

**RECONNAISSANCE LEVEL SURVEY  
OF A PORTION OF  
CENTRAL OKLAHOMA CITY**

**Submitted to:**

**City of Oklahoma City  
Neighborhood and Community Planning Department**

**Submitted by:**

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**September 30, 1992**

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## ABSTRACT OF REPORT

This is a report on a reconnaissance level historical resource survey on the central portion of Oklahoma City. This survey is being conducted under a contract with the City of Oklahoma City. The survey area encompasses the portion of the city which is defined by a boundary starting at the intersection of N.W. 30th and Lincoln Boulevard, proceeding south on Lincoln Boulevard/Byers Avenue to S.W. 29th, proceeding west on S.W. 29th to Pennsylvania Avenue, proceeding north on Pennsylvania Avenue to N.W. 23rd, proceeding east on N.W. 23rd to Western Avenue, proceeding north on Western to N.W. 30th, and proceeding east on N.W./N.E. 30th to Lincoln/Byers. (Refer to Map 1)

Robison Boeck Architects performed the survey under a contract with the City of Oklahoma City to: 1) identify, minimally record, and photograph properties which are potentially eligible or which warrant further study for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places; 2) document representative property types (including intrusions) in areas recommended for intensive-level survey and representative properties of areas considered to be potential National Register Districts; 3) provide representative streetscape photographs of areas recommended for intensive-level surveys and areas considered to be potential National Register Districts; and 4) provide streetscape photographs of areas deemed to warrant no further study in order to exclude them from consideration to the National Register of Historic Places.

The total area covered by the survey is approximately 11 square miles. Seven (7) potential historic districts were identified. Four (4) previously identified potential historic districts had modifications to their boundaries proposed. Eighteen (18) additional previously identified potentially eligible districts are within the project area boundaries. Each of these districts was judged by the researchers to possess sufficient architectural integrity to warrant intensive survey. Of these eighteen districts, four (4) were not documented because they were the subjects of intensive survey by either the City of Oklahoma City or the State Historic Preservation Office concurrent with this study. Eight (8) were not documented as they were the subject of a recent thematic survey for industrial properties. Each of these districts, however, was visually inspected by the researchers so that an evaluation could be made on their architectural integrity and concurrence could be established with past evaluations. Three (3) areas were identified which warrant further study.

A total of 241 properties were minimally documented in this report, of which thirty-three (33) warrant further study as potential nominees for the National Register of Historic Places and fifty-one (51) were assessed as being eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Seventy-nine documented properties contributed to the various identified potential districts and eight properties did not contribute. Photographs of streetscapes, which documented the recommendations of the survey, were provided.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This project fulfills the following objectives:

1. Identify individual properties and potential districts which, on the basis of age (over 40 years old) and integrity, warrant further study to determine eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and to substantiate such assessments;
2. To record, photograph, and identify those individual properties in the project area which, on the basis of age and integrity warrant further study to determine eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and to substantiate such assessments;
3. To identify and characterize those portions of the project area which, on the basis of insufficient age or integrity do not warrant further study to exclude them from consideration for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places;
4. To identify and annotate all reference material necessary for completing National Register nominations of properties and districts, located in the study areas that are determined to warrant further study.

## INTRODUCTION

Oklahoma is a young state, and Oklahoma City is a young community. Even so, the northern portion of the study area is the most historic place in Oklahoma City. It includes the city's first commercial centers, the surviving artifacts of its initial systems of transportation, the homes of the first generation of the city's business leaders, the first middle class suburbs, and the homes of the poor and the working class who physically constructed the pioneer city. Archival records and physical artifacts show how a variety of cultures and a broad range of business, recreational, educational and political institutions developed in the center of Oklahoma City. More often than not, all of these different types of Oklahoma City residents and institutions were within close proximity of each other within the area. Over the decades as the city grew geographically, however, these former neighbors were dispersed to separate locations.

The central portion of Oklahoma City is now the modern Central Business District. In the late 1890s, this area encompassed nearly the totality of Oklahoma City, and included both of its varied residential and business communities. (South Oklahoma City was a separate political entity.) Early in the twentieth century, this area became the location for commerce, transportation, and food and light industrial production. As the city became a hub for transportation, manufacturing and warehousing, such enterprises expanded to the east, south and west, between the paths of the railroads and the meanderings of the North Canadian River.

The northeastern, central, and southern sections of the study area thus attracted working class and poor residents. They sought to live within close walking distances of their places of employment. Moreover, the proximity to the railroads, industry, and a river which flooded frequently reduced the cost of living in these areas.

During the first years of the Twentieth Century, the city's pioneer phase came to a close and the specialization which characterized modern America became apparent. Retail commerce, as exemplified by "Automobile Alley," which was the automobile retail center on North Broadway, tended to grow to the north. Residential growth, stimulated by the expansion of the streetcar system, leapfrogged the retail center and expanded past 13th Street.

During the second and third decades of the century, the northern portions of the study area were devoted to more affluent residential homes. The oldest residential development grew to the northeast, towards the state capitol, which marks the northeast border of the study area. The north-central portion became the area now known as Heritage Hills. Middle class housing followed the streetcar lines to the northwest.

The southern portion of the study area has a distinctive history and ambiance. Citizens of the southern area have traditionally believed that they were somewhat peripheral to

the mainstream of Oklahoma City. The physical character of the area largely confirms their beliefs.

The distinctive culture of the southern area is more rural and more industrial than the northern portion. Historically, most of the area was characterized by low population density, despite the existence of a major low cost housing development. Moreover, the major employers in the general area were industries, such as the meat packing industry and oil production, that are typically linked with rural economies. Also, the area had a distinctive political history which reinforced the more rural culture.

As a result of these historical trends, distinctive districts emerged in the study area. A number of these architectural and cultural areas have been previously identified as National Register districts, or as potential National Register districts.

**National Register Districts** in the study area are Heritage Hills, the Maney Historic District, Mesta Park, and the Spanish Village (The Paseo.)

**Previously identified potential districts** which are potentially eligible districts are East Heritage Hills, Classen's North Highland Parked, Gatewood, Jefferson Park, Carey Place, Paseo Neighborhood, the Classen Ten Penn neighborhood, and the Main Street Commercial District.

**Previously identified potential industrial districts** are Bricktown, Rock Island, North Santa Fe, Hudson-Harvey, N.E. Second Street, the West Main Industrial District, Automobile Alley, Oilfield Row, South Walker Industrial District, and the S.W. Third Street Industrial District.

The entire project area was divided into seven (7) study units, and each study unit was researched. (Refer to Map 2) Within these seven study units, seven new potential historic districts were documented and delineated that "represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction," or "a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development." Moreover, these areas "possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association." These are justifications for warranting an intensive-level survey of a potential historic district. These potential districts are:

1. **Willard-Colcord Historic District:** A primarily residential area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of N.W. 3rd and Klein, proceeding south to N.W. 1st and Klein, proceeding west on N.W. 1st to Virginia, proceeding north on Virginia to N.W. 4th, proceeding east on N.W. 4th to Blackwelder, proceeding south on Blackwelder to N.W. 3rd, and proceeding east on N.W. 3rd to the intersection of N.W. 3rd and Klein.

2. **Metro Park Historic District:** A primarily residential area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of N.W. 10th and Western, proceeding south to Linwood Boulevard and Western, proceeding west on Linwood Boulevard to Brauer, proceeding north on Brauer to N.W. 7th, proceeding west on N.W. 7th to Virginia, proceeding north on Virginia to N.W. 10th, and proceeding east on N.W. 10th to the intersection of N.W. 10th and Western.
3. **Civic Center Historic District:** An area primarily composed of municipal government Art Deco buildings, with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of Harvey and Dean A. McGee, proceeding south on Harvey to Park Avenue, proceeding west on Park to Hudson Avenue, proceeding south on Hudson to Colcord, proceeding west on Colcord to Lee Avenue, proceeding north on Lee to Robert S. Kerr, proceeding east on Robert S. Kerr to Walker Avenue, proceeding north on Walker Avenue to Dean A. McGee, and proceeding east on Dean A. McGee to the intersection of Dean A. McGee and Harvey.
4. **Film Exchange Historic District:** An area primarily composed of smaller Art Deco buildings used, historically, for motion picture film distribution. This area is defined by starting at the intersection of Hudson and Colcord, proceeding south on Hudson to Sheridan, proceeding west on Sheridan to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to Main, proceeding east on Main to Lee, proceeding north on Lee to Colcord, and proceeding east on Colcord to the intersection of Colcord and Hudson.
5. **Farmers Market Historic District:** A primarily commercial area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of Reno and Exchange Avenues, proceeding southwest on Exchange to Noble, proceeding west on Noble to Ellison, proceeding north on Ellison to Reno, and proceeding east on Reno to the intersection of Reno and Exchange.
6. **Exchange Avenue Historic District:** An area primarily composed of industrial and residential buildings, with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of Exchange and Indiana, proceeding southeast on Indiana to Birch, proceeding southwest on Birch to Dougherty, proceeding northwest on Dougherty to Exchange, proceeding southwest on Exchange to Pennsylvania, proceeding north on Pennsylvania to N.W. 10th, proceeding east on N.W. 10th to Kentucky, proceeding south on Kentucky to Exchange, and proceeding northeast on Exchange to the intersection of Exchange and Indiana.



7. **Will Rogers Courts Historic District:** An area composed of a large, Moderne, WPA housing projects community building and other related buildings. This area is defined by starting at the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Heyman, proceeding northeast on Heyman to South Indiana, proceeding south on Indiana to Southwest 15th Street, proceeding west on Southwest 15th Street to Rotary Drive, proceeding southwest on Rotary Drive to the intersection of Rotary Drive and Westwood, proceeding north on Westwood Boulevard to the intersection of Westwood and Heyman. This district includes all those buildings historically associated with the Will Rogers Courts on both sides of Heyman and Indiana.

Four (4) potential historic districts were previously identified within the project study area in the 1982 study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. These areas still appear to meet the criteria for district status, however, modifications to the boundaries of these districts are proposed. These potential districts are:

1. **Riverside Historic District:** A primarily residential area with commercial and industrial buildings. Boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 3rd and Walker, proceeding south to S.W. 8th and Walker, proceeding east on N.W. 8th to Robinson, proceeding south on Robinson to S.W. 12th, proceeding west on S.W. 12th to Walker, proceeding north on Walker to S.W. 11th, proceeding west on S.W. 11th to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to S.W. 3rd, and proceeding east on S.W. 3rd to the intersection of S.W. 3rd and Walker.
2. **Capitol Hill Historic District:** A primarily residential district with a historically significant commercial area along S.W. 25th. Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 22nd and Shields, proceeding southeast on Shields to S.W. 29th, proceeding west on S.W. 29th to Western, proceeding north on Western to S.W. 28th, proceeding east on S.W. 28th to Olie, proceeding north on Olie to S.W. 27th, proceeding west on S.W. 27th to Western, proceeding north on Western to S.W. 24th, proceeding east on S.W. 24th to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to S.W. 23rd, proceeding east on S.W. 23rd to Walker, proceeding north on Walker to S.W. 21st, proceeding east on S.W. 21st to halfway between Robinson and Broadway, proceeding south from that point two blocks to S.W. 22nd, and proceeding east on S.W. 22nd to the intersection of S.W. 22nd and Shields Boulevard.
3. **Shidler-Wheeler #1 Historic District:** A primarily residential area, with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 11th and Laird, proceeding south on Laird to S.W. 15th, proceeding west on S.W. 15th to Byers, proceeding north on Byers to S.W. 11th, and proceeding east on S.W. 11th to the intersection of S.W. 11th and Laird.

4. **Shidler-Wheeler #2 Historic District:** A primarily residential area, with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 19th and Byers, proceeding south on Byers to S.W. 23rd, proceeding west on S.W. 23rd to Central, proceeding north on Central to S.W. 19th, and proceeding east on S.W. 19th to the intersection of S.W. 19th and Byers.

Although Shidler-Wheeler #1 is adjacent to the project study area, it was documented in this survey to provide continuity between the 1982 survey and this survey.

Three (3) more areas were documented and delineated that warrant further study:

1. **The 1400 block of S. Blackwelder Avenue,** which retains a concentration of Shotgun and Folk Victorian houses, and
2. **An area bounded by Sheridan, N.W. 13th, Shartel and Santa Fe** which does not exhibit the criteria necessary to be defined as a district but does contain a substantial number of buildings which may be individually eligible.
3. **An area bounded by S.W. 23rd, McKinley, S.W. 25th, and Indiana.** This area warrants further study as post-war housing.

The architectural researcher also studied areas which have been previously identified as potential historic districts. These areas include Classen's North Highland Parked, Gatewood, Carey Place, East Heritage Hills, Northeast Second Street, Heritage Hills East, the Main Street Commercial District, the North Santa Fe Industrial District, Automobile Alley, the Hudson-Harvey Industrial District, the West Main Street Industrial District, the western portion of the Oilfield Row Industrial District, the Rock Island Industrial District, the South Walker Industrial District, the S.W. Third Industrial District, and the Bricktown Warehouse District. In each case, the architectural researcher concurred that these areas are potential districts which merit further study.

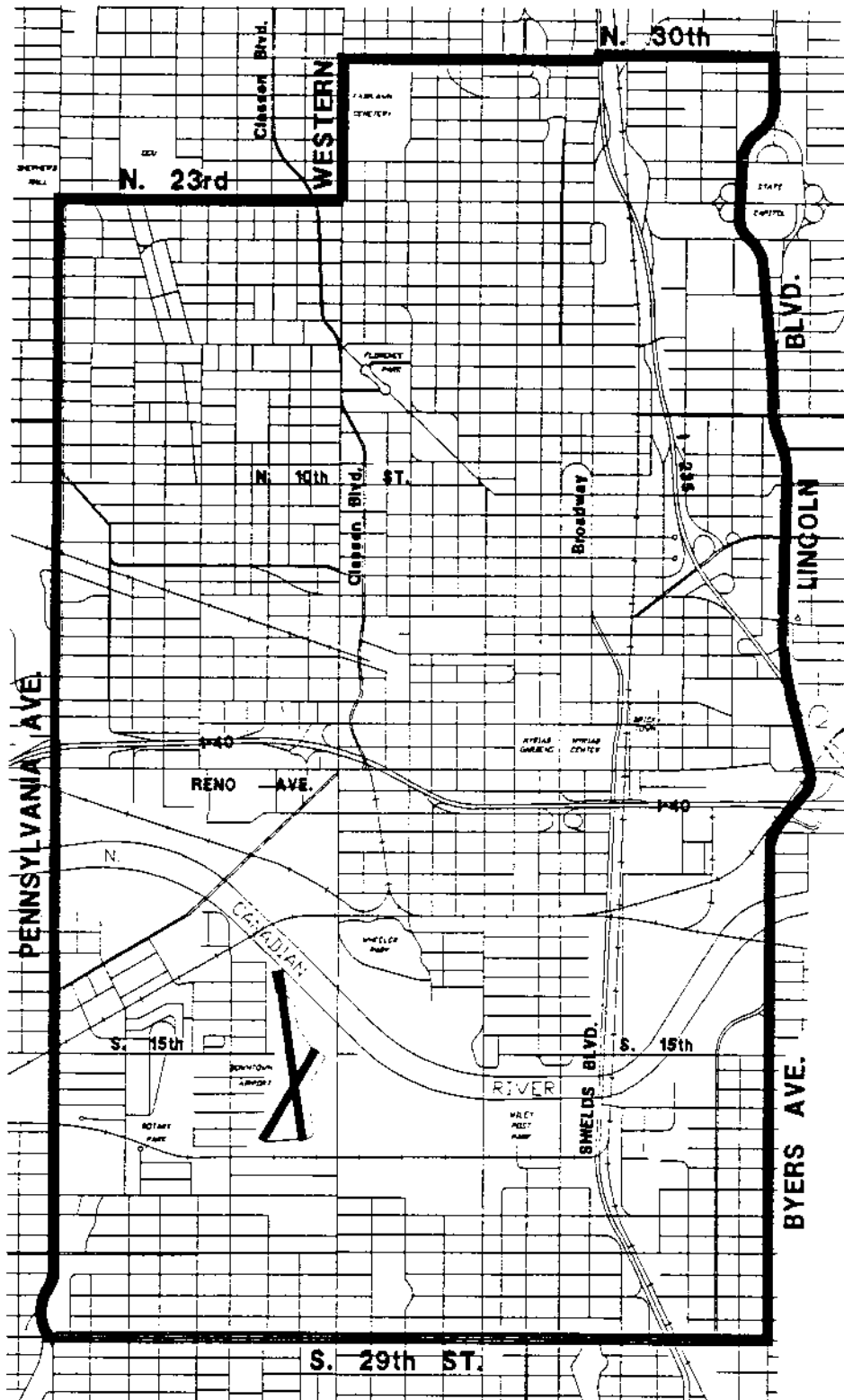
Classen Ten Penn, Jefferson Park, the Paseo Neighborhood, and the N.W. Second Street Historic District were intensively surveyed concurrent with this reconnaissance survey. Thus, they were not included in the reconnaissance survey documentation.

The four National Register districts in the reconnaissance survey area were also not included in the survey documentation.

## **SURVEY AREA**

The survey area encompasses the portion of the city which is defined a boundary starting at the intersection of N.W. 30th and Lincoln Boulevard, proceeding south on Lincoln Boulevard/Byers Avenue to S.W. 29th, proceeding west on S.W. 29th to Pennsylvania Avenue, proceeding north on Pennsylvania Avenue to N.W. 23rd, proceeding east on N.W. 23rd to Western Avenue, proceeding north on Western to N.W. 30th, and proceeding east on N.W. 30th to Lincoln/Byers. (Refer to Map 1)

# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



MAP 1 SURVEY AREA

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The project study area was subdivided into seven (7) study units. (Refer to Map 2.) The boundaries of the study units are as follows:

**Study Unit One:** bounded by N.W. 23rd Street, Western, Reno Avenue, and Pennsylvania Avenue;

**Study Unit Two:** bounded by N.W. 30th Street, Broadway, Reno Avenue, and Classen Boulevard;

**Study Unit Three:** bounded by N.E. 13th Street, Lincoln/Byers, Reno Avenue, and Broadway;

**Study Unit Four:** bounded by N.E. 30th Street, Lincoln Boulevard, N.E. 13th Street, and Broadway;

**Study Unit Five:** bounded by Reno Avenue, Shartel Avenue, S.W. 29th Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue;

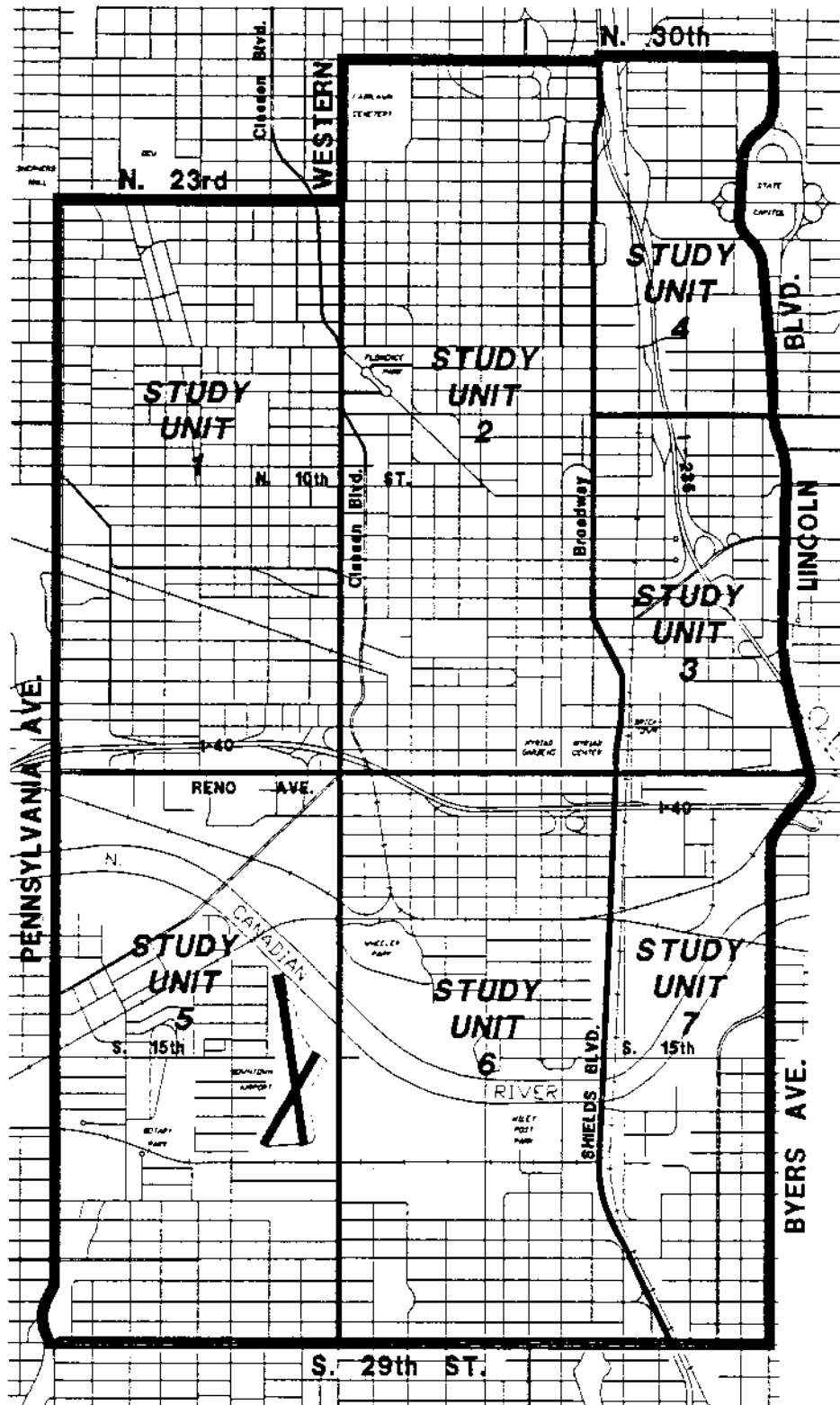
**Study Unit Six:** bounded by Reno Avenue, Shields Boulevard, S.W. 29th Street, and Shartel; and

**Study Unit Seven:** bounded by Reno, Byers Avenue, S.W. 29th Street, and Shields Boulevard.

The initial phase of the research centered on a historic context of the urban development of Oklahoma City, focusing on the social, economic, political, intellectual and cultural history of the study area. Special attention was paid to historical developments of national interest and influence, and the material lives of the residents of the area, as well as trends which contributed to the distinct culture of central Oklahoma. Historical research involved archival study, oral history, and physically walking the district in an effort to reconstruct the way that residents lived their daily lives. Themes included settlement, transportation, ethnic heritage, industry, energy, urban development, and depression and recovery.

The themes explored were determined by the history of areas which were not National Register districts or areas being intensively surveyed. Consequently, the history of districts such as Heritage Hills received less emphasis than the developments which reveal the cultural essence of those portions of the project area which have not yet been thoroughly documented. The historical research sought to be precise in outlining events which occurred within the boundaries of the study units, as opposed to events which occurred in close proximity and which informed the units' social character.

# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



MAP 2 STUDY UNITS

The second phase was an architectural survey of the area to determine whether various subareas or study units retained integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The architectural survey considered the results of the historical research in order to reconstruct the age, function, and importance of properties, as well as the way that different ethnic groups interpret the cultural meanings of properties in the study units.

Study units that were primarily residential were analyzed for patterns of commerce, recreation, and intellectual and artistic expression, as well as architectural integrity and cohesion. Business areas which once were organized around a definable economic sector, but which had lost their distinctive role in commerce, were recognized if they retained sufficient architectural integrity and cohesion to convey their historical significance. For instance, the Film Exchange District was characterized by Art Deco commercial buildings. It had once performed a distinctive economic role in processing and distributing film for motion picture theaters. With the decline of that industry, the area became more diverse economically, but its buildings survived and maintained this potential district's integrity and cohesion to convey its historical significance.

Two types of photographs were taken in each study unit, streetscapes and photographs of individual properties. Streetscapes were documented in order to communicate the "feel" of study units by documenting the survival or the lack of buildings, trees, and gardens. Coherent streetscapes were looked for to help identify potential historic districts. These images help to convey a sense of time and place as well as the patterns of life and the images which were associated with the study units. Moreover, streetscapes portray some of the character of the methods of transportation which formed these areas. Photographs of individual properties which exemplify the character of the study units, as well as intrusions which undermine a person's ability to appreciate an area as a cultural and/or architectural whole were taken to provide a more detailed view of the architectural integrity of each study unit.

The architectural researcher then documented the history of individual properties, in order to determine the age, past uses, current uses, styles, materials, and overall character of individual properties. Properties of integrity and intrusions were recorded minimally. Properties that warranted further study or which were considered to be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places were minimally recorded.

Also, the architectural researcher delineated areas which warranted intensive study. In addition to the informed judgment of the architectural researcher, an analysis of aerial photographs and the patterns of similar properties informed this determination. Whenever there was uncertainty about whether the integrity and cohesion of a study unit had been retained, the "benefit of the doubt" was given to the judgment that the area merited further study.

The architectural researcher reviewed areas which have been identified by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and by previous surveys as potential historic districts. In each case the recommendations of the SHPO and of previous surveys were confirmed, however, boundary modifications are proposed for four potential districts previously outlined in the 1982 study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated.

Finally, the relationships between study units and individual properties which warrant further study, National Register Districts and previously identified potential historic districts are noteworthy. For instance, Northeast Second Street is spatially related to Bricktown and various industrial districts and, thus, plays a role in maintaining the area's individual character and architectural integrity. The important spatial relationships between the study units, and districts that have already been recognized as National Register Districts and potential historic districts, enhance the character and integrity of Oklahoma City.



## RESULTS

### Study Unit One

#### **Boundaries:**

Study Unit One is bounded by N.W. 23rd Street, Western, Reno Avenue, and Pennsylvania Avenue. The study unit is a mixed industrial, commercial and residential area.

#### **Listed and Proposed Districts:**

##### National Register Districts

No National Register districts are in Study Unit One.

##### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

The following potential districts were identified in this survey:

1. Metro Park Historic District
2. Willard-Colcord Historic District

##### Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

The following districts were proposed by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Gatewood
2. Carey Place
3. Main Street Commercial District

### Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County Survey

The following districts were proposed by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Rock Island Railroad Industrial District
2. West Main Street Industrial District

### Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated

The following districts were proposed by the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Classen Ten Penn

### Areas Warranting Further Study to Determine Eligibility

No areas in Study Unit One warrant further study to determine eligibility.

## District Descriptions

1. **Willard-Colcord Historic District:** A primarily residential area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of N.W. 3rd and Klein, proceeding south to N.W. 1st and Klein, proceeding west on N.W. 1st to Virginia, proceeding north on Virginia to N.W. 4th, proceeding east on N.W. 4th to Blackwelder, proceeding south on Blackwelder to N.W. 3rd, and proceeding east on N.W. 3rd to the intersection of N.W. 3rd and Klein. Willard-Colcord is a working-class neighborhood lying between the Rock Island Railroad Industrial District to the north and the West Main Street Industrial District to the south. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Please Note: There may be a justification for including the Rock Island and West Main Industrial Districts and the West Main Street Commercial District with Willard-Colcord as one large historic district.
2. **Metro Park Historic District:** A primarily residential area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of N.W. 10th and Western, proceeding south to Linwood Boulevard and Western, proceeding west on Linwood Boulevard to Brauer, proceeding north on Brauer to N.W. 7th, proceeding west on N.W. 7th to Virginia, proceeding north on Virginia to N.W. 10th, and proceeding east on N.W. 10th to the intersection of N.W. 10th and Western. Metro Park is a middle-class neighborhood to the north of the Rock Island Railroad Industrial District. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
3. **Gatewood Historic District:** A primarily residential district with boundaries of N.W. 23rd, Classen, N.W. 16th, and Pennsylvania. Commercial uses are concentrated on the Gatewood perimeter. Gatewood is a middle- and upper-class neighborhood composed primarily of substantial Tudor Revival, Craftsman, and bungalow residences. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

4. **Carey Place Historic District:** An approximately two-block-long residential district lying between N.W. 21st, Gatewood, N.W. 19th, and Indiana. Carey Place has a concentration of simple Tudor Revival and Late Gothic Revival residences which are all very similar. In addition, these buildings all have very shallow setbacks from the street, and the street is slightly off the dominant orthogonal street pattern of Oklahoma City, which produces a streetscape similar to an old European community. Carey Place fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
5. **Main Street Commercial Historic District:** A concentration of early commercial buildings in Oklahoma City's history. This district encompasses Main Street from Classen to Douglas. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
6. **Rock Island Railroad Industrial District:** A large industrial district along the Rock Island Railway bounded by N.W. 5th/6th, Douglas, N.W. 3rd/4th, and Pennsylvania. (Please refer to the Industrial Resources Survey of Oklahoma County for exact boundaries.) It includes many historic industrial buildings. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
7. **West Main Street Industrial District:** An industrial district bounded by Main Street, Blackwelder, Sheridan, and Kentucky. (Please refer to the Industrial Resources Survey of Oklahoma County for exact boundaries.) It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
8. **Classen Ten Penn:** A primarily residential neighborhood bounded by N.W. 16th, Classen, N.W. 10th, and Pennsylvania. Classen Ten Penn has commercial uses concentrated on its perimeter. Classen Ten Penn is composed primarily of bungalow and Tudor Revival residential buildings and a number of commercial buildings on its boundaries which possess architectural integrity. Classen Ten Penn was the subject of an intensive survey concurrent with this project.

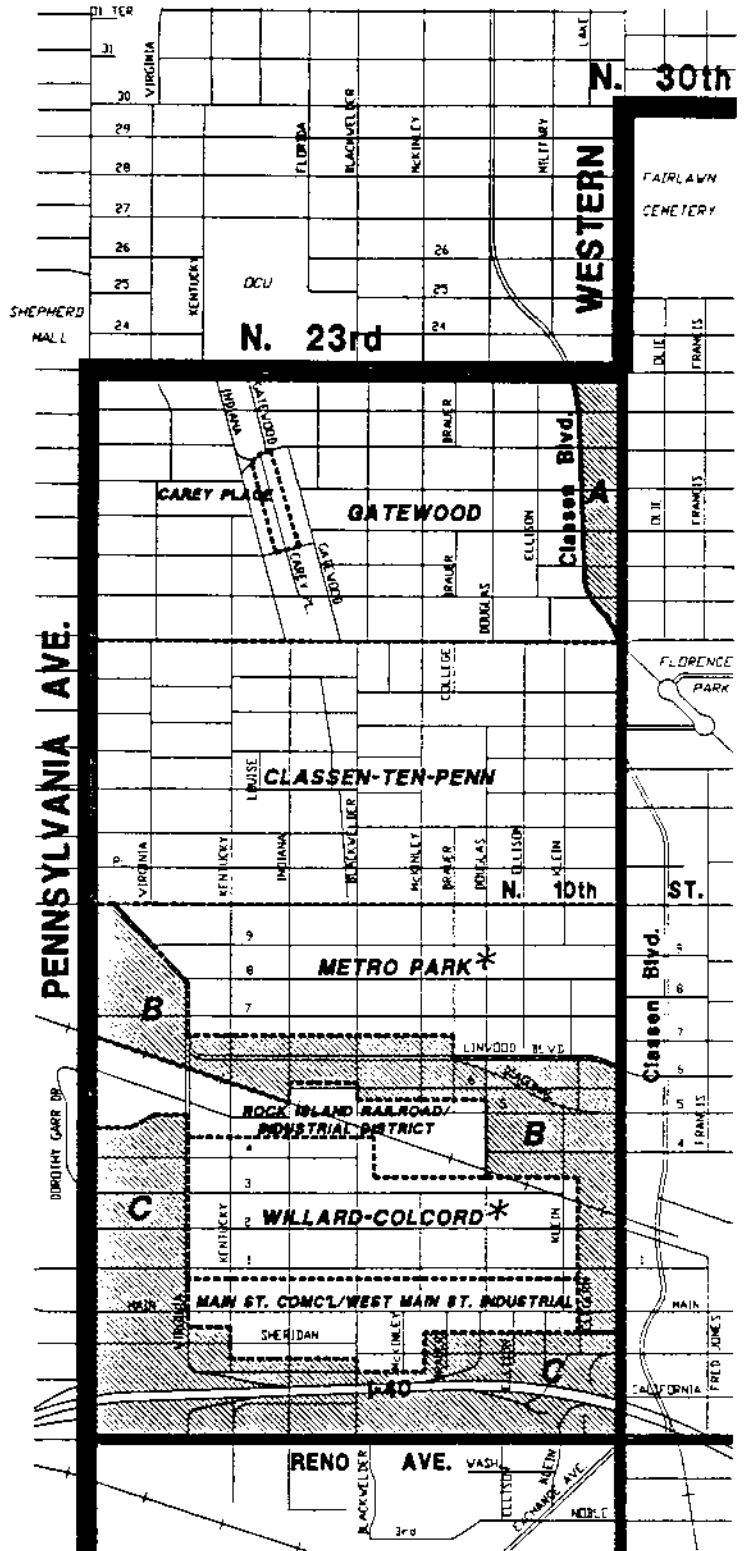
#### **Areas Which do not Warrant Further Study**

- A. An area roughly bounded by N.W. 23rd, Western, N.W. 16th, and Classen Boulevard. Most of the buildings within this area are contemporary (1960s) and it does not possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
- B. An irregularly shaped area between the Metro Park and Willard-Colcord Historic Districts, the Main Street Commercial District and the Rock Island Industrial







District. It is primarily commercial with residential buildings on the southeast portion. The boundaries are roughly defined by starting at the intersection of Linwood Boulevard and Western, proceeding south on Western to Main Street, proceeding west on Main to Klein, proceeding north on Klein to 3rd, proceeding west on 3rd to Douglas, proceeding north on Douglas to 5th, proceeding west on 5th to Blackwelder, proceeding north on Blackwelder to 6th, proceeding west on 6th to the Rock Island Railway, following the Rock Island Railway to Pennsylvania, proceeding north on Pennsylvania to Virginia, proceeding southeast on Virginia to Linwood, proceeding east on Linwood to Western, proceeding north on Western to N.W. 10th, and proceeding east on N.W. 10th to Western. This area does not possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

- C. An irregularly shaped area with primarily commercial and industrial uses and highway right-of-way. It is bounded by the proposed Willard-Colcord Historic District, the Main Street Commercial District, the Rock Island and West Main Industrial Districts and Reno Avenue. The boundaries are roughly defined by starting at the intersection of Main and Classen, proceeding south on Classen to Reno, proceeding west on Reno to Pennsylvania, proceeding north on Pennsylvania to N.W. 4th, proceeding east on N.W. 4th to Virginia, proceeding south on Virginia to Main, proceeding east on Main to Kentucky, proceeding south on Kentucky to Sheridan, proceeding west on Sheridan to McKinley, proceeding north on McKinley to Main, and proceeding east on Main to Classen. This area does not possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



## LEGEND

-  Survey Area
-  Study Unit
-  Identified Historic District
-  Area does not warrant further study
-  Area warrants further study
-  Identified by Recon Survey 1991-92



Prepared by: The City of Oklahoma City,  
Neighborhood & Community Planning Dept.

## STUDY UNIT 1

## Significant Buildings

### **Reconnaissance Survey of a Portion of Central Oklahoma City**

#### Individually Eligible:

1. Hellenic Orthodox Church, 1100 N.W. 8th.
2. Residence, 1218 N.W. 9th.
3. Second Presbyterian Church, 1529 N.W. 9th.
4. Whittier School, 1900 N.W. 10th.
5. Residence, 1301 N.W. 20th.
6. NuWay Laundry, 1104 Linwood Boulevard.
7. Roosevelt Jr. High, 900 N. Klein Avenue.

#### Warrants Further Study:

1. Robberson Steel Offices, 1401-1409 N.W. 3rd.
2. William Jennings Bryan School for Crippled Children, 1134 N.W. 8th.
3. Cleveland Apartments, 1741 N.W. 9th.
4. Reliable Van Warehouse, 15 S. Ellison Avenue.
6. Kings Package Ice Cream Parlor, 1411 Linwood Boulevard.

### **National Register Buildings**

1. Oklahoma City University, 2501 N. Blackwelder Avenue, 12/19/78.
2. Pilgrim Congregational Church, 1433 Classen Drive, 2/23/84.
3. Weather Service Building, 1923 Classen Boulevard, 7/12/78.

### **Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County**

1. A.C. Beeman Brass & Aluminum Foundry, 1737-1739 N.W. 3rd.
2. Agee Manufacturing Company, 1741 N.W. 3rd.
3. American Iron & Machine Works Company, 518 N. Indiana.
4. Arrow Bag Company, 1144 N.W. 4th.
5. Crawl Machine & Heat Treating Company II, 1632 N.W. 5th.
6. Crawl Machine & Heat Treating Company I, 1728 N.W. 5th.
7. Dimick Building, 1819 N.W. 5th.
8. Folding Carrier Corporation, 1300-1328 W. Main.
9. Governair Corporation, 513 N. Blackwelder.
10. Harter Marblecrete Stone Company, 1642 W. Main.
11. Industrial Machine Company, 1546 W. Reno.

12. Kool Kooshion Manufacturing Company, 1738-42 N.W. 5th.
13. Letts Box and Body Company, 1500 W. Main.
14. Nance and Nelson Incorporated, 1349 W. Reno.
15. Oklahoma City Machine Works, 1637 W. Main.
16. Overhead Door Company of Oklahoma, 1830 N.W. 5th.
17. Southwest Machinery Company, 1900 Linwood.
18. Southwest Manufacturing Company, 1432 W. Main.
19. Southwestern Paint Company, 1628 N.W. 6th.
20. Speas Company, 1734 N.W. 6th.
21. Standard Paint Works, 1845 Linwood.
22. Tennison Brothers Sheet Metal, 1530 W. Main.
23. Walton Manufacturing, 1720 N.W. 5th.
24. Welded Products Company, 1700 N.W. 5th.
25. Williams Brothers Ice and Ice Cream Company, 1401 Linwood.
26. F.W. Witt Manufacturing Company, 1737-1739 N.W. 5th.

#### **WPA Survey**

1. Tolan Park Clubhouse, 200 N. Blackwelder Avenue.
2. Highly Park Fence, N.W. 8th and Virginia Avenue.
3. McKinley Park Bath Houses, N.W. 12th and McKinley Avenue.

#### **Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory**

1. Epworth University District, N.W. 23rd to N.W. 17th and Blackwelder Avenue to Classen Boulevard.
2. Stroud-Libke House, 1826 N.W. 11th.



## Historic Context

Within Study Unit One are eight potential districts. Three districts, Gatewood, Carey Place, and the Main Street Commercial District, were previously identified by the State Historic Preservation Office. Two industrial districts, the Rock Island Railroad District and the West Main Street District were identified by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey. One district, Classen Ten Penn, was identified by Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. Two districts were identified by this survey. They are the Willard Colcord historic district and the Metro Park historic district.

The **Willard-Colcord Historic District** is primarily a residential area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of N.W. 3rd and Klein, proceeding south to N.W. 1st and Klein, proceeding west on N.W. 1st to Virginia, proceeding north on Virginia to N.W. 4th, proceeding east on N.W. 4th to Blackwelder, proceeding south on Blackwelder to N.W. 3rd, and proceeding east on N.W. 3rd to the intersection of N.W. 3rd and Klein.

The **Metro Park Historic District** is primarily a residential area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of N.W. 10th and Western, proceeding south to Linwood Boulevard and Western, proceeding west on Linwood Boulevard to Brauer, proceeding north on Brauer to N.W. 7th, proceeding west on N.W. 7th to Virginia, proceeding north on Virginia to N.W. 10th, and proceeding east on N.W. 10th to the intersection of N.W. 10th and Western.

These two districts are a part of a study unit which is one of the most significant historical areas in Oklahoma City. The residents, workers, and businesses in this area literally built much of the city. The economic expansion which they helped to create, however, produced a geographical expansion of Oklahoma City and eventually undermined the fabric of the area.

Historians George Shirk and Howard Meredith identified three phases of growth in early Oklahoma City. First, during the pioneer phase of the 1880s, rapid economic growth was propelled by an initial building boom. Secondly, during the first decade of the 20th Century, Oklahoma City became a hub for four railways and, consequently, "this period witnessed a tremendous building phase as red brick construction crowded out the remaining frame buildings in the central business district." Moreover, the expansion of street car lines further stimulated residential growth. Thirdly, from 1909 to 1912, the two major packing houses were recruited to Oklahoma City, and the city "reached out to 23rd street to the north and Blackwelder on the west."<sup>1</sup>

The origins of these proposed districts lay in the second and third of these phases of growth. The railroads linked Oklahoma City to distant agricultural and urban markets,

and thus created an opportunity for industrial development. The location of the railroads was a primary influence in the location of businesses and industries which required rail transport. The presence of the railroads, as well as the growth of Packingtown, which was located a short distance to the southwest of the study unit, undermined the area's value for more affluent residential and retail purposes.<sup>2</sup> However, in adjacent areas working class housing was built for employees of those businesses and industries.

This area became a center for iron and steel fabrication. In 1909, J. B. Klein Iron and Foundry was established, and it became the focal point of a diverse working class community. In 1928, the firm was acquired by R. W. Robberson, a long-time employee of Klein Foundry. The steel fabrication company was renamed Robberson Steel, and it expanded into a 19 acre office and plant at 1401 N.W. 3rd Street.<sup>3</sup> During the 1920s, another iron and steel plant, as well as an aluminum and brass foundry, was established in the study unit.<sup>4</sup>

During their first decades, the Willard-Colcord and Metro Park proposed districts were typical of small town Oklahoma. The immediate neighborhood included everything required by a community. Groceries, ice, a laundry plant, recreational, and employment opportunities were within a short walk of residents. One block to the east of the area was the Oklahoma Railway streetcar "barn"; 55 union halls were within close proximity; the city's water plant was on the border of the neighborhood; and Holland Field, a Texas League baseball field, straddled its west boundary. The Progress Beer Brewery, now the Oklahoma League for the Blind, is located at N.W. 3rd Street and Douglas Avenue. The Hellenic Orthodox Church at 1100 N.W. 8th and the Second Presbyterian Church at 1529 N.W. 9th are still extant, although the first is vacant and the second is now used as a community outreach center.

The topography sloped gently upward from the North Canadian River on the south toward N.W. 10th. As in the early industrial United States, the homes of the more affluent were located at the top of the hill, while laborers lived closer to the industrial plants, the railroad, and the river.<sup>5</sup> One of the primary distinguishing features between the Willard-Colcord district and the Metro Park district are the more substantial residences, religious buildings, and school buildings of the latter, more northerly, neighborhood.

Especially before World War I, Willard-Colcord and Metro Park were culturally diverse neighborhoods. The majority of families came from the rural areas of Oklahoma and the Southwest, but an estimated 25 percent of the Klein Foundry's workers were immigrants from Czechoslovakia, Poland, Germany and other European nations.<sup>6</sup> Both the native Oklahomans and the immigrant workers brought a strong predilection toward progressive political thought, and the area became a center of socialist activity. In 1911, Oscar Ameringer, the Socialist Party candidate for mayor, outpolled two other candidates in this area and received approximately one third of the vote in the wards which included the study unit. (The exact boundaries of the city's election wards and precincts have

been lost.) Given the open-minded frontier environment of the young city, it is unlikely that the radicalism of the area's workers offended their more wealthy neighbors. Political and economic disputes could become intense, as occurred in the street car workers' strike of 1911 when one thousand businessmen picked up rifles to confront the labor action, but the full range of social and political world views were largely accepted in this neighborhood.<sup>7</sup>

The main exception to this pattern of tolerance was racial segregation, which was imposed after 1910. Officially, blacks were excluded from the residential area, even though an unknown number lived along the southeastern portion of the study area, around Clegern Street. Tolan Park, which is across the street from the south boundary of the study unit, was an all-black park.<sup>8</sup> Apparently, a disproportionate number of white residents did not approve of this racial segregation, because they tended to vote for vocal advocates of racial equality. (Exact vote totals of pivotal elections, such as the vote to disenfranchise black Oklahomans, also have been lost, but numerous scholars have confirmed a basic pattern which supports such a generalization.)

Moreover, Willard-Colcord and Metro Park were characterized by religious diversity. In 1920, within or in close proximity of these neighborhoods were: two Methodist and two Baptist churches; one Catholic, one Pentecostal Holiness, one Spiritualist and one Christian church; and two Evangelical churches.<sup>9</sup>

During periods of prosperity, such as the booms stimulated by World War I and World War II, and the take-off of the 1950s and 1960s, Robberson Steel expanded from the fabrication of ornamental steel to the production of the full range of structural steel. It supplied steel for Air Force construction projects in Alaska; bridges in Montana, Wyoming and New Mexico; and industrial buildings throughout Oklahoma. Some of the more unique local buildings and structures which used Robberson Steel were First National Bank, St. Luke's Methodist Church, the Oklahoma City University Gold Star Building, the Church of the Savior, Liberty Bank, and the Belle Isle overpass.<sup>10</sup>

Even during the Depression in the 1930s, the steel fabrication workers represented the second largest employment category in Oklahoma City. (The first was bakers.) In 1939, 249 workers, who were concentrated in this area, produced steel valued at \$2,910,296. They were paid an average of \$94 per month.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the wages paid by the steel fabrication industry, the neighborhood suffered disproportionately during the Depression. Mary Agnes Martineau's survey of the "Social Backgrounds of One Hundred and Fifty-Seven Children Given Free Lunches," published in 1936, determined that 76 percent of the families in the area earned less than \$100 per month. In an area which largely corresponds to the Willard-Colcord and Metro Park, 28 percent of the workers were classified as unskilled or common labors, 34.7 percent as skilled workers, 10 percent as unemployed, and 14.1 percent as business or professional workers. Sixty-nine percent of families shared their living space with one

to three other families, and researches reported that, "there is evidence here of a large amount of crowding in houses which are neither duplexes or apartment houses." The survey determined that 21.4 percent of the housing in the area was good, 46 percent was fair, 15.7 percent was poor, and 16.7 percent was terrible. The median value of a house and its property was less than \$2,000. Although 48 percent of the total residents had lived in the same house for more than one year, the majority of renters moved frequently because they could not afford to pay their rent.<sup>12</sup>

The researchers, a volunteer blue ribbon research committee, were critical of the lack of assistance provided to the poor in the neighborhood, but they praised the local residents, teachers, and social workers for their selflessness. For instance, impoverished school children were supposed to receive free lunches, which were worth ten cents. Willard School, which served the study unit, received only 70 percent of its allotted share. Fortunately, local volunteers donated food to make up the difference.<sup>13</sup>

Beginning in 1930, these two neighborhoods and surrounding neighborhoods were inundated by homeless farmers and unemployed transients. In 1931, the city collected approximately 300 families, and moved these people, "some willingly and some by force," to Community Camp on the south border of Willard-Colcord. This community, which was immortalized by Carry McWilliams in Ill Fairs the Land, grew to include approximately 500 families in 1936. An investigation into the camp revealed that 70 percent had no occupation or were unemployed or underemployed. It reported 61 percent had no income, that 69 percent possessed property less than \$20, and that 42 percent shared a room with at least three other persons.<sup>14</sup>

Prosperity returned during and after World War II, but the relationship between Robberson Steel and the neighborhood was transformed during the post-war boom. Wages for blue collar workers increased to middle-class levels. Workers, who had walked to work, saved enough money to purchase a car and moved away from the central city. This shift to the suburbs grew to a point where workers commuted from as far away as Chandler. Also during this period, an increasing number of African-Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics moved into the study area. They came to represent an estimated 25 to 30 percent of the Robberson Steel work force.<sup>15</sup>

With the outmigration of more highly paid workers to the suburbs, and the corresponding decline of the residential neighborhood, a greater need for social services became apparent. Non-profit, educational, and service agencies came to represent an unknown but large percentage of the economy in the study unit. These institutions included: the Oklahoma City Public School System Administrative Offices (located in the old Roosevelt Junior High School building), the Institute for the Blind (located in the old Progress Brewery), a community center sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (located in the old Second Presbyterian Church), youth programs at the Holy Angels Catholic Church, and the Pilot Center (located next to Willard School).

The Pilot Center has an especially interesting history. It was built in 1949 through a cooperative effort of volunteers of numerous social service agencies, an effort which was led by Freda Ameringer, who had been a socialist organizer in the neighborhood during World War I. Mrs. Ameringer led a coalition which included the YMCA, the Oklahoma City Pilot Club, and the Altrusa Club to promote a successful bond issue to allocate \$100,000 for inner city parks. The Pilot Center was a "miniature Hull House which worked closely with the teachers and parents of Willard School to serve a weekly average of 1,200 underprivileged young persons."<sup>16</sup>

Willard School was closed in 1986, and Robberson Steel was closed in 1985. A number of businesses, including a diesel engine repair plant and a recycling center, have expressed interest in purchasing the steel plant.<sup>17</sup>

The architectural character of the proposed Willard-Colcord district is largely defined by the by the contrast between its modest residential buildings and the large-scale buildings of the Rock Island industrial district to its north and the West Main Street industrial district to its south. This residential area is characterized by modest bungalows and Folk Victorian houses which have retained their integrity. Two "shotgun" houses are in the area. This housing type is generally associated with rapid industrial expansion early in the 20th Century; however, these houses apparently replaced one larger house in the 1940s.

The architectural character of the proposed Metro Park district is more residential. The district is composed of bungalows, two-story Craftsmen houses, and Folk Victorian homes. Examples of Tudor Revival multi-family dwellings were found, as well as two churches, the Second Presbyterian Church and the Hellenic Orthodox Church, that may be individually eligible for the National Register. Art Deco and early Commercial buildings which retain their architectural integrity are on the southern end of the west boundary and the western end of the south boundary. One example is the King's Package Ice Cream Parlor, an Art Deco building on Linwood Avenue.

## Study Unit Two

### **Boundaries:**

Study Unit Two is bounded by N.W. 30th Street, Broadway, Reno Avenue, and Western Avenue. This study unit is a mixed residential and commercial area.

### **Listed and Proposed Districts:**

#### National Register Districts

1. Heritage Hills Historic and Architectural District
2. Maney Historic District
3. Mesta Park
4. Spanish Village (The Paseo)

#### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

The following potential districts were identified in this survey:

1. Civic Center Historic District
2. Film Exchange Historic District

#### Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

The following districts were proposed by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. East Heritage Hills
2. Paseo Neighborhood

#### Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County Survey

The following districts were proposed by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Automobile Alley Industrial District
2. Hudson-Harvey Industrial District

Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated

The following districts were proposed by the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Jefferson Park

Areas Warranting Further Study to Determine Eligibility

1. An area bounded by Sheridan, N.W. 13th, Shartel and Santa Fe. This area does not possess the cohesion to warrant definition as a district, however, it does contain a substantial number of buildings which may be individually eligible.

## District Descriptions

1. **Heritage Hills National Register Historic and Architectural District:** A residential district in Oklahoma City, composed of substantial single family dwellings in a variety of styles. It is roughly bounded by N.W. 21st, Robinson, N.W. 14th and 15th, and Walker.
2. **Maney National Register District:** A small district composed of three residential buildings converted to business use; 725 N.W. 11th, and 1200 and 1224 Shartel.
3. **Mesta Park National Register District:** A residential district composed mainly of substantial Craftsman buildings. It is roughly bounded by N.W. 23rd, Walker, N.W. 16th, and Western.
4. **Spanish Village (The Paseo) National Register District:** A two-block-long Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival commercial district from 2909 to 3024 Paseo.
5. **Civic Center Historic District:** An area primarily composed of municipal and county government Art Deco buildings, and Art Deco buildings used for entertainment. Each building within this district is individually eligible. Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of Harvey and Dean A. McGee, proceeding south on Harvey to Park Avenue, proceeding west on Park to Hudson Avenue, proceeding south on Hudson to Colcord, proceeding west on Colcord to Lee Avenue, proceeding north on Lee to Robert S. Kerr, proceeding east on Robert S. Kerr to Walker, proceeding north on Walker to Dean A. McKee, and proceeding east on Dean A. McGee to the intersection of Dean A. McGee and Harvey. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
6. **Film Exchange Historic District:** An area primarily composed of smaller Art Deco buildings used, historically, for motion picture film distribution. This area is defined by starting at the intersection of Hudson and Colcord, proceeding south on Hudson to Sheridan, proceeding west on Sheridan to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to Main, proceeding east on Main to Lee, proceeding north on Lee to Colcord, and proceeding east on Colcord to the intersection of Main and Colcord. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
7. **Heritage Hills East:** An area composed of single and multiple family residences. Single residences are primarily two-story Craftsman houses or substantial bungalows. Multiple family residences are brick Prairie School or Craftsman four-plexes. It is bounded by N.W. 22nd, Broadway, N.W. 16th, and Robinson.



This area is adjacent to Heritage Hills, however, its buildings are closer in design to those of Mesta Park. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It may be appropriate to incorporate this area into either the Heritage Hills or Mesta Park National Register districts.

8. **Paseo Neighborhood:** A primarily residential neighborhood bounded by N.W. 30th, Walker, N.W. 23rd, and Western. Paseo Neighborhood includes the Spanish Village National Register district and has commercial uses concentrated on its south, east, and west boundaries. Paseo is composed primarily of single family bungalows, and Tudor Revival and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival multiple family residential buildings. Paseo Neighborhood was the subject of an intensive survey concurrent with this project. Paseo Neighborhood fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
9. **Automobile Alley Industrial District:** An area roughly bounded by the alley north of N.W. 10th, Broadway, N.W. 9th, and the alley west of Robinson. (Refer to Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey for exact boundaries.) It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. There is a corridor of historic buildings originally used as automobile showrooms, vendors of auto parts, and automobile repair along Broadway from N.W. 4th to N.W. 13th. Some of these may be individually eligible and may be noted when studying area 13, below.
10. **Hudson-Harvey Industrial District:** An area roughly bounded by the N.W. 6th, Robinson, the alley south of N.W. 6th, and Walker; and between N.W. 6th and N.W. 7th on Hudson. (Refer to Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey for exact boundaries.) It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. There are a number of historic buildings in this area that are individually eligible. This area is encompassed by area 13, below.
11. **Jefferson Park:** A primarily residential neighborhood bounded by N.W. 30th, Broadway, N.W. 23rd, and Walker. Jefferson Park has commercial uses concentrated on its south, east, and west boundaries. It is composed primarily of bungalow single residences and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival multiple family residential buildings. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Jefferson Park was the subject of an intensive survey concurrent with this project.

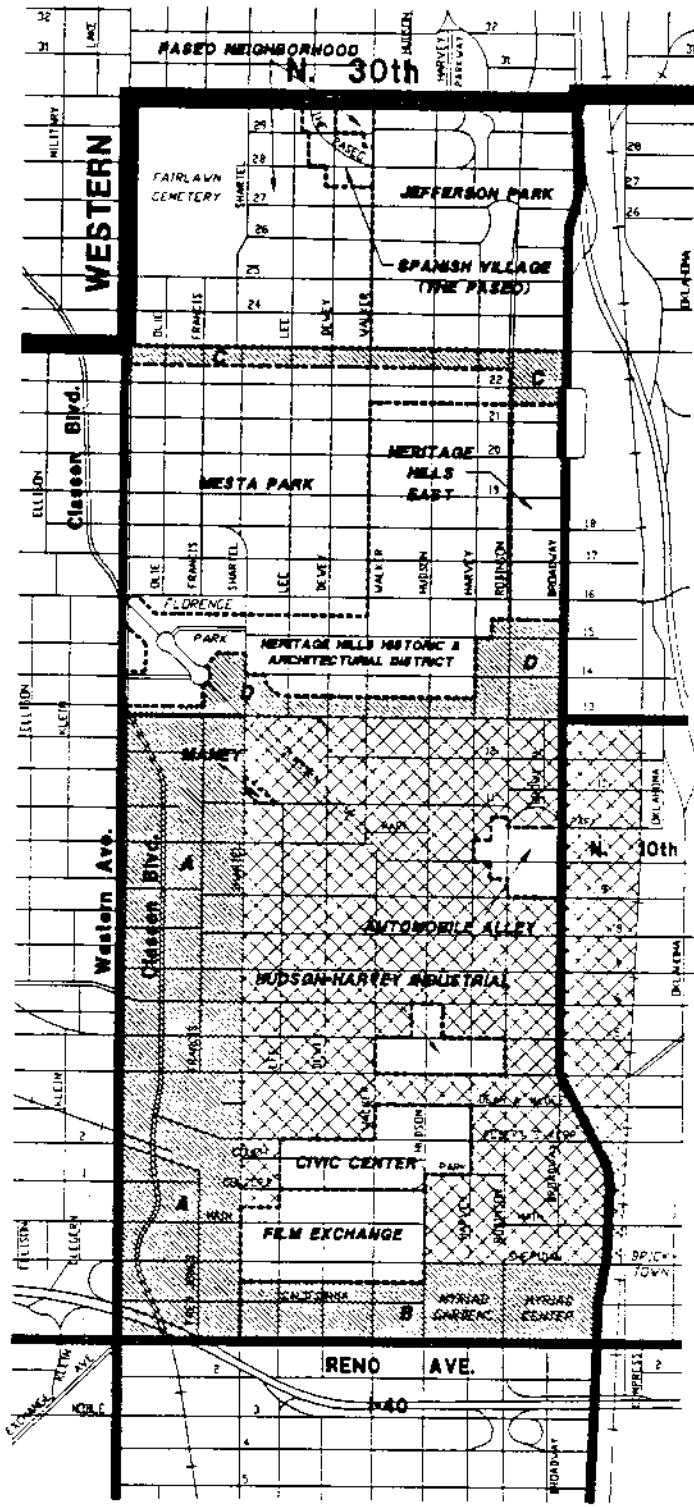
12. **An area bounded by Sheridan, N.W. 13th, Shartel and the Santa Fe Railway.** This area does not possess the cohesion to warrant definition as a district, however, is warrants further study as an area which contains a substantial number of buildings which may be individually eligible. It includes one National Register district and four proposed districts within its boundaries.

#### **Areas Which do not Warrant Further Study**






- A. An area bounded by N.W. 13th, Shartel, Reno, and Western. This area has a mixture of property types including light industrial, commercial, office, and residential. Some of the area is vacant due to demolition. Although the area contains properties built prior to 1945, there are a number of properties built after 1960. Located on N.W. 8th and N.W. 9th streets on either side of Francis Avenue are a number of residences constructed shortly after the turn of the century (ca. 1910). Because of loss of integrity and the removal of the surrounding original neighborhood, these houses do not constitute a district.
- B. An area bounded by Sheridan, Broadway, Reno, and Shartel. This area consists of commercial properties and vacant land. The buildings are not visually cohesive nor is any one building individually eligible for listing. The vacant land is due to demolition.
- C. An area which includes both sides of N.W. 23rd from Western to Broadway. This area consists of commercial and residential properties. Originally a residential boulevard, the majority of residences were eventually demolished and replaced with contemporary structures. Although there are a few commercial properties located on N.W. 23rd Street (circa 1925-1945) between Western and Broadway, none are were identified as individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- D. An area bounded by N.W. 13th, Broadway, Western and the southern boundaries of Heritage Hills Historic District (approximately the alley between N.W. 13th and N.W. 14th) and Heritage Hills East (approximately the alley between N.W. 15th and N.W. 16th). The majority of residential properties which were once located along N.W. 13th Street have been demolished and replaced with contemporary office and commercial buildings.
- E. An area located on the east side of Classen Boulevard between N.W. 14th and N.W. 16th streets. This area consists of a row of two-story brick duplexes constructed in the 1920s. Classen, once a residential boulevard, is lined with primarily commercial buildings. This row of buildings, which back up to the Heritage Hills Historic and Architectural District, is not visually cohesive with Heritage Hills. Across the street to the east is the Gatewood neighborhood, a potentially eligible historic district. The houses in Gatewood face north and south

on the west side of Classen across from the row of brick duplexes and the duplexes are not visually cohesive with Gatewood.

# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



## LEGEND

-  Survey Area
-  Study Unit
-  Identified Historic District
-  Area does not warrant further study
-  Area warrants further study
- \* Identified by Recon Survey 1991-92



Prepared by The City of Oklahoma City,  
Neighborhood & Community Planning Sect

## STUDY UNIT 2

## Significant Buildings

### **Reconnaissance Survey of a Portion of Central Oklahoma City**

#### Individually Eligible:

1. Rockwall Apartment, 424 N.W. 6th.
2. First German M.E. Church, 701 N.W. 8th.
3. Residence, 731 N.W. 8th.
4. Marion Apartment Hotel, 110 N.W. 10th.
5. Residence, 901 N.W. 12th.
6. Doctor's Building, 400 N.W. 13th.
7. Davis Brothers General Merchandise, 400 W. Main.
8. Marion Hall, 1000 N. Dewey Avenue.
9. Industrial Printing Company, 623 N. Harvey Avenue.
10. Sieber Apartment Hotel, 1305 N. Hudson Avenue.
11. Oklahoma Theater Center, 400 West Sheridan Avenue.
12. Union Bus Station, 427 W. Sheridan Avenue.
13. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Distribution Corp., 629 W. Sheridan Avenue.
14. Fleshman Motor Company, 630 W. Sheridan Avenue.
15. Municipal Building, 200 N. Walker Avenue.
16. Blackwood-Davis Business College, 1015 N. Walker Avenue.
17. Centre Theater, 411 Couch Drive.
18. Municipal Auditorium, 200 Channing Square.

#### Warrants Further Study:

1. Heady Apartments, 317 N.W. 8th.
2. Residence, 826 N.W. 8th.
3. Norton-Johnson Buick, 117-125 N.W. 13th.
4. Residence, 924 N. Shartel Avenue.
5. Ina Mae Apartments, 812 N. Lee Avenue.
6. Sunshine Laundry Co., 1002 N.W. 1st.

## **National Register Buildings**

1. Braniff Building, 324 N. Robinson, 2/28/80.
2. Cain's Coffee Building, 1 N.W. 12th, 2/04/82.
3. Central High School, 700 block of N. Robinson, 11/07/76.
4. Colcord Building, Robinson and Sheridan, 11/07/76.
5. Cotton-Exchange Building, 218 N. Harvey, 3/18/80.
6. Elks Lodge Building, 401 N. Harvey, 3/10/80.

7. First Christian Church, 1104 N. Robinson, 3/08/84.
8. Hales, W.T. House, 1521 N. Hudson, 3/29/78.
9. Harbour-Longmire Building, 420 W. Main, 3/03/80.
10. India Temple Shrine Building (Law Journal Record Building), 621 N. Robinson, 3/26/80.
11. Kaiser's Ice Cream Parlour, 1039 N. Walker, 11/28/78.
12. Magnolia Petroleum Building, 722 N. Broadway, 10/04/79.
13. Mid-Continent Life Building, 1400 Classen Drive, 3/12/79.
14. Montgomery Ward Building, 500 W. Main, 3/13/80.
15. Oklahoma County Courthouse, 321 Park Avenue, 3/05/92.
16. Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company, 321 N. Harvey, 4/09/80.
17. Overholser House, 405 N.W. 15th, 6/22/70.
18. Pioneer Building, 401 N. Broadway, 3/03/80.
19. Plaza Court, 1100 Classen Drive, 9/08/80.
20. Post Office, Courthouse, and Federal Office Building; Robinson at 3rd, 8/30/74.
21. Skirvin Hotel, 1 Park Avenue, 10/10/79.
22. Snyder's Super Service Station, 1325 N. Broadway, 3/26/80.
23. St. Joseph's Cathedral, 225 N.W. 4th, 1/30/78.
24. St. Paul's Cathedral, 127 N.W. 7th, 4/11/77.
25. Tradesman's National Bank Building, 101 N. Broadway, 11/05/80.

#### **Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County**

1. Belsky Manufacturing Company, 800 W. California.
2. Buick Motor Company Assembly Plant, 1101 N. Broadway.
3. City Mattress Factory, 719 N. Hudson.
4. Claude Neon Federal Company, 213 N.W. 10th.
5. Dona Dress Company, 210 N.W. 10th.
6. W.L. Ewan Company, 24 N.W. 7th.
7. Ford Motor Company Assembly Plant, 900 W. Main.
8. Industrial Printing Company, 623 N. Harvey.
9. J.B. Klein Foundry & Iron Works, 215 Classen.
10. L & S Bearing Company, 1011-1015 N. Broadway.
11. Riley and Danford Building (Colonial Hotel), 428 W. Main.
12. Robberson Steel Company, 401 W. 3rd.
13. Sooner Paint Manufacturing/Higgins Neon Signs, 106 N.W. 6th.
14. Southern Coffee and Produce Company, 704-710 N. Hudson.
15. Southwestern Bell Telephone Building, 405 N. Broadway.
16. Southwest Stationary & Bank Supply, 408-410 N.W. 6th.
17. Standard Engraving, 626 W. Main.
18. Unit Parts Company, 1117 N. Robinson.

## **WPA Survey**

1. Harn Park, N.W. 14th and Classen Drive.

## **Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory**

1. Ames-Coley Home, 401 N.W. 14th.
2. Bath Melton Building, 20 W. Main.
3. Center Theater, 415 Couch Drive.
4. Cravens Building/Perrine Building, 119 N. Robinson.
5. 8th Street Methodist Church, 701 N.W. 8th.
6. Ellis Building, 220 Robert S. Kerr.
7. First Baptist Church, 1201 N. Robinson.
8. First Church of Christ Scientist, 10th-11th and Robinson.
9. First National Bank, 120 N. Robinson.
10. First United Methodist Church, 4th and Robinson.
11. Hefner, Robert A. House, 201 N.W. 14th.
12. Hightower House, 439 N.W. 15th.
13. Johnny's Tire Service, 300 N. Walker.
14. Lambird House, 419 N.W. 14th.
15. Marion Hotel, 110 N.W. 10th.
16. Mayfair Apartments, 1315 N. Broadway.
17. Medical Arts Building, 100 Park Avenue.
18. Oil and Gas Building, N.E. corner Main and Robinson.
19. Oklahoma County Courthouse, 321 Park Avenue.
20. Osler Physicians Building, 1200 N. Walker.
21. Petroleum Building, Robinson and N. 2nd.
22. Ramsey Tower (City National Bank), 204 N. Robinson.
23. Plaza Court, 1100 Classen Drive.
24. Post Office, Courthouse and Federal Office Building; Robinson and N.W. 3rd.
25. Reinhart House, 515 N.W. 13th.
26. St. George Hotel, 504-506 W. Sheridan.
27. St. Luke's (Old) Church, 201 N.W. 8th.
28. Sunbeam Home, 620 N.W. 21st.
29. Wiley Post Apartments, 706 N.W. 29th.

## Historic Context

Within Study Unit Two are five National Register Districts and seven potential historic districts. Two potential districts, East Heritage and the Paseo Neighborhood were previously identified by the State Historic Preservation Office. Two industrial districts, the Automobile Alley and Hudson-Harvey districts, were identified by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey. One district, Jefferson Park, was identified by Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. Two potential historic districts were identified by this survey. They are the Civic Center and the Film Exchange districts.

The **Civic Center Historic District** is an area primarily composed of municipal and county government Art Deco buildings, and Art Deco buildings used for entertainment. Each building within this district is individually eligible. Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of Harvey and Dean A. McGee, proceeding south on Harvey to Park Avenue, proceeding west on Park to Hudson Avenue, proceeding south on Hudson to Colcord, proceeding west on Colcord to Lee Avenue, proceeding north on Lee to Robert S. Kerr, proceeding east on Robert S. Kerr to Walker, north on Walker to Dean A. McGee, and proceeding east on Dean A. McGee to the intersection of Dean A. McGee and Harvey.

The **Film Exchange Historic District** is an area primarily composed of smaller Art Deco buildings, many of which were used, historically, for motion picture film distribution. This area is defined by starting at the intersection of Hudson and Colcord, proceeding south on Hudson to Sheridan, proceeding west on Sheridan to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to Main, proceeding east on Main to Lee, proceeding north on Lee to Colcord, and proceeding east on Colcord to the intersection of Colcord and Hudson.

The potential Civic Center and Film Exchange historic districts are too small to be examined alone from a historical perspective. They have a common history, however, which is intimately connected to the other identified historical districts in an area which stretches from N.W. 13th Street on the North, to Reno on the South, and from Broadway on the East to Western on the West. This area includes the city's business district and it is the oldest section of the city. The area also was the location for some of Oklahoma's stormiest historical events and it inspired some of America's great writers.

Downtown Oklahoma City was founded on April 22, 1889, when ten thousand Boomers walked, ran, rode horses, drove wagons, and rode the rails to generate the city. The Work Progress Administration (WPA), in Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State, described how Oklahoma City was settled through the unique method of the land run.<sup>18</sup>

A common description of western towns is that they 'sprang up overnight.' In the case of Oklahoma City, the literal truth is that it came



into being between noon and sunset of April 22, 1889; and certain cynical historians insist that a considerable population had appeared on the site fifteen minutes after the noon signal for the 'run' had been given to those lined up more than thirty miles away. ... [one settler] said that 'men of the Seminole Land Company were dragging steel chains up the street on the run' at 12:15 p.m.

Almost all of the area was platted by the Seminole Land Company, which former city manager Albert McRill linked to the "Sooner," who jumped the gun during the land rush. The southern few blocks were platted by the Oklahoma Town Company. The two companies' plats met -- or failed to meet - at Grand Avenue, which is now Sheridan. the result was a jag in north-south streets which survived until the 1990s.<sup>19</sup>

McRill described the colorful history of this area in his aptly titled memoir And Satan Came Also. For the first three decades, the business district was an "open town," meaning that bootlegging, gambling, and frontier lawlessness were rampant. Perhaps the key social and political personality was "Big Anne" Anne Wynn who dominated the vice industry for two decades. This created tension between business leaders, who tolerated vice because it was good for economic development, and citizens' groups who sought to enforce prohibition, anti-gambling, and anti-prostitution laws.<sup>20</sup>

A second colorful period for this downtown area encompassed the term of Jack Walton as mayor (1919 -1923) and his abbreviated term as governor of Oklahoma. Walton was a political unknown who was elected to both offices because of his strong support for labor and his opposition to the Ku Klux Klan. He engaged in erratic and possibly illegal activities that quickly outraged his supporters, as well as his enemies. The area became the focus of national attention in 1923 when the besieged governor sought to divert attention by declaring martial law in order to battle the Klan. At the peak of the crisis, the Ku Klux Klan erected a thirty foot electric-light cross on the top of a downtown office building. Machine guns were mounted by law enforcement officials at City Hall, the County Courthouse, and the police station. The governor was impeached and removed from office.<sup>21</sup>

During the first two decades of Oklahoma City, African-Americans lived in an unusually open and relatively unsegregated environment. Early in the 1890s, "quite a few colored people lived in the block [sic] on West 1st Street." Oklahoma City's first doctor, dentist, pharmacist, teacher, and real estate developer of African-American descent all lived in this part of the city in the 1890s. The first black school was located on California and Harvey. All-black Douglas High School was located on the 400 block of California, until in 1903 it was destroyed by arson and moved east of the railroad tracks.<sup>22</sup>

In 1916, however, Oklahoma City passed an ordinance prohibiting either whites or blacks from moving into any neighborhood which was inhabited by 75 percent or more of the other race.<sup>23</sup> This effectively prevented African-Americans from gaining access to the

northern affluent portion of the area. In fact, the famous "Battle Royal" scene at the beginning of Ralph Ellison's The Invisible Man was partially inspired by a cruel joke perpetrated on Ellison after he was tricked into running north to NW 9th and Broadway Avenue in search of a job.<sup>24</sup>

For the most part, Oklahoma City's business district was prosperous and dynamic. Economic growth in the area was attributed to the construction of an excellent street car system with its hub in the central city, the removal of the Rock Island and Frisco Railroad track from the heart of downtown which allowed for the construction of four public buildings in the proposed Civic Center district in its place. The discovery of oil in the city in 1928 further accelerated development.<sup>25</sup>

From 1920 to 1940 the population of Oklahoma more than doubled. This increase in population necessitated a corresponding increase in the provision of civic amenities. "Taking advantage of the offer of a PWA grant, the taxpayers of the county and city voted a bond issue for the construction of the new buildings in 1935; and they were completed, at a cost of more than \$10,000,000, in 1936-37."<sup>26</sup> This group of PWA Deco buildings is still the core of Oklahoma City's municipal and county government complex.

In 1941, the W.P.A. guide to Oklahoma took especial notice of the Civic Center, which was then known as the Municipal Auditorium, and which was described as a "modern classic" limestone building "with an accent on the practical"; the County Building, described as "a successful adaptation in Bedford limestone of the classic style," and the Municipal Building, a "modified Romanesque architectural motif" ... "with six flat fluted columns that rise from the broad steps to the first floor lobby ... and two perfectly plain attached office sections."

Many other distinctive buildings in the Central Business District were constructed during this same period which were not part of the PWA grant program. These include: the Federal Building, a "modified classic structure of limestone" with accents borrowing from the style of Socialist Realism; the Shrine Temple, a "four-story structure of marble, brick, granite and concrete" with an interior "decorated with classic orders of Greece and Rome"; and the First National Bank Building, a 32 story office building "of functional modern design", polished black granite, Bedford limestone and a trim of aluminum cast panels, ornaments, spandrels, and window jambs. It noted that more aluminum was used in the First National Building than any other in the nation at the time it was constructed.<sup>27</sup>

With the Great Depression of the 1930s, the city's commercial district again became the focus of national attention. From 1931 to 1938, a series of food riots occurred at the relief office at 317 W. Reno Avenue (demolished, site of Myriad Convention Center). Jim Thompson, the noted novelist who lived and worked in the area at this time,

apparently came to Oklahoma City in order to participate in these disturbances.<sup>28</sup> It was also in the area where Woody Guthrie wrote the song "Union Maids."<sup>29</sup>

It is testimony to the turbulence of the history of Oklahoma City that, during the 1930s, the downtown area was home to both the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce and its neighbor, the Progressive Book Store (demolished). The Progressive Book Store was a communist book store which was visited by Thompson, Guthrie, Pete Seeger and other notables. In 1940, the store was closed and its employees were imprisoned under the terms of the Criminal Syndicalism Act for selling allegedly subversive literature.<sup>30</sup>

Oklahoma City's downtown was also home to political activity that may have been more orthodox but which was equally energetic. The Skirvin Tower Hotel (NR '79) provided a meeting place for Oklahoma's "economic elite", as well as a platform for journalists with binoculars to monitor the movements of E. K. Gaylord, owner of the Oklahoma Publishing Company, at his offices at Fourth and Broadway.<sup>31</sup> In the 1930s and 1940s, the Huckins Hotel (demolished) performed a similar role as a social center for the state's legislators. In the 1940s and 1950s, the Biltmore Hotel (demolished) became the second home of legislators. Historian Marty Hauan has chronicled some of the more extravagant happenings at these hotels, and speculated that its bellboys had witnessed more history than scholars could imagine.<sup>32</sup>

World War II and the post war boom brought new prosperity to Oklahoma City. Unfortunately, the area's colorful social character did not survive prosperity. In the 1960s and 1970s Urban Renewal destroyed many of downtown's historical structures. Roy Stewart, author of Born Grown, wrote:<sup>33</sup>

In 1962 a group of leading Oklahoma City businessmen, concerned about the lack of an orderly development program for their community, formed the Urban Action Foundation of Oklahoma City, Incorporated.

Today tall buildings dominating the city's skyline are a testimonial to the vision of these civic leaders. But it is doubtful that even they, despite the scope of the goals they set for themselves, foresaw all the dramatic results of the urban renewal program they helped launch.

Even so, the area which immediately surrounds the central business district and extends north to Heritage Hills and Heritage Hills East (the adjacent residential districts) has been relatively unchanged and gives a glimpse of the areas's history. This area, bounded by Sheridan, N.W. 13th, Shartel and Santa Fe, contains a number of historic office buildings, churches, hotels, residential buildings, industrial buildings and commercial buildings. It warrants further study as an area which retains much of the architectural character of its past. It contains a substantial number of buildings which may be individually eligible or warrant further study. Unfortunately, a large number of

intrusions have undermined the coherence of the area which precludes it from being defined as a district. However, it includes one National Register district (Maney Park) and four proposed districts within its boundaries.

Heritage Hills, a National Register Historic and Architectural District; and Heritage Hills East, a potential historic district, are directly north of the area described in the paragraph above. Development in these areas took place primarily between 1910 and 1930. Heritage Hills is a residential area composed of substantial single-family dwellings in a variety of styles. It is roughly bounded by N.W. 21st, Robinson, N.W. 14th and 15th, and Walker. Heritage Hills East occupies the area directly east of Heritage Hills. It is roughly bounded by N.W. 22nd, Broadway, N.W. 16th, and Robinson. Heritage Hills East is composed of single- and multiple-family residences. Single residences are primarily two-story Craftsman houses or large bungalows. Multiple-family residences are brick Prairie School or Craftsman four-plexes.

### Study Unit Three

#### **Boundaries:**

Study Unit Three is bounded by N.E. 13th Street, Lincoln/Byers, Reno Avenue, and Broadway. It has some residential and industrial areas, but it is mainly characterized by its emptiness.

#### **Listed and Proposed Districts:**

##### National Register Districts

No National Register Districts are in Study Unit Three.

##### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

No potential districts were identified in this survey.

##### Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

The following district was proposed by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. N.E. Second Street Historic District

##### Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County Survey

The following districts were proposed by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Bricktown Industrial District  
Please Note: The Bricktown Industrial District is encompassed by the Warehouse District cited below. For the purposes of this study, the larger area defined by the Warehouse District will be considered the boundaries of a proposed district for further study.

Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated

The following districts were proposed by the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Warehouse District

Areas Warranting Further Study to Determine Eligibility

No areas warranting further study to determine eligibility are in Study Unit Three.

## District Descriptions

1. **N.E. Second Street Historic District:** An area from Stiles to Walnut on N.E. 2nd. This area contains several commercial buildings and buildings used for entertainment/recreation. It was once the center of African-American culture in Oklahoma City and is renowned as "Deep Deuce," the historic center for jazz in Oklahoma City. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association; and it is an important landmark in the ethnic and cultural heritage of Oklahoma City. N.E. Second Street was the subject of an intensive survey concurrent with this project.

The boundaries for the N.E. Second Street Historic District are defined by starting at the intersection of N.E. 2nd Street and N. Stiles Avenue and proceeding north to the alley south of the 300 block of N.E. 2nd Street, then proceeding west across N. Central Avenue and including approximately 100 feet of the 200 block of N.E. 2nd Street, proceeding north to include 226-228 N.E. 2nd Street to the middle of N.E. 2nd Street, proceeding east to N. Central Avenue to the alley north of the 300 block of N.E. 2nd Street, proceeding west to N. Stiles Avenue, and then proceeding south on N. Stiles to the intersection of N. Stiles and N.E. 2nd Street.

2. **Warehouse District/Bricktown Industrial District:** The Bricktown Industrial District is encompassed by the Warehouse District defined in the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. For the purposes of this study, the larger area defined by the Warehouse District will be considered as the boundaries of a proposed district which should be intensively surveyed. The boundaries are roughly the CRI & P Railroad, Byers Avenue, S.W. 2nd, and the Santa Fe Railroad tracks. The Warehouse District contains a concentration of large red brick buildings used for industry and commerce. Historically, the Warehouse District, located in a triangular-shaped area bordered by three sets of railroad tracks, is a tangible reminder that Oklahoma City was a major southwestern distribution center early in the century. It fulfills the National Register criteria for a district in that it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

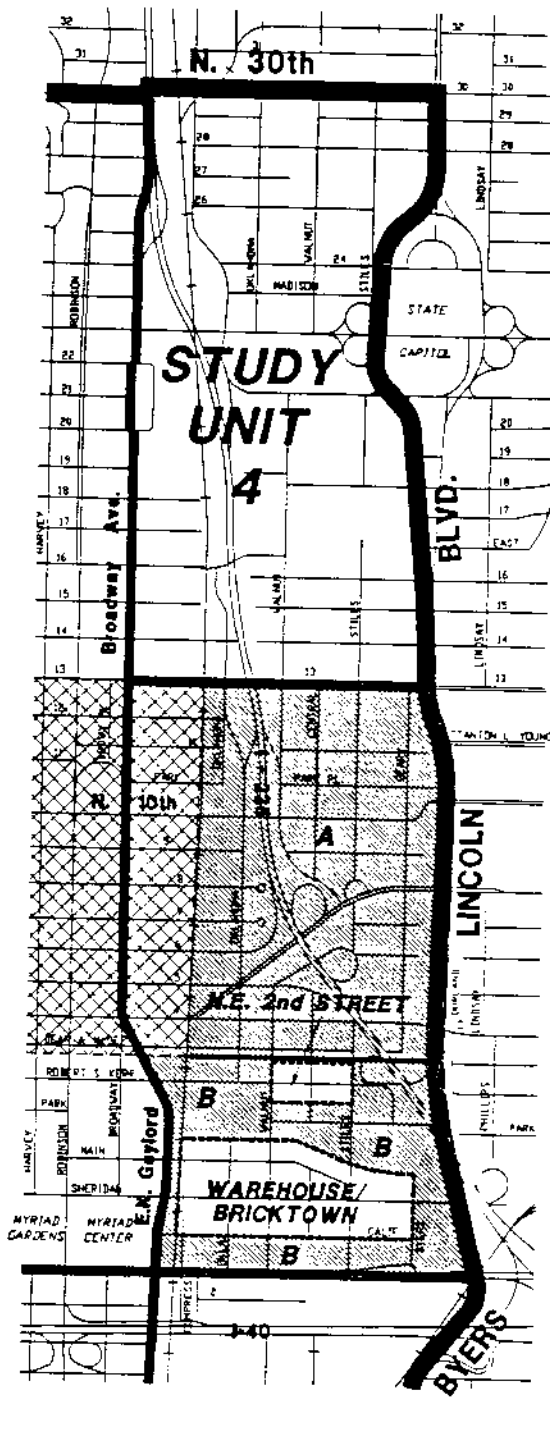
The boundaries for the Warehouse/Bricktown Industrial District are defined by beginning at the intersection of Byers Avenue and the M.K. & T. railroad tracks (northeast corner), proceeding south on Byers to California Avenue, proceeding west on California Avenue to the Santa Fe railroad tracks, proceeding north on the east side of the Santa Fe railroad tracks to the M.K. & T. railroad tracks, and proceeding east/southeast on the M.K. & T. railroad tracks to the intersection of the M.K. & T. tracks and Byers Avenue.

### **Areas Which do not Warrant Further Study**







- A. The entire area north of Dean McGee Avenue does not warrant further study. Much of this area is completely vacant as a result of Urban Renewal policy. This area formerly contained Harrison-Walnut, a neighborhood of substantial Craftsman and Victorian residences, but it has been eradicated, primarily due to the construction of Interstate 235. This area is bounded on the north by N.E. 13th, on the east by Lincoln Boulevard on the south by Dean A. McGee Avenue, and on the west by the Santa Fe railroad tracks.
  
- B. The entire area south of Dean McGee Avenue, with the exception of N.E. 2nd Street Historic District and the Bricktown/Warehouse District, does not warrant further study. A great number of buildings in this area have been demolished as a result of the Urban Renewal policy. This area is bounded on the north by Dean A. McGee Avenue, on the west by Lincoln/Byers, on the south by Reno Avenue, and on the west by E.K. Gaylord Avenue. The N.E. 2nd Street and Bricktown/Warehouse districts are located in the center of this Area B and the boundaries are stated above.



# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



## LEGEND

-  Survey Area
-  Study Unit
-  Identified Historic District
-  Area does not warrant further study
-  Area warrants further study
-  \* Identified by Recon Survey 1991-92



Prepared by: The City of Oklahoma City,  
Neighborhood & Community Planning Dept.

**STUDY UNIT 3**

## Significant Buildings

### **Reconnaissance Survey of a Portion of Central Oklahoma City**

#### Individually Eligible:

1. Holt Motor Sales, 824 N. Broadway.
2. Immanuel Baptist Church, 1222 N. Geary Avenue.
3. Santa Fe Railroad Station, 100 S. Santa Fe Avenue.

#### Warrants Further Study:

1. Anderson Ice Company, 14 N.E. 10th.
2. New York Plate Glass Company, 14 N.E. 13th.
3. Lincoln School, 1140 N. Geary Avenue.
4. Maywood Presbyterian Church, 922 N. Stiles Avenue.

### **National Register Buildings**

1. Avery Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 15 E. California, 8/12/83.
2. Calvary Baptist Church, 2nd and Walnut, 12/19/78.
3. Case, J.I. Plow Works Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 2 E. California, 8/12/83.
4. Heierding Building, 35 Harrison, 3/10/82.
5. Kingman-Moore Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 100 E. California, 8/12/83.
6. Luster, Melvin F., House, 300 N.E. 3rd.
7. Mideke Supply Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 100 E. Main, 8/12/83.
8. Miller-Jackson Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 121 E. California, 8/12/83.
9. Oklahoma Hardware Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 27 E. California, 8/12/83.
10. Oklahoma Publishing Company Building, 500 N. Broadway, 9/18/78.
11. Rock Island Plow Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 29 E. Reno, 8/12/83.
12. Sherman Machine and Iron Works Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 26 E. Main, 8/12/83.
13. Stanford Furniture Co. Building [Red Brick Warehouses of Oklahoma City TR], 1 E. Sheridan, 8/12/83.
14. Wells Fargo and Co. Livery Stable, 115 E. Reno, 7/09/82.

## **Industrial Resources of Oklahoma**

1. Anchor Burner Company, 420 E. Sheridan.
2. Anderson Artic Ice Company, 10 N.E. 10th.
3. J.W. Awalt Building, 101 E. Sheridan.
4. Cain's Coffee, 1 N.W. 12th.
5. J.I. Case Company, 21 E. Main.
6. The Confectionary Building, 120 E. Sheridan.
7. Corken Pumps & Machinery Incorporated II, 206 E. Sheridan.
8. East India Toilet Goods & Manufacturing Company, 300 N.E. 3rd.
9. Fry and House Printing Company, 6 E. 4th.
10. General Beverage Company ("Grapette Building"), 1324 N. Broadway.
11. Johnson Company, 319-321 E. Sheridan.
12. Littlepage Building, 324 N.E. 2nd.
13. Neal Millwork & Supply Company, 217 E. Sheridan.
14. Oklahoma City Casket Company, 413 E. California.
15. Oklahoma Furniture Manufacturing Company, 121 E. Sheridan.
16. Oklahoma Paper Company, 301 E. California.
17. W.H. Stewart Company, 500 E. Sheridan.
18. Triple AAA Company, 14 N.E. 13th.
19. Western Extract and Manufacturing Company, 129 E. Main.

## **WPA Survey**

1. Irving School Addition, N.E. 5th and Walnut.

## **Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory**

1. Jenkins Building, 16-26 N.E. 5th.
2. Maywood Presbyterian Church, 922 N. Stiles.
3. Oklahoma Furniture Factory, 121 E. Sheridan.
4. Rock Island Railroad Hotel, 218 N. Broadway.
5. Stiles Circle Park; 8th, Stiles and Harrison.

## Historic Context

Study Unit Three stretches from N.E. 13th on the North to Reno Avenue on the South, Lincoln Avenue on the East and Broadway on the West. The section was once the center of African-American culture in Oklahoma City. It also includes the warehouse and industrial district which has become known as Bricktown, and N.E. 2nd street which has been identified as a potential historic district.

The first African-American residents of Oklahoma City lived just to the East and West of Broadway, from California to N. 2nd Street. Many blacks immigrated to Oklahoma, especially the rural areas in the north central and northeastern parts of the state, because of the relative freedom and opportunity provided by the frontier state. With statehood in 1907, much of that opportunity began to disappear, even though African-Americans in Oklahoma retained the confidence and independence which characterized their experience in territorial Oklahoma.<sup>34</sup>

During the first decade of statehood, segregation in public places, ranging from restaurants to telephone booths, was implemented, and in 1911 African-American Oklahomans, for all practical purposes, lost the right to vote.<sup>35</sup> In 1916, Oklahoma City instituted de jure segregation in housing. Both whites and blacks were prohibited from moving into neighborhoods where 75 percent or more of the residents were members of the opposite race. Consequently, African-Americans were forced to live in the southern and eastern portions of the study unit.<sup>36</sup>

Although Sanborn Fire Insurance maps typically record structures in great detail, the 1922 map dismissed two lots on N.E. 1st Street as being occupied by "Negro shacks" without any delineation of the structures. Roscoe Dungee, the founder and editor of the Black Dispatch newspaper which had an office at 324 N.E. 2nd, recalled the effect of segregation, saying, "Housing for Negroes in Oklahoma City, to say the least, was terrible."<sup>37</sup>

Another resident, who lived on First Street, remembered another effect of segregation. She explained: <sup>38</sup>

At first, we lived in all parts of town but then, later, there was a move toward one section because we couldn't get services anywhere else. The men couldn't go to white barber shops; we couldn't go to white churches or schools; so we developed our own -- our own services and our own organizations.

Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State confirmed the existence of black resourcefulness, even if it did so in an inelegant manner, and with exaggeration. According to the Guide:<sup>39</sup>

Except on the poor district bordering the river, the Negro quarters compare favorably with the average residential and suburban business districts occupied by whites; and there are a few homes costing from \$20,000 to \$30,000 each. One Negro, W. J. Edwards, has amassed a fortune as a wholesale junk dealer, and there is a gradual seepage of Negroes into other than the usual service areas.

On the cultural side, Oklahoma City Negroes have provided themselves two movie houses, churches, lodge and dance halls.

Oklahoma City born novelist Ralph Ellison would have mocked such a statement, but he also confirmed the basic point it was clumsily trying to make. Ellison said that Oklahoma blacks had a powerful culture of confidence and independence that was derived from their heritage of "going to the territory" of Oklahoma. Even though Ellison reached maturity in a segregated urban environment, he had frequent contacts with family and educational role models who had come to rural Oklahoma to gain freedom and equality. Ellison was especially influenced by educators like Zella Breaux, the music director at Douglas High School, and Inman Page, the former president of Langston University who was principal at Douglas. As a result of the Public School Music Program at Douglas High School, this area was the site of great blues, spirituals, dance, comedy, and drama performances, as well as Bach and Handel concerts.<sup>40</sup>

Ralph Ellison was the son of a housekeeper who lived in numerous residences in the study unit, including a shotgun house to the north of NE 2nd street. Ellison wrote passionately about "the Deep Deuce," as the area became known, which was one of the world's great centers for jazz. Northeast 2nd Street featured great musicians such as Charlie Christian, Jimmy Rushing, and the Oklahoma City Blue Devil's. Ellison described himself as "a child who lived in a hotbed of everything that middle-class people fear - the tuberculosis rate was sky high, crime, prostitution, bootlegging, illness." Despite "all of the disintegration," NE 2nd Street "was one of the most wonderful places I have ever known." <sup>41</sup>

Former state senator Hannah Atkins wrote, "Music historians now agree that jazz had several 'birthplaces'...we should add 'Deep Second' in Oklahoma City, Tulsa's Greenwood Street, in fact all of Oklahoma, for jazz was both indigenous to this area, and grew to maturity here."<sup>42</sup>

Oklahoma's great claim to artistic fame lies in N.E. 2nd street. No other area of the state has inspired such literary and musical excellence. A small number of the architectural resources on N.E. 2nd Street are extant, including the lodge hall, the Black

Dispatch building, the East India Toilet Goods and Manufacturing Co. building, and the Haywood building.

The Harrison-Walnut residential area stretched roughly from N.E. 2nd Street to N.E. 13th Street, and from Lincoln to Oklahoma. In the 1930s, the area became the site of a historic conflict as Oklahoma City's segregation laws were strengthened further. Most of the study unit remained all white, with blacks living north of Stiles Circle; further east toward the fairgrounds and in the 900 block on N.E. 9th and 10th; and, as already explained, in the southern part of the study unit. Apparently, even in areas where African-Americans were allowed to live, there were restrictions on property ownership. One African-American was arrested four times after he purchased and tried to move into a home on N.E. 2nd and Central. He sued the city in Federal Court, and won a judgment which allowed him to live in his house.<sup>43</sup>

Governor William Murray then declared that an imaginary line be drawn down the middle of N. E. 8th Street. Whites were ordered to leave the section below Eighth Street, and blacks were denied the opportunity to move north of the line. Numerous African-Americans were arrested for challenging segregation. One African-American was arrested three times for attempting to occupy his home, and he appealed to the Oklahoma Supreme Court. In 1936, this governmental imposed system of residential segregation was declared unconstitutional.<sup>44</sup>

The newly integrated Harrison-Walnut area remained stable until after World War II. According to the Oklahoma City Planning Division, the neighborhood declined "when encroachment by industry and commercial establishments as well as the discovery of oil began to erode its stability." As a result, "today Harrison Walnut is characterized by decayed and abandoned structures, high crime rates, and substandard housing."<sup>45</sup>

In the 1960s, the study area was transformed by urban renewal. A large percentage of the area was bulldozed in the name of slum clearance. Other portions faced disinvestment and stagnation due to the knowledge that large but undetermined areas would be cleared for the construction of a highway and the expansion of the medical complex.

The study area also includes the Warehouse district, bounded roughly by the CRI & P Railroad, Byers Avenue, S.W. 2nd, and the Santa Fe Railroad tracks. Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked, and Populated, describes the district as "the most visible reminder we have of Oklahoma City's development as a major southwestern distribution center," and it is "a clear symbol of the heart of Oklahoma City." As early as 1907, entrepreneurs built spacious, well-lighted, and efficient warehouses in this easily identifiable district. According to Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930, from 1910 to 1930, investors demonstrated their faith in the city by constructing substantial brick structures. They have since reaffirmed their commitment by conserving and maintaining the area.

In recent years, the district has been best known as "Bricktown", a revitalized office and commercial center.<sup>46</sup>

## Study Unit Four

### **Boundaries:**

Study Unit Four is bounded by N.E. 30th Street, Lincoln Boulevard, N.E. 13th Street, and Broadway. It is a mixed area with residential, industrial, commercial and government offices.

### **Listed and Proposed Districts:**

#### National Register Districts

No National Register Districts are in Study Unit Four.

#### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

No potential districts were identified in this survey.

#### Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

No potential districts were proposed by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office.

#### Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County Survey

The following districts were proposed by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. North Santa Fe Industrial District

#### Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated

The following districts were proposed by the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Classen's North Highland Parked



Areas Warranting Further Study to Determine Eligibility

No areas warranting further study to determine eligibility are in Study Unit Four.

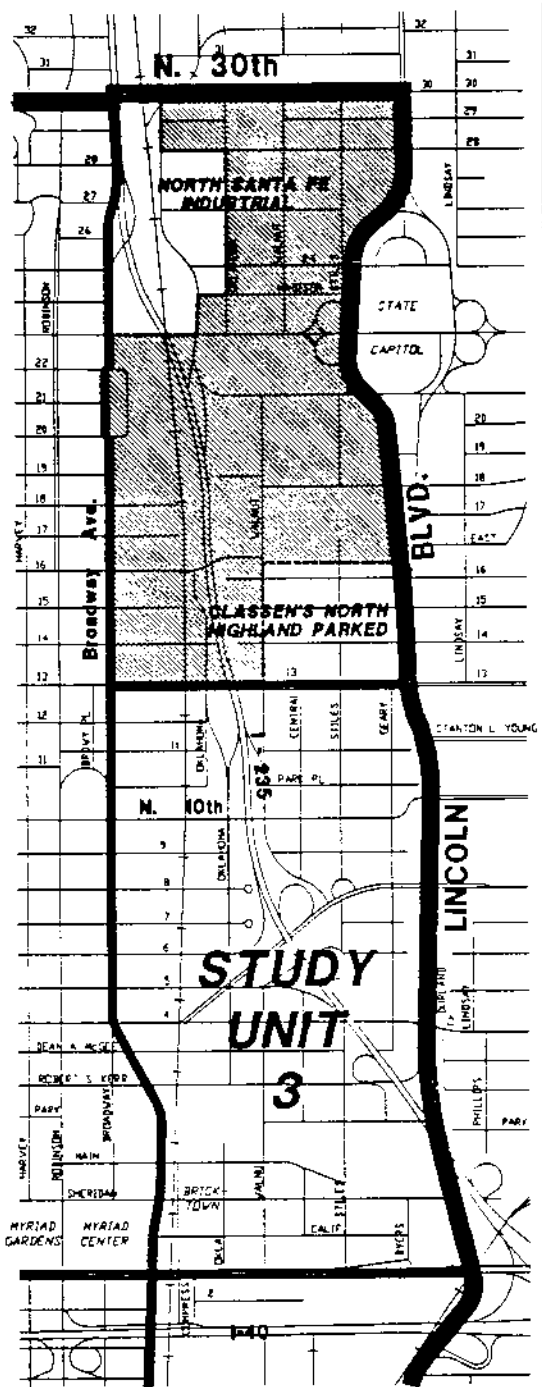
## District Description

1. **North Santa Fe Industrial District:** An industrial district roughly bounded by N.E. 27th, Oklahoma, Madison, and Santa Fe. (Please refer to the Industrial Resources Survey of Oklahoma County for exact boundaries.) This area forms the core of a larger and more modern industrial district that extends to N.E. 36th Street. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
2. **Classen's North Highland Parked:** A residential district roughly bounded by N.E. 16th, Lincoln, N.E. 13th, and Walnut. It is composed mainly of substantial Prairie School and Craftsman houses. Classen's North Highland Parked was the neighborhood of choice for many businessmen, lobbyists and politicians, including Robert S. Kerr, due to its elegant houses and its proximity to the State Capitol. Its most notable residence is the Jewell Hicks house at 400 N.E. 14th, which was strongly influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School. (Hicks is also credited with the architectural design of the Oklahoma State Capitol and the Governor's Mansion.) Despite the loss of its former status as one of Oklahoma City's most desirable neighborhoods, Classen's North Highland Parked still possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.







## **Areas Which do not Warrant Further Study**

- A. The following area does not warrant further study: start at the intersection of N.E. 30th and Lincoln, proceed south on Lincoln to N.E. 18th, proceed west on N.E. 18th to Walnut, proceed south to N.E. 13th, proceed west on N.E. 13th to Broadway, proceed north on Broadway to N.E. 23rd, proceed east on N.E. 23rd to Santa Fe, proceed north on Santa Fe to Madison, proceed east on Madison to Oklahoma, proceed north on Oklahoma to N.E. 28th, proceed west on N.E. 28th to Santa Fe, proceed north on Santa Fe to N.E. 30th, and proceed east on N.E. 30th to Lincoln. This area is composed of many large areas of vacant land, modern commercial buildings, a few isolated one-story private and state government office buildings, and a vacant public housing project. The northern section of this study unit, bounded by N.E. 30th, Lincoln, N.E. 28th and Santa Fe, is virtually empty.

# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



## LEGEND

-  Survey Area
-  Study Unit
-  Identified Historic District
-  Area does not warrant further study
-  Area warrants further study
-  \* Identified by Recon Survey 1991-92



Prepared by: The City of Oklahoma City,  
Neighborhood & Community Planning Dept

## STUDY UNIT 4

## **Significant Buildings**

### **Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City**

#### **Individually Eligible:**

1. Kroger Grocery & Baking Company, 9 N.E. 23rd.
2. Capitol Power Plant, 2208 N. Central Avenue.
3. Jim Thorpe Office Building, 2101 N. Lincoln Boulevard.

#### **National Register Buildings**

1. Harn House, N.E. 17th and Stiles Avenue, 4/13/73.
2. Walcourt Building, 1401 N.E. Walnut, 3/19/82.

#### **Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County**

1. Booth Tank Company, 2613-2615 N. Oklahoma.
2. Cheatham Metal Weather Strip & Insulation Company, 2412 N. Santa Fe.
3. Geolograph Company Incorporated, 27 N.E. 27th.
4. Stan Ramsey Company, 2727 N. Oklahoma.
5. Superior Neon Signs Incorporated, 2515 N. Oklahoma.

#### **WPA Survey**

1. National Guard Armory, 200 N.E. 23rd.

## Historic Context

Study Unit Four stretches from N.E. 30th Street to N. E. 13th, and Lincoln Avenue on the East to Broadway on the West. This area includes beautiful residential areas such as Classen's North Highland Parked, the Harn Homestead, a large strip of state government office buildings, and the industrial corridor along the Santa Fe Railway. Classen's North Highland Parked and the North Santa Fe Industrial District have been identified as potential historic districts. It also includes a portion of one of the state's great oil fields.

In the 1920s, Classen's North Highland Parked, a residential district roughly bounded by N.E. 16th, Lincoln, N.E. 13th, and Walnut, was promoted as a grand, architecturally distinguished residential addition for oil investors, businessmen, and professionals. It is composed mainly of substantial Prairie School and Craftsman houses, and large bungalows. Its proximity to both state and local government as well as the Central Business District made it an attractive home for oil men, petroleum lobbyists, and distinguished governmental officials, such as Senator Robert S. Kerr.<sup>47</sup>

Architect Jewell Hicks, of Layton, Hicks, and Forsyth, who designed the Oklahoma Capitol, contributed greatly to the aesthetic character of the neighborhood. Much of the area followed the design of Hicks' own home on Stiles and N.E. 14th Street, which was influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School. The area's houses often were built to be "large rectangular two story brick and clapboard houses with wide overhanging eaves and brackets. The houses were further unified by the similarity of features of the properties through the use of deep uniform setbacks and raised front yards."<sup>48</sup>

The Harn Homestead is immediately to the North of Classen's North Highland Parked. The site includes the homestead of William Harn, a governmental land agent. He purchased the property in 1891, and built a two story clapboard farmhouse in 1904.<sup>49</sup>

Further to the north, from N.E. 18th Street to NE 28th Street are state governmental buildings. Older buildings include the old Oklahoma Military Department Headquarters, the Capitol Power Plant, and the PWA Deco Jim Thorpe Office Building. The Thorpe Building was originally built as the Capitol Office Building. The WPA guide to Oklahoma described it as "a severely plain neoclassic six-story white limestone structure built to relieve congestion in the capitol." Most of the more recent capitol buildings date to the 1970s when oil revenues allowed for expanded capitol investments by the state government.<sup>50</sup>

The most dramatic chapter in the history of this area involved an intense conflict over the drilling of oil in the residential area and the capitol complex. After the famous "Wild Mary Sudik" oilfield blowout of 1930, a controversy ensued over the drilling of wells inside the city limits. In a compromise, the City Council stiffened the safety regulations

and limited drilling to the southeast portion of town. In 1935 and 1936, special elections authorized drilling on the northeast side of the city in the vicinity of the Capitol. In 1936, Governor Marland declared martial law and ordered drilling in the Capitol Complex.<sup>51</sup> Wells were also drilled in residential areas which are a part of the study area. Consequently, oil wells still dominate the vistas of the state capitol complex and "some of the finest homes in the city had oil wells on their lawns and in their rose gardens."<sup>52</sup>

In the 1930s, a light industrial and commercial area on N.E. 23rd Street, near the Santa Fe Railroad tracks, expanded to the north. The Kroger Grocery & Baking Company, at 9 N.E. 23rd is the southernmost building. The North Santa Fe Industrial District, roughly bounded by N.E. 27th, Oklahoma, Madison, and Santa Fe, is north of the Kroger Grocery & Baking Company. This area was most notable as being the home of several oilfield-related companies.<sup>53</sup> It forms the core of a larger and more modern industrial district that extends north of N.E. 30th Street along the spine of the Santa Fe Railway.

## Study Unit Five

### **Boundaries:**

Study Unit Five is bounded by Reno Avenue, Shartel Avenue, S.W. 29th Street, and Pennsylvania Avenue. It has a mixture of industrial, residential and commercial uses, including a small airport and railway lines.

### **Listed and Proposed Districts:**

#### National Register Districts

No National Register Districts are in Study Unit Five.

#### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

The following potential districts were identified in this survey:

1. Farmers Market Historic District
2. Exchange Avenue Historic District
3. Will Rogers Courts Historic District

#### Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

No potential districts were proposed by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office.

#### Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County Survey

No districts were proposed by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey.

#### Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated

The following districts were proposed by the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. This study concurs with those recommendations:

No districts were proposed by the above study.

Areas Warranting Further Study to Determine Eligibility

1. 1400 block of S. Blackwelder Avenue (east side): Shotgun and Folk Victorian dwellings.
2. An area bounded by S.W. 23rd, McKinley, S.W. 25th, and Indiana. This area warrants further study as post-war housing.



## District Description

1. **Farmers Market Historic District:** An area of commercial buildings designed primarily in the Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style. This area is bounded by Reno, Exchange, Noble, and Ellison. It encompasses many historic commercial buildings, including the Farmers Public Market at 311 S. Klein (NR 1982). This proposed district is one of the few commercial districts left from the early development of Oklahoma City which is still used much as it was originally intended, as a produce market and center for produce brokers. It possesses the necessary integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to be assigned district status.
2. **Exchange Avenue Historic District:** A primarily residential neighborhood with some historic commercial buildings along Exchange Avenue. Its boundaries are delineated by starting at the intersection of Exchange and Indiana, proceeding southeast on Indiana to Birch, proceeding southwest on Birch to Dougherty, proceeding northwest on Dougherty to Exchange, proceeding southwest on Exchange to Pennsylvania, proceeding north on Pennsylvania to N.W. 10th, proceeding east on N.W. 10th to Kentucky, proceeding south on Kentucky to Exchange, and proceeding northeast on Exchange to the intersection of Exchange and Indiana. This area is composed primarily of bungalow and brick Tudor Revival residential buildings. Two brick residences on Exchange Avenue and one on Westwood exhibit very fine brickwork executed in contrasting colors. There is also a historic school in this area. The proposed Exchange Avenue Historic District possesses the necessary integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to be assigned district status.
3. **Will Rogers Courts Historic District:** Will Rogers Courts is a federal public housing project built in 1936. It has been preserved in its entirety very much as it was when it was built. This area is defined by starting at the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Heyman, proceeding northeast on Heyman to South Indiana, proceeding south on Indiana to Southwest 15th Street, proceeding west on Southwest 15th Street to Rotary Drive, proceeding southwest on Rotary Drive to the intersection of Rotary Drive and Westwood, proceeding north on Westwood Boulevard to the intersection of Westwood and Heyman. This district includes all those buildings historically associated with the Will Rogers Courts on both sides of Heyman and Indiana. Will Rogers Courts is still used as a public housing project and it possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
4. **1400 block of S. Blackwelder Avenue (east side):** This area warrants further study as a concentration of Shotgun and Folk Victorian dwellings in nearly original condition. It encompasses the east side of the 1400 block of South

Blackwelder. A resident of the block related that one Shotgun house on the block had recently been demolished.

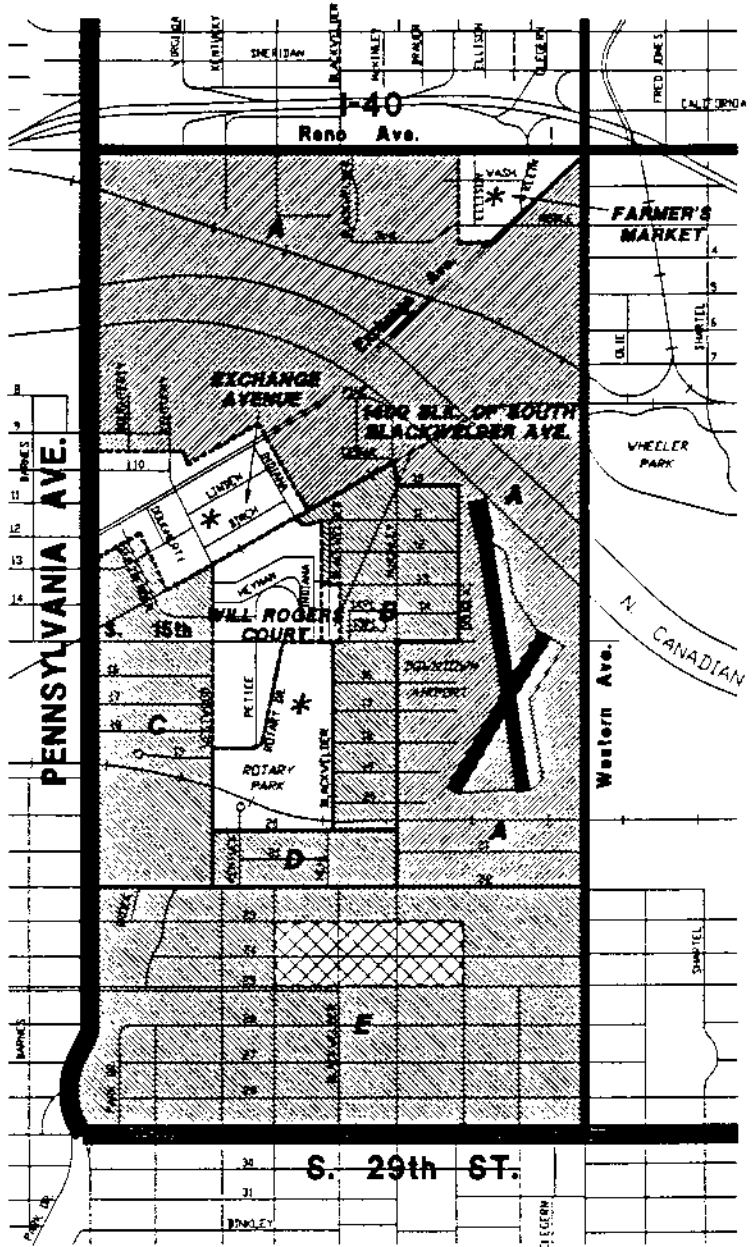
5. **An area bounded by S.W. 23rd, McKinley, S.W. 25th, and Indiana.** This area warrants further study as post-war housing.

#### **Areas Which do not Warrant Further Study**








- A. An area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of Reno and Western, proceeding south on Western to the S.W. 22nd, proceeding west on S.W. 22nd to McKinley, proceeding north on McKinley to S.W. 15th, proceeding east on S.W. 15th to Douglas, proceeding north on Douglas to S.W. 10th, proceeding west on S.W. 10th to McKinley, proceeding north northwest on McKinley to the St. Louis and Santa Fe Railway, proceeding southwest on the St. Louis and Santa Fe Railway to Indiana, proceeding northwest on Indiana to Exchange, proceeding southwest on Exchange to S.W. 10th, proceeding west on S.W. 10th to Pennsylvania, proceeding north on Pennsylvania to Reno, Proceeding east on Reno to Ellison, proceeding south on Ellison to S.W. 3rd, proceeding east on S.W. 3rd to Exchange, and proceeding northeast on Exchange to the intersection of Reno and Western. This area is occupied by scattered new industrial and office buildings, the Canadian riverbed, and the Downtown Airpark.
- B. An area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 10th and Douglas, proceeding south on Douglas to S.W. 15th, proceeding west on S.W. 15th to McKinley, proceeding south on McKinley to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, proceeding west along the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway to Blackwelder, proceeding north on Blackwelder to the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway, proceeding northeast on the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway to McKinley, proceeding south on McKinley to S.W. 10th, and proceeding east on S.W. 10th to the intersection of S.W. 10th and Douglas. This area is occupied by newer residences and residences which have lost their architectural integrity.
- C. An area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of the St. Louis and Santa Fe railway and Westwood, proceeding south on Westwood to S.W. 22nd, proceeding west on S.W. 22nd to Pennsylvania, proceeding north on Pennsylvania to S.W. 13th, proceeding east and northeast on S.W. 13th to Sulzberger, proceeding south southeast and east on Sulzberger to Westwood. This area is occupied by newer residences and residences which have lost their architectural integrity and by railroad right-of-way.
- D. An area with boundaries defined by S.W. 20th, McKinley, S.W. 22nd, and Kentucky. This area is a fairly new public housing project.

- E. An area bounded by S.W. 22nd, Western, S.W. 29th, and Pennsylvania (excepting the area in number 5, above.) This area is characterized by residences which have lost their architectural integrity because of the widespread use of siding, new windows, carports and other obtrusive additions.

# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



## LEGEND

-  Survey Area
-  Study Unit
-  Identified Historic District
-  Area does not warrant further study
-  Area warrants further study
-  Identified by Recon Survey 1991-92
-  City Park



Prepared by: The City of Oklahoma City,  
Neighborhood & Community Planning Dept

## STUDY UNIT 5

## **Significant Buildings**

### **Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City**

#### **Individually Eligible:**

1. Green's Graphics, 1000 S.W. 2nd.  
Columbus School, 2400 South Pennsylvania Avenue.

#### **Warrants Further Study:**

1. Westwood School, 1701 S.W. 10th.
2. Residence, 1449 S.W. 13th.
3. Residence, 1630 Exchange Avenue.
4. Residence, 1033 S.W. 27th.

### **National Register Buildings**

1. Farmers Public Market, 311 S. Klein, 12/02/82.

### **Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County**

1. American Body and Trailer Company, Inc., 1500 Exchange.
2. The Boardman Company, 1401 S.W. 11th.
3. Liebmann's Independent Ice Company I, 1140 W. Reno.
4. Morgan Sash and Door Company, 1100 S.W. 3rd.

### **WPA Survey**

1. Rotary Park Amphitheater, S.W. 15th and Rotary Drive.

## Historic Context

Within Study Unit Five are three potential historic districts and two areas which warrants further study. All of these areas were identified by this survey.

The **Farmer's Market Historic District** includes the Farmer's Public Market and the surrounding buildings. This area is bounded by Reno, Exchange, Noble, and Ellison. It encompasses many historic commercial buildings, including the Farmers Public Market at 311 S. Klein (NR 1982.) This proposed district is one of the few commercial districts left from the early development of Oklahoma City which is still used much as it was originally intended, as a produce market and center for produce brokers.

The **Exchange Avenue Historic District** is primarily a residential neighborhood with some historic commercial buildings along Exchange Avenue. Its boundaries are delineated by starting at the intersection of Exchange and Indiana, proceeding southeast on Indiana to Birch, proceeding southwest on Birch to Dougherty, proceeding northwest on Dougherty to Exchange, proceeding southwest on Exchange to Pennsylvania, proceeding north on Pennsylvania to N.W. 10th, proceeding east on N.W. 10th to Kentucky, proceeding south on Kentucky to Exchange, and proceeding northeast on Exchange to the intersection of Exchange and Indiana. This area is composed primarily of bungalow and brick Tudor Revival residential buildings.

The **Will Rogers Courts Historic District** is a federal public housing project built in 1936. It has been preserved in its entirety very much as it was when it was built. The boundaries of Will Rogers Courts are by starting at the intersection of Westwood Boulevard and Heyman, proceeding northeast on Heyman to South Indiana, proceeding south on Indiana to Southwest 15th Street, proceeding west on Southwest 15th Street to Rotary Drive, proceeding southwest on Rotary Drive to the intersection of Rotary Drive and Westwood, proceeding north on Westwood Boulevard to the intersection of Westwood and Heyman. This district includes all those buildings historically associated with the Will Rogers Courts on both sides of Heyman and Indiana. Will Rogers Courts is still used as a public housing project.

The **east side of the 1400 block of South Blackwelder** may be eligible as a small district and should be intensively surveyed. This block contains a concentration of shotgun and folk victorian houses, some of which are in very good condition. One of the shotgun houses on this street was recently demolished.

The **area bounded by S.W. 23rd, McKinley, S.W. 25th, and Indiana**. This area may warrant further study as post-war housing.

This study unit reveals the dynamics of the migration of rural Oklahomans to the city and, subsequently, to a modest first-generation suburb.

South Oklahoma City's origins can be traced to a dispute on the afternoon of April 22, 1889. Numerous participants of the famed land run arrived in central Oklahoma City and found that the best lots had been taken. They charged that their rivals who had already staked claims were "Sooners" who had slipped into the territory before noon on the day of the run. They then staked out a town to the south of the city which grew into Capitol Hill.

Capitol Hill and the rest of south Oklahoma City, including the area between Western and Pennsylvania, developed a distinct culture with the reputation as a "working man's home."

In 1928, the outstanding development in the study unit, the Farmers Public Market, was constructed near the intersection of the Chicago Rock Island and the St. Louis and Santa Fe Railways. The Public Market, which is listed on the National Register, and the surrounding buildings and produce stalls compose the development which is identified as the potential Farmers Market District. The Public Market building is located at 1201 Exchange Avenue, adjacent to the north border of the study unit. The market is composed of a two story main building which was "finished in three-tone buff stucco with terra-cotta colored trim ... in the modified Spanish style." It was designed by Gaylord B. Noftziger. On the second floor were shops and an auditorium that was used for athletic events. The market also included rows of concrete-and-steel sheds for local truck farmers and produce merchants, who imported vegetables from the Rio Grande Valley.<sup>54</sup>

Although south Oklahoma City did not enjoy the prestige of its rival on the other side of the North Canadian River, Exchange Avenue gave easy access to the Farmers Market and important places of employment such as the stockyards and industrial and commercial buildings along its path. The avenue is bordered by historic commercial buildings on the north side and dignified homes with stately trees on the south side. It leads to a small though attractive middle-class neighborhood on the northwest corner of the study unit. These commercial buildings, substantial brick homes, and bungalows, which have been identified as the potential Exchange Avenue district, provide evidence of a neglected past which defied negative stereotypes about "Southsiders."

Even so, the study unit primarily encompasses a variety of working class neighborhoods. The first residents of the area were meat packing house laborers and other blue-collar workers. A masters thesis in 1941, euphemistically referred to this area as "less favored than the section north." It reported that the area's close proximity to the river, the cattle pens of Packingtown, and the industrial plants made "this district still less desirable to the more stable, enterprising, ambitious people." The thesis also acknowledged, however, that:

It is true that clerks, office workers, and skilled workers employed by these industries have established homes near their place of employment so

that there are several districts of comparatively comfortable homes...It is also true that only a few blocks away on the river banks are to be found the most squalid homes in Oklahoma City.

A survey of the residents of South Blackwelder in 1920 and 1940 largely confirms this pattern, if not the commentary of the master's thesis. In 1920, the sample of residents was small, but every worker but one was employed by the packing houses. Their positions included a laborer, a butcher, a machinist, a driver, and two teamsters. The lone person employed elsewhere was a gardener.

In 1940, a much larger sample of residents living in the same area followed a similar pattern, with almost all of the neighborhood residents being skilled and unskilled workers and a plurality being employed at the packing houses. Workers who were identified as packing house employees included hog and beef killers, butchers, machinists, and drivers. Other workers tended to be iron and steel workers and mechanics employed in oil field-related industries or automobile, truck, and farm equipment industries. A noteworthy group included a gardener, a nurseryman, and a cider stand operator. Only four of the 53 residents had telephones, although 21 of the 53 were property owners.

A combination of the rural roots of the area and the economic hardships faced by its residents contributed to a populist political environment. In the three-way race for mayor in 1911, wards which overlapped with the study unit cast up to 47 percent of their votes for the Socialist Party candidate. Two decades later, a series of food riots between 1931 to 1936 in downtown Oklahoma City brought attention to the unemployed. In the main riot of 1934, every person arrested gave an address within the study unit. With the decline of political radicalism, the district became solidly Democrat.

The growth of the Community Camp, from Reno to the Canadian River just west of Pennsylvania, also presented the possibility of social unrest. The camp was home to an estimated 500 families who lived in conditions that a committee of citizens of Oklahoma City determined to be a "disgrace." Local and federal authorities sought to disperse the camp's occupants to all parts of the city. Since they could not afford to pay rent, these families tended to gravitate back to the area.

In 1936, the Work Project Administration (WPA) sought to help alleviate these social problems by constructing the Will Rogers Courts at 1620 Heyman Street, next to Rotary Park in the northern part of the study unit. The \$2,000,000 project included 85 buildings and spread over 37 acres. Will Rogers Courts provided housing to 354 families with incomes ranging from \$9 to \$25 a week. Rent for two-to-five room apartments ranged from \$13.25 to \$17.50 per week. The W.P.A.'s Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State described the units as:

...buildings with flat roofs ... (with) nearly all one story in height; a few are two stories high.



... Apartments are supplied with gas ranges, refrigerators, and shades; the management maintains for tenants a library, a kindergarten, 'Toyland,' and other play facilities for children. There is an active women's club. Donald Gordon was the architect, and landscaping was done under the supervision of the city's parks department.

This housing development and the adjacent park are identified as the potential Will Rogers Courts Historic District.

To the south and east of Will Rogers Courts stretch Rotary Park; modest frame houses, with large lots, and streets that often lacked curbs; and expanses of vacant lots with an occasional oil well. Beyond the eastern border of the study unit is an airfield and a surrounding green space. The cumulative effect of the physical environment is to create the image of a small town. To the south, across a drainage area, is a modest low cost apartment complex. Further to the south and the southwest is a modest suburban neighborhood. Houses range from comfortably middle class to small shotgun houses. Even in the more affluent areas, fruit and pecan trees seem to outnumber shade trees, and vegetable gardens are more prominent than flower gardens. The total effect of the entire area is a reminder of how rural Oklahomans struggled to achieve economic stability.

After World War II, residents of the area built a distinctly "southside" working class and middle class community. They often found employment in the automotive related field. The physical legacy has been pejoratively described as "block after block of auto salvage yards and shops." Their churches tended to be Southern Baptist and other fundamentalist denominations. Politically, the area is very conservative on social, and "law and order" issues, while it retains a commitment to labor unions and economic populism. It has a reputation for being extremely conservative; yet, the area votes heavily for some of Oklahoma's most liberal officeholders, who grew up on the southside and who are respected for their loyalty to their neighborhood. During the 1960s, disputes involving racial desegregation and generational conflict were exceptionally intense. The area's culture remains complex, however, as is the history that shaped it.

## Study Unit Six

### **Boundaries:**

Study Unit Six is bounded by Reno Avenue, Shields Boulevard, S.W. 29th Street, and Shartel. It is primarily a residential area with industrial and commercial uses.

### **Listed and Proposed Districts:**

#### National Register Districts

No National Register Districts are in Study Unit Six.

#### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

No new potential districts were identified in this survey.

#### Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

No potential districts were proposed by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office.

#### Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County Survey

The following districts were proposed by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey:

1. South Walker Industrial District
2. S.W. Third Industrial District

Please note: Both of these districts are contained within the Riverside Historic District as a result of the Reconnaissance Survey of a Portion of Central Oklahoma City.

Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated

The following districts were proposed by the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. This study concurs with those recommendations:

1. Riverside Historic District
2. Capitol Hill Historic District

Please note: Both of these districts have boundary modifications proposed as a result of the Reconnaissance Survey of a Portion of Central Oklahoma City.

Areas Warranting Further Study to Determine Eligibility

No areas warranting further study to determine eligibility were identified.

## District Description

1. **South Walker Industrial District:** An industrial district roughly bounded by S.W. 8th, Walker, S.W. 10th, and Lee. (Please refer to the Industrial Resources Survey of Oklahoma County for exact boundaries.) This area is the lynch pin of the two legs of the Riverside residential district. One of its most significant buildings is the Taylor Marble and Tile Company at 515 S.W. 9th. This area possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
2. **S.W. Third Industrial District:** An industrial district roughly encompassed by S.W. 3rd between Walker and Shartel. (Please refer to the Industrial Resources Survey of Oklahoma County for exact boundaries.) This area lies on the north boundary of the proposed Riverside Historic District. It possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
3. **Riverside Historic District:** A primarily residential neighborhood with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 3rd and Walker, proceeding south on Walker to S.W. 8th, proceeding east on S.W. 8th to Robinson, proceeding south on Robinson to S.W. 12th, proceeding west on S.W. 12th to Walker, proceeding north on Walker to S.W. 11th, proceeding west on S.W. 11th to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to S.W. 3rd, and proceeding east on S.W. 3rd to the intersection of S.W. 3rd and Walker. Riverside is primarily a residential area with industrial and commercial uses on its S.W. 4th, Walker and Robinson boundaries. The residences in Riverside are mostly bungalows and Folk Victorian, with some National Folk and Shotgun houses. Riverside also has individually eligible buildings, including the Riverside School at 415 S.W. 11th and Little Flower Church at 1125 S. Walker. Little Flower's construction was concurrent with the first movement of Hispanics into the neighborhood, and the neighborhood still has a strong hispanic identity. Riverside was first identified as a potential historic district in Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated, however, the boundaries of the neighborhood have been modified as a result of this survey. (The former boundaries were the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, S.W. 15th, and Shartel.) The modified boundaries take in the South Walker and S.W. Third Industrial Districts, as well as a residential area to the north of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway. The proposed Riverside Historic District possesses the integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association required for status as a National Register district.
4. **Capitol Hill Historic District:** A primarily residential neighborhood with a historic commercial district along S.W. 25th (traditionally known as Commerce.)

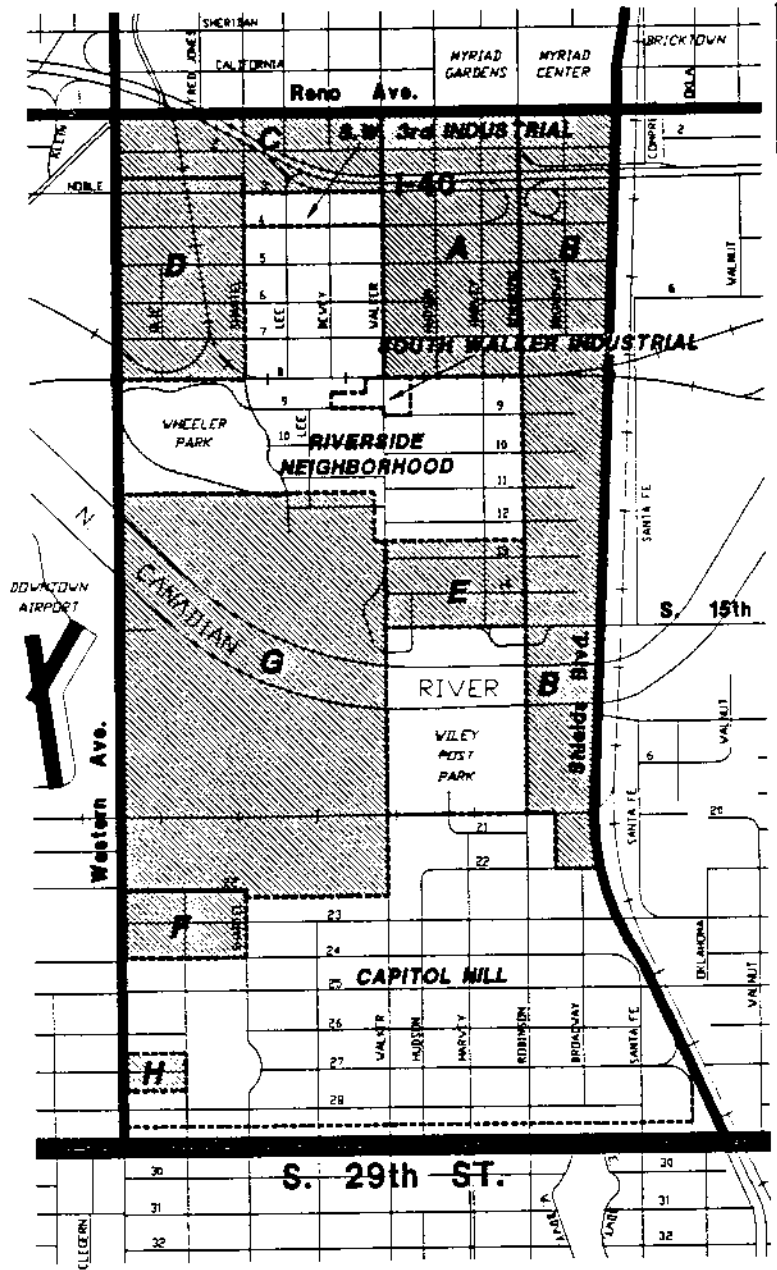
Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 22nd and Shields, proceeding southeast on Shields to S.W. 29th, proceeding west on S.W. 29th to Western, proceeding north on Western to S.W. 28th, proceeding east on S.W. 28th to Olie, proceeding north on Olie to S.W. 27th, proceeding west on S.W. 27th to Western, proceeding north on Western to S.W. 24th, proceeding east on S.W. 24th to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to S.W. 23rd, proceeding east on S.W. 23rd to Walker, proceeding north on Walker to S.W. 21st, proceeding east on S.W. 21st to halfway between Robinson and Broadway, proceeding south from that point two blocks to S.W. 22nd, and proceeding east on S.W. 22nd to the intersection of S.W.22nd and Shields Boulevard. Capitol Hill's residences are primarily bungalows with some Shotguns. It also has a number of individually eligible buildings, including the Capitol Hill Junior High School at 2717 S. Robinson and the Capitol Hill Hospital at 2400 S. Harvey. A number of Moderne buildings were also identified on S.W. 25th, including the Yale Theater at 229 S.W. 25th and the Metro Supply Company at 328 S.W. 25th. Another fine Moderne building is a former clinic at 301 S.W. 23rd (across the street from the Capitol Hill Hospital.) Capitol Hill was incorporated separately from Oklahoma City in 1904, and despite its absorption by Oklahoma City, it still has a strong separate identity. Capitol Hill was first identified as a potential historic district in Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated, however, the boundaries of the proposed district have been modified as a result of this survey. (The former boundaries virtually the same, however, now two legs on S.W. 25th and S.W. 28th from Shartel to Western are included, as is Mount St. Mary's complex bounded by S.W. 25th, Olie, S.W. 28th and Olie.) The proposed Capitol Hill Historic District possesses the integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association required for status as a National Register district.

#### **Areas Which do not Warrant Further Study**

- A. An area bounded by Reno, Robinson, S.W. 8th, and Walker. This area contains commercial and residential buildings which have lost their architectural integrity.
- B. The boundaries of Area B are defined by starting at the intersection of Reno Avenue and Shields Boulevard and proceeding south S.E. 22 Street, proceeding west to the half-way point between Broadway and Robinson avenues, proceeding north to S.E. 20th Street, proceeding west to Robinson Avenue, proceeding north on Robinson to Reno, and proceeding east on Reno to the intersection of Reno and Shields Boulevard. This area primarily consists of highway right-of-way and has been almost vacated.
- C. An area bounded by Reno, Walker, S.W. 2nd, and Western. This area is highway right-of-way.

- D. An area bounded by S.W. 2nd, Shartel, the St. Louis and Santa Fe Railway, and Western is composed of predominantly new industrial and commercial buildings, vacant lots, scattered bungalows, and railroad right-of-way.
- E. An area bounded by S.W. 13th, Shields, S.W. 15th, and Walker is occupied mainly by houses which have lost their architectural integrity, and by vacant lots.
- F. An area bounded by S.W. 22nd, Shartel, S.W. 24th, and Western is occupied by houses which have lost their architectural integrity.
- G. An area with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 12th and Walker, proceeding south on Walker to S.W. 22nd, proceeding west on S.W. 22nd to Western, proceeding north on Western to S.W. 12th, and proceeding east on S.W. 12th to the intersection of S.W. 12th and Walker. This area is occupied by the Canadian river bed and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway right-of-way.
- H. An area bounded by S.W. 26th, Olie, S.W. 27th and Western composed of residences which have lost their architectural integrity
- I. Wheeler Park. An area defined by Western Avenue, S.w. 8th Street, Shartel Avenue, and S.w. 11th Street. Although the park was developed in the early part of the twentieth century, the original buildings and structures are no longer extant.
- J. Wiley Post Park. An area defined by S.W. 15th Street, Robinson Avenue, S.W. 20th Street, and Walker Avenuen. The Wiley Post Park Clubhouse, listed at S.W. 17th and Robinson, is located in the park and was identified by the WPA survey. The remainder of the park does not warrant further study.

# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



## STUDY UNIT 6

Prepared by: The City of Oklahoma City,  
Neighborhood & Community Planning Dept.

## **Significant Buildings**

### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

#### **Individually Eligible:**

1. Dryer Clark & Dryer Oil Company, 701/709 S.W. 3rd.
2. Residence, 313 S.W. 24th.
3. Little Flower School, 526 S.W. 10th.
4. Riverside School, 400 S.W. 11th.
5. Capitol Hill (Yale) Theater, 229 S.W. 25th.
6. Knob Hill Theater (Oklahoma Opry), 404 S.W. 25th.
7. Residence, 515 S.W. 28th.
8. Residential/Commercial, 235/237 S.W. 29th.
9. Capitol Hill Hospital, 2400 S. Harvey.
10. Congregation Emanuel Synagogue, 528 W. Reno Avenue.
11. Capitol Hill Junior High School, 2717 S. Robinson Avenue.
12. Vibert Drake Building, 2916/2920 S. Robinson Avenue.
13. Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 2706 S. Shartel Avenue.
14. Convent of Our Lady of Mercy/Mt. St. Mary's Academy, 2801 S. Shartel Avenue.
15. Little Flower Church, 1125 S. Walker Avenue.
16. Sautbine Building, 2424 S. Walker Avenue.

#### **Warrants Further Study:**

1. Conway Springs Bottling Company, 726 S.W. 3rd.
2. Clark's Garage, 819 S.W. 3rd.
3. Cain's Truck Lines, 817 S.W. 6th.
4. Barbour Transportation Company, 217 S.W. 7th.
5. Tavern and House of Prostitution, 229 S.W. 13th.
6. Clinic, 2333 S. Harvey.
7. United Brethren Church, 33 S.W. 25th.
8. Capitol Hill Baptist Church, 301 S.W. 25th.
9. Metro Supply Company, 328 S.W. 25th.
10. Taylor Marble and Tile, 515 S.W. 9th Street.

## **National Register Buildings**

1. Union Depot, 300 S.W. 7th, 5/16/78.



### **Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County**

1. Auto Lite Battery Corporation, 600 S.W. 3rd.
2. Capitol City (Big-4) Ice & Cold Storage Co., 812-822 S. Walker.
3. C.C. Cooke Company, 512 S.W. 3rd.
4. Oklahoma City Pottery Company Kiln, 520 S.W. 12th.
5. Oklahoma Spring Bed Manufacturing Company, 712 S. Broadway.
6. Taylor Marble and Tile Company, 515 S.W. 9th.
7. Tibbs-Dorsey Manufacturing Company, 501 S.W. 9th.
8. Wilbert Burial Vault of Oklahoma, 726 S.W. 3rd.

### **WPA Survey**

1. Wiley Post Park Clubhouse, S.W. 17th and Robinson.

### **Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory**

1. Residence, 2804 S. Broadway.
2. Residence, 2300 S. Harvey.
3. Church of the Little Flower, 1125 S. Walker.
4. St. Mary's Academy, 2801 S. Shartel.

## Historic Context

Study Unit Six stretches from Reno on the north to S.W. 29th on the south, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad tracks on the east and Western and Shartel (Western) on the west. On the north, the area includes the S.W. Third Industrial District, the South Walker Industrial District, Wheeler Park, and the proposed Riverside historic district. In the middle towards the east boundary is Wiley Post Park. On the south is the potential Capitol Hill historic district. The potential Riverside Historic District is primarily a residential neighborhood with boundaries defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 3rd and Walker, proceeding south to S.W. 8th and Walker, proceeding east on N.W. 8th to Robinson, proceeding south on Robinson to S.W. 12th, proceeding west on S.W. 12th to Walker, proceeding north on Walker to S.W. 11th, proceeding west on S.W. 11th to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to S.W. 3rd, and proceeding east on S.W. 3rd to the intersection of S.W. 3rd and Walker. The area is composed primarily of numerous pockets of bungalows, National Folk, Folk Victorian and shotgun houses which have retained their architectural integrity. It also includes potentially individually eligible buildings including Little Flower Church, Little Flower School, and Riverside School; as well as a neighborhood store constructed in 1928 at 711 S.W. 7th which is still in use.

A sprawling warehouse district, as well as vacant lots resulting from slum clearance, compromise the cohesiveness of the northern portion of the study unit. However, an area bounded by S.W. 3rd, Walker, S.W. 8th and Shartel retains its integrity and should be added to the Riverside historic district originally defined in Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. The area previously defined by that document also suffers from an encroachment of vacant lots and new or extensively modified buildings; but the effects have been less intrusive and confined mostly to the south and east boundaries. This has necessitated revisions to the original boundaries of the proposed Riverside historic district. South Robinson, rather than the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, should be the east boundary; and S.W. 11th and 12th Streets, rather than S.W. 15th Street, should be the south boundary.

Riverside's first occupants settled there in 1905. Doctors, businessmen, clerks, and skilled workers were attracted by the quiet environs and the charming Folk Victorian cottages that became a dominant house type in Riverside.

Riverside benefitted by its proximity to Wheeler Park, the city's first amusement center. Among its features were a zoological gardens, vaudeville acts, and a scenic railway. The importance of Wheeler Park, Wiley Post Park, and the Canadian River to the residents of Riverside are reflected in some of Riverside's original street names, including Cedar, Maple, Elm, Hickory, Oak, and Ash. (These named east/west streets were changed to numbered streets in 1930.)

The most notable building and a symbol of the Hispanic community in Riverside is Little Flower Catholic Church, located at 1125 S. Walker Avenue. Little Flower was built by the Carmelite Order in 1927, and its construction coincided with the first Hispanic migration into the neighborhood. The large brick church and its very tall belfry at the intersection of its two wings provides a focus for Hispanics who now comprise more than 50 percent of the neighborhood. It is a community center, as well as a church. Another impressive structure is Riverside School, perhaps the only Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival public school building, located at 400 S.W. 11th Street.

The social history of the Riverside district was not untroubled. In 1923, a massive flood destroyed the zoo at Wheeler Park and prompted a general decline of the area. Moreover, economic decline in the warehouse district on the north transformed the area into a square mile section with the worst crime in the city. A 1943 master's thesis described the northern portion of the potential district as follows:

The transition area of the city lies between Washington on the south and Main Street on the north from Santa Fe tracks on the east to Western Avenue on the west. This district was abandoned by the better class of poor when the entrenchment of business made it undesirable for residence.

The thesis then described the Riverside neighborhood in unflattering terms, commenting, "Still further to the south is a dilapidated district where Negroes, whites, and Mexicans live indiscriminately."

Across the river to the south is Capitol Hill. This district was once an independent city and it retains a distinctive ambiance. South Oklahoma City's origins can be traced to a dispute on the afternoon of April 22, 1889. Numerous participants of the famed land run arrived in central Oklahoma City and found that the best lots had been taken. They charged that their rivals who had already staked claims were "Sooners" who had slipped into the territory before noon on the day of the run. They then staked out a town to the south of the city which grew into Capitol Hill. Capitol Hill was incorporated separately from Oklahoma City in 1904, and despite its later absorption by Oklahoma City, it still has a strong separate identity.

Capitol Hill's boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 22nd and Shields, proceeding southeast on Shields to S.W. 29th, proceeding west on S.W. 29th to Western, proceeding north on Western to S.W. 28th, proceeding east on S.W. 28th to Olie, proceeding north on Olie to S.W. 27th, proceeding west on S.W. 27th to Western, proceeding north on Western to S.W. 24th, proceeding east on S.W. 24th to Shartel, proceeding north on Shartel to S.W. 23rd, proceeding east on S.W. 23rd to Walker, proceeding north on Walker to S.W. 21st, proceeding east on S.W. 21st to halfway between Robinson and Broadway, proceeding south from that point two blocks

to S.W. 22nd, and proceeding east on S.W. 22nd to the intersection of S.W.22nd and Shields Boulevard.

Capitol Hill's residential areas are noteworthy for their three-room shotgun houses for workers and more substantial bungalows. The many historic brick buildings in its business district, located along S.W. 25th (Commerce Street) from Broadway to Walker Avenue, were built during the oil boom of the 1920s. A number of Moderne buildings were also identified on S.W. 25th, including the Yale Theater at 229 S.W. 25th and the Metro Supply Company at 328 S.W. 25th, which was built in 1948. Other distinctive buildings in Capitol Hill include: the Capitol Hill Hospital building, Capitol Hill Junior High School, the United Brethren Church, and the A.H. Parmelee house. Another Moderne building is the former Clark Clinic at 2333 S. Harvey Avenue, (across the street from the Capitol Hill Hospital) also built in 1948.

Capitol Hill was previously identified as a potential historic district in Oklahoma City 1850 to 1930: Platted, Parked, and Populated, but a change in the boundary is recommended. It is recommended that the district be expanded to include the Mount St. Mary's Complex bounded by S.W. 25th, Shartel, S.W. 28th, and Olie; and Southwest 25th Street and Southwest 28th Street from Shartel Avenue to Western Avenue, which are residential streets which retain their architectural integrity and are similar to the rest of the residential areas in Capitol Hill.

## Study Unit Seven

### **Boundaries:**

Study Unit Seven is bounded by Reno, Byers Avenue, S.W. 29th Street, and Shields Boulevard. It is primarily a residential area with commercial uses on the west boundary and industrial uses on the north and south boundaries.

### **Listed and Proposed Districts:**

#### National Register Districts

No National Register Districts are in Study Unit Five.

#### Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City

The following potential districts were identified in this survey:

1. Shidler-Wheeler #1
2. Shidler-Wheeler #2

Please Note: Shidler-Wheeler was identified as a potential district in the study Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated, however, the boundary recommendations for Shidler-Wheeler have been substantially altered as a result of this study.

#### Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office

No potential districts were proposed by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office.

#### Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County Survey

The following districts were proposed by the Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County survey:

1. Oilfield Row Industrial District (western portion)

Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated

The following districts were proposed by the study, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated. This study concurs with those recommendations:

Please refer to note under "Reconnaissance Survey."

Areas Warranting Further Study to Determine Eligibility

No areas warranting further study to determine eligibility were identified.

## District Description

Please Note: Shidler-Wheeler was identified as a potential district in the study Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated, however, the boundary recommendations for Shidler-Wheeler have been substantially altered as a result of this study. The original boundaries were roughly S.W. 23rd, Byers, S.W. 29th, and Central for the south portion; and S.W. 10th, Laird, S.W. 12th and Durland for the north portion.

1. **Shidler-Wheeler #1:** A primarily residential area, composed of bungalows, Folk Victorian and Shotgun houses. A feature is a row of brick veneer Shotguns on S.W. 15th. Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 11th and Laird, proceeding south on Laird to S.W. 15th, proceeding west on S.W. 15th to Central, proceeding north northeast on Central to S.W. 11th, and proceeding east on S.W. 11th to the intersection of S.W. 11th and Laird. (Although Shidler-Wheeler #1 is adjacent to the project study area, it was documented in this survey to provide continuity between the 1982 survey, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated, and this survey. This area possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
2. **Shidler-Wheeler #2:** A primarily residential area, composed of bungalows, Folk Victorian and Shotgun houses. Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 19th and Byers, proceeding south on Byers to S.W. 23rd, proceeding west on S.W. 23rd to Central, proceeding north on Central to S.W. 19th, and proceeding east on S.W. 19th to the intersection of S.W. 19th and Byers. This area possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
3. **Oilfield Row Industrial District (western portion along S.W. 29th):** An industrial district partially in this study unit. It reflects the importance of the oil industry in Oklahoma as an employer and generator of ancillary businesses and industries. This area possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

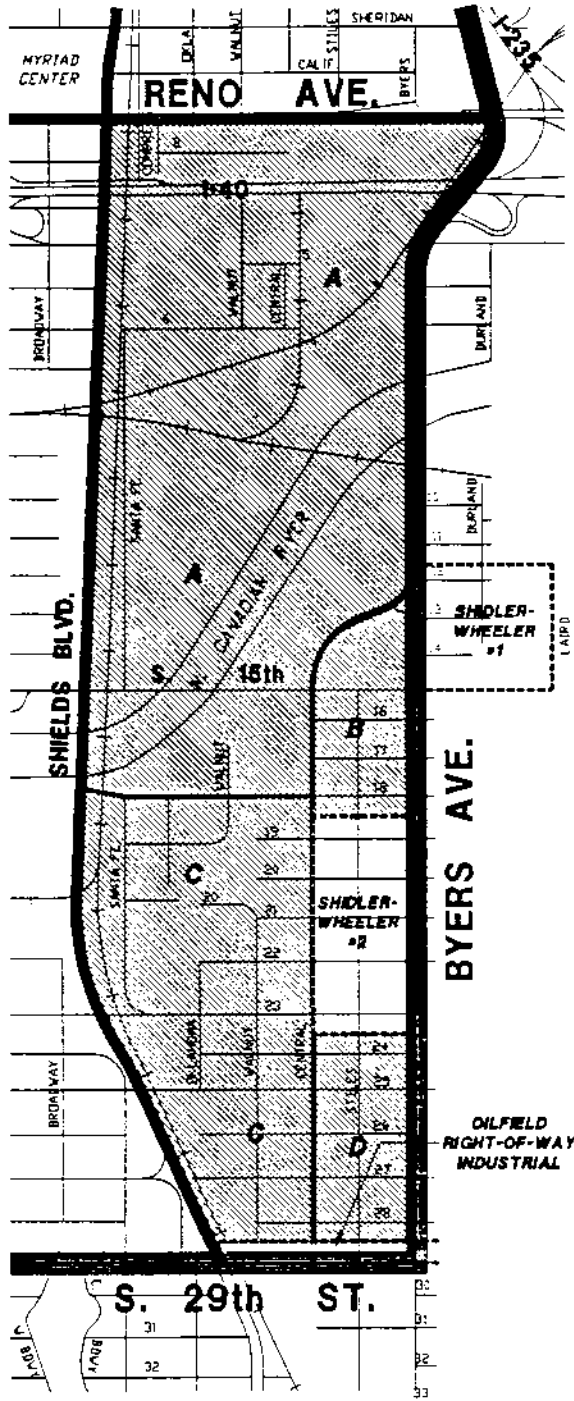
### **Areas Which do not Warrant Further Study**

- A. An area bounded by Reno, Central, S.W. 18th, and Shields. This is an undeveloped area, roughly divided by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway.
- B. An area bounded by S.W. 15th, Byers, S.W. 18th, and Central. This is a residential area whose buildings have experienced a loss of architectural integrity.







- C. An area bounded by S.W. 18th, Central, S.W. 29th and Shields. This area has new industrial buildings along the west boundary. Many of its residences have experienced a loss of architectural integrity.
- D. An area bounded by S.W. 24th, Byers, S.W. 28th, and Central. This area has new industrial buildings along the south boundary. It also has residences which have experienced a loss of architectural integrity.



# ARCHITECTURAL/HISTORIC SURVEY



## LEGEND

-  Survey Area
-  Study Unit
-  Identified Historic District
-  Area does not warrant further study
-  Area warrants further study
-  \* Identified by Recon Survey 1991-92



Prepared by: The City of Oklahoma City,  
Neighborhood & Community Planning Dept.

## STUDY UNIT 7

## **Significant Buildings**

### **Reconnaissance Survey of a Central Portion of Oklahoma City**

#### **Individually Eligible:**

1. 333/335 S.E. 27th.
2. 5 S.E. 28th.
3. Shidler School, 1415 S. Byers Avenue.

#### **Warrants Further Study:**

1. Residence, 413 S.E. 17th.
2. Residence, 137 S.E. 25th.
3. Church of Christ, 2000 S. Central Avenue.
4. Harmony Hill Tabernacle, 2901 S. Central Avenue.

### **National Register Buildings**

None listed.

### **Industrial Resources of Oklahoma County**

1. Baker Tools, 45 N.E. 27th.
2. Liebmann's Independent Ice Company II, 303 S.E. 29th.

### **WPA Survey**

None listed.

### **Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory**

None listed.

## Historic Context

Within study Unit Seven are three potential historic districts. Two districts, Shidler-Wheeler #1 and Shidler-Wheeler #2 constitute a redefinition of the two areas originally proposed as the Shidler-Wheeler historic district in Oklahoma City 1850 to 1930: Platted, Parked, and Populated. A third proposed historic area is the western portion of the Oilfield Row Industrial District, most of which lies to the south and east of the project area boundaries.

**Shidler-Wheeler #1** is primarily a residential area, composed of bungalows, Folk Victorian and Shotgun houses. A feature is a row of brick veneer Shotguns on the north side of S.W. 15th. Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 11th and Laird, proceeding south on Laird to S.W. 15th, proceeding west on S.W. 15th to Byers, proceeding north on Byers to S.W. 11th, and proceeding east on S.W. 11th to the intersection of S.W. 11th and Laird. (Although Shidler-Wheeler #1 is adjacent to the project study area, it was documented in this survey to provide continuity between the 1982 survey, Oklahoma City 1890 to 1930: Platted, Parked and Populated, and this survey.

**Shidler-Wheeler #2** is also a primarily residential area, composed of bungalows, Folk Victorian and Shotgun houses. Its boundaries are defined by starting at the intersection of S.W. 19th and Byers, proceeding south on Byers to S.W. 23rd, proceeding west on S.W. 23rd to Central, proceeding north on Central to S.W. 19th, and proceeding east on S.W. 19th to the intersection of S.W. 19th and Byers.

The Shidler-Wheeler neighborhood consists of sixteen subdivisions which were mostly platted by 1910. From 1910 to 1925, skilled and unskilled workers lived in its "small functionally designed cottages." The area provided inexpensive housing for oil-field workers during the oil boom of the 1920s. The area includes shotgun houses, and simple one-story clapboard houses, as well as two architecturally impressive schools, Shidler School, located at the northwest corner of S.W. 15th and Byers Avenue; and Wheeler School, located at the northeast corner of the intersection of S.W. 29th and Byers Avenue.

During the 1930s, social workers analyzed the social conditions of the area, which had always been harsh but became deplorable during the Depression. The unemployment rate was 23.6 percent for adult men and 60 percent for young persons. Twenty-two percent earned less than \$10 a month and 73 percent earned less than \$75. Twenty-four percent said that their homes were worth less than \$200, and 94 percent claimed that their property was worth less than \$2,000. The physical condition of 40 percent of the children appeared "poor" or "very poor," and only 17 percent appeared to be in good condition.

This continues to be a low income area, however, this has probably contributed to the preservation of a large number of shotgun houses in Shidler-Wheeler.

On the south border of the study unit is the western portion of the Oilfield Row Industrial District. These businesses grew with the oil boom of the 1920s, which resulted in 1,600 wells being drilled in Oklahoma City and the outlying areas between 1928 and 1938. Remnants of many of those wells remain visible throughout southern and eastern Oklahoma City. After the famous "Wild Mary Sudik" oilfield blowout of 1930, a controversy ensued over the drilling of wells inside the city limits. In a compromise, the City Council stiffened drilling safety regulations and limited drilling to the southeast portion of town. Thus, Shidler-Wheeler has probably been impacted by the physical effects of oil well drilling more than any other part of Oklahoma City.

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### Secondary Works

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A coffee-table book published for residents of the neighborhood.

Burbank, Garin. "Socialism in an Oklahoma Boom Town," Socialism in the Cities, Bruce Stave, ed. New York: Kennikat, 1975.

An excellent scholarly study which includes the best surviving information about ward voting patterns in Oklahoma City elections before World War I.

Chandler, Allison and Stephen Maquire. When Oklahoma Took the Trolley. Glendale, Calif: Interurbans, 1980.

A basic chronicle of streetcar and railway transportation in central Oklahoma. Historical analysis is somewhat weak, but includes good photographs and valuable maps and outlines of transportation routes.

Ellison, Ralph. Going to the Territory. New York: Random House, 1986.

A brilliant intellectual biography. The prose is challenging and the book's philosophical arguments are complex, but it is well worth the effort. Ellison's memories of the great cultural contributions of African American Oklahomans should be read by all Oklahomans and all Americans.

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A subjective historical narrative of little overall significance but it provides information which can be valuable in local historical surveys.

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McRill, Albert. And Satan Came Also: An Inside Story of a City's Social and Political History. Oklahoma City: Britton Press, 1955.

A self-serving though fascinating account of the forgotten history of Oklahoma. A very enjoyable narrative which contains historical insights which are as valuable or even more valuable than those of modern academic historians.

Meredith, Howard, and George Shirk. "Oklahoma City: Growth and Reconstruction 1889-1939," Chronicles of Oklahoma 55 (Fall 1977) 293-308.

A brief chronology of early Oklahoma City business history. The historical interpretation is shallow, and it lacks objectivity. As an academic journal article, it is very poor, but it provides some valuable information.

Robinson, James. "Anti-Sedition Legislation and Loyalty Investigations in Oklahoma." Norman: Bureau of Government Research, 1956.

An exhaustive study of anti-sedition legislation and its effects in Oklahoma.

Stewart, Roy. Born Grown: An Oklahoma City History. Oklahoma City: Fidelity Bank, 1974.

A vanity press book which is interesting only as a primary document which illustrates the worldview of financial leaders who presided over urban renewal in the 1960s.

Teall, Kay. (ed.) Black History in Oklahoma: A Resource Book. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma City Public School System 1971.

An outstanding curricula guide prepared for the Oklahoma City School System. Its great strength is as an anthology of primary documents which help students reclaim a lost heritage.

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An uneven but stimulating guide prepared by a diverse group of talented and opinionated writers, it has a vitality which is usually lacking in modern guides to Oklahoma.

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The following are competent studies that were prepared as parts of the same research effort. They share a common methodology and quality. Each provides detailed information about Oklahoma City's forgotten poor. Together, they form an indispensable portrait of Oklahoma City's conditions during the Depression.

Chowning, Betty Katherine. "Social Factors Contributing to Dependency of One Hundred Families." masters thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1943.

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Gibson, Mattie Cal. "The Dependent Family in the Oklahoma City Community Camp." masters thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1934.

Graham, Donald. "Red, White and Black: An Interpretation of Ethnic and Racial Attitudes of Agrarians Radicals in Texas and Oklahoma." masters thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1973.

An exhaustive study of racial segregation and political conflict in the southwest, including Oklahoma City.

Martineau, Mary Agnes. "Social Backgrounds of One Hundred and Fifty-Seven School Children Given Free Lunches," masters thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1942.

### Newspapers and Periodicals

Oklahoma City Advertiser, February 15, 1954; April 4, 1963; and December 21, 1961.  
Editorials and analysis of social welfare activities written by the premier journalist of Oklahoma history, Freda Ameringer.

The Daily Oklahoman, May 10, 1911; January 28, 1931; October 10, 1940.  
News accounts of variable accuracy which describe notable episodes of class conflict in Oklahoma City.

### Government and Government Related Documents

City Planning Commission. The Comprehensive City Plan: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. July 1949.

Although its effectiveness as a planning document is debatable, this document has a compilation of charts and maps which are extremely important historical documents.

Oklahoma History Preservation Survey. "Final Survey Report: Reconnaissance Level Survey of Oklahoma County Industrial Resources." August 1991.

A thematic survey of historic industrial properties in Oklahoma County. Thumbnail sketches of the history of the various types of significant industries which contributed to Oklahoma's early development are provided, as well as many maps showing the locations of historic districts and buildings. A history of the architectural development of industrial buildings in the state is also provided.

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untitled brochure circa 1983.

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A detailed map compiled for fire insurance ratings that contains extremely valuable information about the physical development of Oklahoma City; including building footprints, building systems and materials, number of stories, and general categories of use. Maps were frequently revised and reissued and provide a detailed chronology of development.



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