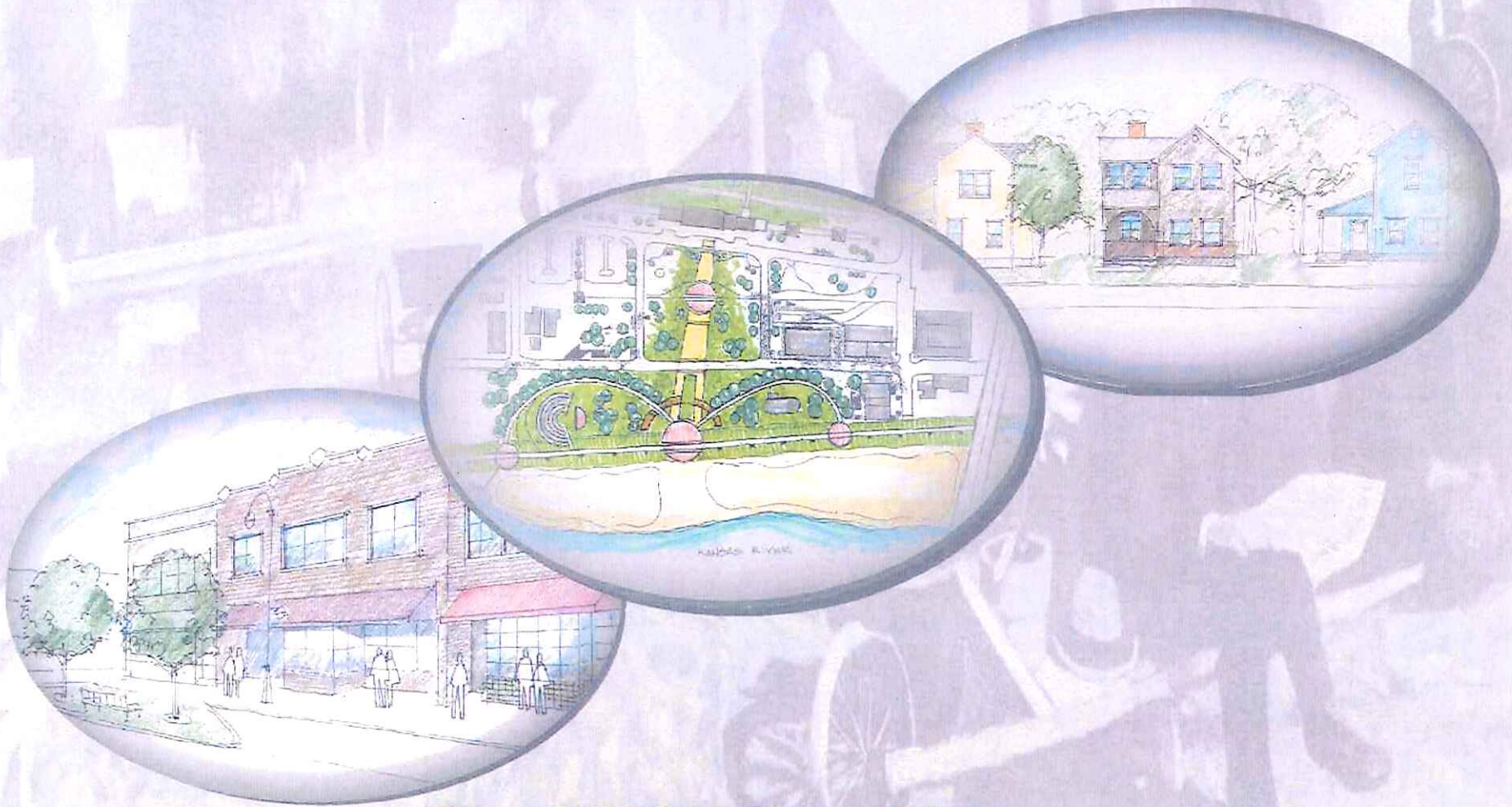


# Historic North Topeka

Topeka, Kansas



## Revitalization Plan

*An Element of The Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan - 2010*

*City of Topeka - Shawnee County, Kansas*

*August 1999*



# Historic North Topeka

T o p e k a , K a n s a s



## Revitalization Plan

An Element of the Topeka-Shawnee County, Kansas  
Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan – 2010

*A Collaborative Effort By:*

The Historic North Topeka Community,  
The City of Topeka &  
The State of Kansas

**August, 1999**

Adopted: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, August 23, 1999

Adopted: Topeka City Council, September 28, 1999

Adopted: Shawnee County Board of Commissioners, October 4, 1999

Revised: \_\_\_\_\_





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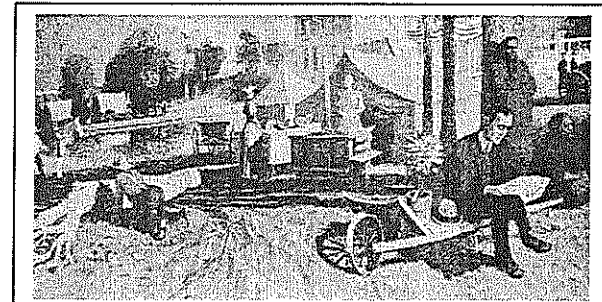
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#### Cover Illustration

*The background image is a section of a mural painted by John William Bashor, which is displayed in Kaw Valley State Bank in Historic North Topeka. It depicts the history of North Topeka from Papan's Ferry in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to 1900. The following items are illustrated on the mural from left to right:*

- John Brown (on horseback) studying the Kansas River crossing for use by his Underground Railroad.
- Papan's Ferry on the Kansas River with two wagons following the Oregon Trail.
- The Inter-Ocean Mills.
- The Camp Meeting in Old Garfield Park.
- Arthur Capper (seated) as a young reporter for the Topeka Mail and Kansas Breeze.
- A Kaw Indian.
- A steamboat on Soldier Creek, Garfield Park.



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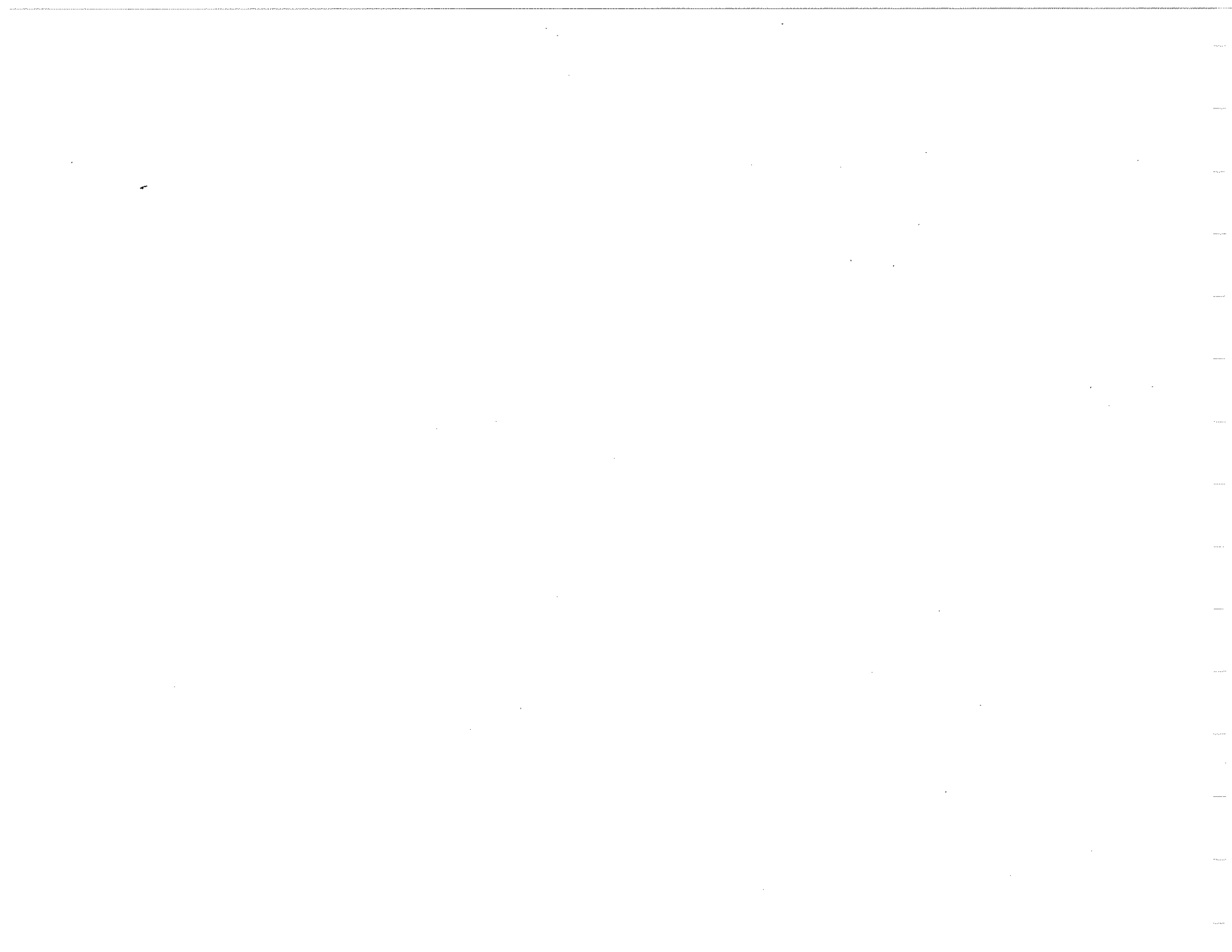
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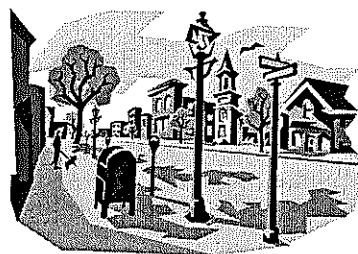
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# Introduction

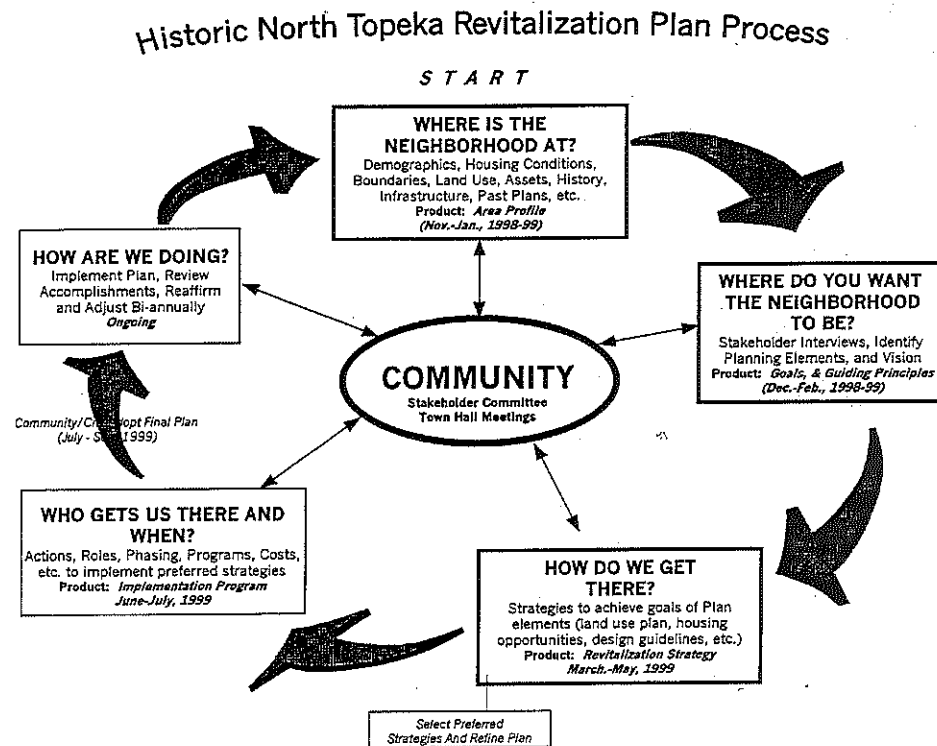


## I. INTRODUCTION

<b>Background</b>	<p>In the fall of 1996, the North Topeka on the Move Association (NOTOMA) completed the Strategic Action Plan to Revitalize North Topeka. The area for that plan encompassed the entire North Topeka West and East Neighborhood Improvements Association (NIA) areas (5 sq. miles) with a population of 6,500 people. The Action Plan focused on business development, community improvement, and infrastructure/ housing, but did not include City Administration participation during the process. NOTOMA used the goals and actions of this plan to guide their organization's agenda over the last several years for this broad area. The major themes of the plan involved returning stability to residential neighborhoods including "a proposal for downzoning", the need to build upon historic assets of the community, and achieve a vibrant business district on N. Kansas Avenue.</p>
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>In the summer of 1998, NOTOMA and the City of Topeka agreed to partner on a more comprehensive revitalization plan to build upon the action plan with a more specific land use and development strategy that would address a smaller geographic area involving City participation. The objectives of this new plan emerged as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An 850-acre area known as Historic North Topeka area should be assessed for appropriate <b>land use</b> and zoning implementation. This Planning Area was predominately zoned for industrial and multi-family uses even though it the neighborhoods were predominately single-family residential.</li><li>• A neighborhood-sized 267-acre focus area with 1,000 people that included the N. Kansas Avenue business district, riverfront, and surrounding residential blocks should be the focus of a more comprehensive <b>revitalization and development strategy</b>.</li></ul> <p>A joint application was made to the State of Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing's Metropolitan Community Capacity Building Grant program for a \$15,000 grant that would be applied to graphic assistance with these planning efforts. <b>The purpose of the Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan is to provide long-range guidance and feasible alternatives to the City, its agencies, residents, and private/public interests for the future revitalization of Historic North Topeka.</b> It establishes a 10-15 year vision with appropriate strategies and implementation measures for land use, housing, urban design, parks, commercial districts, infrastructure, and circulation. This Plan provides the policy basis from which to identify appropriate zoning, capital improvements, and programs to implement it.</p>
<b>Relation to other plans</b>	<p>The Plan is a comprehensive community-based approach to neighborhood planning that constitutes an amendment to the Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan and is regularly monitored, reviewed, and updated as needed. It is intended to balance neighborhood needs with city-wide objectives and be consistent with goals of existing and future elements of the Comprehensive Plan including Downtown, Transportation, Economic Development, and Trails Elements.</p>

## Process

This document has primarily been prepared in collaboration with NOTOMA and the Historic North Topeka Stakeholders Committee (see Acknowledgements). Beginning in December, 1998, development of the plan involved a community-based process inclusive of the representative neighborhood organizations. Planning staff conducted a property-by-property land use/housing survey of the neighborhood and collected pertinent demographic data. 14 interviews were conducted by staff of identified stakeholders such as businesses, property owners, community organizations, etc. that had a stake in revitalizing Historic North Topeka. The information was shared and presented to the Stakeholders Committee to craft desired guiding principles, revitalization strategies, and implementation measures. To date 8 committee meetings were held with staff to develop the plan and 2 town hall meetings of the community were held to further refine recommendations and achieve a consensus. A conceptual description of this process is outlined below.

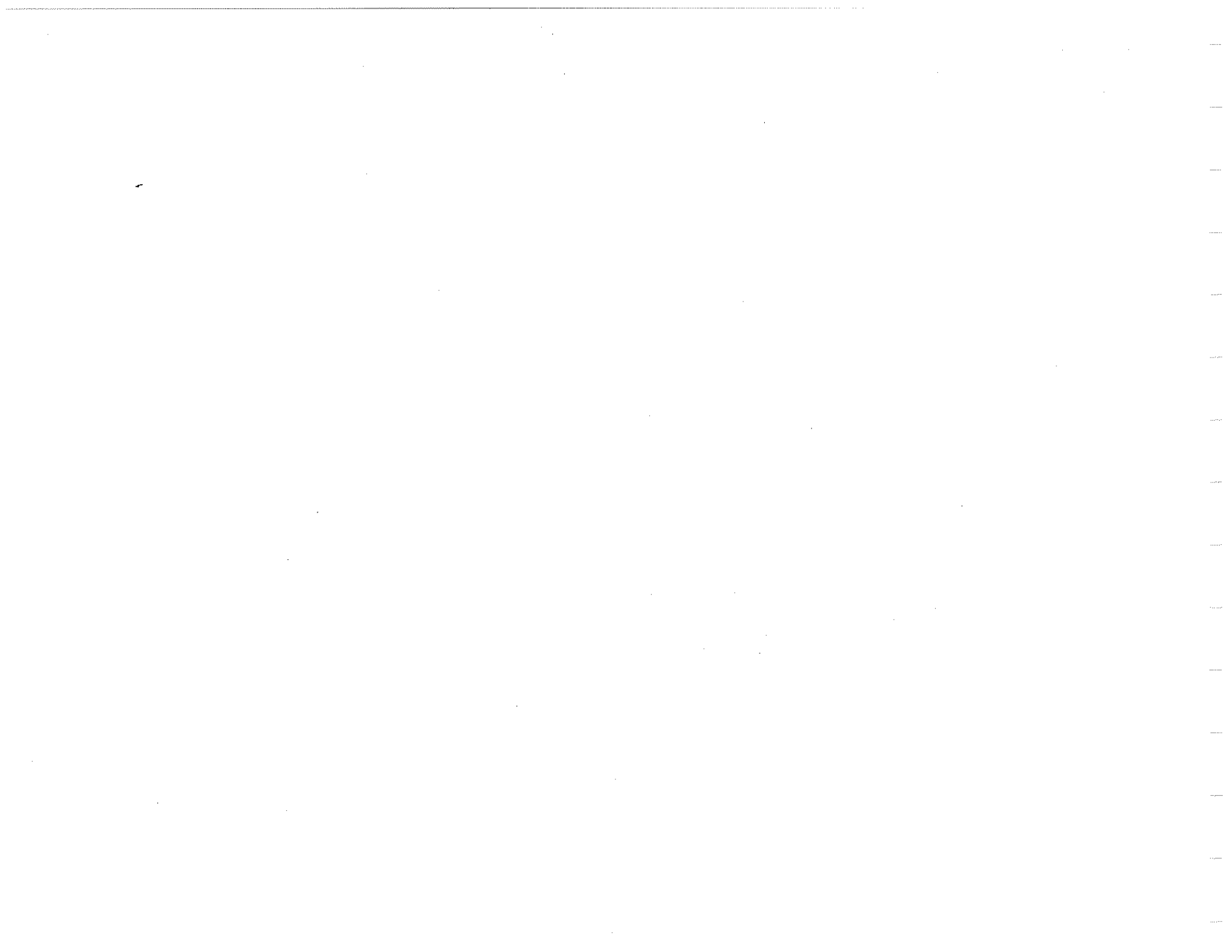






# Neighborhood Profile





## II. NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

### A. LOCATION AND CHARACTER

- Location** Historic North Topeka is located along the north bank of the Kansas River, approximately 1 mile from the Capital in downtown Topeka. The Planning Area is bound by the Kansas River to the east and south, the old Soldier Creek channel to the north and the Kansas River Dike System and West Street to the west. The Planning Area comprises approximately 850 acres.
- Setting** The community is intersected by two major north-south thoroughfares – Topeka Boulevard and Kansas Avenue – that connect to the downtown south of the Kansas River by way of two bridges at Topeka Boulevard and Quincy Street. Areas to the west of the community are largely rural/agricultural in character. Areas to the north of the community are predominantly residential with a large concentration of commercial and industrial development along Topeka Boulevard and US 24 Highway.
- History & Character** Historic North Topeka can be referred to as a crossroads in the settling of the West. In 1849, three brothers named Joseph, Achan and Louis Pappan moved to what is now North Topeka and began a ferry service across the Kansas River for Oregon Trail travelers. Pappans landing rested somewhere in the vicinity between Topeka Boulevard and Harrison Street and was also utilized as a segment by John Brown's followers on the Underground Railroad. The first African-American churches in Topeka were established just north of the river.



Originally called "Eugene" by its founders William Curtis (grandfather of Charles Curtis who became Vice President of The United States during the Hoover Administration) and Louis Laurent, the town was laid out on the north side of the Kansas River in 1865, near the landing of the Pappan's Ferry. The first passenger train in Topeka rolled through North Topeka in 1866 when there were only a handful of houses and a few stores. Shortly thereafter in 1867, the area was annexed into the City of Topeka. Once the railroad arrived, the community began to grow with the construction of a flourmill, hotels, saloons, banks, homes and schools. In 1869, after several previous floating bridges were swept down the river, a permanent structure was built connecting North Kansas Avenue to South Kansas Avenue. After that North

Topeka was booming with development, including the construction of the Union Pacific Passenger Depot and Place Hotel built at the southwest corner of Kansas Avenue and Railroad Street in 1872. The following was printed in the North Topeka Times describing North Topeka before the turn of the century:

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

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

The history of the community is filled with frequent floodings, the most notable occurring in 1903 and 1951. After the floods of 1903 and again in 1908, a dike system was built to protect North Topeka from future floods and restore confidence in the community. However, in 1951 a major flood once again inundated the community, causing tremendous damage. Many homes were razed or left uninhabitable following the flood and were often replaced by mobile homes as a low-cost alternative to traditional site-built homes. Concurrently, suburban development trends were also accelerating migration from inner city neighborhoods to outlying areas. In an effort to encourage redevelopment, much of the area was "upzoned" from its base zoning of single-family and two-family districts, to zoning districts that allowed multiple-family dwellings and highly intensive commercial and industrial uses. The Army Corps of Engineers built a new levee system in the mid-50s to protect the area from flooding and reassure property owners.



A decline in population was soon followed by a decline in neighborhood business activity years later when the Kansas Avenue bridge was rebuilt in the mid-60s and relocated to Quincy Street thus bypassing the traditional business district on Kansas Avenue. Many historic buildings from the turn of the century still exist in Historic North Topeka, although most are in need of rehabilitation. The Kansas Avenue business district has positioned itself more for the construction

industry than travelers or residents. The 1927-edition of the Union Pacific Depot, moved to the west side of Kansas Avenue in line with the Capital building, is being reincarnated as a railroad museum and is the only structure on the National Register of Historic Places located in the Planning Area.

## B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

**Land Use** Land use in Historic North Topeka can be characterized as predominantly residential with 65% of all parcels and 37% of the land area devoted to residential uses. Site-built single-family dwellings together with manufactured “mobile homes” account for 90% of the residential properties. Open/Recreational Space accounts for 23% of the land area and includes Garfield Park, the old Soldier Creek channel and the “Charles Curtis Greenway” on North Topeka Boulevard. Industrial and open storage uses account for an additional 17% of the land area. Historic North Topeka exhibits a relatively high percentage of vacant land, with vacant parcels accounting for 9% of the total land area and 16% all parcels.

**Table 1**  
**Existing Land Use – Historic North Topeka**

Land Use	Acres	Percent	Parcels	Percent
Agricultural Land	4.0	0.6%	1	0.06%
Automobile Parking - Open	5.4	0.8%	17	1.02%
Commercial	26.8	4.1%	101	6.05%
Commercial - Mixed Use	0.7	0.1%	3	0.18%
Cultural/Recreational Land	18.2	2.8%	2	0.12%
Industrial	99.3	15.2%	85	5.09%
Institutional	18.4	2.8%	29	1.74%
Mobile Home Court	23.0	3.5%	24	1.44%
Mobile Home Site	14.0	2.1%	67	4.01%
Office	14.9	2.3%	17	1.02%
Open Space	150.9	23.1%	23	1.38%
Open Storage	11.9	1.8%	26	1.56%
Residential - Multi Family	4.9	0.8%	23	1.38%
Residential - Other	3.1	0.5%	15	0.90%



Land Use	Acres	Percent	Parcels	Percent
Residential - Single Family	184.9	28.3%	915	54.82%
Residential - Two Family	13.0	2.0%	53	3.18%
Utility	1.2	0.2%	1	0.06%
Vacant	58.9	9.0%	267	16.00%
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>653.6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1669</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Public R-O-W</b>	<b>196.9</b>			
<b>TOTAL AREA</b>	<b>850.5</b>			

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning & Shawnee County Appraisers (1998)

Map #1 illustrates the existing land use in Historic North Topeka. High concentrations of commercial uses are found along North Topeka Boulevard and North Kansas Avenue, including the historic business district comprised of century-old row-style buildings. A small commercial strip also exists in the 500 and 600 blocks of NW Paramore Street. High concentrations of industrial uses are found south of Laurent Street adjacent to the Union Pacific railroad tracks and the Kansas River. An area of transition exists south of Gordon Street and west of N Kansas Avenue, which separates the predominantly low-density residential blocks to the north from the commercial/industrial areas to the south with a mix of vacant, commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential land uses. Intact single-family residential blocks are generally found north of Gordon Street, with the highest concentrations occurring east of Topeka Boulevard. A “ring” of open space partially encircles the community, including the areas within the Kansas River levee, the Old Soldier Creek channel, and the old Kansas River Dike System to the west.

### Zoning

As early as 1939, the community was primarily zoned for residential uses, with areas east of N Kansas Avenue being zoned for two-family use and areas west of N Kansas Avenue generally being zoned for single-family use. Areas adjacent to the railroad tracks, in the southern and eastern portions of the community, were zoned for industrial uses, including the small residential enclave known as “Little Russia”. Areas along Kansas Avenue, Topeka Boulevard and NW Paramore Street were zoned for commercial uses. After the 1951 flood, the area experienced a massive “upzoning” in an effort to promote redevelopment. All of the residential areas were zoned for more intensive residential, industrial, or commercial uses. Single-family zoning districts were eliminated from the Planning Area. The zoning pattern established by these upzonings remains relatively intact today as depicted on Map #2.

### Housing Density

The very low density of 1.8 units/acre found in Historic North Topeka can be attributed to the large percentage of dwelling units in single-family residences and large areas of non-residential use. Nearly 8 out of 10 housing units in the Planning Area are in single-family structures. Two and multiple-family dwellings combined account for only 15.8% of the

housing units in the area despite the fact that the area has largely been zoned for two-family and multiple-family use for the better part of 50 years.

**Table 2**  
**Housing Density – Historic North Topeka**

Housing Types	Units	Percent	Acres	Units/Ac.
Mobile Home Court	169	12.48%	23.0	7.3
Mobile Home Site	67	4.95%	14.1	4.8
Residential - Multi Family	98	7.24%	4.9	20.0
Residential - Single Family	914	67.50%	184.9	4.9
Residential - Two Family	106	7.83%	13.0	8.1
<b>Sub Total (Net)</b>	<b>1354</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>240.0</b>	<b>5.6</b>
<b>Total with ROW (Gross)</b>			<b>850.5</b>	<b>1.6</b>

*Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (1998)*

## Housing Conditions

Housing conditions in Historic North Topeka, as surveyed by the Metropolitan Planning Department in November and December of 1998, can be characterized as relatively poor with 41% of all residential structures exhibiting major deficiencies and an additional 31% exhibiting intermediate deficiencies, as seen in Table #4 (*housing conditions and ratings are defined in Appendix "A"*). The large number of single-family structures with major deficiencies contributed the most to these conditions, accounting for 88% of dilapidated residential structures, or 36% of all residential structures. Two-family and multiple-family dwellings were also significant contributors with 56.5% of multiple-family dwellings and 44% of two-family dwellings exhibiting major deficiencies.

Map #3 illustrates the building conditions by block. The highest concentrations of blocks exhibiting major deterioration generally occur east of N Kansas Avenue. Blocks located along NE Jefferson, NE Madison and NE Monroe Streets in particular exhibited poor exterior conditions. The blocks with the best conditions were found along NW Jackson Street (north of Morse Street) and west of Topeka Boulevard on NW Harrison and NW Eugene. **(NOTE: Average block conditions are relative to the neighborhood and should not be compared to similar surveys in other neighborhoods. Refer to Appendix "A" for specific definitions of conditions)**

**Table 3**  
**Housing Conditions – Historic North Topeka**

Housing Types	Minor Deficiencies		Intermediate Deficiencies		Major Deficiencies		Total
	Prop.	%	Prop.	%	Prop.	%	Prop.
Mobile Home	1	4.5%	14	63.6%	7	31.8%	22
Mobile Home Court	35	53.0%	20	30.3%	11	16.7%	66
Multi Family	4	17.4%	6	26.1%	13	56.5%	23
Single Family	250	27.7%	269	29.8%	385	42.6%	904
Two Family	7	13.2%	22	41.5%	24	45.3%	53
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>27.8%</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>41.2%</b>	<b>1068</b>

*Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (1998)*

**Tenure**

Historic North Topeka is predominantly a renter community with 59% of all housing units being renter occupied (see [Table 5](#)). A majority of the occupied housing units in all housing types are renter occupied. Properties containing mobile home courts, two-family structures and multi-family structures demonstrated the lowest homeownership levels and the highest vacancy rates. Site-built single-family homes exhibited the highest homeownership levels and lowest vacancy rates. Overall vacancy rates are surprisingly low which may be attributable to a localized demand for low-cost units.

[Map #4](#) illustrates that homeownership levels in *Historic North Topeka* directly correspond to the types of housing and conditions. The lowest homeownership levels are generally found in the southeast portion of the community where the deterioration is greatest. The highest levels of homeownership are found in the northern and western areas where deterioration is not as prevalent. Areas east of Kansas Avenue exhibited the lowest homeownership levels, particularly those blocks south of Morse Street. Blocks with particularly high levels of owner occupancy include the 1500 block of NW Logan, the 1200 and 1300 blocks of NW Van Buren, and the 1400 block of NW Central.

**Property Values/Age**

According to data provided by the Shawnee County Appraisers Office, the median value of single-family homes were nearly \$20,000 (see [Table #5](#)). The mean and median values for mobile home sites and courts were considerably less (by nearly \$20,000) than site-built single-family and two-family homes. Multi-family structures had the highest appraised values.

According to data provided by the Shawnee County Appraisers Office, 77% of the housing units in Historic North Topeka were built prior to 1940 and nearly 6% were built before the turn-of-the-century. Of those housing units built prior to 1940 a majority (76%) are in single-family dwellings, accounting for 82% of all single-family dwellings in Historic North Topeka. 23% of the housing units in the community were built after 1940, of which 57% (167 housing units) are in single-family dwellings. Mobile home sites and parks account for 1/3 of all housing units created after 1940 in Historic North Topeka. The age of structures in the Focus Area is depicted in Map #5 that also illustrates buildings of significant historical character as surveyed by Historic Topeka, Inc.

**Table 4**  
**Housing Tenure – Historic North Topeka**

Housing Types	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Vacant		Total
	units	%	Units	%	units	%	
Mobile Home Court	4	2.4%	154	91.1%	11	6.5%	169
Mobile Home Site	27	40.3%	37	55.2%	3	4.5%	67
Multi-Family	3	3.1%	86	87.8%	9	9.2%	98
Single-Family	436	47.7%	442	48.4%	36	3.9%	914
Two-Family	11	10.4%	85	80.2%	10	9.4%	106
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>35.5%</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>59.4%</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>1354</b>

*Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (1998)*

**Table 5**  
**Property Values & Age – Historic North Topeka**

Use	Values		Age (% of Units)	
	Median	Mean	Pre – 1940	Post - 1940
Mobile Home Court	\$9,227.50	<b>\$10,107.25</b>	0%	100%
Mobile Home Site	\$2,345.00	<b>\$3,421.56</b>	0%	100%
Multi-Family	\$27,600.00	<b>\$27,559.57</b>	93%	7%
Single-Family	\$19,800.00	<b>\$21,035.71</b>	82%	18%
Two-Family	\$22,720.00	<b>\$22,747.00</b>	84%	16%

*Source: Shawnee County Appraiser (1998)*

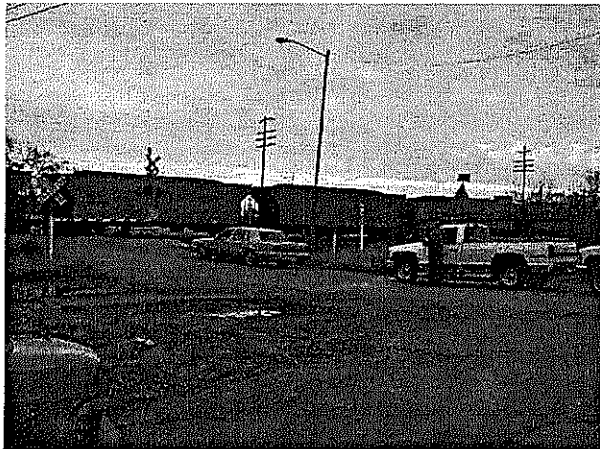
**Environment/  
Public Safety** Map #6 illustrates the data collected from the City's Code Compliance Services division in 1998 on nuisance code violations which include accumulation of junk and abandoned vehicles. The map indicates that blocks in the northern and central portions of the community experienced the largest number of violations, with several blocks averaging between 8 and 19 violations. Generally the east and west portions of the community exhibited the soundest environmental conditions with most blocks averaging between 0 and 3 violations. This mirrors the locations of industrial zoning districts that would legally allow more open storage than the more restrictive residential districts in the central portion of the neighborhood.

Map #7 illustrates the number of major crimes committed by block according to crime statistics collected from the Topeka Police Department from 11/97 to 11/98. The highest crime levels generally occurred in commercial activity areas such as the 800-1100 blocks of Kansas Avenue and the 1000 block of Topeka Boulevard. Residential areas were not found to have many high crime spots. The notable exceptions occurred at NW Eugene (1300 block), NW Jackson (1000 block), and the blocks to the southeast of Quincy Elementary School. The safest concentration of blocks occurred in the low-density area west of NW Tyler. Major crimes are defined as Part 1 crimes – murder, rape, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, and theft.

**Development  
Activity** Development activity in the community between 1990 and 1997 has primarily consisted of demolitions (see Map #8). There were 55 permits issued for the demolition or removal of a structure in that time period. Of the 28 permits issued for development, 22 were for mobile homes, 3 for commercial structures, 2 public/quasi-public structures and 1 single-family dwelling. Building permits tracked are for new construction and whole demolitions and do not include rehabilitation.

**Circulation** A diverse street network provides pedestrian and vehicular circulation in Historic North Topeka. Historic North Topeka is intersected by 1 principal arterial street (Topeka Boulevard), 3 minor arterial streets (Quincy, Kansas and Morse) and 2 collector streets (Tyler and Gordon). The Topeka Boulevard, Kansas Avenue and Sardou Avenue bridges provide access to areas south and east of the Kansas River.

There are two major constraints to traffic circulation in Historic North Topeka. The Topeka and Kansas Avenue Bridges, which provide access to Interstate 70, also create an obstacle to efficient traffic circulation by only providing access north of Laurent Street. Therefore, all traffic (including heavy trucks) from areas to the south of Laurent are forced onto local residential streets and the historic business district on Kansas Avenue in order to gain access to the Topeka and Kansas Avenue bridges at Gordon and Laurent streets respectively. The second major obstacle to efficient traffic circulation is the railroad tracks which “rope-off” the community to the east and south, isolating areas between the river and the tracks. The “Great Overland Station” and the small residential enclave known as “Little Russia” are both within

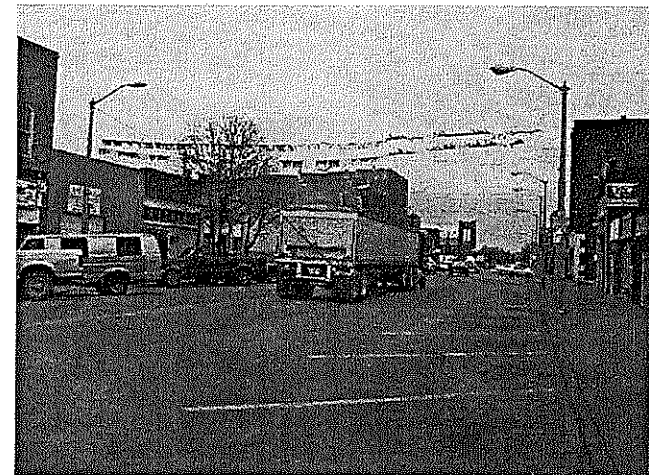


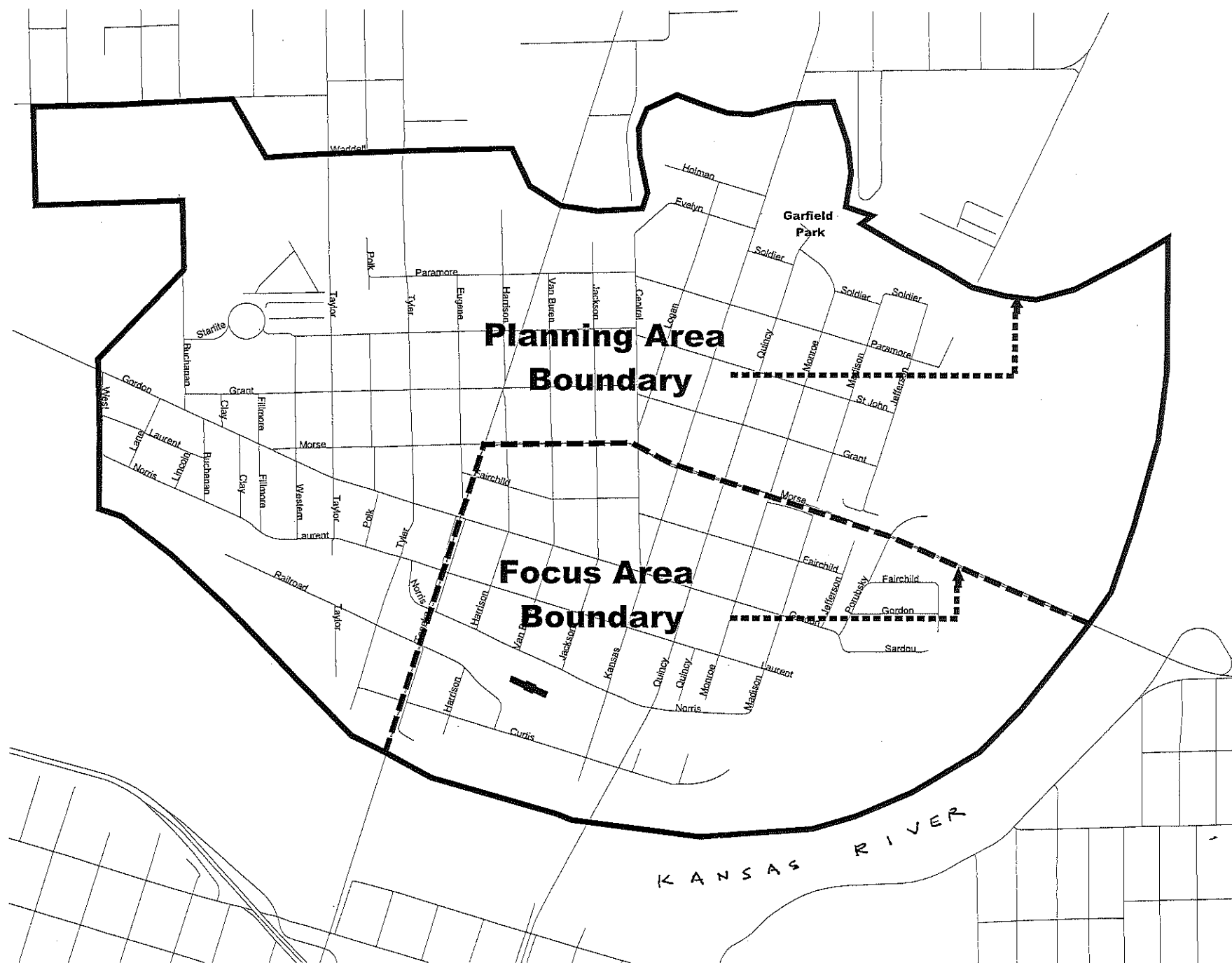
this area. Little Russia is a prime example of the circulation problems that the railroad tracks create, with the only vehicular access to the community provided at the Gordon Street railroad crossing. Vehicular access in and out of "Little Russia" is delayed frequently by the 75-85 trains that pass through the intersection each day. It is these same trains that frequently delay both pedestrian and vehicular movement at the Kansas Avenue railroad crossing around the bend from the Gordon Street crossing.

There is a significant amount of large truck (3 or more axles) traffic generated by industrial uses in Historic North Topeka. Often times, in an effort to access the Kansas Avenue and Topeka Boulevard bridges this traffic is forced onto local streets and the historic business district on Kansas Avenue. Much of the heavy truck traffic is generated by

industrial uses located south of Gordon Street, primarily by Cargill and Farmers Cooperative grain elevators. Transporting back and forth to their plant downtown south of the river mainly causes Cargill's trips, which can peak at 75-80/day (one-way) during harvest season. Traffic counts taken by the City of Topeka Public Works Department on January 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 1999 show that there were 142 heavy trucks (12.7% of the total traffic volume for the 24 hour period) on North Kansas Avenue, just south of the railroad tracks. This count includes both north and south-bound traffic. As expected, truck traffic peaked during business hours (8am-5pm), with only 5 truck between 5pm and 11pm.

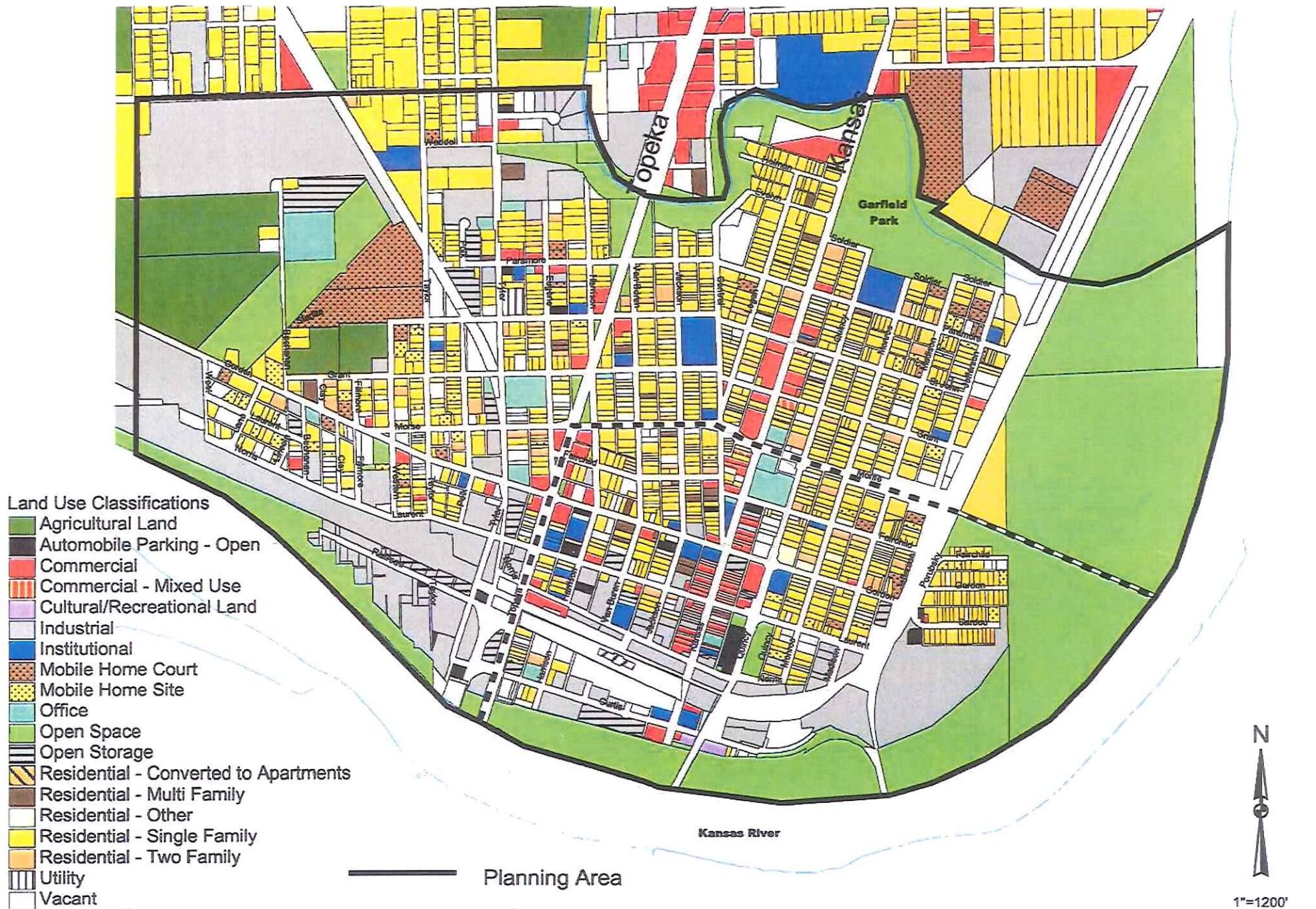
Table 6 summarizes the busiest and most accident prone streets and intersections in Historic North Topeka.







# Existing Land Use Map #1





## Map #2



Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan







## Map #4





# Historic Landmarks and Age of Structures

## Map #5



### Year Structure Built

- 1850 - 1920
- 1921 - 1940
- 1941 - 1999
- No Information Available  
(Property is either vacant or tax exempt)

Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office

--- Target Area



Historic Landmarks

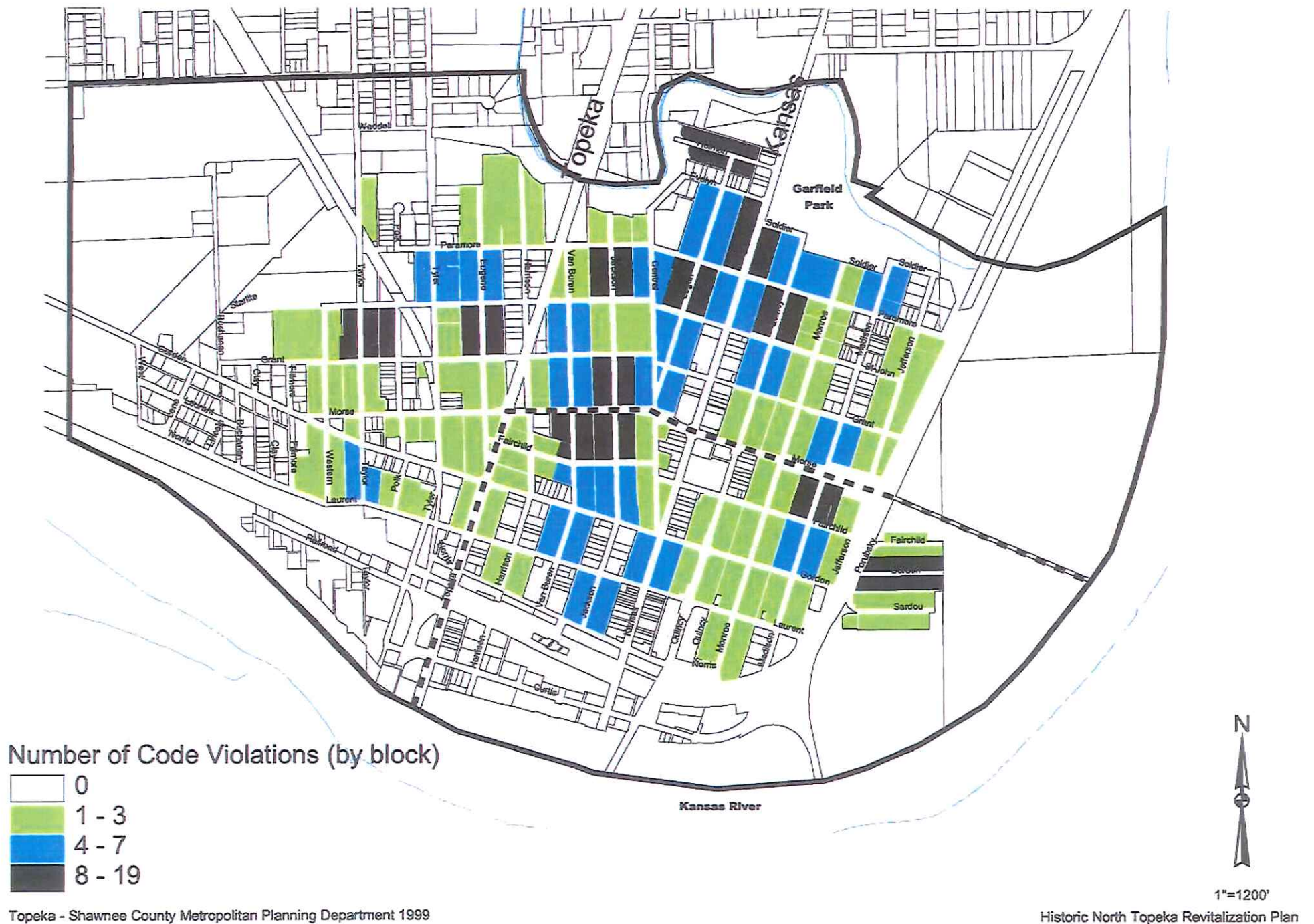
Source: Historic Topeka Inc. & Downtown Topeka Inc.



1"=700'

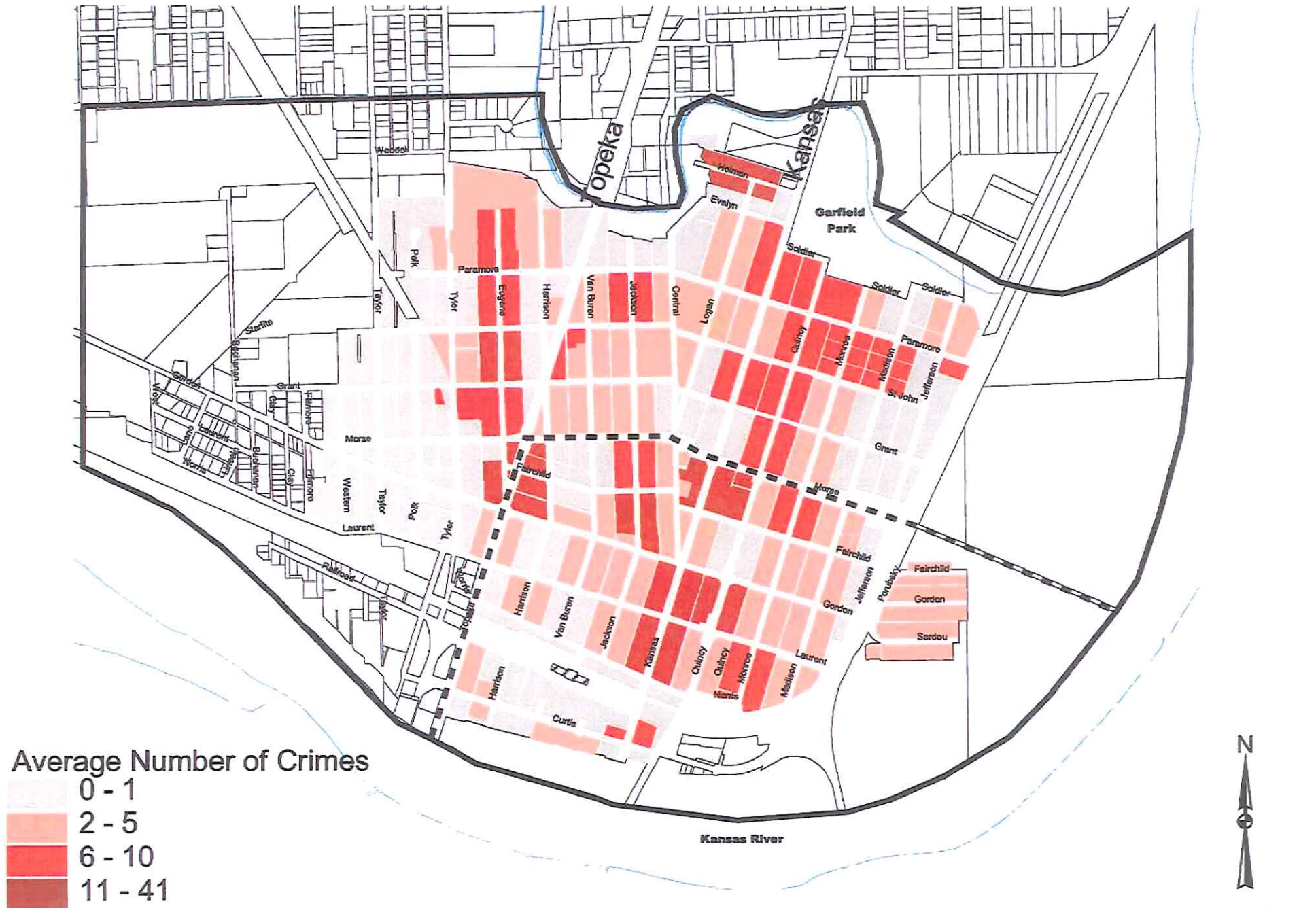


## Map #6

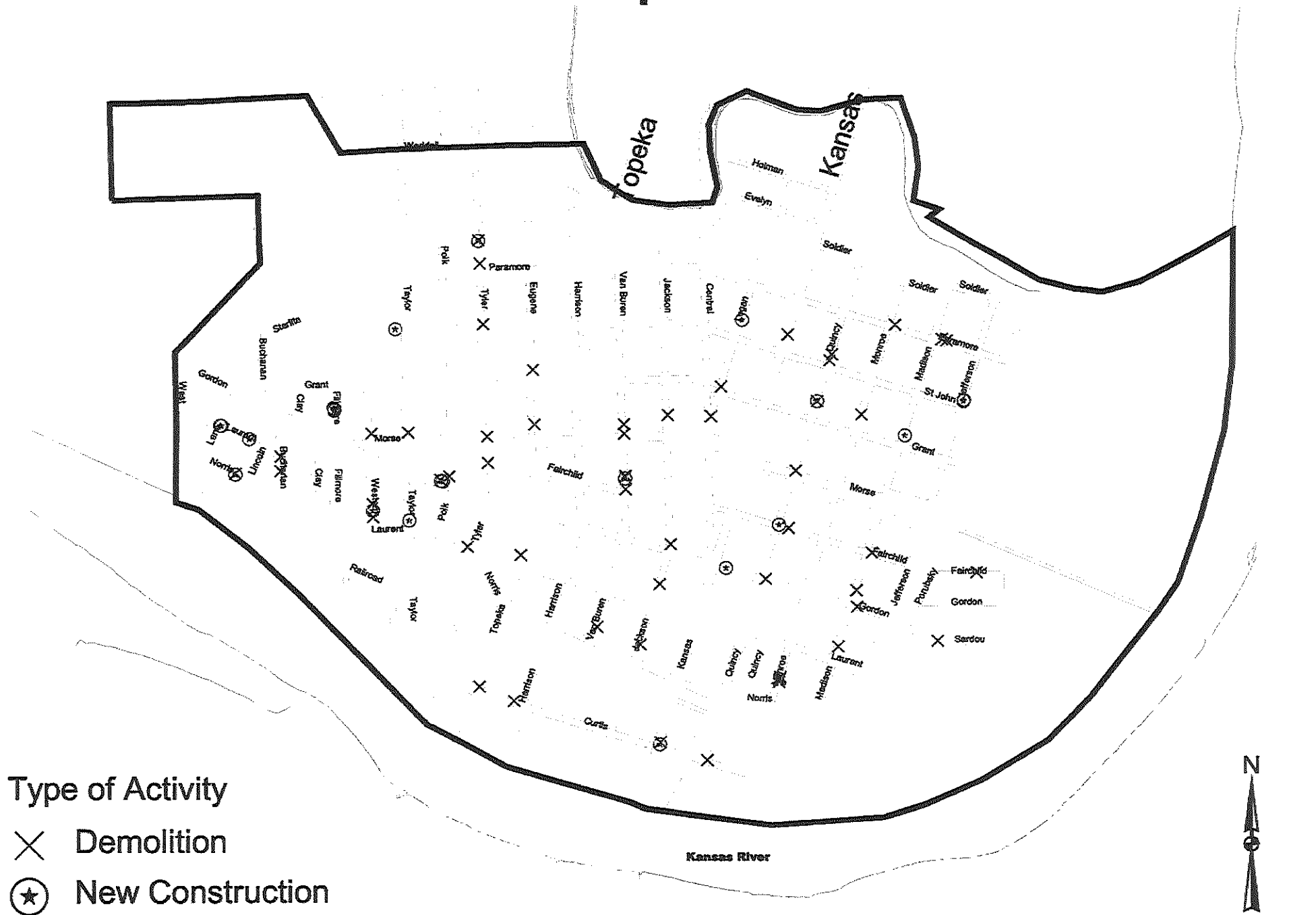




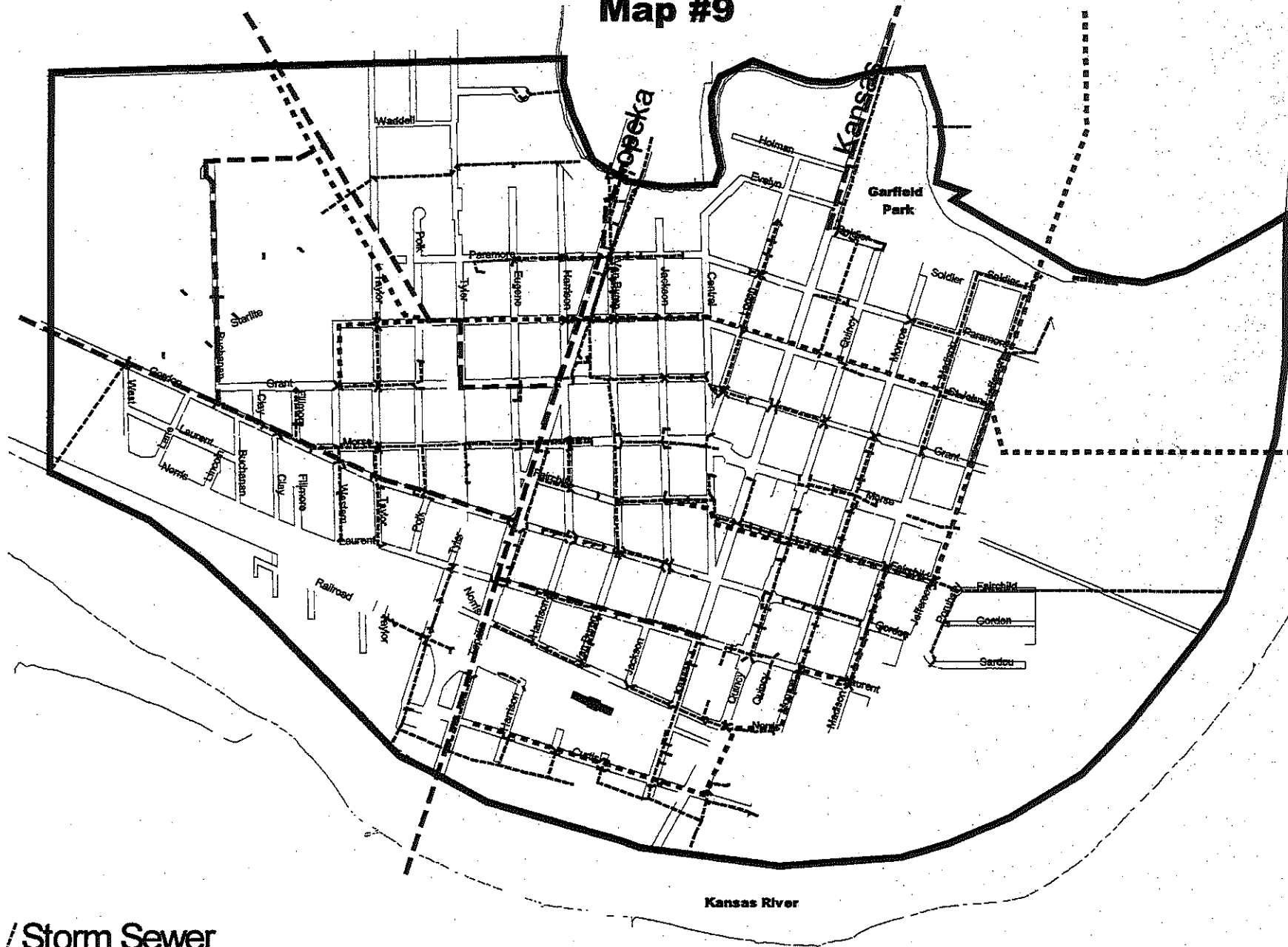
# Public Safety Map #7



## Map #8



# Utilities Map #9



 Storm Sewer  
 Water Distribution System  
 Sanitary Sewer

 Planning Area



1"=1200'





**Table 6**  
**Street Classification & AADT**  
(Vehicles Entering Intersection)

Street	Classification	AADT	Entering Intersection	Accidents
N. Topeka Boulevard	Principal Arterial	22,536	NW Gordon	10
N. Topeka Boulevard	Principal Arterial	18,563	NW Morse	8
NE Morse	Minor Arterial	14,245	NE Quincy	9
N. Topeka Boulevard	Principal Arterial	N/A	NW Grant	7

*Source: Topeka City Engineer (1996)*

**Public  
Facilities**

Within the boundaries of Historic North Topeka there are 6 public facilities. These include Garfield Park, Quincy Elementary School, Veterans Park, McKinley Park, Charles Curtis Greenway/Cemetery, and Fire Station No. 1. Garfield Park is the main community facility in terms of recreational use and includes a swimming pool, tennis courts, outdoor grills and picnic areas and an enclosed community center and shelter house. Utilities – storm sewer, water distribution, and sanitary sewer – are depicted on Map #9.

**C. SOCIOECONOMIC TRENDS**

The following data pertains to the **Focus Area only** since the boundaries of Planning Area do not align with Census Tract or Block Group boundaries. The “Focus Area” is bounded by Morse Street on the north, Topeka Boulevard to the west, and the Kansas River to the south and east. It represents Census Block Groups 5 and 6 within Census Tract 8.

The Focus Area experienced a net loss of population from 1980 to 1990 of 25% (see Table 7). Almost every age cohort experienced a loss in population, although the largest loss occurred in the 10-24 year old age group. Persons 45 years of age or older accounted for 40% of the total population in 1990, with over half of those people 65 years or older. The number of households also substantially decreased, with 578 households in 1980 as compared to 411 in 1990 (see Table 8). The 10% decrease in student enrolment at Quincy Elementary School since 1994 may indicate that the population is continuing to decline into the 1990's. Nearly 20% of the Focus Area population in 1990 were living below the poverty level. According to USD 501, during the 1998-99 school year 84% of the students at Quincy Elementary School participated in the free lunch program, the highest percentage of any school in the school district (the average percentage in USD 501 is 44%).

**Table 7**  
**Population – Historic North Topeka**

	1990	Percentage	1980	Percentage	%Change
Population	1034	100%	1381	100%	-25%
<u>Gender</u>					
Female	477	46%	685	50%	-30%
Male	557	54%	696	50%	-20%
<u>Race</u>					
White	877	85%	1200	87%	-27%
Black	53	5%	31	2%	71%
Other	104	10%	76	6%	37%
Hispanic Origin	69	7%	73	5%	-5%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 1980 & 1990*

**Table 8**  
**Age – Historic North Topeka**

	1990	Percentage	1980	Percentage	%Change
<u>Age</u>					
Under 5 years	84	8%	111	8%	-24%
5 to 9 years	102	10%	57	4%	79%
10 to 14 years	23	2%	85	6%	-73%
15 to 19 years	37	4%	110	8%	-66%
20 to 24 years	38	4%	156	11%	-76%
25 to 34 years	185	18%	175	13%	6%
35 to 44 years	158	15%	139	10%	14%
45 to 54 years	96	9%	153	11%	-37%
55 to 64 years	104	10%	177	13%	-41%
65 and Over	207	20%	218	16%	-5%
Total Persons	1034	100%	1381	100%	

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 1980 & 1990*

**Table 9**  
**Households – Historic North Topeka**

	1990	Percentage	1980	Percentage	%Change
Households	411		578		-29%
Families	244	59%	344	60%	42%
Husband-Wife	136	33%	107	19%	27%
Female-Headed (no husband)	81	20%	N/A	N/A	
w/ child. <18	18	4%	N/A	N/A	
Persons per Household	2.5		2.4		
Persons per Family	2.1		4.0		

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 1980 & 1990*

#### **D. PROFILE SUMMARY: Needs and Opportunities**

Historic North Topeka, once a thriving low-density residential community capable of supporting its own business district, has lost its original character to the effects of several devastating floods and urban-to-suburban migration patterns. The result is a community with vast potential, but in dire need of re-investment. The preceding sections have identified the following needs and opportunities, which are summarized below:

##### Needs/Constraints

- The low density of population in HNT, which is due in large part to a preponderance of vacant parcels and non-residential land uses, presents a constraint to developing a critical mass of population that can thrive as an traditional urban community and be better able to support commercial services.
- 41% of all residential structures exhibited major deficiencies.
- The highly intensive zoning is not reflective of the predominantly low-density residential character and has allowed the intrusion of deleterious land uses in traditional residential neighborhoods.
- Only 1/3 of the housing units are owner occupied.
- Mobile homes and vacant lots, which together account for 21% of the parcels in HNT, are scattered throughout traditional residential neighborhoods with a median property value 10 times less than the surrounding homes.
- 2/3 of the building permits issued between 1990 and 1998 were for demolitions, and the other 1/3 mainly for mobile home development; such development does not inspire confidence or re-investment by homeowners.

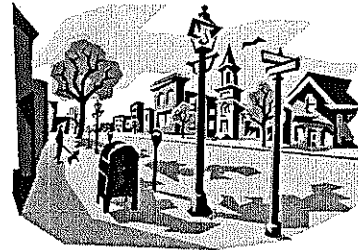
- Inefficient traffic circulation caused by lack of direct Interstate access and frequent train traffic.
- Heavy truck traffic on N. Kansas Avenue and in residential neighborhoods.
- The population in HNT decreased by 25% during the 1980's and students at Quincy Elementary participated in the free lunch program at the highest rate of any school in USD 501.
- Declining population, homeownership, and concentration of low income households are a combination signaling potentially devastating economic, educational, and social divestiture in the community.
- Perception that the area is prone to flooding.

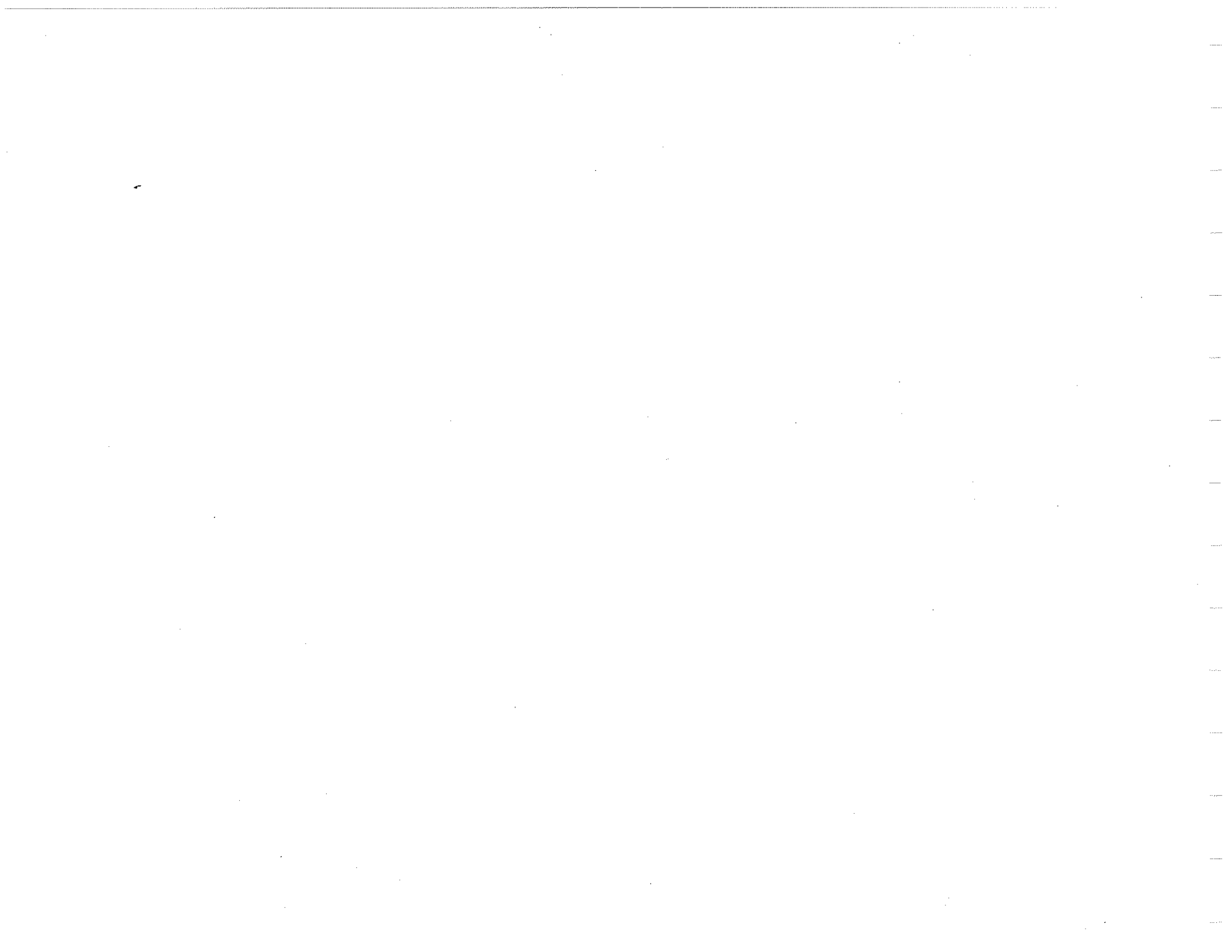
#### Opportunities

- The traditional small town design found in HNT, if restored to its original character, could be an attractive alternative to suburban living with shopping and entertainment within walking distance from residential areas and the close proximity to downtown.
- The area has retained its original low-density residential character despite being zoned for multiple-family and highly intensive non-residential uses for the better part of 50 years.
- The area has retained many of its historic residential and commercial buildings, although many are in need of rehabilitation. North Kansas Avenue is the only intact traditional commercial district in Topeka.
- The substantial investment going into the renovation of the Great Overland Station could attract people, and new investment, to the community's historic commercial district on N. Kansas Avenue. Upon completion, the Great Overland Station museum represents a destination anchor for the Kansas Avenue business district.
- The large number of vacant lots presents an opportunity for new in-fill housing development.
- Residential blocks in the community boast relatively low crime.
- Single-family homes exhibit a relatively high percentage of homeowners and a relatively low vacancy rate.
- The riverfront offers significant development potential and an opportunity to re-define Topeka's and North Topeka's regional image.

Historic North Topeka is one of the oldest and most diverse areas in Topeka. The area is rich in history and still exhibits many characteristics of its original traditional small town design. However, the effects of several devastating floods forever altered its original character. Today the areas' hidden qualities remain largely undiscovered, with numerous vacant lots, little or no compatible development activity, dilapidated building conditions, and a declining population more dependent. The residential areas have suffered from the blighting influences of industrial uses and heavy truck and railroad traffic. The business climate flourishes here only because of low overhead. It clearly is an area where many businesses make a good living, but it is not clear how they can contribute back to revitalization efforts in the area's current state. These factors have eroded any homeowner confidence in the community. With the recent renovation efforts on the Great Overland Station much attention is once again focused on the area. It is this renewed interest in conjunction with a new neighborhood vision that, if capitalized on, will help to revitalize the historic business district, riverfront area, and surrounding residential areas and to redefine Historic North Topeka's image as a viable mixed-use community of choice.

# Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles





### III. VISION, GOALS, & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### A. VISION 2015

*In 2015, a vibrant Historic North Topeka is envisioned with a strong North Crossings mixed-use entertainment district, a successful Great Overland Station Railroad Museum, and rediscovered riverfront for the public's enjoyment. Most of the historic building fronts along N. Kansas Avenue have been restored to their original grandeur, the sidewalks are full of patrons during the evening, and former residential homes have been adaptively re-used for businesses. Nearby residential areas seem fresh with new in-fill housing and homeowners, and former residents have returned to in-town living to retire in the renovated Curtis and Grant school buildings/grounds or raise their families. School enrollment and test scores are steady after reaching their all-time peak several years ago. The I-70 interchange has put Historic North Topeka on the "map" giving its residents, businesses, and visitors direct access and identity. No longer is the area's image viewed with skepticism and doubt – nobody knocks Historic North Topeka anymore because knocking it would be a knock against yourself. Renewed pride and commitment to the area shows in every Topekan.*



## B. GOALS & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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

### 1. Land Use

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#### Goal

**To establish a predictable pattern of land use that preserves the viability of residential neighborhoods and promotes a destination-oriented mixed-use center and riverfront**

#### Guiding Principles

- Identify single-family residential preserves and protect them from encroachment of incompatible land uses.
- Concentrate commercial activity within neighborhood friendly nodes and limit strip development.
- Condense industrial districts and lessen negative impacts industrial-type uses have upon stable residential, commercial, or “image” areas.
- Enable the cohesive re-definition of the area surrounding the Great Overland Station for high-end mixed-use development.
- Develop a system of quality-designed open space that links a variety of uses and users and takes advantage of the riverfront.
- Encourage mobile home development as part of planned unit developments and outside of traditional neighborhood settings.

## 2. North Crossings

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### Goal

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

### Guiding Principles

- Encourage a mixed-use urban environment that promotes “in-town” living while limiting creation or expansion of industrial uses.
- Restore historic building fronts and retain integrity of block frontage on N. Kansas.
- Install public streetscape improvements to compliment area’s character and entice investment.
- Promote a “walkable” setting and pedestrian-oriented development.
- Link the Great Overland Station to N. Kansas Avenue and area north of tracks.
- Recruit destination-oriented uses and plan for expansion of district beyond N. Kansas Avenue
- Range of uses should include youth and/or young adult attractions.
- Create a management entity or structure to oversee implementation of the entertainment district’s revitalization.

## 3. Circulation

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### Goal

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

### Guiding Principles

- ⇒ Eliminate heavy truck traffic from the entertainment district and establish alternate heavy truck routes without unreasonably impacting residential areas.
- ⇒ Alleviate circulation/safety conflicts due to freight trains in Focus Area.
- ⇒ Improve routing of non-local traffic into Historic North Topeka and its entertainment district/riverfront.
- ⇒ Develop a recreational trail system that is linked to a regional trail system.
- ⇒ Enhance circulation of pedestrian traffic within Focus Area.

#### 4. Housing

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##### Goal

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

##### Guiding Principles

- ⇒ Establish design standards for new in-fill housing and rehabilitation that compliments the historic architectural elements of the neighborhood and maintains affordability.
- ⇒ Upgrade housing and neighborhood conditions to retain and attract more homeowners.
- ⇒ Target larger strategic blocks for in-fill housing compatible with the neighborhood and concentrate rehabilitation improvements around them.
- ⇒ Promote adaptive re-use of commercial and school buildings for loft apartments.

#### 5. Community Character Preservation

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##### Goal

**Communicate a notable image and unique experience of place within the Focus Area by building off of its physical and cultural heritage.**

### **Guiding Principles**

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

## **6. Infrastructure**

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### **Goal**

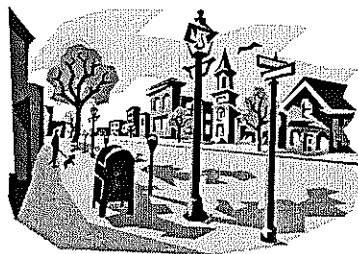
**Upgrade and maintain public infrastructure to ensure public confidence in the future of Historic North Topeka.**

### **Guiding Principles**

- ⇒ Maintain 100-year minimum flood protection from the Kansas River and its tributaries.
- ⇒ Ensure that proper drainage systems and urban infrastructure is in place.
- ⇒ Eliminate "red water" problems from area.



# Land Use Plan





## IV. LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan is intended as a conceptual guide for future land use development of the neighborhood that embodies the goals and guiding principles for Historic North Topeka and that builds upon the revitalization concepts and urban design framework as put forth in the Plan. This section describes the primary land use categories as depicted on Map #10.

### A. LAND USE PLAN CATEGORIES

The following recommended land uses, zoning districts, and densities are proposed as the “maximum allowed” and does not preclude lower intensity land uses, zoning districts, or densities from being appropriate. *The recommended densities are defined for “gross areas” and not on a per lot basis.*

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

***Primary Uses:*** Single-family dwellings (detached, attached)

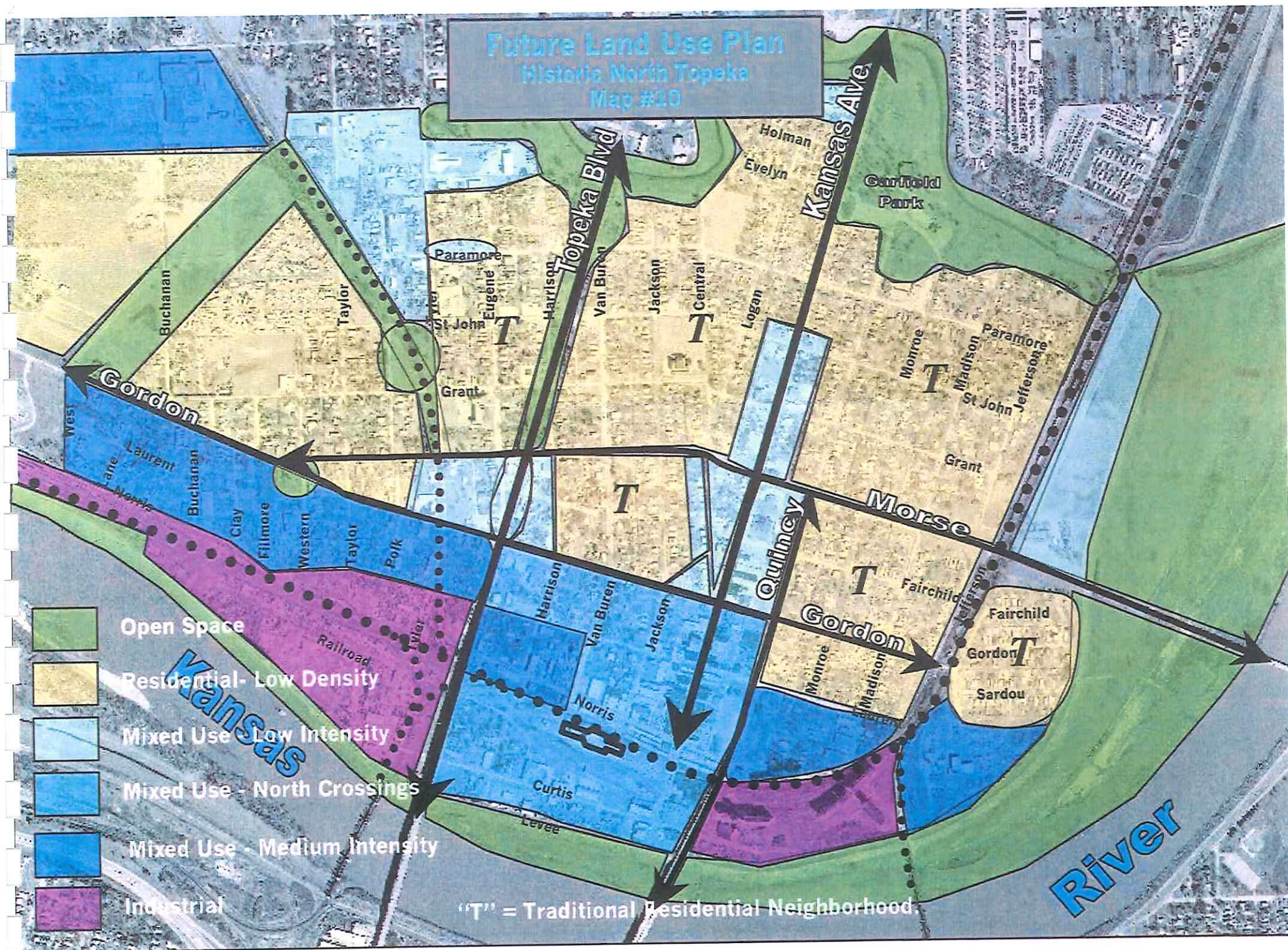
***Zoning Districts:*** “R-2,3” (Single Family)

***Density/Intensity:*** 5-7 dwelling units/acre

**Residential – Low Density:** This category comprises blocks where the highest concentrations of cohesive single-family uses exist without a significant mixing of two/multiple-family or non-residential uses. This designation recommends a more “non-traditional” character is appropriate since much of the area either was not originally developed as part of a traditional single-family neighborhood, or it lacks a realistic potential to sustain this predominate character. Major sections of the district lack sufficient densities, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, alley



# Future Land Use Plan Historic North Topeka Map #10





systems, historic architectural styles or building types. Mobile home (i.e., less than 22' wide not on foundations) development should only be encouraged within land lease developments and not on single lots.

**Primary Uses:** Single-family dwellings (detached, land-lease developments)

**Zoning Districts:** "R-2" (Single Family)

**Density/Intensity:** 4 dwelling units/acre

**Mixed Use – Low Intensity:** This designation is recommended for those areas that either may not display a cohesive single-use environment, may not exhibit a desirous pattern for future development, have large tracts of open or vacant land, and/or that are adjacent to or within stable low density residential districts. A variety of uses can be found within these areas ranging from contractor storage yards, office buildings, retail establishments, and single-family dwellings. The objective of this designation is to buffer adjacent single-family residential districts by limiting the intensity of the uses and managing their compatibility. Therefore, the neighborhood will be protected from negative impacts – traffic, noise, light, drainage, visual, etc. – associated with medium-to-high intensity level of uses such as salvage yards, manufacturing activities, communication towers, multiple-family dwellings, and automotive service repair shops. New light and heavy industrial uses are prohibited. A new mixed-use zoning district is recommended to implement this category which should include site plan review requirements and performance standards to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses and neighborhood character.

**Primary Uses:** Mixed

**Zoning Districts:** HNT-1 (Historic North Topeka – Low Intensity); no higher than C-2

**Performance Standards:** Yes

**Density/Intensity:** 5-7 units/acre, low

**Mixed Use – Medium Intensity:** This designation is recommended for those areas that may not display a cohesive single-use environment, may not exhibit a desirous pattern for future development, have large tracts of open or vacant land, and that are transitioning from heavier industrial-type areas. The objective of this designation is to promote development or redevelopment of medium intensity non-residential uses in the area while mitigating site-related impacts that affect more viable, cohesive, and stable residential use districts (e.g., new light industrial uses or highly intensive commercial uses should meet a set of performance standards). New heavy industrial uses are prohibited. A new mixed-use zoning district is recommended to implement this category which should include site plan review requirements and performance standards to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses and neighborhood character.

**Primary Uses:** Mixed

**Zoning Districts:** HNT-2 (Historic North Topeka – Medium Intensity)

**Performance Standards:** Yes

**Density/Intensity:** 5-7 units/acre, low

**Mixed Use – North Crossings:** The objective of this designation is to promote quality development and redevelopment in and around the Great Overland Station, Kansas Avenue business district, and Kansas River waterfront by:

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

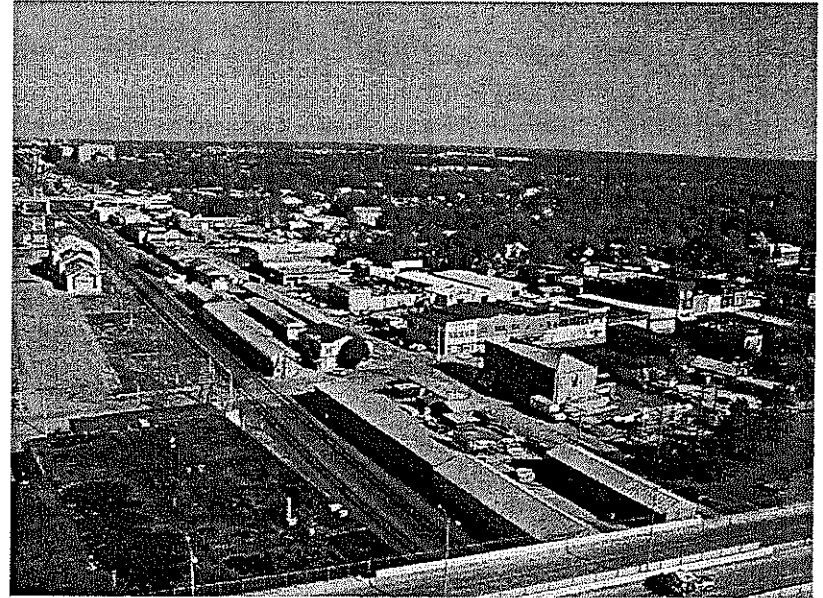
Encouraging a variety of uses such as restaurants, cafes, artist galleries, loft dwelling units, brew pubs, museums, theatres, produce markets, and other types of artisan work spaces is envisioned for the area. Higher density residential development should also be accommodated. New or expansion of light industrial-type uses may be appropriate if found to be consistent with the goals, objectives, and principles of this designation and Plan. A new mixed-use zoning district is recommended to implement this category which should include site plan review requirements and performance standards to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses and desired character.

**Primary Uses:** Mixed – commercial retail/service and residential, open space, and public facilities

**Zoning Districts:** HNT-3 (Historic North Topeka – North Crossings)

**Performance Standards:** Yes

**Density/Intensity:** 8-20 units/acre, medium-high



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

***Primary Uses:*** light, heavy industrial

***Zoning Districts:*** "I-1" (Light Industrial), "I-2" (Heavy Industrial)

***Density/Intensity:*** High

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

***Primary Uses:*** park, open space, trails, floodways

***Zoning Districts:*** "R-1,2" (Single-Family), new open space district

***Density/Intensity:*** Very Low



# Revitalization and Development Strategy





## V. REVITALIZATION & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

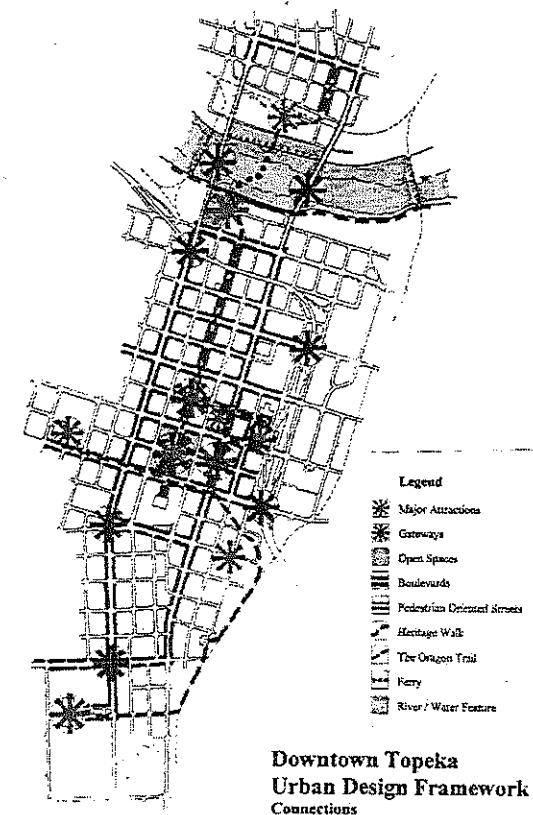
### A. REVITALIZATION CONCEPTS

#### #1. Destination Known: Linkages Within A Metropolitan Hub

Historic North Topeka and its environs are reminiscent of a “small town” atmosphere. Of course this is what Mr. Laurent and Mr. Curtis may have had in mind when they laid out the charming town of Eugene. The area was planned and has functioned to be somewhat independent at times from the rest of the Topeka, even at some expense. This subordinate role in the city has been reinforced over time by post-flood zoning plans and lack of Interstate access. For revitalization efforts to succeed, Historic North Topeka needs to be viewed more as a destination that is an extension or northern anchor of downtown and therefore, the region as a whole. The recently proposed Downtown Topeka Urban Design Framework (*see right*) illustrates this concept within the context of an overall development framework for Downtown.

#### #2. Focus Area Synergy: Mix, Mass, and Mesh

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





By definition, no singular project (e.g., Great Overland Station Museum) can be a true “catalyst” for an area’s revitalization unless there are two or more different elements it is in contact with. In a downtown or mixed-use district, an essential *mix* of ingredients (employees, residents, customers, tourists, etc.) in sufficient amounts/densities (*critical mass*) need to be in contact (the *mesh*) with one another to enable true synergistic effects to take place. (*Urban Land Institute, 1998*)

Almost all of the Plan’s **Focus Area** – south of Morse Street and west of Topeka Boulevard – represents a 5-minute walking radius from the center of the business district at N. Kansas Avenue and Laurent Street. The compact nature and diversity of potential uses and destinations in this area can make for highly successful spin-off investment. *Revitalization strategies and investments should be primarily concentrated within the Focus Area so as to achieve the greatest impact possible.*

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

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

**#4. Focal Point: Great Overland Station**

The old Union Pacific Depot, now known as the Great Overland Station, is by far the most well-known and visible landmark in the planning and Focus Area. The Station’s current renovation as a museum to celebrate railroad heritage in Kansas is a high profile project with great significance for Topeka and Kansas as a whole. It is the largest source of current identity for the area and therefore, new development and initial revitalization scenarios should be linked to its “coat-tails”. It is a source of great pride for North Topekans who own much of Topeka’s railroad heritage. Actions and improvements needed to make the Station/Museum project work in conjunction with the business district must be pursued as a priority since those will only help to open up other catalytic opportunities and lead to ripple affects throughout the Focus Area.

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

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

## **B. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

Why do some places affect us so mysteriously and forcefully while others don't? The urban design framework describes an "anatomy" of place and how spatial elements can be enhanced to function together for successful revitalization (see [Map #11](#)). It describes elements of our everyday environments that can alter the quality and perception of an area. Urban design "clues" for the Focus Area are broken down into traditional neighborhood design, districts, edges, views, landmarks, streetscapes, and paths.

### **1. Traditional Neighborhood Design**

Like so many new ideas, traditional neighborhood design (TND) is not new at all. It is a revival of pre-automobile community building precepts that dominated American city landscapes and some of the country's most cherished neighborhoods developed prior to World War II. It is being revived by architects, planners, and developers across the country as an alternative to suburban development where "cookie cutter" tract homes and detachment from one's neighbors have left a growing number of households yearning for a more community-minded option. TND elements are reminiscent of small towns or villages that capture a real sense of community. Historic North Topeka is blessed with many of these same elements of a traditional neighborhood since it was originally laid out as a small town itself. Identifying, promoting, and expressing these elements are a major factor in reviving this "new" image and returning market stability to property values. Some of the more relevant components to TND include the following:

- **Size and density** – A complete, walkable neighborhood unit is best accommodated in an area of 40-160 acres at an average density of 5+ units per acre. This provides for a critical mass of people in close proximity to daily services and activities. The *Focus Area* is 100 acres north of the railroad tracks and manages a 5-minute walking radius from the center of the business district. However, densities are only 3.8 units/acre due to the large number of vacant lots and low density residential development.
- **Internal balance of housing, jobs, and services** – Traditional neighborhoods were developed around a full range of daily activities. Housing was the predominate use, but schools, shopping, services, work, and recreation were also in close proximity or walking distance. Over-reliance on any one non-residential use precludes the area from generating a healthy range of community activities.



Urban Design Framework  
Historic North Topeka  
Map #11

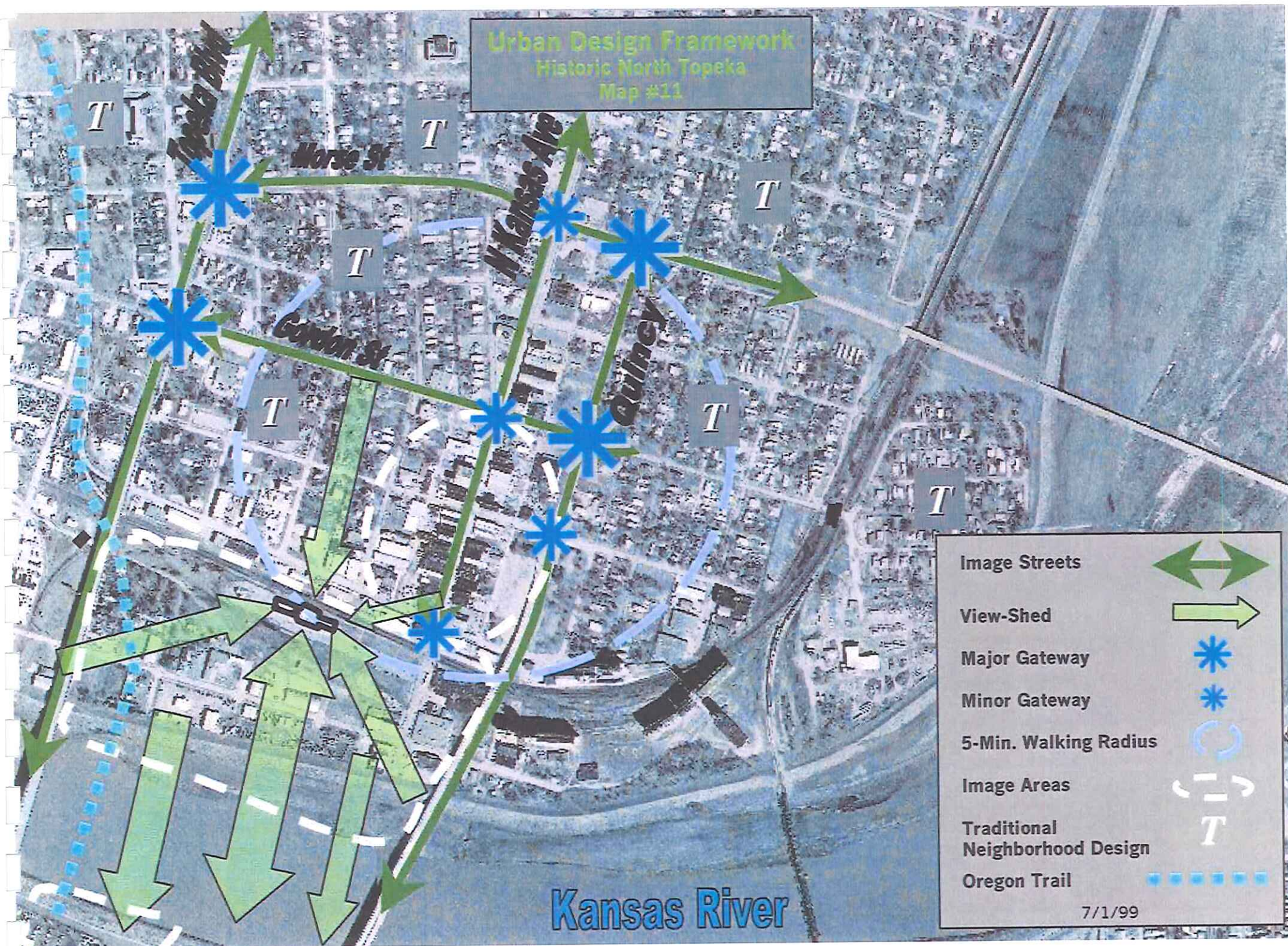


Image Streets



View-Shed



Major Gateway



Minor Gateway



5-Min. Walking Radius



Image Areas



Traditional  
Neighborhood Design



Oregon Trail



7/1/99

Kansas River



- **Identifiable neighborhood center** – A civic focus and informal gathering place for residents/users of the area fosters community socializing, celebrations, and identity. Garfield Park is utilized in this vein with a park, shelter house, community center, etc. Within the Focus Area, the Kansas Avenue business district is an activity node, but it lacks a true common area that is not street related.
- **Streets for both people and cars** – Neighborhood streets are public places meant to comfortably accommodate all forms of transportation, including pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Human-scaled building types** – Small lot platting, variety of building articulations fronting the street at eye-level, and front porches that promote social interaction are types of “human-scaled” elements that generate a cohesive urban pattern.

## **2. Districts**

*Districts* are classified as smaller sub-areas of a Planning Area or neighborhood that represent a cohesive grouping of like uses and character that may have physically or mentally-defined boundaries. Crossing over district boundaries should be noticeable and are typically marked by changes in land use. Districts for the Planning Area are illustrated by the land use categories in **Section IV (Land Use Plan)** and **Section V.D (North Crossings)**.

## **3. Edges**

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

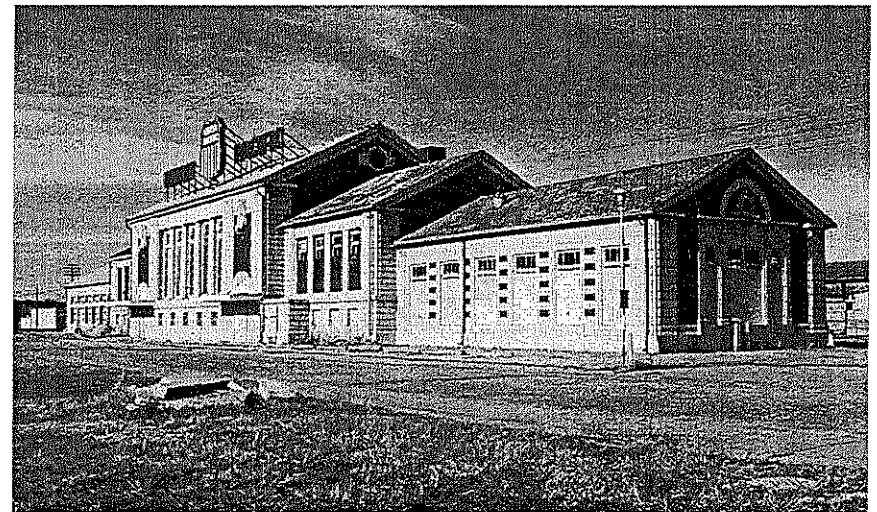
- **Gateways** – Gateways are a district’s “front door” into the community. They greet one’s entry into a district and give the first impression of an area. They can be designed at pedestrian or vehicle-scales and can include prominent buildings as well as landscape, signage, or focal point treatments. Major gateways are the key entry points into Historic North Topeka which occur at Quincy/Laurent, Quincy/Morse, Topeka/Gordon, and Topeka/Paramore. Secondary gateways occur at Kansas/Morse, Kansas/Gordon, Quincy/Laurent, and Topeka/Morse.

- **Image Streets/Areas** – Since streets are public spaces, the more frequently used streets act as further image identifiers of a place. The same can be said for *non-street* public spaces as well. In Historic North Topeka, key image streets include Topeka Boulevard, N. Kansas Avenue, Quincy Street, Gordon Street, and Morse Street. In addition, areas that will be more frequently used or draw more attention of people include the area around the Great Overland Station, the riverfront (particularly as seen from the bridges), and the Garfield Park/Quincy Elementary School area.

#### **4. Views/Landmarks**

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

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



**5. Streetscapes**– The area between the building walls and the street can be defined as the *streetscape*. With buildings traditionally parallel to the street, a streetscape is the building fronts and the street together. The character or

quality of a streetscape is dependent upon the quality of the street, the buildings that front it, and the combined effect of the two. (see Sec. F - Design Guidelines)

## **6. Paths - (see Sec. D - Circulation Plan)**

### **Recommendations:**

TND elements can be translated into **performance measurements** that will benchmark how well the neighborhood is doing in re-establishing itself as a traditional neighborhood:

- *Increase Focus Area dwelling units by 125 units*
- *Increase land use area percentage for residential (including mixed-use residential) 26% to 40% while decreasing industrial 55% to 40% in Focus Area*
- *Develop a community-gathering place in conjunction with the Great Overland Station and Kansas Avenue business district*
- *Establish building design guidelines for residential and commercial in-fill development (see Design Guidelines under Section E)*

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

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



## **C. CIRCULATION PLAN**

The Plan's goals and guiding principles translate into the following major recommendations for circulation as illustrated on Map #12:

### **Improved Access:**

- The most prominent access issue involves constructing a new interchange at Topeka Boulevard and Interstate 70 so that cars will be able to exit I-70 into N. Topeka without the difficulty of using the myriad of local street connections throughout downtown.
- A new interchange should be designed and constructed in combination with a new Topeka Boulevard Bridge superstructure that only has an expected 10-year useful life remaining. The piers are assumed to be in adequate condition.
- An access ramp from the bridge to the riverfront should be accommodated in the design to by-pass conflicts with the railroad tracks. A fly-over from Gordon Street or a ramp from the bridge to the riverfront area is not recommended prior to the bridge being rebuilt because they would only act as temporary "fixes".
- Before the bridge is rebuilt, specially designed signage is needed to help wayfinding to the Great Overland Station and N. Kansas Avenue and should be placed at key points directing traffic to and from Gordon Street.

### **Heavy Truck Routing:**

- The high number of heavy truck traffic trips generated by the grain elevators south of the tracks is incompatible with future land use plan for North Crossings. Two major improvements would make this acceptable: 1) a traffic light installed at Laurent and Quincy to facilitate left-turns, or 2) construction of an alternative truck route. The traffic light option is not supported by traffic engineering standards because of a lack of adequate sight distance.
- Alternative truck routes include: 1) east of Norris to Gordon, 2) east of Curtis to Porubsky, or 3) ramp off of Kansas Avenue bridge east to Curtis; the preferred route to be explored first should be a Norris to Gordon connection. Re-routing the trucks over the Kansas Avenue Bridge is recommended since the preponderance of truck trips are either created by Cargill shipping freight to their plant on the south side of the river or by trucks wanting to access I-70 at First Street.
- All heavy truck trips are occurring during 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the majority of those occurring in the hours before and after 12 noon. Entertainment uses dependent on evening or night time activity would not be adversely affected.



# **Circulation Plan** **Historic North Topeka** **Map #12**

I-70 interchange

Kansas River

- Arterial Streets
- New Roads (funded)
- New Roads (not funded)
- Closed Street/Rail X
- Pedestrian Link
- Heavy Truck Route
- Traffic Calming Device
- Parking Areas
- Levee/Heritage Trail
- Railroad Line

7/1/99



- Traffic calming devices should be installed to prevent heavy truck routes from entering 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue and residential blocks; secondarily, access to other parts of North Crossings, such as the riverfront and N. Jackson should also be avoided

#### **Parking:**

- The existing parking capacity in the N. Kansas Avenue area is comprised of roughly 150 on-street spaces on N. Kansas Avenue and side streets and a 225 space parking lot (if redesigned) at the foot of the Kansas Avenue bridge.
- Various other potential parking lots could be accommodated north of the existing parking lot (200 spaces), Norris Street west (100), Norris Street east (100), and a mini-lot off of N. Kansas Avenue (25).
- If an entertainment anchor is developed, a major new parking lot is recommended off of Gordon Street between Jackson and Van Buren (400 spaces).

#### **Pedestrian Linkages should occur...**

- Over the railroad tracks approximately at Norris and Kansas (west side)
- Along the top of levee and abandoned rail lines connecting to trail system south of Kansas River; this includes connections from Kansas Avenue and Topeka Boulevard bridges
- Heritage trail development highlighting various historic points of interest in Historic North Topeka and which connects to downtown south of the river; a cross-river connection could occur along the Kansas Avenue Bridge or a ferry boat shuttle linking the proposed city park south of the river
- Along paths connecting parking lots behind storefronts to interior of N. Kansas Avenue. If these lots are privately developed, easements should be sought to reserve public paths.

*The Circulation Plan Map shows various alternatives for new roads and does not imply that they all should be constructed. Refer to **Sec. VI - Implementation** for further cost and phasing information.*

## **D. NORTH CROSSINGS**

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

The North Crossings is broken down into 2 sub-districts – the entertainment district and riverfront – that have their own potential and constraints. These sub-districts are described in detail below and their land use concepts are illustrated in Map #13 and Illustration #2:

### **1. THE ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT**

Any place left primarily to tourists ceases to be a real place and eventually loses its appeal even to tourists  
Roberta Brandes Gratz, *The Living City*

Most mid-sized to large cities are reviving obsolete warehouse and commercial districts into "old town" mixed-use restaurant/bar, entertainment, shopping, and living areas. Whether it is Kansas City's River Quay, Oklahoma City's Bricktown, or Lincoln's Haymarket, these areas all try to recreate urban marketplaces festive for tourists and locals alike. They all are intimate places steeped in history that were cut-off from the city's central business district, but whose buildings remained intact representing opportunities to re-adapt them into new ways of enjoying our urban spaces. Once an attraction is established and commercial uses follow, a residential component is phased in making them true urban marketplaces with 24-hour activity. Topeka's traditional downtown provides for some opportunity for this, but lacks an intimate setting or "district" that is walkable and cohesive. Although the Watertower redevelopment area is planned as a major entertainment/office/retail component at the southern end of downtown,

a district has not yet evolved in Topeka that could attract and retain younger adults that would compare to Lawrence's downtown, Manhattan's Aggieville, or Kansas City's Westport.

#### **A. North Kansas Avenue**

Topeka's most adaptable area for such a mixed-use entertainment district could lie within the North Crossings centered on and around the historic 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue. Over 200,000 square feet of ground floor space exists within these two blocks of attached buildings with uses ranging from lumber warehousing to watch/clock repair shop. The district was once the hub of community of life in North Topeka, particularly prior to the 1951 flood, where residents came to shop and do business forming a vibrant north end of Topeka's Kansas Avenue corridor. Today, it sits isolated from through traffic with a new set of users occupying the mostly intact building fronts. Its isolation is also an opportunity to maintain a pedestrian-oriented environment that is so critical. It maintains a good amount of real and perceived daytime activity due to the high number of building contractor employers, truck deliveries, and trains. The low 12% estimated vacancy rate for storefronts paints a picture not of desperation, but one of great potential if some key actions are taken to introduce more of a user-friendly theme. Property values remain low, but many active businesses remain. Several new retail businesses have recently relocated to the Avenue seeking out more retail potential. The key to further unlocking the potential of this district lies in creating an atmosphere conducive for new investment.

- **Restore and maintain historic quality and pedestrian-orientation to buildings/streetscapes.** An urban entertainment district works best where people are attracted because the place is "real". That means keeping building forms, styles, and infrastructure true to their original feel and building off of the peculiarities of the area (see *Design Guidelines* and *Illustration #3*). In addition, dwellings that have been identified as homes of past railroad engineers, etc. could be saved and threaded into museum exhibits for the Great Overland Station.
- **Seek out "destination" uses such as restaurants, micro-breweries, live entertainment, galleries, or recreational venues, that will attract non-residents.** North Topeka already has many establishments that are "institutions" of themselves (e.g., Porubsky's, Heidleberger Cafe, Herman's Beef and Sausage House, etc.) that if expanded or relocated to N. Kansas Avenue, would be great destinations in of themselves pulling their clientele with them. Entrepreneurs need to be encouraged to locate businesses here that can be new attractions as well.
- **Improve comfort-level.** Safety is a major concern for most people not familiar with the area. An atmosphere of safety could be created by improving streetscapes, lighting, storefronts, and visible security that can improve people's comfort-level. Security patrols or "ambassadors" could be utilized. The best assurance for safety remains in attracting a critical mass of users.








- **Encourage adaptive re-use of buildings for residential and artist purposes.** N. Kansas Avenue commercial buildings should be encouraged to re-use second/third story space for loft apartments. Likewise, historic non-commercial structures, particularly the residences in the 800 block of Jackson Street, should be preserved if not for housing then workspace, bed and breakfast, or other viable use. Likewise, old advertising signs on buildings could be re-painted. Artist space is almost non-existent in Topeka and the buildings could be pursued for living, work, and gallery space.

**Perspective – Future Streetscape of N. Kansas Avenue  
Illustration #3**





## Land Use Classifications

-  Mixed Use / Residential
-  Open Space / Park
-  Entertainment / Cultural
-  Commercial - Adaptive Reuse
-  Commercial - New
-  Parking
-  Light Industrial
-  Institutional

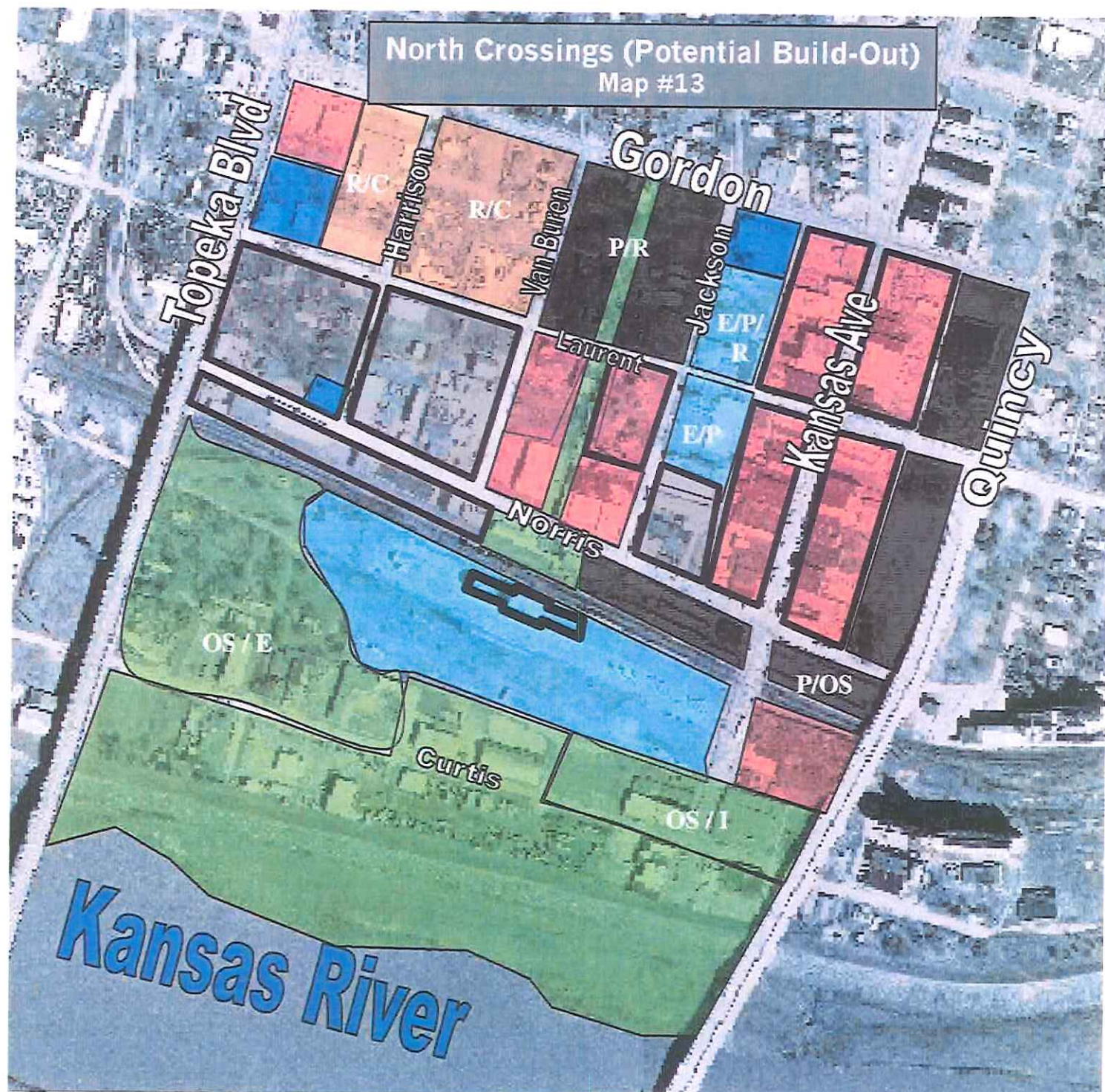
Letter designation indicates flexible land use preference.

Example for "E/P":

preferred use = "entertainment/ cultural"

secondary preference = "parking"

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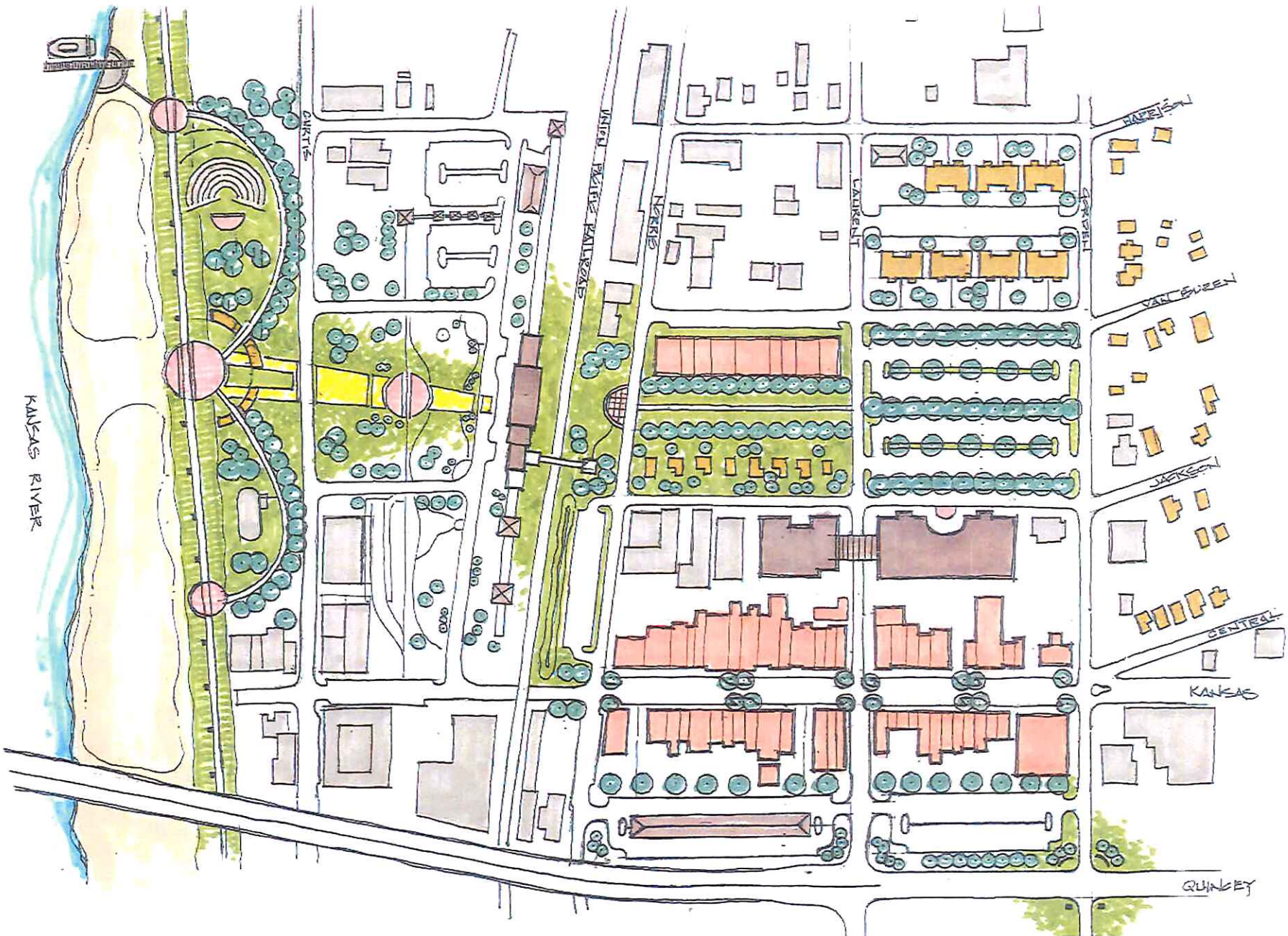


# NEPTUN TAPPEKA REVITALIZATION SITE PLAN ILLUSTRATION # 2

RAILROAD / LANDSCAPE

NORTH

SCALE: 1" = 200'



- **Seek out an entertainment anchor and link to N. Kansas Avenue and Great Overland Station;** new development should be designed to encourage patronage within district and not isolated from each other (see “Entertainment Anchor” below”)
- **Remove heavy truck circulation route** (see Circulation Plan)
- **Create a central gathering or civic space**
- **Provide for physical expansion in the future**
- **Where possible, maintain existing non-entertainment employment activity (e.g., smaller industrial businesses) to maintain daytime activity and potential retail customer base.**
- **Ensure that merchants/businesses do not monopolize convenient on-street parking spaces on N. Kansas Avenue.** As success of new businesses grow in the area, parking will become premium. There are currently 150 on-street spaces in the 800-900 blocks of N. Kansas and on cross streets within a ½ block. This number will likely be slightly reduced when streetscape improvements are made. While parking lots are planned for, these on-street spaces will be the first to be filled and should be reserved for customers only with no curb cuts allowed.

Accommodations should be made for new development to further invigorate the district if blended appropriately. Four new development ventures are initially envisioned for the entertainment district to facilitate its growth: **(1) completion of the Great Overland Station Railroad Museum, (2) an entertainment anchor, (3) a pedestrian overpass and (4) a farmers market.**

#### **B. Great Overland Station Railroad Museum**

Topeka Railroad Days, Inc. is leading efforts to preserve and restore Topeka’s historic Union Pacific Railroad station. With \$3.4 million in federal ISTEA grants combined to \$2.6 million of matching private funds, they have begun to renovate the station for use as a museum and education center celebrating railroad heritage in Topeka and Kansas. The Grand Waiting Room will be transformed into the main gallery where both permanent and changing exhibits will be displayed. Photographic displays, touring exhibits, model trains, hands-on activities for children, costumed docents representing people of the railroads, restored pieces of rolling stock, and freight trains rumbling by will add to the experience. Although, the building itself is physically separated from the entertainment district by two rail lines, its 75,000 – 100,000 annual customers creates a destination attraction that can act as an entertainment anchor for the district if better linked both visually and physically. These customers can create demand for services on N. Kansas Avenue. Meanwhile, the area south of the Station is more appropriately linked to future efforts to redevelop the riverfront (see *Riverfront*). The station’s renovation is well underway to be completed by the year 2000 and will become the centerpiece of the North Crossings revitalization.

### **C. Entertainment Anchor**

Entertainment attractions can dramatically enhance the market appeal of mixed-used districts (Urban Land Institute, *Developing Urban Entertainment Centers*, 1998). Types of anchors that would be activity generators could include:

- Cinema complexes (movies)
- Live music or stage performances (indoor or outdoor)
- Game-based attractions (*Gameworks*, high-tech game centers, arcades, etc.)
- Educational facilities (museums, aquarium, halls of fame, etc.)
- Specialty-format film theatres (360-degree films)
- Family entertainment centers (batting cages, driving ranges, rock-climbing, laser tag, etc.)

The entertainment anchor is the initial and critical draw into an entertainment district causing repeat visits. Once the entertainment anchor generates activity, signature restaurants with more mass appeal are viable and extend the length of stay. Retailers round out the experience by creating shopping opportunities and inducing activity beyond entertainment. The entertainment anchor is key to the success of the district. The Great Overland Station railroad museum will be an anchor in the future if properly “linked” to activity north of the Station. The estimated draw of visitors to the Station will generate activity, but probably not at the daily levels needed to transform N. Kansas Avenue for retail and dining uses. A second entertainment anchor would be necessary to stimulate further daily and evening activity.

The key to design is making such a potentially large-scale building fit within the intimate scale of the district and compliment N. Kansas Avenue businesses and the historic Union Pacific Depot building. Another just as important key is to provide convenient parking and access for a new anchor. Therefore, the size of the building and necessary parking realistically dictate that this complex be located off of N. Kansas Avenue and not along its frontage. However, it should be linked to pedestrian traffic on N. Kansas Avenue by being adjacent to the Avenue for ideal synergy at a pedestrian scale.

For purposes of the Plan, an 8-screen movie theatre is used as an example of what could fit within the district. A typical 8-plex averaging 210 seats/screen occupies a footprint of approximately 33,000 square feet (0.8 acres) and requires a maximum of 4.5 acres of on-site parking for 475-500 spaces. Based on these typical suburban-style

requirements, a city block (including alley) within Historic North Topeka could support 400 spaces with the remainder satisfied in on-street parking or parking lots within a one block radius.

**It is recommended that any major entertainment anchor be sited on the east side of Jackson Street immediately adjacent to the backs of N. Kansas Avenue buildings (see Illustration #2). The entrance should face Laurent/Jackson Streets to visually link N. Kansas Avenue and the Great Overland Station museum. A well landscaped CPTED-approved parking could be located off of Gordon Street between Jackson Street and Van Buren Street convenient to ingress and egress. Any significant turn-of-the-century homes should be preserved and relocated. Building design could be elevated to allow surface level parking under floorplate thus maximizing efficiency of space and conserving pedestrian-scale of area. If needed, the building could cross over Laurent Street while allowing pedestrian traffic to pass through at street level.**

**As a secondary alternative to a major entertainment anchor, a multi-family residential use designed as a planned unit development would help to increase density and a customer base for the commercial district. While not having the same economic development impacts on N. Kansas Avenue, this use would certainly aid in the vitality and livability of the district by providing a critical 24-hour activity.**

#### **D. Pedestrian Overpass**

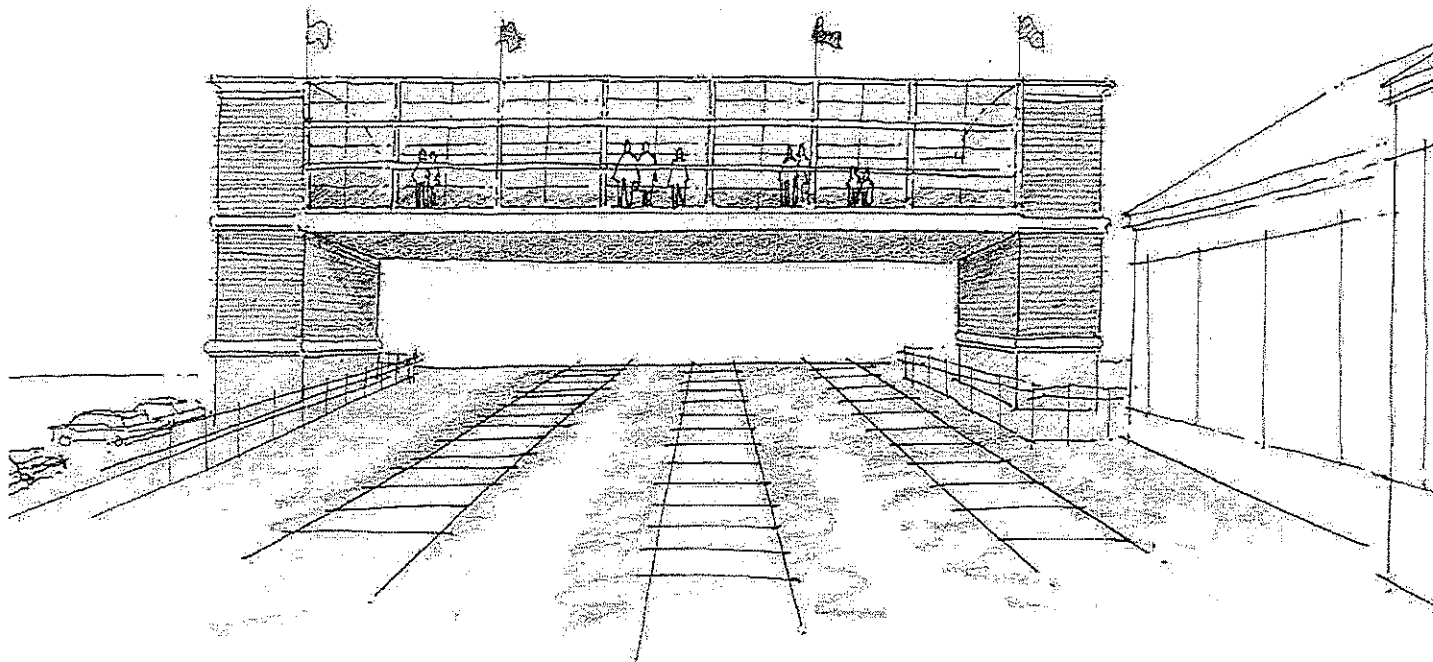
In order for the N. Kansas Avenue entertainment district to be positively impacted by the Great Overland Station Museum and vice-a-versa, a pedestrian overpass spanning the railroad tracks along the west side of Kansas Avenue is recommended to facilitate an unimpeded flow of pedestrian traffic (see Circulation Plan Map #12 for location and Illustration #4 for depiction).

This overpass would serve a two-fold purpose: 1) safe access between entertainment district and riverfront district, and 2) a view platform. The safe access of pedestrians, persons with disabilities, and bicyclists who want to cross the tracks would be ensured with an enclosed stairway and elevator on both sides. Station Museum patrons could park north of the tracks off of Norris without having to worry about getting stuck waiting for a train to clear. Likewise, those that do park here and cross over the bridge would be treated to an ideal viewing experience from an enclosed platform where they could not only see the trains go by, but also feel them as they rumble underneath them. This sensory experience can be another part of the overall attraction to the Railroad Museum. This structure should be high enough for train clearance (20'), be architecturally compatible to the Great Overland Station, and



designed for natural surveillance (e.g., transparent elevator walls) to eliminate any hiding spots. A pedestrian overpass would likely cost six times less to construct than a vehicle fly-over and would do more to enhance the synergy of the area than a potentially divisive vehicle bridge. If roughly half of the lumberyard property is used to accommodate parking, 90-100 spaces could be located here. In addition, a landscaped berm, ample lighting, and well-designed fence system is recommended between the parking lot and tracks for sound attenuation and safety purposes.

**Pedestrian Overpass/View Platform  
Illustration #4**



Just north of the tracks directly in front of the Station, lies an opportunity to commemorate a park space celebrating North Topeka history. A park for gatherings was historically located north of the UP depot when it was on the east side of Kansas Avenue. It contained a gazebo and landscaped open space to accommodate special celebrations and VIPs to the area. This also could be designed as a safe ground-level viewing area to experience the active train lines.

### **E. Farmer's Market**

An informal Farmers Market, which currently exists in a State-owned parking lot downtown at 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Topeka Boulevard during the summer, will soon be displaced by pending office development. It is recommended that a formal year-round and permanent farmer's market space be located at one of several sites elsewhere within the downtown. One of those potential sites includes the North Crossings to serve as another destination-oriented use.

Typical vendor stall dimensions of a 12.5' wide and 20' deep could be accommodated at various locations within the entertainment district. Peak vendor demand at the current downtown parking lot location is 40 per day. A permanent location with an overhead metal canopy would need linear dimensions of 250' x 60' (15,000 sq. ft.) for 40 vendor stalls/parking (both sides) including a covered center pedestrian aisle and display space. Assuming that demand for space could exceed current projections with a covered facility and utilities to the site, the initial facility could be expanded if successful. Parking is estimated to be required at 1:200 of retail space which translates into 75 parking spaces (16,200 sq. ft.). Based on these assumptions, an estimated area of approximately 1.5 acres is needed for a fully functional farmers market including future expansion equal to double current demand. The facility can be designed with potential space enclosures that could allow the market to operate non-seasonally. Sites that meet these dimensional requirements north of the tracks include:

- **Quincy Street Parking Lot** – A 1.9-acre parking lot and park space currently owned by the City of Topeka at the base of the Kansas Avenue bridge and behind the storefronts in the 800 block of N. Kansas.
- **N. Kansas Avenue** – The 800 or 900 block of N. Kansas Avenue could be closed down for market activities on weekend hours. Each block has just under 1 acre of public right-of-way that can be used for vendors and pedestrians, although parking for customers would be quite limited if not allowed on that block.
- **Schmidt Builders Supply Lumberyard** – This 1.4 acre elongated-shaped property located between Norris Street and the railroad tracks is currently home to Schmidt Builders Supply lumber storage and offices.

- **New Gordon Street Parking Lot** – If a movie theatre is developed on Jackson Street, a city-block of parking off of Gordon Street between Jackson and Van Buren would need to be developed. This block could serve a farmers market on axis with the Great Overland Station within its 4-acre site.

**In Historic North Topeka it is recommended that the Quincy Street Parking Lot or N. Kansas Avenue sites be explored for a farmers market on a trial basis in order to acclimate both vendors and customers to the North Crossings environment. These sites are publicly-owned and can be established at minimal cost with no dislocation of existing businesses. They both are easily identified sites within Historic North Topeka and have good access from Topeka Boulevard or Kansas Avenue south of the river. As success of the market and revitalization efforts move forward, permanently establishing a covered facility at any of the four sites or a site south of the tracks should be assessed and pursued as feasible. An exciting potential exists to develop an extensive market site south of the tracks which would be highly visible from the two bridges if grade-separated vehicle access can be provided to the riverfront.**

## **2. THE RIVERFRONT**

The area generally south of the Great Overland Station/Union Pacific Depot between the Kansas Avenue and Topeka Boulevard bridges comprises the North Crossing's riverfront. This roughly 24-acre site is comprised of three major land owners – Union Pacific, BRB Contractors, City of Topeka – which control over 82% of the land area on the land-side of the Kansas River levee. A perfect compliment to the entertainment district would be to redevelop this area as another destination for events, activities, and recreation. Enabling the public to rediscover Topeka's historic riverfront, which was the site of its founding, could be another major attraction to the area that will add to the synergy of the North Crossings. Its redevelopment potential is largely defined by its constraints. Those constraints consist of:

**Vehicular access** – Vehicular access to the area is limited to two access points (N. Kansas Avenue and Tyler Street) both impeded by train crossings causing countless delays and uncertainty. Increased truck traffic may also become a greater concern given the need to redirect them off of N. Kansas Avenue.



**Industrial property** – BRB Contractors and Union Pacific control most of the industrialized land available and which would need to be acquired. Furthermore, the land may be potentially contaminated from past industrial usage and may require significant clean-up.

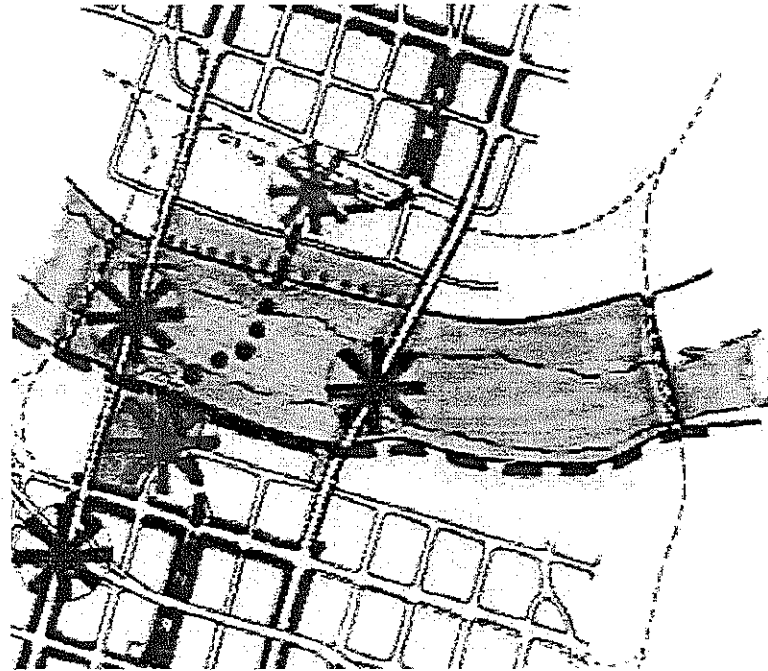
**Topeka Rescue Mission** – Another 1.3 acres is owned by the Topeka Rescue Mission to operate the city's major homeless programs for men with a new women and family center expansion currently under construction. It is expected that both buildings will accommodate 349 beds.

However, the Great Overland Station Museum, beautiful skyline and Capital views looking back across the Kansas River, and its frontage on the waterfront, all make this an ideal location to plan for future "greenfield" development. Topeka Railroad Days, Inc. has proposed a new park to surround the station on approximately 10 acres of land currently owned by Union Pacific that would be the permanent home for Locomotive 3463 along with other pieces of rolling stock such as a business car, club car, dining car, sleeper, and caboose. This landscaped urban green space would provide an ideal setting for family and community events spilling out from the station to the north.

**It is proposed that a major urban park be established south of the Great Overland Station to the waterfront that would compliment the proposed Millennium Park south of the river (*see illustration below*). It could be a logical extension for festivals and events held in conjunction with the Museum's programming (e.g., Railroad Days). As vehicle access and circulation to this district is improved, the riverfront park would be an ideal green space setting for city and regional events to take place. The "greening" of both sides and creation of linkages will serve to make the river a new destination for Downtown. It is envisioned that events could be taking place simultaneously on both sides of the river with ferry shuttles and/or pedestrian bridges linking both sides. Access to an improved levee-walk with lighting, benches, etc., outdoor skating rinks, amphitheater for outdoor music and stage productions, and sites commemorating historical events (e.g., Pappan's Landing, Charles Curtis house, Oregon Trail) is also envisioned.**

Given the budget, time, and development constraints in building grade-separated vehicular access (*see Circulation Plan*), the uncertainty over land acquisition and clean-up, and the stigma of the city's major homeless facility, it is recommended that the riverfront redevelopment take place on pace as a second priority within the North Crossings area unless these constraints change. However, because of the scope of the project, property acquisitions and business relocations should be initiated as opportunities arise so that the project becomes more feasible spread out over a number of years. BRB Contractors, the largest private property owner in this district, has a business need to better consolidate their operations onto one site that is not affected by train traffic, increases efficiencies, and allows

expansion room. If implemented in a timely fashion, relocation to a consolidated site elsewhere in North Topeka would enable their growth to occur while allowing for an exciting new type of growth along the river, thus creating a greater economic impact for the City.



*From: Urban Design Framework for Downtown Topeka (draft 1999)*

## **E. DESIGN GUIDELINES**

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

James Q. Wilson, *The Moral Sense*

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

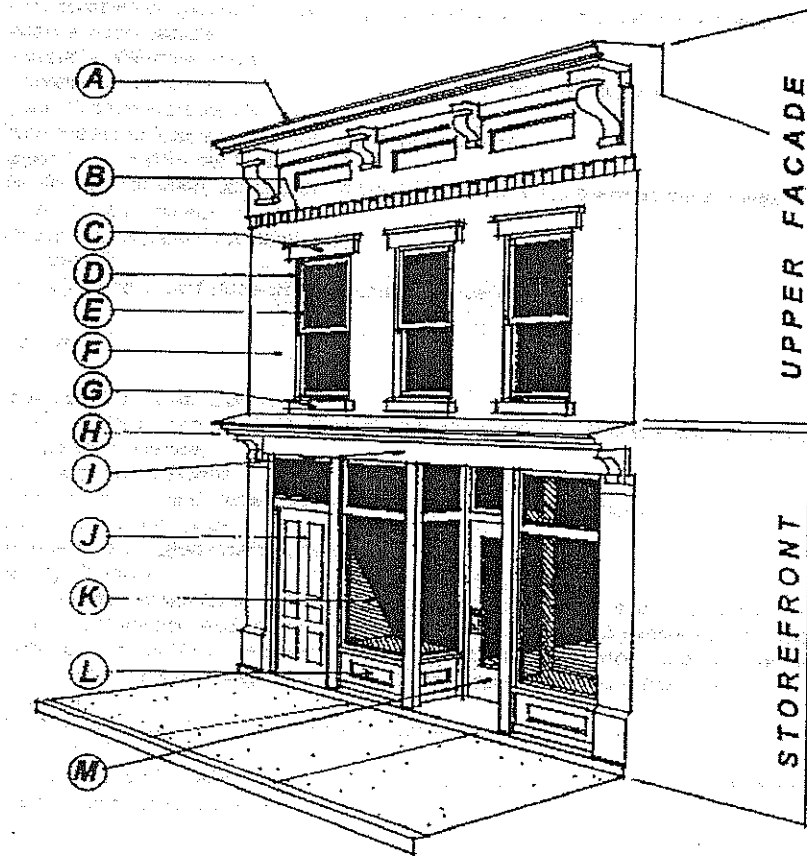
### **A. COMMERCIAL/MIXED-USE**

Commercial and mixed-use buildings of historic character and sufficient integrity are primarily found in the 800, 900, and 1000 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue. The old Union Pacific Depot, listed on the National Register, should also be looked at as a model for new and renovated commercial/mixed-use buildings. These and other commercial buildings within the Focus Area that have potential for local or national listing should adhere to basic guidelines below for rehabilitation as demonstrated by Illustrations #5, #6, #7, and Appendix B.

#### **Street facades and rehabilitation**

1. Original **facades**, including windows and openings, should be retained.
2. Encourage removal of applied **siding** treatments, metal fascias and canopies wherever possible.
3. Repair damage from siding treatments and rejuvenate upper facades hidden by treatments. Siding treatments often tend to preserve the façade in good condition. If architectural elements (e.g., upper and lower cornices) have been removed or damaged, reconstruct/restore original elements.

## A Traditional Storefront Façade – Illustration #5



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

4. Maintain or reconstruct large **storefront windows**. Original storefront windows usually begin at 18"-24" above the ground and extend to the underside of the second floor.
5. NEVER **paint** unpainted brick or sandblast brick to remove paint. If painted, colors should visually relate to building elements and neighboring facades (i.e., earth-tones). Placement of colors should be based on the existing hierarchy of detail: base and major/minor trim colors. Base color is the upper wall surface and storefront piers.
6. New **windows** should fit the size and shape of their original openings. Mirrored or smoked-glass windows should not be used since they are not original materials and detract from the district's character.
7. Maintain original decorative stone details, window hoods, cornice brackets and woodwork whenever possible.
8. **Awnings** or canopies should be of traditional design, preferably cloth, and not unusually large or awkward in shape. Avoid excessive signage on awnings, back-lit awnings, and round awnings.
9. Keep the size of **signs** modest and locate them at the storefront cornice line; they may overhang the public right-of-way if they do not obscure architectural details or dominate the building. Avoid plastic materials on the exterior of signs since this is not a traditional material. A well designed and maintained building is as much of an advertisement for a business as the sign itself.
10. Avoid permanent **fences** visible from street frontages or public areas that are chain-link or wire. Barbed wire should not be permitted in a non-industrial district.

### **New Construction**

1. All building designs should be compatible with the major elements of historic architecture along the N. Kansas Avenue mixed-use district and the Union Pacific Depot: red brick buildings with limestone or grey concrete trim are desirable.
2. Buildings should be set back from the street uniformly to present a continuous façade line along the street, except that minor recesses, projections for entries, and similar elements may be acceptable.
3. Human scale elements along the street front should be included within the building's design.
4. The desired height of buildings should not exceed forty (40) feet.
5. The street grid system and views of the Union Pacific Depot and Capital need to be preserved.
6. Parking lots should have CPTED ("crime prevention through environmental design")-approved design elements, interior landscaping, and be located behind buildings in the interior of blocks, or side yards to the maximum extent feasible.

7. Mechanical or electrical equipment should be hidden or screened from street level view.

Design guidelines for commercial and mixed-use structures should at a minimum, be applied to the “entertainment district” with consideration given to “expansion” or “riverfront” areas for new construction.

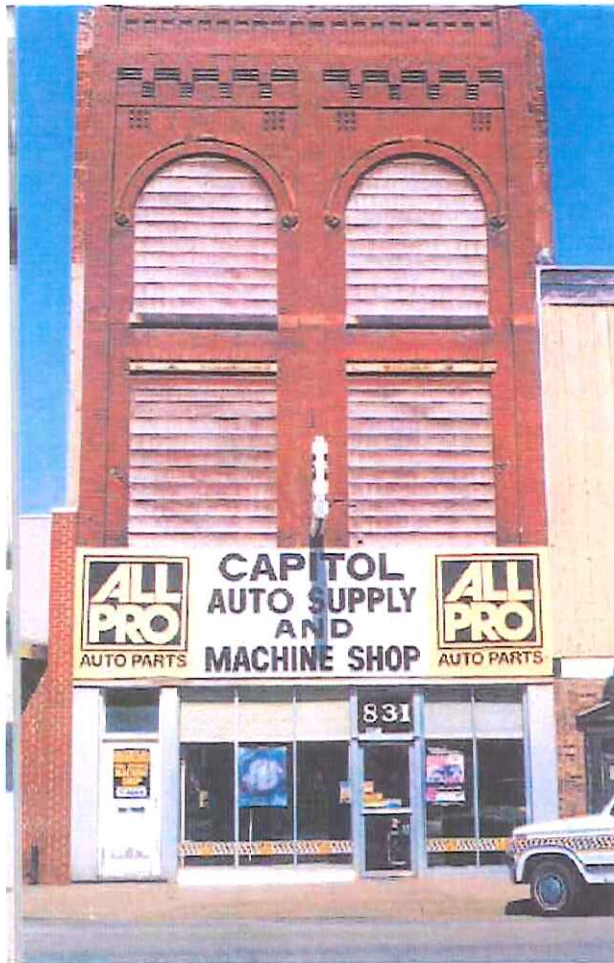
## **B. STREETSCAPES**

Streetscape guidelines would apply to N. Kansas Avenue (500-1000), gateways and other “image” streets identified under the Urban Design Framework. Some major recommendations for the **800-900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue** include (see Illustration #8):

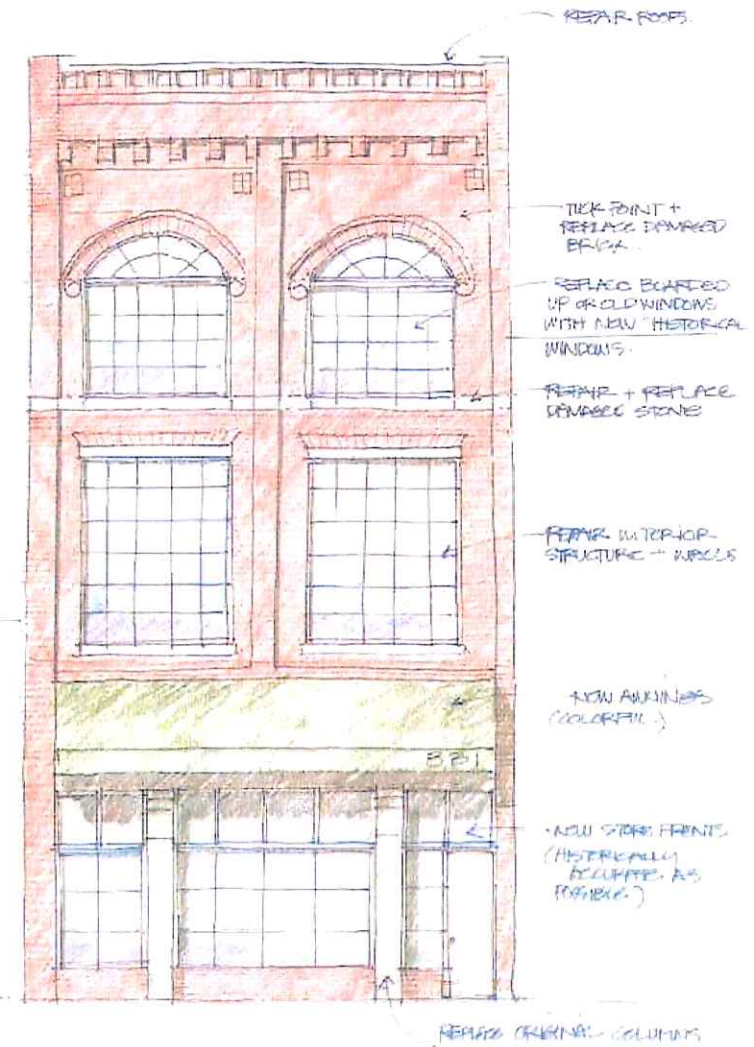
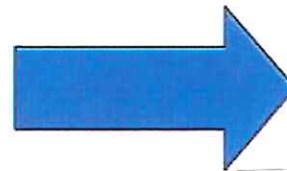
1. **Pedestrian Bump-outs** – Located at intersections and mid-block crossing to shorten pedestrian crossing distances, slow traffic, and visually deter heavy truck traffic. These bump-outs should include space for raised landscaped planters that are slightly setback from the curb at intersections and mid-block crossing.
2. **Overhead Gateway Signage** – Located at Gordon and Norris for gateway affect and to deter heavy truck traffic.
3. **Sidewalks** – The possibility exists for the 10’ wide sidewalks to be extended up to 18’ to provide for outdoor display, dining, planter, and/or street furniture space; this option might require parallel instead of angle parking, but could be limited to mid-block locations where pedestrian crossings would be located. New sidewalk concrete should be laid with brick paver trim and brick paver treatments at intersections, crosswalks, and any extensions of the sidewalk.
4. **Shade Trees** – Shade tree plantings should be spaced from intersection to intersection judiciously so that storefronts are not obscured to any great extent, but that a pleasant walking environment is provided; at a minimum, intersections and mid-block crossings should have multiple plantings.
5. **Lighting** – Existing street lights are spaced at a 100’ interval. Since the fluted poles retain a desired character, they should remain to provide vehicular light. Pedestrian lighting that is historically compatible could either be spaced mid-point between the street lights or attached to the street lights with an arm bracket overhanging the sidewalk. In addition, metal placards or signs could be placed on light poles at pedestrian level scale with the



Commercial Building Design Guidelines (831 N. Kansas Avenue)  
Illustration #6



BEFORE

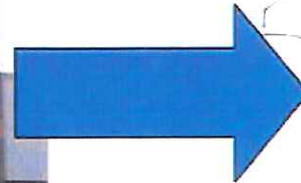


AFTER

Commercial Building Design Guidelines (816 N. Kansas Avenue)  
Illustration #7



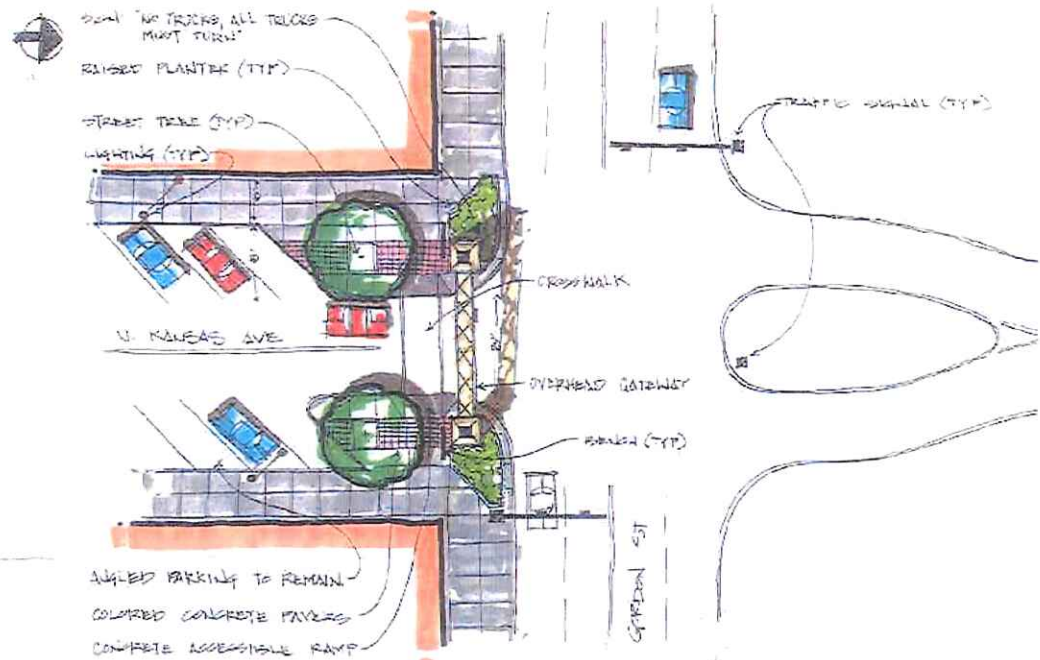
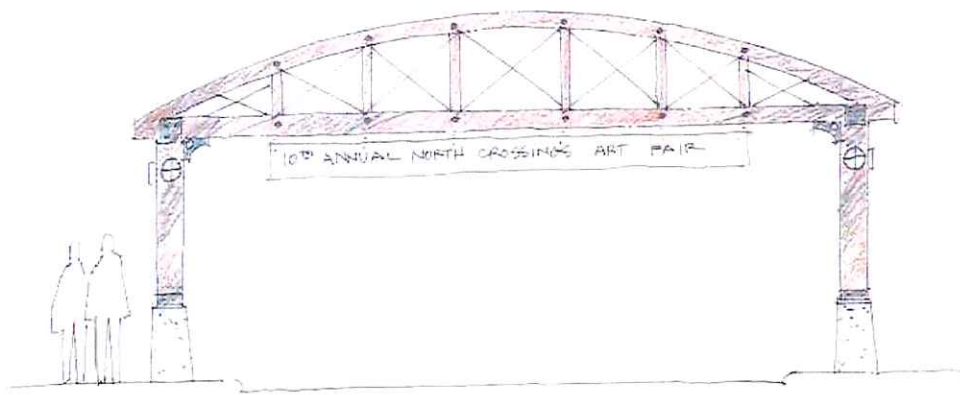
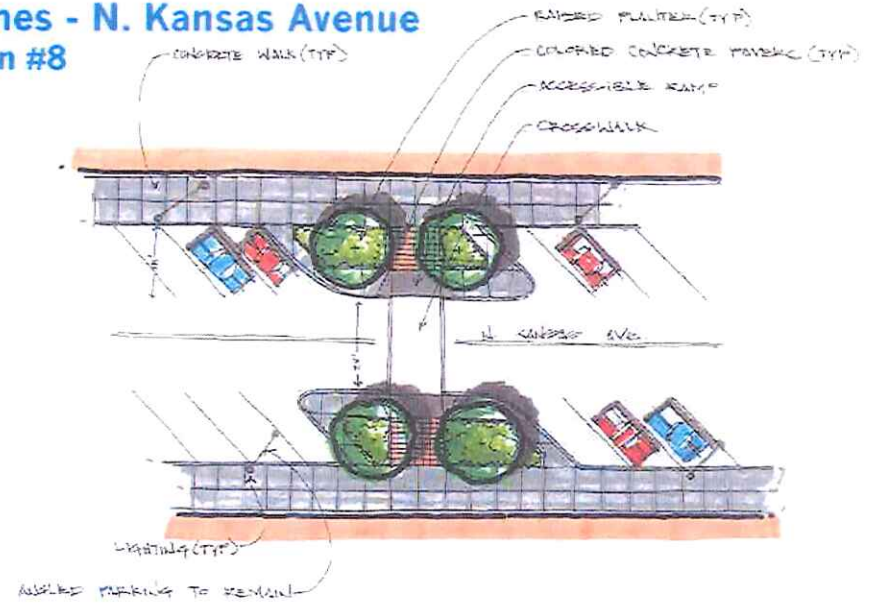
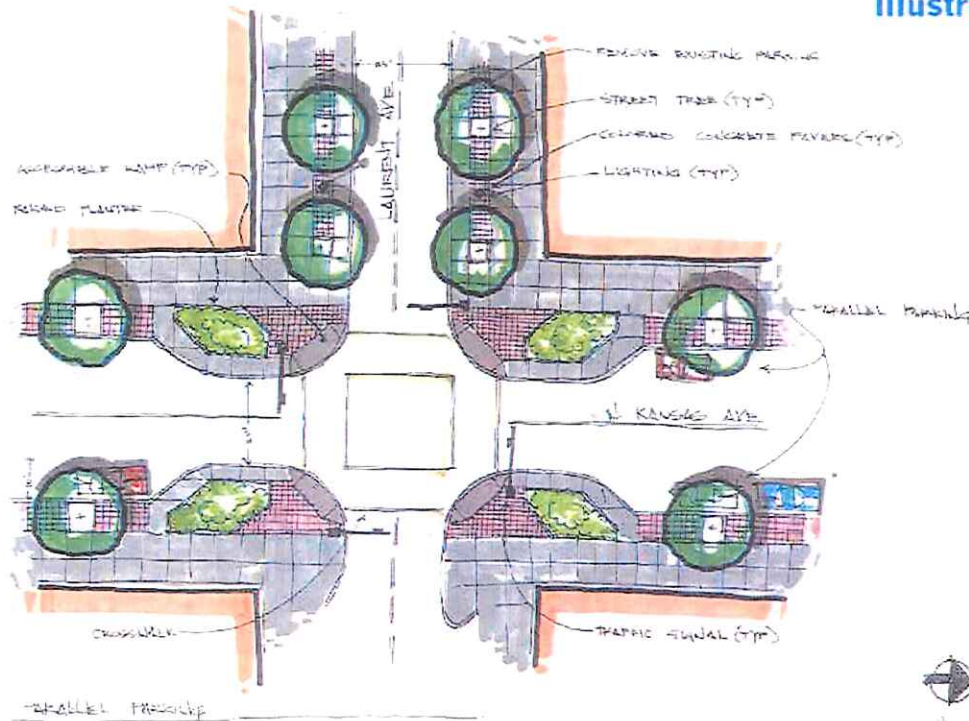
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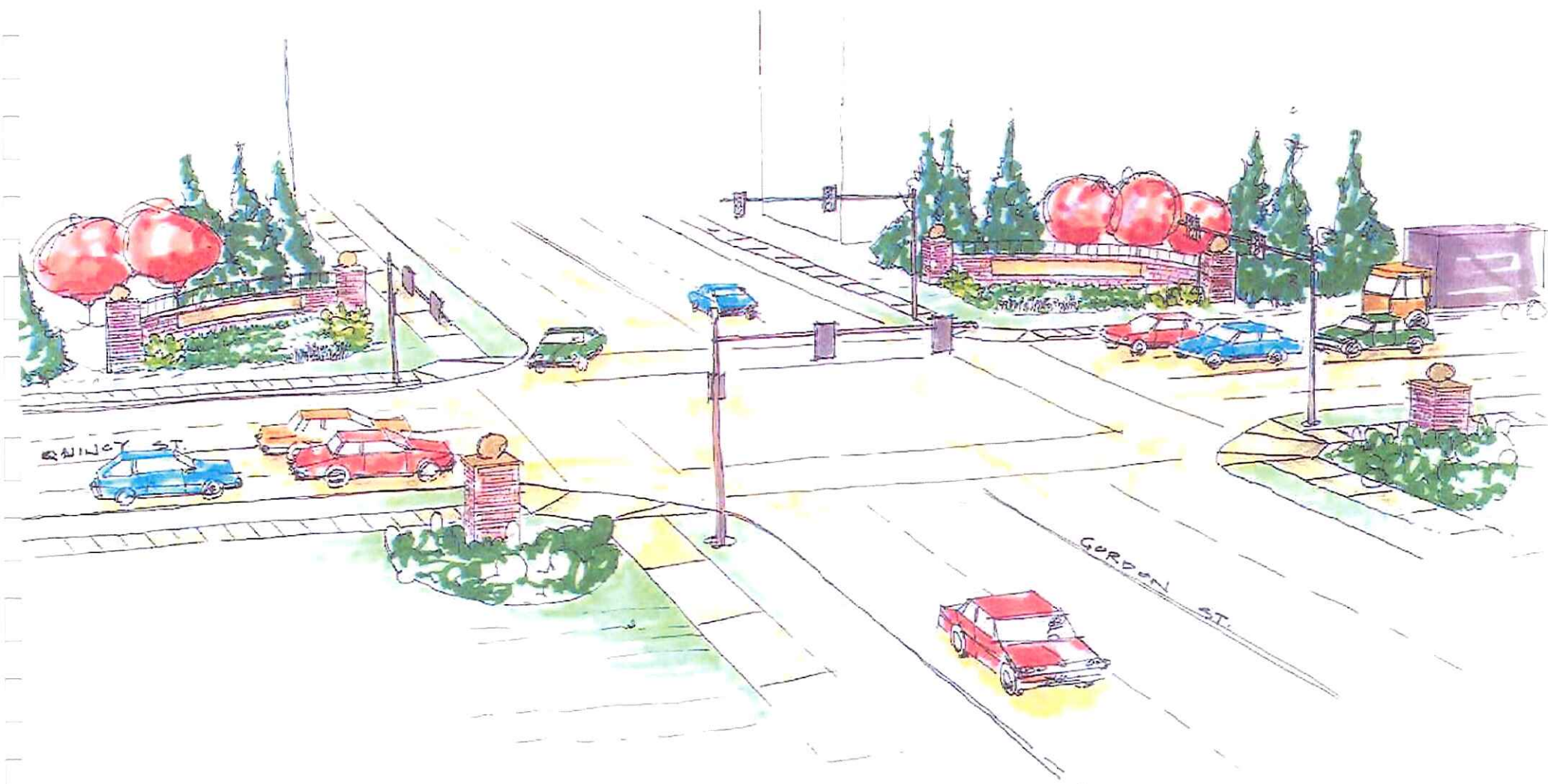
AFTER



# Streetscape Design Guidelines - N. Kansas Avenue Illustration #8



## Streetscape Design Guidelines - Major Gateway Illustration #9





# Housing Infill Design Guidelines -1100 NE Monroe

## Illustration #10

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



district name on them. Interchangeable canvas banners could be placed higher up on the street light poles announcing different events.

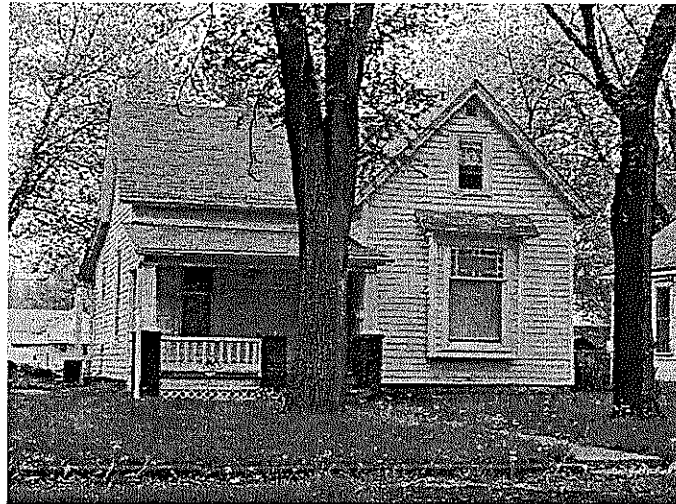
6. **Street Furniture** – Benches and trash receptacles should be historically compatible to building architecture and placed at appropriate intervals along the sidewalk.

### C. RESIDENTIAL

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

#### Folk Victorian (1870-1910)

- gable-front-and-wing subtype without Victorian detailing
- cross gable roofing with steep pitch
- can be 1 or 2 stories
- wooden posts atop brick piers supporting porch that is length of wing
- bay window with 1-over-1 double hung sash
- common in Southern states
- gable-fronts are prominent in Little Russia





### **Craftsman (1905-1930)**

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



### **Queen Anne (1890-1910)**

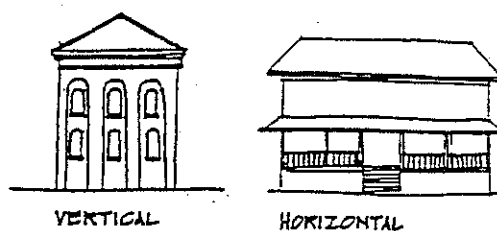
- very late variant of Queen Anne style
- two-story gable façade with cross-gable roof
- horizontal wood clapboards with fishscale shingling
- pediment marking entry over full length porch
- wood posts atop painted brick piers extending to ground
- balustrade provides railing for porch



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

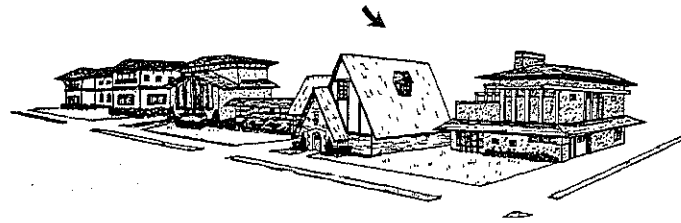
**Massing and Form** – *Massing* generally refers to how a given amount of space is reflected in a building's design. For example, the space could be a rectangular box with no porch and a flat roof, OR two smaller boxes of uneven height and a full length covered front porch with front-gable roof. The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

1. The height, width, and general proportions of a building should generally conform to other buildings in the neighborhood. That would include a building frontage narrower than its depth with a visible main from street, elevation of floor above ground, and a proportional front porch.
2. The ratio of wall surface to openings should be consistent with traditional buildings in the neighborhood. This includes width and height of window and door openings. Enclosure or re-positioning of original window placements should be avoided. Size and proportion of window space to façade should be kept consistent with neighborhood
3. Buildings should be of vertical or non-directional appearance so that horizontal lines are minimized. Flat wall surfaces, particularly frontages, should be avoided.

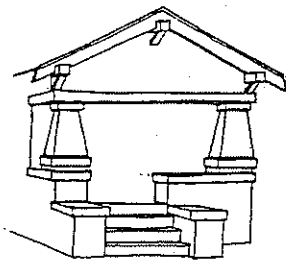


4. The slope, massing, and configuration of the original roof should be maintained. Roof pitch should be kept within range of predominate building style. Low gable, domed, A-frame, and shed-vaulted roof shape are inappropriate.

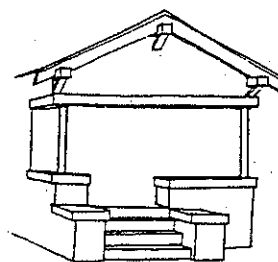
*Example of inappropriate roof line and front setback on a given block*



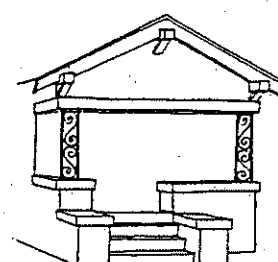
5. Additions to traditional dwellings should be complimentary and subservient to the main structure.
6. Front doors should be accentuated and painted/stained.
7. Garages should be built in the rear yard behind the house or to the side in proportion to the main structure. Access should be from alley unless historical front curb-cut exists.
8. Historic details – balconies, covered porches, decorative shingles, bracketed eaves, columns, balustrades, arches, turrets, etc. – should be in proportion with the building and considered on contemporary designs only where appropriate.



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



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



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

## **Materials**

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

Design guidelines for residential structures should at a minimum, be applied to identified blocks with sufficient historical integrity (e.g., primarily >50 yrs. old) within the Focus Area. If desired by the community, the area may be expanded to adjacent residential blocks of the Planning Area. An example of what infill housing would look like following these guidelines is depicted in Illustration #10.

## **F. HOUSING**

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

**Housing Rehabilitation** – Community perception of the housing market affects the confidence of local residents in investing in the neighborhood. When a market is perceived to be in a declining state or when property values/rents cannot adequately support new investment, maintenance of properties is deferred and disinvestment begins. Activities therefore should be geared towards improving the existing housing stock in the community. With 72% of the residential properties in the community exhibiting either major or intermediate deficiencies (see Table 4) the need for a more targeted rehabilitation program is apparent. The following strategies could help achieve this objective:

- **Identify strategic blocks to concentrate rehabilitation efforts:** Map #14 illustrates the location of blocks that present new housing opportunities. These blocks and the blocks surrounding them should be targeted for more concentrated rehabilitation efforts within the community. This should be coordinated with the in-fill housing activities discussed below and in the implementation section.
- **Areas for conservation-based rehabilitation:** The Design Guidelines section notes that there are certain characteristics of older, historic homes in terms of size, mass and scale which need to be conserved. Areas with a large percentage of historically significant homes need to be identified. The historic housing stock within those areas needs to be protected by discouraging architecturally insensitive renovations/alterations. In addition, some of the most historic homes are found within the North Crossings and should be targeted for conservation in lieu of any major redevelopment proposals. The most significant buildings should be identified and relocated within Historic North Topeka if redevelopment poses a conflict.

**In-Fill Housing Development** – Historic North Topeka presents numerous opportunities for in-fill housing development with an abundance of vacant parcels (9% land area, 16% of all parcels), in some instances comprising entire blocks. In-fill housing development will help to stabilize the neighborhood by removing the blighting influences of excessive vacant lots and deteriorated mobile home sites in traditional neighborhood



# Housing Opportunity Areas

Historic North Topeka

Map #14



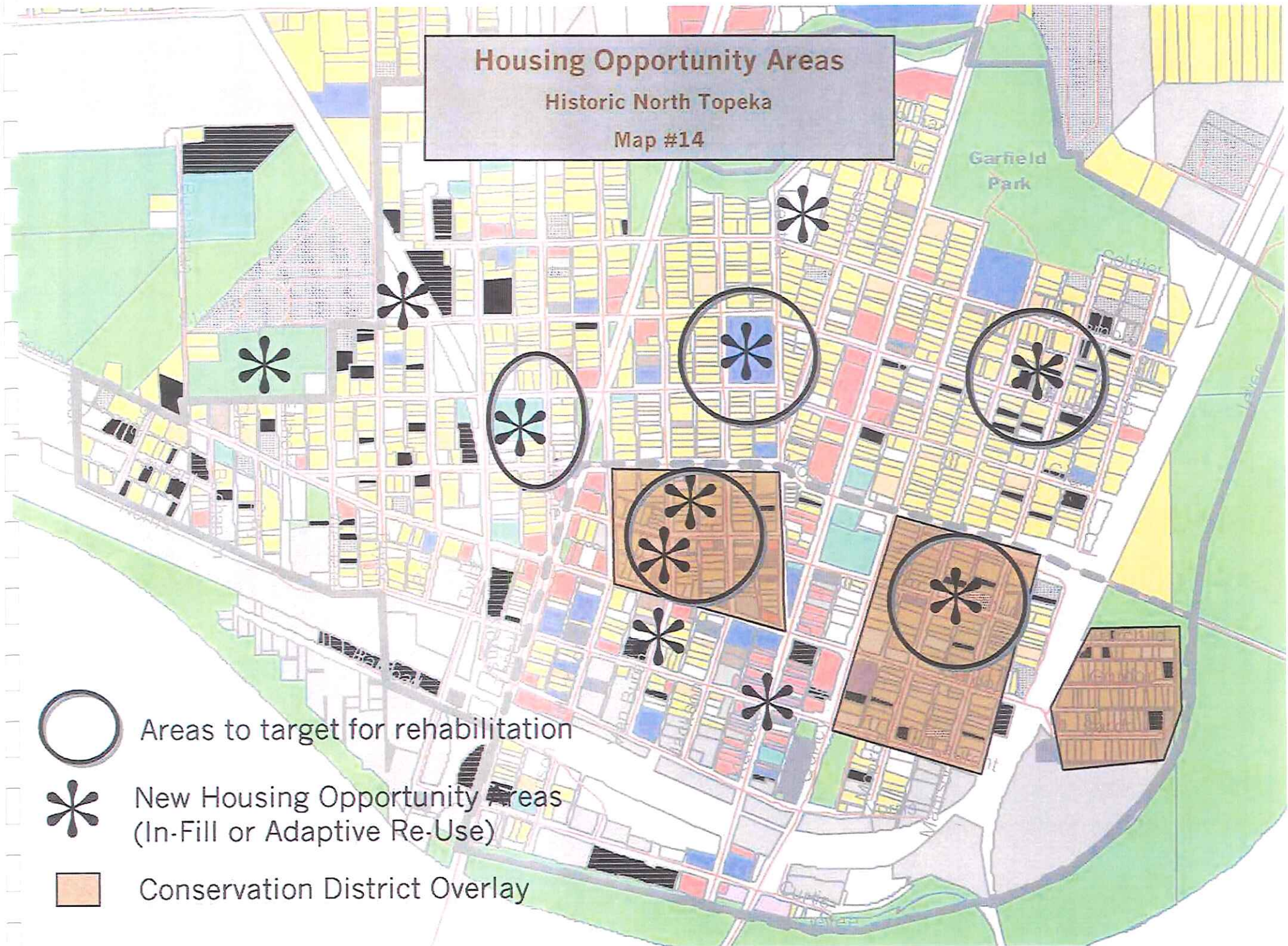
Areas to target for rehabilitation



New Housing Opportunity Areas  
(In-Fill or Adaptive Re-Use)



Conservation District Overlay





settings, increasing the density of population and attracting homeowners. All new in-fill activities should be coordinated with rehabilitation efforts to create a synergistic effect. The following strategies would contribute to the success of compatible in-fill housing development:

- **Identify strategic in-fill housing and adaptive reuse areas:** Map #14 illustrates areas that might be suitable for future in-fill development. In-fill housing development can be divided into three general categories: lot-by-lot in-filling of deteriorated mobile home sites and vacant lots; the adaptive re-use of vacant non-residential structures; and the wholesale redevelopment of large tracts of land. These concepts are explored in more detail below:
  - **North Kansas Avenue:** This area comprises the 800 and 900 blocks of N. Kansas Avenue. The area consists primarily of historic row-style commercial buildings that have the potential for adaptive reuse for loft style apartments above the ground floor. New residential opportunities will be an essential component to the successful revitalization of this historic area into a viable mixed-use district.
  - **Van Buren/Fairchild:** With a large number of vacant lots, relatively high number of unoccupied dwellings, and poor housing conditions, the 1000 and 1100 blocks of Van Buren Street has considerable potential for wholesale in-fill redevelopment. Assemblage of land would front Morse Street and possibly Gordon Street for high visibility. Any in-fill efforts should be pursued in combination with the rehabilitation efforts of historic homes on Fairchild Street and Jackson Street, which boasts some of the area's best remaining collection of period homes. The area has fair homeownership levels.
  - **Curtis Junior High Blocks:** A city block in the 1300 range of Jackson Street comprises the former Curtis Jr. High School grounds (*see right*). The only building improvement on these two tracts of land is the school itself, which is located on Grant Street. These areas therefore are optimal for larger-scale in-fill projects of single-family detached houses. The school could be renovated for an adaptive re-use such as a retirement community,



branch library or community building.

- **North Crossings:** Directly south of the Van Buren/Fairchild site across Gordon Avenue, exists a potential for higher density in-fill development to create further synergy in the North Crossings area. The 900 block between Van Buren and Harrison is currently occupied by 8 detached houses, open storage, and 3 vacant lots that could be replaced by apartment complexes consistent with the Plan's design guidelines. Some of the structures should be evaluated for preservation. 320 Laurent is the oldest church in Topeka and should be preserved on site. The 900 block between Van Buren and Jackson may also be worthy of the same treatment if parking is not needed for the entertainment district.
  - **Madison/Jefferson South:** This 5-block area along the 1000-1100 blocks of Madison and Jefferson Streets in the northeastern portion of the Focus Area exhibits relatively poor exterior conditions, with 4 of the 5 blocks experiencing major deterioration. The area has a large number of mobile home sites and courts which could be an opportunity for an affordable in-fill project. This area has not retained a much of its original historic housing stock. However, new in-fill housing could stimulate private rehab efforts in the 1100 block of Monroe Street which has a fine collection of turn-of-the-century homes, but is in poor condition. The area has poor homeownership levels.
  - **Madison/Jefferson North:** This area is similar to Madison/Jefferson South except it is in the 1300-1400 blocks. It exhibits relatively poor housing conditions with a large number of mobile homes, vacant lots, vacant homes, and blight. A major constraint to wholesale redevelopment is the cost of installing new curb, gutter, or sidewalk improvements which the area lacks. Another constraint to the redevelopment of these blocks is their adjacency to the railroad tracks, which could be overcome through appropriate buffering techniques.
  - **NW Taylor and NW Western:** These two tracts of land are largely unused and undeveloped. Given the existence of two large mobile home communities adjacent to these areas, these sites might be a suitable location for new planned mobile home communities.
- **Identify areas with significant intact historic housing stock:** Special considerations need to be made to ensure that in-fill housing in blocks with a large percentage of historically "significant" housing is architecturally compatible with the surrounding historic homes. These areas are identified on the Housing Opportunity Areas map as "housing conservation areas". Refer to the Design Guidelines section for more discussion of this topic.
  - **Overcome perceived obstacles to development and redevelopment:** There is a perception in the development community that the current building regulations present an obstacle to redevelopment projects on narrow lots

and the renovation of older buildings. Eliminating this perceived obstacle to development in inner-city neighborhoods will be crucial to attracting new investment to HNT.

- **Encourage development that is compatible with surrounding neighborhood:** The appearance and character of new in-fill housing should be similar to that of adjacent or nearby housing. See “Design Guidelines”.

**Homeownership** – Although not a panacea for all of a neighborhood's problems, an increase in the number of owner occupants can contribute to the stability of the neighborhood. HNT is predominantly a renter neighborhood with only 36% of the housing units in the community being owner occupied. Much of the problem may be attributed to a perception that the housing market in HNT is declining. The abundance of dilapidated housing and vacant lots is evidence that, while the market may or may not be declining, the demand for owner-occupied housing is low. The following strategies can be employed to attract new homeowners to the area and increase existing homeowner confidence.

- **Downzoning:** The implementation section discusses this in more detail. Many low-density residential blocks are presently zoned for high-density multi-family residential uses and even highly intensive non-residential uses. This action would help to improve homeowner confidence and predictability in the neighborhood by preventing further encroachment of incompatible uses in residential blocks.
- **Coordinate with rehabilitation and in-fill efforts:** The rehabilitation and in-fill efforts combined with homeownership efforts will have a synergistic effect which should attract additional investment and therefore, new homebuyers to the community. The removal of the blighting influences of dilapidated housing, mobile homes and excessive vacant lots, will make the community more attractive to potential homeowners.
- **Overcome and change current negative outside market perceptions of HNT:** As is evidenced by the non-existence of any TOTO houses in Historic North Topeka, the outside market perception of the neighborhood is quite negative. TOTO (Topeka's Opportunity to Own program) is a market-driven program relying on realtors and first-time homeowner clients to choose the house of their choice on the open market. Acquisition and renovations costs cannot exceed \$50,000. The energies being created by new investment in the North Crossings area should be able to give potential residents/homebuyers another opportunity to look at living in Historic North Topeka. Therefore, the community should take advantage of this higher profile to work on a

marketing brochure and establish a working relationship with a realtor(s) who is willing to market the area to new homeowners.

**Manufactured Housing and Affordability** – Manufactured housing has become an increasingly attractive and affordable alternative to site-built housing in recent years. A 1998 publication on manufactured housing by the American Planning Association and the Manufactured Housing Institute reports that the cost of building a manufactured home is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the cost of site-built homes, making it the only type of housing that some households can afford to own. They further state that approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the housing starts in 1996 were manufactured homes, evidencing their growing popularity. Recent advancements in the design of manufactured housing have resulted in a new breed of residential design manufactured homes that are virtually indistinguishable from site-built homes (*see picture at right*). This is particularly true when site-built features such as porches, entryways and garages are added to enhance the design of residential design manufactured homes.



Manufactured Housing can be divided into two distinct types: *mobile homes* and *residential-design manufactured homes*. A **mobile home**, according to the Topeka/Shawnee County Comprehensive Zoning Regulations, is a manufactured structure for dwelling purposes that is less than 22' wide. This dimension accommodates single-wide mobile homes with or without a foundation. A **residential-design manufactured home (RDMH)**, is defined as a manufactured home that is:

*"on a permanent foundation which has: (a) minimum dimensions of 22 feet in body width, (b) a pitched roof and (c) siding and roofing materials which are customarily used on site-built homes."*

RDMH's are treated the same as site-built homes in the building permit process and are permitted in all single-family dwelling districts, provided that they are at least 22 feet in width. Mobile homes are regulated differently. A mobile home is specifically excluded from the definition of a single-family dwelling in the zoning regulations and is

prohibited in all single-family zoning districts, with the exception of the "R-4" district. In order to place a mobile home on a property the owner must have the proper zoning and obtain a mobile home license, which is updated annually.

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

- **Encourage residential design manufactured homes to maintain an affordable housing environment:** As in-fill housing is developed in the community, replacing vacant lots and mobile home sites/courts, the use of residential design manufactured homes should be encouraged to help preserve the affordable housing environment. As was noted above, the primary advantage of RDMH's are their affordability. A typical RDMH would be 25-50% less than the cost of a site-built home. Another advantage of RDHM's is their visual compatibility with traditional site-built homes. Other cities like Louisville, Kentucky; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Washington, D.C. and Birmingham, Alabama have used manufactured housing for urban in-fill projects and have met with much success. These projects have produced a variety of architectural styles, each tailored to be compatible with the particular neighborhood in which they are located.
- **Promote Mixed Income Developments:** When a neighborhood like Historic North Topeka is "rediscovered" the inevitable result is that the average cost of housing increases, often displacing low-income residents. Developers who make a substantial investment for in-fill and wholesale redevelopment projects should be required to address the affordable housing needs in the area and integrate new development with low-moderate income housing.



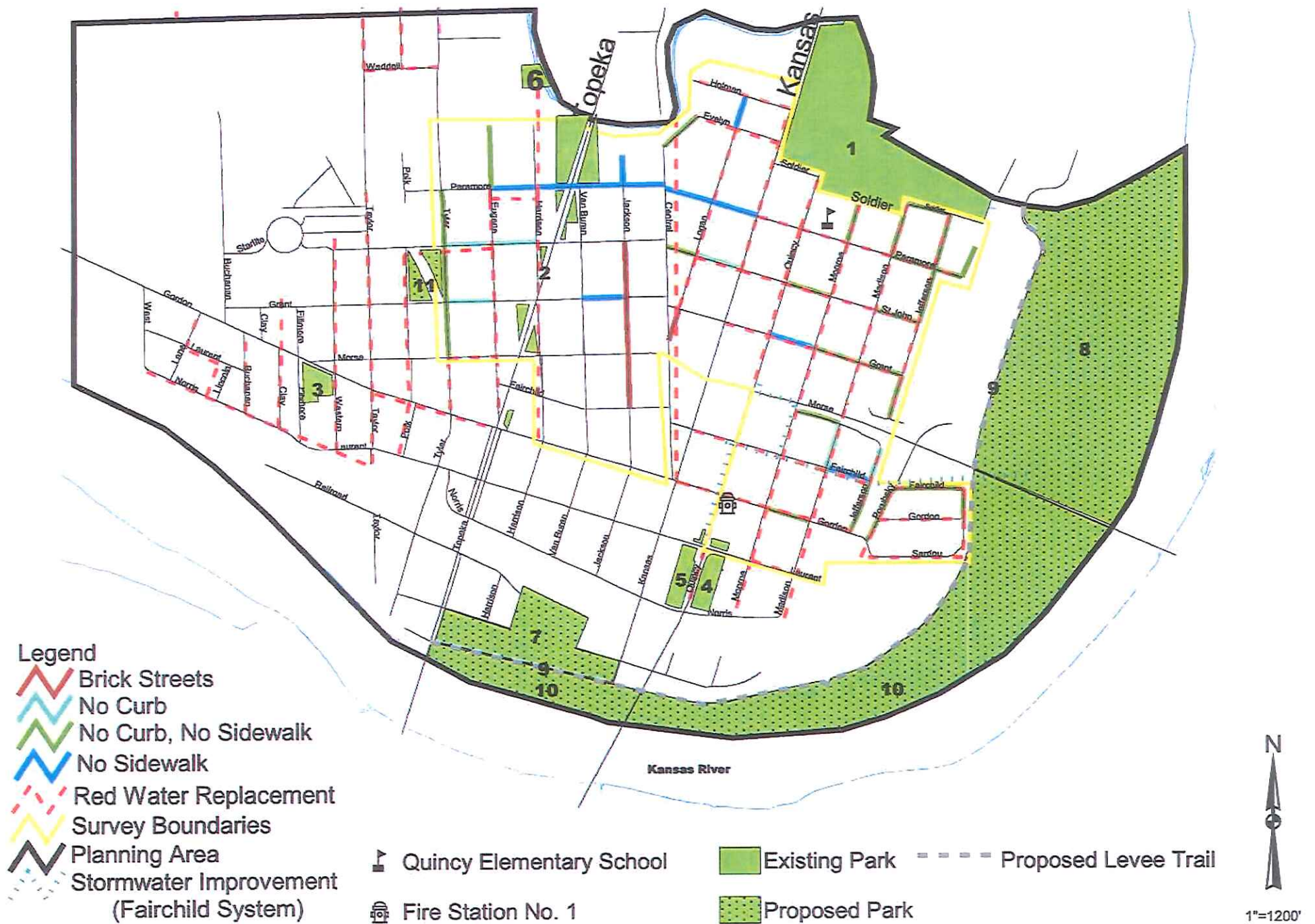
## G. PARKS

The parks and trails referenced below are anticipated to be consistent with any future Parks and Trails element of the Comprehensive Plan (Refer to Map #15 for locations):

Existing	Size (ac.)	Type	Recommendations
1. Garfield Park	23.7	Community – active and passive	Make part of regional trail system along old Soldier Creek channel. Maintain and upgrade as premier community park in North Topeka.
2. Charles Curtis Greenway	5.8	Linear - passive	Acquire properties as opportunities arise and complete greenway as buffer on heavily traveled image corridor.
3. McKinley Park	0.8	Mini-park – active and passive	Not central to residential population and within increasingly non-residential area. Policy should be to put major park improvements into establishing new future park site (see Oregon Trail Park).
4. Veterans Park east	2.0	Special use – passive and active	Could be offered in land swap for business relocation for future park space. Save ne corner of Quincy/ Laurent for gateway effect.
5. Veterans Park west	0.4	Special use – passive	Redesign to provide parking and potential Farmers Market space. Veterans Park can be consolidated with WW I-II monuments in a more prominent and worthy setting.
6. Curtis Cemetery	0.9	Special use – historic site	Preserve historic Curtis Family cemetery and provide access along regional trail system.

<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
7. <i>Riverfront Park south of Great Overland Station</i>	14-20	<i>Regional</i>	<i>Brownfield to greenfield project that would establish regional gathering place for events related to Great Overland Station. Would compliment efforts to develop Millennium Park south of river by linking pedestrian and/or ferry service. Could include levee trail, historic landmarks, and outdoor facilities for music, ice skating, etc. Would require industrial business relocations and improved vehicular access.</i>
8. <i>Sardou Recreation/Nature Trail Park</i>	98.0	<i>Special Use/Open Space</i>	<i>Replace farming use to support kite flying, model airplane, and/or athletic field use. Explore use of creek inlet for canoe launch area. Preserve natural vegetation and habitat area along river.</i>
9. <i>Levee Trail</i>	1.7 miles (0.4 miles between bridges)	<i>Linear - recreational</i>	<i>An urban trail should be established on top of Kansas River levee from at least from Topeka Blvd. Bridge to old Soldier Creek inlet. Trail between Kansas and Topeka bridges should include lighting, benches, and turnouts to support higher usage for strolling, viewing, and gathering. It would be part of an overall regional trail system.</i>
10. <i>Kansas River Open Space</i>	84.0	<i>Open Space - passive</i>	<i>Grow back to natural state of vegetation and habitat; add possible nature trail.</i>
11. <i>Oregon Trail Neighborhood Park</i>	2.0	<i>Neighborhood</i>	<i>Develop as more centralized park for residences in neighborhood with children's play and picnic settings. Could commemorate historic Oregon Trail that follows UP line through site. Rail line used infrequently by Goodyear, but would need appropriate fencing from park for safety.</i>

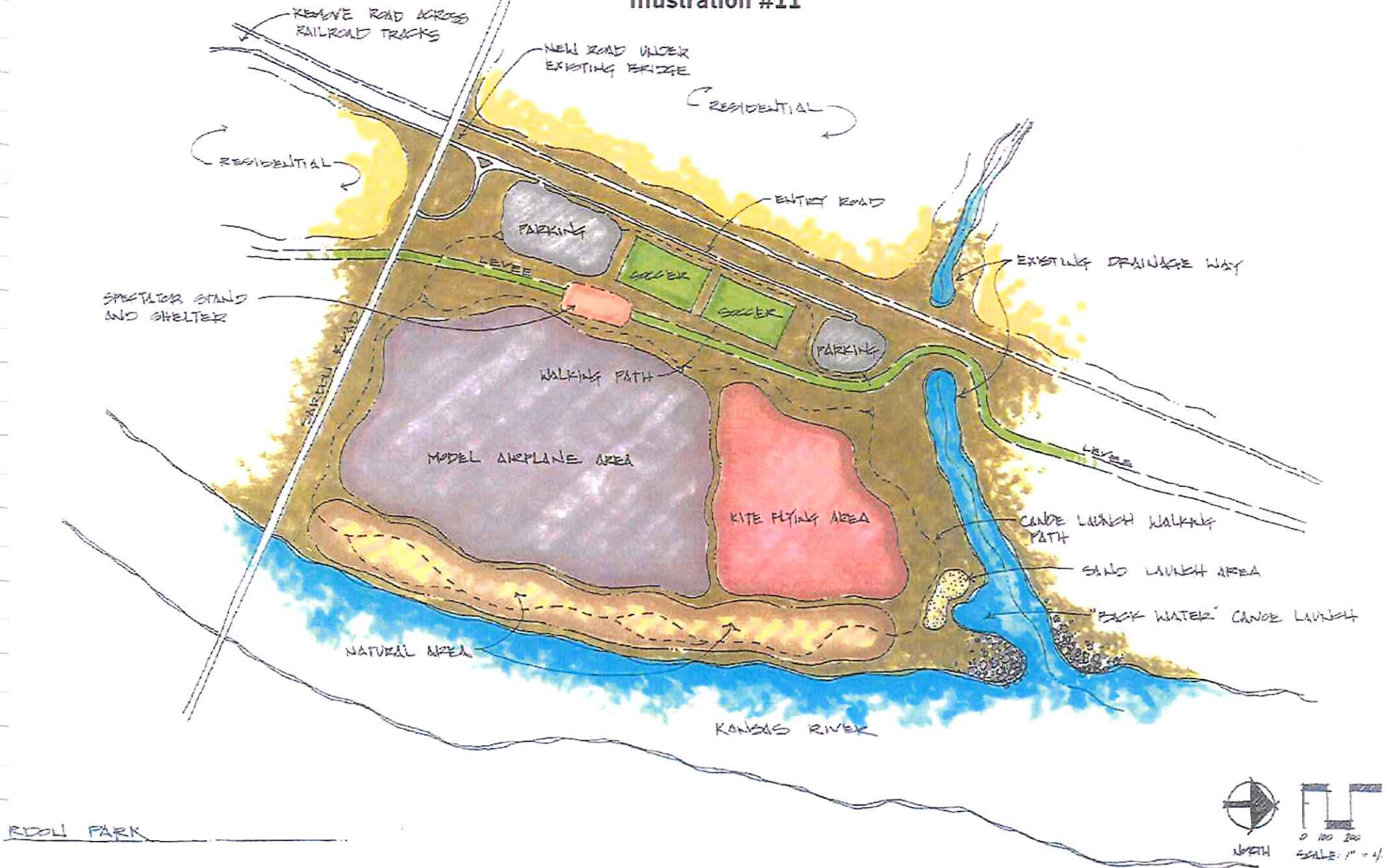
## Map #15





# Sardou Recreation/Nature Park

## Illustration #11



## H. UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Utility infrastructure typically consists of *non-transportation* related capital infrastructure. The utility infrastructure needs for the residential areas with traditional neighborhood design elements are illustrated in Map # 15. In this case, sidewalks and brick streets have identified as well in this section. Sidewalks have been identified because they are considered standard urban capital improvements in a traditional neighborhood design setting. Brick streets are mapped to alert others for their preservation. Brick sidewalks have not been mapped, but are included in the recommendations below and should be preserved as necessary.

### Needs and Recommendations:

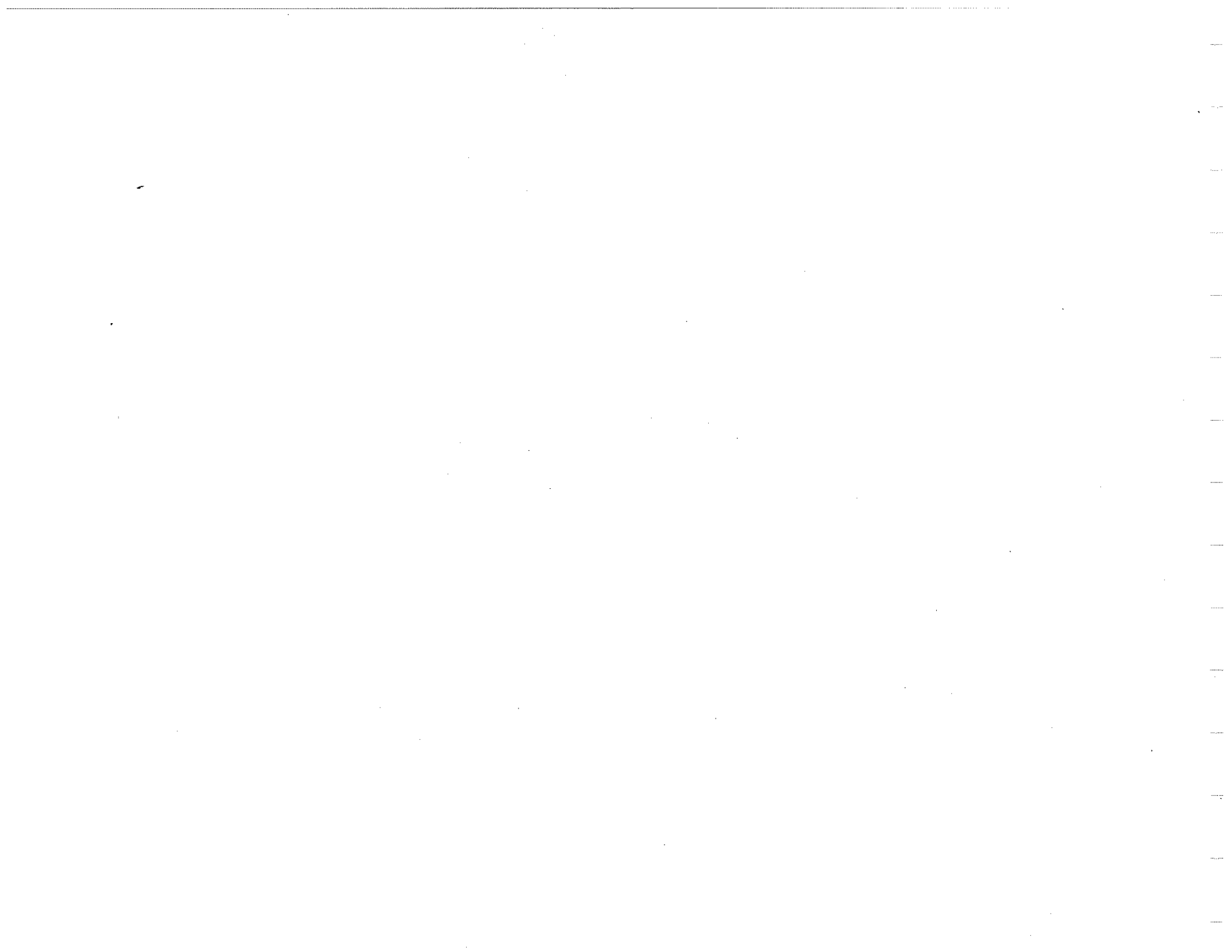
- **Sidewalks, Curb, and Gutter** – All blocks within TND areas should be completed for sidewalks and curb/gutter work. Some areas of the neighborhood are devoid of these basic urban infrastructure services and have no way to revitalize the housing development on those blocks without these basic services. Some blocks border on slum conditions and are impassible for pedestrians because of the lack of curbs/gutters.
- **Water Main Replacements** – The issue of “red water” and the replacement of old rusting water lines with new water mains should be completed as soon as possible. Clear drinking and bathing water is another basic service that must be ensured before any residential revitalization can occur.
- **Storm Sewer Improvements** – The Fairchild Pump Station in Little Russia was built in 1927. When the river rises, the sluice gates close, and rain run-off cannot be pumped out into the river without this facility working properly. It should be replaced within the next several years to insure against rain run-off backing up and causing property damage. The sewer line itself should be assessed for replacement as well, but as a second priority.
- **Kansas River Levee** – The Army Corps of Engineers is currently performing a 3-year Feasibility Study to determine the need to provide a minimum of 100-year flood protection for all the Topeka levee units. The North Topeka Unit protects the Planning Area from River flooding and may need upgraded although the weakest point of the levee is believed to be further down river not affecting the revitalization area.

Estimated costs are identified in the Implementation Summary Agenda (**Section VI**).



# Implementation





## VI. IMPLEMENTATION

### A. ZONING

#### Neighborhood Downzoning

Development policies of the Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan are legally implemented through the practice of zoning to regulate desirous patterns of land use and intensity. As documented in the profile section of the Plan, Historic North Topeka has been greatly affected by the massive re-zoning action adopted for the area following the 1951 flood in an effort to encourage industrial investment. The zoning districts as adopted have permitted numerous incompatible land use relationships to come about and have failed to protect the residential neighborhood from encroachment of non-residential activities. Homeownership has been discouraged and historic character eroded because of allowed development intensity. Commercial retail employers have also been effectively discouraged from investing in the area due in part to the permissive nature of zoning.

The Land Use Plan has identified “Residential – Low Density” blocks that reflect the strongest concentration of single-family residential uses that should be preserved and protected. The properties within these areas are recommended for “downzoning” from two-family, multiple-family, commercial, and industrial zoning districts to a lower intensity single-family districts (“R-2”, “R-3”) through a City-initiated downzoning process (see Map #16). In addition, a new zoning district – Mixed-Use (“X”) – should be adopted for special mixed-use and transition areas that help promote neighborhood stability as described below.

#### Mixed-Use District (“X”)

The new Mixed-Use District is intended to encourage a healthy balance of activities ranging from commercial, industrial, residential, and office that can promote stability and/or revitalization of the neighborhood through redevelopment or re-use actions. The District is broken down into three sub-districts - Low Intensity (X-1), Medium Intensity (X-2), and North Crossings (X-3) - based on their level of intensity and specific goals as described in the Land Use Plan (see Section IV). A recommended outline of these three new districts is further outlined in **Appendix A**.

A **site plan review** process should be included as part of the “X” District. A Site Plan review process should be established by ordinance to authorize review of building and site development on individual properties within designated “design districts”. The program should establish criteria for review and adopt design guidelines. Site plan review, at a

minimum, shall be conducted by the Planning Director or designee(s) to ensure conformance with the site design objectives of this Plan in a manner to be established that is procedurally less-intensive than a Planning Commission/City Council review process.

#### **Conservation District Overlay**

**A *conservation district* emphasizing the preservation of pre-World War II residential building characteristics – size, mass, scale, materials, and setbacks – is recommended to be adopted as an overlay zone** with the base single-family zoning district for the geographic area as identified under Housing (Sec. F). All new residential exterior building construction (as defined by being visible from the street) requiring a building permit within the conservation overlay district should be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission for conformance to the residential design guidelines of this Plan or to guidelines that are subsequently adopted for the area. The intent of a conservation district is to promote good design in new construction and educating property owners of appropriate methods to rehabilitate existing housing while at the same time remaining flexible. The guidelines are intended to be just that – specific enough to give guidance, but not too specific as to become infeasible or stifling creativity that benefits the neighborhood’s long-term revitalization objectives. It should be the responsibility of the Landmarks Commission to establish a fair and reasonable review procedure without undermining long-term revitalization objectives.

#### **Open Space District**

A new open space zoning district is recommended to be adopted to identify and protect public, or potential public, park space, greenways, recreational space, environmental preserves, floodways, trails and other designated open space from non-open space or incompatible development.

### **B. TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT**

Tax increment financing (TIF) is a statutory procedure available to cities in Kansas to encourage the redevelopment of certain designated areas. Cities may coordinate with non-governmental developers to undertake redevelopment projects in areas that meet statutory criteria of being in a defined “blighted” or “conservation” area. Financing is available from the proceeds of bonds to be issued by the city. Such bonds are primarily secured by the incremental increase in property valuation, franchise fees, and sales taxes within the redevelopment district. The theory of tax increment financing is that by encouraging redevelopment projects, assessed property values will increase which are in turn captured and put back into the project to pay for public improvements within the project area.

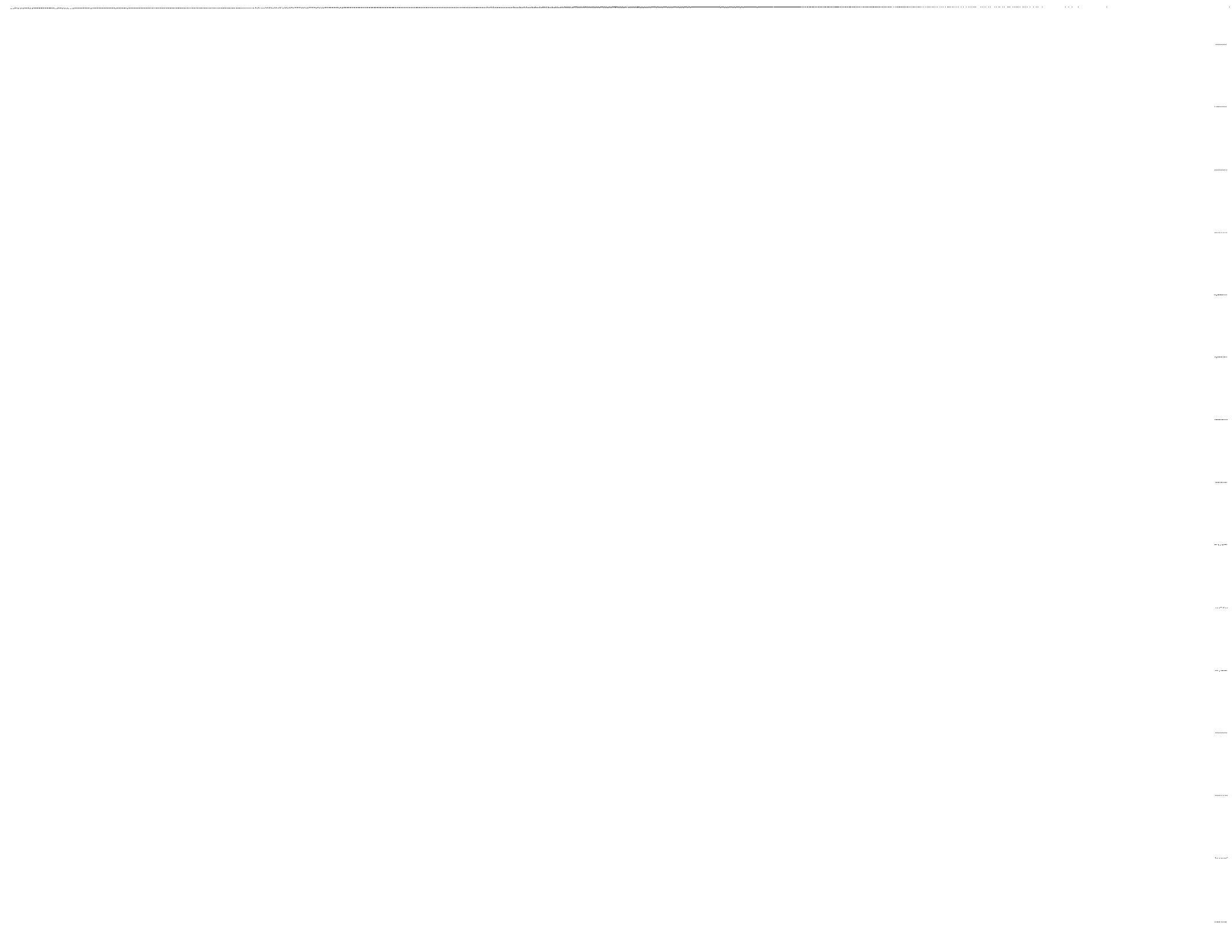


## Map #16



Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan





**A TIF district should be established to facilitate the proposed redevelopment and rehabilitation efforts within the North Crossings area.** Establishment of a TIF district would enable the city to use bond proceeds to fund infrastructure improvements and key property acquisitions/relocations. These up-front costs are crucial to private developers who do not have the funding necessary for these capital investments. The project generates tax revenue to pay for the infrastructure improvements over the term of the bond – in theory, it pays for itself if the project is successful in the long-term. Proceeds from TIF district bonds could ultimately help fund the following:

- Property acquisition of strategic properties for public use: parking, pedestrian overpass, park/open space, plazas, etc.
- Property acquisition of strategic properties for development in conjunction with a private developer
- Relocation of businesses/residents affected
- Streetscaping (decorative lighting, signage, sidewalks, benches, trees/plantings, etc.)
- Site preparation, demolition
- Infrastructure improvements (roads, drainage, water/sewer, etc.)

The boundaries of the TIF district should initially include everything east of Van Buren Street and north of the Union Pacific rail line in the North Crossings district with potential expansion of the district to the riverfront and west of Van Buren Street in the future. A TIF district should be established in conjunction with selection of a preferred developer(s) for the North Crossings entertainment district or the establishment of a redevelopment authority.

## **C. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

A series of capital improvements, or physical infrastructure upgrades that typically come at the cost of local government, are necessary to implement portions of this Plan. No special tax assessment districts are recommended to fund any of these improvements except for the creation of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district within the North Crossings entertainment district as noted above. Potential major capital improvements of the plan would include:

- Repair, replacement, and redesign of Topeka Boulevard Bridge to include an I-70 interchange and access to the riverfront
- Installation of streetscape improvements for N. Kansas Avenue (800-900 blocks Phase I) and side streets

- Repairs necessary to Kansas River levee system to maintain 100-year flood protection
- Pedestrian overpass linking entertainment district and Great Overland Station
- Covered farmers market facility
- Public plaza north of the Great Overland Station
- Replacement of identified water lines to eradicate “red water” problems
- Installation of curb/gutter/sidewalk improvements in residential areas
- Stormwater drainage improvements
- Development of a Railroad Days festival park south of the Great Overland Station to the waterfront
- Levee trail improvements for recreation
- Public parking lots and pedestrian linkages to N. Kansas Avenue
- Sardou Park recreation/nature trail development
- Sardou Bridge access ramp to Little Russia and closing of Gordon Street rail crossing
- Norris Street extension to Gordon, Curtis Street extension to Gordon, or Kansas Avenue Bridge ramp to Curtis
- Installation of truck calming devices on N. Kansas Avenue and NE Monroe and NE Madison

#### **D. INCENTIVES**

A series of financial incentive programs are recommended to provide a “carrot” for desirous implementation of building rehabilitation standards and new investment as outlined in the Revitalization and Development Strategy section. Those incentive programs would include:

**Conservation Rehab Program** – This new program would provide financial and design assistance to homeowners who are restoring/repairing the exteriors of dwelling units or for affordable new construction infill housing projects within the targeted Conservation Areas that conform to adopted design guidelines of the Plan. The funding could help cover the costs of design guideline-related improvements.

**Storefront Façade Rehab Program** – This new program would provide financial and design assistance to commercial property owners on N. Kansas Avenue who undertake façade restorations in conformance with the adopted design guidelines of the Plan. It is recommended that this program be modeled after similar programs associated with the Kansas Main Street program which also provides in-kind architectural design assistance to business/property owners.

**Loft Housing Program** – This new program would be a companion to the storefront façade program. Its focus would be facilitating repair of existing buildings for above-storefront housing units. This program would expedite development of loft units through the building permit process and potentially offer financial assistance as appropriate to overcome ADA or other building code requirements.

**Neighborhood Revitalization Program** – This existing program offers property tax rebates up to 95% on the post-renovation or construction value of residential buildings that increase the property value by 5% or more. Single-family dwellings, new or existing, that are owner-occupied within the Planning Area are eligible for this credit. No renter-occupied dwelling or multi-family dwellings are currently eligible. Commercial and industrial properties located within the Plan's Focus Area generally south of Morse Street are eligible for the rebate if they increase the property value by 15% or more. *It is recommended that this program be extended to multi-family dwellings and loft apartment rehabilitation projects within the North Crossings area and should be tied to adopted design guidelines.* Note: Under current program guidelines, the NRP incentive cannot be utilized in a TIF district.

**Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA)** – It is recommended that the City submit an application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for inclusion of the Planning Area as an NRSA. This designation by HUD would allow the City to expend Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) with fewer restrictions in support of the Plan while also promoting mixed-income housing development. The public service cap for CDBG funds would also be eliminated allowing additional investment in this area for social or youth programs.

**Historic Preservation Income Tax Credit Program (Federal)** – This existing program applies to structures within an approved or eligible National Register Historic District or that are designated or eligible for listing on the National Register. This is a federal income tax credit up to 20% of the renovation costs needed to rehab the building.

**Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Tax Credit (pending Federal)** – If this program is approved by Congress, it would make owner-occupied residential structures that are on local registers eligible for an income tax credit up to 20% of renovation costs (\$40,000 credit max). The credit could be transferred to a first-time homeowner who lives in a home for 5 years as a primary residence or could be transferred to a mortgage lender to buy down their interest rate. This underscores the importance of implementing Topeka's local preservation program to take advantage of this potential program.

## E. ORGANIZATION

A local community-based organization is recommended to help implement housing and commercial development improvements for Historic North Topeka. It is envisioned that this organization would oversee creation of new incentive programs for the Focus Area, represent community interests in overseeing implementation of the plan, and become an active partner in the redevelopment process representing the community. For example, a landbanking program could be established to acquire property that can be marketed to private/non-profit housing developers for in-fill housing development. Likewise, they could maintain key buildings preventing them from falling into disrepair and marketing them to private buyers or new businesses. It is not the recommendation of this Plan to necessarily create a new entity for this purpose, but rather to use an existing or combination of existing organizations to take responsibility for further implementation of the recommendations of the Plan. Currently, NOTOMA would be the most appropriate group to organize these efforts.

There is a particular need to **form a group or sub-group that does nothing but focus on N. Kansas Avenue** issues. Any commercial district, be it neighborhood or regional serving, must have a merchants or property owner association that can be advocates for their own cause. Outside investors will also look favorably upon the district if they know in advance there is a group working on their behalf. The North Topeka Business Alliance would be a logical entity to form a sub-group to begin the implementation of the Plan for N. Kansas Avenue including marketing, recruitment, streetscape improvements, and new incentive programs. This group should form a working relationship with Downtown Topeka, Inc. (DTI) so that the North Crossings area can be looked upon as the northern anchor of downtown. As a member of the Downtown Development Association, training is also available on a quarterly basis involving retailing, marketing, organization, and design issues.

**A business improvement district (BID) for N. Kansas Avenue is not recommended at this time.** Based on similar experiences in other "Main Street" communities, creation of such a district to help finance a variety of public improvement projects and services has tended to divert a district of its focus and stifle initial momentum. However, a BID should be kept as an option to help finance a special project that would benefit everybody such as the streetscape improvements. If property owners support such an idea, it could be used as a match with city-wide CIP funding or other grants and be "sunset" after 1-2 years depending on the amount needed.



## **F. PHASING**

**Action Steps** – Adopt plan, downzoning/rezoning, organization of landbanking trust

**Initial Phase** – N. Kansas Avenue facades and streetscapes, Great Overland Station, and in-fill housing in Focus Area

**Secondary Phase** – Riverfront development, entertainment district expansion

(See Implementation Agenda Summary)

# IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA SUMMARY

ACTIONS	Responsibility (Funding, if any)	Years			
		1	2	3	4
Comprehensive Plan Amendment	Metro Planning				
Downzoning	Metro Planning				
New Mixed-Use Zoning Districts/Rezoning	Metro Planning				
New Open Space Zoning District/Rezoning	Metro Planning				
Conservation Overlay District	Metro Planning				
Site Plan Review Procedure	Metro Planning				
Establish Tax Increment Finance District	Metro Planning	in conjunction w/ developer(s)			
Environmental Audit (Phase 1-2)	(EPA Grant)				
Historic Resources Inventory	Landmarks Commission (State Historical Society)				
Develop Computer Animation Model w/ Downtown	Metro Planning/DTI/Railroad Days				
Complete Great Overland Station Phase II Site Work	Railroad Days				
Signage/Wayfinding Program	Railroad Days/Business Alliance/Public Works				
Market Development Potential	City, Non-Profit				
Market Events	Non-Profit, City				
Organize Landbanking Trust	Non-Profit				
Partner w/ DTI, form Kansas Avenue sub-group	Non-Profit/DTI				

# IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA SUMMARY

Improvements	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Years			
			1-2	3-5	5-10	10-15
<b>Access</b>						
<b>Topeka Blvd. Bridge (w/out interchange)</b>	\$ 46,000,000	CIP				
replace superstructure (standard)	\$ 43,000,000					
access ramp to northern waterfront	\$ 3,000,000					
<b>I-70/Topeka Blvd. Interchange</b>	\$ 20,000,000	Fed/State/Local				
<b>Pedestrian Overpass/Parking Lot</b>	\$ 1,161,000	EA-21 (Enhance)/TIF/HUD EDI Brownfields				
construction of overpass/view platform	\$ 600,000					
property acquisition	\$ 161,000					
relocation	\$ 100,000					
parking lot/berming (100 spaces @ \$3,000/space)	\$ 300,000					
<b>Ped. Link - Kansas Ave bridge to levee trail</b>	\$ 100,000	TEA-21 (TSCP)				
<b>Sardou Bridge Ramp/Gordon St. closing</b>	\$ 873,000	CIP/State/Union Pacific				
City share	\$ 373,000					
<b>Ferry or Extension of Trolley System</b>						
<b>Heavy Truck Routing (* = choose 1)</b>						
<b>Curtis Street Extension*</b>	\$ 352,000	CIP/Private				
construction @ \$200/ft.	\$ 270,000					
right of way/demolition	\$ 50,000					
contingencies @ 10%	\$ 32,000					
<b>Norris Street Extension*</b>	\$ 374,000	CIP/Private				
construction @ \$200/ft.	\$ 316,000					
right of way	\$ 24,000					
contingencies @ 10%	\$ 34,000					
<b>Kansas Avenue Bridge truck ramp*</b>	\$ 1,800,000	CIP/Private				
construction @ \$3,000/ft.	\$ 1,800,000					
<b>Traffic Calming Devices</b>	\$ 35,000	CIP				

# IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA SUMMARY

Improvements	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Years			
			1-2	3-5	5-10	10-15
2 cul-de-sacs @ \$190/ft. + r-o-w	\$ 35,000					
<b>Water/Sewer/Flood Protection</b>						
Water main replacements ("red water")	\$ 1,048,500	CIP (Water RB/GIF)				
<b>Stormwater Improvements</b>	\$ 3,500,000	CIP (Storm RB)				
Replace Pump Station (Fairchild)	\$ 2,000,000					
Replace Storm Sewers (Fairchild)	\$ 1,500,000					
<b>Levee Raise - 3 ft. (No. Topeka Unit)</b>	\$ 8,021,000	Feds				
1-foot	\$ 2,059,000					
2-foot	\$ 5,867,000					
3-foot	\$ 8,021,000					
<b>Sidewalks and Curbing</b>						
Sidewalk/Curb/Gutter (Target Area)	\$ 500,000	CIP/CDBG/TIF				
11,000 feet @ \$190/linear foot	\$ 2,090,000	CIP/CDBG/TIF				
<b>Sidewalks</b>	\$ 404,200	CIP/CDBG/TIF				
4,300 feet @ \$94		CIP/CDBG/TIF				
<b>Curb/Gutter</b>	\$ 240,000	CIP/CDBG/TIF				
2,500 ft. @ \$96/linear foot						
<b>Parking</b>						
<b>Gordon Street/Entertainment Anchor</b>	\$ 1,400,000	TIF	in conjunction with entertain. anchor			
400 spaces of surface @ \$2,500/space	\$ 1,000,000					
property acquisition	\$ 300,000					
relocation	\$ 100,000					
<b>Quincy/Laurent half-block</b>	\$ -	Gen. Fund - operations	or in conjunction w/ farmers market			
200 spaces restriped						
relocation of Veterans Park						
<b>Quincy/Gordon half-block</b>	\$ 900,000	TIF				

# IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA SUMMARY

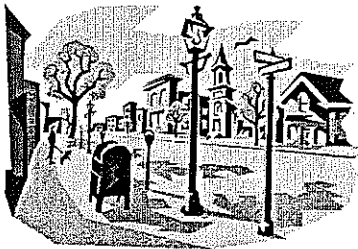
Improvements	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Years			
			1-2	3-5	5-10	10-15
200 spaces of surface @ \$2,500/space	\$ 500,000					
property acquisition	\$ 400,000					
<b>N. Kansas Avenue Mini-Lot</b>	\$ 59,000	TIF				
15-20 spaces of surface @ \$3,000/space	\$ 50,000					
property acquisition (vacant lot)	\$ 9,000					
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>						
<b>Farmers Market Facility (13,000 sq. ft.)</b>	\$ 500,000	CIP				
<b>Levee Trail</b>	\$ 1,375,000	TEA-21 (Enhancement)/CIP				
1.3 mile @ \$750,000/mile	\$ 975,000					
0.4 mile @ \$1,000,000/mil	\$ 400,000					
<b>Sardou Park recreation/nature trail</b>		CIP/Private				
<b>Railroad Days Festival Park</b>		HUD EDI Brownfields/TIF/EPA				
property acquisition (non-UP)		City Parks Forum (APA/Lila Wallace Fund)				
<b>Heritage Walk</b>		TEA-21 (TSCP)				
<b>Pocket Park (link parking lot to Kansas Ave)</b>	\$ 20,000	CDBG				
<b>Completion of Charles Curtis Greenway</b>		CIP/CDBG/Private	as opportunities arise			
<b>Streetscapes</b>						
<b>N. Kansas Avenue</b>	\$ 640,000	CIP/TIF/BID				
Kansas Avenue (Gordon to Norris)	\$ 250,000					
Laurent Street (Kansas to Jackson)	\$ 100,000					
2 traffic signals replaced	\$ 240,000					
Overhead Entry Sign	\$ 50,000					
<b>Storefront Façade Program (Pilot)</b>	\$ 57,500	KDOCH/CDBG/BID/NOTOMA/Private				



# IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA SUMMARY

Improvements	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources	Years			
			1-2	3-5	5-10	10-15
<b>Gateways</b>	\$ 45,000	CIP/CDBG				
Quincy/Laurent	\$ 15,000					
Quincy/Gordon	\$ 15,000					
Topeka/Gordon	\$ 15,000					
<b>Housing</b>						
In-fill/Rehab Project #1	\$ 400,000	CDBG/HOME/LIHTC/Banks				
In-fill/Rehab Project #2	\$ 400,000	CDBG/HOME/LIHTC/Banks				
In-fill/Rehab Project #3	\$ 400,000	CDBG/HOME/LIHTC/Banks				
Loft Housing Pilot	\$ 40,000	CDBG				
Conservation Rehab Program	\$ 100,000	CDBG				
<b>Other</b>						
Consolidation of Fire Station #1		Fire - Operations				

# APPENDIX





## Appendix A

### Draft Outline of Mixed Use Zoning District (X)

- Permitted Uses** a) Any use which is not hereafter listed as a permitted use in this zone district but which was permitted for a specific parcel of property pursuant to zone district regulations in effect for such parcel and which physically existed upon such parcel prior to the enactment of the HNT District.
- b) The following uses should be permitted by corresponding zoning district as indicated below subject to administrative approval (☆), Planning Commission/City Council approval (⊕), or not permitted (np). Administrative approval should consist of a ministerial action involving granting of a building permit or other administrative review procedure involving Planning Director approval.

Land Use	X-1 (Low)	X-2 (Medium)	X-3 (Crossings)
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>			
Single-family dwellings	☆	☆	☆
Two-, Three-, and Four-family dwellings	☆	☆	☆
Multi-family dwellings	np	⊕	⊕
Group homes	⊕	⊕	np
Mixed-use dwelling units	☆	☆	☆
Boarding and rooming houses	np	⊕	np
Crisis centers	np	⊕	np
Residential design manufactured home	☆	☆	☆
Mobile homes (single lot)	np	☆	np
<b>INSTITUTIONAL/CIVIC/PUBLIC</b>			
Churches, places of worship or assembly	☆	⊕	⊕
Schools	⊕	⊕	⊕
Community facilities	☆	☆	☆
Conference/convention center	np	⊕	⊕
Public use facilities	⊕	⊕	⊕
Parks, recreation, and open space	☆	☆	☆
Residential care facility type I	☆	np	np
Residential care facility type II	⊕	np	np
Transportation facilities	⊕	☆	np

## Appendix A

<b>COMMERCIAL/RETAIL</b>			
Amusement - indoors	★	np	☆
Amusement parks	np	★	★
Artisan, photog. galleries studios	☆	☆	☆
Automobile service station Type I	☆	☆	☆
Automobile service station Type II	★	☆	np
Automobile service station Type III	np	★	np
Bars and taverns	★	★	☆
Bed and breakfast establishments	☆	np	☆
Child care centers	☆	☆	☆
Clubs and lodges	☆	☆	☆
Entertainment facilities/theatres (non-adult)	★	★	☆
Farmers markets	★	★	☆
Funeral homes	☆	☆	np
Health clubs	☆	☆	☆
Hotel, Motel	np	★	★
Night Clubs	np	★	★
Motor vehicle sales (size restrictions)	★	☆	np
Offices, financial services, medical clinics	☆	☆	☆
Parking lots/garages (principle use)	★	☆	★
Recreation - Indoor	☆	☆	☆
Restaurants	☆	☆	☆
Retail establishments	☆	☆	☆
Retail establishments (large)	★	★	★
Service shops – personal/business	☆	☆	☆
Supermarkets	★	☆	np
Veterinary facilities/small animal clinics	★	★	np
<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>			
Assembly without fabrication	np	☆	★
Communication towers	np	★	np
Fabrication of products allowed under "I-1"	np	☆	np
Equipment/product storage – outdoor	np	☆	★
Printing and distribution	np	☆	np
Research and development	★	☆	★



## Appendix A

Warehousing	np	☆	★
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- c) Not more than two (2) of the following uses may be established, operated, or maintained within one thousand (1,000) feet of each other: billiard parlor, amusement center, or tattoo studio.
- d) Any permitted industrial use operating on a lot 25,000 square feet or more and/or operating between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. should require a conditional use permit.
- e) Expansion of legal non-conforming uses and/or structures is prohibited unless a determination of "no adverse impact" is obtained based on the following:
  - the intensity of development on the site of the proposed expansion will not increase by more than 10%.
  - the expansion will not result in a reduction of acceptable levels of off-street parking, lot coverage ratio, landscaping, or signage,
  - the expansion will not result in an increase of noise, odor, traffic, light, or dust incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood and/or uses,
  - conditions of an approved site plan have been met,
  - it is consistent with any redevelopment plan for the area

**Site Standards** a) All new buildings or additions to existing buildings greater than 25,000 square feet in floor area shall be subject to Planning Commission/City Council review.

b) Dimensional standards are set forth on the chart below:

Site Feature	HNT-1	HNT-2	HNT-3
Minimum lot size	10,000	10,000	None
Minimum lot width	TBD	TBD	TBD
Maximum building coverage	TBD	TBD	TBD
Maximum FAR	TBD	TBD	TBD

## Appendix A

Maximum Front Yard Setback	TBD	TBD	TBD
Maximum Rear Yard Setback	TBD	TBD	TBD
Maximum Side Yard Setback	TBD	TBD	TBD
Maximum building height	40'	60'	GOS roof

### Design Standards

- a) All new construction, development, or substantial reconstruction within the X-1 and X-3 mixed-use districts, or within X-2 mixed-use district adjacent to residential uses, shall be subject to **site plan review** requirements for consistency with applicable design guidelines adopted for the area or at a minimum, the following:
- *Setbacks, Massing, and Form* – Setbacks shall be minimized within traditional neighborhood settings so as to reflect existing setbacks of buildings on block or facing block. Massing and form of building shall also be compatible with buildings on block or facing block.
  - *Parking* – Parking lots shall not dominate the frontage of pedestrian-oriented streets, image streets/areas, and gateways or conflict with pedestrian crossings. Parking lots should incorporate landscaping with CPTED-elements. Parking lots within pedestrian-oriented districts should include shade-type plantings.
  - *Facades* – Blank walls in excess of 50 feet should be avoided. Buildings with multiple storefronts should be unified in character and compatible with any upper floors.
  - *Outdoor activity* – Buildings should accommodate outdoor activity with balconies, arcades, terraces, decks and courtyards for resident's and workers' use and interaction to the extent reasonably feasible.
  - *Outdoor cafes* – Restaurants shall be encouraged to operate outdoor cafes on sidewalks, and other public right-of-way or courtyards provided that pedestrian circulation and access to store entrances is not impaired, the space is well-kept, and street furniture/coverings are compatible with architectural character of the building/block.
  - *Windows* – Ground floor retail, service and restaurant uses shall have large pane display windows.
  - *Storage* – Any open storage visible from the street and within or adjacent to residential districts, identified image areas, or North Crossings district should be adequately screened to substantially reduce visual impact by fencing, landscaping, or other appropriate means.

## Appendix A

- b) All new development, substantial reconstruction and/or exterior renovations within or adjacent to North Crossings district (X-3) shall be reasonably consistent with adopted design guidelines for that district.

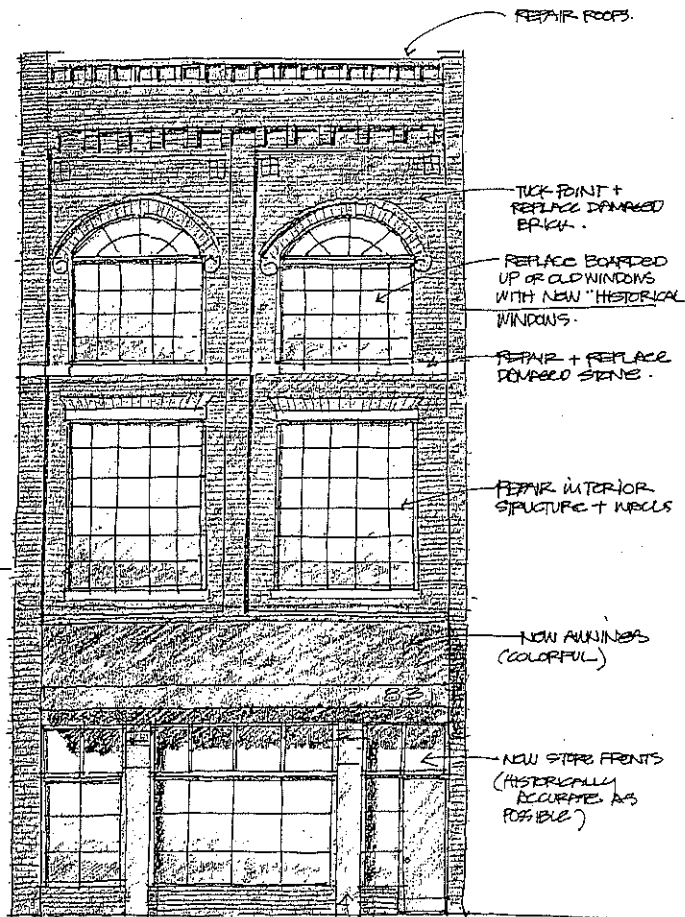
### Parking

- a) Residential dwellings: 1 space per dwelling unit
- b) Private clubs, drinking establishments, and restaurants +50% of gross income in food sales: 1 space per 4 occupants permitted
- c) Private clubs, drinking establishments, and restaurants +50% of gross income in alcoholic or cereal malt beverage sales: 1 space per 3 occupants permitted
- d) Retail and office uses: 1 space per 300 square feet of floor area
- e) Industrial uses: 1 space per 1,000 square feet of floor area

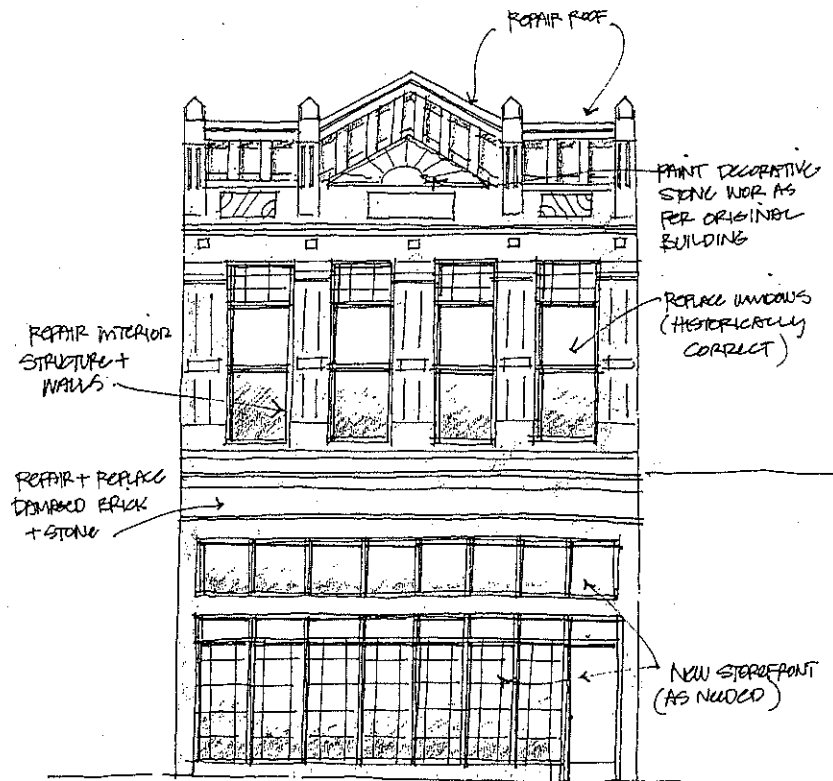
A special parking district may be established to factor in public parking and off street parking spaces. The intent of parking regulations in the X-3 district should be to minimize off-street requirements within an established urban commercial district.



# APPENDIX "B" N. KANSAS AVE. FACADE IMPROVEMENT EXAMPLES

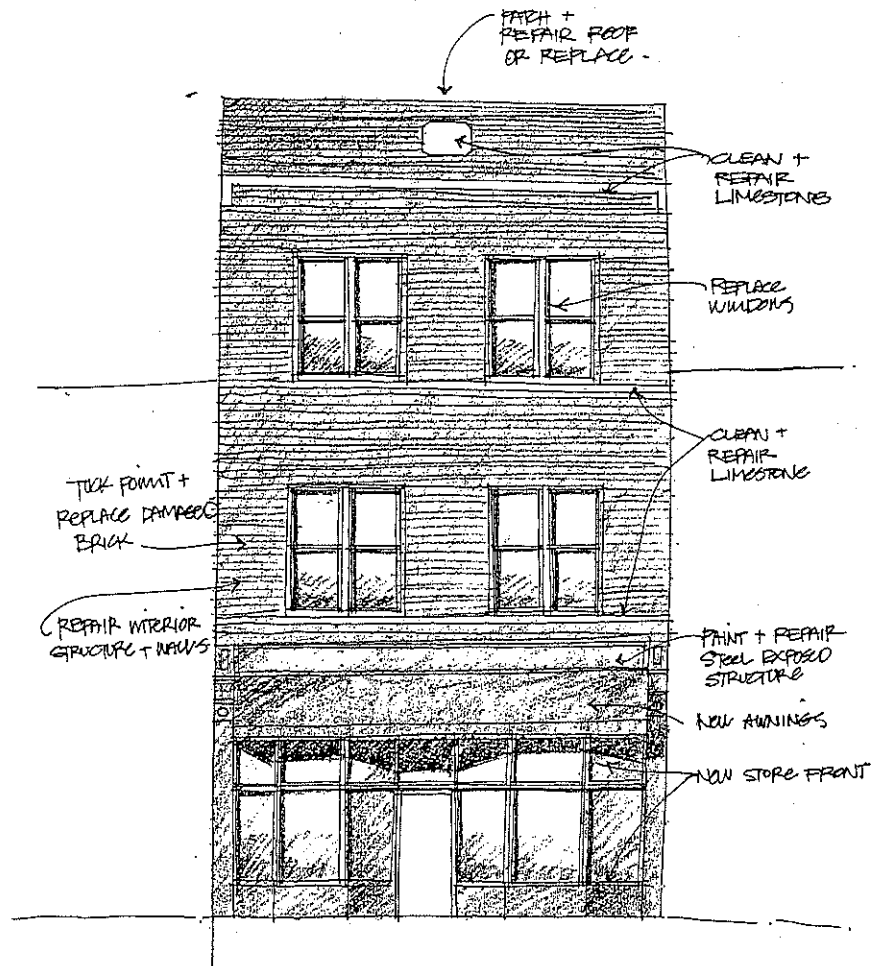


TOPEKA REVITALIZATION  
FACADE STUDY  
BIBB/LANDPLAN  
10 MAY 99.

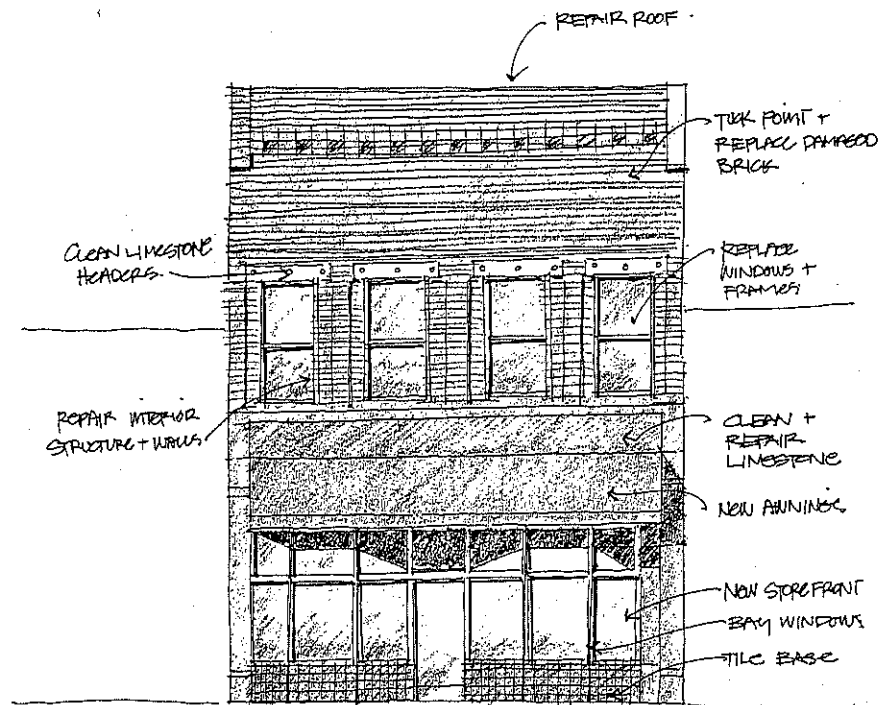


TOPEKA REVITALIZATION  
FACADE STUDY  
BIBB/LANDPLAN  
10 MAY 99.





TORONTO REVITALISATION  
FACADE STUDY  
EIBB LANDPLAN  
10 MAY 99.



TORONTO REVITALISATION  
FACADE STUDY  
EIBB LANDPLAN  
10 MAY 99.

## Appendix C

### Stakeholder Organization Interviews

- *BRB Contractors*
- *Cargill*
- *City of Topeka, Department of Parks and Recreation*
- *City of Topeka, Department of Public Works*
- *Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing (Main Street Program)*
- *Kaw Valley State Bank and Trust*
- *North Topeka East NIA*
- *North Topeka on the Move Association*
- *North Topeka Wesleyan Church*
- *North Topeka West NIA*
- *Robuck Watch and Repair*
- *Schmidt Builders Supply*
- *Topeka Railroad Days*
- *Topeka Rescue Mission*
- *U. S. Army Corps of Engineers*
- *Union Pacific Railroad*
- *Weed and Seed Program*
- *Whiteley's Pallet and Blocking*



## Appendix D

### Criteria Used to Evaluate Structural Defects

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

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

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

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

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

- Holes, open cracks, rotted or missing material in foundations, walls, roofing, porches, columns, etc.

## Appendix D

- Sagging or leaning of any portion of house indicating insufficient load bearing capacity: foundation, walls, porches, chimneys.
- Defective conditions caused by storms, fires, floods, or land settlements.
- Inadequate or poor quality material not used in permanent construction.
- Inadequate conversion for use involved.
- Major deteriorated or dilapidated out building or garage.
- Evidence of a lack of, or inadequate, indoor plumbing such as no roof vents.

### **CATEGORY**

### **DEFINITION**

#### **Buildings/Properties**

##### **Minor Deficiencies (Sound)**

No major defects with no more than 1 intermediate defect and less than 5 minor defects. (3 points)

##### **Intermediate Deficiencies (Fair)**

No major defects with 2 or more intermediate defects; no major defects with 1 intermediate defect and 5 or more minor defects. (2 points)

##### **Major Deficiencies (Disrepair or Dilapidated)**

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

#### **Blocks**

##### **Sound**

Average 3.0 – 2.3 points per block

##### **Minor Deterioration**

Average 2.2 – 2.0 points per block

##### **Intermediate Deterioration**

Average 1.9 – 1.7 points per block

##### **Major Deterioration**

Average less than 1.6 points per block



## *Appendix E*

### *Housing Conditions - Focus Area*

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Major Deterioration</i>		<i>Intermediate Deterioration</i>		<i>Sound</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Properties</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Properties</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Properties</i>	<i>Percent</i>	
<i>Mobile Home Court</i>			3	75.0%	1	25.0%	4
<i>Mobile Home Site</i>	3	18.8%	5	31.3%	8	50.0%	16
<i>Residential - Multi Family</i>	6	50.0%	4	33.3%	2	16.7%	12
<i>Residential - Single Family</i>	158	52.3%	77	25.5%	67	22.2%	302
<i>Residential - Two Family</i>	9	45.0%	9	45.0%	2	10.0%	20
<b><i>Grand Total</i></b>	176	49.7%	98	27.7%	80	22.6%	354

## *Appendix E*

### *Housing Density - Focus Area*

<i>Housing Type</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Units Per Acre</i>
<i>Mobile Home Court</i>	17	4.0%	1.7	10.3
<i>Mobile Home Site</i>	16	3.7%	3.2	5.0
<i>Residential - Multi Family</i>	55	12.8%	2.3	23.6
<i>Residential - Single Family</i>	302	70.2%	50.7	6.0
<i>Residential - Two Family</i>	40	9.3%	4.1	9.6
<i>Net Density</i>	430		62.1	6.9
<i>Total Acres With ROW</i>			348.4	
<i>Gross Density</i>				1.2

## *Appendix E*

### *Housing Tenure - Focus Area*

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Owner Occupied Units</i>		<i>Renter Occupied Units</i>		<i>Vacant Units</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Units</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Percent</i>	
<i>Mobile Home Court</i>	0	0.0%	15	88.2%	2	11.8%	17
<i>Mobile Home Site</i>	3	18.8%	12	75.0%	1	6.3%	16
<i>Residential - Multi Family</i>	2	3.6%	52	94.5%	1	1.8%	55
<i>Residential - Single Family</i>	109	36.1%	174	57.6%	19	6.3%	302
<i>Residential - Two Family</i>	3	7.5%	33	82.5%	4	10.0%	40
<b><i>Grand Total</i></b>	<b>117</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>430</b>

*Source: Shawnee County Appraiser Office and Topeka - Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department Survey, 1998*

*Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan*

## *Appendix E*

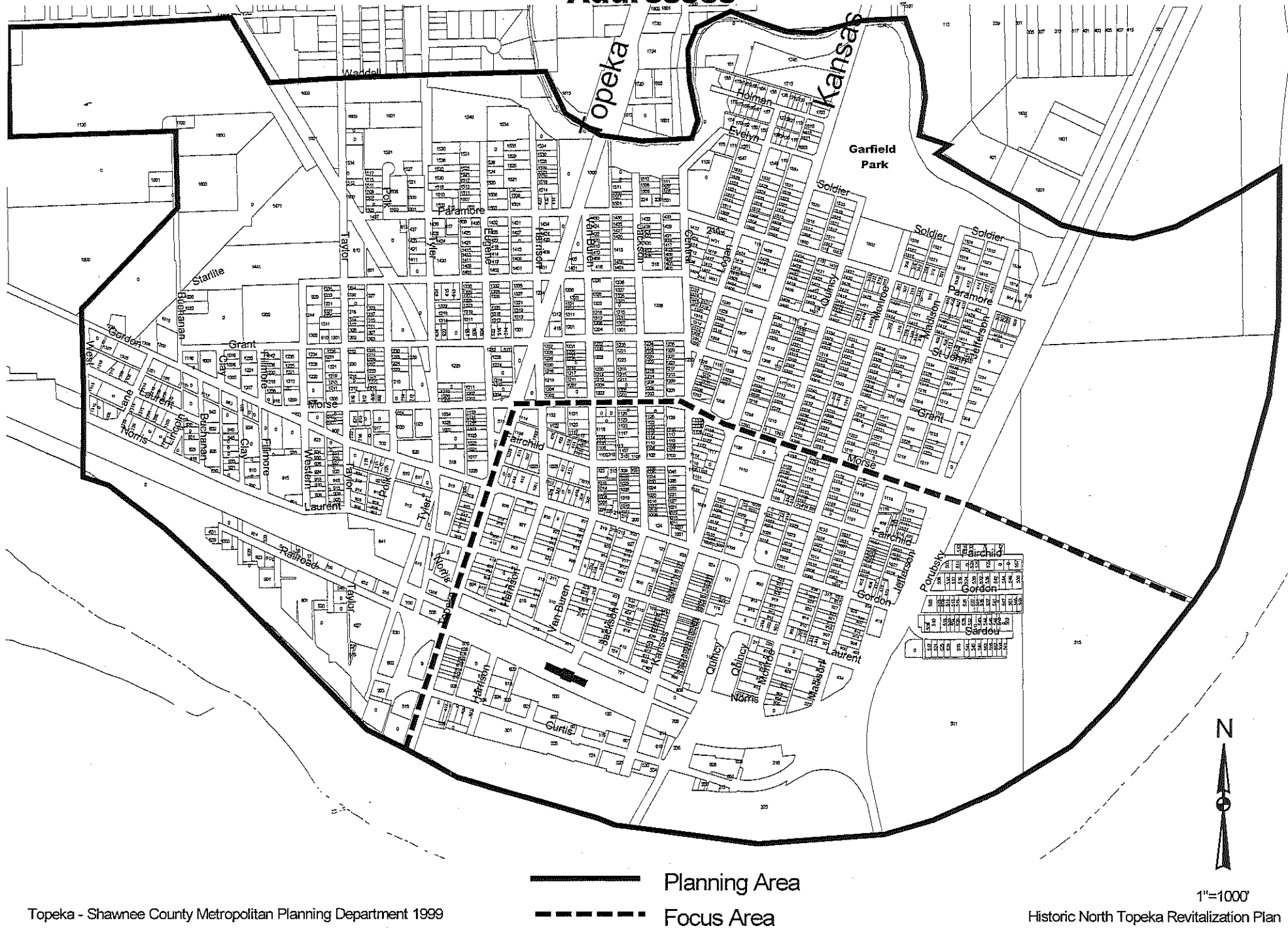
### *Land Use - Focus Area*

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Parcels</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Industrial</i>	39	6.3%	54.7	22.4%
<i>Open Space</i>	5	0.8%	54.1	22.1%
<i>Residential - Single Family</i>	303	49.3%	50.8	20.8%
<i>Vacant</i>	92	15.0%	20.2	8.3%
<i>Cultural/Recreational Land</i>	2	0.3%	18.2	7.4%
<i>Commercial</i>	71	11.5%	13.9	5.7%
<i>Institutional</i>	16	2.6%	6.6	2.7%
<i>Office</i>	8	1.3%	4.3	1.8%
<i>Automobile Parking - Open</i>	10	1.6%	4.2	1.7%
<i>Open Storage</i>	10	1.6%	4.2	1.7%
<i>Residential - Two Family</i>	20	3.3%	4.1	1.7%
<i>Mobile Home Site</i>	16	2.6%	3.2	1.3%
<i>Residential - Multi Family</i>	12	2.0%	2.3	1.0%
<i>Residential - Other</i>	6	1.0%	1.7	0.7%
<i>Mobile Home Court</i>	4	0.7%	1.7	0.7%
<i>Commercial - Mixed Use</i>	1	0.2%	0.2	0.1%
<b><i>Grand Total</i></b>	<b>615</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>244.4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

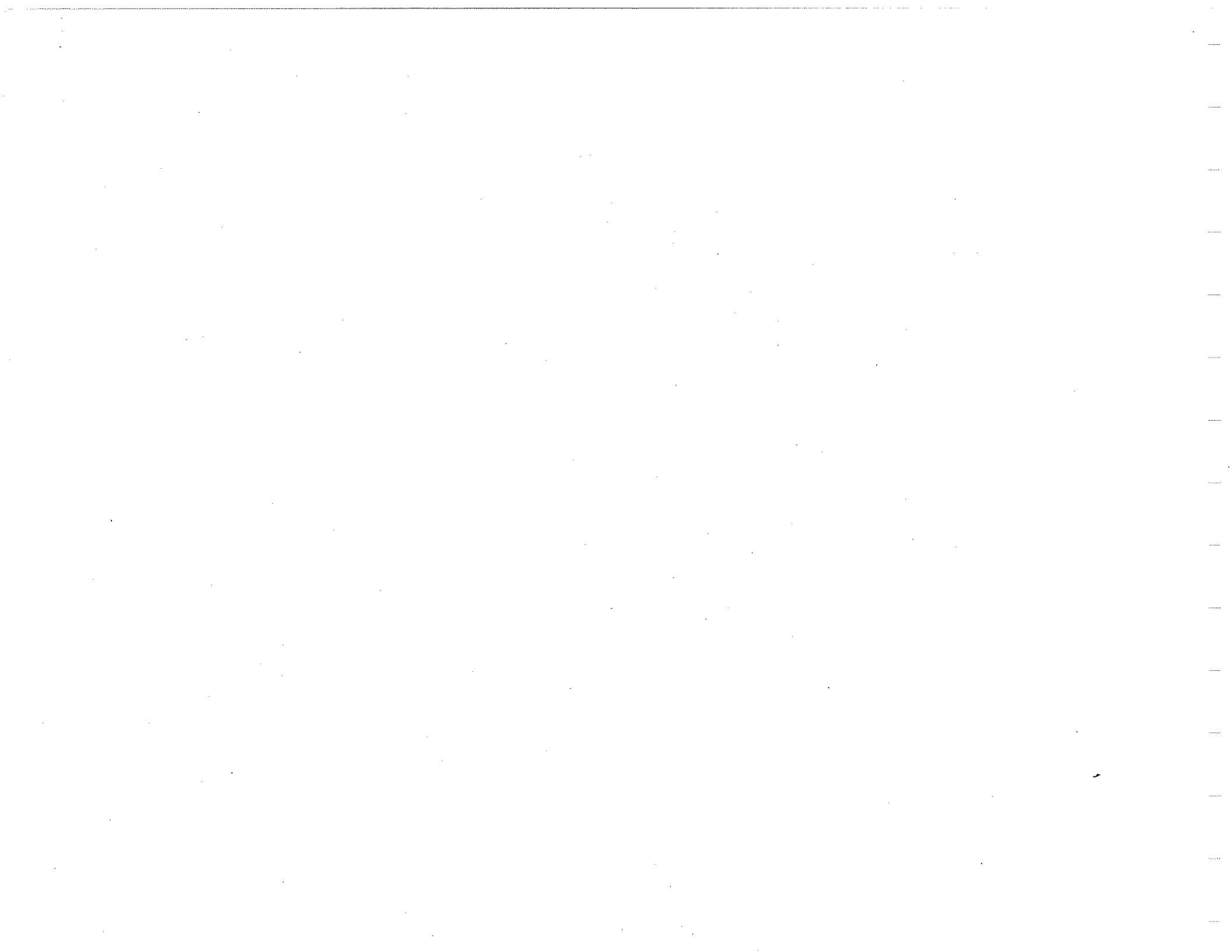
*Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office and Topeka - Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department Survey, 1998*

*Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan*

# Appendix F Addresses







# Appendix G

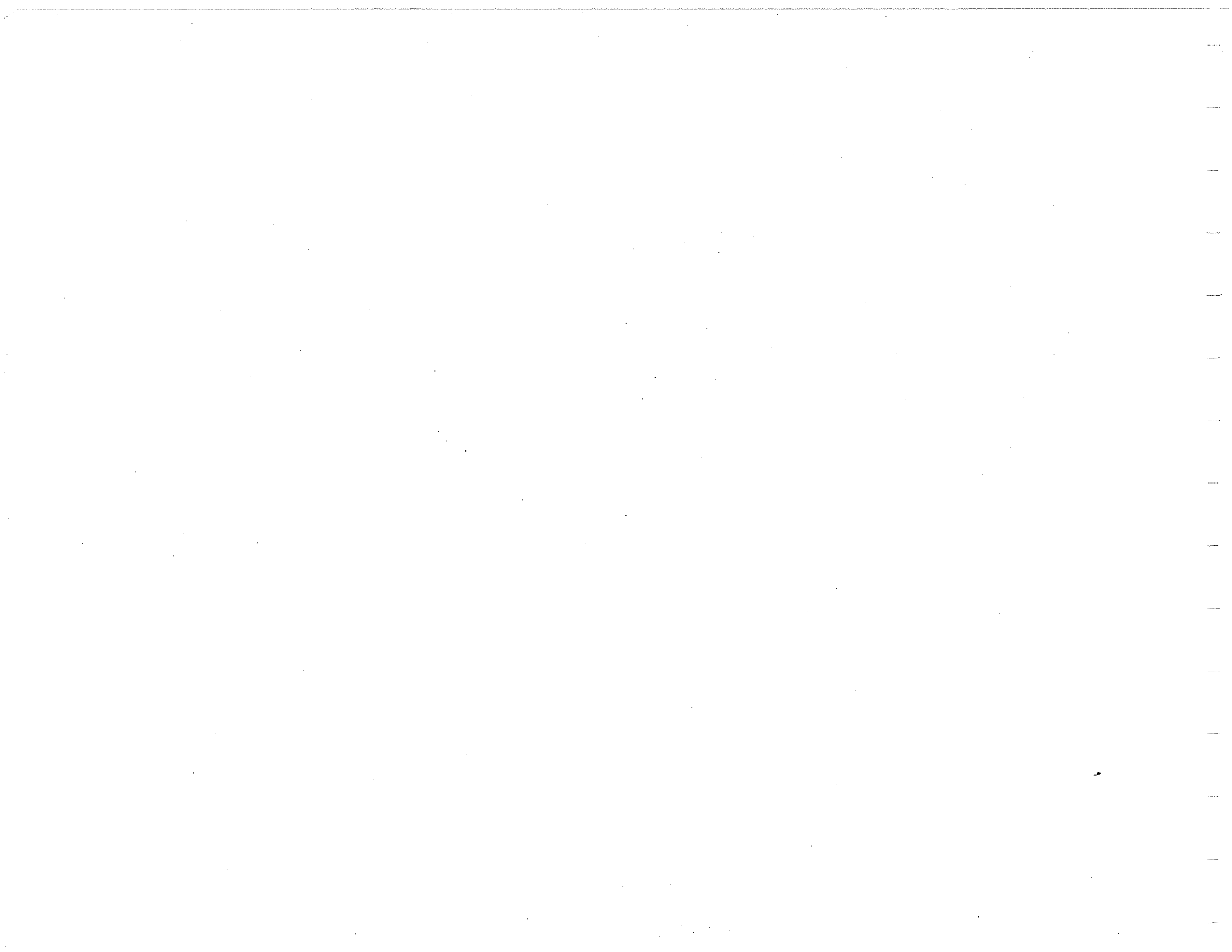
## Aerial



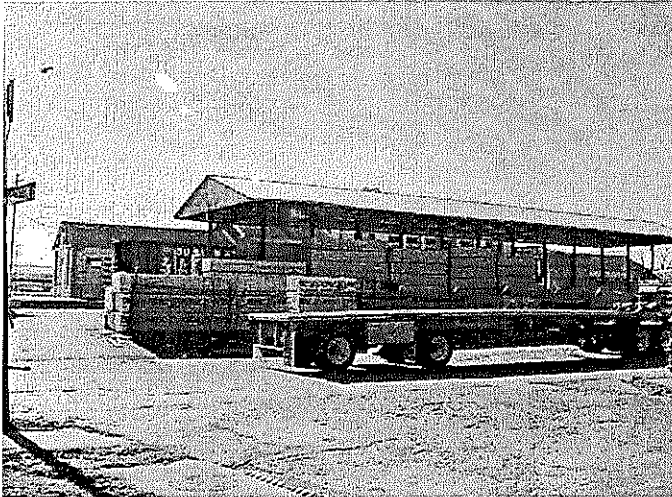
— Planning Area  
- - - Focus Area



1"=1200'



## Appendix H Pictures



**1. Hidden Focal Point** – views of Great Overland Station blocked by lumberyard



**2. Historic Architecture** – brick Victorian-era house at corner of Harrison and Morse.



**3. Land use conflicts** – industrial equipment storage within residential block



**4. Charles Curtis Greenway** – example of gateway and buffering techniques along Topeka Boulevard

