broken, cracked, missing segments of curbing (> 25 % disrepair)
- 0= Major defects- None existent; drainage ditches

#### **Streets:**

- 3= No defects- concrete or asphalt, even, draining
- 2= Minor defects- uneven concrete/asphalt and/or significant pot holes, cracks, broken pavement (<25% disrepair/substandard)
- 1= Intermediate defects- uneven concrete/asphalt and/or significant pot holes, cracks, broken pavement (> 25% disrepair/substandard)
- 0= Major- gravel or dirt; road incomplete or dead-ends; street one-lane and does not allow cars to pass; or any combination of these.

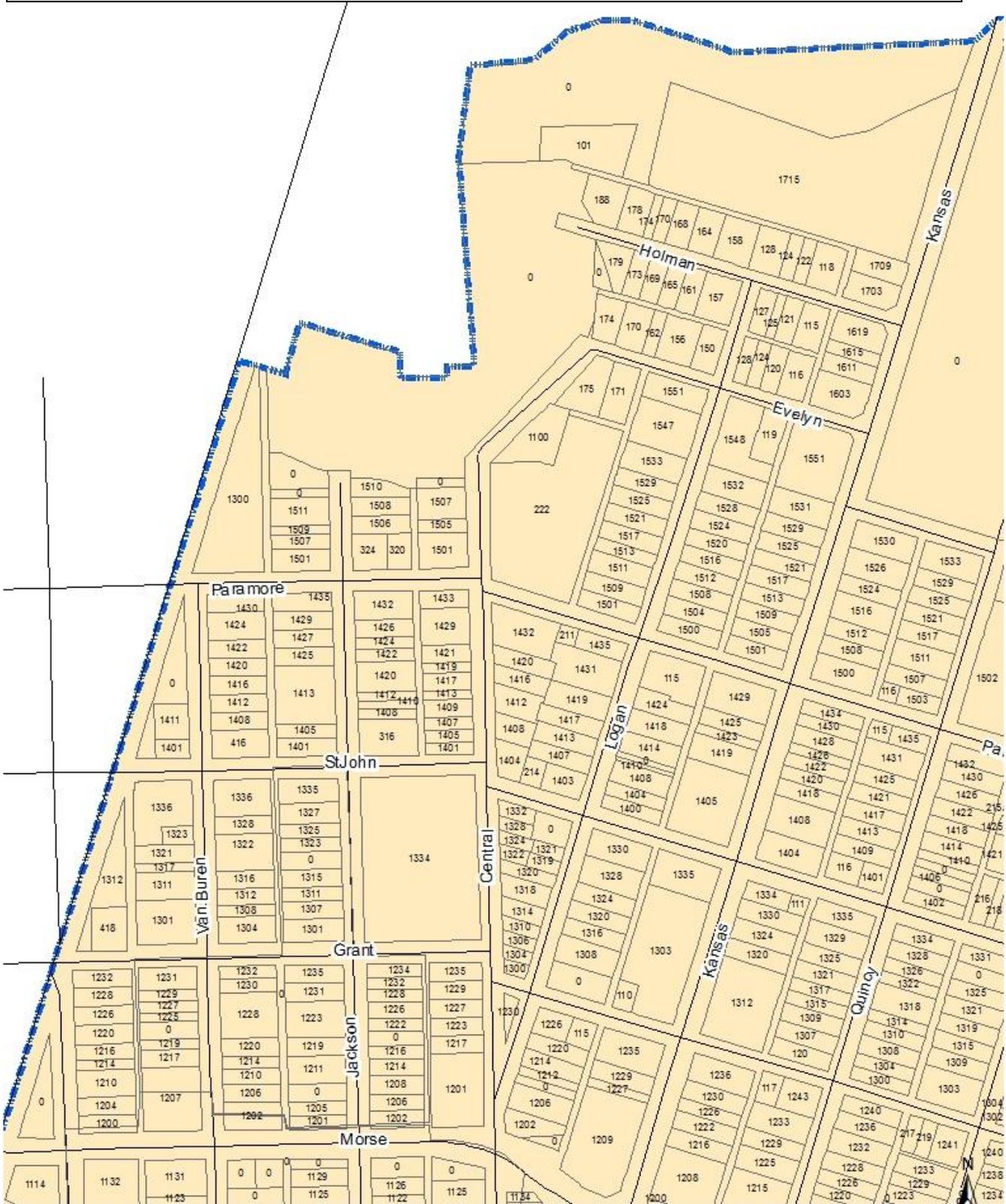
#### **Alleys:**

- 3= No defects- gravel or concrete/asphalt, even, draining
- 2= Minor defects- gravel and uneven concrete; alleys not platted (i.e. less cost to improve)
- 1= Intermediate- dirt and even; draining
- 0= Major- Dirt and uneven; or not draining; platted alleys, but never built

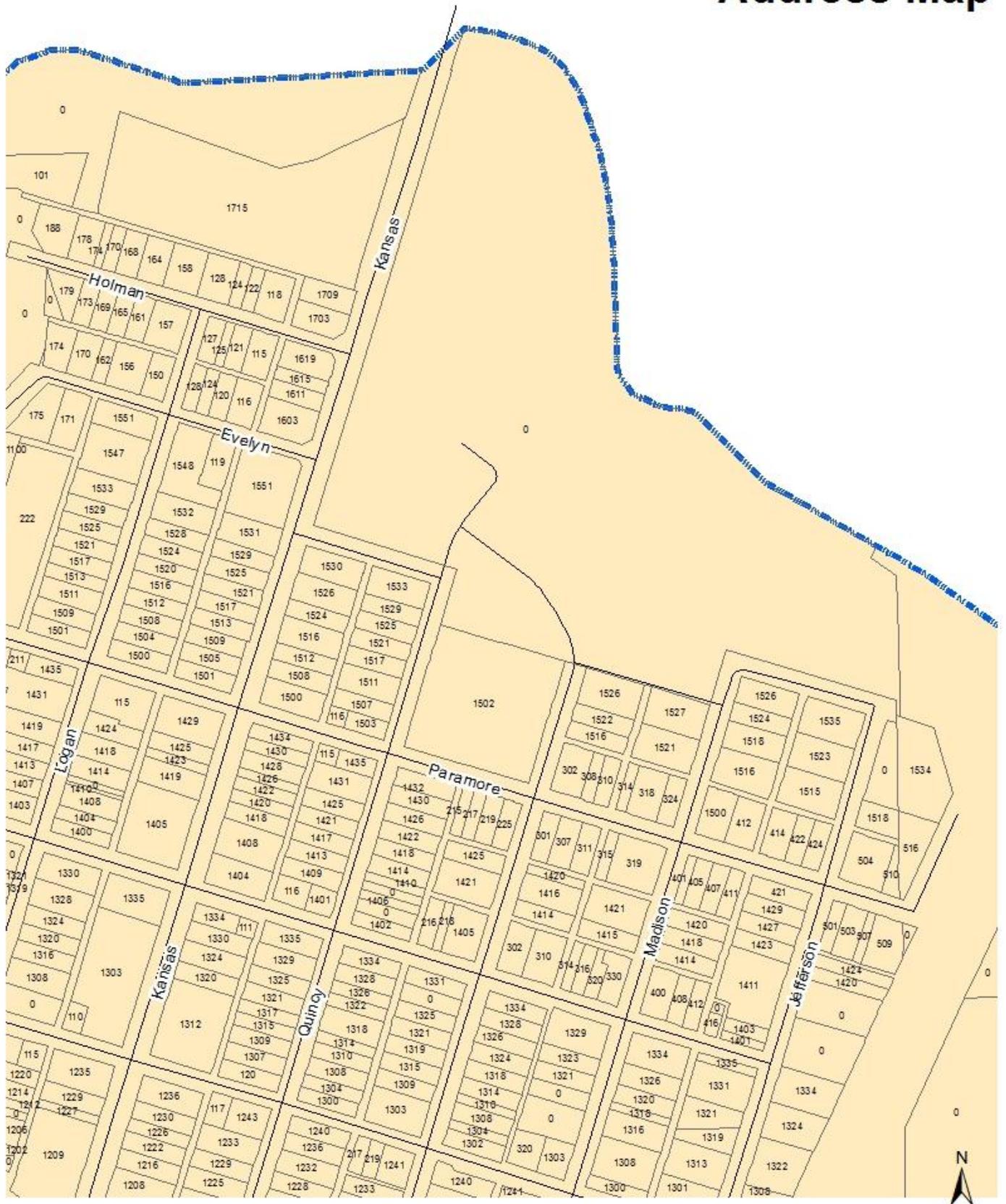
#### **Block Averages**

- No defects- 2.25 - 3
- Minor repairs/maintenance issues- 1.5 – 2.25
- Intermediate repairs- 0.75 – 1.5
- Major repairs/total construction or replacement- < 0.75

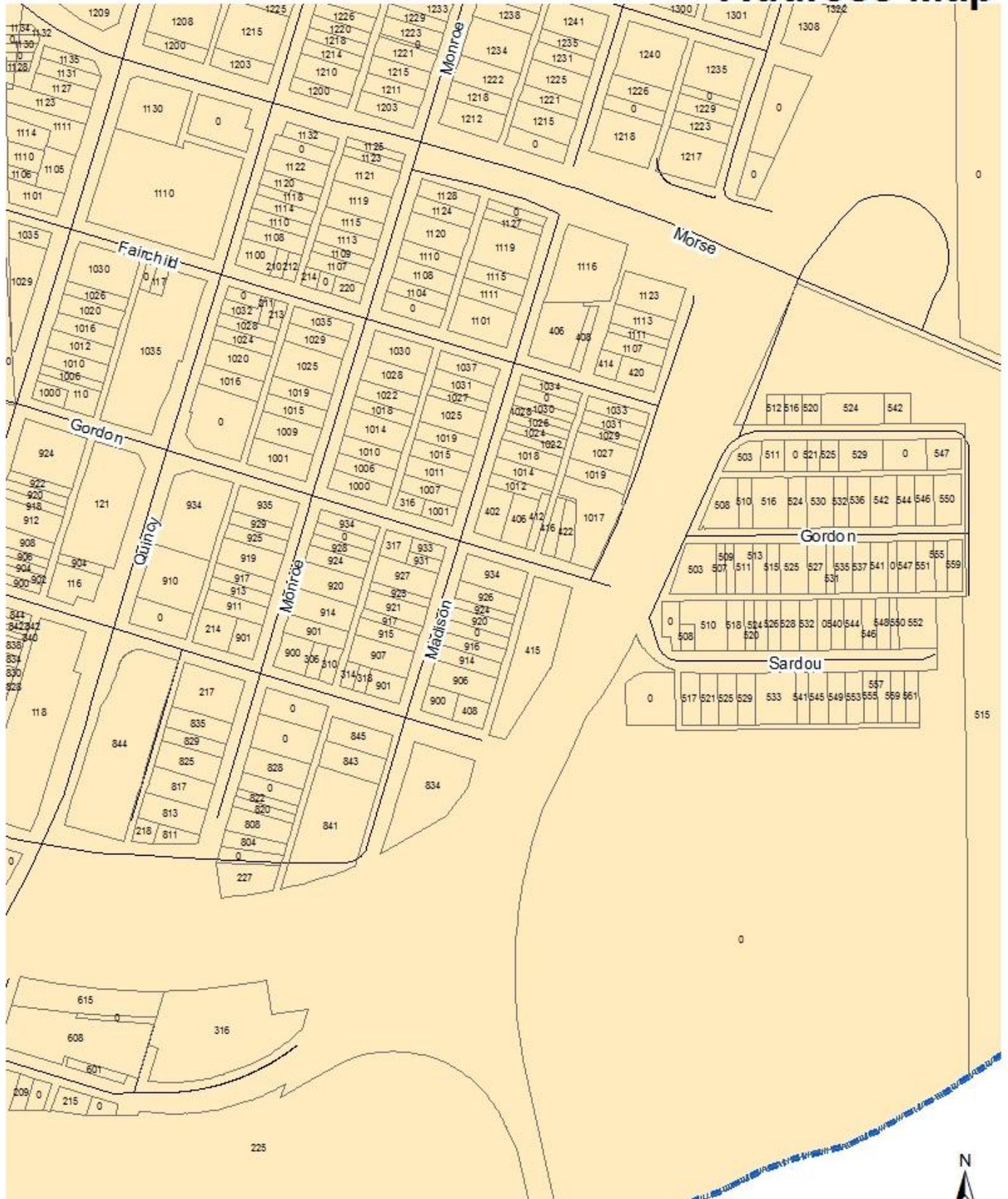
# XI. APPENDIX E: ADDRESS MAP



# Historic North Topeka East Address Map



# Historic North Topeka East Address Map



# Historic North Topeka East Address Map

