



**ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL
SURVEY OF OKLAHOMA'S ALL-BLACK
TOWNS**

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Abstract

In November 2021, the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, a division of the Oklahoma Historical Society, retained Cox|McLain Environmental Consulting, Inc., now Stantec (Stantec), to conduct an architectural/historic resources survey of 13 of the 14 extant all-Black towns in Oklahoma.¹ More than 50 all-Black towns were founded, governed, and inhabited by Black Oklahomans starting after the Civil War through the early twentieth century. This survey is partially funded by the Underrepresented Community Grant program through the Historic Preservation Fund matching grant-in-aid from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, and is part of the ongoing Oklahoma Comprehensive Survey Program, supported by both state and federal funds. One National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination for a property within the survey boundaries was produced as part of the scope of this project and was submitted under separate cover.

The purpose of the survey was to document historic resources associated with 13 of Oklahoma's 14 remaining all-Black towns—Brooksville, Clearview, Grayson, IXL, Langston (partial), Lime, Red Bird, Rentiesville, Summit, Taft (partial), Tatum, Tullahassee, and Vernon—and identify individual resources or districts potentially eligible for the NRHP. As part of the survey methodology, Stantec completed preliminary research to identify locations of historic-age resources, constructed in or before 1977, within each town; conducted field investigations to document both previously and newly identified historic-age resources within each town's survey boundary; prepared an Oklahoma Historic Preservation Resources Identification form for each historic-age resource documented; and developed a historic context to evaluate the historic significance of resources and identify properties for potential nomination to the NRHP. The methodology in this report discusses the types of resources identified in the survey areas and the techniques used to collect information.

The survey documented a total of 226 resources within the 13 towns. Of these, 40 retain sufficient integrity to convey their historic significance and are recommended potentially eligible for the NRHP. The Abe Lincoln Trading Store in Clearview, Oklahoma, was selected as the property to be nominated to the NRHP, and a draft form was developed and submitted.

¹ Boley, the fourteenth all-Black town, was previously documented and designated as a National Historic Landmark.



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2 Introduction

Between May 2022 and June 2022, Cox|McLain Environmental Consulting, Inc., now Stantec (referred to as Stantec hereafter), historians conducted a historic resource survey of properties in 13 of Oklahoma's 14 All-Black Towns, including Brooksville, Clearview, Grayson, IXL, Langston, Lima, Red Bird, Rentiesville, Summit, Taft, Tatums, Tullahassee, and Vernon, to identify resources constructed in or before 1977, 45 years before the date of survey, as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and to develop a comprehensive historic context for the survey areas.² Each historic-age resource in all towns except for Langston and Taft were documented. In Langston and Taft, a representative selection of properties was identified for survey.

In total, 226 historic-age resources, constructed in 1977 or before, were documented (**Table 1**). As a result of this survey and outreach to the communities, 40 resources are recommended potentially eligible for the NRHP. In coordination with OK/SHPO and the property owner, Stantec selected the Abe Lincoln Trading Store in Clearview, Oklahoma, for nomination to the NRHP as part of this project.

Table 1. Resources Surveyed in 13 All-Black Towns (Historic-Age Resources)

All-Black Town	County	Number of Historic-Age Resources Surveyed	Number of Potentially NRHP Eligible Resources
Brooksville	Pottawatomie	8	3
Clearview	Okfuskee	18	6
Grayson	Okmulgee	14	1
IXL	Okfuskee	23	1
Langston	Logan	7	3
Lima	Seminole	30	1
Red Bird	Wagoner	23	3
Rentiesville	McIntosh	10	3
Summit	Muskogee	11	0
Taft	Muskogee	12	5
Tatums	Carter	38	3
Tullahassee	Wagoner	20	7
Vernon	McIntosh	12	4
TOTAL	226	226	40

This report begins with an introduction to the project and the project area. Next, the research design, project objectives, and areas surveyed are described. The methodology, including the intensity of coverage and kinds of properties looked for; results of the survey including a discussion of properties recommended eligible for the NRHP; the kinds of historic properties present in the survey area; and specific properties identified, and the techniques of information collected will follow. Next, a thumbnail sketch of each individual property that warrants further contextual research and evaluation for NRHP eligible and historic context is presented. An annotated bibliography and project summary conclude the report. Included in the appendices are GIS-based maps of the survey areas and survey results and the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (OK/SHPO) Historic Preservation Resource Identification Forms for each resource. This information is on a compact disc with the survey data compiled in the OK/SHPO's Access database.

² Boley, the fourteenth all-Black town, was previously documented and designated as a National Historic Landmark.

3 Project Objectives

The objective of this project is to conduct an architecture/historic survey of historic-age buildings associated with 13 of Oklahoma's 14 extant all-Black towns, as defined by the November 2021 agreement between the Oklahoma Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office (OK/SHPO) and Stantec, based on the scope outlined in RFP URC-ABT-2021 Architectural/Historic Survey of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns. The project involved locating, identifying, and documenting resources within Brooksville, Clearview, Grayson, IXL, Langston, Lima, Red Bird, Rentiesville, Summit, Taft, Tatum, Tullahassee, and Vernon to the minimum level of documentation standards, which includes the creation of an Oklahoma Historic Resources Identification Form with at least two photographs. Stantec evaluated each documented resource for potential NRHP eligibility, and one property was selected for an individual NRHP nomination, to be completed outside of this survey effort and report. Stantec conducted the project in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Identification and Evaluation* and the "Oklahoma Architectural/ Historic Survey Requirements" (updated 2020).

3.1 Historic Resource Surveys

A historic resource survey is a process to identify and gather data about a community's historic resources.³ Throughout this report, "resource" is the term applied to any building, structure, site, or object documented as part of the survey. There are two types of historic resource surveys: reconnaissance and intensive. Reconnaissance surveys involve inspection of an area to generally characterize common resource types and develop a plan for future survey efforts. Intensive surveys are a systematic documentation and evaluation of all resources within a survey area. Surveys are commonly used to identify historic resources eligible for local, state, or national designation. Both types of surveys involve the development of a historic context, which is a narrative of the broad patterns of historical development for the area under study. The historic context is used to evaluate the historic significance of resources in a survey area.

3.2 Compliance with NRHP and OK/SHPO Standards and Guidelines

This project was conducted in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Identification and Evaluation* and the guidelines for surveys set forth in OK/SHPO's *Architectural/Historic Resource Survey: A Field Guide*.⁴ Stantec project personnel are professionals who meet or exceed the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Architectural History and History and have extensive experience with similar projects.⁵ They are trained in the content of the OK/SHPO workshop, "Working with the National Register of Historic Places." Emily Reed, Stantec Historic Preservation Program Manager, served as the Project Manager and oversaw all aspects of the survey and deliverables. Historians Kory Van Hemert and Jenya Green participated in field investigations, research, report preparation, and evaluations of significance. Senior Historian Amy E. Dase participated in context development, report preparations, research, and quality management. Historic Preservation Specialist Izabella Nuckels and Senior Architectural Historians Tori Raines and Laura Kviklys participated in report preparation, Historian Jennifer Brosz completed quality control/quality assurance, and GIS Manager Sara Laurence created the mapping and graphics.

³ Derry et al., "National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning."

⁴ Childs, Burns, and Renaud, "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation"; Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (OK/SHPO), "Architectural/ Historic Resource Survey: A Field Guide."

⁵ Ibid.



4 Areas Surveyed

The survey area generally consisted of the city limits of 13 non-contiguous all-Black towns in Oklahoma: Brooksville, Clearview, Grayson, IXL, Langston, Lima, Red Bird, Rentiesville, Summit, Taft, Tattums, Tullahassee, and Vernon. All historic-age resources within the study area provided for each town were documented except for the towns of Langston and Taft. In Langston and Taft, Stantec historians determined a select number of resources (between 10 and 15 per town) for documentation to prioritize accuracy, efficiency, and appropriate representation (**Figure 1**).

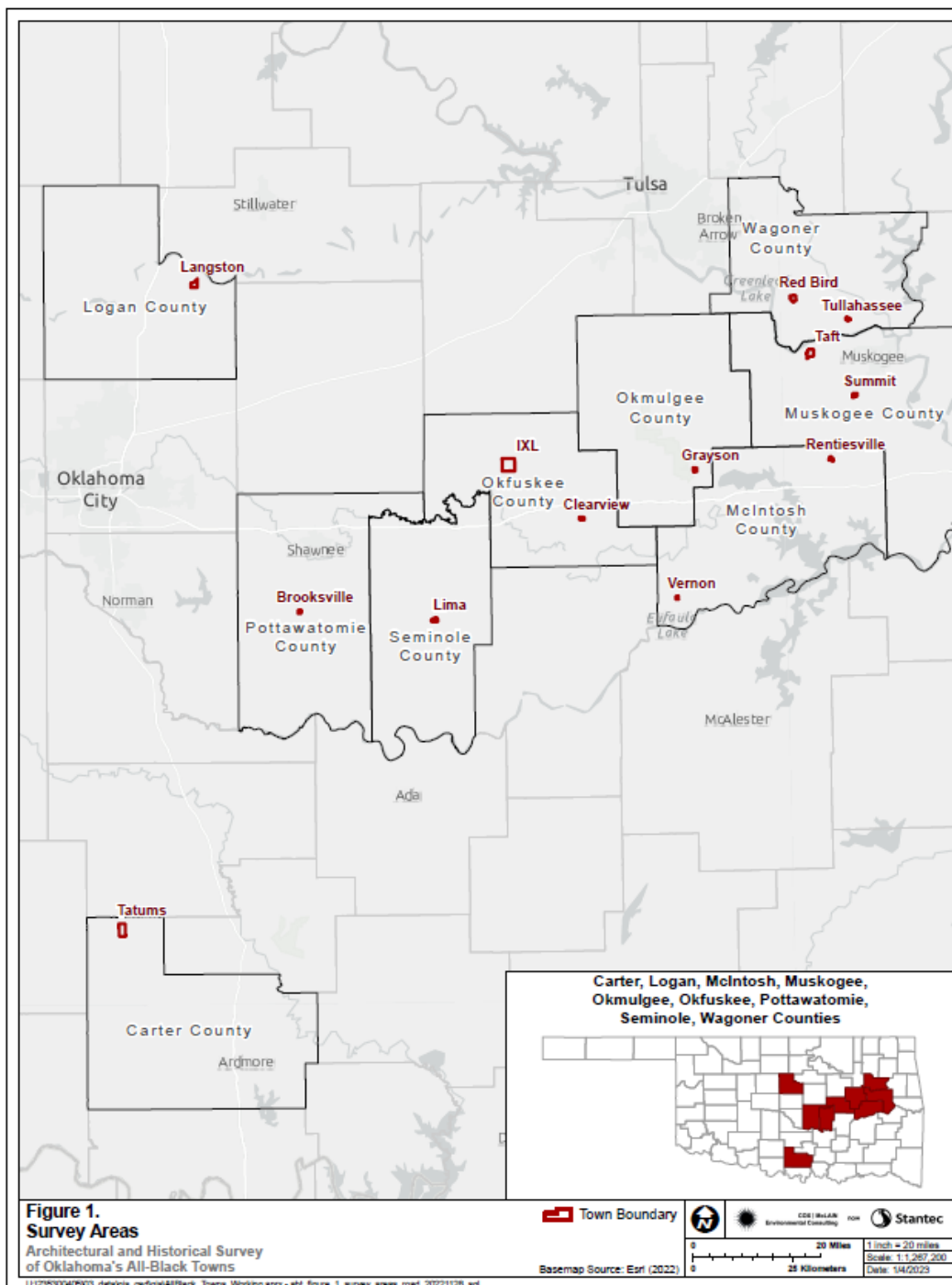


Figure 1. Map of 13 Surveyed All-Black Towns. Source: Stantec, 2022.

5 Methodology

Stantec developed a methodology for this project based on standards set by the NPS and guidelines for historic resource surveys recommended by the OK/SHPO. Approaches for research, survey, and evaluation were determined at the outset of the project and were adhered to throughout. This section describes the survey and research methods, which involved five main tasks: (1) field investigations preparation, (2) public involvement, (3) on-the-ground field investigations activities, (4) research, and (5) post-field data processing and evaluation.

5.1 Preparation for Field Investigations

Stantec commenced project coordination with OK/SHPO in November 2021. Initial tasks involved desktop research and preliminary analysis to create a list of historic-age resources in the study area and the preparation of a GIS map with known historic-age resources, and the locations of potential historic-age resources with unknown dates. Field investigations' intensity and types of properties anticipated to be extant in the survey areas were also identified.

5.1.1 DESKTOP ANALYSIS

The desktop review of preliminary source materials, including previous surveys and studies, historic aerials, NRHP nominations, and digital archival collections, informed field investigations and established a basis for a draft historical context. Stantec historians conducted an aerial review, combined with a review of Google Streetview, of the included towns to identify historic-age resources (built in 1977 or earlier, 45 years prior to the survey date) within the provided study areas for each town. The NRHP ArcGIS map for Oklahoma confirmed the locations of NRHP-listed properties and districts in the survey area.

5.1.2 FIELD MAP PREPARATION AND FIELD INVESTIGATIONS SCOPE

An ArcGIS Online (AGOL) map was prepared with each town's study area as provided by OK/SHPO. Stantec conducted a review of aerial photographs to confirm the presence of historic-age resources. Aerial photography coverage for each town varied by year and geographic location. All visible resources were assigned a historic-age, non-historic-age, or questionable (age undetermined and not confirmed by aerial review) designation on Stantec's AGOL map. Buildings determined to be nonhistoric-age according to the aerial review were not recorded. Those buildings for which a historic-age date of construction could not be confirmed (questionable) were assessed in the field with professional judgement. Those questionable resources that were determined, in the field, to have potential eligibility for the NRHP were recorded as historic-age resources. Those buildings designated as questionable that do not appear to have potential eligibility, regardless of apparent age, were not recorded as part of this effort.

All historic-age resources within each town's study area were documented, except for the towns of Langston and Taft. Stantec identified a selection of representative resources in Langston and Taft to survey in order to prioritize accuracy, efficiency, and appropriate representation. The resources selected, provided a snapshot of the development of the two towns. In Langston, seven historic-age buildings, and in Taft, 12 historic-age buildings.

Prior to survey, an information sheet was developed to inform interested citizens and residents about the survey activities. The sheet included a project summary and OK/SHPO contact information.

5.1.3 TYPES OF PROPERTIES ANTICIPATED

Based on preliminary desktop analysis, Stantec historians anticipated historic-age resources would be buildings, structures, and objects and include many different property types including residential, religious, commercial, civic/governmental, and educational. Although cemeteries are essential resources in All-Black Towns, this survey effort focused on buildings and their associated resources. It is recommended that future survey efforts include cemeteries.



5.2 Public Involvement

OK/SHPO connected Stantec with Ms. Shirley Ann Ballard Nero, who is the chair of the Black Heritage committee for the Oklahoma Historical Society and has many connections with leaders in the 13 towns. Stantec worked with Ms. Nero to obtain contact information for at least one leader/stakeholder (often the mayor) in each town. A virtual kickoff meeting was held on April 25, 2022. Project Manager Emily Reed presented the project, including the purpose, methodology, schedule, and opportunities for input, in a virtual format. The meeting was recorded (<https://youtu.be/MZGoFKhawoc>) and the recording link and a copy of the presentation were provided to the town contact list. During the meeting and in follow-up calls and emails, Stantec staff solicited input from stakeholders in each town. Community members provided information regarding the history and significance of several sites, which was incorporated into the HPRI forms as appropriate. During the meeting, Stantec also informed the community members about the upcoming fieldwork and subsequently reached out to contacts in each town by email and/or phone to notify them of the days in which surveyors would be present. During fieldwork, Stantec staff interacted with various curious community members including the mayors of Grayson and Tatum, and as the school administrators for New Lima High School. Both mayors provided Stantec with tours and information on their respective towns and select resources. The school administrators also provided a tour and several documents about the school campus.

Representatives from OK/SHPO attended the Oklahoma All-Black Towns State Conference on August 20th in Oklahoma City. The conference brings together the mayors of the all-Black towns for an opportunity to exchange resources with state agencies. The OK/SHPO hosted a booth with a poster and information about the survey. OK/SHPO also made the draft HPRI forms available for review; several mayors took copies of the forms to review and provided comments to OK/SHPO; Stantec addressed these comments in the final version of the forms.

5.3 Field Investigations

Field investigations occurred on select dates between May 10, 2022, and June 8, 2022. After identifying the locations of all historic-age properties in each town, a unique Survey ID number (referred to as "Survey ID#" in this report) was assigned to each resource. Stantec historians documented historic-age buildings in the survey areas from the public right-of-way (ROW). Project historians began with windshield surveys within the established city limits of each of the 13 towns to confirm the location of each historic-age resource identified during the desktop study and identify any historic-age resources not identified during the desktop study. The surveyors did not have right-of-entry and did not attempt to take photographs from private property. In cases where resources were not visible from the public ROW, a review of aerial photographs was used as a tool to document and evaluate the resource. Stantec historians documented the characteristics of each resource on OK/SHPO HPRI forms. Stantec historians noted any relevant property or historical information obtained from members of the public encountered during the survey. At least two photographs were taken of each resource, with additional photographs collected as necessary to document each resource.

Other potential historic-age resources encountered during the survey that were not identified in preliminary aerial review were photographed to the minimum requirements described if they retained sufficient integrity and apparent potential for individual NRHP eligibility. Before leaving each town, surveyors also identified and recorded any smaller objects, signage, or other features that display a sense of historic community that may have been missed in the aerial review.

5.4 Research

Using guidance from "Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office Comprehensive Historic Preservation Planning Process and Historic Context Development," Stantec historians conducted archival research to develop a historic context of events that shaped the development of the 13 all-Black towns surveyed. Available digital resources, including online newspaper archives and online articles; local digital repositories; and resources from the OK/SHPO website and relevant databases enhanced the study of these areas.



5.5 Post-Field Processing and Evaluation

Following the completion of field investigations, Stantec historians saved all data and photographs and began evaluating historic resources for inclusion in the NRHP.

5.5.1 DATA PROCESSING

After field investigations, historians saved all photographs to Stantec servers, and loaded the photographs into the inventory form database with enough photographs to fully document each resource's physical integrity. The field team documented the resources on OK/SHPO HPRI forms; OK/SHPO will, at some point in the future, load the survey data into the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory Database, an online repository of the state's documented resources.

5.5.2 NRHP EVALUATION

Surveyors assessed the significance of each resource following research and development of the historic context, which was developed along with the inventory form database. The context incorporates the NRHP Criteria for Evaluation and a discussion of the historical significance of resources within each town.

The NRHP is a federal list of historic resources deemed worthy of preservation for their historic significance. The list is administered by the National Park Service (NPS), and inclusion in the list is an honorary and administrative designation bestowed upon properties that meet registration criteria. In general, for a property to be deemed eligible for inclusion in the NRHP, it must be at least 50 years old and must possess historic significance and integrity.⁶ Both individual properties and districts with a collection of resources can be listed in the NRHP.

Historic Significance

The NPS established four criteria under which a property may be significant, and a resource must possess significance under at least one criterion to be eligible for the NRHP.⁷ The four criteria are:

- Criterion A** Properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- Criterion B** Properties associated with the lives of persons significant to our past;
- Criterion C** Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and
- Criterion D** Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.⁸

Integrity

For a historic resource to be eligible for the NRHP, it must retain enough physical and historical integrity to convey its significance.⁹ The NPS has identified seven aspects of integrity:

- Location** Place where a historic property is situated or where an event occurred.

⁶ National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," 3.

⁷ Ibid, 11.

⁸ Ibid, 12–24.

⁹ Ibid, 44.



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Design	Elements on a historic property, such as structure, form, place, and style, which result from decisions made in the planning and construction of a historic property. These elements inform not only the aesthetic of the property, but also historic functions and technologies.
Setting	The physical environment where a historic event occurred, or a property was constructed. The character of this place may contribute to the property's significance.
Materials	The physical elements used to construct a historic property. Exterior elements are particularly important with historic properties.
Workmanship	Evidence of the craft and labor used to construct a historic property.
Feeling	Retention of physical elements that convey a sense of a specific period of time, typically associated with the period of significance.
Association	Evidence of a link between the place that an event occurred and a historic property. ¹⁰

A resource need not possess all seven aspects to retain integrity; a combination of some or most may be sufficient.¹¹ Aspects of integrity can be weighted differently depending on the applicable NRHP criteria.¹² For example, a resource eligible under Criterion C should retain the aspects of integrity linked to physical qualities (design, materials, and workmanship) to a higher degree than one that is eligible for its historical associations (Criterion A or B). However, a resource that is eligible for its historical associations (Criterion A or B) should still possess sufficient physical integrity to be recognizably associated with the time or era in which it attained significance.

The NRHP Criteria for Evaluation were applied to the surveyed resources. A detailed discussion of the integrity requirements for resources in Oklahoma's all-Black towns is in **Section 5.5.3**.

5.5.3 NRHP REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Criterion A

Historic properties can be listed in the NRHP under Criterion A if they have an important association with significant historic events, a pattern of events, or trends, and if they retain physical and historical integrity to convey that significance. However, situated in underrepresented communities, most historic-age resources in Oklahoma's all-Black towns have undergone alterations that compromise, to varying degrees, each aspect of integrity. Some eligible resources may not be in their original locations; these should either be in a historic-period location or one that is amenable to the resource's historic-period function. Integrity of setting, and the inimitably linked integrity of feeling, communicate an eligible resource's salient features, despite certain alterations, such that community members would recognize the building to its period of significance.

Resources eligible under Criterion A will have some intact historic-period physical characteristics with certain acceptable modifications that reflect improvement trends. Nevertheless, the original design intent should be evident with the presence of character-defining features, such as roof forms, fenestration patterns, and form- or style-specific details that embrace the intended design. Historic-period materials may be visible or hidden. Alterations and additions that obscure historic-period stylistic influences, materials, or workmanship may be acceptable since they often represent the desire for expansion. Most original materials should be present; exceptions are replaced windows and doors, if fenestration patterns, shapes, and size are unchanged, because updated materials provided improved insulation and more-efficient interior conditions. Replaced wall cladding is another exception; this type of alteration protected the building and displayed another indicator of desire to update failing materials or enhancement. Exposed exterior wood cladding required regular

¹⁰ National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," 4445.

¹¹ Ibid, 44.

¹² Ibid, 45–46.



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repair and paint; sturdy, if nonhistoric, replacement materials provided a cost-effective means to long-term low-maintenance upkeep. Thus, some resources with multiple material replacements are eligible under Criterion A because their overall form, scale, massing, composition, and details are sufficiently intact to convey the intended design. Lastly, although they may have been substantially altered, some extant resources are rare surviving examples of a property type, the most intact example of a type, or the only or best remnant resources that represents an area of significance; these resources may be considered eligible with appropriate justification to explain their exceptionality.

The associative qualities for resources eligible under Criterion A are paramount to understanding their historical significance. Integrity of association made possible through archival evidence that relates specific information about the resources. Deed, manuscript decennial census records of population, contemporaneous newspapers, and other primary sources provide this documentation.

Criterion B

Properties can be eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B if they are associated with specific individuals who made a significant contribution to the past, and if they retain physical and historical integrity to convey that significance. This criterion only applies to a property that best illustrates a person's contributions. However, situated in underrepresented communities, most historic-age resources in Oklahoma's all-Black towns have undergone alterations that compromise, to varying degrees, each aspect of integrity. Some eligible resources may not be in their original locations; these should either be in a historic-period location or one that is amenable to the resource's historic-period function. Integrity of setting, and the inimitably linked integrity of feeling, communicate an eligible resource's salient features, despite certain alterations, such that community members would recognize the building to its period of significance.

Resources eligible under Criterion B will have some intact historic-period physical characteristics with certain acceptable modifications that reflect improvement trends. Nevertheless, the original design intent should be evident with the presence of character-defining features, such as roof forms, fenestration patterns, and form- or style-specific details that embrace the intended design. Historic-period materials may be visible or hidden. Alterations and additions that obscure historic-period stylistic influences, materials, or workmanship may be acceptable since they often represent the desire for expansion. Most original materials should be present; exceptions are replaced windows and doors, if fenestration patterns, shapes, and size are unchanged, since updated materials provided improved insulation and more-efficient interior conditions. Replaced wall cladding is another exception since this type of alteration protected the building and displayed another indicator of desire to update failing materials or enhancement. Exposed exterior wood cladding required regular repair and paint; sturdy, if nonhistoric, replacement materials provided a cost-effective means to long-term low-maintenance upkeep. Thus, some resources with multiple material replacements are eligible under Criterion B because their overall form, scale, massing, composition, and details are sufficiently intact to convey the intended design. Lastly, although they may have been substantially altered, some extant resources are rare surviving examples of a property type, the most intact example of a type, or the only or best remnant resources that represents an area of significance; these resources may be considered eligible with appropriate justification to explain their exceptionality.

The associative qualities for resources eligible under Criterion B are paramount to understanding their historical significance. Integrity of association made possible through archival evidence that relates specific information about the resources. Deed, manuscript decennial census records of population, contemporaneous newspapers, and other primary sources provide this documentation.

Criterion C

Properties can be eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C for their physical design or construction if they:

- Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction—most properties eligible under Criterion C are eligible based on this subcategory. To be significant, a property must illustrate the distinguishing features common to its particular style or type of resource, so that the property is a good representative example.



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- Represent the work of a master—this generally refers to design or aesthetic accomplishments by a master craftsman, artisan, or architect.
- Possess high artistic value.
- Represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction—this subcategory applies to historic districts.

However, situated in underrepresented communities, most historic-age resources in Oklahoma's all-Black towns have undergone alterations that compromise, to varying degrees, each aspect of integrity. Some eligible resources may not be in their original locations; these should either be in a historic-period location or one that is amenable to the resource's historic-period function. Integrity of setting, and the inimitably linked integrity of feeling, communicate an eligible resource's salient features, despite certain alterations, such that community members would recognize the building to its period of significance.

Resources eligible under Criterion C will have some intact historic-period physical characteristics with certain acceptable modifications that reflect improvement trends. Nevertheless, the original design intent should be evident with the presence of character-defining features, such as roof forms, fenestration patterns, and form- or style-specific details that embrace the intended design. Historic-period materials may be visible or hidden. Alterations and additions that obscure historic-period stylistic influences, materials, or workmanship may be acceptable since they often represent the desire for expansion. Most original materials should be present; exceptions are replaced windows and doors, if fenestration patterns, shapes, and size are unchanged, since updated materials provided improved insulation and more-efficient interior conditions. Replaced wall cladding is another exception since this type of alteration protected the building and displayed another indicator of desire to update failing materials or enhancement. Exposed exterior wood cladding required regular repair and paint; sturdy, if nonhistoric, replacement materials provided a cost-effective means to long-term low-maintenance upkeep. Thus, some resources with multiple material replacements are eligible under Criterion C because their overall form, scale, massing, composition, and details are sufficiently intact to convey the intended design. Lastly, although they may have been substantially altered, some extant resources are rare surviving examples of a property type, the most intact example of a type, or the only or best remnant resources that represents an area of significance; these resources may be considered eligible with appropriate justification to explain their exceptionality.

The associative qualities for resources eligible under Criterion C are paramount to understanding their historical significance. Integrity of association made possible through archival evidence that relates specific information about the resources. Deed, manuscript decennial census records of population, contemporaneous newspapers, and other primary sources provide this documentation.

Criterion D

Properties can be eligible under Criterion D for information potential, if their examination can yield important information that would contribute to understanding history. These properties are limited to historic-period archeological sites. However, situated in underrepresented communities, most historic-age resources in Oklahoma's all-Black towns have undergone alterations that compromise, to varying degrees, each aspect of integrity. Some eligible resources may not be in their original locations; these should either be in a historic-period location or one that is amenable to the resource's historic-period function. Integrity of setting, and the inimitably linked integrity of feeling, communicate an eligible resource's salient features, despite certain alterations.

Resources eligible under Criterion D must be in their original location. They should retain a high level of association in the form of archival evidence that relates specific information about who owned and operated the property, and their relationship within an all-Black town. Land grant, deed, ad valorem tax, and manuscript decennial census records of population and agricultural provide this documentation. These resources should retain a high level of materials, meaning artifacts, since these are the best possible additional sources of information about the property's occupants, which can be



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used to corroborate the archival record and to yield information that documentary evidence does not. Because historic archeological sites are often disturbed through natural occurrences or human activity, the level of integrity for design, workmanship, setting, and feeling can be relaxed.

6 Results

This section describes survey results and observations from the survey of 226 resources in the all-Black towns survey areas, as defined in **Figures 1** and **2** in **Appendix A**. Tables summarizing survey results are included. Detailed information for each historic-age property is included on the survey inventory forms (**Appendix B**). Analysis of survey results and resources identified as potentially eligible for the NRHP are described in **Section 7**.

6.1 Summary of Results

Stantec surveyors documented 226 historic-age resources across the 13 all-Black towns in this project. In the field, surveyors documented each resource with information about the historic function (**Table 2**), year of construction (**Table 3**), architectural style (**Table 4**), and whether it retains sufficient integrity to be potentially eligible for the NRHP (**Table 5**).

6.1.1 SUMMARY OF TOTAL RESULTS

Across the 13 all-Black towns, Stantec historians documented 226 historic-age resources constructed between ca. 1895 and ca. 1975.¹³ Ten historic functions were identified. Most surveyed resources, or 60 percent, historically functioned as single dwellings. More than 48 percent of resources had no style; however, 10 architectural styles were recorded, the most common of which was Bungalow/Craftsman, comprising 18.58 percent of total resources, followed by Ranch which represented 15.49 percent of resources. In all, 40 of the 226 resources were determined potentially eligible for the NRHP (**Section 7**).

Table 2. Historic Function of Resources Surveyed in 13 All-Black Towns (Historic-Age Resources)

Historic Resource Function	Number of Historic-Age Resources	Percent of Total
Agricultural	7	3.10
Commerce/Trade	9	3.98
Domestic – Single Dwelling	135	59.73
Domestic – Multiple Dwelling	1	0.44
Domestic – Secondary Structure	11	4.87
Educational	21	9.29
Government - Fire Station	1	0.44
Government – Other	5	2.21
Government – Post Office	5	2.21
Other	4	1.77
Religious	27	11.95
TOTAL	226	100

¹³ The survey cutoff date was 1977; however, no resources constructed in 1976 or 1977 were recorded.

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Table 3. Year Built Date of Surveyed Resources (Historic-Age Resources)

Year Built	Number of Historic-Age Resources	Percent of Total
1870–1879	0	0.00
1880–1889	0	0.00
1890–1899	2	0.88
1900–1909	2	0.88
1910–1919	10	4.42
1920–1929	18	7.96
1930–1939	34	15.04
1940–1949	49	21.68
1950–1959	40	17.70
1960–1970	57	25.22
1971–1975	13	5.75
Unknown	1	0.44
TOTAL	226	100

Table 4. Architectural Styles in the Survey Areas (Historic-Age Resources)

Architectural Style	Number of Historic-Age Resources	Percent of Total
Bungalow/Craftsman	42	18.58
Commercial	5	2.21
Contemporary	1	0.44
Folk Victorian	2	0.88
Minimal Traditional	9	3.98
National Folk	2	0.88
Queen Anne	2	0.88
Ranch	35	15.49
Shed	1	0.44
Tudor Revival	1	0.44
No Style	109	48.23
Other	16	7.08
TOTAL	226	100

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Table 5. Summary of Results Per Town (Historic-Age Resources)

All-Black Town	Number of Historic-Age Resources Surveyed	Range of Year Built Dates	Historic Functions Recorded	Architectural Styles	Number of Potentially NRHP Eligible Resources
Brooksville	8	1910–1975	Education (1) Religion (1) Single dwelling (5)	Craftsman/Bungalow (3) No Style (2) Other (1) Queen Anne (1) Ranch (1)	3
Clearview	18	1920–1975	Commerce/Trade (2) Education (2) Multiple Dwelling (1) Other (2) Religion (1) Secondary Structure (1) Single Dwelling (9)	Craftsman/Bungalow (4) Commercial (1) Minimal Traditional (2) No Style (9) Ranch (2)	6
Grayson	14	1900–1975	Education (1) Other (2) Religion (2) Secondary Structure (1) Single Dwelling (8)	Craftsman/Bungalow (1) No Style (6) Other (4) Ranch (3)	1
IXL	23	1920–1973	Education (1) Other (2) Religion (2) Single Dwelling (18)	Craftsman/Bungalow (1) No Style (10) Other (2) Ranch (10)	1
Langston	7	1895–1975	Commerce/Trade (2) Other (1) Religion (3) Single Dwelling (1)	Craftsman/Bungalow (1) Folk Victorian (1) Minimal Traditional (1) No Style (3) Other (1)	3
Lima	30	1907–1975	Education (10) Other (3) Religion (1) Secondary Structure (3) Single Dwelling (13)	Craftsman/Bungalow (5) No Style (16) Other (7) Ranch (2)	1
Red Bird	23	1930–1970	Other (3) Religion (3) Single Dwelling (17)	Craftsman/Bungalow (4) Minimal Traditional (2) No Style (12) Other (2) Ranch (3)	3
Rentiesville	10	1910–1965	Other (1) Religion (3) Single Dwelling (6)	Craftsman/Bungalow (2) Folk Victorian (1) No Style (6) Ranch (1)	3
Summit	11	1922–1970	Commerce/Trade (2) Religion (1) Single Dwelling (8)	Craftsman/Bungalow (3) Minimal Traditional (1) No Style (6) Other (1)	0

Table 5. Summary of Results Per Town CONTINUED (Historic-Age Resources)

All-Black Town	Number of Historic-Age Resources Surveyed	Range of Year Built Dates	Historic Functions Recorded	Architectural Styles	Number of Potentially NRHP Eligible Resources
Taft	12	1910–1973	Commerce/Trade (1) Other (1) Religion (1) School (1) Secondary Structure (2) Single Dwelling (6)	Commercial (1) Craftsman/Bungalow (4) Minimal Traditional (1) No Style (4) Other (2)	5
Tatums	38	1919–1975	Commerce/Trade (1) Education (1) Other (4) Religion (3) Secondary Structure (2) Single Dwelling (27)	Commercial (1) Craftsman/Bungalow (9) Minimal Traditional (1) No Style (18) Ranch (9)	3
Tulahassee	20	1912–1975	Commerce/Trade (2) Education (3) Other (2) Religion (3) Secondary Structure (1) Single Dwelling (10)	Commercial (1) Craftsman/Bungalow (1) Minimal Traditional (1) No Style (11) Other (2) Ranch (4)	7
Vernon	12	1910–1986	Education (1) Other (1) Religion (2) Secondary Structure (1) Single Dwelling (7)	Commercial (1) Craftsman/Bungalow (4) No Style (5) Other (2)	4
TOTAL	226				40

6.2 Types of Properties Surveyed

Stantec historians surveyed agricultural, commercial, domestic, educational, governmental, and religious resources.

6.3 Historic Property Types Surveyed

Historic buildings, structures, and objects representing six different property types were identified as part of this survey. Historic resource property types included residential, religious, educational, governmental, agricultural, and commercial. The majority of resources surveyed, 60 percent, were single-family dwellings.

Agricultural Resources

Seven metal-clad, utilitarian agricultural outbuildings were surveyed.

Commercial Resources

Nine commercial buildings or sites were surveyed, constructed from brick, stone, or concrete masonry units.

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Domestic Resources

One multiple-family dwelling and 135 single-family dwellings were recorded. Of the single-dwellings surveyed, 82 represent mid-twentieth-century Bungalow-Craftsman inspired, Ranch, or Minimal Traditional architectural styles; another 39 dwellings have no clear stylistic influences. Outliers are Folk Victorian, National Folk, and Queen Anne dwellings that are evidence of some all-Black towns' late-nineteenth-century origins.

Educational Resources

The 21 education-related buildings or objects surveyed range from modest wood-frame, wood-clad buildings to designed Classical Revival buildings of rusticated stone and brick-clad. Several are no longer in use, deteriorating, or ruinous.

Government Buildings

Ten government-related buildings were surveyed including five post offices, two city halls, and three one-room stone jails.

Religious Resources

Of 26 churches surveyed, 10 are concrete-masonry-unit clad, six are wood-frame, four are stone, four are brick-clad, one is brick- and concrete-masonry-unit-clad, and one is stucco- and concrete-clad.

7 Properties Potentially Eligible for the NRHP

Stantec historians evaluated 226 historic-age resources in the survey area to identify those that possess significance with an associated historic context and retain sufficient integrity to be potentially individually eligible for the NRHP. Historical and physical integrity was carefully evaluated for each resource. Groups of resources were evaluated as potential historic districts eligible for the NRHP, with areas lacking a concentration of potentially contributing resources considered ineligible.

Resources were evaluated for eligibility under each of the criteria, including Criterion D, traditionally reserved for archeological sites and their potential to yield important information. This type of analysis requires discipline-specific expertise that was outside the scope of work. However, these resources deserved full consideration under Criterion D, and their potential as local interpretations of a standard design or undocumented constructed technique was examined.



Figure 2. Former ca. 1931 Grayson School in Grayson, Oklahoma. Survey ID #98. Source: Stantec, 2022.

7.1 List of Properties

Of the 226 surveyed resources, OK/SHPO advised that one (Survey ID #194), the Abe Lincoln Trading Company, had been previously determined eligible; it is included in the potentially eligible resource count in this report, as integrity is sufficient to maintain the eligibility recommendation. Eight resources (Survey IDs #36, #118, #112, #176, #66, #65, #12, and #248) were already listed in the NRHP and are not included in the list of potentially eligible resources.

As a result of this survey, Stantec identified 40 resources as potentially eligible for the NRHP which are listed in **Table 6**; **Appendix C** has individual inventory forms for each resource. Thumbnail sketches of individual properties are described in **Section 7.2.1**. Three potential historic districts were identified and are described in **Section 7.2.2** along with their associated resources. In **Section 7.2.3**, a historic-age resource is recommended contributing to a current district, and **Section 7.2.4** provides an overview of Multiple-Property Documentation Forms.

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Table 6. Properties Identified as Potentially Eligible for the NRHP

Survey ID	Town	Address	Current Property Name
263	Brooksville	301 N Lincoln Street	St. John's Baptist Church
266	Brooksville	S corner of N Tolson Street and Sammy Davis Jr. Drive	Church
267	Brooksville	S side of Rock Ave, approx. 300 feet W of NS 3600 (Broadway)	Former School
194	Clearview	ca. 335 feet E of S Main Street	Abe Lincoln Trading Company
193	Clearview	202 N 1st Street	Church of the Living God
236	Clearview	SW of Boston/Main Streets	Clearview School
192	Clearview	E side of N McIntosh Street, 125 feet S of Gertrude Avenue	Sandstone wall
191	Clearview	101–107 Broadway	Dwelling
234	Clearview	S of W Main Street, approx. 150 feet E of S JRG Street	Dwelling
98	Grayson	SE corner of Broadway and McIntosh Streets	Former Grayson School
183	IXL	111 W Seminole	Pleasant Hill African Methodist Episcopal Church
260	Langston	208 W Seminole	Old Langston Jail
258	Langston	Corner of Cherokee and Walnut Streets	Old Church of the Living God
259	Langston	S side of W Choctaw Street, 220 feet W of S Pine Street	Scott's Grocery and Deli
161	Lima	1207 Turner Avenue	First Baptist Church
31	Red Bird	NW corner of Lincoln and Webster Streets	Shiloh Baptist Church
14	Red Bird	26 King Street	Red Bird Church of Christ
271	Red Bird	505 Lincoln Street	Red Bird Jail
69	Rentiesville	Broadway between Oklahoma/Missouri Streets	Former Post Office
82	Rentiesville	Broadway between Oklahoma/Missouri Streets	Church of Christ
72	Rentiesville	300 Pecan Street	Church
246	Taft	5 Lincoln Street	Post Office/Boots Cafe
244	Taft	S side of Missouri Street ca. 240 feet W of Broadway	Moton High School
245	Taft	N 4250 Road, ca. 0.5 miles north of E 241st Street	First Baptist Church
249	Taft	NE corner of Mississippi Avenue/Broadway	Dwelling
253	Taft	Corner of Mississippi/Alabama Avenues	Dwelling
145	Tatums	E terminus of Tennessee Avenue	Varner's Grocery
146	Tatums	28 Lincoln Street	Dwelling
160	Tatums	E terminus of Tennessee Avenue	Mary T. Tatum Municipal Building
41	Tulahassee	301 N Lincoln Street	Pinkard Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
49	Tulahassee	S corner of N Tolson Street and Sammy Davis Jr. Drive	Carter G. Woodson School
48	Tulahassee	S side of Rock Ave, approx. 300 feet W of NS 3600 (Broadway)	Carter G. Woodson School
39	Tulahassee	ca. 335 feet E of S Main Street	Building
45	Tulahassee	202 N 1st Street	First Baptist Church
67	Tulahassee	SW of Boston/Main Streets	John Ford Field House (Carter G. Woodson School)
68	Tulahassee	E side of N McIntosh Street, 125 feet S of Gertrude Avenue	Pleasant Grove Baptist Church
104	Vernon	101–107 Broadway	Old Vernon Schoolhouse
103	Vernon	SE corner of Broadway and McIntosh Streets	New Hope Baptist Church
107	Vernon	111 W Seminole	Dwelling
108	Vernon	208 W Seminole	Outbuilding



7.2 Property Summaries

In this section, properties recommended as potentially eligible for the NRHP, and their respective area(s) of significance are described.

7.2.1 INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE FOR THE NRHP

7.2.1.1.1 Historic Resources in Brooksville, Oklahoma

St. John's Baptist Church (Survey ID #263)

A ca. 1910 single-story church with an asphalt-clad front-gable roof. The church has rusticated stone walls and two-over-two single-hung metal window units. The primary entrance has double paneled doors. A cupola with flared eaves is asymmetrically positioned. The belfry has been enclosed and clad in asphalt siding. Alterations include replacement of all visible windows, windows boarded, entrance infilled, stone walls painted, and a concrete block addition to the rear.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Furthermore, alterations have diminished integrity. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Church (Survey ID #266)

A ca. 1920 single-story craftsman-influenced church with an asphalt-clad front-gable roof. The church has wood-clad walls, double-hung wood window units, and a set of double paneled wood doors. The entrance is set under a partial-width projecting porch on wood posts. Alterations include the replacement of some wall cladding on the rear. The church does not appear to be in use.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. This resource does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials and association have been compromised by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

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Former School (Survey ID #267)

A ca. 1945 single-story frame school building with an asphalt-clad side-gable roof. The building has wood walls and a mix of one-over-one and eight-over-eight double-hung wood window units. The entrance is set under a projecting stoop. The building has exposed rafter tails. Alterations include boarding of some windows and doors. The building appears vacant.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Brooksville.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. This resource does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, workmanship, and association have been compromised by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.2 Historic Resources in Clearview, Oklahoma

Dwelling (Survey ID #191)

A ca. 1940 single-story, single-family Craftsman-influenced dwelling with a front-gable asphalt-clad roof. The dwelling has wood-clad walls and a mix of one-over-one double-hung wood and two-over-two single-hung aluminum window units. There is a full-width porch with tapered wood supports on brick piers on the primary façade. Decorative elements include exposed rafter tails, brackets, and a diamond-shape window in the façade gable. Alterations include missing windows and the replacement of some windows.

Dwellings, the most common property type in the all-Black towns, exhibit forms and styles that were modest versions of contemporaneously popular choice. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of a Craftsman-influenced bungalow. Although the resource is deteriorated, it retains the essential components of brackets, tapered columns on brick piers, exposed rafters, and a diamond gable window/ornament to convey the building's intended design. The house appears to retain original wood weatherboard and some windows, although they are in disrepair.

This resource is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance; however, additional research may identify owners or occupants with significance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Church of the Living God (Survey ID #193)

A ca. 1930 single-story church with a front-gable, asphalt-clad roof. The church has painted stone-clad walls with engineered wood cladding in the gable ends and the projecting gable volumes on the primary and rear façades. Windows are single-hung and sliding metal units. Alterations include painting of the stone walls, the replacement of windows and boarded windows on the east façade, the replacement door, and the projecting front volume addition.



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Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Abe Lincoln Trading Company (Survey ID #194)

A ca. 1903 single-story one-part commercial-block building with a flat roof with parapet. The building has sandstone walls, double-hung wood windows, and double paneled wood doors on the façade. A full-width porch is appended to the primary façade and a small brick chimney is on the east façade.

According to SHPO correspondence, this resource was previously determined eligible for the NRHP. No change in its eligibility is recommended.

Commercial buildings were vital magnets of trade in the all-Black towns. Based on report findings, this resource is considered eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also considered eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. It is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Commerce; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role commerce played in Clearview. Finally, it is considered eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative and a rare surviving example of a commercial building in Clearview. Its physical integrity has been compromised, but character-defining features, including original materials and fenestration pattern, convey the intended design.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Dwelling (Survey ID #234)

A ca. 1945 single-story, single-family Craftsman-style dwelling with a metal-clad, front-gabled roof. The dwelling has wood siding, double-hung wood windows, and exposed rafter tails. There is a full-width porch with tapered wood supports on brick piers over the primary entrance. Alterations include the replacement of the roof material and boarding of a door on the east façade.

Dwellings, the most common property type in the all-Black towns, exhibit forms and styles that were modest versions of contemporaneously popular choice. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of a Craftsman-style bungalow. This resource retains the essential components of tapered

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columns on brick piers and exposed rafter tails to convey the building's intended design. The house appears to retain original wood weatherboard siding and double-hung wood windows.

This resource is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance; however, additional research may identify owners or occupants with significance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.3 Historic Resources in Grayson, Oklahoma

Former Grayson School (Survey ID #98)

The remains of a ca. 1931 two-story former school constructed from coursed, rusticated stonework. The building has arched doorways, a brick chimney, and once had a gable roof. No windows or doors remain, and the roof is gone. The stone ruins are open to the elements.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Grayson.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. This resource does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, workmanship, and association have been compromised by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.4 Historic Resources in IXL, Oklahoma

Pleasant Hill African Methodist Episcopal Church (Survey ID #183)

A 1964 single-story church with a front-gable, metal-clad roof. The façade of the church's primary volume is clad in brick, and gable ends are clad in metal. The other façades are clad in concrete block. A hipped roof addition with concrete block-clad walls projects from the south façade to create an L-plan. The church has a mix of fixed aluminum and one-over-one single-hung window units. The primary entrance is a set of double aluminum and glazed doors on the south façade.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are

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diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.5 Historic Resources in Langston, Oklahoma

Old Church of the Living God (Survey ID #258)

A ca. 1898 single-story frame church with Craftsman-influenced details and an asphalt-clad, front-gable roof. The church has wood-clad walls and double-hung wood window units. The entrance contains a set of double paneled doors, each with a nine-pane metal glazed unit. The building has exposed rafter tails and brackets in the gable ends. Alterations include the historic-period addition of a hipped roof volume to the rear, replacement doors and missing porch components.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of the property type. Alterations compromise the building's integrity, but character-defining features, including wall and roof cladding, and fenestration pattern, convey the building's intended design.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Scott's Grocery and Deli (Survey ID #259)

A ca. 1940 single-story commercial building of no particular style with an asphalt-clad side-gable roof. The building has concrete block-clad walls with wood siding in the gable ends. The building has fixed and single-hung metal window units. The primary entrance contains a single metal glazed slab door. Alterations include infilling of some windows and doors, a shed roof addition to the south façade, the addition of a ramp, and the porch frame on the primary façade. The building appears vacant.

Commercial buildings were vital magnets of trade in the all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Commerce; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role commerce played in Langston.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. This resource does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship have been compromised by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.



Old Langston Jail (Survey ID #260)

A single-room jailhouse with a flat roof with a slight parapet and sandstone walls. The building has two window openings, each containing a set of unglazed metal bars. The primary entrance is centered on the façade and contains a door composed of metal bars. An inscription reading “1935 Trotter” is etched into a concrete cornerstone on the façade. A poured concrete foundation suggests that the building may have been altered or moved to this location. Other alterations include repointing with incompatible mortar.

Governmental buildings, like jails, allowed all-Black towns autonomy to conduct civic affairs. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative and a rare surviving example of the property type in Langston. Its physical integrity has been compromised and it may have been moved, but character-defining features, including original materials, convey the building's intended design.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.6 Historic Resources in Lima, Oklahoma

First Baptist Church (Survey ID #161)

A 1959 single-story brick-clad church with a stepped-gable, metal-clad roof. The church has a mix of double-hung wood window units and sliding metal window units over brick sills. A wood steeple projects from the roof. Additions to the façade include a partial-width porch and ramp.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of the property type. The porch addition compromises the building's integrity, but character-defining features, including wall and roof cladding, fenestration pattern, and stepped gable convey the building's intended design.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.7 Historic Resources in Red Bird, Oklahoma

Shiloh Baptist Church (Survey ID #31)

A 1948 one-story church building of no particular style with an asphalt-clad front-gable roof. A stair-step parapet formed of concrete block decorates the front façade above a projecting front-gable porch. The church follows a traditional cross plan but appears to have once been a T-plan before an addition at its apse at the east end of the building. The church is clad in concrete block and stucco and vertical wood board. Four metal single-hung windows are on either side of the chapel

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nave. Two vinyl windows flank the primary entrance, a pair of storefront metal glass doors. The rear of the church has both single-hung vinyl and fixed windows and synthetic doors. Alterations include the rear apse addition and replacement doors and windows. A stone well and a standalone church bell with wheel are on the property. A cornerstone is at the southwest corner of the building and a commemorative marker is at the base of the well.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Red Bird Church of Christ (Survey ID #14)

A 1970 single-story church with a cross-gable, asphalt-clad roof. The church is constructed with concrete blocks and has a wood cladding in the gable-ends. The church has double-hung wood window units and some single-hung metal units. There is a partial-width projecting porch at the primary entrance, and a stoop porch at the secondary entrance. Alterations include a missing steeple, replacement of the doors, some windows, and the porch addition.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.8 Resources in Rentiesville, Oklahoma

Former Post Office (Survey ID #69)

A ca. 1930 single-story post office of no particular style. The building has an asphalt-clad front-gable roof and painted concrete block walls. The building has single-hung metal window units and a single glazed slab door centered on the façade. The entrance is set under a partial-width projecting stoop. The building has exposed rafter tails. Alterations include replacement of the door and windows. The post office appears vacant.

Post offices were significant in all-Black towns because they signaled federal recognition of these communities. Governmental buildings, like post offices, allowed all-Black towns autonomy to conduct civic affairs. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for



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associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Church of Christ (Survey ID #82)

A ca. 1940 single-story church of no particular style with a metal-clad front-gable roof. The church has stucco-clad walls, one-over-one double-hung and fixed wood window units, and two-over-two single-hung metal window units. The primary entrance is set into an enclosed partial-width projecting porch and contains a single paneled synthetic door. Alterations include the addition of a concrete block volume to the rear, porch enclosure, and boarding of some windows.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Church (Survey ID #72)

A ca. 1945 single-story church of no particular style with an asphalt-clad front-gable roof. The church has painted concrete block walls with wood cladding in the gable ends. The church has two-over-two single-hung metal window units. The primary entrance contains a set of double slab wood doors. Alterations include a rear addition that runs perpendicularly to the primary volume, a second addition in the ell of those two volumes, and the enclosure of the primary porch.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.9 Resources in Taft, Oklahoma

Moton High School (Survey ID #244)

A 1958 single-story Mid-Century Modern building that has a flat, asphalt-clad roof and concrete block- and brick-clad walls. The building has both multiple-pane fixed metal windows and one-over-one metal awning windows. Entrances contain double metal doors with a small, glazed pane. The primary entrance has brick surrounds, and a vertical brick wall that pierces the roof, and integrated planters on the façade are also brick.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. It is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Taft. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of the property type.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

First Baptist Church (Survey ID #245)

A 1973 single-story church with a metal-clad front-gable roof. The church has concrete block walls. The walls of the façade extend past the façade's intersection with side s to form stepped wingwalls. The building has single-hung metal window units and double metal slab doors. There is a partial-width porch on the primary façade. A steeple tops the roof. Alterations include replacement of cladding in gable ends with vinyl siding, the replacement of some windows, a rear addition, and the addition of the projecting front porch.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Post Office/Boots Café (Survey ID #246)

A 1949 single-story one-part commercial-block building that historically served as a post office. The building has a flat, asphalt-clad roof with a parapet on the primary façade that steps down on the side façades. Walls are clad in brick and concrete block. There is an inscription reading "C. R. Grimmett 1949" on the façade. Alterations include a metal-clad addition on the north façade, an addition to the rear, a replacement awning, replacement doors, and boarding of windows. The building is currently vacant.

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Post offices were significant in all-Black towns because they signaled federal recognition of these communities. Governmental buildings, like post offices, allowed all-Black towns autonomy to conduct civic affairs. During its later use as a commercial building, it was a vital magnet of trade. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. It is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Commerce; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role commerce played in Taft. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative and a rare surviving example of the property type in Taft. Alterations compromise the building's physical integrity, but character-defining features, including original materials, parapet, and fenestration pattern, convey the building's intended design.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Dwelling (Survey ID #249)

A ca. 1930 one- and a half-story single-family dwelling with an asphalt-clad hipped roof. The dwelling has a stone foundation and rusticated stone walls. The dwelling has one-over-one single vinyl window units with simulated divided panes. The entrance contains a single glazed paneled synthetic door. Hipped dormers project from the roof on three façades. A full width, shed roof porch is supported on tapered wood porch supports with stone piers. Alterations include painting of the stonework and replacement of doors and windows.

Dwellings, the most common property type in the all-Black towns, exhibit forms and styles that were modest versions of contemporaneously popular choice. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of a Craftsman-influenced bungalow. Although the resource is altered, it retains essential components like footprint, tapered columns on brick piers, full-width porch, and fenestration pattern, to convey the building's intended design. Although painted, the house appears to retain original stone cladding.

This resource is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance; however, additional research may identify significant owners or occupants. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Dwelling (Survey ID #253)

A ca. 1950 single-story, single-family Minimal Traditional-style dwelling with a complex asphalt-clad roof. The dwelling has sandstone walls in a giraffe pattern, double-hung wood windows, and paneled wood doors. The primary door has been replaced.

Dwellings, the most common property type in the all-Black towns, exhibit forms and styles that were modest versions of contemporaneously popular choice. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of its type.

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This resource is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance; however, additional research may identify significant occupants. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.10 Resources in Tatum, Oklahoma

Mary T. Tatum Municipal Building (Survey ID #160)

A ca. 1970 single-story municipal building of no particular style with a low-slope, rolled asphalt-clad roof. The building has brick-clad walls and a mix of steel casement and fixed metal windows. Entrances have single slab wood doors with metal hardware. Some windowpanes are missing.

Governmental resources, like this municipal building, allowed all-Black towns autonomy to conduct civic affairs. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.11 Resources in Tullahoma, Oklahoma

Pinkard Chapel Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (Survey ID #41)

A 1923 one-story church building with front-gable roof clad in asphalt. The building is made of concrete block with wood board as vestibule and gable-end cladding. Board and batten clads the rear wing. Fenestration includes fixed and sliding windows and synthetic doors. Alterations include replaced windows and doors, and additions to the front and side façades.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship have been compromised by non-historic alterations and additions. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Building (Survey ID #39)

A ca. 1940 one-story L-shape building with cross-gable asphalt-clad roof. Its form and double entrance suggest it was previously used for a religious or educational purpose. Concrete block forms its walls and asphalt shingles occupy the



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gable ends. Two five-paneled wood doors provide the primary entrance into the building. Although most of the windows are boarded, some original one-over-one single-hung wood windows remain on the west façade. Sometime after 1973, the south wing of the L-plan was added. The building has been vacant since at least 2008.

Although its historical associations remain unclear, this resource likely has associations with an educational or religious function that were essential components of all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Integrity of design, materials, and workmanship have been compromised by non-historic alterations and additions. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

First Baptist Church (Survey ID #45)

A ca. 1960 one-story L-plan church building with a cross-gable roof clad in asphalt. It is clad in tan brick on the front façade and concrete block on the other façades. Processed wood board clads the gable ends. The front façade exhibits a stylized concrete breeze-block wall, narrow windows, and an obelisk steeple. The church has wide eaves on the main volume. Double wood doors are at the entrance and fixed narrow windows are throughout the sanctuary. By 2003, the southeast wing was added to the church. The new addition has single-hung vinyl windows and a synthetic door. Some windows on the original volume have been painted.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church/Sodom Church (Survey ID #68)

A ca. 1945 one-story church with a front-gable roof clad in asphalt. The building is clad in concrete block with asphalt shingles in the gable ends. A central partial-width porch shelters the primary entrance. Fenestration includes metal two-over-two single-hung windows, metal one-over-one single-hung vinyl windows, and wood doors. Alterations include some replaced windows, painted windows, and a rear addition. One front door is missing.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately

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designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.1.1.12 Resources in Vernon, Oklahoma

New Hope Baptist Church (Survey ID #103)

A 1968 single-story church with a metal-clad, gable roof with exposed rafter tails. The primary volume is constructed of concrete blocks with vinyl cladding in the gable ends. There is a metal-clad addition to the north façade. The building has single-hung vinyl window units and a double synthetic door. A square cupola with a hipped metal roof supports the steeple-like cross that protrudes from the roof above the main door. Alterations include the northern addition, and replacement windows, doors, some wall cladding, and roof material.

Churches were an essential component of community building in all-Black towns. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Old Vernon Schoolhouse (Survey ID #104)

A 1951 one-story former schoolhouse clad in brick with an asphalt-shingle-clad hipped roof and a built-up flat roof with parapet. All of the windows appear to have been replaced with fixed windows or single-hung metal units. The doors are also metal replacements. Some of the window openings have been altered and partially enclosed.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the role education played in Vernon.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. This resource does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, workmanship, and association have been compromised by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.



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Dwelling (Survey ID #107)

A ca. 1910 single-story, single-family National Folk Style house with a metal-clad, side-gable primary volume. The building is clad in wood weatherboard and has double-hung wood windows and a single glazed paneled wood door. Most windows have missing glazing. There is an addition to the rear, and a partial-width porch on the primary, western façade.

Alterations include replacement porch supports, replacement roof materials, and the rear addition. The dwelling appears to be vacant. It is associated with the adjacent outbuilding (Survey ID #108).

Dwellings, the most common property type in the all-Black towns, exhibit forms and styles that were modest versions of contemporaneously popular choice. This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of its type. Alterations compromise the dwelling's physical integrity, but character-defining features, including original materials and fenestration pattern, convey the building's intended design.

This resource is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance; however, additional research may identify significant occupants. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Outbuilding (Survey ID #108)

A ca. 1910 single-story outbuilding constructed of vaguely coursed, random -cut stone, with a metal shed roof. There appears to be a window opening on the south façade with clerestory windows above. All windows are missing glazing. The east façade has an opening, but no door.

This resource is associated with the adjacent National Folk Style dwelling (Survey ID #107). This resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative example of its type. Alterations compromise the dwelling's physical integrity, but character-defining features, including original materials and fenestration pattern, convey the building's intended design.

This resource is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance; however, additional research may identify significant occupants. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.2 DISTRICTS POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE FOR THE NRHP

Three historic districts are assessed for NRHP eligibility in this section; individual resource assessments follow each district assessment.

7.2.2.1.1 Clearview School, Clearview, Oklahoma

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) built the Clearview School campus in the late 1930s with a gymnasium (Survey ID #236), an agricultural building (demolished in 1995), and a sandstone perimeter wall (Survey ID #192). A non-historic-age building is also on the property.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. These resources are recommended eligible for the NRHP as a potential historic district with two contributing resources, the gymnasium and the wall, and one noncontributing resource, the non-historic-age building. The district is recommended eligible under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This district is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements, and for its associations with WPA-era construction projects. It is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Clearview. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative and rare surviving example of the property type in Clearview. The district boundary includes the area enclosed by the sandstone wall, the historical boundary of the Clearview School campus. The period of significance begins with the build dates, ca. 1938–1939, and concludes in 1973, the 50-year guideline for NRHP resources.



Figure 3. Clearview School Recommended NRHP District Boundary.

The district is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the district offers neither local interpretations of a standard design nor undocumented construction techniques, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Clearview School Gymnasium (Survey ID #236)

A ca. 1938 single-story school building of no particular style that likely functioned as a gymnasium. The building has brick-clad walls, with an asphalt-clad barrel roof, and a set of double metal slab doors on the primary façade. Parapets embellish the front and rear façades. Alterations include the boarded windows, an addition to the rear, and the addition of a partial width, projecting front porch.

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Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements, and for its associations with WPA-era construction projects. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Clearview.

It is recommended not individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Although it does embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, it does so more favorably as a historic district in tandem with the related sandstone wall (Survey ID #192). The school does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. On its own, integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Sandstone Wall (Survey ID #192)

This ca. 1939 sandstone rubble wall is irregularly pierced by stone posts made of the same material.

As part of a school campus, this wall was associated with education in an all-Black town. This resource is recommended individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements, and for its associations with WPA-era construction projects.

It is recommended not individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Although it does embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, it does so more favorably as a historic district in tandem with the related Clearview School Gymnasium (Survey ID #236). The wall does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. On its own, integrity of materials, design, and workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

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7.2.2.1.2 Carter G. Woodson School, Tullahassee, Oklahoma

The WPA built the Carter G. Woodson School from the late 1930s through the early 1940s. Two WPA buildings, one stone (Survey ID #48) and wood-frame (Survey ID #49), and a ca. 1970 field house (Survey ID #67) are extant.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. The resources are recommended eligible for the NRHP as a potential historic district with three contributing resources, the two WPA buildings and the field house. The district is recommended eligible under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This district is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements, and for its associations with WPA-era construction projects. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Tullahassee. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, as a good representative and rare surviving example of the property type in Tullahassee. The district boundary includes the building footprints and the historical boundary of the Woodson School campus. The period of significance begins with the earliest construction date, 1939, and concludes in 1973, the 50-year guideline for NRHP resources.

The district is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Because the district offers neither local interpretations of a standard design nor undocumented construction techniques, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Stone WPA Building at Carter G. Woodson School Building (Survey ID #48)

A 1941 one-story, stone school building with side-gable roof. A 2012 fire destroyed most of the building, leaving only a few stone walls that typify giraffe-pattern stonework. Arched stoop porches are on the east and west façades. These portals have voussoirs and keystones. The school originally had wood windows in the main volume and multiple-pane metal casement windows in its south wing.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements, and for its associations with WPA-era construction projects. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education;



Figure 4. Carter G. Woodson School Recommended NRHP District Boundary.

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although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Tullahassee.

It is recommended not individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Although it does embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, it does so more favorably as a historic district in tandem with related buildings (Survey IDs #49 and 67). The building does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. On its own, integrity of materials, workmanship, feeling, and design have been diminished due to the loss of the roof, windows, doors, and most walls, and its abandonment. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Wood WPA Building at Carter G. Woodson School Building (Survey ID #49)

A 1939 one-story, wood-frame school with a central primary entrance flanked by window bays. The building has a side-gable roof clad in asphalt with a front-gable stoop porch. Wood siding and tan brick are on the building. All windows and doors are missing. The school originally had a band of three single-hung six-over-six wood windows in each bay. A pairing of smaller six-over-six single-hung windows were in the smaller openings on either side of the primary entrance. At some point, brick veneer cladding was used to cover original wood siding. A 2012 fire contributed to its current condition.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements, and for its associations with WPA-era construction projects. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Tullahassee.

It is recommended not individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Although it does embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, it does so more favorably as a historic district in tandem with related buildings (Survey IDs #48 and 67). The building does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. On its own, integrity of materials, workmanship, feeling, and design have been diminished due to fire damage, replacement cladding, the loss of windows and doors, and abandonment. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

John Ford Field House at the Carter G. Woodson School (Survey ID #67)

A ca. 1970 one-story building with barrel metal roof, its shed metal roof covers an inset partial-width porch that leads to the primary entrance. The building is clad in concrete block. Windows are mostly boarded; those that are exposed are fixed. Metal and synthetic doors are present. All windows and doors appear to have been replaced or boarded. The roof has been replaced.

Schools were critical to educating youths and adults in all-Black towns, with enriching instruction in primary, secondary, and industrial curriculums. This resource is recommended individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements, and for its associations with WPA-era construction projects. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A in the area of Education;

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although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with the influential role education played in Tullahassee.

It is recommended not individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. Although it does embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, it does so more favorably as a historic district in tandem with related buildings (Survey IDs #48 and 49). The building does not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. On its own, integrity of materials, workmanship, and feeling have been diminished due to the replacement of some materials and abandonment. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.2.1.3 Varner House and Grocery Historic District, Tatums, Oklahoma

The ca. 1945 Varner's Grocery (Survey ID #145) and ca. 1955 associated dwelling (Survey ID #146) were part of a mid-century commercial business in Tatums, Oklahoma. Three non-historic-age accessory buildings are associated with the resources.

Commercial buildings were vital magnets of trade in the all-Black towns. The resources are recommended eligible for the NRHP as a potential historic district with both buildings as contributing. The district is recommended eligible under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. The district resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage commercial and institutional improvements. Finally, it is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Commerce; although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the potential district is closely associated with Tatums' commercial development. The district boundary encompasses two parcels with the contributing Varner House and Grocery Store (Survey ID #145 and #146), and three noncontributing non-historic-age accessory buildings. The period of significance extends from ca. 1945, when the grocery store was completed, to 1973, the 50-year guideline for NRHP resources.



Figure 5. Varner House and Grocery Recommended NRHP District Boundary.

The district is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. The buildings do not represent the work of a master or possess high artistic value. Because the district offers neither local interpretations of a standard design nor undocumented construction techniques, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Varner's Grocery (Survey ID #145)

A ca. 1945 single-story one-part commercial-block building with a gable asphalt-clad roof and a stepped parapet on the primary (south) façade. The building is constructed of concrete blocks. Window units are missing or not visible. The



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primary entrance has a single metal and glass door. There is a full-width porch addition on the primary façade. The building is overgrown and appears to have the words "Varners Grocery" painted on the parapet.

It is recommended not individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, B, C, or D. Although its historical associations are apparent in association with the district, the building does not achieve significance on its own. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

Dwelling (Survey ID #146)

A ca. 1955 single-story, single-family Ranch-style dwelling with side-gable, asphalt-clad roof. The dwelling has painted brick walls with T1-11 wood siding panels in gable ends. Windows are two-over-two, single-hung metal units. There are two integrated porches, a brick chimney, a low brick wall capped with decorative metalwork, and periodic piers surrounding the house perimeter. Alterations include several rear additions, some cladding and window replacements, and the addition of concrete blocks to the brick wall landscape. Jimmy Lee and Jewell Varner owned this house the adjacent commercial grocery store (Survey ID #145), which they operated.

This resource is recommended individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. It is also recommended eligible under Criterion A, in the area of Commerce, for its association with operation of the Varner Grocery Store (Survey ID #145); although this area of significance is not explicitly documented in the related historic context, the resource is closely associated with Tatums' commercial development.

It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B, C, or D. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.3 RESOURCES POTENTIALLY CONTRIBUTING TO EXISTING NRHP NOMINATIONS

One resource, the Old Red Bird Jail (Survey ID #271), is recommended contributing to an existing thematic group listed in the NRHP as part of the “Historic Local Government Buildings in Oklahoma’s All-Black Towns” nomination in 1984. Among other properties, the nomination includes the Taft City Hall and the Red Bird City Hall with a period of significance extending from 1910 to 1984 with Politics/Government and Ethnic Heritage as areas of significance. However, contributing resources were not included in this nomination.

7.2.3.1.1 Red Bird City Hall Nomination Boundary, Red Bird, Oklahoma

The 1933 Old Red Bird City Hall (Survey ID #12), listed in the NRHP as part of the 1984 nomination, is the second-oldest extant government building associated with Oklahoma’s all-Black towns. The verbal boundary description for the property is Lots 1–4, Block 144, Original Townsite of Red Bird, OK.¹⁴ Since the Old Red Bird City Hall is listed in the NRHP, it is not further described in this report.

Adjacent to and west of the City Hall is the ca. 1930 Red Bird Jail (Survey ID #271). Both are part of a nine-parcel triangular block with a ca. 1960 Red Bird City Hall (Survey ID #10), and a ca. 2000 metal utilitarian storage building and picnic pavilion.

It is recommended that the NRHP boundary for the Old Red Bird City Hall be extended to incorporate these parcels to include the Red Bird Jail (Survey ID #271), which is recommended as contributing the Old Red Bird City Hall property. The ca. 1960 Red Bird City Hall (Survey ID #10) and two ca. 2000 resources are recommended as noncontributing.

Red Bird Jail (Survey ID #271)

A ca. 1930 abandoned stone and concrete calaboose jail with two cells. The roof is missing. Barred windows have been infilled with brick and one gate door is missing. The roof is also missing.

Governmental buildings, like jails, allowed all-Black towns autonomy to conduct civic affairs. This resource is recommended contributing to the “Historic Local Government Buildings in Oklahoma’s All-Black Towns” NRHP nomination in association with the Old Red Bird City Hall for significance under Criterion A, in the area of Ethnic Heritage/Black, for its associations with a defined all-Black town founded to protect and provide opportunities in the Jim Crow era. This resource is also recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, in the area of Community Planning and Development, for associations with a deliberately designed town that had amenities intended to support surrounding farm families and encourage institutional improvements.

It is recommended not individually eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, B, C, or D. Although its historical associations are apparent in association with the district, the building does not achieve significance on its own. No associations were identified linking it to persons of historic importance. It does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic value. Integrity of materials, design, and



Figure 6. Red Bird City Hall Recommended NRHP Boundary.

¹⁴ U. S. Department of the Interior, “Historic Local Government Buildings in Oklahoma’s All-Black Towns,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1984.

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workmanship are diminished by non-historic alterations. Because the building offers neither a local interpretation of a standard design nor an undocumented construction technique, it has limited potential to yield important information.

7.2.4 MULTIPLE-PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR THE NRHP

The surveyed resources were evaluated for a potential NRHP Multiple-Property Documentation Form (MPDF) representing the all-Black towns of Oklahoma. This type of nomination documents groups of properties related to a specific historic context, provides guidelines for property types, their significance, and registration requirements. An MPDF is a unifying umbrella-like cover document that encapsulates a contextual history—like that of the all-Black towns—and a broad understanding of related property types—in this case, agricultural, commercial, domestic, educational, governmental, and religious resources. The contextual documentation in a SHPO/NPS-approved MPDF provides the preponderance of historical evidence and evaluation processes, simplifying the NRHP nomination process.

A fully developed MPDF for the all-Black towns would incorporate the results of this report and could further develop additional areas of significance, particularly Commerce, Education, and Politics/Government. The component parts of the MPDF provided in this survey report are the historic context, “Oklahoma’s All-Black Towns, 1865–1973,” its related registration requirements, and identification and evaluation methods. An MPDF also would include a detailed description of associated property types and their significance.

8 Historic Context

Stantec developed a historic context within which to understand and evaluate resources in the all-Black towns of Oklahoma for the period between 1865 and 1973. This section describes significant trends and events that influenced the founding and development of these towns and the three areas of significance that apply most readily, Community Planning and Development, Ethnic Heritage/Black, and Architecture. Many other areas of significance are likely applicable to the documented resources but were not explicitly represented in the historic context. The most common of these areas are Commerce and Education. However, in all-Black towns, since businesses were so integral to commercial development and schools were so closely associated with the influential role of education, these and other areas of significance can apply with appropriate and specific justification.

Reports suggest that about 50 all-Black towns once existed in Oklahoma, a number unprecedented among the states, and some have been recognized with historical designations. Today, 30-plus locations are discernible in archival sources but, on the ground, only 14 all-Black towns are extant (**Figure 7** and **Table 7**). This historic context focuses on 13 of those communities, since the remaining place, Boley, has been well documented.¹⁵ Some of the best examples of buildings in these towns are already listed in the National Register: three schools (W. E. B. Du Bois School [burned 1991], Summit, Muskogee County; Rosenwald Hall, Lima, Seminole County; Mill-Washington School, Red Bird, Wagoner County), two churches (Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, Tatums, Carter County, and St. Thomas Primitive Baptist Church, Summit,

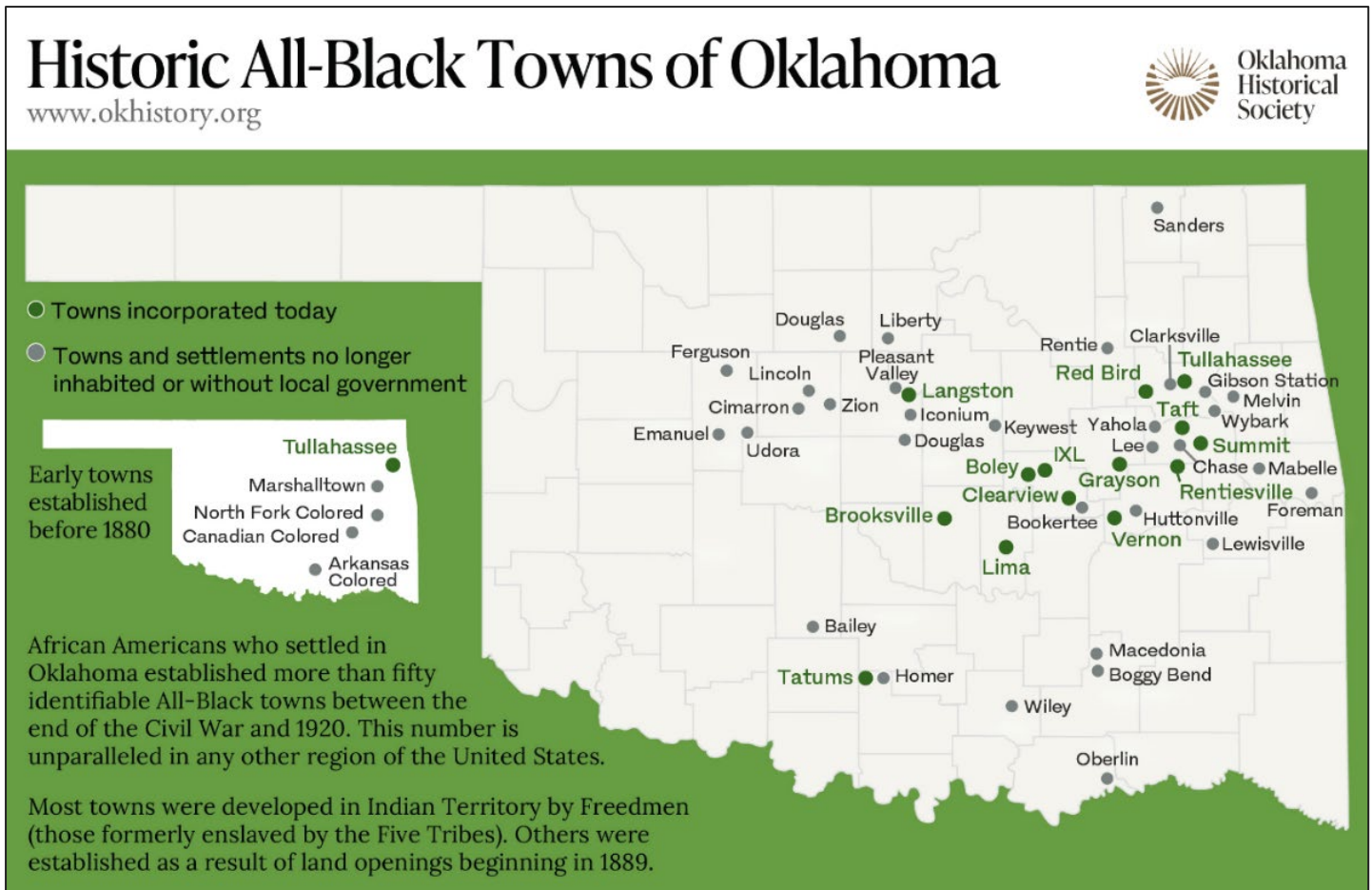


Figure 7. Locations of Select All-Black Towns in Oklahoma. Source: Larry O'Dell, "All-Black Towns" (*The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, Oklahoma Historical Society, 2022).
<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=AL009>.

¹⁵ Listed in the NRHP and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1975.

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Muskogee County), two city halls (Red Bird City Hall, Wagoner County, and Taft City Hall, Muskogee County), a post office (Vernon Post Office, McIntosh County), a commercial building (A. J. Mason Building, Tullahassee, Wagoner County), and dwellings (Morris House, Langston, Logan County, and Lee Wilder Thomas Homestead, Summit, Muskogee County), including a small historic district (Langston University Cottage Row Historic District, Langston, Logan County).

Table 7. Select All-Black Towns, By Estimated Founding Date, Their Estimated Duration, and Territory.

All-Black Town	Estimated Duration	Territory
North Fork Colored	1869–?	Indian
Arkansas Colored	1869–?	Indian
Canadian	1869–?	Indian
Gibson Station	1870—at least 1962	Indian
Lincoln City	1889–?	Oklahoma
Arcadia	1890–?	Indian
Langston	1890–present	Oklahoma
Liberty	1893–?	Oklahoma
Tatums	1894–present	Indian
Wybark	1896—at least 1952	Indian
Summit	1896–present	Indian
IXL	1896–present	Indian
Grayson (initially Wildcat)	1897–present	Indian
Foreman	1898—at least 1952	Indian
Tullahassee	1899–present	Indian
Overton	1900–?	Indian
Wellston Colony	1900–?	Oklahoma
Bluff	1901–1934	Indian
Iconium	1902–?	Indian
Clearview (initially Lincoln)	1903–present	Indian
Marshalltown	1904–?	Indian
Red Bird	1902–present	Indian
Taft	1902–present	Indian
Rentiesville	1903–present	Indian
Boley	1903–present	Indian
Brooksville (initially Sewell)	1903–present	Oklahoma
Bailey	1904—at least 1952	Indian
Chase	1906—at least 1962	Indian
Ferguson	1907–?	Oklahoma
Lima	1907–present	Indian
Gay (initially Lenton)	1908–1932	Indian
Vernon	1911–present	Indian
Lewisville	1911—at least 1962	Indian
Bookertee	1919—at least 1952	Indian

8.1 Oklahoma's All-Black Towns, 1865–1973

Researchers have delved into the remarkable and unusual history of Oklahoma's all-Black towns for decades. To learn about these towns as individual places and shared communities is to explore how common experiences connected and benefited a complicated intersection of people from differing ethnic heritages. Regardless of derivation, the Black men, women, and children who sought independence and autonomy in these towns were able to partially avoid the realities of a racist standard.

The definitions of all-Black towns in Oklahoma guide the pertinent NRHP areas of significance that best apply to the resources. In many ways, these all-Black towns were not entirely dissimilar from the traditional organically developed freedmen's communities common in the South since the people who inhabited both types of settlements all sought self-determination. However, in the twin Oklahoma and Indian Territories, with their many Native American groups, land ownership was considerably more likely for freedmen, and this conspicuous advantage foreshadowed a social movement with its own distinctive landscapes. Early studies, not surprisingly, report on these places as all-Negro towns; by 1970, the term all-Black replaced the offensive phrase.¹⁶ In 1998, the Oklahoma Historical Society investigated communities that could be considered all-Black. To meet project qualifications, a town had to have: Black founders, a Black-dominated governance structure, Black town officials, or a Black postmaster.¹⁷ This is the definition of all-Black towns. Towns that meet this definition, combined with their representation in the archival record, may have resources that achieve an Ethnic Heritage/Black area of significance. County plat maps, deeds, and other legal records, plus newspapers document how Black entrepreneurs devised means for people of color to enjoy the protection of and opportunities in the all-Black towns. These sources support a Community Planning and Development area of significance. Last, the buildings, structures, and objects in the all-Black towns define the local built environment, which includes myriad property types like dwellings, and commercial, educational, governmental, and religious buildings. These resources are the underpinnings of an architectural area of significance.

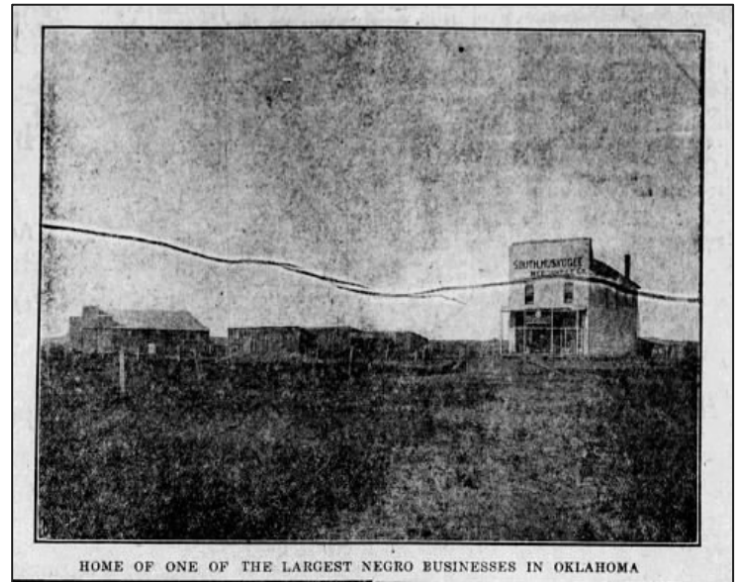


Figure 8. The largest black-owned business in Oklahoma. Source: The Topeka Plaindealer, "South Muskogee Boasts Real Negro Mercantile Establishment," December 1, 1922. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/381863395/>

8.1.1 EARLY BLACK SETTLEMENTS

The earliest all-Black town populations derived from two sources, the enslaved of the Native American Tribes and free Black people. In the 1830s and 1840s, the United States government forcibly relocated 60,000 Native Americans, their enslaved, and free Black people to Indian Territory, in present-day Oklahoma. These men, women, and children, relocated along the route known as the Trail of Tears, were the first Black settlers in Indian Territory.¹⁸ By 1839, the Five

¹⁶ R. Edgar Iles, "Boley: An Exclusively Negro Town in Oklahoma," *Opportunity* (1925); Mozell C. Hill, "The All-Negro Communities of Oklahoma; The Natural History of a Social Movement: Part I," *The Journal of Negro History* 31, no. 3 (1946), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2714893>; William E. Bittle and Gilbert L. Geis, "Racial Self-Fulfillment and the Rise of an All-Negro Community in Oklahoma," *The Phylon Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (1957), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/272978>; James E. Woodard, "Vernon: An All-Negro Town in Southeastern Oklahoma," *Negro History Bulletin* 27, no. 5 (1964), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44174958>; Harold M. Rose, "The All-Negro Town: Its Evolution and Function," *Geographical Review* 55, no. 3 (1965), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/213134>; Arthur Lincoln Tolson, "The Negro in Oklahoma Territory, 1889–1907: A Study in Racial Discrimination" (PhD Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1966).

¹⁷ Hannibal B. Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration: The All-Black Towns of Oklahoma* (Fort Worth: Eakin Press, 2002).

¹⁸ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

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Tribes—the Choctaw, Cherokee, Muscogee/Creek, Seminole, and Chickasaw Nations—held an estimated 4,500 to 5,000 people of African descent in the territory. Of approximately 15,000 Cherokee people removed, an estimated 15 percent had African lineage.¹⁹

In the aftermath of the Civil War, Oklahoma's first all-Black towns developed as newly deemed Black Americans sought access to economic opportunities and spaces where racial persecution was less likely. In 1866, treaties with the Five Tribes prohibited slavery in Indian Territory.²⁰ The Muscogee, Seminole, and Cherokee authorized full citizenship to freedmen; for many, rights included land allotments to men, women, and children.²¹ In 1866, a treaty between the federal government and the Cherokee Nation, for example, specified that all former slaves, Cherokee or freedmen, who resided on their land before June 1861 could settle 160 acres.²² Another treaty that same year allowed 40 acres to Choctaw and Chickasaw people and their descendants.²³ In this way, many Black people of all ages achieved land ownership decades before thousands of white settlers migrated westward.

Little is known about the earliest all-Black towns, most long erased from the landscape. Those settled before 1880 were known as Arkansas Colored, Canadian Colored, North Fork Colored, Marshalltown, Tullahassee, and Gibson Station.²⁴ These places, with populations derived from a remnant mix of freed people and their descendants, arose through clusters of Black families gaining access to land ownership. Here, freedmen settled on farms and served in leadership roles on tribal councils and city boards.²⁵ Their homes would have been dugouts or log cabins. It is unclear how prescribed early Black hamlets may have been, but it is probable they developed organically, like most small settlements, with schools, churches, and cemeteries the most common institutions represented and otherwise limited amenities.

8.1.2 BLACK COLONIZATION EFFORTS AFTER RECONSTRUCTION

Another Black population, the freedmen of the South, was the next large group to migrate and found all-Black communities. In 1877, when the federal government withdrew Reconstruction policy-enforcing troops from the South, white violence escalated against Black Americans and their communities.²⁶ Positioned to pursue newly granted social, economic, and political prospects, they suffered increased racially motivated violence and restrictive state and local laws. Black southerners were motivated to identify locations for new communities free from external persecution. The concept of all-Black communities with safety, opportunity, and dignity gained momentum and leaders formed organizations to promote the idea. These groups, formed in the nineteenth century, pursued multiple versions of single-race colonies—all-Black settlements in the American West, an all-Black state in Oklahoma, and Black American colonies abroad—that early-twentieth-century leaders would iterate.²⁷

Some post-Reconstruction Black settlers came to Oklahoma by way of Kansas between 1879 and 1881. Large numbers of formerly enslaved Black people, deemed “Exodusters,” left the southern states for Kansas, claimed to be the “Garden Spot of the Earth” and the “quintessential Free State.”²⁸ Kansans made no particular appeal to newcomers, but with former abolitionist Republicans in power, compared to other places in the country, they at least appeared to welcome both

¹⁹ Patrick Neal Mingos, *Slavery in the Cherokee Nation: The Keetoowah Society and the Defining of a People, 1855–1867* (New York: Routledge, 2015). <https://www.routledge.com/Slavery-in-the-Cherokee-Nation-The-Keetoowah-Society-and-the-Defining-of/Mingos/p/book/9781138982079>.

²⁰ U.S. Department of the Interior, Treaty with the Seminoles (Washington, D.C. 1866).

²¹ George O. Carney, “Historic Resources of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns: A Preservation Profile,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 69, no. 2 (1991); Johnson, *Acre of Aspiration*.

²² U.S. Department of the Interior, Treaty with the Cherokee (Washington, D.C. 1866).

²³ U.S. Department of the Interior, Treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw (Washington, D.C. 1866).

²⁴ Larry O'Dell, “All-Black Towns,” in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=AL009>.

²⁵ Warigia M. Bowman, “Connections Between Black Wall Street and Oklahoma's All-Black Towns,” *Tulsa Law Review* 57, no. 1 (2021): 296.

²⁶ Johnson, *Acre of Aspiration*.

²⁷ *The (New Orleans) Times-Picayune*, “Negro Colonization: the View of Leaders of the Colored Race Thirty-Five Year Ago,” October 18, 1889; *The (Purcell) Territorial Topic*, “To Secure Oklahoma: The Colored Contingent's Design Attracting Much Attention,” March 6, 1890, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/608989741>.

²⁸ Johnson, *Acre of Aspiration*.



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white and Black settlers.²⁹ Organizers formed a Colonization Council that laid plans for routes and stops. As described in Booker T. Washington's, *My Larger Education*, this later wave of migrants usually arrived with some personal capital and a better understanding of what awaited them in the territories.³⁰ When the harsh 1881 Kansas winter slowed their flow, Black migrants viewed the more-southern Twin Territories—the Indian Territory and the Oklahoma Territory—as additional locations for resettlement.³¹ A general exodus to the western states continued through the end of the nineteenth century.

By 1881, three prominent Black leaders each targeted the Twin Territories for the resettlement of Black communities. Interestingly, the associations they formed to organize and encourage participation were each named for the state that would develop decades later. St. Louis lawyer and former consul general to Liberia James Milton Turner founded the Freedmen's Oklahoma Association with Hannibal C. Carter. Carter founded the Freedmen's Oklahoma Immigration Association in Chicago. Politician W. L. Eagleson founded the Oklahoma Emigration Association.³² The same year, their efforts were temporarily stymied for the larger Black population when the territories' General Land Office commissioner limited settlement to freedmen the Five Tribes formerly enslaved. Yet, the idea of the Twin Territories providing refuge persisted.³³

Despite the continued effort to bring Black freedmen to the Territories, any all-Black towns settled during this period remain unknown. Those that may have launched would likely have had dispersed rural farms with modest dugouts, log, or wood-frame homes, all surrounding a nearby node with one or more buildings for trade, education, and religion. Such communities would likely have been organically clustered around these viable gathering places that might have a single nucleus or two or three nuclei, scattered discontinuously with one or more services. Tullahassee, for example, formed naturally for decades. When the railroad built through in 1899, a more-formal town plan evolved.

8.1.3 TERRITORIAL RAILROAD EXPANSION

White and Black migrants recognized the potential bounty of the Twin Territories. As railroad companies acquired rights of way through the territories, "boomers" settled on the land without legal authorization beginning in the early 1880s.³⁴ The Indian Appropriations Act of 1889 authorized the federal government to purchase two million acres from the Muskogee/Creek and Seminole Nations, opening it for settlement that April.³⁵ White and Black migrants streamed into the newly opened area and 50,000 "sooners" settled in that year. By 1890, the Twin Territories were home to 21,000 Black people; by 1900, this number had increased more than 2.5 times, to 57,000.³⁶ By this time, the decades'-long presence of Black communities in Oklahoma, the influx of southern Black migrants, and the work of committed town promoters and activists converged to initiate settlement in all-new all-Black towns.

Between 1897 and 1907, railroads traversing the Twin Territories bolstered migration to and manifested unprecedented urbanization on the rural landscape. In 1880, the territories had 289 miles of track. By 1892, routes already included the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas, from Kansas to Texas; the Atlantic and Pacific; the St. Louis and San Francisco, connecting

²⁹ Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (New York: Norton & Company, 1986), 158-59.

³⁰ Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction*, 245.

³¹ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*; Arthur Lincoln Tolson, "Black Towns of Oklahoma," *The Black Scholar* 1, no. 6 (1970), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41163446>.

³² Norman L. Crockett, *The Black Towns* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1979); Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*; Daniel F. Littlefield Jr. and Lonnie E. Underhill, "Black Dreams and 'Free' Homes: The Oklahoma Territory, 1891-1894," *Phylon* 34, no. 4 (1973), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/274249>.

³³ Tolson, "The Negro in Oklahoma Territory, 1889-1907.

³⁴ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

³⁵ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

³⁶ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.



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Arkansas and Texas; the Atchison Topeka, and Santa Fe, linking Kansas to the future Oklahoma City; and the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific, between Kansas and Texas (**Figure 9**). Railroad construction halted during the Panic of 1893 but rebooted when these mainlines sponsored regional branches that fostered dense and sometimes redundant networks that would add up to almost 6,550 miles in the next century.³⁷ A later route, was the Fort Smith and Western Railroad, intersected two of the extant all-Black towns, and connected its Arkansas-based eastern terminus, with Guthrie, Oklahoma.³⁸

The railroads not only induced migration and grew the population, but they also supplanted overland travel as relatively cheaper, faster, and more reliable, particularly for agricultural yields. Rails removed geographical limitations and bound the agricultural economy to larger and more-distant markets. With rail service, newly established all-Black towns had passenger depots, and means to support expanded commercial activity. Several towns flourished with agricultural processing facilities like a mill or gin that had rail access and benefited local farmers.

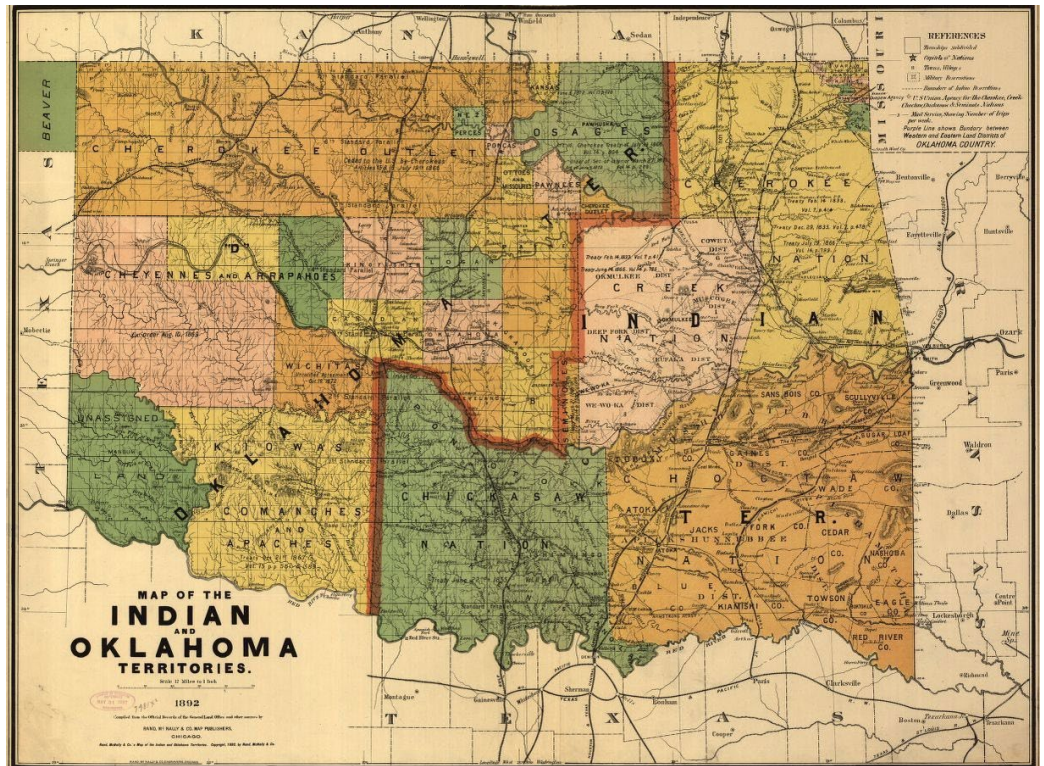


Figure 9. By 1892, numerous railroad routes crisscrossed the Indian and Oklahoma Territories, and even more would follow in the next few decades. Source: McNally and Company Rand, "Map of the Indian and Oklahoma Territories" (Chicago: Rand, McNally and Company, 1892). <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g4021e.ct000224/?r=-0.648,-0.04,2.295,0.818,0>.

³⁷ Augustus J. Veenendaal Jr., "Railroads," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=RA004>.

³⁸ Augustus J. Veenendaal Jr., "Fort Smith and Western Railway," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=FO040>.

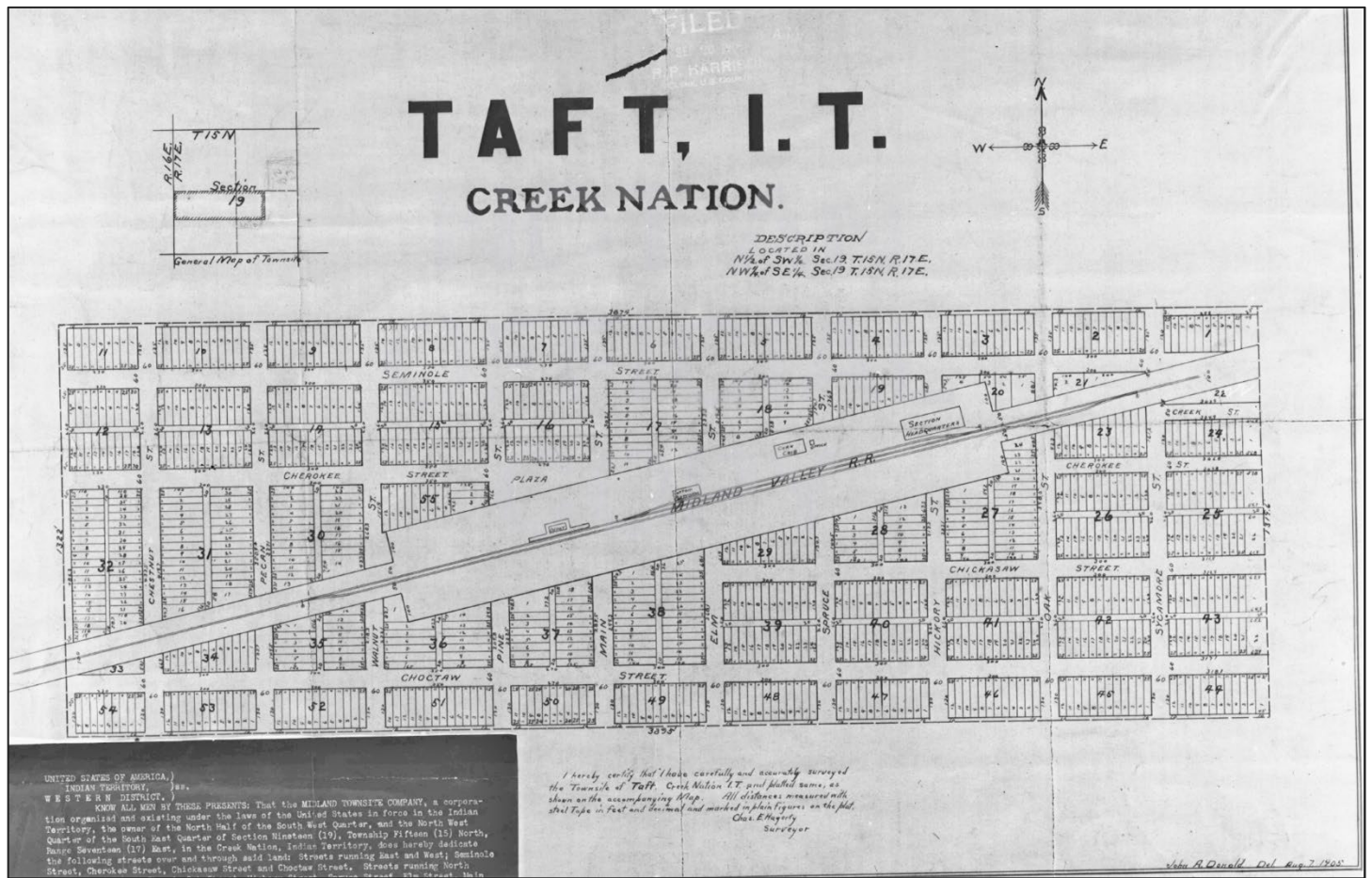


Figure 10. In Taft, the Midland Valley Railroad bisected the town. Besides a depot, the section headquarters, a cotton platform, a corn crib, and an office were along the line. Source: Muskogee County, Taft, 1904 [Plat Map], Document 1972792 1904, Muskogee County Clerk, Muskogee, <https://okcountyrecords.com/>.



Figure 11. In Clearview, the Fort Smith and Western Railroad intersected the east side of town. The school and a church location are evident. Source: Okfuskee County, Clearview, 1904 [Plat Map], Documents 1878086 and 1878087, 1904, Okfuskee County Clerk, Okemah, <https://okcountyrecords.com/>.

8.1.4 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Most of the all-Black towns were founded during the period of railroad expansion, just before Oklahoma achieved statehood, with a handful established later as tracks continued to be laid in the territories. Most formed in the eastern Indian Territory where the early presence of freedmen and their honed local experiences helped facilitate eastern town formation. Those in the western Oklahoma Territory were all settled during or after 1889. In both territories, the ready availability of cheap land through grants, lotteries, or auctions attracted southern freedmen to settle in and near these towns.³⁹

Oklahoma's surviving all-Black towns share many attributes, chief among them their significance as planned places. Several entrepreneurial Black men, and a few women, inspired to move westward and attentive to railroad expansion, capitalized on land purchases sited along railroads. These planners realized that built-in transportation would fortify local agricultural development, the economic backbone of any rural town. Achieving access to larger and more-remote markets, the potential for success was plausible. The plats they developed display gridded block and lot configurations except, notably, where railroads intersected at an angle (**Figure 10** and **Figure 11**). The plat for Langston highlighted autonomy, noting it as the only distinctively Black city in America (Figure 12). The names of these communities were frequently plain, but some had powerful meanings. Surnames and familiar biblical terms were customary, and others broadcast dedication to uplift, like Bookertee, for Black leader Booker T. Washington; Lincoln, for the president who issued the Emancipation Proclamation that freed slaves; and Douglas, for abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

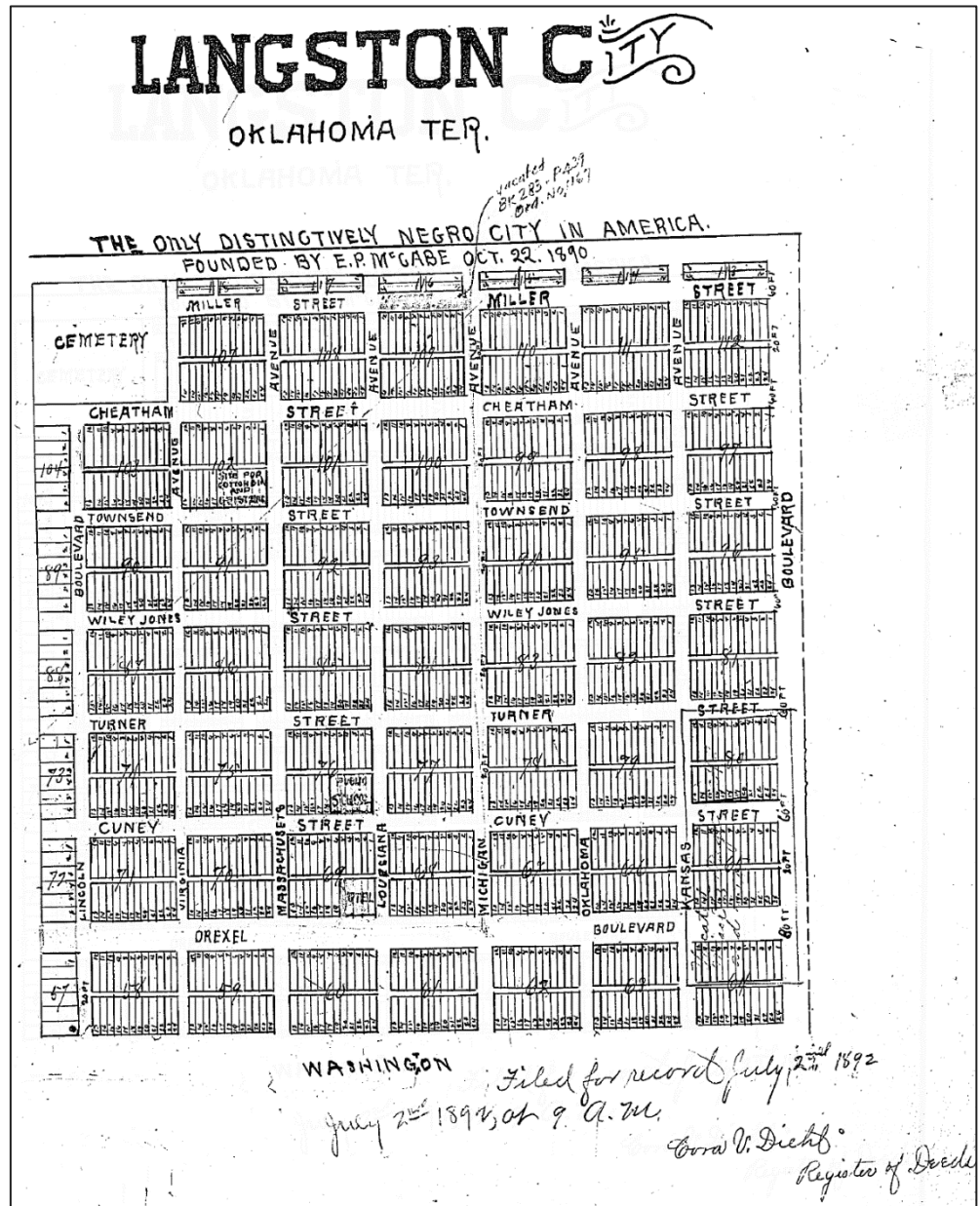


Figure 12. Town founder Edward Preston McCabe called out the town's Black autonomy on the plat for Langston. The plat also highlighted the cemetery location. Source: Logan County, Langston, 1892 [Plat Map], Document 10684038, 1892, Logan County Clerk, Guthrie, <https://okcountyclerk.com/>.

³⁹ Crockett, *The Black Towns*.

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Street names were very plain, like Main Street and Broadway, many named a series of trees, letters of the alphabet, or Native American tribes; one was named Fortune, a likely indication of optimism.

The planners also had to be promoters, advertising residential and commercial lots for sale in newspapers and through sales agents deployed to southern states.⁴⁰ Readers learned of economic possibilities, the availability of land, and the chance to live in a community of shared experiences and personal safety.⁴¹ Langston town founder and newspaper owner Edward Preston McCabe printed that the venture was “not a picnic” but an avenue to better conditions.⁴² Because illiteracy was an issue among southern freedmen and newspapers would not easily reach them, town planners relied on kinship ties to encourage large family groups to the newly established communities.⁴³ Black migrants envisaged these new towns as their “promised land,” based on the words of newspapers and sales agents.

One of the most important institutions in all-Black towns was a United States post office. Post offices, incubators for the speedy transference of information and communication, were harbingers of the nation’s democratic system in each small town. The postal service was one of the few public or private institutions that treated people with equanimity. It was one of the first and, for a long time, the only, federal agency that employed women, and hired many Black workers after the Civil War.⁴⁴ At the turn of the twentieth century, a post office signaled acceptance and approval from the federal government, giving each all-Black town legitimacy and agency.

Locally owned and published newspapers were another stride toward independence. Newspapers were instrumental in community engagement, sparking debate and fostering associations with neighbors. For Black Americans, newspapers played a vital role in distributing information about public health, addressing temperance, tobacco use, and birth control. Newspapers were the voices that shared race wrongs, clashes, progress, and movements and main themes. Besides conveying national and regional news, newspapers were



Figure 13. Residents of Red Bird gather in front of the wood-frame depot with its wide eaves. Source: Anonymous, [Townpeople of Red Bird, Oklahoma, in Front of Railroad Depot], International Center of Photography.

⁴⁰ *The (Natchez) Weekly Democrat*, "Over the Country: A New Colonization Scheme," September 2, 1891, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/235242209/>; *The Chicago Chronicle*, "Langston, A Unique Community," November 7, 1897, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/668126684/>.

⁴¹ William J. McAuley, "History, Race, and Attachment to Place Among Elders in the Rural All-Black Towns of Oklahoma," *Journal of Gerontology* 53B, no. 1 (1998): S38.

⁴² Susan Hardwick, *Mythic Galveston: Reinventing America's Third Coast* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 2002).

⁴³ Crockett, *The Black Towns*.

⁴⁴ Daniel P. Carpenter, "State Building through Reputation Building: Coalitions of Esteem and Program Innovation in the National Postal System, 1883–1913," *Studies in American Political Development* 14, 2, no. October, <https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/S0898588X00003382>, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/studies-in-american-political-development/article/abs/state-building-through-reputation-building-coalitions-of-esteem-and-program-innovation-in-the-national-postal-system-18831913/F3C72B5DE4E414388E366B152319657A>.

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choice for advertising goods and myriad community events.⁴⁵ Schools, churches, and fraternal organizations sponsored ice cream socials, fairs, rallies, and entertainment evenings.⁴⁶

The towns' downtowns offered commerce and community. Railroad depots, sited alongside the tracks, were the transportation hubs for goods and passengers (**Figure 13**).

Businesses sold goods and services from one or two streets with several small wood-frame or masonry commercial-block buildings, their proprietors facilitating exchanges for cash or credit. Commerce included stores of many kinds, but especially groceries, and the occasional bank or hotel. Banks in Langston, Boley, and Taft propped businesses, homeowners, and farmers with capital for loans. Hotels offered nondiscriminatory accommodations for traveling Black guests. Services included barbershops, real estate agencies, and cafés. Because their occupants desired autonomous civic affairs, some communities had a city hall and a jail. The all-Black towns had local politicians responsible for managing community business and public works. Some towns had fraternal organizations that supported social change and imbued middle-class values of industry, thrift, and temperance.



*Figure 14. Sarah Rector, the daughter of freed Creek parents, received a land allotment that afforded her wealth at a young age. Source: Selena Hill, "Meet Sarah Rector, the 11-Year-Old Who Became the Richest Black Girl in America in 1913," *The Black Enterprise*, February 1, 2020, <https://www.blackenterprise.com/sarah-rector-11-year-old-richest-black-girl/>.*

From these all-Black towns, a few residents achieved influential political milestones in state and national civil rights during the Jim Crow—era. Elbert L. Barber led Red Bird in a failed effort to defeat a 1910 state constitutional amendment with a grandfathered policy that prevented Black men from voting.⁴⁷ Years later, Red Bird resident I. W. Lane won a lawsuit that went to the U.S. Supreme Court on appeal after the county registrar denied his attempt to register to vote.⁴⁸ Warrior A. Rentie, with the help of William H. Twine Sr., was the first Creek freedmen to gain guardianship over his own children. With another colleague, they founded the Negro Guardianship League.⁴⁹ Twine was a civil rights attorney and newspaper editor, known as a crusading defender for Black participation in the statehood convention and for lawsuits intended to overthrow Jim Crow conditions.⁵⁰ Sarah Rector, a young girl born near Taft, achieved a different kind of fame when national Black leaders Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois took an interest in her welfare on behalf of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (**Figure 14**). As a freed Muscogee/Creek citizen, she had

⁴⁵ Frederick German Detweiler, *The Negro Press in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1922). https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Negro_Press_in_the_United_States.html?id=B7MQAAAAAYAAJ.

⁴⁶ *The (Oklahoma City) Black Dispatch*, "Some Oklahoma Towns," October 6, 1921, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/657623069/>.

⁴⁷ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

⁴⁸ U.S. Supreme Court, *Lane v. Wilson*, 307 U.S. 268 (1939); Alfred L. Brophy, "Lane v. Wilson (1939)," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (Oklahoma Historical Society, 2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=LA018>.

⁴⁹ R. Darcy, "With Statehood Came White Supremacy: African American Leaders Become Janitors," in *Oklahoma Political Science Association* (Durant, OK, 2001). https://polsci.okstate.edu/images/Darcy/Ch_113_With_Statehood_Comes_White_Supremacy.pdf.

⁵⁰ Avodale Braimah, "William Henry Twine (1862–1933)" (*BlackPastOnline*, 2014). <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/twine-william-henry-1862-1933/>.

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received a land allotment that, it was discovered in 1913, had an oil source that would reap her millions. When reports surfaced that her white estate managers were mishandling Rector's estate, the agency formed a children's department.⁵¹

Educational programming in several all-Black towns proved a two-fold success, teaching young and adult students, and drawing an educated work force to their communities. Most towns had at least one primary school. The Rosenwald Fund, established in 1917, aided hundreds of rural school building projects for Black students across the county until the program ended in 1932. In Oklahoma, the fund supported construction of 176 schools, 16 teacherages, and 6 shop buildings in 44 counties.⁵² The fund helped with school construction projects in five all-Black towns in the 1920s: Brooksville, IXL, Lima, Tatums, and Vernon (**Figure 15**). Secondary and higher education opportunities founded in several all-Black communities attained recognition. In 1897, the Oklahoma Colored Agricultural and Normal University opened, the sole historically Black college in the state, which was renamed Langston University in 1941. Inman E. Page, one of the first two Black men to be educated at Brown University, was the controversial school president who oversaw campus development for the land-grant college for its first few decades. As the epitome of industrial education that Booker T. Washington advocated, the Halochee Industrial Institute in Taft was considered the offspring of the forefather's infamous Tuskegee Institute. Taft also attracted the state children's home and the state training school for Black girls. The music education program developed at the Rentiesville Musical and Industrial School brought prominence to that community.



Figure 15. The 1896 wood-frame IXL school was replaced by a new building in the 1920s with aid from the Rosenwald Fund. Source: Anonymous, The IXL Schoolhouse, Oklahoma Territorial Plaza Trust.



Figure 16. The wood-frame Bethel Missionary Baptist Church was built in 1919. Source: Erin O'Hare, "View Finder: New York Times Opinion Writer Jamelle Bouie Develops His Perspective as a Photographer," Charlottesville Weekly, May 29, 2019, <https://www.c-ville.com/view-finder-new-york-times-opinion-writer-jamelle-bouie-develops-his-perspective-as-a-photographer/>.

⁵¹ Tonya Bolden, *Searching for Sarah Rector: The Richest Black Girl in America* (New York: Abrams, 2014). https://www.google.com/books/edition/Searching_for_Sarah_Rector/EMzQAQAAQBAJ.

⁵² Cynthia Savage, "Rosenwald Schools," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (Oklahoma Historical Society, 2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=RO029>.

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The high proportion of churches in all-Black towns reflects the centrality of religion to these communities. Church congregations held both religious and secular gatherings, and regularly scheduled, holiday, and revival services.⁵³ Churches were a source for organizing men's and women's auxiliaries that resulted in community engagement and uplift. The most common religious affiliations were with the African Methodist Episcopal and Baptist denominations. Most were wood-frame buildings (**Figure 16**), but some later-built churches were constructed of masonry. Each of these places has a cemetery, as well; in some cases, the burial ground is all that remains of some all-Black towns. Unlike many Black graveyards, especially in the South, these were not relegated to marginal areas, but planned spaces for residents to bury the deceased. The all-Black town cemeteries have attributes common to Black graveyards, like limited permanent markers and many grave locations indicated with plants or temporary markers. They also have in common with historic-period cemeteries, encircling fences, entrance signs, paths or walkways, and burial with some family groups clustered together.



Figure 18. This family home, outside of Nicodemus, Kansas, is representative of a rural home associated with an all-Black town. The wood-frame house is well-appointed with screens covering fenestration and a cellar. The family's equines and canines were valuable contributors to their work force. Source: Anonymous, Historic American Building Survey: Nicodemus Historic District, Nicodemus, Graham County, Kansas, n.d. Library of Congress.



*Figure 17. This two-story wood-frame home in Boley exhibits hybrid high-style designs with Queen Anne–inspired turned porch posts and decorative bargeboard and classically influenced corner pilasters and symmetrically placed fenestration. Source: Heather Warlick, "President Abraham Lincoln's Legacy: Oklahoma's Black Towns," *The Oklahoman* 2009, <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/politics/2009/02/12/president-abraham-lincolns-legacy-oklahomas-black-towns/61465068007/>.*

Dwellings were and are the most common property type in the all-Black towns. Houses near and in the towns were usually modest one-story wood-frame buildings. Town dwellers were typically southern migrant freedmen and their descendants. They lived in homes with forms and styles that were modest versions of contemporaneously popular choices, with very few that would be considered high-style examples (**Figure 18**). Most extant homes in these towns were built after 1900 and employed the tremendously widespread bungalow form. These dwellings often followed standard plans that building and lumber companies sold. After World War II, infrastructure in the towns usually included telephones and electricity, but water, sewer, and natural gas systems were not always available for town residents.⁵⁴

⁵³ *The Okfuskee County News*, "Iron Post Items," June 10, 1909, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/606837368/>.

⁵⁴ McAuley, "History, Race, and Attachment to Place Among Elders in the Rural All-Black Towns of Oklahoma."

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However, most people associated with the all-Black towns were not town dwellers but dispersed on the surrounding rural farmsteads. Most people associated with the all-Black towns were homesteaders who sought out these communities and chose to live near, but not in them. These men and women had usually received land allotments, and some purchased or rented land. They could rely on their nearby all-Black town for governmental, commercial, and institutional needs. Their living accommodations might be dugouts, one-room log houses, or a two-room wood-frame dwelling, and each signified a legal claim to property (Error! Reference source not found.17).⁵⁵ By 1910 in Taft, for example, Black family farms surrounded the community and were positioned on both sides of the Arkansas River (Figure 19).⁵⁶

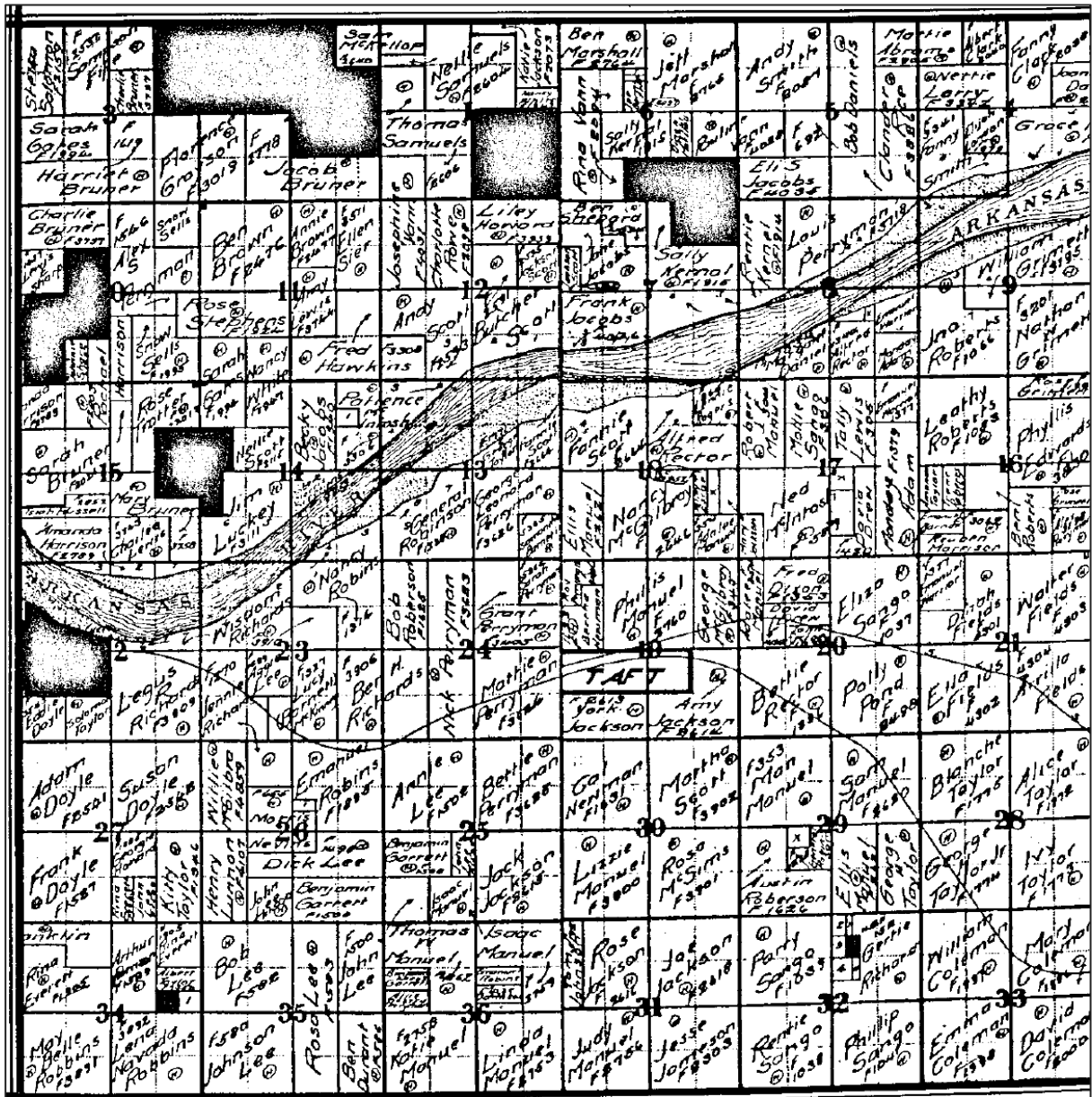


Figure 19. In 1910, the names of Black families, indicated with an F, for freedmen, surrounded Taft, near the center. The shaded quarter sections were the only land white families occupied in the vicinity. Source: Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

⁵⁵ M. Jeff Hardwich, "Homesteads and Bungalows: African-American Architecture in Langston, Oklahoma," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 6, Shaping Communities (1997): 25, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3514360>.

⁵⁶ Linda C. Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 65, no. 4 (1988).

8.1.5 STATEHOOD AND JIM CROW

Black migrants had viewed the Twin Territories as a haven from the hostile South, but Oklahoma statehood in 1907 resulted in the institutionalization of racist segregation policies that would extend for decades. Instead of the hoped-for limited outside interference or prejudice that the mild-mannered state constitution appeared to embrace, the Oklahoma legislature enacted discriminatory Jim Crow laws, policies that banned interracial marriage and segregated public accommodations, like schools, libraries, and railroad cars and depots.⁵⁷ Langston founder Edward Preston McCabe and other Black leaders lobbied against Oklahoma Senate Bill 1, with violence resulting in the all-Black towns of Taft and Red Bird. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the law in 1914.⁵⁸ Severe white animosity continued in subsequent decades, culminating in the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre that devastated 30 city blocks and the homes of 15,000 Black residents. In the aftermath, nearby Red Bird and Tullahassee experienced population increases.⁵⁹

This de jure segregation had direct implications for the all-Black towns. Some turned to more-radical colonization plans. Some all-Black towns experienced population loss in the 1910s, when a man known as Alfred C. Sam, a self-proclaimed African chief, traveled to several all-Black towns persuading hundreds to invest in his Akim Trading Company. For an investment of \$25, an entire family could travel to Africa's Gold Coast to form a colony on his land. About 600 set up camps near Weleetka, in Okfuskee County, to await passage. In 1914, the 60 delegates who made the first and only voyage on the *Liberia* with Sam considered themselves misled when local landowners prohibited the colony. Sam's effort to form an autonomous Black American community in Africa failed and several voyagers returned to Oklahoma.⁶⁰



Figure 20. The all-Black town Bookertee was named for the infamous forefather of the Tuskegee Institute, Booker T. Washington. Source: Department Oklahoma State Highway, "General Highway Map, Okfuskee County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma State Highway Department, 1936). <https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/7086/>.

Meanwhile, a few new all-Black towns formed in the aftermath of statehood amid the sustained exclusionary social and economic system. Ferguson and Lima were founded in 1907, Gay was platted in 1908, and Vernon and Lewisville were established in 1911. Bookertee, formed in 1919, was probably the last all-Black town founded in Oklahoma (Figure 20).

8.1.6 DECLINE

Agrarian-based communities reeled during the years between the world wars in both Black and white rural communities. The proliferation of post-World War I domestic manufacturing centers enticed farm workers to industrialized cities and

⁵⁷ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

⁵⁸ Larry O'Dell, "Senate Bill One," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=SE017>.

⁵⁹ Crockett, *The Black Towns*, S39.

⁶⁰ Bob Drummond, "Clearview: Town Full of History Seeks Future," *The Daily Oklahoman*, October 25, 1981, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/454322909>; Larry O'Dell, "Chief Alfred Sam," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=CH040>.

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towns for consistent work. Small production facilities like broom factories, since the state was a leading producer of broom corn, and bottling plants opened in many locations. Larger factories attracted former farm laborers to industrial shops in Oklahoma City, Enid, Muskogee, Tulsa, Shawnee, and Guthrie where lumber, printing, milling, and machine shops needed employees.⁶¹ Efforts to instill industrial and other skills had helped buoy some all-Black towns, but without a stronger economic foundation, most were impermanent.⁶²

For farmers, dependence on cotton as the monoculture cash-crop was a huge vulnerability, and several towns could not persist with agriculture as their fickle economic underpinning. The boll weevil, disease, and weather events incited crop fluctuations that overwhelmed farmers. Combined with the decreased values of agricultural products, rural families were compelled to leave their homes.⁶³ The 1930s intensified movement away from rural communities as the Dust Bowl eviscerated farms and the Great Depression spun a lengthy and unprecedented economic crisis. Many independently owned railroad companies, lifelines for all-Black town merchants and farmers, collapsed.⁶⁴ While that mode of transport lagged, the automobile was increasingly prevalent, and other and larger urban centers became more readily accessible.⁶⁵

The WPA became the best-known New Deal agency with a range of programs, the most visible of which was construction of thousands of public improvements, some in Oklahoma's all-Black towns. Among these were buildings, structures, and objects that filled local needs during a time of severe financial crisis for communities, big and small. The federal government paid for labor and a local sponsor supplied construction materials. The agency was responsible for more than 4,000 schools and miles of storm drains, sewer lines, and roads. In the Dust Bowl, the WPA planted more than 24 million trees to relieve soil loss. In Oklahoma, the WPA spent millions and employed thousands.⁶⁶ Schools and infrastructure were the most likely WPA projects in the all-Black towns, and these contributed to the communities' evolution of planning and development.

During and after World War II, while these communities continued to depopulate, the town plans evolved to share another developmental attribute. Wartime experiences gave Black service men and women who shipped overseas exposure to a measure of equality, and those employed in stateside war-related industries glimpsed the potential for parity in jobs and education. Jobs at the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant and the army and air bases in Oklahoma offered some opportunities. Manufacturing enterprises attracted employees away from farms and small towns to work in mills, meatpacking, printing, metal products, and textiles.⁶⁷ Construction of new commercial, institutional, and religious buildings generally ceased as the populations in all-Black towns declined. As a result, most of the smaller downtowns were never fully built out. Only select lots on downtown blocks filled with improvements, as opposed to side-by-side, back-to-back downtown commercial buildings or residential areas with rows houses on postage-stamp-size lots lining the blocks.

Intended as safe havens for Black residents, racist treatment still hindered Oklahoma's all-Black towns (**Figure 21**). Residents faced harassment, hostility, and threat of violence when traveling outside of their towns or to nearby white communities seeking employment, political engagement, or government and commercial services. Although all-Black towns afforded residents' political engagement in local matters, whites who controlled county-level government wielded influence by withholding funding for schools and infrastructure.⁶⁸ Residents of all-Black towns were legally permitted to vote; however, constant intimidation, redistricting, and gerrymandering reduced their access on election day. This

⁶¹ Dianna Everett, "Manufacturing," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=MA017>.

⁶² Tolson, "Black Towns of Oklahoma."

⁶³ Crockett, *The Black Towns*; Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

⁶⁴ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

⁶⁵ Charles A. Humphrey and Donald E. Allen, "Educational and Social Needs in Small All-Black Towns," *The Journal of Negro Education* 47, no. 3 (Summer 1978): 245, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2294599>.

⁶⁶ William H. Mullins, "Works Progress Administration," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=WO022>.

⁶⁷ Everett, "Manufacturing."

⁶⁸ Crockett, *The Black Towns*.



curtailed fair representation and funding for public works. White residents in nearby communities habitually refused to hire Black men and women or to rent or sell land to them, deepening economic disparities.⁶⁹

Nevertheless, the success of the all-Black towns was an environment of respect, support, and self-sufficiency. The many services supplied from these towns sustained Black farmers in their quest to achieve economic independence. In town, a farm family purchased provisions and services from the merchants they patronized. City halls, post offices, jails, and schools furnished civic amenities, and churches and cemeteries satisfied religious and social affiliations. Literary societies, public debates, and newspapers encouraged interaction and awareness of current events. Booster organizations, like business leagues, boards of trade, and commercial clubs, pooled funds and gave financial assistance at times. These groups encouraged a shared commitment to "buy Black" that propped local merchants and institutions. Entrepreneurs had established and designed, and area residents had chosen, these communities as theirs. These places offered many Black residents their first feelings of liberty and dignity, and prospects to control their livelihoods. They found agency in owning property, voting, and operating their farms and businesses without assistance from or under the control of whites.

Economic and social factors depressed the all-Black towns and ultimately caused their decline but did not strip them of their achievements. The towns that persisted had more diversified economies and sufficient services for nearby residents into the latter half of the twentieth century. In fact, most of the towns have homes with a median construction date of about 1960.⁷⁰ A few businesses are extant, and several have active schools and church congregations. Residents, past and present, continue to celebrate these places. Even as they have dwindled, they portray distinctive landscapes that are evidence of a surge in racial fulfillment and self-realization. These enclaves are significant for resulting in a positive and permanent group ideology without white or Native American interference. In effect, the all-Black towns of Oklahoma institutionalized a social movement.⁷¹



Figure 21. For two days in 1921, a horrific massacre in Tulsa killed and injured hundreds of Black residents. In the all-Black towns, this traumatic event raised concerns within their communities. Source: *The Black Dispatch*, "Loot, Arson, Murder!" (Oklahoma City), 1921-06-10, June 10, 1921, <https://gateway.okhistory.org/ark:/67531/metadc152336/m1/1/zoo/m/?resolution=4&lat=5065.462483437172&lon=2093.820990572807>

⁶⁹ O'Dell, "All-Black Towns."

⁷⁰ McAuley, "History, Race, and Attachment to Place Among Elders in the Rural All-Black Towns of Oklahoma," S36.

⁷¹ McAuley, "History, Race, and Attachment to Place Among Elders in the Rural All-Black Towns of Oklahoma," S38.

8.2 Developmental Components of the All-Black Towns

A brief narrative history of the 13 all-Black towns documented describes each of them, in alphabetical order, in terms of location, establishment/prominent citizens, economy, religious institutions, educational facilities, and decline/recent status. A summary table shows their estimated establishment dates and select amenities (**Table 8**).

Town	Date Established *	Churches	Schools	Post Offices	Hotels	Stores	Other	Railroad Depots
Brooksville	1903	3	Banneker School	1909	Yes	Yes	2 cotton gins, cafes	Yes
Clearview	1902	4	Creek-Seminole Agricultural College	1902	Yes	Yes	<i>The Clearview Patriarch</i> , real estate agency office, cotton gin, brick kiln	Yes
Grayson	ca. 1897	3	Yes	1897	No	Yes	Doctor, cotton gin	No
IXL	1900	Yes	IXL School	No	No	No	Public park	No
Langston	1890	Yes	Langston University	Yes	Yes	Yes	<i>Langston City Herald</i>	No
Lima	1907	Yes	Rosenwald Hall	1907	Unknown	Yes	<i>The Lima Observer</i>	Yes
Red Bird	1902	5	McCallop School	1902	Yes	Yes	Fraternal hall, sawmill, department store	Yes
Rentiesville	1903	2	Rentiesville Musical and Industrial School	1904	Unknown	Yes	Rentiesville Fair	Yes
Summit	1896	Yes	DuBois School	1896	Unknown	Yes	Filling station, garage	Yes
Taft	1902	Yes	Halochee Industrial School	1904	Yes	Yes	Bank, <i>Enterprise</i> , <i>Tribune</i>	Yes
Tatums	1894	Yes	Subscription School	1895	Yes	Yes	Doctor, cotton gin, sawmill	No
Tulahassee	1899	Yes	Tulahassee Mission School, Flipper Davis College	1902	Unknown	Yes	Business district	Yes
Vernon	1911	5	Yes	1920	Unknown	Yes	Midwest Chicken Hatchery	No

• Estimate based on available sources.

8.2.1.1 Brooksville

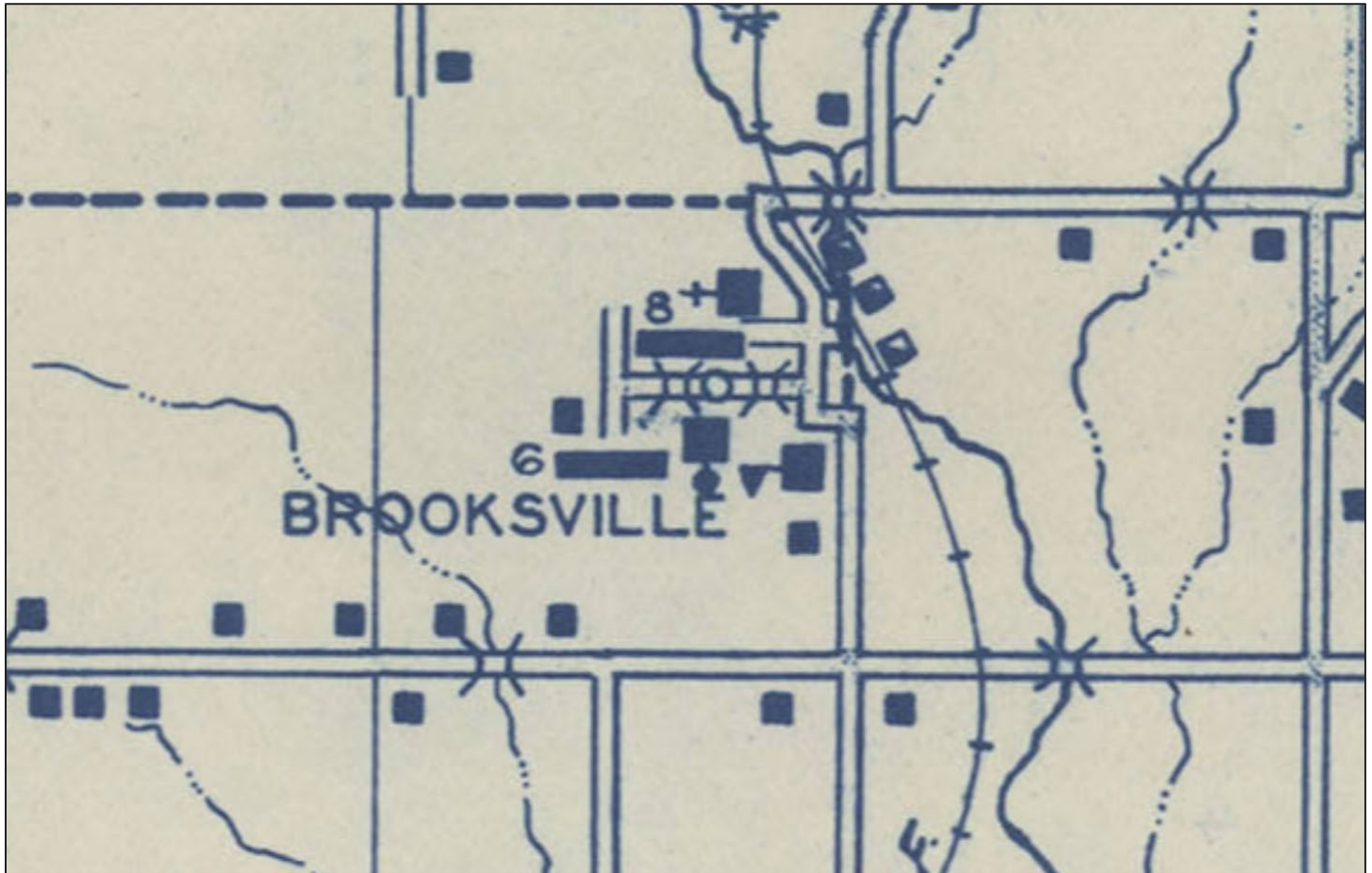


Figure 22. 1936 map of Brooksville. Source: Oklahoma State Highway Department, "General Highway Map, Pottawatomie County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma State Highway Department, 1936).
<https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/7086/>.

8.2.1.1.1 Location

Brooksville is in Pottawatomie County, approximately 15 miles south of Shawnee, the county seat of and largest city in the county, with a current population of approximately 29,500 residents. Pottawatomie County is in central Oklahoma in former Oklahoma Territory.

8.2.1.1.2 Establishment/Prominent Citizens

The community, established along the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad in about 1903, was initially known as Sewell, named after a white doctor who attended to the residents and owned most land around the town.⁷² By October 1905, town lots were advertised for sale to Black buyers. In 1909, a post office application noted Alfred R. Brooks as the proposed postmaster and renamed the community Brooksville to honor of the first Black resident. The area had a

⁷²The Shawnee Herald, "Cotton Crop Report," October 24, 1905.

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population of around 500 that year.⁷³ Many Brooksville settlers had Alabama or Texas roots.⁷⁴ By 1911, the area had a population of 700.⁷⁵

8.2.1.1.3 Economy

The local economy centered on cotton farming was important to Brooksville, and the railroad station supplied easy access to transporting people and goods.⁷⁶ In 1921, a dry goods, grocery, and drug store opened.⁷⁷ At its height in the mid-1920s, the area had 3,000 residents and supported two cotton gins, several cafes, a dry goods store, and a hotel.⁷⁸

8.2.1.1.4 Religious Institutions

Brooksville had three churches including St. John's Baptist Church that Reverend Jedson White organized in 1906. At least two churches were extant in 1974, according to a topographic map, one of which is a later-built St. John's sanctuary is extant.⁷⁹

8.2.1.1.5 Educational Facilities

Beginning in 1924⁸⁰, the Rosenwald Fund helped finance construction of the Banneker Training School in Brooksville.⁸¹ The Black contractors and workmen constructed the school, a 4-room stone building with a library, domestic science room, and a 300-seat auditorium.⁸² When it opened, the principal was W. T. McKenzie, who had graduated from the Tuskegee Institute. His wife was the primary teacher, who had received her certification from Langston University. When it opened in 1927, the Banneker Training School had 47 primary students enrolled and taught around 40 adults reading and writing in night school. George W. McLaurin, the first Black graduate student at the University of Oklahoma, taught at the school. The original Rosenwald-funded school building burned. A wood-frame building took its place until the school closed in 1968.

8.2.1.1.6 Decline/Recent Status

Former Brooksville Mayor Lee Oliver recalled population decline in the 1950s and 1960s after residents, many of whom migrated seasonally to California and Arizona to pick cotton, did not return.⁸³ Brooksville was formally incorporated in 1972, to bolster the waning population. The population doubled between 1980 and 2000, growing from 46 to 90 residents; by 2010 the town had declined to 63 residents.⁸⁴

⁷³ U.S. Post Office Department, Office of the Postmaster General, Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950: File Unit, Oklahoma, Pontotoc–Seminole, Application for Post Office at Brooksville, Oklahoma (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1909); U.S. Post Office Department, Office of the Postmaster General, Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950: File Unit Oklahoma, Pontotoc–Seminole, Site of Post Office at Brooksville, Oklahoma (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1910); Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

⁷⁴ *The Daily Oklahoman*, "Small Metro Area Towns Tucked Away," July 1, 2001, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/453889587>.

⁷⁵ *The Shawnee Herald*, "Negroes to Hold Barbecue and Celebration," July 26, 1911.

⁷⁶ U.S. Post Office Department, Short Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950: File Unit, Oklahoma, Pontotoc–Seminole, Application for Post Office at Brooksville, Oklahoma.

⁷⁷ *The (Oklahoma City) Black Dispatch*, "Brooksville News," January 28, 1921.

⁷⁸ *The Daily Oklahoman*, "Small Metro Area Towns Tucked Away": Ann Kelley, "Brooksville Celebrates 100 Years of Support," *The Oklahoman*, September 1, 2003, <https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/2003/09/01/brooksville-celebrates-100-years-of-support/620282110071>.

⁷⁹ *The Daily Oklahoman*, "Small Metro Area Towns Tucked Away": Kelley, "Brooksville Celebrates 100 Years of Support."

⁸⁰ Sources conflict regarding the exact date of construction.

⁸¹ *The (Wagoner) Record-Democrat*, "Negro School Gets Aid," May 3, 1928, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/838509356>; Larry O'Dell, "Brooksville," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022).

<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=BR023>; Rosenwald Fund Card File Database, "Banneker C.T.S. School, Brooksville, District #6" (Nashville, Tennessee: Fisk University, 2022). <https://fisk.libguides.com/c.php?g=1057119&p=7710823>.

⁸² *The Daily Oklahoman*, "Large Negro School Near Little River," September 25, 1927, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/442017788>.

⁸³ Kelley, "Brooksville Celebrates 100 Years of Support."

⁸⁴ *The Daily Oklahoman*, "Small Metro Area Towns Tucked Away."



8.2.1.2 Clearview

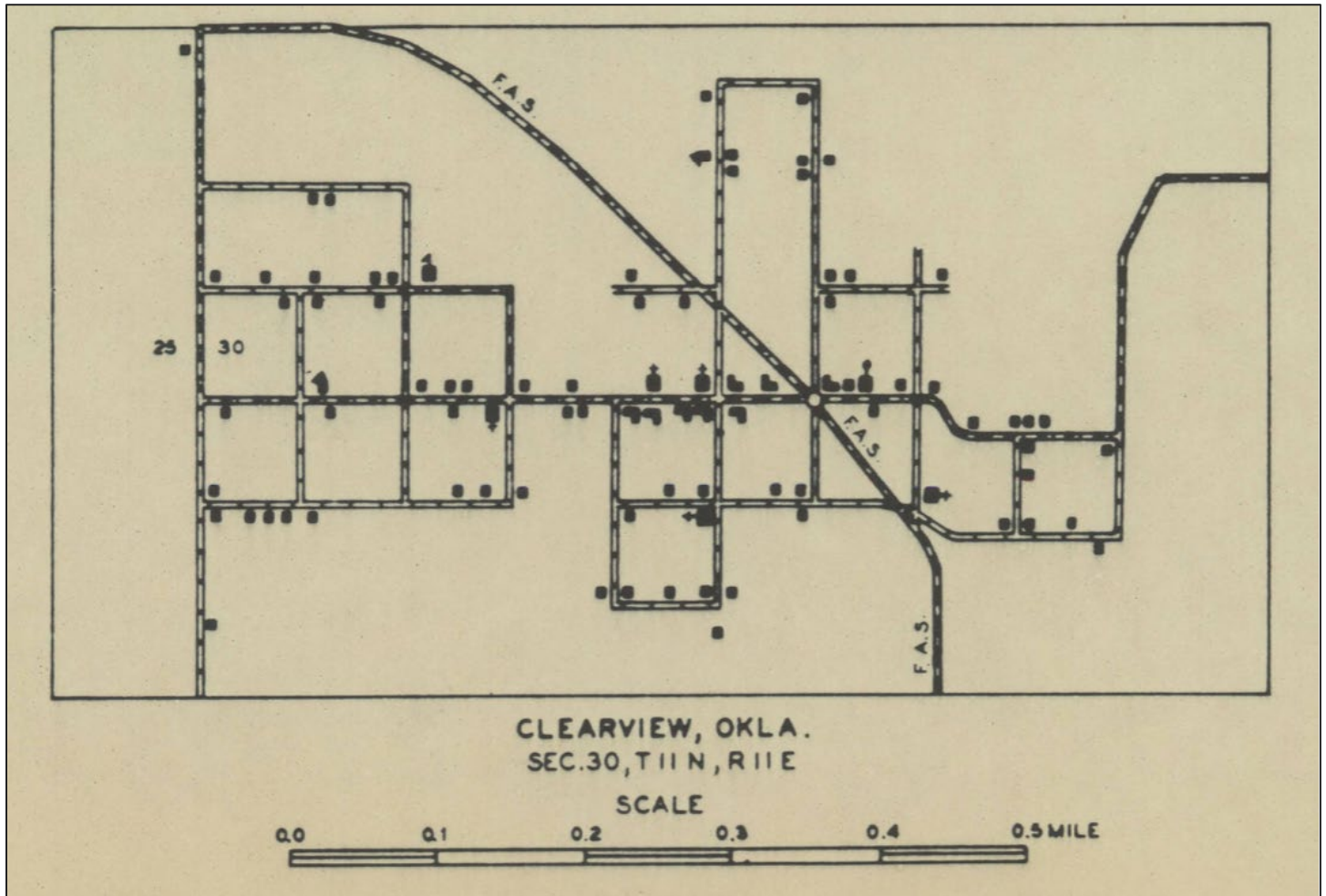


Figure 23. 1958 Map of Clearview. Source: Oklahoma Department of Highways, "General Highway Map, Okfuskee County, Oklahoma" (1958). <https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/7086/>.

8.2.1.2.1 Location

In Okfuskee County, Clearview is approximately 9 miles southeast of the county seat of Okemah, in east central Oklahoma in former Indian Territory, along the Fort Smith and Western Railroad.⁸⁵

8.2.1.2.2 Establishment/Prominent Citizens

The community applied for a post office as early as December 1902 and was established as Lincoln in 1903; the name briefly changed from Lincoln to Abelincoln.⁸⁶ Entrepreneurs Lemuel Jackson, James Roper, and John Grayson formed the Lincoln Townsite Company to sell residential lots and promote settlement along the Fort Smith and Western Railroad built to link the rail center at Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Guthrie, Oklahoma, in 1903.⁸⁷ In the Creek Nation on Indian Territory,

⁸⁵ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*; Tolson, "The Negro in Oklahoma Territory, 1889–1907.

⁸⁶ U.S. Post Office Department, Office of the Postmaster General, Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950: File Unit, Oklahoma, Mayes–Oklahoma, Application for Post Office at Clearview, Oklahoma (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1902).

⁸⁷ Crockett, *The Black Towns*.

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the area had 1,000 people at its height.⁸⁸ All of the all-Black towns were comprised of tribal freedmen and Black migrants, but Clearview had a higher percentage of specifically Creek freedman because of its location within the reservation.

A central figure in local development was James E. Thompson, a landowner and passionate town promoter who organized a fraternal order, the Patriarchs of America. Thompson's wife Neva, a teacher, formed an auxiliary organization, the Sisters of Ethiopia.⁸⁹ Beginning in 1911, Thompson published *The Clearview Patriarch*, which evolved from the *Lincoln Tribune*, published since the town's establishment.⁹⁰

8.2.1.2.3 Economy

In May 1912, at the height of its existence, Clearview had seven dry goods/grocery stores, several real estate offices, and a drug store, newspaper, cotton gin, and train depot. Thompson owned a brick kiln.⁹¹ Cotton was the primary crop for local agriculturists, and the town was also a prominent destination for shipping cattle within the state, and some grew potatoes and other vegetables.⁹²

8.2.1.2.4 Religious Institutions

Clearview once had four churches, with locations, but no denominations, identified on a 1968 topographic map.⁹³ The only one standing was built in about 1930 on the north side of Main Street, now known as the Church of the Living God. Another church was on the same block and side of Main Street, but closer to Bruce Street. A third church was at the southwest corner of Langston and Bruce Streets, and the fourth was on the east side of Lincoln Street, between Main Street and Cuney Avenue. Their original congregational affiliations remain unknown.

8.2.1.2.5 Educational Facilities

In 1904, Clearview residents planned a subscription school after the white county superintendent purposely failed to assure public funding for a school.⁹⁴ Subscription schools were a common type of private education in rural areas. Parents paid for their children on a pro-rated basis determined by attendance. In 1914, John L. Leftwich, a former administrator at Boley, purchased land adjacent to Clearview to build an industrial and agricultural college for Black students.⁹⁵ When the Creek-Seminole Agricultural College opened in September 1916, it was touted as the only college in Oklahoma where nonwhites could receive an undergraduate degree.⁹⁶

8.2.1.2.6 Decline/Recent Status

The railroad faltered into receivership in 1915, reemerged in 1923, and closed again in 1931, leaving the town without easy rail access.⁹⁷ People left the community seeking jobs in urban settings.⁹⁸ In 2010, 48 residents lived in Clearview, according to the census.

⁸⁸ Drummond, "Clearview: Town Full of History Seeks Future."

⁸⁹ Crockett, *The Black Towns*; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, District 139, Lincoln Township, Okfuskee County, Oklahoma, Population in 1910 (Manuscript), 1910, Ancestry.com.

⁹⁰ *The Clearview Patriarch*, "Room for A Thousand Homeseekers," January 26, 1911, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/606826725>; Crockett, *The Black Towns*.

⁹¹ Drummond, "Clearview: Town Full of History Seeks Future."

⁹² *The (Clearview) Patriarch*, "Clearview, Oklahoma: A Negro Town," May 2, 1912, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/606829273>.

⁹³ *The (Clearview) Patriarch*, "Clearview, Oklahoma: A Negro Town."

⁹⁴ *The Lincoln Tribune*, "Plans for a School," November 19, 1904, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/606835522>; Crockett, *The Black Towns*.

⁹⁵ *The Okemah Ledger*, "An Agricultural College for Town of Clearview," July 23, 1914, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/606899956>.

⁹⁶ *The (Clearview) Patriarch*, "Creek-Seminole-Agricultural College," August 4, 1916, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/606838347>.

⁹⁷ Veenendaal Jr., "Fort Smith and Western Railway."

⁹⁸ Drummond, "Clearview: Town Full of History Seeks Future."



8.2.1.3 Grayson

8.2.1.3.1 Location

In eastern Oklahoma in Okmulgee County, Grayson is approximately 11 miles southeast of the county seat of Okmulgee, in former Indian Territory.

8.2.1.3.2 Establishment/Prominent Residents

The town was originally platted as Wildcat, but its founders remain unclear.⁹⁹ Birl Grayson was the first Wildcat postmaster in 1897.¹⁰⁰ Sources conflict as to who the town was named for, Postmaster Grayson, who was also the first mayor and reportedly had the town renamed in his honor, or Muscogee Chief George W. Grayson. The town is within the Muscogee Nation and Chief Grayson was a prominent public servant and Native rights activist from the early 1900s and until his 1920 death.¹⁰¹

8.2.1.3.3 Economy

The nearest railroad to Grayson was the Missouri, Oklahoma, and Gulf Railroad, about 2.5 miles away.¹⁰² The railroad supported the local coal and mineral extraction.¹⁰³ Cotton farming was another livelihood for Grayson area residents, and the community had a cotton gin.¹⁰⁴

In 1909, the town had five stores, two blacksmiths, two drug stores, a physician, and a cotton gin.¹⁰⁵

8.2.1.3.4 Religious Institutions

Grayson had three churches in 1909: the Louisiana Baptist, the Union Baptist, and the Israel Chapel African Methodist Episcopal.¹⁰⁶

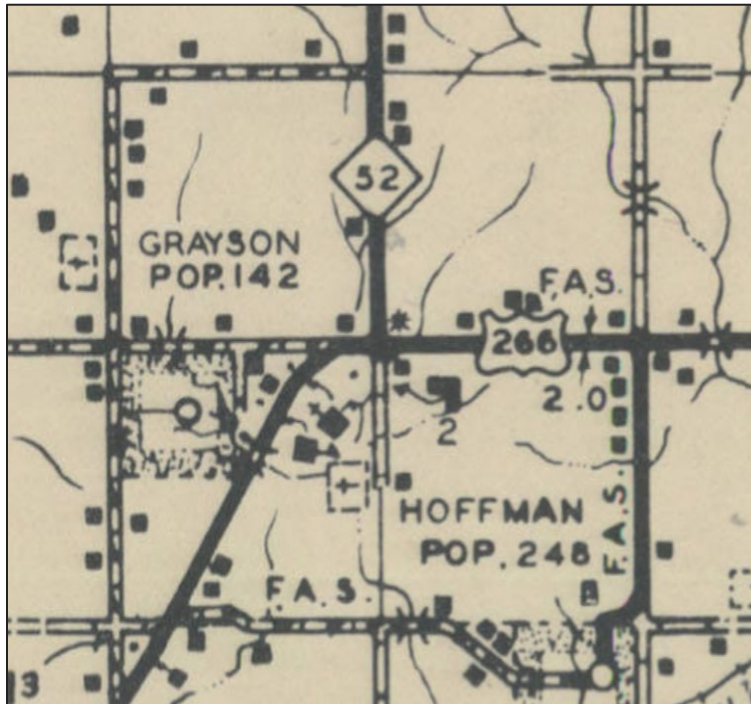


Figure 24. 1968 Map of Grayson. Source: Oklahoma Department of Highways, "General Highway Map, Okfuskee County, Oklahoma" (1958). <https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/7086/>.

⁹⁹ *The Bartlesville Weekly Enterprise*, "The Last of Wild Cat, I.T.," October 6, 1905, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/590398618>.

¹⁰⁰ *The Daily Oklahoman*, "New Western Post Offices," June 17, 1897, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/607385509>.

¹⁰¹ *The Daily Oklahoman*, "New Western Post Offices": Mary Jane Warde, "The Historic Context for African American History in Muskogee, Oklahoma" (Muscogee: National Park Service, 2014).

¹⁰² U.S. Post Office Department, Office of the Postmaster General, Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950: File Unit, Oklahoma, Okmulgee–Pittsburg, Site of Post Office at Grayson, Oklahoma (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1908).

¹⁰³ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

¹⁰⁴ *Okmulgee Democrat*, "Grayson," December 2, 1909, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/587330728>.

¹⁰⁵ Lynn Marie Townsend, "Grayson," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022).

<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=GR012>.

¹⁰⁶ *Okmulgee Democrat*, "Grayson."

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8.2.1.3.5 Educational Facilities

The Grayson student population in 1909 was at least 28. A public school system operated there between 1931 and 1966.¹⁰⁷

8.2.1.3.6 Decline/Recent Status

The Grayson area may have been home to as many as 1,000 residents. As of 2018, the town had a population of around 150.¹⁰⁸

8.2.1.4 IXL

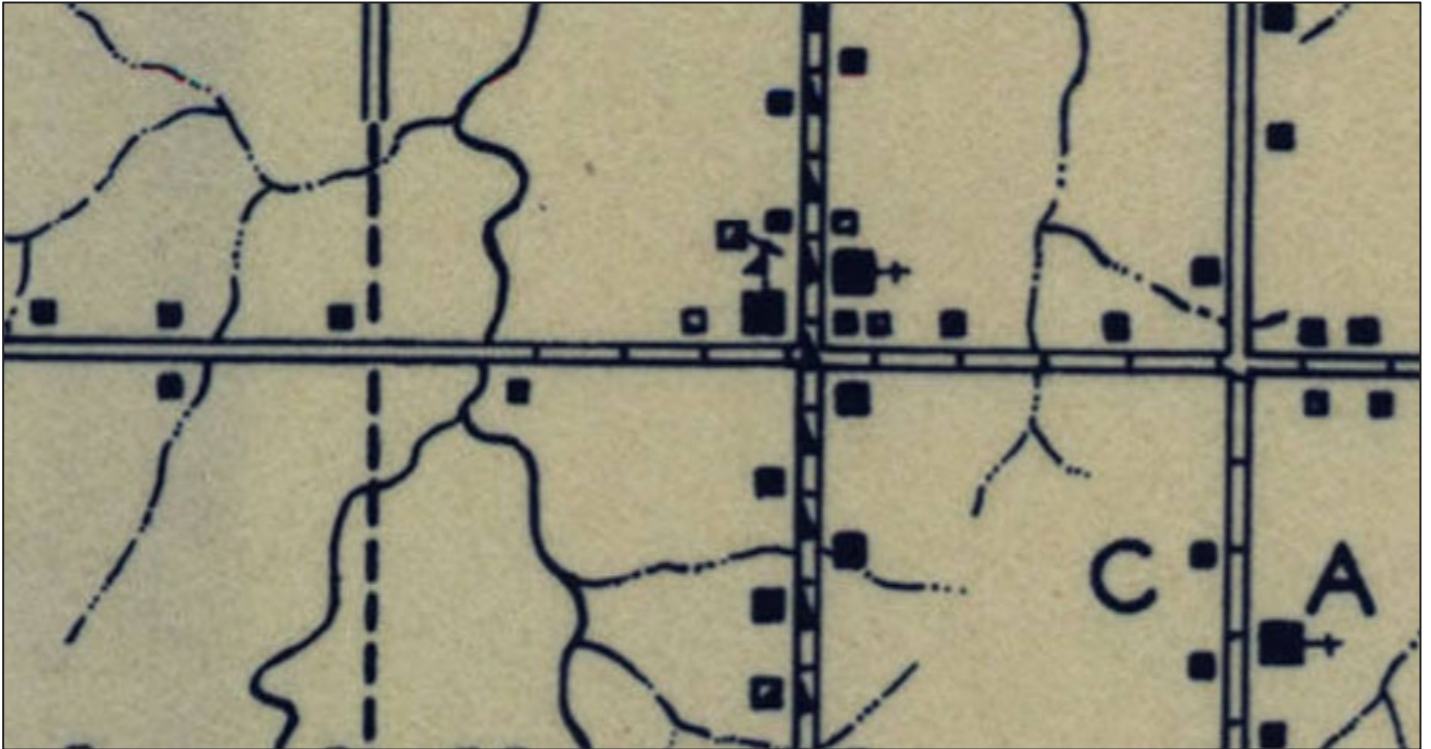


Figure 25. Map of IXL. Source: Oklahoma State Highway, "General Highway Map, Okfuskee County, Oklahoma."

8.2.1.4.1 Location

In eastern Oklahoma in Okfuskee County, in former Indian Territory, IXL is approximately 9 miles northwest of the county seat of Okemah and 6 miles northeast of the oldest and most well-known all-Black town, Boley. By the end of the twentieth century, IXL coalesced near the State Highway 48 and County Road East-West 1030 intersection.

8.2.1.4.2 Establishment

IXL was established by 1896.¹⁰⁹ No definitive narrative explains the town moniker. Some sources attribute it to the first three letters of the founders' names, but it is unclear whether this would be given or surnames; others credit the acronym to the town's location on Mvskoke or Indian Exchange Land.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ *Okmulgee Democrat*, "Grayson": Patrick Ford, "Town of Grayson," *Henryetta Daily Free-Lance*, March 23, 2018, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/707546664>.

¹⁰⁸ Ford, "Town of Grayson"; Tolson, "The Negro in Oklahoma Territory, 1889–1907."

¹⁰⁹ Anonymous, *The IXL Schoolhouse [Photograph]*, n.d. Oklahoma Territorial Plaza Trust.

¹¹⁰ William Wallace, "What Does IXL Mean?," *Town of I.X.L.*, 2012, <http://visitixlok.com/>.

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8.2.1.4.3 Economy

Like other all-Black towns in Oklahoma, IXL's economy was agrarian. However, IXL farmers eschewed traditional cotton cultivation prevalent in central Oklahoma for more diverse crops like potatoes because, "1 acre of good black sandy land will grow 100 bushels of potatoes."¹¹¹

8.2.1.4.4 Religious Institutions

Religion was a pillar of the IXL community. As early as 1915 residents attended local evangelical religious revival meetings where "great good has been done for the town and the neighborhood adjoining."¹¹² Churches were a staple of the social order during the town's height and hosted Christmas programs and gatherings where "Sunday school patrons...spread a good dinner on the grounds."¹¹³ Social events included weddings, visits with friends and community members, and performances by local high school glee clubs.¹¹⁴ By 1976, the Pleasant Hill African Methodist Episcopal Church and another, of unknown denomination, were in IXL, according to a topographic map.¹¹⁵

8.2.1.4.5 Educational Facilities

The town had an early wood-frame school. From 1926 to 1927, grant funds from the Rosenwald Fund facilitated school construction. IXL District School 12 became an important local symbol and gathering place.¹¹⁶ Within a year of its construction, the school added a ninth grade to the traditional eight-year plan and employed seven teachers. It was one of "the leading schools in Okfuskee County."¹¹⁷ The building was demolished in the early 2000s.

8.2.1.4.6 Decline/Recent Status

As of 2012, the town had a public park and two churches.¹¹⁸ IXL differs from other all-Black towns in that it was not incorporated until 2001. This late date indicates a local desire for redevelopment and resurgence. At that time, a mayor and council form of government and a fire department were established. IXL has a fire station and a 2012 community building, erected on site of the demolished school. The population was 51 in 2010.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ *The Okemah Ledger*, March 4, 1915, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/606893273/>.

¹¹² *The Okemah Ledger*, "I.X.L. News," April 1, 1915, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/606893744/>.

¹¹³ *The Okfuskee County News*, "Iron Post Items."

¹¹⁴ *The Okfuskee County News*, "Iron Post Items."

¹¹⁵ *The Okfuskee County News*, "Iron Post Items."

¹¹⁶ Dianna Everett, "IXL," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=IX001>.

¹¹⁷ Everett, "IXL."

¹¹⁸ Everett, "IXL."

¹¹⁹ Everett, "IXL."



8.2.1.5 Langston

8.2.1.5.1 Location

Langston is in central Oklahoma within Logan County, approximately 10 miles from the county seat of Guthrie, in former Oklahoma Territory.

8.2.1.5.2 Establishment/Prominent Residents

Edward Preston McCabe, a Kansas politician and advocate for Black colonization of Oklahoma, founded Langston in 1890.¹²⁰ The town had a post office by 1892.¹²¹ McCabe acquired land from white developer Charles H. Robbins. The town was named for noted Black politician John Mercer Langston, who, among other accomplishments, had organized the law department at Howard University and served in the Virginia House of Representatives.¹²²

8.2.1.5.3 Economy

Although Langston was not on a railroad—approximately 1.5 miles from the Eastern Oklahoma Railroad, and 4 miles from the Rock Island Railroad—it prospered with commercial development.¹²³ McCabe passionately promoted Black settlement of the new city in his newspaper, the *Langston City Herald*. An 1892 edition called Langston “the only distinctively negro city in America.”¹²⁴ An 1891 visitor to Langston reported 15 buildings, including 2 stores, and others under construction.¹²⁵ In 1895, a telephone line was planned.¹²⁶ By 1907, Langston businesses were a cotton gin, several grocery stores, and a confectionary, blacksmith shop, meat market, hardware store, and saloon.¹²⁷ Cotton farming was a common livelihood.¹²⁸

8.2.1.5.4 Religious Institutions

Langston had a church in 1892.¹²⁹ By 1907, Langston was home to African Methodist Episcopal, Missionary Baptist, Catholic, and Presbyterian churches.¹³⁰

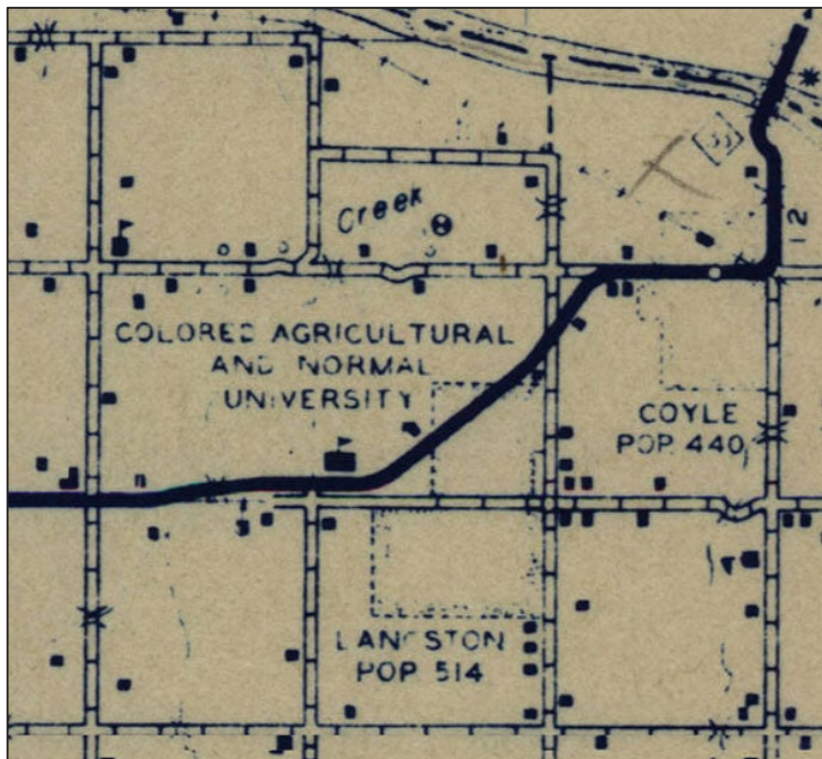


Figure 26. Map of Langston. Source: Oklahoma State Highway Department, "General Highway and Transportation Map, Logan County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma State Highway Department, 1942). <https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/6990/rec/1>.

¹²⁰ Jere W. Roberson, "Edward P. McCabe and the Langston Experiment," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 51, no. 3 (1973).

¹²¹ Elbert P. McCabe, "Langston City," *The Langston City Herald*, November 17, 1892, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/78174960>.

¹²² Roberson, "Edward P. McCabe and the Langston Experiment"; Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

¹²³ *The (Langston) Western Age*, "Opportunity for Negroes," June 7, 1907, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/665471333>.

¹²⁴ McCabe, "Langston City."

¹²⁵ G. W. Washington, "From Langston City, O.K." (*Guthrie*) *Oklahoma State Capital*, March 21, 1891, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/608656292>.

¹²⁶ *Langston City Herald*, "City News," April 13, 1895, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/665474427>.

¹²⁷ *The (Langston) Western Age*, "Opportunity for Negroes."

¹²⁸ *The Oklahoma State Capital*, "Langston Light," March 23, 1898, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/657783488>; *Langston City Herald*, "Cotton at Langston," February 6, 1897, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/78188087>.

¹²⁹ McCabe, "Langston City."

¹³⁰ *The (Langston) Western Age*, "Opportunity for Negroes."

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8.2.1.5.5 Educational Facilities

In 1892, Langston had a school with almost 200 pupils.¹³¹ For several years, Black citizens advocated before the Oklahoma Industrial School and College Commission for college to serve Black students.¹³² Langston University, Oklahoma's only historically Black college or university (HBCU), was founded in 1897 as the Colored Agricultural and Normal University. The September 1898 opening dedication attracted at least 400 people.¹³³ The Morris House, a boarding house for students, opened in 1904.¹³⁴ In the 1930s and 1940s, the school built several teacher cottages.¹³⁵

8.2.1.5.6 Decline/Recent Status

Langston University is the only historically black or colored university in the state of Oklahoma, and its continued draw has bolstered the community substantially. The university has generated jobs for faculty and administrative support.¹³⁶ It also prevented much of the typical population decline that most other all-Black towns experienced. In 2010, Langston had a population of 1,724.¹³⁷

8.2.1.6 Lima

8.2.1.6.1 Location

Lima is in present-day Seminole County, former Indian Territory, approximately 7 miles southeast of the Seminole County seat in central Oklahoma.¹³⁸ The town is on Seminole tribal land and Seminole freedmen occupied the area around the turn of the twentieth century.¹³⁹ New Lima is a small, predominantly white, village just east of Lima.

8.2.1.6.2 Establishment/Prominent Residents

Lima was founded in 1907 along the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, and officially incorporated in 1913.¹⁴⁰ Lima may get its name from the local quarries that operated near the town by 1904. Grudge V. Gross was the first postmaster. This post office was demolished in 1957.¹⁴¹ A 1926 oil discovery with a related population influx of white settlers led to the founding of New Lima in 1926. New Lima was never incorporated but had a post office and school.¹⁴²

¹³¹ McCabe, "Langston City."

¹³² Langston University, "History of Langston University," *Langston University*, 2022, <https://www.langston.edu/about-us/resources/history-langston-university>.

¹³³ *The Oklahoma State Capital*, "Langston University," September 24, 1898, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/657752427>.

¹³⁴ Listed in the NRHP in 1994.

¹³⁵ Listed in the NRHP in 1998.

¹³⁶ *The Oklahoma State Capital*, "Langston Light": *Langston City Herald*, "Cotton at Langston."

¹³⁷ City of Langston, "About the Langston City," *Langston, Oklahoma*, 2022, <https://cityoflangston.com/pages/about-the-langston-city/>; Larry O'Dell, "Langston," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=LA020>.

¹³⁸ Larry O'Dell, "Lima," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=LI003>.

¹³⁹ "Lima," *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, Oklahoma Historical Society, 2022, accessed September 16, 2022, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=LI003>.

¹⁴⁰ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁴¹ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁴² O'Dell, "Lima."



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8.2.1.6.3 Economy

In 1921, Farmers' Union leader John L. Simpson spearheaded integrating Black members into the organization.¹⁴³ The discovery and development of the Greater Seminole Oil Field brought more money and white settlers to the area in 1926.¹⁴⁴ New Lima eventually some businesses.¹⁴⁵

8.2.1.6.4 Religious Institution

In 1915, the Mount Zion Methodist Church was constructed.

8.2.1.6.5 Educational Facilities

Rosenwald Hall¹⁴⁶ was built in 1921 with the help from the Rosenwald Fund.¹⁴⁷ Rosenwald Hall was the primary elementary school until 1966.¹⁴⁸ Since then, the hall has been a day-care center that the Lima School District owns. In 1927, the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled in favor of Lima residents who sought a Black school in its own district and that any white school would be a separate, racially segregated school.¹⁴⁹ New Lima had a school for its white population but following desegregation and local population decrease in both Lima and New Lima, the two separate schools merged in 1957.¹⁵⁰

8.2.1.6.6 Decline/Recent Status

The combined populations of Lima and New Lima increased only slightly from 239 in 1930 to 271 in 1940.¹⁵¹ The population dropped to 99 in 1950 and to 90 in 1960. The population has steadily declined since the 1960s and had a recorded population of 53 as of 2010.¹⁵²

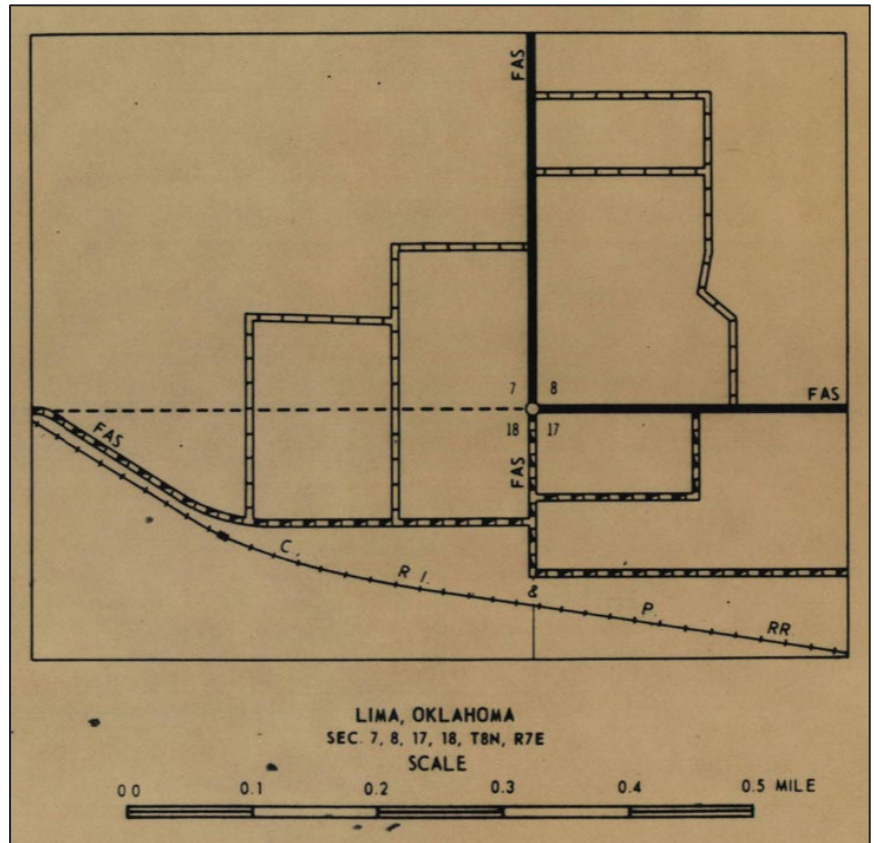


Figure 27. Map of Lima. Source: Oklahoma Department of Highways, "General Highway Map, Seminole County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma Department of Highways, 1972).

<https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/6917/rec/2>.

¹⁴³ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁴⁴ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁴⁵ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁴⁶ Listed in the NRHP in 1984.

¹⁴⁷ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁴⁸ Miller-Washington Non-Profit Organization, "Educational Resources Associated With All-Black Towns in Oklahoma, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form" (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1984).

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/d67bb1d6-e782-4b21-9854-bbdf9915c000>.

¹⁴⁹ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁵⁰ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁵¹ O'Dell, "Lima."

¹⁵² O'Dell, "Lima."

8.2.1.7 Red Bird

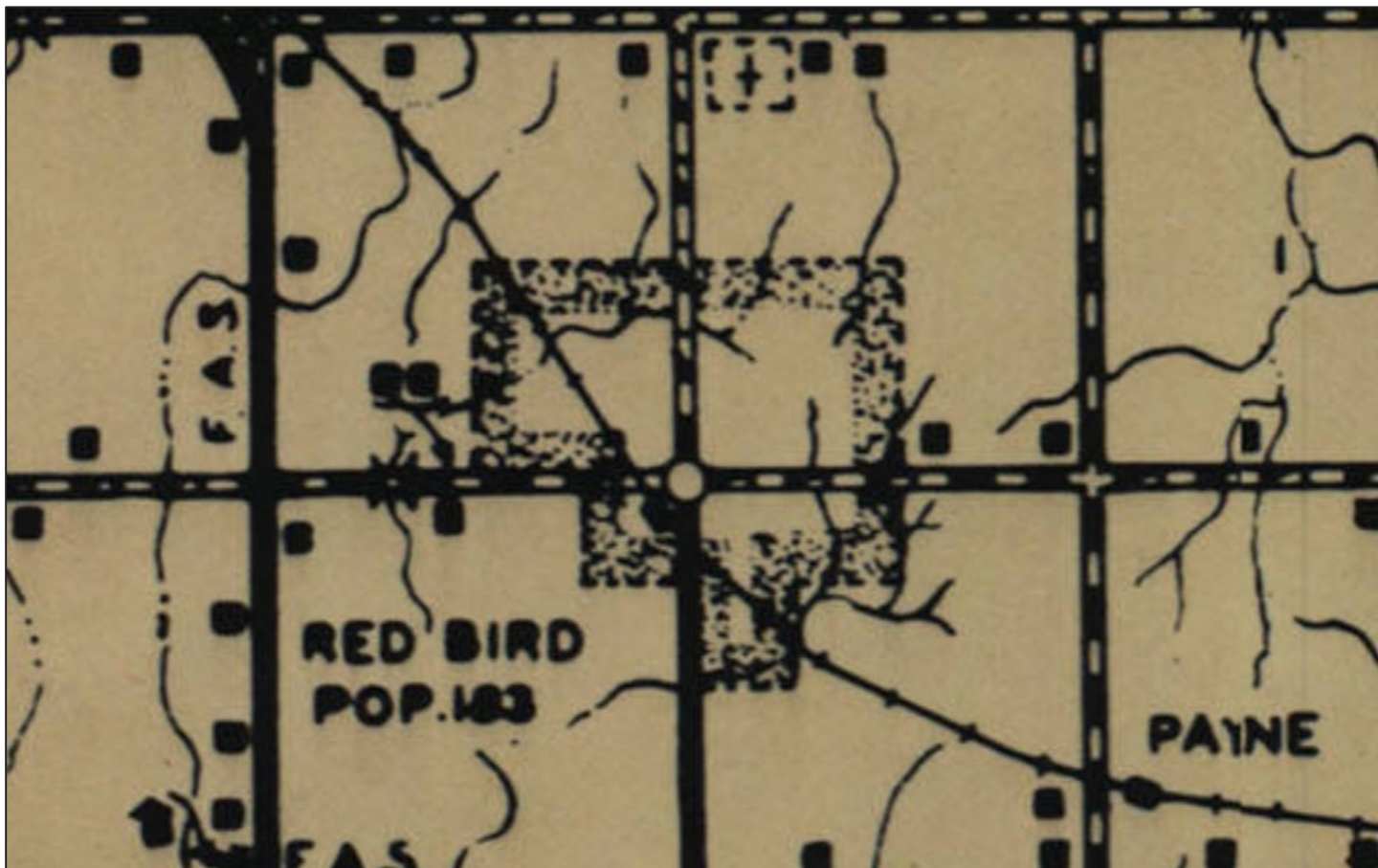


Figure 28. Map of Red Bird. Source: Oklahoma Department of Highways, "General Highway Map, Wagoner County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma Department of Highways, 1972).

<https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/6929/rec/5>.

8.2.1.7.1 Location

Red Bird was established in what was formerly Indian Territory and is in present-day Wagoner County in northeastern Oklahoma, about 11 miles southeast of Wagoner, the county seat.

8.2.1.7.2 Establishment/Prominent Residents

A post office was established for Red Bird by 1902, with Ellis White as postmaster.¹⁵³ Arkansas-native Elbert L. Barber, a minister, formed the Red Bird Investment Company and laid out a townsite along the Missouri Kansas, and Texas Railroad in about 1904.¹⁵⁴ Agents sold town lots in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas.¹⁵⁵ The community had about 30 "beautiful" cottages by 1905, and 140 residents by 1907.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ U.S. Post Office Department, Office of the Postmaster General, Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950: File Unit, Oklahoma, Sequoyah–Wagoner, Application for Post Office at Red Bird, Oklahoma (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1902).

¹⁵⁴ *The (Muskogee) Daily Search-Light*, "A Grand Baptist Rally with Rev. A. J. Lacy," April 12, 1905, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/585934607/>; Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

¹⁵⁵ Anonymous, *Townpeople of Red Bird, Oklahoma, in Front of Railroad Depot [Photograph]*. International Center of Photography.

¹⁵⁶ Bryan Brown, "Historic Local Government Buildings in Oklahoma's All-Black Towns, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form" (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, Department of Geography, 1984); *The (Muskogee) Daily Search-Light*, "A Grand Baptist Rally with Rev. A. J. Lacy."

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Red Bird residents were involved in the ongoing efforts of Black Oklahomans to attain equal protection under the law. Elbert L. Barber led Red Bird in a failed effort to defeat a 1910 state constitutional amendment with a grandfathered policy that prevented Black men from voting.¹⁵⁷ Years later, Red Bird resident I. W. Lane won a lawsuit that went to the U.S. Supreme Court on appeal after the county registrar denied his attempt to register to vote.¹⁵⁸

Town officials had a new city hall built in 1933.¹⁵⁹

8.2.1.7.3 Economy

By 1905, the town had six grocery stores, two dry goods stores, and a boarding house, drug store, Masonic Hall, sawmill, and department store.¹⁶⁰ Red Bird became a market center for rural Black families.¹⁶¹

8.2.1.7.4 Religious Institutions

By 1905, Red Bird had one church.¹⁶² Eventually the community had five congregations: Shiloh Baptist, First Baptist, Waton Chapel African Methodist Episcopal, and Church of Christ.

8.2.1.7.5 Educational Facilities

Children attended the McCallop School, 1 mile south of Red Bird, until the board-and-batten Main Street School was built in town at Main and Boston Streets.¹⁶³ The Miller-Washington School¹⁶⁴, a single-story brick-clad building, was the high school from about 1920 until integration in the 1950s, and the elementary school from the mid-1950s until its 1977 closure.¹⁶⁵

8.2.1.7.6 Decline/Recent Status

Red Bird has approximately 175 residents as of 2010, along with a post office, community center, town hall, volunteer fire department, and utilities office, but no industrial or commercial development.¹⁶⁶

¹⁵⁷ Johnson, *Acres of Aspiration*.

¹⁵⁸ U.S. Supreme Court, *Short Lane v. Wilson*, 307 U.S. 268; Brophy, "Lane v. Wilson (1939)."

¹⁵⁹ Listing in the NRHP in 1984.

¹⁶⁰ *The (Muskogee) Daily Search-Light*, "A Grand Baptist Rally with Rev. A. J. Lacy."

¹⁶¹ Brown, "Historic Local Government Buildings in Oklahoma's All-Black Towns, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form."

¹⁶² *The (Muskogee) Daily Search-Light*, "A Grand Baptist Rally with Rev. A. J. Lacy."

¹⁶³ Town of Red Bird, "Red Bird, Oklahoma: Historical Photos" (2022). <http://www.redbirdok.org/products.html>.

¹⁶⁴ Listed in the NRHP in 1984.

¹⁶⁵ Miller-Washington Non-Profit Organization, "Educational Resources Associated With All-Black Towns in Oklahoma, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form."

¹⁶⁶ Town of Red Bird, "Welcome to Red Bird, Oklahoma" (2022). <http://www.redbirdok.org/index.html>.



8.2.1.8 Rentiesville

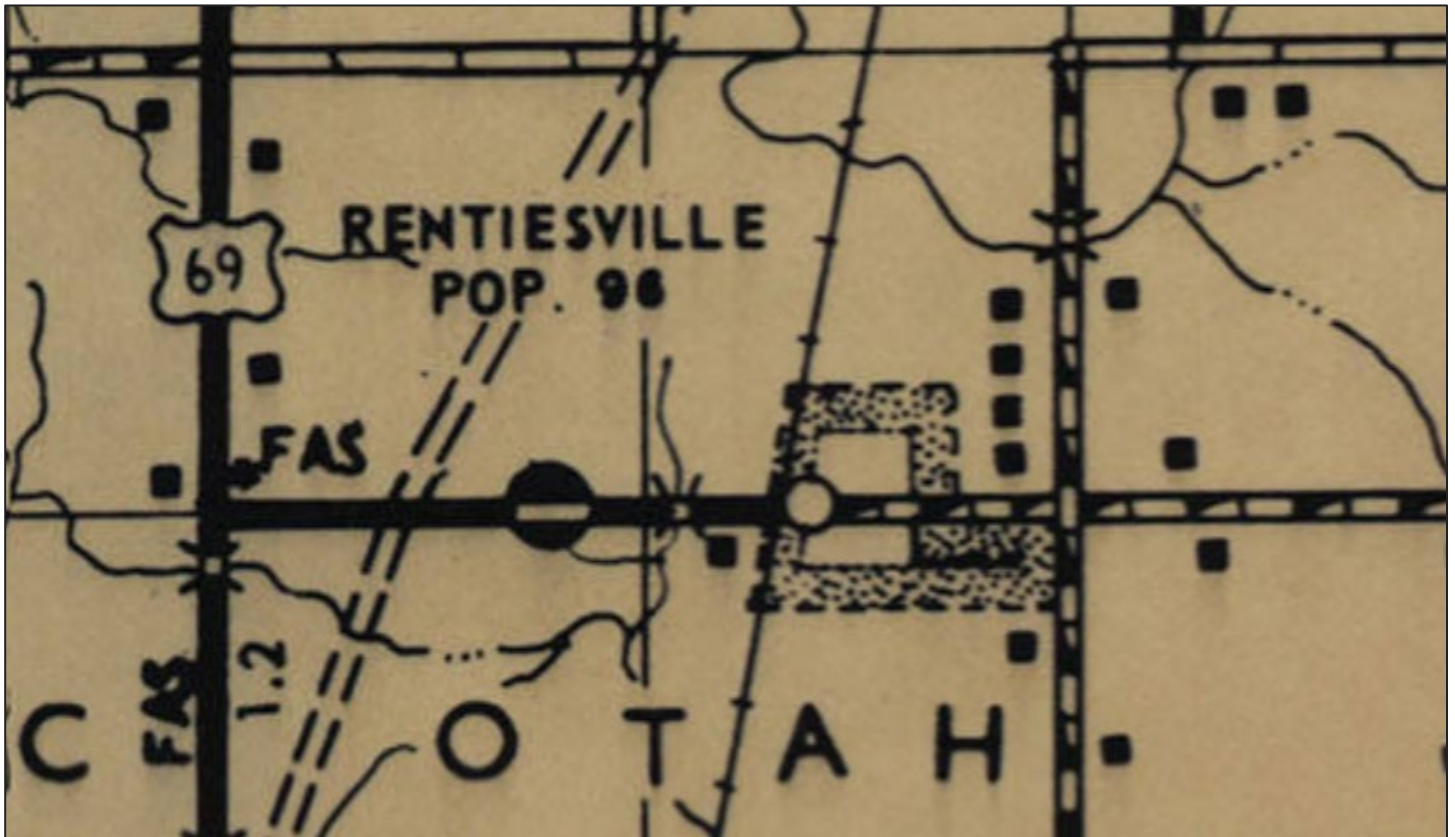


Figure 29. Map of Rentiesville. Source: Oklahoma Department of Highways, "General Highway Map, McIntosh County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma Department of Highways, 1972).

<https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/6890/rec/4>.

8.2.1.8.1 Location

Rentiesville is in eastern Oklahoma within McIntosh County, former Indian Territory, approximately 18 miles northeast of Eufaula, the county seat. It is also approximately 0.5 miles from the site of Oklahoma's largest Civil War battle, the Battle of Honeysprings.¹⁶⁷

8.2.1.8.2 Establishment/Prominent Residents

Rentiesville was founded in 1903 as a flag-stop on the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad.¹⁶⁸ In 1904, the town had its first post office under postmaster J. J. Hudson. Rentiesville was named for local landowner and lawman, William Rentie, a marshal until 1910.¹⁶⁹ Buck Colbert Franklin, the lawyer who represented the dispossessed in the aftermath of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, lived here, and his son, John Hope Franklin, renowned historian, was born here. Rentiesville is home to the Oklahoma Blues Hall of Fame.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Larry O'Dell, "Rentiesville," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022).

<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=RE027>.

¹⁶⁸ O'Dell, "Rentiesville."

¹⁶⁹ *The Checotah Times*, "Rentiesville R.F.D. No 1," February 6, 1914, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/5781190/>.

¹⁷⁰ Bowman, "Connections Between Black Wall Street and Oklahoma's All-Black Towns," 298.

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8.2.1.8.3 Economy

Beginning in 1911, the Rentiesville Fair was touted as Oklahoma's largest Black fair and exhibit. The annual event attracted thousands of visitors to domestic science, livestock, and farm product displays.¹⁷¹ By 1914, a cotton gin had been relocated from Grayson to Rentiesville.¹⁷²

8.2.1.8.4 Religious Institutions

By 1906, the town had two churches, the Missionary Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal.¹⁷³

8.2.1.8.5 Educational Facilities

Rentiesville hosted several civic and educational events during the first decades of the twentieth century. The Rentiesville Musical and Industrial School opened in 1907 with "Normal, Musical, and Industrial courses" for students.¹⁷⁴

8.2.1.8.6 Decline/Recent Status

By 1910, more than 400 people resided in one of Rentiesville's five wards.¹⁷⁵ Like other small agricultural towns in Oklahoma, the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression lured locals out of Rentiesville as they searched for employment in larger areas. By the mid-1930s, the town's population had dwindled to 154 residents.¹⁷⁶ During the last decades of the twentieth century, the population dropped to 90, and had a small resurgence by 2010 with 128 residents. Currently, the town hosts the annual Dusk 'til Dawn Blues Festival and is home to the Down Home Blues Club, both of which hometown musician D. C. Minner founded.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ *The (Eufala) Indian Journal*, "Big Days at Rentiesville," October 22, 1915, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/588905959/>.

¹⁷² *The Checotah Times*, "Rentiesville R.F.D. No 1."

¹⁷³ *The (Eufala) Indian Journal*, "Big Days at Rentiesville."

¹⁷⁴ *Checotah Enquirer*, "Rentiesville Musical and Industrial," June 14, 1907, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/587090999/>.

¹⁷⁵ U.S. Department of Labor and Commerce, Bureau of the Census, District 68, Rentiesville, McIntosh County, Oklahoma, Population in 1910 (Manuscript), Ancestry.com.

¹⁷⁶ *The McIntosh County Democrat*, "Street Project Approved in Rentiesville District," July 21, 1938, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/5924893/>; *The (Eufala) Indian Journal*, "Rentiesville Streets May Soon Be Improved," February 8, 1940, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/16902676/>.

¹⁷⁷ O'Dell, "Rentiesville."



8.2.1.9 Summit

8.2.1.9.1 Location

Summit is 6 miles southwest of the Muskogee County seat of Muskogee, between the Arkansas and North Canadian Rivers in northeastern Oklahoma, former Indian Territory.

8.2.1.9.2 Establishment/Prominent Residents

Summit had a post office as early as 1896, but was not platted until 1910, along the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad.¹⁷⁸ In 1922, Lee Wilder Thomas, a minister from Mexia, Texas, invested \$100,000 to purchase 576 acres to create his version of a model city for Black citizens.¹⁷⁹ Thomas constructed a cotton gin and a general store for local residents and to entice new settlers to Summit.¹⁸⁰ His 1922 home, a Craftsman-influenced bungalow, was a sign of his prominence.¹⁸¹

8.2.1.9.3 Economy

Summit's economy was based on agricultural production from the surrounding area. Unlike other all-Black towns that focused on cotton as a cash crop, Thomas promoted diversified farming, touting the benefits of "growing of smaller and better crops."¹⁸² Thomas provided seed and training resources to local farmers.¹⁸³ The success of diversified farming necessitated supporting businesses in Summit, and before World War II the town had a cotton gin, filling station, grocery, and garage.¹⁸⁴

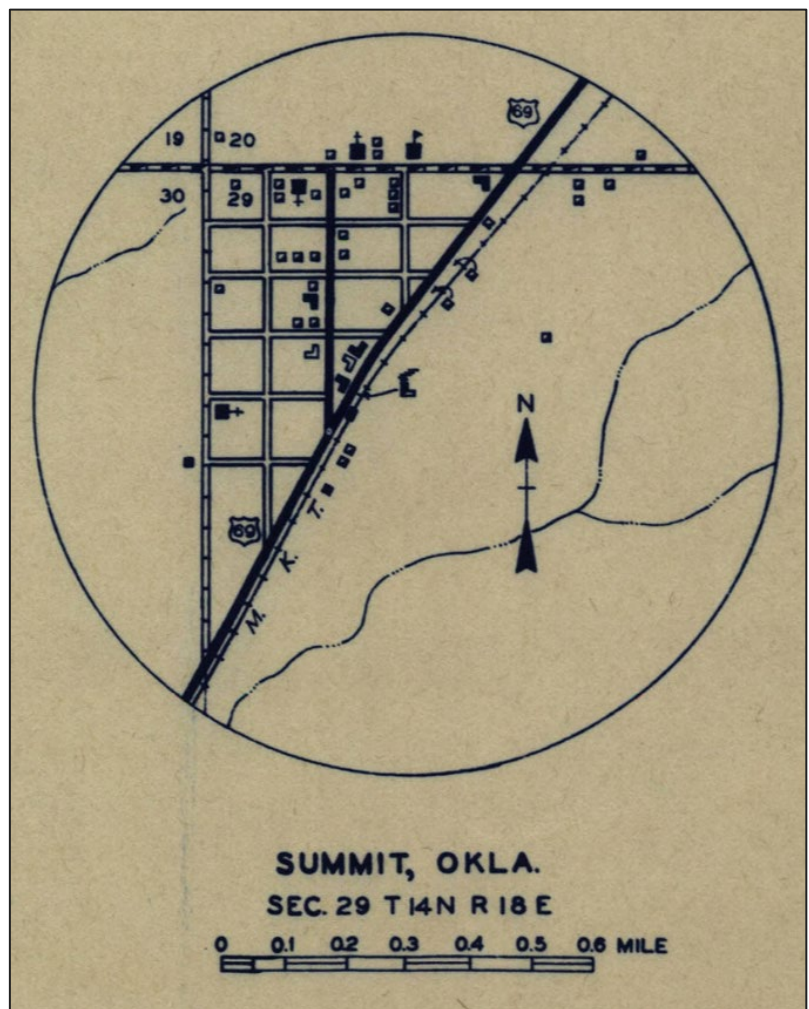


Figure 30. Map of Summit. Source: Oklahoma State Highway Department, "General Highway and Transportation Map, Muskogee County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma State Highway Department, 1937).

<https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/6988/rec/1>.

¹⁷⁸ Larry O'Dell, "Summit," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022). <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=SU007>.

¹⁷⁹ *The Dallas Express*, "Mexia Capitalist to Build Modern Negro Town in Oklahoma," November 11, 1922, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/78711672/>.

¹⁸⁰ DeRutha Richardson, *St. Thomas Primitive Baptist Church, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, Muskogee County Clerk (Muskogee, 2004).

¹⁸¹ Listed in the NRHP in 2018.

¹⁸² *The Topeka Plaindealer*, "South Muskogee Boasts Real Negro Mercantile Establishment," December 1, 1922, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/381863395/>.

¹⁸³ *The Dallas Express*, "Mexia Capitalist to Build Modern Negro Town in Oklahoma."

¹⁸⁴ *The Dallas Express*, "Mexia Capitalist to Build Modern Negro Town in Oklahoma."

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8.2.1.9.4 Religious Institutions

Thomas organized the St. Thomas Primitive Baptist Church¹⁸⁵ in 1923, and in 1929, the congregation built the extant sandstone church.¹⁸⁶ The church was the "strongest source of the community cohesion and was the one social institution" in Summit, and it remains a pillar of social activity.¹⁸⁷

8.2.1.9.5 Educational Facilities

The 1925 W. E. B. Du Bois School was named for the famed sociologist, historian, and a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In the 1930s, the WPA funded an addition to the school. Fire destroyed the property in 1991.¹⁸⁸

8.2.1.9.6 Decline/Recent Status

In the aftermath of the Dust Bowl and Great Depression, some residents moved away.¹⁸⁹ A rash of fires destroyed many homes and the Du Bois School.¹⁹⁰ The town officially incorporated in 1980. In 1990, Summit had 170 residents, by 2010, the number had dropped to 139.¹⁹¹

8.2.1.10 Taft

8.2.1.10.1 Location

Taft is at the confluence of the Arkansas and Verdigris Rivers, in present-day Muskogee County, part of former Indian Territory, approximately 8 miles west of the county seat at Muskogee.

8.2.1.10.2 Establishment/Prominent Citizens

In 1902, having received land allotments under the Dawes Act of 1887, Thomas and Phillis Manuel settled the future site of Taft with their extended family.¹⁹² One mile to the east was the townsite of Twine, where the Midland Townsite Company hoped to purchase land from owner John Rector. Unable to acquire the desired parcels at that location, the company bought the nearest available tract, 120 acres to the west, and moved the post office to the newly platted town of Taft on November 18, 1904. The Midland Townsite Company platted the town, and Taft was incorporated on May 8, 1907 and named in honor of the contemporaneous Secretary of

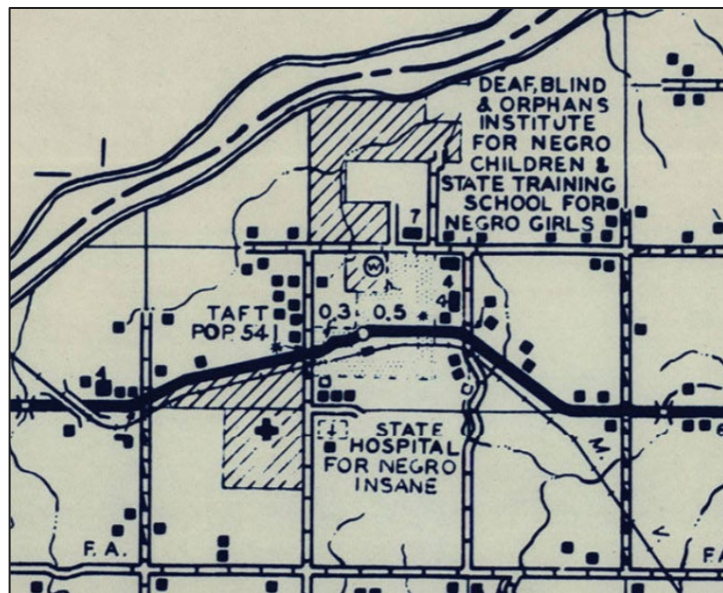


Figure 31. Map of Taft. Source: Oklahoma State Highway Department, "General Highway and Transportation Map, Muskogee County, Oklahoma."

¹⁸⁵ Listed in the NRHP in 2004.

¹⁸⁶ O'Dell, "Summit."

¹⁸⁷ Richardson, *St. Thomas Primitive Baptist Church, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*.

¹⁸⁸ Listed in the NRHP in 1984.

¹⁸⁹ Richardson, *St. Thomas Primitive Baptist Church, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*.

¹⁹⁰ Richardson, *St. Thomas Primitive Baptist Church, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*; Bryan Brown, "W. E. B. Du Bois School, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form" (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, 1984). <http://nr2.shpo.okstate.edu/QueryResult.aspx?id=84003161>.

¹⁹¹ O'Dell, "Summit."

¹⁹² Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

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War, William Howard Taft.¹⁹³ Taft's founding population primarily relocated from the southern states, rather than from tribal lands.¹⁹⁴ The city hall was built in 1910.¹⁹⁵

Taft has the distinction of electing the first Black woman mayor in the United States. Lelia Foley-Davis, born in 1941, was elected in 1973, and named the state's Outstanding Woman of the Year in 1974. Foley-Davis was mayor through the early 1980s. She regained her seat in 2000 and has continued to serve on the Taft Board of Trustees.¹⁹⁶

In 1908, William H. Twine and Warrior A. Rentie, president of the Anti-Jim Crow League, filed a lawsuit contesting segregation in train cars as a violation of civil rights and the constitution. When the Taft railroad depot burned after the state enacted Jim Crow segregation laws, some assumed that citizens started the fire as retaliation. The community also organized and opposed separate waiting rooms, another version of Jim Crow laws, along with residents of other all-Black towns in Oklahoma.¹⁹⁷ Residents raised \$1,500 to replace the Taft depot, but railroad officials denied receiving the money.¹⁹⁸

8.2.1.10.3 Economy

By about 1904, Taft had a depot for the Midland Valley Railroad, which connected Hope, Arkansas, to Wichita, Kansas, via about northeastern Oklahoma. Settlers represented an array of professions that by 1911 included farmers, merchants, mechanics, and professionals.¹⁹⁹ Like other all-Black towns, Taft quickly developed a business community to provide necessities for locals. Within a decade of its founding, Taft had 37 businesses—groceries, hardware stores, a bakery, meat market, barber shops, cotton gins, and a two-story brick depot.²⁰⁰ The local farming community, which grew cotton as its staple crop, patronized these businesses. A white businessman from Muskogee, John Coulter, operated a bank in Taft between 1906 and 1928.²⁰¹ The Halochee Industrial institute sparked a building boom and increased local real estate prices beginning in 1906.²⁰²

8.2.1.10.4 Religious Institutions

The African Methodist Episcopal Church was one of the first institutions in Taft. Creek freedman Phillis Manuel donated the land from her allotment. In addition, the Star Light Masonic Lodge was established first in Twine in 1904, and it moved to Taft with the rest of the community a few months later.²⁰³

8.2.1.10.5 Educational Facilities

Taft's citizens focused on establishing educational opportunities. Some residents joined the Negro Press Association for the Oklahoma and Indian Territories organized in Guthrie in 1906, encouraging exchanges on current events and race issues. The group exerted its support for full and equal rights for Black students in Oklahoma. That year, Warren E. Glenn established the Halochee Industrial Institute.²⁰⁴ The curriculum included literature and practical classes like blacksmithing, wheel-writing, sewing, and dressmaking. The institute had a small broom factory in 1907.²⁰⁵ When the Industrial Institute for the Deaf, Blind, and Orphans of the Colored Race opened in 1909, it was temporarily housed in the Halochee

¹⁹³ Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

¹⁹⁴ Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

¹⁹⁵ Listed in the NRHP in 1984.

¹⁹⁶ Larry O'Dell, "Taft," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022).

<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=TA001>.

¹⁹⁷ *OK Democrat Beckham County* (Erick, February 6, 1908, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/587033958/>).

¹⁹⁸ Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

¹⁹⁹ *Taft Enterprise*, "The Character Peculiar to the Taft Negroes," April 18, 1911, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/593011403/>.

²⁰⁰ *Taft Enterprise*, "The Character Peculiar to the Taft Negroes."

²⁰¹ Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

²⁰² *Muskogee Daily Phoenix and Times-Democrat*, "City of Taft on Eve of Great Big Boom," March 13, 1907, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/584245411/>.

²⁰³ O'Dell, "Taft."

²⁰⁴ Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

²⁰⁵ Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."



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Industrial Institute. These students were similarly schooled in grammar with practical classes on a breadth of subjects, including grammar, gardening, farming, cooking, sewing, shoe-cobbling, carpentry, and harness-making. The first class graduated in 1926. The Taft State Children's Home, a facility for Black dependent and neglected children, and the State Training School for Negro Girls were also in Taft.²⁰⁶

8.2.1.10.6 Decline/Recent Status

In an unusual twist, Taft grew during and in the immediate aftermath of the Great Depression, hitting its peak population of 772 in 1940 before steadily declining in the decades that followed. Renewed interest in the town has helped steady the population, which was 197 in 2000, and 250 in 2010.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Gray, "Taft: Town on the Black Frontier."

²⁰⁷ O'Dell, "Taft."



8.2.1.11 Tatum

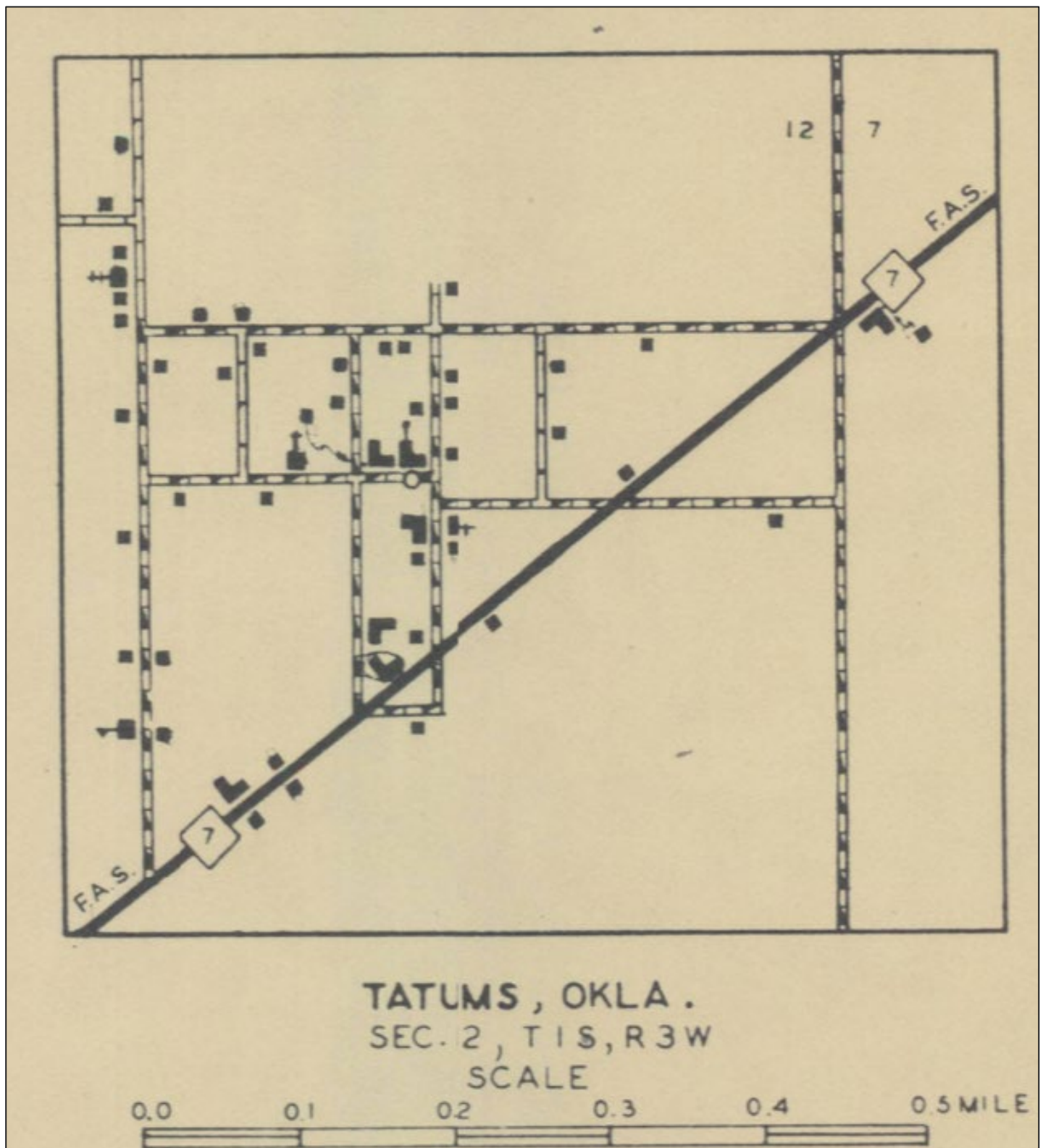


Figure 32. Map of Tatum. Source: Oklahoma Department of Highways, "General Highway Map, Carter County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma Department of Highways, 1972).

<https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/6864/rec/4>.

8.2.1.11.1 Location

Tatums is in former Indian Territory, present-day Carter County approximately 27 miles northeast of Ardmore, the county seat.

8.2.1.11.2 Establishment/Prominent Citizens

Lee B. and Mary T. Tatum founded the town in about 1894. Many families that settled in Tatums before statehood had lived in Indian Territory as freedmen of the members of the Five Tribes.²⁰⁸

8.2.1.11.3 Economy

Business enterprises were instrumental to the community's prolonged success. Tatum determined that recruiting professionals, like doctors and shopkeepers, was necessary to sustain a town.²⁰⁹ Tatum was the first postmaster and town marshal in 1895, using his home for these services and as a general store with dry goods.²¹⁰ Stores and business enterprises emerged. For example, the first blacksmith shop opened in 1901, a doctor provided services by 1904, and a drug store opened in 1909.²¹¹

Agriculture was another important economic factor for Tatums. Unlike some other all-Black towns in the region, Tatums farmers diversified crops to include potatoes, sweet potatoes, pecans, wild grapes, plums, blackberries, and black walnuts. In 1910, a cotton gin and grist mill opened.²¹²

8.2.1.11.4 Religious Institutions

Church was another important community cornerstone. The first religious institution was a Methodist congregation early Tatums settler E. B. Hunt founded. He was its first pastor, and his small congregation could not sustain itself.²¹³ As early as May 1894, residents coordinated efforts to establish a Baptist church, a more commonly practiced religion. In 1919, the Bethel Missionary Baptist Church building was complete.²¹⁴

8.2.1.11.5 Educational Facilities

Education was a fundamental component of Tatum's plan for the town. In 1894, early settler Enoch Carter lead the community's first subscription school classes under a brush arbor. The first year, the three-month session cost families 25 cents monthly.²¹⁵ As attendance increased, two teachers were added, and the meeting was relocated to a log cabin. Following statehood in 1907, state funding helped expand the curriculum from a three-month to a full eight-month academic year.²¹⁶ Tatums' literacy rate increased to 70 percent by 1900; by 1910, the rate was at 86 percent, well above the state average.²¹⁷

²⁰⁸ Rhonda M. Ragsdale, "A Place to Call Home: A Study of the Self-Segregated Community of Tatums, Oklahoma, 1894–1970" (MA Thesis, University of North Texas, 2005).

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²¹⁴ Listed in the NRHP in 1995.

²¹⁵ Varner, "A History of the Tatums Community."

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8.2.1.11.6 Decline/Recent Status

Tatums began to decline following World War I. The drop in cotton prices and crippling economic effects of the Great Depression led a large portion of the population to migrate to urban areas for employment.²¹⁸ Tatums had no businesses or stores and only a few paved roads by 2005.²¹⁹

8.2.1.12 Tullahassee

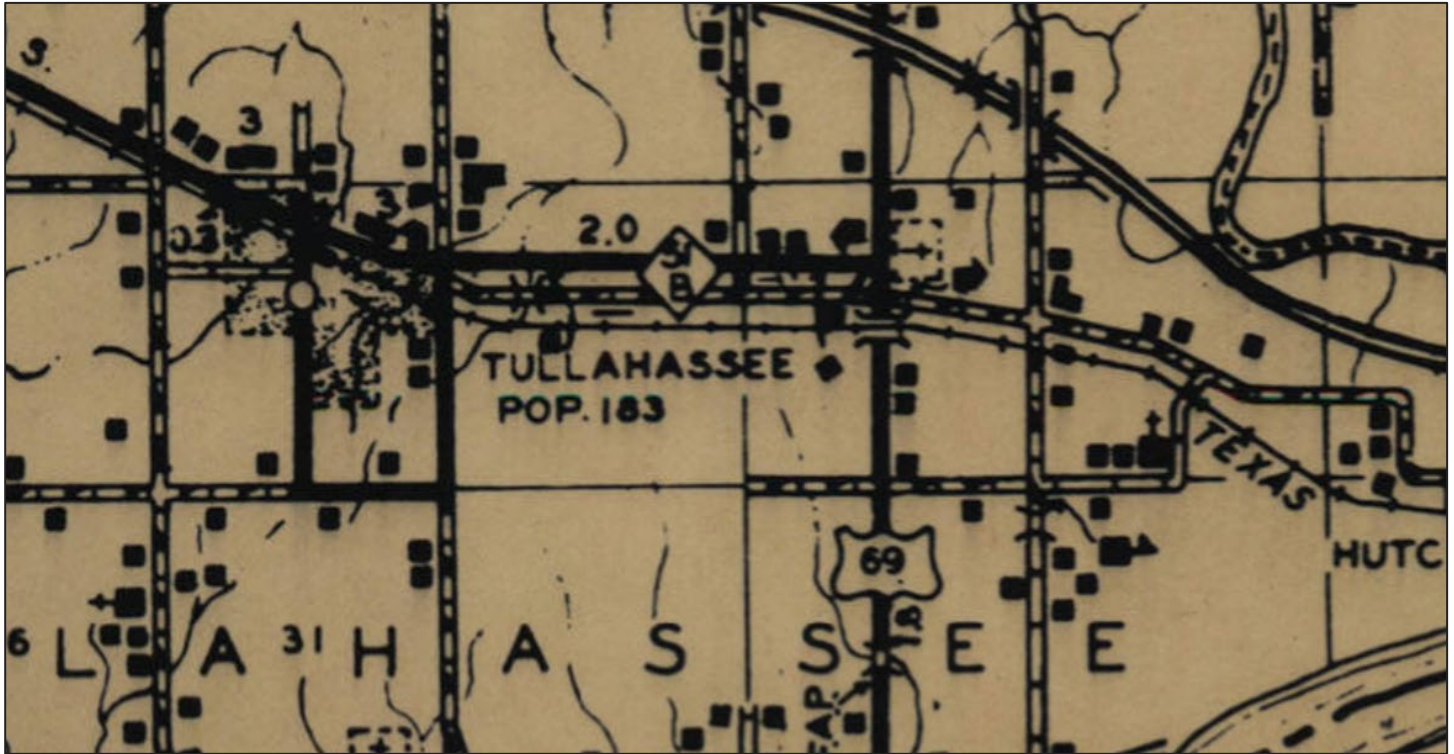


Figure 33. Map of Tullahassee. Source: Oklahoma Department of Highways, "General Highway Map, Wagoner County, Oklahoma."

8.2.1.12.1 Location

Tullahassee is in eastern Oklahoma, approximately 10 miles southwest of the County Seat of Wagoner in Wagoner County, former Indian Territory.

8.2.1.12.2 Establishment/Prominent Citizens

Although it had earlier precedents, by the 1880s, Creek freedmen and their descendants primarily populated this area.²²⁰ The Tullahassee Town Site Company solicited residents in surrounding counties to purchase town plots. Aided by its location along the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad line, the town was informally founded in 1899. In 1902, the town incorporated, and a post office opened.²²¹

²¹⁸ Larry O'Dell, "Tatums," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022).

<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=TA014>.

²¹⁹ Ragsdale, "A Place to Call Home: A Study of the Self-Segregated Community of Tatums, Oklahoma, 1894–1970."

²²⁰ Larry O'Dell, "Tullahassee," in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* (2022).

<https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=TU002>.

²²¹ O'Dell, "Tullahassee."

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8.2.1.12.3 Economy

Tulahassee developed a business district and the population reached approximately 200 residents before 1920.²²² The 1912 A. J. Mason Building²²³, Oklahoma's oldest-surviving, masonry-constructed, Black-owned business was a grocery store from its inception until the 1950s.²²⁴

8.2.1.12.4 Religious Institutions

Founded on March 1, 1850, the Tullahassee Mission was a Presbyterian undertaking for the Creek Nation.²²⁵ No church buildings appear to be extant.

8.2.1.12.5 Educational Facilities

Tulahassee has a long history of providing education to its residents. The Tullahassee Mission established a school for Creek students.²²⁶ Following an 1880 fire, the school reopened for Creek freedman in 1883; control of the school remained under the Bureau of Indian Affairs until 1914.²²⁷

In 1916, the African Methodist Episcopal Church established Flipper Davis College, the only private institution for Black students in the state, on the site of the Tullahassee Mission. The curriculum included agriculture, mechanics, and home economics, and the school was open until 1935.²²⁸

In 1939, the WPA made more than \$10,000 in improvements to the Tullahassee School and renamed it for renowned historian Carter G. Woodson. Woodson founded Negro History Week in 1926, which evolved to become Black History Month in 1976.²²⁹ The white wood-frame building had six classrooms and offices for the principal and secretary. The project included a sandstone elementary school with a multiple-purpose cafeteria/auditorium/gymnasium.²³⁰ In 1990, the building was abandoned after consolidation with nearby Porter School District.

8.2.1.12.6 Decline/Recent Status

By the 1980s, the population had decreased to approximately 150. The downtown commercial sector was demolished or vacant.²³¹ By 2010, Tullahassee had 106 citizens.²³²

²²² Bryan Brown, "A. J. Mason Building, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form" (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University, 1985).

²²³ Listed in the NRHP in 1985.

²²⁴ Brown, "A. J. Mason Building, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form."

²²⁵ Emily Cowan, "Carter G. Woodson School," in *Abandoned Oklahoma* (2021). <https://abandonedok.com/carter-woodson-school/>.

²²⁶ Cowan, "Carter G. Woodson School."

²²⁷ Angela Y. Walton-Raji, "Remembering Tullahassee Manual School, and Flipper-Davis College," *The African-Native American Genealogy Blog*, 2010.

²²⁸ *Muskogee Daily Phoenix and Times-Democrat*, "Old Tullahassee, Rich in Story to be Auctioned Off," December 24, 1914, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/584044001/>; O'Dell, "Tullahassee."

²²⁹ Lerone Bennett Jr., "Carter G. Woodson, Father of Black History," *Ebony*, 1993,

<https://web.archive.org/web/20150405053807/http://www.nathanielturner.com/cartergwoodsonfatherblackhistory.htm>; O'Dell, "Tullahassee."

²³⁰ Cowan, "Carter G. Woodson School."

²³¹ Brown, "A. J. Mason Building, National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form."

²³² O'Dell, "Tullahassee."



8.2.1.13 Vernon

8.2.1.13.1 Location

Vernon is in eastern Oklahoma in McIntosh County, former Indian Territory, approximately 20 miles west of Eufaula, the county seat.

8.2.1.13.2 Establishment/Prominent Citizens

Vernon was established in 1911 in McIntosh County on the Fort Smith and Western Railroad. The town was named for Bishop W. T. Vernon of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.²³³ T. M. Haynes platted Vernon. Haynes was instrumental in founding and developing Boley, one of the largest all-Black towns in Oklahoma. John Caldwell and William Rice were some of Vernon's earliest settlers. Many original settlers were formerly enslaved or their descendants who had experience with cotton cultivation in the South.²³⁴ The Vernon Post Office was built in 1920 by Bill Young and C. F. Dozier.²³⁵

8.2.1.13.3 Economy

The local economic focus, with acres of deep rich soil and prairie lands, was cotton. The soils could also accommodate diversified crops like wheat, potatoes, cotton, alfalfa, apples, [and] peaches.²³⁶ Many who did not own farms and facilities worked as farm laborers. The Boley-Vernon Development Company was founded by Haynes and an early resident of Boley, D. J. Turner, assist Black citizens in acquiring real estate in both Boley and Vernon.²³⁷ Agricultural enterprises like L. T. Woodard's Midwest Chicken Hatchery Company barely survived the Great Depression.²³⁸

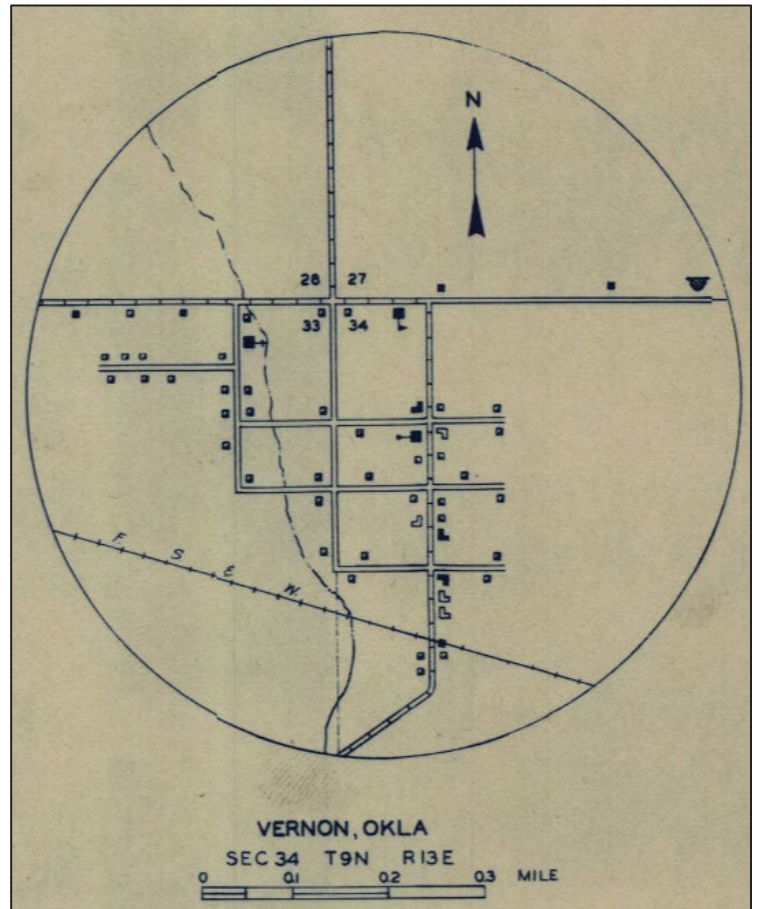


Figure 34. Map of Vernon. Source: Oklahoma State Highway Department, "General Highway and Transportation Map, McIntosh County, Oklahoma" (Oklahoma State Highway Department, 1937).
<https://dc.library.okstate.edu/digital/collection/OKMaps/id/6984/rec/1>.

²³³ *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Facts About Vernon, Okla.," December 21, 1911, 6, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/606556375/>; Woodard, "Vernon."

²³⁴ Woodard, "Vernon."

²³⁵ Listed in the NRHP in 1984.

²³⁶ *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Facts About Vernon, Okla.": *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Vernon, Okla.," December 17, 1915, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/606556523/>.

²³⁷ *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Vernon, Okla."

²³⁸ Woodard, "Vernon."

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Vernon served as a rural market center for the nearby agriculturalists.²³⁹ Vernon had its first postmistress, Ella Woods, by 1913.²⁴⁰ Five businesses, a gin, grist mill, hotel, and sawmill were in Vernon. By 1915, Vernon had 10 businesses and a gin.²⁴¹ At its peak, the town had two blacksmithies, and a drug store, restaurant, cannery, and barbershop.²⁴²

8.2.1.13.4 Religious Institutions

L. T. Woodard and Louise Wesley founded the first Vernon church congregation in 1912. The town had five churches by 1915.²⁴³

8.2.1.13.5 Educational Facilities

Vernon had a public school.²⁴⁴ Since Vernon was not permitted to have a high school until 1955 when a small number of high school students were in residence, one was never built.²⁴⁵

8.2.1.13.6 Decline/Recent Status

Without a high school in the community, it was difficult to develop trained people with education, and many young residents left Vernon and did not return.²⁴⁶ Vernon's population had decreased to 46 residents in 1978, the result of economic depression and lack of education.²⁴⁷

²³⁹ *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Vernon News," February 2, 1911, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/legacy/606556017/>.

²⁴⁰ Woodard, "Vernon."

²⁴¹ *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Facts About Vernon, Okla.": *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Vernon, Okla."

²⁴² Woodard, "Vernon."

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²⁴⁴ *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Facts About Vernon, Okla.": *The (Boley) Weekly Progress*, "Vernon, Okla."

²⁴⁵ Woodard, "Vernon."

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ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SURVEY OF OKLAHOMA'S ALL-BLACK TOWNS

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10 Summary

In 2022, Stantec, contracted by the OK/SHPO, conducted an architectural and historic resources survey of 13 of the 14 extant all-Black towns in the state and completed an accompanying historic context. As a result of the project, 226 historic-age resources in the all-Black towns of Brooksville, Clearview, Grayson, IXL, Langston, Lima, Red Bird, Rentiesville, Summit, Taft, Tatums, Tullahassee, and Vernon were surveyed. An OK/SHPO Historic Resource Inventory form was created for each property, and each resource for evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP. Furthermore, a historic context was developed to sufficiently evaluate the significance of proposed historic districts and individual properties. After survey and data analysis, 40 resources were recommended as potentially eligible for the NRHP and one of these historic resources, the Abe Lincoln Trading Company was selected for individual nomination to the NRHP as part of this project. Areas of significance identified included Criterion A in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Commerce, Education, and Ethnic Heritage/Black at the local level and Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level. To accompany the survey, the project team also completed a NHRP nomination for the Abe Lincoln Trading Company in Clearview, Oklahoma.

APPENDIX

A.1 Maps



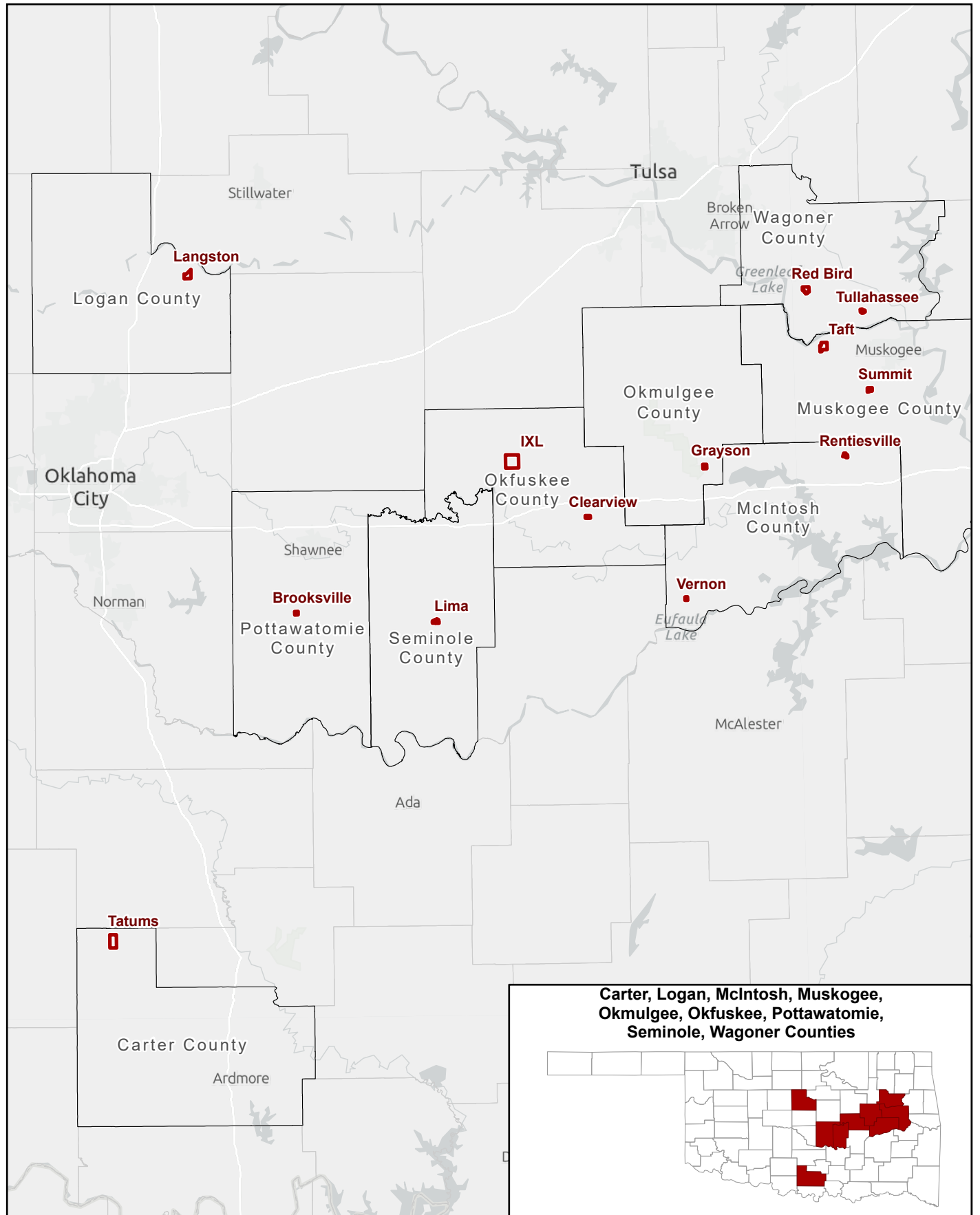


Figure 1.
Survey Areas
 Architectural and Historical Survey
 of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

Town Boundary



COX | McLAIN
 Environmental Consulting

now

Stantec

0 20 Miles
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1 inch = 20 miles
 Scale: 1:1,267,200
 Date: 1/4/2023

Basemap Source: Esri (2022)



Figure 2a. Surveyed Properties, Brooksville
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

- Town Boundary
- Documented Resource

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Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)



Figure 2b. Surveyed Properties, Clearview

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

- Town Boundary
- Documented Resource

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Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
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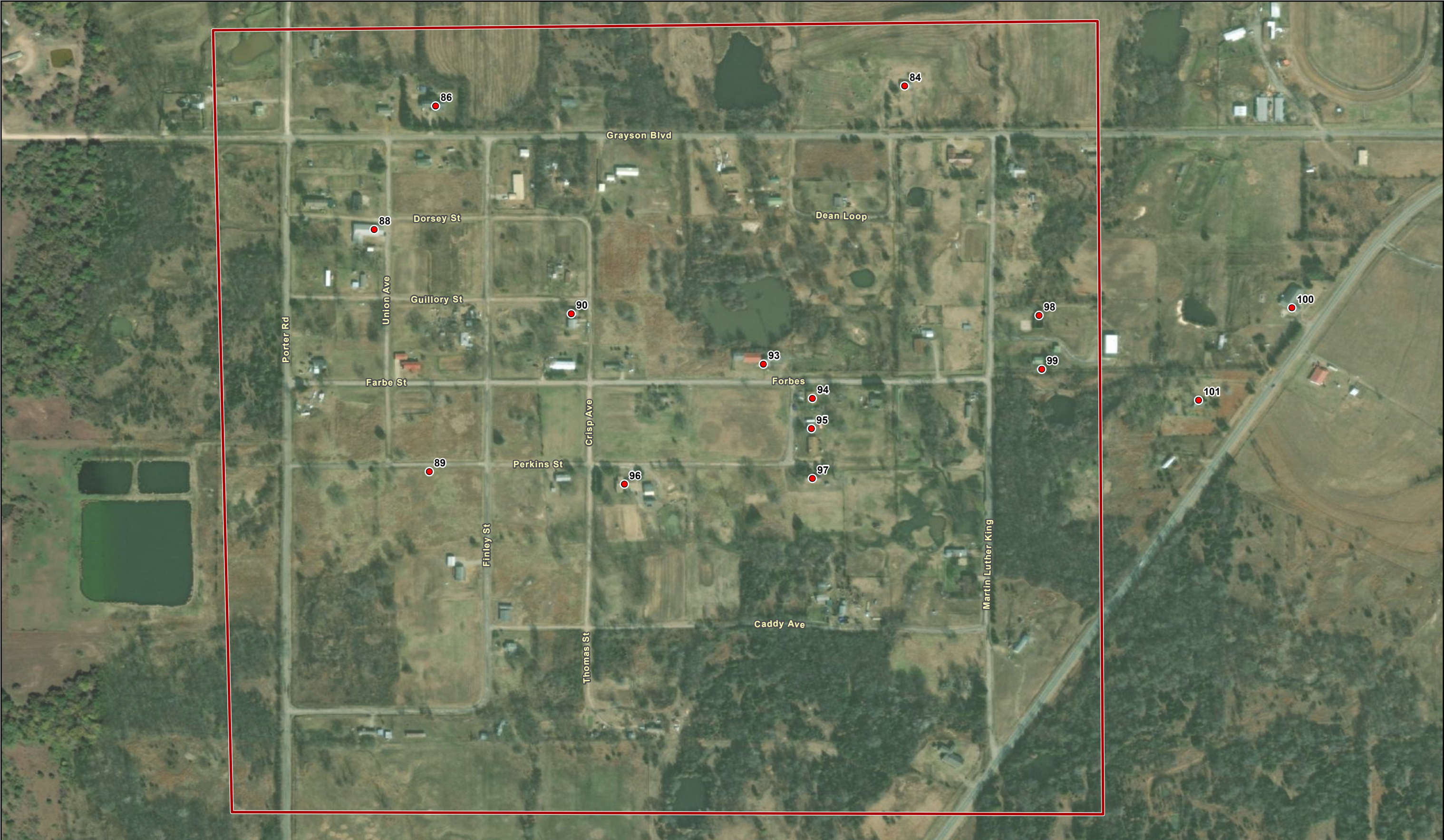


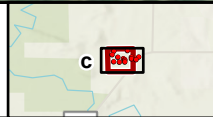


Figure 2c. Surveyed Properties, Grayson
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns



-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

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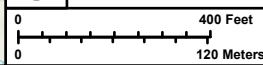
Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2019, 2020)



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Environmental Consulting





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1 inch = 400 feet
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Date: 3/28/2023





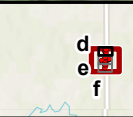
Figure 2d. Surveyed Properties, IXL

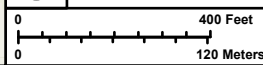
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

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Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)





1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023



Figure 2e. Surveyed Properties, IXL

Architectoral and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

- Town Boundary
- Documented Resource

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Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021, 2022)



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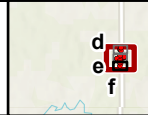
Figure 2f. Surveyed Properties, IXL

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns



-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

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Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)



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0	400 Feet	1 inch = 400 feet
0	120 Meters	Scale: 1:4,800
		Date: 3/28/2023






Figure 2g. Surveyed Properties, Langston


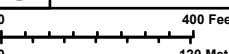
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

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-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)





1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023

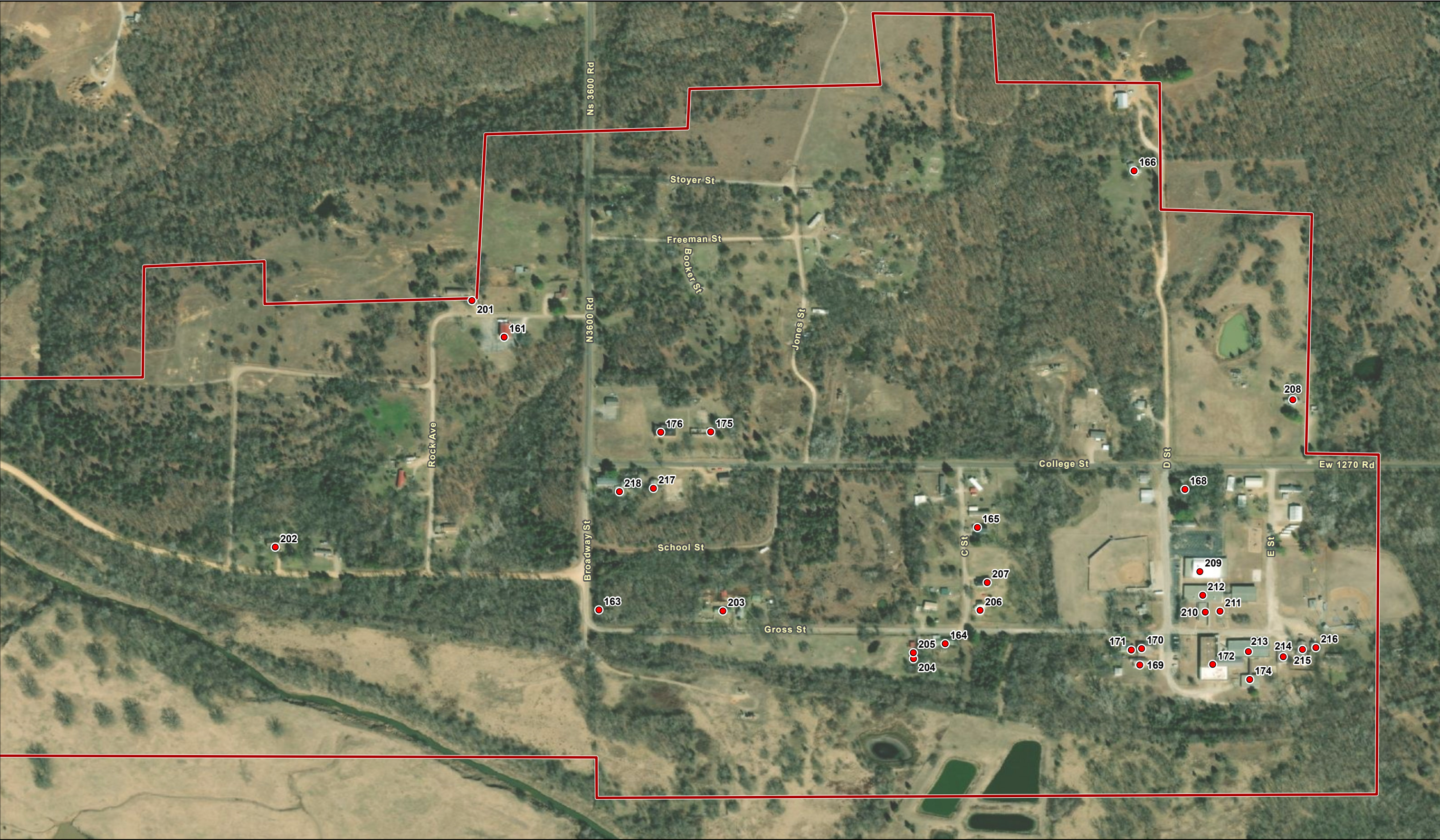




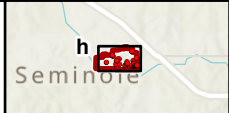
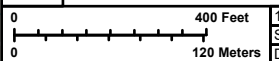


Figure 2h. Surveyed Properties, Lima

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)





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1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023

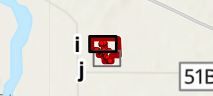




Figure 2i. Surveyed Properties, Red Bird
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl



Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)






0	400 Feet	1 inch = 400 feet
0	120 Meters	Scale: 1:4,800
		Date: 3/28/2023

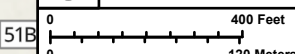
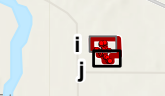


Figure 2j. Surveyed Properties, Red Bird
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)





1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023



Figure 2k. Surveyed Properties, Rentiesville
 Architectural and Historical Survey
 of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

- Town Boundary
- Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
 Aerial Source: Maxar (2019)

1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023



Figure 21. Surveyed Properties, Summit

Architectural and Historical Survey of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl



- Town Boundary
- Documented Resource

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2019)

1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023






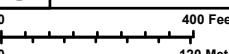
Figure 2m. Surveyed Properties, Taft
Architctural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2018)







1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023



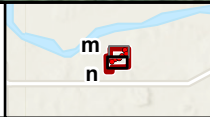


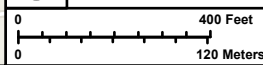
Figure 2n. Surveyed Properties, Taft

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2018)







1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023






Figure 2o. Surveyed Properties, Tatums

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)





0 400 Feet	1 inch = 400 feet
0 120 Meters	Scale: 1:4,800
	Date: 3/28/2023






Figure 2p. Surveyed Properties, Tatum

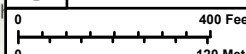
Architectural and Historical Survey of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)





1 inch = 400 feet



Scale: 1:4,800

Date: 3/28/2023






Figure 2q. Surveyed Properties, Tatum

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)



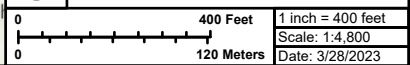




Figure 2r. Surveyed Properties, Tatum

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

● Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2021)

1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023



Figure 2s. Surveyed Properties, Tullahassee
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

- Town Boundary
- Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2019)

N

0 400 Feet
0 120 Meters

s
t

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1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023



Figure 2t. Surveyed Properties, Tullahassee

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

● Documented Resource

U:\235300405\03_data\gis_cad\gis\AllBlack_Towns_Working.aprx - abt_figure_2_surveyed_properties_20221128_sgl

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2019)

s

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0 400 Feet
0 120 Meters



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Environmental Consulting

now Stantec



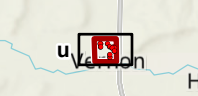
1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023

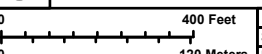


Figure 2u. Surveyed Properties, Vernon
Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

-  Town Boundary
-  Documented Resource

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)





1 inch = 400 feet
Scale: 1:4,800
Date: 3/28/2023

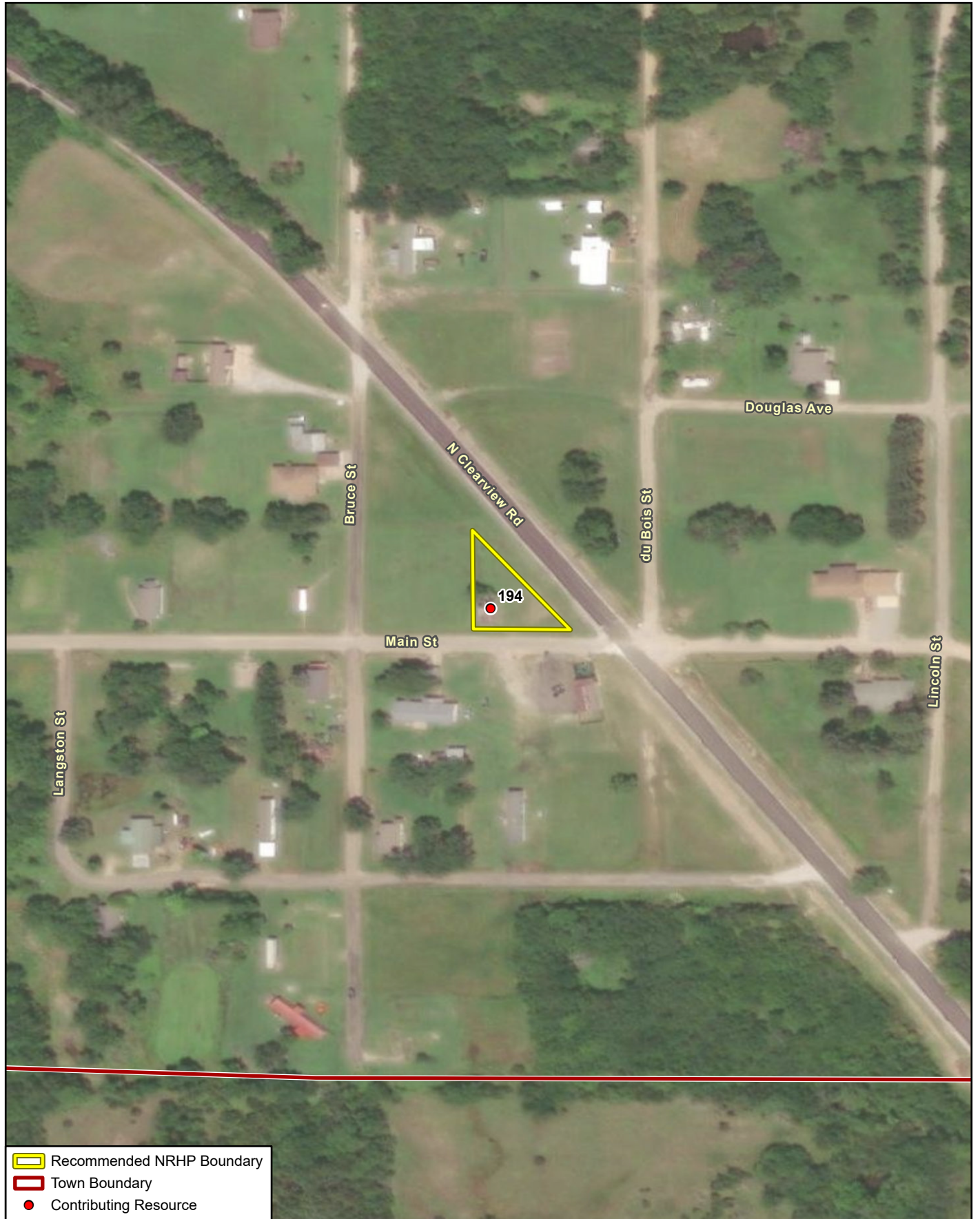


Figure 3. Recommended NRHP Boundary for Abe Lincoln Store, Clearview, Oklahoma

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)

<p>0 200 Feet 1 inch = 200 feet</p> <p>0 60 Meters Scale: 1:2,400 Date: 1/10/2023</p>		



Figure 4. Recommended NRHP Boundary for Clearview School, Clearview, Oklahoma

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)

		now	
0 200 Feet		1 inch = 200 feet	
0 60 Meters		Scale: 1:2,400	
		Date: 1/10/2023	

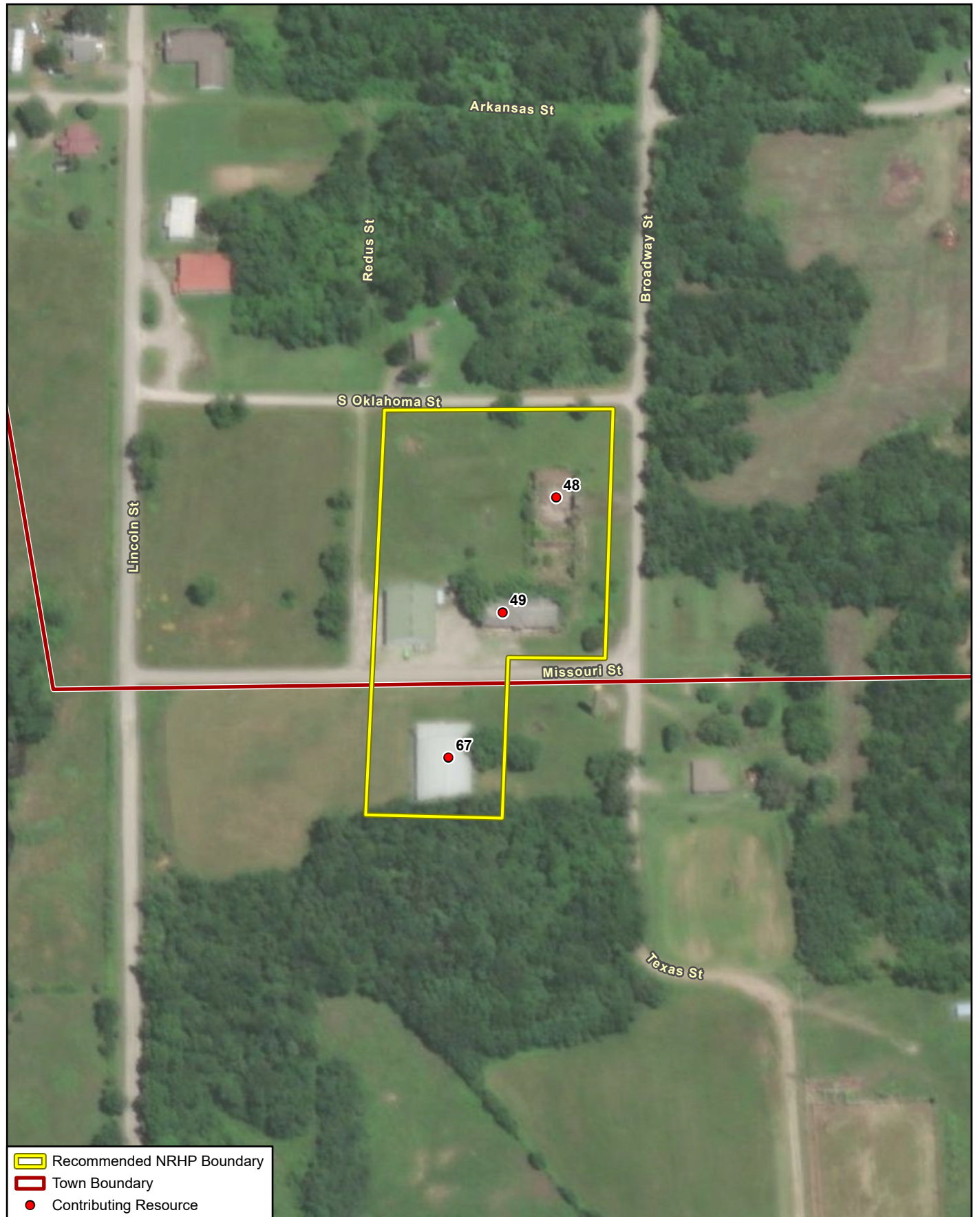


Figure 5. Recommended NRHP Boundary for Carter G. Woodson School Historic District, Tullahassee, Oklahoma

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)

0 200 Feet		1 inch = 200 feet
0 60 Meters		Scale: 1:2,400
		Date: 1/10/2023



Figure 6. Recommended NRHP Boundary for Varner House and Grocery Historic District, Tatums, Oklahoma

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)

0 200 Feet		1 inch = 200 feet
0 60 Meters		Scale: 1:2,400
		Date: 1/10/2023



Figure 7. Recommended NRHP Boundary for the Red Bird City Hall Historic District, Red Bird, Oklahoma

Architectural and Historical Survey
of Oklahoma's All-Black Towns

Data Source: CMEC now Stantec (2022)
Aerial Source: Maxar (2022)

0 200 Feet		1 inch = 200 feet
0 60 Meters		Scale: 1:2,400
		Date: 1/10/2023

A.2 Historic Resource Survey Forms

