

# 3100 BLOCK TROOST AVENUE 2019 SURVEY



PREPARED FOR:  
Exact Architects

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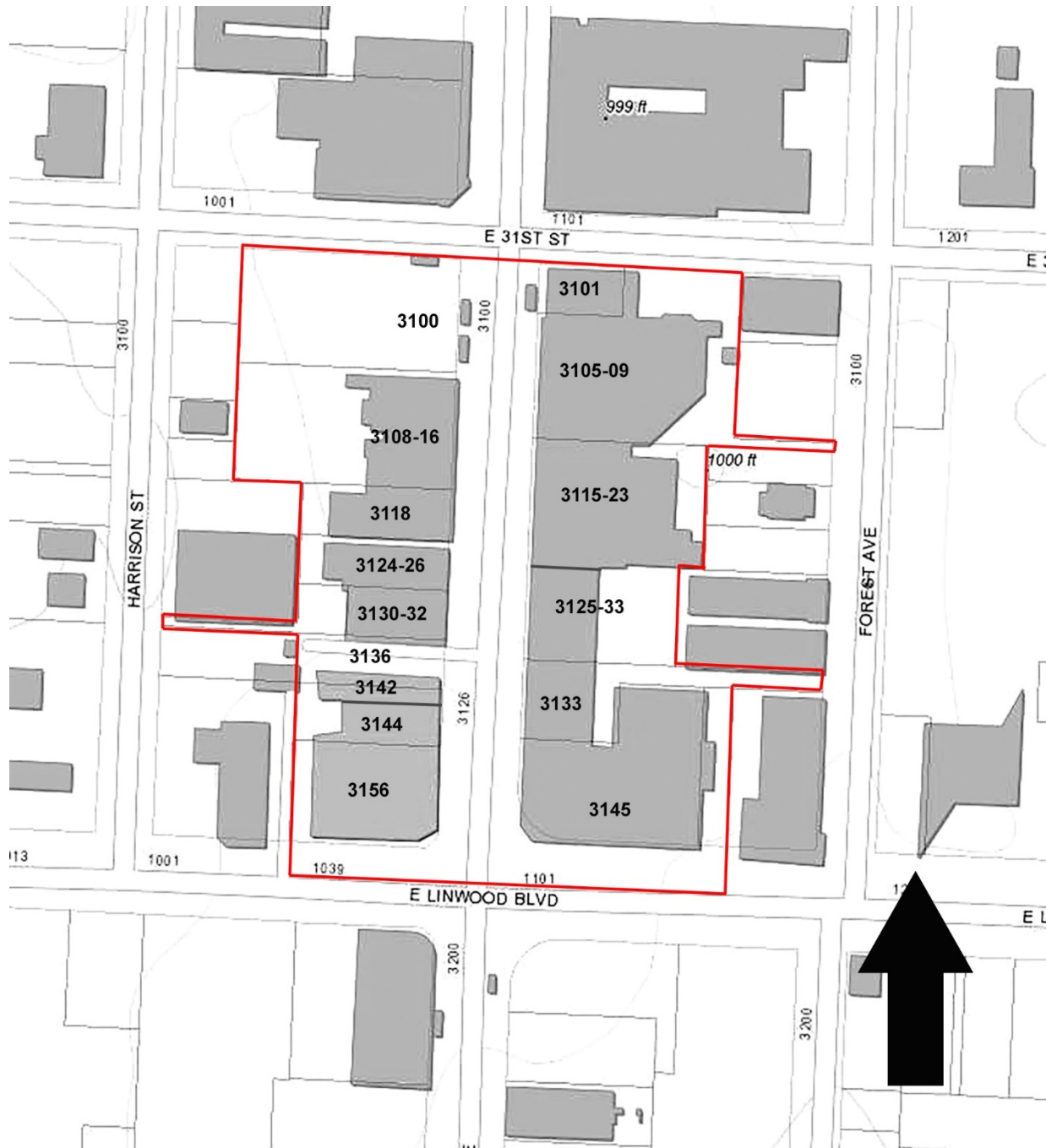


# **INTRODUCTION**

In September 2019, Exact Architects contracted Rosin Preservation to complete an architectural survey of commercial resources in the 3100 Block of Troost Avenue. This survey is a comprehensive project designed to document the neighborhood's properties, gain an understanding of the historical development of the area, and identify resources or groups of resources that may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Survey Area includes properties fronting Troost Avenue between 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Linwood Boulevard and encompassed three small plats dating to c. 1887 (*Figure 1*). Rosin Preservation documented 15 primary resources, including one- and two-part commercial blocks and non-historic surface parking lots. The commercial resources are typically one and two-story masonry buildings with flat roofs. Brick and terra cotta are common historic cladding materials. Three resources are currently listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places.

Rosin Preservation examined the history of the Survey Area including its initial establishment as residential development, its early twentieth century transition to a commercial corridor, and finally through the decline of commercial activity in the late twentieth century. The surveyed resources illustrate patterns of development within Kansas City as the city grew exponentially during the late nineteenth through twentieth centuries. In addition to documenting the historic development of the Survey Area, Rosin Preservation evaluated the surveyed resources for potential National Register of Historic Places eligibility.

**FIGURE 1: TROOST AVENUE SURVEY AREA**



# **METHODOLOGY**

Rosin Preservation completed the 3100 Block of Troost Avenue Survey in conformance with the procedures for historic resources surveys outlined in *National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Survey: A Basis for Preservation Planning* and the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office's *Standards for Professional Surveys* and *Architectural Survey Form Instructions*. Evaluation of resources for significance was in accordance with *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

The scope of work included the following:

- Field survey and photography of individual properties.
- Archival research sufficient to develop a historic context for the Survey Area and to estimate dates of construction for all resources surveyed.
- Compilation of physical and historical information in a database and preparation of a report that summarizes the findings.
- Preliminary identification of each resource's architectural style or property type, period of construction, and architectural integrity.
- Preliminary identification of all architecturally significant sites, objects, buildings, structures, and districts within the Survey Area.
- Evaluation and determination of properties and districts that appear eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Recommendations for future preservation of historic resources identified in the Survey Area.

## **FIELD SURVEY**

During field survey the consultants examined every resource in the Survey Area regardless of age, whether it had been previously surveyed, or its existing National Register designation. The team took high-resolution digital photographs and recorded information about the exterior physical appearance of each resource, specifically building materials, architectural style, and condition. Primary elevation photographs conform to standards for survey documentation set forth by the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

## **ARCHIVAL RESEARCH**

Historical research is critical to understanding the evolution of the built environment as well as the social history of the Survey Area. Research occurred concurrently with field survey and data review. This approach allowed the team to merge field and research data to create a strong and understandable relationship between the events in the history of Kansas City, Troost Avenue, the Survey Area, and the built environment to develop a historic context for the survey area, and to establish dates of construction for individual properties.

A variety of primary and secondary resources provided background information about the people, buildings, and developments that created the current residential community. Primary sources, such as building permits, city directories, newspaper articles and maps obtained from the Kansas City Public Library and the State Historical Society of Missouri were reviewed to understand the development of Kansas City and the Survey Area. Other sources included the *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps* from 1896, 1909, 1951, and 1963, Jackson County plat maps from 1887 and 1891, the 1925 Tuttle-Ayers-Woodward city atlas, United States Census records, and aerial photographs. The Jackson County Tax Assessor records provided approximate dates of construction, which were verified through field survey and the sources listed above. When these sources could not provide a definitive date of construction, a “circa” was estimated based on style or form and known dates of similar resources. Determining accurate dates of construction for secondary resources, additions, and alterations was also a challenge. Comparing the current appearance with aerial photographs (1955, 1959, 1963, 1969-1970, 1991, 1996, 2002-2003, 2006-2010, 2012, 2014-2016, and 2018), Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, and Google Street View images provided a reasonable range of dates within which an outbuilding, addition, or alteration could have been constructed, but this method was imprecise and resulted most dates being estimated.



## **COMPILATION OF DATA**

Rosin Preservation compiled survey information for each resource in the Survey Area in a Microsoft Access database. The database fields record each building's physical features (e.g., plan, materials, architectural style and/or property type, outbuildings, etc.) as well as historical information (e.g., date of construction and historic function). This database enhances the understanding of historic resources in the Survey Area.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The consultants analyzed three categories of data to identify contiguous historic districts and/or individual properties that appear potentially eligible for National Register listing. The following three categories address issues important in determining the significance of a property and its National Register eligibility.

- Architectural Style and Form/Property Type
- Date of Construction
- Architectural Integrity

The “Survey Results” section of this report provides a description of this analysis and the survey findings.

### **ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS**

After compiling and reviewing the results of the field survey, Rosin Preservation analyzed architectural styles and forms, as well as property types, by reviewing photographs and database information. Rosin Preservation assigned each building an architectural style and/or form, and a functional property type. *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* by Richard Longstreth and *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester provided guidance for identifying properties by architectural style, building form, and function and ensured the use of terminology consistent with National Register nomenclature.

### **ESTABLISHING DATES OF CONSTRUCTION AND PROPERTY HISTORIES**

Historic maps and atlases, building permits, written histories of the area, historic newspaper articles, and county tax assessor records provided starting points for determining dates of construction. When historic accounts, county tax records, and historic maps did not provide conclusive information, architectural style and comparison to similar buildings in the Survey Area were used to estimate construction dates.

## EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY

All properties eligible for listing in the National Register, whether for individual significance or as contributing elements to a historic district, must retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the period of time and area in which they are significant.<sup>1</sup> The National Park Service uses the following terms to define integrity. A property must retain integrity in a majority of these areas to be eligible for listing.

- Location: The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
- Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- Setting: The physical environment of a historic property.
- Materials: The physical elements that were combined during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
- Workmanship: The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- Feeling: A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.<sup>2</sup>

Based on visual inspection during field survey, each historic resource in the Survey Area received an integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor reflecting how much of the original design, workmanship, exterior materials, and overall feeling of a past period of time remain.<sup>3</sup> The consultants employed a “glass half-full” approach to integrity evaluation, considering the reversibility of alterations as well as the quality of alterations. Rosin Preservation developed the following criteria to serve as the basis for rating architectural integrity in this survey. The components of each rating address the features and elements typically required for a resource to retain integrity. This list is tailored to address the conditions and character of this specific survey area.

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<sup>1</sup> A contributing property to a historic district does not have to meet the same threshold for integrity as an individual landmark, but it must retain enough historic fabric to contribute to the significance of the district. Properties contributing to a district that is significant in the area of architecture must retain a higher degree of integrity than properties in a district that is significant for associations with an important individual or with historical events or patterns of history.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: National Register Publications, 1998), 45.

<sup>3</sup> Architectural integrity differs from physical condition. A building with excellent integrity may be in very poor condition and, conversely, a building with very poor integrity may be in excellent condition.

### Excellent

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- The exterior cladding material has not been altered;
- The majority of the building's openings are unaltered or were altered in a sensitive and appropriate manner using similar materials, profiles, and sizes as the original building elements;
- Significant decorative elements, including porches, 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 fifty years in age, the building appears to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or would be a contributing element to a historic district.

### Good

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- Significant portions of original exterior cladding materials remain;
- 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 decorative elements, including porches, remain intact;
- Alterations to the building are potentially reversible without damaging the historic character of the building; if non-historic siding is applied, it has characteristics similar to the historic siding and is reversible;
- 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 for register listing if the significance of the resource meets the National Register criteria for eligibility.

### Fair

- The original form and massing of the building are intact, but:

- Exterior cladding material has been altered or added; however, replacement cladding material that retains some of the visual characteristics of the historic cladding material has less of an impact on integrity than a material that does not retain those visual characteristics, i.e. vinyl siding over wood clapboard versus stucco over wood clapboard, vinyl siding resembles the horizontal banding of the wood clapboard while the stucco obscures the horizontal banding; or
- The majority of the building's openings were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles, and sizes; or
- There have been some alterations to significant decorative elements, including porches; or
- Additions generally respect the materials, scale, and character of the original building design, but would be more difficult to reverse without altering the essential form of the building;
- Historic feeling or character of the building remains intact despite the alterations; and
- If the property has associations with a district's area of significance, the property might be a contributing resource to a historic district.

#### Poor

- The form and massing of the building were altered;
- Exterior materials were altered or removed;
- The majority of the building's openings, such as windows and doors, were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles, and sizes;
- Multiple decorative elements, including porches and windows, have been 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 re-evaluated.

## NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

Following data analysis, the consultants made preliminary evaluations of all inventoried properties according to the criteria and standards for historic resources established by the National Park Service. This included a preliminary assessment of individual eligibility for listing in the National Register and/or as contributing elements to a National Register historic district.

### EVALUATING NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

In addition to retaining integrity of their historic architectural design, properties listed in 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. Information such as date, function, associations, and physical characteristics affect significance.

To be listed in the National Register, 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: Embody distinctive characteristics of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Criterion D: Have yielded, or be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The consultants analyzed data relating to the architectural integrity and historic significance of each surveyed property to identify contiguous districts and individual properties that appear potentially eligible for National Register listing.<sup>4</sup> Rosin Preservation used the following terminology to complete this analysis.

- **Individually Eligible** applies to properties that retain excellent architectural integrity and clearly represent associations with the established historic context(s). A property that independently meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation can also be contributing to a historic district if it falls within the district boundaries and has associations with the district's areas of significance.

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<sup>4</sup> SHPO staff makes official determinations of National Register eligibility for properties in Missouri.

- **Contributing to a District** applies to properties that do not retain sufficient integrity or associations to merit individual listing but would enhance the historic associations and the architectural qualities of a historic district. A National Register district is a significant concentration of sites, buildings, structures, or objects that are united historically or aesthetically by design, physical development, or historic events. Contributing properties do not have to be individually distinctive, but must contribute to a grouping that achieves significance as a whole. The majority of the components that define a district's historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. Contributing buildings typically have "Excellent" or "Good" integrity, were constructed or achieved significance within the period of significance, and have historical associations with the proposed area(s) of significance.

"Fair" resources are difficult to categorize. Each resource is evaluated individually for integrity and association. Despite the list of integrity evaluation criteria, the alterations are evaluated for their overall impact on the feeling and association of the resource. Resources can have multiple alterations but the cumulative effect is that the resources are still be recognizable to their historic period. Additionally, resources are evaluated in relation to one another. An intact grouping of resources with marginal integrity conveys feelings and associations with certain areas of significance, particularly for Criterion A, despite the alterations to individual resources.

- **Non-Contributing to a District** applies to individual properties located within a historic district that have lost their historical integrity, were not present during the period of significance or do not relate to the documented significance of the district. In some cases, non-contributing buildings, those with integrity ratings of "Fair," can be reclassified as contributing if alterations are reversed to reveal intact historic fabric and features.

Resources located within a potential historic district are identified as Non-Contributing if they are less than fifty years of age and do not exhibit exceptional significance as it is defined in National Register Criteria Consideration G. The National Park Service considers fifty years to be the length of time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance.

- **Not Eligible** applies to individual properties located outside an area of resources that could potentially form a historic district. These resources either no longer possess historical integrity due to alterations, or do not represent significant associations with

historical events, or provide excellent examples of an architectural styles. These could also be resources that are less than fifty years of age and do not exhibit exceptional significance.

# **HISTORIC CONTEXT**

## **HISTORY OF KANSAS CITY**

### *Early Development and Founding<sup>5</sup>*

The origins of Kansas City development can be traced to the early nineteenth century and westward movement. Beginning in 1821, the Santa Fe Trail became a major influential force in the movement of people and goods across the frontier.<sup>6</sup> During its sixty years, the Santa Fe Trail was a driving developmental force in Jackson County and, in turn, Kansas City.<sup>7</sup> Three routes passed through Kansas City at various times. Captain Will Becknell formed the earliest route in 1821 while traveling west to Santa Fe, New Mexico. Twelve years later, John Calvin McCoy established the town of Westport approximately four miles south of the Missouri River.<sup>8</sup> As Westport became a supply point for westward expansion, the Santa Fe Trail route became more direct between the town and Independence, Missouri. The direct route eased travel between the two centers and increased movement through the fledgling town of Westport. The third Santa Fe Trail route was established the following year and connected the town of Westport to a newly established steamboat landing, Westport Landing. Westport Landing was transformational to the area and in 1838 gave rise to the Town of Kansas. Fifteen years later, in 1853, the Town of Kansas incorporated as the City of Kansas.

### *Mid-Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Expansion*

Due in large part to its proximity to the river and connection to westward movement, the City of Kansas grew rapidly. In only six years, the city limits were expanded substantially, and the city nearly quadrupled in size. The 1859 expansion limits included the Missouri River to the north; Lydia and Troost Avenues to the east; 20<sup>th</sup> Street to the south; and the Missouri-Kansas border to the west. When the railroad arrived in the city in 1865, it further cemented the City of Kansas's status as a transportation and shipment hub. Between 1867 and 1880, the population grew exponentially. Population growth drove city limits expansion and in 1885 the southern city limit reached the north side of Springfield Avenue, later renamed 31st Street. (*Figure 2*) In 1889, the City of Kansas became Kansas City. Rapid growth and development continued in the following decades. In 1909 the city again more than doubled in size with the southern limit extended to 48<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Rosin Preservation, LLC. And Helix Architecture + Design. "Kansas City Police Department East Patrol Station Historic Context Report." Completed for the City of Kansas City, Missouri. 2017.

<sup>6</sup> "Santa Fe Trail," Booklet, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, MO.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> "The Three Major Routings of the Santa Fe Trail Through the Kansas City Area," Map, Santa Fe Trail Vertical File, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, MO. The settlement of Westport pre-dates Kansas City by nearly a decade.



Street. As the urban core increased in both population and building density, the desires for increased space and an escape from congestion fueled suburban expansion.

Public transportation including the streetcar and, later, bus systems played a key role in the development of suburban communities in Kansas City. By 1891, streetcar lines provided access to outlying residential neighborhoods over several miles. As the Kansas City population grew, so did public transportation routes. Within fifty years, streetcar lines provided access to communities at Independence Avenue to the north;

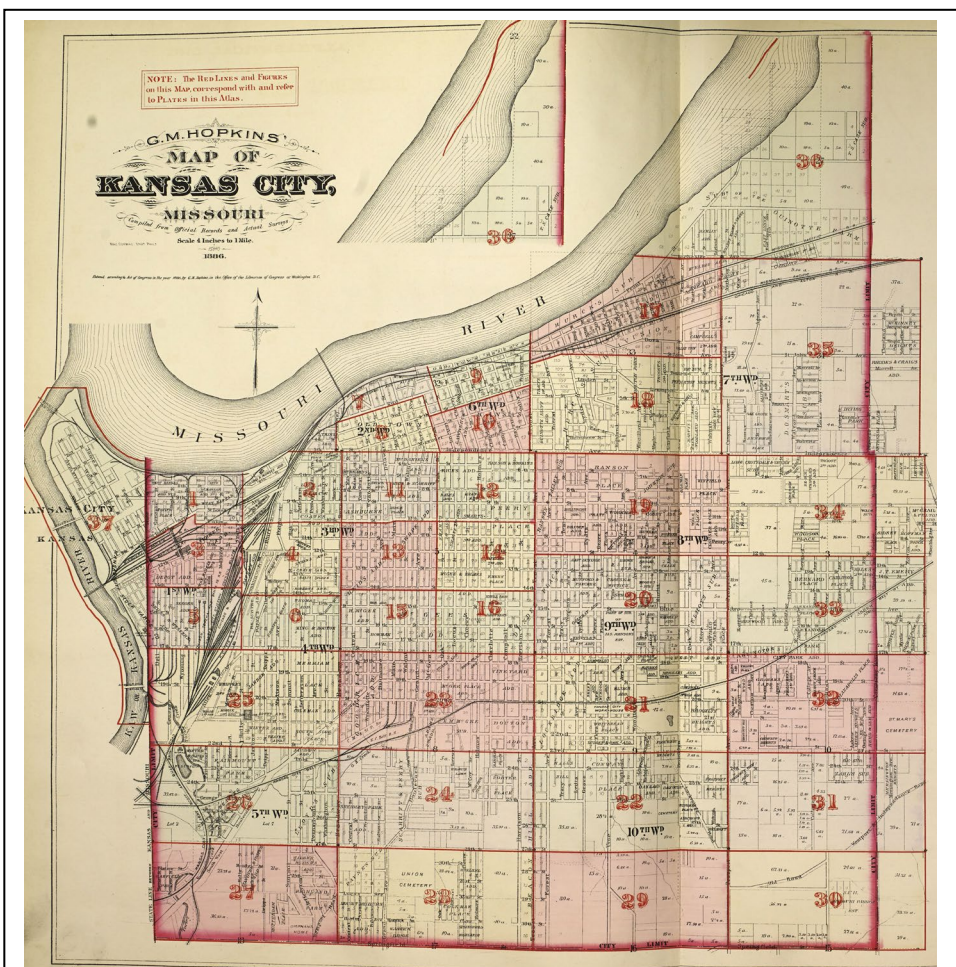


Figure 2. City Limits, 1871. G.M. Hopkins. *A Complete Set of Surveys and Plats of Properties in the City of Kansas, Missouri*. Philadelphia, PA, 1887.

past 80<sup>th</sup> Street to the south; Hardesty Avenue to the east; and into Kansas City, Kansas to the northwest (Figure 3).<sup>9</sup> Streetcar transportation served Kansas City neighborhoods until the mid-century. Following World War II, buses replaced streetcars and automobile ownership became ubiquitous. With the rise of the automobile and the freedom it afforded, suburban expansion continued to move further from the urban core. At the end of the twentieth century, the Kansas City population reached over 441,000 residents and in 2010 city limits encompassed 319 square miles with nearly 460,000 residents.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Edward A Conrad, *Kansas City Streetcars: From Hayburners to Streamliners* (Blue Springs, Mo.: Heartland Rails Publishing Co., 2011), Map 62.

<sup>10</sup> Census 2000 Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary File. <https://www.marc.org/Data-Economy/Metrodata/Population/Census-2000> (accessed 6 December 2019).; Rosin Preservation, LLC. And

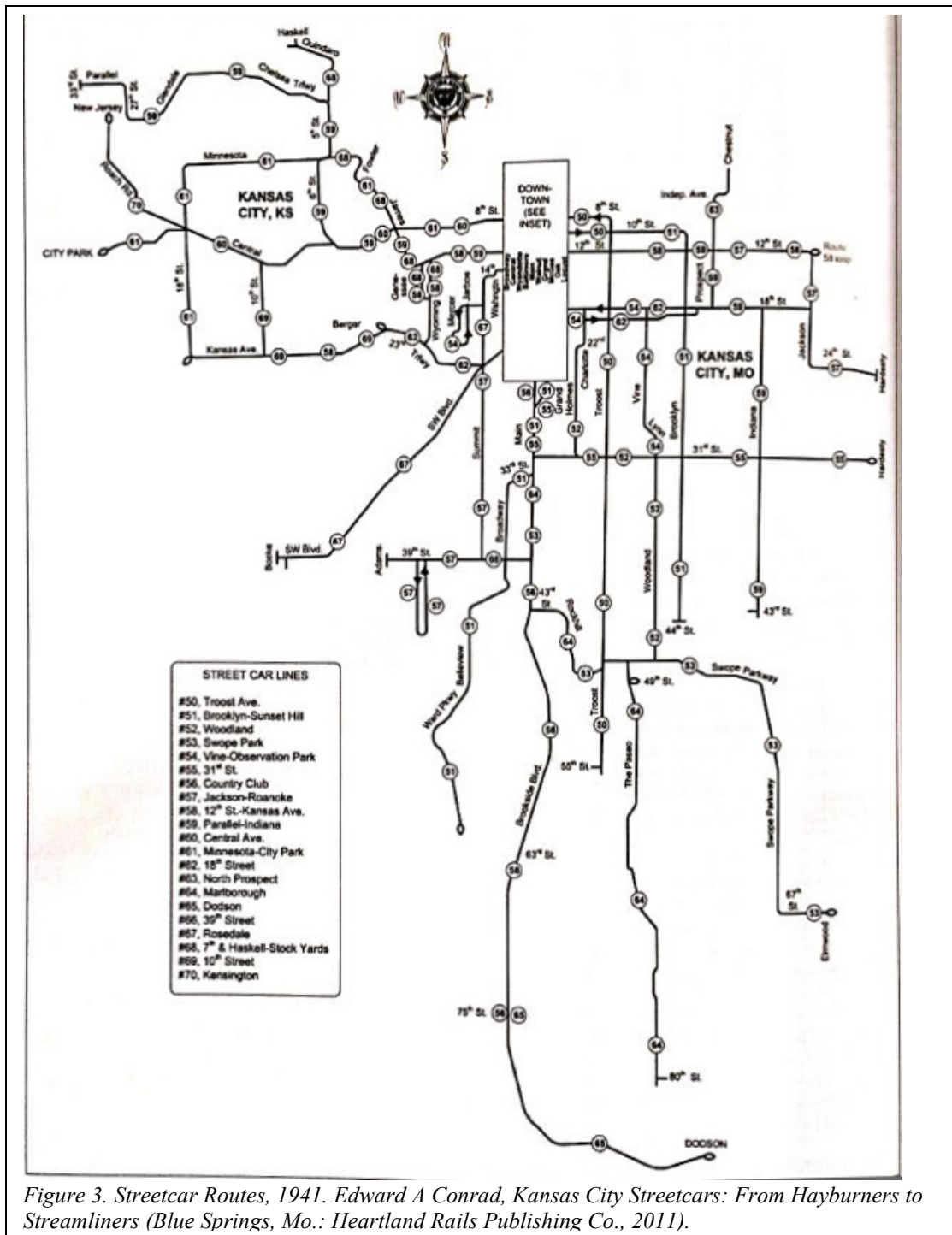


Figure 3. Streetcar Routes, 1941. Edward A Conrad, *Kansas City Streetcars: From Hayburners to Streamliners* (Blue Springs, Mo.: Heartland Rails Publishing Co., 2011).



## HISTORY OF THE SURVEY AREA

### *Early Residential Development, c. 1887-1909*

Prior to the turn of the century, the Kansas City city limits terminated at Springfield Avenue, later renamed 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Although the area on the north side had been platted by 1887, it was sparsely populated.<sup>11</sup> Much of the land east of Troost remained semi-rural, with individual residences on multi-acre holdings. To the west, Union Cemetery and multiple small, residential additions were interspersed with holdings. The Beacon Hill Addition included property fronting Troost Avenue and extended from 23<sup>rd</sup> Street on the north to the north side of Springfield Avenue (31<sup>st</sup> Street). Like the surrounding area, it was largely unoccupied south of 26<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>12</sup>

Although area development was relatively sparse when first platted, within four years the city limits were extended to include Troost Avenue south to 43<sup>rd</sup> Street.<sup>13</sup> During this period the Survey Area was platted (*Figure 4*). Withers Place fronted the east side of Troost and extended three block east and one block south to Linwood Avenue.<sup>14</sup> Chadwick's Subdivision and Troost Avenue Park fronted the west side of Troost Avenue and contained lots in the north and south halves of the block, respectively.<sup>15</sup> Single-family residences and associated outbuildings characterized development within all three additions. Within the Survey Area, eight buildings occupied lots fronting Troost Avenue to the east while only one, the Cord. E. Withers residence, fronted Troost Avenue to the west in 1891.

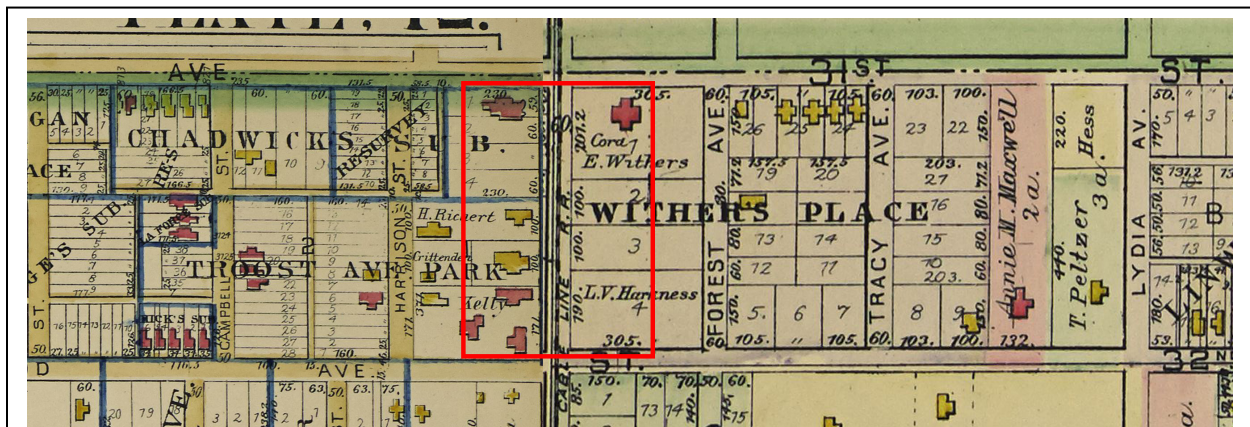


Figure 4. Historic plats of the Survey Area, 1891. Troost Avenue circled in red. G.M. Hopkins. *A Complete Set of Surveys and Plats of Properties in the City of Kansas, Missouri*. Philadelphia, PA, 1891, Sheets 41-42

<sup>11</sup> G.M. Hopkins. *A Complete Set of Surveys and Plats of Properties in the City of Kansas, Missouri*. Philadelphia, PA, 1887, Sheets 28-29.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> G.M. Hopkins. *A Complete Set of Surveys and Plats of Properties in the City of Kansas, Missouri*. Philadelphia, PA, 1891, Sheets 41-43.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

Early residents of the area were typically wealthy members of Kansas City society and the large, stately residences they constructed reflected this wealth. Combined, this earned the 3100 block the nickname “Millionaires Row.”<sup>16</sup> Adding to the feeling of affluence was the conveniently located streetcar line which, in 1894, terminated at 33<sup>rd</sup> Street to the south. Between 1894 and 1910, the Troost Avenue streetcar route was extended from 33<sup>rd</sup> Street to 48<sup>th</sup> Street as the city limits extended much further south. The streetcar line connected early residents of the block to the city center, which allowed them to construct homes away from the noise, pollution, and congestion of the city’s primary commercial hub. Access to undeveloped land at the southern terminus of city limits in turn afforded greater opportunities to construct the prominent dwellings for which the area was nicknamed.

While many early residents of “Millionaires Row” settled in the area to escape the activity of the commercial center, this idyllic setting was relatively short lived. The Survey Area remained solely residential only until c. 1908, little more than a decade after the additions were platted. Webster Withers, a resident of the area since 1883, soon recognized the potential commercial value of the land should it be further developed.<sup>17</sup> Withers vacated his residence at the southeast corner of 31<sup>st</sup> and Troost began a campaign to establish commercial development on “Millionaires Row.” Concurrently, residential development occurred to the south, east, and west. In contrast to the high-profile residences of “Millionaire’s Row,” the new dwellings were more modest in scale and reflected shifting socioeconomic demographic within the residential as middle-class Kansas Citians moved into the area.

#### *Initial Commercial Development, c. 1908-1920*

The turn of the century began a period of transition within the Survey Area. Although it remained predominately residential, commercial development began at the northern boundary. Commercial development was initially concentrated on the southeast corner of Troost Avenue and 31<sup>st</sup> Street, site of the former Withers estate (*Figure 5*). In 1909, two-story brick commercial buildings containing a drug store, photography studio, and retail shops, dominated the corner (*Figure 5*).<sup>18</sup> With their comparatively large footprints and mass, the new commercial buildings greatly contrasted with the residences to the west and south. Once established at the southeast corner of Troost Avenue and 31<sup>st</sup> Street, commercial development on the block rapidly expanded southward and encompassed both sides of Troost.

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<sup>16</sup> Brenda and Michelle Spencer. “Shankman Building.” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. Spencer Preservation, Wamego, Kansas. January 29, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> The two-story brick building at 3101-3103 Troost Avenue is the Westover Building which now rises four stories. It was constructed in 1908 and city building permits indicate three upper stories were added in 1911. The top story was removed at an unknown date. .



New commercial development on the block brought in many needed or desirable services for residents. Healthcare offices, restaurants, clothing and tailor shops, and other such businesses provided service and retail opportunities for residents while office space and storefronts provided opportunities for employment. Advertisements in the *Kansas City Star* in early 1911 announced retail and office space opportunities in the Westover Building (3101 Troost Avenue) and describe the location as “specially[sic] desirable for tailoring or dressmaking parlors” and the “best location in the city for doctors.”<sup>19</sup> Local papers noted the transition on the block from residential to commercial use as well as the speed with which it occurred. When the Troost Avenue Bank was established in 1913, the *Kansas City Star* remarked “the bank at the corner is another evidence of the encroachment of business on what used to be exclusively a residence[sic] district. The Westover building is the center of a rapidly growing business community.”<sup>20</sup> As commercial building construction on the block expanded during the 1910s, it created the first retail shopping district outside downtown Kansas City central business area and Westport.<sup>21</sup> Streetcar routes, including the Troost Line, facilitated access to the district from neighboring and distant residential areas. Figure 6 depicts a Troost Line streetcar at the corner of 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Troost Avenue. The Westover Building is on the right while the Second Church of Christ, Scientist (not extant) is to the left.



Figure 6. Postcard depicting Troost and 31<sup>st</sup>, c. 1925. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

<sup>19</sup> Advertisement. “31st and Troost.” *The Kansas City Star* (15 January 1911):21.; Advertisement. “31st and Troost.” *The Kansas City Star* (5 February 1911):40. The Westover building is extant located at the north end of the Survey Area.

<sup>20</sup> “A Bank at 31<sup>st</sup> and Troost.” *The Kansas City Star* (15 June 1913):3.

<sup>21</sup> Sally F. Schwenk. “F.W. Woolworth Building.” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. Historic Preservation Services, Inc. Kansas City, Missouri. May 6, 2006.8.8. Westport was a separate municipality until annexation in 1897.



### *Commercial Boom, 1915-1950*

By 1920, the block had nearly completely transitioned from residential to commercial. The 1920 city directory includes only four residences. Excluding the Herndon Apartments at 3115-21 Troost Avenue, the residences were single-family dwellings concentrated at the south end of the block.<sup>22</sup> During the 1920s, the paving and widening of the street contributed to the rapid commercial construction.<sup>23</sup> As



*Figure 7. Postcard depicting Troost and 31<sup>st</sup>, c. 1925. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.*

before, new commercial development during this period accommodated varied businesses which supported the surrounding residential community. In 1925 clothing stores, healthcare offices, grocers, drug stores, banks, and beauty parlors occupied most commercial buildings. Dr. Balls Health School occupied the Harkness Building (3133 Troost Avenue) while the Firestone Building (3145 Troost Avenue) was designed and constructed for automobile services. Recreational resources such as the Isis Theater (3104 Troost Avenue, not extant) and the Abe O Sackin bowling alleys in the Michelson Building (3123-33 Troost Avenue) provided entertainment. A 1920s postcard illustrates the commercial streetscape as it appeared during the period (*Figure 7*). The Bradford Building (3108-3112 Troost Avenue) and Wirthman Building (3100 Troost Avenue, not extant), which housed the Isis Theater, are visible to the left while the Westover Building, one of the earliest commercial buildings on the block, occupies the right midground.

The surveyed resources reflect this period of robust commercial development in the 3100 block of Troost Avenue. Of the fifteen surveyed resources, ten (67 percent) were built between 1915 and 1940. By 1935, construction in the block was largely complete and commercial resources lined Troost Avenue on both sides (*Figure 8*). They were typically one and two-story commercial blocks with flat roofs and brick or terra cotta cladding. Variation in materials, height, architectural style, and form are consistent with the organic pattern of development on Troost Avenue. Although construction did not halt, occupancy suffered during the Great

<sup>22</sup> Polk's City Directory. Kansas City, Missouri. R.L. Polk & Co., 1920: 545

<sup>23</sup> Schwenk. "F.W. Woolworth Building," 8.6-11.

Depression. The 1935 city directory list many vacancies in the Wirthman Building.<sup>24</sup> Additional vacancies were noted in the Westover, Shankman, and Bradford Buildings as well. Interestingly, few vacancies were noted in smaller, one-part commercial blocks. This may reflect less expensive rental rates, maintenance costs, or other such factors that insulated these resources from vacancies during economic strife.

The 3100 block of Troost Avenue remained a prominent commercial corridor through the 1950s. Although buses replaced the streetcar transit system in 1947, the 3100 block remained a public transportation transfer point and continued to benefit from pedestrian traffic.<sup>25</sup> In 1951, commercial resources occupied all lots on Troost Avenue between 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Linwood Boulevard.<sup>26</sup> Linwood Boulevard was an “intra-neighborhood connector” developed as part of the city’s City beautiful Movement Parks and Boulevards system design while 31<sup>st</sup> Street was a primary east-west corridor.<sup>27</sup> Steady traffic on both routes further benefitted the commercial resources on the block. As in previous decades, businesses continued to cater to the everyday needs and desires of the nearby residents. Cafes, shoes stores, and a bank are visible in a 1955 photograph taken from the south half of the block and looking north (*Figure 9*). Heavy automobile and pedestrian traffic in the photograph illustrate the vibrancy of the block.



*Figure 8. 3100 Block of Troost, 1935. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.*



*Figure 9. 3100 Block of Troost, 1955. Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.*

<sup>24</sup>Polk’s City Directory. Kansas City, Missouri. R.L. Polk & Co.,1935: 2300-2301.

<sup>25</sup> Schwenk. “F.W. Woolworth Building”” 8.15.

<sup>26</sup> Sanborn Map Company. *Insurance Maps of Kansas City, Missouri. Volume Four.* 1909, revised to 1963. Sheet 465.

<sup>27</sup> Cydney Millstein and Paul Novick, “The Kansas City System of Parks and Boulevards” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. AHR, LLC., Kansas City, Jackson County. 2014: F.7-9.



### *Commercial Decline, 1960-1970*

Occupancy began to wane towards the end of the 1950s and into the 1960s. Suburban expansion to the south and widespread automobile use drew residents away from the area and decreased pedestrian traffic at 31<sup>st</sup> and Troost. Concurrently, changes in national retail trends including the rise of “big-box” stores and shopping malls negatively impacted the commercial corridor. During this period, many resources updated their storefronts in an attempt to modernize and compete with new retail competition. A December 1970 *Kansas City News-Press* article documents the deterioration of the area and notes high vacancies that year.<sup>28</sup> While retail operations continued in the Survey Area post-1970, they never again achieved the prominence experienced in earlier decades.<sup>29</sup> Currently, 67 percent of resources in the survey area are vacant.

The developmental histories of the Survey Area and the nearby Prospect Avenue and 27<sup>th</sup> Street commercial corridor are remarkably similar. Like the Survey Area, the commercial core at Prospect Avenue and 27<sup>th</sup> Street arose from organic growth within an initially residential development. Between 1885 and 1904, multiple subdivisions were platted in the vicinity of Prospect Avenue and 27<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>30</sup> In the early 1890s, streetcar lines provided affordable and reliable transportation between the suburban development and the downtown commercial core as well as the industrial centers in the East and West Bottoms.<sup>31</sup> Public transportation between the residential suburb and employment and retail opportunities to the north soon made the residential area a desirable location for residents and small commercial enterprises alike. Commercial resources developed at Prospect Avenue and 27<sup>th</sup> Street (a major east-west connector) were typically one-story, occasionally two-story, frame and brick commercial resources that housed businesses to serve the surrounding residential area. Typical occupants included grocers, specialty stores such as tailor and clothing shops, and drug stores. Small scale commercial resources occupied the area through the early 1970s. However, disinvestment and demolition in the subsequent decades erased the commercial center by the early 2000s. Non-historic infill construction and vacant lots currently occupy the area. One historic commercial resource

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<sup>28</sup>Garret L. Smalley. “The Deterioration of What Was Known as Kansas City’s Greatest Suburban Business Center...The One That Lead All the Way Fifty Years Ago!” *The Kansas City News-Press* (25 December 19270): A4.

<sup>29</sup> In addition to shifting commercial trends and suburban development, “white flight” and the role of Troost Avenue as a racial and political diving line significantly contributed to the decline of the 3100 block of Troost. As disinvestment in the surrounding residential area resulted in fewer residents to patronize retail and services on the block. These concepts will be further explored and discussed in the nomination of the proposed 3100 Block of Troost Avenue historic district.

<sup>30</sup> Rosin Preservation, LLC. And Helix Architecture + Design. “Kansas City Police Department East Patrol Station Historic Context Report.” Completed for the City of Kansas City, Missouri. 2017.

<sup>31</sup> Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Co., *Park, Boulevard, Street Railway and Railway Map of Kansas City, MO and Kansas City, Kas*, 1894, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri [https://kchistory.org/islandora/object/kchistory%3A106663?solr\\_nav%5Bid%5D=826c2114f5a3297f993b&solr\\_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr\\_nav%5Boffset%5D=0](https://kchistory.org/islandora/object/kchistory%3A106663?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=826c2114f5a3297f993b&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=0&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=0) (accessed 6 December, 2019).

remains at the northeast corner of the intersection, however the dense streetscape which defined the commercial core is not extant.

In contrast to organic commercial growth demonstrated in the Survey Area and the Prospect Avenue and 27<sup>th</sup> Street corridor, planned commercial development also occurred in Kansas City during the early twentieth century. In the years immediately preceding the 1909 city expansion and in the following decades, Jesse Clyde (J.C.) Nichols established numerous residential tracts in the southwest portion of the city south of Brush Creek. Nichols' planned communities included designated areas for limited commercial development within or adjacent to the residential area. As planned areas of commercial development, Nichols maintained control over the scale, appearance, and location of commercial resources as well as the types of services offered. Deed restrictions in Nichols' adjacent residential developments further limited encroachment of commercial resources in his residential neighborhoods.<sup>32</sup> In contrast to the Survey Area, these planned commercial developments did not develop organically based on entrepreneurial enterprise or in response to resident needs, but rather from planned development efforts meant to attract middle and upper-middle class white residents. Examples of extant J.C. Nichols developments include the Country Club Plaza, a commercial shopping district, and the adjacent residential development. Unlike the Survey Area, which was historically nestled within a residential development, the Country Club Plaza represents a dense commercial concentration distinguished from the surrounding residential development through a unified architectural expression. The Crestwood Shops (1922) at 55<sup>th</sup> and Oak streets is a small shopping district associated with the Crestwood subdivision and consists of one-story Colonial Revival shops which offered a variety of goods and services for the nearby residents. Like the Country Club Plaza, the Crestwood shops represent a planned commercial development which conformed to standards in size, style, and function as established by Nichols.

The 3100 block of Troost Avenue represents a period of dynamic transition during the early twentieth century. While the Survey Area was initially home to large, ornate dwellings for several of Kansas City's wealthy residents, the Survey Area quickly evolved into a vibrant commercial core. Within two decades, commercial resources began to encroach on the residential block. The introduction of commercial resources, bolstered by an affordable and efficient public transit system, transformed the block into one of the city's premier commercial corridors during the twentieth century. The dense streetscape and one- and two-part commercial block resources which define the area represent this transformative period and ongoing vitality into the mid-century through their character-defining forms and materials, including many mid-

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<sup>32</sup>Sara Stevens. "J.C. Nichols and the Country Club District: Suburban Aesthetics and Property Values." The Kansas City Public Library. <https://pendergastkc.org/article/jc-nichols-and-country-club-district-suburban-aesthetics-and-property-values> (accessed 6 December 2019).

century storefronts. Although most resources in the Survey Area are currently vacant, they continue to communicate associations with early- through mid-century commercial development and activity when the area functioned as a premier commercial corridor in Kansas City. Due to widespread demolition on Troost Avenue, the 3100 block remains the single intact block representing this period on the street.

# **SURVEY RESULTS**

## **PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY AREA**

### **LOCATION AND SETTING**

The Troost Avenue Survey (Survey Area) is located less than two miles south of the downtown Kansas City commercial core and approximately one mile west of U.S. Highway 71. The Survey Area includes properties fronting both sides of Troost Avenue in the 3100 block. East 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Linwood Boulevard form the north and south boundaries respectively. The surrounding area is largely residential although individual or small pockets of commercial development are interspersed throughout.

The Survey Area is characterized by generally flat terrain. Troost Avenue is a two-way street paved with asphalt. Concrete sidewalks and shallow concrete curbs line both sides of the street. Two paved surface parking lots are located on the west side of the street. Landscaping within the Survey Area is minimal and includes small street trees and planting beds. Storefronts on the west side of Troost Avenue are currently boarded with plywood for security purposes. However, historic storefronts are intact behind most boards.

### **DATES OF CONSTRUCTION**

An analysis of the periods of construction represented in the Survey Area was conducted to understand how the area developed over time. Rosin Preservation obtained the date of the construction of the fifteen primary resources in the Survey Area by reviewing building permits and estimated dates of construction from the Jackson County Tax Assessor. Construction dates were corroborated and/or refined by reviewing city atlases, Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, listings in the U.S. Census or city directories, newspaper articles, and architectural style. Dates of building additions or alterations were not readily available. Historic aerial photographs were consulted for additions, but often did not yield conclusive evidence regarding a date of construction. Figures 10 and 11 present the distribution of resources by dates of construction. Excluding the two non-historic surface parking lots, all resources in the Survey Area were built in the early twentieth century.<sup>33</sup> Of the fifteen primary resources, six (40 percent) were built during or immediately following the Depression Era. Four (27 percent) and were constructed between World War I and the Great Depression at the height of commercial development on the block. Three (20 percent) date to the period between turn of the century and World War I and

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<sup>33</sup> The surface parking lots replace historic commercial resources demolished in the late-twentieth century.

reflect initial commercial development in the Survey Area. Many resources possess updated storefronts which date to the mid-century and reflect efforts to retain commercial traffic in the area as new retail options to the south and the development of “big-box” stores threatened the block. The geographic distribution of construction dates within the Survey Area reflects the pattern of transition in the built environment as commercial development initiated at the corner of Troost Avenue and 31<sup>st</sup> Street and subsequently moved south during the following decades.

**FIGURE 10: ESTIMATED DATES OF CONSTRUCTION**

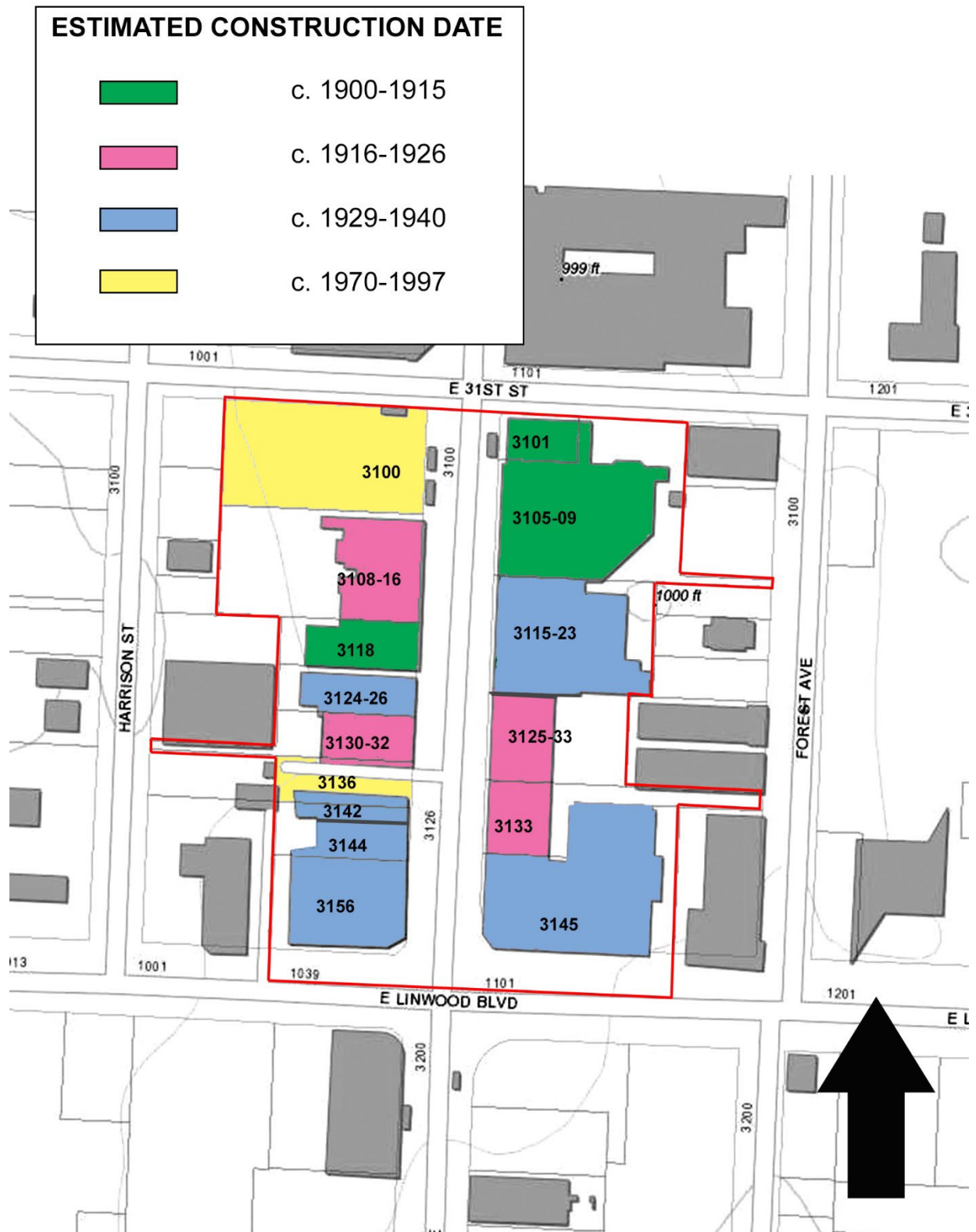
<b>ERA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
c. 1908-1915	3	20
c. 1916-1926	4	27
c. 1929-1940 <sup>34</sup>	6	40
c. 1970-1997 <sup>35</sup>	2	13
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

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<sup>34</sup> Of these, one (3156 Troost Avenue) was built in 1940 as the Depression ended while the others were built prior to 1939.

<sup>35</sup> These resources are non-historic surface parking lots. All commercial resources within the Survey Area are historic.

**FIGURE 11: ESTIMATED DATES OF CONSTRUCTION**



## HISTORIC PROPERTY TYPES

To understand the historical development of the Survey Area, Rosin Preservation identified the original function as well as the architectural style and building type of the surveyed resources. Determining the resource's original function allowed for a compilation of the property types represented in the Survey Area. Property types link the themes incorporated in the historic contexts with the physical historic resources that illustrate those ideas. By examining resources according to original function and architectural style, the analysis addresses both shared associative (functional) characteristics as well as physical (architectural style and type) characteristics.

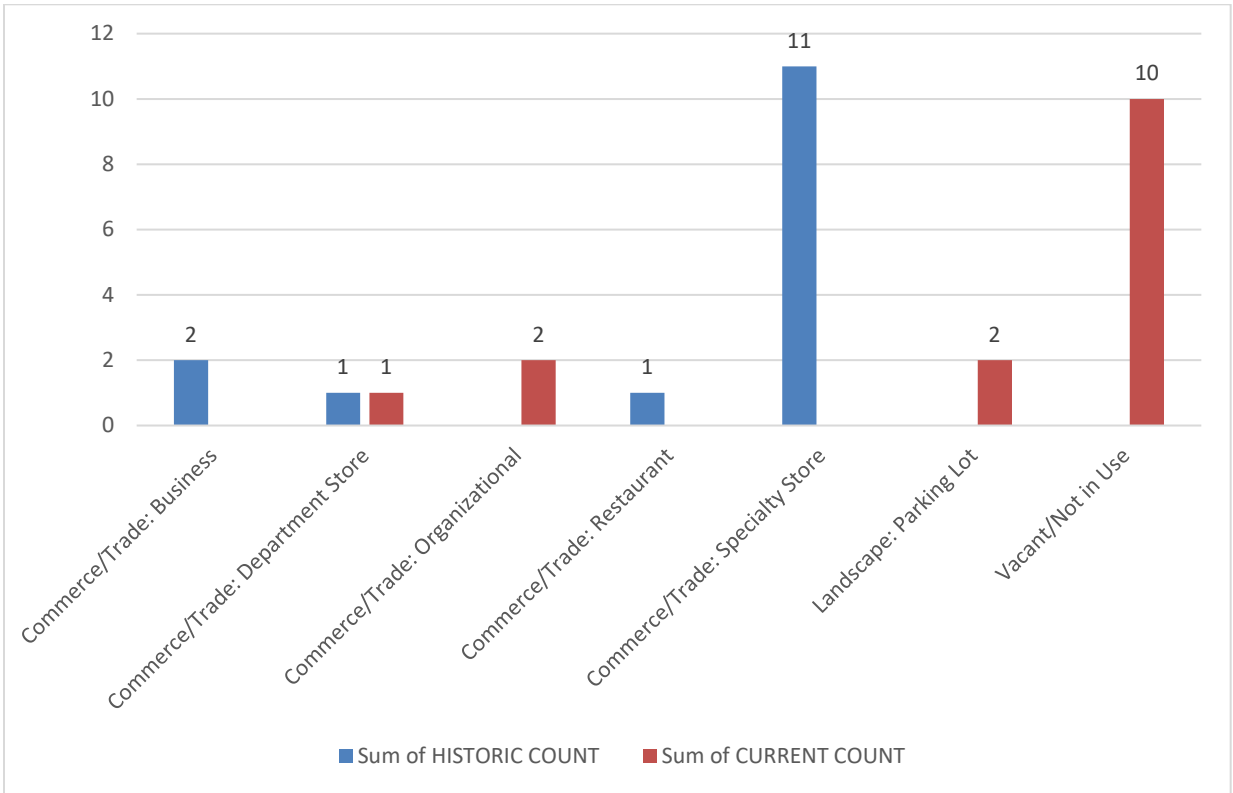
### ORIGINAL FUNCTION

Drawn from the National Register subcategories for function and use, Rosin Preservation identified different categories of original functions for the surveyed primary resources. Most resources in the Survey Area retained their original or a similar function for many years, however almost all are currently vacant. All the surveyed resources were historically commercial resources including eleven specialty stores, two business or office buildings, and one department store. This reflects the early historical development of the Survey Area as a commercial hub in the city of Kansas City. The Survey Area contains thirteen commercial resources and two landscape resources. Figure 12 shows the breakdown of historic property types represented in the Survey Area while Figure 13 compares historic and current use.

**FIGURE 12: ORIGINAL PROPERTY TYPES**

<b>ORIGINAL FUNCTION</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
COMMERCE/TRADE: BUSINESS	2
COMMERCE/TRADE: DEPARTMENT STORE	1
COMMERCE/TRADE: RESTAURANT	1
COMMERCE/TRADE: SPECIALTY STORE	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>

**FIGURE 13: HISTORIC VS. CURRENT USE**

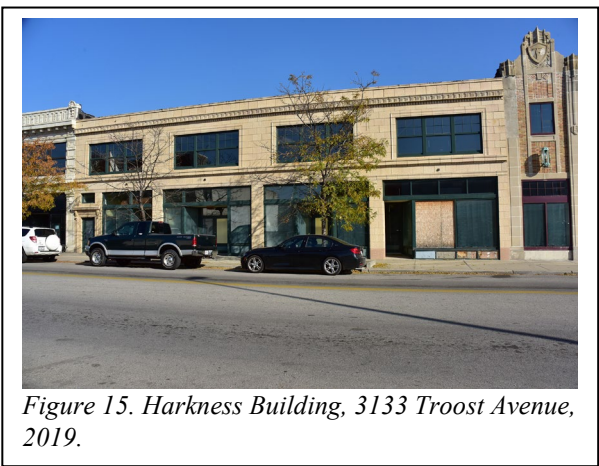


**Commercial Property Types**

Commercial property types account for approximately 87 percent of the primary resources surveyed. They are one and two-part commercial blocks. In general, the commercial property types are constructed with masonry or concrete foundations; brick or concrete block wall cladding; and flat roofs. Many feature storefront display systems or fixed sash display windows. The high percentage of commercial property types in the Survey Area reflects the historic status of the Survey Area as a commercial hub.



*Figure 14. 3142 Troost Avenue, 2019.*



*Figure 15. Harkness Building, 3133 Troost Avenue, 2019.*

3100 Block Troost Avenue Survey 2019



## **Landscapes**

Landscape resources in the Survey Area include two non-historic surface parking lots. The surface parking lots are asphalt or concrete-paved and have irregular plans. Both parking lots were constructed between c. 1971 and 1997 and replace a variety of historic property types.



Figure 16. 3100 Troost Avenue, 2019.



Figure 17. 3136 Troost Avenue, 2019.

## **ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND FORMS**

Classifications based on shared physical attributes include categorization by architectural styles and vernacular building forms or types.<sup>36</sup> The architectural styles and forms identified in the Survey Area and assigned to the properties follow the terminology and classifications accepted by the National Register of Historic Places program. This nomenclature relies heavily on the forms and styles discussed for residential buildings in *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* by Richard Longstreth and *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester.

Of the thirteen primary resources (not including two parking lots for a total of fifteen properties) evaluated in the Survey Area, eight were categorized by a formal architectural style, and five were categorized by their architectural form (*Figures 18 and 19*). The majority of resources classified by their form are done so because stylistic ornament was never part of the original design or has since been removed.

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<sup>36</sup> The term “vernacular” is used in its broadest application and refers to common local and regional building forms and the use of materials specific to a particular period of time.

**FIGURE 18: ARCHITECTURAL STYLES**

STYLE	TOTAL
ART DECO	2
BEAUX ARTS	1
ITALIANATE	1
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: COMMERCIAL STYLE	3
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>

**Figure 19: ARCHITECTURAL FORMS**

FORM	TOTAL
ONE-PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK	4
TWO-PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>

## COMMERCIAL RESOURCES

Commercial resources make up most of the Survey Area and account for nearly 87 percent (thirteen) of the fifteen primary resources. These resources are typically one to two-story one- and two-part commercial blocks. Only one resource, the four-story Westover Building at 3101 Troost, rises above two stories.

### One-Part Commercial Block

The One-Part Commercial Block building is a simple one-story cube with a decorated façade. In many examples, the street frontage is narrow and the façade comprises little more than plate glass windows and an entrance with a cornice or parapet spanning the width of the façade (*Figure 20*)



*Figure 20. 3118 Troost Avenue, 2019.*

## Two-Part Commercial Block

Slightly more complex than their one-story cousins, Two-Part Commercial Block buildings are typically two- to four- stories in height. They have a clear visual separation of use between the first-story customer service/retail space and the upper-story office, meeting room, or residential uses (*Figure 21*). Similar to One-Part Commercial Block buildings, the styling of the first story focuses on the storefront glazing and entrance(s). The design of the upper stories identifies the building's architectural influences.



*Figure 21. The Shankman Building, 3115-3133 Troost Avenue, 2019.*

The functional subcategories the extant commercial resources represent include eleven specialty stores, one department store, and one business/office building. Many two-part commercial blocks contained secondary uses at the upper story in addition to the primary, first-floor commercial function.

Usually sited on one or two lots, the commercial buildings typically have rectangular plans oriented with the short side facing the street. The two-story or higher designs incorporate public spaces on the first floor and office, residential, meeting, storage, or light industrial spaces on the upper floors. A defining feature of the early commercial property types is a well-defined ground floor “storefront” that distinctly separates it from the upper stories and reflects a difference in public and private uses. Storefronts housed retail or wholesale vending, public entry, showroom, or office spaces. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century commercial buildings often have elaborate decorative ornament at the upper stories.

Stylistic treatments for the commercial properties in the survey area reflect architectural styles popular in the era in which they were built. They typically have a flat roof and, depending on the date of construction, structural elements include load-bearing stone and brick walls, concrete block, or steel members. Similarly, storefronts incorporate combinations of brick, glass, metal, terra cotta, and wood.

## Specialty Stores

The overwhelming majority (73 percent) of small commercial buildings disbursed throughout the survey area had retail sales or service functions that are typical of business districts throughout the country, identified broadly as the “specialty store.” The specialty store includes any

commercial entity where goods are available for purchase. The one- to two-story buildings are business houses designed for small operations providing wholesale or retail sales involving the receipt and distribution of goods. Goods and services offered in the specialty stores on Troost Avenue varied from the Kresge Co. store at **3124-3126 Troost Avenue** (c. 1930) to the Western Auto Supply Company store at **3142 Troost Avenue** (c. 1930) to (Figures 23-24



Figure 23. 3124-3126 Troost Avenue, 2019.

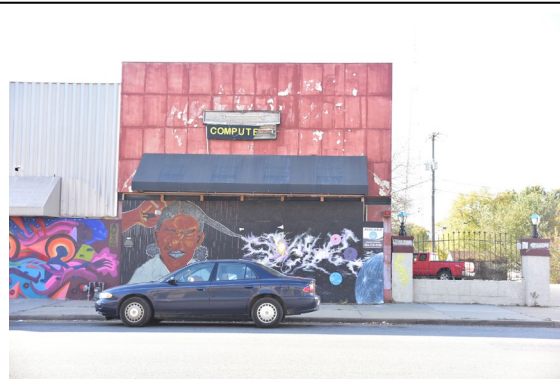


Figure 24. 3142 Troost Avenue, 2019.

### **Business/Office Buildings**

Business/Office Building resources were the second-most numerous identified original property type. These buildings were constructed as offices for a single business or as speculative ventures for multiple tenants. While two such resources were historically present in the Survey Area, only one, the Westover Building (c. 1908) at **3101 Troost Avenue**, is extant.<sup>37</sup> The four-story two-part commercial block housed retail operations on the first floor while office space occupied the upper stories.<sup>38</sup>



Figure 25. The Westover Building, 3101 Troost Avenue, 2019.

<sup>37</sup> The Wirthman Building at 3100 Troost Avenue was demolished in 1997. A surface parking lot now occupies the site.

<sup>38</sup> The Westover building historically rose five stories.



## **Department Stores**

The National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* classifies department stores as resources such as general stores, marketplaces, department stores, trading posts, and similar retail resources. One such resource was recorded in the Survey Area. The F.W. Woolworth Building (3118 Troost Avenue) was initially constructed in 1915, however it was substantially remodeled in 1927 for the F.W. Woolworth Company. The company occupied this one-story, one-part commercial block building throughout the 1950s. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2006.<sup>39</sup>

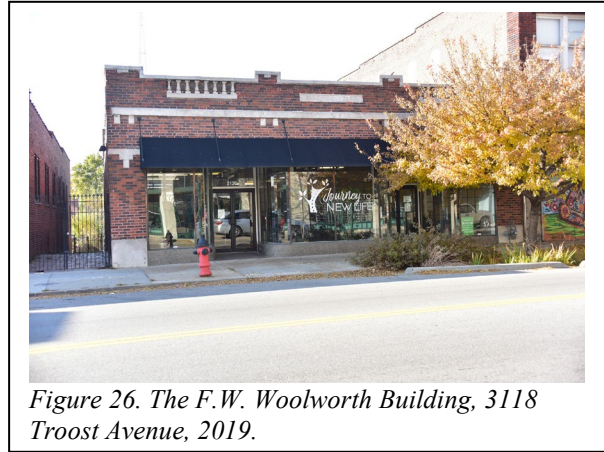


Figure 26. The F.W. Woolworth Building, 3118 Troost Avenue, 2019.

## **ANCILLARY RESOURCES**

Ancillary resources such as garages, storage sheds, carports, and carriage houses were not observed in the Survey Area. Although the Jackson County Parcel Viewer suggest a small ancillary resource may be present behind 3105-3109 Troost, this resource was not visible from the public right of way. As such its presence, use, form, and appearance could not be confirmed and it is not included in the total resource count.

## **ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY**

All properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places must retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the period of time and criteria for which they are significant. As described in the Methodology, each resource received an integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. Figures 27 and 28 illustrate the results of the integrity analysis. Figure 27 provides the distribution of integrity ratings for the fifteen primary resources identified in the Survey Area. The integrity ratings of the primary resources identified in the Survey Area are provided on the map in Figure 28.

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<sup>39</sup> See Schwenk, Sally F. "F.W. Woolworth Building." National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. Historic Preservation Services, Inc. Kansas City, Missouri. May 6, 2006 for additional information.

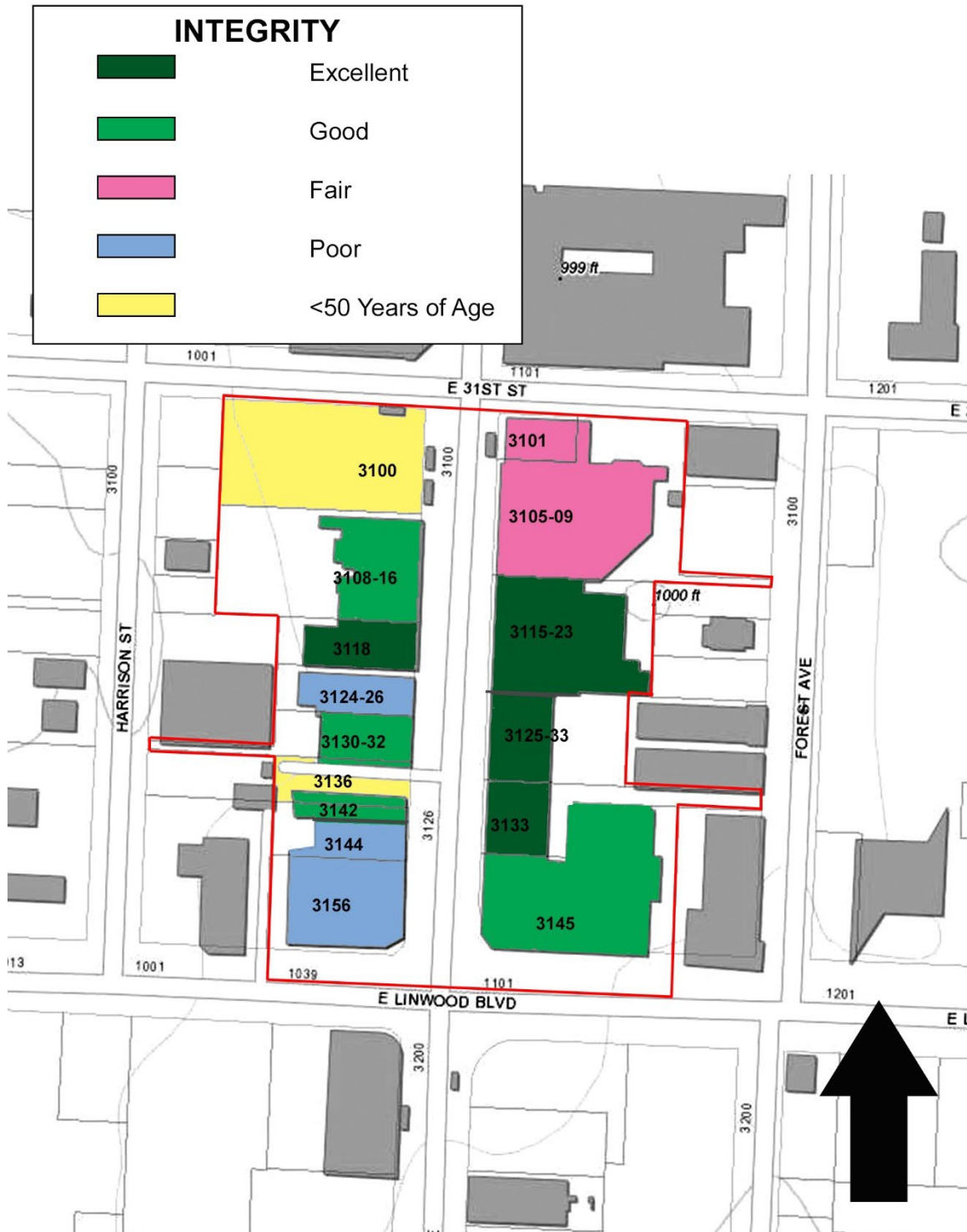
**FIGURE 27: ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY OF PRIMARY RESOURCES**

<b>INTEGRITY</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
EXCELLENT	3	20%
GOOD	5	34%
FAIR	2	13%
POOR	3	20%
LESS THAN FIFTY YEARS OF AGE	2	13%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

Integrity ratings represent a sliding scale of alterations to the historic fabric and the features of individual buildings. Both the quantity of changes and the reversibility of changes affected the ranking each building received. Buildings rated “Excellent” and some rated “Good” may be individually eligible for register listing if they also have significant associations that meet one or more of the National Register Criteria. Buildings that received an integrity rating of “Good” and some rated as “Fair” could be listed as contributing resources to a historic district. The application of non-historic siding, specifically vinyl siding, compromises the architectural integrity of a resource because it changes the relationship between siding and trim and often obscures subtle historic ornament. In the integrity analysis, resources with non-historic siding that continue to communicate their historic function and period of construction through their form, porch, and windows are rated as “Fair.” Ultimately, resources which have been treated with non-historic vinyl or metal siding are considered ineligible for listing individually. However, they may be eligible as contributing resources to a historic district if the historic form is intact and non-historic exterior cladding material retains some of the visual characteristics of the historic cladding material. Vinyl siding over wood clapboard versus stucco over wood clapboard, vinyl siding resembles the horizontal banding of the wood clapboard while the stucco obscures the horizontal banding. An integrity rating of “Poor” reflects the presence of numerous alterations that significantly diminish architectural integrity, regardless of historical significance.

The Survey Area contains three resources rated as “Excellent” and five rated as “Good.” Two were rated as “Fair” and three as “Poor.” Two of the resources are less than fifty years of age and do not meet the established threshold for determining eligibility. The resources with a “Fair” integrity rating retained historic forms and fenestration patterns but received non-historic siding, non-historic windows, and non-historic storefronts. Many of these resources communicate their historic function through the retention of historic forms, particularly one- and two-part commercial blocks.

**FIGURE 28: ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY**



# **SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

As documented in the Historic Context and in the Survey Findings, the resources in the 3100 Block Troost Avenue Survey Area date to the early twentieth century with construction of the commercial resources that redefined the function and character of the block. The Survey Area initially developed as a residential corridor, however in the early twentieth century commercial development transformed the Survey Area. The high number of one- and two-part commercial forms reflects trends in commercial architecture and illustrate the functional shift that occurred during the early twentieth century. Although construction slowed during the Depression years, the block was almost entirely developed by 1940. The 3100 Block of Troost Avenue remained a vibrant commercial center through the 1960s. Several storefronts were replaced during this period and continue to communicate mid-century commercial activity in the Survey Area. Rosin Preservation offers the following recommendations for future preservation action.

## **NATIONAL REGISTER-LISTED AND INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE RESOURCES**

There are currently three resources in the Survey Area that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The F.W. Woolworth Building was listed in 2005 under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. The Michelson and Shankman Buildings were listed in 2018 under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. These resources retain excellent integrity and continue to communicate associations with commercial development in the Survey Area. No additional individually eligible resources were identified during this survey.

## **NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

A historic district is a grouping of resources that shares significant associations of history or architecture. These resources must be located in a concentrated geographical area to create a unified entity that is clearly distinct from the resources outside the district boundaries. Resources within a historic district can include individually distinctive resources (resources that might also qualify for individual register listing) as well as resources that lack the qualities of design or association to merit individual listing. District boundaries can encompass resources that lack integrity or association with the historic context and are considered “non-contributing,” although resources of this type must be a minority within the district.

Rosin Preservation documented fifteen primary resources in the Survey Area. After determining if each resource retained integrity, Rosin Preservation assessed the potential for each resource to



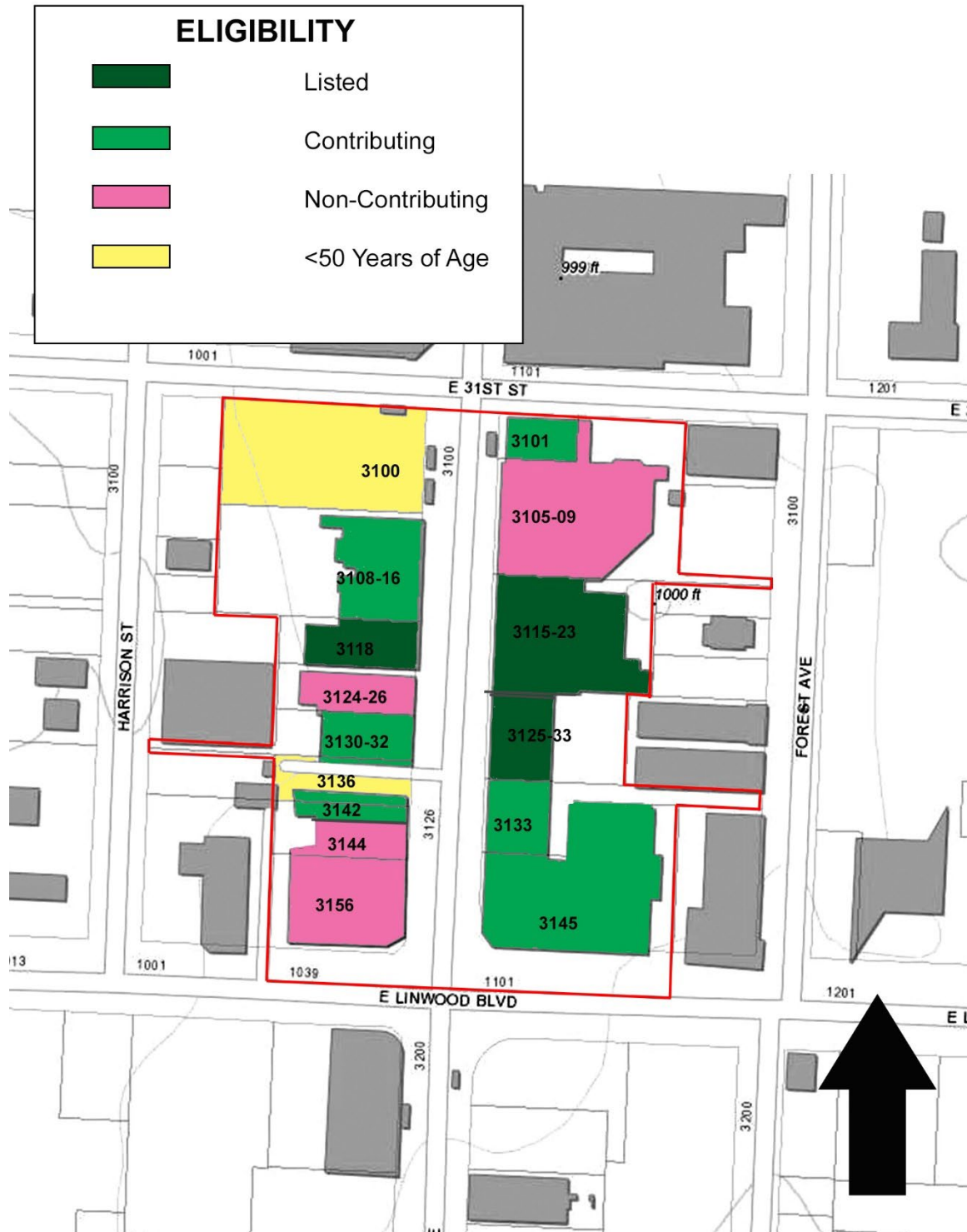
contribute to a potential 3100 Block of Troost Avenue historic district (*Figure 29*). Throughout the survey area, there are a several examples of buildings with sufficient integrity to contribute to the potential historic district. Eight (53 percent) retain excellent to good integrity and would contribute to the district. The Westover Building at 3101 Troost Avenue would also be contributing. While it has been altered, it continues to dominate the corner and retains its historic two-part commercial block form and storefronts which communicate its historic use. The remaining six resources (40 percent) would not contribute. Of these, two are surface parking lots less than fifty years of age and four retain poor integrity. One resource, 3105-3109 Troost Avenue, retains fair integrity and may contribute to a potential district should inappropriate alterations be sensitively reversed to expose intact historic material to convey associations with the district's area and period of significance.

The proposed 3100 Block of Troost Avenue historic district is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its associations with commercial development in southern Kansas City as the city underwent a period of suburban expansion. The 3100 Block of Troost Avenue evolved from a residential corridor to a commercial center in the early twentieth century. Public transportation contributed significantly to the growth and vitality of the block. The Troost Avenue streetcar line is associated with early development within the area. The Troost Avenue line first connected the initially residential corridor to shopping, services, and employment opportunities to the north. As commercial development within the block began, the streetcar provided convenient, efficient, and affordable access to goods and services on the block. Following World War II, buses replaced the streetcar however the 3100 Block of Troost remained an important transportation transfer point and pedestrian traffic continued to benefit the commercial resources

The potential district represents the remaining intact block of the historic commercial corridor on Troost Avenue and includes commercial resources associated with the first suburban retail shopping district outside of downtown. Resources within the potential district were constructed to house neighborhood services including grocery stores, doctors' offices, and a myriad of specialty stores which supported the surrounding residential neighborhood. Storefront updates were common during the mid-century and reflect an attempt to attract customers to the block despite the overall decline of the area. The proposed period of significance is 1908 through 1970 and captures the year commercial development on the block began through the period in which it served as a prominent commercial district. The proposed end date reflects when high vacancy rates significantly reduced commercial activity within the block. Throughout the survey area, there are a several examples of buildings with sufficient integrity to contribute to the potential historic district. Nine (60 percent) retain excellent to good integrity and would contribute to the district. The remaining six resources (40 percent) would not contribute. Of these, two are surface

parking lots less than fifty years of age and four retain poor integrity. The remaining resource, 3105-3109 Troost Avenue, retains fair integrity and may contribute to a potential district should inappropriate alterations be sensitively reversed to expose intact historic material sufficient to convey associations with the district's area and period of significance.

**FIGURE 29: CONTRIBUTING AND NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES**



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