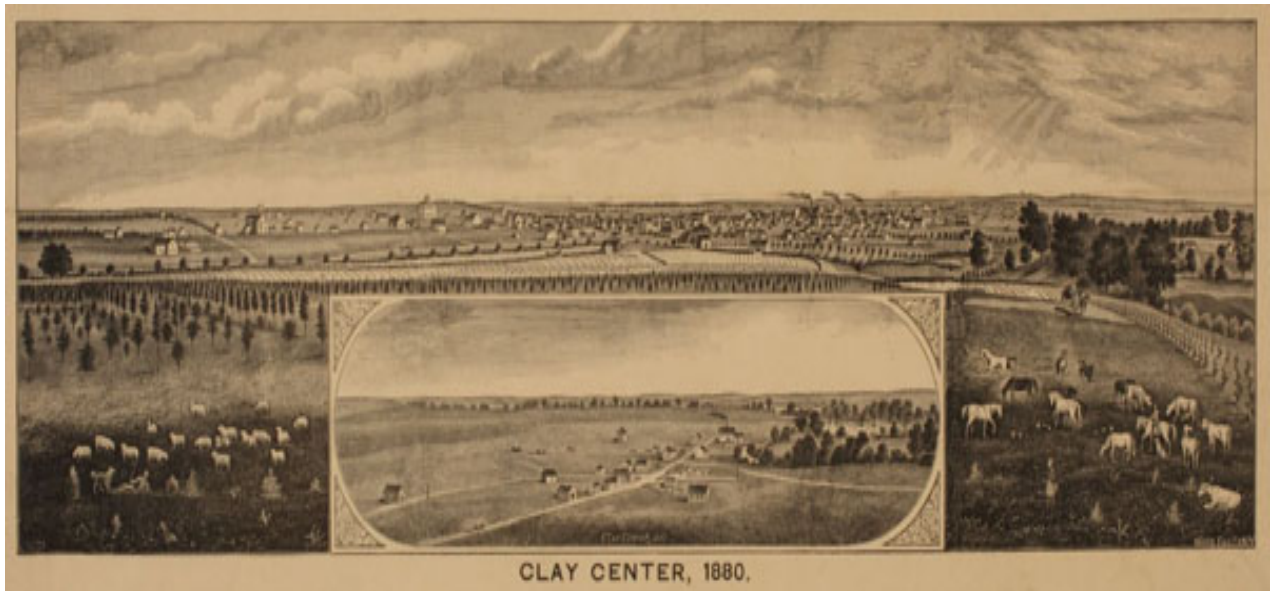


PROJECT REPORT

CLAY CENTER DOWNTOWN HISTORIC PRESERVATION SURVEY



(Clay Center, KS, Artist's View (1880), Kansas State Historical Society, Archives)

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For the Clay Center Economic Development Group, Clay Center, Kansas

July 12, 2019

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Introduction

This project report consists of the following section:

- A) Methodology Discussion
- B) Historical Summary and Context Statement
- C) Architectural Analysis
- D) Recommendations
- E) Bibliography
- F) List of Surveyed Properties
- G) Map of Survey Area

A. Methodology Discussion

The Clay Center Downtown Historic Preservation Survey project was supported by the Clay County Economic Development Group. Members of the Clay Center Action Network (Jacob Lohmeyer, Chair, Heath Craig, Jeremy Glavan, Nicole Glavan, Monte Green, Renee Langvardt, George Murchison, Josh Peterson) organized the public meetings and promoted for the survey. Lori Huber, Executive Director, supervised the project. Funding was provided by a Historic Preservation Fund Grant administered by Katrina Ringler, State Historic Preservation Office Grants Manager. The Flint Hills Regional Council provided technical assistance for funding. The Clay Center Action Network committee learned about the benefits of having a historic district and the resources available to assist with it from the Regional Council. Clay County Appraiser, Danny Mesalles, provided property information and the survey area base maps. Kimble Mapping, Manhattan, KS, provided additional mapping services. Jeff Gaiser, Clay County Historical Museum Director, museum staff members, and volunteers, provided valuable research information and images. We appreciate the work and cooperation of all those involved in compiling this survey.

Consultant historian Dale Nimz led the project team which carried out the field survey, research, and writing for the survey inventories and project report. Susan Jezak Ford also surveyed downtown properties and Wendi Bivett carried out research on individual buildings and property owners. Michelle Tessaro provided most of the photographs of buildings in the downtown survey area.

Generally, the survey covered the buildings around the courthouse square from Sixth to Fourth Streets and from Grant to Dexter Streets. Buildings in the survey area were recorded with digital photographs. Individual buildings were inventoried and described and building locations were recorded on a survey map. A total of 97 buildings (historic and non-historic) were inventoried in the downtown survey.

In the existing Kansas Historic Preservation Office for Clay Center, Clay County, only five properties were previously surveyed. Two of those properties, the Clay County Courthouse and Clay Center Carnegie Library, were listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Clay County Jail, the Clay Center Post Office, and a gas station were previously surveyed. For these properties, current photographs were added to the KHRI (Kansas Historic Resource Inventory) inventories. Additional historical information also was added to the existing inventories.

Beginning the project, Dale Nimz, and project administrator, Lori Huber, met on August 23 with Katrina Ringer, Kansas Historic Preservation Office to discuss goals and expectations for the survey. Nimz made a presentation about the project to the Clay Center Rotary Club on September 6 and met with members of the Clay Center Action Network and the executive director of the Clay County Economic Development Group.

Nimz carried out archival research at the Kansas State Historical Society, Archives and at the Clay County Historical Museum (see sources listed in Bibliography). Other information came from secondary sources on Kansas history and architecture. Sanborn Insurance Maps for Clay Center (1885, 1887, 1893, 1899, 1905, 1911, 1917, 1930) were used as a source for estimating construction dates and identifying historic functions of downtown buildings. Nimz also identified historic photographs of downtown Clay Center available from Special Collections, Wichita State University, and other images from the KSHS Archives and Clay County Museum.

B. Historical Summary—Context Statement

As early as 1856, a few bold European-American settlers located preemption claims in Kansas Territory along Timber Creek in what is now Clay County. These pioneers suffered through a severe drought in 1860. The territorial legislature named and defined the boundaries of Clay County in 1860, but the new county was attached to Riley County, and later Geary County, for judicial and administrative purposes.¹

Founders platted the townsite of Clay Center on June 1, 1862. They selected a site almost in the geographical center of the county, hence the name. Founder A.F. Dexter came from California where he had been engaged in mining and his brother John came from Illinois to Clay County. At the townsite, they built a log house, 14 X 18 feet, near what is now the corner of Fourth street and Lincoln Avenue. The Dexters also dug a well which, for several years, supplied the entire community with water. They made these improvements to give them a claim to the townsite. Then A.F. Dexter returned to California and John to Illinois. John came back to Kansas in the spring of 1863; A. F. Dexter returned in 1864.²

The first post office was established in Clay County in 1862 and Orville Huntress was appointed postmaster. He kept the mail at his residence on a claim adjoining the Clay Center town site. His widow continued until 1871 when the post office was moved to Clay Center. J.W. Miller was appointed postmaster and served through 1876.³ In June, 1866, Clay Center was a “town” of only two houses. W.H. Hutchinson built his home on Fourth Street, midway between the Comstock Hotel in downtown Clay Center and the mill on Huntress Creek. A. F. Dexter built his sawmill early in 1866 and, in the following year, he installed machinery to grind corn and wheat. Lumber used for building purposes was supplied by this mill sawed out of cottonwood logs which were cut principally along the river on government land. For several years, the Dexter brothers also kept the only store which on the site of Wickstrum & Swenson’s brick building at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Fourth Street.⁴

As more settlers moved into Clay County, they held a public meeting held in Clay Center July 28, 1866 to formally organize county government. Citizens selected commissioners and a clerk selected who were confirmed by the governor on August 10. Clay Center was designated the temporary county seat and it has remained ever since. The first county-wide election was held in November, 1866. As a measure of the county’s population growth, 106 votes were cast in 1866; 955 votes cast in 1872, and 3, 578 votes were cast in 1912.⁵ Transportation in the county began to improve when citizens presented the first road petition to county commissioners on April 1, 1867. As another investment in the road network that year, the county granted a license to N. Duncan to build a ferry across the Republican river at the crossing of the county road near Dexter’s mill.⁶

¹ Clay County Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: Clay Dispatch, 1901), 4-5.

² Clay County Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: Clay Dispatch, 1901), 5-6.

³ Clay County Dispatch 6 July 1876. Clay County Clippings, KSHS Archives, p. 3.

⁴ Clay County Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: Clay Dispatch, 1901), 6.

⁵ “Progressive Clay County and Organization,” Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 4.

⁶ “Progressive Clay County and Organization,” Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 4.

In 1868, the Dexter brothers built a modest stone courthouse (two rooms, one up, one down) at the northeast corner of the public square which also was used for many years as a jail.⁷ County offices occupied the stone building on July, 1875. Later the county offices were moved in 1901 to the present landmark stone courthouse on the square.⁸

By the early 1870s, the town of Clay Center had about one hundred and fifty residents. Nearly all the buildings were located west of Sixth and south of Court Streets.⁹ As one reporter recalled, from the earliest settlement, "merchandise had to be hauled by wagons from Manhattan or Junction City, the nearest railroad towns, and Clay Center did not grow very fast until it had railroad facilities.¹⁰ Clay County and Clay Center began to change dramatically when the first railroad reached the town. In a special election held on February 13, 1872, citizens approved a bond issue (\$175,000) to support railroad construction through the county via Clay Center. The first train cars on the Junction City and Fort Kearney Railroad arrived at Clay Center January 22, 1873 and the town remained the terminus of this railroad for several years.¹¹

During this period, Clay Center residents built a log schoolhouse near the present site of the Garfield building and later a stone schoolhouse was constructed on the same grounds in 1869. This building was used by several religious denominations for services. Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians were the earliest congregations. On August 20, 1871, E.P. Houston and David Downer began publication of the Clay Center Independent with their office upstairs in the stone courthouse. J.W. Miller bought the newspaper on March 12, 1873 changing the name to the Dispatch.¹² Clay Center was organized as a city of the third class in 1875. Citizens presented a petition for organization to the district judge on June 11 and the first meeting the city council was held on July 1.¹³

By 1877 Clay Center had a population of at least 1,000 residents and possibly 1,200. In that year, as a community booster described the community, "here is the upper end of the Junction City and Fort Kearney Railroad, and it commands the products of the Republican valley for sixty and eighty miles. . . the town is in the full tide of the grain trade now, and the business streets area a perfect jam from morning to night. Hundreds of grain wagons job along down the valley from Cloud, Jewell, Republic, Mitchell, Smith, and other counties in the splendid upper country. Whole trains of teams come here with corn, wheat, rye, barley, sweet potatoes and fat hogs, and carry back lumber and all kinds of merchandise."¹⁴ At the time, Clay Center had half a dozen grain warehouses, a splendid steam flouring mill, two banks, a dozen stores, as many more offices a fine school house, several churches, and one of the best newspapers in the state."¹⁵ The city council

⁷ Clay Center Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: 1901), 5.

⁸ "Will Be Debt Free," Kansas City Journal 24 April 1901, 2-4, Clay County Clippings, 1876-1999 .

⁹ Clay County Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: Clay Dispatch, 1901), 6.

¹⁰ Clay County Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: Clay Dispatch, 1901), 6.

¹¹ Clay County Dispatch 6 July 1876. Clay County Clippings, 1876-1999 (Topeka, KS: KSHS, n.d.), p. 5.

¹² Clay County Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: Clay Dispatch, 1901), 6.

¹³ "Progressive Clay County and Organization," Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 4, 49.

¹⁴ J.B. Moore, "Homes for Thousands in the Beautiful Republican Valley of Kansas," pamphlet (Topeka, KS: Commonwealth Printing House, 1877), 10-11.

¹⁵ J.B. Moore, "Homes for Thousands in the Beautiful Republican Valley of Kansas," (1877), 11.

voted in 1876 to construct board sidewalks; These were replaced by cement sidewalks after 1900.¹⁶

For the next ten years, the town grew dramatically and developed much of the urban form and infrastructure that became the foundation of present-day Clay Center. As the Dispatch reported May 6, 1880, "the building boom has struck the block in which the Dispatch office located. Workmen have been engaged this week moving the two story frame buildings that have hitherto occupied the ground between our office and Fifth street . . . then the dirt will begin to fly for the foundation for Pierce's brick block. The new building will cover all the space previously occupied by all these buildings and will be, when completed the largest business house in this valley."¹⁷ The Leavenworth, Kansas, and Western railroad (narrow gauge) reached Clay Center in 1882. Then the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad built its line through the town in 1887.¹⁸

As Clay Center gained population in the 1880s and the boom continued, town builders invested in the urban infrastructure. Citizens organized a volunteer fire department in 1882. At first, the department stored water in cisterns located in alley and streets.¹⁹ In 1883 sixty-five citizens petitioned the Clay Center City Council for a municipal water works system. The council held a special meeting and met with representatives of the Holly Water Works Company of New York. In December, the council accepted the Holly company's proposal and passed an ordinance granting a franchise. By April, 1885, the first water main was under construction. However, the private water works was only in operation for three years. The company was cited for violating the terms of the ordinance and contract. The Holly company sued the city and the United States circuit court decided in favor of the company. Immediately, the city appealed to the Supreme Court. As the case dragged on, the Holly company offered to settle. Eventually, citizens passed a bond issue, the city and company agreed on a settlement, and Clay Center became the owner of the private water works.²⁰

The building boom in Clay Center peaked about 1888 and that development was documented in a series of wood-cut images published in an 1887 booster publication printed by the Clay Center Times. As reported, "in the past year over six hundred feet of permanent business buildings were erected and something near two hundred private dwellings."²¹ As the reporter boasted, "Clay County ranks among the best in the state as an agricultural county. . . It has within it the *largest city* in Northern Kansas, Clay Center with 8,000 population [sic], the acknowledged metropolis and commercial center of Northern Kansas." The author went on to describe the townsite in picturesque terms, "the county seat of Clay County, Kansas, is located on a beautiful southern slope which extends from the banks of the Republican river on the south on a gradual incline to the

¹⁶ Clay County Historical Society, Clay County, Kansas Heritage Book (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company, 1990), 9.

¹⁷ This article refers to the southeast corner of Fifth Street and Lincoln Avenue. "A Veritable Boom," Clay Center Dispatch 6 May 1880, 5.

¹⁸ Clay Center Historical Society, Clay Center, Kansas Heritage Book (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company, 1990), 8.

¹⁹ Clay County Historical Society, Clay County, Kansas Heritage Book (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company, 1990), 9.

²⁰ "History: Clay Center, Kansas Public Utilities Commission," Accessed 12/29/18 at <http://www.claycenterpublicutilities.com/history>.

²¹ "Ten Years Progress," Clay Center Times 31 March 1884, 230-231.

high prairie on the north, about one and a half miles from the river. In addition to this, Huntress Creek flows along the western side of the city and empties into the river just south of the city, thus giving thorough surface drainage and ample opportunity for a complete system of sewerage, and arrangements are now being made to put in this improvement during the summer of 1888."²²

Emphasizing the positive attributes of the community, the booster described, "in addition to watering our county and furnishing our city with drainage, the river furnishes us with an almost inexhaustible water power. . . Among some of our conveniences we will mention our street railway, telephone exchange with 100 subscribers, Holly system of water works, our fine churches and school buildings, our good hotels, our magnificent opera house, and our electric light plants from which our streets and business houses are lighted. . . Clay Center is a new city, nearly all of it having been built within the past ten years, consequently is bright and clean. . . Our business houses are mostly built of brick, plate glass fronts, and modern architecture, two to four stories high."²³ By this date, the urban plan of downtown Clay Center defined by masonry business blocks arranged on three sides of the courthouse square and extending west toward the Rock Island Railroad depot had been established.

The commentator in 1887 also reported on the industrial development of Clay Center. "A dam in the Republican River turns its exhaustless tide through the natural channel of Huntress Creek in which it flows to Dexter's turbine wheels. Here, within the city limits and only five blocks (630 yards) from the business center of the city, may be found Dexter's Flouring Mills, using two sets of rollers and having a capacity of 120 barrels per day. Also, Dexter's Electric Light Plant. One block east of the mill are the Clay County Foundry and Machine Shops, and the Planing Mill, Sash and Door Factory with modern machinery, all turned by water power transmitted by wire cables from Dexter's turbine wheels. Three blocks north of the mill, the same turbine wheels operate Snell's Grain Elevator, situated on the Rock Island railroad, and having a capacity of 20,000 bushels."²⁴

In addition to the grain mills, foundry, and planning mill, by 1887 the people of Clay Center had constructed an infrastructure to provide municipal services. The water company had been operating for almost four years. The town had a series of hydrants, for use in case of fire, distributed over the city. In those years, the volunteer fire department had been successful in extinguishing every fire before spreading to any adjoining building. The town had an electric light plant that had been operating successfully since July, 1886.²⁵ By 1887 Clay Center had three brickyards which employed "a large force of men making the brick for our business buildings and residences. Clay has been recently discovered near our city which makes a deep red hard brick, equal to any found in the west for beauty and durability."²⁶

At that time, some of the town's boosters believed that Clay Center could become a "second Chicago."²⁷ At the height of the boom, commodity prices fell abruptly, farm land wouldn't sell, and a drought ruined the crops. The new hotels that had been constructed were empty and businesses

²² "Views of Clay Center, Kansas, Summer of 1887," Clay County Clippings, KSHS Archives, 241-248; Clay Center Souvenir (Clay Center, KS: Times Printing Co., 1887), 1, 3.

²³ Clay Center Souvenir (Clay Center, KS: Times Printing Co., 1887), 1, 3.

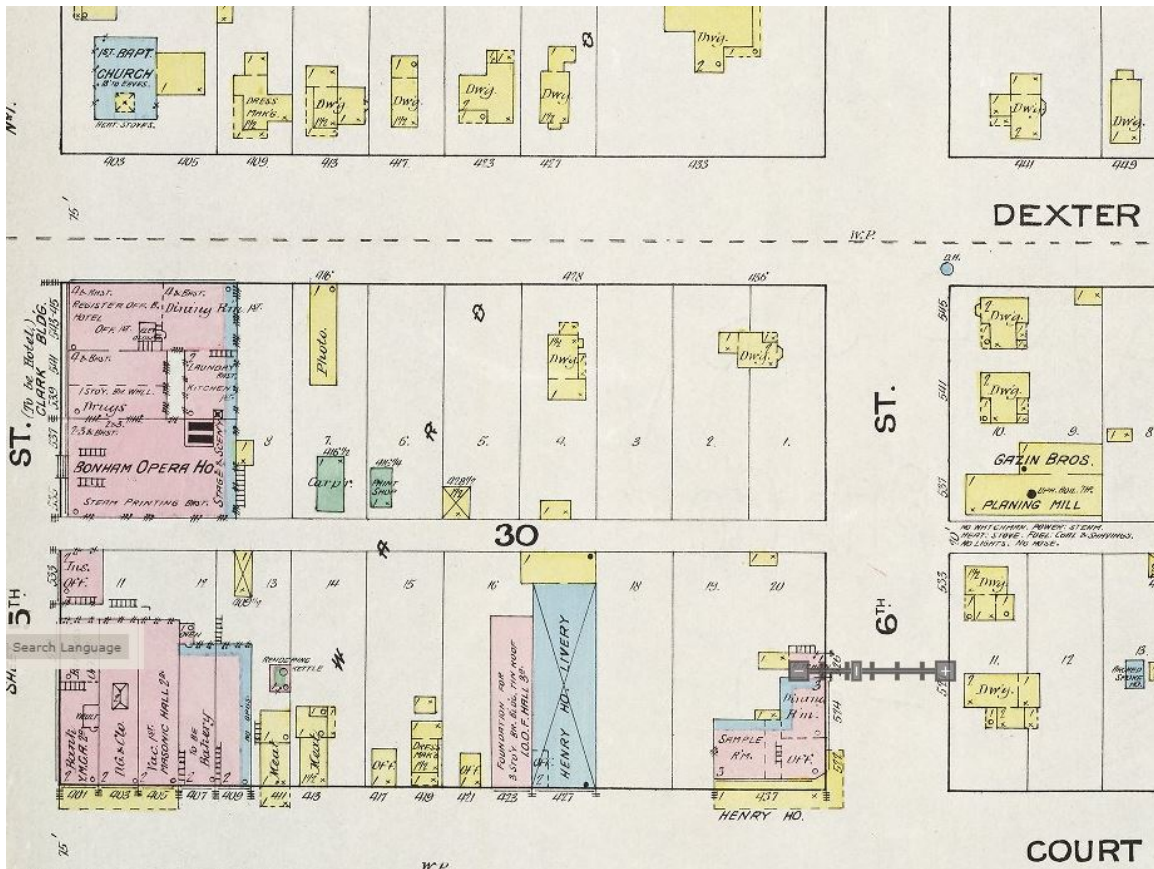
²⁴ Clay Center Souvenir (1887), 1, 3.

²⁵ Clay Center Souvenir (1887), 1, 3.

²⁶ Clay Center Souvenir (1887), 3.

²⁷ Clay Center Dispatch 14 September 1971.

had few customers. The horse-drawn streetcar service was discontinued in 1889 and workers tore up the tracks in 1890.²⁸



(Clay Center, KS, North side 500 block Court Street, Sanborn map, 1887)

²⁸ Clay Center Dispatch 14 September 1971.

Although the population and business growth paused, Clay Center maintained itself and prospered again. As John Lethem described Clay Center in 1890, "It is a wide-awake, thriving city of four thousand inhabitants. Has three hotel buildings, one of them the most handsome and costly in Northern Kansas, completed and furnished as a cost of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars; the Holly system of water works. . . two opera houses; a street railway line and is illuminated with electric lights."²⁹ According to Lethem, the town had two well-equipped flouring mills, several elevators, three newspapers, two national and one state bank. Unlike many other towns in Kansas, the Dexters had harnessed the Republican River. "The water power propels the machinery of a large flouring mill, an elevator, and is the motive power of the electric light plant. It is sufficient to operate any number of manufacturing enterprises."³⁰

Another description in 1891 summarized the town-building process of Clay Center from settlement to maturity. "Situated as it is, in the heart of the beautiful and prolific Republican valley, surrounded by one of the best farming communities in Kansas, there is no wonder that her citizens feel proud of the rapid growth Clay Center has made in the past few years. Ten years ago Clay Center was a little country village of only a few hundred inhabitants—today it has a population of over 3,000, containing handsome business blocks, two fine roller flouring mills, a lovely park in the heart of town, fine water power, handsome residences, beautiful and imposing church edifices, and a hotel and opera house that any city of 10,000 inhabitants might well be proud of."³¹

The Dispatch boasted in 1899, "like many Kansas towns, several years ago Clay Center had a boom. . . now vacant dwellings and business houses are not to be found here. . . Clay Center is the county seat of a most productive county where grain and livestock thrive. . . Three railroads: U.P., C.R.I. & P, L.K & W... We have a fine lot of stone and brick business houses and dwellings, good walks, elegant churches, good systems of electric, lights, and water works. Our public schools are among the very best in the state. . ."³²

At the turn of the century, the construction of landmark buildings expressed the prosperity and maturity of the town and the local economy. In March, 1898, the Clay County Commission let a contract for construction of a new jail and sheriff's residence on the courthouse square. That building (extant) was completed by August. Two years later on April 23, 1901, the commissioners laid the cornerstone for a handsome new \$40,000 native stone courthouse (extant, National Register of Historic Places). J.C. Holland, Topeka architect, designed the Romanesque Revival style building and Zeigler and Dalton, Junction City, were the contractors.³³ Officials occupied the new courthouse in December, 1901.³⁴

²⁹ John Lethem, "Clay Center," Historical and Descriptive Review of Kansas Vol. 1, The Northern Section. (Topeka, KS: John Lethem, 1890), 177-178.

³⁰ John Lethem, "Clay Center," 177-178.

³¹ "More Taffy: The Editors Continue to Praise the Laudable Efforts of Clay Center," Clay Center Dispatch reprinted from Council Republican 16 July 1891, 2.

³² "Clay Center and Her Business Enterprises," Clay Center Dispatch 6 April 1899, 1.

³³ "Progressive Clay County and Organization," Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 4.

³⁴ "Will Be Debt Free," Kansas City Journal 24 April 1901, 2-4, KSHS clipping file.

Building technology also began to change at the turn of the century. While the courthouse was constructed of native stone load-bearing masonry. At the same time, concrete was being rapidly introduced. The Salina Cement and Plaster Company was “one of the more flourishing manufacturing plants” in Clay County with a mill located in Longford. Built in 1896, the cement mill had the capacity to produce 125 tons of cement and plaster every twenty-four hours.³⁵

In 1905, a booklet of historic photographs portrayed Clay Center at the beginning of a period of prosperity and stability. These included images of Lincoln Avenue from 4th Street as well as the Bonham and Comstock Hotels.³⁶ The publication also presented the Watts & Householder garage, machine shop, foundry, bottling works, two greenhouses, two flour mills, and the Clay Center Brick Company.³⁷ As the Clay Center Times reported April 26, 1934, Ray Watts and Tom Householder constructed a downtown building in 1904 for a machine shop that eventually became a busy garage. The “first car owned and run by a Clay County citizen” was a Great Smith purchased in 1903 by William Docking. After Fred Williamson bought an automobile in 1904, the town had two vehicles. By 1934 the large Harner garage was constructed in downtown Clay Center.³⁸



(Clay Center, KS, Lincoln Avenue, View from Fourth Street (c. 1908), Wichita State University, Special Collections)

³⁵ Clay County Illustrated (Clay Center, KS: Clay Dispatch, 1901), 20.

³⁶ “Souvenir of Clay Center,” (Clay Center, KS: Dispatch, 1905), 9.

³⁷ “Souvenir of Clay Center,” (Clay Center, KS: Dispatch, 1905), 10-12.

³⁸ “Coming of the Automobile,” Clay Center Times 26 April 1934.



203—LOOKING NORTH ON 5TH ST. CLAY CENTER KANS.

(Clay Center, KS, Looking north on Fifth Street, View from Lincoln Avenue (c. 1910), Wichita State University, Special Collection

Newspapers were one of the most important community institutions that influenced the community and the development of downtown Clay Center. In January, 1879, Roger Cunningham moved his newspaper to Clay Center from Clifton and changed its name to the Times. Cunningham sold the newspaper sometime in 1881. By October, 1882, the paper, a weekly, was being published by the Times Printing Company. This company had three owners Captain O.M. Pugh, A.L. Runyon, and J.W. Miller.³⁹

D.A. Valentine purchased the Times from the company on January 1, 1884. D.A. Valentine published the newspaper until the summer of 1900 when L.F. Valentine came to town and took over. D.A. Valentine sold to L.F. Valentine in 1929. He later leased the newspaper to Harry Valentine, his son. On May 1, 1941, L.F. Valentine, Harry Valentine, and Mrs. James C. Martyn organized the Clay Center Publishing Company and purchased the Clay Center Dispatch, a daily, from Ray Brightweiser in that year. Although the Times moved around downtown in the late nineteenth century, in 1900 it moved to the basement of the Bonham Opera House block. Finally about 1908, the Valentines built a building for the newspaper at 429 Court Street.⁴⁰

³⁹ “Clay Center Times Is 72 Years Old Monday,” Clay Center Times 20 April 1950, Clay County Clippings, KSHS, volume 2, 123-125. A.L. Runyon moved from Manhattan, Kansas, to Clay Center, then to Wellington and Pueblo, Colorado by 1887. Damon Runyon, his son, became a famous author and newspaper reporter, first with the Pueblo Chieftain and then with the New York American. Damon Runyon was known as a sports writer and columnist who also wrote a collection of short stories, Guys and Dolls, which was adapted as a successful Broadway musical and movie. See Kansapedia, KSHS, at: <https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/damon-runyon/12188>.

⁴⁰ “Clay Center Times Is 72 Years Old Monday,” Clay Center Times 20 April 1950.

By 1914, Clay Center had a population of more than 4,000 residents. As the Industrial Edition of the Dispatch proudly reported, the town “has the best of schools. . . churches representing thirteen denominations, three weekly and two daily newspapers, a well-equipped and capably managed hospital, two public parks, forty miles of cement sidewalk, eight miles of water mains, five banks with a combined capital and surplus of approximately \$375,000, two flouring mills. . . a \$60,000 federal building, a \$25,000 Carnegie library, free city mail delivery, three theaters, many manufacturing enterprises including a broom factory, engraving plant, foundries, monument works, three hotels, five elevators, a company of state militia, automobile clubs and in fact everything and more than one would expect to find in a city much larger than Clay Center.”⁴¹ In 1907 Mr. Gilmore M. Stratton promoted and organized the Clay Center Telephone company which established the first telephone exchange.⁴²

The Industrial Edition documented community institutions and buildings in detail. By that time, the editor concluded, “Clay Center, through its competent officials, has demonstrated to the world that municipal owned public utilities can be placed on a paying basis. At the present time the city owns the electric light system, which was only gained through a bitter fight; the water works and sewerage systems.”⁴³ All of these utilities operated under municipal direction generated revenues for the city.

In Clay Center, the story of electrical power production was particularly dramatic. At a special council meeting in 1905 (led by Mayor George W. Hanna), town leaders voted to submit two proposals to the public. Both were approved in 1906. Citizens decided to issue a total of \$45,000 in bonds to fund construction of a municipal power plant and they decided to establish a Board of Public Utilities to operate and manage a municipal electric plant when the current private franchise expired. Later on July 7, 1907, the council adopted a resolution which notified F.L. Williamson & Company, the franchise holder, to discontinue providing electric power to the city. The council instructed the private company to take down and remove all its poles and wires from streets and alleys of the city. Williamson resisted this instruction and the dispute led to an extended court fight to keep the city from making the changes and building its own light plant.⁴⁴

Early on the morning of November 15, 1910, citizens cut down some of Williamson and Company's poles and cut the main cable in several places. The suit by Williamson against the city was taken to the Supreme Court.⁴⁵ In January, 1911, attorney F.B. Dawes argued the case for the city before the Supreme Court, but it remained pending for several years. Finally, in 1916, the Court upheld the city's right to establish its own electric utility. As the Topeka Capital reported, “municipal ownership won an important victory in a decision of the Supreme Court . . . in the case of the City of Clay Center against the Clay Center Light & Power Company. The court held that the 21-year franchise of the company had expired so that the city was not compelled either to purchase the

⁴¹ “Clay Center and Her Many Opportunities,” Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 2.

⁴² “Gilmore McGrath Stratton, Truly a Town Builder and Good Citizen,” Industrial Edition, 10-11.

⁴³ “Clay Center and Her Many Opportunities-Continued,” Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 3.

⁴⁴ “History: Clay Center, Kansas Public Utilities Commission,” Accessed 12/29/18 at <http://www.claycenterpublicutilities.com/history>.

⁴⁵ “History: Clay Center, Kansas Public Utilities Commission,” Accessed 12/29/18 at <http://www.claycenterpublicutilities.com/history>.

plant or renew the franchise.”⁴⁶ This Supreme Court decision was a significant precedent for the establishment of public power utilities.

Some of the power generated by the municipal electric plant was used for Clay Center’s White Way. This lighting system consisted of fifty clusters of five lights each. These group lights surrounded the courthouse square and extended in all directions on the business streets. As the Industrial Edition reported, “the work of putting in the modern lighting system was all done this summer [1913] and in the residence districts the street lighting system was changed from arcs to incandescents at a cost of \$2,690.” The total cost of the White Way was \$4,180 which was paid by the city, county, and utility commission.⁴⁷

In the 1914 Industrial Edition, the Dispatch editor boasted that fire insurance rates in Clay Center were lower than any city of its size in the state of Kansas. “This is due to the fact that Clay Center’s fire department, while composed solely of volunteer members, is recognized as one of the best equipped and most efficient to be found anywhere in the country.”⁴⁸ The fire department was organized on January 4, 1882. In 1914 the department had forty-five members including sixteen honorary members. The department had its headquarters in the rear of the city building on Court Street.⁴⁹

Early in 1910, that building was considered the municipality’s most recent important improvement. As the Dispatch reported, “the new city building will be ready for occupancy in a day or so. . . It is well designed for the purposes for which it is intended and will be a great convenience to the town in location and otherwise. The front is twenty by twenty feet, with a big plate glass window and a ground glass door handsomely finished. This room has a steel ceiling and the woodwork is curly pine. Back of this is the city clerk’s private office with furnishings of the same character as those of the front room. . . The rear room, entered by way of the clerk’s private office, through wide doorways, is fifty-seven by twenty feet in size and is intended for meetings of the council and gatherings of a public character. . . The fire department building, largely rebuilt, has been extended twelve feet to the sidewalk, with a handsome front, new swinging doors, etc. . . The improvements have cost about \$2,500, which is all paid.”⁵⁰

Another vital community institution, the Porter-Morgan hospital, was established in 1903. A second private hospital appeared in 1914. Eventually, the first public hospital in Clay Center began operations in 1925. A modern new hospital was constructed in the north part of town in 1962.⁵¹

⁴⁶ “History: Clay Center, Kansas Public Utilities Commission,” Accessed 12/29/18 at <https://www.claycenterpublicutilities.com/history>.

⁴⁷ “Clay Center’s Famous White Way,” Industrial Edition, p. 6.

⁴⁸ “Clay Center’s Prize Winning Volunteer Fire Department,” Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 3.

⁴⁹ “Clay Center’s Prize Winning Volunteer Fire Department,” Industrial Edition of Clay Center Dispatch (January 29, 1914), 3.

⁵⁰ “The City Building,” Clay Center Dispatch 31 March 1910, 5.

⁵¹ Clay County Historical Society, Clay County, Kansas Heritage Book (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company, 1990), 11; see also “Medical Community Celebrates 75 Years of Service Here,” Clay Center Dispatch 14 April 1978, KSHS, Clay County Clipping, vol. 3.

After World War I, one of the next landmark buildings was constructed in downtown Clay Center was the new Rock Island Railroad. The Spanish Eclectic style depot opened early in 1924 to replace an older depot that burned on October 24, 1921. After the fire, "the first plans were to immediately rebuild the station on the old site," but the Clay Center Chamber of Commerce asked to have the new depot built in a different location, "where more room for autos and vehicles could be provided." This change required the purchase of additional land and delayed the construction of the new station. As reported in the Rock Island magazine, "the location selected for both the freight and passenger stations affords access to and from the business section of the city without crossing any tracks." The contract for construction of the new passenger and freight stations was awarded to the Sanneman Construction Company of Clay Center. Finally, the Clay Center Times reported on February 24, 1924, the old coach which had served the traveling public for nearly three years had been discarded and the new depot was being used. "Clay Center now has a nice station, conveniently arranged with a general waiting room, ladies' rest room, offices, baggage room, etc."⁵² Another transportation innovation in the 1920s was the acquisition of a tract of land for a municipal airport northwest of Clay Center adjacent to Highway 40. The city council approved the purchase August 8, 1929 in response to a petition carrying the signatures of 1,045 citizens. Local leaders had high expectations for the benefits of air travel because they concluded that Clay Center had "an exceptionally good geographical location, lying in a nearly direct line between Kansas City and Denver, and Wichita and Omaha."⁵³

Despite the Depression during the 1930s, some important investment continued in downtown Clay Center. Early in 1935, the Dispatch reported that, at Marshall's Implement Company (603 5th Street), "the whole area inside the main building is undergoing repairs almost equivalent to putting in a new building and the same is true at the Peoples National Bank" (510 Lincoln). The work on the bank included expansion into the adjacent building formerly used by the Priest Drug store. Johnson and Brose of Clay Center were the contractors for both rehabilitation projects.⁵⁴

As the demand for city services grew in the 1930s, citizens dedicated "a beautiful new municipal building." Nearly 5,000 people went through the city hall during the day and evening of May 25, 1937.⁵⁵ The reporter praised city officials for building a debt-free city hall. In that same year, significant community buildings—the City Hall, Post Office, Courthouse, Library, and Hospital were illustrated in a souvenir pamphlet.⁵⁶

According to the 1940 census, Clay Center had a population of 4,518. The town was described as the "trade center for a livestock and agricultural region in northern Kansas comprising about 1,500 square miles having a population of approximately 30,000 and embracing all of Clay and parts of adjoining Ottawa, Cloud, Washington, and Geary counties."⁵⁷ Another report from August, 1940 commented that, "the city's well paved streets, its parks, municipal swimming pool, new city

⁵² "In New R.I. Station," Clay Center Times 28 February 1924, 1; Raymond Krutsinger, "New Station at Clay Center Is One of the Best in Kansas," Rock Island magazine (September, 1924), 19.

⁵³ "Clay Center Secures Site for an Airport Following Petitions," Topeka Capital 10 August 1929., KSHS, Clay County Clippings, volume 3.

⁵⁴ "Local Building Activity Recalls Huge Building Boom Here in 1886," Clay Center Dispatch 13 February 1935, KSHS Clay County Clippings, volume 2.

⁵⁵ "Dedication Draws Crowds to Town," Clay Center Times 27 May 1937, 1.

⁵⁶ "The City of Clay Center: A Beauty Spot in Kansas," (Clay Center, 1937), 3,7.

⁵⁷ Union Pacific Railroad, "Clay Center, Kansas," in Kansas Industrial Properties (Topek, KS, 1940), 1.

auditorium and its municipal light and water plant, all of which are practically paid for, give Clay Center an unique position among its sister cities and stamps at once the character of its citizens. The city is able, through the earnings from its light and water plant, to make many civic improvements without the necessity of bond issues."⁵⁸

Modern America

National trends that affected the Clay Center downtown district after World War II were the decline of railroad transportation, the development of the federal interstate highway system, and the movement of population from farms to cities. In Kansas the new construction of railroads slowed after 1917 and virtually ended by 1930. Abandonment of unprofitable branch line began in the 1930s. During the Great Depression, the financial stability of railroads was threatened by the increasing competition from automobiles and trucks. A general decline in railroad passengers and freight hauling paused during World War II, but the decline resumed after the war. Railroad lines in Kansas were abandoned at a slow but steady rate through the 1970s.⁵⁹ The Rock Island railroad ended service to Clay Center in 1979 and the passenger depot eventually was sold to a private owner.

In 1950 L.F. Valentine, editor of the Clay Center Dispatch, reflected on the transformation of his community and the many changes that had taken place since he returned to the town after college on July 9, 1900. In his mind, the most outstanding change was the disappearance of the livery stables and the appearance of many garages and auto repair shops. He also commented on the disappearance of tailor shops and cigar factories. Mr. Valentine concluded that the largest change in appearance in the downtown was in the courthouse square. As he described, "in the summer of 1900 the courthouse had not been started and the square was largely overgrown with underbrush." There were just dirt paths across the square which were impassable in muddy weather and "the Square was not a pretty sight. All that was corrected quickly when the court house was finished."⁶⁰

Extensive development of the interstate highway system after 1956 weakened the economic position of railroads and accelerated a population movement of Kansans from farms to cities. The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 brought interstates to Kansas by paying ninety percent of the cost.⁶¹ Throughout the twentieth century, the general demographic trend of rural counties losing population affected Clay Center and north central Kansas. In the 1990s, the wheat state lost more and more of its rural population as fewer people operated larger mechanized farms. In 1920 there were 167,000 farms in Kansas. By 1996 there were only 64,000. As people moved from farms to cities, the east central and south central urban areas became more densely settled.⁶²

In the post-World War II period, important changes in transportation impacted the Clay Center downtown district. Highway 24 which runs east-west four blocks north of the Courthouse square was improved and diverted long-distance travelers. More and more businesses located along

⁵⁸ Kansas State Planning Board, Works Project Administration, "Industrial Survey of Clay Center, Kansas," (Topeka, KS: August, 1940), 35.

⁵⁹ Deon Wolfenbarger, "Historic Railroad Resources of Kansas," National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Document (2000), E/11-12.

⁶⁰ L. F. Valentine, "Fifty Years in Clay Center Sees Many Changes in Scene," Clay Center Dispatch 8 July 1950, KSHS, Clay County Clippings, volume 2.

⁶¹ Craig Miner, History of the Sunflower State, 337.

⁶² Miner, History of the Sunflower State, 405.

Highway 24 in the northwest part of Clay Center. In 1935 a massive flood on the Republican River ruined the bridge in the northwest part of town which carried Highway 15 through town. After this natural disaster, Highway 15 was re-routed from Fourth Street to higher ground on Sixth Street. This north-south route now follows Sixth Street on the eastern edge of the downtown business district. Through traffic on Highway 15 separates the Post Office and Carnegie Library from the rest of the downtown district. Passenger service on the Rock Island and Union Pacific Railroads ended in the 1970s. These changes probably reduced traffic and revenues generated for some businesses in the downtown business district, but new businesses also appeared.

While these broad structural changes affected downtown, the destructive tornado of September 25, 1973, happened quickly and unexpectedly. "The tornado raged down Sixth Street about second floor level, dipping down briefly to demolish businesses between McBrathney and Lincoln Ave and Sixth Street. It ripped buildings for two blocks on either side of its path. Downtown windows were shattered." Days after the tornado, the Red Cross reported 500 Clay Center homes were damaged and about 80 were destroyed. In the business district, at least 80 offices, shops, and stores were hit.⁶³ A striking aerial view of the destruction was published in the commemorative pamphlet published by the Clay Center Dispatch.



(Tornado damage, Dispatch pamphlet, September, 1973)

Despite contemporary challenges, downtown Clay Center still is an active business district anchored by public services including the City Hall, Post Office, Library, and Clay County Courthouse as well as major financial institutions.

⁶³ "the indian was wrong," Clay Center Dispatch (Clay Center, KS, 1973), 4-5.

Downtown businesses and town builders

Several important businesses and business leaders helped to build Clay County and downtown Clay Center. Some examples that emerged in the research for this project include the People's National Bank, the First National Bank, and the Union State Bank. Each of these financial institutions was associated with significant downtown buildings.

During the settlement period, the People's National Bank was organized on May 13, 1885, with H.H. Taylor, president, John Hanna, vice president, and F.H. Head, cashier. J.H. Quimby succeeded Taylor as president January 12, 1886 and L. McChesney became president on March 8, 1889 and held this position until after 1899.⁶⁴ The First National Bank was organized in November, 1883, D.H. Myers, president, M.G. Patterson, vice-president, and F.H. Myers, cashier. As the Dispatch commented, "this bank is a favorite among cattle men of this section. President Myers, a pioneer citizen and large land owner of the county, is himself one of the most extensive and successful cattle men of the state."⁶⁵

At the beginning of the twentieth century, John McKee, bank president, ex-county treasurer and postmaster in 1907, and, George W. Hanna, cashier, secured a charter for the Union State Bank on May 6, 1901. Mr. Hanna sold his interests in January, 1907, and established another bank in the brick building he owned at the corner of Fifth & Court Street. Brothers George, John, and James Hanna with 116 others secured a charter for the Farmers State Bank.⁶⁶ The Dispatch reported, "the organization of the new bank is said to be the outgrowth of a town row. George Hanna was interested in the Union bank and is also mayor of Clay Center. It is said that the president and assistant cashier of the bank were against Hanna in many things he attempted to do as mayor of the city, as manager of the bank and as the head of the electric light fight. The president of the Electric Light company finally purchased Hanna's interest in the bank at a good figure and Hanna resigned. . . Mr. Hanna says arrangements have been completed for organization of a new state bank with \$25,000 capital, which will be the largest state bank in Clay county."⁶⁷ The Farmers State Bank opened May 1, 1907.

Besides George Hanna, Eric Swenson was one of the substantial citizens of Clay Center. In 1871 he became a clerk in a downtown store. In 1875 at the age of twenty-one, he formed a partnership with P. M. Wickstrum and they operated a popular general store. After six years, the partners sold that business and began to sell insurance and real estate. In 1880 and 1901, Swenson returned to Sweden and returned with groups of emigrants to settle in Kansas. He was president of the Clay County Commercial Club for six years. Swenson was president of the Union State Bank in 1914 and a director of seven of "the leading financial institutions in Clay county." Finally, he was described as "the largest owner of real estate in Clay county, his property including city holding as well as forty farms in Clay and adjoining counties" in 1914.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ "Clay Center and Her Business Enterprises," Clay Center Dispatch 6 April 1899, 1.

⁶⁵ "Clay Center and Her Business Enterprises," Clay Center Dispatch 6 April 1899, 1.

⁶⁶ "George W. Hanna, Banker, Town Builder and Laborers' Friend," Industrial Edition, 7

⁶⁷ "A New Bank for County of Clay," Clay Center Dispatch 7 February 1907, 5.

⁶⁸ John C. Kelly, "Eric H. Swenson Important Factor in Development of Resources," Industrial Edition, Clay Center Dispatch 29 January 1914, 8.

C. Architectural Analysis

This historic preservation survey focused on the commercial buildings of the Clay Center downtown business district on Dexter, Court, Lincoln, and Grant streets adjacent to Sixth Street, the major north-south route through town (Highway 15). The survey inventoried ninety-five (95) buildings. Eighty-five (85) were commercial structures, eight (8) were institutional buildings, one was a railroad depot (transportation-related), and one was a telephone equipment structure. Commercial buildings in the Clay Center downtown district are typical of historic Kansas architecture. Most of the inventoried buildings have a degree of architectural integrity that reflects an evolution of styles and building types over several decades of commercial and institutional development.

The field survey recorded the architectural integrity and documented the historical significance of these properties. The survey documentation, historic context statement, and project report will support the economic development and historic preservation activities of the Clay County Economic Development Group. Information from the survey will be used in marketing and promotion of the downtown business district.

Based on current information, the major **periods in Clay Center's development** are outlined as follows:

- 1) Settlement (1862-1874). Clay Center was platted in 1862.
- 2) Town-building (1875-1899). Clay Center was organized as a city of the third class in 1875.
- 3) Urban Development and Stability (1900-1945)
- 4) Post-War Prosperity (1946-1974). This end date corresponds to the National Register fifty-year-old convention plus five years.
- 5) Modern Era (1975-present)

In downtown Clay Center, it appears that no buildings have survived from the early settlement period. Thirty-two extant buildings (32) were constructed between 1875 and 1899. Forty-six (46) buildings were constructed between 1900 and 1945. Ten buildings were constructed between 1946 and 1974 and seven were constructed between 1975 and the present.

The downtown Clay Center business district developed in relation to two primary activity nodes: the courthouse square to the east and the Rock Island Railroad passenger and freight depots to the southwest. The courthouse square occupies one block between Fifth and Sixth Streets and Court and Lincoln Streets. The railroad right-of-way runs diagonally from southeast to northwest and the railroad depot is located between Fourth and Third streets. Those activity nodes resulted in the development of adjacent commercial business blocks in the 400 block of Lincoln and on four sides of the courthouse square.

Landmark buildings that helped define the historic architectural character of downtown Clay Center include the Clay County Courthouse (1901), the U.S. Post Office (1913), and the Clay Center Carnegie Library (1912). Other character-defining commercial buildings include the People's National Bank building (510 Lincoln, 1917), the First National Bank (440 Lincoln, c. 1910), the Selts

Block (418-420 Lincoln, c. 1884), Rex Theater, (519 Court, c. 1920) and the First Baptist Church (910 5th, 1911).

Architectural styles

The historic buildings of the Clay Center downtown district are representative of Kansas commercial architecture during the periods of construction. Buildings constructed in the late nineteenth express the Late Victorian Italianate style (20 buildings). Most of the buildings constructed in the early twentieth century are examples of the Commercial style (38 buildings), but there are well-preserved examples of the Neoclassical Revival style (7). Other architectural styles in the downtown district include Eclectic (2), Mission (1), and Vernacular (2). The Courthouse is a late example of the Richardsonian Romanesque style and the Rock Island Depot is an example of the Spanish Eclectic style.

During the late nineteenth century in Kansas, Italianate was the most popular style applied to commercial and residential buildings. It emphasized vertical proportions and elaborate decorative detailing. Common Italianate elements in commercial buildings include bracketed cornices, tall, narrow round-arched windows, and molded window hoods. This style was popular in Kansas from the late 1850s through the 1880s. Well preserved examples are similar to others in the Midwest during this period. Italianate building and construction details in Clay Center resemble those of other downtowns in north central Kansas and throughout the state.

The Commercial style was most popular for commercial buildings during the early twentieth century. These buildings are distinguished by their form and façade composition with little ornamentation other than decorative brick coursing in the façade and outlining the cornice. Often, earlier clear glass transoms were replaced by translucent prismatic glass. Some storefront entrances are flush with the façade, but others feature deep recesses that encourage sidewalk shoppers to examine window displays. Common elements of the Commercial style include recessed or flush entrance, translucent window transom, door transom, corbelled cornice, and ornamented parapet. Building and construction details in Clay Center resemble those of other downtowns in north central Kansas and throughout the state. This style was popular in Kansas from about 1900 to the 1930s.

Also, during the early twentieth century, a few prominent downtown buildings in Clay Center expressed a more elaborate and monumental Classical Revival style. The Fine Arts Building at the Columbian Exposition of 1893 and Pennsylvania Station (1910) inspired this preference for important financial and institutional buildings.⁶⁹ Examples of this style in Clay Center express the wide-spread influence of such examples on local contractors and regional designers in Kansas. This style was popular in Kansas from about 1895 into the 1930. Single examples of other styles represented in downtown Clay Center include the Romanesque Courthouse, Spanish Eclectic railroad depot, and a Mission style commercial building. The Romanesque style was popular from 1880 through 1900. The Spanish Revival style was popular between 1915 and 1940 and the Mission style was popular from 1890 through 1920.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 167.

⁷⁰ Virginia S. McAlester, *A Field Guide to American House* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983, 2013), 387, 511, 521.

Most of the downtown buildings are two-part or one-part commercial blocks. A few significant buildings—First National Bank, Post Office—are enframed blocks. These building types are typical of the buildings found in central and neighborhood commercial districts. This identification system is based on “the ways in which a façade is composed.” These types include variations in size, scale, and stylistic ornamentation.⁷¹

Architectural integrity

Alterations to the commercial buildings in the Clay Center survey area are typical of the changes to historic Kansas architecture. Most of the inventoried buildings have a level of architectural integrity that reflects an evolution of adaptation over several decades of commercial and institutional development.

As a district, the buildings of downtown Clay Center reflect a cohesive tradition of building one- and two-story commercial masonry buildings in close-packed rows. This is most apparent in the 400 block of Lincoln Avenue and on the west side of Fifth and the north side of Court Streets. Considering the seven essential aspects, the survey area retains an excellent level of integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. The level of integrity of materials is generally good. Because of alterations to individual buildings, the level of integrity of design and workmanship varies from fair to good. Overall, the level of integrity of materials, design, and workmanship in the area is good.⁷²

Certain types of alterations to downtown buildings are typical. Some older historic buildings may have received new facades. If these are at least fifty years old and represent a recognizable style of the period, these may contribute to the historic character of the proposed district. Often, first floor storefronts have been modernized. These buildings may contribute to the historic character of the district, however, if the front retains its entrance, display windows, and historic proportions. It is important that the historic masonry openings remain on both the first and second floor facades. Usually, the second floor facades are less altered although upper windows may have been replaced, covered, or infilled. If both the first and second floor facades have been altered, the building may not contribute. In a few other examples, the historic facades have been stuccoed or covered with metal panels. Stuccoed masonry buildings may contribute depending on the age of the treatment; metal-covered buildings do not contribute to the character of the district.

Recommendations

The objectives of the Clay Center Downtown Historic Preservation Survey were to evaluate the community’s architectural resources through a survey of ninety-seven properties in the downtown business district. Survey inventories, historic context statement, and report will support the economic development and historic preservation activities of the Clay Center Action Network and the Clay County Economic Development Group. Information from the project may be used in marketing and promoting the downtown commercial district.

⁷¹ Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1987), 20-21.

⁷² National Register Bulletin, “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” Section VIII, “How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property,” Accessed 6/21/19 at https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/nrb15_8.htm

The Clay Center downtown business district does appear to have potential for a nomination to the Kansas Register or the National Register of Historic Places. The potential historic district occupies an area of approximately four blocks (see map—proposed Historic District). The proposed district extends from the U.S. Post Office (806 6th Street, northeast corner 6th & Court) west on the north side of Court Street to 401 Court, then south to 406 Lincoln, then east on the south side of Lincoln to 512 Lincoln. On the east side of Sixth Street, the district includes five commercial buildings and the landmark Library (706 6th Street, northeast corner 6th & Lincoln). The proposed district includes the courthouse square (a significant historic landscape), Post Office, Carnegie Library, County Courthouse, and two municipal buildings. The proposed district includes 72 properties, 55 contributing and 17 non-contributing. The potential district includes two properties already listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Clay County Courthouse and Clay Center Carnegie Library). For a few buildings, façade alterations may be reversible so those buildings that are now evaluated as non-contributing might someday contribute to the proposed district.

Although a nomination depends on strong local support, particularly of the downtown property owners, designation of a downtown historic district would qualify properties for financial incentives from the Federal and state tax credit programs as well as the Kansas Heritage Trust Fund. Technical assistance on storefront rehabilitation and masonry repair and maintenance Designation also could be the basis for a façade rehabilitation revolving loan fund or development of a Clay Center Main Street program. With such programs, several downtown commercial buildings with relatively minor alterations could be rehabilitated. That would reinforce the historic architectural character of the district. Finally, a historic district nomination would recognize the community's pride in the Clay Center downtown business district and give business owners a possible comparative advantage in the regional competition for customers.

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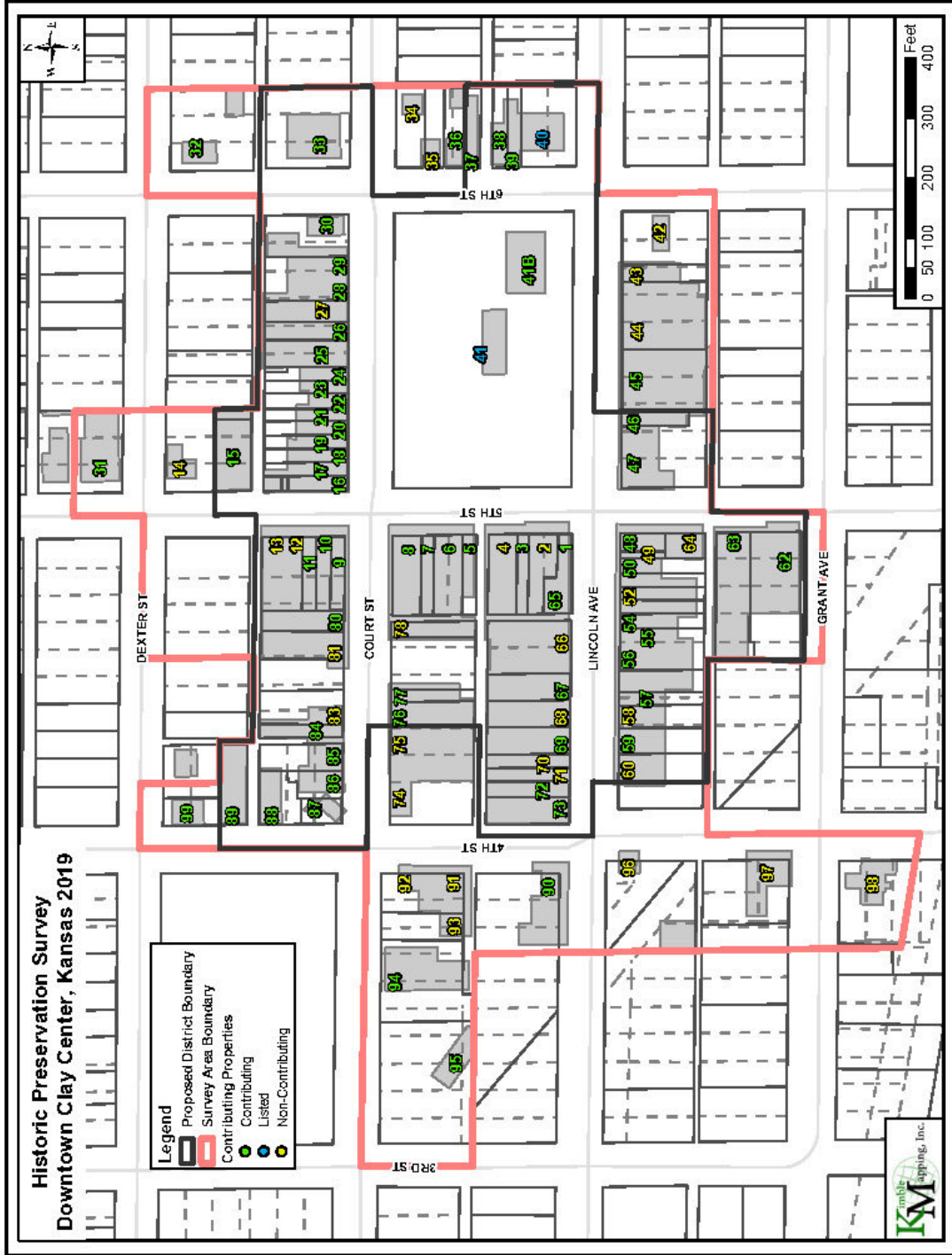
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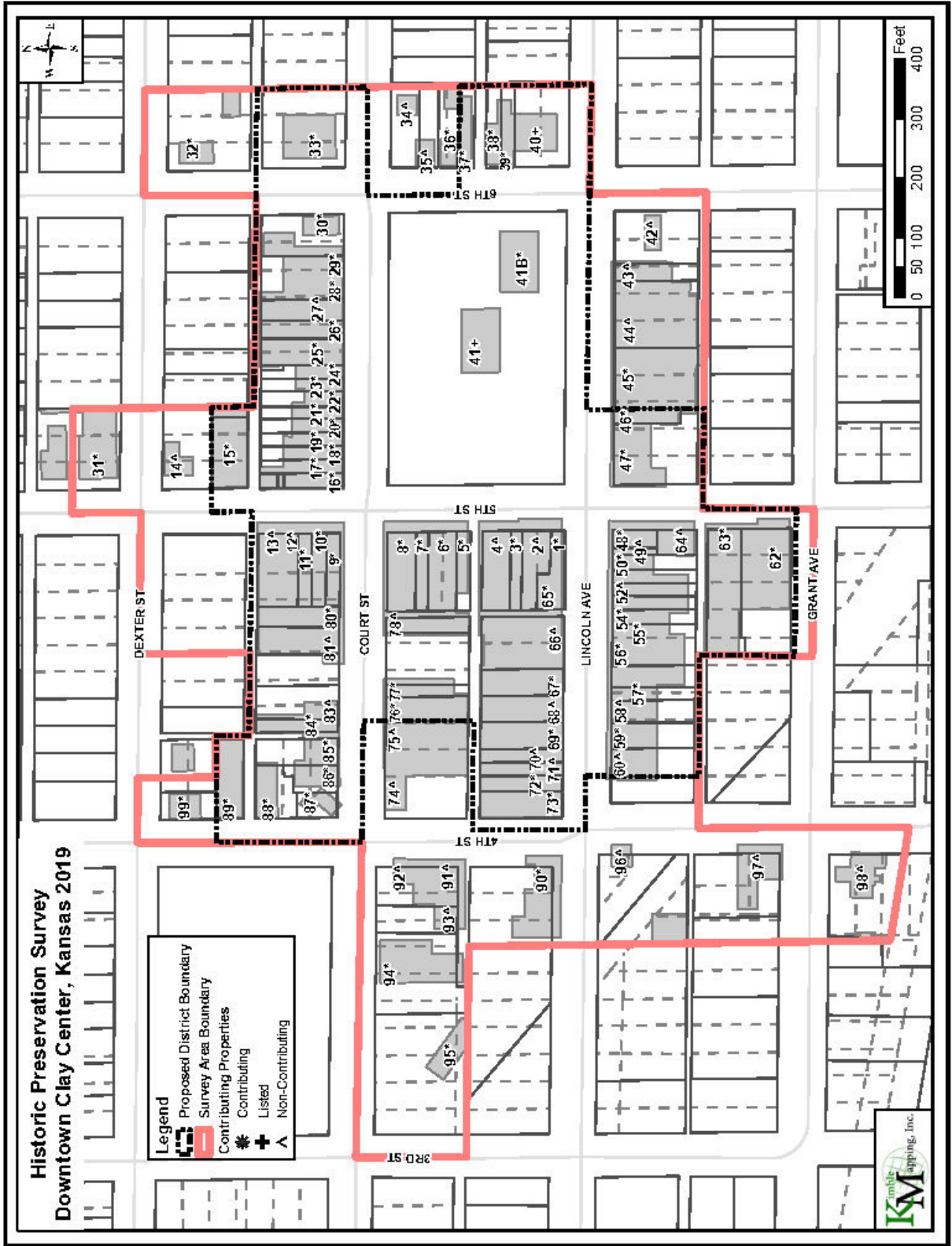
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E. Maps

Clay Center Downtown Survey Area Map





List of Surveyed Properties

KHRI Inventory #	Address	Historic Name	Arch. Style	Construction Date	Listed	Survey Sequence
027-0980-00004	539 Lincoln	Clay County Jail	Vernacular	c. 1898	No	CC041b
027-0980-00006	712 5th	Clay County Courthouse	Richardsonian Romanesque	1900	Yes	CC041
027-0980-00007	806 6th	US Post Office	Classical Revival	1913	No	CC033
027-0980-00008	706 6th	Carnegie Library	Classical Revival	1912	Yes	CC040
027-0980-000016	519 Court	Rex Theater	Classical Revival	c. 1920	No	CC025
027-187	401 Court	Masterson Gas Station	Other/Utilitarian	c. 1926	No	CC087
027-196	701 5 th	Union State Bank	Italianate	1918	No	CC001
027-197	705 5 th	Clay Co Office Building	Eclectic	c. 1880	No	CC002
027--198	707 5 th	Times Steam Printing	Commercial Style	c. 1886	No	CC003
027-199	709 5th		Commercial Style	c. 1886	No	CC004
027-200	713 5th		Italianate	c. 1884	No	CC005
027-201	717 5th		Commercial Style	c. 1900	No	CC006
027-202	719 5th		Commercial Style	c. 1900	No	CC007
027-203	721 5th	Gollober Building	Commercial Style	1914	No	CC008
027-204	801 5th	Hanna Building	Classical Revival	c. 1917	No	CC009
027-205	803 5 th		Italianate	c. 1885	No	CC010
027-206	805 5 th		Italianate	c. 1885	No	CC011
027-207	807 5 th		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC012
027-208	811 5 th		Italianate	c. 1895	No	CC013
027-209	508 Dexter	Motor Bank	Modern/Modern Movement		No	CC014
027-210	816 5 th	Bonham Opera House	Commercial Style	c. 1886	No	CC015
027-211	501 Court		Italianate	c. 1884	No	CC016

027-212	503 Court		Italianate	c. 1884	No	CC017
027-213	505 Court		Italianate	c. 1884	No	CC018
027-214	507 Court		Italianate	1887	No	CC019
027-215	509 Court		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC020
027-216	511 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1908	No	CC021
027-217	513 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1908	No	CC022
027-218	515 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1915	No	CC023
027-219	517 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1920	No	CC024
027-220	523 Court	I.O.O.F. Building	Commercial Style	1912	No	CC026
027-221	527 Court		Eclectic	c. 1915	No	CC027
027-222	529 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1912	No	CC028
027-223	531 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1912	No	CC029
027-224	537 Court	United Telephone Co. Building	Commercial Style	1917	No	CC030
027-225	910 5th	First Baptist Church	Classical Revival	1911	No	CC031
027-226	822 6th	SW Bell Telephone Building	Modern/Modern Movement	c. 1965	No	CC032
027-228	602 Court		Not applicable/No Style	c. 1980	No	CC034
027-229	720 6th		Not applicable/No Style	c. 1929	No	CC035
027-230	716 6th		Minimal Commercial	c. 1950	No	CC036
027-231	714 6th		Mission	c. 1940	No	CC037
027-232	712 6th		Minimal Commercial	c. 1950	No	CC038
027-233	710 6th		Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC039
027-234	540 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1990	No	CC042
027-235	532 Lincoln		Postmodern/Neoelectic	c. 2000	No	CC043
027-236	524 Lincoln	Chicago Lumber Co.	Other-Utilitarian	c.1905	No	CC044
027-237	518 Lincoln	W.W. Smith & Sons	Commercial Style	1924	No	CC045
027-238	512 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC046

027-239	510 Lincoln	Peoples National Bank	Classical Revival	1917	No	CC047
027-240	440 Lincoln	First National Bank	Classical Revival	c. 1910	No	CC048
027-241	438 Lincoln	Broughton Music Store	Commercial Style	c. 1910	No	CC049
027-242	436 Lincoln	Boston Clothing Co.	Commercial Style	c. 1884	No	CC050
027-244	432 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC052
027-246	428 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC054
027-247	426 Lincoln		Commercial Style	c. 1884	No	CC055
027-248	420 Lincoln	Selts Block	Italianate	c. 1884	No	CC056
027-249	418 Lincoln	Selts Block	Italianate	c. 1884	No	CC057
027-250	416 Lincoln		Commercial Style	c. 1917	No	CC058
027-251	412 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC059
027-252	406 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC060
027-254	603 5 th	Marshall Implement	Commercial Style	c. 1887	No	CC062
027-255	611 5 th		Modern/Modern Movement	c. 1950	No	CC063
027-256	613 5 th		Modern/Modern Movement	c. 1917	No	CC064
027-257	431 Lincoln		Classical Revival	c. 1911	No	CC065
027-258	423 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1975	No	CC066
027-259	419 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC067
027-260	415 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC068
027-261	413 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC069
027-262	409 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC070
027-263	407 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC071
027-264	405 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1885	No	CC072
027-265	401		Italianate	1885	No	CC073

	Lincoln					
027-266	400 Court		Other-Utilitarian	c. 2000	No	CC074
027-267	412 Court		Other-Utilitarian	c. 1950	No	CC075
027-268	416 Court	Schrader Auto Co.	Commercial Style	c. 1909	No	CC076
027-269	420 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1950	No	CC077
027-270	422 Court	Schaubel Building	Commercial Style	1910	No	CC078
027-271	429 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1910	No	CC080
027-272	427 Court	City Hall	Commercial Style	1910	No	CC081
027-274	417 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1929	No	CC083
027-275	415 Court	Clay Center Steam Laundry	Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC084
027-276	411 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC085
027-277	405 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC086
027-278	810 4 th	Clay Center Milk Co.	Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC088
027-279	812 4 th	Nyberg Garage	Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC089
027-280	701 4th	Miller Company	Commercial Style	c. 1917	No	CC090
027-281	713 4th		Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC091
027-282	721 4th		Commercial Style	c. 1960	No	CC092
027-283	316 Court		Other-Utilitarian	c. 2000	No	CC093
027-284	314 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1930	No	CC094
027-285	308 Court	C.R.I.&P RR Depot	Spanish Eclectic	1924	No	CC095
027-286	340 Lincoln		Commercial Style	c. 1915	No	CC096
027-287	601 4th		Other-Utilitarian	c. 2005	No	CC097
027-288	340 Grant	J.B. Gabbert Oil Co.	Other-Utilitarian	c. 1950	No	CC098
027-308	402 Dexter	Assembly of God Church	Minimal Traditional	c. 1970	No	CC099

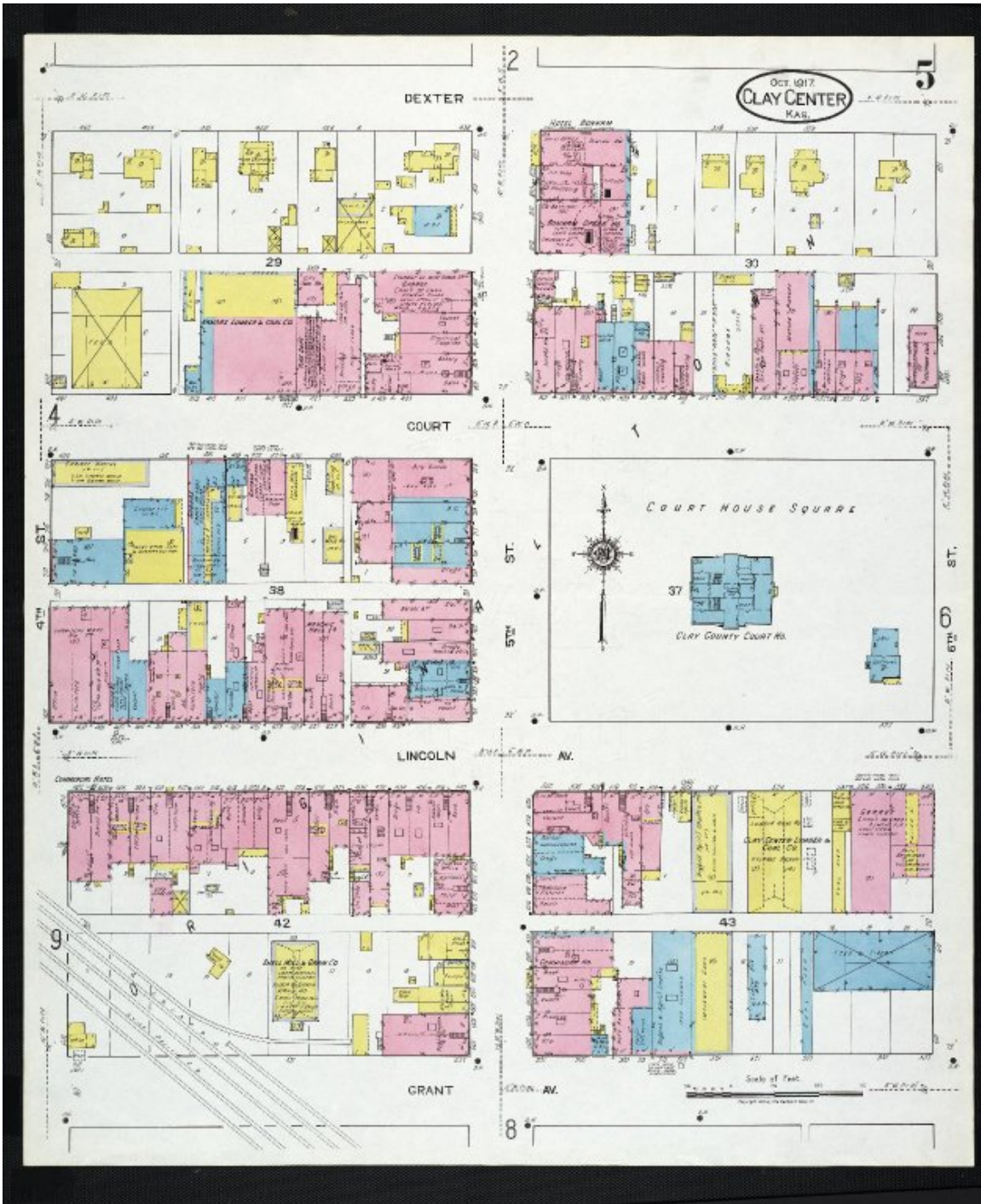
List of Properties – Proposed Historic District (55 contributing, 17 non-contributing, 72 total)

KHRI Inventory #	Address	Historic Name	Arch. Style	Construction Date	Eligible	Survey Sequence
027-0980-00004	539 Lincoln	Clay County Jail	Vernacular	c. 1898	Contributing	CC041b
027-0980-00006	712 5th	Clay County Courthouse	Richardsonian Romanesque	1900	Listed 01/29/1973	CC041
027-0980-00007	806 6th	US Post Office	Classical Revival	1913	Contributing	CC033
027-0980-00008	706 6th	Carnegie Library	Classical Revival	1912	Listed 06/25/1987	CC040
027-0980-000016	519 Court	Rex Theater	Classical Revival	c. 1920	Contributing	CC025
027-187	401 Court	Masterson Gas Station	Other/Utilitarian	c. 1926	Contributing	CC087
027-196	701 5 th	Union State Bank	Italianate	1918	Contributing	CC001
027-197	705 5 th	Clay Co Office Building	Eclectic	c. 1880	No	CC002
027--198	707 5 th	Times Steam Printing	Commercial Style	c. 1886	Contributing	CC003
027-199	709 5th		Commercial Style	c. 1886	No	CC004
027-200	713 5th		Italianate	c. 1884	Contributing	CC005
027-201	717 5th		Commercial Style	c. 1900	Contributing	CC006
027-202	719 5th		Commercial Style	c. 1900	Contributing	CC007
027-203	721 5th	Gollober Building	Commercial Style	1914	Contributing	CC008
027-204	801 5th	Hanna Building	Classical Revival	c. 1917	Contributing	CC009
027-205	803 5 th		Italianate	c. 1885	Contributing	CC010
027-206	805 5 th		Italianate	c. 1885	Contributing	CC011
027-207	807 5th		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC012
027-208	811 5th		Italianate	c. 1895	No	CC013
027-210	816 5 th	Bonham Opera House	Commercial Style	c. 1886	Contributing	CC015
027-211	501 Court		Italianate	c. 1884	Contributing	CC016
027-212	503		Italianate	c. 1884	Contributing	CC017

	Court					
027-213	505 Court		Italianate	c. 1884	Contributing	CC018
027-214	507 Court		Italianate	1887	Contributing	CC019
027-215	509 Court		Italianate	c. 1887	Contributing	CC020
027-216	511 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1908	Contributing	CC021
027-217	513 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1908	Contributing	CC022
027-218	515 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1915	Contributing	CC023
027-219	517 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1920	Contributing	CC024
027-220	523 Court	I.O.O.F. Building	Commercial Style	1912	Contributing	CC026
027-221	527 Court		Eclectic	c. 1915	No	CC027
027-222	529 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1912	Contributing	CC028
027-223	531 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1912	Contributing	CC029
027-224	537 Court	United Telephone Co. Building	Commercial Style	1917	Contributing	CC030
027-231	714 6th		Mission	c. 1940	Contributing	CC037
027-232	712 6th		Minimal Commercial	c. 1950	Contributing	CC038
027-233	710 6th		Commercial Style	c. 1930	Contributing	CC039
027-238	512 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	Contributing	CC046
027-239	510 Lincoln	Peoples National Bank	Classical Revival	1917	Contributing	CC047
027-240	440 Lincoln	First National Bank	Classical Revival	c. 1910	Contributing	CC048
027-241	438 Lincoln	Broughton Music Store	Commercial Style	c. 1910	No	CC049
027-242	436 Lincoln	Boston Clothing Co.	Commercial Style	c. 1884	Contributing	CC050
027-244	432 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC052
027-246	428 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	Contributing	CC054
027-247	426 Lincoln		Commercial Style	c. 1884	Contributing	CC055
027-248	420	Selts Block	Italianate	c. 1884	Contributing	CC056

	Lincoln					
027-249	418 Lincoln	Selts Block	Italianate	c. 1884	Contributing	CC057
027-250	416 Lincoln		Commercial Style	c. 1917	No	CC058
027-251	412 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	Contributing	CC059
027-252	406 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	No	CC060
027-254	603 5th	Marshall Implement	Commercial Style	c. 1887	Contributing	CC062
027-255	611 5th		Modern/Modern Movement	c. 1950	Contributing	CC063
027-256	613 5th		Modern/Modern Movement	c. 1917	No	CC064
027-257	431 Lincoln		Classical Revival	c. 1911	No	CC065
027-258	423 Lincoln		Not Applicable/ No Style	c. 1975	No	CC066
027-259	419 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	Contributing	CC067
027-260	415 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC068
027-261	413 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1887	Contributing	CC069
027-262	409 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC070
027-263	407 Lincoln		Not Applicable/No Style	c. 1887	No	CC071
027-264	405 Lincoln		Italianate	c. 1885	Contributing	CC072
027-265	401 Lincoln		Italianate	1885	Contributing	CC073
027-268	416 Court	Schrader Auto Co.	Commercial Style	c. 1909	Contributing	CC076
027-269	420 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1950	Contributing	CC077
027-270	422 Court	Schaubel Building	Commercial Style	1910	No	CC078
027-271	429 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1910	Contributing	CC080
027-273	427 Court	City Hall	Other	1937	No	CC082
027-274	417 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1929	No	CC083
027-275	415 Court	Clay Center Steam Laundry	Commercial Style	c. 1930	Contributing	CC084
027-276	411 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1930	Contributing	CC085

027-277	405 Court		Commercial Style	c. 1930	Contributing	CC086
027-278	810 4 th	Clay Center Milk Co.	Commercial Style	c. 1930	Contributing	CC088
027-279	812 4 th	Nyberg Garage	Commercial Style	c. 1930	Contributing	CC089



(Clay Center, KS, Downtown business district, Sanborn map, 1917)

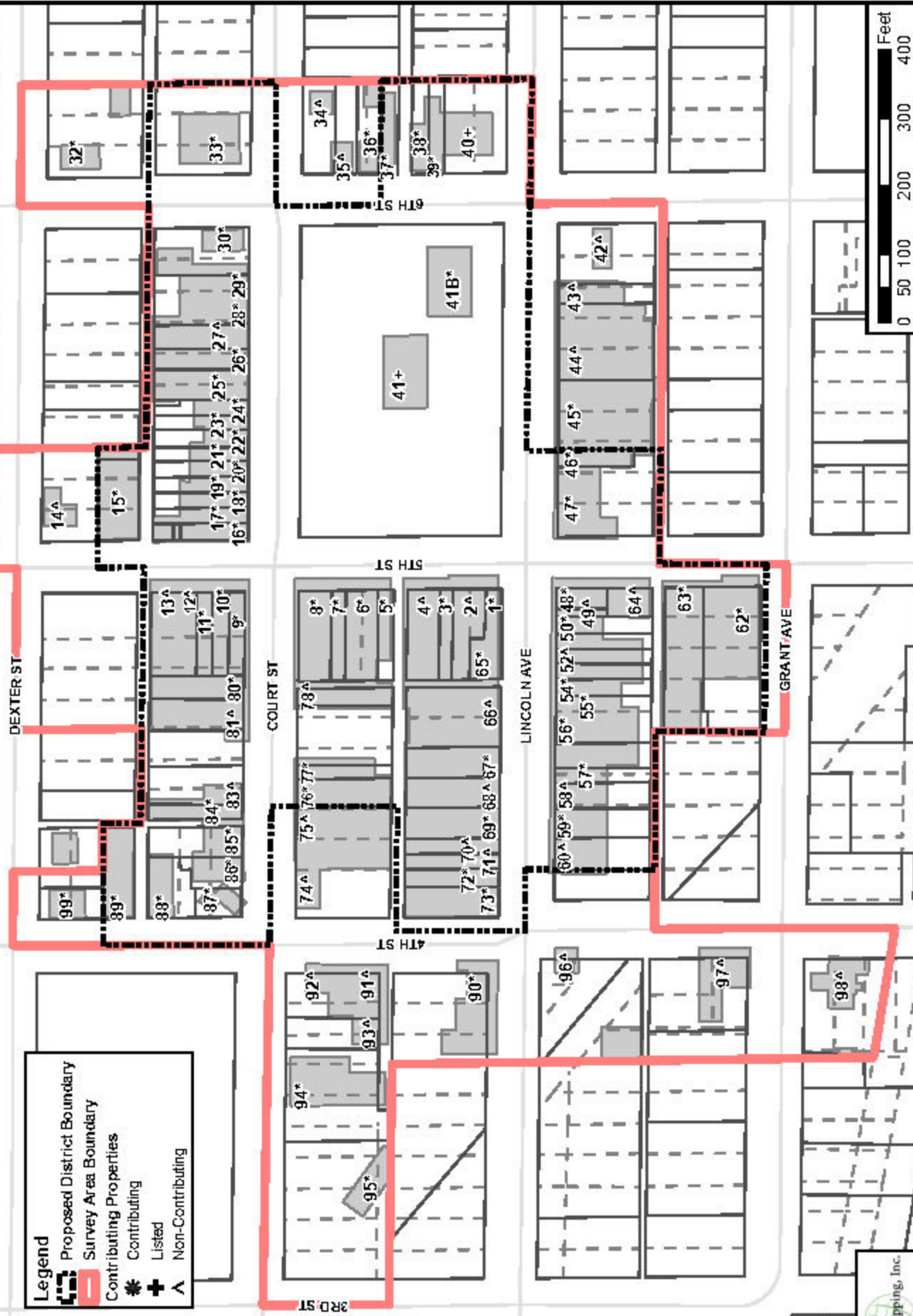


(Clay Center Downtown District, Aerial View from Southeast, 1940)

Historic Preservation Survey Downtown Clay Center, Kansas 2019

Legend

-  Proposed District Boundary
-  Survey Area Boundary
-  Contributing Properties
-  Listed
-  Non-Contributing



Historic Preservation Survey Downtown Clay Center, Kansas 2019

Legend

-  Proposed District Boundary
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- Contributing Properties**
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