

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

Topeka, Kansas



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CHAPTER 1 ■ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Historic Preservation Plan for the City of Topeka examines historic preservation within the city and the role that historic assets play in the city's economy and quality of life. The plan is an element of Topeka's comprehensive plan and builds upon the goals and strategies of other comprehensive plan elements that have been developed and refined in recent years. The Historic Preservation Plan was prepared following a review of the existing condition of the city's historic assets, a review of community programs and initiatives, and consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders representing differing perspectives and interests.

Topeka is a historic city. It was prominent in the founding of Kansas and has developed over the past one hundred and fifty-eight years as a center of the state's political, social, and economic life. Today it remains a vital and unique place. Topeka's historic buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes are essential features of the city's character. They help make the city an outstanding place to live and work. They contribute to the city's economy and their preservation and appropriate treatment is in the best interest of Topeka's residents. The following vision statement has been created for the preservation plan:

Topeka is the Capital City of Kansas. We are proud of our state and work hard to showcase its heritage. Our neighborhoods and commercial centers exemplify what is best about Kansas towns—livable communities steeped in character and tied to the land. We value our shared history and welcome our statewide neighbors and visitors from across the nation to enjoy our quality of life.

This preservation plan identifies the many ways in which Topeka's historic assets contribute to the city's well being. It is a comprehensive document that outlines how historic preservation interests are embedded in city and community initiatives and how the city, stakeholders, and residents can use historic preservation principals and resources in support of their broader objectives. Six goals were identified for the plan:

1. Make historic preservation central to Topeka's quality of life.
2. Use the private sector and self-interest as engines for historic preservation and revitalization.

3. Heighten public appreciation of Topeka’s heritage through storytelling and other means.
4. Make heritage development a core strategy in Topeka’s economic development plan.
5. Fully integrate historic preservation into city programs and processes.
6. Make full use of the programs available for community revitalization and enhancement.

Priorities for Action

Work on the Historic Preservation Plan identified five areas of activity as priorities in achieving the goals outlined above and in Chapter 2, *Preservation Approach*.

- **Encourage and facilitate private sector investment in downtown historic buildings to help make the city’s Kansas Avenue project a success.** The City of Topeka is implementing a downtown streetscape infrastructure improvement and enhancement project that has received broad private sector support and investment. The goal of the project is to enhance Downtown Topeka as the center of community identity, social and cultural life, and economic activity.

Downtown’s historic commercial buildings play a central role in the plan through their character by providing outstanding places for restaurants, shopping, and other activities that attract residents and visitors. Private sector investment by small businesses is essential to the project and can be supported through city and other stakeholder activities. Bringing residential uses to downtown has been an objective of the city to support downtown as a living place.

The preservation plan outlines a series of recommendations to support this initiative. Chapter 3 recommends action to facilitate the availability of federal and state investment tax credits to small businesses for the rehabilitation of historic downtown buildings. Preservation Program Recommendation 3.4 advocates outreach to businesses. Preservation Program Recommendation 3.19 advocates the creation of downtown National Register historic districts that would simplify use of tax credits for individual businesses.

Chapter 5 includes a series of recommendations supporting downtown investment under the section *Making Downtown a Vital Place*. It highlights existing city and stakeholders’ initiatives and outlines additional actions to achieve success.

- **Complete historic resource inventories or surveys of the entire city to fully understand the nature, scope, extent, and condition of Topeka’s historic assets.** Topeka is a large city and has a wide variety of historic assets that contribute to its character and significance beyond those that have been officially designated. The city has undertaken a number



Downtown Topeka

of historic resources inventories or surveys, but they are incomplete and some are old and need to be reassessed.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.1 in Chapter 3 states that surveying Topeka’s historic assets city-wide is a priority project of the Landmarks Commission. Chapter 5 outlines specific priorities for the surveying of neighborhoods and how surveys are related to the city’s neighborhood plans.

- **Use a coordinated city-wide heritage tourism initiative to increase awareness of Topeka’s historic character and contribute to the city’s economic vitality.** Heritage tourism is a means through which Topeka’s history and most prominent publicly accessible historic sites may be promoted, raising the profile of the city’s history among residents and contributing to the city’s economy. Heritage tourism attracts visitors and gives visitors coming to the city for other reasons something additional to do, encouraging them to stay longer and to make return visits.

Chapter 4 outlines recommendations for a comprehensive city-wide interpretive presentation featuring Topeka’s historic interpretive attractions and linking them through self-guided interpretation along trails and at public sites. Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.1 describes preparation of a city-wide interpretive plan. Subsequent recommendations in Chapter 4 highlight a range of coordinated implementation steps. Heritage tourism supports historic preservation goals.

- **Focus upon neighborhood preservation and revitalization as central to Topeka’s outstanding quality of life.** Topeka is a city of historic neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are the focus of significant grassroots

activity by residents seeking to enhance neighborhood character, increase property values, and improve local quality of life. The preservation and enhancement of the historic assets in Topeka's neighborhoods will help achieve these grassroots goals.

Preservation Program Recommendations 3.16 and 3.17 encourage the Landmarks Commission to engage with and support neighborhood initiatives as a primary means through which to encourage grassroots historic preservation city-wide. The Chapter 5 section titled *Neighborhoods – Conserving Topeka's Greatest Assets* supports city planning and revitalization initiatives for neighborhoods and identifies recommendations through which the city can include historic preservation as part of its revitalization strategy.

- **Incorporate historic preservation principles and values into the wide range of programs and initiatives undertaken by city agencies.** Throughout the historic preservation plan, recommendations and supporting text describe how the wide range of city programs and initiatives affect historic assets and how city agencies can work together to support historic preservation and use preservation principles to achieve community objectives.

Chapter 5, *Special Places*, focuses upon city programs related to neighborhood revitalization, downtown investment, and building maintenance. Special Places Recommendations 5.1 and 5.2 recognize the important role that neighborhood planning plays in the city's historic preservation program.

Special Places Recommendations 5.7 and 5.9 recognize that the city's neighborhood revitalization programs are important vehicles for strengthening historic character. Recommendations 5.10 through 5.12 provide guidelines and recommendations to help achieve this end.

Special Places Recommendation 5.27 and 5.28 encourage a team approach among city agencies to address problematic building maintenance and code violations that impact historic assets and neighborhood character.

Organization of the Plan

Topeka's Historic Preservation Plan is organized into five chapters. Appendices A through F at the back of the plan provide background and supporting information.

Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, provides an overview of the preservation plan and highlights its priority actions.

Chapter 2, *Preservation Approach*, establishes a foundation for the strategies and recommendations presented in the plan to guide implementation and further development of the plan in the future. It discusses the plan's six goals and notes where those goals are addressed in the plan.

Chapter 3, *Historic Preservation Program*, reviews Topeka’s local historic preservation program as it has been authorized through the city’s Historic Preservation Ordinance. It outlines recommendations for strengthening the preservation program through the role of the Landmarks Commission and by engaging residents.

Chapter 4, *Heritage Tourism – Telling Topeka’s Stories to Attract Visitors and Inspire Residents*, describes how heritage tourism should be an integral part of Topeka’s historic preservation program to highlight the significance of history and historic assets to Topeka’s character and identity, contribute to the economic vitality of the city, and enhance quality of life for residents.

Chapter 5, *Special Places*, identifies ways in which the city’s many programs and initiatives can contribute to and benefit from a historic preservation perspective. It looks at how city programs and initiatives not typically associated with historic preservation affect historic assets and historic community character and how city agencies can work together to coordinate their activities in a way that enhances community character. Chapter 5 focuses especially on Topeka’s neighborhoods, its special places. The chapter refers to Appendix E, Neighborhood Priorities, which provides information on neighborhoods that the city has determined are priorities for survey and programming with respect to the recognition, preservation, and treatment of their historic assets.

Appendix A, *Topeka’s Preservation Context*, at the end of the Historic Preservation Plan outlines preservation programs at the federal, state, and local levels and describes how they coordinate to encourage historic preservation initiatives at the local, grassroots level. The appendix includes a review of Topeka’s historic assets and how historic assets have been recognized through surveys and inventories and through local, state, and federal designation.

The Planning Process

This preservation plan was prepared in four stages including 1) project initiation, 2) existing conditions assessment, 3) outline of strategies and recommendations, and 4) preparation of the draft and final plans. At each stage in the process stakeholders and the general public were engaged to provide information, discuss issues, and suggest potential actions. Many of the participants in the planning process are acknowledged at the beginning of this plan following the Table of Contents.

An Advisory Committee was assembled to review the status of the project and provide guidance at each stage of the work. Three separate focus groups were created to provide input on specific subjects that were determined to be key to the plan’s success:

- downtown investment,
- neighborhood revitalization, and
- the role of historic preservation in community identity.

The focus groups met at the existing conditions and the outline of strategies and recommendations stages to provide guidance and input.

Public workshops were conducted at each stage in the process during which a presentation was made and facilitated discussion was undertaken to receive public input. Throughout the course of the project individual meetings were held to solicit input from the representatives of key stakeholders and to obtain their support. The staff and planning team met with the city Planning Commission and Landmarks Commission at several of their regular meetings to report findings and recommendations and to receive guidance.

Conclusion

Topeka is a community with strong historic character and a wide range of significant historic assets. The strengthening of historic preservation within Topeka is in the community's self-interest and will enhance the quality of life for residents. Topeka's historic preservation program supports and encourages grassroots initiative and is based primarily upon the preservation and enhancement of neighborhoods by the residents themselves. While the city has a number of outstanding and nationally significant historic landmarks, its deepest strength is found in the many homes, community buildings, and streetscapes that make the city a great place to live. It is hoped that this Historic Preservation Plan will help residents coordinate their actions to preserve and enhance their community for the benefit of present and future generations.



Streetscape characteristic of Historic Topeka

CHAPTER 2 ▪ PRESERVATION APPROACH

The overall vision, concept, and goals for the Historic Preservation Plan are outlined in Chapter 2, establishing a foundation for the strategies and recommendations presented in the following chapters. This conceptual framework should guide the implementation and further development of the preservation plan by the many partners that share its interests. Going forward, conditions will change, new partners will emerge, and new opportunities will present themselves. The approach outlined here should guide ongoing response and adaptation to both the actions included in the plan and to new ideas yet to be developed.

The preservation approach is to be as broad as possible in considering what historic assets are, the roles they play in the community, and the ways in which they can be recognized, preserved, and enhanced. Topeka’s Historic Preservation Plan highlights the central role that historic buildings and neighborhoods play in the city’s quality of life. It recognizes the landscape as the context in which individual resources exist and how assets are inter-related. In short, we view the entire city as significant and focus upon the historic attributes of community character city-wide and neighborhood-by-neighborhood as valued by most residents.

Such a broad-based approach leads to the potential use of a wide range of tools in the plan’s implementation and the enlistment of a wide range of partners with sympathetic and overlapping interests. The plan emphasizes good planning but de-emphasizes regulatory approaches. We will succeed best when we are all pulling in the same direction as a result of our mutual self-interest. So this plan emphasizes engaging the private sector—residents, businesses, and organizations—and making it easier for everyone to do the right thing in terms of enhancing historic assets and strengthening community character.

Central to this idea is making sure that historic preservation is incorporated into and supports the city’s long term economic development strategy. The plan supports proactive economic development initiatives in attracting new business and industry to Topeka. The plan recognizes that community character is an important factor in attracting new businesses and retaining existing businesses. Topeka’s well educated and high quality work force values the community attributes and quality of life found here.

The plan emphasizes good planning but de-emphasizes regulatory approaches.

Central to this idea is making sure that historic preservation is incorporated into and supports the city’s long term economic development strategy.

But Topeka’s historic resources are affected by other city programs and initiatives as well.

While the preservation plan emphasizes the interests of residents and the private sector, it uses the city’s broad range of activities to help achieve its goals. Topeka has a well developed historic preservation program that works in concert with state and federal programs managed through the Kansas Historical Society. But Topeka’s historic resources are affected by other city programs and initiatives as well.

Through the experience and input of a wide range of citizens participating in the preservation planning process through focus groups, workshops and individual consultations, the preservation plan identifies city programs and initiatives—beyond the historic preservation program—that impact historic resources and historic character and outlines how they may be adapted to help meet the plan’s goals. In this regard, the preservation plan is closely coordinated with other elements of the city’s Comprehensive Plan and supports private sector and non-profit initiatives that bring economic vitality and cultural richness to Topeka.

Vision Statement

With these thoughts in mind, the following vision statement has been created for the preservation plan:

Topeka is the Capital City of Kansas. We are proud of our state and work hard to showcase its heritage. Our neighborhoods and commercial centers exemplify what is best about Kansas towns—livable communities steeped in character and tied to the land. We value our shared history and welcome our statewide neighbors and visitors from across the nation to enjoy our quality of life.

The preservation plan is closely coordinated with other elements of the city’s Comprehensive Plan and supports private sector and non-profit initiatives that bring economic vitality and cultural richness to Topeka.

The vision statement for this plan mirrors the city’s vision statement and emphasizes Topeka as a livable community and model for the state. In the process of developing the preservation plan, a great deal of discussion centered upon community identity. Participants felt that Topeka could better embrace its role as state capital in representing statewide character, welcoming fellow citizens, and presenting itself to visitors. The plan’s vision statement addresses this intent and sets the stage for the following goals upon which the plan’s recommended actions are based.

Goals for the Historic Preservation Plan

Six goals were identified that together broadly express a full range of ways in which historic preservation can be incorporated into planning for Topeka’s future:

1. Make historic preservation central to Topeka’s quality of life.
2. Use the private sector and self-interest as engines for historic preservation and revitalization.
3. Heighten public appreciation of Topeka’s heritage through storytelling and other means.

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4. Make heritage development a core strategy in Topeka's economic development plan.
5. Fully integrate historic preservation into city programs and processes.
6. Make full use of the programs available for community revitalization and enhancement.

How each of these goals is represented in the strategies and recommendations presented in Chapters 3 through 5 is discussed below.

Goal 1: Make historic preservation central to Topeka's quality of life.

The preservation approach outlined above makes the basic point that historic buildings and landscapes are central to the quality of life valued and enjoyed by Topeka's residents. This is most clearly evident in the importance of neighborhoods and neighborhood character in Topeka.

Historically, Topeka has grown from the center—Kansas Avenue—outward with successive waves of new development adding new residential neighborhoods over the decades. Each new neighborhood is an expression of the character of its time, a physical record of the city's historical development. This pattern continues today. The livability of these neighborhoods is Topeka's strength in terms of the quality of the buildings, the visual appeal of the streetscape, and ways in which buildings and landscapes work together.

Preserving this historic compact pattern of growth and recycling denser neighborhoods also promotes a sustainable fiscal model for the city. The ability to preserve a built environment while re-using existing infrastructure investments is vital to advancing smart growth principles central to the City's Land Use and Growth Management Element of the Comprehensive Plan.



Even Topeka's more modest neighborhoods have great charm.

Recognizing, preserving, and enhancing the elements that contribute to neighborhood and community character is the chief aim of this preservation plan. Because so much of the community's character is historic in nature, responding in a knowing and sensitive way to character-defining features will help preserve Topeka's historic assets, its historically significant buildings and landscapes. Historic preservation is central to Topeka's quality of life.

Topeka is investing in the revitalization of its downtown corridor—Kansas Avenue—because of the widespread recognition that a vital downtown used by residents is the hallmark of a healthy, thriving city. Historic buildings are the key assets that make downtown an attractive setting for businesses and an appealing place for residents to gather.

The preservation plan highlights the role of historic assets in Topeka's quality of life and outlines strategies to facilitate and support initiatives taking advantage of this fact. *Chapter 3, Historic Preservation Program* and *Chapter 5, Special Places* in particular outline strategies and recommendations to enhance the quality of life of residents through the preservation and appropriate treatment of Topeka's historic assets, especially in the city's neighborhoods. The plan recognizes the things that are being done right, suggests ways in which initiatives might be strengthened, and addresses issues and challenges that have been of concern.

Goal 2: Use the private sector and self-interest as engines for historic preservation and revitalization.

Most historic assets in Topeka are privately owned and contribute to the historic character of their respective neighborhoods or commercial areas. Historic preservation is most successful when property owners appreciate the historic character of their properties and treat them appropriately. To this end, communication and outreach are an important part of the preservation plan to engage property owners and provide them with information that will help them preserve and appropriately treat their historic resources. *Chapter 3, Historic Preservation Program* takes the lead in engaging residents and property owners in the preservation plan and encourage the appropriate treatment of privately owned historic properties.

Beyond the normal activities of maintenance and use of historic properties, the preservation plan seeks to encourage private initiative in the revitalization of historic buildings, neighborhoods, and commercial areas.

As outlined in Chapter 5 related to downtown revitalization, the City of Topeka and partnering organizations such as Downtown Topeka, Inc., NOTO, and the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce collaborate in soliciting businesses and property owners in the adaptive reuse of historic buildings. The city coordinates and streamlines its development services and other programs to encourage and support private investment.

As also discussed in Chapter 5, the city's neighborhood revitalization programs are aimed at creating an environment that attracts new homeowners and encourages existing homeowners to maintain and improve their properties. Chapter 4 on heritage tourism outlines initiatives and incentives to support the



Privately rehabilitated commercial building in Downtown Topeka.

non-profit sector in the preservation and interpretation of historic assets. Through these and other means, the preservation plan emphasizes using the private sector as an engine for historic preservation and revitalization to the maximum extent possible.

Goal 3: Heighten public appreciation of Topeka’s heritage through storytelling and other means.

In order to be successful, we must make sure that residents, businesses, and community leaders are aware of the central role that historic assets play in Topeka’s character, economic prosperity, and quality of life.

Chapter 3, Historic Preservation Program addresses ways in which historic preservation interests can engage residents, businesses, and other Topeka organizations to raise the profile of historic resources and communicate their importance to the city’s character. *Chapter 4, Heritage Tourism- Telling Topeka’s Stories to Attract Visitors and Inspire Residents* addresses telling the city’s stories through coordination of a city-wide interpretive presentation.

Storytelling is one way to engage residents and make them aware of the history and significance of the place in which they live. By knowing more about their city and their neighborhoods and by associating those stories with real places, residents will better appreciate why historic preservation is meaningful and important and will be more liable to incorporate historic preservation goals and techniques in their own initiatives.

Presenting Topeka’s stories to visitors and creating a high quality visitor experience are part of a heritage tourism strategy that supports economic development while simultaneously enhancing quality of life for residents.

Visitors like to go to places where local residents gather. Attracting visitors and making them feel welcome enhance the city's reputation in direct support of Topeka's role as state capital. It raises public appreciation of the city's heritage and the state's heritage as well. By setting an example, Topeka can be a statewide model and support historic preservation and community spirit throughout Kansas.

Goal 4: Have heritage development be a core strategy in the city's economic revitalization plan.

As mentioned above in the introduction to this chapter, making sure that historic preservation is incorporated into Topeka's long term economic development strategy is central to the idea of a broad-based preservation plan. Historic assets contribute directly to economic development through heritage tourism, as mentioned above, by attracting visitors and by giving visitors something to do when they come for other reasons.

More broadly, community character is an important factor in attracting new businesses and retaining existing businesses. The central role that historic assets play in Topeka's character and quality of life is directly related to how the city will be viewed by existing and prospective primary employers. The impressive degree to which large local employers are contributing to the enhancement of downtown Topeka as a public-private investment is testimony to this point.

Historic preservation must be recognized as part of a city-wide economic development strategy. As noted earlier, the ability to preserve a built environment while re-using existing infrastructure investments is vital to advancing smart growth principles central to the City's Land Use and Growth Management Element of the Comprehensive Plan.



Streetscape in Downtown Topeka.

PRESERVATION APPROACH

This preservation plan identifies many ways in which historic preservation contributes to Topeka's economic vitality and well being. Investment in downtown, enhancement of neighborhoods, and heritage tourism are key areas of activity. This must continue going forward.

Goal 5: Fully integrate historic preservation into city programs and processes.

Topeka has a wealth of historic building and landscape assets that contribute to the character of the community and its neighborhoods. While the city's official historic preservation program is well developed and well managed, it focuses primarily upon a limited number of officially designated landmarks and upon a few designated historic districts, where residents have readily embraced preservation programming.

To address preservation issues in the broader city beyond the officially designated areas and to reach as wide an audience as possible, historic preservation initiatives must extend beyond the official historic preservation program and be a core principle in all of the city's activities. Historic preservation is an important element in the city's vision of "a vibrant community where people choose to live, work, learn, and play and of which Kansans are proud."

During focus groups and workshops as part of the planning process for this preservation plan, participants enumerated the activities of city government that impact neighborhoods and historic assets. The city's operational and capital budgets detail the magnitude of the public sector investment in community infrastructure and processes of change. City departments that affect historic resources include:

- City Council,
- City Manager,
- Mayor,
- Code Enforcement,
- Communications,
- Development Services,
- Engineering,
- Forestry,
- Housing and Neighborhood Development,
- Planning, and
- Public Works.

With input from citizens and with the leadership of city staff, the Historic Preservation Plan identifies how historic preservation may be integrated into related city services, programs and processes and city activities may be coordinated to support preservation and community goals. *Chapter 3, Historic Preservation Program* discusses the city's official historic preservation program and, along with Chapter 4, seeks ways to engage residents and broaden its scope. Chapter 5 focuses upon neighborhoods and downtown to identify how key related city departments and processes may be integrated into the preservation vision.

Historic preservation initiatives must extend beyond the official historic preservation program and be a core principle in all of the city's activities.

Goal 6: Make full use of the programs available for community revitalization and enhancement.

One positive outcome of the planning process associated with the preparation of this Historic Preservation Plan has been to solidify the conversations being held between various interest groups into a single document focused upon the role of historic preservation in community life. Goal 6 simply says that the preservation plan should make full use of available programs that support community revitalization and enhancement.

The preservation plan has provided the opportunity to enumerate the various programs available and to assess the extent to which they are being used effectively to the benefit of the city and its residents. The State of Kansas in partnership with the federal government offers excellent programs to encourage historic preservation at the grassroots level both through city government and through private investment. State and federal programs are described broadly in Appendix A, and specific recommendations for Topeka's preservation program are included in Chapter 3.

Beyond the preservation program, Topeka takes advantage of a variety of other programs offered by the federal government through the Department of Housing and Urban Development that have helped the city revitalize struggling neighborhoods. Over the past decade, these programs have had a remarkable and clearly measurable positive effect on the city. State and federal transportation programs are also an important factor in Topeka's urban development and enhancement. The redesign of Interstate 70, now in the planning stages, will have a tremendous effect on Downtown Topeka and the city as a whole. The Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area and National Park Service are examples of important regional and national programs in which Topeka and its partners can participate to enhance historic preservation and local quality of life. These and other programs provide opportunities for Topeka and are noted throughout the preservation plan.

Preservation Principles

All of the strategies, recommendations, and actions included in Topeka's Historic Preservation Plan should be informed and guided by the principles of historic preservation that have been developed and honed by practitioners in the field over the years.

Preservation is a practical discipline that can accommodate growth and change while continuing to preserve the characteristics that make a place special. The principles that have been developed in the field of historic preservation in general recognize the importance of preserving authentic historic fabric to the maximum extent possible. Building uses come and go, but once lost, original historic fabric can never be reclaimed. The maintenance and preservation of original historic fabric, features, materials, and design elements, therefore, is central to a sound preservation approach. A key objective of Topeka's Historic Preservation Plan is to encourage and promote the preservation and maintenance of historic building and landscape fabric in as many ways as possible.



Kansas State Capitol – Topeka’s most prominent historic building.

The principles of historic preservation are embodied in the topic of Preservation Treatments and in *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, both of which are discussed below. The principles and thinking they convey should guide the actions undertaken as a result of this preservation plan. The extent to which the plan’s strategies and actions succeed in implementing these principles in real projects within the community and help to make them widely known and appreciated should be the measure by which the strategies and actions are evaluated.

Preservation Treatments

The historic preservation field uses a variety of terms to describe the treatments that may be applied to historic building and landscape assets. Although sometimes these terms are used loosely in discussion, they have specific meanings that are important to distinguish. The four key preservation treatments include: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction (National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties 2013).

Of these four terms, *Preservation* requires retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric, features, and materials. *Rehabilitation* acknowledges the need to alter or add to a property to meet continuing or new uses while retaining historic character. *Restoration* allows for an accurate depiction of the property’s appearance at a particular time in its history. *Reconstruction* establishes a framework for re-creating vanished historic elements with new materials. Preservation and Rehabilitation are the most appropriate and applicable treatments for most historic buildings and landscapes in Topeka.

Preservation

Preservation is defined as the process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize features, generally focuses on the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features. Removals, extensive replacement, alterations, and new additions are not appropriate. Preservation stresses protection, repair, and maintenance, and should be the baseline treatment for all historic resources.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is defined as the process of creating a compatible use in a historic property through carefully planned minimal alterations and compatible additions. Often referred to as adaptive reuse, rehabilitation protects and preserves the historic features, materials, elements, and spatial relationships that convey historical, cultural, and architectural values. In this context, new, expanded, or upgraded facilities should be designed to avoid impacts to historic elements. They should also be constructed of compatible materials. Retention of original historic fabric should be the primary consideration in undertaking a program of rehabilitation and adaptive reuse. Rehabilitation is perhaps the most important and widely used treatment in communities that are revitalizing and adapting to new uses.

Restoration

Restoration refers to returning a resource to its appearance at a specific previous period of its history. Restoration is the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular time by means of removal of features from other periods in its history and the reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. In this context, historic plans, documents, and photographs should be used to guide the work. Limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as code-related work to make a property functional, are all appropriate within a restoration project.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction is defined as the process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a non-surviving historic property using new construction for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its original location. A reconstruction is a new resource made to replace an historic resource that has been lost. Reconstruction is a rarely used preservation treatment applicable primarily in educational and interpretive contexts.

**Secretary of the Interior’s Standards
for the Treatment of Historic Properties**

The philosophy that guides the implementation of recommendations included in the Historic Preservation Plan is based on a set of federal guidelines entitled *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, commonly called the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards” or simply the “Standards.” The *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards* were established under authorization of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to provide

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professional national standards and guidelines for the treatment of historic resources.

An individual set of standards was developed for each of the four preservation treatments described above. All federally funded and permitted activities affecting historic resources are evaluated with respect to these standards. The *Standards for Rehabilitation*, however, are most applicable to most projects undertaken by property owners affecting historic resources in Topeka.

In the language of community planners, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards* are a list of "best practices" for historic preservation. They are a touchstone for all activities affecting historic buildings and landscapes and help ensure that important issues about the care of historic buildings and landscapes are not forgotten in the process of making decisions about other issues. When the *Standards* are used in the context of a new construction project involving an historic building, they provide a starting point for the discussion of proposed changes to the building's historic character and fabric. They were developed to ensure that policies toward historic resources were applied uniformly, even if the end result may be different in every case.

All preservation activities, whether they are publicly or privately funded, can be informed and enhanced by understanding the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. Because the *Standards* outline a sensitive approach for assessing changes to historic properties, they are often included in preservation plans, ordinances, and regulations that govern activities affecting local historic districts. These *Standards* articulate basic principles that are fundamental to historic preservation. Although they have been modified over the years to



Fine residence in a historic neighborhood.

accommodate changing views of historical significance and treatment options, their basic message has remained the same.

The durability of the *Standards* is testimony not only to their soundness, but also to the flexibility of their language. They provide a philosophy and approach to problem solving for those involved in managing the treatment of historic buildings, rather than a set of solutions to specific design issues. Following a balanced, reasonable, and disciplined process is often more important than the exact nature of the treatment option that is chosen. Instead of predetermining an outcome in favor of retaining or recreating historic features, the *Standards* help ensure that the critical issues are considered.

The language of *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* is codified in 36 CFR Part 68 (the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, *Parks, Forests and Public Property*, Chapter 1 *National Park Service, Department of the Interior*, Part 68). A related federal regulation, 36 CFR Part 67, addresses the use of the *Standards* in the certification of projects receiving federal rehabilitation tax credits.

The *Standards* are published by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and are available online, including definitions for the four preservation treatments discussed above (National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties 2013).

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation are particularly useful in consideration of the appropriate maintenance of historic buildings; the alteration of older buildings as necessary for reuse, safety, and accessibility; and the construction of new buildings in an historic context. The ten standards that



Historic landscape – a neighborhood park.

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comprise the *Standards for Rehabilitation* are quoted below followed by a brief discussion of the implications of each. Additional discussion of the *Standards for Rehabilitation* may also be found online (National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings 2013).

STANDARD 1 – *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

Standard 1 recommends compatible use in the context of adaptive reuse and changes to historic buildings and landscapes. This standard encourages property owners to find uses that retain and enhance historic character, not detract from it. The work involved in reuse projects should be carefully planned to minimize impacts on historic features, materials, and spaces. The destruction of character-defining features should be avoided.

STANDARD 2 – *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

Standard 2 recommends the retention and preservation of character-defining features. It emphasizes the importance of preserving integrity and as much existing historic fabric as possible. Alterations that repair or modify existing historic fabric are preferable to those that require total removal.

STANDARD 3 – *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

Standard 3 focuses on authenticity and discourages the conjectural restoration of an entire property, feature, or design. It also discourages combining and/or grafting historic features and elements from different properties, and constructing new buildings that appear to be historic. Literal restoration to an historic appearance should only be undertaken when detailed documentation is available and when the significance of the resource warrants restoration. Reconstruction of lost features should not be attempted without adequate documentation.

STANDARD 4 – *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

Standard 4 recognizes that buildings change, and that many of these changes contribute to a building's historical significance. Understanding a building's history and development is just as important as understanding its original design, appearance, and function. This point should be kept in mind when considering treatments for buildings that have undergone many changes.

Most historic buildings contain a visual record of their own evolution. This evolution can be identified, and changes that are significant to the history of the building should be retained. The opportunity to compare multiple periods of



Detail of a commercial building in Downtown Topeka.

time in the same building lends interest to the structure and helps communicate changes that have occurred within the larger landscape and community context.

STANDARD 5 – *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

Standard 5 recommends preserving the distinctive historic components of a building or landscape that represent its historic character. Workmanship, materials, methods of construction, floor plans, and both ornate and typical details should be identified prior to undertaking work.

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

Standard 6 encourages property owners to repair historic character-defining features instead of replacing them when historic features are deteriorated or missing. In cases where deterioration makes replacement necessary, new features should closely match historic conditions in all respects. Before any features are altered or removed, property owners are urged to document existing conditions with photography and notes. These records assist future choices that are appropriate to the property's historic character.

STANDARD 7 – *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*



Rehabilitated commercial buildings in North Topeka.

Standard 7 warns against using chemical and physical treatments that can permanently damage historic features. Many commercially available treatments are irreversibly damaging. Sandblasting and harsh chemical cleaning, in particular, are extremely harmful to wood and masonry surfaces because they destroy the material's basic physical properties and speed deterioration.

STANDARD 8 – *Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

Standard 8 addresses the importance of below-ground prehistoric and historic features. This issue is of most importance when a construction project involves excavation. An assessment of a site's archeological potential prior to work is recommended. If archeological resources are present, some type of mitigation should be considered. Solutions should be developed that minimize the need for excavation of previously unexcavated sites.

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

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

Standards 9 and 10 are linked by issues of the compatibility and reversibility of additions, alterations, and new construction. Both standards are intended to

1) minimize the damage to historic fabric caused by building additions, and
2) ensure that new work will be different from, but compatible with, existing historic conditions. Following these standards will help to protect a building's historic integrity.

In conclusion, the basis for the *Standards* is the premise that historic resources are more than objects of aesthetic merit; they are repositories of historical information. It is important to reiterate that the *Standards* provide a framework for evaluating preservation activities and emphasize preservation of historic fabric, honesty of historical expression, and reversibility. All decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis. The level of craftsmanship, detailing, and quality of materials should be appropriate to the significance of the resource.

Summary

Topeka's Historic Preservation Plan takes a broad view of the role of historic resources in creating community character and making Topeka a vibrant, prosperous, and desirable place to live. It seeks to engage residents and the private sector in recognizing preservation's benefits and embracing preservation initiatives. Guided by the five goals outlined above and informed by the preservation principles presented in the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, the following chapters of the preservation plan create a comprehensive framework of strategies and actions through which the city and its partners work together to make historic preservation a central component of the city's future development.

CHAPTER 3 ■ HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The City of Topeka has an active historic preservation program that has been an important part of the city's planning for many years. Topeka is designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG) under the federal and state CLG program administered by the Kansas Historical Society, recognition that the city's historic preservation program meets state and national criteria for preservation planning. Through the CLG program, Topeka networks with the Kansas Historic Society and is eligible to receive technical assistance and access to special grant funding.

As this preservation plan was being developed, the city was in the process of updating its Historic Landmarks Ordinance, Chapters 2.60 and 18.255 of the Topeka Municipal Code. Chapter 2.60 creates the Landmark Commission and describes its duties. Chapter 18.255 is the city's Historic Landmarks Ordinance through which historic landmarks and historic districts are designated and recognized through historic overlay zoning.

Chapter 3 of the preservation plan outlines recommendations for strengthening the city's historic preservation program through the role of the Landmarks Commission and use of the historic overlay district as authorized in the updated ordinance. The plan seeks to achieve wider public participation in the city's preservation program to the benefit of residents and property owners, and to broaden recognition of the large number of historic assets within the city and how they contribute to the city's quality of life.

Chapter 3 addresses all six of the preservation plan's goals as presented in *Chapter 2, Preservation Approach*. The chapter's recommendations are organized under five broad strategies, each of which is addressed below:

- Strengthen Topeka's existing historic preservation program by creatively and effectively implementing provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance;
- Focus on widening public participation through the benefits derived by creating local historic districts;
- Broaden the approach to historic preservation by recognizing the role historic assets play city-wide and how they are impacted through city programs;

- Focus on ways to improve the treatment of historic properties by property owners city-wide; and
- Network with professional and leadership organizations within the city and at the state and national levels.

Strengthening the Historic Preservation Program

Topeka’s historic preservation program is authorized and described in the Historic Landmarks Ordinance that was being updated concurrently with the preparation of this preservation plan. The ordinance states that the Topeka Landmarks Commission “shall advise the city council on historic assets and safeguard the architectural and cultural heritage of the community through the preservation of historic landmarks and local historic districts.” The commission may carry out its duties through the:

- Identification, documentation and designation of historic landmarks and local historic districts;
- Development and implementation of a historic preservation plan;
- Administration of ordinances governing the designation, alteration and removal of historic landmarks;
- Assistance with educational and incentive programs;
- Economic development and tourism, and
- Coordination of public and private historic preservation activities.

Additional detail is provided in the section of the ordinance describing the functions of the Landmarks Commission. Relevant aspects of that section are highlighted in the recommendations provided below with the purpose of describing how they may be prioritized and addressed. The Landmarks Commission works closely with the city’s Planning Department, which provides staff assistance to the Commission.

In performing its duties of advising the City Council on historic assets and “coordination of public and private historic preservation activities,” the Landmarks Commission should identify, assess, and monitor the wide range of historic assets across the city. It should identify issues and threats and seek solutions that preserve the city’s historic assets for future generations. The commission should take strong, measured steps to raise Topeka’s historic preservation program’s profile and increase its benefits to neighborhoods, businesses, and residents.

The principal challenge with respect to the historic preservation program is the large number of potential historic landmarks and local historic districts in Topeka in comparison to the number that have actually been designated. Topeka has far fewer National Register listed properties and districts, buildings listed in the city’s Landmarks Registry, and local historic districts than it could have.

One result is that few property owners have been able to take advantage of state and federal rehabilitation tax credits that are available for projects involving historic buildings. This is unfortunate because the state tax credit program in particular, available to homeowners as well as businesses, is one of

The principal challenge with respect to the historic preservation program is the large number of potential historic landmarks and local historic districts in Topeka in comparison to the number that have actually been designated.



The Charles Curtis House, a Topeka Landmark.

the best programs in the nation. A goal of the city’s historic preservation program is to encourage broader participation so that the benefits of the state tax credits can be enjoyed by a larger number of property owners.

The recommendations below seek to increase public participation in the city’s preservation program in part by increasing the number of designated landmarks and local historic districts. Promoting the benefits of local historic districts is particularly important and is addressed in a separate section below.

Beyond the designation of landmarks and local historic districts, the Landmarks Commission needs to recognize and address the large number of historic assets that will never receive designation. This can be accomplished largely through communication, education, technical assistance, and incentives tailored to engage private property owners. It will also be achieved through coordination with, and the administration of, other city programs that affect historic assets.

Recommendations to strengthen the city’s historic preservation program are outlined below. Recommendations on economic development and heritage tourism are included in Chapter 4. A number of recommendations specifically related to city programs are included in Chapter 5.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.1 – Undertake a long-term program of **surveying historic assets** throughout the city as a priority project of the Landmarks Commission. By fully documenting its historic assets, the Landmarks Commission and city can recognize their significance in city programs and promote their preservation and appropriate treatment to property owners and neighborhoods. Documentation is a critical first step. A number of neighborhoods in Topeka have been surveyed, but others have not. Some of the city’s previous surveys need to be reassessed.

Beyond the designation of landmarks and local historic districts, the Landmarks Commission needs to recognize and address the large number of historic assets that will never receive designation.

Coordinate the survey process with the Kansas Historical Society in such a way that the information gathered may be entered into the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory and made available online. Several of the city's surveys were completed before the online database was created and are not yet incorporated into it.

Include survey information in the city's GIS database. Use the neighborhood plans developed by the city's Planning Department to help organize and structure the surveys. Prepare a historical overview for each neighborhood plan that sets the context for its survey. Include the results of the surveys in each new and updated neighborhood plan.

Explore the possibility of using an expedited system of field recordation with the Kansas Historical Society in which photographs and site information is entered directly into forms and databases by surveyors in the field using computer tablets or laptops. Such a system makes the survey of the large number of properties in neighborhoods and historic districts easier. Consider using groups of neighborhood or student volunteers under professional guidance to conduct the surveys. Use a combination of city and grant monies to fund the long-term survey program.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.2 – Encourage the preparation of **National Register nominations** for buildings and districts city-wide. Apply the city's grant programs to support the preparation of nominations when appropriate.

The listing of buildings and districts to the National Register of Historic Places and Register of Kansas Historic Places is an honorary professional recognition but can also have important benefits in providing protection from federal and state actions and incentives through federal and state rehabilitation tax credits (see Appendix A).

Prioritize determinations of eligibility and the listing of historic assets in Downtown Topeka to facilitate investment by businesses and property owners (see Chapter 5). Promote the listing of historic districts by neighborhoods in conjunction with the designation of local historic districts as discussed later in this chapter.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.3 – Encourage the designation of **historic landmarks** as authorized in the Historic Landmarks Ordinance. Reach out to property owners whose historic assets seem particularly appropriate for designation as historic landmarks. Develop programming and incentives that are tailored to landmark properties.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.4 – Actively promote the use of federal and state **rehabilitation tax credits** by businesses, developers, and homeowners. Collaborate with Downtown Topeka, Inc., the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, the Kansas Historical Society, and others in promoting the benefits of rehabilitation tax credits through outreach and workshops. Develop and publicize information to businesses and homeowners. Help make the process easy.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.5 – Work with City Council and city agencies to use **Community Development Block Grant** funds strategically for public improvements that support qualified historic rehabilitation and adaptive reuse projects that are in the community interest.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.6 – Develop a **conservation easement** donation program as authorized in the Historic Landmarks Ordinance. The easement program should be led by the Landmarks Commission and administered by the Planning Department’s historic preservation staff.

The conservation easement program can be comprised of two parts, façade easements and land conservation easements. Façade easements are donated by building owners and provide protection of the facades of designated historic buildings. Land conservation easements are donated by property owners and provide protection for natural and historic landscapes.

The conservation easement program will provide another form of preservation incentive to property owners, who can take the value of their donations as a tax credit. As outlined in the Historic Landmarks Ordinance, the city will hold the easement. The value of each donation is established through a certified appraisal.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.7 – Continue to implement and streamline the **design review process** in issuing certificates of appropriateness for changes to designated historic landmarks and projects within local historic districts as outlined in the Historic Landmarks Ordinance. Work to make the guidelines clear and the process efficient. Organize the process to be helpful and supportive so that property owners will be encouraged to have their properties designated.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.8 – Conduct an annual review of historic landmarks, local historic districts, and historic assets in Topeka as called for in the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Document the review in an **annual report** to the Mayor and City Council. Publicize the annual report to help raise public awareness about historic preservation and the conditions and issues related to the city’s historic assets.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.9 – In conjunction with the annual report, prepare an annual **Endangered Properties List** based upon recommendations from the public. Create a public process through which nominations are gathered and assessed by a panel of qualified individuals. Publicize the list with an event to help raise public awareness about historic preservation and the work of the Landmarks Commission. Give priority for grants, loans, and other city incentives to properties on the Endangered Properties List.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.10 – Continue to promote the city’s **Neighborhood Revitalization Program** that offers tax rebates to property owners who make improvements to their properties within the city’s neighborhood Revitalization Area. The Landmarks Commission should



Most of Topeka’s historic buildings will never receive an official designation.

monitor the program and seek ways to broaden its use. Improvements should be consistent with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Preservation Plan Recommendation 3.11 – Continue to **fund economic development related to heritage tourism** through a dedicated allocation or transfers from the Transient Guest Tax. In 2013, the heritage tourism portion of the transfers included \$94,000 for Great Overland Station and this year’s approximately \$60,000 to the Historic Preservation Fund for a total allocation of approximately \$154,000. Increase the dedicated allocation if possible.

Transfers from the Transient Guest Tax should be used as an incentive program specifically for heritage tourism related initiatives (see Chapter 4) in support of historic preservation goals. The Landmarks Commission should manage the incentive programs with administrative support from Planning Department staff. Consider establishing the following incentive programs on a yearly basis:

- **Capital Improvement Grants** as a matching grant program for non-profit or municipal historic preservation projects that are open to the public and participate in the city-wide heritage tourism program. Great Overland Station has been a recipient of such support in recent years. Continue the grant program for the development of other qualified historic attractions such as Constitution Hall and Jayhawk Theater.
- **Interpretive Program Grants** as a grant program for interpretive enhancements and programming in accordance with the city’s heritage tourism program (see Chapter 4). Projects should be

collaborative endeavors of the city's historic interpretive attractions and include projects such as interpretive exhibits coordinating themes and stories between attractions, outdoor exhibits and public art along routes linking attractions, and living history performances during events.

Preservation Plan Recommendation 3.12 – Establish **incentive programs for historic preservation** as called for in the Historic Landmarks Ordinance. Work with City Council to identify a potential funding source for the incentive program. The Landmarks Commission should manage the incentive programs with administrative support from Planning Department staff. Consider establishing the following incentive programs on a yearly basis:

- **Historic Landmark Grants** as a matching grant program available to properties that are designated as Historic Landmarks as authorized by Topeka's Historic Landmarks Ordinance. Potential projects could be for preservation maintenance, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, or planning.
- **Save Our Heritage Grant Program** as a matching grant program for threatened historic commercial or residential buildings with the intent of placing them back into productive use. Priority should go to emergency situations where a building is facing immediate deterioration and its stabilization and rehabilitation would not take place without additional incentive and support. The potential economic contribution of the property to its vicinity and the potential impact of the property in terms of stabilizing or enhancing the economic viability of its neighborhood should be key considerations in the award of grants.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.13 – Refine and further develop the **façade improvement program** for historic buildings in the downtown district consisting of technical assistance and matching grants (or forgivable loans, when appropriate). Implement the façade improvement program through Downtown Topeka, Inc. with design review and approval by the Landmarks Commission. Fund the program through the city's public/private downtown investment initiative.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.14 – Consider establishing a low interest **revolving loan program** as an incentive for small to medium sized projects involving the rehabilitation of historic buildings, façade improvements, and related initiatives. The loan program should have a non-profit, commercial, and economic development focus. Ask local banks to support establishment of an initial fund to be matched by the city that can then be rotated to qualifying projects on a periodic basis.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.15 – Consider initiating a **Residential Rehabilitation Program** using the city's federal housing funds. The program should take the money currently used for demolitions and infill and instead use it to renovate and rehabilitate vacant or deteriorated

residences to their original character for homeownership. Use the program as a revitalization tool for Target Area Neighborhoods identified through the city's SORT program.

Combine the rehabilitation program with the city's tax rebate program (Neighborhood Revitalization Program) and state rehabilitation tax credit program to further assist qualified property owners and enhance the program's effectiveness. Projects should be undertaken in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Creating Local Historic Districts

In addition to undertaking a long-term program of surveying historic assets, discussed above, a primary focus of the Landmarks Commission should be to encourage neighborhoods to establish local historic districts as authorized by the Historic Landmarks Ordinance. The creation of local historic districts is the most effective way to engage broad segments of the public, promote the benefits of historic preservation, and achieve the designation of a significant number of historic assets.

Local historic districts have a proven track record nationwide of strengthening neighborhood character and increasing property values. Neighborhoods that collaborate in enhancing their properties in accordance with common design criteria attract new residents that are dedicated to and invest in their properties. Historic districts are desirable and attractive places to live. In addition, residential properties located in historic districts that are listed on the Kansas or National Registers are eligible for use of the state rehabilitation tax credit. The state rehabilitation tax credit program offers a state income tax credit equal to 25 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures for projects costing over \$5,000.

In seeking to create new local historic districts, the Landmarks Commission should undertake a long-term initiative to cultivate and support Neighborhood Associations (NAs) and Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIAs). The commission should work with the city's Planning Department to weave historic preservation principles and practices into neighborhood planning, to highlight the importance of historic preservation to neighborhood character, and to encourage the appropriate treatment of historic assets. The benefits and successes of established local historic districts should be publicized to other neighborhoods.

The creation of local historic districts that effectively guide the enhancement of neighborhood character and the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic assets is a key strategy for Topeka's historic preservation program.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.16 – Actively engage **existing National Register and local historic districts** to support their initiatives and find ways to visibly incentivize and reward their activities. Consult with local Neighborhood Association leaders to assess their priorities and coordinate

support. Work with city departments to provide needed services and support. Publicize their achievements.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.17 – Work with NAs, NIAs, and local advocates to encourage the creation of **new National Register and local historic districts**. Outline benefits, especially increased property values, the potential to use state tax credits, and access to grants and other programs.

Support NAs and NIAs in revitalization and enhancement initiatives related to historic preservation. Develop targeted preservation programs to **engage NAs and NIAs**. Use the historic neighborhood surveys discussed in Preservation Program Recommendation 3.1 above to lay the groundwork for neighborhoods becoming National Register and local historic districts.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.18 – Consult with the Planning Department in the preparation of new and updated **neighborhood plans** for NAs and NIAs. Use neighborhood plans to focus attention upon the historic character of existing neighborhoods, identify character defining features, and identify preservation issues. Review historical overviews, incorporate historic asset surveys, and provide input on neighborhood-specific design guidelines to be included in the plans.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.19 – Support the development of a multiple property document and National Register districts in **Downtown Topeka** as outlined Chapter 5. Support the inclusion of historic preservation principles and criteria in the design guidelines for the Downtown District. Support Downtown Topeka, Inc. in attracting investors for the rehabilitation of historic downtown buildings.



Most Topeka neighborhoods are potential historic districts.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.20 – Encourage neighborhoods to create **neighborhood conservation districts** in accordance with the city’s conservation district ordinance. Identify neighborhoods with interest in conservation districts and explore how to best bring them to fruition. Consult with the Planning Department on the development of customized conservation district guidelines for specific neighborhoods and process for their implementation.

Coordinating Historic Preservation City-wide

Among other duties, the Historic Landmarks Ordinance gives the Landmarks Commission the responsibility to

- Advise City Council on historic assets;
- Coordinate public and private historic preservation activities;
- Prepare and adopt a historic preservation plan as a component of the city’s Comprehensive Plan; and
- Recommend programs and legislation to City Council to encourage historic preservation.

In this regard, the Landmarks Commission should take on the role of being aware of historic preservation activities throughout the city and of assessing impacts on the city’s historic assets from public and private actions. The commission’s observations and assessments should be summarized in the annual report to the Mayor and City Council discussed in Preservation Program Recommendation 3.8 above.

The Landmarks Commission should be active in encouraging historic preservation perspectives in all of the city’s endeavors.

To fulfill these responsibilities, Landmark Commission members should maintain an awareness of city programs that are being implemented that may impact historic assets and an awareness of issues that are being addressed at public meetings that may impact historic assets. Many of the city’s activities, programs, and decisions impact historic buildings, neighborhoods, and other assets. The Landmarks Commission should be active in encouraging historic preservation perspectives in all of the city’s endeavors.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.21 – Monitor city programs to assess their impact and effectiveness with respect to the preservation and the treatment of historic assets. Focus particularly upon downtown, neighborhood, capital improvement, heritage tourism, and economic development services and programming. Include assessments in the annual report to the Mayor and City Council discussed in Preservation Program Recommendation 3.8 above.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.22 – Monitor City Council, Planning Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals meetings and issues. **Advise City Council** and these other bodies on issues affecting historic preservation and community character.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.23 – Consult with the Planning Department on **comprehensive plan and area planning initiatives**. Keep abreast of planning activities. Provide input with respect to historic preservation issues.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.24 – Forge constructive working relationships with the **Housing and Neighborhood Development Department** and **Code Enforcement Unit**. Encourage and support initiatives and programs that preserve and rehabilitate the historic assets in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Treatment of Historic Properties

The most effective way to achieve the city’s historic preservation goals is to raise awareness among homeowners and the general public about the appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscapes and to encourage and support private sector activities that implement appropriate treatments.

The Historic Landmarks Ordinance assigns the Landmarks Commission the responsibility to provide assistance with educational and incentive programs and to render advice and provide guidance with respect to any proposed work on a historic asset.

The Landmarks Commission should provide leadership in promoting preservation philosophy city-wide and helping to make preservation easy for homeowners. It should provide information, guidance, and technical assistance to the private sector to encourage best practices. Recommendations include:

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.25 – Prepare a comprehensive set of **design, maintenance, and treatment guidelines** for Topeka’s historic buildings. The Historic Preservation Ordinance specifically notes adoption and implementation of design guidelines for historic landmarks and local historic districts as among the functions of the Landmarks Commission.

The guidelines should be applicable not only to designated landmarks and districts but to potential landmarks and districts as well. They will be useful in the appropriate treatment of historic assets throughout the city.

As stated in the definitions section of the Historic Landmarks Ordinance, the design guidelines should be based upon the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. The appropriate maintenance of historic buildings and building fabric is a critical topic to be addressed in the design guidelines and is central to appropriate treatment and best practices.

The document should include guidelines for the:

- Maintenance and treatment of historic building materials such as wood, brick, stone, metals, stucco, concrete, etc;
- Treatment of historic building features and systems such as roofs, walls, doors, windows, porches, steps, stormwater systems, etc;
- Energy efficiency;
- Proposed changes to historic building features;
- Additions to historic buildings; and
- New construction in a historic context.

The Landmarks Commission should provide leadership in promoting preservation philosophy city-wide and helping to make preservation easy for homeowners.



Design guidelines help homeowners appropriately maintain their historic homes by providing information on the care of historic building fabric.

The design guidelines should be made available to property owners, designers, developers, city staff, and others undertaking projects involving historic assets and in historic areas throughout the city. They should be used by owners and designers undertaking projects involving designated landmarks and districts subject to Landmark Commission review for certificates of appropriateness. They should be used by the commission to guide its decision-making.

Beyond Landmark Commission reviews, the design, maintenance, and treatment guidelines should be an informative, useful, user-friendly document for the owners of historic buildings throughout the city. They should be promoted for use by NAs and NIAs and may be referenced in neighborhood conservation district ordinances. The design guidelines included as part of neighborhood revitalization plans prepared by the Planning Department may reference and build upon the city-wide design guidelines with neighborhood-specific information and guidance.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.26 – Maintain an **online reference library** of preservation related information for property owners. Include summaries, explanations, and PDFs of materials related to the appropriate treatment of historic building fabric and links to sites where additional information and guidance is available, such as National Park Service *Preservation Briefs* and information offered by the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, Association for Preservation Technology, and others. Consult with the staff of the Kansas Historical Society and National Park Service in assembling the reference library information and links.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.27 – Offer **technical assistance programs** to interested homeowners working with historic buildings. Coordinate specifically with NAs and NIAs in providing technical assistance programs and services to neighborhood residents. Conduct homeowner workshops where qualified craftsmen demonstrate how to maintain and repair historic fabric.

Organize an annual historic homeowner trade show where private sector craftsmen display their services and work and where preservation related products can be shown and demonstrated. Coordinate a design assistance center through which homeowners can obtain advice from historic preservation professionals on appropriate design changes to historic buildings.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.28 – Provide technical assistance to property owners and investors unfamiliar with the use of **state and federal rehabilitation tax credits** in the form of information, encouragement, and general guidance. Prepare a list of qualified private sector consultants capable of advising investors and assisting with the rehabilitation tax credit process.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.29 – Organize **training programs for contractors** and craftsmen in working with historic building fabric. Work with trade unions to provide certificates for individuals completing training courses. Maintain a **list of qualified contractors** and craftsmen working with historic buildings and trades.

Networking with Leadership Organizations

The Historic Landmarks Ordinance states that the Landmarks Commission should carry out its duties in part through the coordination of public and private historic preservation activities. In order to undertake this responsibility, the Commission must maintain contact with organizations throughout the city. Communication and outreach is the subject of next section in this chapter, but aside from outreach to the general public, Landmark Commission members should network with those involved in historic preservation activities on an ongoing basis.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.30 – The Landmarks Commission should maintain **relationships with leadership organizations** in Topeka. Commission members should stay informed by attending meetings and events and by interacting with representatives of other organizations.

The Commission should make sure it understands and appreciates the mission and interests of the variety of public and private organizations involved in Topeka. It should promote the value and benefits of historic assets to the interests and activities of other organizations where possible and appropriate.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.31 – Cultivate relationships with **Neighborhood Associations** and Neighborhood Improvement Associations

as suggested in recommendation 3.17 above. Attend meetings, stay abreast of issues, be a resource, and offer advice and support whenever possible.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.32 – Coordinate with and support local and regional **historical attractions**. Understand and provide support for their initiatives. Support heritage tourism as an economic development and community revitalization strategy. Use history and interpretation to promote public interest in preservation. (See Chapter 4, *Heritage Tourism*.)

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.33 – Explore new potential **sources of funding and incentives** to support historic preservation and related initiatives. The Historic Landmarks Ordinance specifically directs that the Commission apply for or suggest sources of funds for preservation, acquisition, and restoration activities.

Network with other organizations in Topeka about needed funding for initiatives that relate to historic preservation. Identify priority projects that support the Landmark Commission’s mission. Coordinate with, support, assist, and provide leadership in developing and implementing fundraising strategies and initiatives.

Consult with the Kansas Historical Society and other Kansas CLG communities. Undertake research and attend national conferences on historic preservation and community planning. Keep informed about programs, techniques, and funding sources being used in other places. Consider federal, state, local, foundation, business, and other potential funding sources.

Preservation Program Recommendation 3.34 – Affiliate with state, regional, and national **preservation organizations** including the Kansas Historical Society, Kansas Preservation Alliance, Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area, National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, Preservation Action, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Participate in their programs and network with their members. Network with other CLG and Main Street communities in Kansas to support their activities and find out what works.

Communications and Outreach

Outreach to the broader Topeka community is necessary to raise the profile of the city’s historic assets and communicate their importance to the city’s character, economic prosperity, and quality of life. Residents, businesses, and community organizations should be engaged in as many ways as possible to promote appreciation of the city’s historic assets and to build support for preservation and community enhancement initiatives.

A key question with respect to public perception is how residents and visitors view Topeka’s *identity*. What comes to mind when residents think about their city? What do they like; what are they proud of; and how do they convey their sense of the city to visitors from away? Topeka’s identity sets the tone for how we think about who we are, what we value, and how we will shape our future. It

is important in building community pride and in communicating to visitors and prospective businesses that Topeka is an attractive place in which to live and work.

In building awareness about the important role that the city's historic assets play, we must recognize that some residents may not have an interest in history or historic preservation per se. Preservation should be framed in the broader context of community character with its community benefits clearly conveyed. Framing historic preservation in the context of community character, prosperity, and well being is a way to help communicate the preservation message to a broader audience in a meaningful way.

Leading organizations involved in presenting Topeka to residents and visitors have overlapping missions, interests, and capabilities and include:

- *Go Topeka Economic Partnership* and *Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce* – implement an economic development strategy on behalf of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County and provide leadership within the business community. Go Topeka focuses upon attracting primary jobs as well as the retention and expansion of existing businesses. Topeka's quality of life is an important consideration in its marketing.
- *Heartland Visioning* – brings together community partners to implement a dynamic, creative vision for the future of Topeka and Shawnee County. Through consensus building, strategic planning, coordinated communications, and implementation initiatives, Heartland Visioning plays an important role in bringing partners together for the betterment of the community.
- *Downtown Topeka, Inc.* – leads the initiative to invest in Downtown Topeka and transform it into a vital and interesting center of activity and community pride – everyone's neighborhood. Great cities have great city centers. Downtown Topeka's historic character is a primary selling point in recruiting businesses and marketing to residents and visitors.
- *Washburn University* – is one of Topeka's leading institutions and is an important part of the city's heritage. As the university continues to grow and develop, it has a strong interest in the character and quality of the community in attracting students, parents, faculty, and alumni. Washburn is a strong supporter of community-wide initiatives.
- *Visit Topeka, Inc.* – presents the city to visitors and markets Topeka to organizations seeking convention and event venues. Topeka's image, identity, and character are important to their messaging, and high quality visitor experience is key to their reputation. Visit Topeka represents the city's hotel and service industry, which has a central role in hospitality and conveying a high quality visitor experience.
- *Kansas Expocentre* – is Topeka's convention and events center. Located near Downtown Topeka, the Expocentre plays an important role in attracting visitors, supporting the local economy, and conveying the

Preservation should be framed in the broader context of community character with its community benefits clearly conveyed.

city's appeal. The Expocentre's venues, Topeka's image and identity, and the quality of the visitor experience are important factors in attracting quality events and repeat visitors.

- *Shawnee County Historical Society* – operates the historic Richie House in Topeka as an interpretive site and educational resource. The Society has played a leadership role in public history in Topeka and publishes bulletins on the history, culture, and heritage of Topeka and Shawnee County that are valuable information and research documents.
- *Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area* – coordinates regional interpretation of Bleeding Kansas and related themes and presents the region to a national audience.
- *National Park Service* – operates the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, coordinates presentation of the site to a national audience, and provides technical assistance to local interpretive sites.
- *Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library* – provides a unique place for the research of stories, information, and connections to people and organizations throughout the nation. Collaboration with the community further enhances their shared connections with organizations with overlapping interests and missions to achieve a stronger community.
- *Topeka's Visitor Attractions* – are places that directly represent the city's quality and character to residents and visitors and provide something for visitors to do when they are here. Many of the city's attractions are historic. How they present themselves and communicate the city's overall message is important in creating a positive visitor experience.

City-wide partners presenting Topeka should incorporate historic preservation and community character as an aspect of the city's quality of life either directly or indirectly into their presentations.

The recommendations below suggest that city-wide partners presenting Topeka incorporate historic preservation and community character as an aspect of the city's quality of life either directly or indirectly into their presentations. Historic preservation interests need to collaborate with these and other leading organizations in reaching consensus on identity, messaging, and communications such that each organization can participate in a coordinated and mutually supportive initiative. Communication should be low key, interesting, and fun: a passive initiative to evoke Topeka's identity, build awareness, and help shape how we think about our city.

Preservation Program 3.35 –Create a **city-wide graphic identity** that reflects historic preservation and community character. Messaging would be used by each organization in a coordinated way. The identity could be one that is currently used, an adaptation of an existing identity, or a new one.

Each organization should endeavor to incorporate the city-wide identity into its own graphics and messaging to the extent possible in order to convey a unified presentation to both residents and visitors. Recognition of Topeka's unique status as the capital of Kansas is important. Incorporate the city's wayfinding plan into the city-wide identity and presentation.



Wayfinding is an important component of identity and communications.

Preservation Program 3.36 – Within the city-wide identity, create a **communications plan for historic preservation** embracing the various ways in which historic preservation is visible in the life of the city. Include Visit Topeka, Downtown Topeka Inc., the city-wide interpretive presentation, historic attractions, Planning Department, Housing and Neighborhood Development Department, and other historic preservation partners.

Preservation Program 3.37 – Publish an illustrated **history of Topeka** based upon the city-wide interpretive plan (see Chapter 4, Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.1) that can be offered for sale to residents and visitors. Digitize existing histories written about the city to facilitate their publishing and availability. Continue to prepare detailed and professional historical publications on thematic subjects and special topics.

Preservation Program 3.38 – Coordinate **websites and social media** presentations between leading organizations city-wide to communicate a common identity, set of themes, and messaging. Coordinate historic preservation and interpretive messaging with this endeavor.

Preservation Program 3.39 – Within the **City of Topeka** communications plan, include outreach and programming about historic preservation and community character with respect to Planning, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Code Enforcement, and Public Works Department programs and activities. Portray how the city's historic assets contribute to quality of life and economic prosperity. Prepare a special **Landmarks Commission newsletter** that can be issued digitally to residents on a periodic basis and posted on the city's website. Consider organizing community-wide conferences for neighborhoods.

Preservation Program 3.40 – Organize partners city-wide in presenting **events, lectures, newspaper articles, and publications** on Topeka history on a coordinated, periodic basis. Build on the existing programming and publications offered by partners. Explore how existing offerings can be better coordinated to keep heritage information and opportunities in the public eye. Identify overlaps and gaps in terms of timing and types of offerings. Create a yearly calendar as a coordination tool.

Preservation Program 3.41 – In a partnership between the Landmarks Commission and Shawnee County Historical Society, develop a **speakers' bureau** that could provide qualified speakers on topics related to Topeka's heritage to local conferences, tourism groups, community groups, schools, neighborhood organizations, and others.

Preservation Program 3.42 – Include outreach to **Neighborhood Associations** and Neighborhood Improvement Associations in the overall communications plan.

Preservation Program 3.43 – Encourage and support programming and interpretation for school groups and youth organizations at the city's interpretive attractions and historic sites as a means of **engaging young people** in the overall communications strategy for historic preservation.

Develop a coordinated approach to school learning standards in which interpretive sites with different stories and organizational capabilities can collaborate to engage schools with coordinated programming. Consult with the local school district and youth organizations to identify programs they conduct beyond the school curriculum with which the city's heritage attractions could participate.

CHAPTER 4 ■ HERITAGE TOURISM- TELLING TOPEKA’S STORIES TO ATTRACT VISITORS AND INSPIRE RESIDENTS

Heritage tourism should be an integral part of Topeka’s historic preservation program. Heritage tourism’s role is to highlight the significance of history and historic assets to Topeka’s character and identity, contribute to the economic vitality of the city, and enhance quality of life for residents.

Heritage tourism has two audiences, visitors and residents. While the economic goals associated with heritage tourism are focused primarily upon visitors, the interpretive presentation created through a heritage tourism initiative can have a significant impact upon residents as well.

Interpretation is a means through which residents can be exposed to Topeka’s heritage. It creates awareness about the themes and stories that tell the city’s history and relates those themes and stories to authentic places. Through interpretation, residents will learn about Topeka’s special places and develop awareness and respect for the city’s historic assets. Heritage tourism is therefore a significant way to reach out to Topeka’s residents and build long-term support for the city’s historic preservation program. Heritage tourism will help build community pride.

Heritage tourism contributes to Topeka’s economic vitality. The city’s historical attractions draw visitors and give those coming to the city for other reasons something more to do. Heritage tourism supports the convention and event businesses led by the Kansas Expocentre and enriches the experiences of those staying in the city’s hotels, encouraging them to stay longer and to return.

Interpretive sites are only one part of heritage tourism’s draw. Visitors who appreciate historic sites also appreciate communities that value their historic character. Heritage visitors want to experience authentic places. They want to learn about the city’s history and combine their visits to interpretive sites with interesting dining and shopping opportunities in historic commercial areas. Heritage visitors want a complete experience, expect high quality, and are willing to spend more than other types of visitors. They like to linger in the restaurants and other places where residents tend to gather. In this respect, the city’s downtown investment initiative, bringing alive the historic district along

Heritage tourism’s role is to highlight the significance of history and historic assets to Topeka’s character and identity, contribute to the economic vitality of the city, and enhance quality of life for residents.

Heritage visitors want to experience authentic places.

Kansas Avenue between 6th and 10th Streets, is an important part of a comprehensive heritage tourism strategy.

In addition to direct spending, heritage tourism enhances and promotes the city's image and identity. An engaging interpretive program, a vital historic downtown center, residents who value their city's character, a place that visitors like to be – these attributes can be positive factors in the city's larger economic strategy of attracting new businesses, helping existing businesses grow, and increasing the number of primary jobs within the region.

In addition to direct spending, heritage tourism enhances and promotes the city's image and identity.

Heritage tourism supports three of the goals identified in the historic preservation plan's *Preservation Approach*. Goal 1, "Make historic preservation central to Topeka's quality of life," is achieved through the enhancements associated with a comprehensive city-wide interpretive program as well as through the heritage development associated with such projects as the downtown investment initiative.

Goal 3, "Heighten public appreciation of Topeka's heritage through storytelling and other means," is achieved through the awareness engendered by the interpretive program and through the promotion associated with it that residents will see.

Goal 4, "Have heritage development be a core strategy in the city's economic development plan," is achieved by attracting heritage visitors and encouraging them to stay longer and by enhancing the city's image, identity, and quality of life, supporting Topeka as a great location for new and existing businesses.

As one aspect of Topeka's overall historic preservation program, this plan does not provide a complete prescription for a heritage tourism initiative. It does, however, outline what an initiative might look like and provides guidance under three strategic components: a city-wide interpretive presentation, visitor experience, and organization and management.

Creating a City-wide Interpretive Presentation

Topeka has a fascinating history closely associated with the broad, central historical themes of the region, the state, and the nation. The city has a strong set of anchor interpretive attractions, historic sites, and public places that can be woven together to create a distinctive interpretive presentation and visitor experience.

A comprehensive city-wide interpretive presentation can be created through the coordination and cooperation of a wide variety of partners. Key partners include historic interpretive sites with professional staff, who can guide development of the interpretive experience, and organizations with marketing responsibilities, such as Visit Topeka and Downtown Topeka, who promote the experience to visitors and residents.

It is suggested that Topeka's interpretive presentation be closely coordinated with the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area, which can help market the presentation regionally and nationally. Topeka should endeavor to become a



Great Overland Station

key partner with the heritage area and a regional anchor for its themes and stories.

In a city-wide interpretive presentation, existing historic interpretive sites serve as anchors and destinations to which visitors can be directed. To be recognized as an anchor site, an attraction should have certain capabilities and amenities to serve the visiting public. Each anchor attraction should:

- Be open to the public and have regular hours of operation that can be coordinated with other attractions. Some emerging sites may need assistance with this requirement.
- Have onsite exhibits and programming that is directly related to the themes and storylines developed in a city-wide interpretive plan. Some level of interior interpretive presentation should be required.
- Have basic visitor amenities including parking, rest rooms, visitor information, and provisions or alternatives for universal access.
- Have onsite staffing, preferably professional interpreters or at minimum trained volunteers.
- Preferably have an onsite meeting facility or gathering space where programming can be offered in a classroom setting (preferable, but not necessarily required).

This interpretive presentation is related only to Topeka’s history and heritage. It does not include other excellent attractions within the city such as the Kansas Children’s Discovery Center, Topeka Zoological Park, Combat Air Museum, or others that are not directly interpreting the city’s heritage. These other



Constitution Hall

attractions should be strongly supported and promoted in the city’s marketing but are not part of the heritage interpretation.

Participating sites with interpretive programming should work together to create a coordinated presentation of Topeka’s history and heritage with each site presenting the aspects of that history to which it relates and coordinating with the stories told at other partnering sites. Historic interpretive attractions in Topeka with public programming that might serve as anchor sites include:

- *Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site* – Tells the story of the landmark civil rights case for which it is named and the local and national context that transformed our nation.
- *Charles Curtis House Museum* – Charles Curtis was a national political leader in the early twentieth century, serving as a U.S. Congressman, Senator, and Vice-President running with Herbert Hoover. He is notable as the first Native American to serve in high national office.
- *Constitution Hall* – Located in the heart of Downtown Topeka, Constitution Hall is in the process of restoration to enable the building to tell the story of the Topeka Constitution and its role as the Free State Capitol.
- *Great Overland Station* – A magnificent railroad station of the Union Pacific line, Great Overland Station has recently completed a high quality restoration and tells the story of the railroad’s role as an anchor of Topeka’s economy and as a force in the opening and settlement of the west.



The Historic Richie Houses

- *Historic Richie Houses* – The homes of John and Hale Richie tell the story of Topeka’s free-state history through the experiences of those who lived it.
- *Kansas Museum of History* – The story of Kansas from prehistoric times to the present is told in this high-quality state museum. The location is home to the Kansas Historical Society, of which the museum is a part, as well as the State Archives and State Historic Preservation Office.
- *Kansas State Capitol* – In the final stages of restoration, the Kansas State Capitol is one of the most magnificent public buildings in the nation and gives living testimony to the history that has and is being made in Kansas through its architecture and visitors center.
- *Old Prairie Town* – Located in Historic Ward-Meade Park, Old Prairie Town uses an assemblage of historic buildings to tell the story of life in early Kansas.

While anchor interpretive sites serve as destinations within a city-wide interpretive presentation, an extensive network of self-guided interpretive installations is the real backbone of the presentation that reaches out and engages visitors and residents. Self-guided interpretive installations can be installed in publicly accessible locations such as the interpretive sites, parks, sidewalk areas, around public buildings, and in landscapes associated with private sites that have agreed to participate in the interpretive program.

The streetscapes along Kansas Avenue in Downtown Topeka and North Topeka are excellent examples of locations where outdoor, self-guided interpretation can be installed. The grounds of the State Capitol, proposed Riverfront Park, and

An extensive network of self-guided interpretive installations is the backbone of the presentation

Topeka Cemetery are examples of other public places where outdoor interpretation can be installed. Historic neighborhoods could also participate if they desire.

Outdoor interpretation can be installed along trails and routes such as Topeka's bikeways to create an interpretive experience and should be used to establish linkages and recommended touring routes between sites. The outdoor exhibits should use a common city-wide graphic format based upon the city's graphic identity discussed in Chapter 3. Public art with some degree of interpretive content is a highly desirable form of exhibit. Interpretation should be well coordinated using themes and stories outlined in a city-wide interpretive plan. *No privately owned historic site should be included in the interpretive presentation without the explicit written permission of the owners.*

The Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site has recently spearheaded an interpretive presentation titled *From Brown to Brown: Topeka's Civil Rights Story* featuring sixteen of the city's historic interpretive attractions and historic sites. The presentation includes a brochure and map and self-guided outdoor wayside exhibits using National Park Service exhibit carriers and graphic formats. Outdoor interpretive exhibits are also being planned as part of the Kansas Avenue streetscape project in Downtown Topeka. Both of these initiatives are exactly the kinds of partnerships and interpretive initiatives envisioned in this plan. It is suggested that they be coordinated and further developed over time.

The following recommendations provide guidance for creating a city-wide interpretive presentation that will promote heritage tourism, reinforce the city's identity, and raise public awareness about the central role of the city's historic assets in its quality of life.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.1 – Develop a **city-wide interpretive plan** that engages a broad array of interpretive partners. Identify interpretive themes and subjects that characterize the city's history. Work with local attractions to determine how the stories each site presents represent the city-wide interpretive themes. Identify the role that each site is willing and able to play in a coordinated city-wide interpretive presentation. Create visitor itineraries, routes, and tours that link interpretive sites and attractions. Outline how the interpretive presentation can begin to be implemented in the short-term and further developed and enriched in phases in over time.

The city-wide interpretive plan will determine how best to present an overview of the city's history to which residents and visitors can relate, identifying key themes and storylines. It will provide a context for how each individual interpretive site fits into the city's history, and it will identify how individual interpretive sites will work together to coordinate their stories, programs, and messaging.

Development of the city-wide interpretive plan should be led by professional interpreters from the city's leading historic sites. Qualified consultants could be used to guide the planning. It should include the following elements:

HERITAGE TOURISM- TELLING TOPEKA'S STORIES TO ATTRACT VISITORS AND INSPIRE RESIDENTS

1. Introduction: Outline the background and purpose of the plan.
2. Themes and Storylines: Identify Topeka's key historic themes and storylines for interpretation as developed by the city's interpretive partners. Every active interpretive attraction should be able to find its place within the thematic structure. Coordinate with themes and storylines associated with Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area.
3. Overview of Existing Interpretation: Prepare an overview summarizing current interpretive programming and conditions offered by partners. Identify (a) each existing participating interpretive site/attraction, (b) organization and contact information, (c) days and hours open to the public, (d) staffing summary, (e) available facilities, (f) theme(s) to which each site relates, and (g) summary of programs currently offered.

Organize the overview to outline the interests and capabilities of the various participating sites. Begin with the larger sites that have professional staff and are fully open to the public and work toward the smaller sites that may be operated solely by volunteers and open only by appointment.

4. Orientation to the City-wide Interpretive Presentation: Outline how the city-wide presentation will be introduced to residents and visitors and how visitors will be oriented. The orientation should include an overview of themes and storylines, where they are presented, and suggested routes and itineraries.



Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site

Consider using websites, interpretive maps and brochures, and introductory exhibits at leading interpretive sites and in key public spaces.

Consult with partners and determine how best to phase-in coordinated interpretation that presents the city-wide context and sets the stage for detailed interpretation at individual sites and attractions. Exhibits should provide orientation information and direct visitors to participating local interpretive sites. Use the county's graphic identity and formatting for exhibits and publications.

5. Interpretation at Sites and Attractions: Outline how individual interpretive sites and attractions will participate in the city-wide presentation. Identify the key storylines that each participating site will present and how sites will work together to tailor their interpretation as part of the broader storylines.

Identify which storylines are visitor-ready and which have gaps and need further development. Determine how support can be provided to assist sites in their presentations. Determine how participating sites can be provided with introductory exhibits providing city-wide context and relating sites to larger storylines.

6. Interpretation at Self-guided Sites: Identify potential publicly accessible sites and private partners that might be interested in and appropriate for self-guided interpretive exhibits as part of the city-wide presentation. Consider public parks, public buildings, trails, bikeways, and streetscapes. Use self-guided interpretation to create linkages between sites.

Develop an exhibit format that can be used for installation of self-guided exhibits using the city's graphic identity and coordinated with city-wide themes and storylines. Develop a maintenance protocol for self-guided exhibits at partnering locations.

7. Implementation: Prioritize the ideas and actions outlined above. Begin with those that are fundable and most likely to achieve results. Identify resources to support coordinated implementation over time.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.2 – Coordinate with **regional and national partners**, especially Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area, the Kansas Historical Society, and the National Park Service. Collaborate actively in their planning and programming. Coordinate with other communities and sites that interpret themes related to those of Topeka, especially those associated with Freedom's Frontier. Become a regional and statewide leader in the presentation of Kansas history.

Become a regional and statewide leader in the presentation of Kansas history.



John Steuart Curry painting of John Brown at the Kansas State Capitol

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.3 – Use the city’s existing **interpretive attractions and historic sites** as anchors and destinations within the city-wide interpretive plan as discussed Recommendation 4.1 above. Engage the professional interpretive staff of anchor sites as leaders in the development of the interpretive plan. Actively support the development and enhancement of anchor sites and the visitor experiences they offer. Establish criteria for sites to meet in the programs they offer, how programs coordinate with other those of other sites, and how sites participate in the city-wide presentation.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.4 – Create a network of **self-guided outdoor interpretive exhibits** at partnering sites, along streetscapes, in public parks, and in other publicly accessible places as noted in Recommendation 4.1 above. Build upon the recently developed *From Brown to Brown* outdoor interpretive initiative focusing on Topeka’s civil rights story and include additional themes and storylines in accordance with the city-wide interpretive plan.

Create a city-wide outdoor interpretive program through which interested partners can install interpretive waysides and kiosks on their publicly accessible properties as part of the city-wide interpretive presentation. Partnering sites should agree to provide matching funds for design and installation and to maintain the sites and interpretive exhibits. Coordinate the interpretation of each site within the overall city-wide presentation.

Develop a set of interpretive exhibit carriers such as waysides and kiosks and graphic formats that can be used for the self-guided outdoor exhibits. Coordinate formats with the city’s graphic identity as discussed in Chapter 3. Consider using National Park Service standards as in the *From Brown to*

Brown installations and/or developing customized standards, perhaps using the designs developed for the Kansas Avenue streetscape improvements (see Recommendation 4.5 below).

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.5 – Designate **Downtown Topeka** as a central interpretive destination in the city-wide interpretive presentation. Install orientation exhibits for the city-wide interpretive presentation along Kansas Avenue. Use the interpretive enhancements proposed in the Kansas Avenue investment initiative between 6th and 10th Streets as a model for the self-guided interpretive presentation. Include outdoor interpretation of public buildings such as the Old Federal Building and historic state government buildings.

Support the development and promotion of downtown anchor attractions including Constitution Hall, Great Overland Station, Jayhawk Theater, and State Capitol. Collaborate with each attraction in determining and promoting their roles in downtown as a destination. Provide visibility and support for Constitution Hall and the Jayhawk Theater as they seek funding for implementation. Include the interpretive presentation in promotion of Downtown Topeka.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.6 – Use Topeka’s system of **trails and bikeways** to link historic sites and tell stories through outdoor exhibits and digital media. Identify themes and stories that can be told along each of the city’s trails and bikeways. Include interpretive enhancements in the development of trails and bikeways. Make these public routes a central component of the city-wide interpretive plan.



Historic building associated with the Kansas Museum of History

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.7 – Support the city-wide interpretive presentation with a **family of brochures and interpretive guides** using Topeka's graphic identity. Include a high-quality **fold-out map** with interpretive context and that helps visitors find their way through the city. Use the *From Brown to Brown* and Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area interpretive maps as potential models. Topeka has several previous versions of interpretive maps, no longer publicly offered, that may also be used as guides. Make the map and brochures available online.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.8 – Include **public art** as a distinctive form of interpretive element within the city-wide interpretive plan.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.9 – Develop **digital interpretive presentations** for iPad and other tablet formats to be accessed over the internet from historic sites throughout the city. Digital interpretation can be used to enhance outdoor exhibits and/or provide interpretation where outdoor exhibits cannot be installed or are not desirable. The media content should be rich and exciting. Development of digital interpretive media could be a longer term goal of the interpretive plan.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.10 – Encourage **Neighborhood Associations** and Neighborhood Improvement Associations to participate as partners in the city-wide interpretive presentation by interpreting the their neighborhoods and public spaces.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.11 – Use **events** offered by the various interpretive partners as an integral part of the city-wide interpretive presentation.

Visitor Experience

In order to present Topeka in a coordinated way and provide the complete experience that heritage visitors are seeking, the city's tourism partners should work together to coordinate visitor information, wayfinding, and services.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.12 – Through Visit Topeka and the Topeka Tourism Alliance, assess the overall **visitor experience** in Topeka and outline priorities and initiatives for its enhancement. Work closely with Visit Topeka and the Chamber of Commerce to incorporate heritage tourism as a focus of the city's tourism and economic development strategy.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.13 –. Make **heritage tourism** an integral part of the communications plan for Visit Topeka that promotes tourism and area attractions for residents and visitors alike. This should include website development, social media, visitor guides, interpretive maps, and other media. Provide complete visitor information online. Link to the social media formats and websites of partners and sponsors.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.14 – Develop a **website** specifically for Topeka's interpretive presentation, perhaps through the Topeka Tourism Alliance. Provide visitor information, presentation of the city's interpretive themes and storylines, interpretive content, and information on interpretive



Old Prairie Town at Historic Ward-Meade Park

sites. Use the website to provide access to the digital interpretative media (see Recommendation 4.9 above) and additional interpretive content. Link to **social media** formats and to the websites of partners and sponsors.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.15 – Expand the existing **wayfinding network** to link sites within the city-wide interpretive presentation.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.16 – In addition to its role as a central interpretive destination (see Recommendation 4.5 above), designate **Downtown Topeka** as the location where historically oriented **visitor services** may be found. Under the leadership of Downtown Topeka, Inc., focus on attracting restaurants and shops located in historic buildings providing services to visitors and residents. Activate Downtown Topeka through marketing and events as the city’s cultural and social center.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.17 – Engage the city’s **hotels and restaurants** as contact points for visitors with respect to the interpretive presentation. Make visitor information available at hotels and restaurants. Provide periodic hospitality training for front-line personnel so they are able to provide information and recommendations to visitors.

The Topeka Tourism Alliance could be enhanced and used to lead the initiative.

Organization and Management

Topeka’s heritage tourism program and city-wide interpretive plan can be organized, implemented, and managed by existing organizations. The Topeka Tourism Alliance, an entity within Visit Topeka, is currently underdeveloped and could be enhanced and used to lead the initiative. The city’s larger interpretive attractions have the management and interpretive experience to execute an effective collaborative program.



Visit Topeka, Inc. on Kansas Avenue, Downtown

Among the key issues to be addressed, however, is the identification of stable sources of funding for both product development and the ongoing operations of individual organizations. This plan proposes that more can be achieved through cooperation and partnerships, showing tangible results and real community benefits, than can be achieved by each of the organizations alone.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.18 – Use the **Topeka Tourism Alliance** as the organizing entity in development and implementation of the interpretive plan. Provide a full-time staff person through Visit Topeka to manage the program and work with anchor attractions and historic sites. Devote a specified portion of the Visit Topeka annual budget to product development and promotion of heritage tourism. Closely coordinate the city-wide interpretive program with other Topeka tourism priorities.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.19 – Continue to devote a portion of the **Transient Guest Tax** revenue as source of funding to promote and support tourism in Topeka. Make heritage tourism an important part of the city's tourism and economic development program. Continue to provide funding for the development of tourism product (anchor attractions, interpretive sites) as well as promotion that enhances visitor experience. See Chapter 3, Preservation Program Recommendation 3.11 on Landmarks Commission incentive programs for funding recommendations that include Capital Improvement Grants for interpretive sites and Interpretive Program Grants.

Heritage Tourism Recommendation 4.20 – Through the Topeka Tourism Alliance, develop a **collaborative approach to funding** in support of anchor interpretive attractions and historic sites. Consider both operational funding

and capital improvements. Work together to share resources and cultivate potential funders.



Kansas State Capitol in the final stages of an extensive restoration

CHAPTER 5 ▪ SPECIAL PLACES

Topeka's Historic Preservation Plan recognizes that many of the buildings and other assets that contribute to the city's historic character will not necessarily become designated as landmarks and that the preservation plan must take a broad view to embrace the wide range of historically significant assets city-wide.

Chapter 3 looks at broadening the city's formal historic preservation program to include a larger number of historic assets. Chapter 5 takes the opposite approach and identifies ways in which other city programs and initiatives can contribute to, and benefit from, a historic preservation perspective. Central to this idea is recognizing how historic assets contribute to the special places within our community regardless of historic designations.

Chapter 5 addresses specific aspects of Goals 1 and 5 as outlined in Chapter 2, *Preservation Approach*. Goal 1 is about making sure historic preservation is understood to be central to Topeka's quality of life; Goal 5 is about integrating historic preservation into city programs and processes.

Topeka's quality of life is in large part dependent upon how we treat the special places in which we live and work. If we understand the character of those places, we can work with it to strengthen and enhance the elements that contribute to that character. In Topeka, community character can be best understood by looking at neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are Topeka's special places and its greatest assets.

Downtown Topeka is everyone's neighborhood. It is the center and the symbol of the city's health and vitality. Great cities have great city centers. As Kansas' state capital, Topeka is in a unique position and has a responsibility to present itself in a manner worthy of Kansans state-wide, welcoming our neighbors from every corner of the state and visitors from across the nation. Kansas heritage and character are central to this special place.

Strategies for strengthening neighborhoods and for investment in downtown Topeka are outlined below along with recommendations for how they might be achieved. Many of the recommendations involve city programs and processes, and will require collaboration and a team approach between different city agencies toward a common purpose. That purpose is a vital, healthy city, and historic preservation plays an important part in achieving it.

The preservation plan must take a broad view to embrace the wide range of historically significant assets city-wide.

In Topeka, community character can be best understood by looking at neighborhoods.



During the planning process that led to the writing of this preservation plan, the impacts of city agencies and programs beyond planning and historic preservation were widely discussed. Ideas and recommendations that go beyond the scope of the historic preservation plan were put forth. Not all of those ideas and recommendations are included in this preservation plan document because they go beyond its intended scope.

For instance, this plan discusses how historic preservation contributes to downtown revitalization and investment, but the full scope of the city's downtown investment initiative is centered in the city's comprehensive plan and related actions. This preservation plan clearly states the importance of downtown investment to the preservation of historic assets within the downtown districts and how they are critical to the downtown initiative's success. A similar point is made about neighborhood revitalization. While this preservation plan is as broad as possible in its scope, some ideas are rightly left to other components of the city's comprehensive plan. This preservation plan coordinates with and supports those components.

Neighborhoods – Conserving Topeka's Greatest Assets

Topeka is a city of neighborhoods. Much of Topeka's appeal as a place to live can be attributed to the character and appeal of its neighborhoods. They are comfortable, spacious, walkable, family-friendly, and of high quality. They are also affordable; even the city's more modest neighborhoods are very appealing and not very different in character from more affluent areas. Topeka's neighborhoods convey a strong sense of community— classic American neighborhoods and good places to live and raise children.

From a design perspective, Topeka’s neighborhoods have a clear structure and are comprised of blocks with interesting, well-built residences; streetscapes with front lawns, sidewalks, and mature canopy trees; public parks; and occasional small commercial centers. Historically, the neighborhoods radiate outward from the downtown business and industrial center. Each neighborhood has distinctive characteristics related to the period in which it was developed and the people for which it was designed. Many residents do not consider their neighborhood features historic, but they are. Many of the city’s historic preservation goals can be achieved by addressing the health, vitality, appropriate treatment of neighborhoods.

The City of Topeka has a strong set of neighborhood programs spread across its Planning, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Public Works, and Police Departments. Grassroots-organized Neighborhood Associations and Neighborhood Improvement Associations are the vehicles through which city programs connect to and are affected by local residents. The policies these city programs reflect and the degree to which they are well coordinated and well implemented has an important impact upon the physical appearance, health, and economic viability of Topeka’s neighborhoods.

Beyond the impact that the city programs are capable of having, the behavior of the private sector, both businesses and residents, is most important in affecting the long-term character of neighborhoods. Inadvertent behavior over time can result in changes that strengthen or weaken neighborhoods, with direct impacts upon appearance, safety, property values, and economic viability. Private sector behavior can be positively influenced through education; incentives; and other public, non-profit, and private grassroots activities.

The preservation plan organizes recommendations for preserving the historic resources within neighborhoods around three broad strategies:

- Continuing planning for neighborhood revitalization;
- Using Topeka’s neighborhood revitalization programs as a means to preserve and enhance community character; and
- Emphasizing the importance of historic building and landscape assets as an element of community character in neighborhood revitalization programs.

Planning for Neighborhood Revitalization

Over the past decade, Topeka has developed an excellent set of individualized neighborhood plans that are used to direct city programs and resources toward revitalization. The plans are prepared by the Planning Department on a rotating schedule as staff time permits and involve extensive input from local residents. Much of the focus has been upon neighborhoods that qualify for federal assistance and have designated Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIAs).

The scope and quality of the neighborhood plans has improved with experience, and the plans prepared in recent years have been of exceptional quality. The plans document existing conditions within each neighborhood, identify areas of

Many of the city’s historic preservation goals can be achieved by addressing the health, vitality, appropriate treatment of neighborhoods.

The neighborhood plans are an effective planning tool that directly supports the role of historic preservation in neighborhood revitalization.

potential action, and prioritize actions to be undertaken. The neighborhood plans provide an action plan for city revitalization programs implemented through Housing and Neighborhood Development and other city departments. Recent plans include design guidelines that promote understanding of the character of historic residences within each particular neighborhood. The neighborhood plans are an effective planning tool that directly supports the role of historic preservation in neighborhood revitalization.

In addition to neighborhood plans, every three to four years, the city's Planning Department undertakes a Neighborhood Health Map Update using benchmarks and vital signs that help identify trends, progress made, and challenges remaining in the revitalization of transitional neighborhoods with NIAs. The Neighborhood Health Map Update is the primary means through which the city and stakeholders can understand the progress being made in neighborhood revitalization and how resources might be redirected to be as effective as possible.

Special Places Recommendation 5.1 – Continue to prepare and update **neighborhood plans** for all neighborhoods. Continue to use neighborhood plans as the guide for coordinated implementation of the city's neighborhood revitalization programs.

Special Places Recommendation 5.2 – Continue development of neighborhood-specific **design guidelines** as components of neighborhood plans to guide treatment decisions for the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic housing and for the design of new infill housing. Use the design guidelines to identify the historic housing types and character defining



features of buildings within a neighborhood. Emphasize the retaining, maintenance, and repair of historic building fabric in neighborhood plan design guidelines and obtain the input of the Landmarks Commission in their development.

Special Places Recommendation 5.3 – Use **neighborhood conservation districts** as developed through the Planning Department as a means through which Neighborhood Associations and Neighborhood Improvement Associations may guide change in a manner that supports and enhances neighborhood character.

Special Places Recommendation 5.4 – Encourage the **recognition of historic attributes** as a component of neighborhood character in the development of conservation districts and in the treatment of neighborhood landscapes. Use the Secretary of the Interior’s *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* as a methodology for the analysis of character defining features in neighborhoods and as a philosophical basis for their treatment (National Park Service 2013). Analysis of landscape characteristics should include:

- Spatial organization and land patterns,
- Views and vistas,
- Topography,
- Natural systems and features,
- Water features,
- Vegetation,
- Circulation,
- Buildings and structures,
- Small-scale features, and
- Special considerations.

Special Places Recommendation 5.5 – Continue to prepare **Neighborhood Health Map Updates** on a regular basis. Underscore the role of historic preservation as an element of neighborhood character in healthy neighborhoods wherever possible.

Surveying Assets and Neighborhoods

A priority recommendation of *Chapter 3, Historic Preservation Program*, is for the Landmarks Commission to focus upon completing historic resource inventories or surveys of historic assets throughout the city. The completion of surveys is the first step in understanding the nature and extent of the presence of historic assets within Topeka’s neighborhoods, its special places.

Surveys will help the city and residents identify areas within neighborhoods that might be eligible to become National Register or local historic districts. Whether or not they actually become designated, the city and residents should consider such locations priority areas for initiatives, incentives, and appropriate treatment to preserve and enhance historic assets and historic character. They should be recognized as priority areas for historic preservation.

Topeka has completed a number of historic resource inventories or surveys of neighborhoods. More recent surveys are included in the Kansas Historic Resource Inventory online database maintained by the Kansas Historical Society.

A priority recommendation of *Chapter 3, Historic Preservation Program*, is for the Landmarks Commission to focus upon completing historic resource inventories or surveys of historic assets throughout the city.



The surveys indicate which properties within a neighborhood are historically significant and which are not. Recommendations are made as to which areas are potentially eligible as historic districts. A number of older surveys undertaken have not yet been included in the online database. Some of these earlier surveys need to be reassessed.

Neighborhoods that have been surveyed in Topeka include:

- Potwin Place (1980) – has been surveyed and listed on the National Register;
- Holliday Park (2002) – has been surveyed and listed on the National Register;
- North Topeka (2002) – multiple individual properties are eligible;
- Collins Park (2002) – the entire survey area has been identified with the potential for nomination as a historic district;
- Original Town (2003) – seven areas have been identified with the potential for nomination of individual properties;
- Ward Meade (2003) – five areas have been recommended for nomination as historic districts and six additional areas have been identified with the potential for nomination as historic districts;
- Monroe (2004) – six areas have been identified with the potential for nomination as historic districts;
- Old Town (2005) – six areas have been identified with the potential for nomination as historic districts;



- College Avenue (2006) – has been surveyed and listed on the National Register; and
- Downtown Topeka (including North Topeka) (2012) – three areas have been recommended for nomination as historic districts.

Topeka’s Planning Department has identified the following neighborhoods as among those that are priorities for additional survey and assessment:

- Kenwood;
- Knollwood;
- Auburndale;
- Elmhurst;
- Tennessee Town;
- Valley Park;
- Westwood Place;
- College Hill; and
- Westboro.

Knollwood and Valley Park are Post World War II neighborhoods that are only recently being considered for their historical significance. Appendix E of this preservation plan, *Neighborhood Surveys*, describes these and other neighborhoods and findings of historic resource inventories that have been undertaken to date.

Special Places Recommendation 5.6 – Assess the status of historic resource inventories or **surveys** of Topeka’s neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas city-wide. Undertake surveys as an ongoing initiative to identify historic assets and areas that are potentially eligible as National Register and local historic districts. Undertake this action independent of the preparation of neighborhood plans but use the information obtained to inform neighborhood planning and revitalization initiatives city-wide.

Preserving Community Character Through Neighborhood Revitalization Programs

The City of Topeka has a comprehensive set of neighborhood revitalization programs focused on improving the quality of life for residents, mostly in lower income neighborhoods. Managed primarily through the city’s Housing and Neighborhood Development Department, most of these programs take advantage of federal grants available through Housing and Urban Development. The programs enhance affordable living, neighborhood livability, and the appearance of the community, and they help safeguard life, health and property. In addition, the various housing programs and projects help build a positive city image, beautify neighborhoods, and generate investment interest in Topeka’s housing market.

The city’s overall neighborhood revitalization program is outlined in the Neighborhood Wellness Strategy, Section 3 of the Neighborhood Element of the Topeka Comprehensive Plan 2025. The Wellness Strategy specifically recognizes historic preservation as a priority activity in neighborhood development (City of Topeka, Neighborhood Wellness Strategy 2012:32).

The limited resources available to the city for neighborhood revitalization are focused upon neighborhoods through a competitive process in which the neighborhoods demonstrate need and capacity of local residents to be engaged. The Neighborhood Health Map Updates help demonstrate need, and neighborhood plans outline an action plan for implementation.

Every two years, the city accepts applications from interested NIAs for designation as a Target Area Neighborhood through its Stages of Resource Targeting (SORT). Two neighborhoods are selected through the application process, and for the next two years the city focuses its resources from a variety of available housing and infrastructure programs upon areas within those neighborhoods. The goal is to have a measurable effect upon those areas of the neighborhoods and to spur revitalization and investment in adjacent areas.

These city neighborhood revitalization programs are important to the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic residences throughout Topeka. City-wide, Topeka’s network of Neighborhood Associations (NAs) and Neighborhood Improvement Associations (NIAs) are the means through which grassroots initiatives are expressed and supported, neighborhood by neighborhood. The city currently has in place programming for the support of NAs and NIAs, yet there is great variation in the organization and effectiveness of these vital entities. The City of Topeka continues to strengthen and refine its efforts to help make NAs and NIAs effective grassroots community organizations.

These city neighborhood revitalization programs are important to the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic residences throughout Topeka.



Special Places Recommendation 5.7 – Support implementation of the Neighborhood Element of the Topeka Comprehensive Plan as outlined in the **Neighborhood Wellness Strategy**.

Special Places Recommendation 5.8 – Facilitate **coordination** between Planning, Housing and Neighborhood Development, and Code Enforcement in implementation of SORT and related programs. Monitor coordination of programs being implemented under SORT to maximize effectiveness and meet goals and community expectations.

Special Places Recommendation 5.9 – Identify an **executive representative** for Neighborhood Relations within City government whose responsibility is to coordinate City programs affecting neighborhood revitalization across all City departments. This person should provide more effective direct communication between neighborhoods and City staff, increase internal communication between relevant departments and divisions, and ensure projects are executed efficiently and effectively.

Special Places Recommendation 5.10 – Support the work of Planning and Housing and Neighborhood Development in **strengthening NAs and NIAs** at the grassroots level in neighborhood revitalization and enhancement.

The Importance of Historic Assets in Community Character

The city’s neighborhood plans and Neighborhood Wellness Strategy recognize the role of historic preservation and community character in healthy neighborhoods. Section 1 of the comprehensive plan’s Neighborhood Element, The State of Neighborhoods, identifies historic character as a key asset, stating:

A large number of historically significant structures, particularly if the renovation of some of those structures has already begun, can be a unique

neighborhood attribute. This allows a neighborhood to distinguish itself by creating a singular identity that can be used as a tool to market the neighborhood (City of Topeka, The State of Neighborhoods 2012:10).

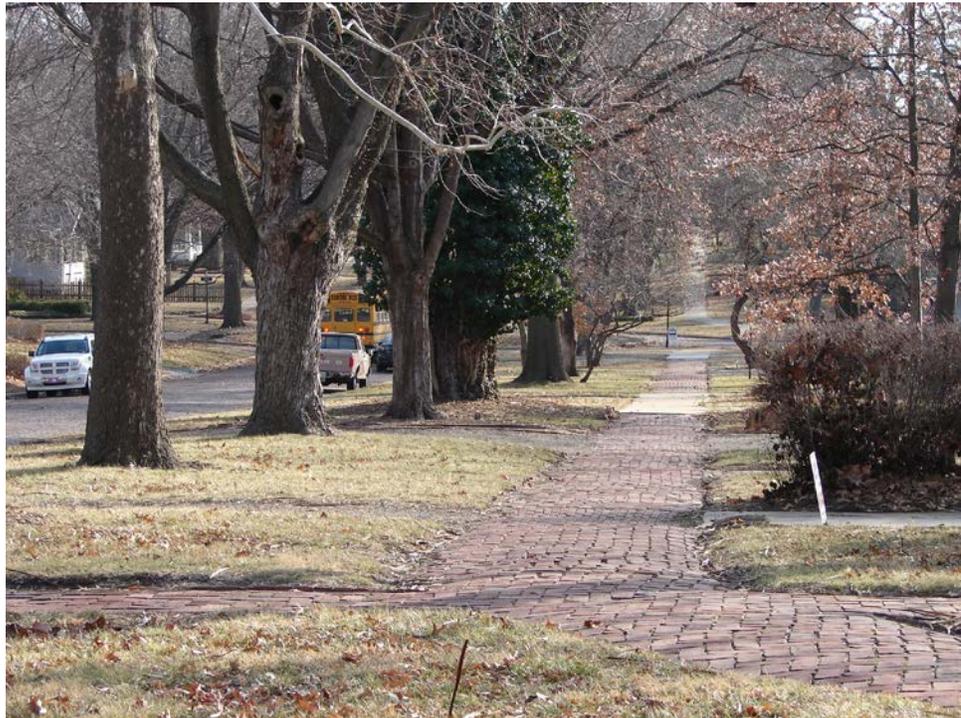
City departments should continue to increase their recognition of historic preservation as an of element community character. Program elements should increasingly provide information on the appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscape features in strengthening and enhancing community character.

City departments should continue to increase their recognition of historic preservation as an of element community character.

Special Places Recommendation 5.11 – Use the ***Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*** to guide treatment decisions in the rehabilitation of historic residences through the Housing Development Program, Community Housing Development Organization initiatives, and other similar city-coordinated programs (National Park Service 2013). Involve Planning staff when needed to assist in integrating appropriate treatment into planning decisions.

Special Places Recommendation 5.12 – Conduct periodic **workshops** to train city Planning, Housing and Neighborhood Development, and Code Enforcement staff in the principles associated with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards* so they are better prepared to make decisions using those principles in the field. Include overviews of the historical development of Topeka neighborhoods, historic building types, and the identification and treatment of character defining features.

Special Places Recommendation 5.13 – Use the **design guidelines** included in the city’s neighborhood plans for the placement, form, character, and appearance of publicly-funded infill development. Tie the design guidelines



to the economic incentives of the neighborhood revitalization program for private development. The purpose of the guidelines is to reinforce historic neighborhood development patterns and overall community character.

Special Places Recommendation 5.14 – Recognize the importance of mature street trees to the appealing character of historic neighborhoods. The role of the city’s **Forestry Program** in maintaining existing street trees and planting new replacement trees should be supported. Best practices for the urban landscape environment should be followed.

Special Places Recommendation 5.15 – The **Brick Streets and Sidewalks Policy**, preserving and restoring the city’s brick streets, brick sidewalks, and granite curbs in locations where they are still present, should be followed by all city departments maintaining and undertaking work where historic materials may be disturbed. Update the brick street policy to reflect changes in the state environs law.

Special Places Recommendation 5.16 – Monitor the city’s **capital improvements projects** for potential impacts on historic landscape and streetscape features in neighborhoods. Review procedures for complying with **Section 106** of the *National Historic Preservation Act* with respect to projects using federal funds, including transportation projects undertaken by Engineering and Public Works, and HUD funded projects administered by Housing and Neighborhood Development.

Making Downtown a Vital Place

Planning for investment in Downtown Topeka is a larger initiative of the city’s Comprehensive Plan. The Historic Preservation Plan supports this initiative and encourages it to be broad in scope and a central focus of the city’s endeavors.

Historic preservation plays a role in the vitality and economic viability of downtown in several important ways. First, historic buildings are central to the character of Kansas Avenue. Finding uses for these buildings and emphasizing their appealing qualities will help activate the street and establish the unique identity of Downtown Topeka and the businesses that occupy those buildings.

Second, downtown is a destination. It is a special place where residents and visitors should seek unique experiences and recollections – creating memorable customs, buying special items, encountering one another in beautiful, exciting places, providing an important place for important happenings. Such a special place can only be found through a combination of layers of historic fabric enhanced by new construction and excellent design in the public realm, all supporting a thriving commercial environment.

Finally, downtown provides the central place to tell and celebrate Topeka’s story. Historic buildings are an important vehicle through which the city’s story can be told.

The success of the downtown investment initiative is essential to the mission of this preservation plan. By establishing Downtown Topeka as the center of the

Historic preservation plays a role in the vitality and economic viability of downtown in several important ways.

The success of the downtown investment initiative is essential to the mission of this preservation plan.



city's economic and cultural identity, appreciation of the role of the city's historic assets in community life will be strengthened. Through this appreciation, the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscapes will receive broad public recognition and support.

The preservation plan includes recommendations for historic preservation in Downtown Topeka through two broad strategies:

- Supporting planning and implementation of investment initiatives in Downtown Topeka; and
- Facilitating the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings as a core component of the downtown investment initiative.

Planning and Implementation in Downtown Topeka

Several recent planning studies provide a foundation for new investment in Downtown Topeka and are guiding its implementation. *The South Kansas Avenue Streetscape Plan* establishes a vision for downtown and outlines components and design principles that will help bring the streetscape alive for residents and visitors. Planning for the Kansas Avenue Phase 1 design and construction project from 6th through 10th Avenues further elaborates upon the streetscape plan and is the basis for implementation.

The Downtown Topeka investment initiative is particularly notable as a significant public/private partnership. City capital funds are being used for engineering and street infrastructure improvements while streetscape enhancements are being funded through private sector donations. The degree to which business leaders have stepped forward to support the project

The Downtown Topeka investment initiative is particularly notable as a significant public/private partnership.



financially demonstrates their understanding of the importance of the project to the city's overall economic development strategy. Great cities have great city centers. A vibrant, healthy downtown demonstrates the quality of life that helps attract new business to the city.

Continued city leadership is needed to fully implement the potential for Downtown Topeka over time. The support of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce and large businesses located downtown is essential for its success. Small businesses are essential to enliven the streetscape; attracting small businesses and helping them succeed is central to the initiative.

Downtown Topeka, Inc. (DTI) is orchestrating business recruitment, coordinating maintenance and enhancements, and activating the streetscape through promotion and events. DTI administers the Downtown Business Improvement District that is a central organizational and funding mechanism for ongoing operations of the downtown initiative.

Non-profit and other organizations such as Heartland Visioning, the North Topeka Arts District (NOTO), Constitution Hall, and Jayhawk Theater bring partners together and make downtown come alive.

Planning and implementation for a vital downtown should continue and is in the interest of Topeka's Historic Preservation Plan in the rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings. Over the medium to long term, planning for the entire length of Kansas Avenue, linking the Capitol area to North Topeka, is in the interest of the city, businesses, and residents. Plans for the redesign of Interstate I-70 and for a future riverfront park will support and help spur investment in the Kansas Avenue corridor.

Special Places Recommendation 5.17 – Make downtown investment a **priority focus** of the City of Topeka and other stakeholders deriving value for all city residents. Commit the necessary resources to planning, programming, business recruitment, marketing, and implementation to ensure success.

Special Places Recommendation 5.18 – Implement *The South Kansas Avenue Streetscape Plan* and the ongoing Kansas Avenue Phase 1 design and construction project from 6th through 10th Avenues.

Use a **citywide interpretive plan** as the basis for design and implementation of the planned interpretive enhancements for the Kansas Avenue Phase 1 Project (see Chapter 4, Heritage Tourism). Connect downtown interpretation to a city-wide interpretive presentation including the city's anchor attractions. Create designs for interpretive kiosks, carriers, and other interpretive elements to be applicable city-wide.

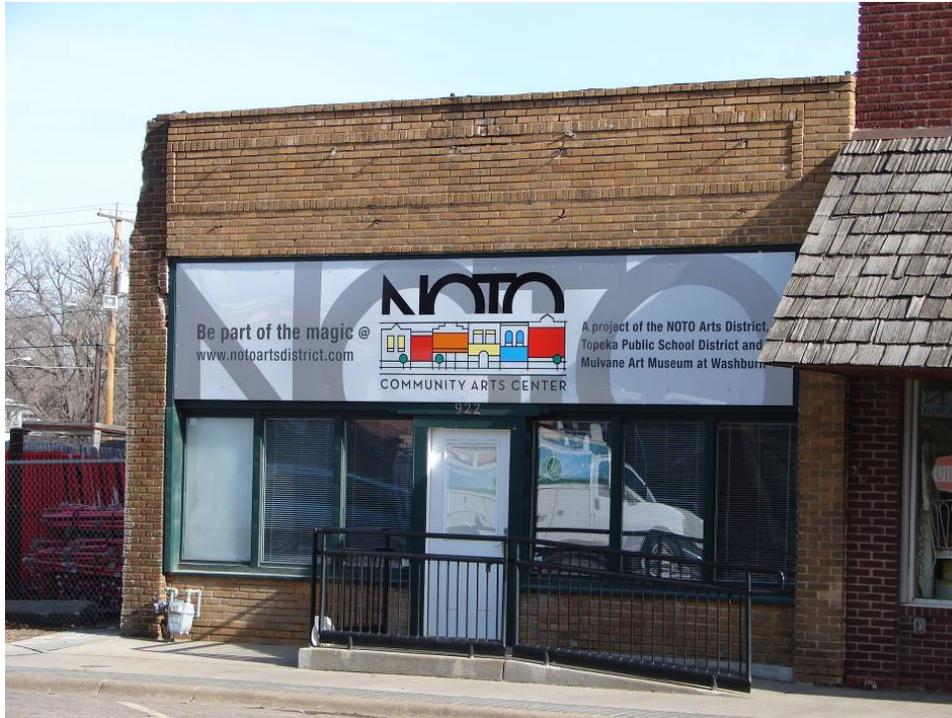
Special Places Recommendation 5.19 – Implement and maintain the complete **wayfinding plan** for Topeka focusing especially on downtown. Assess the existing plan for gaps and additional enhancement to be planned and implemented. Coordinate the wayfinding system with the planned interpretive enhancements for downtown. Add historic downtown interpretive attractions that are not yet part of the system, such as NOTO and Constitution Hall.

Establishing a high quality wayfinding system is essential in helping the visitors that downtown needs to attract find their way and have a satisfactory visitor experience. The wayfinding system is also important in establishing a graphic identity for Downtown Topeka to which visitors can relate.

Special Places Recommendation 5.20 – Revise the city's zoning map to implement the **Downtown District** included in Topeka's zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance was amended to include the Downtown District and D1, D2, and D3 zoning classifications, but the zoning map was never revised to implement the district throughout the city's downtown core. The Downtown District and its historic preservation and design provisions are key to the long term goal of making Downtown Topeka a center of the city's economic and cultural identity.

Special Places Recommendation 5.21 – Revise the city's zoning map to implement the "D" **Downtown Districts** included in Topeka's zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance was amended to include the D1, D2, and D3 zoning classifications, but the zoning map was never revised to implement the district throughout the city's downtown core.

The Downtown Districts' design guidelines are key to the long term goal of making Downtown Topeka a center of the city's economic and cultural identity. Formalize and further develop the **Downtown Topeka Urban Design Guidelines** applicable to the Downtown District through the zoning ordinance with the goal of making them a more central part of the downtown redevelopment process.



Make the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties the basis for treatment of historic buildings within the downtown districts. This will allow zoning and historic district reviews to be seamless and consistent, if applicable. Consider having the Landmarks Commission determine compliance with design guidelines with respect to historic preservation issues.

Special Places Recommendation 5.22 – Building on the significant work already undertaken, further develop the design principles, planning elements, and palette of materials to be used in downtown projects by extending the conceptual design envisioned in *The South Kansas Avenue Streetscape Plan* and Kansas Avenue Phase 1 design and construction project to other areas of Kansas Avenue, the downtown districts, and North Topeka.

Special Places Recommendation 5.23 – Update the 2000 *Downtown Topeka Redevelopment Plan* to include more recent planning and design developments.

Special Places Recommendation 5.24 – Use the **Main Street Four-Point Approach** of organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring in implementing the vision for Downtown Topeka. Downtown stakeholders have taken substantial measures to embrace this approach. As the entity responsible for implementation, provide Downtown Topeka, Inc. with the resources needed for successfully activating business and streetscape activity. Incorporate historic preservation and adaptive reuse as central components of that vision.

In planning for a Main Street approach, network with other Kansas Main Street communities to find out what has worked for them. In September, 2012, the state Main Street program administered through the Department of Commerce was discontinued. Kansas Main Street communities, however, are exploring how to reorganize and reconstitute the program in coordination with the National Main Street Program. Consider affiliating with these communities and joining in a new statewide initiative that will support Downtown Topeka's goals.

Under the Main Street program,

- **Organization** establishes consensus and cooperation by building partnerships among the various stakeholders within the downtown district. Downtown Topeka, Inc. is performing this role with support from the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, Heartland Visioning, the city, and others. By getting stakeholders working toward common goals, DTI and its partners provide effective, ongoing management and advocacy for Topeka's downtown investment initiative.
- **Promotion** creates a positive image that rekindles community pride and improves consumer and investor confidence in downtown. Advertising, retail promotions, special events, and marketing campaigns help sell the image and promise of Downtown Topeka to the community. Promotions communicate Downtown Topeka's unique characteristics, business establishments, and activities to residents, shoppers, investors, potential business and property owners, and visitors.
- **Design** involves creating a high quality environment for workers, residents, and visitors, taking advantage of the visual character of Downtown Topeka: public and private buildings, storefronts, signs, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, landscaping, merchandising, window displays, and promotional materials. The ongoing Kansas Avenue project implements this concept and will convey a positive message about the downtown district and what it has to offer.

Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the downtown district, enhancing the district's physical appearance through the rehabilitation of historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, educating business and property owners about design quality, and long-term planning.

- **Economic restructuring** strengthens Downtown Topeka's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base. This is accomplished by retaining and expanding successful businesses to provide a balanced commercial mix, sharpening the competitiveness and merchandising skills of business owners, and attracting new businesses that the market can support. Converting

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unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property helps boost the profitability of the district. The goal is to build a downtown district that responds to the interests and needs of Topeka's residents and visitors (National Main Street Center 2013).

Facilitating Adaptive Reuse in Downtown Topeka

The city and community stakeholders should encourage and facilitate the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in Downtown Topeka by making private sector investment attractive, easy, and rewarding.

Potential investors from inside the city may not be familiar with the rehabilitation of historic buildings and need to have confidence that the rehabilitation process is not overly complex and costly. Investors from outside the city, who may have experience working with historic buildings, need to know that the city and other stakeholders understand the rehabilitation process and have developed protocols to facilitate investment.

The use of federal and state rehabilitation tax credits is key to making many adaptive reuse projects financially viable and an attractive investment (see Appendix A). The city and its partners can take concrete steps to take advantage of federal and state incentives to achieve public policy goals through private sector investment to the benefit of city businesses and residents.

Special Places Recommendation 5.25 – Encourage and facilitate the **adaptive reuse** of historic buildings in Downtown Topeka through private sector investment. Make downtown's historic character and historic buildings the centerpiece of the downtown investment strategy by making it an attraction for residents and visitors.

Encourage and facilitate the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in Downtown Topeka by making private sector investment attractive, easy, and rewarding.



Recruit small businesses, especially restaurants, in street level commercial spaces. Encourage the adaptive reuse of the upper floors of historic buildings in Downtown Topeka for residential use. Coordinate city governmental departments in facilitation of the adaptive reuse policy.

Special Places Recommendation 5.26 – Facilitate the listing of historic buildings along Kansas Avenue downtown and in North Topeka on the National Register of Historic Places and Register of Historic Kansas Places in order to make **federal and state rehabilitation tax credits** available to private sector investors.

The preference is to implement recommendations of the *Downtown Topeka Historic Resources Survey* in nominating the three potential historic districts along Kansas Avenue on the national and state registers (Rosin Preservation, LLC 2012).

As an alternative and with guidance from the Kansas Historical Society, prepare a ‘multiple property document’ supporting the listing of historic buildings identified in the *Downtown Topeka Historic Resources Survey* on the national and state registers. Once approved, the multiple property document would simplify the process of completing the nomination process for individual property owners and investors.

Special Places Recommendation 5.27 – Work with local banks on special terms for **loan packages** for qualified investors to encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings in Downtown Topeka.

Special Places Recommendation 5.28 – Continue current **protocols for building permit review** processes for historic buildings in Downtown Topeka. The current protocols bring together representatives from Development Services, Planning, the Fire Department, and other city offices as a redevelopment review team to work directly with property owners and developers on a case-by-case basis.

The team meets with owners and developers onsite early in the planning process to identify and address building code compliance issues. The team works with owners and their architects throughout the design process to find solutions to code compliance issues that adapt to building conditions and the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards* while protecting public safety.

Topeka has adopted the *Uniform Code for Building Conservation* for use with existing buildings and historic structures, which provides the team with flexibility in developing code mitigation strategies for existing buildings (International Conference of Building Officials 1997).

Special Places Recommendation 5.29 – Refine and further develop the **façade improvement program** for historic buildings in the downtown district consisting of technical assistance and matching grants (or forgivable loans, when appropriate). Implement the façade improvement program through Downtown Topeka, Inc. with design review and approval by the Landmarks Commission.



Building Maintenance and Demolition-by-Neglect

Poorly maintained buildings leading to building deterioration and demolition-by-neglect is a problem citywide. It is one of the most serious problems in neighborhoods struggling to revitalize but is also an issue downtown and for isolated buildings in well-established neighborhoods (for example, the Sumner School). The poor maintenance of many rental properties and vacant buildings is a significant component of this problem.

The city's Code Enforcement Unit responds to a large number of citizen complaints of deteriorating buildings each year. Legal processes are not always supportive of neighborhood and city needs in helping to quickly resolve code violations. Buildings are too often allowed to deteriorate, endangering the public and depressing neighborhood property values. Demolition is frequently seen as the desired outcome when, with swifter action, repairs could have more easily been undertaken, saving buildings and preventing building loss that destabilizes neighborhoods.

Poor building maintenance endangers not only the property in question but discourages investment in adjacent and nearby properties, spreading blight down streets and threatening the economic viability of neighborhoods. Poorly maintained buildings depress property values for the entire neighborhood and make it economically difficult for home owners to invest when they are unable to recoup their investment through increased property values.

Poor maintenance leads to the deterioration of building fabric that can make it significantly more expensive to repair over time. This is especially the case for the city's many wood framed buildings, where leaking roofs and peeling paint can lead to serious structural deterioration. Demolition-by-neglect occurs when

Poor building maintenance endangers not only the property in question but discourages investment in adjacent and nearby properties, spreading blight down streets and threatening the economic viability of neighborhoods.

the cost of repairs and rehabilitation begins to exceed the value of the property and owners allow the buildings to deteriorate and become a danger to the public. Routine maintenance is essential for all buildings and is the responsibility of property owners. Routine, low cost maintenance can prevent the need for expensive repairs later.

Building loss through demolition-by-neglect accelerates the decline of neighborhoods and commercial centers, creating gaps in the neighborhood fabric and discouraging investment. In Downtown and North Topeka, the loss of historic buildings negatively affects the character of the commercial streetscape, the very attribute investors are seeking to attract customers and build their business ventures. Diminished character severely inhibits the ability of the downtown core to attract and support the business investment needed to sustain revitalization.

Addressing poor building maintenance and demolition-by-neglect is not easy. It requires strong leadership and consistently administered policies. It requires cooperation across city departments with appreciation of the desired outcome. Policies must be clear, fair, and flexible, yet strong. They must be simple to implement, and consistently applied. One of the greatest obstacles is sometimes the lack of support in enforcement by the judicial system, when cases go that far. Communication with judges should be clear. They should understand that the city's system is fair and workable and that the negative impacts on neighboring residents caused by violators are detrimental to the community and are unacceptable.

Addressing Poor Building Maintenance and Demolition-by-Neglect City-wide.

The following set of recommendations are intended to preserve historic buildings and historic neighborhood character by addressing issues caused by poor building maintenance and demolition-by-neglect by serious offenders, especially with respect to rental properties and vacant buildings. They require emphasis on reasonable minimum standards for maintenance, support for the code enforcement system, and consequences for serious violators.

Title 8 of the Topeka Municipal Code addresses Health and Sanitation, and Division 3 of that title addresses Property Maintenance. Section 8.70, Standards, requires that exteriors be kept weather tight and in sound condition and good repair. Modest fines are imposed for violations that are not addressed.

Section 8.75, Unsafe Structures, addresses more serious building conditions that may be unsafe or which have a blighting influence on properties in the area. At present, this code is too often used to affect the demolition of threatened buildings rather than their repair.

The purpose of the following set of recommendations is to re-orient the city's code enforcement process to emphasize early intervention with respect to threatened buildings and prevent the need for demolition. The recommendations require close cooperation between the Code Enforcement Unit, a division of the Police Department, and the city's Planning and Housing and Neighborhood Development Departments. Complementary recommendations to promote improved building maintenance are included in

The purpose of the following set of recommendations is to re-orient the city's code enforcement process to emphasize early intervention with respect to threatened buildings and prevent the need for demolition.



other chapters of this plan, such as the development of maintenance guidelines and homeowner workshops in Chapter 3.

Special Places Recommendation 5.30 – Review protocols for addressing problematic building maintenance and preventing demolition-by-neglect city-wide as an inter-departmental initiative. Identify ways to strengthen enforcement measures for the basic maintenance, appearance, and securing of poorly maintained, vacant, and underutilized buildings. Emphasize effective action before building issues become critical.

Refocus and strengthen the city’s Property Maintenance and Unsafe Structures codes and processes to emphasize **early intervention** in preventing demolition-by-neglect and neighborhood blight. Have the Code Enforcement Unit collaborate with the city’s Planning and Housing and Neighborhood Development departments in identifying threatened structures and structures causing “a blight to adjoining properties and the neighborhood.”

Section 8.75.060 of the Unsafe Structures code empowers the city to “cause such structures to be repaired or improved” and for related costs to be recouped through a lien against the subject property. Use this authority to establish a clear, effective process through which the city intervenes directly to implement stabilization and maintenance measures necessary to prevent deterioration that might lead to building loss or neighborhood blight.

Use the Unsafe Structures code to stabilize threatened and blighted buildings and avoid the need for demolition. Establish clear criteria for the definition of “blight to adjoining properties and the neighborhood” to

benefit and support struggling neighborhoods. Revise the emphasis within the code's language accordingly.

Special Places Recommendation 5.31 – Make the Code Enforcement Unit a central part of the **team approach** to revitalizing neighborhoods. Underscore the important role it plays in preserving neighborhood character, stabilizing property values, and protecting public safety. Coordinate the work of the Code Enforcement Unit with that of other city departments, especially Planning and Housing and Neighborhood Development. Adapt policies and procedures to support the goals outlined in neighborhood plans. Provide the Code Enforcement Unit with the resources and support it needs to be effective.

Special Places Recommendation 5.32 – Explore ideas that might support the city's efforts to address circumstances surrounding poor building maintenance and demolition-by-neglect such as the following.

- Consider adopting the **International Property Maintenance Code** as the basis for property maintenance standards in Topeka. Adapt aspects of the code to specific conditions in Topeka as appropriate.
- Consider establishing a **rental license program** to register and inspect rental properties in single family and two-family residential zoning districts to ensure that properties comply with minimum city maintenance standards as established by code. Model the program on that established by the City of Lawrence. Obtaining a rental license would be the responsibility of the property owner, be obtained on a yearly basis, and include a minimal yearly fee. Apply fees to code enforcement activities. Inspections of rental properties and rental units would be undertaken every three years by the city's Code Enforcement Unit.
- Consider establishing a yearly **vacancy fee** to apply to properties that remain vacant over an established period of time. Apply the fees collected to code enforcement activities.
- Consider using **permit fees for demolition** as a means to discourage the demolition of buildings and to contribute to funding that helps prevent the need for demolition. Make permit fees for the demolition of a building equivalent to the annual property tax due for the property on which the building being demolished is located. Fees may be prorated if multiple buildings are located on a property. Assign revenues collected through demolition permit fees to early intervention funding as outlined in Recommendation 5.30 above.

APPENDIX A ▪ TOPEKA'S PRESERVATION CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Historic preservation is primarily a product of grass-roots initiative fostered by many decades of interest and effort by private citizens. Early preservation efforts in the nineteenth century focused on sites of great national interest like George Washington's Mount Vernon or the Gettysburg Battlefield. Over time the preservation movement expanded as places of regional and statewide significance were identified and protected. Increasingly, communities began to recognize that many of their homes, churches, public buildings, and neighborhoods were important locally and also deserved to be recognized, preserved, and respected.

During the course of this growing movement, local, state, and federal governments established a framework to aid and encourage community preservation efforts. A structure has taken form to help identify significant resources, fund their preservation, and plan for their future. While this structure emanates through the federal government based upon a nationwide consensus on preservation standards, preservation programs are implemented primarily at the local level by, and in accordance with, the goals, beliefs, priorities, and capabilities of the local community and its citizens. The grass-roots nature of historic preservation is a fundamental concept and the strength of historic preservation programs.

Appendix A outlines the structure of nation's historic preservation program at the federal, state, and local levels. It describes how the preservation program in Topeka builds upon the nation-wide system in accordance with local interests and dependent upon local initiatives. The appendix begins by reviewing how the historic preservation program at the federal level is designed to encourage local initiative.

National Historic Preservation Program

Over the decades, the Federal government has established historic preservation programs in recognition of its responsibility to protect historic, cultural, and natural resources on federally owned lands and on other lands where federally sponsored activities are undertaken. Together, these programs have evolved into a comprehensive National Historic Preservation Program. Through example and through a network of nationwide partnerships, the Federal government

provides leadership, encouragement, and support in the stewardship of historic resources associated with our nation's heritage.

The cornerstone of the national program is the *National Historic Preservation Act of 1966* (NHPA). The NHPA establishes as Federal policy that the government will provide leadership in the preservation of historic resources and will administer a national preservation program in partnership with states, Indian tribes, and local governments. In addition, the act establishes that Federal policy should contribute to the preservation of non-federally owned historic resources and provide encouragement to organizations and individuals undertaking preservation by private means (ACHP 2008).

The NHPA has been amended by Congress over the years to improve, clarify, and reaffirm the national program. Key elements of the NHPA and the National Historic Preservation Program include:

National Register of Historic Places

The NHPA authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to maintain the National Register of Historic Places composed of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is the nation's official list of historic resources that have been determined worthy of preservation. Resources may be significant at the local, state, or national level.

The National Register is administered by the National Park Service and supports the efforts of public agencies, private organizations, and individuals to identify, evaluate, and protect significant historic and archeological resources. The National Register lists over 80,000 properties representing 1.4 million individual resources (National Park Service 2012).

The National Register is the core designation program within the National Historic Preservation Program. Listing on the National Register is purely an honorary recognition. It recognizes the importance of a historic resource without placing any obligations or restrictions on the resource owner. Listing does not give the Federal government any ownership rights or regulatory controls with respect to a property.

Listed properties are recognized as having met professionally developed criteria for historical significance at the national, state, or local level. In addition, listing in the National Register:

- makes the resource eligible for certain tax provisions;
- provides the resource with protection from federal actions under the Section 106 review process; and
- qualifies a resource for federal historic preservation grants when funds are available.

National Register evaluations are undertaken by the National Park Service in partnership with State Historic Preservation Offices, which guide the nomination process at the state and local levels.

Although a national program, the National Register is important on a local level because it identifies and evaluates resources according to uniform, professionally recognized standards. These criteria are specifically designed to help state and local governments, organizations, and individuals identify important historic and archeological resources worthy of preservation and consideration when making local planning and land development decisions.

National Historic Landmarks Program

Properties that are nationally significant and possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the nation may be designated as National Historic Landmarks by the Secretary of the Interior. National Historic Landmarks are the highest level of designation within the National Historic Preservation Program.

Authorized in the NHPA, over 2,500 properties across the country have been designated as National Historic Landmarks, fewer than 400 of which are owned by the Federal government. In Topeka, the Sumner Elementary School and Monroe Elementary School (Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Site) were designated as National Historic Landmarks in 1991.

The National Historic Landmarks Program is managed by National Park Service staff, who assist organizations and citizens from across the country in the nomination and review process.

Designation as a National Historic Landmark:

- ensures that stories of nationally significant historic events, places, or persons are recognized and preserved for the benefit of all citizens;
- provides the property's historic character with a measure of protection against projects initiated by the Federal government; and
- qualifies a resource for grants, tax credits, and other opportunities when available to help maintain a property's historic character.

Designation as a National Historic Landmark is purely an honorary recognition. It does not give the Federal government any ownership rights or regulatory controls with respect to a property. (National Park Service 2013)

State Historic Preservation Programs

The NHPA establishes a partnership through which State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) in each state administer the National Historic Preservation Program at the state and local levels. In Kansas, the Executive Director of the Kansas Historical Society is the Kansas SHPO, and the Kansas Historical Society is the State Historic Preservation Office. Federal funding is provided to support the work of the State Historic Preservation Office through the Historic Preservation Fund, a yearly allocation authorized by Congress in the federal budget.

Among the duties of the SHPO within each state as outlined in the NHPA are to:

- Survey and maintain an inventory of historic resources;
- Manage the National Register process at the state and local levels;
- Prepare and implement a statewide historic preservation plan;

- Assist local governments in developing local historic preservation plans and in becoming Certified Local Governments;
- Administer Federal grant, tax credit, and other assistance programs for historic preservation;
- Consult with Federal agencies in the Section 106 program;
- Provide public information, education, and training, and technical assistance in historic preservation; and
- Cooperate with all levels of government and the private sector to ensure that historic properties are taken into consideration at all levels of planning and development.

State Historic Preservation Offices are the backbone of the National Historic Preservation Program. They connect the national program to the local level and assure that it is customized to state and local circumstances and interests in accordance with established national standards (ACHP 2008).

Certified Local Government Program

The NHPA establishes a program through which local governments can become certified to participate in the National Historic Preservation Program. The Certified Local Government Program is a preservation partnership between local, state and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grass roots level. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Offices in each state, with each local community working through a certification process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG).

As a CLG, a local government has access to Federal grants specifically designated to support local preservation planning as well as technical assistance provided by the SHPO and NPS. Local governments have the opportunity to network with other CLGs through the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions and other programs such as the Preserve America and Main Street programs. Most importantly, however, is the recognition that a CLG has demonstrated the commitment and capability to implement historic preservation planning at a professional level (National Park Service 2013).

Section 106

Section 106 of the NHPA states that federal agencies must take into account the effect of any federal, federally assisted, or federally licensed undertaking on any resource that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register (ACHP 2008).

Section 106 requires each federal agency to identify and assess the effects of its actions on historic resources. Those actions may directly affect the interests of the public, local residents, or local government. The responsible federal agency must consult with appropriate state and local officials, Indian tribes, applicants for federal assistance, and members of the public and consider their views and concerns about historic preservation issues when making final project decisions.

Effects are resolved by mutual agreement, usually among the affected state's State Historic Preservation Officer, federal agency, and any other involved parties. The Advisory Council for Historic Preservation oversees the process and may participate in controversial or precedent-setting situations (ACHP 2012).

Section 106 can be an important vehicle through which historic resources are identified and protected. Additionally, larger Section 106 projects and multiple projects over time have generated considerable information and knowledge on local, regional, and national history.

When a federal undertaking such as a federally funded road project is proposed, the sponsoring agency is responsible for identifying and evaluating for National Register eligibility any resources over 50 years of age located within the area of potential effect of the proposed project. This type of survey is generally coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office (In Kansas, the Kansas Historical Society) and performed by individuals who meet federal qualifications for architectural history and archeology.

The evaluation of these properties might result in recommendations of eligibility for additional historic resources and/or archeological sites. If it appears that proposed work might have an effect on a listed or eligible resource, the sponsoring agency needs to evaluate the effect and propose solutions for its mitigation.

Section 110

As amended in 1992, Section 110 of the NHPA outlines a broad range of responsibilities for Federal agencies that own, manage, or otherwise control historic properties. Among other things, Section 110 calls for Federal agencies to establish their own preservation programs that provide broadly for careful consideration of historic properties commensurate with their mission and the effects of their activities on historic properties. The agencies are required to designate qualified Federal Preservation Officers to coordinate their historic preservation activities (ACHP 2009).

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation was created by the NHPA as an independent Federal agency that promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of our nation's historic resources, and advises the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy.

As directed by the NHPA, the Advisory Council is responsible for recommending administrative and legislative improvements for protecting our nation's heritage; advocate for full consideration of historic values in federal decision-making; and reviewing federal programs and policies to promote effectiveness, coordination, and consistency with national preservation policies.

The Advisory Council is an appointed body with twenty-three members that meet four times a year. Day-to-day operations are managed by the Chairman, Executive Committee, and staff. Among its more specific responsibilities is management of the Section 106 review process and working with federal agencies to help improve how they consider historic preservation values in their programs (ACHP 2012).

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (Standards) were established as part of the NHPA to provide a set of guidelines and standards for the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic buildings and landscapes. The Standards and accompanying Guidelines are used to advise both federal agencies and the general public on best practices for the treatment of resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Standards provide valuable insight into the appropriate treatment of historic resources.

An individual set of standards was developed for each of the four preservation treatments (preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction). All federally funded and permitted activities affecting historic resources are evaluated with respect to these standards.

In the language of community planners, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards* are a list of "best practices" for historic preservation. They are a touchstone for all activities affecting historic buildings and landscapes and help ensure that important issues about the care of historic buildings and landscapes are not forgotten in the process of making decisions about other issues. When the *Standards* are used in the context of a new construction project involving an historic building, they provide a starting point for the discussion of proposed changes to the building's historic character and fabric. They were developed to ensure that policies toward historic resources were applied uniformly, even if the end result may be different in every case.

All preservation activities, whether they are publicly or privately funded, can be informed and enhanced by understanding the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. Because the *Standards* outline a sensitive approach for assessing changes to historic properties, they are often included in preservation plans, ordinances, and regulations that govern activities affecting local historic districts. These *Standards* articulate basic principles that are fundamental to historic preservation. Although they have been modified over the years to accommodate changing views of historical significance and treatment options, their basic message has remained the same.

The durability of the *Standards* is testimony not only to their soundness, but also to the flexibility of their language. They provide a philosophy and approach to problem solving for those involved in managing the treatment of historic buildings, rather than a set of solutions to specific design issues. Following a balanced, reasonable, and disciplined process is often more important than the exact nature of the treatment option that is chosen. Instead of predetermining an outcome in favor of retaining or recreating historic features, the *Standards* help ensure that the critical issues are considered.

The language of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* is codified in 36 CFR Part 68 (the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, *Parks, Forests and Public Property*, Chapter 1 *National Park Service, Department of the Interior*, Part 68). A related federal regulation, 36 CFR Part 67, addresses the use of the *Standards* in the certification of projects receiving federal rehabilitation tax credits.

The *Standards* are published by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and are available online, including definitions for the four preservation treatments discussed above (National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties 2013).

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are particularly useful in consideration of the appropriate maintenance of historic buildings; the alteration of older buildings as necessary for reuse, safety, and accessibility; and the construction of new buildings in an historic context. The ten standards that comprise the *Standards for Rehabilitation* are quoted below followed by a brief discussion of the implications of each. Additional discussion of the *Standards for Rehabilitation* may also be found online (National Park Service, Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings 2013).

STANDARD 1 – *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.*

Standard 1 recommends compatible use in the context of adaptive reuse and changes to historic buildings and landscapes. This standard encourages property owners to find uses that retain and enhance historic character, not detract from it. The work involved in reuse projects should be carefully planned to minimize impacts on historic features, materials, and spaces. The destruction of character-defining features should be avoided.

STANDARD 2 – *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

Standard 2 recommends the retention and preservation of character-defining features. It emphasizes the importance of preserving integrity and as much existing historic fabric as possible. Alterations that repair or modify existing historic fabric are preferable to those that require total removal.

STANDARD 3 – *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

Standard 3 focuses on authenticity and discourages the conjectural restoration of an entire property, feature, or design. It also discourages combining and/or grafting historic features and elements from different properties, and constructing new buildings that appear to be historic. Literal restoration to an historic appearance should only be undertaken when detailed documentation is available and when the significance of the resource warrants restoration. Reconstruction of lost features should not be attempted without adequate documentation.

STANDARD 4 – *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

Standard 4 recognizes that buildings change, and that many of these changes contribute to a building's historical significance. Understanding a building's history and development is just as important as understanding its original design, appearance, and function. This point should be kept in mind when considering treatments for buildings that have undergone many changes.

Most historic buildings contain a visual record of their own evolution. This evolution can be identified, and changes that are significant to the history of the building should be retained. The opportunity to compare multiple periods of time in the same building lends interest to the structure and helps communicate changes that have occurred within the larger landscape and community context.

STANDARD 5 – *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

Standard 5 recommends preserving the distinctive historic components of a building or landscape that represent its historic character. Workmanship, materials, methods of construction, floor plans, and both ornate and typical details should be identified prior to undertaking work.

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

Standard 6 encourages property owners to repair historic character-defining features instead of replacing them when historic features are deteriorated or missing. In cases where deterioration makes replacement necessary, new features should closely match historic conditions in all respects. Before any features are altered or removed, property owners are urged to document existing conditions with photography and notes. These records assist future choices that are appropriate to the property's historic character.

STANDARD 7 – *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

Standard 7 warns against using chemical and physical treatments that can permanently damage historic features. Many commercially available treatments are irreversibly damaging. Sandblasting and harsh chemical cleaning, in particular, are extremely harmful to wood and masonry surfaces because they destroy the material's basic physical properties and speed deterioration.

STANDARD 8 – *Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

Standard 8 addresses the importance of below-ground prehistoric and historic features. This issue is of most importance when a construction project involves excavation. An assessment of a site's archeological potential prior to work is recommended. If archeological resources are present, some type of mitigation should be considered. Solutions should be developed that minimize the need for excavation of previously unexcavated sites.

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

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

Standards 9 and 10 are linked by issues of the compatibility and reversibility of additions, alterations, and new construction. Both standards are intended to 1) minimize the damage to historic fabric caused by building additions, and 2) ensure that new work will be different from, but compatible with, existing historic conditions. Following these standards will help to protect a building's historic integrity.

In conclusion, the basis for the *Standards* is the premise that historic resources are more than objects of aesthetic merit; they are repositories of historical information. It is important to reiterate that the *Standards* provide a framework for evaluating preservation activities and emphasize preservation of historic fabric, honesty of historical expression, and reversibility. All decisions should be made on a case-by- case basis. The level of craftsmanship, detailing, and quality of materials should be appropriate to the significance of the resource.

National Center for Preservation Technology and Training

Recommendations for a national research and development organization devoted to technical issues in preservation were adopted into legislation as part of the NHPA Amendments of 1992. The legislation established the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT), an advisory board (the Preservation Technology and Training Board), and the Preservation Technology and Training Grants program as major components of a new “national initiative to coordinate and promote research, distribute information, and provide training about preservation skills and technologies.”

NCPTT was founded in 1994 on the campus of Northwestern State University of Louisiana in Natchitoches, Louisiana. The Center funds research projects and training events at National Park Service sites; other federal agencies; state and tribal historic preservation offices; universities; and local, state, and national non-profits. It promotes excellence in preservation by promoting and developing educational opportunities for professionals. This includes nationwide seminars and workshops on topics like green building science and non-destructive archaeology. The Center also cooperates with international preservation organizations to promote understanding and application of technology to cultural issues (National Park Service 2012).

In addition to the programs authorized and developed through the National Historic Preservation Act, a variety of other federal programs are important components of the National Historic Preservation Program. These include:

National Park System

The National Park System is comprised of 401 sites and covers more than 84 million acres. These include 124 historical parks or sites, 78 national monuments, 59 national parks, 25 battlefields or military parks, 18 preserves, 18 recreation areas, 10 seashores, four parkways, four lakeshores, and two reserves. The National Park System preserves and interprets many of the nation's most significant historic sites. In Topeka, the system features the Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Site.

The National Park System is managed by the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS also helps administer dozens of affiliated sites, the National Register of Historic Places, National Heritage Areas, National Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Historic Landmarks, and National Trails (National Park Service 2013).

The NPS was created by the organic Act of 1916 with the mission "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." The Historic Sites Act of 1935 placed responsibility for the nation's historic preservation activities with the NPS.

Over the years as federal historic preservation programs have grown, the NPS has played a central role in both administering programs and in providing leadership in conveying and encouraging a preservation ethic nationwide. The NPS is a key player in the National Historic Preservation Program.

One of the most important ways in which the NPS provides support for preservation is by providing technical services. NPS sites within the National Park System, such as the Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Site in Topeka, are encouraged to engage their local communities as part of their mission. This can be implemented in a variety of ways, including programs for schoolchildren, collaboration in heritage tourism, and support for community initiatives.

National Heritage Area Program

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape. They are places known for their unique culture and identity, as well as for being good places to live and visit. Through their resources, National Heritage Areas tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation's diverse heritage and support the local economy through heritage tourism.

National Heritage Areas are managed locally by designated 'coordinating entities,' usually a local non-profit organization, that build public-partnerships involving a wide variety of local interests to undertake projects in accordance with an approved management plan. The National Park Service administers the overall National Heritage Area Program nationwide, and partners with, provides

technical assistance, and distributes matching federal funds from Congress to the local coordinating entity and its partnerships.

Forty-nine National Heritage Areas have been designated by Congress nationwide as of 2013. *Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area* encompasses 29 counties in eastern Kansas, including Topeka, and 12 counties in western Missouri interpreting stories about the events leading up to the Civil War and the enduring struggle for freedom.

National Heritage Areas are lived-in landscapes and a grassroots, community-driven approach to heritage conservation and economic development. They collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs and to support locally driven historic preservation, natural resource conservation, recreation, heritage tourism, and educational projects. (National Heritage Areas 2013).

Heritage Documentation Programs

The *Historic American Building Survey* (HABS), introduced in 1933, was the first of four National Park Service Heritage Documentation Programs created to establish permanent, high-quality public records of significant historic resources.

HABS was initially introduced as a make-work New Deal program for unemployed architects and focused on documenting significant, threatened, or rare examples of historic American buildings with measured architectural drawings, large-format photography, and written documentation. The program became permanent as part of the Historic Sites Act of 1935.

In 1969, the *Historic American Engineering Record* (HAER) was established to document historic engineering resources such as bridges, mills, dams, aqueducts, and vessels. The third documentation program, the *Cultural Resources Geographic Information Systems* (CRGIS), was established in 1989 to institutionalize the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and Remote Sensing technologies in historic preservation within the National Park system, State Historic Preservation Offices and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices.

The *Historic American Landscape Survey* (HALS) is the newest component of the program, established in 2000. HALS documents historic American landscapes, including both vernacular and designed landscapes, through drawings, written histories, and photography. Documentation produced through the Heritage Documentation Programs constitutes the nation's largest archive of historic architectural, engineering, and landscape documentation (National Park Service 2013).

In Topeka, the only HABS/HAER recorded site is the Monroe Elementary School, the Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Site, which was documented by HABS in 1993 (Library of Congress 2013).

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program was established in 1976 to foster private sector investment in historic preservation projects and

promote community revitalization. It is one of the nation's most successful and cost effective community revitalization programs. It has leveraged over \$62 billion in private investment to preserve 38,000 historic properties since 1976.

The Preservation Tax Credit program is targeted for income-producing properties and requires that they be rehabilitated in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*. Eligible properties include properties that are National Historic Landmarks, listed in the National Register, contribute to a National Register District, or have been determined eligible for the National Register.

Preservation tax incentives attract private investment to the historic cores of cities and towns and often provide the additional financing that makes a difficult project viable. The program has been instrumental in the revitalization of urban centers across the country. Through this program, abandoned or underused schools, warehouses, factories, churches, retail stores, apartments, hotels, houses, and offices have been restored to viable economic use in a manner that maintains their historic character. A number of key revitalization projects in Topeka have been made possible through preservation tax incentives.

Current tax incentives for preservation established by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 include a 20% tax credit for the rehabilitation of a certified historic structure and a 10% tax credit for the rehabilitation of a non-historic, non-residential building constructed prior to 1936. Both tax credits effectively lower the amount of tax owed; in general, a dollar of tax credit reduces the amount of income tax owed by one dollar. The program is jointly managed by the National Park Service and Internal Revenue Service in partnership with State Historic Preservation Offices (National Park Service 2012)

Save America's Treasures

Save America's Treasures is a matching grant program for the preservation and conservation of nationally significant intellectual and cultural artifacts and historic structures and sites, including historic districts, sites, buildings, and objects. Established by President Clinton in 1998 by executive order, the program has been an important source of bricks-and-mortar funding for nationally significant historic properties.

Grants are awarded to Federal, state, local, and tribal government entities, and non-profit organizations through a competitive matching-grant program administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (National Park Service 2013).

Many properties recognized as National Historic Landmarks have been beneficiaries of the program. The Save America's Treasures grant program was targeted for termination by the Obama Administration and has not been funded by Congress since 2010. It is likely that this popular program will not be resumed in its past form but will be replaced by a similar successor program in the future.

Preserve America

Preserve America is a federal initiative that recognizes and designates communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Since the program began in 2003, 843 communities have been designated as Preserve America Communities throughout the country. Four communities in Kansas have received Preserve America recognition, Lawrence, Leavenworth, Riley County, and Wichita.

Benefits of participation in the Preserve America program include recognition, promotion, and the ability for communities to apply for planning grants. Grants are awarded in five categories: research and documentation, planning, interpretation and education, marketing, and training. The grant program helps local communities develop sustainable resource management strategies and sound business practices for the continued preservation and use of heritage assets. Successful projects feature public-private partnerships and serve as models to communities nationwide for work in heritage tourism, historic preservation, education, and economic development (Preservation Action 2011). More than \$20 million in matching grants was awarded to 259 projects throughout the country between 2006 and 2009 (Preserve America 2013).

The Preserve America program was created in 2003 by executive order by President George W. Bush. It was permanently authorized as part of legislation passed by Congress and signed by President Obama in March, 2009. Management of the program is led by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and Department of the Interior. Though authorized, the Preserve America grant program was targeted for termination by the Obama Administration and has not been funded by Congress since 2010. It is possible that this popular program will not be resumed in its past format but may be replaced by a similar program in the future.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was one of the first laws written establishing a broad national framework for protecting our environment. NEPA assures that all branches of government give proper consideration to the environment prior to undertaking any major Federal action that might significantly affect the environment.

NEPA states that it is the policy of the Federal government to preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of the nation's heritage. NEPA requires Federal agencies to conduct interdisciplinary investigations and prepare environmental impact statements prior to making decisions about projects that have the potential to impact the quality of the human environment.

Similar to Section 106, NEPA is triggered by projects using Federal monies. Investigations conducted under NEPA cover a broad range of environmental issues, but include the identification of impacts on historic resources. Projects in Topeka that are funded by the Federal government would require compliance with NEPA (Environmental Protection Agency 2013).

Kansas State Historic Preservation Program – The Kansas Historical Society

The Kansas Historical Society is the state agency charged with actively safeguarding and sharing the state's history. Founded in 1875 to collect newspapers and manuscripts about the state's territorial period, the Historical Society's role has grown over the years and become officially a part of state government. In 1879 the state enacted legislation that recognized the Historical Society as "the trustee of the state" for the purpose of maintaining the state's history. In 1905 the Kansas Legislature passed a bill establishing the Historical Society as the repository of official government records, making the Historical Society the State Archives for Kansas.

Today, the Kansas Historical Society has a wide-ranging role as steward of the state library and archives, administrator of the state historic preservation program, and manager of the Kansas Museum of History and sixteen state-owned historic sites.

Its programs and services are carried out by six divisions: Administration, Cultural Resources, Education and Outreach, Historic Sites, Museum, and State Library and Archives. The location of the Kansas Historical Society, State Library and Archive, and Kansas Museum of History in Topeka is a tremendous opportunity for a close working relationship with the city and its partners.

Kansas State Historic Preservation Office

The Kansas Historical Society's Cultural Resources Division (CRD) operates as the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office and is responsible for administering the Kansas Historic Preservation Program. The Executive Director of the Kansas Historical Society serves as the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in accordance with federal historic preservation programs as outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), discussed in the preceding section.

The Cultural Resources Division/Kansas State Historic Preservation Office fosters the preservation of the archeological, architectural, and cultural heritage of Kansas by assisting property owners and heightening the awareness of decision-makers to the benefits of historic preservation. The CRD encourages and supports community-based preservation initiatives through the programs it administers and the technical assistance it provides.

With a staff of nineteen people, the preservation office administers state and federal preservation programs within Kansas. Professionals on the staff have training in archeology, architecture, architectural history, and history. Historic preservation assistance is provided at no charge to federal, state, and local governments; planning, engineering, architectural, and other consulting firms; local historical societies and other non-profit organizations; private property owners; and any interested organization, firm, or individual whether or not their properties have been listed in the State or National Registers of Historic Places (Kansas Historical Society 2013).

The preservation office is advised by the Historic Sites Board of Review, which is a governor-appointed board of eleven professionals from various fields. The Historic Sites Board of Review meets quarterly and reviews nominations for inclusion in the State and National Registers.

In accordance with NHPA requirements, the preservation office updates its state historic preservation plan every five years. The most recent update is the *2011 – 2016 Kansas Preservation Plan* that outlines the state preservation program and sets goals and objectives for the five-year period. The preservation plan highlights the following programs (Kansas Historical Society 2011).

Kansas Preservation

The quarterly newsletter of the Cultural Resources Division, *Kansas Preservation* provides information on educational programs, technical topics for owners of historic properties, the findings of archeological excavations and staff studies, successful preservation stories, and endangered properties.

Kansas Historic Resources Inventory

The Cultural Resources Division maintains files on more than 70,000 of the state's historic properties and archeological sites. Historic properties that have been surveyed statewide may be accessed through the user-friendly web-based Kansas Historic Resources Inventory (KHRI).

KHRI contains all of the CRD's survey records and is fully searchable and available to the public. An interactive map shows the locations of surveyed properties and accesses a summary of survey information on each property. Users interested in submitting new surveys or updating existing survey forms can become registered and, once approved by CRD staff, log directly into the system. Mapping and data is available in GIS formats. KHRI not only aids in assisting property owners, but also helps streamline the process of reviewing projects that may affect historic properties. Approximately 3,170 individual properties in Topeka are included in the online database.

National Register of Historic Places and Register of Historic Kansas Places

The official lists of historically significant properties in Kansas are the National Register of Historic Places and Register of Historic Kansas Places. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service in association with State Historic Preservation Offices and is discussed earlier in this chapter. As of December, 2010, there were 1,217 Kansas listings in the National Register.

The Register of Historic Kansas Places is the state's official list of historically significant properties. Properties included in the National Register are automatically listed in the State Register. However, not all properties listed in the State Register are included in the National Register. The same general criteria are used to assess the eligibility of a property for inclusion in the state register, but more flexibility is allowed in the interpretation of the criteria for eligibility. State register listing makes properties eligible for funding through the Heritage Trust Fund and rehabilitation tax credit programs.

Certified Local Government Program

The CRD administers the federal Certified Local Government (CLG) program in Kansas in association with the National Park Service. Described earlier in this chapter in association with the National Historic Preservation Act, fifteen Kansas communities participate in the CLG program, including Topeka.

Becoming a CLG demonstrates a community's readiness to take on preservation projects and be successful when seeking other opportunities for community revitalization and development using local historic assets. Certification provides communities access to expert technical advice from the CRD and the NPS and provides access to federal grant monies set aside specifically for CLGs. Preparation of the preservation plan has been undertaken largely through federal CLG grant monies administered by the CRD.

Historic Preservation Fund Grants

The CRD administers the federal Historic Preservation Fund grant program to finance local preservation activities that will contribute to planning for the preservation of the built environment and archeological resources. Up to 60 percent of the cost of eligible activities can be funded through this program. Through property identification and evaluation, communities may assess their historic properties and develop plans for their recognition and preservation (Kansas Historical Society 2013).

Eligible Historic Preservation Fund projects include, but are not limited to:

- preservation plans for communities or historic properties;
- surveys of cultural resources;
- National Register historic district nominations;
- design-review guidelines for historic districts;
- walking tour brochures, websites, or podcasts; and
- educational presentations, conferences, or workshops

Federal and State Rehabilitation Tax Incentives

The federal and state rehabilitation tax credit programs promote the rehabilitation of the state's historically significant properties, while also serving as key economic development tools for the revitalization of historic communities. The Federal Historic Preservation Incentives program, established for income-producing buildings and discussed earlier in this chapter, offers a federal income tax credit equal to 20 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures on a historic property.

The state rehabilitation tax credit program, for both income-producing and non-income-producing properties, offers a state income tax credit equal to 25 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures. (Kansas Historical Society 2011:4). Proposed work must follow a qualified rehabilitation plan and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and project expenses must exceed \$5000. Tax credits may be carried forward for 10 years or may also be transferable to other taxpayers. The Kansas rehabilitation tax incentive program has become a national model for the revitalization of historic communities.

Heritage Trust Fund

The Heritage Trust Fund is a state grant program that provides matching funds for bricks-and-mortar projects for properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places or the Register of Historic Kansas Places. The Heritage Trust Fund reimburses expenses for projects that preserve or restore historic properties. Qualifying expenses include professional fees and construction costs. Properties owned by local governments, private individuals, non-profit, and for-profit entities may qualify. Individual grant awards may not exceed \$90,000 and must be matched by the grant recipient. The grants are highly competitive.

Section 106 and the Kansas Preservation Act Compliance

CRD staff reviews a variety of projects related to federal and state agencies' compliance with both federal and state laws for the protection of historic properties. These project reviews generally fall under one of two laws: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, discussed earlier in this chapter, and the Kansas Preservation Act (K.S.A. 75-2724). Approximately 3,000 projects are reviewed by the CRD each year.

Section 106 involves federal, federally assisted, or federally licensed undertakings. The CRD works with the applicable federal agency involved and others to identify impacts on resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This frequently requires architectural or archeological surveys of the impacted area be undertaken by qualified private sector professionals. Over the years, these surveys add considerably to the number of properties included in the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory. The reports generated identifying and assessing the effects on historic resources are reviewed by CRD staff. Section 106 projects, such as roads, bridge, levee, and other projects, frequently impact historic communities.

The Kansas Preservation Act was enacted in 1977. The initial legislation declared historic preservation the policy of the state and required the activities of governmental entities which encroached on national or state register properties to be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office. In 1981 lawmakers widened the law to require review of all projects involving national and state register properties and their environs which needed local building permits. In July, 2013 lawmakers reversed the 1981 amendment resulting in the elimination of environs reviews. Review of impacts by state and other governmental entities directly upon listed historic resources remains in effect.

2011 – 2016 Kansas Preservation Plan

Every five years, as required by the National Historic Preservation Act and the receipt of federal funding support for the state historic preservation program, the CRD updates its state historic preservation plan. The most recent state historic preservation plan was prepared in 2011. In this process, the CRD collaborated with partners and the public to reflect on past goals and achievements and develop new priorities for the 2011-2016 period.

The plan identified five broad goals to strengthen historic preservation within the state:

- Broaden public knowledge;

- Strengthen advocacy;
- Develop statewide preservation network;
- Integrate historic preservation practices into community planning; and
- Fund historic preservation Initiatives.

The national and Kansas historic preservation programs are organized to provide a structure, programming, incentives, and support for community and grassroots historic preservation initiatives. The objectives listed under the goals in the Kansas Preservation Plan are written for the Cultural Resources Division but are also relevant for its statewide partners in identifying the current emphasis of the state program.

The Historic Preservation Plan for the City of Topeka is aligned with and supports the goals of the state-wide preservation plan. The two goals related to *broadening public knowledge* and *integrating historic preservation practices into community planning* are most relevant to Topeka's plan. Topeka's preservation partners will address the statewide goals through many of the strategies and actions detailed in the following chapters.

Specific objectives listed in the state plan that are relevant to Topeka's plan are included below. Though these objectives are mostly specific to the CRD, they should inform Topeka's preservation partners in how they can coordinate with CRD's statewide focus.

Broaden Public Knowledge

- Collaborate with stakeholders about preservation-related and archeology programs and opportunities through workshops, training, and publications targeting groups such as realtors, lenders, chambers of commerce, developers, planners, engineers, architects, governmental agencies, donors, and property owners.
- Make historic preservation and archeological programs, activities, and conferences more accessible to the public by actively promoting them through the media and online.
- Call attention to the economic importance of preservation by featuring successful projects in newsletters and on websites using podcasts and interactive maps.
- Broaden scope of properties surveyed and nominated to state and National Registers. Emphasize the documentation of prehistoric and historic archeological sites, parks, cultural landscapes, heritage parks, rural vernacular properties, public buildings, New Deal-era resources, and recent past resources. Emphasize resources associated with specific cultural groups, such as African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics.
- Encourage communities to survey their resources and provide workshops to give them the tools to do so.

Strengthen Advocacy

- Maintain a statewide organization with preservation advocacy as its primary mission and with the organizational structure to communicate and respond quickly.
- Collaborate to create a group of voluntary field representatives to assist in public education.
- Invite national-level training programs, such as the National Center for Preservation Technology, to hold workshops in Kansas. Promote the classes on websites, through email groups, and press releases.
- Partner with area colleges to develop preservation trades training and education.

Develop Statewide Preservation Network

- Connect with partners and the public through email listserves and websites.
- Develop educational tutorials and how-to videos to be posted on websites and promoted to the public. Examples could include commissioner trainings, how-to-repair videos, or tours of historic properties.
- Circulate and publicize the publication of the Kansas Preservation Alliance, Inc., *Directory of Preservation Resources*, and the SHPO's *Source List for Historic Preservation Services and Resources*.
- Offer scholarships for attendance to conferences and trainings to local government staff, students, and non-profit leaders.
- Continue to promote and emphasize hands-on programming such as the Kansas Archeology Training Program field school, certification classes, and building repair workshops by offering incentives such as college credit or professional certification.

Integrate Historic Preservation Practices into Community Planning

- Provide local governments tools to promote regular maintenance and develop minimum maintenance requirements.
- Require recipients of grant and/or loan funds to develop a long-term maintenance plan.
- Assist local governments and state agencies in integrating register-listed properties into Geographic Information System (GIS) applications.
- Assist local governments in preservation planning efforts through HPF grants to do surveys to be used as planning tools for future development and disaster readiness.
- Grow the network of CLG communities.
- Develop and coordinate Section 106 training programs for communities seeking federal funding.
- Develop standards for conservation easements for archeological sites.

Fund Historic Preservation Initiatives

- Establish a process for funding repairs to historic properties impacted by disaster through the Heritage Trust Fund and other related programs.
- Continue to build the rehabilitation tax credit programs and the Partnership Historic Sites program.

Historic Topeka

Topeka's historic assets are an integral part of the city's character and contribute significantly to making the city an appealing place to live. Topeka has an active historic preservation program based upon the federal and state programs outlined above and is engaged in a number of additional initiatives that impact historic assets.

Topeka's Historic Assets

The most important point that this preservation plan wishes to make is that Topeka's historic assets go well beyond those that have been officially designated by federal, state, and city historic preservation programs and include a large part of the city's development fabric. In recognizing the number and extent of Topeka's historic assets, it is more appropriate to look at the landscape of the entire city and identify what is *not* historically significant than to focus on individual buildings. It is more appropriate to think of Topeka's historic assets in terms of neighborhoods, historic districts, and cultural landscapes than solely in terms of individual buildings and structures.

The underlying feature contributing to the character and historical significance of Topeka is the natural landscape that influenced the selection of this place as a site for settlement and upon which the fabric of the city has developed and evolved over the decades: the Kansas River and its floodplain, Shunganunga Creek and its tributaries, and the ridges overlooking these water courses upon which the city developed.

Before territorial settlement by westward expanding European Americans, the site where Topeka would be located was already an established crossing point of the Kansas River. A historic map of the route of John C. Fremont's expeditions of 1842 and 1843 shows a crossing of the Kansas River at the site of present day Topeka (Preuss 1846). Soon after, this became the route of the Oregon Trail from Independence, Missouri, west.

Topeka's founders selected this site for a city in late 1854 because of its location on the Kansas River, the presence of a low bluff near the mouth of Shunganunga Creek suitable for a wharf, and the twenty-five mile distance from Lawrence. The founders were energetic and politically astute in the settlement's establishment and promotion. In the summer of 1855, the new settlement was chosen as a meeting place for a convention of the Free State dissenters, in opposition to the recognized Pro-Slavery territorial legislature, largely due to Topeka's central location within the New England settled area of Kansas as well as its safer distance from the Pro-Slavery Missouri strongholds (Shortridge 2004: 73).

The Free Staters met in Topeka again the following spring, and in 1858, settlers voted to move the local county seat to Topeka. Also in 1858, city leaders sought to attract two schools to Topeka through offers of land for buildings and as an endowment. One of those schools became today's Washburn University. In October of 1859, the framers of the Wyandotte Constitution, written for entry into the Union, named Topeka as the temporary seat of state government. In November 1861, voters selected Topeka to be the permanent state capitol.

Topeka was active and prominent in the early establishment of Kansas and in the political struggle between Free State and Pro-Slavery interests. The young city grew quickly. Significant remnants of the earliest settlement include the landform on which the city was established; the pattern of streets and town lots laid out south from the river with Kansas Avenue as its spine; and the stone walls of some early buildings buried within later structures. Perhaps the most prominent of these are the walls of Constitution Hall, where the Free State delegates met, which have recently been exposed and preserved. The John Richie House, dated to 1855, is a significant surviving building from Topeka's founding years.

Railroads have played a significant role in the economic prosperity of Topeka and in its physical development. With federal land grants as an incentive, the early railroads raced to establish their lines westward. The Union Pacific Railroad was laid out along the floodplain on the north side of the Kansas River. Construction began near Wyandotte in 1863 and reached Topeka in January 1866 (Shortridge 2004: 103). The town of North Topeka was created around the railroad and soon consolidated into Topeka.

Through the business and political initiatives of Cyrus Holliday, Topeka's co-founder, the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad was created with a route from Atchison on the Missouri River south through Topeka to southern Kansas and then west. Construction began in 1868 and by 1871 the line was making money through shipments of Texas cattle and Kansas coal (Shortridge 2004: 112, 240).

In the mid-1870s, through aggressive leadership and some luck, Topeka was selected as the location for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe's permanent offices and principal repair shops. The new shops opened in 1878, and Topeka's prosperity was assured as the railroad expanded into a major national system. The city almost tripled in population between 1870 and 1880 and then again doubled in population between 1880 and 1890 (Shortridge 2004: 241).

With the twin economic foundations of state capital and railroad hub, Topeka experienced a long period of solid, sustained economic growth that continued well into the twentieth century. As a political center, the city attracted a range of businesses and organizations that benefitted by being close to legislators including insurance companies, publishers, and banks. As a railroad center, the city attracted a variety of transportation-dependent industries such as wholesalers, foundries, machine shops, flour mills, and meatpackers. The economic influence of the state capital was meaningful but diffuse. The economic impact of the railroad was visible and substantial (Shortridge 2004: 242, 243).

Topeka's commercial center grew southward down Kansas Avenue, up the bluff from the river and floodplain, with a site set aside for the state capitol immediately to the southwest. The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroad shops occupied a three-hundred acre site on the east side of the city near the river with lines extending north-south and east-west. Industries extended along the river's floodplain and adjacent to the rail yard. Workers' housing spread to the east and south, while middle class housing spread to the west.

Topeka's late nineteenth and early twentieth century growth is clearly evident in the physical character of the city today. As the residential areas expanded, additional land was annexed into the city, continuing to the present. The city's slightly southwest trending grid extended outward over the landscape in all directions, adapting after a certain distance to the north-south national grid predominant throughout the mid-west.

Downtown Topeka, the city's historic center, remains the business center of the city today. A number of historic late nineteenth century commercial buildings remain along Kansas Avenue and adjacent streets surrounded and interspersed with later commercial structures representing the city's economic evolution. The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe rail yards and related buildings are still present to the east of downtown, and the magnificent Great Overland Station of the Union Pacific Railroad has recently been restored north of the river. A variety of historic warehouse, mill, and industrial buildings related to the railroad remain at the north end of Kansas Avenue and along the river.

Topeka is a city of neighborhoods and is defined by the grid of neighborhood blocks. Older neighborhoods are located closer to the historic downtown Kansas Avenue commercial center. Proceeding outward, the neighborhoods become later in date. Community parks are sited at strategic locations. In some neighborhoods, curving streets have been introduced as design features and to adapt to landscape conditions.

The character of each neighborhood is influenced by its period of construction, economic strata, and design vocabulary (again often a matter of date). Most residences are single family detached buildings, regardless of size, and most residential construction is of wood. The city's neighborhoods are punctuated by a variety of social, religious, institutional, and commercial buildings that served their locales. In many cases these buildings are of very high quality.

As neighborhoods have matured, street trees have become the dominant visually defining feature of practically every residential block. Regardless of economic strata and even the current physical condition of buildings, street trees create a strong, appealing character for neighborhoods throughout the city. Topeka's more modest neighborhoods are as visually appealing as its more affluent neighborhoods largely for this reason.

Topeka's prosperity continued well into the twentieth century founded principally upon to the twin pillars of state capital and railroad. The railroad's shops continued to grow, peaking in 1938, despite the Santa Fe's real economic focus upon Kansas City, Chicago, and Los Angeles (Shortridge 2004: 244). In addition to the state capitol building, federal offices, utilities, insurance, and

printing were particular strengths of the city's diversified economy. Forbes Air Force base, located south of the city, was added to Topeka's economic portfolio during World War II. Topeka peaked in population around 1960.

In the late 1950s, a large area between Kansas Avenue and the Santa Fe railroad yard between 1st Street, near the river, and Eighth Street was designated for urban renewal. In 1961 land was purchased and cleared for a new interstate highway that was constructed through this area, and property on either side was made available for new development.

New construction of modern, free standing commercial buildings continued in the urban renewal area through the 1960s, changing the scale and character of much of downtown Topeka (Rosin Preservation 2012: 40). Many late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings were lost along Kansas Avenue north of Sixth and Seventh Streets. Many early manufacturing and industrial buildings and lower income residential areas were lost between Kansas Avenue and the Santa Fe rail yard.

The interstate highway system and the automobile changed the city's growth patterns with the introduction of new automobile related commercial strips along primary feeder roads and at interchanges. Contemporary large lot suburban subdivisions continued the historic pattern of residential expansion to the west and south.

To the immediate west of downtown, older residential areas were lost to demolition creating a gap between downtown and the nearest residential neighborhoods. The city's regional health complex, ten blocks west of downtown, expanded eliminating some residential areas as well. Other losses of historic building fabric are notable through clearing of older residential areas in decline and through localized commercial and institutional redevelopment in various parts of the city.

Today, despite these changes, Topeka retains a remarkable expanse of historic city fabric and thousands of historic buildings and other assets that contribute to its historic character and significance. Downtown Topeka retains a significant number of historic commercial buildings particularly between Tenth and Sixth Streets. The historic State Capitol building has recently been restored and is surrounded by state office buildings of various ages and significance. Remaining historic railroad, manufacturing, warehouse, and industrial buildings are becoming fewer in number. The city's urban renewal buildings are emerging as potentially historically significant structures.

The large majority of the city's historic assets, however, are residential buildings set in historic neighborhood landscapes of rich and appealing character, Topeka's special places. Supporting these neighborhoods is a rich mosaic and variety of historic social, religious, institutional, and commercial buildings that represent the city's evolution. Recognizing the significance and value of Topeka's wide range of historic assets is the principal purpose of this preservation plan.

The Identification of Historic Resources in Topeka

A number of Topeka's historic resources have been officially designated through nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and Register of Historic Kansas Places. Other resources have been determined eligible for listing in the National and State Registers through historic resource inventories or surveys but have not been officially designated. The National and State Registers and historic resource inventories are important tools for recognition of the city's historic resources.

National Register of Historic Places The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official registry of historic resources and is discussed earlier in this chapter. Historic resources may be recognized through listing on the National Register either individually or as contributing resources to designated historic districts. In order to be listed, individual resources or districts must meet federally established criteria for evaluation. The nomination process for listing on the National Register is administered by Cultural Resources Division of the Kansas Historical Society and the National Park Service.

The National Park Service lists 60 resources on the National Register of Historic Places in Topeka (see Appendix C). These listings include five historic districts:

- Potwin Place Historic District (1980 – 108 buildings);
- Topeka Cemetery, Mausoleum Row (2001 – 10 structures);
- Holliday Park Historic District 1 (2002 – 99 buildings);
- Holliday Park Historic District 2 (2002 – 11 buildings);
- College Avenue Historic District (2007 – 77 buildings);

Together, the individual listings and historic districts total approximately 360 National Register listed resources within the city (National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, Shawnee County, Kansas 2013).

Register of Historic Kansas Places The Register of Historic Kansas Places is the state's official list of historically significant properties. The State Register is administered by the Cultural Resources Division of the Kansas Historical Society and includes all of the properties listed on the National Register as well as some that are not. The Register of Historic Kansas Places lists twelve additional resources that are not included on the National Register.

National Historic Landmarks In addition to being listed on the National Register, historic properties of exceptional value or quality may be designated by the Secretary of the Interior as National Historic Landmarks. The National Historic Landmarks program is discussed earlier in this chapter and is the highest level of designation within the National Historic Preservation Program. Topeka has two National Historic Landmarks, the Sumner Elementary School and Monroe Elementary School (Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Site), both of which were designated in 1991.

Determinations of Eligibility Qualified historic resources may be determined eligible for listing on the National Register but not actually nominated and listed. Listing of a privately owned resource on the National Register requires

the approval of the property owner, but a determination of eligibility does not. Determinations of eligibility are important in identifying and understanding the nature and extent of existing historic resources in a community with respect to public awareness and public policy even if listing on the National Register is not to be undertaken.

Historic Resource Inventories or Surveys The first step in understanding the nature and extent of the presence of historic resources within a community is through conducting historic resource inventories or surveys. Surveys are often required in response to planned federal actions, such as federally funded road construction projects, as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, discussed earlier in this chapter. However, historic resource surveys may be undertaken for many other reasons as well, most importantly simply to understand what historic resources exist. The Kansas Historical Society encourages the survey of historic resources in communities and includes survey results in the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory.

The Kansas Historic Resources Inventory, an online database of surveyed properties managed by the Kansas Historical Society, includes 3,130 individual surveyed properties in Topeka. The database notes which surveyed properties have been determined eligible for listing on the National Register or as contributing resources to eligible historic districts and which surveyed properties have been determined not to be eligible.

Most of Topeka's surveyed properties currently included in the database are located in Downtown Topeka (including North Topeka along Kansas Avenue), Old Town east of the medical complex, and Monroe. A smaller number of individual listings are located in the neighborhoods of Kenwood, Ward Meade, Elmwood, and Westboro (Kansas Historical Society, Kansas Historic Resources Inventory 2013).

However, the surveys for some neighborhoods in Topeka were completed before creation of the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory and have not yet been included in it. These earlier surveys and their conclusions need to be re-evaluated before they are incorporated into the online database.

Neighborhoods that have been surveyed in Topeka include:

- Potwin Place (1980) – has been surveyed and listed on the National Register;
- Holliday Park (2002) – has been surveyed and listed on the National Register;
- North Topeka (2002) – multiple individual properties are eligible;
- Collins Park (2002) – the entire survey area has been identified with the potential for nomination as a historic district;
- Original Town (2003) – seven areas have been identified with the potential for nomination of individual properties;

- Ward Meade (2003) – five areas have been recommended for nomination as historic districts and six additional areas have been identified with the potential for nomination as historic districts;
- Monroe (2004) – six areas have been identified with the potential for nomination as historic districts;
- Old Town (2005) – six areas have been identified with the potential for nomination as historic districts;
- College Avenue (2006) – has been surveyed and listed on the National Register; and
- Downtown Topeka (including North Topeka) (2012) – three areas have been recommended for nomination as historic districts.

The surveys that have been undertaken in Topeka are essential tools in the identification of the city's historic resources. However, large areas of the city have yet to be surveyed or have surveys that need to be re-examined. Chapters 3 and 5 of the preservation plan recommend that the completion of historic resource surveys be a priority action throughout the City of Topeka.

Topeka's Historic Preservation Program

Topeka has an active historic preservation program grounded in the city's designation as a Certified Local Government. The Certified Local Government program, discussed earlier in this chapter, is a federally authorized and funded program administered through the Cultural Resources Division of the Kansas Historical Society.

Topeka has been designated as a Certified Local Government by meeting certain criteria outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act, including:

- Enforcing state and local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties;
- Establishing an adequate and qualified historic preservation review commission;
- Maintaining a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties; and
- Providing for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program.

Topeka's designation as a Certified Local Government recognizes that the city has created a local historic preservation program that meets national standards of professionalism and is conducting its historic preservation activities in accordance with those standards. By participating in the program, Topeka is eligible to receive federally funded grants and technical assistance through the Kansas Historical Society. This historic preservation plan is being funded largely through a Certified Local Government grant. Topeka's historic preservation review commission, the Landmarks Commission, is also authorized to participate in the National Register review process and may be authorized to undertake state reviews on behalf of the Kansas Historical Society.

Topeka's historic preservation program is authorized through the city's Historic Landmarks Ordinance, Chapters 2.60 and 18.255 of the Topeka Municipal Code, and is discussed in Chapter 3 of this plan. The ordinance creates the city's Landmarks Commission, outlines the Commission's duties and responsibilities, establishes a process for the local designation of historic landmarks and local historic districts, and authorizes other activities related to historic preservation. The city's Historic Preservation Ordinance was being revised as this preservation plan was being prepared.

Topeka's designated historic landmarks are listed in the Topeka Landmarks Registry (see Appendix D). The city currently has 46 historic landmarks, including a variety of historic and high quality single family residences, apartments, commercial buildings, institutional buildings, and a cemetery. Designation as a historic landmark by a property owner is voluntary. Designation helps preserve historic buildings by authorizing design review of proposed changes by the Landmarks Commission and issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Topeka currently has no designated local historic districts. The designation of local historic districts requires the approval of 60% of the property owners within the proposed district. Like historic landmarks, Topeka's Historic Landmarks Ordinance authorizes the Landmarks Commission to undertake design review of proposed changes to properties within a local historic district. Chapters 3 and 5 reviews the economic and quality of life benefits of having local historic districts and discusses ways to encourage neighborhoods to create them as a primary objective of the preservation plan.

Other City Programs

Despite the quality and strength of the historic preservation program as authorized by Topeka's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the number of historic resources or assets that are designated and included in the program is limited in comparison to the number of historic assets in the city as a whole and the importance of their appropriate treatment to the economic vitality and quality of life of the city. This preservation plan proposes reaching out to engage other city programs in a collaborative effort to achieve preservation objectives in support of the city's economic, quality of life, and community service goals.

The City of Topeka conducts a wide range of activities through its various departments that have the potential to affect the city's historic fabric. Chapter 5 of this preservation plan, *Special Places*, reviews the key city programs that have the potential to affect historic assets and suggests ways in which city departments can work together to preserve assets and enhance historic community character.

The Landmarks Commission is encouraged to engage city departments with the assistance of Planning staff and report to the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager on the city's historic assets on a yearly basis as authorized in the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Key city programs that have the potential to impact historic assets and historic community character include:

- Implementation of the city's long term economic development strategy through the Go Topeka Economic Partnership and the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce focusing upon attracting primary jobs to the city and retaining and expanding existing businesses;
- Topeka's downtown investment initiative implementing infrastructure and streetscape improvements through a public/private initiative;
- Downtown Topeka's Business Improvement District and programming to attract and support small business investment along Kansas Avenue, including North Topeka;
- Coordinated review of rehabilitation plans for historic buildings by the Development Services Department and associated city departments;
- Neighborhood plans developed through the Planning Department that identify neighborhood characteristics and conditions and lay out action plans for neighborhood revitalization, enhancement, and economic sustainability;
- Neighborhood revitalization programs conducted through the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department including the use of federal funding;
- Building code enforcement conducted through the Code Enforcement Unit, a division of the Police Department, including the use of allocated funds for emergency stabilization or demolition of threatened buildings;
- Implementation of road and infrastructure projects through the Engineering Public Works Departments including the use of federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding;
- Implementation of the city's tourism strategy through Visit Topeka as funded through the city's Transient Guest Tax including attracting convention and event visitors to the Kansas Expocentre;
- Support for institutional and non-profit partners and stakeholders such as Washburn University, the North Topeka Arts District (NOTO), and historic attractions as an element of the city's economic development and community enhancement programming;
- Implementation of recreational and open space initiatives such as the Topeka Bikeways Master Plan and development of the Riverfront Park along the Kansas River;

These and other initiatives are discussed in Chapters 3 through 5 of the historic preservation plan along with recommendations for how city departments and other stakeholders can work together to include historic preservation as an integrated part of Topeka's economic development, community enhancement, and community services initiatives.

Appendix B. Historic Landmarks Ordinance

Chapter 18.255 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Sections:

[18.255.010](#) Declaration of policy.

[18.255.020](#) Definitions.

[18.255.030](#) Local historic landmark – Local historic district designation.

[18.255.040](#) Historic landmark or local historic district designation criteria.

[18.255.050](#) *Repealed.*

[18.255.060](#) Local historic landmark or local historic district nomination process.

[18.255.070](#) Local historic landmark or district denomination process.

[18.255.080](#) *Repealed.*

[18.255.090](#) Design review guidelines.

[18.255.100](#) *Repealed.*

[18.255.110](#) Certificate of appropriateness review – Minor and major projects – No demolition.

[18.255.120](#) Certificate of appropriateness review – Demolition – Historic landmark and contributing
feature.

[18.255.130](#) *Repealed.*

[18.255.140](#) *Repealed.*

[18.255.150](#) Penalty.

[18.255.160](#) Concurrent use of Topeka landmarks commission by the county commission.

[18.255.170](#) Continuation of existing designation.

[18.255.180](#) Severability.

[18.255.190](#) Saving clause.

Cross References: Planning department, TMC [2.25.210](#); landmarks commission, Chapter [2.60](#) TMC.

Editor's Note: Ord. No. 18420, §§ 1 – 21, adopted April 19, 2005, amended Code 1995 Chapter 80 in its entirety to read as herein set out. Formerly, said chapter pertained to similar subject matter as enacted by Ord. No. 17292, §§ 1 – 17, adopted July 28, 1998.

18.255.010 Declaration of policy.

The city council finds and declares as a matter of public policy that the identification, designation, protection, enhancement, preservation and use of historic assets is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the culture, prosperity, education and welfare of the public. Preservation of historic assets will:

- (a) Protect, enhance and perpetuate historic, distinctive and important elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, archaeological and architectural history;
- (b) Safeguard the city's historic and cultural heritage as embodied and reflected in such historic assets;
- (c) Stabilize and improve property values in such locations of historic assets and thus strengthen the economy of the city;
- (d) Promote and encourage restoration, rehabilitation, and maintenance of historic properties, neighborhoods and districts and thus combat blight and decay;
- (e) Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past;
- (f) Protect and enhance the city and its attractions to tourists and visitors and provide support and stimulus to business and industry; and
- (g) Promote the use and adaptive reuse of historic assets for the culture, education, enjoyment and economic welfare of the city's citizens and visitors. (Ord. 18420 § 1, 4-19-05; Ord. 17292 § 1, 7-28-98. Code 1995 § 80-1.)

18.255.020 Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following words, terms and phrases shall have the meanings set out below:

"Appurtenances and environmental setting" includes, but is not limited to, walkways and driveways (whether paved or not), fences, gateways, open space and waterways. Interiors of structures are included only for local historic landmarks upon consent of the owner.

"Certificate of appropriateness" is the approval of plans for the alteration, construction, removal or demolition of historic landmarks or contributing features.

"Contributing feature" is a significant building, site, structure, or object which adds to the architectural qualities, historic association, or archaeological values of a local historic district because (1) the item was present during

the district's period of significance and (2) possesses significant historic character or is capable of yielding important information about the period of significance.

"Demolition" shall mean any and all activity that requires a demolition permit.

"Design review criteria" are standards identified in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

"Design review guidelines" are standards used in addition to the design review criteria for issuing a certificate of appropriateness for individual projects or projects located within local historic districts.

"Historic asset" is a site, land area, building, structure or object, which may also include appurtenances and environmental setting, which may have historical, cultural, aesthetic, architectural and/or archaeological significance but has not been designated as a local historic landmark.

"Historic integrity" is the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period. It is a composite of original and historic characteristics, construction, elements, qualities, design, architectural features, distinctive style, craftsmanship, composition, color, texture, and other visual characteristics.

"Local historic district" encompasses a group of historic assets, consisting of three or more buildings, structures or objects which are significant as a cohesive unit and contribute to the historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural values of the city, county, state, or nation which is so designated by the city council. The district may also include appurtenances and environmental setting with written consent from the owner(s) of record.

"Local historic landmark" is an historic asset that has been designated, with the written consent of the owner(s) of record, as having historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural importance or value which the city council determines shall be protected, enhanced and preserved in the interest of the culture, prosperity, education and welfare of the public. "Local historic landmark" may also include the interior of a structure, appurtenances and environmental setting with written consent from the owner(s) of record. "Local historic landmark" includes all state and nationally registered structures, provided the owner(s) of record consents in writing to the inclusion.

"Mothballing" means controlling the long-term deterioration of a building while it is unoccupied as well as finding methods to protect it from sudden loss by fire or vandalism. Mothballing includes, but is not limited to, securing

the building from unwanted entry, providing adequate ventilation to the interior, shutting down or modifying existing utilities, surveillance monitoring and periodic maintenance to minimize deterioration.

“Overlay zoning” means any zoning that functions in addition to the existing land use zoning, as in the case of local historic landmark or local historic district zoning.

“Period of significance” is the span of time in which a local historic landmark or local historic district attained the significance for which it is designated.

“Permit” means authorization whether by administrative action or actions by the city council and includes a building, demolition, moving, zoning, sign, fence, parking lot, roofing, sidewalk, siding, or swimming pool permit.

“Preservation plan” means a document developed, adopted and implemented by the Topeka landmarks commission that identifies trends affecting and impacting historic assets and provides guidance for their preservation. The preservation plan will include a list of all local historic landmarks and local historic districts within Topeka. The preservation plan will be a component of the comprehensive plan for the city.

“Preservation program” means the program administered by the Topeka landmarks commission implementing the historic preservation ordinance, the historic preservation plan, and all activities relating to the furtherance of historic preservation in Topeka.

“Preservation staff” means personnel assigned to provide staff services for the Topeka landmarks commission.

Project Classification. For the purpose of the certificate of appropriateness review procedure, proposed work involving a local historic landmark or property within a local historic district shall be classified as major or minor.

(1) “Major projects” include:

(i) Any undertaking requiring a certificate of appropriateness for a local historic landmark or structure within a local historic district; or

(ii) Any demolition permit or moving permit for any structure listed as a local historic landmark or contributing feature.

(2) Minor Project. Any undertaking requiring a certificate of appropriateness for a local historic landmark or property within a local historic district that proposes repairing or restoring an existing exterior element, or replacing an element or material with identical material and design

to that which is existing. A list of minor projects, which can be reviewed and approved by preservation staff, shall be adopted by the Topeka landmarks commission.

“Uniform Code for Building Conservation” means a national code adopted by the city that provides for more flexible code review for older and historic properties. (Ord. 19901 § 3, 5-6-14.)

Cross References: Definitions generally, TMC [1.10.020](#).

18.255.030 Local historic landmark – Local historic district designation.

The governing body may designate local historic landmarks or local historic districts by adopting historic overlay zoning. An official register of all historic designations in the city shall be created and maintained by the planning department. (Ord. 19901 § 4, 5-6-14.)

Cross References: City council – mayor, Chapter [2.15](#) TMC.

18.255.040 Historic landmark or local historic district designation criteria.

(a) Local Historic Landmark. The governing body may designate an historic asset as a local historic landmark if the following requirements are met:

- (1) The asset is at least 50 years old; and
- (2) The asset possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship.
- (3) In addition to subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this section, at least one of the following requirements shall be met:
 - (i) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history of the city, county, state or nation;
 - (ii) Is associated with a significant person or group of persons in the history of the city, county, state or nation;
 - (iii) Embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represents the work of a master builder/architect; possesses high artistic values; or represents a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
 - (iv) Yields or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

(b) Local Historic District. The governing body may designate an area as a local historic district if at least 75 percent of the structures within the district boundaries are of architectural, historical, or cultural importance or value and are classified as contributing features. (Ord. 19901 § 5, 5-6-14.)

Cross References: City council – mayor, Chapter [2.15](#) TMC.

18.255.050 Historic district designation criteria.

Repealed by Ord. 19901. (Ord. 18420 § 6, 4-19-05; Ord. 17292 § 6, 7-28-98. Code 1995 § 80-6.)

18.255.060 Local historic landmark or local historic district nomination process.

(a) Nomination. Any owner of an historic asset may nominate such asset as a local historic landmark. Any person may nominate an area within the city as a local historic district in accordance with this section. The applicant shall supply the following information on a form provided by the planning department:

(1) A description of the specific historic asset nominated as an historic landmark or a list of specific historic assets located within the proposed district boundaries and a description of the particular importance or value of each historic asset, such description to include the following:

(i) A brief property history, including approximate date of construction, and dates of major alterations, if known;

(ii) Builder and/or architect, if known;

(iii) Architectural style;

(iv) Primary building materials;

(v) Current owner(s) of record; and

(vi) Legal description of each property;

(2) A map showing the boundaries of the proposed local historic landmark or local historic district and the location of each asset of importance or value identified by a number or letter designation;

(3) Sufficient photographs of each historic asset proposed as a local historic landmark or listed within the proposed local historic district;

(4) Written consent to the nomination by all of the owners of record of the proposed local historic landmark. In the event of a contract sale, both the owner of record and the party or parties holding an equitable interest in the property must consent to the nomination; and

(5) For a local historic district, the owners of record of at least 60 percent of the properties within the proposed district shall submit written consents to the nomination. In the event of a contract sale of real property, both the owner of record and party or parties holding an equitable interest in the property must consent to the nomination.

(6) For a local historic district, proposed design review guidelines pursuant to TMC [18.255.090](#).

(b) Increasing Boundaries – Local Historic District. Applications to increase the boundaries of a local historic district may be considered if one or more of the following conditions are met:

(1) An additional historic asset which relates and is contiguous to the local historic district is requested for inclusion by its property owner; or

(2) Two or more historic assets or local historic landmarks would be included in the expanded local historic district and at least 60 percent of the owners of record of properties within the proposed expansion area submit written consents.

(c) Citizen Participation. Applicants shall comply with the citizen participation process adopted by the planning director and posted on the city's website. The planning director shall provide a map of the notification area which shall be a 500-foot radius.

(d) Consideration by Topeka Landmarks Commission. Upon determination by the planning director that the application is sufficient, the director shall submit the application to the Topeka landmarks commission.

(e) Notification. Upon determination by the planning director that the application is sufficient, the director shall submit the application to the Topeka landmarks commission. The Topeka landmarks commission shall consider the application at a meeting; provided, that notice shall be mailed at least 20 days prior to the meeting to the owner(s) of record of any parcel upon which a proposed local historic landmark is situated or which is part of a proposed or expanded local historic district.

(f) Meeting – Landmarks Commission. The Topeka landmarks commission may solicit expert testimony regarding the historic and architectural importance of the historic asset(s) under consideration for designation. All interested persons may provide written comments and/or appear in person or by representative. The

commission shall make a recommendation to the planning commission whether to adopt historic overlay zoning.

(g) Historic Overlay Zoning. The governing body, upon the recommendation of the planning commission, shall consider whether to adopt historic overlay zoning in accordance with state law and Chapter [18.245](#) TMC governing rezoning. (Ord. 19901 § 7, 5-6-14.)

Cross References: City council – mayor, Chapter [2.15](#) TMC; planning commission, Chapter [2.65](#) TMC.

18.255.070 Local historic landmark or district denomination process.

(a) Applications to denominate a local historic landmark or local historic district and/or reduce the district's perimeter may be made when one or more of the following conditions have been met:

(1) A local historic landmark or building, structure, site, or object within a district has no historic, architectural, archaeological, cultural importance or value to the viability of the historic district; or

(2) The owners of record of at least 75 percent of the properties within the local historic district provide written consent to the denomination of the local historic district.

(b) The applicant shall comply with the citizen participation process adopted by the planning director and posted on the city's website. The planning director shall provide a map of the notification area which shall be a 500-foot radius.

(c) Upon receipt of such application, the Topeka landmarks commission shall consider the application at a meeting; provided, that notice shall be mailed at least 20 days prior to the meeting to the owner(s) of record of any parcel upon which the local historic landmark is situated or which is part of the local historic district. All interested persons may provide written comments and/or appear in person or by representative. The commission shall make a recommendation to the planning commission whether to remove historic overlay zoning.

(d) Historic Overlay Zoning. The governing body, upon recommendation of the planning commission, shall consider whether to remove historic overlay zoning in accordance with state law and the ordinances governing rezoning. (Ord. 19901 § 8, 5-6-14.)

Cross References: City council – mayor, Chapter [2.15](#) TMC; planning commission, Chapter [2.65](#) TMC.

18.255.080 Procedure for designation of historic landmark and historic district.

Repealed by Ord. 19901. (Ord. 18420 § 10, 4-19-05; Ord. 17292 § 10, 7-28-98. Code 1995 § 80-10.)

18.255.090 Design review guidelines.

(a) Design review guidelines for each local historic district shall address the following:

- (1) Acceptable materials for any construction, additions, remodeling or rehabilitation activities to the exterior of the structures;
- (2) Appropriate architectural character, scale, and detail for any construction, additions, remodeling or rehabilitation activities;
- (3) Acceptable appurtenances to the structures;
- (4) Acceptable textures and ornamentation to the exterior of the structures;
- (5) Acceptable accessories on structures;
- (6) Such other building regulations which would have impact on the buildings;
- (7) Acceptable standards for changes to noncontributing resources within the district; and
- (8) Acceptable signage.

(b) The Topeka landmarks commission shall make available the proposed design review guidelines to each owner of record in a proposed local historic district prior to consideration by the commission. (Ord. 19901 § 10, 5-6-14.)

18.255.100 Historic district designation administrative requirements.

Repealed by Ord. 19901. (Ord. 18420 § 12, 4-19-05; Ord. 17292 § 12, 7-28-98. Code 1995 § 80-12.)

18.255.110 Certificate of appropriateness review – Minor and major projects – No demolition.

(a) No local historic landmark, contributing feature, or a portion of either, shall be altered, removed, or moved unless a certificate of appropriateness is approved in accordance with this section. No certificate is required for maintenance and repair not requiring a permit or not restricted by design review guidelines. If an application proposes that a local historic landmark be removed or moved to a new site, the proposal shall be treated as an

application for denomination or a nomination, as appropriate. If an application proposes that a contributing feature be removed or moved to a new site, the proposal may be treated as an application for denomination or a nomination, as appropriate.

(b) Preservation staff shall review the application and determine whether the project is a major or minor project, as defined in TMC [18.255.020](#).

(c) If the project is determined to be minor, preservation staff may approve or deny the application, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and any approved design review guidelines, within 30 days of receipt of a complete application. If the application is denied, the applicant may request a review by the planning director within five business days from the date of denial. If the planning director affirms the denial, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and any approved design review guidelines, the applicant may request a review by the Topeka landmarks commission which will determine, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and any approved design review guidelines, whether to affirm, reject, or modify the planning director's decision.

(d) If the project is determined to be major but does not involve demolition of a local historic landmark or contributing feature in a local historic district, the following procedure shall apply:

(1) The Topeka landmarks commission shall consider each application at a meeting; provided, that notice shall be mailed at least 20 days prior to the meeting to the owner(s) of record of the local historic landmark that is the subject of the application and the owners of record of properties located within any local historic district where the local historic landmark or contributing feature is located.

(2) All interested persons may provide written comments and/or appear in person or by representative.

(3) The Topeka landmarks commission may request additional information, approve, approve with conditions, or deny the certificate based upon the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and approved design review guidelines.

(4) The owner of the local historic landmark or a property owner within the local historic district may appeal the commission's decision to the city council by submitting a notice of appeal to the planning director within 10 calendar days of the decision.

(5) The council shall affirm the commission's decision if there is sufficient evidence to support the decision. (Ord. 19901 § 12, 5-6-14.)

Cross References: City council – mayor, Chapter [2.15](#) TMC.

18.255.120 Certificate of appropriateness review – Demolition – Historic landmark and contributing feature.

(a) No local historic landmark, contributing feature, or portion of either shall be demolished unless a certificate of appropriateness is approved by the city council. Additionally, no permit to demolish a local historic landmark, contributing feature, or portion of either shall be issued prior to approval of a certificate of appropriateness.

(b) Citizen Participation. The applicant shall comply with the citizen participation process adopted by the planning director and posted on the city's website. The planning director shall provide a map of the notification area which shall be a 500-foot radius.

(c) Notification. The Topeka landmarks commission shall consider each application at a meeting; provided, that notice shall be mailed at least 20 days prior to the meeting to the owner(s) of record of the local historic landmark that is the subject of the application and the owners of record of properties located within any local historic district where the local historic landmark or contributing feature is located.

(d) Meeting – Landmarks Commission. All interested persons may provide written comments and/or appear in person or by representative. The commission shall make its determination based upon the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

(e) After review and recommendation by the Topeka landmarks commission, the city council may approve or deny the certificate of appropriateness based on the following factors:

(1) Whether feasible alternatives to demolition exist, including mothballing the structure;

(2) The state of repair of the structure;

(3) The cost of restoration or repair;

(4) Hardship to the applicant if the certificate is denied;

(5) Economic consequences to affected property owners; and

(6) The interest in preserving historical values.

(f) Notwithstanding subsection (e) of this section, if the Topeka landmarks commission determines that the demolition will destroy historic property included in the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Places, demolition shall not proceed until the governing body makes any determination required by K.S.A. [75-2724](#) and amendments thereto.

(g) If a demolition is approved by the council, the planning commission shall make a recommendation to the governing body whether to remove historic overlay zoning in accordance with state law and the ordinances governing rezoning. (Ord. 19901 § 13, 5-6-14.)

Cross References: City council – mayor, Chapter [2.15](#) TMC; planning commission, Chapter [2.65](#) TMC.

18.255.130 Review of demolition buildings and moving permits historic resources.

Repealed by Ord. 19901. (Ord. 18420 § 15, 4-19-05; Ord. 17292 § 15, 7-28-98. Code 1995 § 80-15.)

18.255.140 Historic landmark and historic district demolition by neglect.

Repealed by Ord. 19901. (Ord. 18420 § 16, 4-19-05; Ord. 17292 § 16, 7-28-98. Code 1995 § 80-16.)

18.255.150 Penalty.

It is unlawful to construct, reconstruct, structurally alter, remodel, renovate, restore, demolish, deface, move or maintain any historic landmark or asset within a historic district in violation of the provisions of this chapter. In addition to other remedies, the city may institute any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent such unlawful construction, restoration, demolition, moving or maintenance to restrain, correct or abate such violation. (Ord. 18420 § 17, 4-19-05; Ord. 17292 § 17, 7-28-98. Code 1995 § 80-17.)

18.255.160 Concurrent use of Topeka landmarks commission by the county commission.

(a) The county commission, at its sole option, may seek the advice and assistance of the Topeka landmarks commission on designating and preserving historic assets and historic districts located in Shawnee County.

(b) In the event the county commission seeks the advice and assistance of the Topeka landmarks commission, it shall receive such county staff support as directed and supplied by the county administration.

(c) The Topeka landmarks commission may be used by the county commission to recommend designation of local historic landmarks or districts located in the county.

(d) The county commission may rely upon the Topeka landmarks commission for assistance in establishing historic preservation guidelines.

(e) The county commission may seek the recommendation of the Topeka landmarks commission on the demolition or issuance of a moving permit for a local historic landmark located in the county. (Ord. 19901 § 16, 5-6-14.)

18.255.170 Continuation of existing designation.

Nothing contained in this section shall eliminate, change, or otherwise affect the existing designation of a local historic landmark or local historic district in the city of Topeka or Shawnee County which was originally made by the Topeka-Shawnee County landmarks commission. Any such designation shall remain in force and effect. (Ord. 19901 § 17, 5-6-14.)

18.255.180 Severability.

If any part or parts of this chapter shall be held unconstitutional, invalid, or otherwise unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this chapter. (Ord. 18420 § 20, 4-19-05. Code 1995 § 80-20.)

18.255.190 Saving clause.

If this chapter or any part thereof shall be held or determined to be unconstitutional, illegal, ultra vires or void, the same shall not be held or construed to change or annul any provisions of this chapter which may be legal or lawful; and in the event this chapter or any part thereof shall be held unconstitutional, illegal, ultra vires or void, the same shall not affect any action theretofore taken by the Topeka landmarks commission as theretofore established and constituted. (Ord. 18420 § 21, 4-19-05. Code 1995 § 80-21.)

**APPENDIX C ■ PROPERTIES LISTED
ON THE
NATIONAL REGISTER**

Shawnee County Properties on the National Register of Historic Places and the Register of Historic Kansas Places – Jan. 1, 2014.

This list is inclusive of all listed properties in Shawnee County. The Topeka Landmarks Commission has review authority only over those properties located within the City of Topeka.

Property	Location	City	Month Listed	Day Listed	Year Listed
Thomas Arch Bridge	Jct. Of Wanamaker Rd. and 105th Street, across the Wakarusa River, Auburn vicinity	Auburn	05	10	1990
McCauley Bridge	.5 miles south of Auburn	Auburn	07	02	1985
Lyons, Horace G., House	4831 SE 61st St	Berryton	08	01	1984
Sage Inn	13553 SW Highway K4	Dover	10	08	1976
Hard Chief's Village	Restricted	Silver Lake vicinity	06	22	2007
Hopkins House	6033 SE US Highway 40	Tecumseh	01	16	2009
Curtis (Charles) House	1101 Topeka Ave	Topeka	01	25	1973
Potwin Place Historic District	Bounded by Willow on the S; the alley W of Woodlawn on the W; Grove on the N; and generally the alley E of Greenwood on the E	Topeka	05	01	1980
Topeka High School	800 SW 10th Ave	Topeka	06	09	2005
Westminster Presbyterian Church	1275 Boswell Ave	Topeka	05	19	2004
Security Benefit Association Hospital Building	5800 SW 6th, 5 mi. NW on private road	Topeka	11	30	2005
Tinkham Veale Building	909-911 S Kansas Ave	Topeka	01	11	2006
Davies Building	725-727 Kansas	Topeka	09	15	1977
St. Joseph's Catholic Church	235 Van Buren	Topeka	02	24	1971
Menninger Clinic Building	3535 W 6th St	Topeka	02	13	1975
Ross Row Houses	513, 515, 517 1/2, 519, 521 Van Buren Street	Topeka	11	05	1998
Monroe Elementary School	1515 Monroe	Topeka	11	06	1991
Morgan House	1335 SW Harrison St	Topeka	04	28	2004
Central National Bank	701-703 Kansas Ave	Topeka	07	19	1976
Curtis Junior High School	316 NW Grant St	Topeka	10	22	2001
Memorial Building	120 W 10th St	Topeka	07	17	1975
Jayhawk Hotel, Theater and Walk	117 SW 7th	Topeka	03	11	1982

England Farm	4619 SE 37th	Topeka	05	07	1982
Giles-Nellis House	915 SW Munson	Topeka	04	28	1992
St. John's Lutheran School (Johannes Arms Apartments)	315 W 4th St	Topeka	01	03	1985
Crawford Building	501 Jackson	Topeka	08	22	1975
Dillon House	404 W 9th St	Topeka	12	27	2006
Shoemaker (J.A.) House	1434 Plass Ave	Topeka	01	22	2009
German-American State Bank (Old)	435 Kansas Ave	Topeka	04	30	1980
Topeka Cemetery- Mausoleum Row	1601 E 10th St	Topeka	04	25	2001
Central Motor and Finance Building	222 W 7th	Topeka	06	08	1982
East Topeka Junior High School	1210 E 8th St	Topeka	01	23	2004
Luttjohann, Fred and Cora, House	2053 S Kansas Ave	Topeka	02	20	2004
Pottawatomie Baptist Mission	6425 SW 6th St	Topeka		9/03, 2/28	1971, 1973
Anton-Woodring House	1011 Cambridge Ave	Topeka	08	23	1991
Washburn University Carnegie Library Building	1700 SW College Ave	Topeka	06	25	1987
Sargent, John, House	225 SW Clay St	Topeka	07	28	1995
St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church	701 SW Topeka Blvd	Topeka	10	16	2008
Columbian Building	112-114 W 6th St	Topeka	09	05	1975
Cedar Crest	1 Cedar Crest Road	Topeka	05	06	1982
Church of the Assumption and Rectory	204 SW 8th St	Topeka	07	02	2008
Willits House	1035 SW Fillmore	Topeka	06	02	1997
Woman's Club Building	420 W 9th St	Topeka	02	19	1982
Woodward (Chester B.) House	1272 SW Fillmore St	Topeka	06	25	1992
Blacksmith Creek Bridge	5 miles west of Topeka on SW 10th Street	Topeka	03	10	1983
Ward-Meade House	124 N Fillmore	Topeka	11	12	1975
Bowker House	1200 SE Quincy	Topeka	03	15	2007
Constitution Hall - Topeka	427-429 S Kansas Ave	Topeka	07	15	2008
Crosby, William T. and Delora, House	1109 SW Topeka Boulevard	Topeka	10	06	2011
Devon Apartments	800-808 W 12th St	Topeka	06	27	2002

Alt, Solomon A., House	1335 SW College Ave	Topeka	03	23	2005
Church of the Holy Name	1110 SW 10th Avenue	Topeka	01	20	2012
Gem Building	506-510 SW 10th Ave.	Topeka	11	01	2006
Union Pacific Railroad Passenger Depot	701 N Kansas Ave	Topeka	10	01	2002
Wea Creek Bowstring Arch Truss Bridge	Grounds of the Kansas State Historical Society 6425 SE 6th Ave.	Topeka	05	09	2003
ATSF Motive Power Building	1001 NE Atchison	Topeka	01	20	2012
Holliday Park Historic District II	1009, 1015, 1019, 1021, 1025, 1031, 1035 SW Fillmore Street	Topeka	11	15	2002
Harmon, John C., House	915 SW Buchanan	Topeka	01	20	2012
Albaugh, Morton, House	1331 SW Harrison St	Topeka	04	28	2004
College Avenue Historic District	College Avenue between Huntoon Street and 17th Street	Topeka	04	18	2007
Hicks Block	600 W 6th	Topeka	11	09	1977
Thacher Building	110 E 8th St	Topeka	03	31	1975
Fire Station No. 2	719-723 Van Buren	Topeka	07	03	2002
Hughes Conoco Service Station	400 SW Taylor Street	Topeka	07	05	2011
North Topeka Baptist Church	123 NW Gordon	Topeka	01	18	2011
Gordon Building	900, 902, 904 S. Kansas Avenue	Topeka	10	20	2010
State Capitol	300 SW 10th St	Topeka	09	03	1971
Holliday Park Historic District I	Roughly bounded by 10th Ave., Taylor, Polk, Huntoon, Clay and Fillmore Sts.	Topeka	11	17	2002
Sumner Elementary School	330 Western	Topeka	05	04	1987
Topeka Council of Colored Women's Clubs	1149 SW Lincoln	Topeka	12	30	2009
Wakarusa Hotel	Main St	Wakarusa	04	04	1979
Uniontown Cemetery	NW Douglas Road	Willard vicinity	05	17	2010

Shawnee County Properties on the Register of Historic Kansas Places – Jan. 1, 2014.

Property	Location	City	Month Listed	Day Listed	Year Listed
Bethany Place	833-835 Polk	Topeka	02	21	1979
Elks Club Building	122 W 7th St	Topeka	12	10	1980
Frost, John E., House	935 Western	Topeka	02	15	1986
Frye Bridge	On Landon Road, 1.5 miles N of the intersection with Highway 24, 1 mile E and 1.5 miles N of the village of Kiro	Kiro vicinity	02	26	2003
Matrot Castle	6424 SW Huntoon	Topeka	08	26	2006
Oakwood Farms	2449 and 2521 NE Sherman Rd	Topeka vicinity	05	02	1992
Ritchie, John, House	1116 SE Madison	Topeka	08	29	1998
Sells Brothers Building	303-305 S Kansas Ave	Topeka	08	26	2006
Stallard Mound 14SH320	address restricted	Topeka vicinity	08	10	1981
Wakarusa Presbyterian Church	10135 SW Jordan Road	Wakarusa	11	16	2013

Appendix D. Local Historic Landmarks Registry

No.	Year Listed	Property Name	Property Address
1	2002	Anton Woodring House	1011 SW Cambridge Ave
2	2002	Union Pacific Station	200 NW Railroad St
3	2002	Fire Station #2	719 SW Van Buren St
4	2002	Hopkins & Holland Building	929 S. Kansas Ave
5	2002	Historic Jayhawk Theatre	720 SW Jackson St
6	2002	Tinkham Veale Building	909 S. Kansas Ave
7	2002	The Devon Apartments	800 SW 12th St
8	2002	1132 NW Harrison St	1132 NW Harrison St
9	2002	Ross Row Houses	513 Van Buren St
10	2002	Ross Row Houses	523 Van Buren St
11	2002	Ross Row Houses	515 Van Buren St
12	2002	Ross Row Houses	521 Van Buren St
13	2002	Ross Row Houses	517 Van Buren St
14	2002	921 SW Buchanan	921 SW Buchanan St
15	2002	2844 SE Maryland Avenue	2844 SE Maryland Ave
16	2003	821 SW Western	821 SW Western Ave
17	2003	400 SW Greenwood	400 SW Greenwood St
18	2003	Dr. Daniel Esterly House	807 SW Western Ave
19	2003	Downtown Ramada	420 SE 6th Ave
20	2003	George D. Lytle House	1020 SW 8th Ave
21	2003	Sante Fe Place, Memorial Bldg.	600 SE Madison St
22	2003	St. John AME Church	701 SW Topeka BLVD
23	2004	White Lakes Golf Clubhouse	3400 SW Topeka Blvd.
24	2004	Calvin Hill House	817 SW Lincoln St.
25	2004	Charles Curtis House	1101 SW Topeka Blvd.
26	2004	Miller Farmstead	6620 SE Ward RD
27	2005	Damron Building	919 S Kansas AVE
28	2005	Museum	427 & 429 S Kansas AVE
29	2005	Miss Helen Henry House	228 SW Harrison St.
30	2005	John Ritchie House	1116 SE Madison ST
31	2006	Retail/Residential	303 S Kansas AVE
32	2006	Ken Alexander House	1215 SW College Ave.
33	2006	KPL Building	1201 SW Oakley Ave.
34	2006	Sells Building	303-305 S. Kansas Ave.
35	2007	D. Holmes Drugstore	731 S. Kansas Ave.
36	2007	J. Fred & Cora Gaylord House	1625 SW Central Park Ave.
37	2007	Veale-Freeburg Bldg.	915-917 S. Kansas Ave.
38	2007	GEM Building	506-510 W.10th St.

39	2007	Commonwealth Building	716-722 SW Jackson St.
40	2007	Hale Ritchie House	1118 SE Madison St
41	2008	Senate Luxury Suites	900 SW Tyler St.
42	2008	Dibble Building	123 SE 6th Ave
43	2008	Curtis Cemetary	1638 NW Harrison St.
44	2009	Central Congregational Church	1248 SW Buchanan St
45	2011	John Nelson House	419 SW Taylor St
46	2011	William T Crosby Home	1109 S. Topeka Blvd.

APPENDIX E ■ NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEYS

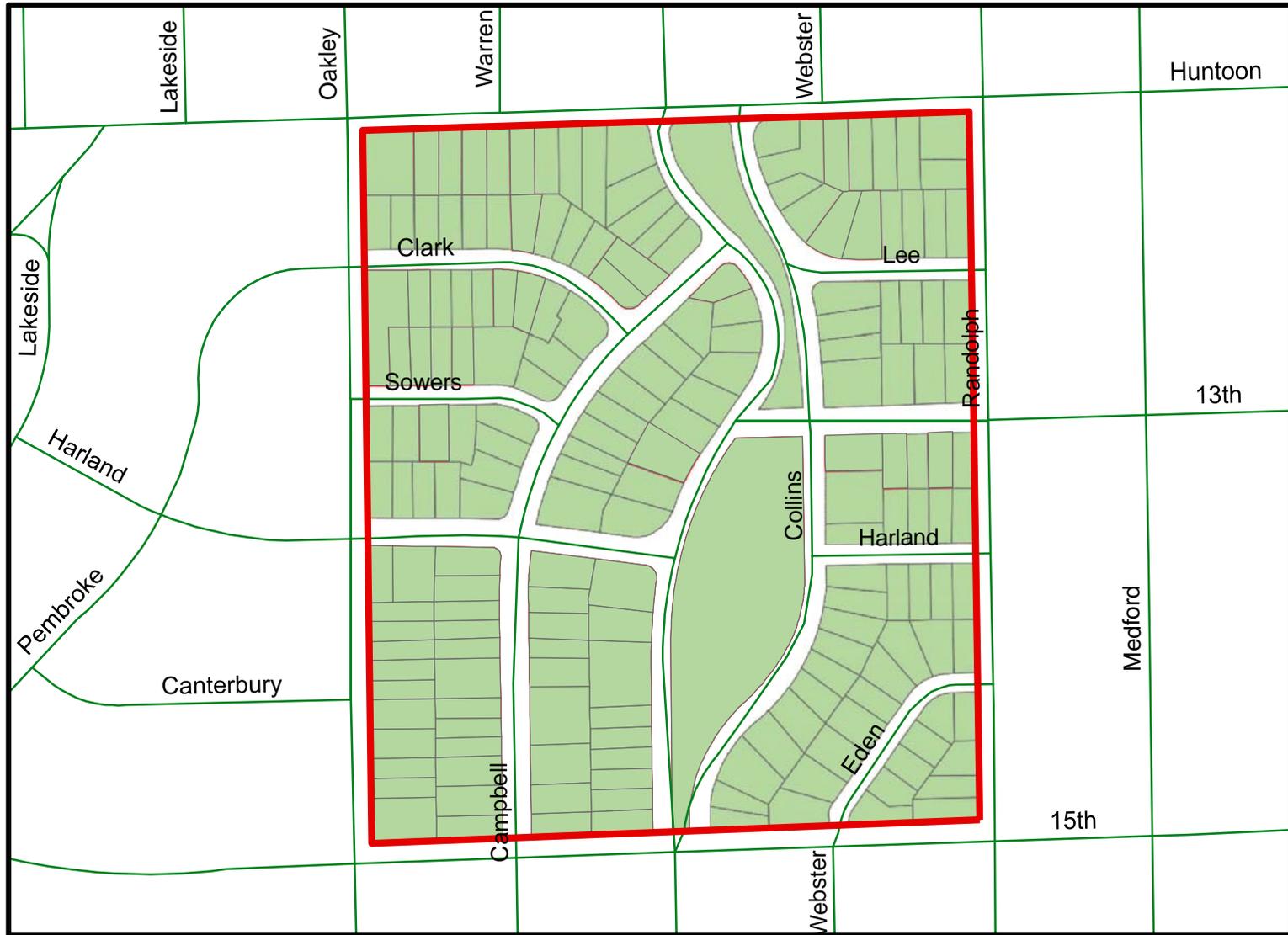
Potwin National Historic District - 1980



Holliday Park National Historic District - 2002



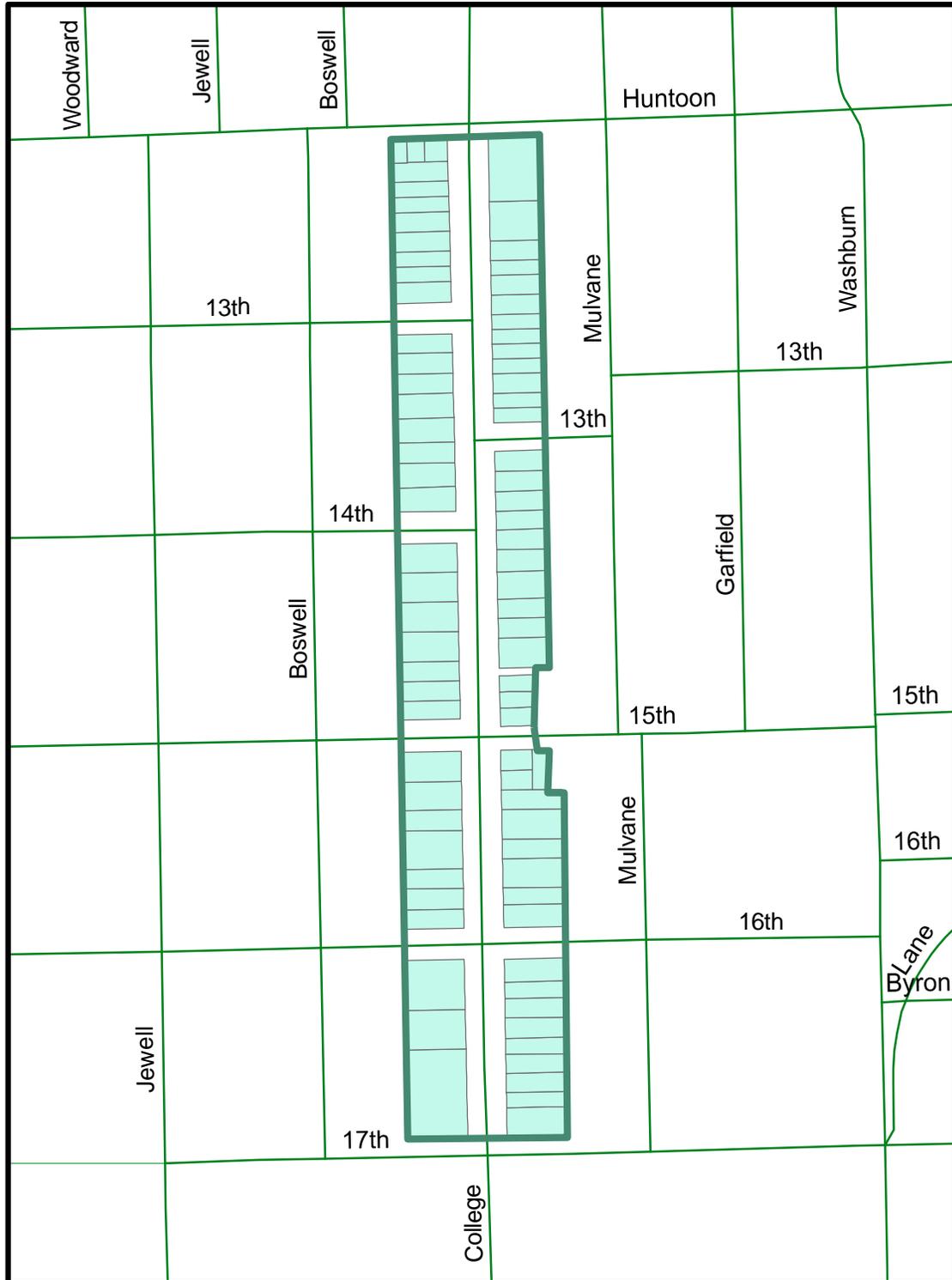
Collins Park Historical Reconnaissance Survey - 2002



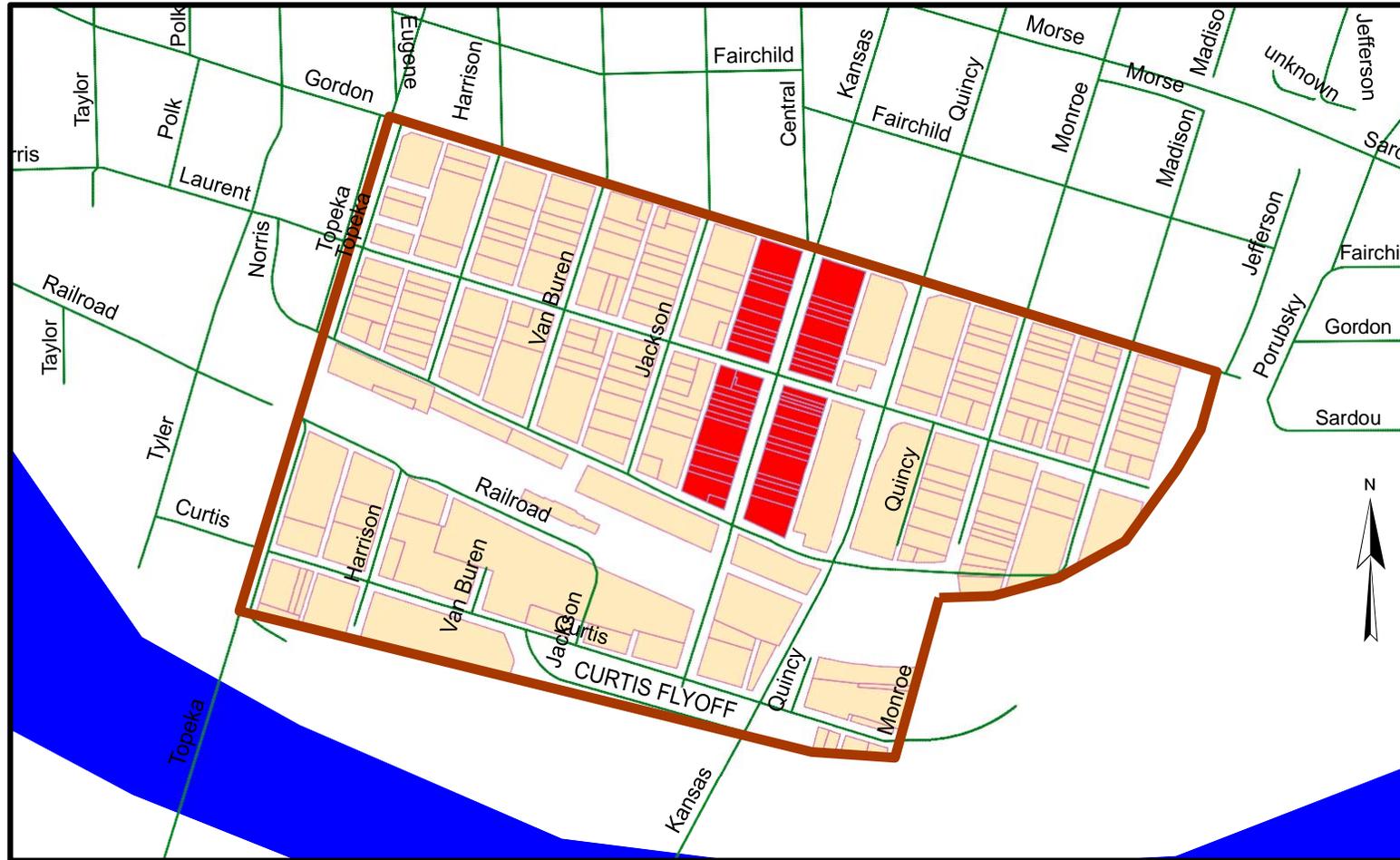
 Collins Park Survey Area

 Recommended Area for National Register Listing

College Avenue National Historic District - 2007



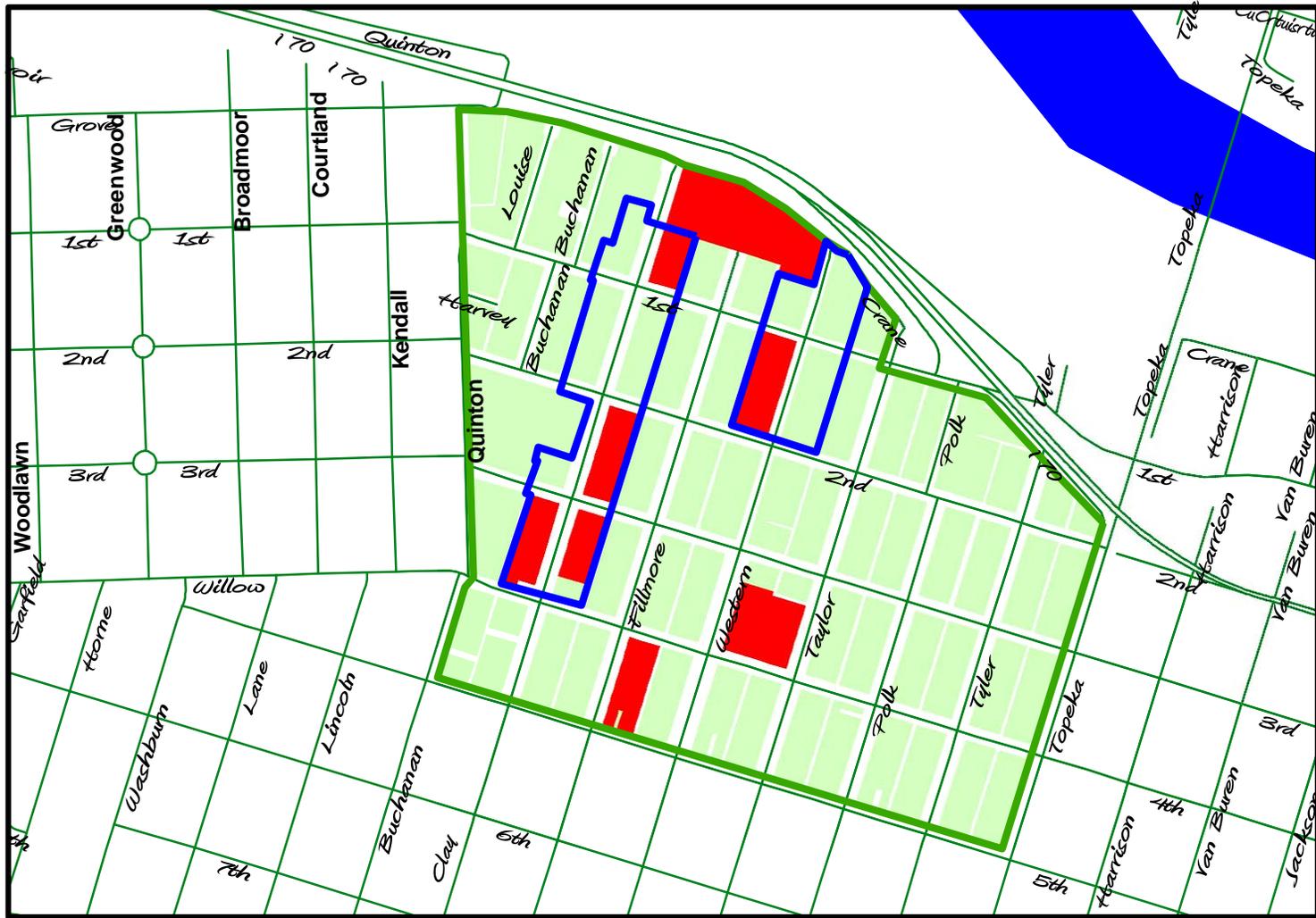
North Topeka Historical Reconnaissance Survey - 2002

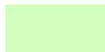


 NorthTopeka Survey Area

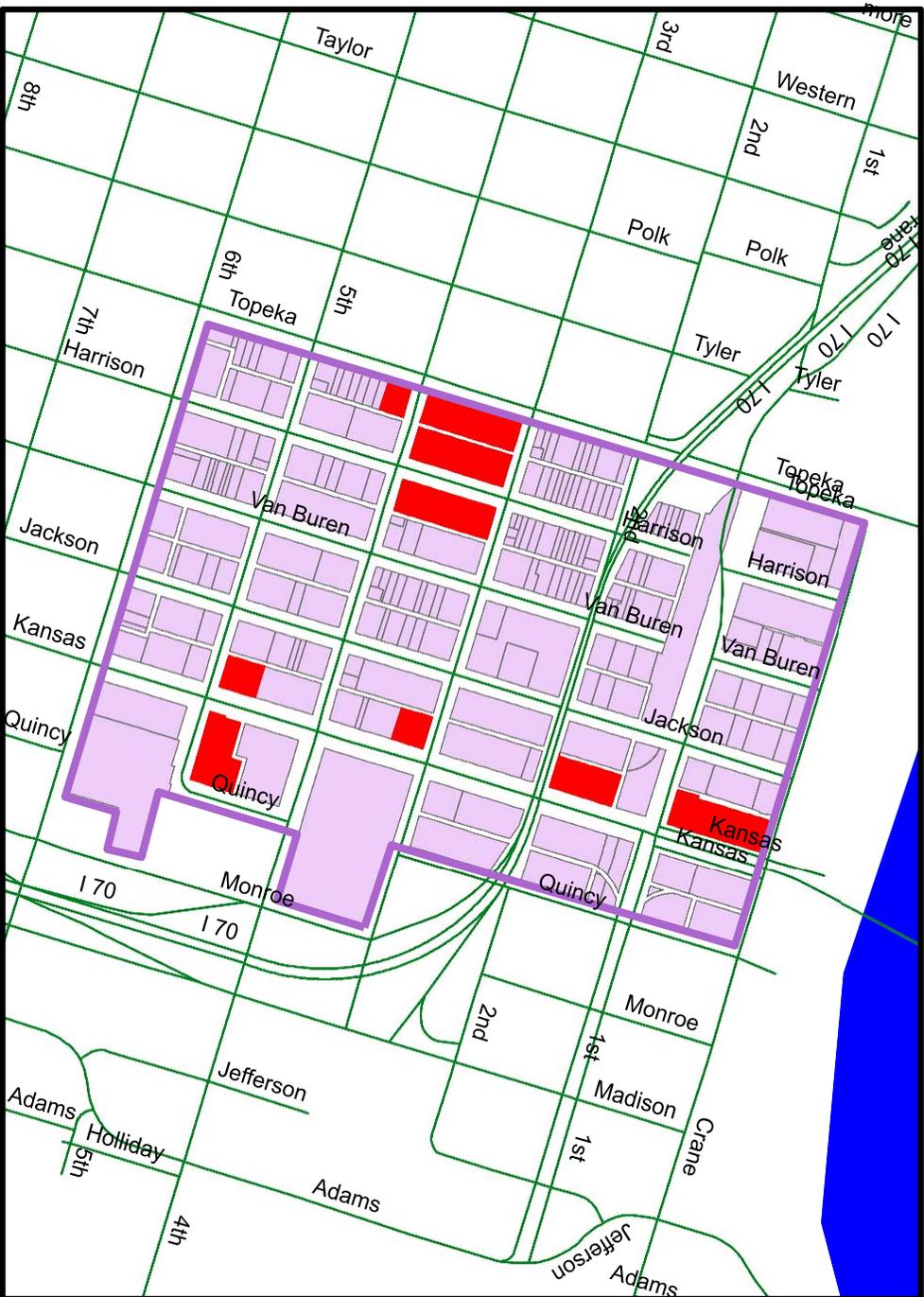
 Recommended Area for National Register Listing

Ward-Meade Historical Reconnaissance Survey - 2003



-  Ward-Meade Survey Area - 2003
-  Recommended Areas for National Register Listing - 2003
-  Areas Recommended for National Register Listing by Kansas Historic Preservation Office Staff in conjunction with the 2010 Ward-Meade Neighborhood Plan

Original Town Historical Reconnaissance Survey - 2003



Original Town Survey Area

Recommended Areas for National Register Listing

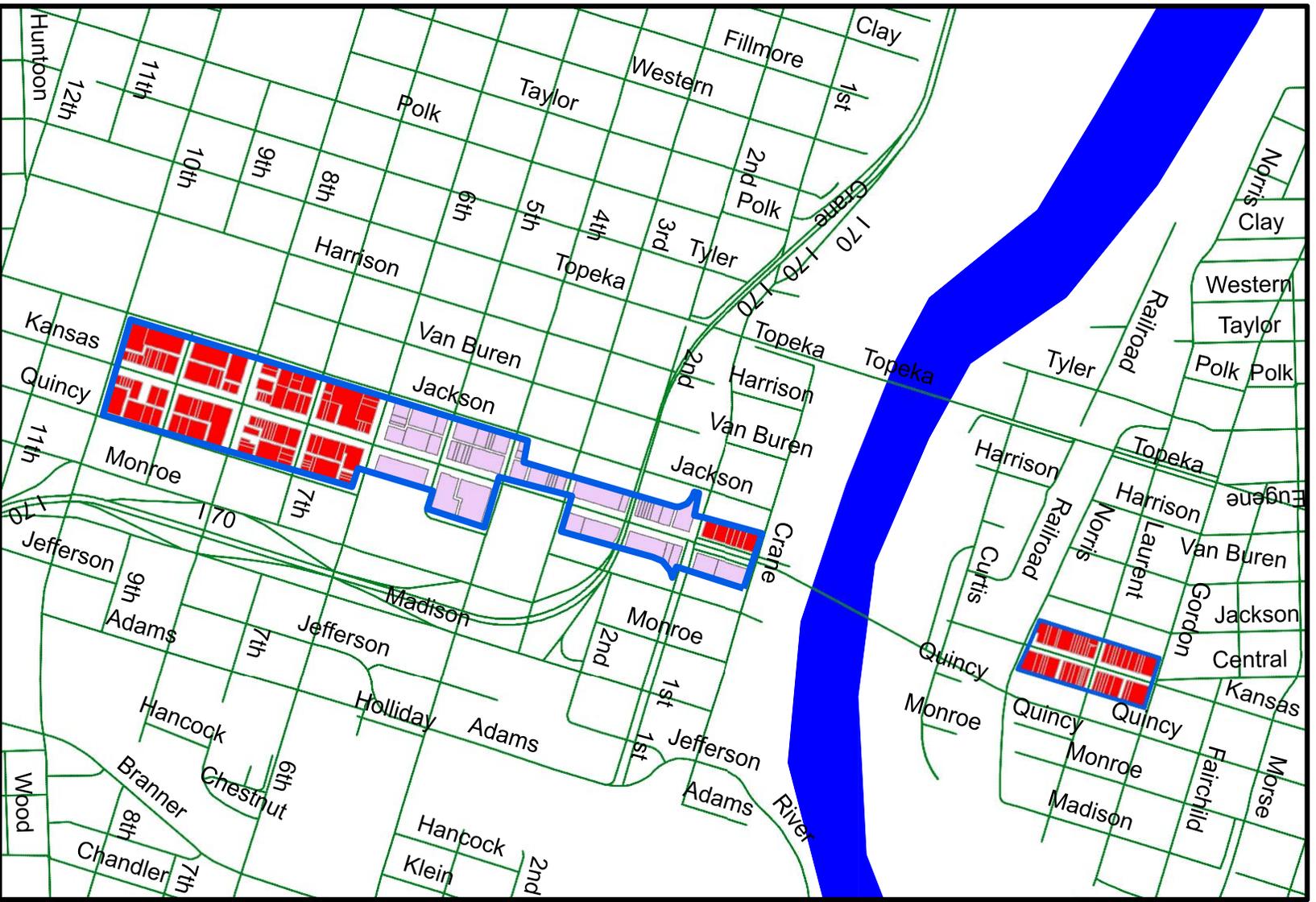
Old Town Historical Reconnaissance Survey - 2005



 Old Town Survey Area

 Recommended Areas for National Register Listing

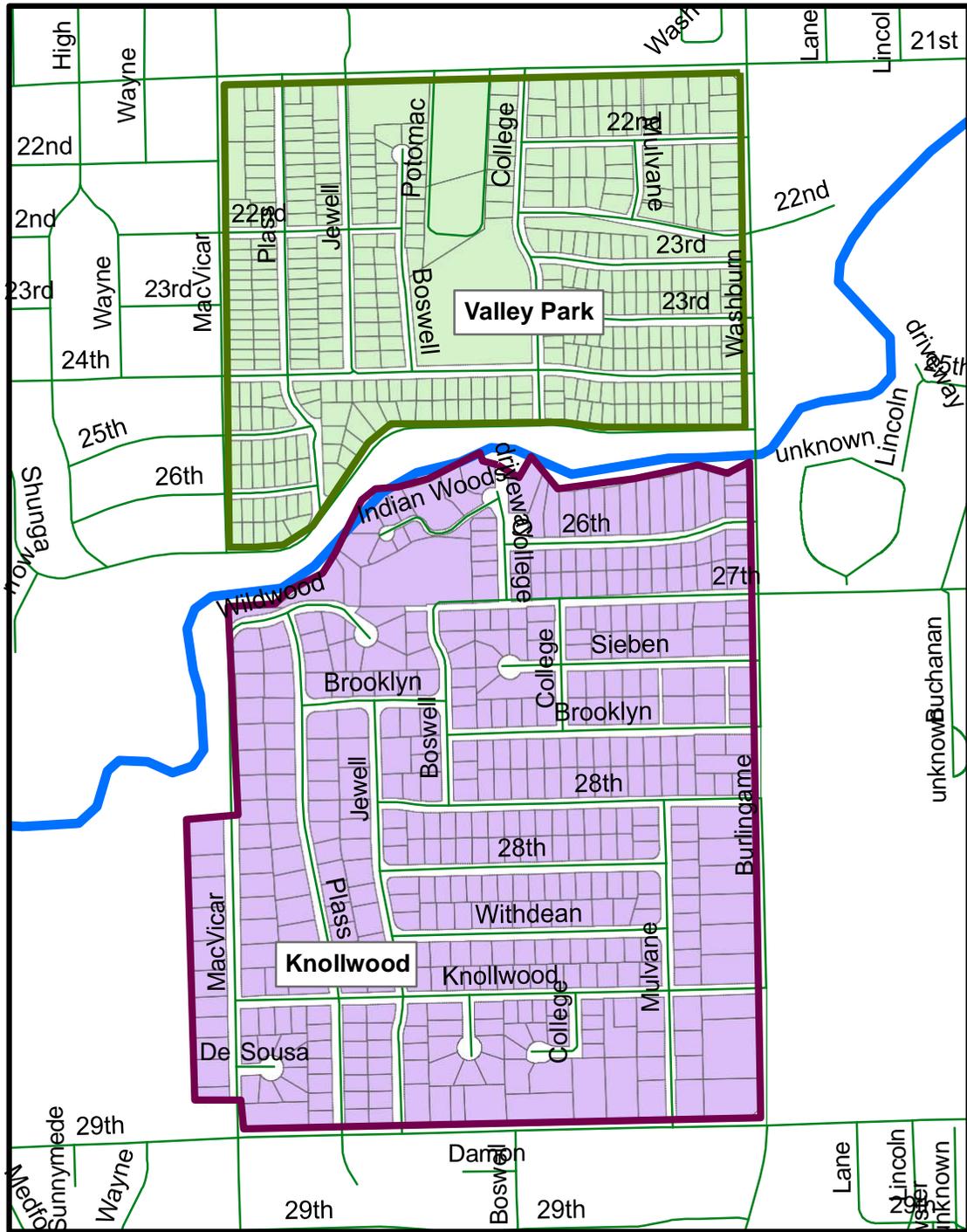
Downtown Topeka Historical Reconnaissance Survey - 2012



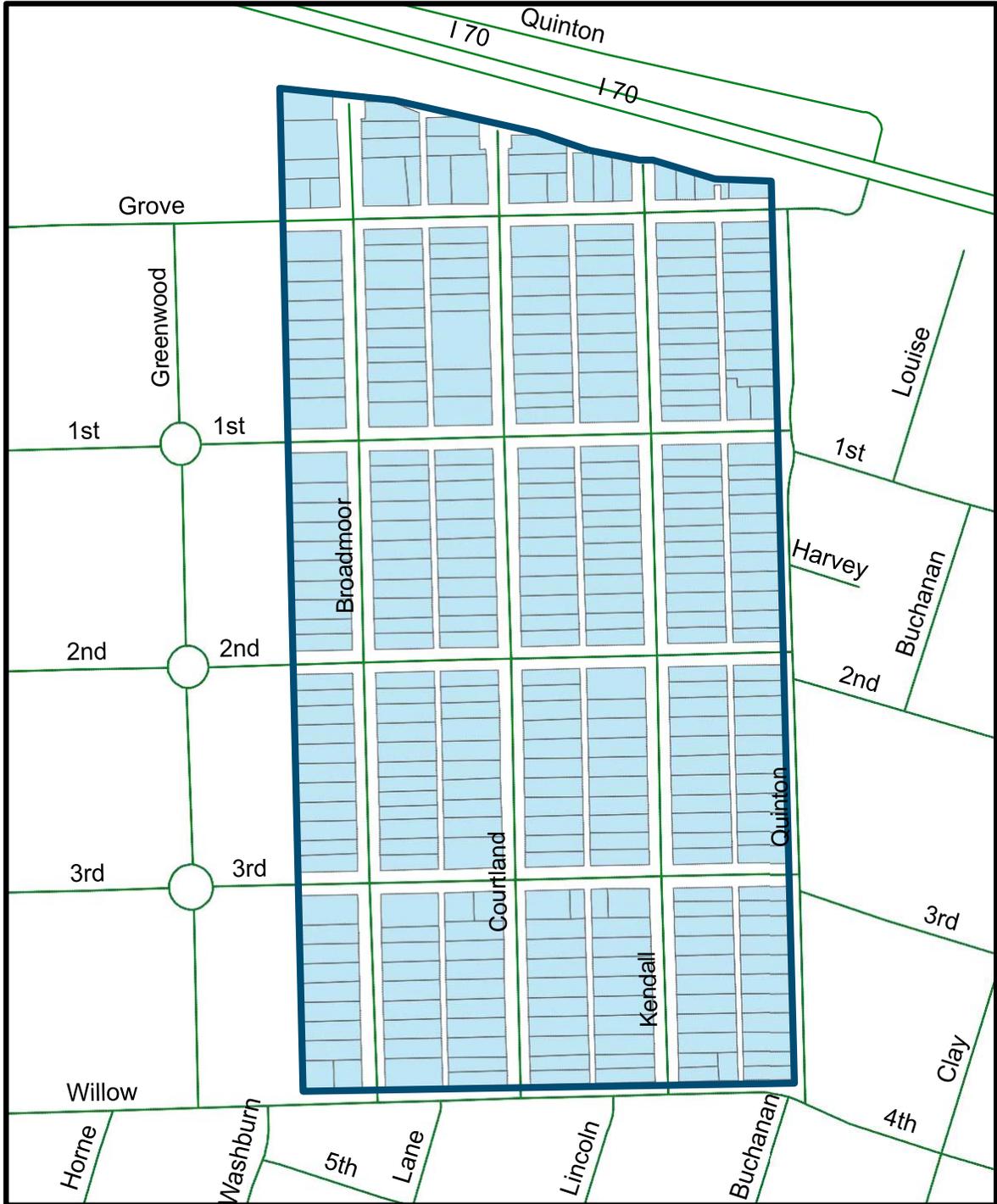
Downtown Survey Area

Recommended Areas for National Register Listing

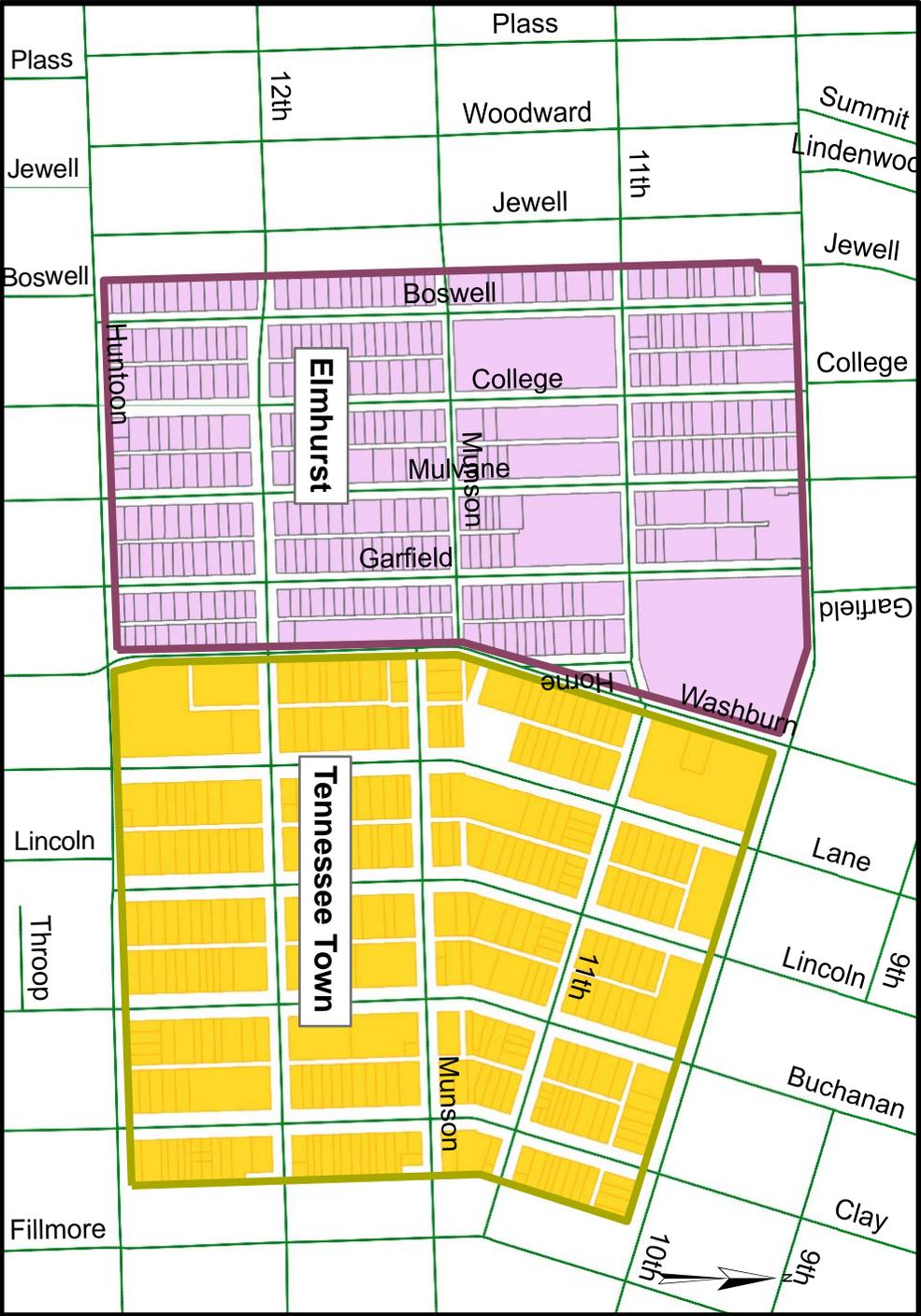
Valley Park and Knollwood Neighborhoods - Future Historic Reconnaissance Surveys



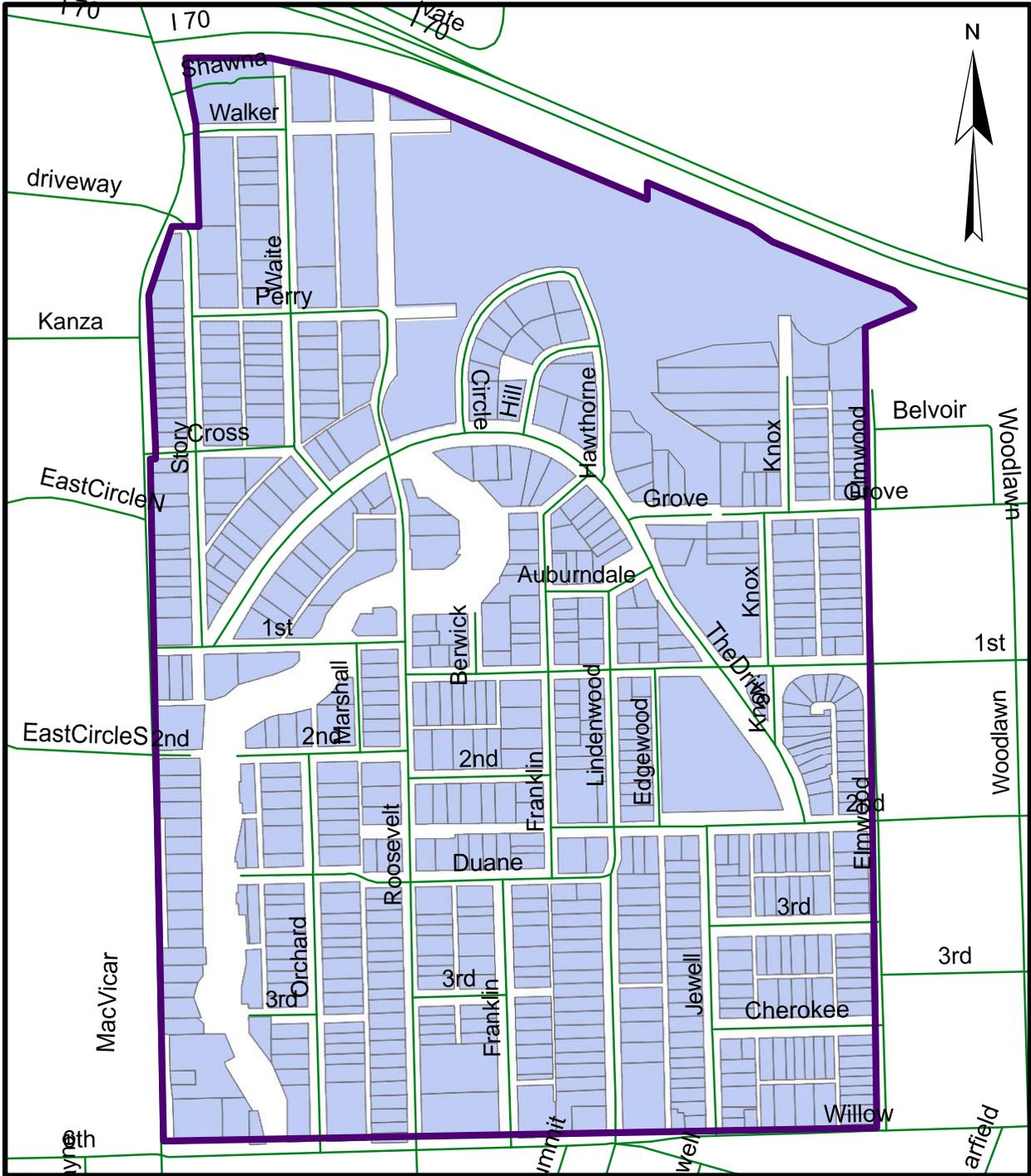
Kenwood Neighborhood - Future Historical Reconnaissance Survey



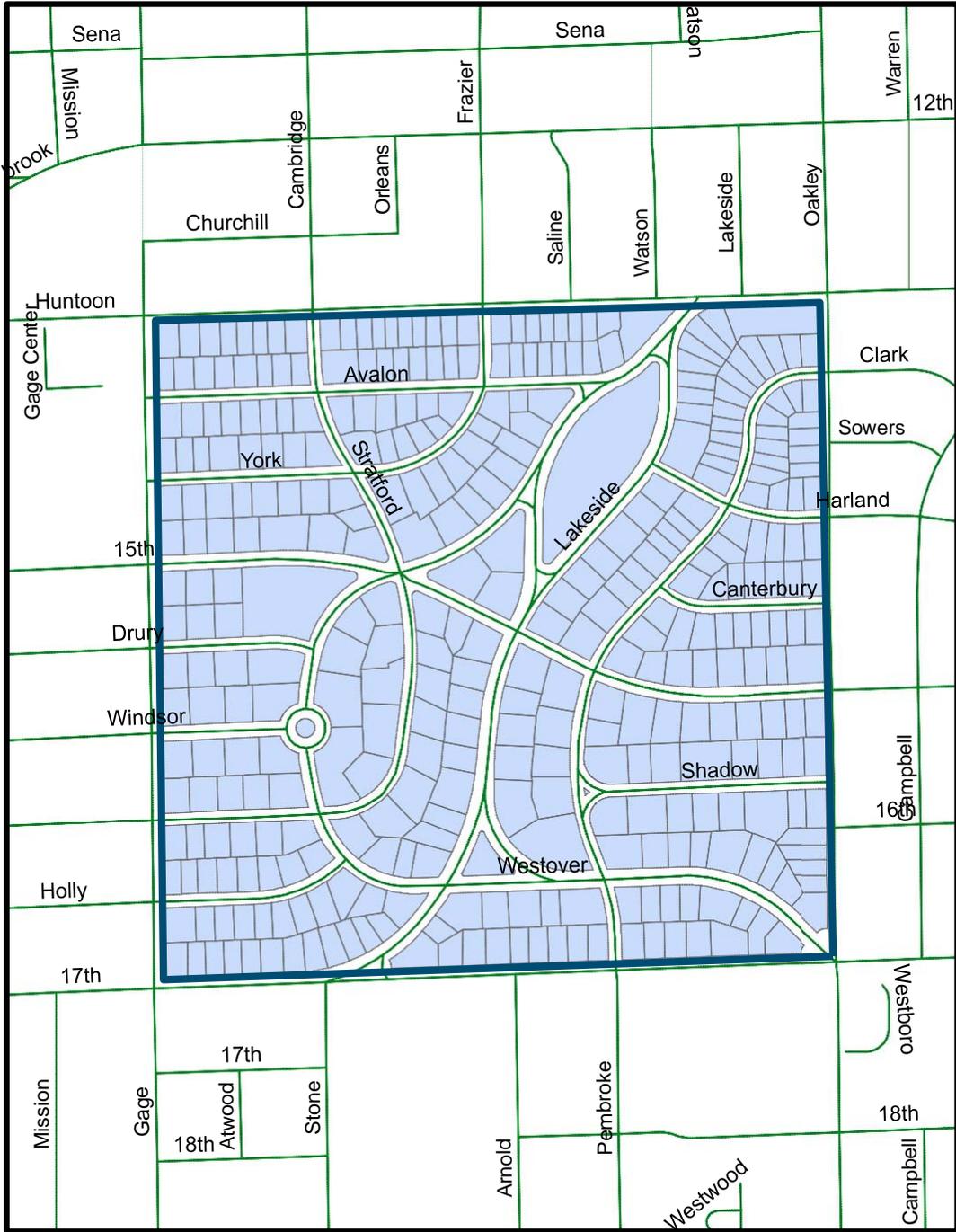
Elmhurst and Tennessee Town - Future Historic Reconnaissance Surveys



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Westboro Neighborhood - Future Historic Reconnaissance Survey



APPENDIX F ■ REFERENCES

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