

WEATHERFORD SOUTHWEST RESIDENTIAL AREA-AREA #5

Description:

The Weatherford Southwest Residential Area (Area #5) is bounded on the north by Huber Avenue, on the east by Broadway Street, on the south by Rainey Avenue (a portion of the southern OK/SHPO study area boundary), and on the west by Oklahoma Highway 54 (a part of the OK/SHPO western boundary). The interior north-south arteries are 1st through 7th Streets. The east-west interior streets are Main Street and Franklin, Stafford and Arapaho Avenues. Area #5 contains roughly 300 properties with more than 90 percent residences. The remaining 10 percent is comprised of some commercial development (pet clinic, a restaurant, convenience store, two gas stations, pharmacy, and telephone company) as well as two churches, two parks, and an elementary school. The area is in the Hahn's College Addition (1908), Home and Farm Addition (1911), Webster's Addition (1910), and Original Townsite (1898).

Architecture:

Of the approximate 270 houses in Area #5, 38 percent are Ranch, 21 percent Bungalow/Craftsman, 16 percent National Folk, and 3 percent Folk Victorian. In the National Folk group, the majority are the Pyramidal type. In terms of high style architecture, Tudor Revival, Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, and Colonial Revival styles are represented with Tudor Revival the most numerous. Mobile homes constitute about 5 percent of the total number of dwellings.

Noncontributing Properties:

The noncontributing properties in Area #5 include the recently constructed commercial development scattered throughout the area, the Ranch style homes that are of insufficient age, and the numerous mobile homes (about 5 percent of the housing stock) ;all of which detract from the overall cohesiveness of the area. Furthermore, the east and west sides of Oklahoma Highway 54 include numerous prefabricated and concrete block buildings, horse pasture, open fields, and a cemetery. Finally, more than 50 vacant lots/gaps are present in the area.

Recommendations:

Area #5 fails to qualify for further study because of the numerous vacant lots, mobile homes, and commercial and residential properties that lack sufficient age to qualify as a historic neighborhood. The varied land use pattern along Oklahoma Highway 54 further detracts from the visual cohesiveness of the area. It is, therefore, recommended that Area #5 does not justify further study.

WEATHERFORD SOUTHEAST MIXED RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL AREA-
AREA #6

Description:

Area #6 in Weatherford is bounded on the south by Clark Avenue (a portion of the OK/SHPO southern study area boundary), then north along Bryan Street to Main Street, then Main east to Washington Avenue; on the east by Washington Avenue (part of the eastern OK/SHPO study area boundary); on the north by Tom Stafford Avenue to Illinois Street, then north along Illinois Street to Huber Avenue, then Huber east to Washington Avenue; and on the west by Custer Street to Tom Stafford Avenue, east to Illinois Street, then north along Illinois Street to Huber Avenue. The interior north-south laterals are Bradley, Caddo, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Bryan, Texas, Arizona, and Nevada Streets. The interior east-west arteries are Proctor, Arapaho, Tom Stafford, Franklin, , and Rainey Avenues and Main Street. Area #6 contains roughly 225 properties of which approximately 60 percent is residential and 40 percent commercial. The commercial development consists of a myriad of establishments with some twenty different types of businesses including four gas stations, four fast-food outlets, three motels, two banks, two car washes, two real estate agencies, and one each of the following: drug store, hair salon, stereo store, car dealership, lumber yard, laundromat, auto parts store, home health care outlet, auto repair garage, physician's clinic, shoe repair store, and an insurance agency. One elementary school is located on Bryan Street. No churches were observed in the area.

The area is included in the Original Townsite (1898), Huber's Addition (1908), College Addition (1903), and Butler's Addition (1901).

Architecture:

Of the estimated 130 residences in Area #6, the Ranch style dwelling is overwhelming dominant with about 66 percent. National Folk is the second leading style with 10 percent, followed by Bungalow/Craftsman with 8 percent. Mobile homes and duplexes/apartment complexes each account for about 8 percent of the housing stock in the area. A handful of Folk Victorian houses were observed as well as one Quonset. No forms of high style architecture are present. The commercial buildings in the area are primarily contemporary commercial architecture.

Noncontributing Properties:

Almost two-thirds of the residences are Ranch style which do not yet qualify for consideration as contributing properties because of insufficient age. The commercial buildings are relatively recent construction, especially the motels, fast food outlets, banks, and other automobile-oriented retail stores. Moreover, the architecture of these buildings do not qualify because of their contemporary nature. Finally, the numerous mobile homes, strip development along Washington Avenue and Custer Street, and parking lots and vacant lots contribute to a lack of cohesion in the area.

Recommendations:

The Weatherford Southeast Mixed Residential and Commercial Area (Area #6) warrants no additional study at this time. Portions of the area along Arizona, Texas, and Nebraska Streets might be considered for an intensive level survey once Ranch style homes meet age eligibility requirements. Recent construction, presence of numerous mobile homes, and

some deteriorated and unoccupied housing stock detract from the visual distinctiveness of the area. Moreover, no individual properties that warrant further study were identified.

WEATHERFORD NORTHEAST RESIDENTIAL AREA-AREA #7

Description:

Area #7 in Weatherford is bounded on the north by Davis Street (part of the OK/SHPO northern study area boundary), on the east by Washington Avenue (about one-half of the eastern OK/SHPO study area boundary), on the south by Huber Avenue, and on the west by Illinois Street. The north-south interior arteries are Kansas and Bryan Streets, and northern portions of Arizona and Nevada Streets. East-west streets include the eastern limits of Arlington, Oklahoma, Eureka, College and Kee Avenues. The area contains approximately 150 properties of which 85 percent is residential and roughly 15 percent commercial. The commercial development includes two gas stations, health care store, physician's building, and day care center, primarily on North Washington Avenue. Two religious-related buildings are located in the area--a church and a student religious center. Area #7 is located in the College Addition (1903) and Huber's Addition (1908).

Architecture:

Of the approximate 130 residences in Area #7, 86 percent are Ranch style, while the remaining 14 percent are evenly divided between Bungalow/Craftsman and National Folk. No forms of high style architecture are present nor were any mobile homes observed. The commercial buildings are contemporary commercial.

Noncontributing Properties:

The Ranch style homes are of insufficient age to qualify for further study. A vast majority of these are located along Illinois, Kansas, and Bryan Streets. Once these properties meet age eligibility requirements, the concentration of these houses could merit an intensive study because of the strong visual cohesiveness in the area. The commercial development

along Washington Avenue detracts from the area. No mobile homes are present and few vacant lots were observed.

Recommendations:

Area #7 does not qualify at the present time for further study; however, once the Ranch style houses meet age requirements, the area has potential as a historic neighborhood. Area #7 in Weatherford contains no individual properties that are National Register eligible or any that warrant further study.

NORTH WEATHERFORD RESIDENTIAL AREA-AREA #8

Description:

Area #8 is bounded on the north by Anderson Avenue, on the west by 7th Street, on the south by Davis Street and University Boulevard, and on the east by Grandview Drive. The interior north-south arteries are Indiana, Illinois, and Kansas Streets, Kaiser Road, and 7th, Caddo, and Broadway Streets. The east-west interior laterals are Hillside, Sandpiper, and Reed Roads, Rachelle Drive, Lois Lane, and Thatcher Trail. Area #8 is to the east, north, and west of the northern edge of the Southwestern Oklahoma State University campus. It contains approximately 160 properties with roughly 99 percent residential. Only a handful of commercial establishments were observed in the area, mostly gas stations and convenience stores. The area is characterized by an overwhelming number of mobile homes, especially in one large mobile home park on Hillside Road, and the presence of numerous vacant lots; an estimated twenty-five. Area #8 is in the Davis Addition (1905).

Architecture:

Mobile homes constitute 60 percent of the housing stock in Area #8; while Ranch style homes are roughly 39 percent. Less than five other homes were of a different architectural style, either Bungalow/Craftsman or National Folk. Six apartment complexes were present in the area. No forms of high style architecture were found.

Noncontributing Properties:

At the present time, all of the properties in Area #8 would be considered noncontributing. Once the Ranch style homes along Grandview Drive, Kansas, Illinois, and Indiana Streets become of sufficient age, the area might receive more consideration as a residential district.

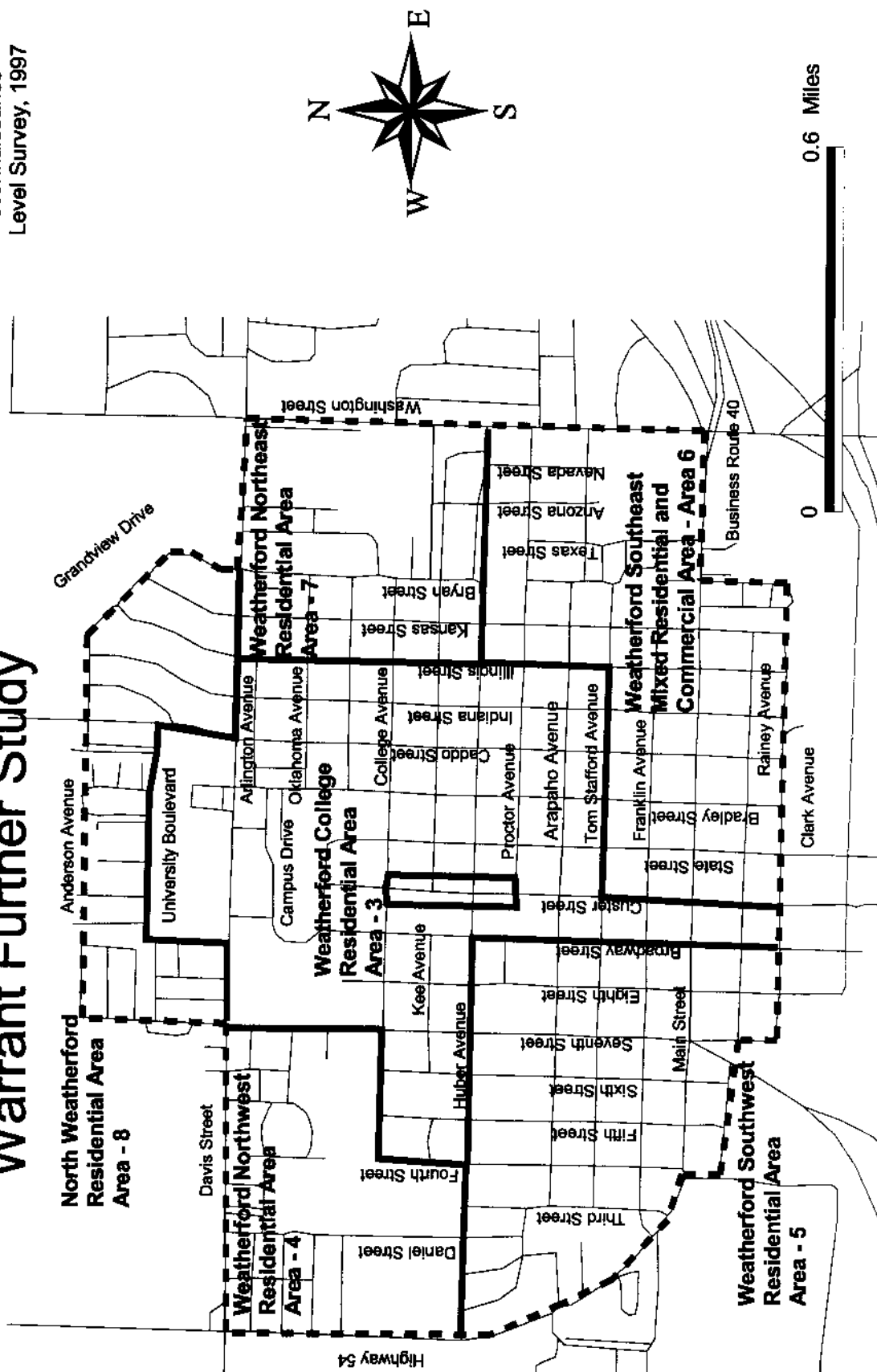
With the presence of 90 mobile homes, six sets of apartment buildings, and roughly 25 vacant lots, Area #8 lacks the visual cohesiveness to qualify as a residential district.

Recommendations:

Weatherford Area #8 does not meet qualifications for further study because of the dominance of Ranch style and mobile homes as well as the numerous vacant lots. It does not contain any individual properties worthy of further study.

Weatherford Areas That Do Not Warrant Further Study

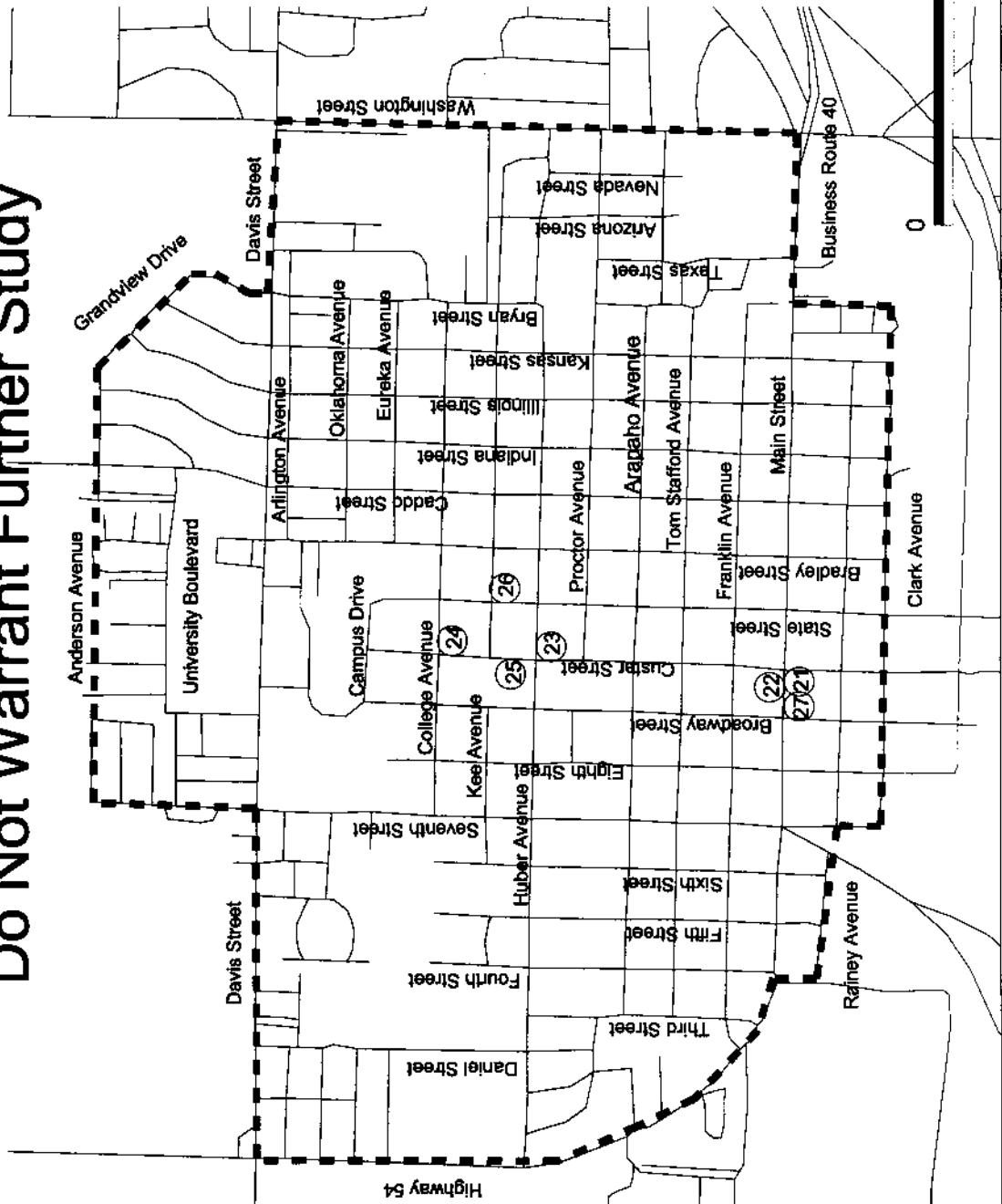
Weatherford, Oklahoma
Reconnaissance
Level Survey, 1997



Weatherford Individual Properties That Do Not Warrant Further Study

Weatherford, Oklahoma
Reconnaissance
Level Survey, 1997

Properties Keyed To
Weatherford Property List
Section IX



XI. HISTORIC CONTEXT

Introduction

Location

The four towns examined by this survey (Clinton, Elk City, Watonga, Weatherford) are united by several aspects of history and geography. The regional location of the four towns is best described as west central Oklahoma. Watonga, in south-central Blaine County, is located west-northwest of Oklahoma City. The other three towns are located directly west of Oklahoma City along the state's main east-west thoroughfare, Interstate-40. Weatherford and Clinton are both located in southeastern Custer County; Elk City is located in northeastern Beckham County. Although the four towns are spread over a relatively wide area (the road distance between Elk City and Watonga is about 74 miles), they are all contained within Management Region Seven for Oklahoma's Comprehensive Preservation Planning Process.

Physical Geography

The physiography of the west central Oklahoma study area is complex and interesting. The entire region falls within the continental transition from the North American Central Lowlands physiographic province in the east to the Great Plains province in the west. While Watonga is generally considered to be located along the western fringe of the Central Lowlands, Elk City is unquestionably located in the eastern Great Plains.

More specifically, the four towns in the study are located in different parts of the Gypsum Hills physiographic region. The Gypsum Hills is a region of small, north-south aligned hills and mesas formed by the presence of a thick layer of erosion-resistant white gypsum caprock that covers an easily-eroded layer of shale. Watonga is located along the physiographic boundary of the rolling Red Bed Plains of central Oklahoma and the Gypsum Hills, where the North Canadian River has carved relatively deep canyons that accentuate the physiographic transition to the caprock area. Clinton and Weatherford are located in the core of the Gypsum Hills Region. Weatherford's topography consists mostly of rolling uplands. In contrast, Clinton's physical landscape, which is set entirely within the basin of the Washita River Valley, is comparatively lower and flatter, although the land rises gently toward the valley escarpment along the west and northwest sides of town. Elk City, while still in the Gypsum Hills region, has the highest elevation of the four towns and is near the transition to the High Plains physiographic region. Elk City's topography is noticeably less dissected than those of the other towns in the study area.

Each of the four towns are located in the western part of the Anadarko Basin geological province. As with physiography, Watonga differs from the other three towns in that it is located on the western periphery of this region. The Anadarko Basin is dominated by shale and sandstone bedrock and contains large deposits of industrial minerals, including gypsum, petroleum, and natural gas.¹

The study area is drained by three major rivers within the Mississippi River watershed. Drainage is generally dendritic from the northwest to the southeast, from the High Plains region toward the Red Bed Plains. These rivers include the North Canadian

River, which passes just west of Watonga, the Canadian River, which passes between Watonga and Weatherford, the Washita River, which passes through the eastern part of Clinton, and the North Fork of the Red River, which passes several miles to the southwest of Elk City. These rivers have wide, sandy beds and low banks. Their highly variable surface flow make them poor for transportation and their high salinity render them inadequate for irrigation. Two major reservoirs that serve localities in the study include Canton Lake, on the North Canadian northwest of Watonga, and Foss Lake, on the Washita northwest of Clinton.²

Soils in the study area are of fairly high quality except where erosion has been severe. Watonga, Weatherford and Clinton occupy locations dominated by reddish mollisols, a thick soil class common throughout Oklahoma and grassland regions in general. Elk City is located in a region of inceptisols, a soil common to western Oklahoma that results from a moderate amount of leaching, resulting in the presence of alkaline horizons.³

The climate of western Oklahoma is difficult to classify. While usually depicted as a subtropical humid (Cf) climate type, it is actually quite transitory between the former and the steppe (BS) climate type. Growing seasons in the study area range from 200 to 210 days out of the year, while average January temperatures range between 36 and 38 degrees Fahrenheit and average July temperatures range between 80 and 82 degrees Fahrenheit. Annual precipitation, on the other hand, is highly variable from year to year, and dramatically different from east to west, with an average of 30 inches at Watonga to about 26 inches at Elk City. This is one of the sharpest non-orographic precipitation

gradients in North America. Most moisture arrives in the form of seasonal frontal thunderstorms during the spring and fall months as the average position of the polar front jet stream passes over the region south and north, respectively. Severe thunderstorms, including hail, lightning, wind and tornadoes are a major natural hazard of the study area. Snow is common in winter, but contributes very little to annual precipitation levels.⁴

The vegetation patterns of the study area reflect and interact with those of the region's hydrology, soils, and climate. Again, local patterns reflect the transition from the western periphery of the eastern woodlands to the prairie-dominated landscapes of the Great Plains. The natural vegetation at Watonga is included in the Post Oak-Blackjack Oak association popularly referred to as the "Crosstimbers," which was known for its impenetrability in the nineteenth century. At Watonga, however, this woodland is confined to the better-watered areas along the North Canadian River, and in modern times it has been invaded by eastern red cedar and cleared for farmland, so that remnants of climax vegetation are rare. In contrast, the climax vegetation regime of Weatherford, Clinton, and Elk City, farther to the west, is a mix of tall and short grasses. This type of vegetation, which was the result of the interplay of lower precipitation, different soils, and periodic burning, has also been dramatically altered in most areas. The introduction of Old World grasses and livestock, and especially the suppression of fire, has prompted reforestation along fence lines and the invasion of opportunistic eastern species.

Natural Resources

The distribution of natural resources in the four town study area has served to attract settlers since the middle nineteenth century. In terms of industrial raw materials, the study area contains a wealth of gypsum, which has been mined at various levels of intensity throughout the twentieth century. Other industrial mineral production in the study area includes gravel and volcanic ash quarries.⁵

The western part of the study area is particularly well endowed with energy resources, namely natural gas. Petroleum exploration and wildcatting were mostly unsuccessful in the study area until rotary well technology improved enough to reach very deep deposits of oil and gas. Natural gas production around Elk City has driven that area's economy since the 1970s.⁶

Agriculture

The physical landscape is the foundation for agriculture, the primary level of human occupancy. The west central Oklahoma towns in this study are principally agricultural marketing centers of a region that specializes in wheat, cotton, and livestock production. The study area is in the southern part of the winter wheat belt and contributes significantly to Oklahoma's usually high national ranking in wheat production. Other small grains such as barley and oats are grown, and grain sorghums like milo are important. Alfalfa and prairie hay are also grown for local feed.

In the first three decades of farm settlement, corn and cotton were the most important crops in the study area. Corn, by far the dominant crop before 1920, was grown for local markets and for livestock feed. Cotton served as the primary cash crop before 1920 due to its marketability and high value per unit weight. When the railroads were the only efficient mode of freight transport in western Oklahoma, farm production remained secondary to cattle ranching. The small amount of crop production that existed in western Oklahoma prior to statehood was oriented toward food crops for subsistence and local sale. Export-oriented production of low value, bulky commodities like small grains was entirely uneconomic more than a dozen or so miles from a railroad line.

Production of cash crops at this time also remained quite marginal in volume, but cotton provided the cash that early western Oklahoma farmers needed to pay for the next years' seed, and perhaps some needed tack and some new shoes for their children. At the turn of the twentieth century farmers' rate of return per acre of cotton could be expected to be at least three to four times that of corn and two to three times that of wheat. When mechanized cultivation became available, farmers planted as much cotton as they could afford to harvest and market, which was typically in the realm of 100 acres per family.⁷

The railroad towns and hamlets of western Oklahoma could not have existed without agriculture to support them. In the first two decades of the century, most places had very few services to offer settlers other than the marketing of their produce. Some places, however, gained importance as agricultural processing centers, and in early western Oklahoma this was oriented toward cotton. By 1931 western Oklahoma had an average of ten cotton gins per county, nearly all of which were located along railways. A

handful of towns, including Elk City and Clinton, developed secondary cotton processing functions, namely cottonseed oil mills.⁸

Evolving industrial technology and the economic changes of World War I brought rapid change to this agricultural regime. The availability of affordable automobiles and the construction of county roads and state highways by 1920 transformed the pattern of settlement in favor of the larger, established towns. Farm-to-market transport was revolutionized as farmers could now haul more produce much faster by truck than by horse and wagon. The internal combustion engine, in the form of automotive transport, meant farms could be located much further from market centers. Tractors and mechanical harvesters also allowed farm size to be dramatically increased. Farmers with ample capital bought land from their less competitive neighbors who often moved into town or to one of the growing regional centers like Oklahoma City or Amarillo. The result was that during the 1910s, the number of farms in the study area decreased dramatically while average farm size steadily increased.

At this time towns containing railroad connections became the foci of a general concentration of settlement. The more even pattern of dispersed rural settlement created by Indian allotment, the land runs, and other federal land programs began to give way to a more uneven, centralizing settlement pattern. Only a decade after Oklahoma statehood, the majority of hamlets and small villages had begun to lose population to railroad towns, as manufacturing and service employment pulled families from the farm to town. This trend was one of the last processes of the larger, national, rural-to-urban migration

phenomenon taking place as urban industrial centers grew and the United States finished its transformation to an industrial economy.

As the trend of farm enlargement gained momentum, rising demand for grain in war-ravaged Europe prompted western Oklahoma farmers to switch to an emphasis on wheat and rye. European demand and the new truck-rail transport system allowed much more United States grain to be marketed globally, prompting western Oklahoma farmers to further expand their land bases and conform to mechanized wheat farming operations during the 1920s. Grain elevators were constructed throughout western Oklahoma during the 1910s and 1920s to handle new grain storage demands, and success in a town often required securing centrality as a grain storage point. Bullish markets and optimal weather patterns throughout the 1920s even led to the tilling of an enormous amount of unbroken land, which was placed in cultivation with new, large-scale implements. In west central Oklahoma, much of this land consisted of upland prairie that had hither been considered unfit for dryland cultivation. Nevertheless, initial high returns on such speculative farming practices led to a rush to open new lands in the 1920s in what became known as “the Great Plow Up.”

By 1930 it was clear that the agricultural production system of the 1920s was not sustainable. Regional scale drought and national economic collapse combined to dispossess between one-third and one-half of the farmers in the region during the “Dirty Thirties.” Cotton production was especially affected by drought, depression, and by this time soil exhaustion and severe wind erosion.⁹ Western Oklahoma experienced its first major population decline as families packed their belongings and left for what they

perceived to be better economic opportunities on the west coast. The 1930s was a decade of economic crisis that prompted regional agricultural reorganization.

The New Deal and the economic upswing associated with World War II brought needed change to western Oklahoma's economy and environment. Federal financial assistance allowed farmers to reclaim their farms and reorganize their land use. Perhaps the most important New Deal measures were policies set by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. The AAA paid many western Oklahoma farmers to withdraw land from production in order to stabilize agricultural prices and conserve soil resources. Other policies allowed landowners to mechanize their operations, which virtually eliminated sharecropping in the region. Displaced agricultural workers migrated to California and to regional cities and towns, increasing industrial labor supplies.¹⁰ Highly-erodible farm land, particularly land with considerable slope, was removed from cultivation and reseeded with native grasses for cattle grazing. In conjunction with the expansion of grazing, hundreds of water conservation ponds and flood-control reservoirs were constructed. The proportion of grazing land and beef cattle production in western Oklahoma consistently increased after World War II, while the amount of land cultivation decreased.¹¹

Livestock production dominates the region's agricultural economy today. Beef cattle ranching complements winter wheat farming, and today feeder cattle are shipped to feedlots in Texas, western Kansas, and eastern Colorado. Sheep ranches are also found in the study area, but these have decreased in recent years. The trend away from raising stock other than beef cattle has slowed in recent years with the emergence of large scale

hog production in western Oklahoma. In addition to wheat and cotton, other crops grown in the study area include grain sorghums, barley, oats, and alfalfa.¹²

The use of new agricultural methods, notably new wheat hybrids and chemical fertilizers, however, have resulted in higher yields per acre throughout the region. The fact that the land is under the greatest pressure to perform today is difficult to discern as one surveys the rural landscape's collection of decrepit outbuildings and grass-covered terraces where wheat was once grown, but this is a landscape that has been strictly reordered: farmland is confined to stream valleys and lowlands, and Herefords and Angus and Dorsets graze the upland pastures.

Population

The earliest recorded example of human occupancy in the study area was that of the groups consisting of the Wichita-Caddo Confederacy, who had trading relations with the French through the eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth century. These village-dwelling peoples hunted woodland and prairie game, and farmed a variety of crops, including corn, beans, sunflowers, tobacco, and squash. The Wichita and Caddo groups traded with nomadic Plains peoples during this period. Plains societies who occupied the study area included the Kiowa, Apache, Comanche, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and others. By the early nineteenth century the pressures of European colonization had thrown the relationships between Plains and Prairie peoples into turmoil; by 1835 the sedentary Wichita and Caddo had dispersed to Texas.

When the United States removed the Five Civilized Tribes to Indian Territory in the 1830s, the locations covered by this study fell into their possession. The Watonga area became part of the Creek and Seminole Nation, and the Clinton, Elk City, and Weatherford areas were placed in the possession of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations. Since these Southern nations stayed far to the east in Indian Territory, the area remained in political flux as various Great Plains groups used it for hunting grounds and projected their influence over it. After 1849, the California Gold Rush added to this disorder as westward bound Europeans migrated through the region along the California Road between Fort Smith and San Francisco. In 1855 the area containing Clinton, Elk City and Weatherford was partitioned from the Choctaw Nation at the ninety-eighth meridian and purchased by the United States for \$800,000 to be used to resettle the Wichita. In 1856 the area containing Watonga was transferred to sole Creek authority.

United States political and economic control tightened over the area after the Civil War. Politically, in 1866 the United States took the remaining western portions of Indian Territory from the Five Civilized Tribes to reserve it for Native peoples who were being dispossessed of their Great Plains homelands. In October of 1867 the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, Comanche, and Kiowa-Apache signed treaties with the United States Indian Peace Commission at Medicine Lodge Creek, Kansas. Under these treaties, the tribes were assigned to reservations in western Indian Territory. The areas under study here were within the boundaries of what became the Cheyenne and Arapaho reservation. From a line of installations that included Cantonment, Fort Reno, Fort Cobb, and Fort Sill, the United States Army confined these peoples to the reservation, and sometimes

launched brutal attacks on them when members of their group moved beyond the agent's supervision.

At this time the study area was becoming part of a larger transit region for cattlemen driving Texas herds north to Kansas railheads. The Great Western Trail, in operation a few years after the Chisholm Trail, ran north just east of Elk City. Although short-lived, the cattle drives created interest among Texas stockmen in the region's fine grazing lands. In the early 1880s, after the long drives had subsided, Texas ranchers attempted to lease grazing lands in the Cheyenne and Arapaho reservation. By the latter 1880s, however, the federal government had stopped the practice and begun to implement a new policy outlined by the General Allotment Act of 1887.

Under a poorly implemented decision by the Department of the Interior, in March of 1892 the Cheyenne and Arapaho people each received allotments of 160 acres. One month later, the balance of the reservation—the so-called surplus lands that made up the vast majority of the reservation—was opened for non-Native American settlement.

The Cheyenne and Arapaho lands were opened through a land run at noon on April 19, 1892. Approximately 2,500 people made the run into the Cheyenne and Arapaho Lands on that day, a number much smaller than the run into the Unassigned Lands in 1889. Settlers could claim 160 acres on those lands that had not previously allotted to Indians. Additionally, sections 16 and 32, which were designated as school lands, were withheld from settlement.¹³

Population trends in the study area are much connected to migration flows, which themselves have been strongly correlated with regional economic trends. As is apparent

from the above discussion, the study area was settled late by Euro-Americans. Late settlement and an economy dominated by primary sector activities has resulted in considerable population change. Anglo-American settlement appeared virtually instantaneous in 1892. Upon closer inspection, however, one finds that this population was quite “footloose.” For example, many of those who claimed land in the run did not stay long in Oklahoma, and those who did stay moved frequently when better land became available. Many more people came to the study area after the initial land run, especially in the 1920s, when the economy was growing due to farm expansion. Obviously, many of those new Oklahomans were the first to leave in hard times. The study area experienced equally rapid outmigration in the 1930s when the Great Depression combined with the Dust Bowl to ruin farming in the area. More recently, west central Oklahoma experienced rapid growth when rising oil prices prompted a renewal of natural gas exploration and the resultant development of the Anadarko Basin gas field during the 1970s. Since the early 1980s and the general decline in oil prices, however, the study area’s population trend has followed that of the Great Plains generally. Most notably this has included the selective outmigration of younger people to metropolitan areas and the resultant aging of the region’s population.

Transportation

The historical development of the study area’s transportation infrastructure is dominated by two forms of transport, railways and roadways. The development of rail

and road transport networks provide powerful insight to the historical development of each town in the study area.

Railroad development was extremely limited for the first decade of Anglo-American settlement. Existing townsites were moved to new locations to be served by the railroads. Townsites fiercely competed for railway connections. The success of a town to attract settlers and businesses eventually came down to its location relative to the railroad. And, the rate of growth of a town, and hence its regional importance, was a matter of how well connected it was within the railway network. Successful towns attracted railways, which attracted businesses, which expanded the town's service area and drew capital into it.

Railroads provided towns in the study area with their initial access to national markets. The first railroad line to be built into the study area was the Choctaw, Oklahoma, and Gulf Railroad (popularly known as the "Choctaw" line). The Choctaw, which connected the McAlester coal district in the Choctaw Nation with Little Rock, Arkansas and Memphis, Tennessee, extended west to Weatherford in 1898. In 1901, the Choctaw was extended further west, through what became Clinton to Elk City. In 1902 the line was leased to the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad.¹⁴

The peak cycle of railroad construction in the study area occurred in the first three years of the twentieth century, when approximately 165 miles of track were laid through the study area. Watonga, which is the easternmost town in the study area, was the last town to receive railroad connections. In 1901 the Watonga and Northwestern Railroad Company (which later reorganized as the Choctaw Northern Railroad Company) built a

line northwest from Watonga. In that same year, the Enid and Anadarko Railroad Company built through Watonga from the opposite direction. The result was that Watonga had two parallel north-south railroads before the two consolidated a few years later. To the west, the Blackwell, Enid, and Southwestern Railroad Company (also known as the "B.E.S." line) built southwest through Clinton in 1901, making that settlement the first railroad crossroads in the west central Oklahoma region.¹⁵

Clinton's stature as a regional rail hub became even more established in 1908 when the Kansas City, Mexico, and Orient Railroad Company built through the town to link Wichita, Kansas with Quanah, Texas. Interestingly, Clinton was the origin point for a fourth independent railroad also constructed in 1908, the Clinton and Oklahoma Western Railroad (C.O.W.). This line, founded by Clint Strong and Tom Nance (town founders of Clinton) depended on land donated by ranchers and farmers for a right-of-way. To help finance construction, Strong and Nance sold lots in a number of townsites built along the fifty-five mile route to Hammon Junction. Like many railroads, the line changed ownership a few times before being abandoned sometime around 1950.¹⁶

Clinton also contained the state's shortest and probably most shortlived interurban rail lines in the state. The line was installed about 1908 to transfer people and freight between the two main train stations on opposite sides of the town. The system lasted only about five years before the company that ran it failed, reputedly because of the outcome of a lawsuit over an accident, but probably also because of the rising importance of the automobile.¹⁷

Clinton

Founding and Naming

Clinton's beginnings reflect the competitive nature and widespread practice of speculative investment that characterized so many Great Plains towns. In 1901, the B.E.S. Railroad crossed the north-south Rock Island line south of the town of Arapaho. The railroad's decision to avoid Arapaho doomed that town's future as a rail hub of the region and created raw opportunity for profiteering from a new townsite. The townsite speculators, who worked in association with railroad planners, included Tom Nance, a banker in Arapaho, J.L. Avant, the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indian Agent, and E.E. Blake, a lawyer regularly retained by the Rock Island. These three individuals obtained special congressional permission to purchase 320 acres of land allotted in eighty-acre parcels to four Native Americans. Each of the four allottees received \$2,000 for their land. The townsite promoters named the plat "Washita Junction."¹⁸

The townsite began to be populated after June 3, 1903. Both the Frisco and Rock Island lines operated excursion trains to the townsite prior to the sale of town lots. The lot auction took place June 3-5 and produced over \$50,000 in lot sales. Citizens of Arapaho, outraged that their town had been bypassed, threatened to herd sheep to the infant townsite to keep people from wanting to improve their lots. The name was then officially changed to "Clinton," in honor of Clinton F. Irwin, an Oklahoma Territorial judge.¹⁹

Natural Resources

The natural resource base of the Clinton area includes limited deposits of mineral resources such as petroleum, natural gas, gypsum, and a few others. Oil and gas development is significant in northern Custer County. The southeast corner of Custer County contains extensive gypsum beds up to 36 feet thick which have been mined at various times during the twentieth century. Important gravel deposits are quarried along the Washita River and Deer Creek in Custer County. Volcanic ash deposits of some twelve feet in thickness are quarried near Custer City.

By far the most important natural resources in the Clinton vicinity are those associated with agriculture, such as soil, water, and range grasses.

Agriculture

Agriculture in the Clinton area was early dominated by the range cattle industry. The Chisholm Trail crossed through the area and introduced Texas ranchers to the region decades before white settlement was legalized. The Clinton area was part of the largest cattle ranch that ever existed in the state: the Cheyenne and Arapaho Cattle Ranch, which was established in 1893. This enormous operation covered more than one million acres in four counties.²⁰

Territorial-period settlers focused their efforts on corn and cotton production. By the turn of the century, however, wheat emerged as a primary cash crop, especially once the railroads linked market centers on the Great Plains with national milling centers.

Cotton remained a very important crop until the 1930s, when a combination of drought, soil exhaustion, pests, depressed prices, farm mechanization, and federal policy decreased its share of acreage.

In general, average farm size in the study area began to steadily increase after World War II. Since the 1940s, pasture land has increased as cultivated acreage and the number of farms has decreased. Many former cotton, corn and wheat fields in the uplands have been re-seeded with pasture grasses and now serve as excellent pasture for cow-calf operations. Cultivated land is found most often on the most level land or bottom land in stream valleys.

Commercial Establishments

Clearly, Clinton's geographical advantages in the rail transport network catapulted it to regional dominance even though it was founded later than the other towns in the study area. Within a few years the inland town of Arapaho, although retaining its status as the Custer county seat, began to deteriorate economically as business gravitated to the new rail hub. With the extension of the C.O.W. line and another Santa Fe branch line within the next few years, Clinton emerged as a regional warehousing center and even gained a significant manufacturing base. By the 1910s Clinton was earning a reputation as the wholesaling center of western Oklahoma.²¹

This boom period in Clinton's growth is well-reflected in the commercial buildings of a 10-block area along Frisco Avenue designated by this study as the Clinton Commercial District. The best examples of Commercial Style architecture from the

territorial period in this district are the Hawks Hotel (1903) at 403 Frisco, and the Dawson Building (1908), located at 423 Frisco Avenue. Other styles represented in the district, in addition to the Classical Revival First National Bank Building mentioned above, include the Ritz Theater, an Art Deco form built in the 1930s at 404 Frisco, and the Calmez Hotel, a six-story building at 221-223 Frisco Avenue.

Among the most important early manufacturers was the Acme Brick Company, which built a brick kiln one mile south of town in 1929. Clay was procured in the local area for manufacture of bricks and tile. The firm was attracted to Clinton by the town's centrality in the western Oklahoma rail network, since early distribution necessarily relied on rail transport, although trucking became more important after World War II. Another important railroad-based firm was the Clinton Cotton Oil Mill, built in the 1910s. This facility extracted oil from ginned cottonseed and was the largest employer in Clinton in 1930.²²

The 1930s was a decade of outmigration and economic stagnation in Clinton, although the town received an infusion of government services discussed below. During and after World War II, a number of new industries emerged in Clinton, although their locations were oriented less to rail connections and more to truck transport. These included manufacturers of paper products and insulation, automotive carpet, and construction machinery.²³

Town Growth and Residential Development

Clinton's growth was rapid and directly related to its superior railroad connections. The townsite was not only planned, it was eagerly anticipated by townsite developers working informally for the two railroads that intersected at the site. Initial town settlement was immediate and long term growth steady until the late 1920s.

Clinton's business district emerged in the southwest corner of the present town. The apex of the townsite was the intersection of Frisco Avenue and Fourth Street, the site of the First National Bank Building, a 1903 Classical Revival building. Banks typically occupied the choicest lot in the townsite, usually at the intersection of the two main thoroughfares, and they were frequently the most impressive commercial buildings on Main Street. Apparently the last remaining commercial building constructed in Clinton's original townsite, it functions today as the community domino parlor.²⁴

After World War II, Clinton transformed from a railroad town to one in which goods and services depended on trucks and automobiles and roads and eventually highways.

The first homes in Clinton were constructed shortly after the town lot sale of 1903, but few of these survive today. The rate of residential development generally followed regional economic growth and change. The oldest homes in the study area are located in nine additions to the town made during the prosperous years of the early statehood period before 1930.

The first two additions, Broadway Heights and Orient, were added in 1906. These two contiguous parcels contained relatively large blocks and fronted a long stretch of the Santa Fe line on the opposite side of the downtown area. In 1908 a third was added on the opposite side of the tracks called Maker's Addition. It is likely that these three additions were made to provide housing for railroad workers based in Clinton. The land was undoubtedly among of the least expensive in Clinton, and the location would have been undesirable to residents who could afford their own homes. Evidence from this survey in the form of relocated shotgun houses suggests that the area may have originally been an area of company housing. Today about half of the Broadway Heights and Orient Additions are occupied by Bungalow/Craftsman and National Folk Styles, and the rest is composed of mostly late twentieth century housing stock, mainly Ranch Style houses and mobile homes. The Broadway Heights and Orient Additions are recognized as not warranting further study as part of Area #5. The Maker's Addition area is a low to lower-middle income residential area containing a broad mix of mid to late twentieth century housing stock. It is also classified as not warranting further study and is contained within Area #3.

The Hayes Addition, located directly south of the original townsite, was also added in 1908. Survey evidence suggests that this addition was an early middle income housing area. Surviving original housing is sparse and in various stages of disrepair, but includes examples of Folk Victorian, Tudor Revival, and National Folk Styles. Late twentieth century housing and commercial buildings are interspersed in the former Hayes Addition, and is classified as not warranting further study. It is contained within Area #6.

In 1910 two more additions were added to the Clinton plat. These include Red Plume Addition directly west of the original town, and Shoe Boys Addition, south of Frisco Avenue between Broadway Heights Addition and Hayes Addition. Red Plume Addition was likely an area of middle income housing. Existing housing stock contains a high percentage of Bungalow/Craftsman and a large variety of National Folk housing Styles in various stages of disrepair. The area has experienced many intrusions by commercial, industrial, and late twentieth century residential development. Most of Red Plume Addition is classified as not warranting further study as part of Area #4. Shoe Boys Addition in 1910 mostly completed Clinton's southern tier of residential additions. Survey evidence indicates that this addition was composed of upper middle income housing. Much of the early architecture, especially large and unique examples of Bungalow/Craftsman Style, has survived in relatively good condition. The western half of the Shoe Boys Addition contains enough integrity to be included in part of the South Clinton Residential District.

The next addition to Clinton did not come until 1924, when Harden Addition was appended to the south side of Shoe Boys Addition. By this time, the rural-to-urban migration trend in western Oklahoma had begun, and farm families had begun to move to town after selling their land to larger operators. By the 1920s Clinton had also attracted a number of new manufacturing industries and warehousing activities connected with its position as a regional rail hub, and business was booming as it never had before. This economic prosperity created a demand for some of the most impressive housing stock to date. Although younger, housing stock in the Harden Addition contains good examples

of Craftsman/Bungalow and Tudor Revival Styles. That portion included in the study area is also included in the South Clinton Residential District.

The final two residential additions within the study area were added to the Clinton plat in 1928 just prior to national economic collapse in 1929 and regional environmental catastrophe in the 1930s. These two include Cox Addition and Riverview Addition, north of the downtown. These two additions apparently remained mostly undeveloped during the 1930s and are classified here as not warranting further study in Area #4.

The South Clinton Residential District occupies Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Streets between Avant and Court Avenue on the north and Modelle Avenue on the south. The area harbors a particularly good collection of various styles of residential architecture from the early statehood period, and especially good examples of the Bungalow/Craftsman Style. Included in this category are properties located at 316 and 501 South Ninth Street. Additionally, several good examples of Tudor Revival houses exist within the district, such as those at 501 South Ninth and 434 South Thirteenth. Representatives of the Colonial Revival Style include properties at 325 and 516 South Ninth, 418 South Tenth, and 400 South Thirteenth Streets. A few Queen Anne houses exist in the study area, of which the properties at 1421 Hayes, 120 South Eleventh, and 416 South Thirteenth are the best examples. The Prairie School is represented by homes at 316 South Tenth and 344 South Thirteenth Streets. A number of other residential architectural styles, including National Folk, Ranch, Folk Victorian, and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival are also represented in the South Clinton Residential District.

Schools and Churches

Several schools existed in Clinton prior to the 1950s, but nearly all of these have since burned or been demolished. Today, only one stands as a reminder of the infusion of federal funds into the town during the Great Depression. Although a modern addition has been made to it, the Clinton Middle School (1935), located at 1001 Orient Avenue, is an interesting example of an Art Deco Style public building.

Two churches in Clinton are good examples of the Late Gothic Revival Style. One property, the First Presbyterian Church (1927), located at 700 Gary Boulevard, represents the economic growth period of the 1920s. The other property, the Trinity Lutheran Church (1940), located at 440 South Thirteenth Street, represents the war years.

Politics and Government

Politically, Clinton and Custer County generally are located in a transition zone between Democratically-dominant southern Oklahoma and the strong Republicanism of northwestern Oklahoma. Throughout Custer County's history, the Democratic and Republican parties have battled closely for votes in both gubernatorial and presidential elections, except during the 1930s, when the Democrats prevailed.²⁵

Clinton became a focus for regional health care as early as the 1910s, but received many new infrastructural developments during the New Deal era of the 1930s. One of the most important publicly-funded institutions established before World War II is Clinton Indian Hospital, built in the 1930s east of town on old U. S. Highway 66. Within this

complex, the Clinton Indian Hospital Administration Building (1936) is an impressive, well-kept Colonial Revival building. Another regional health care facility, the Western Oklahoma Tuberculosis Sanitarium, first established in 1919 south of town on U.S. Highway 183, received several new buildings during the New Deal era. Today this complex is a convalescent center operated by the Oklahoma State War Veteran's Commission.

Several properties represent the important role the W.P.A. played in the construction of public buildings and structures in Clinton during the latter 1930s. These include Ackley Park Stadium, the Clinton Fire Station, the Exhibit Auction Building, and the W.P.A. wall.

Cultural and Social Aspects

The Native American heritage of the Clinton area is celebrated in late April and mid June. Rodeos and horse shows are conducted in July and September. Clinton's affinity for the fine arts may still be seen in the Southwest Playhouse, originally known as the Exhibit Auction Building, built in 1941 at 523 West Nowahy Avenue.²⁶

Perhaps Clinton's most important contribution to regional and national culture is as a typical southwest town on the "Mother Road" of the United States, U.S. Highway 66. The Route 66 Museum, located at 2229 Gary Freeway in Clinton, is devoted to the history of this transportation and popular culture icon.²⁷

Elk City

Founding and Naming

The land beneath Elk City was transferred to private hands from the public domain in 1897 when the site was homesteaded by J.M. Allee. About this same time, Cisero Sitton opened a rural post office in a dugout three miles to the south of this location. Sitton intended to name his place "Crone," but the Post Office Department misread his application as "Crowe," which became the official name and the rural community center for the next three years. In 1900, however, the Choctaw line surveyed its right-of-way to the north on Allee's land. Through a deal with two local individuals, the railroad's townsite entity, the Choctaw Townsite and Improvement Company, purchased the Allee place and other tracts for a total of \$2,500. On March 18, 1901 J.N. Cook completed the town plat along the Choctaw right-of-way, and encouraged the settlers at Crowe to relocate to the settlement. The next day, the Choctaw line operated an excursion train that brought Oklahoma City and El Reno businessmen to the site, and the first town lot auction was held on March 20, 1901. The sale placed \$32,000 worth of lots in the hands of new settlers and speculators, and within days people began constructing homes and business buildings with lumber and other materials delivered by rail from the east.²⁸

The naming of Elk City was a problematic affair. Soon after initial settlement in 1901, the railroad named the town "Busch" in order to persuade representatives from the

Anheuser Busch Brewing Company of St. Louis to visit the site and consider establishing a warehouse to serve the region, and the Busch Brewery Warehouse was completed in 1902. Today this handsome flatiron building, located adjacent to the Rock Island Passenger and Freight Depots (built later in 1910), survives as one of the few commercial buildings from the territorial period. Obtaining the warehouse was a commercial success, and it attracted other business; even so, Victorian attitudes looked down on adopting the name of the brewery. Prohibition was strong, especially among women town settlers, and temperance societies led a movement to have the official name changed from something other than Busch. Nancy Keen proposed the name "Elk City" after nearby Elk Creek, and the name became popular in the remaining territorial years. When Oklahoma entered the union and prohibition succeeded in 1907, the Post Office Department officially changed the name.²⁹

Natural Resources

The Elk City area is notable for its historic contributions to watershed conservation design and energy resource development in Oklahoma.

In terms of natural resource conservation, the Elk City area is home to the Sandstone Creek Watershed Project, the nation's first upstream flood control undertaking. Located northwest of town, the Sandstone Creek Project was built in 1953 by the State of Oklahoma and has become a model for many other projects in the United States.³⁰

Elk City also has superior groundwater resources. Water is supplied to Elk City and surrounding communities for municipal water use and to the surrounding farming

region for irrigation from the North Fork of the Red River located to the south of Elk City.³¹

Petroleum exploration in the Elk City area preceded the platting and settlement of the railroad townsite. The first oil was found in 1899, but production technology to exploit the resource was not capable of reaching the deep oil and gas deposits of the Anadarko Basin until after World War II. The Elk City field was opened in 1947, and at the time was among the deepest fields in the world, at over 13,000 feet deep. In 1948 Shell Oil Company opened an Elk City office to oversee the development of the field.

Today the Elk City region is primarily a natural gas production area that was extensively developed between the mid 1970s and early 1980s when high oil and gas prices and modern rotary drilling techniques made it feasible to tap the area's deposits. The Elk City field remains one of the deepest fields in the state. Producing gas wells in the Elk City field average between fifteen and twenty thousand feet deep, but even larger reserves exist at fifty thousand feet below the surface. Natural gas production currently appears to be an important future economic resource.³²

Agriculture

Even though energy production has at times driven the local economy of Elk City, agriculture has been the economic mainstay from its earliest days. Prior to the construction of county roads and the arrival of motorized transport, agricultural production patterns in the Elk City area were quite different from what exist today.

Interestingly, the agricultural economy of the Elk City area began with beef cattle ranching, and although farming outpaced ranching early in the century, today, livestock production is again the top industry in the area. Livestock production today accounts for at least one-half of all farm income. Cow-calf operations dominate the local cattle industry. Stocker-feeder operations follow in importance.³³ Some sheep ranching still exists, but this industry has declined in recent years. Newer livestock operations in the area include hog feeding operations and emu and ostrich ranching.

Ranching in the Elk City area arrived long before permanent white settlement. As part of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation from 1867-1892, the area was used first as a transit region for cattle driven overland from Texas to Kansas railheads along the Great Western Trail. This route roughly follows Oklahoma Highway 34, which passes directly through the Elk City area.³⁴ During the 1880s Texas ranchers leased the reservation from the Cheyenne and Arapaho; the Elk City area was contained within the northeast portion of Lease No. 3, an enormous acreage controlled by the Denham Ranch.³⁵

One of the most notable examples of the importance of ranching to the Elk City area can be found at the Beutler Brothers ranch just north of town. The Beutler ranch is considered to be one of the cultural source areas of professional rodeo. The Beutlers began promoting professional cowboy competitions in 1927, and since that time their ranch has become well known as one of the rodeo world's top stock breeding operations and performer training centers.³⁶

In terms of cultivation, it should be noted ranching took a temporary back seat to farming after initial white settlement around the turn of the century. As with other

localities in west central Oklahoma, the most important early crops in the Elk City area were corn and cotton. After the arrival of the railroad in 1901, however, wheat farming for national markets began to outpace corn production, and farm enlargement began.³⁷

Elk City became an early center for cotton marketing and processing when the Chickasaw Cotton Seed Oil Company built an office, oil mill, and warehouse there. The Chickasaw Cotton Seed Oil Company Office Building, built in 1905, is a two-story stucco Commercial Style building. Located on East Seventh Street just southeast of downtown, it survives as a reminder of the importance of cotton production during western Oklahoma's territorial period.

Wheat production is the second most important farm activity in the Elk City area, and wheat is by far the most important crop grown in the region. The Elk City area is in the southern periphery of the United States Winter Wheat Belt. Cotton production remains more important in the Elk City area than any of the other towns in this survey. Other important cultivated crops include: alfalfa, which is typically grown in irrigated lowlands; prairie hay, which occupies much of the uplands that serve as cattle pasture during the spring and summer months; and grain sorghums, which are grown for animal feed.³⁸

More than a century of livestock ranching and dryland agriculture in the Elk City area has resulted in considerable environmental alteration and damage. According to the Soil Conservation Service, most of the native vegetation has been depleted by excessive grazing. Grazing has resulted in the depletion of about two-thirds of the original biomass, and in some areas overgrazing has allowed the invasion of woody species such as

mesquite and shiner oak. Erosion caused by both overgrazing and intensive agriculture has seriously damaged soil quality in certain areas. Today, conservation measures such as reseeding and erosion control, as well as rural depopulation, have allowed some environmental recovery.³⁹

Commercial Establishments

Among the earliest and most important commercial establishments in Elk City was the warehouse for the Busch Brewing Company, located at 220 South Main Street. The Busch Brewery Warehouse, a flatiron building completed in 1902, is one of the oldest and most unique commercial buildings in the four town study area. Another major manufacturer and early employer was the Acme Brick Plant located one mile south of downtown.⁴⁰ Territorial period consumers in Elk City were provided a grocery delivery service out of the downtown Herring and Young Building, a 1904 Commercial Style building at 108 South Main Street.⁴¹

Elk City's economic growth during the 1920s may be seen today in the architecture of a portion of the Elk City Commercial District. One of the most important properties in this district is the Elk City Commercial Club Building, previously known as the German State Bank, located at 201 West Broadway. This bank was built in 1906 in the Tudor Revival Style, and like thousands of early frontier town banks, it occupied an impressive location on the corner of the intersection of two primary streets. Later growth during the 1920s saw the arrival of food processing firms in Elk City, including creameries, meat packing, and baking. One of the largest bakeries in the region, the

Merrit Bakery, was established at 213-215 West Broadway in 1926. Other significant commercial properties in this district include the Shadid Building, a 1925 Art Deco building located at 212-214 West Broadway, and the Carnegie Library, a 1915 Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival form located at 221 West Broadway.

As the automobile arrived on the scene in the latter 1910s, towns usually attracted car dealers representing major automobile manufacturers. The first car dealer in Elk City was Hedlund Motor Company, which opened in 1914. The Hedlund Motor Company Building (N. R. listed, 1983), located at 202-206 South Main Street, is an interesting example of the Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival Style for a commercial building. Other automobile dealers followed, including Findley Motors in 1916 and Galloway Motor Company in 1917.

Town Growth and Residential Development

By the time automobile ownership became commonplace in the 1910s, Clinton's two main streets—Main Street and Broadway Avenue—had been paved with bricks. This was a costly achievement for a small town, and it represented oncoming changes in the mobility of urban life. In 1922 Elk City was designated as a node along U. S. Highway 66; when it was paved in 1931, the highway era had arrived. Truck transport began to replace dependence on railroad freighting, and by 1940 the town was mostly oriented to the highway rather than the railroad. The city initiated a street paving program in 1946, and postwar growth made it necessary to widen some streets at this time. The first traffic signal was installed in 1950.

Elk City's earlier spatial evolution had begun south of the present-day downtown area at the intersection of the Katy Depot and Main Street. Elk City was platted as the quintessential Plains country town in 1901. At that time the original Main Street was located south of the Rock Island tracks, and when the first train arrived in September of 1901, Elk City's buildings consisted of mostly frame buildings and "box" houses. Within a few years, however, these were replaced with more substantial building materials such as brick and stone, which were made available by the railroad.⁴²

The heyday of residential construction in Elk City centered on the early statehood period during the 1920s. A strong state and national economy led to the construction of Elk City's most impressive historic housing stock. The Elk City West End Residential District, which focuses on Broadway Avenue and Third Street (U.S. Highway 66) just west of downtown, contains the highest quality and most architecturally impressive housing stock in the four-town study area. While the district contains a wide range of styles, most houses were constructed during good economic times. The Tudor Revival Style is represented by the Herring Home at 1000 West Third, the Ray Jones Home, at 801 West Broadway, the Sisson Home, at 703 West Broadway, and the Carpenter Home at 1021 West Broadway. The Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival Style is well-represented by the 721 West Broadway (N. R. listed 1983) and the property at 1221 at West Broadway. Good examples of Queen Anne Style homes include 520 West Broadway, 704 West Broadway, 801 West Broadway, and 901 West Broadway. Two very good examples of the Prairie School Style include the Garnett Home at 1006 West Broadway and the Noel Jones Home at 610 West Third Street.

Schools and Churches

Religious life in early Elk City was marked by cooperation by necessity. The first church was built by the Presbyterians in 1902. This building, which is no longer in existence, was also used for services by congregations of Southern and United Methodists and United Brethren. African-American Protestants and Catholics remained fairly segregated from white Protestant ecumenical activities, even in death. Elk City contained three graveyards, including a “Black” cemetery and a “Catholic” one.

The prosperity of the 1920s is reflected in Elk City’s Longfellow Elementary School, located at 313 North Oliver, a Late Gothic Revival building.

Politics and Government

Elk City was incorporated as a “City of First Class” on March 11, 1907. Four wards were established and the city government was headed by a mayor and a city council who served without pay. Politically, Beckham County, including Elk City, voted overwhelmingly Democratic in gubernatorial and presidential elections until 1960.⁴³

In terms of public buildings in Elk City, an important center of activity during the early years was the town’s United States Post Office, a National Register-eligible Colonial Revival building included in the Elk City Commercial District.

Cultural and Social Aspects

The Beutler Brothers Ranch is a local attraction in Elk City. In mid-May of each year the ranch hosts a quarter horse show, and in June the ranch hosts an Indian pow-wow and craft show. The most notable cultural event occurs each September, when the ranch hosts a Championship Rodeo, which draws professional cowboys from throughout North America.⁴⁴

In terms of other contributions to popular culture, Elk City was also the birth place and home of Jess Willard, an early day mule team freighter who rose to international notoriety as the Heavyweight Boxing Champion of the World during the years 1915-1919.⁴⁵

Although the Great Depression and Dust Bowl brought declining population to Elk City, federal relief dollars arriving in the 1930s added significantly to the cultural and social life of later generations. This may be seen in the numerous Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects in the town, notably Ackley Park Stadium, completed in 1939 at 2200 West Third Street. The 1940s and early 1950s also brought the rise of Route 66, which ran through Elk City, and its associated aspects of popular culture.

Watonga

Founding and Naming

Watonga was established as a tent city soon after the land run that opened the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation to white settlement at noon on April 19, 1892.⁴⁶ The townsite was actually platted twelve days before the run on April 7, 1892. The name of the town was taken from the rural post office of the same name, which was established on March 23, 1892.⁴⁷ "Watonga" is an English corruption of the Arapaho words meaning "Black Coyote," the name of a local Arapaho leader.⁴⁸ The first frame building was the house of Rudolph Bernet, who had the lumber hauled thirty miles by freighter from the railroad terminus at Kingfisher.⁴⁹

Watonga was located in newly-renamed Blaine County, which before April 19 had been designated "C" County. The new name honored United States Senator James G. Blaine, a Maine Republican who had been a Speaker of the House and 1884 Presidential candidate. The decision to name the county after Blaine was a compromise proposed by county Republicans after citizens were split over naming the county either "Custer" or "Sheridan."⁵⁰

Natural Resources

The earliest natural resources exploited by settlers in the region were not of great value or produced on a large scale, but they had regional connections all the same. Prior to the Civil War and shortly afterward, Jesse Chisholm, for whom the cattle trail was named, owned a salt production operation near Watonga. In large cast iron pots,

Chisholm's employees boiled and concentrated brine from the salt springs that flowed into the North Canadian River. The salt was then transported east and south to more populated areas where it was needed for various uses such as the preservation of meats. At the turn of the century, at least two commercial salt producers, one of which was Morton Salt, were based just north of Watonga at Ferguson. Commercial salt production ceased in 1910 when new analytic techniques revealed that the area yielded chemically inferior salt.⁵¹

The most important mineral resource in the Watonga vicinity has long been gypsum, which is found throughout the local area. The first gypsum extraction operation in Blaine County was the Ruby Stucco Mill, built in 1902 six miles north of Watonga at Bickford. After this closed in 1910 and burned in 1915, Watonga lost much of its potential for direct growth from the gypsum industry, although as county seat it was guaranteed some level of development from service functions related to gypsum production in the county. In 1912, the core of gypsum production moved to Southard, in far northern Blaine County, where the United States Gypsum Company built a very large quarry.

Oil and gas exploration in the Watonga vicinity began a few years prior to statehood, but the level of production technology at the time yielded nothing. It was not until the 1950s that rotary drilling procedures had advanced enough to tap the deep fields of natural gas in the Anadarko Basin, which extends into southwestern Blaine County.

Agriculture

Agriculture has been the mainstay of people in the Watonga area for hundreds and perhaps thousands of years. Archaeological evidence indicates that cultures classified as part of the Caddoan complex adopted farming practices in the area sometime between 1500 and 500 years ago. The crops raised by these early Native Americans included maize, beans, sunflowers, and squash, and were probably traded as well as used for subsistence. As late as the early 1800s, descendants of these people—the Pawnee, Wichita, and Caddo nations—still farmed these crops in the vicinity of Watonga.⁵²

After the Caddoan peoples were displaced from the Watonga area by nomadic hunting tribes like the Comanche and Southern Cheyenne in the early 1800s, and the area was transferred to the control of the Creek and Seminole Nations, it was not utilized for agriculture in any significant way. Agricultural land use returned to the area after the Civil War. Texas cattle drives began to traverse the area via the Chisholm Trail as white ranchers moved their herds from Texas to railheads in Kansas. At about the same time, in 1869, the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation was established and the Watonga area became a focus of Native American resettlement. Government-employed ranchers kept about 2000 head of cattle as a food supply for the reservation during the 1870s and 1880s. Later, as part of the federal government's civilization program, Cheyenne and Arapaho people in the Watonga area adopted (often by coercion) European crops, livestock, and farming techniques.⁵³

The non-Native Americans who settled in the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation after 1892 were a mix of farmers and ranchers of various backgrounds. A number of

ranchers from Texas and Indian Territory were attracted to the area, but farmers dominated numerically. Census data indicate that most farmers originated in Midwestern states, but there were also a number of farmers from Southern states, which included a significant number of African-American settlers. In fact, Blaine County had been identified as a major focus of African-American settlement in Oklahoma Territory.⁵⁴

Most settlers at first practiced a semi-subsistence form of mixed-farming based on a corn and livestock combination. The relatively low number of land claimants in 1892, the absence of railroads, and the drought, grasshopper infestations, and wildfires of the first half of the 1890s severely limited agricultural settlement. By 1895 most settlers were convinced that eastern farming practices were not sustainable on the Great Plains.⁵⁵

In 1896, however, new sod cutters began to allow farmers to plant wheat on the grasslands, and agricultural settlement advanced during a new cycle of humid years. Still, corn production prevailed for the next two decades, and cotton production also emerged as an important agricultural activity that was pioneered by African-American settlers. Cotton provided large returns for farmers who otherwise remained hindered by overland transport. Perhaps the most important economic foci in Watonga during the territorial period was the cotton gin; after the arrival of the railroad in 1901, Watonga's function as a cotton ginning point multiplied. The importance of corn and cotton production during this time is highlighted by the division of the school year: schools remained open in July and August, but were closed in September and October so children could help harvest these crops.⁵⁶

Wheat production emerged as a major activity in the Watonga area after statehood. Automobiles and better roads allowed crops to be marketed easier just as demand for wheat in Europe increased. Agricultural mechanization also began to supplant cotton production early in the Watonga area. Between 1910 and 1920 Blaine County's corn acreage decreased by two-thirds, its cotton acreage fell by three-fourths, and its wheat acreage more than doubled.⁵⁷

Cultivated acreage increased during the 1920s, even as farm prices fell in the latter part of the decade. By the early 1930s, however, economic depression had bankrupted many farmers in the Watonga area. The Great Plow Up of the 1920s gave way to the Dust Bowl years of regional-scale drought and resultant loss of top soil, followed by out-migration and farm abandonment.

Recovery came in the latter 1930s through federal aid programs that paid farmers to keep land out of production and introduce new land management practices. Policies set by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration have encouraged ranching and range management over cultivation since World War II. Since then, the number of farms and farm families in the region have steadily decreased, although the average size of farms has increased. Beef cattle ranching has largely replaced wheat and cotton cultivation in acreage and farm income, a fact immediately apparent in the grassy terraces of cattle pastures. Still, the economy of Watonga remains very much an agricultural one, although much more diversified and service-oriented today.⁵⁸

Commercial Establishments

The Watonga Cheese Factory, located at 314 East Second Street in Watonga, was originally established as Montague Dairy Products in 1941. It is today one of only three cheese plants in the state, and it has a production capability of 10,000 pounds of cheddar per day. Since the 1970s, the Watonga Chamber of Commerce has successfully focused attention on the industry and the town's local history through an annual spring festival celebrating Watonga as the cheese capital of western Oklahoma.⁵⁹

Several extant properties representative of Watonga's early commercial and political activities remain in an eight block area of the downtown. The area contains architectural reminders of Watonga's early function as an agricultural market center that provided goods and services to area farmers. Territorial and early statehood commercial activities included blacksmith shops, livery stables, wagon and lumber yards, and grocery, hardware, drug, and feed stores, the best extant representative of which is the Phil Koch Building (1903), a Commercial Style building located at 104-106 East Main Street that warrants further study. The early statehood period is well-represented by a number of commercial buildings of adequate integrity or potential for rehabilitation. Included are the J. H. Wagner Building (1910), a Commercial Style form built in 1910 located at 113 West Main Street that is eligible for National Register nomination; the Rose Building (1911), a Commercial Style building located at 103 East Main Street that warrants further study; the Liberty Theater (1926), a Commercial Style form located at 117 East Main Street that warrants further study; and Smith's Apartments (1928), a Commercial Style building located at 113-115 Noble Avenue that warrants further study. One commercial

property is already listed on the National Register, the Noble Hotel (N. R. listed 1996), a Commercial Style building located at 112 North Noble Avenue.

Town Growth and Residential Development

Although Watonga was platted in 1892, it did not receive rail connections until 1901. Hence Watonga was a relatively isolated inland town during its first decade, which undoubtedly hindered its later rate of commercial and residential growth. When the railway finally did link the town to the national economy, Watonga's residential area expanded outward away from the 1892 townsite. As a result of this slow growth, Watonga's spatial extent today is not much larger than what it was ninety years ago.

Watonga's original townsite was anchored by an east-west Main Street and the intersections of three north-south arteries of Weigle, Noble, and Prouty Avenues. Between 1892 and 1901 a variety of businesses located to this area that specialized in serving the surrounding farm population. Since all freight coming into and going out of Watonga before had to be hauled by mule train at least thirty miles, Watonga's earliest commercial establishments included several stores, livery stables, saloons, and other retail and service-related businesses for the area's settlers. Manufacturing activities remained limited before rail connections. The most important function of Watonga's manufacturing sector before 1901 was grain milling and cotton ginning. Other manufacturing businesses centered on skilled trades that served farmers such as blacksmith and mechanical work. Manufacturing activities that employed considerable numbers of workers, however, were few, if not nonexistent.

After 1901, Watonga secured its viability by receiving rail connections and designation as a county seat. The railway intersected Main Street at a right angle, essentially rearranging Watonga from an inland town to a railroad "T-town" overnight. Several residential additions were appended to the original townsite at this time, including McCoy Addition to the north, Sweets Addition and Payne and Sweets Addition to the northeast, and Coy Addition to the west.

Shortly before statehood, Watonga became the county seat of County "C," which was later renamed Blaine County. The Blaine County Courthouse (N. R. listed 1984), which was constructed in 1906, gave Watonga legal and service functions related to farm land turnover and mineral resource development in the entire county. Hence later agricultural intensification and gypsum mining benefited the town because of its political function.

Despite its rise in importance in 1907, before World War II Watonga did not further expand its town limits beyond its 1901 extent. With service and local administrative activities dominating Watonga's economy, there was not a large amount of population growth associated with manufacturing or warehousing industries, as in other railroad towns. One visible result of Watonga's slow growth is that it retains a relatively large number of historically significant properties for a town of its size.

The little lateral expansion of Watonga that has occurred since World War II has been beyond the designated study area of this survey. After World War II commercial transport and industrial development have focused on highways on the periphery of town

rather than the railroad, and the downtown has declined in relative commercial importance.

Still, Watonga does contain one cluster of extant residential properties. The properties, located north of the downtown, include a number of architectural styles representative of the territorial, early statehood, and depression eras. Two residential properties are already listed on the National Register. These include the most famous historic property in Watonga, the Thompson Benton Ferguson House (N. R. listed 1973), a 1901 Queen Anne located at 521 North Weigle Avenue, as well as the J. H. Wagner House (N. R. listed 1983), a 1905 Queen Anne located at 521 North Prouty. One particularly interesting property that is National Register eligible is the Rook Home (1935), a French Eclectic house. At least one other residential property in this area is the W. R. Kelly Home (1900), a Queen Anne house located at 601 North Prouty, which is National Register eligible.

The residential area north of downtown also includes a number of other properties exhibiting styles representative of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, such as Folk Victorian, Prairie School, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival. The 1920s are particularly well-represented by a large number of Bungalow/Craftsman houses and the 1940s are well-represented by a number of National Folk forms.

Schools and Churches

A number of churches were established in 1892. The first churches were built on lots reserved for gratis for such purposes by the town site developers. Included among these was a church on lot seven of block 21, which was eventually rebuilt in 1903 as the First Presbyterian Church, a fine Late Gothic Revival church building located at 300 North Weigle Avenue, a National Register eligible property. All of the original church buildings built in 1892 have been replaced at least once by later buildings. Also located north of the downtown is the First Baptist Church (1949), a Romanesque Style church located at 301 North Noble representative of the post-World War II era.

As with churches, Watonga's early town site developers provided free space for public schools, usually in the form of an entire block. Blocks 18 and 33 in Watonga were reserved for school grounds. The only surviving educational property built before 1950 is the Watonga High School (1937), a WPA-Standardized Style building located at 1012 North Noble Avenue that is representative of the Depression era.

Politics and Government

Politics in Blaine County, and especially Watonga, have been dominated by the Republican Party for most of the twentieth century. The Grand Old Party has succeeded in nearly every gubernatorial and presidential race in Blaine County except those

spanning the Great Depression years of the 1930s, when the Democrats won by a small margin.⁶⁰

The built landscape of political and civil life in Watonga is dominated by the 1906 Blaine County Courthouse (N. R. listed 1984). The courthouse proclaims that Watonga is the seat of Blaine County, and as such makes Watonga noticeably different from the other three towns in the study area. In addition to the courthouse, two other government properties are located in the downtown area, including the Watonga City Hall and Fire Station (1930), a Commercial Style building located at 115-123 North Weigle Avenue that warrants further study, and the United States Post Office (1937), a fine Colonial Revival building located at 121 North Noble, which is eligible for National Register nomination.

Cultural and Social Aspects

At least part of the historic prevalence of the Republican Party in the Watonga area is undoubtedly a legacy of the leadership of Thompson Benton and Elva Shartel Ferguson, co-editors of the Watonga Republican, the local newspaper since 1892.

In 1901 Thompson Ferguson was appointed Governor of Oklahoma Territory by President Theodore Roosevelt. Ferguson's term lasted until 1906, during which he earned a reputation for integrity and the nickname, "Honest Tom." After her husband died in 1921, Elva Ferguson continued tirelessly as a successful newspaper editor and author. Her life and the early years of Oklahoma Territory eventually became the subject

of the noteworthy novel, Cimarron, written by Edna Ferber at the T. B. Ferguson home during the late 1920s.⁶¹

The historical legacy of Native American and African American settlement persists in the Watonga area in the relatively large population of these groups. Both groups played a vital role in the development of the town. Native Americans in the area, most of which are members of the Arapaho and Cheyenne nations, continue their unique cultural traditions. African-Americans, although fewer in proportion than in the early part of the century continue to add to the cultural diversity of the area.

Weatherford

Founding and Naming

Weatherford's origins began in 1892 after the run into the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation. In that year, William J. Weatherford, a homesteader from Alabama, with his daughter built a house, store, blacksmith shop, and saw mill on the wagon trail between El Reno and the young settlement of Arapaho. Weatherford obtained a contract to operate a post office from his store in August of 1893. This frontier hamlet served a large cluster of rural settlers who had claimed land just across the eastern Cheyenne and Arapaho boundary in 1892. Through the 1890s, these early white settlers scratched out a meager living by raising corn and hauling it more than forty miles by wagon to El Reno. Weatherford also served as a stop for overland freighters moving between settlements even further west, like Arapaho, between 1892 and 1898.⁶²

Plans to build the Choctaw, Oklahoma, and Gulf Railroad through the area from Geary were finalized by early 1898. Beeks Erick, an employee of the railroad, obtained the rights for a new townsite on his homestead near the rural post office of Dewey, a distance of two miles southwest from Weatherford's homestead. New Weatherford, as it was called, was platted that summer in a cornfield. The newly-platted town soon gained a large influx of occupants when the Choctaw line designated it as a terminus town. John Jones opened a bank on August 3, 1898, formally opening the town for business. As a terminus town, however, New Weatherford's occupants were mainly railroad workers. By October 1898 the town had fourteen saloons, five dance halls, fifteen wagon yards, and eight lumber yards. The first train arrived for business in mid December. As the first railroad link to the area, Weatherford provided a much needed market center for cattlemen and grain farmers in central Oklahoma Territory.⁶³

Natural Resources

The natural resource base of the Weatherford area includes limited deposits of mineral resources such as petroleum, natural gas, gypsum, and a few others. Oil and gas development is significant in northern Custer County. The southeast corner of Custer County contains extensive gypsum beds up to 36 feet thick which have been mined at various times during the twentieth century. Important gravel deposits are quarried along the Washita River and Deer Creek in Custer County. Volcanic ash deposits of some twelve feet in thickness are quarried near Custer City. By far the most important natural

resources in the Weatherford vicinity are those associated with agriculture, such as soil, water, and range grasses.

Agriculture

Ranching in the Weatherford and Clinton area has its origins with the movement of Texas cattle north along the Chisholm Trail. Native Americans in the area, who had no authoritative power to affect the use of the land they were supposed to make a living from, occasionally charged cattlemen tolls during the Chisholm Trail drives between 1869 and the mid 1870s. One important outcome of the long overland drives during the existence of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation was that Texas ranchers began to drive their herds through slowly and even keep their herds in the reservation for the summer to increase the weight of their stock so as to gain higher market prices in Kansas. By 1882, informal leases were made between cattlemen and Native Americans that satisfaction both groups. However, the federal government eventually ruled that this arrangement was illegal, a stance favored by Indian policy makers and white settlers who wanted the land allotted and opened for white settlement. Although ordered to leave the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation by Executive Order in the 1880s, many ranchers stayed in the area, particularly the western part of the reservation, until the 1892 run. After white settlement was legalized, ranchers had established various forms of leases and land claims to control the water supply of large tracts of land. Since much of the upland area remained undeveloped and unclaimed by farmers until the 1920s, they could graze their cattle on open range ranches that had not been alienated from the public domain.⁶⁴

Commercial Establishments

Early commercial establishments in Weatherford included mainly service establishments and warehousing and agricultural storage facilities. Very early in its history, Weatherford became a railroad cattle loading point for ranchers after the opening of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation, and even supplanted El Reno in that function.

Weatherford was a railroad terminus town during the first years of its existence, and as a result, its businesses included a relatively large number of saloons and dance halls in addition to the usual stores, banks, liverys, and lumber yards. The large number of cowboys and railway workers in Weatherford gave it an early reputation as a rough and rowdy frontier town. Reputedly, Weatherford's reputation was so well-known that the brewery magnate Adolphus Busch, when visiting Elk City in 1901, made the point of staying a few days in what he heard was one of the wildest towns in the West.

Warehousing dry goods, manufactured items, and especially lumber from urban centers in the east was an important activity that required a number of early buildings. Wagon yards and livery stables were important transportation-oriented facilities that became even more important after the railroad enabled more intensive settlement of the region.

A few surviving commercial properties warrant the designation of the Weatherford Commercial District, located on the west end of Main Street. While the majority of the buildings within this district represent the Commercial Style, one, the

German National Bank (1909), located at 118 West Main Street, is a quite unique example of Classical Revival Style commercial architecture.

Town Growth and Residential Development

Weatherford is the quintessential small college town. Its establishment as a railroad town in 1898 followed the general T-town design; in Weatherford's case, the "T" is formed by the intersection of Broadway and the Rock Island Railroad. Despite its design, Weatherford did not soon evolve into a major regional commercial and manufacturing center, as did Clinton a few miles to the west. Instead, Weatherford retained its agricultural market center functions and emerged as an educational center for western Oklahoma. In 1901 the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature designated Weatherford as the location for the state's Southwestern Normal College. The college tract was designated north of the downtown area.

The result on the landscape of Weatherford in the few years after 1901 was that the area of the townsite essentially doubled northward as landowners dedicated land for residential development between the college tract and the original town. The area immediately south of the college campus along North Custer Street contains a number of early properties oriented to housing college students and individual families.

Properties along North Custer Street represent both single family and multiple unit residential housing from the early statehood period before the Great Depression. The period represented by this area was one of generally strong regional and national economic growth. The area contains a few examples of various styles such as

Bungalow/Craftsman, Queen Anne, Prairie School, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and National Folk. A property that warrants further study is Whitaker's Boarding House (1910), located at 611 North Custer Street, a Queen Anne house originally used for college student housing.

College enrollment did not increase above 1,000 students until after World War II, when it experienced a large influx of veterans under the G. I. Bill. Beginning in the 1950s new residential additions were made to compensate for the new housing demand by college staff and students, but all of these were located outside the designated study area of this survey.⁶⁵

Schools and Churches

Weatherford's history is intertwined with the history and politics of higher education in Oklahoma. Southwestern Oklahoma State University is a regional center of higher education and has long been a major economic force in Weatherford. The school attracts students from throughout west central Oklahoma, and it is nationally recognized for its pharmacy and watch making schools. In 1901 the Oklahoma Territorial legislature allocated funds for a normal school to serve southwestern Oklahoma. Towns in the area were to compete for the designation by providing 40 acres of land and paying for the landscaping and road work.⁶⁶

Apparently, the deal had already been set before the formalities were legislated. In 1899, three of Weatherford's strongest promoters—J.E. Keen, a Dr. Ballard, and Beeks Erick—invited Oklahoma Territorial Governor Cassius M. Barnes and an entourage of

Republican legislators to Weatherford and proposed that a normal school be built. Erick promised to donate one of his 40-acre homestead parcels for the site. Weatherford businessmen entertained the officials for several days and reputedly made an informal agreement to have the college built in their town.⁶⁷

Barnes, however, was succeeded by Ferguson, who selected Granite as the site of the future college. After construction began at Granite, the Weatherford group filed an injunction to stop construction and sued to have their town as the home of the school. Weatherford won their case, and construction of Southwestern Normal College was relocated to the town.⁶⁸

Southwestern has undergone a number of changes since opening in 1903. The first classes were held in vacant saloons and the Congregational Church in downtown Weatherford. The first graduating class at SNC received their diplomas in 1908. The institution was renamed a number of times (Southwestern State Teachers College, 1921; Southwestern State College of Diversified Occupations, 1939; Southwestern Institute of Technology, 1941; Southwestern State College, 1949) before arriving at its present name. The first administration building, built in 1903, burned to the ground in 1939, prompting construction of the current building. The Old Science Building (N. R. listed 1984), on the SWOSU campus is National Register listed, and several other campus properties are eligible for National Register nomination, including the SWOSU Art Building (1928), an Art Deco Style building, the SWOSU Administration Building (1942), also an Art Deco Style building, and the SWOSU President's Home (1925), a Prairie School house.⁶⁹

These properties are included in the proposed Southwestern Oklahoma State University Campus District.

Politics and Government

Politically, like nearby Clinton, Weatherford and Custer County generally are located in a transition zone between Democratically-dominant southern Oklahoma and the strong Republicanism of northwestern Oklahoma. Throughout Custer County's history, the Democratic and Republican parties have battled closely for votes in both gubernatorial and presidential elections, except during the 1930s, when the Democrats prevailed.⁷⁰

One extant government building in Weatherford representative of the Depression era warrants further study, the United States Post Office (1938) a Colonial Revival Style building located at 107 Franklin Street. The Weatherford Municipal Swimming Pool and Bathhouse (1935), a Commercial Style facility located at 601 North Indiana Street, warrants further study.

Cultural and Social Aspects

Weatherford's local culture is quite cosmopolitan for a town of its size, no doubt because of the university community. A number of fine arts exhibitions and activities are available, as well as a number of college sports. The town also harbors aspects of the Route 66 popular culture of the 1950s and 1960s. Curiously, the founding of Weatherford is celebrated annually in a watermelon seed-spitting contest.⁷¹

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³ Wike, Atlas of Oklahoma, 13-14.

⁴ Wike, Atlas of Oklahoma, 21-22.

⁵ Odos G. Henson, Soil Survey of Custer County, Oklahoma (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1978), 48.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Philip V. Scarpino, "Industrial Development in the Seventeen Counties of Southwestern Oklahoma to 1930," Resource Protection Planning Project, Region Seven. (Stillwater, OK: Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, 1986), 10-12.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ David W. Baird and Danney Goble, The Story of Oklahoma (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 395.

¹¹ Henson, Soil Survey, 48.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Wayne S. Wallace, "The Growth and Development of Custer County," (M.A. thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1950), 17-19.

¹⁴ Ibid, 67-71.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid, 70.

¹⁷ Scott Baxter, "Transportation in Oklahoma to 1920," Resource Protection Planning Project, Region Seven. (Stillwater, OK: Oklahoma Historic Preservation Survey, 1986), 14, 18.

¹⁸ Wallace, "Custer County," 50-53; Francis L. Fugate and Roberta B. Fugate, Roadside History of Oklahoma (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1991), 339-40; George H. Shirk, Oklahoma Place Names, Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 54; Kent Ruth, Oklahoma Travel Handbook (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977), 74.

¹⁹ Wallace, "Custer County," 50-53; Fugate, Roadside History, 339-40; Shirk, Oklahoma Place Names, 54; Ruth, Oklahoma Travel Handbook, 74.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Wallace, "Custer County," 54.

²² Ibid, 48.

²³ Henson, Soil Survey, 48.

²⁴ Fugate, Roadside History, 339-40; Ruth, Handbook, 74.

²⁵ Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Oklahoma Almanac, 1997-1998 (Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 1997), 34.

²⁶ Ruth, Handbook, 74.

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- ²⁷ Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Almanac, 675.
- ²⁸ Fugate and Fugate, Roadside History, 343-44; Ruth, Handbook, 92.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*; Shirk, Place Names, 78.
- ³⁰ Jimmy G. Ford, Gregory F. Scott, and Jimmie W. Frie, Soil Survey of Beckham County, Oklahoma (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1978), 2.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² *Ibid.*
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ³⁵ John W. Morris, Charles R. Goins, and Edwin McReynolds, eds., Historical Atlas of Oklahoma, Third Edition (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 51.
- ³⁶ Ruth, Handbook, 92.
- ³⁷ Ford, et al, Soil Survey, 2.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ Scarpino, "Industrial Development," 13.
- ⁴¹ BANK, 17.
- ⁴² BANK, 11.
- ⁴³ Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Almanac, 908.
- ⁴⁴ Ruth, Handbook, 92.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

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- ⁴⁶ Marjorie Bennett Everhart, "A History of Blaine County," (M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1929), 12.
- ⁴⁷ Shirk, Place Names, 251.
- ⁴⁸ Fugate and Fugate, Roadside History, 300.
- ⁴⁹ Everhart, "Blaine County," 16.
- ⁵⁰ Heritage Book Committee, Their Story: A Pioneer Days Album of the Blaine County Area (Oklahoma City: Metro Press, 1977), p. 2.
- ⁵¹ Scarpino, "Industrial Development," 14.
- ⁵² Robert O. Fay, Guide to Roman Nose State Park. Guide Book 9 (Norman, OK: Oklahoma Geological Survey, 1959), 7.
- ⁵³ Everhart, "Blaine County," 8-10.
- ⁵⁴ Michael H. Reggio, "Troubled Times: Homesteading in Short-Grass Country, 1892-1900," The Chronicles of Oklahoma 57:196-211.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ Everhart, "Blaine County," 60.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid, 34.
- ⁵⁸ Carl F. Fisher, Soil Survey of Blaine County, Oklahoma (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1968), 81-83.
- ⁵⁹ Ruth, Handbook, 238.
- ⁶⁰ Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Almanac, 908.
- ⁶¹ Baird and Goble, Oklahoma, 373-76.

⁶² Wallace, "Custer County," 338.

⁶³ Ibid; Ruth, Handbook, 240-41; Shirk, Place Names, 252.

⁶⁴ Wallace, "Custer County," 30-32.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 35.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 73-74; Fugate, Roadside History, 339.

⁶⁷ Wallace, "Custer County," 73-74.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Almanac, 34.

⁷¹ Ruth, Handbook, 240-41.

XII. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Hill, Luther B. History of the State of Oklahoma. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1908.

An early attempt to tell the story of Oklahoma from the date of the Louisiana Purchase through the formation of the state.

History of Custer and Washita Counties, Oklahoma, 1883-1937. Clinton: Clinton Daily News, 1937.

A helpful, but dated, county history that includes the home county (Custer) of Weatherford and Clinton.

Hoebel, E. Adamson. The Cheyenne: Indians of the Great Plains. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1978.

A scholarly account of this Plains Indian tribe who were forced to move into western Oklahoma to a reservation led by Chief Henry Roman Nose.

Hofsommer, Donovan L. (ed.) Railroads in Oklahoma. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1977.

This author probably knows more about Oklahoma railroad history than any other student of the subject. This anthology provides general information as to dates of construction of the railways that influenced the development of the four western Oklahoma towns.

Industrial Development in the Seventeen Counties of Southwestern Oklahoma to 1930. Region Seven. Resource Protection Planning Project report prepared by Philip V. Scarpino, Department of History, Oklahoma State University, 1986. Report located at State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, OK.

Mentions gypsum plant in Watonga in 1920s. Industrial properties listed include Whited Grist Mill in Elk City and Owl Blacksmith Shop in Weatherford.

Johnson, Kenneth et al. Geology and Earth Resources of Oklahoma. Norman: Oklahoma Geological Survey, 1972.

A handsome booklet laced with numerous maps, charts, and graphs developed by the leading geologist of the state.

Joyce, Davis D. (ed.). An Oklahoma I Had Never Seen Before: Alternative Views of Oklahoma History. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.

Chapter 8 details the history of the Elk City Community Hospital, a cooperative project, launched by the Farmers Union in 1929.

McReynolds, Edwin C. Oklahoma: A History of the Sooner State. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954.

A detailed political history of the state written by an Oklahoma State University history professor, it became a college textbook for Oklahoma history courses.

Meredith, Howard L. and Meredith, Mary Ellen. Of the Earth: Oklahoma Architectural History. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1980.

This collection of readings covers a myriad of house types, building materials, and renowned architects in the state.

Morgan, H. Wayne and Morgan, Ann Hodges. Oklahoma: A Bicentennial History. New York: W.W. Norton, 1977.

This was the commissioned bicentennial history of Oklahoma in 1976. Authored by a husband-wife team, it is an outstanding overview of the state with some new interpretations.

Morris, John W. (ed.) Cities of Oklahoma. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Historical Society, 1979.

A useful anthology that includes some information on all four towns-- Clinton (pp. 11, 19, 20); Elk City (pp. 11, 20, 21); Watonga (pp.11, 21); and Weatherford (pp.11, 20, 22).

Morris, John W. Ghost Towns of Oklahoma. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977.

Four ghost towns are located in Blaine and Custer Counties--Eagle City and Bickford, north of Watonga; and Independence (north of Clinton) and Parkersburg (west of Weatherford).

Morris, John W. et al. Historical Atlas of Oklahoma. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986.

This is the best atlas of Oklahoma. It covers a variety of topics from cattle trails to railroads. The textual material accompanying the maps is brief, but informative.

Moudry, Frank J. Watonga: 1892 to 1992. Watonga, OK: Watonga Republican, 1991.

Block-by-block analysis of commercial district of Watonga. Valuable historic and contemporary photos. Helpful on construction dates of downtown buildings.

Native American Theme: Historic Context for Management Region #7: 1803-1938. Prepared in 1988 by W. David Baird, Department of History, Oklahoma State University. Report on file at the State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, OK.

Tribal histories are given for Cheyenne and Arapahoes. The only historic property listed in the four towns is the Chief Henry Roman Nose House in Watonga.

Oklahoma Almanac. 2 vols. Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Publishing Company, 1930-31.

Now dated, this two-volume set is a storehouse of statistics on Oklahoma during the period from statehood through the 1920s.

Patterns of White Settlement in Oklahoma, 1889-1907: Region Seven. Resource Protection Planning Project report prepared by Michael W. Smith, Department of History, Oklahoma State University, 1986. Report located at the State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, OK.

Discusses railroad linkages as important to settlement patterns, especially the east-west Rock Island line from El Reno to Texola which served Weatherford, Clinton, and Elk City by 1907, and the Rock Island line from Enid to Waurika which included Watonga by statehood. Historic properties in the four study towns are listed including Herring-Young Building, Johnson House, and Shelton House in Elk City; Ferguson House, Kelley House, and Wagner House in Watonga; Crawford House, Nance House, and Cotter's Blacksmith Shop in Clinton; and the Stafford House in Weatherford.

Ranching in Southwestern Oklahoma: Region Seven. Resource Protection Planning Project report prepared by Mary Ann Anders, Department of History, Oklahoma State University, 1984. Report located at the State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, OK.

Pertinent to this study, the report discusses the Cheyenne-Arapaho Cattle Company. Murphy Ranch House near Clinton and Cronkhite Ranch House near Watonga are mentioned.

Roark, Michael. "Searching for the Hearth: Culture Areas of Oklahoma." The Chronicles of Oklahoma, LXX (Winter, 1992-93), 416-31.

A useful article on settlement patterns in Oklahoma by a cultural geographer who gives source areas for migrants into the state and how they shaped its political and religious history.

Roark, Michael. "Oklahoma Territory: Frontier Development, Migration, and Culture Areas." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1979.

Excellent analysis of migration, settlement patterns, and cultural regionalization of Oklahoma Territory.

Ruth, Kent and Argo, Jim. Window on the Past: Historic Places in Oklahoma. Oklahoma City: Western Heritage Press, 1982.

Photo and text on Ferguson House in Watonga (p.12).

Ruth, Kent. Oklahoma Travel Handbook. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977.

Compiled by one of Oklahoma's most noted historians, this is a travelogue of the state, but contains brief histories of each community including the four western towns of this study.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps-Clinton, Elk City, Watonga, and Weatherford, Oklahoma.

These are valuable primary sources for construction materials, types of commercial establishments, lot and block numbers, plat name, and dates of construction. A must for conducting historic property surveys.

Scott, Quinta and Kelly, Susan Croce. Route 66: The Highway and Its People. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988.

Clinton, Elk City, and Weatherford are given proper treatment in this recent history of "The Mother Road."

Shirk, George H. Oklahoma Place Names. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974.

This is the most recent study on the origins of city and county names in Oklahoma.

Snider, L.C. Geography of Oklahoma. Norman: Oklahoma Geological Survey, 1917.

This study provides some excellent physical geography information on the state.

Starr, Emmet. Encyclopedia of Oklahoma. Oklahoma City: Private Printing, 1912.

The first statistical handbook on Oklahoma following statehood.

Thematic Survey of Grain Elevators in Western Oklahoma, 1889-1950. Report prepared by W. David Baird, Department of History, Pepperdine University, 1990. Report on file at the State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, OK.

Of the 490 elevators covered in this report, seven are located in the four study towns, including the Roger Mills County Coop Elevator and Old Ben Martin Grain Elevator in Elk City; Old Blaine County Milling Elevator, Wheeler Brothers Grain Elevator (south) in Watonga; and Farmers Union Coop Elevator (North), Clinton Grain Company Elevator, and Old Stafford Grain Elevator in Clinton.

Thoburn, Joseph B. and Wright, Muriel H. Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People. New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1929.

A four-volume set gives a detailed story on Oklahoma to the 1920s.

Transportation in Oklahoma to 1920. Region Seven. Resource Protection Planning Report prepared by Scott Baxter, Department of History, Oklahoma State University, 1986. Report located at the State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma City, OK.

Report discusses trolley system in Clinton. Lists two historic properties in Elk City--Rock Island and M, K, & T Depots.

Trenholm, Virginia. The Arapahoes, Our People. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970.

Author gives comprehensive picture of this Plains Indian Tribe who moved to western Oklahoma in the 1860s.

Townsend, Charles V. "The Opening of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Country." Unpublished Master's thesis, Oklahoma A&M College, 1939.

A helpful thesis on the 1892 opening of the Cheyenne-Arapahoe reservation to white settlement.

Wallace, Wayne S. "The Growth and Development of Custer County." Unpublished Master's thesis, Oklahoma A&M College, 1950.

Thesis chapters deal with Clinton and Weatherford and a separate chapter on Southwestern State College.

Withers, Vicki Dale. "A Check List of Theses and Dissertations Relating to Oklahoma History Completed at the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University Through 1972." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1974.

Although needs updating, this is a valuable source. Other disciplines need to follow this model. First part is organized by topic and second section is arranged by county and city names.

WPA Guide to 1930s Oklahoma. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986.

With a new introduction by Anne Hodges Morgan, this is an updated version of the 1941 edition compiled by the Writer's Program of the Works Progress Administration. Contains brief material on the four study towns (Clinton, p. 230; Elk City, p. 232; Watonga, p.311; and Weatherford, p. 230).

Wright, Muriel. A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951.

Covers Cheyenne (pp. 76-84) and Arapaho (pp. 42-47) tribes in western Oklahoma.

XIII. SUMMARY

The Reconnaissance Level Survey of Portions of Four Western Oklahoma Towns included the four communities of Clinton, Elk City, Watonga, and Weatherford.

A total of 166 properties were surveyed with minimum level documentation including completion of the OK/SHPO Historic Preservation Resource Identification Form and at least two 5x7 B/W prints of each property.

1. Eighteen (18) properties were recommended for National Register consideration: Elk City [6], Clinton [4], Watonga [5], and Weatherford [3].
2. One hundred one (101) individual properties were suggested as warranting further study.
3. Thumbnail sketches for six (6) proposed districts were outlined with tentative boundaries and justifications for intensive level surveys: Clinton [2], Elk City [2], and Weatherford [2].
4. Four (4) National Register listed properties were surveyed and updated with form and photographs: Casa Grande Hotel (1995), Storm House (1983), and Hedlund Motor Company Building (1983) in Elk City, and the J. H. Wagner House (1983) in Watonga.
5. Six (6) W. P. A. buildings/structures were identified and documented.
6. Seventy-six (76) of the individual properties surveyed were residential (single and multiple dwellings), the leading kind of property in the four towns.
7. The second most numerous kind of property was commercial with twenty-one (21).

8. Additional kinds of properties represented in the four towns included health care (7), educational (6), government (5), recreation (5), religious (4), transportation (3), and social (2).
9. Residential areas in the four study towns are characterized by an exceptional variety in architecture including both vernacular and high styles. Among these are National Folk (Pyramidal, Hall-and-Parlor, Front-Gabled, Shotgun, and I-House), Bungalow/Craftsman (airplane and classic), Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, Romanesque, Ranch, Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, French Eclectic, Late Gothic Revival, Prairie School, Art Deco, and Tudor Revival. Two general architectural movements, however, appear to dominate the vocabulary of the houses surveyed: Victorian (1860-1900) and Eclectic (1880-1940).
10. Commercial areas in the four study towns are characterized by one to three story buildings, primarily of the Commercial Style, although some examples of Classical Revival and Art Deco styles were found. The only commercial building to reach skyscraper proportions is the Calmez Hotel in Clinton, which is six stories. A vast majority have red brick wall cladding with a few stone buildings. Decorative elements are minimal, primarily at the upper levels.

Overall, the four towns possess numerous cultural resources that meet age eligibility requirements and retain some degree of architectural and/or historic significance. An intensive level survey is endorsed for portions of each of the study towns. Several individual properties and proposed districts that retain a high level of historic and architectural integrity deserve immediate attention and

early nomination to the National Register, whereas other individual properties and proposed districts are in need of rehabilitation.

In terms of individual properties, several are included on a proposed endangered historic properties list for the four towns. These are:

1. First National Bank (Clinton) is reported as the oldest commercial building [1903] in the town and is noted for its Classical Revival architecture. It needs immediate rehabilitation and occupancy.
2. Calmez Hotel (Clinton) is the tallest building in the four study towns with skyscraper proportions [six stories] and Sullivanesque treatment. It is in a deteriorated state and unoccupied.
3. Commercial Club Building (Elk City) is one of the oldest commercial buildings in the downtown area and is significant for its Tudor Revival architecture. It is vacant and needs immediate restoration.
4. Music Hospital (Elk City) is a 1920s Prairie School style health care building that has fallen into poor condition with a critical need for restoration.
5. Western Oklahoma Tuberculosis Sanitorium Buildings (Nurses Building and South Apartments) are in relatively good condition, but stand vacant and need maintenance.

This list is presented because during the study period one of Watonga's historic buildings (Masonic Grand Lodge Hall) was demolished.

Top priority for National Register nominations that could be included in existing Thematic Resources and Multiple Property Submissions are:

1. First Presbyterian Church (Watonga) is a well-preserved Carpenter Gothic religious building that could be included with the Territorial Era Carpenter Gothic Churches Thematic Resources (N. R. listed 1984).
2. The five W. P. A. buildings in the four study towns (Watonga High School and Watonga Recreation Center, Clinton Fire Station, and Elk City's Ackley Park Stadium) could be included in the W. P. A. Public Buildings Thematic Resources (N. R. listed 1988).
3. Elk City, Clinton, and Weatherford historic properties should be considered for the Route 66 and Associated Historic Resources Multiple Property Submission (N. R. listed 1995).

In terms of residential districts, it is suggested that the Elk City West End Residential District be given strongest consideration for an intensive level survey because of its high density of intact historic homes of exceptional architectural integrity and an estimated contributing resources rate of roughly 80 percent. It contains one N. R. listed home, two National Register eligible properties, and twelve residences that warrant further study.

Each town has preserved a myriad of cultural resources representing different time periods in its history from the Territorial Era to the post-World War II period. Moreover, these resources reflect different segments of its community ranging from residences and churches to commercial and industrial properties.

Therefore, community leaders and citizens of the towns should be encouraged to emphasize properties that are representative of these slices of time and serve as historic reminders of various aspects of their community's past. Finally, citizens interested in preservation should be encouraged to form preservation alliances, or as a committee within the local historical society, Chamber of Commerce, or other local organization; and to seek support and assistance from the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), a division of the Oklahoma Historical Society in Oklahoma City.

XIV. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

It has been a long held belief that a culture communicates its values through architecture. This has proven true for a wide variety of cultures over long periods of time, and this certainly holds true in the case of this reconnaissance level survey of the western Oklahoma communities of Clinton, Elk City, Watonga, and Weatherford.

In applying this principle one is typically able to ascertain what a culture considered to be of prime importance—what is considered worthy of investments of time, energy, money, materials, and spirit. By applying this approach to the study areas of this reconnaissance survey, we will identify how their built environments illustrate the history of these communities as well as offer architectural evaluations of the built environments found in the survey.

All four towns have their beginnings around the time of early statehood, and each community's existence was dependent on their connection to the railroad. The development of communities based on location and/or proximity to transportation systems has consistently been a common theme throughout human history. More specifically, railroad transportation has driven location and development patterns of many western towns. This can easily be seen in this study by observing the railroad's connection to the town's development. These towns have grown up around these connections. The downtowns are adjacent to the railroad stations, which became entrances to the towns, and the industrial activities which the railroads supported are located adjacent to these railroads. While many of the original industrial facilities (mills and grain elevators) of these communities are not remaining, there are a few examples of this influence, namely Elk City's brick freight depot in the 300 block of South Main and

the brick industrial building at 226-228 South Main. Both are buildings obviously shaped by their functional needs and have proximity to the railroad facilities. In addition, these structures, while rather modest, represent architectural designs which has been studied and intentionally composed, whether by an architect or local craftsman, and as such achieve a design quality that is much more appealing than would be typical in today's environment.

This strong connection to the railroad as arrival place is also evidenced by the passenger depots which still remain a part of the various downtowns. This is particularly true of Elk City's passenger depots located at both 422 South Main and in the 300 block of South Main. While the depot in the 300 block of South Main is a nice simple brick structure with contrasting stone detailing and a rear canopy, the MKT facility at 422 South Main is a more elaborate structure with energetic stone detailing and larger covered passenger areas with emphasis placed on its bracketing details.

As mentioned previously, the physical growth of downtown in relationship to this railroad access was characteristic of this type of community, and the downtowns of each of these communities are adjacent to their railroads. Because each of these communities was dependent on agriculture as their primary industry, we do not see elaborately developed downtowns. The downtowns exist primarily as a place for everyday business. There are no elaborate bank structures or major public facilities anchoring the downtowns, declaring their permanence with solid, formidable structures. The structures that do exist are typically modest one and two part commercial buildings which are typically executed in brick, with only a few adorned with any attempt at developing the brick detailing beyond the minimum level of design required for their utilitarian function.

While the above is certainly true of the overall impression of these communities, there are exceptions to this condition, particularly in the downtowns of Clinton and Elk City. There obviously were some creative craftsmen and designers in these communities, and this is evidenced by a few of their commercial structures and many of their residential structures.

The best examples of Clinton's commercial structures are located at 403 Frisco Avenue, a red brick corner building with refined brick detailing, and at 423 Frisco Avenue, another red brick corner building with clean simple lines in its brick detailing. The old bank building at 400 Frisco Avenue has an appealing, energetic character to its brick façade with wood detailing which attempts to simulate stone, but because of this wood detailing its presence is more playful than permanent or classical, and its state of repair is such that it does not present itself as well as the previous two examples. Each of the structures mentioned above are corner structures, illustrating another typical development characteristic of siting the most prominent buildings at the corners of the block, thus encouraging infill of the remainder of the block over time. The most dominating structure in downtown Clinton is the Calmez Hotel, which greeted visitors to the city with both its sheer physical size (rising up six stories tall) and the most elaborate architectural detailing within the downtown area. This building has a frame structure which is sheathed in brick and stone, with a large percentage of its façade being windows. This glazing characteristic suggests it was influenced by the developments of the Chicago School, and the stone detailing, particularly at the top of the structure, appears to be influenced by Art Deco design. The combination of these characteristics

would have presented an up-to-date, albeit eclectic, presence to the visitors of Clinton which would suggest that they were a growing, progressive community.

The best historical examples from the downtown core of Elk City are typically less significant than those of Clinton, and typically in a poorer state of repair. The building at 201 West Broadway is an interesting two-part commercial structure with the addition of a creative turret at the corner of its upper level (there may have been a creative craftsman who influenced this decision, for there are several examples of this turret approach present in the residential architecture of Elk City as well). The mid-block two-part commercial building located at 108-110 South Main Street has had its brick painted several times, yet its cornice development appears to have good proportions. The one-part commercial building at 200 South Main Street has a Spanish Colonial character to its façade, and there is a modest Art Deco-influenced theater located at 220 South Main Street which has simple stone detailing. While the design of this Art Deco structure has clean simple lines, it certainly falls short of the design energy present in similar theaters located in other Oklahoma communities.

The former German National Bank, located in downtown Weatherford, comes closest of all buildings in this study to creating that sense of permanence that is typical of bank facilities in the early Oklahoma towns. Its one story Greek Revival stone façade remains as a reminder of previous times. Unfortunately, it is currently sandwiched amidst a streetscape of mediocre brick two-part commercial facades and houses an unsympathetically designed commercial establishment.

The best architectural design in downtown Watonga occurs in its governmental structures. The Post Office, located at 121 North Noble Avenue, is a modest Federalist

brick structure with a celebrated entry area. The town meeting hall (actually a Masonic structure) is one of the larger buildings in the town. It achieves prominence more by its size and siting than through its modest brick architectural detailing. Watonga's City Hall is a rather bland two story brick structure which projects a character more reminiscent of an educational facility than a home for city government. The most dominating structure in downtown Watonga is the Blaine County Courthouse. This building is a Beaux Arts-influenced design with a symmetrical façade and centralized dome. Its detailing and materials are modest, and its entry axis is emphasized by a series of arched windows, Greek Revival entry portico, and semi-grand staircase. It has a one story tall stone base and is pulled back from the street, thus facilitating a park-like setting as a foreground for this four story structure.

As stated previously, these communities were dominated by agricultural industries, and as such they were communities which were humble, stable communities which were grounded in the basic fundamentals of life. Their built environment communicates this to us not only through their business and government-related buildings, but also through their educational and religious structures. Each of the communities has examples which convey the importance which they placed on these aspects of their lives.

Watonga's First Presbyterian Church (300 North Weigle Avenue), a wonderfully simple wood-framed building with Queen Anne and Shingle style influences, sports a bell tower at its entry which suggests a spirit that reaches out to the community. First Baptist Church, located at 301 North Noble Avenue, is a buff brick, Romanesque-

influenced design that presents a more formidable building to the community of Watonga.

Clinton's First Presbyterian Church is a dominating Gothic Revival building which utilizes stone and brick detailing in combination with extensive stained glass and grand entry staircase to create a strong presence along the street. Similarly, Trinity Lutheran Church has similar characteristics and a similar result on its corner site. The Clinton Middle School is an excellent example of the controlled use of the Art Deco style on an educational facility, particularly on the portions of its massing that is two stories tall.

Curiously, there were no religious structures that stood out in the survey area of either Elk City or Weatherford, but there were some very good educational examples. In Elk City, Longfellow Elementary School is a very well designed brick and stone Tudor Revival building which this survey identifies as being eligible for the National Register. Their Carnegie Library is a spirited Spanish Colonial Revival design which is executed in brick and stone and has been maintained very well. Finally, Elk City's Ackley Park Stadium, while not an educational facility, is a native stone WPA facility which is impressive more because of its size than its architectural character. This facility indicates that this community placed importance on its recreational activities.

Weatherford's educational emphasis is best seen in its concentration of university facilities which are located on the campus of Southwestern Oklahoma State University. The Art Deco Administrative Building and Art Building of this campus are particularly noteworthy. They are constructed primarily of brick with stone detailing. The Art Building in particular has a very strong stone entry element and building cornice. The

original President's residence, currently used for administrative functions, is a more modest brick structure with Prairie School style characteristics in its detailing and window placement. Clearly, the University has played a major role in creating a focus and image for the community. As such, it indicates the value the community places on these elements of their lives.

While all of the aforementioned public buildings certainly contribute to our understanding of the values of these communities, the residential properties of this study are the properties that most clearly communicate the spirit and character of the people. While most of the public buildings have been either utilitarian and/or modest, the residential properties are where we see a great degree of diversity and personality coming forth.

The best residential architecture of Watonga is typically modest in size, has been well maintained, suggests a sense of permanence in its use of materials (primarily brick), and maintains a fairly high standard of design quality which was probably a result of craftsmen's use of pattern books rather than custom architectural design. The best examples are found in the Tudor Revival structures at 615 and 815 North Prouty Avenue, the Queen Anne-influenced brick structure at 603 North Prouty Avenue, the energetic horizontal lines of the Prairie School style residence at 703 North Prouty Avenue, and the eclectic mix of Classical Revival and Prairie School style features of 521 North Noble Avenue. In addition, the native stone Bungalow style residence at 1101 North Noble Avenue is very interesting, as is the turreted wood-frame Queen Anne residence at 521 North Prouty Avenue.

The residential properties within the study area of Weatherford do not have as great a sense of permanence nor do they have as high a quality of architectural design as those of Watonga's study area, but they still convey a spirit that is quite interesting. The best examples of this are the Queen Anne residences of 624 North State Street and 611 North Custer Street, with their elaborate details and spires, the Craftsman style features of 701 East Arapaho and 504 North Custer Street, and the Tudor Revival residences at 521 North Caddo Street and 715 North Sixth Street. The stucco Mission style residences at 223 West Tom Stafford Avenue and 509 North Caddo Street are visually interesting but rather unsophisticated, as are the Shotgun residences of 313 and 319 North Kansas Street.

Clinton's residential architecture (within the study areas) reflects a step up in architectural sophistication from that of either Watonga or Weatherford. It is larger in scale as well as more attentive to its architectural details. There is also a much more extensive grouping of quality residential architecture in this community. A large percentage of the properties fall into the Classical Revival style, being constructed primarily of brick and featuring some classical details, either in the form of entry elements, window openings and/or roof configurations. Examples of this type of construction are 340 South Thirteenth Street, 422 Terrace Avenue, 511 and 516 South Ninth Street, the gambrel roofed house at 325 South Ninth Street, and 418 South Tenth Street, with its spirited entry arch. There are also some very interesting Craftsman style bungalows such as those at 316 South Ninth Street, 430 South Tenth Street, and 500 South Eighth Street. Quality examples of brick Tudor Revival designs are found at 400 South Eighth Street as well as 400 and 404 South Fourteenth Street. Finally, the Prairie

School style is represented by 410 South Tenth Street while the Queen Anne style influenced the design of 416 South Thirteenth Street.

Elk City's residential architecture as represented by its study area is a wonderfully spirited concentration of properties which suggest that both the craftsmen and the owners had/have great pride and creativity. This delightful residential area is still organized by a brick street pattern, and the properties generally are sited in a stately manner with large lawns and carefully manicured landscaping. The area is anchored by numerous Tudor Revival structures, namely 801 West Broadway Avenue, with its energetic stone details complimenting its rich dark brick, 613 West Fifth Street, 522 West Sixth Street, 622 West Third Street (which has been transformed into a business), 908 West Third Street, 1000 West Third Street, 703 West Broadway Avenue, and 814 West Broadway Avenue. In addition to the concentration of Tudor Revival structures, there are also several Prairie School style residences. The most elaborate of these is the residence at 521 West Broadway, which has an energetic organization of horizontal lines. Additional examples of Prairie School style structures can be found at 1006 West Broadway Avenue and 610 West Third Street (which has also been transformed into a business). There are a few other styles mixed throughout the neighborhood, namely the Spanish Colonial residences at 1221 West Broadway Avenue and 721 West Broadway Avenue as well as 602 West Broadway Avenue, a Colonial Revival design. While these wonderful structures do create a rich neighborhood mixture, the neighborhood character would not be complete without the infusion of its very creative, turreted Queen Anne designs at 901 West Broadway Avenue, 522 West Broadway Avenue, and 821 West Fifth Street.

Perhaps more than in any survey that I have reviewed to date, the difference in quality between this survey's residential and public properties stands out as a unique condition. These agricultural communities, while providing the basic elements of survival and a sense of community in an above average way, have also risen to a much higher level of quality in their residential architecture. In addition, there seems to be less emphasis on commercial and financial institutions in comparison to many similar Oklahoma towns. And finally, while there were religious structures represented in the survey area for some of the communities, these facilities seemed to take a less prominent role in these communities than in other similar Oklahoma communities. The combination of these factors makes for an intriguing survey, and it is for these reasons that I concur with all the survey's recommendations regarding further study.