

Cultural Resource Survey

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE



Prepared for

The City of Independence, Missouri

By

SALLY F. SCHWENK

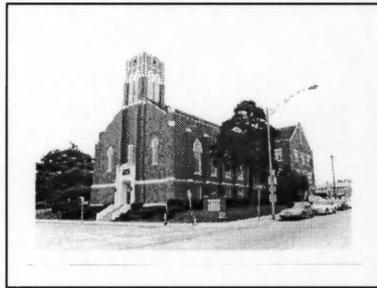
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Historic Preservation Services

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This survey project was funded, in part from a grant from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program through funding from the Historic Preservation Fund, National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the United States Department of the Interior or the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Independence contracted the firm of Historic Preservation Services (HPS) to complete a historic resources survey in the Independence Square area of Independence, Missouri. The goal of the survey was to identify and evaluate architectural and historic cultural resources in the survey area, to ascertain any individual properties and/or groups of properties that may be potentially eligible for listing on the National or Independence registers of historic places. In addition to designation of resources, information gathered in the Survey is a necessary component of future city and neighborhood planning activities.

Historic Preservation Services preservation consultants, Sally F. Schwenk, assisted by Jon Taylor and Kerry Davis conducted survey activities beginning in April of 2001. The City of Independence provided photographs of the surveyed properties and a base map of the survey area. The survey area included 163 resources in an area roughly bounded by White Oak Street on the North, Pleasant Street on the West, Walnut Street on the South and Memorial Drive on the East.. *[Figures 1 and 2]*. The survey area is almost entirely commercial and institutional in character with residential enclaves located in peripheral areas. Commercial properties are clustered around the Independence Courthouse Square.

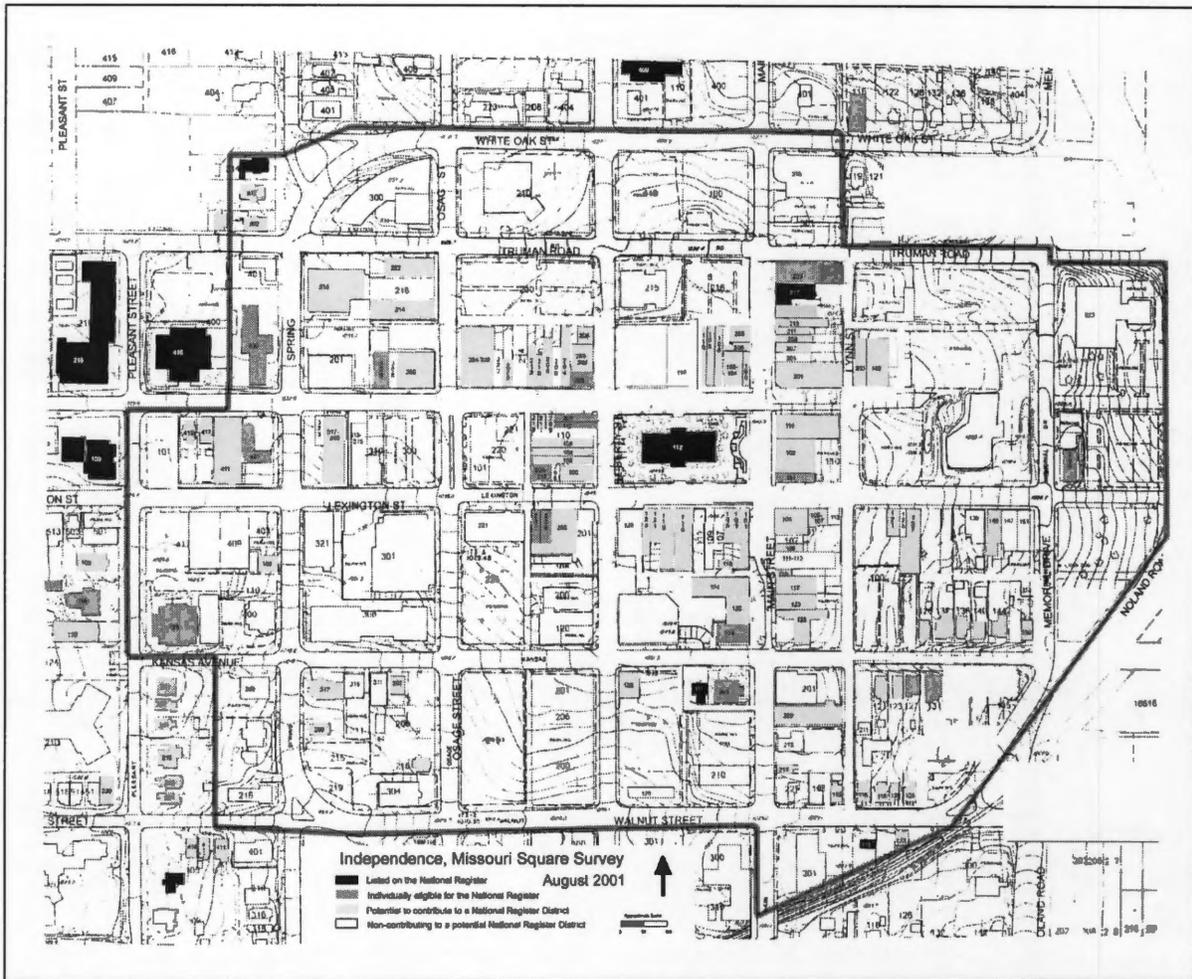
Figure 1
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE
Independence Square Survey Location



Independence Square Survey

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Figure 2
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE
Independence Square Survey Area



Independence Square Survey

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METHODOLOGY

Historic Preservation Services completed the Independence Square Survey in conformance with the procedures for reconnaissance level survey outlined in the *National Register Bulletin 24, Guidelines for Local Survey: A Basis for Preservation Planning*. Evaluation of resources for significance was in accordance with *National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. In addition to these guidelines, the consultants relied on guidelines established by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program

SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work for the Independence Square Survey project included the following:

- Compilation of existing data on the history and architecture of the City of Independence and the survey area
- Field inspection of all properties in the survey area
- Compilation of data on a data base
- Analysis of data gathered
- Identification of properties and districts that are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and/or as local Landmarks or Historic Districts.
- Preparation of a report and maps that summarize the findings.

FIELD SURVEY

The field survey component included field inspection of each building in the survey area to confirm building materials, in particular wall cladding and foundation materials. The consultants relied on this information as well as that supplied by the photographs in developing written descriptions of each property.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

In addition to the documentation of architectural styles and evolution of land use, research focused on the preparation of historical contexts for the time period in which the survey area developed and the identification of dates of construction and original property owners. Historic Preservation Services used the archival and research collections of the Midcontinent Public Library, Independence (MO) North Branch; the Jackson County Historical Society Archives and Research Library in Independence, Missouri, the Kansas

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City, Missouri Public Library, Special Collections and the vertical files maintained by the Historic Preservation Manager in the City of Independence Planning Department

ESTABLISHING DATES OF CONSTRUCTION

Due to the absence of extant building and water permits, HPS relied plat maps, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, city directories and phone directories as well as architectural style to establish a construction date range. For properties in which a specific date of construction could not be determined, consultants used a circa "c." designation to designate a ten year date range. Identification of style and use of atlases and plat maps of Independence and Jackson County helped identify properties with the earliest dates of construction (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) and the ownership of those properties. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps dating from 1885, 1892, 1898, 1907, 1916, 1926 and 1949 were used in conjunction with city directories. Unless identified on a map as dating from an earlier period or in phone directories, the earliest date identified by extant city directories is 1905. Many properties have the appearance of later alterations, an effort to identify the time of these changes involved use of historic photographs and Sanborn maps.

IDENTIFYING OWNERS AND BUSINESSES

In most instances the city directories identified building owners and tenants. Extant directories with listings organized by address used began in 1905. Other sources used included newspaper articles. Available city directories located at the Jackson County Historical Society Archives and Research Library; Mid-continent Library, Independence North Branch and the Special Collections located at the Kansas City, Missouri Public Library included the years 1905, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1945, 1950, 1960 and 1970.

COMPILATION OF DATA

The consultants used a database in Microsoft Access 7.0 to compile the survey information. HPS used a template of fields created from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Program cultural resources survey form and the Independence, Missouri Historic Inventory Form. The database fields record each building's physical features (description, plan, height, materials, style) as well as historical information (date of construction, original use, property history). When linked with the digital records from other surveys, this database will enhance the understanding of historic resources in Independence. For example, use of the database simplifies searches for properties by dates of

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construction, builder, architect, and style. This information can also be linked to geographic information systems software to more easily create visual presentations of the data.

DATA ANALYSIS

The consultants analyzed five categories of data to identify contiguous historic districts, thematic districts, and/or individual properties that are potentially eligible for National Register and local Landmark or Historic District listing. The five categories address issues important in determining the significance of a property for listing on the National Register. The categories are:

- Architectural Integrity
- Date of Construction
- Original Building Use/Function
- Architectural Style/Property Type
- Architect.

A detailed description of the five areas of analysis and results is included in the "Survey Results" section of this report and in the Appendix.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Prior to the Independence Square survey, an historical architectural resource survey for the City of Independence conducted in 1974-75 included certain resources in the project area. In addition, the City of Independence has maintained an on-going file for properties surveyed and for survey updates.

After compiling and reviewing the results of the field survey and completing the archival research, the consultants identified the broad patterns of development of Independence and contexts particular to the Independence Square survey area. At the same time, work on developing architectural contexts began with the review of photographic documentation and database information relating to the survey area. The following resources aided in the identification and evaluation of the properties in the survey area. *National Register Bulletin 16A*; *The Buildings of Main Street* by Richard Longstreth; *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to Architectural Styles* by Marcus Whiffen; *Identifying American Architecture* by John J. G. Blumenson; *What Style Is It?* by John Poppeliers, S. Allen Chambers and Nancy B. Schwartz; *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester; and *The Missouri Historic Property Inventory Form Instructions* manual. Review of the survey data revealed

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not only the architectural styles and sub-types but provided information for mapping to reveal development patterns and chronology.

In order to make management recommendations, the consultants conducted preliminary evaluations for all inventoried properties according to the criteria and standards for historic resources established by the Secretary of the Interior. This included a preliminary assessment for individual eligibility for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* and as potentially contributing elements in a National Register District.

In addition to retaining the integrity of their historic architectural design, properties listed on the *National Register of Historic Places* must meet certain criteria of historic significance. Historic significance is the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture of a community, a state or the nation. To be listed, properties must have significance in at least one of the following areas.

- Criterion A: Association with events, activities or broad patterns of history;
- Criterion B: Association with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- Criterion C: Embodiment of distinctive characteristics of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values; or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- Criterion D: Have yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history

This criteria also conforms with that specified in the City of Independence, Missouri's ordinances relating to local designation of Landmarks and Historic Districts.

All properties eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* whether for individual significance or as contributing¹ elements to a district must retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the period of time in which they are significant. There are seven areas of integrity and a property must retain integrity in a majority of these areas.

- Location
- Design
- Setting

¹ A contributing property to a historic district does not have to meet the threshold for individual significance but it must contribute to the district's area of significance. Properties contributing to a district's significance for architecture must retain a higher degree of architectural integrity than in a district significant for associations with an important individual or with historical events or patterns of history.

- Materials
- Workmanship
- Feeling
- Association

The consultants visually inspected the exterior of each of the buildings in the survey area. Each building received an integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor based primarily on how much of the building's original design, workmanship, exterior materials and overall feeling of a past period of time remained. The following criteria served as the basis for rating architectural integrity:

EXCELLENT

- The majority of the building's openings are unaltered or altered in a sensitive and appropriate manner, using similar materials, profiles and sizes as the original building elements;
- The exterior cladding material has not been altered;
- Significant decorative elements are intact;
- Design elements intrinsic to the building's style are intact;
- The overall feeling or character of the building for the time period in which it was erected is intact. Changes over a period of time are sympathetic and compatible to the original design in color, size, scale, massing and materials;
- Character-defining elements from the time period in which the building had significant associations with events or important individuals remain intact; and
- If over 50 years in age, the building is individually eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* or would be a contributing element to a historic district.

GOOD

- Some alteration of original building openings or spaces has occurred using new materials and profiles but not causing irreversible damage to the original configuration of openings and spaces;
- Significant portions of original exterior cladding material remain;
- Significant decorative elements remain intact;
- Alterations to the building are reversible and the historic character of the property could be easily restored;
- Additions to a secondary elevation are in an appropriate manner, respecting the materials, scale and character of the original building design;
- The historic feeling or character of the building is slightly weakened by change or lack of maintenance; and
- The building would be a contributing element to a historic district and/or it might be independently eligible to the National Register if restored in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

FAIR

- The majority of the building's openings were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles and sizes;
- Exterior cladding material has been altered or added, however there is some indication upon visual inspection that if removed, enough of the original cladding material might remain that the property could be restored to its original appearance;
- Additions were made in a manner respecting the materials, scale and character of the original building design and, if removed, the essential form of the building remained intact;
- Historic feeling or character of the building is compromised, but the property could be restored although reversal of alteration and removal of inappropriate materials could be costly; and
- If restored in conformance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, and if the property has association with a district's area of significance, the property might be a contributing resource to a historic district.

POOR

- The majority of the building's openings, such as windows and doors, were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles and sizes;
- Exterior materials were altered;
- Alterations are irreversible or would be extremely difficult, costly and possibly physically damaging to the building to reverse;
- Later additions do not respect the materials, scale or character of the original building design;
- The overall historic feeling and character of the building is significantly compromised; and
- Further investigations after removal of non-historic materials and alterations may reveal that the structure retains greater architectural integrity than originally apparent and should be reevaluated.

SURVEY RESULTS

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY AREA

The Independence Square Survey examined 163 resources in an area roughly bounded by White Oak Street on the North, Pleasant Street on the West, Walnut Street on the South and Memorial Drive on the East. [Figure 1]. This area encompasses the bulk of the original Old Town Independence, platted 1827, the city's historic commercial center and the Jackson County Courthouse Square. It is also an area roughly encircled by a loop roadway system incorporating Memorial Drive, White Oak Street, Spring Street and Walnut Street created as part of the City's Land Clearance Redevelopment Authority plan in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Truman Road (Missouri Highway 78) runs east-west through the district one block south of the survey area's northern boundary.

Within the loop area, early to mid-twentieth century development characterizes the survey area with scattered vestiges of late nineteenth century commercial buildings. A regular grid of streets extends outward from the Jackson County Courthouse Square. Alleys run between the blocks. Within two blocks of the Courthouse Square, large vacant spaces begin to dominate the landscape and commercial buildings dating from the 1970s are scattered in a random pattern. Within the loop, the northern boundary of the historic commercial resources in courthouse square area is Truman Road. The southern boundary, is Kansas Street. The eastern boundary is Lynn Street and the western boundary, with the exception of a corridor stretching west along Maple Avenue, is Osage Street. Within this area, urban landscape features are uniform and include asphalt paved streets, concrete curbing and sidewalks and, at various locations, street trees. With the exception of Truman Road and the streets comprising the Loop, street size is uniform in the survey area as are alley dimensions and lot size.

HISTORICAL PROPERTY TYPES

To assist in developing historic property types for the survey area, HPS identified resources according to 1) original function and 2) architectural style — thus including both shared associative (function) and physical (architectural style/building form/type) characteristics. A property type is a grouping of individual properties based on shared physical or associative characteristics. Property types link the ideas incorporated in the theoretical historic context with actual historic properties that illustrate those ideas.

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ORIGINAL BUILDING FUNCTION PROPERTY TYPE

Figure 3: ORIGINAL BUILDING FUNCTION

COMMERCE TRADE: Specialty Store	87	53%
COMMERCE TRADE: Professional Offices	8	05%
COMMERCE TRADE: Financial Institute	8	05%
COMMERCE TRADE: Other	11	07%
DOMESTIC: Single Family	25	15%
GOVERNMENT	10	06%
RECREATION & CULTURE	3	02%
RELIGION: Religious Facility	3	02%
DOMESTIC: Multiple Family	2	01%
OTHER	6	04%
TOTAL	163	100%

Drawn from the National Register sub-categories for function and use, HPS identified different categories of building function for properties in the survey area. The functions of some buildings changed from their original use but, for the purposes of this analysis, they were recorded according to their original use. The four major functional property types are single-family residential, commercial, and institutional buildings.² They have a high degree of diversity due to their dates of construction, which constitutes a long time span (1827-2000).

The single-family residential buildings compose a sub-type of a larger residential property type. Their significance is derived from the information they impart as to the continuum of single-family dwellings in the community reflecting middle-class, blue- and white-collar families, upper-middle-class families, as well as the homes of substantial size erected by the town's upper class.³ This property sub-type is found in popular "high style" architectural styles and in vernacular folk house building forms of the era in which they were constructed. In Independence, only a few of these property types appear to be the work of architects; the majority are popular plan-book styles executed by master carpenters and builders. All are detached dwellings located on rectangular lots with narrow frontage

² The determination of property types is based on the original use.

³ Only one sub-type of functional residential property type – single-family buildings – is found in the survey area. Survey research yielded no information on other sub-types i.e., duplex, multi-family.

platted on a grid system. They are one- or two-story buildings constructed of masonry foundations, wood and/or masonry wall cladding, and roofs of tile or shingles.

The commercial building property types found in the survey area reflect a variety of property sub-types. The majority of commercial buildings have retail sales or services functions typical of small county courthouse business districts in rural areas of the state. They are business houses designed for small business operations providing financial, legal and other professional services, or wholesale or retail sales services involving the receipt and disbursement of goods.



Usually sited on one or two lots, they have a rectangular plan with the short side located facing the street. Their design incorporates public space on the first floor and storage or secondary space on the upper floors. They are one or two stories in height. One defining feature of the property sub-type is a well-defined ground floor “storefront” that is distinctly separate from the upper stories and reflects a difference in public/private uses. Private use may pertain to storage space, or office space or even residential space. Storefront space indicates retail or wholesale vending space, lobby space, showroom or office space. A small percentage of this property sub-type feature high style designs with an accentuated, stylistic entrance rather than a storefront. The first floor is separated from upper floors by decorative devices such as belt courses and different fenestration treatments. This property type’s style may reflect the high style architecture or commonplace commercial styles popular in the era in which they were built. They typically have a flat



roof and masonry construction – usually brick. Depending on the date of construction, structural elements include the use of load-bearing brick walls, cast iron or steel construction. Similarly, storefronts incorporate combinations of brick, cast iron and wood.

The survey identified 10 government buildings (three county courthouses, two city halls, two correctional facilities, a public works garage, a post office, and a fire station); three

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churches; and three recreational properties (two movie theaters and a museum). Although they have associative functions, the government buildings do not share any physical characteristics due to their divergent functions and periods of construction. Because there are so few examples of institutional and recreational buildings, it is not possible to develop property type characteristics for these buildings.

Buildings in the survey area represent a wide range of building types and styles, including residential, commercial and institutional property types.⁴ The dates of construction include a long time span, further adding to the diversity of resources.

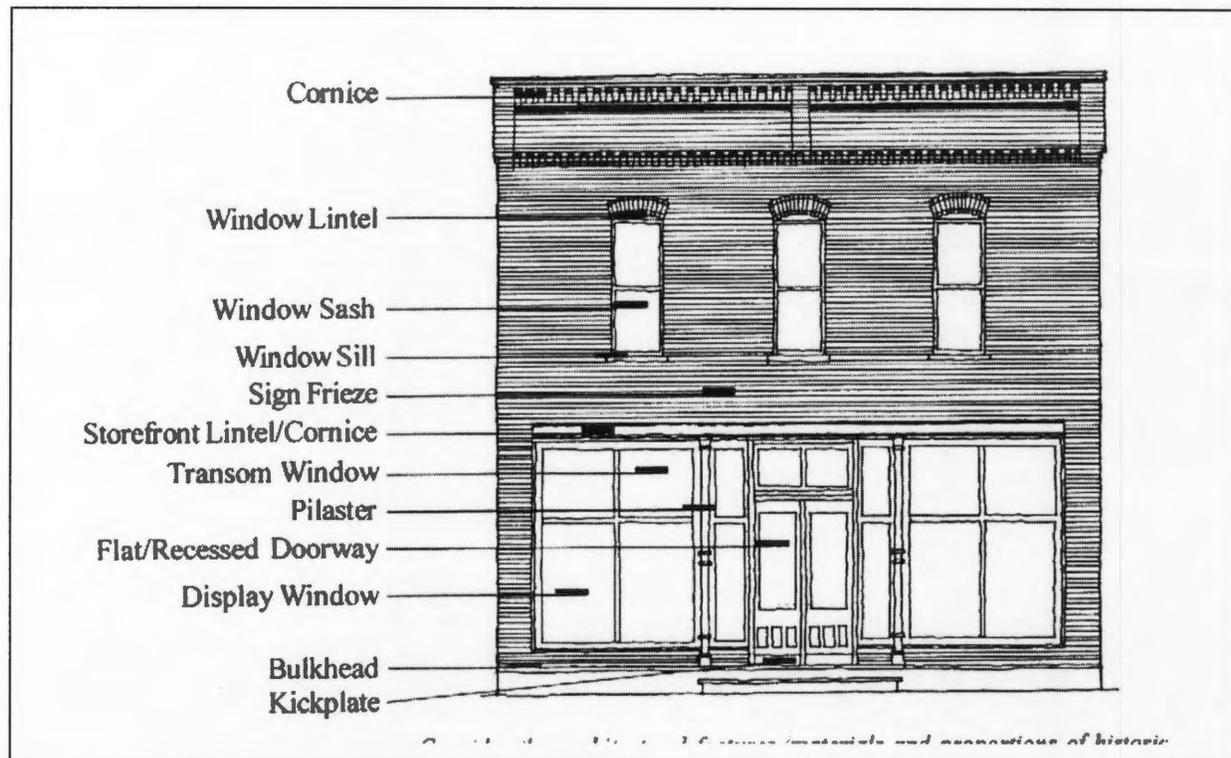
COMMERCIAL BUILDING PROPERTY TYPES

Commercial buildings and the streetscape they create in downtown Independence define both the functional and visual character of the city's historic business district. Most of the Independence Square's commercial buildings are simple structures of one or two stories. The traditional nineteenth and early twentieth century building material is dark red brick, while buff brick appears in some buildings built during the early to mid-twentieth century.

Dating from the mid-to-late nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth century, they include examples from almost every decade up to the present. Many of the façades have been altered or have inappropriate siding. The majority of changes are due to the modernization of the first story display windows and entrances. In particular, the replacement of display windows, the installation of certain types of canopies/awnings, and the covering of transom windows are the most conspicuous alterations. Many of these alterations leave the original openings and spatial relationships of the storefront intact. Other changes, such as the addition of awnings and applications of wood or metal sheathing over original openings are reversible. The second stories often retain their original integrity and are the principal means to identify the original appearance and style.

Commercial architecture is distinguished first by building form and secondly by its architectural style. Due to their functional nature, many commercial buildings exhibit restrained architectural details.

⁴ The determination of property types is based on the original use.



The first story storefront is the most prominent and distinctive feature of a commercial building and is an important merchandising element. The rest of the commercial building's key design elements visually relate to it. Important character-defining elements are display windows, signs, doors, transoms, kick plates, corner posts and entablature.

SPECIALTY STORES

NW corner of Square at Lexington and Liberty streets, 1950 photograph courtesy of Harry S Truman Museum and Library

Victorian Functional (1870-c.1940)

Victorian Functional commercial buildings are one- to two-story buildings built in rectangular plans with flat, gable or hipped roofs. Their storefronts have central or offset entrances, display windows and transoms on the first story, and simple detailing on the upper façade. Upper stories generally have simple cornices, rectangular windows and detailing. The late nineteenth century form continued well into the mid-twentieth century. These buildings are



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distinguished by their arrangement of architectural features rather than architectural style.

False Front

False Front commercial buildings were quite common in small towns. These buildings are generally one- to two-stories in height, of frame construction with wood cladding or brick veneer, and have gable or flat roofs hidden behind the false fronts on the primary façade. These false fronts have a flat roofline and a stepped or shaped parapet. The car dealership building on West Maple is an example of this building type



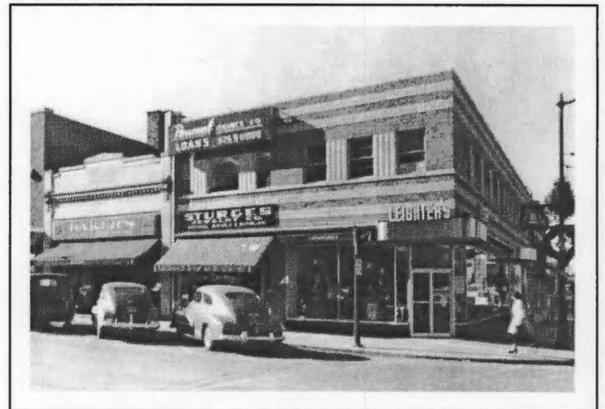
One-Part Commercial Block

This basic commercial building form is one-story in height and generally housed a single business. Simple architectural styling emphasizes the storefront window glazing. Other stylistic applications included datestones or panels near the roofline and glazed brick laid in decorative patterns.

(Photograph Courtesy of the Harry S Truman Library and Museum)

Two-Part Commercial Block

Slightly more complex than their one-story cousins are two-part commercial blocks. These buildings typically are two to four stories in height and there is a clearly visual separation of use between the first story customer services and upper story office, meeting room or residential uses. Styling on the first story focuses on the storefront glazing and entrance(s). Design of the upper stories identifies the building's architectural influences. This 1951 photograph of the SW corner of the Square shows a two-part commercial block building at the corner and next door to the south is a combination false front, one-part commercial block building.



Two-Part Vertical Block

Office buildings, meeting halls, department stores and hotels are commonly Two-Part Vertical Block designs. The multi-story vertical block's façade has horizontal divisions that create two major zones that are different and yet carefully related to one another. The lower zone (one or two stories) serves as a visual base for the dominant upper zone. The clearly prominent upper zone achieves its dominance through a unified treatment of the upper stories. A cornice usually separates the upper zones from the roofline. This meeting hall with commercial first floor shops at **124-126 S. Main** is an excellent example of the property type.



Vernacular Adaptations

Many of the vernacular commercial buildings found in small towns include a category of designs noted for their eclectic combination of different styles applied to traditional commercial forms. The highly ornamented corner building at **209-212 West Lexington** reflects Queen Anne influences. Often these hybrids are specialty buildings such as confectionery shops, movie theaters, fraternal lodges, etc.



AUTOMOTIVE BUILDINGS

Automobile related buildings first appeared in the early twentieth century to meet the growing needs of automobile and truck owners. Those identified in the Survey include gas service stations, automobile dealerships, sales and service facilities and taxi companies.

Gas Service Stations and Retail Service Facilities

The function of gas service stations -- providing fuel, routine service and repairs determined the design. One or more drive-through garage bays with a small office at one end dominated these functionally designed buildings. Styling ranged from picturesque to the



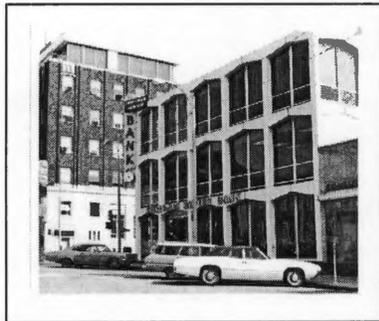
utilitarian. The full service station at the **SW corner of Maple and Spring** is a high style example of the property type. Closely associate with the service station is the auto specialty store such as the Goodyear facility at the corner of South Main and Kansas streets.

Automobile Dealership Buildings

The Independence Square area contains a number of buildings that housed the town's early automobile dealerships. This unique property type had broad display windows looking into the showroom and specialty areas at the rear of the showroom for sales offices and merchandising. At the rear, were the service garage area equipped for repairs and cleaning of vehicles. Examples of this property type include the building at 409-411 W. Maple



OFFICE BUILDINGS



Buildings that house business and professional offices are found in a variety of forms and plans. They include larger, multi-story edifices and smaller, one-story blocks. The examples identified in the survey include the bank buildings at the southern corners of Liberty and Lexington. All were erected after 1970 except the First National Bank building at 129 W. Lexington shown in the background of this c. 1975 photograph before the installation of modern sheathing. In the foreground is the Chrisman Sawyer Bank building. There are numerous small office buildings scattered in the vicinity of the Jackson County Courthouse Annex at 308 W. Kansas. With one or two exceptions, all are less than fifty years in age.

INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS

Institutional buildings are often more architecturally expressive than commercial buildings although they are generally conservative in their selection of an architectural idiom. Classical motifs and traditional styling with historical antecedents are the most common stylistic treatments. Sub-types identified in survey include religious buildings and government buildings.

Religious Buildings

The survey area includes three church buildings. They range in style from the Classical Revival and Late Gothic Revival to a simple Post World War II Modern Movement building.

Government Buildings

Government buildings found in the survey area date from 1827 to the 1980s and include two county courthouses and one courthouse annex, two city halls, two jails, one fire station, one post office and a city public works garage.



1827 Jackson County Courthouse

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS

A number of commercial and institutional buildings have sufficient stylistic features and ornamentation to be classified by architectural styles. As such, they reflect conscious design intent and the widespread use of popular architectural styles in public architecture.

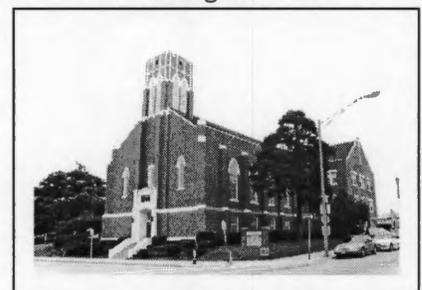
Italianate

Italianate commercial buildings routinely feature a street-level storefront with plate-glass windows framed by iron columns or masonry pilasters with ornamented capitals and cornices or decorated piers. Upper story windows feature arches, either individual or grouped; window hoods, often with projecting keystones and richly profiled moldings; and double-hung sashes with one-over-one or two-over-two lights. The example at **208-212 W. Lexington** is an early example of the style found in the survey area.



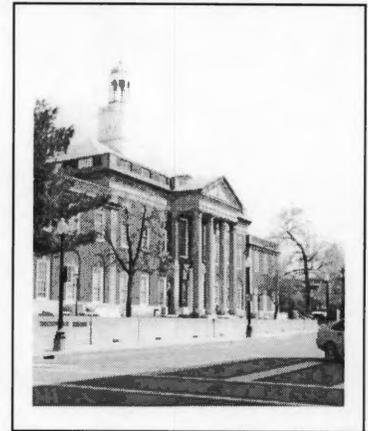
Late Gothic Revival

The First Methodist Church at **400 West Maple** demonstrates the shift from nineteenth century religious property design to twentieth century models.



Neo-Classical Temple Front

These buildings have façades derived from the temples of Greek and Roman antiquity. The design treatment enjoyed popularity at the turn of the twentieth century and for the next three decades as the design of choice institutional buildings. Temple Front buildings make use of arrangements of columns, pilasters and/or piers to spatially divide the primary façade and to accentuate the entrance. Most designs feature a shallow portico of four or more colossal columns extending across the façade or a recessed entrance fronted by twin columns set inside an enframed wall. An excellent example of this style is **Jackson County Courthouse** located in the center of the public square at 112 W. Lexington



Spanish/Mission Revival

These buildings have their origins in the architecture of the Mediterranean as adapted and influenced from Spanish Colonial architecture in the Americas. Most commonly as applied to commercial design, tiled roofs shaped “false front” parapets, arches, smooth stucco and masonry wall surfaces are freely adapted to traditional forms, particularly those from the Craftsman and Prairie movements. After the Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego in 1915, more precise imitations of more elaborate Spanish prototypes appeared. As applied to commercial architecture, the examples are as varied as the service station at **401 West Maple**.



Tudor Revival

Commercial buildings executed in the Tudor Revival style are not commonly found in older center city downtowns. More often, they are found at commercial corners of residential neighborhoods as part of an effort to create cohesive thematic designs for a small strip of commercial specialty shops. The style became increasingly popular after World War I, particularly for residential buildings. Distinguishing features include steep gables prominently placed on the front and corners of the buildings; complementary arched door hoods or openings, grouped windows and an interplay of masonry surfaces. The building at the **northeast corner of Osage and Maple** is an excellent example.



Mixed

Several of the commercial buildings in the survey area reflected a combination of different stylistic idioms from the period in which they were constructed. The buildings at the **southeast corner of East Lexington and South Main** reflect different stylistic adaptations and were later consolidated into one building. They reflect the conscious adaptation of different stylistic elements over a period of time.



Circa 1950 photograph courtesy of Harry S Truman Library and Museum Archival Collection.

HIGH STYLE AND VERNACULAR RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Residences were not a dominant building type in the survey area and appear in scattered enclaves on the edges of the survey area. Those that are on the western edge of the survey area often are part of a larger neighborhood not included in the survey.

NATIONAL FOLK HOUSES

Several of the buildings on East Kansas and East Walnut reflect National Folk House origins. These are simple dwellings defined by their form and massing but lacking identifiable stylistic attributes. Even after communities became well established, folk house designs remained popular as an affordable alternative to more ornate and complex architectural styles. The nature of American folk housing changed dramatically as the nation's railroad network expanded in the decades from 1850 to 1890. Builders of modest dwellings no longer had to rely on local materials. Instead, railcars moved bulky construction materials, particularly lumber from distant sawmills in heavily forested areas, rapidly and cheaply over long distances. Consequently, large lumberyards quickly became standard fixtures in almost every town. Soon folk houses of light balloon or braced framing covered by wood sheathing replaced hewn log houses. Despite the change in building technique and materials, the older folk house shapes persisted. The resulting houses were simple dwellings defined by their form and massing but lacking identifiable stylistic attributes. Even after communities became established, these folk house designs remained popular as an affordable alternative to more ornate and complex architectural styles.

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The Survey identified one example of the Hall and Parlor⁵ and one example of the Gable Front and Wing, folk house building forms.

ROMANTIC PERIOD (1820-80)

During the Colonial era, one or two styles tended to dominate each colony for an extended period of time. By the 1840s, the cottage designs in the Italianate, Gothic Revival and Exotic Revival styles, first published by Andrew Jackson Downing in his popular pattern book, supplemented the Greek Revival style as a design choice for American homeowners. The simultaneous popularity of several architectural styles from this point forward persisted as a dominant theme in American housing. All of the Romantic styles originated and grew to popularity in the decades before 1860 and appear both as highly detailed and less elaborate interpretations as late as the 1880s. Houses of the Romantic Period found in the survey area include one Second Empire dwelling⁶ found in the edge of the survey area.

VICTORIAN PERIOD (1860-1900)

During this period, increasingly accessible builder's pattern books spread the latest trends in house designs and styles to the population in growing communities throughout the country. The expansion of the railroad system after the Civil War made building materials, including milled lumber and mass-produced nails, accessible to anyone living in relative proximity to a rail line. Milled lumber included decorative turned and cut pieces that conveyed ornate Victorian motifs. The Survey identified four Queen Anne style residences.

Queen Anne Style

Distinguished by their irregularly-shaped steeply pitched roofs, Queen Anne dwellings feature numerous devices to avoid smooth wall texture including the use of multiple wall claddings, cut-away or projecting bay windows and oriels. The one-story, partial, full or wrap-around porches that covered the façade typically features turned or jigsaw ornament.

ECLECTIC PERIOD (1880-1940)

The McAlesters divide the Eclectic Period into three subcategories: Anglo-American, English and French Period Houses; Mediterranean Period Houses; and Modern Houses. The Eclectic Movement drew inspiration from American Colonial era architecture as well as the architecture of Europe. Designs emphasized strict adherence to stylistic traditions and

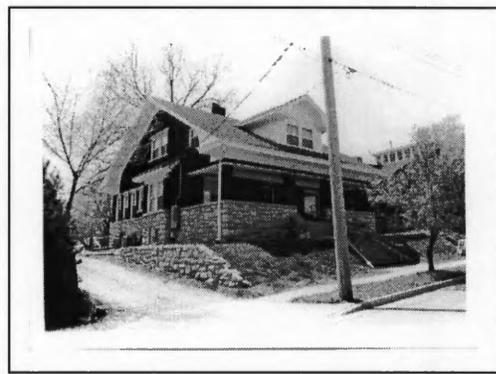
⁵ The folk house at 115 E. Walnut is listed in the National Register of Historic Places

⁶ The residence at 314 Spring Street is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

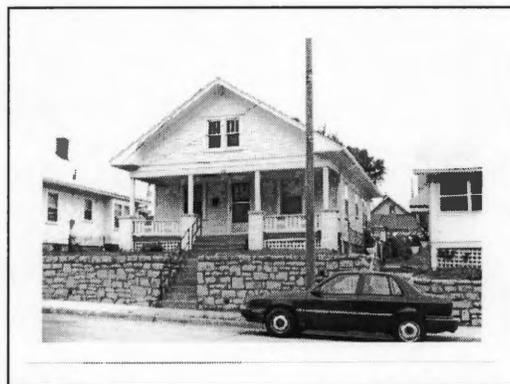
minimal variation and innovation. At the same time, and in contrast to the European and Colonial American-influenced designs, Modern Houses appeared. Dwellings in this subcategory represented the burgeoning efforts of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School and European Modernism in the early twentieth century. A number of examples of the Modern Houses executed in the Craftsman (10) and Prairie School (6) styles are in the survey area.

CRAFTSMAN/BUNGALOW

The area includes a significant number of Craftsman style residences in an enclave along East Kansas and East Walnut. They include modest and dramatic examples of the Side-gable and front-gable roof variants. The residence at **127 E Kansas** is a unique variation on the Gable Front form while the house at **131 E. Kansas** is a "high style" execution of the Side Gable sub-type.



An excellent grouping of frame gable-front bungalows runs along the 100 block of East Walnut. The ensemble provides insight into the variety of treatments used in this popular style. An ashlar retaining wall unites the group, underscoring the homogenous nature of the streetscape. The example at **118 E. Walnut** reflects the transition from the gable-front folk house form to the bungalow.

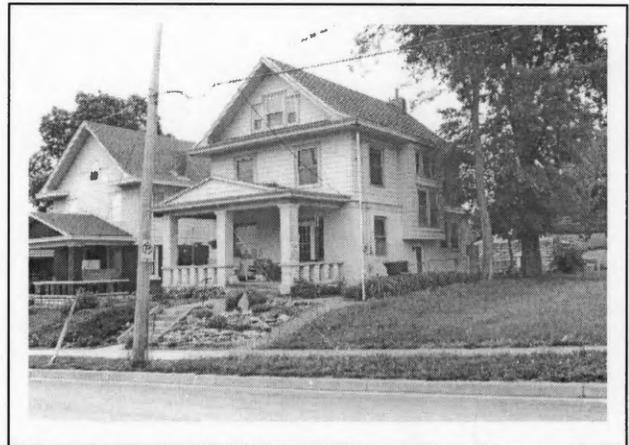


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PRAIRIE SCHOOL

Prairie School houses found in the survey area reflect one of the few indigenous American styles. Popular from 1900-1920, the style evolved from the work of Chicago architects in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In particular, Frank Lloyd Wright's early work in this style influenced its use for important commissions. The examples found in the survey area are simple gable front and hip roof versions that are the earliest Prairie form—building types that developed into the most common vernacular version of the style. In vernacular adaptations, such as the property at 121 E. Kansas common features are the as are full-width, single story front porches and double-hung sash windows with one-over-one lights.



Often referred to as the American Foursquare, this sub-type has a simple square or rectangular plan, a low pitched hipped roof or gable roof and symmetrical façade. One story wings porches or additions are clearly subordinate to the principal two-story mass. The entrance which may be centered or off center, as in this example/ These buildings are excellent example of the vernacular form that spread throughout the country by pattern books published in the Midwest but were also a short-lived style, flourishing and declining in the years between 1900 and 1920.

No single family residential buildings date after the Great Depression. The survey identified several apartment buildings that date from after that time. Only one at 301 Kansas is older than fifty years. The others, all found along the Loop area near Walnut and Spring streets date from the late 1970s through the early 1990s.

Figure 4: RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW	10	37%
PRAIRIE SCHOOL	6	22%
FOLK HOUSE FORMS	5	18%
QUEEN ANNE	4	15%
SECOND EMPIRE	1	4%
COLONIAL REVIVAL	1	4%
TOTAL	27	100%

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Figure 5: NONRESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

LATE 19 TH AND EARLY 20 TH CENTURY FUNCTIONAL COMMERCIAL STYLE	85	63%
MODERN MOVEMENT	24	17%
LATE 19 TH AND 20 TH CENTURY REVIVAL STYLES	9	07%
ITALIANATE	7	05%
MIXED	4	03%
MODERNE	4	03%
NEO-COLONIAL	3	02%
TOTAL	136	100%

ARCHITECTS

Because there are no existing building or water permits from the survey area it was difficult to document, architects who designed buildings. The following architects were identified as designers of properties 50 or more years in age: Asa Beebe Cross, John Henry Felt & Company, William Borland Fullerton, Jr., Alonzo Gentry, Hoit Price and Barnes, Keen & Simpson, and William McCoy.

- Asa Beebe Cross is generally regarded as Jackson County's first professional architect. He was born in Camden New Jersey in 1828 and various sources place him in Pennsylvania or New York studying architecture before moving to St. Louis in 1850. In 1851 he formed a partnership with John Johnston and became a partner in an architectural school developed by him. In 1858, Asa Cross relocated to Kansas City where he opened A. B. Cross & Co., a lumberyard in partnership with George Rippey. Cross gradually shifted his business emphasis from lumber sales to construction, serving as both architect and contractor. His stepson, William E. Taylor, Jr., who specialized in railroad construction, joined the business. The 1859 county jail and marshal's house in Independence is believed to be one of his first commissions after arriving in Kansas City. Cross eventually designing 27 bridges and union depots for Peoria, IL; Atchison, KS; Denver CO and Kansas City. Other extant works includes St. Patrick's Catholic Church at 8th and Cherry in Kansas City and the Vaile Mansion in Independence. Cross was instrumental in the formation of the Kansas City Society of

Architects, the forerunner to the Kansas City Chapter of the American Institute of Architect. He retired from the practice of architecture in 1894.⁷

- John Henry Felt, architect of the First Christian Church at 125 S. Pleasant, was the designer of many churches and school buildings in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska and Iowa. He was born in 1867 in Greenfield, Indiana where he attended school. He worked at a planing mill where he was superintendent for six years, during which time he studied architecture. He opened his first office in Greenfield, and received commissions for schools, churches and residences. In 1898, he moved to St. Joseph Missouri where he formed a partnership with Homer H. Carr. The firm of Felt and Carr continued until 1901 when Carr retired. Felt then formed the firm of J. H. Felt & Company. In 1906, he transferred his office to Kansas City. He was an early member of the American Institute of Architects. ⁸
- William B. Fullerton was born in Belton, Missouri in 1916 and moved to Independence in the 1920s. He graduated from William Chrisman High School and attended Kansas State University where he received a degree in architecture. He served in the U.S. Army in World War II and after returning to Independence established an architectural practice in Kansas City, Missouri. He designed a number of residences, schools, churches, and commercial buildings in Independence including the Messiah Lutheran Church on South Main Street, the Bank of Independence Building at North Liberty and Truman Road, Hanthorn Elementary School on Kingshighway, Carson's Funeral Home on Winner Road, the pediatric offices of S.F. Cockerell and Seymour Kranson, and the residence of Dr. S.F. Cockerell at 35th Street and Crysler and his home at 604 Red Road.
- Henry F. Hoit was born in 1872 and reared in Chicago. He graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1898. Several years after his graduation, he received an invitation to apply to fill a vacancy in the office of Van Brunt and Howe architects. Hoit practiced with the firm under a variety of names and partnerships until 1941 when he retired as the head of the firm Hoit Price and Barnes. Shortly afterward the firm was dissolved. In 1938, he received a fellowship from the American Institute of Architect's for professional leadership and accomplishment. Edwin W. Price was born in Webb City Arkansas in 1885 and attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. ⁹ Alfred Barnes Jr. was the grandson of Asa Beebe Cross, Kansas City's first professional architect. He attended Kansas City schools and found work as a draftsman with architect Henry F. Hoit in 1909. Barnes became a member of the firm of Hoit, Price, and Barnes in 1919. He remained in that firm until it was dissolved in 1941. Thereafter he worked as a coordinating engineer at the Lake City Arsenal and later was associated with the Long Construction Company before retiring in 1958. In

⁷ Architects Vertical File. Kansas City Landmarks Commission. City of Kansas City, Missouri.

⁸ M. L. VanLoda, ed. *The Book of Missourians* (St. Louis: T. J. Steele & Co., 1906), 341-42 and Kansas City Star Mounted Clippings. *Kansas City Star*, 2 November 1938, Microfilm, Kansas City, Missouri Public Library Special Collections.

⁹ Architect Vertical File. Kansas City Landmarks Commission, City of Kansas City, Missouri.

much the same manner that the firm of McKim, Mead and White was considered the dean of architects in New York in the nineteenth century, the firm of Hoyt, Price and Barnes may be considered the dean of architects in Kansas City during the early twentieth century. Among the firm's important commissions was the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company building in Kansas City which was the tallest structure in Missouri at the time of its construction. The firm also designed the R. A. Long Building, the Kansas City Power and Light Company Building.

- Arthur S. Keen was born in Brighton, Massachusetts and graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1898. He came to Kansas City in 1907 and established the firm of Keene and Simpson with Leslie B. Simpson. Leslie B. Simpson is was born in Calhoun, Missouri in 1885 and studied architecture by correspondence before coming to Kansas City. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects and the Missouri Association of Registered Architects. He served as president of the architectural League of Kansas City in 1930 and of the AIA chapter in 1939-40. The firm designed the Jackson County Courthouse building in Kansas City, Missouri, the remodeled 1934 Jackson County Courthouse in Independence, the Scottish Rite Temple and the City National Bank, the original St. Luke's Hospital, Van Horn High School, and the State Office Building in Jefferson City. ¹⁰
- William McCoy was born in Independence, Missouri and graduated from Independence High School in 1904. He attended the Virginia Military Institute for two years. Upon leaving school he entered the office of J. H. Brady, Chief Engineer for the Kansas City, Missouri Board of Education. And subsequently worked for the Kansas City architectural firm of Smith, Rea and Lovitt for five years. The firm specialized in the design of schools. He went to Chicago in 1913, worked as an architect, and then returned to the Kansas City firm. After two years, he formed the association of Wm. H. Sayler and Wm. S. McCoy, Associated Architects, a Kansas City firm that specialized in school design. In 1920 he was elected Mayor of Independence on the Republican ticket. From 1930 to the time of his death, he worked as an architect for the St. Clair (sic>Sinclair) Refinery Company. In addition to his home on Park Street, among his other work in the city is the residence at 720 Procter Place, the movie theater at 119 West Lexington (now a photograph studio), the restoration of the 1826 log Jackson County Courthouse, and the Sugar Creek School on Claremont. He was also associated with the design of William Chrisman High School on Maple Street.

The work of late nineteenth and early twentieth century master builders who designed buildings in the survey area included R. L. McBride, Christian Yetter and William Street is also found in the survey area. Their biographical information is included in the Historic Context section

¹⁰ Ibid.

DATES OF CONSTRUCTION

Using the information provided by city directories and phone books, the consultants entered estimated dates of construction in the data base and assigned each building to one of eight time periods based on their original construction date. Dates of additions and alterations were not considered in the analysis. The eight eras of construction are as follows:

Figure 6.
DATES OF CONSTRUCTION

Early Settlement 1827-1854	2	01%
Border & Civil War: 1855-1865	1	01%
1866-1889	9	06%
1890-1909	29	18%
1910-1919	13	08%
1920-1930	31	19%
Depression and War Years 1931-1945	12	07%
Presidential Years 1946-1953	11	07%
Truman Retirement Era 1954-1972	28	17%
Late 20 TH CENTURY	27	16%
TOTAL	163	100%

ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

As noted in the Methodology section, all properties eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* and for local designation as Landmarks or Historic Districts, whether for individual significance or as contributing ¹¹ elements to a district must retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the period of time in which they are significant. Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. The evaluation of a property's historic integrity must be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. The National Register program recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, in various combinations, define integrity:

- **Location**
- **Design**
- **Setting**
- **Materials**
- **Workmanship**
- **Feeling**
- **Association**

Ultimately, the question of integrity is answered by whether or not the property retains the identity for which it is significant. The consultants, in assessing the integrity of properties utilized the following steps:

- Determined the essential physical features that must be present for a property to represent its significance.
- Determined whether the essential physical features are visible enough to convey their significance.
- Determined whether the property needs to be compared with similar properties.
- Determined, based on the significance and essential physical features, which aspects of integrity are particularly vital to the property and if they are present.

The consultants visually inspected the exterior of each of the buildings in the survey area. Each building received integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor based primarily on how much of the building's original design, workmanship, exterior materials and overall feeling of a past period of time appeared to remain. This coupled with their age and areas of significance provided the following breakout.

¹¹ A contributing property to a historic district does not have to meet the same threshold as properties having individual significance but it must contribute to the district's area of significance. Properties contributing to a district's significance for architecture must retain a higher degree of architectural integrity than in a district significant for associations with an important individual or with historical events or patterns of history.

**Figure 7.
ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY & SIGNIFICANCE**

LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER	5	03%
INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE FOR LISTING¹²	15	09%
CONTRIBUTING TO A DISTRICT	66	41%
NON-CONTRIBUTING TO A DISTRICT	15	09%
NOT ELIGIBLE	20	12%
LESS THAN 50 YEARS	42	26%

ASSOCIATIONS WITH HISTORIC CONTEXTS

The Survey identified buildings associated with the history of the community. In addition to those listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there are 108 buildings dating from 1827 to 1951 associated with the commercial development of the Independence Courthouse Square. These buildings also reflect the appearance of the Independence Square during the rise to political power and the presidential years of Harry S. Truman.

¹² In some instances properties individually eligible may also be counted as contributing elements to a district.

HISTORIC CONTEXTS

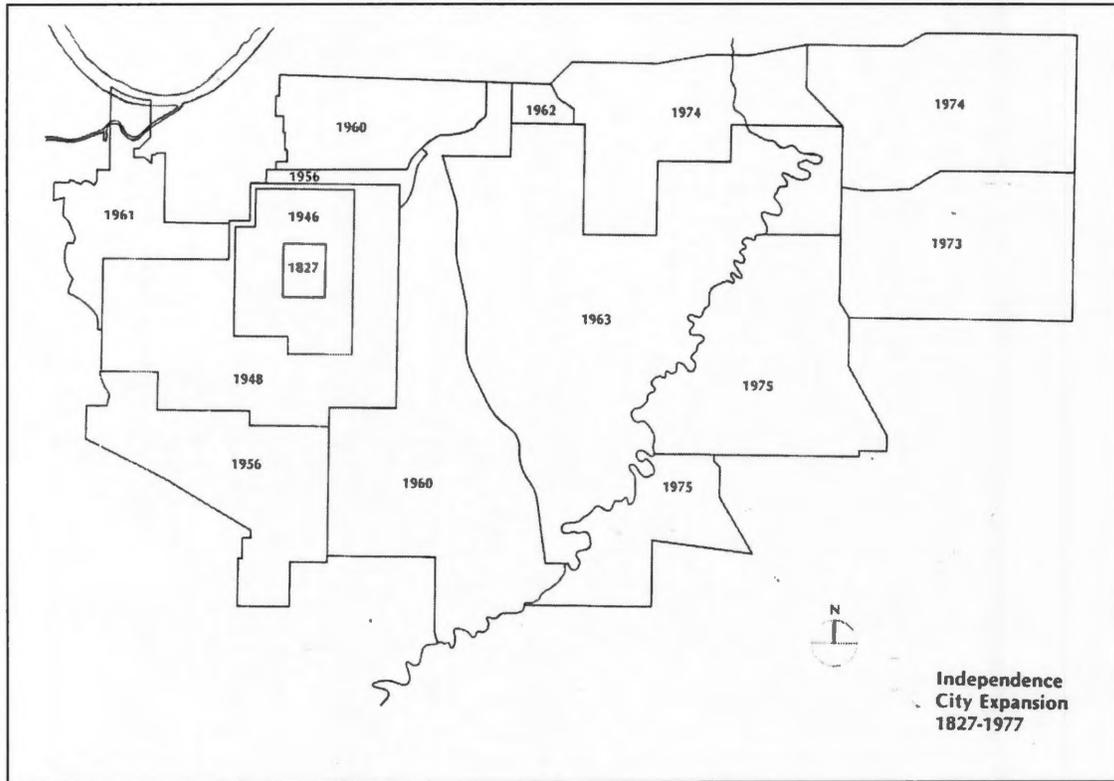


Figure 8.
INDEPENDENCE CITY EXPANSION 1827-1977

To fully understand the findings of the Survey, it is important to interpret survey information in context with the development of the neighborhoods within the survey area and in relationship to the forces that influenced the development of the City of Independence in general. The National Park Service defines historic context as “. . . a broad pattern of historical development in a community or its region, that may be represented by historic resources.” The development of a historic context identifies important connections between local, regional, state and national history and that of a defined sub-area. When survey findings are viewed in relationship to a broader historical

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context, it is possible to apply the criteria for evaluating eligibility for designation to the National and/or local historic registers.

The historic contexts developed in this survey are examined within the general chronological contexts established in "Comprehensive Plan Chapter 11 Historic Preservation City of Independence Missouri" by JMA/Watson Heritage Development and Community Planning Consultants, April 17, 2000. In certain instances, the chronological development of architectural and neighborhood development contexts do not follow the dates of these general thematic, chronological eras established in the preservation plan document. In such instances, the contexts are located within the earliest general chronological era and elaborated upon as a preface to the ensuing era.

The following historical narrative establishes historic contexts for defined chronological eras. Within these time periods, it identifies important development patterns including geographic limits, historical themes and evolution of architectural styles. Specific data from the survey are then related to this contextual information. Because of the geographical boundaries of the survey area and its period of development, the Survey does not fully address many of the established historical contexts for Independence in general.

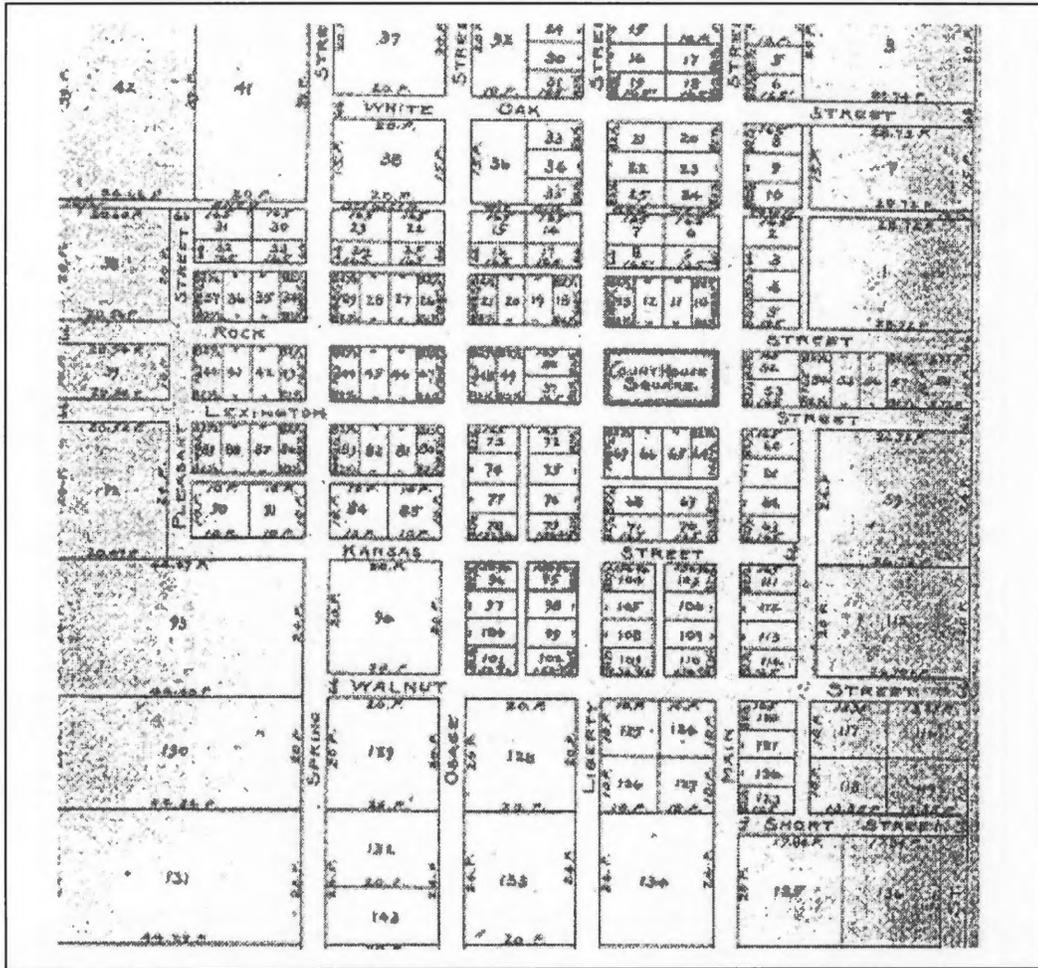
EARLY SETTLEMENT (1808-1832)

Euro-American settlers began to establish homes in the area of the Independence Square in 1825 after indigenous native American nations relinquished title to their lands. In December 1826, the Missouri legislature established Independence as the county seat for newly formed Jackson County.¹³ The following year, the Jackson County Court, an administrative body, platted the town of Independence. Planners set aside the springs for public use and designated a courthouse square plan. Specifications for the building of a permanent brick courthouse in the Courthouse Square date to 1827 and construction began the next year. The first meeting in the new courthouse took place in the fall of 1831

The first judges of the Jackson County Court gave special attention to changing primitive trails to roads. Among the earliest roads was the stretch from the Six Mile Baptist Church in eastern Jackson County to the Courthouse Square. This included part of the Lexington Road from Lexington, Missouri to Independence, which followed what is now

¹³ The area was then part of Lilliard County.

Figure 9.
Original 1827 Town Plat



U.S. 24 Highway to College Street, College to Main Street, and Main to the Square. Another early road, initially called the Westport Road, served as a westward continuation of the Lexington Road from Independence to the community of Westport, Missouri. Later, the City renamed the segment that ran from Noland Road¹⁴ to Forest Avenue to "Lexington Street."

The community's location along the trails established by native tribes overlooking the Missouri River and the number of fine springs in the area made Independence a favorable

¹⁴ The Noland Road segment was originally called Harmony Mission Road and, later, Harrison Road.

spot for traders and settlers. Near Independence the river, upon which and alongside which settlers moved west from St. Louis, bent northward and those wishing to travel further west, disembarked to take the overland routes. Initial growth was slow. During the years immediately following the platting of the community, the town's life was that of " . . . a very quiet, unenterprising and undistinguished village."¹⁵

TRAILHEAD (1833-1854)

It was not long, however, before entrepreneurs discovered the town's proximity to the river and key overland trails constituted an ideal place for the exchanging goods and services between business houses in the settled regions and speculators and traders in the wilderness. The commercial trade with Santa Fe that began in the 1820s at the town of Franklin, Missouri on the



Missouri River moved upriver. Independence became the primary embarking place from the river, shortening the overland trip by hundred of miles.

Beginning in the early 1830s, the Santa Fe trade was a powerful impetus for the growth of Independence. The Santa Fe traders could expect profits of 10 to 40 percent with a few realizing a return of up to 300 percent. Businesses such as Samuel Weston's blacksmith shop and wagon factory located at what is now S. Liberty Street and Kansas Avenue denoted the growing role of the small community as a chief outfitting location for the Santa Fe trade. An 1831 account describes the town during its formative years.

Independence. . . is a new town, containing a courthouse built of brick, two or three merchant stores and fifteen or twenty dwelling houses, built mostly of logs hewed on both sides and is situated on a handsome rise of ground about three miles south of the Missouri River and about twelve miles east of the dividing line between the U.S. and the Indian Reserve, and is the county seat of Jackson County. ¹⁶

¹⁵ W. L. Webb, "Independence, Missouri, A Century Old," *Missouri Historical Review*, vol. XXII, No. 1 (October, 1927), p. 3.

¹⁶ Gregory M. Franzwa, *The Oregon Trail Revisited* (St. Louis: Patrice Press, 1972), 87.

MORMON WARS

At the same time the Santa Fe Trade expanded the town's economic base and stimulated development, other forces accelerated the town's growth. In 1831, Independence became the focus of missionary activities of the newly created Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.¹⁷ Its founder and prophet, Joseph Smith, Jr., proclaimed Independence to be the "City of Zion" contending that God had given the area to the "Saints" as a divine inheritance.¹⁸ The arrival of followers of the prophet Joseph Smith created conflict between the old settlers and the new emigrants. Church members purchased 63 acres less than a mile from the town's square and laid a cornerstone for a temple. The following year, the sect's population numbered more than 1,200 -- roughly one-third of the total population of the county. As the religious group's members acquired large tracts of land and their political influence and communal economic base increased, resentment against them grew among the entrenched Scotch Irish settlers. This and their pronouncements regarding sensitive issues such as slavery and the status of Indians led to discord and hostility. Within a few years what began as minor persecution and isolated conflict escalated into mob violence and, in November 1833, the Latter Day Saint settlers abandoned their homes and businesses in Jackson County and fled across the Missouri River to Clay County.

OVERLAND TRADE

The decades between 1830 and 1850 saw thousands of people and millions of dollars worth of goods pass through Independence. During the vigorous 1830s Independence was "the only considerable place" in Jackson County and the chief "port of embarkation" for travel west.¹⁹ The Santa Fe trade passing through Independence averaged \$130,000 per year and eventually topped \$3 million.²⁰

The 1840s and the early 1850s were, however, the Square's high point during the westward movement. In addition to the Santa Fe trade, beginning in 1843, families bound for California and Oregon joined the mountain men, traders, cattle drovers, Mexicans, slaves

¹⁷ Also known as the Mormon Church or Mormons. The term as used in the nineteenth century was considered by many in the church to be a perjorative term used by "gentile" detractors.

¹⁸ W. Patrick O'Brien, *Independence Square A Convenient Guide to the Past for Today's Pioneers* (Independence: Independence Square Merchants Association, 1985), 1.

¹⁹ A. Theodore Brown, *Frontier Community: Kansas City to 1870* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1963), p. 55.

²⁰ Sherry Lamb Schirmer and Richard D. McKinzie. *At the River's Bend: An Illustrated History of Kansas City, Independence and Jackson County* (Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, Inc. in association with the Jackson County Historical Society, 1982), 23.

and residents who thronged the Courthouse Square. Arriving by boat at the Independence Landing in the early spring, and traveling to the town square, they camped around the springs and purchased wagons, teams, and the provisions needed for their 2,000 mile journey.²¹ In 1845, Independence formally secured its position as the hub of the overland trade to the West and Southwest becoming the official U.S. Customs port of entry from the Far West. Twice the size of her main commercial rivals, the Town of Kansas and Westport put together, Independence reigned as the "Queen City of the Trails".²² The following May, the first overland mail stagecoach lines into the Far West left Independence for Santa Fe. The Mexican War that erupted that year and, which the citizens of Independence regarded as "particularly hers" because of the significant role of the local populace in supplying men, material and transportation for the effort, contributed to the town's economic fortunes.²³ Three years later, the California Gold rush added to the town's economic growth. That same year, Independence became a city in its own right, released from a 22-year rule of the Jackson County Court.

Early on, Independence business and service people established a toehold in the overland outfitting trade. They met the heavy demand for wagons, oxen yokes, canvas, and other necessities for traveling on the western trails. Blacksmith Samuel Weston and former slave, Hiram Young, grew wealthy by manufacturing and sale of wagons from their respective shops near the Independence Square. Craftsmen repaired and manufactured wagon fittings and guns. Merchants opened stores stocked with cloth, tobacco, shoes, dye paper, books, foodstuffs and a wide range of housewares.²⁴ Saloons and hotels served the drovers and speculators. And, the farms populating the surrounding countryside benefited through the sale of livestock., flour, tobacco and dressed meat.²⁵

As the town enlarged its role during the 1840s as an embarking point for both the commercial trail to the Southwest and the emigrant trails to the Far West, the area around the Courthouse Square took on the appearance of a rough, boomtown. Historian Bernard DeVoto described the scene:

²¹ Ibid., 25.

²² *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850* (Washington: Robert Armstrong, 1853), p 658. Blue Township, including Independence had a population of 6,458 while Kansas.(sic. Kaw) Township including the Town of Kansas and the Town of Westport had 2,529.

²³ Webb, p. 40

²⁴ Schirmer, 24.

²⁵ Ibid.

Independence. It was still Eden but with metropolitan additions and the flood poured through it. All conditions of mankind were there in all costumes: Shawnee and Kansa from the Territory and wanders of other tribes, blanketed, painted, wearing their Presidential metals; Mexicans in bells, slashed pantaloons and primary colors, speaking a strange tongue and smoking shuck-rolled cigarettes; mountain men in buckskins preparing for the summer trade or offering their services to the emigrant trains; the case-hardened bullwhackers of the Santa Fe Trail in boots and bowie knives, coming in after wintering at the other end or preparing to go out; rivermen and roustabouts, Negro stevedores, soldiers from Fort Leavenworth. . . Freight poured in from the steamboat landing, the great wagons careened through the streets, day by day the freshet of movers came in from the east, the lowing of herds polluted over the town, the smithies and wagon shops rang with iron, whooping riders galloped their ponies through the mud, the groggeries were one long aria, and out from town the little clusters of tents grew and grew.²⁶

The courthouse served as a community focus, not only the seat of justice and the county's administrative headquarters, the grounds hosted political speeches, patriotic celebrations, public lynchings, and sale of property including slave auctions. The following quote from William Walker in April 1851 reflects a common occurrence.

April 7 Cloudy and misting rain. Went in company with J. M. McCoy to attend the session of the county Court. Arrived midst rain, noise and confusion about the courthouse. Selling at auction negroes, horses, mules, etc.

In 1836, the county demolished its first brick courthouse and erected another two-story brick building in 1838. Around the Courthouse Square, businesses related to the town's function as county seat, overland embarking point and growing regional agricultural center flourished.

Liberty Street, with its direct access to the river landing, became an important commercial thoroughfare. The road led two-and-one-half miles to the Square from the Upper Independence Landing,²⁷ one of two river ports serving the community. Wagons leaving Independence for the West lined up on Liberty Street because of its proximity to the various wagon and blacksmith shops. They rolled past the location on South Liberty Street of the ill-fated *Morning and Evening Star* newspaper office established by the Latter Day Saint Church and demolished by an angry mob in 1833. At the southwest corner of Liberty and Kansas Street was the blacksmith shop of Robert Weston. Adjoining the brick building were

²⁶ O'Brien, 2.

²⁷ Known after 1847 as Wayne City. After 1850 a different route was developed

wooden sheds that housed a wagon shop and plow factory. In 1850, the first Waldo, Hall and Company stagecoaches carrying regular United States mail left by way of Liberty Street for Santa Fe.

Other blacksmith shops also provided one of the most essential industries of the community at that time -- repair of wagons, fabrication of ok yokes, shoeing of oxen, mules and horses, forging wagon rims, chains, kingbolts, linchpins and other apparatus as well as household and farm implements. Among the town's earliest "smithies" were those of Lewis Jones on the corner of Liberty and West Lexington streets, Robert S. Stone on South Liberty Street near the railroad track, Thomas Shaw at the corner of South Liberty and Walnut streets, Nicholas Hocker's shop on Lynn Street near Lexington, and John G. McCurdy's shop at North Main and White Oak streets.²⁸ Northeast of McCurdy's shop was a large camping ground and corral for the westward travelers.

The 100 block of West Maple Street²⁹ marks the site of the warehouse of the Independence and Missouri River Railroad Company. Incorporated in 1849, the firm constructed a six-and-one-half mile rail track from the large warehouse on Maple to upper Independence Landing at Wayne City. A block west of Liberty and Maple streets stood the City Market³⁰ Nearby the city erected its first Fire Engine House and City Hall in 1850.

At the northeast corner of Maple and Main Street, Solomon Flournoy built one of the town's first hotels. Later Smallwood Noland purchased the property and ran a hotel under the names Washington Hotel and Globe Hotel. After a fire in the 1840s, Noland rebuilt and christened his new venture the Noland House. . The hotel faced Main Street and had livery stables attached to the north. Guests included writer Francis Parkman and pioneer traveler Susan Magoffin. Noland's Hotel later became known as Hickman House and the Merchant's Hotel.³¹

²⁸ Pearl Wilcox, *Jackson County Pioneers* (Independence: 1975), 170.

²⁹ Originally named Rock Street.

³⁰ In 1838 the County Court issued an order for erecting a market on the east side of the square. Later this location was changed to the west side of the square in an area between Lexington and Maple streets on the west side of what is now Osage Street. Use of the market house ceased during the Civil War and the building burned in 1889. The lot is now a surface parking lot.

³¹ A marker located at the intersection of Truman Road and Main Street commemorates the battle.

John Lewis, one of the town's first businessmen opened a saddle shop at 214 West Lexington.³² In the 1850s, Lexington Street, know at that time as the Independence-Westport Road also carried mail stages, and passengers to the West. On East Lexington was the Robison and Crook Iron Foundry, that produced engines boilers, farm implements, cast iron stoves, pots kettles, wagons, bows and yokes. Southeast of the foundry site at the corner of Lynn and Lexington was the original site of the first courthouse of Jackson County. It was at this time that the south side of the Square became the "saloon side" although business houses serving liquor were also at other locations. In 1845, Alfred S. Waugh, a traveling artist described Independence as a ". . . striving, pleasant little town." After noting a number of irregular buildings around the courthouse square ". . . dignified with the lofty sounding title of stores," he wrote:

*In the center of small square, enclosed in a wooden fence stands a low, square, squat, two-story brick courthouse . . . with no attractive features about to draw attention of claim the slightest homage from the lovers of architectural beauty*³³

EARLY BUILDING FORMS AND ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

The first residences and business houses in Independence were log buildings. Some served as temporary shelter while larger hewn buildings served for a generation or more. As the community grew, its buildings began to reflect a wide range of architectural styles. Most residences were simple folk houses – gable-front houses with massed plan that included the gable-front-and-wing, hall-and-parlor, and I-house shapes.³⁴ Other residences reflected the styles made popular by architectural pattern books that spread the use of the latest styles including the Gothic and Greek Revival styles as well as the latest Italianate design. Business houses included log buildings, wood sheathed buildings with mortise and tendon framing, as well as one- and two-story brick and stone buildings. The gable-end, one-and-a-half story, brick Kritzer House on East Lexington listed in the *National Register of Historic Places* is the only remaining building in the survey area dating from the early settlement period. Foundations and some walls of buildings in the survey area may date to this period. The Independence Square Courthouse although remodeled several times, still encapsulates

³² The building was razed in 1922 to make way for a modern business building that occupied for the next thirty-two years as a shoe shop. The lot is currently a surface parking lot.

³³ Wilcox, 201.

³⁴ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 90.

the c. 1840s brick courthouse in its central section. Roof and exterior walls and chimneys are intact. It too, is listed in the National Register.

WAR AND RECOVERY (1855-1879)

THE BORDER AND CIVIL WARS

By 1854, the businesses on the Independence Square had suffered a number of setbacks, Flooded river landings, cholera epidemics, poor roads and competition from a growing network of river ports to the west and north diminished its trade monopoly. Still, it competed successfully as the dominant river port outfitting towns such as Westport, the Town of Kansas, Leavenworth, Weston and St. Joseph. It was the conflict that arose with the opening of the Kansas Nebraska Territory that cut short the town's competitive success. The opening of the territory to settlement in 1854 offered the people of western Missouri the guarantee of continued prosperity and the potential for further growth. Unfortunately decades of sectional hostility, escalation of the slavery question and competitive rivalry over the route of the transcontinental railroad combined to set the stage for the next ten years as an extended period of internecine warfare along the Missouri-Kansas border. Beginning in 1855 and continuing until the end of the Civil War, the conflict devastated whole areas of the state, particularly along the southern and the western borders, which included Jackson County.

By 1862, Union troops and Kansas volunteer units controlled most of Missouri. From that period on, the conflict in western Missouri degenerated into a struggle between groups of southern sympathizers known as "Border Ruffians" or "Bushwhackers," and Union sympathizers, called "Redlegs" and "Jay Hawkens." Historians would later characterize the plundering, burning, and killing of this period as one of ". . . the most savage and bitter phases of the entire Civil War."³⁵ The three-day Battle of Westport, fought between October 21 and 23, 1864 ended the final Confederate effort to control Missouri and the West.

Almost from the beginning of the regional conflict, control of Independence became the objective of both sides. Originally southern in sympathy, the town's leaders quickly

³⁵ Albert Castel, "Order No. 11 and the Civil War on the Border" *Missouri Historical Review*, vol. LVII, (July, 1963) p. 368.

attempted to strike middle ground only to find themselves at the mercy of both the Kansas "Jayhawkers" and the William Clarke Quantrill's Missouri guerrillas.

On Washington's Birthday, 1862, members of the Second Ohio Cavalry and Quantrill's troops confronted each other in a surprise melee on the Square that killed two of Quantrill's men and four or five of the Union soldiers. The ensuing panic prompted bankers to move their assets from the town and the County Clerk fled with the court's records to Kansas City where Union troops maintained their headquarters. The following June, Union Troops under James T. Buel took control of Independence. Buel commandeered the Southern Bank Building at West Lexington and Liberty streets as his headquarters. His troops took control of the county jail on North Main Street. The remainder of the federal soldiers pitched tents in the vicinity of Pleasant and Lexington streets.

On August 11 1862, Confederate troops under Upton Hays and John T. Hughes as well as the guerrilla forces under William Quantrill attacked the town. Entering from the east on present day Truman Road, they first seized the county jail and executed Marshal James Knowles for collusion with federal authorities. They then assaulted Buel's headquarters at the bank and set it afire. Buel surrendered as many of his troops fled west to Kansas City.

Beginning in 1863, during a period of martial law and the forced exodus of Southern sympathizers from western Missouri, Independence served as a federal outpost. The once thriving public square became a crowded refugee camp as federal troops enforced the United States Army Department of the Border's infamous Order Number Eleven clearing Missouri border counties of all populations, southern and union alike, in an attempt to curtail southern guerrilla activity.

Barely a year later, a pitched battle engulfed the Square for the better part of two days. In the late summer of 1864, General Sterling Price with 15,000 mounted Confederate troops, struck out across the state in the direction of Fort Leavenworth. Known as the Second Battle of Independence, a pitched battle began on October 22, 1864 between his forces which included the famed "Iron Brigade" of General Joseph Shelby, and Union troops under the command of General Alfred Pleasanton.³⁶ One witness living several blocks south of the public square estimated around 10,000 federal soldiers encamped around the town at about 10,000 awaiting Price's army. The forces met in an area south and west of the Courthouse Square, the lines sometimes no more than 90 yards apart. Price's forces

pushed west to be defeated at the Battle of Westport, an event that signaled the end of the conflict in the western United States.

MID-CENTURY BUILDING FORMS AND ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Building Forms and Styles

Prior to the Civil War, Independence's commercial and residential architecture consisted of wooden structures and a few institutional and commercial buildings constructed of brick and limestone. The conflict during the Civil War destroyed the vast majority of these buildings. Only a few ante-bellum buildings remain in Independence. One building in the survey area dates from the Border and Civil wars period. The 1859 Marshal House and Jail at 217 North Main Street, which figured prominently in the conflict, is listed in the *National Register of Historic Places*.

Architects and Master Builders

Independence's early builders had much to do with the changing appearance of the town during the ante-bellum period. They included William M. Randall and Rezin Benjamin Franklin Milton. The design of the 1859 county marshal's home and jail on North Main Street, by architect Asa Beebe Cross, is testimony to the use of academic, "high style" influences of the era.

Rezin B. F. Milton came to Independence in 1856 from Virginia and became noted for the large masonry homes he designed and erected. William Randall also arrived in Independence that same year. Randall established a brickyard on 20 acres north of the William McCoy home on Farmer Street bounded by College Street on the south, Mill Street on the north, Delaware Street on the west, and Spring Street on the east. When the supply of native shale and clay ran short at this location, Randall and his sons, William and Adron, purchased a larger 85-acre tract "away out south of town,"³⁷ and erected brick kilns there. In addition to brick making, the Randalls were skilled masons and contractors.³⁸

RECOVERY

The end of the war in 1865 did not mean a suspension of hostilities. In eastern Jackson County, guerrilla bands continued to roam the countryside where burned homes, neglected

³⁶ A marker located at the intersection of Truman Road and Main Street commemorates the battle.

³⁷ Wilcox, *Jackson County Pioneers*, 504.

farmsteads, and ruined business houses testified to eleven years of conflict. The surrender of the guerrilla troops on August 11, 1866 signaled the beginning of peace in the county. In Independence the depredations of both Union and Confederate forces left the town in a sad state physically and economically. Ferdinand Helff who arrived in Independence in 1865 described the town as desolate and deserted, especially the north and west sides of the Courthouse Square.

The windows and doors of the buildings were knocked out and some were boarded up to keep out boys. A row of frame houses on the south and east sides of the square marked the business portion except the Jones Hotel, Doctor Stark and Doctor Henry, a dentist. The marks of the Civil War showed on every house and on every face.³⁹

The town of Leavenworth, Kansas, which enjoyed the protection of federal troops at the nearby fort throughout the conflict, now controlled the region's overland trade. Moreover, the City of Kansas usurped Independence's function as the county seat when a group of businessmen confiscated the county records during the war and established their community as the de facto center of county government. This, coupled with the erection of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad Bridge in 1869, the first railroad bridge to span the Missouri River, assured Kansas City as the seat of commerce and government in Jackson County.

After their surrender, some of the former guerrillas who served under Quantrill launched a fifteen-year career of train and bank robberies reaching from western Missouri to Alabama and Minnesota. Alexander Franklin James and Jesse Woodson James of Clay County and the Younger brothers from eastern Jackson County became national legends. Frank James married Independence resident Annie Ralston in 1874. In 1880, a Jackson County jury convicted James gang member Bill Ryan in a sensational trial at the courthouse in Independence. Two years later, Robert Ford murdered Jesse James at St. Joseph, Missouri. Frank James remained at large until his surrender to the governor of Missouri in the fall of 1882. Upon his return to Independence to stand trial, friends of James honored him at a reception at the Merchant's Hotel before he began his incarceration in the county jail on Main Street.⁴⁰

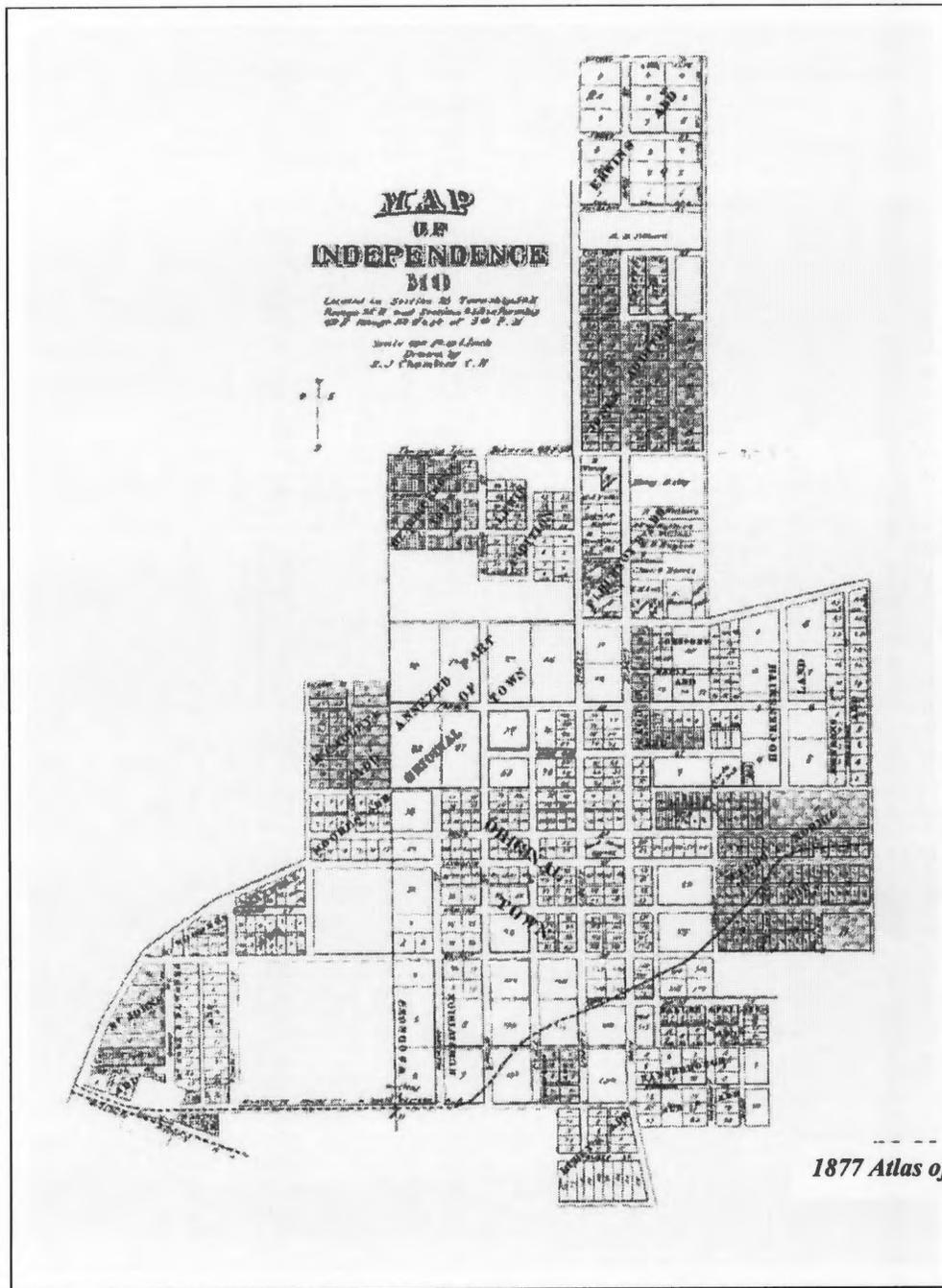
³⁸ Ibid., 504-505.

³⁹ Ibid., 390.

⁴⁰ O'Brien, 4-5.

Although the town's role as an overland outfitting center ended with the escalating civil conflict in the region, one artery of the new overland transportation system did reach Independence immediately after the war's end. In 1865, the crews of the Missouri Pacific Railroad completed its line through Independence and on into Kansas City. In addition to

Figure 10
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, 1877



1877 Atlas of Jackson County, Missouri

the commerce this line brought to the beleaguered town, a small number of Independence's metalworking and grain milling firms continued to produce goods for regional consumers.⁴¹

By 1870 any contest among the river towns for the area's economic supremacy was over. Kansas City easily dominated the region, its population growing from 4,418 in 1860 to 32,260 in 1870 compared to Independence's growth from 3,164 to 3,184 during the same period.⁴² Independence, out-stripped in its bid to be a commercial center, settled into the role of county seat and agrarian market town. Ten years later, Independence had the appearance of a typical thriving Missouri county seat. The addition of the services of the Union Pacific Railroad, the City benefited from the commerce generated by the Chicago and Alton Railroad Company. Broad macadamized streets radiated from the business district. More than 25 businesses clustered about the Courthouse Square and resident shoppers and rural families flocked to town each Saturday. Visitors took notice of the town's picturesque homes with "neat porches" covered with climbing vines that were so hidden by foliage "... that one could scarcely believe at a glance down the green avenues that the place was inhabited." Ten religious denominations held services in simple wood frame and brick churches on residential streets adjacent to the Square. Three private schools offered a variety of grammar, high school and college level courses, supplementing the efforts of a growing public school system. Numerous private clubs and organizations met regularly and promoted cultural, educational and fraternal endeavors.⁴³

POST -WAR ARCHITECTURE AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The appearance of the Independence Square in the 1870s began to reflect that of other cities that evolved during the mid-nineteenth century, particularly in the Midwest after the end of the Civil War. Sharp distinctions emerged between village and town, and between town and city. Within the city or town, areas in the commercial downtown began to be arranged based on administrative, retail, wholesale, industrial or recreational use. New building types or fundamental reinterpretations of familiar types emerged including, the commercial block, office building, town or city hall, courthouse, schoolhouse, opera house, hotel, department store, loft building and warehouse. In larger cities, architectural preferences changed at staccato speed and in time with the rhythm of big city life – Italianate, Second Empire, Richardsonian Romanesque – all enlivened the cityscape. In

⁴¹ Schirmer. 57.

⁴² Joseph C.G. Kennedy, Superintendent of Census, *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Records of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 292; and Webb, 50.

⁴³ *The History of Jackson County Missouri*. Indexed Reprint Edition of Original 1881 publication of the Union Historical Company, Birdsall, Williams & Company (Cape Girardeau, MO: Ranfre Press, 1966), 666-667.

towns, with the exception of large edifices, the use of new styles was slower and styles retained popularity for a longer period.

Building Forms and Styles

As Independence grew, its buildings reflected a wide range of architectural styles. Residences included simple folk houses and popular high-style designs. Commercial buildings erected immediately after the end of the war reflected the ubiquitous Italianate commercial style. The building on the northwest corner of Liberty and Lexington reflects the typical American



mercantile version of the Italian palazzo incorporated a storefront with a broad expanse of plate-glass windows, framed by cast-iron columns and cornices or decorated piers. Upper-story windows featured projecting keystones and richly profiled moldings, or simple round arch window openings. A projecting brick, metal or wood cornice with modillions or brackets, visually capped the flat roof building.

Architects and Master Builders

Joining master builders, Rezin B. F. Milton and the Randall brothers in providing construction services in Independence after the war was Christian Yetter. At the age of 19 Yetter, a carpenter and master builder, immigrated from Germany to the United States in 1866 and located at Hermann, Missouri. Five years later he moved to Jackson County. He first worked as a carpenter for the firm of Hook and Rolland, contractors and builders. In 1876, he began his own construction business. He built many of the early frame and iron bridges in the county, constructed the first concrete highway in the county, and erected numerous frame and masonry buildings, including modest as well as important residences and business houses. ⁴⁴ Among the buildings he erected were the old Ott School, Columbia School, the 1910 City Hall, the First Presbyterian Church, The First Christian Church, North Rock Creek School, and the remodeled Jackson County Courthouse Clock Tower.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 505.

BOOM, BUST, AND CONSOLIDATION (1880-1917)

THE ROYAL SUBURB

Boom Years - From Village to Town

By 1880, the settled areas of the town generally extended from the Square north past what is today U.S. 24 Highway, south to the Missouri Pacific Railroad tracks, east a few blocks past Noland Road and west as far as Pleasant Street except along Truman Road⁴⁵ and Lexington

At a time when well-heeled Kansas Citians began looking for home sites away from the industrial and urban grime of their city, Independence's promoters touted the physical amenities of their town—neat prosperous homes and business houses, scenic glades, wooded bluffs and an abundant source of pure spring water. It was not coincidental that at this same time interest surfaced in Kansas City for broadening and improving boulevards between Kansas City and Independence.⁴⁶

As Kansas City's commercial and manufacturing centers and interurban lines expanded, suburban migration from the city initially followed an easterly course. Speculators anticipated that the attractive countryside along the river bluffs and in the upland sections of the Little Blue River Valley between Kansas City and Independence would be the next logical area for the homes of well-to-do commuters. And, as more and more middle- and upper-class citizens equated Kansas City as a great place for commerce but an unsuitable place to live, many saw Independence as Kansas City's "Royal Suburb," the logical place to live and rear a family.

These events occurred in a larger economic context. Beginning in 1870 and continuing for the next thirty years, one of the most impressive businesses in Kansas City and, to a lesser degree, in neighboring communities, was real estate development. From Jackson County's beginnings there was a direct relationship between buying and selling land and other economic activity such as freighting, railroad promotion, the development of the livestock industry, etc. The profitability of investing in and selling land during Kansas City's growth and prosperity after the Civil War attracted people and capital. Nevertheless, throughout the 1870s, national economic conditions, including periods of depressed market conditions,

⁴⁵ First called Rock Street and later, Van Horn Avenue. In the City of Kansas City, Missouri it was 15th Street.

⁴⁶ Theodore Brown and Lyle W. Dorsett, *K.C. A History of Kansas City, Missouri* (Boulder Colorado: Pruitt Publishing Company, 1978), 123.

combined with grasshopper plagues in the surrounding farming communities to restrain real estate transactions. After the economy absorbed the effects of two large bank failures in 1878, land transactions gathered momentum and culminated into the great real estate boom of the 1880s.

In Kansas City the boom affected both the development of settled areas and the new residential development to the east and south of the city's core. One significant element affecting growth patterns was the extension of transit lines to link established communities and crossroads. Even the announcement of new rail lines created speculation and raised land prices along projected routes. As the boom intensified, Kansas City developers platted numerous additions and erected inexpensive, look-alike middle-class homes along streetcar lines to the south and, especially, to the east.⁴⁷

Beginning first along the five miles of Independence Avenue⁴⁸ linking Kansas City and Independence, a significant portion of the residential development in the 1880s occurred in the inter-city area between Independence and Kansas City. Willard Winner's planned extension of his Kansas City and Independence Park Railway to Independence further stimulated speculation and development in this area. In 1886 Winner formed the Eastside Syndicate which purchased 2,400 acres of land that ran east to Independence from Kansas City. Here Winner planned a tract to be called Washington Park. He eventually secured a right-of-way for a rail line that connected Independence with the eastern terminus of the Metropolitan Street Railway cable line at Fifteenth Street⁴⁹ and extended from the western limits of Independence at Forest Avenue, to the eastern boundary of Kansas City, Missouri.

Inaugurated on September 2, 1887, the interurban line was a first. Previously, the only transportation other than horse drawn vehicles between the two communities was the infrequent Missouri Pacific Railroad line.⁵⁰ The next year, Winner extended eastward Washington Park Boulevard, which included the inter-urban tracks.⁵¹ The steam powered rail line created both real and paper development along the 100 foot wide boulevard leading

⁴⁷ Ibid., 53-54.

⁴⁸ Now U.S. 24 Highway

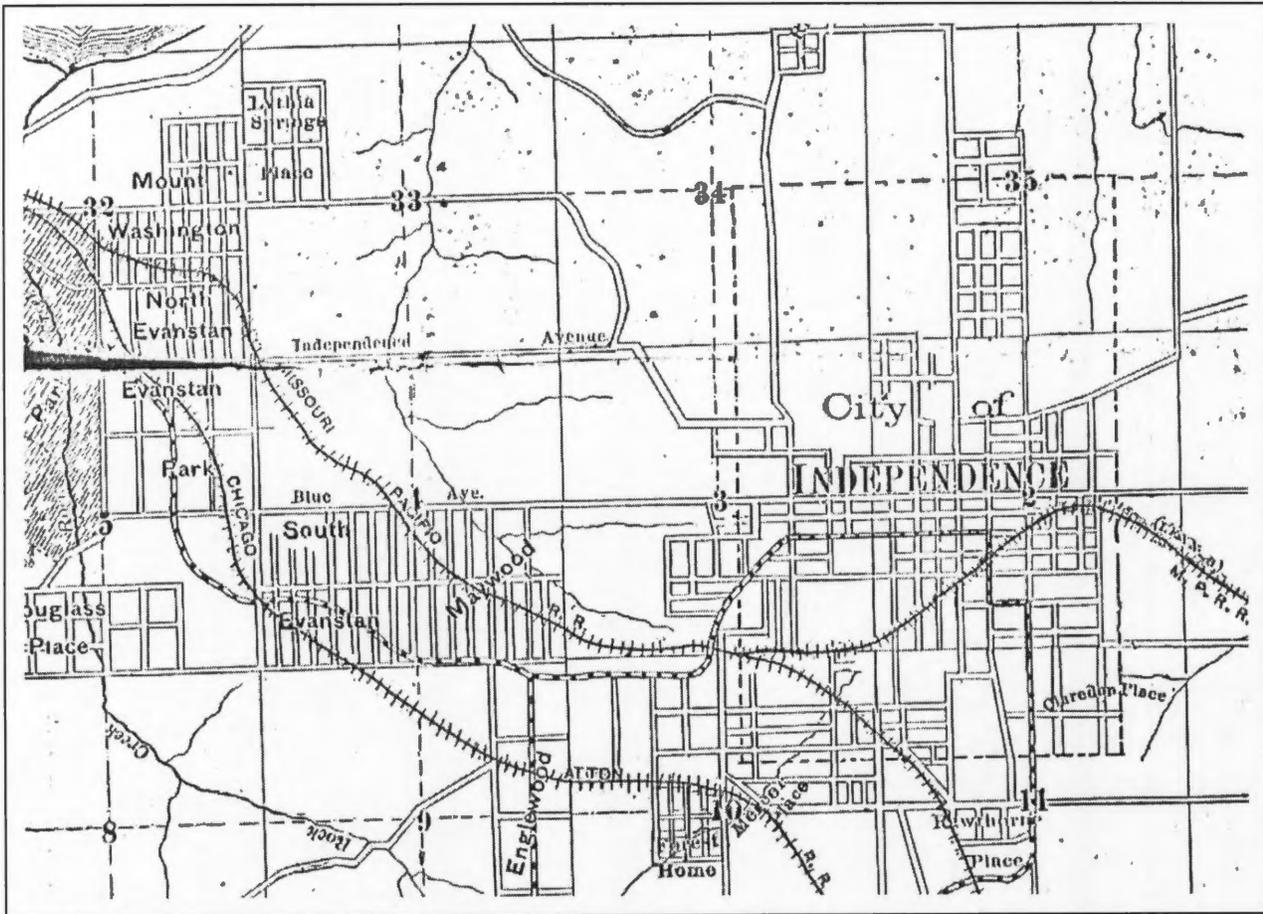
⁴⁹ Truman Road

⁵⁰ Ed Carnes, "The East Suburbs," *Jackson County Missouri Area Historical Information*, compiled by William J. Curtis. Volumes 1- 12. (Independence Missouri: William J. Curtis, 1963), 3370. The tracks ran through Independence and along South Noland Road, but the company never used these tracks and ended its run at the ticket office at 212 West Lexington on the Independence Square.

⁵¹ Later called Mt. Washington Boulevard and finally, Winner Road.

Figure 11
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE, 1887

*Sentinel's Map of Independence, Kansas
City and Vicinity, 1887*



to Winner's 400 acre Washington Park where he planned to develop a residential enclave.⁵² The line passed through scenic river bluffs and rich farm land that, for the most part, soon became real estate subdivisions. These real and proposed residential enclaves quickly stimulated the development of Maywood, Englewood, and Fairmont -- small commercial areas located near Winner's train stops or "Stations" west of the Independence city limits and east and south of Washington Park.⁵³

⁵² Now Mt. Washington Cemetery. Schirmer, 99-100.

⁵³ Carnes, 11 and Schirmer, 99-100

Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

Historic Preservation Services.

Civic leaders from Kansas City and Independence hailed the railway's first run as the beginning of a new era.⁵⁴ The new "rapid transit" consisted of two coaches drawn by a wheezing, cinder-throwing engine that could run as fast backwards as forward. Round trip tickets included a transfer to the Kansas City cable cars in Blue Valley at Ninth, Twelfth and Fourteenth streets.⁵⁵

The impact of the eastward movement of development from Kansas City had a striking effect on land values in Independence. Winner's new rail line from Kansas City and the inauguration of a cross-town line within Independence intensified the city's real estate "boom."⁵⁶ The Citizens Street Railway (known locally as the "Goat line") broke ground June 9, 1887. The railway ran south to north across town from its starting point at the old South Liberty Street Missouri Pacific Depot to College Street, then east to Noland Road. A spur line extended from the intersection of College Street out past the Vaile home on North Liberty Street.

Land in Independence began to sell at unheard of prices. Real estate speculators offered owners of vacant land one-third down and the balance when the promoter sold the lots. At this time there were some fifty-eight real estate agents in Independence. One agent reported selling \$26,826.31 worth of property in July of 1887. During that year land transfers reached \$18,200,000 and there were 200 homes under construction.⁵⁷

The boom years of the 1880s had a lasting effect on Independence. At the beginning of the decade census records showed a population of 3,146 -- a typical size for a village. By 1890, the population doubled to 6,380. In 1880, kerosene lamps lighted homes and offices. Oil lamps at important corners comprised the city's street lighting system. Wells, cisterns or springs were the source of water. Two years later, the town's first water service utility established a small treatment and pumping station located on the Missouri River and the company geared up to install nearly six miles of new mains and thirty-five fire hydrants.⁵⁸ By the late 1880s the village was a town. The city granted utility franchises for natural gas and electric power. A business directory listed ten attorneys, six physicians, five druggists, a dentist, three barbers, two milliners, one dressmaker, three tailors, and four shoemakers. Business houses included three banks, three newspapers, six saloons, three hotels, three

⁵⁴ Wilcox, *Jackson County Pioneers*, 472.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 471.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 470 quoting *Kansas City Journal*, January 1, 1888.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, quoting *Kansas City Journal*, July 9, 1887.

livery stables, and three real estate companies. Seven dry goods stores, four hardware stores, two coal and fuel dealers, a furniture store and undertaker, a book store and stationer, a cigar and confectioner's shop, seven grocery stores, three butcher shops, a bakery and an ice cream maker comprised the city's retail establishments. A lumber company, six blacksmith shops, a wagon maker, three harness makers, a gunsmith, a flour mill and a woolen mill accounted for the town's manufacturing concerns.⁵⁹

Independence's street grid in 1887 stretched east along Lexington Street to Park Avenue, south along Chrysler to what is today 23rd Street, north to what is today U.S. 24 Highway and east several blocks past Noland Road. New development along Winner's rail line between present day Sterling Road and Northern Boulevard stretched north to what is now Truman Road and south of the streetcar line a few blocks. As late as 1899-1900 there were no additional residential listings along Lexington Street south of the Missouri Pacific Railroad tracks.

BUST! – THE REAL ESTATE MARKET COLLAPSES

By the end of the 1880s the flourishing regional real estate market collapsed. In 1891, property values in Independence fell to one-third of their previous level and building construction sagged. A significant number of both established and inexperienced real estate developers and speculators suffered financial ruin. Scattered along transit lines in Kansas City and Independence were a succession of residential real estate projects in various stages of development. Abandoned streetcar rights-of-way snaked through underdeveloped farmland and commercial properties sat vacant and deteriorating. Not until the 1900s did real estate prices again approach their fair market value.⁶⁰

The depressed local real estate market and a national depression in 1893 slowed any additional real estate development in the region. Willard Winners' multi-million dollar enterprises, dependent on a formula of developing barren tracts into residential districts along new rail lines and selling houses on the installment plan, began to unravel. Suffering huge losses in other projects in Jackson and Clay counties, Winner held on to some of his investments in the inter-city area. He completed Mt. Washington Boulevard⁶¹ and his interurban rail line continued to operate, adding freight hauling to passenger services.

⁵⁸ Schirmer, 96.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 51, 58, 99-100.

⁶¹ Previously called Washington Park Avenue and today, Winner Road.

Although lots did not sell at the same pace and prices of the 1880s, the Maywood and Englewood areas continued to attract working class homebuyers. In 1896, the Metropolitan Street Railway purchased Winner's line and electrified it. Electric "trolley" cars now provided service every fifteen minutes to Kansas City. The inception of these services stimulated residential and some new commercial development along the line.⁶²

Despite the recession, the 1890s were a period of modest improvements for the city, particularly in the area of utilities. Between 1893 and 1894 the water company erected a brick pumphouse and a steel 220,000 gallon standpipe on North Main Street. This effort was the beginning of more extensive improvements. Under a new twenty-year franchise, the company installed nearly six miles of new mains and 35 fire hydrants. In 1898 citizens approved \$25,000 in revenue bonds to build an electric light plant.⁶³

TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY INDEPENDENCE

By the first years of the twentieth century, real estate prices improved. Kansas City resumed its rapid expansion eastward and Independence development again extended westward. The opening of the Kansas City Bolt and Nut Company marked the beginning of an industrial district in the Blue River Valley between Kansas City and Independence as early as 1887. The undeveloped area between the two communities began to fill with manufacturing establishments. Between 1905 and 1909, alone, over 30 plants located in the Blue River Valley. Developers and planners believed that in the near future thousands of people would reside in new subdivisions on the hillsides overlooking the growing manufacturing center.

This development spawned a grimly fought contest over annexation by Kansas City that diverted the energies of Independence's developers and civic leaders between 1906 and 1914. The resumption of commercial and population growth in Independence, albeit modest, was enough to dampen support of the town's pro-annexation forces who hoped to gain a slice of the economic benefits emanating from Kansas City.⁶⁴

By the second decade of the new century, Independence entered a period of model growth. The town's population grew to 9,859.⁶⁵ Infrastructure and utility improvements by 1911 included 20 miles of paved streets, 40 miles of paved sidewalks, 115 miles of rock roads, and

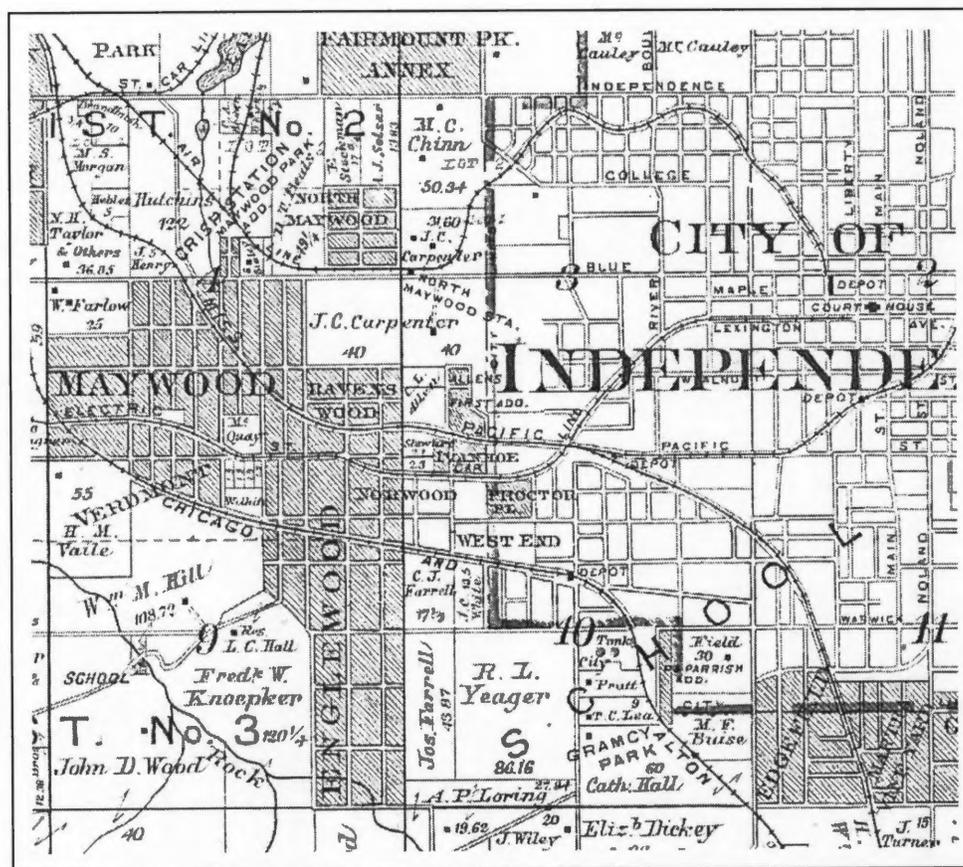
⁶² Carnes, 11.

⁶³ Schirmer, 59.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

electric, water and gas plants. Community leaders touted the city's new \$30,000 City Hall on S. Main Street, a \$100,000 government building, and two fire stations. Seventeen churches served the local residents and five banking institutions reflected the town's status as a financial and commercial center in the county. Among the city's industries were a \$60,000 ice plant, three planing mills, three large greenhouses, two steam laundries, a large plow manufacturing company, an overall factory employing 200 workers, a flour mill and elevator, a scale works, an iron works and stove foundry, and a nearby cement plant and oil refinery. Three railroad systems and an electric car line provided shipping and inter-urban transportation services.⁶⁶

Figure 12.
INDEPENDENCE MISSOURI, 1904



Plat Book of Jackson County, Missouri, 1904

⁶⁶ Ibid.; and Curtis, "City's Boom of 80's Begins Burst in '90," 34.

LATE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Residential Building Forms and Styles

As railroads mushroomed across the continent during the last half of the nineteenth century, American vernacular architecture erected in the communities of the "West" changed. In locations removed from major river transport areas, builders no longer relied exclusively on indigenous materials. Wooden dwellings constructed with light balloon or braced framing covered by wood sheathing replaced folk houses in log, sod or heavy hewn frames.

Due to Kansas City's position as a rail hub for the lumber industry in the late nineteenth century, wood was a comparatively cheap and available commodity in the region and frame houses built on stone or brick foundations were quite common. Another factor contributing to the popularity of frame construction was the availability of paints and varnishes direct from local manufacturers.

Traditional folk forms of the period before the war continued to be built, but with new construction methods and different techniques. During this period a sizable number of institutional and commercial buildings constructed of brick and limestone also appeared in Independence. And, although a considerable number of the town's residences were brick, wood-frame construction was as common.

During the 1880s and on into the early decades of the twentieth century, popular pattern book designs continued to influence building styles in Independence. Widespread use of Victorian ornamentation -- turned and jigsaw wood trim, decorative glass, terra cotta and brick continued. And, as in the past, in addition to folk house and vernacular designs, Independence residents erected high style residential, institutional and commercial buildings in the Second Empire, Stick, Queen Anne, Shingle and Romanesque Revival styles.

⁶⁶ 1911 *Independence, Missouri City Directory, Vol. XLI*. (Kansas City, Missouri: Gate City Printing Co., 1911), and Annette W. Curtis. *Street Guide for the 1911 Polk's Independence, Missouri City Directory*. Independence Missouri: 1991. Mid-continent Public Library North. Independence, Missouri.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century stylistic interpretations of older Euro-American period houses gained popularity.⁶⁷ The historic eclectic movement began when European-trained architects began to design houses for wealthy clients in the United States based on relatively pure copies of earlier styles. The architecture of the Colombian Exposition of 1893 further accelerated the movement. By the first decades of the twentieth century, Colonial and Classical Revival styles, as well as adaptations of Mediterranean and French styles enjoyed increasing popularity.

During the early years of the twentieth century, the new and distinctly American Craftsman and Prairie styles also appeared and quickly began to overshadow the eclectic movement. Unlike their predecessors, the form and ornament of these houses was devoid of historical references. One and two-story treatments, usually applied to the twentieth century four-square and bungalow residential forms, successfully competed with the historically based revival styles.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, architectural styles in Independence reflected these national trends and ranged from traditional national folk house forms to vernacular and high style interpretations of popular architectural styles. The nineteenth century middle-class preference for one-story and one-and-one-half story plans with fewer, larger rooms continued. The front porch also remained an important feature of these homes, serving as outdoor living areas during the hot, humid Missouri summers.

The majority of these residences were variations of popular folk house designs, including the popular gable-front-and-wing form, the massed-plan side gable house, the gable-front house, pyramidal roof house, and the two-story, four-square house. Some reflected Free Classical, Craftsman and Prairie School stylistic influences. Variations of the Folk House styles continued to be erected in Independence well into the 1930s. The bungalow design, such as the example at 131 E. Kansas, that emerged as part of the Craftsman movement at the beginning of the twentieth century also continued in popularity into the 1930s. During this period, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Prairie School, and Free Classical stylistic elements adorned the bungalowoid form



⁶⁷ McAlester, 319.

During this same period, concepts of residential planning began to change. By the early 1900s, the City Beautiful Movement and the newly formed American Planning Association emphasized the creation of identifiable neighborhoods. Although the new field of landscape architecture promoted the use of curving streets following natural terrain, developers of middle-class subdivisions in Independence during this period expanded the traditional grid system already in place. The subdivisions and additions platted in the city between 1900 and 1920 had lots with cardinal axis. In some cases new, slightly modified street grids fit within the pre-existing rural road system.

Commercial Architecture

In the late nineteenth century, as city and town borders expanded, the need to control the disorder caused by growth resulted in the installation of water, sewer, gas, electricity, and telephone utilities. City councils established fire, safety and health codes. Out of the need to satisfy a growing demand for civic amenities, elected officials built imposing public buildings and embellished their courthouse squares and parks. And yet, it was the everyday business house and the form its purpose demanded that determined the appearance of each town and city's commercial district.

Commercial buildings erected in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century followed many general forms and patterns. They fall into two distinct design categories, those that reflect popular academic or "high style" designs and those that feature simple utilitarian styles.

Growth and prosperity in the United States during this period brought a variety of robust popular nineteenth century styles for commercial and industrial buildings. Styles commonly found on the Courthouse Square included Italianate (such as the example in at 209-211 W. Lexington), Queen Anne, Renaissance Revival, Second Empire, Romanesque Revival and Classical Revival. Less "important" buildings erected during this period reflected faint echoes of their high style counterparts in the use of restrained, simple ornament and character-defining elements.



Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

Historic Preservation Services.

Many of the commercial and industrial buildings can also be identified by the arrangement of their façade. One- and two-story commercial retail and specialty service buildings in commercial retail areas usually featured a separate storefront and upper façade while the commercial and industrial buildings that were two-stories or more in height can be classified according to the arrangement of their upper façades. The uniform use of this hierarchy created a certain density in downtown centers. Even when the commercial building is a modest 25- to 30-foot wide, its integration into a three- to six-unit block produced an impressive visual effect.

Most of the commercial buildings in Independence featured a separate storefront and upper façade. Storefront designs included either flush or recessed entrances, usually centered, with rectangular transoms over wood doors. Display windows, resting on frame paneled bulkheads flanked the door. Over the windows are large multi-light transoms. The design of masonry buildings frequently included cast iron columns or masonry piers that supported the storefront elements. Upper façades incorporated a variety of treatments and their form and design usually defined the buildings. Banks, opera houses, hotels and other business buildings often owed their design to popular high style architectural styles. The courthouses and city hall commissions tended to go to architects who used traditional forms in a variety of applications.

Two major classifications that denote a late nineteenth and early twentieth century building's overall plan and form are the "False Front Victorian Functional" and "Urban Commercial Building Forms, 1870-1940." The latter building type includes the following sub-types: the One-Part Commercial Block, the Two-Part Commercial Block, Stacked Vertical Block, Two-Part Vertical Block, Three-Part Vertical Block and Temple Front designs.⁶⁸ Independence's historic commercial area includes a variety of examples of these plans.

New commercial building plans also emerged. The open-plan department store that allowed customers to go from area to area to view merchandise, rather than depending on the assistance of clerks to view goods, created a need for a large volume of space. For partially detached or freestanding structures such as courthouses, hotels, etc., a complex plan resulted from projections and recesses, lateral extensions, cross axis and asymmetries. The large and taller buildings usually had a L- or U- shaped plan with large interior spaces.

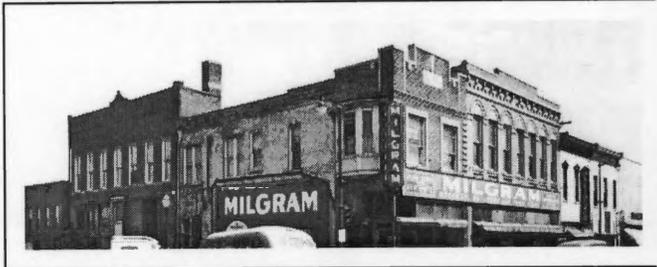
⁶⁸ Commercial vernacular property types in this document are based on American *Vernacular Design, 1870-1940* by Jan Jennings and Herbert Gottfried and the *Buildings of Main Street* by Richard Longstreth.

Indigenous styles applied to the false front form, the one-part and two-part block, and the vertical stacked block forms characterize the most common commercial building of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The earliest are frame structures with wood sheathing. The concern for fire safety led to quick replacement with masonry structures. Designed for narrow deep lots, these rectangular buildings used faint echoes of high style architecture in an eclectic use of ornamental details such as door paneling, lintel shape, balustrade design and brick patterning

Every town by the late nineteenth century boasted of some types of academic or “high style” architectural designs that reflected a definite style distinguished by special characteristics. These buildings reflect styles that enjoyed wide public support and are easily defined by their form, spatial relationships and embellishments. Those commonly found in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne, Renaissance Revival and Colonial and Classical Revival styles. Common to all of the styles was a conscious reinterpretation, manipulation and distortion of familiar architectural elements --flattened arches clustered windows, reinterpreted cornice and column details, and elaborate use of ornamentation.

Several popular styles do not appear in the designs of the commercial buildings in downtown Independence. The Gothic Revival style, with its pointed arches and verticality, did not commonly appear in commercial centers of towns in the Midwest, although a few examples exist where architects and builders did incorporate some of the idiom’s features such as pointed arch windows. While the elaborate Second Empire style was the chosen treatment of railroad depots, hotels, courthouses and other signature commercial (and residential) buildings in the 1870s and 1880s, a review of historic photographs and drawings indicates that it was not a style used in the Independence Square area. The Renaissance Revival style, popular in the design of hotels, corporate headquarters and in public buildings was a rare stylistic choice for the functional commercial buildings located around the rural Courthouse Square.

Right after the end of the Civil War, a sizable number of institutional and commercial buildings constructed of brick and limestone began to appear in Independence. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s they created a solidity to the public square. Most were vernacular adaptations of popular styles. Nevertheless, high style academic architecture played a role in defining the downtown. The buildings at the southeast corner



Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

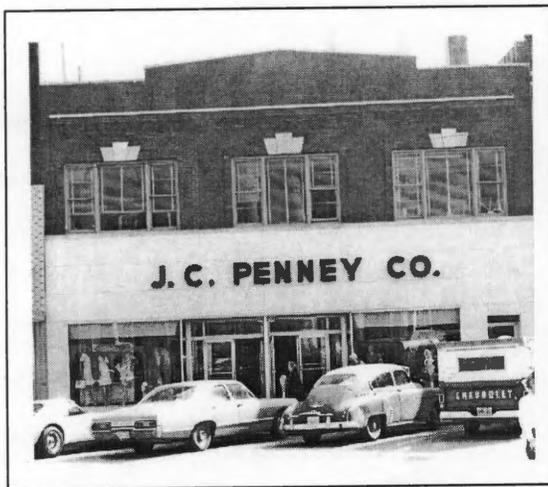
of Main and Lexington reflect high style architectural influences combining the Italianate and Queen Anne stylistic treatments.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, the country's urban centers experienced a rapid rise in population that created social problems in large urban areas. As Americans turned their attention to addressing these issues, there was a cultural shift from the aesthetic abstractions of the Victorian period to the economic, social and physical realities of the early twentieth century. Architects increasingly turned to more utilitarian styles.

The revival styles that began in the late nineteenth century and lasted into the 1920s, notable for their weightiness and solidity, became larger and more elaborate than earlier nineteenth century styles. The architect's use of these styles in designing commercial and industrial buildings typically consisted of the merging of vague historic motifs with utilitarian building forms such as the turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival Style building at 308 W. Maple.



At the same time that revival styles enjoyed popularity, the industrial designs that emerged from the Chicago School became a major influence on Midwestern urban architecture. These designs used restrained ornamentation and emphasized the grid-like pattern created by the steel-skeleton construction and the balanced treatment of horizontal spandrels and vertical piers. The design frequently used a three-part window composed of a wide fixed-light flanked by narrow double-sash windows as the principal element of pattern and ornamentation.



In small county seats such as Independence, the movement had little influence on building design. The only reference to the Chicago School design on the Square is the use of the three-part Chicago window with its central fixed-light flanked by narrow double-sash windows. The c. 1909 building at 113-115 W. Lexington features typical early twentieth century features such as the shaped parapet, Colonial Revival keystones combined with the Chicago School window on the upper story.

Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

Historic Preservation Services.

Commercial buildings continued to be built in the one-part and two-part commercial block and the two-part vertical stacked block plans embellished with streamlined classical or modern decorative treatments.

Construction Materials and Techniques

Commercial buildings erected in the late nineteenth century displayed a variety of traditional and innovative materials often used in combinations to create a striking effect. During this period, dark-red or dark-brown brick, limestone and slate were favorite materials. Dressed Brownstone and dark-toned granite, often hewn for a rustic treatment, had both visual and tactile appeal. The use of cast iron, both structurally and for decoration, became popular during the 1870s, and continued to be used throughout the remainder of the century. Zinc, galvanized iron and pressed tin also came into use during this period. The ever-present concern for fire safety popularized the use of pressed brick, ceramic tile and, after the turn of the century, reinforced concrete. To enliven building surfaces, architects and builders of this period favored the use of brick corbels as well as the use of terra-cotta cast in panels, moldings and columns. Although the palette of the turn-of-the-century City Beautiful Movement brought white and light-gray marble, limestone and buff masonry materials to the nation's boulevards and commercial corridors, the use of dark brick and stone continued in commercial and industrial areas.⁶⁹

New tools, new materials and new processes emerged during this period with staggering rapidity. The industrialization of glass production led to the use of the large, plate glass windows of the late Victorian period. The Civil War accelerated the development of metallurgical industries and the post-war fabrication and use of iron and then steel as structural building components transformed construction technology. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the nation's increased capacity to supply structural steel in a range shapes and form led to the demise in the use of the less satisfactory wrought iron and cast iron. In particular, as steel succeeded iron in the 1880s and 1890s, the method of steel framing called "skeleton construction" eliminated the use of timber and masonry materials as structural building elements. At the same time, the manufacture of Portland cement, begun in 1870, gave impetus to the use of brick and stone masonry for the walls of large buildings. During the first decade of the century, reinforced concrete came into usage particularly in commercial and industrial architecture further stimulating large buildings with more open plans. The advent of steel skeleton buildings and the accompanying

prospect of fireproof construction stimulated, in turn, developments in ceramic and clay products.⁷⁰

The voracious demand for new construction and the appearance of new technologies in the late nineteenth century led to the creation by the early twentieth century of the building industry itself as a distinct force in shaping the appearance of commercial buildings. Steam power allowed the efficient quarrying and finishing of stone. Hydraulic cranes and elevators permitted the accomplishment of extraordinary construction feats. Advances in metal fabrication led to the mass production of high-quality tools and machines.⁷¹ The cumulative effect of the inventions developed between 1865 and 1900 such as the elevator, electric transformer, airbrake, generator, dynamo, cable, motor and light bulb, completely transformed the character of the nation's buildings, releasing them from centuries-old limitations of size, density and relationship.⁷²

The Influence of the Architect

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, professionalism in the practice of architecture became firmly established in Missouri. Prosperous times dramatically changed the appearance of the state's cities leading to increased architectural sophistication on the part of craftsman and client.⁷³ Because Missouri did not regulate architectural practice until 1941, many of the individuals involved in the construction of buildings and structures prior to that time, particularly in the nineteenth century, bestowed upon themselves the title of "architect." With the exception of important civic buildings, master carpenters and masons contracted by property owners designed the majority of buildings in small towns such as Independence. And although the construction boom of the 1880s dramatically increased the number of architects in the state, only the prestigious religious and government building and a few residences in Independence reflected the designs of trained architects. Whether the result of academically trained design professionals or skilled craftsmen, the commercial buildings erected in Independence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflect the presence of competent and even innovative design practices.

⁶⁹ Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to American Architecture* (New York: Times Mirror New American Library, 1980), 194.

⁷⁰ James Marston Fitch, *American Building The Historical Forces That Shaped It* (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), 168.

⁷¹ Rifkind, 271 and Fitch, 169.

⁷² Fitch, 176.

⁷³ George Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History 1826-1990* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 41.

After the turn-of-the-century, graduates from two architecture schools in Kansas joined the group of academically trained architects practicing in the Missouri. The College of Engineering at Kansas State University in Manhattan first offered a formal curriculum for study of architecture in 1903. The architectural program at the University of Kansas in Lawrence began ten years later under the direction of Goldwin Goldsmith, a graduate of Cornell University and former secretary to Stanford White, of the New York-based firm of McKim, Mead & White. The two schools offered programs in both architecture and architectural engineering. The acceptance of modernism in the region during the first half of the twentieth century was due, in part, to attitudes fostered at the University of Kansas where the architecture program was among the first in the country to embrace the new aesthetic tenets evolving in Europe in the 1920s. Kansas City architect Clarence Kivett, a 1928 graduate, was a leader in introducing modernist architectural sensibilities to the Midwest. In addition to the impact of graduates of these schools, the architectural profession in the western part of the state in the first half of the twentieth century continued to be enriched by architects who trained at other institutions.⁷⁴

During the same period, one result of industrial expansion was an initial split between the disciplines of architecture and engineering. During the nineteenth century as metal construction came into general use for bridges, the roofs of large structures, and ultimately steel frame buildings, engineers became more involved in the design of large industrial and commercial projects. At the same time architects, distracted by efforts to resuscitate historic styles, as a rule ignored the possibilities of new technology and materials.⁷⁵ During the first decades of the twentieth century the two disciplines began to reconcile as style and function blended. By the mid-twentieth century, architect designed commercial and residential buildings became more commonplace.

Architects and Master Builders

Joining master builders William Randall and Christian Yetter in the design and construction of late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings in Independence were Robert McBride, finish carpenter George Sapp, William and Adron Randall and William Street. Each contributed architectural expertise and craftsmanship to the city's late nineteenth and early twentieth century residences, government buildings, schools, churches, and business houses.

⁷⁴ David H. Sachs & George Ehrlich, *Guide to Kansas Architecture* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1996), 21-22.

⁷⁵ Fitch, 187-88.

After the supply of native shale and clay ran short at his brickyard north of College Street, William Randall and his sons, William and Adron purchased a larger 85- acre tract "away out south of town,"⁷⁶ and erected brick kilns there. The brothers joined their father in providing the services of masons and contractors and carried on the family business after their father died in 1907. The Randall family either supplied the brick or erected most of the brick buildings of consequence in Independence during the late nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century. Some of their surviving work includes the Vaile Mansion, designed by Asa Beebe Cross; the Mercer home on South Pleasant, the c. 1890s remodeled portion of the Bingham-Waggoner home, and the First Baptist Church.⁷⁷

In addition to the Randall Family construction business and that of Christian Yetter, Robert McBride was one of the most prominent builders in early twentieth century Independence. His career as an architect and builder in Independence spanned nearly 60 years. Born on a farm near present day Scott Avenue and Winner Road, McBride was a native of Jackson County. He attended Woodland College in Independence and later attended school and worked for a construction company in St. Louis. He returned to Independence in 1895 and began his own construction business. Among the residences he built were a number of stone homes including the J. W. Martin residence at Main and Farmer Street, the L. L. (Polly) Compton home at 318 Delaware and several on West Maple Street. He also designed a number of the early twentieth century schools in Independence as well as the 1910 Independence City Hall. In partnership with Christian Yetter he erected the First Christian Church at Pleasant and Kansas streets.⁷⁸

William Street, a local brickmaker and contractor was born in St. Louis in 1860 and moved to Independence in 1883. He was a partner of Christian Yetter, a brick mason and contractor in the remodeling of the Courthouse and the construction of the Eagle's Lodge building at 124-126 S. Main Street. Street, who invested in real estate, designed and erected numerous buildings in the Courthouse Square area including the extant buildings at 208-212 W. Lexington. A Democrat, Street served several terms as a member of the city council from the fourth ward and, in 1908, was a candidate for mayor. He died at the age of 50 in 1910.

⁷⁶ Wilcox, *Jackson County Pioneers*, 504. The area fronted an area which included the Allis Chalmers Plant at Pleasant and Pacific, west of the Bingham Waggoner Estate.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 504-505.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 505.

CIVIC PRIDE AND MODERNIZATION (1918-1948)

POST WORLD WAR I CONSTRUCTION BOOM: 1918-1930

Independence's population reached 11,686 by 1920.⁷⁹ As in other communities, construction halted in Independence during World War I. After the war, many developers feared that post-war inflation would end any further growth, and initially, the post-war period had a slow economic start. One deterrent was the agricultural recession of 1920-1922 that depressed Jackson County's rural trading centers resulting in a fall in crop prices.

Of the county's farm-service centers, Independence escaped the brunt of the slump, in part because of its more diversified economy and role as the county seat. The Waggoner-Gates Milling Company was its largest industry with markets in 19 states. Manufacturing plants in the nearby Sugar Creek and the Blue Valley industrial areas employed Independence workers. Woodcraft Equipment Company opened its plant in the 1400 block of West Lexington in 1922. Two years later the Gleaner Harvester Company began manufacturing grain combines at a new facility south of the square. In 1927 Frederichsen Flour and Wall Tile Company brought its manufacturing plant to Independence. Other industries manufactured overalls, lumber, brass fittings, and stoves. In 1925, the Chamber of Commerce estimated that the city's factories produced \$4.4 million in goods annually.⁸⁰

County government provided both jobs and the attendant trade for merchants near the Courthouse Square. Here, businesses stocked the most fashionable clothes, shoes, and other goods. In addition, the movie theaters and automobile showrooms provided additional entertainment value.

Expanding retail trade stimulated new construction. Independence businessman, A. J. Bundschu, erected a large modern fireproof department store in 1928 that dominated the east side of the Courthouse Square. Between 1926 and 1930, the city issued permits for the construction or remodeling of 260 structures, including the imposing new auditorium of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on West Walnut Street⁸¹.

The interurban rail line and the growing use of the automobile firmly established Independence as a suburb of Kansas City. As a result, Independence experienced a

⁷⁹ Curtis 34, "City's Boom"

⁸⁰ Schirmer, 259-260.

residential building boom throughout the 1920s. Forty or fifty new families a month moved into Independence. In 1923 the city issued 183 building permits and the post office added two carriers. In September of 1925, the phone company installed 98 new telephones. Between 1926-1930, contractors erected approximately 700 more houses⁸²

Within the city limits, development moved outward from the Courthouse Square. The areas adjacent to the city limits on the south, east and north enjoyed moderate but steady growth. But in the inter-city area just west of Independence, residential and business construction increased 50 percent as developers laid out addition after addition. The tremendous increase in residences on the western edge of Independence at this time stimulated development of the Fairmount, Maywood and Englewood commercial centers located on the eastern edge of the Inter-city area on Independence Avenue, Van Horn Street, and Mt. Washington Boulevard respectively.⁸³ All evolved from streetcar stops in sparsely developed residential area.

ARCHITECTURE AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT 1918-1930

The types and styles of commercial buildings and structures built after World War I and before the Great Depression reflected both national trends and the unique circumstances of Independence itself. Most utilitarian, office and non-retail commercial buildings had minimal architectural ornament -- patterned brickwork, sparse terra-cotta details such as this early automobile showroom at 121 E. Kansas. The simple cubic forms and flat surfaces of the Art Deco and Modern Movement styles quickly found a place in commercial areas. The simplicity of the styles, popular from 1925-1940, proved to be quite adaptable to low, simple buildings that housed business offices, show rooms and even storage facilities. These streamlined buildings had simple cubic forms and flat surfaces with little or no ornamentation. The Moderne variation of these Modern Movement buildings featured banded windows of metal and glass. The linear Art Deco style had a pronounced verticality and featured geometric ornamentation that utilized faceted surfaces, zigzags and chevron patterns.



⁸¹ Ibid., 260.

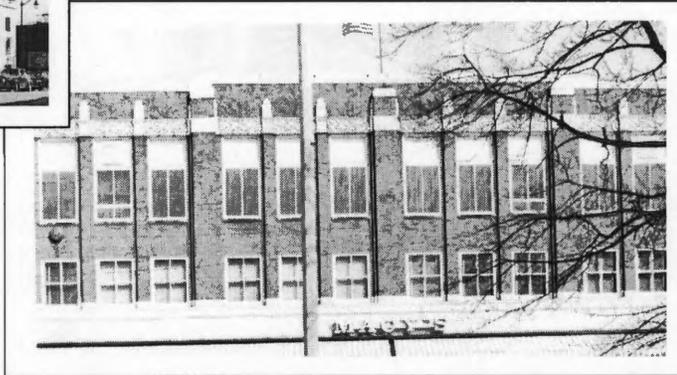
⁸² Pearl Wilcox, *Independence and 20th Century Pioneers: The Years from 1900-1928* (Independence: Wilcox, 1972), 520.

⁸³ The streets now are U.S. 24 Highway, Truman Road and Winner Road respectively.



The First National Bank building at Lexington and Liberty and the upper floors of the Bundschu Department Store Building on N. Main both reflect Art Deco stylistic influences.

By the 1930s, much of the building activity in Independence slowed, as it did throughout the country. The majority of commercial and industrial buildings erected during the 1930s and 1940s feature simple masonry construction, often a light-colored brick, with functional styling incorporating minimal ornamentation. A few incorporate the decorative

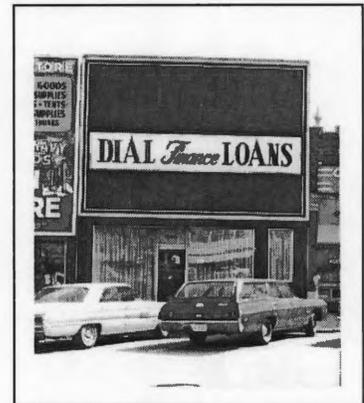


and streamlined Art Deco and Moderne architectural styling that evokes the era.

The prospect of war in Europe and consequent entry of the United States into the conflict stimulated a return to known designs. America's architectural tastes again embraced the revival styles, particularly the Colonial and Classical Revival style idioms.⁸⁴

Twentieth Century Construction Materials and Techniques

Following World War I, the use of pastel-colored terra-cotta and unglazed bricks with soft yellow and russet tones created a rich tapestry-like effect in masonry walls. By the 1930s, poured concrete construction and cast-concrete ornament came into common usage. Materials associated with the Art Deco style included black glass and marble, neon tubes, and bronze and terra-cotta in decorative grilles and panels. The Moderne style employed large expanses of glass, glass brick, chrome and stainless steel such as this simple adaptation that featured black Carrara glass on the first floor storefront at 105 W. Lexington.⁸⁵



⁸⁴ Rifkind, 217-218 and Ehrlich, 94-106.
⁸⁵ Rifkind, 218.

The use of welding, rigid-frame trusses and the cantilever accelerated the use of steel construction during the 1920s and the Depression years. The greater strength created by the use of steel welding and synthetic adhesives created lighter construction. Electric welding tools, cutting tools utilizing cemented tungsten carbide and tantalum carbide and compressed-air tools, all provided the ability to utilize new building materials. These innovations led to streamlined standardized construction processes including mass production and prefabrication.⁸⁶

Residential Building Forms and Styles

Housing in the region by the end of World War I ranged widely in type and quality. The Craftsman and Prairie School styles that enjoyed special popularity prior to World War I continued to be favored up to World War II. But, historic eclectic styles prevailed as the most common styles for residential housing.

In this respect, Independence was no different from other American cities and continued these preferences into the 1940s.⁸⁷ This period was part of a larger era dating from the late nineteenth century to the beginning of World War II in which stylistic interpretations were based on a full spectrum of older Euro-American period houses. As a result, styles such as Colonial Revival, Neoclassical (Classical Revival), Tudor Revival, Chateausque, Beaux Arts, French Eclectic, Italian Renaissance, Mission, Spanish Eclectic, Monterey, and Pueblo Revival became part of the American residential style vocabulary.⁸⁸

Between World War I and World War II, the residential architecture erected in Independence reflected national trends. Historical Revival styles returned to popularity, Especially the Colonial and Tudor Revival styles. Vernacular and high style variations expressed the full range of both Revival styles and Modern architectural vocabularies.

The Craftsman and Prairie School styles that overshadowed the revival styles during the first decades of the twentieth century, continued after World War I but enjoyed less popularity. The shift back was due, in part, to new and affordable methods for adding thin masonry veneer to balloon frame houses, allowing even modest homes to replicate the stone and brick construction of bygone eras. However, it should be noted that the national

⁸⁶ Ibid., 294.

⁸⁷ Ehrlich, 88.

⁸⁸ McAlester, p. 319.

preference for proven architectural styles even extended to the grand, architect-designed mansions.⁸⁹

In new, working-class neighborhoods, modest, plan book stock designs and pre-fabricated bungalows utilizing Prairie School, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival motifs appealed to developers interested in quick production of small, detached houses. At this time, the appearance of the typical residential lot changed during this period. As barns, wells, sheds and cisterns disappeared with the advent of city water lines and sewage systems, the backyard began to replace the front porch as a family and neighborhood gathering place. The growing use of the car by the middle-class made the detached garage a status symbol as well as a standard outbuilding by the 1920s.

Architects and Master Builders

Even in the construction of upper- and upper-middle class housing, it was unusual at this time for prospective homeowners or developers to work with an architect. Most practicing architects at this time considered domestic architecture, particularly middle-class housing, to be an inferior pursuit, preferring instead large commercial and institutional building contracts and, from time to time, a commission for a grand mansion.

The architectural community in the Kansas City area at this time fell into two distinct categories: a few had the formal education and training to provide a full spectrum of professional services; others -- draughtsmen, engineers and contractors -- provided more limited types of design and planning work. The professionals usually entered into partnerships, employed draughtsmen as apprentice architects, and directed their efforts to commercial design and a few, choice residential commissions. There were, however, many architects in individual practices that, by necessity as well as choice, provided residential design services. Nevertheless, the contractor/builder using standardized plan books designed the majority of the region's working- and middle-class housing.

DEPRESSION AND WAR YEARS: 1930-1946

Between 1930 and 1940 the population of Independence increased by only 770.⁹⁰ The county erected a second courthouse in Kansas City in the 1930s and the city continued to function as a suburb of Kansas City. At the same time, however, Independence was still the Jackson County Seat and retained its identity as a distinct community. The city had 19 industries

⁸⁹ Ibid.

including a flour mill that processed \$12,000,000 worth of Queen of the Pantry flour a year, and served as the headquarters of the Jackson County Farm Bureau, employing the largest staff of its kind in the State. In addition, the city was the world headquarters of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.⁹¹ The city boasted enough paved streets which, if lined end to end, would reach Lexington, Missouri; an open air swimming pool, the Natatorium, on the west side of the intersection of Crysler and Lexington; and a newly completed World War I Memorial Building with a seating capacity of 1,700.⁹²

These stabilizing factors did not provide protection from the Great Depression. Three banks closed within three weeks of each other in 1931.⁹³ Mayor Roger Sermon applied for federal relief funds and the city converted the old 1859 jail into a welfare and unemployment office, canning factory and sewing shop. Except for very limited private construction, the principal changes in the American rural and city landscape during the 1930s and 1940s came from a highly selective funding program for public buildings and defense plants. The Independence Square Courthouse was one such program, remodeled to its present appearance in 1933-34 under the supervision of Presiding Judge Harry S. Truman.⁹⁴

Real economic recovery did not occur until 1939 when European allies entered into war against Germany. War industries and war production in Sugar Creek and the Blue Valley created jobs for workers in the surrounding region. In 1940 Senator Harry Truman secured the Lake City Arsenal east of Independence near Buckner, Missouri providing an economic boost for eastern Jackson County.

ARCHITECTURE AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT 1930-1946

Building Forms and Styles

In Kansas City, the boom in residential housing topped out by 1928. The types of houses built reflected old styles and forms rather than new designs. Between 1940 and 1942 a spurt of residential construction occurred. Most of these houses were under construction prior to the Japanese attack on Pear Harbor in December 1941 and the U.S. entry into

⁹⁰ Curtis, "City's Boom," 34.

⁹¹ Charles van Ravenswaay, *Missouri A Guide to the "Show Me" State* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1941), 378

⁹² R. L. Polk, compiler, *Polk's Independence (Missouri) City Directory* (Kansas City Missouri: Gate City Directory Co., 1930).

⁹³ Schirmer, 261.

⁹⁴ This was the last of a series of remodelings after completion of the 1938 courthouse in 1848, 1872, 1888 and 1907.

World War II and thus were completed before wartime restrictions stopped domestic home building. Construction did not resume until after the end of the war.

The types of housing constructed in Independence in the 1920s was typical of the housing Americans often wanted but found difficult to obtain in the suburban explosion following World War II. Before 1930 developers and contractors erected homes of more substantial materials with larger bedrooms and living areas. After 1935, design changes reflected increased dependence upon electrical innovation in appliances and greater attention to the mechanical aspects of housing. By this time, housing styles were, as a rule, more a precursor for the limited styles of post-W.W. II suburban subdivisions than a reflection of the more spacious houses of the 1900-1920s.

SUBURBAN GROWTH (1949-1980)

POST WAR DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

During the years following the Second World War, Independence changed from a “farm-service center” to a service center supporting a growing network of suburbs. Its population rose from 37, 000 in 1950 to around 100,000 in 1960 and, by 1976, Independence was the state’s fourth-largest city with a population of 120,000 citizens.⁹⁵

The first decades of the post-war period were a boom era in building construction. The war-time housing shortage, an influx of over ten million returning veterans and a desire to return to normalcy fueled an almost universal desire to own a home and raise children in a new homogeneous environment.⁹⁶ During the first years of the post-war period, home ownership, particularly for white middle-class families, became a matter of public policy. The 1949 Housing Act guaranteed developers and bankers a higher profit on large housing developments targeted to the middle class. The legislation also initiated the Urban Renewal Program, which contributed to post-war white flight to the suburbs. As a result, the selling of single-family, detached house quickly became big business.⁹⁷

The first decades of the post-war period witnessed a boom in building construction. Annual single-family housing starts exploded from 114,000 in 1944 to 1,692,000 by the end of the

⁹⁵ Schirmer, 262.

⁹⁶ Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), 242.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 246-47.

decade. Between 1950 and 1956, mortgage banking firms increased loans nationally from six billion to twenty billion dollars.⁹⁸ The level of building activity, particularly new construction, is not surprising. Over twenty years passed during which the Great Depression and wartime restrictions severely constrained construction opportunities. Thus there was a real and a psychological need for all kinds of new, clear symbols of progress. Independence responded to these post-war conditions.

A number of very significant factors entrenched suburban development in the United States during the post-war years. Federal programs such as the lifting of price, wage, rent and other war controls and restrictions; the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) which revolutionized home loan financing with the long term, low interest, amortized mortgage; the G. I. Bill, which allowed purchase of a home without a down payment; and the introduction of personal income tax deductions for mortgage interest, created the foundation for massive post-war suburban expansion. The significant increase in automobiles and governmental funding of limited access inter-state highways, and improved county road systems furthered suburban growth as an established development pattern for the next fifty years. ⁹⁹

Although the city boundaries had not changed since 1889, as early as 1947, the city moved to annex-unincorporated areas to the south and west. On May 12, 1948, voters approved the annexation of an area enlarging the city from 3.4 to 10.3 square miles and doubling the city's population.¹⁰⁰ The incorporation of these areas into the city limits established Independence as the fifth largest city in the state with a population in 1950 of 36,963. The series of annexations that continued through 1976, [Figure 8] gradually diminished Independence's small-town character as the city expanded to an area eventually covering 78 square miles with 116,000 residents.¹⁰¹

Neighborhood and Commercial Development

The Golden Acres subdivision, begun in 1931 and completed after the end of World War II reflected what would become the prototypical post-war suburban subdivision. The layout and planning of the subdivision by real estate developer John Kroh reflected the suburban design elements begun in the post W.W.I era – curved streets that followed topographical

⁹⁸ Wright, 242; and Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 233.

⁹⁹ Wright, 248.

¹⁰⁰ Bernd. Forester, *Independence, Missouri*. (Independence: Independence Press, 1978), 181.

¹⁰¹ JMA/Watson, "Comprehensive Plan, Historic Preservation City of Independence" (Prepared for the City of Independence, Missouri 17 April, 2000), II-13.

features; no sidewalks; wide horizontal lots; long, irregularly shaped unbroken blocks; and houses oriented to private space at the rear of the lot. The location of these new neighborhoods away from established transit corridors and commercial centers also reflect the widespread use of the automobile.

Following the development of new neighborhoods and improved transportation networks, were small commercial strips near suburban neighborhoods that began to pull business from the Independence Square. The city's traditional role as the center of commercial and governmental life began a serious decline in 1955-56 when a majority of the doctors and dentists and several pharmacies moved from the Courthouse Square to a three story medical building in the Englewood shopping area west of the Square. The erection of a courthouse annex on Kansas Street to house new courtroom and administrative facilities for the County, reduced the historic courthouse on the square to an auxiliary function.

The opening of the Blue Ridge Mall shopping center on the city's southern borders in 1959 further sealed the fate of the Courthouse Square as a retail center. The remaining businesses hired a New York consulting firm to advise them on how to attract shoppers and, in 1963, the Jackson Square Association organized to revitalize the central business district. The effort gained momentum with the erection of the Independence Center Shopping Center that opened in 1974 at the southeastern city limits.

During the 1970s, through various federal urban renewal programs, the appearance of the Square changed. A loop roadway encircling the original commercial area required the demolition of a block-wide swath around the square to create surface parking lots to compete with the suburban mall form. The traffic pattern of the Courthouse Square with its two-way traffic and parking on both sides of the streets became a winding one-way street meandering around concrete "islands" with landscape plantings that projected into the street and defined parking areas on one-side of the street. Concrete canopies supported by brick veneer piers ostensibly provided shelter from inclement weather and theoretical entrances to second floor space. A low, concrete wall and the closing of the sections of Main and Liberty streets that bordered the Courthouse lawn created a moat effect visually reducing any synergistic relationship of the Courthouse to the commercial buildings, effectively reducing the Courthouse and its grounds to a ceremonial role. Despite ample parking and new modern landscape amenities, the Independence Square's traditional role as the commercial and governmental center of the community was over.



PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN – THE RISE TO POWER

The Independence Courthouse Square witnessed some of the most singular occurrences in nineteenth century American history; the expulsion of the Mormons in 1833; the mustering of troops for the Mexican war in 1846; and Civil War battles in which the building served as both military headquarters and hospital facilities. During the twentieth century, it also witnessed another event of national importance – the rise to power of United States President Harry S Truman.

Independence, Missouri is part of an environment that both reflected and influenced President Harry S. Truman's values. Truman himself acknowledged these associations frequently comparing himself to another Missourian from a small town -- Mark Twain. "All the me in me is in a little Missouri village halfway around the world."¹⁰² *The New York Times Magazine* characterized Independence and its citizens as "prosperous, middle-class, stable, sedate, conscious of traditions, and imbued with a practical, earth-bound philosophy of life."¹⁰³ Truman's interactions with the people of Independence, some of whom he knew all his life, provided him with confidence, security and happiness. "I loved independence more than any place else in the world. I have been everywhere and seen nearly everything. . . and this is one of the finest places in the world."¹⁰⁴ His childhood, adolescence, family life, friendships, and political associations in Independence all provided him with a sense of place and meaning. It was in Independence that he made friends in grade school and high school that he kept for life. He married one and appointed another as his presidential press secretary. His Masonic brothers and World War I companions from Independence, Kansas City and Jackson County remained his supporters for life forming the nucleus of his

¹⁰² *General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Missouri.* (Draft), Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, September 1986 (Draft), 54 quoting Merle Miller, *Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation., 1973).

¹⁰³ *General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Missouri, 54*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

political machine. One of his great joys was a poker game with his hometown friends a practice he managed to continue as president and during his retirement.

During his trips home during the presidency, he barely missed the opportunity to greet people waiting outside his home and to visit the Independence Square and catch up on the latest events. The same was true for Bess Truman, when in Independence she continued to run her home, shop and socialize as she had all her life. A letter from the President to his wife, reflects the intimate association of Truman to his hometown citizens. In typical fashion, Truman reports about the events surrounding a visit with political crony and longtime friend Mayor Roger Sermon at Sermon's grocery store at 120 W. Maple.

. . . Porter¹⁰⁵ was outside Sermon's store with his notebook out jotting down items for publication and I suggested to Roger that he invite him in. Then I proceeded to tell Mr. Porter that I had gotten out of bed at five-thirty, brushed my teeth, shaved, and attended to certain unmentionable personal matters, put on my underclothes, my shirt, tie, pants and coat. Had then eaten an egg on toast, after drinking some tomato juice and wound up with a glass of skimmed milk. Then he was informed that neither I nor my family were appreciative of the spying tactics he had used. I told him I knew of his sitting across the street with a spy-glass, that he had followed me to John Hutchison's house and that he and his boss Roy Roberts were only trying to get something nasty on me and that it was not appreciated. He said he was only obeying orders. That was what I wanted him to say. Mr. Shoop told Charlie that Mr. Roberts felt very badly about my attitude, which made me very happy. . .¹⁰⁶

The strongest show of support and affection Harry Truman received from his friends and neighbors was at his homecoming in 1953. More than 10,000 people greeted him at the train station and 5,000 more at the home on Delaware street. " Mrs. T. and I were overcome. It was the pay-off for thirty years of hell and hard work." ¹⁰⁷

During Truman's administration, Independence was lauded for its small-town flavor and neighborly residents. With his retirement to Independence following the completion of his term in office, Independence again became the focus of national attention.

¹⁰⁵ Porter was a reporter for the *Kansas City Star* under the editorship of Roy Roberts.
¹⁰⁶ Independence Square Survey File. City of Independence, Missouri.
¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 55.

Harry S. Truman was born in Lamar, Missouri on May 8, 1884. A year later the family moved to a farm near Harrisonville, Missouri. In 1887, the family moved again to the farm of Truman's maternal grandfather, Solomon Young, near the present site of Grandview, Missouri. When Harry reached the age to attend school in 1890, the family moved to a house at 619 Chrysler Street in Independence, Missouri. Truman attended Noland Elementary School in Independence. In 1896, the family moved to 909 W. Waldo Avenue in Independence. He graduated from the Independence High School in 1901 in a class of 40 that included his future wife, Bess Wallace, and his future press secretary, Charlie Ross.



1901 Independence High School Graduating Class. Harry S. Truman is fourth from the left, back row.

After graduation, he obtained employment in nearby Kansas City. In 1903 he moved with the family to a house at 902 N. Liberty Street in Independence; later the family moved to Kansas City. In 1906, at the age of 22, he returned to Grandview, where he spent the next ten years assisting his father in operating the family farm inherited by his mother.

Truman joined the Missouri National Guard in 1905 and was discharged as a corporal in 1911. In 1910, he began courting Bess Wallace while working and living at the farm in Grandview. At the outbreak of World War I, he helped organize the 2nd Regiment of Missouri Field Artillery which, when called into federal service, became the 129th Field Artillery. Among the members of the regiment were his childhood friends and schoolmates. The associations of the 129th Field Artillery would form the nucleus of his political machine in future decades. In France, Captain Truman Battery D, 129th Field Artillery regiment, 35th Division that participated in the Vosges, Saint-Michael, and Meuse-Argonne campaigns.

On his return from Independence, he married Elizabeth (Bess) Wallace at the Trinity Episcopal Church on North Liberty Street in Independence on June 28, 1919. Mr. and Mrs. Truman established their residence in Bess Wallace's grandfather's home on at 219 N. Delaware Street. Here, their only child, Mary Margaret, was born February 17, 1924.

From 1919 to 1922, Truman ran a haberdashery shop in Kansas City. The firm failed as a result of the Depression of 1921 and Truman turned his attention to politics.

In 1922, Truman, with the endorsement of county Democratic party leader, T. J. Pendergast, won election as one of the three judges of the Jackson County Court ¹⁰⁸ representing the eastern part of the county. He lost his bid for reelection in 1924,¹⁰⁹ but two years later won his campaign to serve as presiding judge of the county court. In 1928, he led a successful bond issue campaign to approve \$6.8 million in funding to build 224 miles of paved highways in the county and additional funds for building a county hospital. The county voters reelected him in 1930. The following year he obtained voter approval of additional bond issues to complete the road system, build a new courthouse and jail in Kansas City, remodel the Independence Square courthouse and construct a detention home. As presiding judge, he had the chief administrative responsibility for expending \$60,000,000 in tax funds and bond issues.

During his early political career, Truman attended the Kansas City School of Law from 1923-1925. With World War I crony, Spencer Salisbury, he established in 1924, the Community Savings and Loan Association in Independence, and served as general manager until 1932. The Association had its offices first in Englewood and later at 204 N. Liberty on the Square. Between 1925 and 1926 he worked as a membership salesman for the Kansas City Automobile Club.

In 1934, Truman received a plurality of 262,000 votes in the election for the United States Senate. During his first term in the Senate, he served as chairman of the subcommittee wrote the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938 and was one of the sponsors of the Transportation Act of 1940. During the same period, he was co-sponsor of a bill to reorganize the railroads and place them under the regulation of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

In 1940, Missouri voters returned Truman to the Senate. The following year, at his suggestion, the Senate established a special committee to investigate the national defense program. Serving as chairman of what became known as the Truman Committee, he exposed waste and extravagance in the World War II defense program that saved the American taxpayers an estimated \$11 billion in defense production costs.

¹⁰⁸ An administrative rather than a judicial body.

¹⁰⁹ This was the only election Truman ever lost.

In July 1944, the Democratic Party nominated Senator Truman as the vice-presidential candidate to run with President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Elected the following November, he served as vice president only 82 days succeeding to the presidency on April 12, 1945 on Roosevelt's death.

The dropping of the first atomic bomb, the subsequent end of World War II and the creation of the United Nations marked Truman's first year as President. Beginning in 1946, the Truman administration directed the reconversion to a peacetime economy, the rebuilding of the war-torn European countries, escalating difficulties with the Communist nations abroad and responded to the victory of the Republicans in both houses of Congress. After a hard-fought "whistle stop" campaign in 1948, Truman returned to office and launched his "Fair Deal" program for promoting the general welfare of the country's citizens and the "Point Four" program for technical assistance to underdeveloped nations. When Communist forces invaded South Korea in June 1950, he ordered United States troops to join with the United Nations to resist the invasion.

In the fall of 1952, Truman announced his support of Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, as the Democratic Presidential candidate. After leaving the White House, Truman returned to Independence and tried to assume a normal life. He tried to remain inconspicuous and go about his daily life without attracting attention -- to take his early daily walks, to drop in and chat with friends, and to eat lunch at his favorite restaurant on the Square. He achieved his goal of blending in to a remarkable extent. With his bodyguard and driver, former policeman Mike Westwood,¹¹⁰ Truman moved unencumbered and unmolested through his home town,

Mindful of his role as a former president, Truman turned his attention to building the Harry S. Truman Library, writing his memoirs, working in behalf of the Democratic Party and sharing his knowledge and experience in national and world affairs as a consultant to his government. With little personal wealth and dependent on a government pension, Truman returned to Independence and set about improving the family finances. Truman and his siblings sold all but a few acres of the Grandview farm and Truman began earning an income as a writer and lecturer. Between 1953 and 1955 Truman worked on his memoirs, the first volume of which was published in 1955 followed in 1956 by the second volume. In 1956 he signed an agreement with the National American Newspaper Alliance to write a series of articles. The following year, Edward R. Murrow of CBS's "See it Now"

¹¹⁰ President Truman did not receive protection from the Secret Service until after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, when the federal government provided protective service to all former presidents.

program interviewed Truman at his home in Independence. In 1960, Truman published *Mr. Citizen*, a book about his post presidential experiences. The following year he signed a contract for a television series on the Truman presidency.

On May 8, 1955, his seventy-first birthday, Truman broke ground for the construction of a privately financed presidential library north of the Independence Square on U.S. 24 Highway and Delaware Street. The following August, President Eisenhower signed the Presidential Libraries Act authorizing the General Services Administration to accept the papers of U.S. presidents, and the land, buildings, and equipment that are offered for a "Presidential archival depository." On July 6, 1957, Truman presented to the federal government the Harry S. Truman Library property in Independence built with his encouragement and collaboration, along with his personal papers and mementos. That year he presided over the first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Harry S. Truman Institute for National and International Affairs.

During his retirement years in Independence he continue to play a vital role in American politics and government. In 1953, in response to allegations of Senator Joseph

McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee, he addressed a national television audience to answer charges involving his hiring of Harry Dexter White, an alleged Communist, who was appointed to the international monetary fund during Truman's presidency. In August 1956, he announced his support of Governor Averell Harriman for the Democratic party's nominee for the presidency. After the Harriman candidacy failed, he campaigned for Adlai Stevenson. In 1960, at a press conference in Independence, Truman explained his decision to support the candidacy of Senator John F. Kennedy who had won the Democratic nomination. Attending the conference was Missouri Senator Stuart Symington, whom Truman had earlier endorsed as a candidate. Between October 8 and November 4, Truman conducted a vigorous cross-country speaking tour on behalf of Kennedy.



Post-presidency distinguished visitors to Independence. Right to Left: Bess Truman, Eleanor Roosevelt, Earl Warren, Herbert Hoover, Basil O'Connor and Harry S. Truman.

He continued to play a ceremonial role attending the funerals of important elected officials and foreign leaders. He hosted visits in Independence from presidents Eisenhower and Nixon and stood beside President Lyndon B. Johnson at the Library for the signing of the Medicare bill. In another ceremony at the Library, he announced the founding of the Harry S. Truman Center for the Advancement of Peace, to be constructed in Jerusalem.

In July 1966, because of illness, Truman discontinued his trips to his office at the Truman Library. In 1968, President Johnson, at the Truman home on Delaware Street, signed the bill designating United Nations Day. The next year, President and Mrs. Nixon visited Truman and donated his White House piano to the Truman Library.

President Truman died December 26, 1972. On October 18, 1982, Mrs. Truman died at the age of 97. President and Mrs. Truman are buried in the courtyard of the Truman Library.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Independence Square reconnaissance level survey compiled physical and historical information on 163 resources in an area roughly bounded by White Oak Street on the North, Pleasant Street on the West, Walnut Street on the South and Memorial Drive on the East. [Figure 1]. Based on an analysis of the data collected and using the methodology outlined in this report, the consultants offer the following recommendations for nomination to the *National Register of Historic Places*, and/or designation as local Landmarks or Historic Districts.

SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Properties that appear to meet the criteria to have potential for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* as individual properties for their local significance and for designation under the City of Independence Historic Preservation ordinances as a Landmark include the following:

127 E. Kansas is significant under Criterion C in Architecture as a unique example of the Craftsman Bungalow house.

131 Kansas is significant under Criterion C in Architecture as a unique example of the Craftsman Bungalow house.

200 E. Lexington, St. Paul A. M. E. Church, is significant under Criterion A for its association with the city's African-American community and with the mid-twentieth century Civil Rights Movement. As such, it meets criteria considerations relating to buildings less than 50 years of age.

209-211 W. Lexington is significant under Criterion A in Commerce for its associations with the founding of the American Hereford Association and Criteria B for its association with livestock breeder Charles Gudgell, and Criteria C for its Italianate architecture. . Charles Gudgell was instrumental in the formation of the American Hereford Association. In 1881, Gudgell opened offices at 209 West Lexington. A pioneer Hereford cattle breeder, Gudgell, his father, bother and their partner, Thomas A Simpson, are legendary for their work with breeding Hereford Cattle. From Charles Gudgell's office in the Slack building at 209 West Lexington, an organization began that would have unparalleled effect on the American beef cattle industry. Gudgell established the American Hereford Cattle Breeders Association's first offices in Independence on the second floor of the Slack building. After a brief removal to Chicago, the organization moved to Kansas City where it remains today. Charles Gudgell served on the first Board of Directors of the organization in 1881, was secretary and treasurer from 1884-1887 and served as the organization's president in 1906. His expertise in the field was universally acknowledged and he wrote the Hereford cattle section for the *Cyclopedia of American Agriculture* in 1908.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ O'Brien, 13.

208-212 W. Lexington is significant under criterion C in Architecture for its associations with the work of master mason and brick maker, William F. Street.

112 N. Liberty is significant under Criterion C in Architecture as a rare unique example in Independence of the Moderne Style of commercial architecture.

200 N. Liberty Street, Bank of Independence building, is significant under Criteria A for its association with Commerce as a leading financial institution in the city beginning in the 1880s and Criterion B, for its associations with John A. Sea, prominent Independence civic leader who served as president of the bank, owner of the John A Sea Abstract Company, leader of the Shannon (Rabbit) Democratic Faction in Eastern Jackson County, president of the Independence Board of Education for fifty years and a leader of the town's Protestant ecumenical movement in the early twentieth century.

124-126 S. Main Street is significant under Criterion C in Architecture as an example of the craftsmanship of master masons and builders William Street and Christian Yetter.

200 S. Main Street, 1910 City Hall building, is significant under Criterion A in Government and Criterion C in Architecture for its Colonial Revival design and associations with R. L McBride architect and Christian Yetter, master mason.

101 N. Main, Farmer and Merchants Bank building, is significant under Criterion B for its associations with Harry S. Truman as the meeting place of the Harpie Club, a poker club to which Truman belonged that met in rooms on the third floor during Truman's rise to political power and presidency. A social club supposedly interested only in card playing and socializing, the Harpies were former World War I cronies and county employees who continued to exert behind-the-scenes influence even through the Truman presidency. Visits to the White House recorded by presidential secretary, Matthew Connelly, included Harpie members; on more than one occasion the president worked in a game or two with the old group upon return trips home.

219-223 N. Main Street is significant under Criterion A in Government and Criterion C in Architecture as an example of an early twentieth century fire station employing historic eclectic stylistic design motifs.

308 W. Maple Avenue is significant under Criterion C in Architecture as a rare, high-style building executed in the Colonial Revival style designed by the prestigious Kansas City architectural firm of Hoit, Price and Barns.

400 W. Maple Avenue, First United Methodist Church, is significant under Criterion C in architecture as a local example of Late Gothic Revival architecture.

401 W. Maple Avenue, Skelly Oil Company Station, is significant under Criterion C in Architecture as an example of Mission/Spanish Revival style as applied to a commercial property sub-type -- the automobile service station.

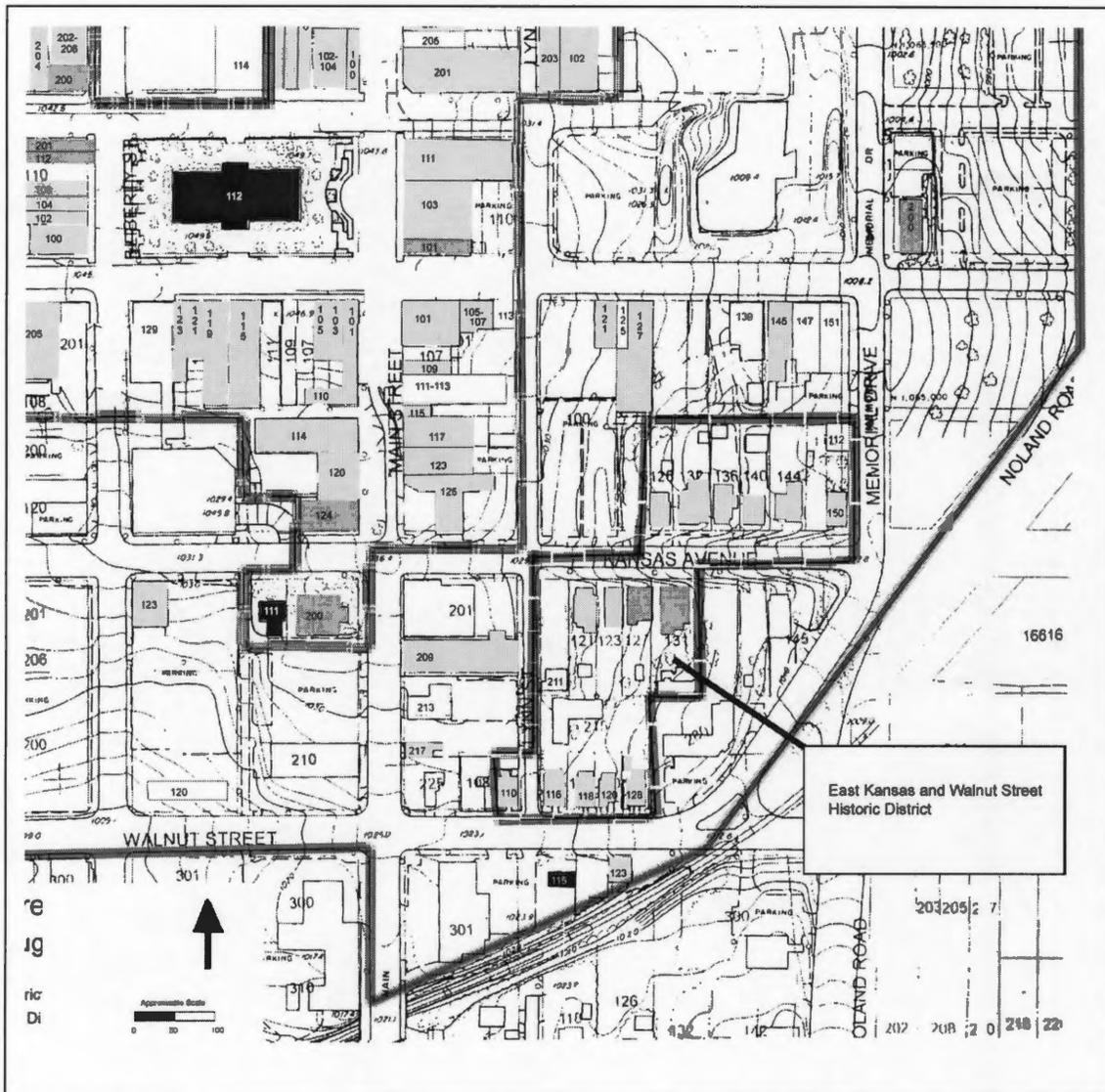
125 S. Pleasant, First Christian Church, is significant under Criterion C in Architecture as an early twentieth century example of the "Temple Front" Classical Revival (Neoclassical) Style designed by Kansas City architect Henry Felt.

POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

NEIGHBORHOOD ENCLAVES

There are a number of streetscapes and contiguous properties that, retain an identifiable setting, character and associations with the larger area to be considered for designation. The neighborhood on the east side of the survey area includes streetscapes along East Kansas Avenue and Walnut Street that include a variety of examples of Craftsman and Prairie School style residences that retain a high degree of integrity.

Figure 13
EAST KANSAS AVENUE AND WALNUT STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT



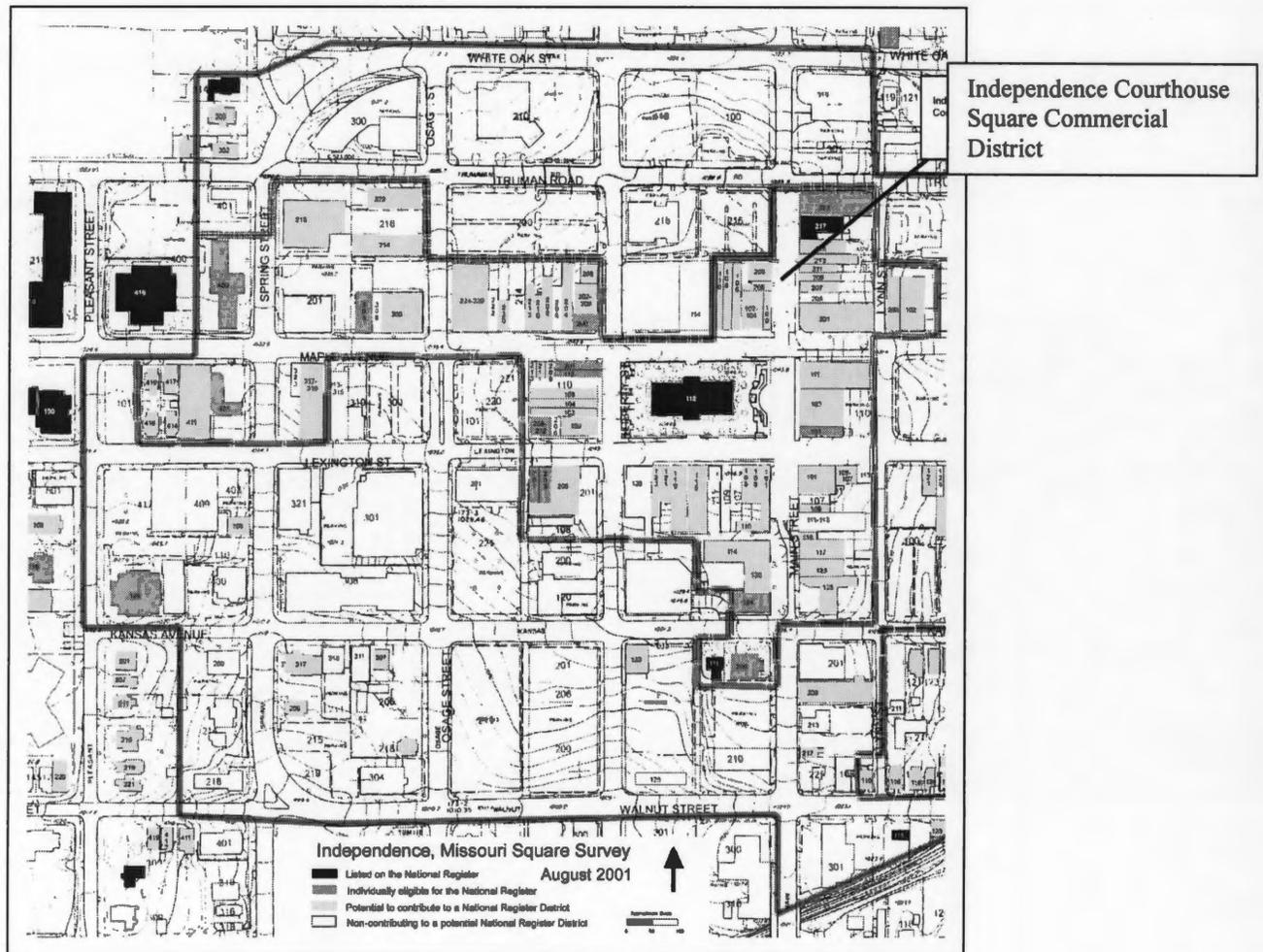
Historic Preservation Services.

HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The survey identified sufficient numbers of late nineteenth and early- to mid-twentieth century commercial buildings in the Courthouse Square area that retain their historical/architectural integrity and that meet at least one of the four National Register criteria to be listed as a district. These buildings contribute to the significance of the Courthouse Square commercial area in the areas of Commerce/Trade and Architecture. The area contains both high style commercial academic architectural styles and vernacular designs that are uniformly applied to the one-part commercial block and two-part commercial block building types/forms. The variety of styles and design treatments convey information about the unique continuum of the commercial architecture found in Independence. Their historic uses provide an understanding of the commercial development of Independence. As a group, their setting, design, materials and workmanship convey feelings and provide associations with the city's commercial past and its evolution as a marketing and governmental center.

Figure 14.

INDEPENDENCE COURTHOUSE SQUARE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT



Moreover, the contributing buildings retain integrity and have associations with the rise to political power and presidency of Independence resident Harry S. Truman. As such, they reflect the appearance of the a president's hometown commercial center during a period of significance in Truman's life. The buildings dating from the 1920s through 1945 have direct associations with the appearance of the Independence Square during Truman's rise to power as county court judge, United States Senator, United States Vice President. Those resources dating from the 1920s through 1953 reflect the appearance of the Courthouse Square during the years of Truman's presidency. Those dating from the 1920s to 1968¹¹² have associations to Truman's retirement years as "Mr. Citizen." The following photographs, courtesy of the Harry S Truman Library and Museum, reflect how the square looked in 1950-1951 during the presidential years.

Northeast corner of Lexington and Main Street. All of the buildings in the photograph are extant.



¹¹² This date reflects his formal retirement from active political life. At this time, Mr. Truman ceased to visit the Truman Library due to his age and health.



Southwest corner Liberty and Maple above in 1950 and below in 1951 after renovations. All but the one-story building today retain sufficient integrity to contribute to a potential commercial district.



Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

Historic Preservation Services.



Southeast corner of Main and Maple after 1949 fire in 1950 above and below, new S. S. Kresge building in 1951. All of the buildings from the 1951 view remain intact and, with varying degrees of integrity, are contributing elements to a potential district.



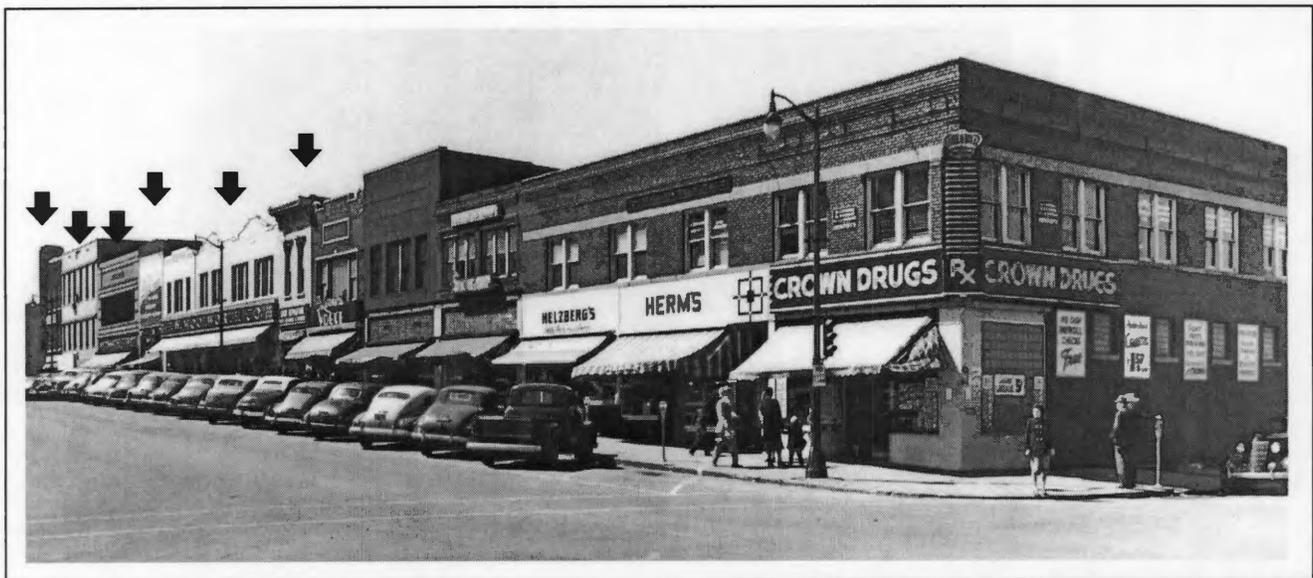
Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

Historic Preservation Services.



Above: South side of Square at Main and Lexington looking southwest c. 1950. Arrows indicate four buildings that currently do not retain their integrity

Below: Maple and Main looking northwest c. 1950. Arrows indicate buildings that have been demolished.



Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

Historic Preservation Services.



Above: Northwest corner of Liberty and Maple. All buildings in photograph are extant.

Below: Northeast corner of Maple and Main Street. Arrow indicates building no longer retaining sufficient integrity to contribute to a district.



Independence, Missouri Courthouse Square Survey

Historic Preservation Services.

THEMATIC DISTRICTS

Based on information yielded in this survey, additional research and survey should identify sufficient properties in Independence to allow designation of certain properties sharing the same contexts and themes. The survey identified numerous buildings designed and constructed by master builders and brick masons, Christian Yetter, William Street and R. McBride in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In addition, the twentieth century work of Independence architects William McCoy and William B. Fullerton, can be found in the survey area as well as in other parts of town. Using the National Register Multiple Property Submission format, discontinuous resources may be nominated as thematic districts for their association with one or more builders and/or architects. In particular, significance may be identified in the range of designs (or similarity of designs) constructed by a single builder and/or architect. In addition to buildings erected by Christian Yetter, William Street and R. McBride, the survey also identified buildings in which they collaborated with one another as well as working for Kansas City architects.

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