

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name The Elms Historic District

Other names/site number N/A

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

2. Location

Street & number Roughly comprised of the 400 block of Regent Av.; 500 block of Elms Blvd.; and the 500-600 blocks of Kansas City Av. N/A not for publication

City or town Excelsior Springs N/A vicinity

State Missouri Code MO County Clay Code 047 Zip code 64024

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A B X C D



JANUARY 31, 2014

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO

Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register

 determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

The Elms Historic District
Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
32	11	buildings
1	2	sites
7	2	structures
0	0	objects
40	15	Total

**Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register**

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC/hotel
RELIGION/religious facility
RECREATION/outdoor recreation
HEALTH CARE/sanitarium
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related
TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC/hotel
RELIGION/religious facility
RECREATION/outdoor recreation
TRANSPORTATION/road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

20th CENTURY REVIVAL/Tudor Revival
20th CENTURY REVIVAL/Gothic Revival
EARLY 20th CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS
OTHER: National Folk Gable-front
OTHER: Foursquare
OTHER: Bungalow

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Limestone
walls: Weatherboard, Limestone
BRICK, STUCCO
roof: ASPHALT
other: (porch) WOOD, STONE

☒ NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

The Elms Historic District
Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

☒ STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

☒ previously listed in the National Register

____ previously determined eligible by the National Register

____ designated a National Historic Landmark

____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

____ Other State agency

____ Federal agency

☒ Local government

____ University

☒ Other

Name of repository: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Areas of Significance

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Health/Medicine

Period of Significance

1887- 1963

Significant Dates

1887; 1907; 1913

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bradley, John O.; Jackson & McIlvain

Glaze Constr. Co.; Kessler, George E.

Mohr, R. E.; Siemens, George M.

Western Bridge Co.

The Elms Historic District
Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri
County and State

Acreage of Property 26.11

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places) *(additional coordinates on continuation sheet)*

1	<u>39.338906°</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.227725°</u> Longitude:	3	<u>39.338827°</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.226321°</u> Longitude:
2	<u>39.338901°</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.227290°</u> Longitude:	4	<u>39.338690°</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.22 5687°</u> Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing	3	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing
2	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing	4	_____ Zone	_____ Easting	_____ Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Deon Wolfenbarger, Historic Preservation Consultant
organization Three Gables Preservation date July 2013
street & number 320 Pine Glade Road telephone 303-258-3136
city or town Nederland state CO zip code 80466
e-mail Deon@ThreeGables.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

The Elms Historic District
Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: "The Elms" District

City or Vicinity: Excelsior Springs

County: Clay State: Missouri

Photographer: Deon Wolfenbarger, Three Gables Preservation (except as noted)

Date
Photographed: April 2013 (except as noted)

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

- 1 of 40: Elms Boulevard medians, streetscape, & The Elms Hotel, camera facing S
- 2 of 40: 512 (right) & 514 (left) Elms Blvd., camera facing SW
- 3 of 40: 518 (right) – 530 Elms Blvd., streetscape, camera facing SW
- 4 of 40: 522 (right) – 532 Elms Blvd., streetscape, camera facing S; August 2012
- 5 of 40: 514 (right) – 522 (left) Elms Blvd, streetscape, median, camera facing NW
- 6 of 40: 526 (right) & 528 (left) Elms Blvd., camera facing NW
- 7 of 40: 530 (right) & 532 (left) Elms Blvd., camera facing SW
- 8 of 40: 532 Elms Blvd., camera facing W/SW
- 9 of 40: 530 (right) & 532 (left) Elms Blvd., camera facing NW
- 10 of 40: 529 Elms Blvd., camera facing NE; August 2012
- 11 of 40: 523 (left) & 525 (right) Elms Blvd., camera facing NE
- 12 of 40: 517 (left) & 523 (right) Elms Blvd., camera facing NE
- 13 of 40: 507 (left) & 517 Elms Blvd., camera facing NE
- 14 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av. & Elms Blvd. median, camera facing S/SE
- 15 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., camera facing SW
- 16 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., camera facing NE
- 17 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., interior Regent Ballroom, camera facing S
- 18 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., interior lobby, camera facing NW

The Elms Historic District

Clay County, Missouri

Name of Property

County and State

- 19 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., interior towards restaurant, camera facing NE
- 20 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., sulpho-saline well on hotel grounds, camera facing SW; December 2012
- 21 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., stone & concrete stairs on hotel grounds, camera facing N
- 22 of 40: Regent Avenue bridge, camera facing NW; Kevin Morgan; March 2013
- 23 of 40: 510 (right) and 514 (left) Kansas City Av., camera facing NW
- 24 of 40: 520 Kansas City Av., camera facing NW
- 25 of 40: 519 (left) and 521 (right) Kansas City Av., camera facing E
- 26 of 40: 523 (left) and 525 (right) Kansas City Av., camera facing E/NE
- 27 of 40: St. Ann Catholic School, 522 Kansas City Av., camera facing NW
- 28 of 40: 540 Kansas City Av., camera facing SW
- 29 of 40: Wabash Railway Station (#1), NE corner of Dunbar & Leavenworth Av., camera facing NE
- 30 of 40: St. Ann Catholic Church (right), 542-558 Kansas City Av. streetscape, camera facing W
- 31 of 40: 500 block Kansas City Av., streetscape, camera facing NW
- 32 of 40: 401 Regent Av., Elms Hotel pumphouse, camera facing NE
- 33 of 40: 612 Kansas City Av., camera facing SW
- 34 of 40: 500 & 600 blocks of Kansas City Av., camera facing N/NW
- 35 of 40: Elms Hotel garage (left) & 646 Kansas City Av., camera facing S/SW
- 36 of 40: 401 Regent Av., Elms Hotel garage, camera facing NE
- 37 of 40: Wabash Railway Station (#2), 646 Kansas City Av., camera facing W/SW
- 38 of 40: St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 404 Regent Av., camera facing NE
- 39 of 40: Elms Boulevard, streetscape, camera facing N; December 2012
- 40 of 40: The Elms Hotel, 401 Regent Av., limestone retaining wall, camera facing N; Kevin Morgan; July 2013

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination

- Figure 1: Elms Historic District Map: boundaries, resource locations and photographs
- Figure 2: 1887 Central Park plat addition
- Figure 3: 1900 Sanborn Map
- Figure 4: 1907 Elms Addition plat
- Figure 5: Elms Boulevard, historic postcards, c. 1908

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

- Figure 6: The Elms Hotel, historic postcards
- Figure 7: 1913 Sanborn Map
- Figure 8: Elms Boulevard, historic postcards, ca. 1910s-1920s
- Figure 9: Elms Boulevard, historic photographs
- Figure 10: Regent Avenue Bridge, historic postcards
- Figure 11: 1942 Sanborn Map (updated from 1926)
- Figure 12: GIS map; latitude/longitude coordinates
- Figure 13: Location map

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUMMARY

The Elms Historic District is located within the city limits of Excelsior Springs, Clay County, Missouri. The district is roughly bounded by Isley Boulevard on the north, Regent Avenue and Marietta Street on the east, the Elms Hotel property on the south, and the alley west of Kansas City Avenue on the west (Figure 1). It is located southwest of Excelsior Spring's historic downtown. The Elms Historic District is primarily residential, although it is anchored on the south by the fifteen-acre Elms Hotel property; it also contains a few community institutional buildings on Kansas City Avenue. The two major streets, Kansas City Avenue and Elms Boulevard, are oriented north-south and are tree-lined with sidewalks on both sides of the street. Elms Boulevard and Regent Avenue are wide boulevards, and have well-maintained planters in the medians. There are 55 resources within the district's boundaries and one previously listed resource – the Elms Hotel (3/29/85). Of the 55 resources, 40 are contributing and 15 are non-contributing. There are 43 buildings: 32 contributing and 11 non-contributing. Of the three sites, one is contributing. There are nine structures: seven contributing and two non-contributing. The dates of construction for the contributing buildings extend from about 1903 to 1956, although the majority of residences were built within five or six years after the Elms Addition was platted in 1907. The Elms Historic District and its contributing resources meet the registration requirements in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri" (herein referred to as the MPDF), with examples of the following property types contained within its boundaries: mineral water resources; hotels; boarding house and apartments; commercial buildings; single family residences; community institutions; and parks, boulevards and park-related resources.¹ The district also represents the transition between two property types described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1950:" *Railroad and Horsecar Suburbs, 1830 to 1890* and *Early Automobile Suburbs, 1908 to 1945*.²

ELABORATION

Setting

The Elms Historic District is located in relatively level plain that forms a U-shape around a bend in the Fishing River. It is surrounded on all sides by ridges that overlook the Fishing River valley. Just west of the district, the ground rises to a ridge that contains a Job Corps complex as well as other residential neighborhoods. The Fishing River is on the west side of the district, forming a natural boundary. Commercial buildings and large multi-family apartments are north of St. Louis Avenue, which approximates the north boundary. The south boundary is formed by the southern edge of the Elms Hotel property (Figure 1). There are two nearby historic districts previously listed on the National Register: the Excelsior Springs Hall of Waters Commercial East Historic District (5/27/99), and the Excelsior Springs Hall of Waters Commercial East Historic District (5/27/99). These districts are located to the northeast of the Elms Historic District and cover the historic commercial downtown area of Excelsior Springs. As a result of its location in the Fishing River valley, the Elms Historic District is physically and visually separate, as well as geographically distinct, from other historic residential neighborhoods in Excelsior Springs.

¹ Deon Wolfenbarger, "Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (June 2012). The historic contexts and registration requirements in this MPDF form the basis for evaluation, and are incorporated into this nomination.

² David L. Ames, Linda Flint McClelland, and Sarah Dillard Pope, "Historic Residential Suburbs in the United States, 1830-1950," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (N.D.).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The district is comprised of two historic residential plats: the Central Park and the Elms Addition. The Central Park addition (Figure 2) contained the area west of Kansas City Avenue, while the Elms Addition (Figure 4) was located adjacent to the east. The Central Park addition also included lots north of St. Louis Avenue, but demolition of historic buildings, new construction, and the commercial development along St. Louis Avenue when it was converted into Missouri Highway 10 has negatively impacted the historic character of the northern portion of the platted subdivision. Buildings along Dunbar Avenue and Concourse on the west are not included within the proposed district because they are either non-residential, of modern construction, or have been altered after the period of significance.

The platted residential lots are rectangular, with the narrow ends abutting the streets. The buildings along Kansas City Avenue and Elms Boulevard have identical setbacks along the street, forming a consistent massing pattern. The lots are 50 feet wide on Elms Boulevard, allowing for driveways along the sides of houses leading to parking or garages in the rear. The narrower 25 foot lots on Kansas City Avenue were often overcome by property owners building on two lots.

The two main streets in the district run north/south: Kansas City Avenue and Elms Boulevard. Regent Avenue runs east/west for a short distance in front of the Elms Hotel, and then curves to the north (not included in the district). At the fork on this north curve, a short road section continues east across the Fishing River over the Regent Avenue bridge. Elms Boulevard and Regent Avenue have grassed and landscaped central medians. The right-of-way for Regent Avenue and Elms Boulevard is 80 feet, with 60 feet for the roadways and central medians. The remainder of the right-of-way is devoted to sidewalks and the road verge. Kansas City Avenue is narrower, with a 70 foot right-of-way but only a 30 foot roadway. Elms Boulevard and Regent Avenue have landscaped medians in the center of the street to separate one lane of traffic on either side, while Kansas City Avenue is a two-way street. An alley behind the properties on the west side of Kansas City Avenue provides access for parking from the rear. There are concrete curbs and sidewalks along all streets except for the southern end of Kansas City Avenue, near the historic Wabash Railway Station.

Due to the relatively level topography, there are only a few low limestone retaining walls between the residential front yards and the public sidewalks. The front residential yards are grassed, and deciduous street trees line the streets. Utility poles are on the west side of Kansas City Avenue, with modern street lights on approximately every other pole. Reproduction street lights similar to the historic lights line both sides of Elms Boulevard.

Property Types

All of the property types listed in the MPDF are present within the Elms Historic District; these include *mineral water resources; hotels; boarding house and apartments; health clinics & bathhouses; commercial buildings; single family residences; community institutions; and parks, boulevards and park-related resources*. While the majority of buildings are either *single-family residences* or *boarding houses*, the largest building is an example of the "1st Class" subtype in the "hotels" property type – the Elms Hotel (N.R. listed 3/29/85). There are a number of domestic buildings that were either built as single-family residences and later converted to boarding houses, or were boarding houses/apartments that were updated within the period of significance. When these changes occurred during the period of significance, or if the changes were acceptable according to the MPDF registration requirements, the building was considered contributing. Examples of acceptable alterations are found at 512 Elms

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Boulevard, where the front porches were enclosed during the period of significance when the building was converted from a medical institute to a boarding house. Similar alterations at 510 and 525 Kansas City Avenue occurred when these single-family residences were converted to boarding houses, and included siding and porch changes. However, the alterations at 514 Kansas City Avenue were too drastic and this building is considered non-contributing. Historically known as the Woodbine boarding house, the two-story gable-front building originally covered a single lot. During the historic period of significance, it was expanded to a double gable-front building covering two lots. Although the building more than doubled its size, this expansion is historic in its own right. Unfortunately, recent alterations such as re-siding, porch removal, and reducing the historic window sizes have negatively impacted its integrity.

There are two *mineral water resources* within the district boundaries, both located on the grounds of the Elms Hotel: a private sulpho-saline well and pumphouse. These resources represent the most rare property type within Excelsior Springs. Although once relatively numerous, after the city consolidated the mineral waters into a municipal system in 1935, many above-ground mineral water features were demolished at that time.

Three churches, two train depots, and one school represent the *community institutions* property type in the Elms Historic District. As noted in the MPDF, Excelsior Springs had an unusually high number of churches in proportion to its permanent population in order to cater to the high number of tourists and visitors to town. Since the town's economy was dependent on serving visitors, the location of two depots adjacent to a neighborhood containing a high number of boarding houses as well as the city's largest hotel is no coincidence. Finally, there is one example of a *health clinic* – the Neal Institute at 512 Elms Boulevard.

Architectural styles/forms

The historic residences in the district, by far the most common property type, were built between c. 1903 and c. 1941. The peak period of building, however, was between 1909 and 1912. The historic residences represent single-family architectural styles and forms popular during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Larger boarding houses also exhibit stylistic details from the turn of the nineteenth century through the late 1920s. Elms Boulevard contains houses ranging from early twentieth century revival styles, as well as more “modern” styles that rejected historic architectural traditions. Represented styles include Neoclassical Revival (529 Elms Blvd.) and Mission Revival (530 Elms Blvd.); the street also contains house forms such as the foursquare and Craftsman bungalow. Kansas City Avenue has a number of folk forms representative of the comfortable yet substantial dwellings popular with middle-class America.

Native limestone is a common building material in the district for building foundations; in fact, nearly every residence has a quarry-faced, random range ashlar foundation. Limestone is also used for retaining walls, stone porch columns or for wall construction, such as 532 Elms Boulevard and 612 Kansas City Avenue. This native building material provides a sense of continuity throughout district and complements the focal building in the district – the Elms Hotel. Other common wall materials are wood and brick. The residences are between one and two-and-half stories, but all have a consistent setback from the street, and similar side yard setbacks as well. Thus in spite of the varied architectural styles, the residential properties convey a homogenous appearance.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Individual Resource Descriptions

A full listing and description of the resources within the district is listed below, followed by a summary chart with addresses and contributing status at the end of Section 7. Each resource is listed by a resource number that corresponds to the table at the end of Section 7, address, name, construction date³, contributing status, architectural style and/or property type, and photograph number(s). The primary resource is listed as 1, 2, 3, etc., while outbuildings or secondary structures are numbered 1b. This is followed by additional description, including a discussion of alterations that affect integrity.

1 401 Regent Avenue, The Elms Hotel; 1912; previously listed (3/29/85)

Style: Tudor Revival

Property Type: Hotel: 1st Class

Photographs: 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

Architects: Jackson & McIlvain

The present Elms Hotel was actually the third Elms hotel, and was designed by prominent Kansas City architects Jackson and McIlvain in the Tudor Revival Style. The architects had also designed the second Elms Hotel in a similar style, but since the first two hotels were destroyed by fires, the third hotel building featured fireproof construction. It is a five-story stone and stucco Tudor Revival building with a full basement. The flat roofed building forms a rough H-shaped plan, with the end wings extending further on the rear than on the front. There are also two, two-story semi-circular bays: one in the front (north) and another in the rear (south); these are centered between the two extending wings.

The building is constructed of steel frame and reinforced concrete, with limestone and brick veneers. Wall cladding also features the character-defining Tudor Revival stucco and half-timbering panels. The north façade is divided into three main sections, with two end wings projecting forward and framing the central area. The east and west end projecting wings each have two bays, which in turn are capped with double-gable-on-hip roofs. The central section has eight bays that are enframed with stone piers extending full height and are terminated in shallow gable-front roofs. Between the two end wings is a two-story semi-circular bay containing a dining area. The main entry bay is immediately east of the west wing, and features a two-story projecting bay with castellated parapet and gable-roof portico. The 3/1 windows vary in height and are generally paired, or in groups of threes, fours, or five; the window groupings are set with stucco and half-timbered panels decorated with strapwork.

The west façade faces the guest parking lot, and also contains a major entry for the hotel. The first four stories have stone veneer, while the fifth story (above a pent roof) is brick painted to match the stucco. On the first story, a porte-cochere and open recessed porch extends along five of the eight bays, and features Tudor-arched spandrels between square stone columns. There are two oriel windows extending from the third to fourth story – one at each end of the west elevation; both have shaped parapets. There are also shaped parapets at the fifth floor, and castellated stone piers on each end.

The south elevation, although facing rear, features the same elaborate wall treatment as the main façade for the benefit of the hotel's guests. It faces a courtyard, swimming pool, and the extensive hotel grounds. It also has two projecting end wings, and a central two-story semi-circular section. The west wing has the same double-gabled roofs as on the façade. This is a one-story, two bay deep extension on the west that features a recessed porch with Tudor-arched stucco spandrels, stone columns, and large

³ Construction dates were derived from previous historic resource surveys, Sanborn maps, county assessor's records, newspapers and city directories.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

stone parapet. The east wing extends much further south, and the west wall of this wing has more extensive areas covered with stucco; otherwise, the elevations facing the interior courtyard are finished in a manner similar to the façade: large bays enframed with stone piers, terminated with shallow gable roof projections, and grouped windows on each floor.

The east elevation faces Fishing River and contains the service entrance and parking. However, the wall treatment still continues the patterns established on the north façade. There are eight bays; the two end bays are clad in stone, while bays two, four and six have brick veneer. A parapet wall is above each of these bays.

On the interior, the large hotel lobby, with entrances from the north and west, has tile floors with a shield pattern, a brick guest counter, brick piers supporting octagonal columns, and a massive stone fireplace with an arched brick inset. There are marble steps on the east end of the lobby, and doors at the southwest leading to a large ballroom. The ballroom (located on the southwest wing) has an even larger stone fireplace at the south end. Here the ceiling features large beams with Tudor-inspired end spandrels. A dining room and restaurant is east of the main lobby, located in the semi-circular wing on the front. It features dark wood paneling, repeated in several of the other public lobbies on other floors. The Elms Hotel was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 29, 1985.

1A 401 Regent Avenue, Elms Park/Elms Hotel grounds; 1912; contributing site⁴

Property Type: Hotel: 1st Class (grounds); parks, boulevards and park-related resources

Photographs: 16, 21

Landscape architect: George E. Kessler

The nearly 15-acre site contains the large Elms Hotel, the pump house building, a carriage house, mineral water well (all counted as contributing resources), as well as several other smaller historic features that also contribute to its historic character. The hotel is located on the north end of the property, which is the highest elevation on the lot. The landscaped, wooded grounds slope down to the south and the east towards the Fishing River. The property also extends beyond the west banks of the Fishing River; this portion is steep and heavily wooded.

A guest parking lot is on the northwest corner of the property, west of the hotel. Parking for employees as well as delivery access is on the east side of the hotel. A courtyard and swimming pool are located between the hotel wings on the south. Curving graveled walks lead to the extensive grounds south of the hotel, through grassed lawns and areas of large deciduous and coniferous trees. The grounds are on two natural terraces, with the lower section along the Fishing River. The upper grounds have a gazebo and three small frame sheds.⁵ The lower grounds are accessed by historic stone stairs with masonry side walls. This area features a picnic area, tennis courts, and an herb garden. A small historic limestone culvert with gravel bed and iron rails leads across a stream to the former Wabash Depot (38). There is a large stone retaining wall (see resource 1F) on the west side of the service parking lot, and stone free-standing walls around the swimming pool and courtyard areas.

1B 401 Regent Avenue. Elms Hotel Pump House; ca. 1912; contributing building

Property Type: Mineral water resource

⁴ Although the 1985 nomination for the Elms Hotel mentioned some other resources, the grounds and accessory buildings and structures were not included in the resource count.

⁵ Non-historic, and too small to include in resource count per NPS guidelines.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Photograph: 32

Located in the northwest guest parking lot on the western boundary of the Elms Hotel property, this vernacular one-story rectangular brick building has a gable roof with open eaves and a shed roof porch with simple square wood columns on the south end. The non-historic entry door is located on the west side of the south elevation, and has a lower paneled section and nine sashes on the upper half. There are two windows on both the west and north elevations. The 1/1 wood windows have brick sills and arched lintels, and are likely not historic. The west end has a small, hip roof frame addition with vertical composite board paneling. A metal stovepipe is near the ridge of the west slope roof. The 1913 Sanborn maps shows that the building was used as a carpenter shop, but in 1926 and 1942, it was a pump house. Local residents recall that mineral water was served from the building.

1C 401 Regent Avenue, Elms Hotel carriage house/garage⁶; ca. 1920; contributing building

Property Type: Hotel: 1st Class (accessory building)

Photographs: 35, 36

This one-story, flat roof rectangular stone carriage house building is located south of guest parking lot on the western boundary of the Elms Hotel property. It is constructed of random-range, quarry-faced, ashlar limestone. There are two vehicle entries on the west elevation, with paired vertical board doors featuring cross-bracing. These door openings have stone arched lintels with a tall, narrow keystone. There are two windows on the north elevation, and one on the south. These non-historic, single sash wood windows have arched also have arched lintels, and are closed down with interior wood shutters. The south elevation also has a non-historic wood entry door with arched lintel. The roof edge is faced with regular stone coping, and square piers extend above at each of the four corners. There is a patio on the east end. The building is currently used as a meeting space.

1D 401 Regent Avenue, Elms Hotel sulpho-saline well; ca. 1912; contributing structure

Property Type: Mineral water resource

Photograph: 20

This well is located in the east service parking lot, south of the hotel's east wing. There is a long, rectangular opening on the ground with plate metal coverings. It is a sulpho-saline well, but the water was only used for hotel guests; in other words, it did not have an associated dispensing pavilion over the well. Thus it retains a high degree of historic character.

1E 401 Regent Avenue, Elms Hotel swimming pool; 1956; contributing structure

Property Type: Hotel: 1st Class (accessory structure)

Built by the Sheraton Corporation after they purchased the property in 1956, the shield-shape of the swimming pool was designed to match the tiles in the lobby of the Elms Hotel. It is located between the hotel wings on the south side. The pool's shape resembles a bell, with steps on each side of the wide end leading into the pool. These steps are edged in dark tiles; similar tiles also spell out "THE ELMS" at the bottom of the pool. The shallow end of the pool is on the north. The pool edge is a wide band of light colored concrete, and the decking is also concrete. The decking is surrounding by a low, quarry-faced, random-range ashlar retaining wall; behind the wall is a planting area and iron fencing. On the east side of the deck is an above-ground diamond-shaped hot tub with limestone walls.

⁶ Often referred to as the carriage house, a 1918 plan of the Elms Hotel grounds by city engineer Walter C. Paton refers to this building as a "garage."

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

1F 401 Regent Avenue, Elms Hotel retaining wall; c. 1912; contributing structure

Property Type: Hotel: 1st Class (accessory structure); parks, boulevards and park-related resources

Photograph: 40

This limestone and concrete retaining wall is approximately 180 feet long, beginning approximately 100 feet south of the south end of the hotel's east wing. It separates the higher grounds to the west from the lower elevation along the Fishing River. It is constructed in slightly stepped terraces of concrete and limestone block. Each terrace is approximately three feet high, with each terrace extending approximately six inches from the one immediately above. From north to south, the north end is marked with a short stone column, and a single low terrace gradually slopes upward. As the ground rises in elevation further to the south, additional wall sections step up until the mid-point, which is comprised of four stacked sections. This mid-point is the tallest segment of the wall, approximately twelve feet high. Here a landing overlooking the Fishing River is marked by square stone columns and a short section of wrought iron fence. The remainder of the wall has a simple metal railing with a wire "rope" supported by simple round metal columns. The wall then slopes down to the south end.

2 404 Regent Avenue, St. Luke's Episcopal Church; 1932-1933; contributing building

Style: Gothic Revival

Property Type: Community Institution

Photograph: 38

Architect: George M. Siemens

Completed in 1933, this one-story, picturesque Gothic Revival church has a cross or T-plan shape and is built of quarry-faced, random ashlar "rubble" limestone. The main portion of the church has a steeply-pitched side gable roof with lower cross gables on the east end forming the north and south transepts. The west end of the south elevation has a lower gable-front entry vestibule with low buttresses and a cornerstone with "A.D. 1933." A stone bell cote with a gable peak and arched opening for the bell is located at the junction of the main building with the roof of the entry vestibule. A parapet on the west gable end has smooth stone coping and is crowned with a cross, and the east elevation has exterior stone chimney.

All the church windows are historic, and the stained glass windows have protective storm windows on the exterior. The façade (south elevation) features a historic main entry door on the entry vestibule at the west end. It is vertical wood plank, with a large tripartite transom above of stained glass. Between the west entry vestibule wing and the east transept wing are three rectangular windows separated by stone buttresses. These leaded casement windows have two vertical sashes with stained glass shields in the upper portion and projecting stone lugsills. The east transept wing has a recessed Gothic arched stained glass window with rough keystone and projecting stone lugsill. There are three windows and an entry door on the east elevation. The windows are tall, narrow wood fixed windows have six sashes. They are deeply recessed, and have tan sills and lintels that contrast with the lighter stone of the building. The entry door (date unknown) is paneled wood with two small upper glass sashes. Large stained glass windows on the north elevation are recessed Gothic arched with rough keystones and projecting tan stone lugsills; these are also separated by stone buttresses. At the sanctuary end is a very large ornate stained glass window with several symbolic elements. The west elevation features a large stained glass Gothic arched window. This nave window has stone mullions further dividing the window into two smaller Gothic arched panels topped by a cinquefoil partition. This window is accented by a larger stone bay that projects from the building

The interior walls are stone, and the ceiling features dark fir beams and arched braces supported by stone wall trusses. The raised chancel is separated from the nave by a carved rod screen supported by walnut

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

columns with Corinthian capitals. The property contains a large parking lot north of the church, built after 1993 after the demolition of a historic residence and a boarding house.

3 Regent Avenue, Elms Hotel parking lot; pre-1950; contributing structure

Property Type: Hotel: 1st Class (accessory structure)

Photograph: 38

This .24 acre lot has been a vacant lot since the platting of the Elms Addition in 1907; historic aerial photographs indicate it has been a parking lot since at least 1952. The asphalt-paved lot has concrete curbing around the edge, an entry drive off of Regent Avenue, and diagonal parking. As it dates from the period of significance and is associated with the Elms Hotel, it is a contributing structure.

4 Regent Avenue, Regent Avenue Bridge; 1917; contributing structure

Style/form: Reinforced concrete open spandrel arch bridge

Photograph: 22

Builder: Western Bridge Co.

The Regent Avenue Bridge is a reinforced concrete, open spandrel arch bridge, featuring pierced spandrel walls with no fill materials. The simple span bridge has a deck travel surface above the single arch featuring a spandrel column on either side of the arch and concrete abutments. The concrete railing has square posts with a railing above a balustrade with pierced openings. By eliminating the walls and fill material inside, the bridge was viewed less expensive to construct, and was considered more aesthetically pleasing as well.⁷ On the interior of the southwest corner post is a bronze plaque with the following inscription: "Western Bridge Co.; Harrisonville, Mo.; 1917; W.C. Patton; City Engineer." It spans the Fishing River at the east end of Regent Avenue.

5 507 Elms Boulevard; Reed Realty & Insurance Building; c. 1955; contributing building

Property Type: Commercial building

Photograph: 13

This one-story commercial building with brick and stone veneer has a nearly square plan and low-pitched hip roof. Located on a corner lot, it has two "primary" elevations – north and west – with a recessed, angled entry door on the northwest corner. This wood entry door (possibly historic) has a single large glass sash with simple wood frame. There are two recessed metal historic windows on the west elevation. Both are large rectangular windows with a large central sash flanked by narrow 1/1 windows on either side. A solid panel door (not historic) is at the south end of this elevation. The north elevation also has two metal windows; one is identical to those on the west, while the other has paired 1/1 windows. These windows are smaller than typically found on commercial buildings, and are more representative of post-World War II residential forms. There are three windows on the south elevation: one large window identical to those on the west, a smaller fixed sash window, and a tall 1/1 window. Another wood door is east of these windows. The west elevation has red brick veneer with a lower band of thin, horizontal red stone veneer beneath the window sill. The north elevation has brick veneer above the windows lintels, and a light on the west elevation, and a light stone veneer on the remainder of the wall. This same light stone veneer covers the entire south elevation. It is little altered on the exterior.

6 512 Elms Boulevard, Neal Institute/Boulevard Inn, The Boulevard; c. 1911; contributing building

Style: Queen Anne

Property Type: Health Clinic; Boarding House

⁷ Parsons Brinckerhoff and Engineering and Industrial Heritage, "A Context for Common Historic Bridge Types," (October 2005) 3-67.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Photograph: 2

This two-and-a-half -story brick rectangular plan building is a late example of a Queen Anne residential building, “hipped roof with lower cross gables” shape subtype.⁸ The distinguishing features of the subtype included its steeply pitched hip roof with ridge running from front to back, with steeply pitched lower cross gables – one on the front and others on the north and south. On the rear, the lower cross gable is instead a gable dormer. The gable ends are clad with horizontal synthetic siding, while the remainder of the house is brick set in stretcher bond on a low limestone foundation. All of these lower gables are pedimented, with the pediment formed by a pitched roof extending from eave to eave. The wide overhanging eaves have a plain frieze board below. The first story has a wood entry door with multiple glass panes flanked by two windows on either side; the south window is a large 1/1, while the north window is smaller 1/1. The second story has a 1/1 window on the south, and a three-side bay on the north containing a 1/1 window in each side. All windows are historic wood with stone sills, except for those on the second story bay. The façade (east elevation) has a full width, one-story flat roof porch with wide, plain entablature is supported by tapering square wood posts set on limestone piers. A wrought iron balustrade encloses the roof porch, forming a second story deck. There is a brick chimney centered on the north side slope of the hip roof. A rear entry door has sidelights. Alterations from its original construction include replacement siding on gable ends and the wrought iron balustrade on the upper porch. The building retains a high degree of character in other key areas as noted in the registration requirements for this property type.

7 514 Elms Boulevard, Ligon Apartments; c. 1910; contributing building

Style/form: Colonnaded apartment

Property Type: Boarding Houses & Apartments

Photographs: 2, 5

The two-story, flat roof, brick rectangular building has a central hall plan with separate two-story front porches flanking either side of the deeply recessed central entrance. The porches are connected by a single flat roof with very wide overhanging eaves. The porch columns are brick, and support a very wide entablature beneath the overhanging eaves. The porch openings have been enclosed with single sash windows separated with wood. The porch retains its original brick balustrade with stone coping on the first story, but the upper story balustrade is currently covered with lap wood siding. The house sits on a rock-faced ashlar foundation set in rough courses. The first story has a central, single historic wood entry door flanked by sidelights, with a wide stone lintel above the entry. It is reached by concrete stairs with stone sides and metal rails. On either side of the entry door, each apartment has a historic 5/1 double-hung wood window and a paneled wood door with upper glass sash leading to the front porch. These windows and doors also have a very wide stone lintel. The second story has paired 5/1 double hung historic wood windows in the central bay, and the upper flanking apartments have the same windows and porch doors as on the first floor. There are two exterior chimneys on both the south and north elevations. There is a low limestone retaining wall along the front sidewalk, and along the sides of the central sidewalk. A concrete drive on the north side leads to parking in the rear. The primary alteration from its original construction is the enclosure of the front porch. However, this was a typical alteration that occurred after World War II in Excelsior Springs, as boarding house owners updated the building’s appearance in an attempt to keep attracting tenants when converting to long-term apartments.⁹

⁸ Virginia & Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984) 263-264.

⁹ Deon Wolfenbarger, “Excelsior Springs, Missouri Historic Resources Survey, Phase II: Boarding House District,” Excelsior Springs, MO: City of Excelsior Springs, 10 June 1994.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The building retains integrity in other key features, and meets the registration requirements for this property type.

8 517 Elms Boulevard, Rowell Residence; 1909-1910; contributing building

Style/form: Bungalow

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photographs: 12, 13

This one-and-a-half story bungalow has a moderately steep-pitched gable-front roof with wide, overhanging enclosed eaves and gable end returns decorated with diagonal wood siding. There are two gable roof dormers on the north and south elevations, centered over half-hexagonal bays on the first story with honeycomb corners. The house is clad on brick on the first story, and narrow wood lap siding on the gable end. The northwest corner of the first story is chamfered. The rectangular plan building has a stone foundation. The first story has a historic centered wood entry door with multiple glass sashes, with large 1/1 wood windows on either side. The windows are historic and have dress-faced stone sills and modern metal storms. The upper story has central paired 1/1 wood windows with metal storms set within a larger wood surround. The half-wide front porch is offset to the south, and has a gable-front roof with a recessed arch formed by the curved gable-end returns. The porch columns are square brick, and both the house and porch have a quarry-faced ashlar limestone foundation. There is a brick chimney on the south side slope near the rear. A concrete driveway is on the south side of the narrow lot. The house changed little since its construction, with the exception of the addition of a porch balustrade.

9 518 Elms Boulevard, McDavid-Morgan Residence; c. 1911; contributing building.

Style: Colonial Revival

Property Type: Single-family residence; Boarding House

Photographs: 3, 5

This two-story residence with Colonial Revival features has a steeply pitched, bellcast gable-front roof with end returns, overhanging eaves and plain frieze board. The rectangular building has wood lap siding, with narrower boards on the second story that flare out at the sill level over the wider boards on the first story. The first story façade has a tri-partite window on the south end, featuring a larger central window flanked by sidelights. On the north is a historic wood entry door with multi-pane glass sashes. The second story has two 1/1 wood windows in simple wood surrounds. The attic-level has three rectangular wood windows arranged in a Palladian manner – two smaller fixed sash windows flanking a tall, narrow 1/1 window. The historic windows have metal storms. The one-story porch is nearly full-width and has a moderately pitched gable front roof with enclosed, overhanging eaves and end returns. The porch has simple, classically-inspired tapering round wood columns set on stone piers. The wood balustrade of the porch extends down to the ground, covering the open porch foundation. The house has a rock-faced limestone foundation and low stone sides to the concrete steps leading to the front porch. There is a brick chimney on the north side slope. A concrete drive on the south leads to parking in the rear. With the exception of the metal storm windows and porch balustrade, the house is little altered since its construction and retains a high degree of integrity.

10 522 Elms Boulevard, Dr. Robichaux Residence; c. 1911; contributing building.

Style: Colonial Revival

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photographs: 3, 4, 5

This two-and-a-half story stucco residence has Colonial Revival style details. The rectangular plan building has a low-pitched bellcast hip roof with wide overhanging eaves with corner brackets, a central hip roof dormer on all four elevations, and full width verandah porch. The first story has a centered entry

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 11

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

with paired historic wood French doors with multi-panes and a lower wood panel. These doors are framed with engaged pilasters and have a transom above. The south end of the first story has a 1/1 wood window, while the north end has a single entry door flanked with small rectangular fixed sash wood windows; the door and windows are set within a single surround.¹⁰ The second story has a centered pair of narrow, multi-paned, historic wood doors leading to the verandah. This entry also has engaged square pilasters. On either side of the second story door are 5/1, double hung sash, historic wood windows. The historic wood dormer windows on the attic level are paired, 4/1, double hung sash. The full width one-story front porch has massive square stucco columns on the corners, with smaller square non-historic wood columns flanking the centered wood porch steps. The flat roof of the one-story porch serves as the floor for the second story verandah. The balustrades for both porches are non-historic, and have slender wood railings. An exterior chimney on the south elevation has decorative stone insets, coping and brackets. A gravel drive on the south leads to rear parking, and the front yard is enclosed by a low picket fence. The house is in deteriorated condition, but retains a high degree of integrity. Alterations from its period of construction include the porch balustrades, and the unpainted wood porch columns and entablature which are part of recent attempts to shore up the porch; however, the house still retains its exterior historic character.

11a 523 Elms Boulevard, Holmes Residence; c. 1911; contributing building.

Style/form: Foursquare

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photograph: 12

This two-and-a-half story foursquare residence has a moderately steep hip roof with wide overhanging open eaves and a centered hipped roof dormer. The rectangular plan building has a stucco veneer with a wood band beneath the second story window sills that separates the first story from the second. The first story has a historic wood front entry door on the north with sidelights and a wood lintel mimicking a large keystone. A large, fixed sash window is on the south end of the façade. The second story has 4/1 double-hung sash windows, and the dormer has a paired single sash windows. The non-historic windows are set within historic wood surrounds. The one-story, full-width front porch has a low pitched hip roof with overhanging eaves, massive square stucco columns set on stone piers, and a solid stucco balustrade. The off-set porch entry has concrete steps with low stone railings; the foundation is also stone. There are two chimneys: an interior chimney on the north slope, and an exterior chimney with decorative brick cap on the south. A concrete drive on the south leads to a rear garage.

11b 523-525 Elms Boulevard, combined garage; c. 1911-1925; contributing building

Property Type: Single-family residence (accessory building)

The north side of this one-story combined garage was constructed between 1909 and 1911, while the south side was built by 1926. It has two automobile bays, one on each side of the property line dividing 523 and 525 Elms Blvd. The north half has a flat roof and is clad with stucco veneer, while the south half has a shallow hip roof and quarry-faced limestone walls.

12 525 Elms Boulevard, Dr. Clark Home; c. 1910; contributing building

Style/form: Colonial Revival/Gable-front *Property Type:* Single-family residence; Boarding House

Photograph: 11

This two-and-a-half story gable-front house has a steeply pitched roof with enclosed eaves and gable end returns. A wide cornice board beneath the eaves extends around the front of the house to form a

¹⁰ As this was formerly a physician's residence, this secondary entry may have led to a small room for patients.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 12

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

pediment in the gable end. There is a gable-roof dormer, also with end returns, on both the north and south elevations with a wide cornice board beneath the eaves. The rectangular plan house is clad in narrow lap wood siding. The first story has a three-sided bay on the north with 1/1 windows in each bay, an off-center non-historic wood door with oval glass sash, and a large 1/1 window on the south. The second story has two 1/1 windows, while the attic has a pair of smaller 1/1 windows. The windows are non-historic, but are set within the historic wood surrounds with slightly projecting entablatures. The one-story, full width front porch has a moderately pitched gable-front roof with gable end returns, and tapering round wood columns on stone piers supporting a plain architrave. The house foundation is the same quarry-faced, random range ashlar limestone. There is a rear shed roof addition, and an iron fence. A concrete drive is on the north side of the property.

13 526 Elms Boulevard, Johnson Residence; c. 1910-1911; contributing building

Style/form: Colonial Revival/Gable-front *Property Type:* Single-family residence; Boarding House

Photographs: 3, 6

This two-story house with Colonial Revival features has a steeply pitched gable-front roof with a boxed pediment. The rectangular plan building is clad in narrow, lap wood siding, with the exception of the gable-front ends, which are stucco with false half-timbers. The first story has a non-historic, centered front entry door with an upper oval glass sash. There is a 1/1 window on either side of the front door. The second story has two 1/1 windows; the windows on both stories have vinyl storms, and are set within historic wood surrounds with projecting entablature. The attic has a wood louvered vent. The full-width, one-story front porch has moderately pitched gable front roof with pediment, tapering classical wood columns, and non-historic turned spindle porch balusters. Centered concrete steps featuring a side stone balustrade with concrete coping lead to the entry. The foundation is covered with stucco. There is a brick chimney on the north side slope. The front yard is enclosed by a low wrought iron fence atop a low concrete retaining wall with overhanging concrete coping. It is one of two gable-front houses built on lot 33, block A of the Elms Addition. The houses share a concrete driveway in between which lead to joined garages at the rear. For this house, the drive is on the south elevation.

14a 528 Elms Boulevard, Dr. Payne Residence; c. 1911; contributing building

Style/form: Colonial Revival/Gable-front *Property Type:* Single-family residence; Boarding House

Photographs: 3, 6

This two-story house with Colonial Revival features has a steeply pitched gable-front roof with a boxed pediment. The rectangular plan building is clad in wide aluminum siding, and has a stone foundation. The first story has a non-historic, 12/1 window on the south, and a historic wood entry door on the north with multi-panes. This door is flanked by narrow sidelights and has a pedimented surround. The second story has a three-sided bay, with a central non-historic door leading to a small porch deck on top of the front porch. This door is flanked by non-historic, 9/1 windows on either side. The historic wood attic level windows are double-hung and have small diamond-shaped panes. The one-story, full width, hip roof porch has paired, slender tapering columns set on rock-faced coursed ashlar limestone piers; they support a wide, plain entablature. The porch has wood steps and an open foundation. There is a brick chimney on both side slopes. While the windows and siding replacement impact integrity, the horizontal aluminum siding replicates the pattern of the original siding, and the house retains its original form (i.e., its historic character is not diminished by non-historic additions). Other key architectural features such as the porch with stone piers, and front entry doors are historic.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 13

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

14b 526-528 Elms Boulevard, combined garage; c. 1920-post 1946; non-contributing building.

Property Type: Single-family residence (accessory building)

The one-story, two-car garage straddles the property line between 526 and 528 Elms Blvd. It has a hip roof with two metal overhead garage doors for each property. The building is clad in non-historic vertical wood paneling. The south portion of the garage was built sometime between 1913 and 1926; the north portion was added sometime after 1946 when it was combined into a single garage serving both properties. The building is non-contributing due to alterations and an addition that doubled its size after the period of significance.

15a 529 Elms Boulevard, Ashley Rooms; c. 1911; contributing building

Style: Neoclassical Revival

Property Type: Boarding House

Photographs: 10, 39

This two-and-a-half story gable-front boarding house has character-defining features of the Neoclassical Revival style. The moderately-pitched gable-front roof has wide, boxed, overhanging eaves that form a pediment on the façade. Beneath the eaves are large flat brackets, which in turn are above a very wide, elaborated entablature of Doric derivation, featuring triglyphs alternating with metopes with circular medallions on the façade. The rectangular plan house is clad in narrow wood siding with wide, square, paneled wood engaged columns serving as cornerboards. The first story façade is two bays wide, with a non-historic wood entry door on the north featuring an oval upper sash of leaded glass. The door has sidelights and transom. There is a pair of 6/1 windows on the south. The second story has two pairs of 6/1 windows, while the attic level has three smaller 6/1 windows. The double-hung windows are non-historic. The full-width, one-story, flat roof front porch has large, tapering round wood columns with a simple capital. Porch balusters (non-historic) are turned wood spindles. The house and porch have a limestone foundation. Both the north and south elevations have a one-story bay extension with pedimented gable roof, wide simple entablature, and flat brackets beneath the eaves. The south elevation also has an exterior brick chimney. A concrete drive on the south side of the property leads to a garage. The lot is enclosed with an iron fence along the front sidewalk.

15b 529 Elms Boulevard, garage; 2007; non-contributing building

Property Type: Single-family residence (accessory building)

The one-story, square plan, two-car garage is clad in narrow lap wood siding with simple wide cornerboards. The gable-front roof forms a pediment on the façade with a pent roof. The single garage door is double-wide, paneled, and has small glass sashes at the top. The door is offset to the north, with extra room on the south side for storage. The garage is located on a lot that formerly contained an apartment/boarding house (535 Elms Blvd., the Pickwick Apartments). It is now incorporated into the parcel for 529 Elms; there is a grassed and landscaped lawn south of the garage. The building is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 14

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

16a 530 Elms Boulevard, Wilhite Residence; 1917; contributing building

Style: Mission Revival

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photographs: 7, 9

Architect: John O. Bradley

This one-and-a-half story Mission Revival residence has a steeply pitched side gable roof with stepped parapet ends. The rectangular plan building has smooth stucco veneer walls. The first story has historic paired, multi-paned wood French doors on the south, a non-historic centered 3/ window, and a main historic wood entry door with sidelights on the north. The upper story has a prominent front facing gable dormer with stepped parapet, two non-historic double-hung recessed windows, and an infilled circular attic vent with four keystones at each compass point. Other vents are also found on the north and south elevation. The roof extends on the façade to form the roof for the full-width, one-story porch. The porch supports are large rectangular columns with shallow arched spandrels. Concrete steps lead to the off-center entry, and feature low stone balustrades on each side. The porch also has a balustrade constructed of the same rock-faced limestone in a random-range ashlar with smooth finished stone coping. This extends around the sides of the house, forming a high stone foundation on the side elevations. The south elevation has a large exterior chimney which extends above the roof parapet, and features twin flues and stucco decorations. This elevation also has an elaborate bay with a stepped gable roof, arched transom, and original wood multi-paned windows. A concrete drive on the north leads to the rear garage.

16b 530 Elms Boulevard, garage; 1917; contributing building

Property Type: Single-family residence (accessory building)

Architect: John O. Bradley (attributed)

This small one-story, one-car garage with gable-front roof is at the rear of the house in the northwest corner of the property. It has stucco siding on the south elevation, and vertical wood panels in the gable ends. There is an overhead metal garage door, and a recessed window on the north elevation.

17 532 Elms Boulevard, Dr. Clark Residence; c. 1924; contributing building

Style/form: Craftsman/bungalow

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photograph: 7, 8, 9

This one-and-a-half story bungalow has character-defining features of the Craftsman style. It has a steep side gable roof with wide, open overhanging roof eaves and exposed beams. There is a centered gable roof dormer on the front, also with exposed beams. The rectangular plan house features a variety of building materials, including brick veneer on the first story with stone quoins on the northeast corner, stucco on the second, wood shingles on the gable-front dormer, wood beams and rafters, and limestone foundation and porch. The first story has a pair of historic 8/1 wood windows on the south and a historic wood door with fifteen glass sashes on the north. Both these fenestrations have a very wide stone lintel. A recessed bay on the north end of the façade has a historic 6/1 wood window. The gable-front dormer has a trio of 6/1 historic wood windows set in a wood surround. The one-story full-width porch has a flat roof, exposed rafters, and decorative beams under the porch eaves supported by tapering stone columns. The porch balustrade is stone, and there are two sets of concrete entry stairs on the front (east) and the south. Quarry-faced limestone is utilized for the large, tapering paired porch columns as well as the porch balustrade. Limestone also accents the large exterior brick fireplace on the south elevation. There is a concrete driveway on the south side of the house. A vacant lot to the south (534 Elms Blvd.) is associated with this house.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 15

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

18 533 Elms Boulevard, Elms Neighborhood Association parking lot; c. 2000; non-contributing structure.

This .14 acre lot was formerly addressed 533-537 Elms Blvd. and historically contained the Crowley Apartments. Those apartments were demolished after 1993, and a parking lot was constructed for the residents of the Elms neighborhood. The rectangular asphalt paved lot has a single row of perpendicular parking on the north and south sides, concrete curbs, and an entry drive off of Elms Boulevard. The structure is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

19 535 Elms Boulevard, Elms Hotel parking lot; non-contributing structure

This .32 acre lot contains an irregularly shaped parking lot that conforms to the curve of Regent Avenue on the south. The asphalt-paved lot has perpendicular parking on the north, and diagonal parking around the other edges. There are concrete curbs and entry drives on the west off of Elms Boulevard and on the south from Regent Avenue. Historically the lot contained a Lustron house which was moved from the property in the 1990s. The structure is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

20 510 Kansas City Avenue, The Olives/Woods Apartments; c. 1903; contributing building.

Property Type: Boarding House

Photograph: 23

This two-and-a-half story frame building was likely constructed in the Queen Anne style, as it has the character-defining multiple rooflines and irregular plan. It has a moderately steep hip roof with a lower gable-front wing featuring gable end returns; there are also cross-gable dormers. A simple flat cornice board continues around the gable front to form a pediment. The house is clad with asbestos siding on the first two levels, and synthetic siding in the gable end. The first story has a 1/1 window on the south, and a five-sided entry bay to the north that features angled corners and a recessed entry with sides that also angle inward. Centered within this five-sided bay is a non-historic wood entry door with multi-sashes in the upper half, and a 1/1 window on the both of the outer sides of the bay. North of this entry bay is a recessed wing, also with a 1/1 window. The second story has two 1/1 windows. All windows have pedimented wood surrounds and non-historic metal storms; the windows are likely non-original. The one-story flat roof porch wraps around the front gable wing to the north side of the house, and has a deck above. The porch columns are square quarry-faced limestone, with a matching balustrade. The flat-roof above supports a deck with non-historic wood balustrade. The house has a limestone foundation, and a low limestone retaining wall borders the front property line. The front yard is enclosed with a chain link fence. Parking is accessed from the rear alley. The alterations date from ca. 1950s (within the period of significance) and are associated with its conversion to from a single-family residence to a boarding house.

21 514 Kansas City Avenue, Buhl House/The Woodbine; c. 1906 & 1930s; non-contributing building.

Property Type: Boarding House

Photograph: 23

Originally a gable-front house, this two-and-a-half story building was expanded historically to form an L-shaped building. The house has two gable-front roofs, with a pent roof extending across the façade at the bottom of the gables. The building is currently clad in synthetic lap siding, and has a concrete foundation. The first story has five bays, with (from south to north) a 6/6 wood window, a paneled wood door with upper oval sash, 6/6 window, paneled wood door with storm, and a 6/6 window. The windows

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 16

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

have metal storms and vinyl shutters. The two front entry doors have a small gable-front portico with turned spindle columns. The second story has four 6/6 windows. At the attic level, the south gable end has a 6/6 window. Concrete parking is accessed from the rear alley. Historic photographs reveal that the boarding house formerly had a full-width, two-story porch with second story doors. The current window and door locations are also changed from the period of significance. It is non-contributing due to these alterations, although the expansion dates from the period of significance.

22 516 Kansas City Avenue; non-contributing site

This .13 acre vacant lot formerly contained a frame building (c. 1903) that was built as a single-family residence, but later converted to "The Princeton" boarding house. The building was demolished after 1993. The site is non-contributing as it dates from after the period of significance.

23 519 Kansas City Avenue; c. 1911; contributing building

Style/form: Colonial Revival/foursquare *Property Type:* Single-family residence; Boarding House

Photograph: 25

This two-and-a-half story foursquare building has a steeply pitched gable-front roof, rather than the more common hip roof of this form. It has wide, overhanging eaves supported by brackets, and a projecting cornice between the second story and attic forming a pediment that also features small flat brackets. There is a gable roof dormer on both the south and north roof slopes. The rectangular plan house is clad in two different types of siding: lap wood siding on the first floor, and wood shingles on the second which flare at the bottom over the first story.¹¹ The first story has a wood paneled door with upper glass sash on the north, and a large 1/1 window on the south. The second story and third stories each have two 1/1 windows, although the attic windows are smaller. The windows are non-historic but are set within a wood surround with slightly projecting entablature. The one-story, full width front porch has a gable-front roof with end returns and tapering round columns set on limestone piers supporting a simple wide architrave. There is an exterior brick chimney on the south, and a limestone foundation. A complete rehabilitation in the late 1990s restored the exterior to its original appearance.

24 520 Kansas City Avenue, Wales House/Hunt House/St. Ann Convent; c. 1911; contributing building

Form: Pyramidal

Property Type: Boarding House; Community institution

Photograph: 24

This two-story pyramidal building was constructed as an apartment/boarding house, but was converted into a convent in 1952. The brick building has a moderately steep hip with overhanging boxed eaves and a rectangular plan. The first story of the façade is three bays wide, with a central projecting bay.¹² This three-sided bay has a non-historic wood door with oval glass sash in the upper half, and 1/1 wood windows on either side of the bay. A pair of wood 1/1 windows flanks either side of the entry bay. The second story is also three bays, and has paired 1/1 windows on either end and a single 1/1 window in the center. Windows on the side elevations are historic 4/1 with dressed-face stone sills. The one-story, full-width front porch is non-historic, and has a flat roof with a second story deck above. It has simple square wood balusters and columns. The foundation is quarry-faced limestone. There is a swept attic vent on the front elevation, and an interior chimney on the south slope. Although the porch is non-historic, the

¹¹ In nearby Kansas City, this sub-type of the Foursquare is often called a "Shirtwaist" house.

¹² The bay entrance was constructed in 1952 and dates from the period of significance. "Will Lay Cornerstone at School," *Excelsior Springs Daily Standard* (23 November 1952).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 17

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

building still conveys its historic associations as a boarding house. Parking at the rear of this property is accessible from the alley.

25 521 Kansas City Avenue, Hayden House; c. 1920; contributing building

Style/form: Foursquare

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photograph: 25

This two-story foursquare house has a low-pitched hip roof with wide, overhanging open eaves revealing exposed rafter tails. The rectangular plan building is clad in brick veneer except for the second story of the porch, which has been enclosed with wood shingles. The first story has a historic wood entry door on the north with four upper glass sashes, and a 4/1 wood window with wide stone sill and metal storm on the south. The upper story enclosed porch has three pairs of wood 1/1 wood windows with metal storms. The one-story, full width porch is recessed, and has square brick columns and balustrade. The house and porch foundation are quarry-faced, random range limestone. There is an interior chimney on the north slope. The house originally had a one-story porch; the second-story enclosure is the only significant alteration, and it appears to date from the period of significance. Furthermore, it does not negatively impact its historic character.

26 522 Kansas City Avenue, St. Ann's Catholic School; 1953; contributing building

Style: Modern movement

Property Type: Community Institution

Photograph: 27

Builder: Glaze Construction Company

This one-story, flat roof brick rectangular plan building has some features identifiable with the Modern movement in architecture as applied to a traditional school block form. The asymmetrical façade has a large window opening on the south end; a projecting entry bay with double wood paneled doors, each with four glass sashes and a transom above in the center; and two large window openings on the north end. The historic façade windows are comprised of a row of small metal sliding windows on the bottom, and several rows of glass blocks above. They are accentuated with simple stone sills and set within the red and black brick walls. Above the windows and front and side entry doors are flat metal cantilevered roof overhangs. The front entry roof is supported by a pair of simple round steel columns set on the concrete entry steps. The south side entry has a single steel column; here, the porch entry is integrated into a small flat roofed entry vestibule. There are stepped parapets at both entry bays, with a herringbone pattern in the recessed brick panel on the façade (east elevation). This herringbone pattern is repeated in a running course around the building at the floor sill and window lintels. There is an interior chimney, asphalt parking in the rear, a small grass lawn on the southeast corner, and an asphalt playground around the remainder of the property. The exterior of the school retains a high degree of integrity.

27 523 Kansas City Avenue; c. 1941; contributing building

Style: Colonial Revival

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photograph: 26

This one-story residence is a simple expression of the Colonial Revival style. The rectangular plan building has a cross gable roof, with a steeply-pitched side gable portion at the front with close eaves. The historic rear portion of the house has a lower gable roof, and a later small addition which extends the rear gable roof. The two-bay façade has an entry door offset to the north, and a pair of historic 1/1 wood double-hung windows with metal storms on the south. The entry has a simple gable portico supported by scrolled brackets, and a full width deck porch with simple wood balusters, spindle corner posts, and an

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 18

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

open foundation. The original rectangular house is clad in lap wood siding, while the small rear (east) addition has wide composite siding.

28a 525 Kansas City Avenue; c. 1924; contributing building

Form: Gable-front

Property Type: Single-family residence

Photograph: 26

This two-story house has a moderately pitched gable-front roof with open, overhanging eaves. The rectangular plan building is clad with non-historic lap siding, and the porch and house foundation are quarry-faced, random-range ashlar limestone. The first story of the façade has a historic wood entry door with multi-panes sashes and non-historic storm on the north, and a larger entry door on the south flanked by two Craftsman-influenced sidelights on the south. The second story has two pairs of historic 3/1 wood windows with metal storms; these windows are set within an enclosed second story porch with a low pitched gable roof. This enclosed porch forms a recessed full width porch on the first floor with square wood columns and a solid wood balustrade. The porch enclosure dates from the period of significance, and is typical of property owners' attempts to increase square footage in rental properties during this time.

28b 525 Kansas City Avenue, carport; ca. 1980s; non-contributing building

Property Type: Single-family Residence (accessory building)

This gable-roof frame carport is one bay wide, and has open sides with square wood column supports and brackets. It is located at the southeast corner of the property. The resource is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

29 540 Kansas City Avenue, Abundant Praise Fellowship Church; c. 1980; non-contributing building

Property Type: Community Institution

Photograph: 28

This one-story brick church building has a steep gable hip roof on the east elevation, a gable end on the west, and a lower cross gable over the entry bay. It has a basic rectangular plan with a small entry vestibule bay on the north elevation. The simple red brick building has two entries on the north elevation: one in the entry bay on the west, and another on the east end. Between the two entries are five single casement windows, each with six sashes. The building is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

30 552 Kansas City Avenue, St. Ann Catholic Church; 1907 & 1917; contributing building

Style: Gothic Revival

Property Type: Community Institution

Photograph: 30

This tall one-story brick church is a late example of a Gothic Revival church. The church building has a "Latin Cross" or T-shaped plan, with the transept area in the front or east, and a projecting entry and steeple centered on a symmetrical façade. It has a gable front roof with parapet, featuring smooth stone caps with two stone courses in the cornice area separated by a band of vertical stretcher bricks. Set within the central bay are non-historic double entry doors that each have a small upper glass sash. These doors are set within a smooth, dress-faced stone surround with keystone topped by an inset stone cross. There are concrete steps with stone sides leading to the front door. On either side of the entry are single large Tudor (flattened Gothic) arched windows with stone lintels, drip molds and keystones. The windows are clear glass, and have mullions dividing the fenestration opening. Above the entry door is a

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 19

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

smaller, boarded-over Tudor window. The tower also has a boarded-over Tudor window, which retains its historic mullions. The window crowns or drip molds on the first story connect to a continuous stone beltcourse which extends across the face of the building, except on the tower bay. The belfry tower has a very steeply pitched pyramidal roof with gabled parapets, corner stone pyramidal caps, stone coping, and a cross spire. The parapets of the tower are vertical stretcher brick. Each corner of the façade is accentuated with two engaged brick columns that rise above the roof edge and have pyramidal stone caps. The engaged brick columns with stone caps and dividers continue on the south elevation, giving the appearance of buttresses. The church has a slightly raised quarry-faced ashlar foundation. The dark brown brick contrasts with the smooth stone decorations on the building and the rough limestone foundation. The main alterations are the removal of the stained glass windows, but this does not affect the building's ability to convey its architectural and historic associations.

31 554 Kansas City Avenue, St. Ann Rectory, c. 1917; non-contributing building

Style/form: Foursquare

Property Type: Community Institution; Single-family Residence

Photograph: 30

This two-story foursquare home has a moderately pitched hip roof, rectangular plan and vinyl siding. The symmetrical façade is three bays, with the first story featuring a centered, recessed wood door with storm flanked by 6/6 double-hung windows on the entry bay. The enclosed front porch has two non-historic 6/6 windows on both the north and south bays set in stucco panels. The second story has a central wood door with glass sashes on the upper half and metal storm door, and a pair of non-historic 1/1 windows on both the north and south bays. The full-length one-story front porch with flat roof has been enclosed, and has quarry-faced, random range limestone columns with matching balustrade. There is an interior chimney on the north slope. The major alterations are the enclosure of the front porch (date unknown), non-historic windows and siding. The building is non-contributing due to the addition of vinyl lap siding over the original stucco ca. 1990s.

32 558 Kansas City Avenue, Hull House; c. 1920; non-contributing building

Style/form: Gable-front

Property Type: Single-family Residence, Boarding House

Photograph: 30, 31

The two-and-a-half story stucco-clad building has a steeply pitched, gable-front roof with a close overhang. The 3/4-width, two-story front porch has a lower, but similarly-pitched gable-front roof that extends forward. The first story has a large historic 7/1 wood window on the south, and a historic wood door with Craftsman-inspired vertical wood sashes in the upper portion. These are set within a recessed three-quarter width porch formed by the overhang of the enclosed second story porch. There is another entry door north of the porch on the main façade. The second story has a continuous band of six 1/1 windows. The first story of the porch has large, square stucco columns. There is an interior chimney on the north slope. The house has a quarry-faced, random range ashlar limestone foundation. The house is non-contributing due to the major alterations since the period of construction, which include the stucco cladding, porch enclosure and prominent second story porch roof.

33a 560 Kansas City Avenue, Craven House; c. 1906; contributing building

Style: Queen Anne

Property Type: Single-family Residence, Boarding House

Photograph: 31

This two-and-a-half story Queen Anne Residence has a steeply pitched cross gable roof, with a gable-front wing on the south forming an ell. All of the roofs have boxed eaves and gable end returns with

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 20

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

paired brackets beneath. The L-shaped building is clad in vinyl shiplap siding with cornerboards on the first two stories, while the gable ends on the façade have wood fishscale shingles and jig-sawn bargeboard. The first story has a three-sided bay window with three 1/1 windows on the south. The entry door is set within the ell on the north, and is historic wood with glass sashes in the upper portion and a storm door. The northeast corner of the façade is angled, and has two 1/1 windows on the façade. The second story has a 1/1 window on the south, and another 1/1 window on a projecting gable-front dormer. There is a fixed sash stained glass window in the attic level of the façade. Except for the stained glass window, all windows are covered with storms; they retain their historic wood surrounds with projecting entablature. The front porch is set within the ell, and extends forward to the east with a shed roof. The porch columns are square brick, as is the porch balustrade. The house has a stone foundation. Although the siding change is recent, the building still conveys its historic boarding house character from the period of significance through its form, multiple rooflines, porch, and extant historic wood details.

33b 560 Kansas City Avenue, garage; c. 2010; non-contributing building

Property Type: Single-family Residence (accessory building)

A one-story, one-car garage is located at the southwest corner of the property. It has a shallow gable roof with rake eaves, composite lap siding, and a single door. The building is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

34 564 Kansas City Avenue, Dr. Craven House; c. 1907; non-contributing building

Style: NeoColonial

Property Type: Single-family Residence, Boarding House

Photograph: 31

This two-and-a-half story house was likely constructed in the Queen Anne style, but recent alterations have added Neocolonial Revival features. The rectangular plan building has a steeply pitched hip roof with lower cross gables, boxed overhanging eaves with end returns, and a plain cornice board beneath. There is a small triangular dormer on the front slope with a small, triangular fixed sash window. The two story façade has been veneered in red brick, while the remainder of the historic portion has been clad in non-historic shiplap siding. The lower cross front gable roof has wood fishscale shingles at the attic level, and a small fixed sash window with a projecting entablature. The first story has three bays, with a three-side bay on the south featuring three 6/6 windows; a slightly off-center front entry in with a Neocolonial Revival style surround with a broken pediment and engaged columns; and a chamfered corner on the northeast, also with three 6/6 windows. The second story has two 6/6 windows. The windows are non-historic. There is a full width, two-story front porch with paneled square wood columns and a flat roof. There is parking on the south side of the house off of Chicago Avenue, and the rear yard is enclosed with a vinyl fence. The building is non-contributing due to its c. 1990s alterations, after the period of significance.

35a 604 Kansas City Avenue, 1973; non-contributing building

Style: Ranch

Property Type: Single-family Residence

This one-story ranch house has a moderately pitched hip roof with overhanging eaves, and a lower hip roof front projecting bay on the east that contains the main entry doors and forms a shallow L-plan. The house is clad in wood board and batten siding. There are two entry doors: one on the south side of the projecting bay, and the other immediately south of that on the west elevation. Windows are 1/1 double-hung and are paired and single. The house is on a large level lot. The building is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 21

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

35b 604 Kansas City Avenue, garage; c. 1980s; non-contributing building

Property Type: Single-family Residence (accessory building)

This one-story two-car garage has a moderately pitched gable roof with close eaves. It is clad in wide composite siding. There are two garage doors on the west and a pair of entry doors on the east. It is located on the west side of the property, and has paved parking on both the north and south side of the garage. The building is non-contributing due to its construction date after the period of significance.

36a 612 Kansas City Avenue; c. 1907; contributing building

Style/form: Gable-front bungalow

Property Type: Single-family Residence

Photograph: 33, 34

This one-and-a-half story bungalow has features of the Craftsman style combined with other elements of high craftsmanship, resulting in a picturesque appearance. The steeply-pitched gable-front roof is bellcast with gable end returns and wide, overhanging boxed eaves. Two dormers on both the north and south roof slopes have similar details, and have tapering walls with square cut wood shingle siding. The rectangular plan building is clad with quarry-faced, random-range ashlar limestone featuring extremely fine craftsmanship, as evidenced in the carefully laid horizontal stones occasionally interspersed with triangular-shaped vertical stones. The first story has a large multi-sash wood window on the south, and a non-historic door with oval leaded glass sash and sidelights on the north. The second story has a pair of historic 6/6 wood windows with stone sills and vertical stone voussoirs. All windows are deeply recessed. The full-width, one-story front porch has a gable-front bellcast roof with square porch columns featuring lighter accent stones. The raised concrete porch has concrete steps. There is an exterior stone fireplace on the north. The large double lot has a low limestone retaining wall along the front border of the north half, and a low stone-faced concrete block retaining wall on the south half. Gravel parking is accessed from the alley at the rear.

36b 612 Kansas City Avenue, c. 1907; garage; contributing building

Property Type: Single-family Residence (accessory building)

The one-story one-car garage has been converted to an accessory building (date unknown), but it still retains its historic character. It has a steeply-pitched bellcast gable roof with end returns, and is clad in the same square wood shingles as the dormers and rear elevation of the main house. There is a pair of French doors on the south gable end.

37 614 Kansas City Avenue, parking lot; unknown date; non-contributing structure

This .36 acres is considered a separate parcel by the county, but is currently owned by the restaurant operating from the historic depot building to the south (38). The asphalt lot is roughly rectangular in shape, and has an entry drive on the south from Chillicothe Street. Although it has historically been a vacant lot, it is considered non-contributing due to its recent paving with asphalt.

38a 646 Kansas City Avenue, Wabash Railway Station (#2)/The Dairy; 1927; contributing building

Style: Mission

Property Type: Community Institution

Photograph: 35, 37

Architect/builder: R. E. Mohr

This one-story brick railway depot has character-defining features of the Mission style. The north section of the building is the original depot, and has a shallow cross-plan with a low-pitched, tile hip roof, wide overhanging open eaves, and exposed rafters. The central cross bays on the east and west also have

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 22

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

hipped roofs. A flat-roof, one-story addition on the south was constructed when the building was converted to a dairy. It has a parapet edge with tile coping on the east. From south to north, the façade has two 4/2 wood windows on the south addition; a large rectangular window of glass blocks; a pair of 9/9 historic wood windows with three-light transoms above each window; the main entry with non-historic glass door set with historic wood surrounds containing multi-paned transoms and sidelights; another pair of 9/9 wood windows with transoms; and a single 9/9 wood window with transom on the north end. The original waiting room, restrooms, baggage rooms, and office with ticket panel are still evident on the interior. There is parking on the east and west sides of the building. Non-historic outbuildings associated with the current restaurant are not included within the district boundaries, but the historic garage dating from the building's use as a dairy is contributing.

38b 646 Kansas City Avenue, The Dairy garage; c. 1940s; contributing building

This one-story, two vehicle garage has a moderately pitched gable roof with overhanging eaves. The brick rectangular plan building has two non-historic garage doors on the east elevation. There are two bricked-in windows on the south. All windows and doors have flush concrete lintels. The building is contributing due to its construction during the period of significance.

39 514 Leavenworth Avenue; Wabash Railway Station (#1); 1907; contributing building

Property Type: Community Institution

Photograph: 29

This simple brick train depot has a rectangular plan with a moderately steep hip roof. There is a lower hip roof porch on the west that is partly enclosed on the north half with board and batten siding. Although the west elevation currently serves as the primary elevation, historically it was the rear of the depot. The west side has two fixed sash windows in the enclosed porch section, as well as an entry door. There are four non-historic 6/6 windows on the south end of this elevation. The original primary façade faced east towards the Elms Hotel. This elevation has (from south to north) two tall window openings, two smaller window openings, two tall window opening, and a large door opening. All of these historic fenestrations a double row of radiating arched brick voussoirs above and a stone lintel below. Most of the windows openings on the east as well as the south elevation have been boarded over, with the exception of the large door on the north end which has been partly bricked in surrounding a non-historic wood door. There is a paved parking on the west side of the building, and a grassed area on other sides. A concrete retaining wall is on the south. The building still exhibits the character-defining features of a train depot and is a contributing resource.

40 Regent Avenue Medians, between Kansas City Av. & Marietta St.; c. 1930s; contributing structure

Property type: parks, boulevards and park-related resources

This short section of road in front of the Elms Hotel extends east/west from Kansas City Avenue to the eastern edge of the Elms Hotel property. There are three low planted medians with concrete borders in the middle of the wide street, forming a boulevard with one lane of traffic on either side. Although the date of construction is unknown, the medians are visible in historic photographs of the hotel dating at least from the 1930s, and therefore are within the period of significance and contribute to the historic character of the district.

41 Elms Boulevard Medians; c. 1908; contributing structure

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 23

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Property type: parks, boulevards and park-related resources

Photographs: 1, 3, 14, 39

There are two long medians of nearly equal length. The original medians were built as an amenity to attract potential buyers for the newly platted Elms Addition subdivision. In the 1990s, the medians were expanded on each end for traffic control. Paved edges, raised planting beds, and a fountain were also added. While these individual elements are not historic (and are also too small to be counted individually), the historic alignment of the medians is retained, with the character-defining feature of this resource being the division of the wide road into a boulevard with one-way traffic on either side.

Conclusion of Section Seven

The Elms Historic District is a cohesive concentration of residential buildings and associated community institutional buildings that were constructed around the Elms Hotel resort. The majority of the residential building styles and forms in the district date from the turn of the twentieth century though the mid-1900s. While several of the buildings retain their historic appearance from the time of their construction, many were altered when converted from single-family residences to boarding houses. Those alterations that occurred during the district's period of significance from 1887 to 1963 are representative of the growth and evolution of health and resort industries in Excelsior Springs and are discussed in the registration requirements of the MPDF.

The district also contains two historic churches that catered primarily to the nearly quarter million yearly visitors to Excelsior Springs, rather than to the nearby residents. There are also several contributing landscape features, such as the street medians, as well as others that are too small to count, such as stone retaining walls. The most prominent historic property is the Elms Hotel, which serves as the focal point and anchor for the south end of the district. Although previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the older nomination did not include its resource count several contributing buildings, structures, and the grounds. Most of the non-contributing sites or structures in the remainder of the district are vacant lots or parking lots; several of these have always been vacant. Others, however, resulted from demolitions occurring after the demise of the mineral water industry in 1963. The number of non-contributing resources are small, and do not detract from the overall historic character of the district.

All of the contributing resources within the district meet the registration requirements for the varying property types as resources within a district. As noted in the MPDF, it is not necessary for contributing resources within the district to possess individual significance or integrity. The district as a whole meets the registration requirements by virtue of its significant concentration of buildings with associations to the historic contexts, its boundaries approximating the original plats, the original circulation patterns (streets and sidewalks), and the historic setback and massing of the contributing buildings. The amount of demolition that has occurred within the district's boundaries is minimal. Outside of the boundaries, there has been extensive demolition along Regent Street, historically part of the neighborhood but not included within the National Register district. There has also been some erosion of the boundaries on the north end of Kansas City Avenue, and construction along St. Louis Avenue that was not historically associated with the district. These areas form natural boundaries for the current designation.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 24

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

LIST OF RESOURCES

Res #	Address/Resource name	Date	Property type	Con	Non	Building	Structure	Site
1	401 Regent Av./The Elms Hotel	1912	Hotel: 1 st Class	¹³		X		
1a	401 Regent Av./Elms Park	c. 1912	Hotel: 1 st Class	•				•
1b	401 Regent Av./ Elms Hotel Pump House	c. 1912	Mineral water	•		•		
1c	401 Regent Av./ Elms Hotel Carriage House	c. 1920	Hotel: 1 st Class	•		•		
1d	401 Regent Av./Elms Hotel sulpho-saline well	c. 1912	Mineral water	•			•	
1e	401 Regent Av./Elms Hotel swimming pool	c. 1956	Hotel: 1 st Class	•			•	
1f	401 Regent Av./Elms Hotel retaining wall	c. 1912	Hotel: 1 st Class	•			•	
2	404 Regent Av./St. Luke's Episcopal Church	1933	Community Institution	•		•		
3	Regent Av./Elms Hotel parking lot	Pre-1950	Hotel: 1 st Class	•			•	
4	Regent Av./Regent Avenue Bridge.	1917	Reinforced concrete open spandrel arch bridge	•			•	
5	507 Elms Blvd./Reed Realty & Insurance Bldg.	c. 1955	Commercial building	•		•		
6	512 Elms Blvd./Neal Institute	c. 1911	Health Clinic	•		•		
7	514 Elms Blvs./Ligon Apartments	c. 1910	Boarding house	•		•		
8	517 Elms Blvd./Rowell Residence	1909-10	Single-family	•		•		
9	518 Elms Blvd./McDavid-Morgan Residence	c. 1911	Single-family	•		•		
10	522 Elms Blvd./Dr. Robichaux Residence	c. 1911	Single-family	•		•		
11a	523 Elms Blvd./Holmes Residence	c. 1911	Single-family	•		•		
11b	523-525 Elms Blvd./garage	1911-25	Single-family (garage)	•		•		
12	525 Elms Blvd./Lewis Residence	c. 1911	Single-family/Boarding	•		•		
13	526 Elms Blvd./Johnson Residence	c. 1910	Single-family/Boarding	•		•		
14a	528 Elms Blvd./Payne-Holmes-Adams Residence	c. 1911	Single-family	•		•		
14b	526-528 Elms Blvd./garage	1920-50	Single-family (garage)		•	•		
15a	529 Elms Blvd./Ashley Rooms	c. 1911	Boarding House	•		•		
15b	529 Elms Blvd./garage	2007	Single-family (garage)		•	•		
16a	530 Elms Blvd./Wilhite Residence	1917	Single-family	•		•		
16b	530 Elms Blvd./garage	c. 1917	SF (garage)	•		•		
17	532 Elms Blvd./Dr. Clark Residence	c. 1924	Single-family	•		•		
18	533 Elms Blvd./Elms Neighborhood parking	c. 2000	-----		•		•	
19	535 Elms Blvd./Elms Hotel parking lot	c. 2000	-----		•		•	
20	510 Kansas City Av./The Olives	c. 1903	Boarding House	•		•		
21	514 Kansas City Av./The Woodbine	1906-30	Boarding House		•	•		
22	516 Kansas City Av.	-----	Vacant lot		•			•
23	519 Kansas City Av.	c. 1911	Single-family/Boarding	•		•		

¹³ Previously listed on the NRHP on 3/29/85.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 25

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

24	520 Kansas City Av./Wales House	c. 1911	Boarding House/Comm.	•		•		
25	521 Kansas City Av./Hayden House	c. 1920	Single-family	•		•		
26	522 Kansas City Av./St. Ann Catholic School	1953	Community Institution	•		•		
27	523 Kansas City Av.	c. 1941	Single-family	•		•		
28a	525 Kansas City Av.	c. 1924	Single-family	•		•		
28b	525 Kansas City Av./carport	c. 1980s	Single-family (garage)		•	•		
29	540 Kansas City Av.	c. 1980	Community Institution		•	•		
30	552 Kansas City Av./St. Ann Catholic Church	1917	Community Institution	•		•		
31	554 Kansas City Av./St. Ann Rectory	c. 1917	Community Inst/SF		•	•		
32	558 Kansas City Av./Hull Residence	c. 1920	Single-family/Boarding		•	•		
33a	560 Kansas City Av./Craven House	c. 1906	Single-family/Boarding	•		•		
33b	560 Kansas City Av./garage	c. 2010	Single-family (garage)		•	•		
34	564 Kansas City Av./Dr. Craven House	c. 1907	Single-family/Boarding		•	•		
35a	604 Kansas City Av.	1973	Single-family		•	•		
35a	604 Kansas City Av./garage	c. 1980s	Single-family (garage)		•	•		
36a	612 Kansas City Av.	c. 1907	Single-family	•		•		
36b	612 Kansas City Av./garage	c. 1907	Single-family (garage)	•		•		
37	614 Kansas City Av./parking lot	-----	Parking lot		•			•
38a	646 Kansas City Av.	1927	Community Institution	•		•		
38b	646 Kansas City Av./garage	c. 1940s	Commercial building	•		•		
39	514 Leavenworth Av./depot	1907	Community Institution	•		•		
40	Regent Avenue medians	c. 1930s	Landscape resource	•			•	
41	Elms Boulevard medians	c. 1908	Landscape resource	•			•	
	<i>TOTAL: 55 resources within district (not including 1 previously listed in NRHP)</i>			40	15	43	9	3

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 26

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUMMARY

The Elms Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of *entertainment/recreation* and *health/medicine*. It is also significant under Criterion C in the area of *architecture*. The district and many of its resources were built as a result of the health industry that grew around the numerous mineral waters found in Excelsior Springs, and are thus significant under *health/medicine*. The health industry was the basis for the town's founding and its economy for nearly a century, earning Excelsior Springs its moniker as "Missouri's National Health Resort." In the area of *entertainment/recreation*, several buildings were constructed to accommodate a new class of tourists. The large Elms Hotel complex was developed to attract not only health-seekers, but also tourists seeking leisure or recreational pursuits. While the large hotel building was previously listed on the National Register in the areas of architecture and commerce (3/29/85), the grounds and outbuildings were not included in that nomination, and the entire complex's association with *entertainment/recreation* was not fully developed. In addition to the Elms Hotel, several boarding houses were built in the district accommodating those who could not afford the first class Elms Hotel. Significance in *architecture* is represented by a number of examples of Early Twentieth Century Revival and American Movement styles, as well as folk house forms that reflect vernacular residential architecture in the United States. There are also several representatives of the "boarding house/apartment" property type as defined in the MPDF. Finally, there are well crafted examples of Early Twentieth Century Revival styles that were designed by prominent local and regional architects: John O. Bradley, Jackson & McIlvain, and George M. Siemens. The district as a whole retains integrity for eligibility under the registration requirements established in the MPDF, while a few buildings possess integrity and significance in architecture for individual listing.

The Elms Historic District is associated with both historic contexts listed in the MPDF *Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri*. The district's initial development and most of the residential construction is closely associated with *Discovery and Development of Excelsior Springs' Mineral Waters Industry: 1880 – 1914*, but the changes over time to the district are also clearly associated with the town's evolution during the context "*Missouri's National Health Resort: the Public Health Years in Excelsior Springs: 1915-1963*". The period of significance begins in 1887 when the first roads were constructed and the land subdivided into lots, establishing the physical arrangement of properties. As documented in Section E of the MPDF, the period of significance ends in 1963 when a national exposé in the *Saturday Evening Post* debunked the cures and treatments for rheumatism at a prominent Excelsior Springs clinic, and dealt a death blow to Excelsior Springs' health resort industry.

ELABORATION

Discovery and Development of Excelsior Springs' Mineral Waters Industry: 1880 – 1914

The Elms Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the area of *health/medicine* for its association with the MPDF historic context *Discovery and Development of Excelsior Spring's Mineral Waters Industry: 1880-1914*.¹⁴ Since its founding in 1880, the development of Excelsior Springs relied on the industry built around its varied mineral waters. The location of the wells influenced the physical development of residential areas as well as the businesses that catered to the thousands of tourists that visited the town annually.

¹⁴ Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section E, pp. 4-17.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

As noted in the MPDF, the town's location in the narrow, Y-shaped valley of the Dry and East Fork Fishing Rivers was due to the wells and springs located within. Although picturesque, it was a poor choice for locating a new town. The valley frequently flooded, while the hills above the river were steep and rocky.¹⁵ In 1880, the first mineral water spring discovered was the Siloam Spring, located on the edge of the Fishing River on land owned by Anthony Wyman. This spring was the impetus for the town's platting that same year. Excitement over the waters was so high that tents and campgrounds sprang up around the spring before houses could be built. Although the water of the Siloam spring was free, others began exploring the area in hopes of discovering other springs with curative values that could be exploited for profit. Within two decades, more than thirty separate well or spring waters were discovered.¹⁶ The mineral waters were categorized by their content, and were separated into five distinct types of waters : ferro (iron)-manganese, calcium bicarbonate (lithia), sodium bicarbonate (soda), saline, and sulphur.¹⁷ Often times the latter two water types, the sulphur and saline, were grouped into a single *sulpho-saline* category.

The discovery of the mineral waters coincided with the Progressive Era in the United States. This era, which began around 1880 and ended in the 1920s, was noted for many health campaigns.¹⁸ Mineral water spas in America, however, had been in existence since the early nineteenth century. Primarily located on the east coast, the proprietors of Saratoga Springs and those in Virginia developed an entire program to prove the mineral contents in the waters contained healthful properties capable of curing ailments. Scientists and physicians produced chemical analyses and reports in an attempt to confer medical legitimacy for either drinking the waters or hydrotherapy (baths).¹⁹ The health claims in these publications meshed with the Progressive Era's programs emphasizing diet and hygiene.

Excelsior Springs' promoters followed the same pattern developed by their east coast counterparts, which was part of a larger effort to market the town's mineral waters in order to attract visitors. One local example involved the Regent Springs. Chemistry professor W. P. Mason of Rensseler Polytechnic Institute in New York was brought to Excelsior Springs in 1890 to analyze the Regent Springs water, which was located just south of the Elms District. In his report, Mason stated that the water from the Regent was the strongest iron-manganese water in the world; it was also one of the purest he had analyzed.²⁰ After establishing the mineral content through scientific means, the next step was to identify the diseases that a particular water would cure. The Regent Spring, for example, would provide "prompt and permanent relief in all kidney and bladder troubles, including Bright's disease, diabetes, inflammation and cartarrh of the bladder, lithaemia and lithic acid deposits, rheumatism, rheumatic gout,

¹⁵ Ibid., 11.

¹⁶ Ibid., 6, 11.

¹⁷ *The Waters of Excelsior Springs: Valley of Vitality* (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Spa Development, March 2003), 57-59.

¹⁸ Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section E, p. 4.

¹⁹ Thomas A. Chambers, *Drinking the Waters: Creating an American Leisure Class at Nineteenth-Century Mineral Springs* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002) 53.

²⁰ Excelsior Springs Company, *Excelsior Springs, Mo.: A Brief History of their Discovery and a Description of the Famous Medicinal Waters*, in Springs, Misc. folder V1.200.100.58 (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, [1890]) 13-14.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 28

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

dropsy and dyspepsia.”²¹ Finally, a complex daily regime for drinking the water, often in combination with other local spring waters, was recommended.

Excelsior Springs’ promoters took an additional step by entering several waters in the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair. The fame of Excelsior Springs’ mineral waters was sealed when they received medals for two of the waters – the Regent for its medicinal value, and the Soterian for its use in the Soterian Ginger Ale. This recognition helped spread the word about Excelsior Springs across the nation. Of course, drinking the waters were not the only health benefit that could be derived. Some visitors preferred hydrotherapy, and an equally complex system of hot or cold baths, compresses, or wraps were developed at the numerous bath houses that sprang up in Excelsior Springs.²²

Once the mineral water industry took off in Excelsior Springs, local boosters hoped the town’s physical development would expand at a similar pace. In anticipation of this growth, several additions to the original forty acre town plat were made within the first decade of Excelsior Springs’ existence. Frederick Kugler’s plat in June 1881 extended the town east of Penn Street between Broadway and Bluff streets. Another addition on the east was J. C. Isley’s May 1887 addition, which extended the eastern side of town from Saratoga to Frances streets, and south to Isley Boulevard. Other additions immediately to the west and south of the original plat were added in the mid-1880s.²³

The first recorded plat in the Elms Historic District was the 1887 Central Park addition, prepared by the Excelsior Springs Company. At the head of the company was Colonel Henry C. Fish; with John Henrie of Kansas City, he purchased the city’s first hotel in 1881. The two men next acquired the Siloam Springs and Regent Springs. In 1887, Fish organized the Excelsior Springs Company after raising \$500,000 from outside investors. With Fish as general manager, the Excelsior Springs Company acquired the land holdings of the Relief Spring and Land Company. The company eventually owned more than 1,000 acres, extending two-and-a-half miles north and south, and a mile east and west.²⁴ They planned an extravagant resort hotel at the center of the company’s land holdings. In order to accommodate a variety of visitors to Excelsior Springs’ mineral waters, different types of accommodations would be needed, ranging from modest hotels up through first class lodgings. Naturally, the latter type of visitor was highly desired, as they had the most disposable income. A first class resort hotel was thus critical to the town’s economy.

The Excelsior Springs Company reserved twenty-three acres for the hotel on the east, and began building the Elms Hotel began in 1887. It formally opened a year later on July 4, 1888. The three-story frame hotel cost more than \$300,000 and featured a broad verandah on all four sides (top view, Figure 6).²⁵ Adjacent to the proposed hotel, the developers planned a residential neighborhood called Central Park. The Excelsior Springs Company hoped to attract new residents with wider streets than those found in the

²¹ Deon Wolfenbarger, “Regent Spring, CL-AS-010-025,” Architectural/Historic Inventory Form (Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office, 2012).

²² Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section E, 7-8.

²³ Ibid., 12.

²⁴ Excelsior Springs Company, 5-6.

²⁵ W. H. Woodson, *History of Clay County, Missouri* (Topeka, KS: Historical Publishing Company, 1920) 631.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 29

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

original town plat. Thus the Central Park addition included streets that were 60 to 80 feet wide and lots 120 feet deep, larger than other parts of town (Figure 2).²⁶

Although the number of visitors to the town was high in the 1880s and 1890s, the town's permanent population did not grow as quickly as anticipated. Most of the new construction in this decade was therefore centered close to the historic downtown and Siloam Springs.²⁷ In contrast, the Central Park neighborhood only contained small hotels on the north side of St. Louis Avenue, and a handful of industrial/rail yard buildings along St. Joseph Avenue to the west before the turn of the twentieth century. The small Catholic Church was the only non-industrial or commercial building west of Kansas City Avenue. Excelsior Springs' residents realized the importance of a Catholic church for visitors coming to town for health and medical reasons. So even though the number of Catholic residents was quite small, the town helped the tiny congregation to raise money for a church building. A location nearest the town's largest hotel, thereby attracting the largest number of visitors, seemed a logical choice for the location of the Catholic Church.²⁸

For the first decade after the platting of the neighborhood, the Elms Hotel was the most prominent building. This hotel only lasted a decade though, as it was destroyed by fire on May 9, 1898. This undoubtedly did little to encourage new construction in Central Park. By 1900, only three small residences (no longer extant) had been built in the neighborhood south of St. Louis Avenue (Figure 3).

As a large first class hotel was critical to the health and tourism industries of Excelsior Springs, citizens were worried about the effect that the loss of the Elms Hotel would have on the town's economy. They were relieved in 1906 when the hotel property was purchased and the new owners announced their intent to build a larger and finer hotel, and vowed to spend \$200,000 in construction and furnishings.

To show that we mean business I have brought with me today Mr. George E. Kessler, the famous Kansas City landscape architect, and he will look over the ground this afternoon with the idea of selecting the site for the hotel building. I expect him to lay out the grounds, tell us just where to place the hotel, how much ground is needed for hotel purposes and plan a system of walks and boulevard through the tract. All the ground not needed for hotel and hotel park purposes will be sold, but we will keep enough for a proper setting for a great big hotel. The rest will be developed for building purposes with a system of parked drives for streets. We expect to put in building restrictions in the deed when we sell this ground so that every residence erected on it will be in keeping with the surroundings of a big hotel.²⁹

The original hotel property included eighteen non-subdivided acres around the first hotel. Realizing they would not require such extensive land for a new hotel, the new owners developed plans for the remaining acreage. As the *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* noted:

²⁶ "Central Park: being a re-survey of part of Excelsior Addition," Liberty, MO: Clay County Assessor's Office (25 August 1887).

²⁷ Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section E, p. 13.

²⁸ "History of St. Ann Church," *St. Ann Catholic Church, Excelsior Springs, Missouri* (N.P.); in St. Innocent Orthodox folder (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives).

²⁹ "Will Build New Hotel on Elms Site," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (5 September 1906) 1.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 30

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The ground which the new owners will not need for hotel purposes—and the whole 18 acres will not be needed—is among the most valuable in the city. It is the only unplatted ground in the valley, and when the new hotel is built with its beautiful surroundings this land should be the most desirable in the city for residence purposes.³⁰

The owners hired landscape architect George Edward Kessler to prepare plans for eighteen acre site. Kessler was born in Germany, but moved to the United States with his family when he was three years old. After returning to Germany for training, he returned first to New York, and then to Kansas City. His work in 1893 for Kansas City's first park and boulevard plan skillfully represented the tenets of the City Beautiful movement by preserving the stream corridors and river bluffs with a planned open space system of boulevards and parkways to connect the city's parks. As Kessler's reputation grew around the turn of the nineteenth century, his projects included park and master plans for cities around the country.³¹

Kessler's role in the new Elms development was two-fold: to prepare ground plans for the hotel, and to recommend the streets and lot subdivision for the remainder of the property. Kessler chose a new location for the hotel south of the old site so construction could begin as soon as possible. However, the new owners planned to finance the construction of the new hotel from the sale of lots in the new "Elms Addition," so Kessler also prepared plans for the new subdivision. There were two versions: one that showed lots facing on an interior street as well as Kansas City Avenue. A second alternative, likely Kessler's preference, was to divide lots only on Kansas City Avenue, "leaving the water course and the natural features entirely unmolested, in which case the present vegetation would entirely block out any possible unfortunate view of the rear or side property lines. The owners, however, chose the version that gave them the "largest amount of frontage on the streets that could possibly have been obtained out of the ground we have there for sale."³²

The plat for the Elms Additions was filed on January 16, 1907. The north portion was subdivided into residential lots, while the south portion was reserved for the hotel. A new street, Elms Boulevard, extended north from the proposed hotel site to St. Louis Avenue, and the Promenade (later Regent Avenue) ran east/west in front of the Elms Hotel; both roads featured twenty foot wide central medians on both the Promenade and Elms Boulevard. The residential lots on both the Elms and the Promenade were twice as wide as those in the older Central Park plat (Figure 4).

Kessler's layout of the subdivision combined with the deed restrictions were aimed to appeal to the upper middle-class of Excelsior Springs. Deed restrictions were a relatively novel approach for a town that sprang out of a farmer's field less than three decades earlier. A newspaper article in February 1907 included a large map showing the residential lots and how much was reserved for the new hotel.

The prices at which the lots will be offered will include the cost of street improvements, sidewalks paving, sewer, gas and water pipes, so that purchasers will have thoroughly modern and up-to-date property. There will be restrictions in the deeds against saloons,

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Kurt Culbertson, "Kessler, George Edward," *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, (Ed.) Charles A. Birnbaum and Robin Karson (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000) 212-215.

³² Correspondence between I. J. Ringolsky and George Kessler, Elms Hotel folder (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives). Note: copies of the correspondence regarding the two sketches is dated 1908, but this is likely an error as the Elms addition was platted in early January 1907.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 31

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

livery, sale or feed stables, laundries, blacksmith shops etc. This will make sure that the new addition will always be an attractive part of town, with no blots on it.³³ In contrast to the haphazard construction of the earlier neighborhoods, there were specific prohibitions against many commercial uses, as well as setback restrictions dictating where the dwelling could be located on the lot. Kessler's design for landscaped medians and boulevards gave a genteel appearance to the streetscape. It was also guaranteed to provide an attractive entrance to the Elms Hotel and appeal to the well-heeled visitors in the burgeoning tourist industry of Excelsior Springs. This was in stark contrast to the hodgepodge of construction that occurred in the sections of town that sprang up immediately after the discovery of the mineral waters.

Work began on the new Elms Addition before the hotel plans were completed, with road paving and sidewalk construction beginning in the spring of 1907.³⁴ Postcards from circa 1907 and 1908 not only show the rapid progress in the new residential block's infrastructure, but also reveal the importance of the new residential area to the company. Multiple views of what is basically an empty street served as marketing tools for the available lots (Figure 5).

In the meantime, Kansas City architect Louis Curtiss was hired to design the new Elms Hotel in 1907,³⁵ but was later replaced with the architectural firm of Jackson and McIlvain.³⁶ The hotel opened to fanfare and guests from around the country on July 31, 1909. The excitement was short-lived, however, as the hotel was again destroyed by another fire on October 30, 1910. Discussion began immediately regarding construction of a new hotel, and although the same basic style was used, this time the developers insured that the new hotel would be completely fireproof with steel frame and reinforced concrete construction.³⁷ The new hotel was also larger (bottom view, Figure 6) and contained mineral baths for its guests. The hotel drilled its own well on the east side of the property that produced sulpho-saline waters. This well provided water in the hotel's bathing department, and later for the swimming pool. The third Elms Hotel would not only provide lodging for the "first class" health-seekers that visited Excelsior Springs, but was able to also accommodate many of their health needs on-site with mineral waters to drink or for bathing.³⁸

Construction of a third hotel required financial backing, however, and many were now leery of investing in a third Elms Hotel. One source of financing that remained to the owners was the unsold lots in the Elms Addition. The first sale of lots had not gone as well as the developers had hoped; only a few lots had been sold in the Elms Addition by the end of 1910, and only one house completed by the time of the hotel fire. Samuel Rowell, a druggist turned attorney, started work on the first house in the Elms Addition in May 1909; by the time of its completion in 1910, it was the only house on the block.³⁹ Furthermore, no houses had been built on the east side of Kansas City Avenue by 1910. Realizing the

³³ "Elms Lots on Market," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (14 February 1907) 1.

³⁴ "An Old Landmark Gone," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (6 April 1907) 1; "The Elms Plans Next Week," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (30 March 1907) 1.

³⁵ "An Old Landmark Gone."

³⁶ "To Finish March 15," *Excelsior Springs Journal* (5 February 1909).

³⁷ "Work Begins Tomorrow," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (14 November 1910).

³⁸ Although previously listed in the National Register in the areas of architecture and commerce, the Elms Hotel also played a key role in the town's mineral waters (and later, tourism) industry as the largest hotel in Excelsior Springs.

³⁹ *Excelsior Springs Daily Standard* (7 May 1909).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 32

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

importance of a first-class hotel to the city's economy, the city rallied behind the developers to help sell the remaining lots. Midway through 1911, the newspaper provided almost daily updates on the progress.⁴⁰ Answering to the call of civic duty, local residents bought the remaining lots in order to insure the construction of the Elms Hotel.⁴¹

In the meantime, the older portion of the neighborhood, represented by the Central Park addition, had slowly been developing. Here the number of houses increased from two to six between 1900 and 1905, and by 1910, there were eleven residential buildings in Central Park. Two of the larger buildings were boarding houses. Members of the Craven family built two of the residences on Kansas City Avenue. Richard Craven's home was at 560 Kansas City Avenue, and in 1910, resided there with three grown daughters. Dr. Y.D. Craven built his house on the lot adjoining to the south.⁴² The picturesque stone bungalow at 612 Kansas City Avenue was built c. 1907, just southwest of the Sulpho-Saline bathhouse (no longer extant). At this time Kansas City Avenue was not paved, and it was necessary to cross a small wooden bridge over a creek to reach the bungalow. This remains the southernmost residence in the district today.

With all the residential lots sold in the Elms Addition, and the third Elms hotel under construction, development in the east side of the neighborhood finally took off. The town's population had more than doubled between 1900 and 1910 due to its successful economy based on the mineral waters and health industries, and the need for new housing lots had finally outgrown the close-in neighborhoods. This district, which had seemed comparatively distant from downtown in decades past, now represented the only remaining open space in the level valley of the Fishing River. Furthermore, the transportation network had greatly improved since 1900, linking not only Excelsior Springs to the region, but this neighborhood to the remainder of town. The neighborhood's developers played a key role in those transportation improvements.

Communities that based their economy on mineral waters depended on a few key areas for their survival and success: improved transportation networks for visitors, sources of capital, increased revenue, and labor.⁴³ Of these, transportation was one of the most important. The developers of the Elms Hotel solved the capital problem by financing part of the hotel construction through the sale of residential lots. However, access to Excelsior Springs had posed a problem since the town's inception. Since the town was platted relatively late, railroad lines had already been laid out linking the older towns in Clay County. It was difficult at first to convince rail companies to build lines to the new town. A few of the town leaders, particularly those involved with the Elms Hotel and realty company, worked diligently to improve access and bring new rail lines to Excelsior Springs. Henry Fish, the head of the Excelsior Springs Company, secured the right-of-way for the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway in 1887; its depot, however, was located a mile from town.

⁴⁰ "Elms Lots are Selling," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (27 June 1911) 1.

⁴¹ "Working for the Finish," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (28 June 1911); "The Elms Lots All Sold," *Excelsior Springs Daily Call* (29 June 1911) 1.

⁴² Wolfenbarger, "Historic Resources Survey, Phase II – Halls of Waters District and Central Park District," survey forms.

⁴³ Chambers, 11, 13.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 33

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

While securing the first rail line for Excelsior Springs greatly increased the number of people that came to town to partake of the waters, it was highly inconvenient for the only depot to located so far from the center of town. The proprietors of the Elms Hotel, who also owned several of the mineral springs, next arranged for the construction of a dummy line for the Wabash railway. This short line linked the Milwaukee depot to town. The tracks for this line conveniently ran along the west side of the Elms District, as undoubtedly one of their main goals was to insure the success of the Elms Hotel. The 1894 Sanborn reveals that that there were no accommodations for passengers on this line. By 1900, a small frame passenger depot was built that featured a boardwalk leading east to the first Elms Hotel (Figure 3). In 1907, a more permanent brick passenger depot for the Wabash line was completed.⁴⁴ The station faced east towards the Elms District, while the Wabash dummy lines were on the rear or west side of the depot. Although all of Excelsior Springs' establishments benefited from this new depot, its location at the northeast corner of Dunbar and Leavenworth Avenues was particularly well suited for guests of the Elms Hotel and for the neighborhood. Coupled with the recent increase in permanent resident population, a new electric train line to Kansas City and St. Joseph, road improvements and bridge construction, several new houses, apartment buildings, and boarding houses were built in the district between 1911 and 1913. Thus the amenities that were planned to increase health seekers and tourists benefited the small Elms residential district as well.

By the time of the 1913 Sanborn (Figure 7), approximately sixty percent of the lots on the west side of Regent Avenue had a residence, and all but two lots on the east side of Elms Boulevard were occupied. There were six new residential buildings on the west side of Elms Boulevard, all built within the span of a few years. Many of the new residents on Elms Boulevard were among Excelsior Springs' prominent citizens. After Samuel Rowell started his house in 1909, Dr. Hiram Clark built his residence at 525 Elms Boulevard after paying \$2700 for the lot. According to Mary Lewis, the second owner of the house, the lots on the west side of the street were priced higher, as it was considered an even more desirable location. Lewis recalled that the street served as a promenade for the guests at the Elms Hotel (Figure 9), and she enjoyed watching them walk by on their way to the "little village" as Excelsior Springs was referred to by the tourists.⁴⁵ J. Elmer McDavid and family lived at 518 Elms; along with his brother Walter, he owned the livery stable, and later an automobile business. Jesse D. Holmes and his wife Anna lived at 521 Elms; J.D. owned and operated the dry goods store. His son, Otis Holmes, managed the store and lived across the street at 528 Elms. Dr. E. C. Robichaux, a physician in private practice, lived at 522 Elms with his wife and son.

The east side of Kansas City Avenue was slower to develop, with only two houses and the Sulpho-saline pavilion between St. Louis and Regent Avenues recorded in 1913. However, the west side between Leavenworth and Chicago Avenues, as well as the central section of the block above Leavenworth, had numerous homes around St. Ann Catholic Church. Most of the other vacant lots on the west side of Kansas City Avenue north of Chicago were properties owned by the Catholic Church.

During this same period in other parts of Excelsior Springs, single-family residences were being converted to boarding houses. This was particularly true between 1900 and 1905, and was associated

⁴⁴ Deon Wolfenbarger, "Wabash R.R. Station, 514 Leavenworth," inventory form, in "Historic Resources Survey, Phase II: Hall of Waters District and Central Park District," May 1993.

⁴⁵ Betty Thompson, "The State of the Street," (15 May 1976); newspaper clipping from Elms Blvd. folder (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 34

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

with the growing need to accommodate visitors that came to Excelsior Springs to “partake of the waters.” New boarding houses and hotels were also constructed along the outer edges of downtown. New single-family residences were being constructed in the first decade of the twentieth century along Isley Boulevard and Benton Avenue, as well as on the west side of downtown.⁴⁶ The downtown was basically filled by 1913, with virtually every lot in the historic commercial core of Excelsior Springs containing a building. With no more room for commercial growth in the downtown, businesses began expanding southwest along Thompson Avenue (then called Wyman). This road crossed the Fishing River and extended along the Elms District. Thus the city’s increase in population to almost 4,000 by 1910, improved rail and road access, and new commercial buildings to the north all helped encourage the growth of the district after 1911.

Although the two platted additions in the Elms Historic District were designed to appeal to the city’s prosperous residents, other buildings, such as boarding houses and apartments, were constructed in the district. This phenomenon was repeated throughout Excelsior Springs, as nearly all sections of town included boarding houses or apartments to accommodate the more than 200,000 health-seeking visitors that mineral waters were attracting each year. The large hotels simply could not provide enough rooms for all who came to town for medical and health reasons. There was also a need for more reasonably priced boarding for long term visits. While the boarding houses may have offered less expensive long-term housing, the workmanship and design of the boarding houses and apartments that were built within the Elms District were of a quality and design that complemented the residential streetscape. The Ashley Rooms at 529 Elms Boulevard (c. 1911) are an example of the high quality architectural designs used for the boarding houses in the Elms District. While this two-and-a-half story Neoclassical Revival building is large, its massing and scale are still compatible with the adjoining single-family home on the north. The attention to details on the porch, frieze, and cornice set it apart from the older boarding houses that were built closer to downtown. The Wales House (c. 1911) at 520 Kansas City Avenue did not have as many stylistic details as those on the Ashley Rooms, but its brick construction with stone features also set it apart from the frame boarding houses in the older sections of town. Health-related buildings were also constructed in or near the district during this period. The Neal Institute at 512 Elms Boulevard was built in the neighborhood around 1911 to house patients who suffered from alcoholism.

The Elms Historic District is thus significant under Criterion A for its association in the area of *health/medicine*. When the first mineral waters were discovered in Excelsior Springs, local entrepreneurs realized that profits were not possible if the waters were given away. In the 1880s, the Excelsior Springs Company began working on a multi-pronged approach to profit from the mineral waters. This included gaining control over the most significant spring and well sites in town; building an elaborate resort hotel; improving access to Excelsior Springs bringing new rail lines to town; developing a nation-wide marketing campaign; and platting residential subdivisions centered around the company’s key land holdings. The Elms District was thus part of the multi-faceted approach to insure the success of the mineral water economy. It not only contained the city’s largest hotel, but the platting of the residential subdivision was part of the campaign to raise capital for the hotel construction. The construction of boarding houses in the district was possibly an unintended, but necessary consequence of the district’s development. The huge number visitors to Excelsior Springs required more accommodations than could possibly be met by the hotels in downtown. Throughout all of Excelsior Springs, boarding houses and apartments were built to handle the influx of visitors. In the Elms District, some of the boarding houses

⁴⁶ Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section E, p. 15.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 35

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

were originally built as single-family residences, but were later converted when improved transportation resulted in every-increasing numbers of tourists. This trend would continue after the first World War in the next period. The other boarding houses were substantial and well-designed, and blended in with the surrounding residences.

“Missouri’s National Health Resort:” the Public Health Years in Excelsior Springs: 1915-1963

The Elms Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the area of *entertainment/recreation* and *health/medicine* for its association with the MPDF historic context *“Missouri’s National Health Resort:” the Public Health Years in Excelsior Springs: 1915-1963.*⁴⁷ By the early twentieth century, Excelsior Springs had determined that its economic future would be dominated by a single industry based on its mineral waters. During this period, though, the nature of the industry evolved from one focused almost solely on health to one that also included leisure activities. The town’s chosen moniker as “Missouri’s National Health Resort” reflects this dual resolution.

At the start of this period, several of Excelsior Springs’ mineral water features were falling into disrepair. Many of the privately owned spring pavilions were run-down or health hazards, and most of the owners were not willing to invest in improvements. Beginning in the late 1910s, a citizen-led initiative asked the City Council to step in and restore some of the most important springs. This movement soon evolved into a broader plan to place every spring in the city under local government control in order to provide free mineral waters for visitors. The first step though, was to improve the physical appearance of downtown. Landscape architect George Kessler was hired by the city to design Siloam Park along the Fishing River in downtown, and to provide suggestions for new spring houses for the Siloam and Sulpho-Saline pavilions. While most of Kessler’s plans for the grounds were not implemented, two elaborate Classical Revival pavilions designed by architect Henry Hoyt were finished in 1923. Other city-wide improvements included several new bridges, an eight mile circuit of drives and parkways, and 100 acres of parkland. The parklands represented over ten percent of the city’s total acreage.⁴⁸

Many of the civic improvements in the late 1910s and early 1920s directly or indirectly affected the district. The new Siloam Park was developed immediately northeast of the neighborhood. This, as well as the increasing reliance on automobile transportation, resulted in the need to improve roads to the Elms Hotel and the neighborhood. In addition to paving streets, in 1917 the city constructed a bridge over the Fishing River at the east end of Regent Avenue.⁴⁹ The new bridge was a reinforced concrete open spandrel arch (photograph 22). As noted in *A Context for Common Historic Bridge Types*, “Open spandrel bridges had a lightness and visual appeal not possible with heavier closed spandrel bridges. This relative openness made open spandrel arch bridges more aesthetically appealing for prominent or scenic locations.”⁵⁰ This was especially important for a bridge next to the Elms Hotel resort; in fact it was considered so scenic that several postcards of the new bridge were printed (Figure 10). These civic improvements are directly associated with MPDF context *“Missouri’s National Health Resort:” the Public Health Years in Excelsior Spring: 1915-1963.*

⁴⁷ Ibid., 18-32.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 19-20.

⁴⁹ *The Contractor* Vol. 24, No. 3, 2 February 1917 (McGraw Publishing Company, 1917) 704, *Books.Google.Com*, Web, 2 February 2013.

⁵⁰ Parsons Brinckerhoff and Engineering and Industrial Heritage, 3-67.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 36

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

These improvements were important elements for expanding the consumer base for Excelsior Springs' mineral waters. While the medicinal uses of the waters were still an important component of marketing the town to outsiders, the city made a conscious effort to broaden the appeal of the community in the early 1920s and beyond. This coincided with a national trend for pleasure travel. The nation's urban population was growing rapidly, and growing numbers of citizens had more leisure time and personal wealth. Furthermore, greatly improved modes of transportation made it possible to travel to previously remote locations. Armed with more leisure time and money, Americans increasingly spent both of these commodities on discretionary travel as leisure tourists.⁵¹ While mineral waters resorts in the eastern United States had long combined health and leisure,⁵² Excelsior Springs more clearly recognized the value of tourists, as opposed to patients, after the turn of the twentieth century. The expanding middle class of Kansas City and surrounding region could now afford discretionary travel, and where better than in nearby Excelsior Springs. After the opening of the third Elms Hotel, a newspaper noted that the both the hotel and the town were . . .

the Mecca for the jaded and tired ones of Kansas City and of the rich and prosperous tributary area. Excelsior Springs will now take rank with the national resorts which here and there have been studded across the continent to periodically divert work-a-day America from the whirl and turmoil of the desk and the counting room to the elysian joys of relaxation where the great alchemist charged the fragrant "outdoors" with healing waters and adorned the panorama with restful bowers.⁵³

Following the lead of springs' promoters around the country, Excelsior Springs publicized its natural scenery and romantic setting almost as much as the mineral waters. Nature could be just as effective as an antidote to society's tensions as drinking eight glasses of mineral water a day.⁵⁴ If the mineral waters did not provide a cure, then fresh air, relaxation and quiet tranquility in nature would surely benefit the tourists. In addition to the city's new park system, the grounds of the Elms Hotel provided extensive outdoor recreational activities. Excelsior Springs grew to appreciate its natural setting and the role of outdoor beauty in attracting tourists in this period. The older, more established resort communities in the eastern United States had long realized this dualism in the mineral water industry. In fact, Henry James believed that while Americans may have traveled to mineral water resorts because they believed the mineral waters would provide a cure for what ailed them, it was the scenic and recreational qualities of the resorts that provided them the impetus to make the trip.⁵⁵ The Elms Hotel, in particular, adapted its business during this period to cater more to tourists than to "health-seekers," as the latter group often chose boarding houses for long-term visits.

Since almost all of Elms Boulevard had been built out in the previous period, most of the new construction within the district between 1913 and 1926 occurred on the east side of Kansas City Avenue, where three houses and an apartment building were built. On the west side, the largest new building was the brick St. Ann Catholic Church built in 1917. The rectory next door was also built around the same

⁵¹ Ethan Carr, *Wilderness by Design Carr: Landscape Architecture & the National Park Service* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1998) 6-7.

⁵² Chambers, 4.

⁵³ "Under New Management," *Excelsior Springs Standard* (18 February 1915).

⁵⁴ Chambers, 29.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 37

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

time. By 1926, two more residences had been built on Elms Boulevard. In 1917, bank president Hugh Wilhite hired Oklahoma architect John O. Bradley to design his new Mission style residence at 530 Elms Boulevard, warranting a front page article in the local newspaper.

The new residence is one of the exceedingly artistic buildings in the city. It is Spanish Mission in style; designed by Architect John O. Bradley. . . The long sloping roof and mission style of architecture have elicited a great deal of admiration, not only from residents of Excelsior Springs, but travelers whose experience brings them in frequent contact with the newest ideas in home building.⁵⁶

The Wabash depot (1907) located on Leavenworth and Dunbar continued to serve the neighborhood and town through most of the 1920s, although its location was no longer convenient for the new Elms Hotel located south of Regent Avenue. In 1927, a new Mission style depot was built in the 600 block of Kansas City Avenue, directly across from the Elms Hotel property. It served the branch line that connected Excelsior Springs directly with St. Louis, Buffalo and New York City, as well as the Kansas City, Clay County, St. Joseph Interurban line. After the new Wabash depot was built, the former depot building continued to be used as a freight station. However, the usefulness of the new train station was short-lived. The increasing use of automobiles and new highways into town led to the discontinuation of the Interurban line in March 1933, followed by the last run of the Wabash in September 1933.⁵⁷

The Depression of the 1930s struck Excelsior Springs as much as the rest of the nation. Although some claimed the city weathered the tough times better than others, the Elms just missed being converted into a sanitarium, only to be forced to file bankruptcy in 1931. Many owners of single-family homes either took in boarders, or converted their buildings to rooming houses. There was virtually no new construction in the district during this decade (Figure 11). The only exception was the new church building for the St. Luke's Episcopal Church at 404 Regent Avenue. Its construction was due to the beneficence of Major W. A. Bell, president of the General Realty and Mineral Water Company. Although the small congregation had raised nearly \$5,000 by 1929, they hoped to have the church close to the center of town. In spite of the Depression, lots were too valuable in the town's center. In 1932, Bell donated the lots across the street from the Elms Hotel, one of the prime locations in Excelsior Springs. He also arranged for a finely carved, 15th century stone from his parish church in Blechingley, Surrey, Great Britain, to be shipped over and used in the construction. To honor Bell, the church was designed in the Gothic Revival style by noted Kansas City architect George M. Siemens. The cornerstone was laid in November 1933.⁵⁸

During the Depression, the other major impact on the town was the city's purchase and consolidation of all of the privately owned mineral wells and springs. The town's bath houses and smaller clinics were also affected by the Depression and the municipal consolidation, resulting in several business closures. One of these smaller clinics was located within the Elms District. The brick building at 512 Elms Boulevard was initially built for the Neal Institute, a clinic established for the treatment of alcoholism, but closed after only a few years of operation. The few local medical mineral water facilities that did

⁵⁶ "New Wilhite Home," *The Excelsior Springs Standard* (7 January 1917) 1.

⁵⁷ Kevin and Sonya Morgan, "The Wabash Depot," (typeset pamphlet, n.d.).

⁵⁸ "History of the Church of St. Luke, the Beloved Physician," Episcopal Church folder (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives, 1993); "St. Luke's Church Cornerstone to be Laid Here Sunday, Nov. 12," *The Daily Standard* (3 November 1933).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 38

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

remain open, however, eventually expanded or evolved into sanitariums or hospitals. These continued to grow until after World War II, the sanitariums were the largest employers in town.⁵⁹ Two of the largest were the Ball Clinic in downtown, and the McCleary Sanitarium, located just north of St. Louis Avenue and the Elms District. The latter, which opened in 1925, had a two-fold effect on the district: it encouraged the conversion of single-family residences to boarding houses for its outpatients and workers, and physicians moved into the neighborhood to be close to work. While some property owners' decision to take in boarder likely stemmed from the economic conditions of the 1930s, the proximity of the neighborhood to these two clinics undoubtedly aided the decision.

Although no new construction occurred during the Depression, the abandoned Wabash Depot was rehabilitated for a new commercial use when the Quality Milk Company moved their dairy production facilities into the building in the late 1930s. A small restaurant was located in the old depot section, and a new addition on the south side served the dairy production.⁶⁰ The business continued to prosper into the 1940s, requiring a new outbuilding to be constructed at the rear of the property. The only other commercial building within the district's boundaries was constructed after World War II. Although several commercial buildings (mainly gas stations) were built along St. Louis Avenue, these businesses were geared towards drivers passing through town, since St. Louis Avenue was part of Highway 10. The building at 507 Elms Blvd., however, was a neighborhood business, geared to local residents and purposely designed to conform with the adjoining residences to the south. The lot was previously owned by Samuel Rowell, who lived south at 517 Elms Boulevard. It was purchased in the 1950s by Dr. McKinney for his dental practice, with the understanding that he would build a "home like" building to fit in with the surrounding neighborhood.⁶¹ Although he died before he could build his office, the next owner, James Reed, built a structure that was less commercial in appearance than those found on nearby Thompson Avenue.

After World War II, only a few new buildings were constructed in the district (Figure 11). The St. Ann Catholic Church built a school in 1952 on the southwest corner of Leavenworth and Kansas City Avenue on property it had owned for decades. The church also converted the boarding house to the north to a convent for the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. In fact, most of the physical changes to the district were updates to those buildings that had been converted to boarding houses. While some of these, such as 510 Kansas City Avenue, had been converted to a boarding house in the previous period, the number of single-family dwellings that changed over in this period was significantly higher. The conversion to multi-family housing usually necessitated physical alterations to the building. In some instances, an owner may have just taken in boarders. On Kansas City Avenue, 525, 558, 560 and 564 were changed to multi-family housing in the 1930s, 1940s or later. On Elms Boulevard, 514, 518 and 526 had boarders by the late teens or 1920s. Thus up through the end of the district's period of significance, the district's location close to the two largest medical clinics in town continued to attract long term boarders who came to Excelsior Springs seeking medical treatments.

⁵⁹ Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section E, p. 19.

⁶⁰ Morgan.

⁶¹ Moyné Tindall Woods, "History of Elms Boulevard," Elms Blvd. folder (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives).

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 39

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

In an attempt to keep up with the new motor courts and motels built on the edge of Excelsior Springs, the Elms built a new swimming pool in 1956.⁶² These alterations reflect the changing emphasis on the part of hotels from medical patients to tourists. The boarding houses and other residents in the district, on the other hand, remained more closely associated with the health industry up through the early 1960s. In 1963, the entire town was rocked by an exposé article in the August 24, 1963 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Entitled the “The Hucksters of Pain,” the author exposed treatments at the Ball Clinic as ineffectual at best, and bordering on fraudulent. The clinic could not survive the negative publicity and closed at the end of the year.⁶³ For a town that based its entire economy on a single industry, this date clearly marked the end of the period of significance for the district and the associated context.

The effect on the district was clear. In the next four decades, several historic buildings were demolished. The majority of these were on Regent Avenue, which is not included within the proposed district. By the 1970s, both of the churches and the Catholic school had declining attendance; the school eventually closed, and the Catholic Church built a new sanctuary on the edge of town. More significantly for the neighborhood, the Elms closed in 1970 for eight years. It reopened in the 1980s under the Elms Redevelopment Corporation, which also purchased several properties in the neighborhood. Increasing traffic on St. Louis Avenue led to redevelopment along that route, resulting in the construction of larger apartments and new gas stations. This area is also not included within the proposed district as most of the construction and alterations are either not associated with the historic development of the neighborhood, or occurred after the period of significance. Although a few small residential garages have been built since the end of the period of significance inside the district boundaries, only one major building was constructed: the church at 542 Kansas City Avenue. These buildings are considered non-contributing as they were built after the period of significance.

When the Elms Hotel for bankruptcy in 1991, the city and its citizens once again stepped in and purchased the hotel in 1995. Private owners began purchasing properties in the district, and with a renewed interest, worked to preserve their historic neighborhood. The city reinvested in the neighborhood infrastructure with new landscaping for the medians. In recognition of the historic significance of the area, the Elms Hotel was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on March 29, 1985, and the Elms Historic District was designated a local landmark in July 2010.

Architecture

The Elms Historic District is an enclave of early twentieth century residences that also includes churches and the large Tudor Revival Elms Hotel. The historic residences represent the continuum of single-family architectural styles and forms popular during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Larger boarding houses also exhibit stylistic details from the turn of the nineteenth century through the late 1920s. Although only a single block, Elms Boulevard in particular contains a wide range of both early twentieth century revival styles, as well as more “modern” styles that rejected historic architectural traditions. Combined with several examples of National Folk forms on Kansas City Avenue, the district is a microcosm of comfortable yet substantial dwelling types popular with middle-class America.

⁶² “Elms Hotel 1930-1980,” Elms Hotel folder (Excelsior Springs, MO: Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives).

⁶³ Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section E, pp. 31-32.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 40

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

A few buildings in the district are noteworthy as examples of work from prominent architects. The Elms Hotel (listed 3/29/85) and the St. Luke Episcopal Church were designed by Kansas City architects, and at least one residence was architect-designed as well. In 1932, George M. Siemens designed the St. Luke's Episcopal Church at 404 Regent Avenue as country Gothic Revival style church. Siemens was a partner in the active Kansas City firm of Root & Siemens from 1896 until Root's death in 1925. Walter C. Root was the brother of famed Chicago architect John Welborn Root, and the firm of Root & Siemens was responsible for the Scarritt Building and Arcade, the Westport Methodist Episcopal Church, the George B. Peck Dry Goods Company commercial building, and Stauffer-Flint Hall at the University of Kansas. Seimens' obituary in 1951, however, stated that he was "primarily a designer of homes."⁶⁴ The scale, materials and design for the St. Luke's Church was expertly designed to blend with the surrounding neighborhood and the natural landscape of the Excelsior Springs area. Here, the native rubble-faced limestone church with wood plank door has the appearance of a country church in England, which was the intent of its benefactor. The character-defining features include the steeply-pitched cross gables roofs at the east end forming the transepts, gable-front entry vestibule, and Gothic arched windows. The craftsmanship of the church masonry is particularly well-executed.

Architect John O. Bradley designed the Mission Revival style house at 530 Elms Boulevard for bank president Hugh Wilhite. Based in Pawhuska, Oklahoma, his firm John O. Bradley & Co. architects designed the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Fidelity State Bank in Cleveland, Oklahoma.⁶⁵ The Wilhite home has a side gable roof accentuated with parapet ends and a decorative circular attic vent; the large gable on the front slope of the side-gable house is similarly designed. The wide overhanging eaves, stucco walls, and porch with arched openings are other features typical of the Mission Revival style. Other homes and boarding houses in the district exhibit similar care to details and design, indicating the likelihood that they were architect-designed as well.

In addition to several well designed representatives of early twentieth century residential architecture, there are several examples of vernacular houses distinguished more by their form, although some contain stylistic details found on higher-style buildings. The Craftsman-inspired bungalow and the foursquare are two of the more common, with several examples of "gable-front" houses as well. Bungalows and bungalowoid houses were popularized by house and garden magazines, and numerous plans for these dwellings were printed in architectural pattern books. Either front- or side-gabled, they featured roofs with widely overhanging eaves, often with exposed rafter tails or brackets. The porches had large columns, often tapering and set on stone or brick piers. Examples of this property type are found at 517 and 532 Elms, and 612 Kansas City Avenue. These same buildings also exhibit excellent masonry detailing and craftsmanship. 532 Elms Boulevard exhibits many features of the Craftsman style. The front porch is particularly noteworthy, with massive decorative beams under the porch eaves, exposed roof rafter tails, and large round columns built of light-colored, curved-faced limestone set off by dark mortar. The masonry at 612 Kansas City Avenue is also striking, and reflects the Craftsman era attention to workmanship. The random-range ashlar limestone is primarily laid horizontally, but is accented with triangular-shaped vertical stones scattered throughout, and with fenestration lintels marked by vertical voussoirs.

⁶⁴ "Walter C. Root is Dead," *Kansas City Star* (26 June 1925) 2; "G. M. Siemens, Sr. Dies," *Kansas City Star* (7 November 1951) 44.

⁶⁵ *The American Architect and The Architectural Review*, Vol. CXX, No. 23 (New York, July-December 1921) 18. Web, 1 May 2013.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 41

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The district contains a few examples of the foursquare residential form. The foursquare features a square or rectangular floor plan and is usually two-and-a-half stories high, resulting in a boxy shape. It most typically features a one-story porch extending full width across the façade. Either gable or hipped roofs were employed, usually with upper story dormers. A variety of stylistic features could be added to the basic form, including elements of the Craftsman, Prairie, or Colonial Revival style. The stucco version at 523 Elms Boulevard, for example, references the Prairie style with its wide overhanging hip roof eaves, and massive square stucco columns set on limestone piers. Gable-front houses were another common house form in the Elms District. 526 and 528 Elms Boulevard illustrate how well suited this form was for narrow lots, when in this case, two houses were fit within a single lot. These two houses have pedimented gable-front roofs and classically-inspired porch columns, a treatment that was followed in many of the other gable-front houses in the Elms Historic District.

Although several single-family residences were later converted to boarding houses, a few were intended from the start as rental housing. The Ligon Apartments were built for G. W. Ligon, and is an example of the "Boarding House/Apartment" property type noted in the MPDF. It is one of only five examples of a brick colonnaded apartment in Excelsior Springs, a type more commonly seen in nearby Kansas City. Although the colonnaded apartment was rare in Excelsior Springs, the two-story porch feature was a common element on boarding houses. As noted in the MPDF and previous surveys, two-story double-decker front porches occurred only on boarding houses in Excelsior Springs, and were key character-defining features of this property type.⁶⁶ Another example of the "Boarding House/Apartment" property type is the Ashley boarding house at 529 Elms Boulevard. This was likely architect-designed, as the Neoclassical elements on the building are well articulated. The pedimented gable-front roof features a very wide, elaborated entablature of Doric derivation, with triglyphs alternating with metopes with circular medallions. This building, along with the other residences on Elms Boulevard, epitomizes the distinction of an address on Elms Boulevard.

Despite its small size, the Elms Historic District contains a variety of architectural styles and forms popular in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The buildings clearly present their key character-defining features from this period. However, since a neighborhood is often dynamic, some changes occurred that embody the continuum of history. The period of significance for the Elms District extends through 1963, representing a long period of association with the mineral water history in Excelsior Springs. During that period, historic changes such as conversion of a single-family residence to a boarding house, or the updating of a boarding house to appeal to modern customers, express the changing trends in the district. These alterations are historic in their own right, and represent the cyclical evolution of the town from its original focus on health to tourism, and back to health again.

⁶⁶ Wolfenbarger, MPDF, Section F, p. 11.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 42

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 43

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 44

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 45

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Latitude/Longitude

	latitude	longitude
1	39.338906°	-94.227725°
2	39.338901°	-94.227290°
3	39.338827°	-94.226321°
4	39.338690°	-94.225687°
5	39.337630°	-94.224773°
6	39.337095°	-94.224355°
7	39.336324°	-94.224084°
8	39.336214°	-94.224101°
9	39.335215°	-94.224752°
10	39.334657°	-94.225886°
11	39.334658°	-94.226939°
12	39.335122°	-94.227645°
13	39.338005°	-94.228099°
14	39.338210°	-94.228100°

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Elms Historic District are indicated as thick dashed lines on the accompanying scaled map "The Elms Historic District" (Figure 1)

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the concentration of historic resources that were historically associated with the Central Park and Elms Addition plats of the City of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, as well as the Elms Hotel property. The boundaries follow the lot lines of the included properties, and also include the streets, medians and sidewalks. Properties not included from the two historic plats are vacant lots along Regent Avenue, and resources on Concourse, St. Louis and Kansas City Avenues that were determined non-contributing due to lack of integrity or construction dates after the period of significance.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 46

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

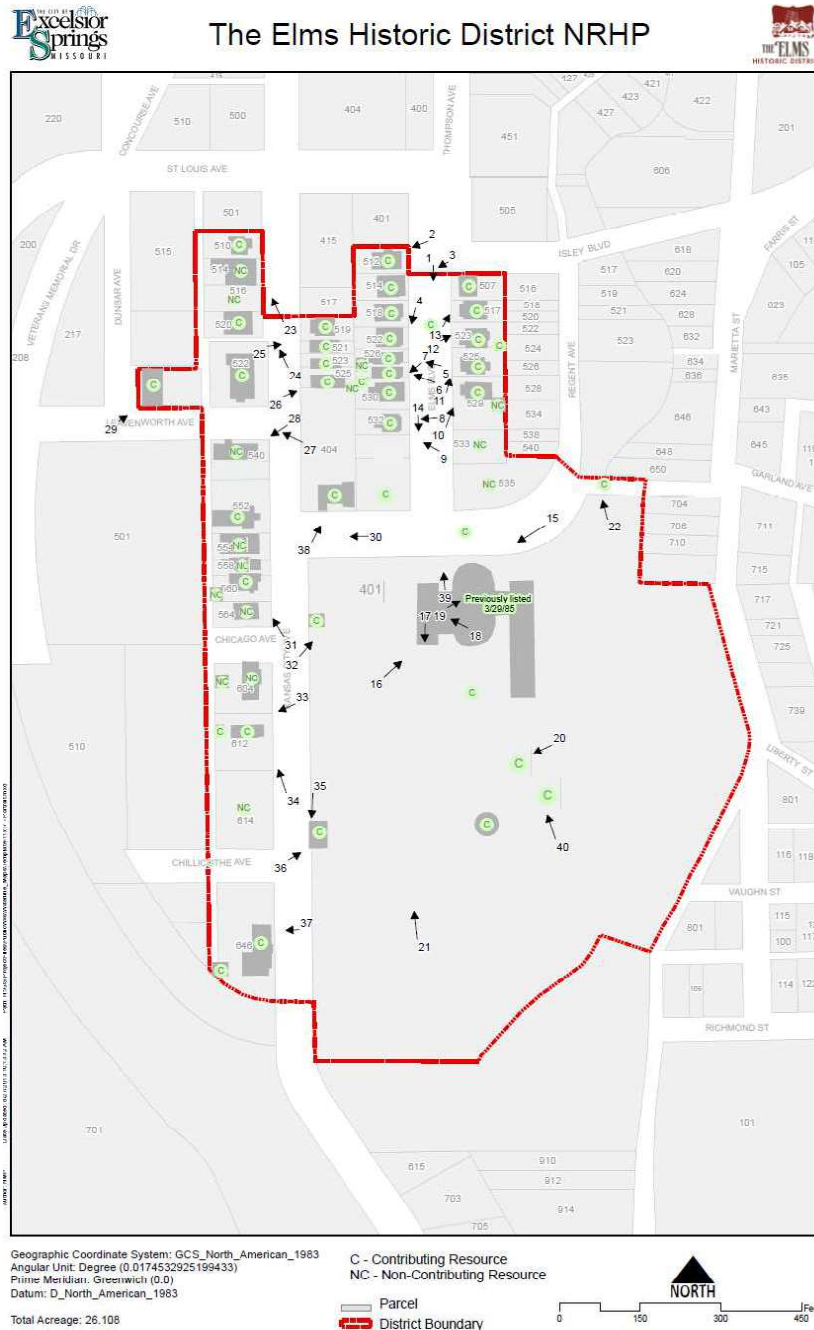


Figure 1
Elms Historic District Map: boundaries, resources and photograph angles

The Elms Historic District

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

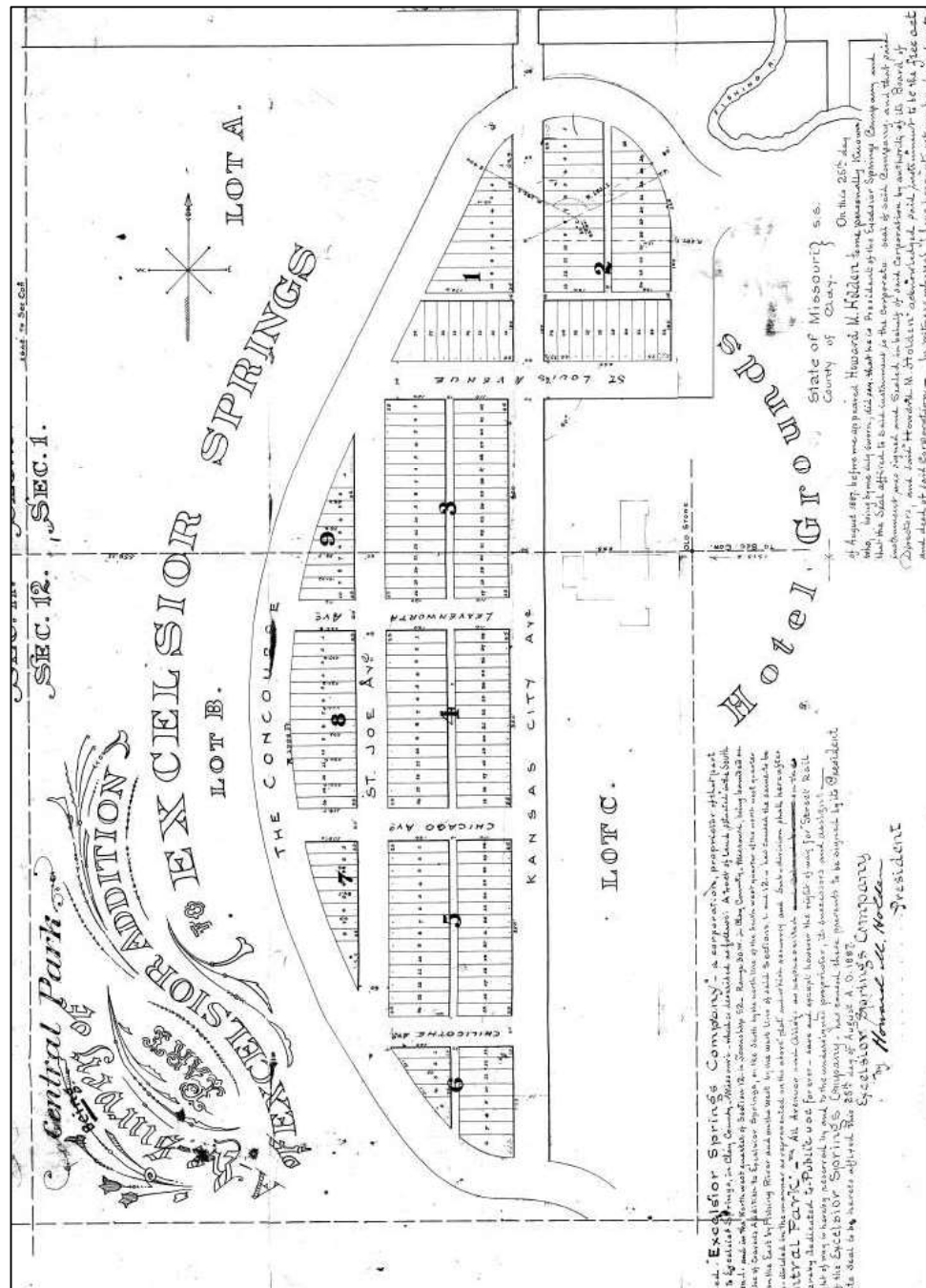
Section number Figures Page 47

Figure 2

1887 Central Park addition

City of Excelsior Springs, Planning and Zoning Department

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 48

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

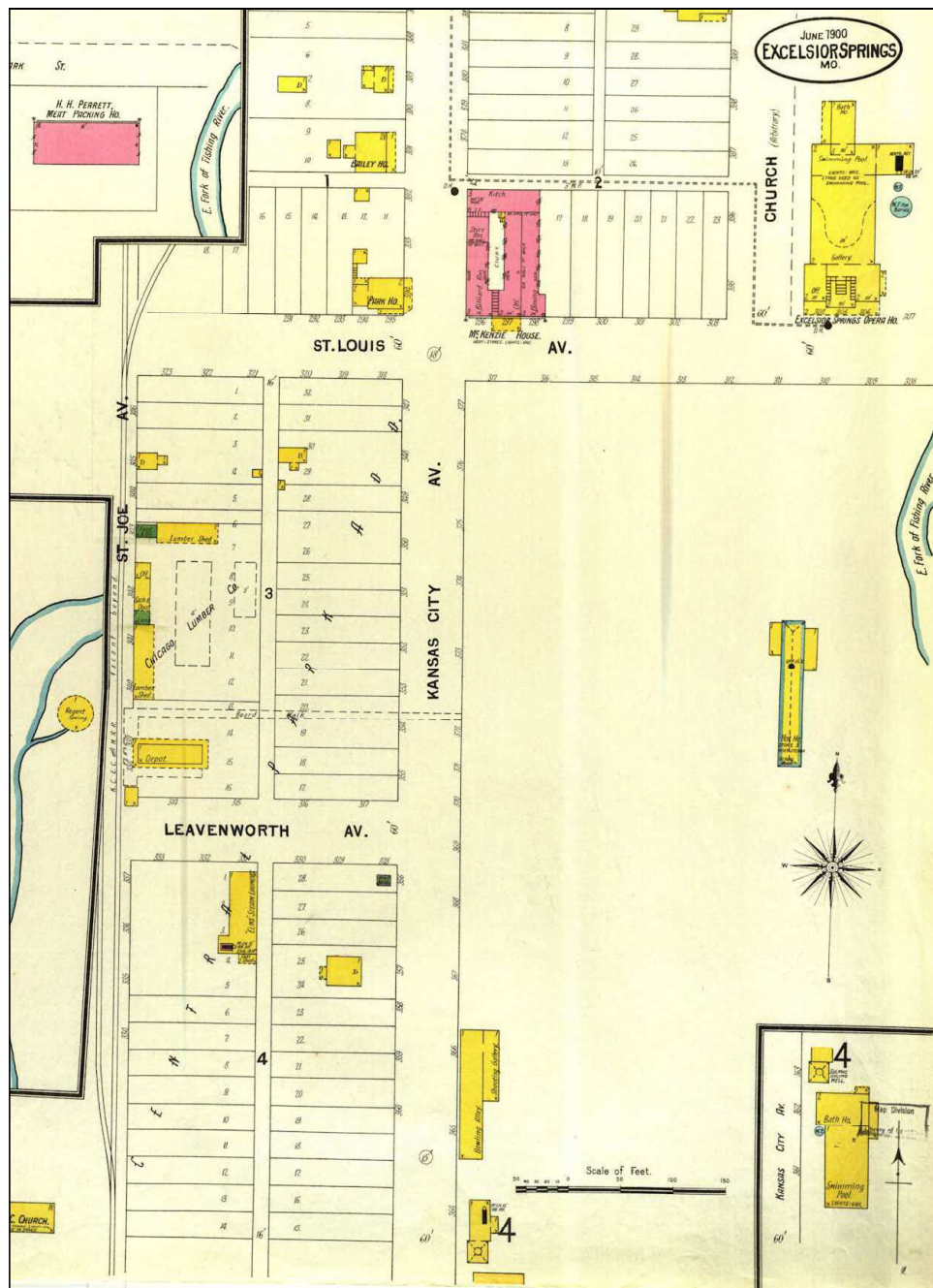


Figure 3

1900 Sanborn Map. Note the first Elms Hotel (east of Leavenworth Ave.) had burned

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 49

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

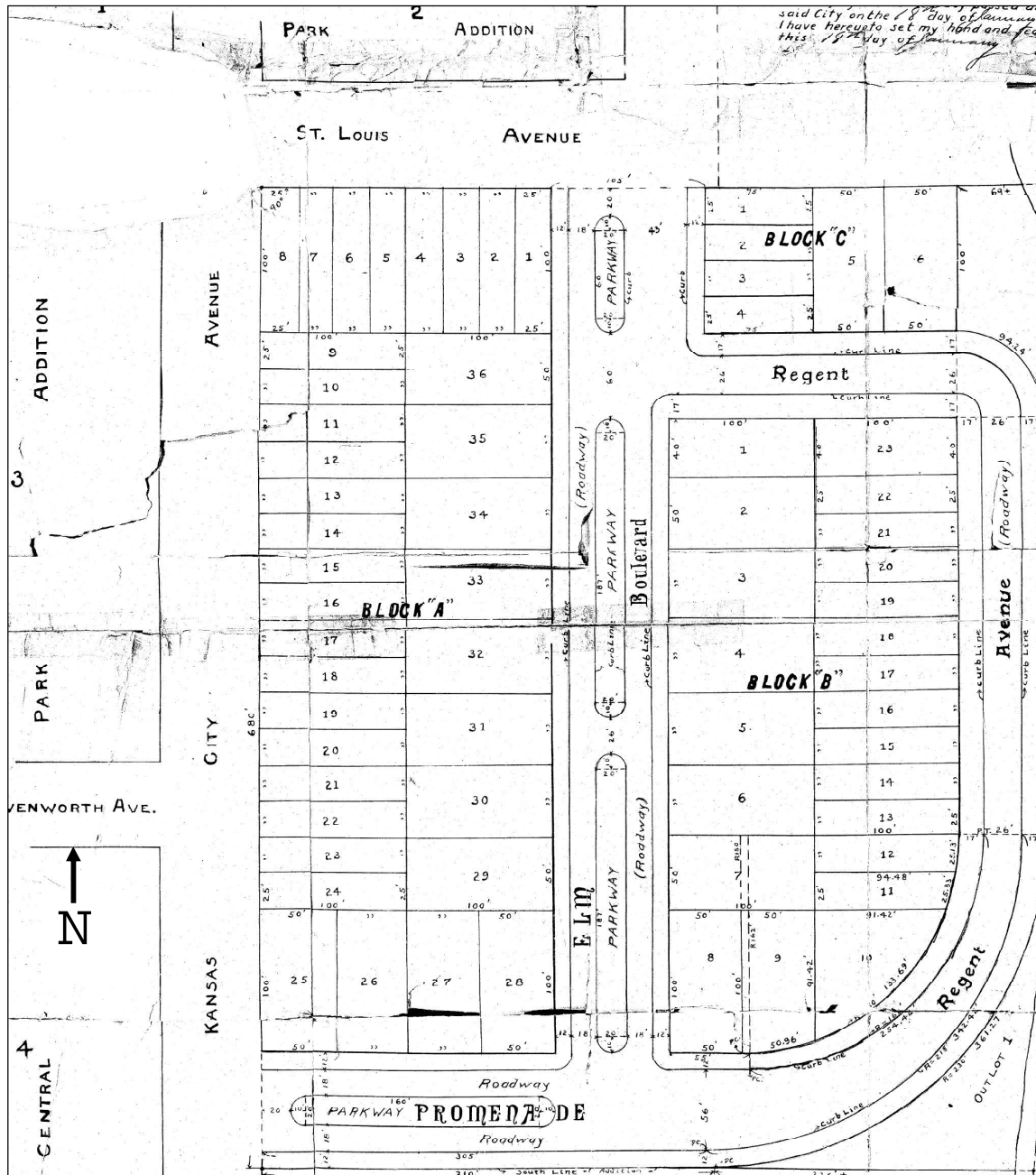


Figure 4
1907 Elms Addition plat
City of Excelsior Springs, Planning and Zoning Department

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 50

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

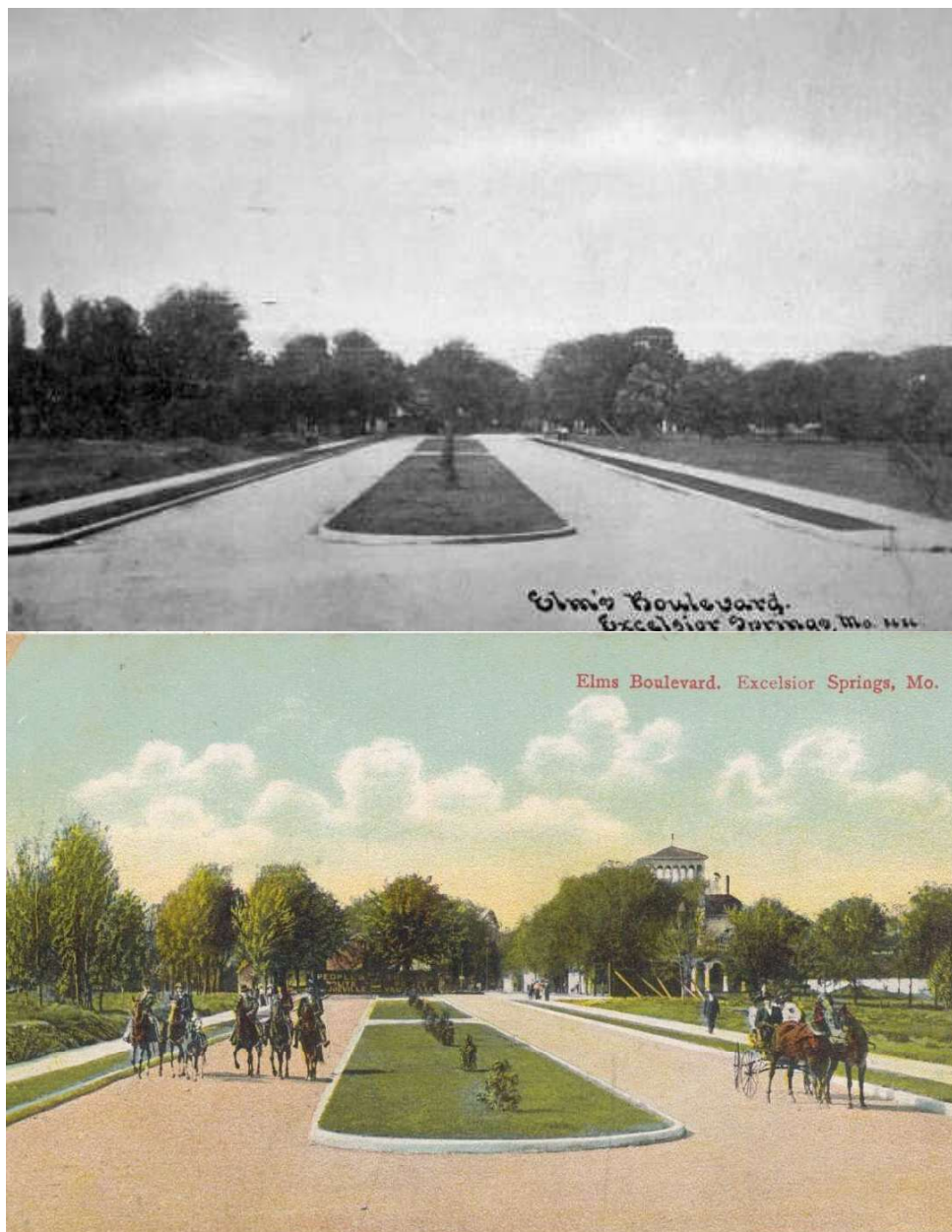


Figure 5

Elms Boulevard, historic postcards c. 1908, prior to construction of the Elms Hotel.
The Sulpho-Saline bathhouse (demolished) is visible in the background.

Author's collection

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 51

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

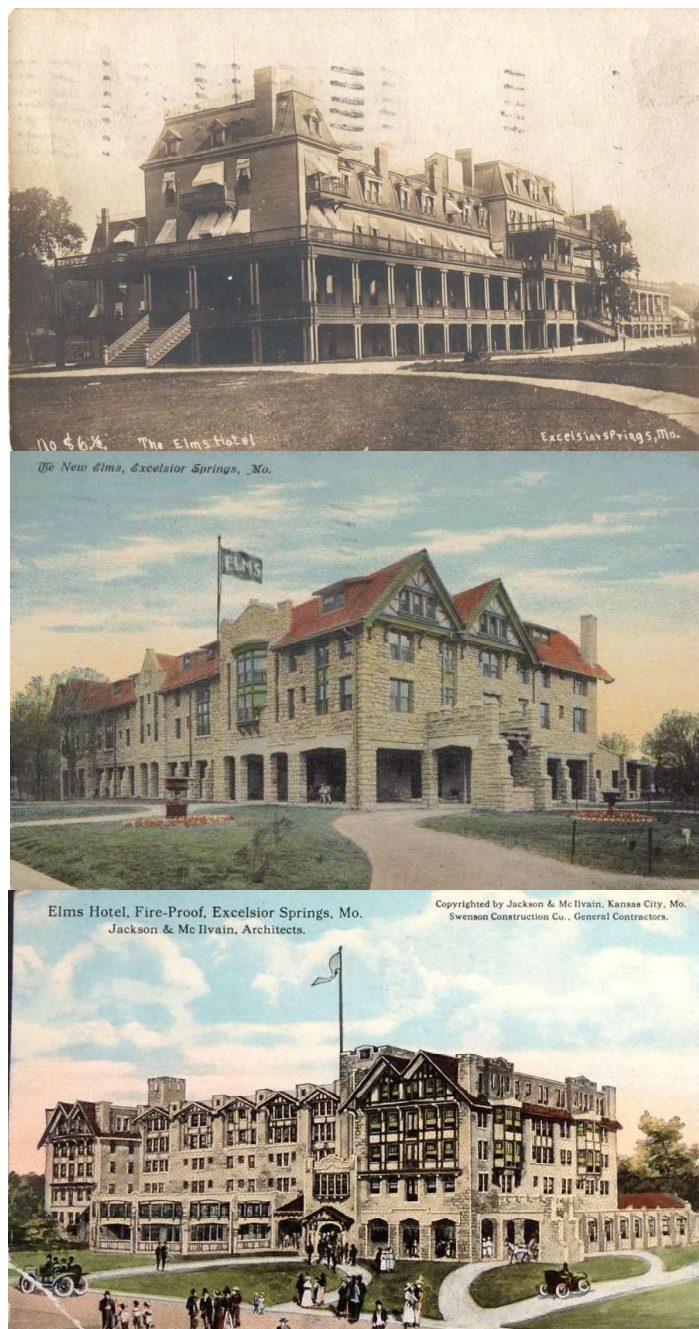


Figure 6

The Elms Hotel, historic postcards

From top to bottom: Elms "I" (1888), Elms "II" (1909), and Elms "III" (1912); Author's collection

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 52

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

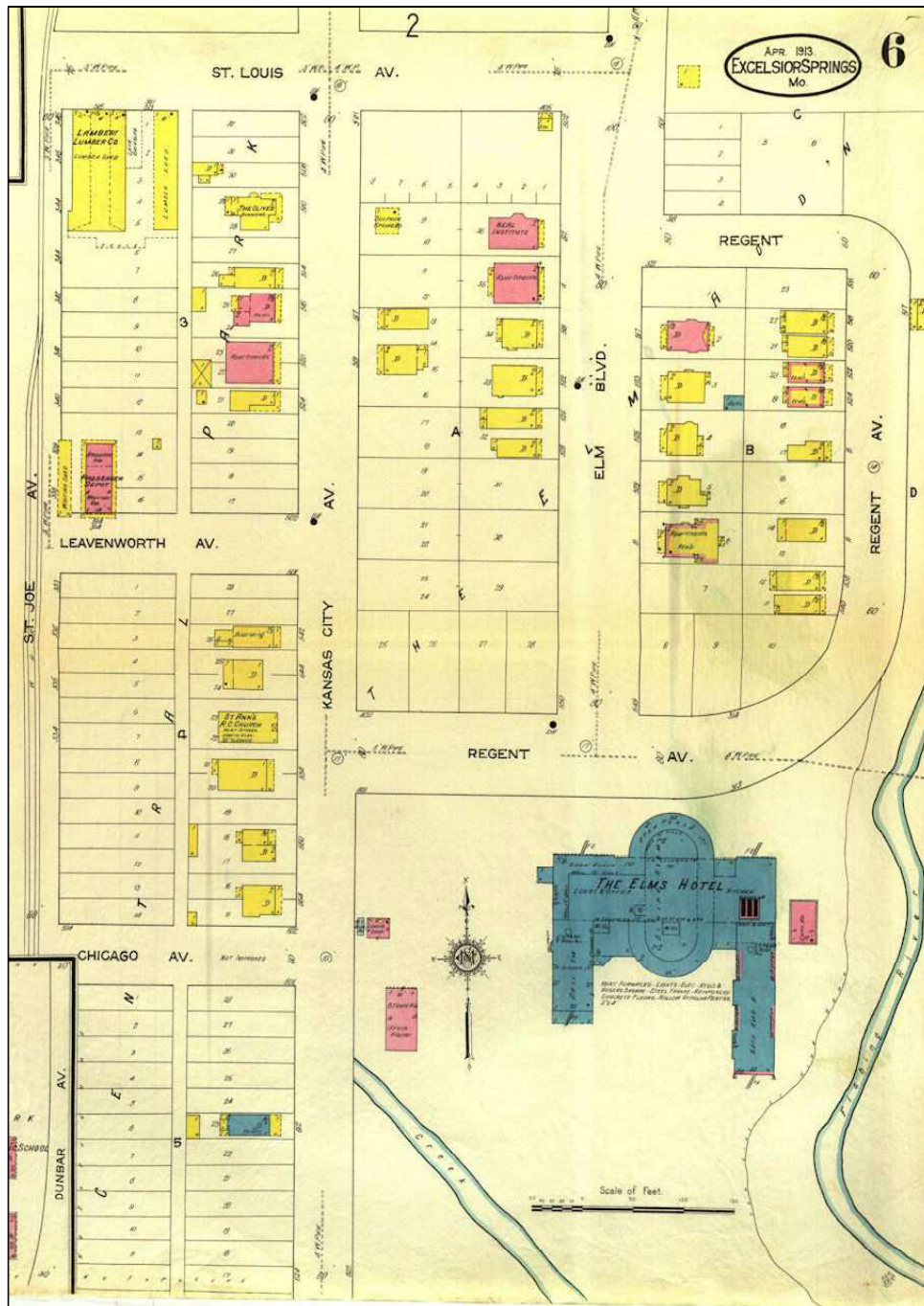


Figure 7
1913 Sanborn Map

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 53

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

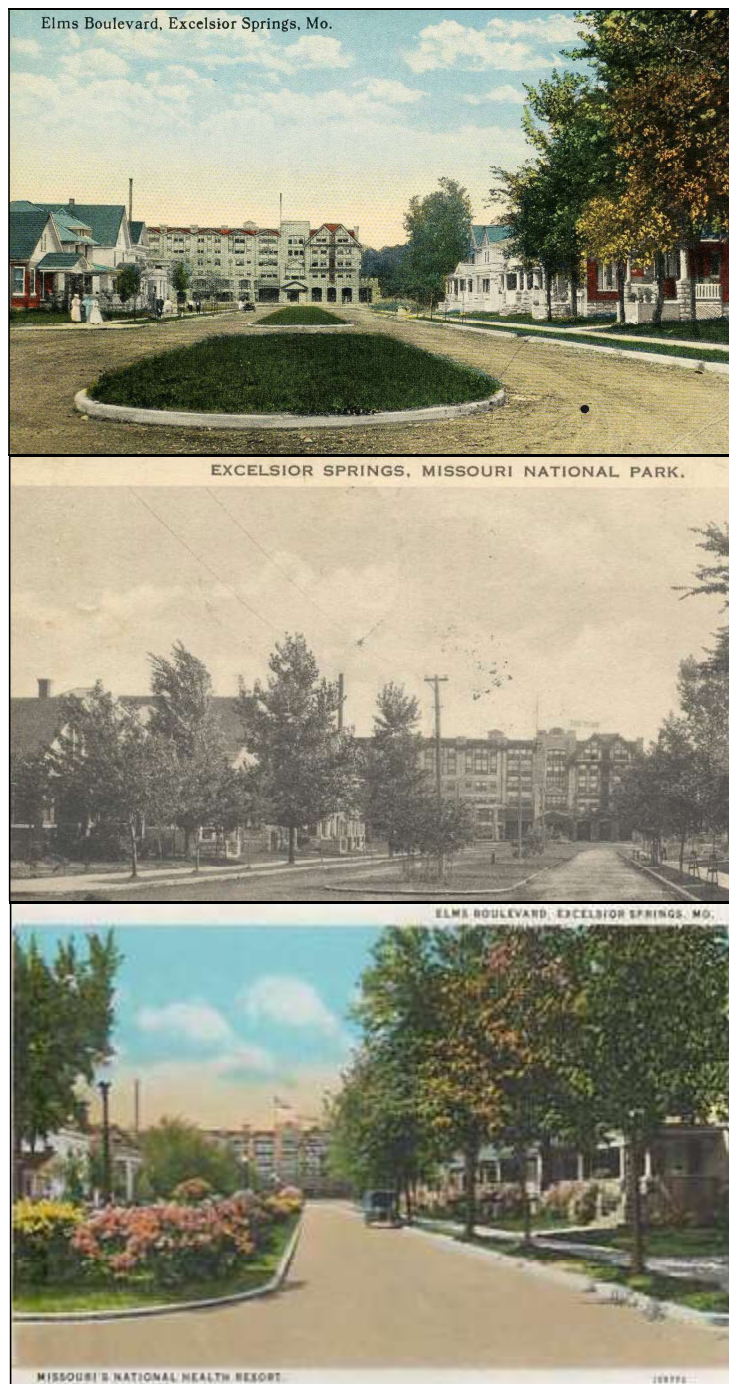


Figure 8

Elms Boulevard, historic postcards, ca. 1910s-1920s; Author's collection

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 54

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 9

Elms Boulevard ca. 1910-1920s; historic photographs courtesy of Excelsior Springs Museum & Archives

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 55

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

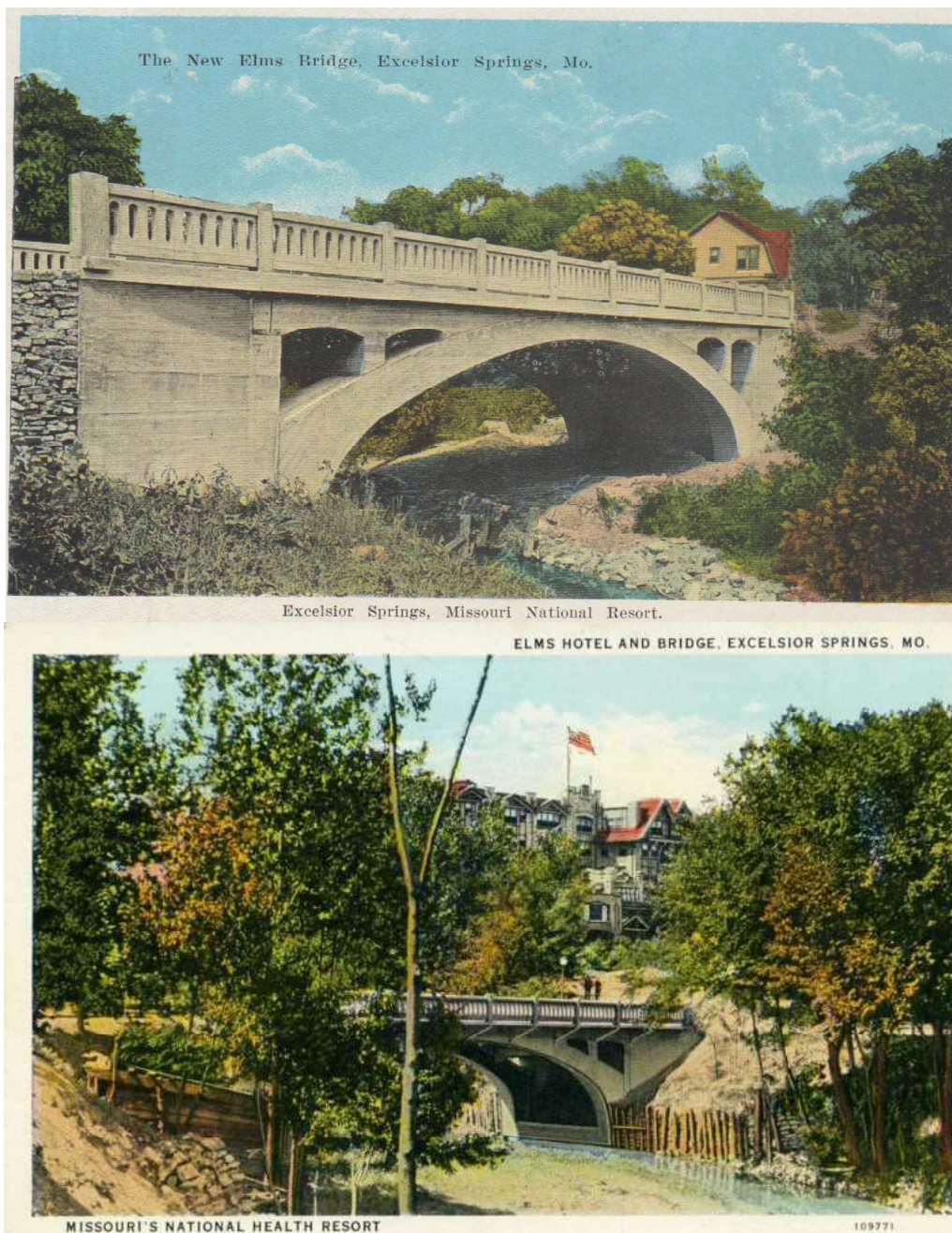


Figure 10
Regent Avenue Bridge, historic postcards, c. 1920s
Author's collection

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 56

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property
Clay County, Missouri
County and State
Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

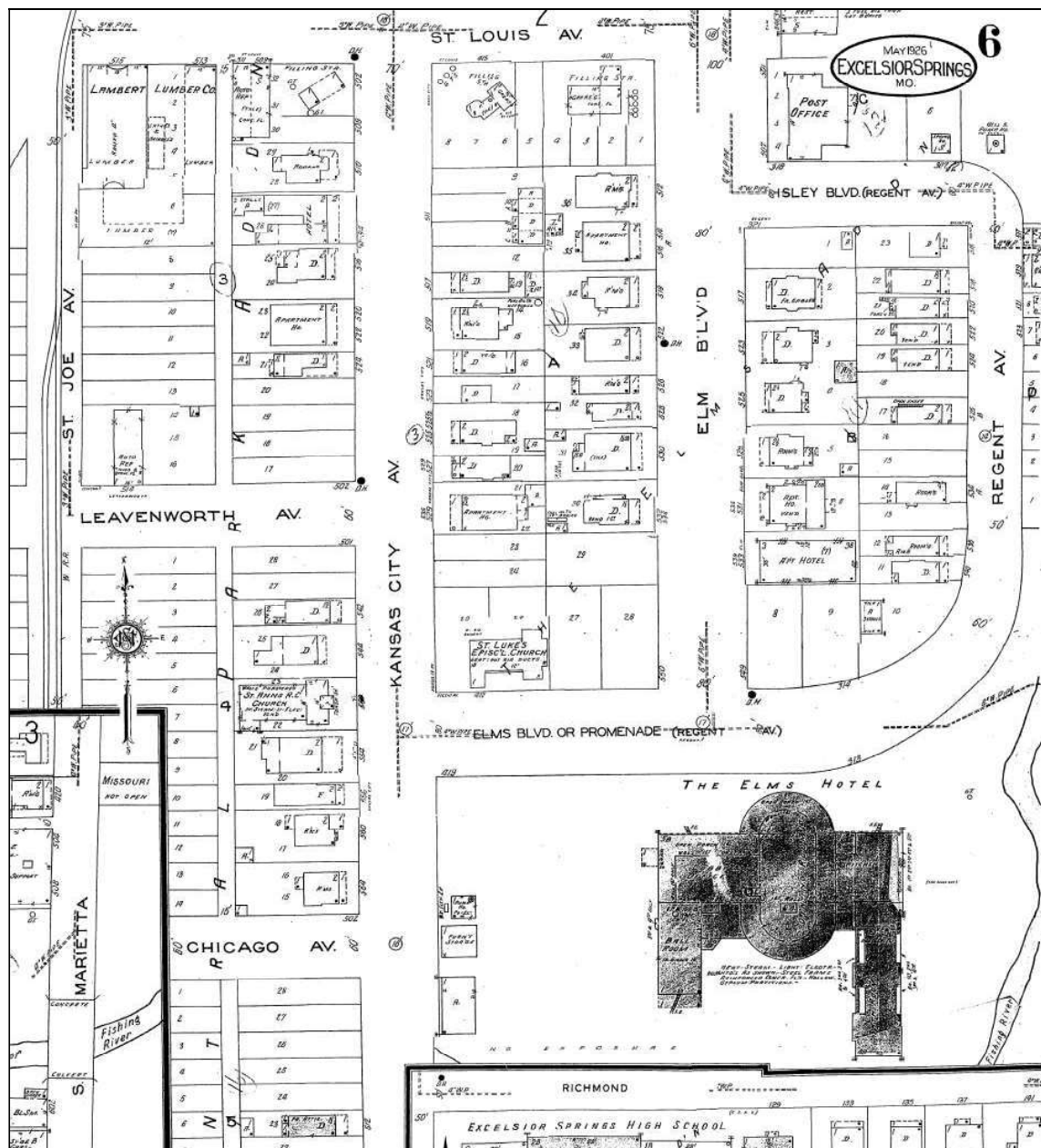


Figure 11
1942 Sanborn Map (updated from 1926)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 57

The Elms Historic District

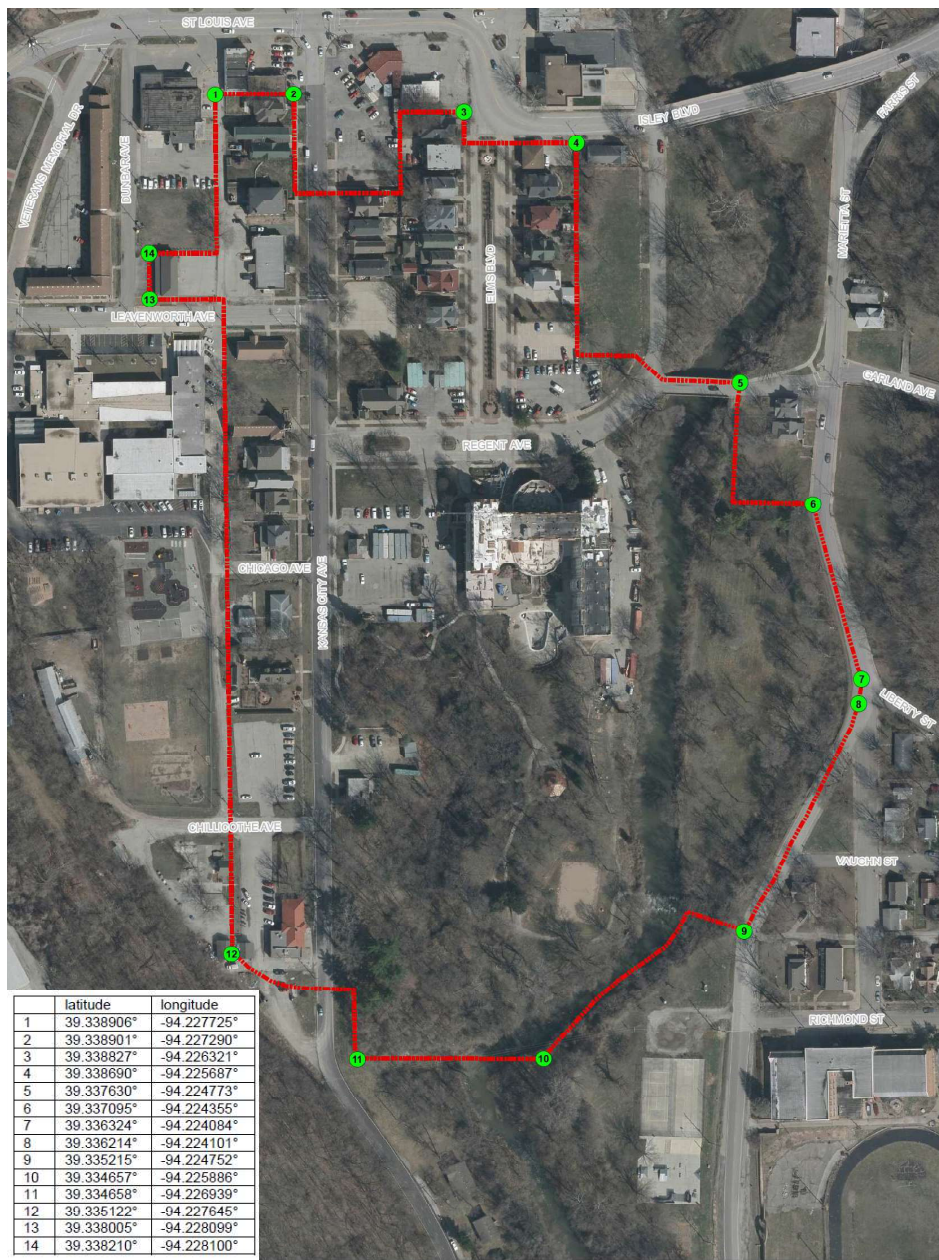
Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



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Prime Meridian: Greenwich (0.0)
Datum: D_North_American_1983

Total Acreage: 26.108

● Coordinate Point
District Boundary

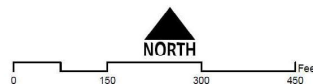


Figure 12
GIS map; latitude/longitude coordinates

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 58

The Elms Historic District

Name of Property

Clay County, Missouri

County and State

Historic Resources of Excelsior Springs, Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

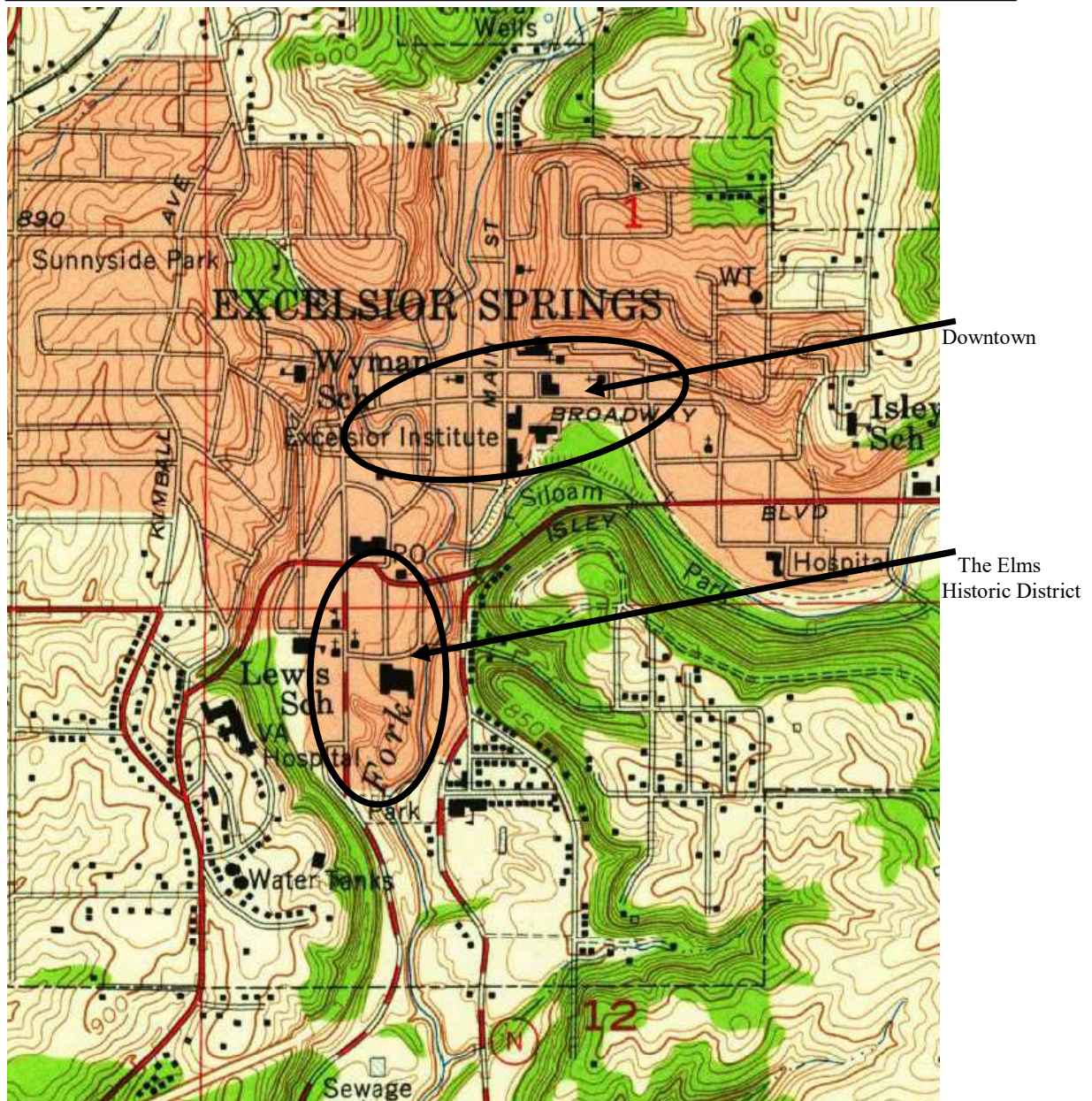
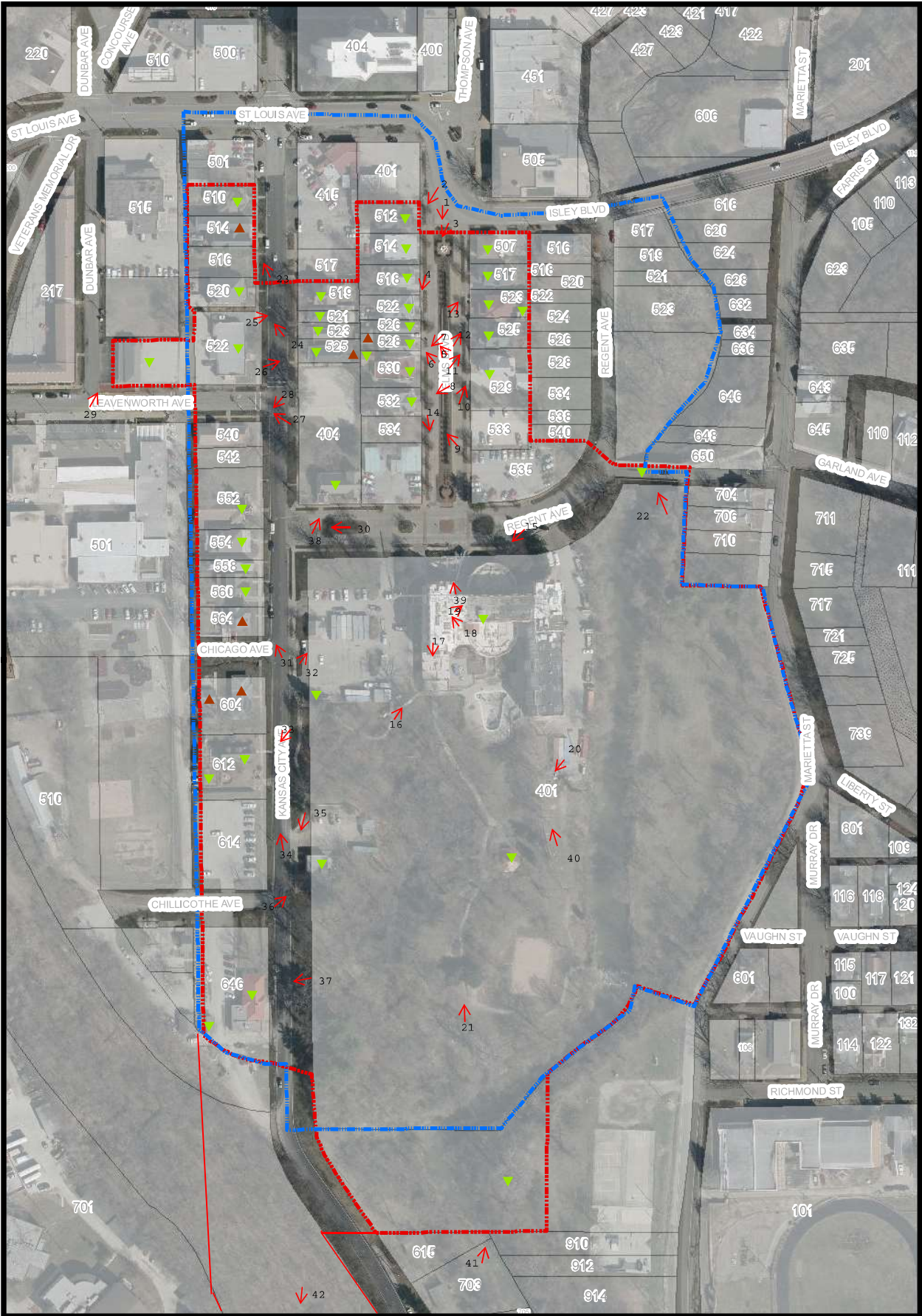


Figure 13


1957 USGS Map


Note the level topography for both the Elms Historic District and downtown Excelsior Springs.


Potential Elms National Register District





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Author: NMP


 Parcel

 Proposed District Boundary


 Current District Boundary

 Non-contributing


 Contributing

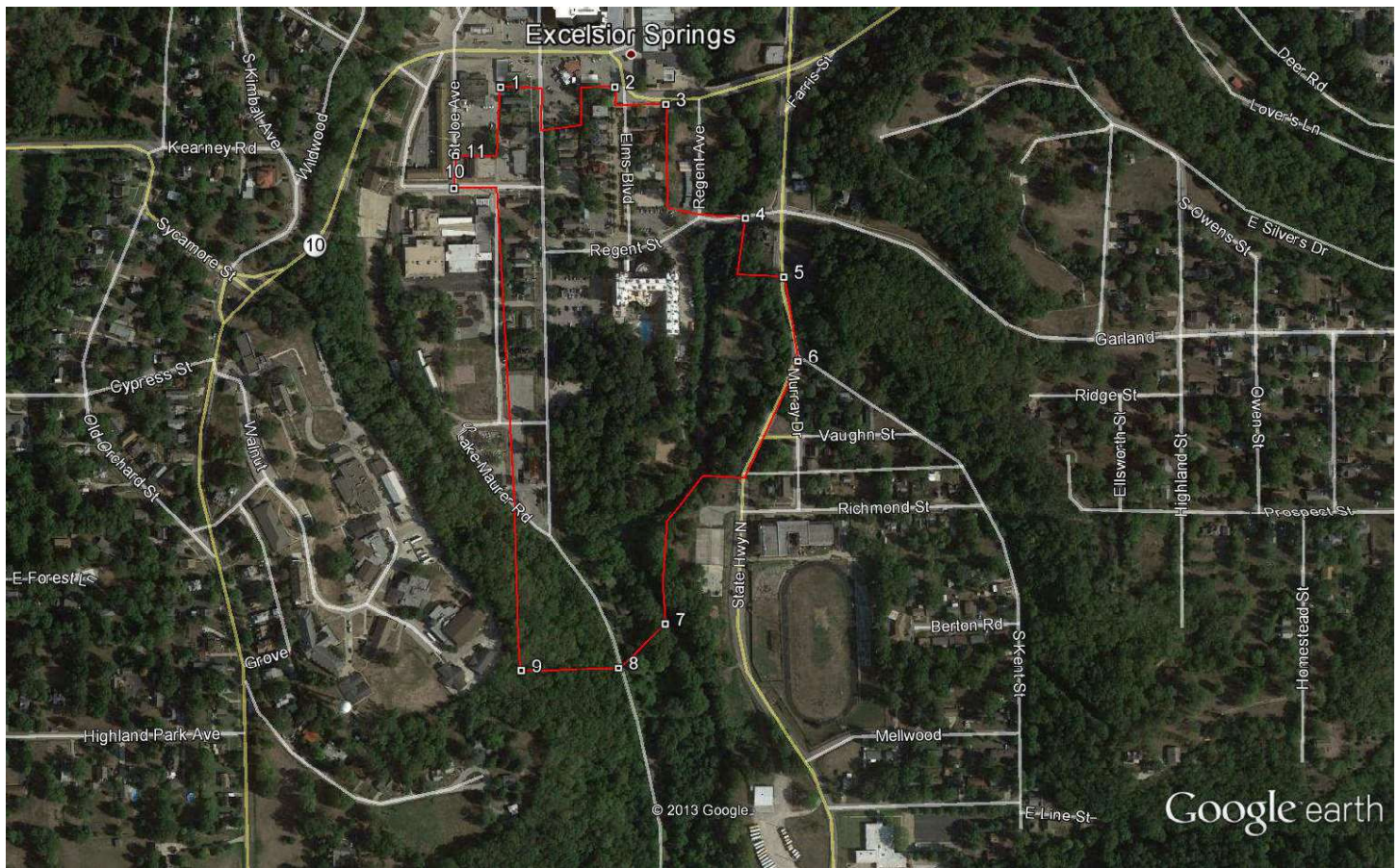


NORTH



0 150 300 450 Feet



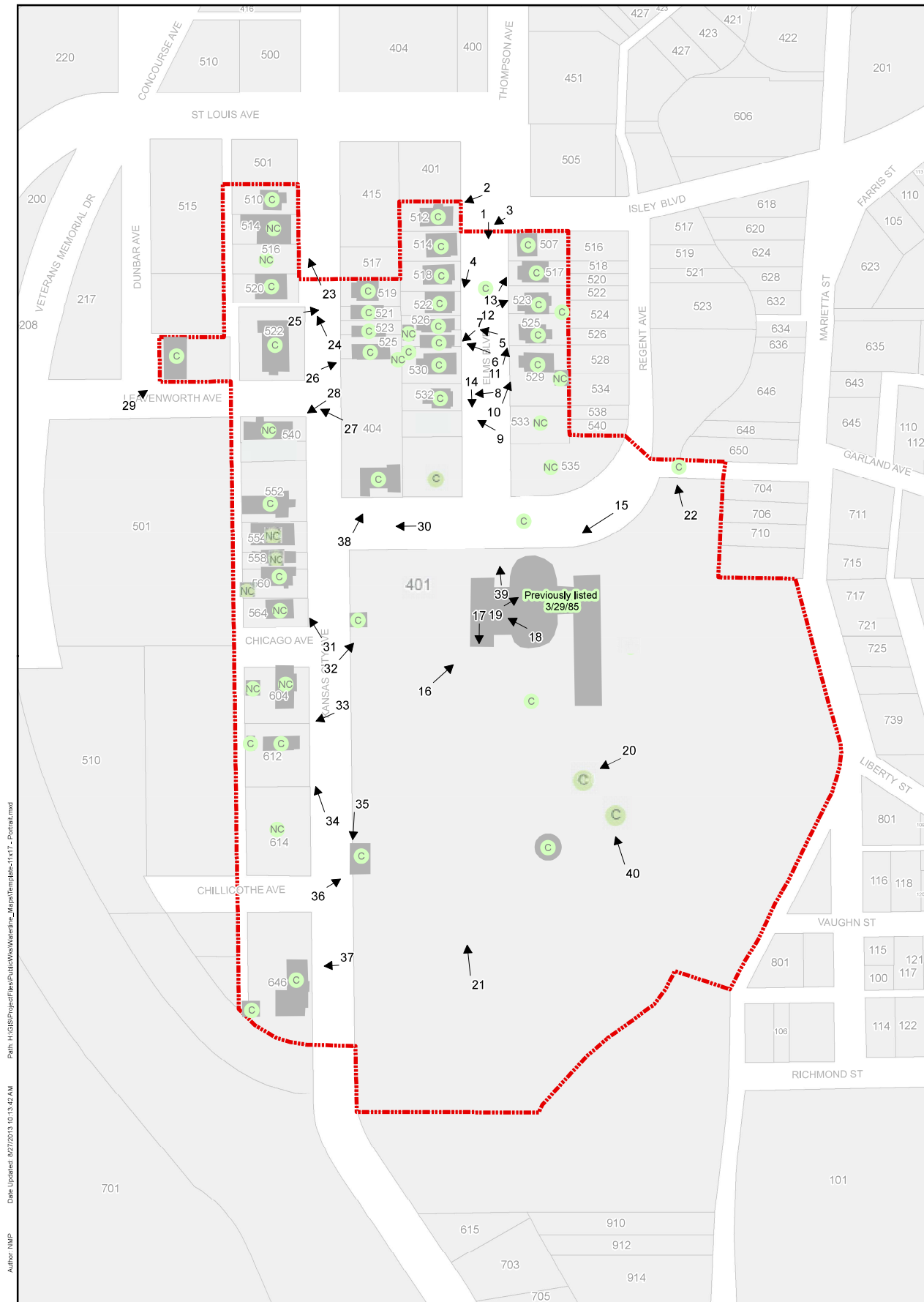


Google earth

feet
meters



The Elms Historic District NRHP



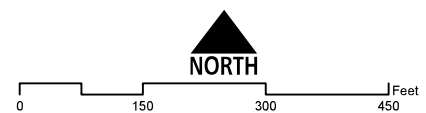
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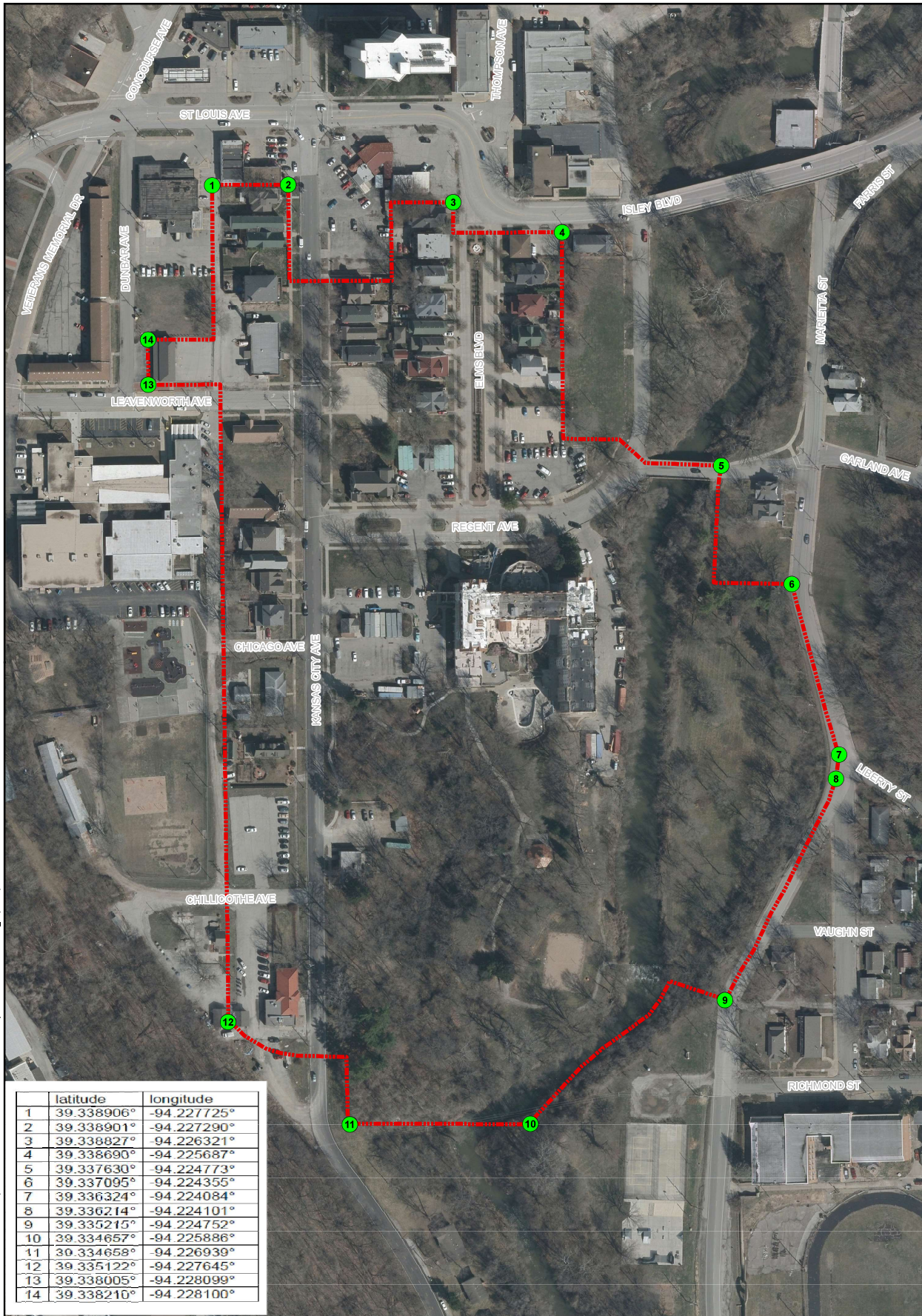
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Total Acreage: 26.108

C - Contributing Resource
NC - Non-Contributing Resource

Parcel
District Boundary

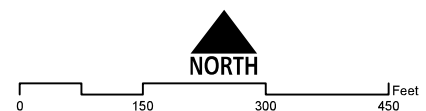




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● Coordinate Point
 District Boundary





















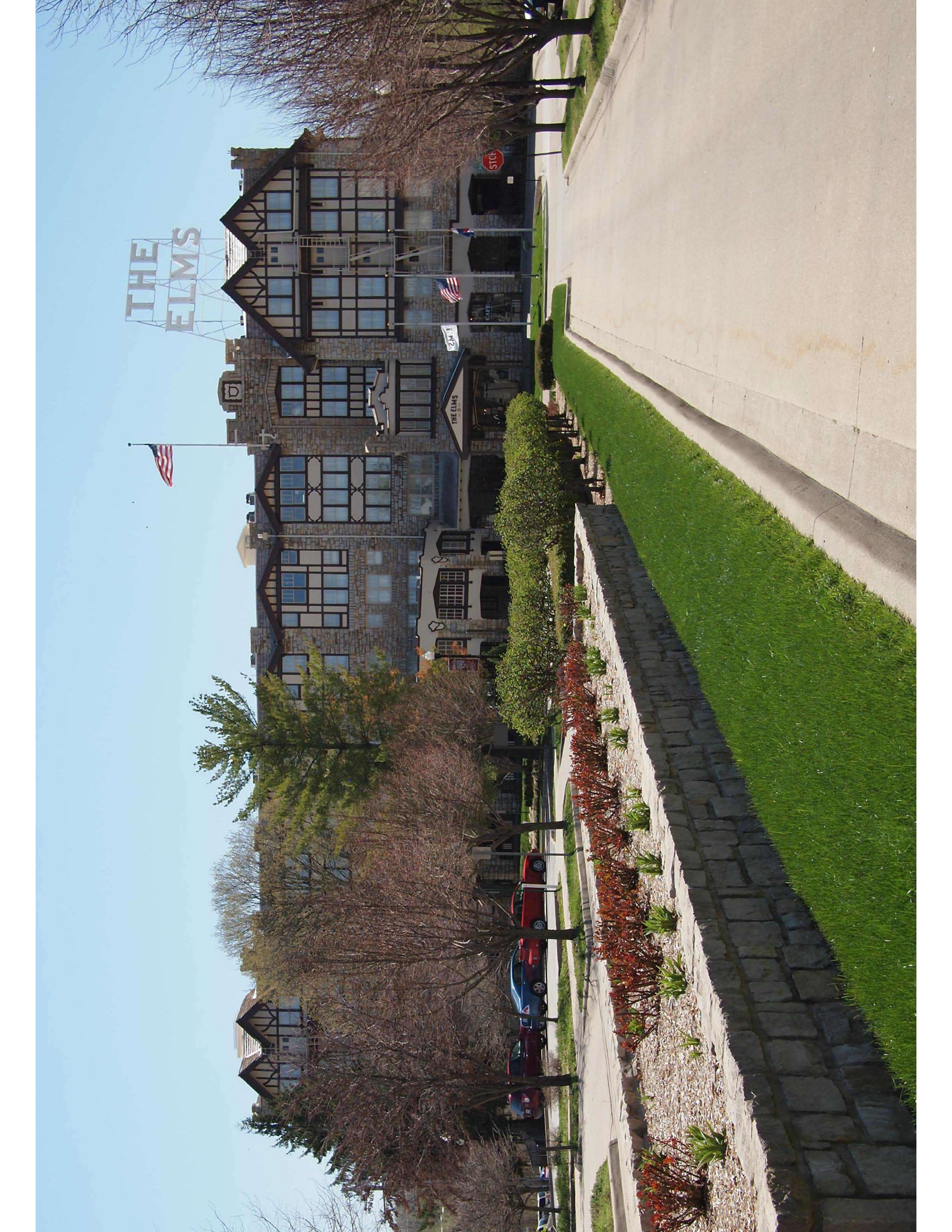




NO
PARKING
EITHER
SIDE OF
STREET



































Abundant Praise
Fellowship
Wednesday at 7:00pm
Sunday at 10:00am
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574-507-0000

MAKESOME

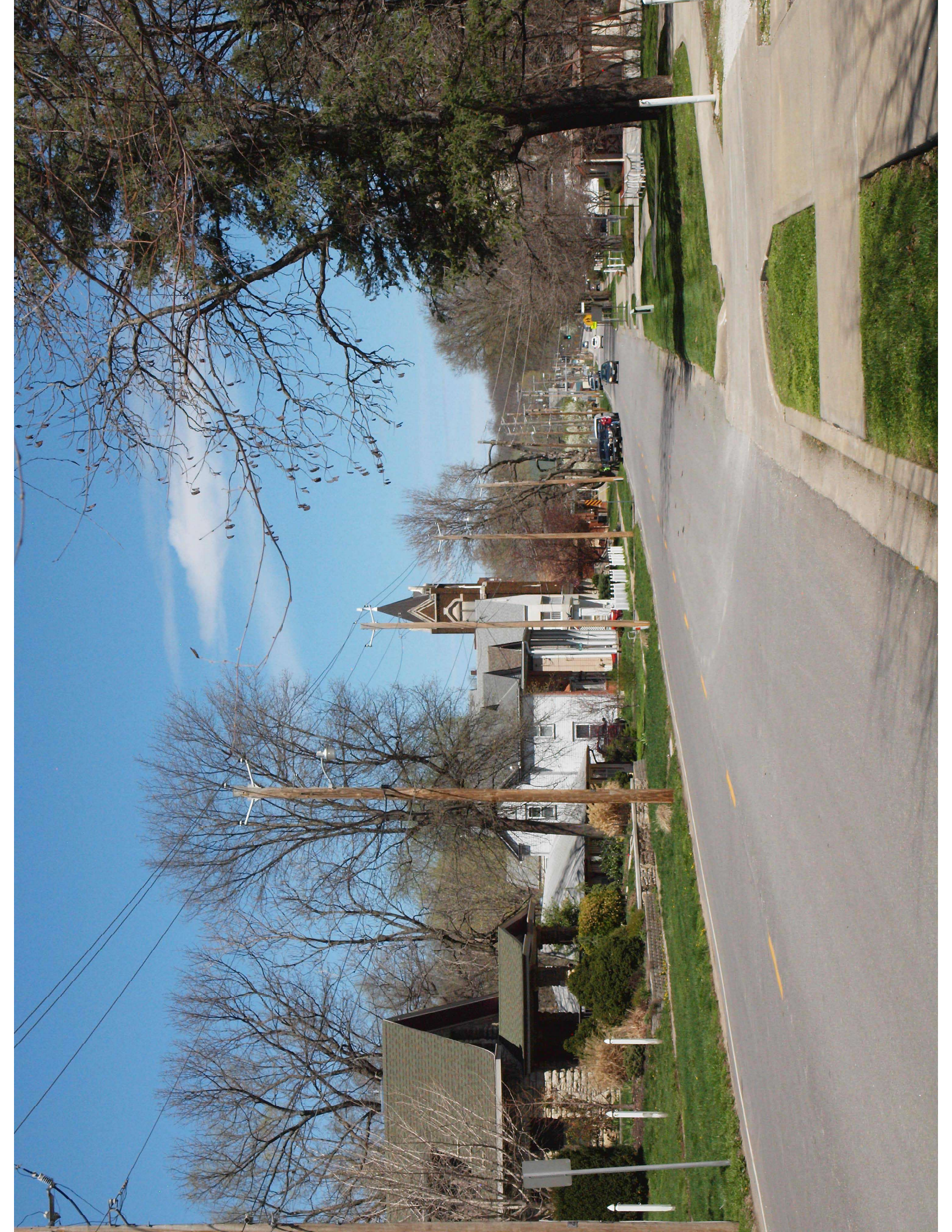
















SPEED
LIMIT
20







