

2019 Most Endangered List

Once it's gone, it's gone forever.

Kansas City, MO, August 19, 2019 – Historic banks. Corner commercial stores. Old gas stations. Historic apartment buildings. Places we pass by so often we no longer notice. But these places face threats everyday – perhaps more so because we've grown accustomed to seeing them.

That is why HKC manages this list to highlight important historic buildings, districts and landscapes that are in danger due to threat of demolition, poor condition, neglect, alterations, poor maintenance, redevelopment pressures, inappropriate development or insensitive public policy, or lack of funds.

Many historic places throughout the city are endangered. The endangered list is intended to provide a wide exposure for the value and plight of these historic resources, in the hope that interested parties within the community can come together to provide concepts and solutions which will return these assets to a vital use while preserving their historic character.

“The list of Most Endangered Buildings calls attention to threatened one-of-a-kind resources throughout Kansas City and galvanizes the local community to help save them,” said Jim Wanser, president of Historic Kansas City. “We also know that many important places throughout Kansas City remain endangered,” said Lisa Briscoe, executive director of Historic Kansas City. “Buildings that once seemed safely preserved can later confront new, unforeseen threats.”

Two examples of endangered buildings that have recently been saved include the Kemper Arena/Hy-Vee Arena, 1800 Genessee Street and the Hotel Savoy/21C Museum Hotel, 219 W. 9th Street, both of which were recognized for their successful rehabilitation with Preservation Awards this year. The use of the federal/state historic preservation tax credit was an essential factor in making these award-winning projects possible. As you read the 2019 Most Endangered List, note the importance of Historic Tax Credits in the future preservation of these historic Kansas City buildings.

This year's list includes a century-old saddlery & mercantile store, a bank, African-American sites, commercial districts and corridors, modern architecture, and neighborhood commercial nodes. Historic properties are selected for listing based on several criteria; sites must be listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the KC Register of Historic Places, and sites must be subject to a serious threat to their existence or historical, architectural integrity.

The list is based on information publicly available at the time of deliberation and allowing a reasonable interval for preparing the list and publishing it. The list is a call for action by all stakeholders. It follows no prioritization order.

African American Heritage Sites

African American heritage sites are threatened by disinvestment and a lack of comprehensive survey. Example sites include the 18th and Vine Historic District, the Satchel Paige residence, 2626 E. 28th Street (Santa Fe Historic District), damaged by fire; and the Rector Mansion, 2000 E. 12th Street.

18TH AND VINE HISTORIC DISTRICT

THE STORY

Designated as a City of Music by UNESCO, 18th and Vine is internationally recognized as one of the cradles of jazz music. Many notable jazz musicians of the 1930s & 1940s made 18th and Vine their home base, including Count Basie, Charlie Parker and Jay McShann. The City's initial investment in July 2016 covered Phase I of a larger \$27.6 million venture and recognized the importance of rehabbing and energizing one of Kansas City's most important historic districts. The City and the 18th & Vine Development Policy Committee are overseeing multiple projects. City Manager Troy Schulte reported in 2018 that 12 projects had been completed and presented a plan for Phase 2 along with his recommendations for funding. This is a significant step forward in the effort to save the remaining buildings.



Mardi Gras Club, 1600 E. 19th St.

THE THREAT

The Historic District had long suffered from a lack of private investment and building neglect. Recent private investment includes the Zhou B. Arts Center, Attucks School renovation, renovation of the Old City Public Works and Water Buildings, now underway, and restoration of 1819 Vine. But, many buildings remain vacant and/or deteriorating. The **Holy Ghost New Testament Church**, 1815 Paseo, designed by architect Charles M. Williams in 1926. In 2017 the roof was blown off and windows were shattered. A temporary roof is in place. A GoFundMe page to raise money for the church's repairs/restoration was not successful. The **Mardi Gras Club**, 1600 E. 19th St, a portion of a building wall and roof collapsed in 2018 during renovation, the building is now partially restored. City-owned sites are also at risk.

With a new plan in place to guide 18th and Vine's future, now is an important time to urge Kansas City new lawmakers to reinforce the City's commitment to preserve and protect this epicenter of America's musical heritage.

FORMER HOME of SACHEL PAIGE, 2626 E. 28TH STREET

THE STORY

The site is the former home of Satchel Paige a Negro League and Major League Baseball player that was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1971. Satchel Paige was born Leroy Robert Paige. His nickname "Satchel" came from his childhood of toting luggage at the train station. He is known as the best pitcher in baseball history, due to his longevity in the game and the record crowds he drew first in the Negro Leagues, then with Major League Baseball. Satchel Paige died in this house in 1982. The former home of Satchel Paige, built in 1910 was designed by Smith & Bois Architects in the Shirtwaist style and is a contributing property within the Santa Fe Neighborhood Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Former Home - Satchel Paige, 2626 E. 28th St.

THE THREAT

After a fire damaged the house in 2018, a larger collaborative effort between Historic Kansas City, the Santa Fe Area Council, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the City of Kansas City, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, Representative Emanuel Cleaver II and many others endeavored to preserve this historic home and honor the legacy of Satchel Paige in Kansas City's baseball history. An initial emergency grant was awarded to HKC from the Trust to complete a structural assessment and recommend the next steps toward stabilization. In 2019, the Kansas City Homesteading Authority (KCHAS) purchased the home to protect and preserve the structure for future use. HKC, in collaboration with the group, has received a grant of \$134,500 from the National Trust to stabilize the structure. HKC and the group will work with the KCHSA to develop a plan to stabilize the house. As the stabilization proceeds, the group will work with the KCHSA to draft a Request for Proposals for the home's redevelopment to make it a neighborhood asset that celebrates Paige's legacy.

RECTOR MANSION, 2000 E. 12TH STREET

THE STORY

The Rector Mansion is the former home of Sarah Rector, the first black female millionaire, who entertained guests such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Joe Louis and Jack Johnson. As members of the Creek Nation, Rector and her family members each received allotments of 160 acres of land in Oklahoma. By the time Sarah was 12, “a gusher” was discovered on her land, and the young girl became a millionaire. Sarah Rector Campbell Crawford, (ca. 1901-1963 ca.), lived in this American foursquare until the stock market crash in 1929. Over the years, the “Rector Mansion” had several tenants, including the C.K. Kerford Funeral Home and offices for the 12th Street Heritage Development Corporation. The building is still standing but remains vacant.



Rector Mansion, 2000 E. 12th Street

THE THREAT

The house is currently owned by the United Inner City Services, who recently was a finalist for a National Trust African American Cultural Heritage Grant, but found out recently they were not chosen as one of the 20+ recipients. As of right now, their plans are still in the development stages. As reported by Flatland (May 17th, 2019), “Deidre Anderson, the executive director of neighboring United Inner City Services (UICS), wants to make sure it is not forgotten entirely. Anderson is looking for a new beginning with a symbolic splash of color — murals by artist JT Daniels installed on March 22. “Whatever we do, I think the history here needs to be preserved,” Anderson said. “It’s a question of what’s the best way to honor [Rector’s] story and legacy. Anderson said much of the original woodwork is intact, but copper thieves have stolen the wire out of the walls and vandals broke the leaded glass on the front door. Pigeons rule the attic. The cost of potential renovations and the number of possibilities — a cultural center, historical museum, or economic incubator — has led to a project that has been slow to get off the ground.”

HKC recently nominated the Rector Mansion to the National Trust for Historic Preservation as part of their development of a broad strategy for promoting and preserving sites related to women’s history in America. This includes sites directly related to the women’s suffrage movement, as well as other significant sites of women’s achievement and activism. Sara Rector’s story is a relatively untold story of American success and a woman’s prosperity during a time where she faced Reconstruction and slavery, discrimination, and sexism.

It is hoped that this listing will bring new awareness to the plight of these important historic sites and encourage both financial and volunteer investment in African American heritage sites.

Modern Architecture

It’s not easy being a neglected modern building. Design that felt cutting edge several decades ago may still feel too avant-garde to people viewing it today. These buildings are old, but often not felt to be “old enough” to be considered as “historic” and therefore worth saving.” You have experienced Modern architecture if you’ve been to KCI, Arrowhead or The K. Drive-thru restaurants, drive-in movie theaters and drive-up banks are all examples of architecture influenced by 20th-century progress and the concept of Modernism. Many neglected modern structures sit awaiting saviors, often unable to be saved from the wrecking ball.

BOARD OF EDUCATION BUILDING, 311 E. 12TH ST.

THE STORY

The Board of Education Building has been vacant since the KCMSD moved offices to its current location. Before it was owned by the school district, the building served as the Kansas City Public Library’s main branch. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and designed by Edward W. Tanner & Associates, this building is an outstanding example of the Modern Movement: International Style - specifically the influence of Miesian design.



Board Of Education Building, 311 E. 12th St

THE THREAT

In June, Terracon Consultants filed for a CPPU - Zoning Compliance Letter. Has Drury returned? Drury officials originally had wanted to renovate the Board of Ed building. Recent changes to the federal historic tax credit program and ongoing uncertainty over the Missouri program contributed to thwart that renovation plan. Last year, Drury submitted a revised plan to demolish the building and replace it with a 10-story, \$50 million hotel and a 176-space garage. Drury's proposal received negative feedback on social media regarding the "quality" of that plan. Drury withdrew its hotel plan.

Good public policy should not incentivize the demolition of historic buildings. Another low dollar hotel will add to the already saturated hotel market; threatening existing healthy historic and approved yet/unbuilt new hotels. Further, even if you don't have affection for the modern architecture of the KC Board of ED Building, Drury's proposal was an affront to the monumental civic mall plan across the street, that includes the three iconic art deco designed buildings: City Hall, Municipal Court and County Courthouse.

IBM BUILDING, 1400 BALTIMORE AVE.

THE STORY/THREAT

IBM Building is an outstanding example of the Modern Movement: International Style. Designed by architect William B. Fullerton, it was built at a cost of \$1,000,000 for IBM; opening in 1957. The building is currently vacant and has an uncertain future. It was threatened with demolition in 2007. A series of property violations and a summons issued for housing court in 2019 makes it a likely "demolition-by-neglect" case.



IBM Building, 1400 Baltimore Ave.

PHILLIPS SERVICE STATIONS

THE STORY

A survey of Post-World War II architecture by the City identified properties of particular note, such as the Phillips Service Station(s) - Willy's Petroleum Co., 5901 Prospect Ave, (currently Calley Tires), whose unique gull-wing design was built in 1963. An example of The Modern Movement: Neo-Expressionism, "This unique standardized design produced by the Phillips Petroleum Company was developed by company architect Clarence Reinhardt who incorporated mid-twentieth-century angular forms – seen in drive-ins and the tail fins of Cadillacs – in his station design"



Phillips Service Station, 5901 Prospect Ave.

THE THREAT

As an example of the "small box with canopy" station form, this service station represents a distinct period in the evolution of gas station design, of which, few possessing this high degree of integrity remain." Other threatened gull-wing designs include 1610 E. 63rd St. and 1300 Prospect Ave.

By listing modern architecture, we hope to raise public awareness of this rich Modernist architectural heritage both locally and as part of an important genre of design.

Epperson House

5200 CHERRY STREET

THE STORY

The once magnificent mansion now sits empty overlooking the UMKC campus. Construction of Epperson House, a 56-room brick Collegiate-Gothic style mansion, began in 1919. Architect Horace LaPierre designed the home for philanthropist Uriah Epperson. It later became the property of J.J. Lynn, a business associate of Epperson, who in 1942 donated the building to what is now UMKC. Epperson House then began a new life, first housing aviation cadets during WWII. It became a university dormitory in 1949, and in 1957, it became the school of education. More recently, the building housed the Department of Architecture, Urban Planning and Design.



Epperson House 5200 Cherry Street, UMKC

THE THREAT

Over its eight years of vacancy, it has fallen into a state of disrepair. UMKC identifies the Americans with Disabilities Act as the trigger. An article published by University News in 2013 detailed the state of neglect the building had suffered, including deteriorating stained-glass windows, water damage and crumbling crenellations on the house's tower. As reported by University News (March 13, 2019, and November 6, 2018), Chancellor C. Mauli Agrawal assembled a task force in November 2018 consisting of faculty, staff, students and alumni to address restoration efforts: The task force has discussed ideas for future uses of the building as well as how the project could be funded. Agrawal says UMKC *“needs to become a residential campus”* and expressed great interest in rehabilitating Epperson House. According to him, little work will be done until the housing and Epperson House task forces have been heard from, all options have been reviewed and he has *“seen the numbers.”* Agrawal stated that the money for the rehab, which could be a large sum, would be sourced from donors willing to contribute to a *“Kansas City treasure.”*

Epperson House has great potential. A collaboration among philanthropic, state and local officials, developers, and preservationists will be necessary for a full restoration and 21st-century adaptive reuse of this local landmark.

Westport Area

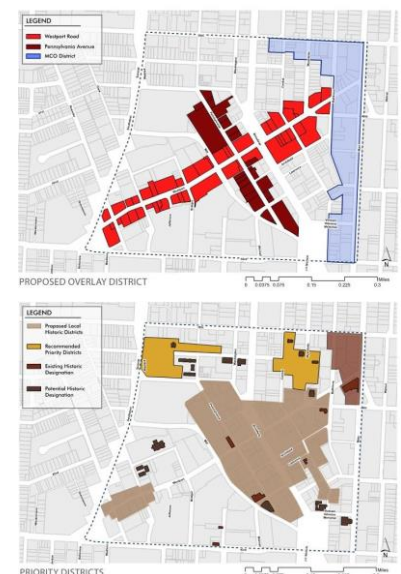
THE STORY

Westport and the surrounding commercial, residential, and institutional buildings, illustrate the development of Westport from an independent trading post settlement to a thriving commercial center in Midtown Kansas City. The buildings, sites, and structures tell a unique and important story. They define the development history of the community and provide tangible reminders of the past that create a unique sense of place. Westport contains a little bit of everything, from architectural styles, building heights, and materials to dates of construction, integrity, and functions. The on-going continuum of development already obscures some of the area's beginnings and early development.

THE THREAT

Today, Westport is one of Kansas City's most distinct places and lies in one of the fastest developing areas of the City. Following a 2-year planning effort led by the Westport Regional Business League, Historic Kansas City and the City, the Westport District Plan was recognized by the City in June 2019. The plan defines a blueprint for the way Westport can and should build into the future. There remains an opportunity for infill and development where we have torn down, to revitalize historic resources that remain; building on the bones of Westport. A top priority of the plan is the adoption of a Special Character Overlay District, for the commercial corridors of Westport Road and Pennsylvania, which would allow Westport to evolve in a way that is sensitive to the existing context and consistent in character.

Westport remains at risk until these implementation steps are completed. Ongoing land assemblage demonstrated the current urgency. Our hope in listing Westport on the Most Endangered List is to raise public awareness of the need for the adoption of these protection solutions.



Historic Churches

One of the most emotionally charged challenges facing preservation is the preservation of churches, synagogues, and other religious structures. Historic religious properties are significant elements of the American cultural landscape. But, as a result of economic, social, and demographic changes, they are, as a category, one of our most endangered property types. Shifts in population, the decline in congregations, and the diminished role of the church in everyday life have placed many in jeopardy. Historic Churches across the Kansas City metro--particularly in abundance in Midtown Kansas City--are at risk due to diminishing congregation size and building layouts that make reuse a challenge.

SEVENTH CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST, 604 WEST 47TH STREET

THE STORY

The Church is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style. Constructed in 1941-1942, it was designed by Indianapolis architect Charles Wilbur Foster to blend with existing buildings that comprise the Country Club Plaza. Developer J.C. Nichols designed regional shopping centers for his residential developments in the early twentieth century. The presence of ecclesiastical resources is in keeping with Nichols' original intention for the mixed-use area, as his idea was to build community.

THE THREAT

In 2019, due to diminishing congregation size, the Seventh Church of Christ elected to pursue a development agreement with Legacy Development that would allow for the demolition of the historic church and construction of a 13-story tower. The congregation would remain on-site with facilities in the new tower. The case before the City Plan Commission to consider a development plan for the church site was never heard as supplemental information was not received by the appointed deadline. The case was continued "off docket".

The future of the church remains uncertain. A recently adopted Special Character Overlay District along the 47th Street corridor caps the height in this area at 45 feet and restricts unwanted uses. However, the Overlay does not protect the church from demolition. Any and all alternatives to demolition should be explored. Options for the most sympathetic reuse possible of the historic church could include reuse as a place of worship by another denomination, cultural or educational purposes as a "social gathering" place, or a creative development plan that incorporates the historic church into a mixed-use development. Other cities throughout the country have seen churches adaptively reused as offices for design firms, nightclubs and restaurants.



7th Church of Christ Scientist, 604 W 47th St

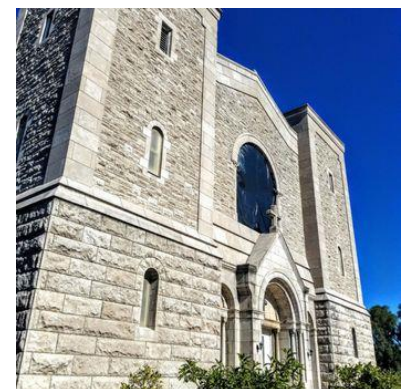
THE HOPE CENTER INC, 2800 E LINWOOD BLVD

THE STORY

This Romanesque church, designed by Frederick Gunn and completed in 1924, was originally called Annunciation Roman Catholic Church. The stain glass windows were made in Innsbruck, Austria and were installed in 1924. The original plan for the church called for piers/steeple on the towers. The church design was modeled after a church in Chicago. In 1940 the church interior was remodeled, in 1953 a new school building to the west was constructed. In 1975 the parishes of Annunciation, Holy Name and St. Vincent were consolidated and renamed Church of the Risen Christ.

THE THREAT

The structure is currently owned by The Hope Center KC, a Community Development organization that provides, family outreach programs; child and youth development programs, housing initiatives; charter school partnership; and a community family care clinic. It is hoped that this listing will bring new awareness to their challenge ahead towards funding a full reuse and rehabilitation plan.



The Hope Center Inc, 2800 E Linwood Blvd

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, 2511 METROPOLITAN AVE, KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

THE STORY

St. John the Divine, is a Gothic Revival structure built in 1887. The building was sold to the Catholic diocese in 1937 and became a cultural anchor in the historically Mexican-American neighborhood of Argentine. Unfortunately, with diminishing attendance the building has been vacant since 1992 and has since suffered from neglect. St. John the Divine is one of less than 100 sites on the National Register associated with Hispanic heritage, and the only one in the State of Kansas designated because of its historical association with the Mexican-American community.

THE THREAT

On the Endangered list since 2013, the Church was previously threatened with demolition by the Unified Government of Wyandotte County. HKC engaged with community partners and Wyandotte County officials to try to save the Church. The owner, St. John the Divine Community Art and Education Center report that they were fortunate to obtain a 2017 Heritage Trust Fund grant that will cover roof repair and replacement. They hope to start next month, as the Unified Government will reinstate a demolition order without evidence of progress toward full rehabilitation and a permanent reuse of the building. St. John the Divine is hopeful that being listed on Historic KC's most endangered list, with evidence of progress on the roof replacement and demolition order, will help them enlist the support of a qualified developer to move toward a full reuse and rehabilitation plan.



St. John The Divine, 2511 Metropolitan Ave, Kansas City, Kansas

Katz Drug Store

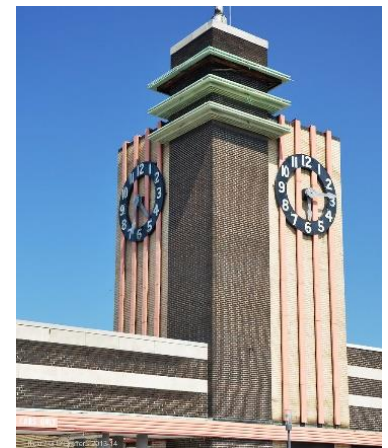
3948 MAIN ST.

THE STORY

This iconic Kansas City building was built in 1934 as home to the first Katz Drug Store outside the central business district. It was the first major work of famed architect Clarence Kivett who also designed numerous Kansas City landmarks including KCI Airport, the Alameda Plaza Hotel (now the Intercontinental), Kauffman Stadium, and many others. It incorporated elements of both Art Deco (the clock tower) and Art Moderne (the horizontal bands and curved storefront) styling. Various commercial tenants have occupied the space including the drug store chains that purchased Katz.

THE THREAT

Redeemer Fellowship bought the historic building at auction; at the time, the church was leasing just the parking lot for its Sunday morning services. Church leadership decided to use the space to further the ministry's mission of cultural renewal. As reported by The PitchKC *"The Drugstore, a collaboratively run studio space at the corner of Westport Road and Main Street, is shutting down after seven years. Redeemer Fellowship, plans to put the iconic Art Deco buildingup for sale. The Drugstore is huge, and the mortgage and utility costs are high, Bean says — about \$80,000 per year when added up. That, plus the increasing costs of maintaining a deteriorating structure built in 1934 — leaky roof, failing HVAC, crumbling facade — is what ultimately convinced Redeemer its money would best be spent elsewhere."*



Katz Drug, 3948 Main St.

The property is for sale. The next steward of the Katz Drug Store will be responsible for an iconic piece of Kansas City's modern architectural heritage. Redeemer has shared with HKC their desire to sell the property to a preservation-minded buyer. Yet, buyer intentions are not a guarantee of intent or outcome. The Katz Drug Store could still be demolished. Although it is listed on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places, any request to demolish or proposed exterior changes to the property must be reviewed by the Kansas City Historic District Commission and receive a "certificate of appropriateness" before the work can proceed. If a certificate of appropriateness is denied, then the property owner must wait three years before proceeding with the proposed alterations or demolition. While this gives the property a significant level of protection, it does not preclude demolition indefinitely. Additional sale provisions are needed to better secure a preservation-minded buyer.

KCMO Closed Schools

In the last 20 years, enrollment in urban schools across the country has dropped, forcing a number of schools to be closed down. Though the challenges are many when it comes to renovating these old school buildings, the opportunities are also extensive. With the help of visionary agencies, neighborhoods and developers, these intriguing parts of history can be preserved and reimagined for a modern purpose. Old schools are prime candidates for eco-friendly renovations. Large windows provide ample natural light, and a more compact, multi-story design makes it easier to heat and cool the school building. Reinforced concrete and brick walls give buildings a high fire rating as well as help to maintain a comfortable internal temperature. Because these schools are located in the urban core with existing transportation and utilities connections, the renovation can be done with far less material than a greenfield development.

The KCMO Repurposing Initiative is responsible for the strategy, design, and conveyance of 30 school properties in Kansas City that the school district closed in 2010. Since the initiative started in 2011, the KCPS has sold 17 school properties, leased 1, have 1 under contract or MOU, 2 reused by KCPS, and demolished 5. Winner of the 2012 HKC Historic Preservation Award for Innovation, the Repurposing Initiative continues to work with community members and prospective buyers to identify new uses for the remaining vacant buildings. Schools still at risk:



Marlborough School
1300 E. 75th Street

MARLBOROUGH SCHOOL, 1300 E. 75TH STREET

THE STORY/THREAT

Through 2017, Exact Partners worked to obtain historic status on the property allowing needed State and Federal Historic Tax Credits to make the preservation work financially feasible. Unfortunately, the State Historic Preservation Office has, to date, rejected Historic designation. Without Historic status, Exact will not have the resources to rehabilitate the property and will need to consider demolition.

PERSHING SCHOOL, 5915 PARK AVE

THE STORY/THREAT

No proposals have been received for Pershing to date. Block Real Estate Services is accepting proposals on a first-come, first-served basis. Pershing was built in several episodes between 1924 and 1953. Overall, the building illustrates the philosophy of Progressive Era elementary school design, and it is an unusual example of a school executed in the Mediterranean Revival style. Few changes have been made to its historic plan and finishes. The building appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



Pershing School, 5915 Park Ave

LADD SCHOOL, 3640 BENTON BLVD

THE STORY/THREAT

In 2018, the Palestine Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) advised KCPS that it is no longer pursuing the Ladd school site for the development of an assisted living center due to uncertainty regarding historic tax credits. At this time, KCPS is accepting proposals for the Ladd School site on a first come first served basis.



Ladd School, 3640 Benton Blvd

MESERVEY SCHOOL, 4210 E 45TH ST

THE STORY/THREAT

Meservey was previously under contract with Yarco-Devco, LLC (Yarco) in 2018. The sale was contingent upon Yarco receiving a Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) allocation, but the Missouri Housing and Development Corporation did not award LIHTC to the project during the Fall 2018 round. Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) is accepting offers on a first-come, first-served basis.



Meservey School, 4210 E 45TH ST

Neighborhood Commercial Structures

This 1920s era commercial property type, the Corner Neighborhood Commercial Store, was once ubiquitous along Kansas City’s urban arterial corridors in the Midtown area. As the retail landscape of our country is changing, and more and more business is done online, a multitude of commercial structures are left to find new uses. These buildings “typically” occupied a lot on a corner or near an intersection that was accessible by one or more streetcar line(s). An example of this real threat can be seen along the Main Street Corridor.

MAIN STREET CORRIDOR

THE STORY

Much of the Main Street corridors’ positive image is created by the character of historic residential and commercial structures – most of which were built prior to 1940. A significant issue is the loss of the corridor’s historic identity as a unique community within the Midtown area. Often, new infill development along the Corridor conflicts with the traditional development pattern and characteristics.

THE THREAT

The Kansas City Streetcar Authority Inc. unveiled potential alignments for the planned 3.5-mile Main Street extension in 2018. Eight stops were recommended. With the city’s focus on revitalizing the areas near the corridor, the pressure to raze vacant historic buildings for future development is a serious threat. Land assemblage and speculative development is real. The proposed route goes through the three historic districts and within a half-block of two additional historic districts, as well as several individually listed National Register properties. These historic resources tell a unique and important story, define the development history of the community and provide tangible reminders of the past that create a unique sense of place.

New development proposed for Main Street, calling for the demolition of historic buildings, is inconsistent with the historic nature of the area. Continued neglect of the remaining historic resources threatens to erase the remnants of the neighborhood’s history and legacy. Renovation of existing homes and commercial properties will be necessary to protect the corridor’s remaining historic character. All new projects should be designed and developed in a manner that maintains and strengthens the historic character of the Corridor. Although this area is under the jurisdiction of the Main Street Special Character Overlay District, it does not include demolition review. In addition, only select areas are included in local historic districts, necessitating demolition review. If a certificate of appropriateness is denied, then the property owner must wait three years before proceeding with the proposed alterations or demolition. While this gives the property a significant level of protection from outright demolition, it does not safeguard it indefinitely.



Examples along Main Street Corridor

Midtown Apartments and Apartment Hotels

One building type that poses a particular challenge in rehabilitation efforts is early 20th-century apartment buildings. Particularly, the apartment hotel in which small unit size necessitates either a creative design solutions or new uses that expand upon the idea of the traditional apartment rental. The apartment hotel was a popular housing option for those who wished to live in upscale residential areas without the hassle of property ownership. Examples include:

KNICKERBOCKER APARTMENTS, 501 – 535 KNICKERBOCKER PLACE

THE STORY

The Knickerbocker Apartments represent an important subtype of the Kansas City Colonnaded apartment, a departure from the typical apartment complex of the period. With their prominent porches and a wide expanse of front lawn, they remained the largest apartment group in Kansas City until around 1921. The building is a representative and rare surviving example of the work of L. G. Middaugh. Built in 1906 in the Century Revival style for developer James A. Rose, the Knickerbocker Apartments are located on what remained as one of Kansas City's few private streets until it was deeded to the city in 1958. The elegance and prestige of the Knickerbocker were highly expressed in its design features and its private street status.

THE THREAT

In 1966 Knickerbocker Place was purchased from the Charles F. Curry family by Kansas City Life Insurance for future expansion of their facilities. In 1981 an attempt to protect Knickerbocker Place from demolition was made by the Valentine Neighborhood Association and the Landmarks Commission of Kansas City. The owner stated that the cost of saving the buildings would place undue hardship on Kansas City Life and that the addition of a new Computer Center to the company's facilities at Broadway and 36th Street outweighed the issue of preserving the Knickerbocker apartments. In 1982, the north building (500-530 Knickerbocker Place) was demolished. One-half of the complex still remains. The building is currently vacant due to the intention of the owner and the future of the building is uncertain. Listed on HKC's "Endangered List" since 2011, the Valentine Neighborhood continues to advocate for the renovation of the building.



Knickerbocker Apartments,
501 – 535 Knickerbocker Place

THE MARQUETTE CLUB OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS (BOULEVARD MANOR HOTEL/STEBEN CLUB), 1115 E. ARMOUR

THE STORY

In the 1920s, the Armour and Troost intersection was a lively part of Armour Boulevard's apartment hotel district. Armour Boulevard accomplished the transition from an exclusive, private residential neighborhood to a thoroughfare lined with impressive fashionable apartment buildings that served to provide needed housing for the increasing population during a period in which the City was undergoing rapid growth.

The businesses that once lined the Armour and Troost intersection are mostly gone now. Around the corner on Armour between Troost and Forest, sits the Marquette Club. Built in 1923 and designed by architect A. F. Adams, the Renaissance Revival building, substantial in its brick and stone construction, incorporated living spaces with club facilities. In later iterations, it would become the Boulevard Manor Hotel and Steuben Club.

THE THREAT

The property is for sale. A preservation-minded buyer is needed. Transformative projects are either underway or in the "pipeline" for the Troost Corridor. Although the Chalfonte and Juliet apartments have been recently renovated, the Marquette Club is at risk and should be included in any future redevelopment efforts.



The Marquette Club, 1115 E. Armour

Sauer Castle

935 SHAWNEE ROAD, KANSAS CITY, KS

THE STORY

The Anthony Sauer residence (Sauer Castle), built in 1872, is attributed to architect Asa Beebe Cross and is one of the finest examples of "Italianate Villa" architecture in the State of Kansas. The building was placed on the National Register in 1977 and designated a Kansas City, Kansas Historic Landmark in 1987. The house is currently owned by a descendant of the Sauer family.

THE THREAT

The house is currently owned by Carl Lopp, a descendant of the Sauer family. The owner has had it for 30 years. Meanwhile, Sauer Castle continues to sit vacant and deteriorate. The Unified Government has made several attempts to take action on the property and tried to gain control of it two decades ago, to no avail. Efforts of the Kansas City, Kansas, Landmarks Commission to make the owner keep the property up to code have proved unsuccessful.

The Sauer Castle Facebook page was initiated several years ago, with over 7,000 followers, the site includes historic facts, photos and comments about possible futures for the building. Their mission is to save it and has hopes that the city, or owners, will find the funds to bring the castle back to its former glory.

Our hope in placing this house on the Most Endangered List is that the owner might be encouraged to finally fix up or sell – and that the local government seek stronger and enhanced laws to protect buildings from owners who would practice demolition by neglect.



Sauer Castle, 935 Shawnee Road, KCKS
Photo by Jennifer Wetzel

The Country Club Plaza Environs

THE STORY

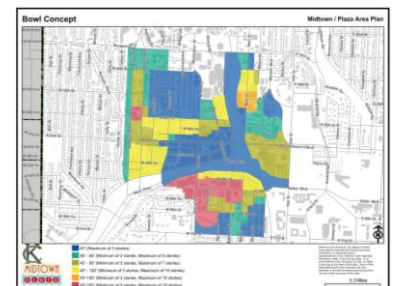
The Country Club Plaza became the most influential comprehensively planned retail complex established in the United States before the mid-twentieth century. The shopping center established real estate developer J. C. Nichols as the nations' foremost author of a groundbreaking approach to the creation of a mixed-use district, an approach that significantly altered the American landscape after World War II. Today, hundreds of new apartments are proposed, approved and/or under construction in the area, particularly north of the Plaza. New hotel proposals emerge while simultaneous subsidies are sought, and the lodging community expands its offerings. Retail properties are constantly changing, and office use has grown in recent years.

The Plaza was threatened. The need for protection was based on underlying zoning that was not consistent with the Plaza Plan and left open the possibility for development that would be out of scale and potentially damaging to the urban design and historic character of the area. Since 2016, HKC has been involved in a multi-phase planning process involving property owners and city officials to adopt land use and the height restrictions established by the Midtown Plaza Area Plan "Bowl Concept". The third expansion of the overlay ordinance was adopted in 2019 and codifies existing recommendations, adding more "teeth" to height and use regulations for the heart of our iconic Country Club Plaza. Adoption of the overlay district enables future developers and current owners to reasonably rely upon and predict what heights and uses will be allowed for future buildings.

THE THREAT

Many areas of the Plaza remain unprotected. Due to increased development pressure, demolitions and new, incompatible development, it's important that future phases to codify the remaining areas of the "Bowl Concept" are implemented.

Further, any new development must follow the Midtown Plaza Area Plan closely in terms of land use, zoning, height, density, architecture and relationship to the area as a whole. These are all details that were carefully considered by the Plaza subgroup of the Midtown/Plaza Area Plan Advisory Committee. The City should enforce *the plan and* complete a comprehensive traffic study for the Plaza so that the impact on roads and traffic can be fully understood and evaluated.



Historic Old Northeast

The Historic Old Northeast area is a group of neighborhoods that housed judges, doctors and captains of industry who built the foundation of early Kansas City. Today, beautiful homes still line the many blocks of these historic neighborhoods. Yet, along its east/west commercial arterial corridors, neighborhood services are left to find new uses, as the retail landscape of our country is changing, and more and more business is done online. Much of these commercial corridors' positive image is created by the character of historic residential and commercial structures – most of which were built prior to 1940. A significant issue is the loss of the corridor's historic identity as a unique community within the Old Northeast. Much of the new infill development in the Corridor conflicts with the traditional development pattern and characteristics. New development proposed for these corridors, calling for the demolition of historic buildings, is inconsistent with the historic nature of the area. Continued neglect of the remaining historic resources threatens to erase the remnants of the neighborhood's history and legacy. Renovation of existing homes and commercial properties will be necessary to protect the Corridor's remaining historic character. All new projects should be designed and developed in a manner that maintains and strengthens the historic character of the Corridor.

INDEPENDENCE AVENUE CORRIDOR, FROM PASEO TO HARDESTY

THE STORY/THREAT

Independence Avenue is a result of historical forces. The Avenue was once an elegant residential street, as well as a bustling commercial corridor served by a streetcar line. Strong institutional assets range from historic churches to educational structures. The passage of time, along with shifting demographic and employment patterns, changes in transportation technologies, and changing consumer preferences have impacted the Avenue. Many of the magnificent homes and commercial storefronts have been replaced by more auto-oriented strip commercial uses, vacant lots, or surface parking. This area is under the jurisdiction of the Kansas City Board of Parks and Recreation Commission and overlaps with the existing Pendleton Heights and Scarritt Point Historic Districts.

ST. JOHN AVENUE FROM GLADSTONE BOULEVARD TO BELMONT BOULEVARD

THE STORY/THREAT

The St. John Corridor provides a unique east-west connection in Kansas City's Old Northeast linking the Indian Mound and Scarritt Renaissance neighborhoods to nearby amenities. Attractive homes, active community groups, employment opportunities, and a sizeable mix of retail shopping, office, and commercial businesses are some of the attributes that contributed to the character of the St. John Corridor through the 1950s. Since then major employers have left and the mix of neighborhood businesses has diminished, but residents remain optimistic about the area's future.

TRUMAN ROAD CORRIDOR/ALADDIN THEATER, 6044 TRUMAN RD

THE STORY/THREAT

Once, Truman Road was a vibrant commercial corridor providing a locus for jobs, retail, and service commercial uses serving the residents in its environs. Like urban core areas in many major cities, the area around the Truman Road Corridor has changed as a consequence of suburbanization, aging, and other interrelated factors. This area has gradually developed as an automobile-oriented "strip commercial" center interspersed with pockets of industrial uses.

Only a few unique features remain such as the Elmwood Cemetery, various church buildings, and The Aladdin Theater, 6044 Truman Rd. This beautiful Moorish style theater, designed in 1927 by the Boller Brothers architectural firm, is one of a few remaining Boller Brothers theaters in Kansas City. Over the years, the building has served a diverse range of uses. In 2015, a local family fell in love with the Aladdin and sought its preservation. To date, they have established the "Save The Aladdin" campaign, applied for listing on the National Register and for HKC's Most Endangered List, established a partnership with leaders in the Blue Valley Neighborhood Association to help get the word out about their efforts.



Aladdin Theater
6044 East Truman Road, KCMO

Nuisance Sites

THE STORY/THE THREAT

There are many vacant properties in Kansas City neighborhoods. Some of these properties have been fully abandoned, often by absentee, out of state owners. As a result, the properties can continue deteriorating, becoming nuisances that blight the neighborhoods, or even dangerous to the public. The City has a set of tools it uses to address the cycle of abandonment and deterioration. When other enforcement options fail, these properties can be candidates for Receivership. Receivership is a process where the City asks a court to appoint a third party to take control of the Property and address the vacant and nuisance issues, preventing the property from continuing to harm the neighborhood and allowing it to return to productive use. Chronic Nuisance is a collaborative program between the City and KCPD to address criminal activity in Kansas City. The program targets properties where owners have created or allowed conditions that encourage criminal activity. The City and KCPD work with the property owners to address the problems and reduce or eliminate the criminal activity.

The following are example historic properties under review by the city to correct a range of deficiencies. Code enforcement activity continues on these properties; some may end up in receivership. The City hopes to work with property owners or other interested parties to encourage someone to step up and save these structures.

KANSAS CITY WATER DEPART. BUILDING – 201 MAIN ST

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this building was to be used in 1905 as a stable, warehouse and shops for the Street Division and Meter Department of the Water Department. The second floor was designed for offices of the Superintendents of Pipelines, the Meter Department, and the blacksmith shop, wagon repair shop and a large storage room for hay and grain. The main floor was designed to house the following: a stable with stalls for forty horses, space for thirty-five buggies and wagons, a harness room, washrooms and a furnace room that supplied steam heat for the building. In 1919 the Building was purchased by the Townley Metal & Hardware Company.



Kansas City Water Dept. Building, 201 Main

611 – 613 FOREST AVENUE

This Italianate Double Townhouse stands on the east side of Downtown Kansas City. The townhouse was built c. 1885 and is a particularly refined yet vernacular expression of the Italianate for what is essentially a working-class apartment house. It is one of the city's few remaining examples.



611 Forest

PRINCETON HOTEL, 3241 THE PASEO

The Princeton Hotel was designed in 1913 by Nelle E. Peters, one of Kansas City's leading architects. She designed numerous buildings during the 1920s when she was one of the few women architects to have an independent practice. During her more than sixty years as an architect, Peters designed almost a thousand buildings, specializing in designing apartment buildings and hotels, mostly in the Kansas City area. While some of her work has been demolished, many of the buildings she designed still stand. They can be found in historic districts throughout Kansas City. The architectural legacy Peters left behind shaped the appearance of Kansas City, as well as other towns and cities throughout Missouri and the Midwest. The building later became the Thompson Care Center.



Princeton Hotel, 3241 The Paseo

CHARLES P. SHIPLEY SADDLERY & MERCANTILE CO., 1631 GENESSEE(1885 – 1972)

The Charles P. Shipley Saddlery & Mercantile Co. began in 1885 with products shipped around the world. By 1910, C. P. Shipley had become a very well-known saddle maker who had a customer base consisting of the likes of Franklin Roosevelt, Tom Mix, Gene Autry, Will Rogers, Buck Jones, and Tex Austin. To accommodate demand, 1631 Genessee was built to house the manufacturing, storage, shipping and retail space. The building was designed by architect Shepard and Farrar and is articulated with Chicago School windows, storefront display, and stone belt courses. The business continued to operate until 1972 when the C. P. Shipley Saddlery and Mercantile Company closed the doors for the last time after 87 Years in the saddlery business.



1631 Genessee, KCMO

BELMONT HOTEL, 911 E. LINWOOD BLVD

The Belmont Hotel is the oldest of the four surviving apartment hotels on Linwood Boulevard, illustrating how this building type was a popular housing option for those who wished to live in upscale residential areas without the hassle of property ownership. The Belmont is an excellent example of an early 20th-century mid-rise apartment hotel, a building that provided a specific set of accommodations that distinguished it from hotels and flats or apartment houses. These units were private rooms or suites designed without kitchens, an important distinguishing feature of the apartment hotel property type. Kansas City architect L. Grant Middaugh designed the six-story building for hotel developer John H. Van Closter and the Belmont Building Company in 1912. Restrained Prairie style elements reflect the architectural trends popular for residential resources at the time of construction. Its history has included a range of uses.



Vacant since the mid-1980s, in February 2016 the Planned Industrial Expansion Authority supported a \$12 million market rate housing project, approving an 18-year, 88% property tax abatement for the developer, Leawood-based Brickstone Capital Partners LLC. They propose to turn it into a 95-unit market-rate apartment building ready for occupancy by December 2017. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 2016 enables the project eligible for state and historic tax credits, as well. Redevelopment efforts appear to be stalled as the building remains unchanged.



Belmont Hotel, 911 E. Linwood Blvd

Southwest Boulevard State Bank

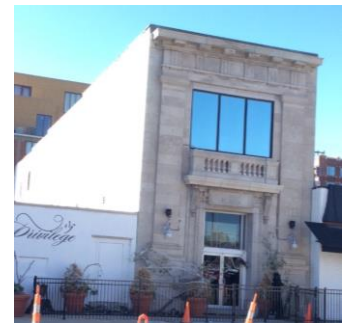
1822 MAIN

THE STORY

Located in the Crossroads District, the Southwest Boulevard State Bank, designed by Architect Madorie and Birdsall, is a good example of the Temple Front building type, derived from the temples of Greek and Roman antiquity. The type was popular at the turn of the century and used almost exclusively for banks and other financial institutions. The building features a stone and concrete facade with full height Doric pilasters, with Greek entablature, that once terminated at a parapet wall with bracketed cornice. The pedimented parapet wall has been removed. The bank opened in 1915 and was determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in the 1980s resulting from a survey commissioned for the city. That listing, however, was not pursued and the building has no landmark protection.

THE THREAT

A proposed office building would require the demolition of the century-old former bank and two adjoining properties, which in recent years were used as night clubs. The project calls for three-levels of office to be built above a three-level, 120-space parking garage. It would include retail space along the sidewalk. The developer's request for a 25-year property tax abatement was endorsed by the Port KC development committee. The developer also plans to seek additional economic activity-based tax incentives from the city. If the necessary approvals are obtained, construction would start this fall with completion anticipated in April 2021. Our hope for including the property on the list is to provide exposure for the value and plight of the historic resource, and that interested parties within the community can come together to provide concepts and solutions to the developer for its integration.



WATCH LIST:

- River Market Area (area redevelopment pending)
- Curtis Studio Building, 1118 McGee St.
- Askew Elementary, 2630 Topping (development pending)
- Newcomer's Funeral Home, 8201 Metcalf Ave, Overland Park, KS
- Metcalf Bank, 7200 W 75th St, Overland Park, KS
- CVS, 7501 Metcalf Ave, Overland Park, KS
- Four Acre Motel – 8220 Hickman Mills Dr
- Community State Bank – 3328 Troost Ave
- Suburban Bank of Kansas City – 6909 Prospect Ave
- Suburban Bank of Kansas City – 6920 Prospect Ave

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