

BLUE SPRINGS **HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY**



Main Street Looking West, Blue Springs, Mo.

PREPARED FOR:
The City of Blue Springs, Missouri

PREPARED BY:
Rosin Preservation, LLC

DRAFT June 30, 2013

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Blue Springs (City) contracted Rosin Preservation, LLC to conduct a reconnaissance-level survey of historic resources within the original corporate boundaries of the city. The heart of the original town site established in 1879, this 135 acre area contains the majority of the commercial and residential resources associated with the early development of Blue Springs.

The survey area includes roughly forty-eight blocks flanking Main and Walnut streets. Twenty blocks lie east of the railroad tracks; twenty-eight blocks are west of the railroad tracks (*Figure 1*). The Survey Area contains all of the resources necessary to sustain a community: government, commercial, educational, religious, and residential. Historically, Main Street was the primary commercial corridor in this small town. Single family residences, churches, and a school filled the grid of streets beyond the business district, primarily to the south and west. The business district ran perpendicular to the tracks of the Chicago and Alton Railroad, which passed through Blue Springs on a diagonal orientation to the street grid. Two hundred fifty-eight primary buildings and ninety-three secondary buildings, such as detached garages and sheds, were surveyed in this area. These resources reflect the growth of the city from the small settlement that relocated to be near the railroad in 1879 to the city that exemplified Post-War expansion and a suburban haven from a nearby metropolis. The southwest corner of the survey area contains the German Evangelical Pastors' Home Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register).¹

A survey in the late 1980s examined roughly the same area. Since then, some resources have been lost, some have been altered, and others have reached fifty years of age and can be evaluated for their historic significance. The City wishes to update their understanding of all resources within the defined survey boundary, with the goal of comprehending residential and commercial development patterns in the historic city core and identifying resources that may be eligible for financial incentives for preservation, such as state and federal historic tax credits.

The Blue Springs Historic Resources Survey encompasses two objectives:

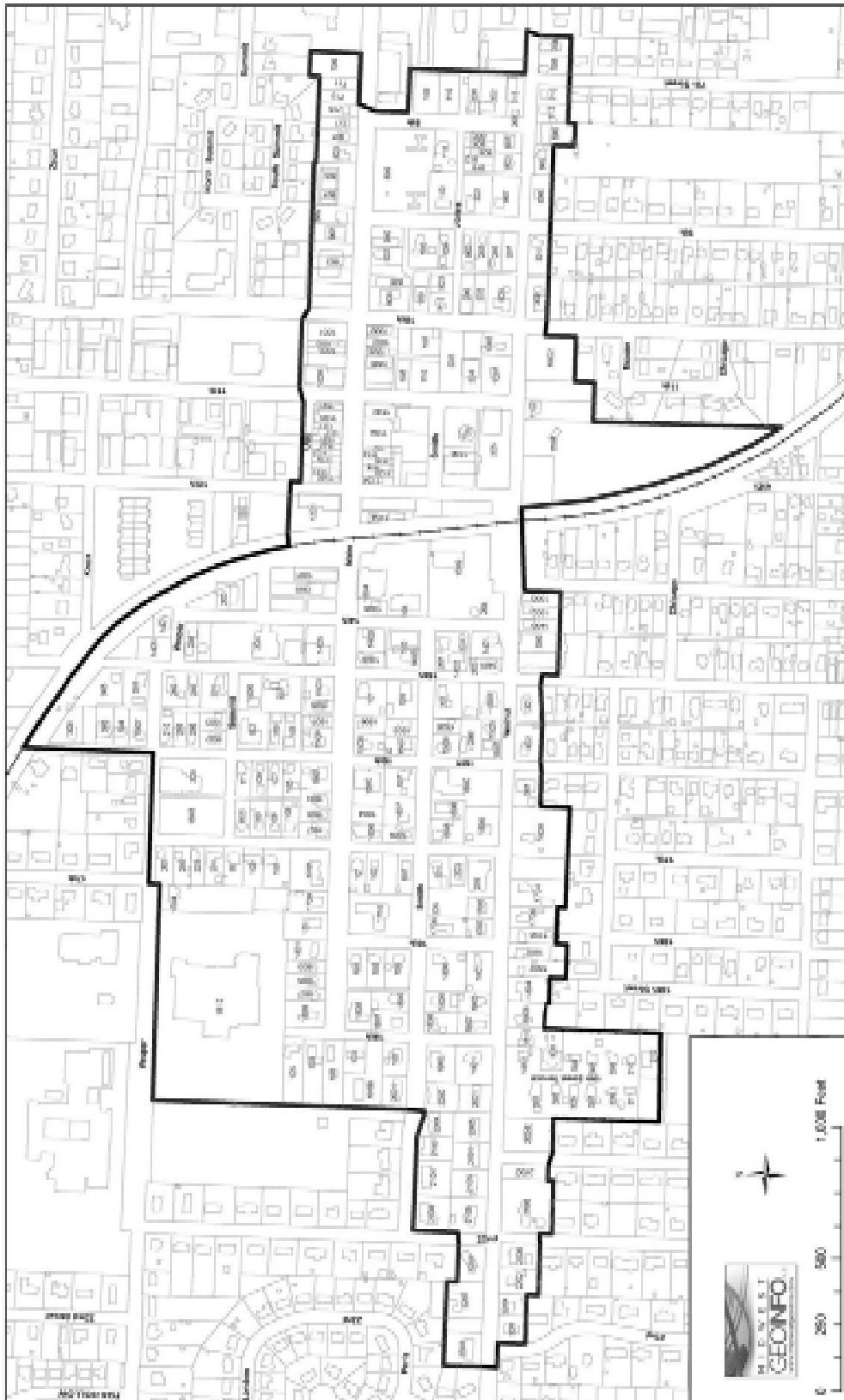
- 1) to identify, record, photograph, and evaluate through architectural/historic survey those individual properties and potential districts in the Survey Area that, on the basis of age, integrity and associations, meet the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and

¹ The German Evangelical Pastors' Home Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 13 October 1988.

- 2) to substantiate such assessments; and to identify and characterize those portions of the Survey Area which, on the basis of insufficient age or integrity, exclude them from consideration for nomination in the National Register of Historic Places and to substantiate such assessments.

During January and February 2013, Rosin Preservation principal Elizabeth Rosin, associate Rachel Nugent, and sub-consultants Brad Finch and Rebecca Reese performed survey activities. Ms. Nugent and Mr. Finch completed field survey and photography. Ms. Nugent and Ms. Reese entered data into a Microsoft Access Database. Volunteers from the City of Blue Springs completed archival research. Finally, Ms. Rosin and Ms. Nugent analyzed the data, prepared the historic context, and developed survey recommendations. Molly Gosnell with Midwest GeoInfo, LLC prepared the maps of project findings. Ms. Rosin, assisted by Ms. Nugent, prepared this report of findings.

FIGURE 1 – PROJECT AREA



METHODOLOGY

Rosin Preservation completed the Blue Springs Historic Resources Survey in conformance with the procedures for historic resources survey outlined in *National Register Bulletin 24: Guidelines for Local Survey: A Basis for Preservation Planning* and the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office *Instructions for Completing the Architectural/Historic Inventory Form*. Evaluation of resources for significance was in accordance with *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

The scope of work included the following:

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

FIELD SURVEY

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

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Historical research is critical to understanding the evolution of the built environment as well as the social history of the Survey Area. Members of the Blue Springs Historical Society and the Blue Springs Historic Preservation Commission, as well as interested residents volunteered their time to conduct archival research as part of the grant match for this project. Research occurred concurrently with field survey and data review. This approach allowed the team to merge field and research data to create a strong and understandable relationship between the events in Blue Springs' history and its built environment, to develop a historic context for the Survey Area, and to establish dates of construction for individual properties.

A variety of primary and secondary resources provided background information about the people, buildings, and developments that created the residential and commercial community that exists in 2013. The consultants reviewed the existing National Register nomination for the German Evangelical Pastors' Home Historic District and written histories of Blue Springs. Volunteer researchers waded through other pertinent primary and secondary source materials. Members of the Blue Springs Historical Society and the Blue Springs Historic Preservation Commission, such as city directories, historic photographs, and *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, gathered and compiled information for the consultants. Other sources included the Jackson County Historical Society, Midwest Genealogy Center, and *Google Books*. Jackson County Tax Assessor records provided dates of construction, although these had to be verified through field survey.

COMPILATION OF DATA

Rosin Preservation compiled survey information in a Microsoft Access database using a template based on the Missouri SHPO Historic Resources Survey Form. The database fields record each building's physical features (e.g., plan, materials, architectural style and/or property type, outbuildings, etc.) as well as historical information (e.g., date of construction, original and current function). When linked with digital records from past and future surveys, this database will enhance the understanding of historic resources in Blue Springs. The database can also use the City's parcel identification information system to link to Geographic Information System (GIS) and mapping software to facilitate analysis and to create visual presentations of the data more easily.

DATA ANALYSIS

The consultants analyzed three categories of data to identify contiguous historic districts and/or individual properties that appear potentially eligible for National Register listing. The following

three categories address issues important in determining the significance of a property or properties and its National Register eligibility.

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

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

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

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

ESTABLISHING DATES OF CONSTRUCTION AND PROPERTY HISTORIES

Historical maps and atlases, written histories of the area, and county tax assessor records provided the starting point for determining dates of construction. Because much of the Survey Area developed before the City began issuing or retaining building permits, the 1904 Map of Blue Springs and 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance map were used to narrow dates of construction for individual buildings. When historic accounts, county tax records, and historic maps did not provide conclusive information, architectural style and comparison to similar buildings in the Survey Area were used to estimate construction dates.

Volunteer researchers assisted Rosin Preservation by reviewing city directories from 1880-99, 1905, and 1975 to identify the names and occupations of historical residents and businesses in the Survey Area. Because there are very few city directories available for Blue Springs the original residents of many of the resources in the Survey Area are unknown.

EVALUATION OF INTEGRITY

All properties eligible for listing in the National Register, whether for individual significance or as contributing elements to a historic district, must retain sufficient architectural integrity to

convey the period of time in which they are significant.² The National Park Service uses the following areas to define integrity. A property must retain integrity in a majority of these areas to be eligible for the register.

- Location: The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.
- Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.
- Setting: The physical environment of a historic property.
- Materials: The physical elements that were combined during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.
- Workmanship: The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.
- Feeling: A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.
- Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.³

Based on visual inspection, each building received an integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor reflecting how much of the original design, workmanship, exterior materials, and overall feeling of a past period of time remain.⁴ When possible, comparison with historic photographs confirmed the retention or loss of historic features. The consultants employed a “glass half-full” approach to integrity evaluation, considering the reversibility of alterations as well as the quality of alterations. The following criteria served as the basis for rating architectural integrity in this survey.

Excellent

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- The exterior cladding material has not been altered;

² A contributing property to a historic district does not have to meet the same threshold for integrity as an individual landmark, but it must retain enough fabric to contribute to the significance of the district. Properties contributing to a district that is significant in the area of architecture must retain a higher degree of integrity than properties in a district that is significant for associations with an important individual or with historical events or patterns of history.

³ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, DC: National Register Publications, 1998), 45.

⁴ Architectural integrity differs from physical condition. A building with excellent integrity may be in very poor condition and, conversely, a building with very poor integrity may be in excellent condition.

- The majority of the building's openings are unaltered or were altered in a sensitive and appropriate manner using similar materials, profiles, and sizes as the original building elements;
- Significant decorative elements, including porches, are intact;
- Design elements intrinsic to the building's style are intact;
- The overall feeling or character of the building for the time period in which it was erected is intact. Changes over a period of time are sympathetic and compatible to the original design in color, size, scale, massing, and materials;
- Character-defining elements from the time period in which the building had significant associations with events or important individuals remain intact; and
- If over fifty years in age, the building appears to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or would be a contributing element to a historic district.

Good

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- Significant portions of original exterior cladding materials remain;
- Some alteration of original building openings or spaces has occurred using new materials and profiles, but not causing irreversible damage to the original configuration of openings and spaces;
- Significant decorative elements, including porches, remain intact;
- Alterations to the building are reversible and the historic character of the property could be easily restored;
- Additions to a secondary elevation are in an appropriate manner, respecting the materials, scale, and character of the original building design;
- The historic feeling or character of the building is slightly weakened by change or lack of maintenance; and
- The building would be a contributing element to a historic district and/or it might be independently eligible for register listing if restored in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Fair

- The original form and massing of the building are intact;
- Exterior cladding material has been altered or added; however, there is some indication upon visual inspection that if removed, enough of the original cladding material might remain that the property could be restored to its original appearance;
- The majority of the building's openings were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles, and sizes;
- Some alterations to significant decorative elements, including porches;
- Additions generally respect the materials, scale, and character of the original building design, but may be more difficult to reverse without altering the essential form of the building;
- Historic feeling or character of the building is compromised, but the property could be restored, although reversal of alterations and removal of inappropriate materials could be costly; and

- If restored in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, and if the property has associations with a district’s area of significance, the property might be a contributing resource to a historic district.

Poor

- The form and massing of the building were altered;
- Exterior materials were altered;
- The majority of the building’s openings, such as windows and doors, were altered in an inappropriate manner using new materials, profiles, and sizes;
- Multiple decorative elements, including porches, have been altered;
- Alterations are irreversible or would be extremely difficult, costly, and possibly physically damaging to the building to reverse;
- Later additions do not respect the materials, scale, or character of the original building design;
- The overall historic feeling and character of the building is significantly compromised; and
- Further investigations after removal of non-historic materials and alterations may reveal that the structure retains greater architectural integrity than originally apparent and should be re-evaluated.

NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

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

EVALUATING NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

In addition to retaining integrity of their historic architectural design, properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places must meet certain criteria of historic significance. Historic significance is the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture of a community, a state, or the nation. Information such as date, function, associations, and physical characteristics affect significance.

To be listed in the National Register, properties must have significance in at least one of the following areas.

- Criterion A: Association with events, activities, or broad patterns of history.
- Criterion B: Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- Criterion C: Embody distinctive characteristics of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a

significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

- Criterion D: Have yielded, or be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The consultants analyzed data relating to the architectural integrity and historic significance of each surveyed property to identify contiguous districts and individual properties that appear potentially eligible for National Register listing.⁵ Rosin Preservation used the following terminology to complete this analysis.

- **Individually Eligible** applies to properties that retain excellent architectural integrity and clearly represent associations with the established historic context(s). A property that independently meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation can also be contributing to a historic district if it falls within the district boundaries and has associations with the district's areas of significance.
- **Contributing to a District** applies to properties that do not retain sufficient integrity or associations to merit individual listing but would enhance the historic associations and the architectural qualities of a historic district. A National Register district is a significant concentration of sites, buildings, structures, or objects that are united historically or aesthetically by design, physical development, or historic events. Contributing properties do not have to be individually distinctive, but must contribute to a grouping that achieves significance as a whole. The majority of the components that define a district's historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole. Contributing buildings typically have "Excellent" or "Good" integrity, although there may be occasions where resources with "Fair" integrity are contributing.
- **Non-Contributing to a District** applies to individual properties located within a historic district that have lost their historical integrity, were not present during the period of significance or do not relate to the documented significance of the district. In some cases, non-contributing buildings, those with integrity ratings of "Fair," can be reclassified as contributing if alterations are reversed to reveal intact historic fabric and features.

⁵ SHPO staff makes official determinations of National Register eligibility for properties in Missouri.

- **Not Eligible** applies to individual properties that no longer possess historical integrity due to alterations or to properties that are located within a historic district but have lost their historical integrity, were not present during the period of significance or do not relate to the documented significance of the district. Buildings with integrity ratings of “Fair” may become eligible as contributing resources if non-historic alterations are reversed.
- **Less than Fifty Years of Age** applies to properties that are less than fifty years old and have not reached the general threshold for National Register eligibility. The National Park Service considers fifty years to be the length of time needed to develop historical perspective and to evaluate significance. The National Register Criteria do allow the designation of properties that are less than fifty years of age if they can document exceptional significance. For this Survey, the fifty-year cut-off was 1965. Buildings in this category that received integrity ratings of excellent or good may be eligible for the National Register once they reach fifty years.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

LOUISIANA PURCHASE TO THE CIVIL WAR

Eastern Jackson County was once hunting and gathering land for the Osage Indians from the seventeenth century into the early nineteenth century.⁶ After the purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803 and the establishment of trade routes to New Mexico, traders and explorers flooded into the area, along with those seeking to capitalize on these ventures by providing places to trade and obtain supplies. Although it is unclear when the actual spring was discovered, the survey area was identified as Blue Springs in expedition journals from 1824 and 1827. On an expedition from Franklin, Missouri to Santa Fe, New Mexico, M. M. Marmaduke recorded that after leaving Camp General Rendezvous (believed to be Fort Osage⁷), his party traveled ten miles to Blue Springs.⁸ A few years later, George C. Sibley led a team to survey and mark the Santa Fe Trail wagon route under a bill signed by President Monroe in 1825. By 1827, Sibley reached “the Blue Spring,” a natural spring noted for its bluish tint. Although Sibley did not consider it to be extraordinary, the Blue Spring was far enough from surrounding settlements to provide a good stopping place or rendezvous point for caravans traveling to Independence before heading west on the new Santa Fe Trail.

Once Missouri entered the Union in 1821 and obtained land from the Osage Nation in 1825, settlers from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia established homes along the Missouri River, bringing with them their Southern customs and values. The counties in which these families settled became known as Little Dixie. In Jackson County, settlers initially laid claim to land near the decommissioned Fort Osage but soon began to head inland. Within five years of Missouri statehood, this far western county contained numerous settlements, including Independence, Westport, Lone Jack, and Blue Springs.⁹ Jackson County was organized at the end of 1826 and established Independence as the county seat shortly thereafter. The county originally had three political townships, but subsequent growth required further subdivisions. Blue Springs was located in Slue Abar Township (renamed Sni-A-Bar in 1843), subdivided from the original Fort Osage Township in 1834, which extended from the Little Blue River to the east county line. Oak Grove was the only other settlement in Slue Abar Township, although by 1877 there were two additional settlements: Stony Point and Mecklin. (*Figure 2*).

⁶ Sally Schwenk, et al., "The Cultural Resources of Blue Springs, Missouri," (Blue Springs, Missouri, 1986), 46.

⁷ Fort Osage is located along the Missouri River at the northeast corner of Jackson County.

⁸ Meredith Miles Marmaduke, "Journal of M.M. Marmaduke of a trip from Franklin, Missouri to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 1824," Reprinted from the *Missouri Intelligencer*, September 2, 1825. Notes by F. A. Sampson (State Historical Society of Missouri, 1911). Google Books:

http://books.google.com/books?id=qnRNAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false (Accessed 3 May 2013).

⁹ Schwenk, 61.

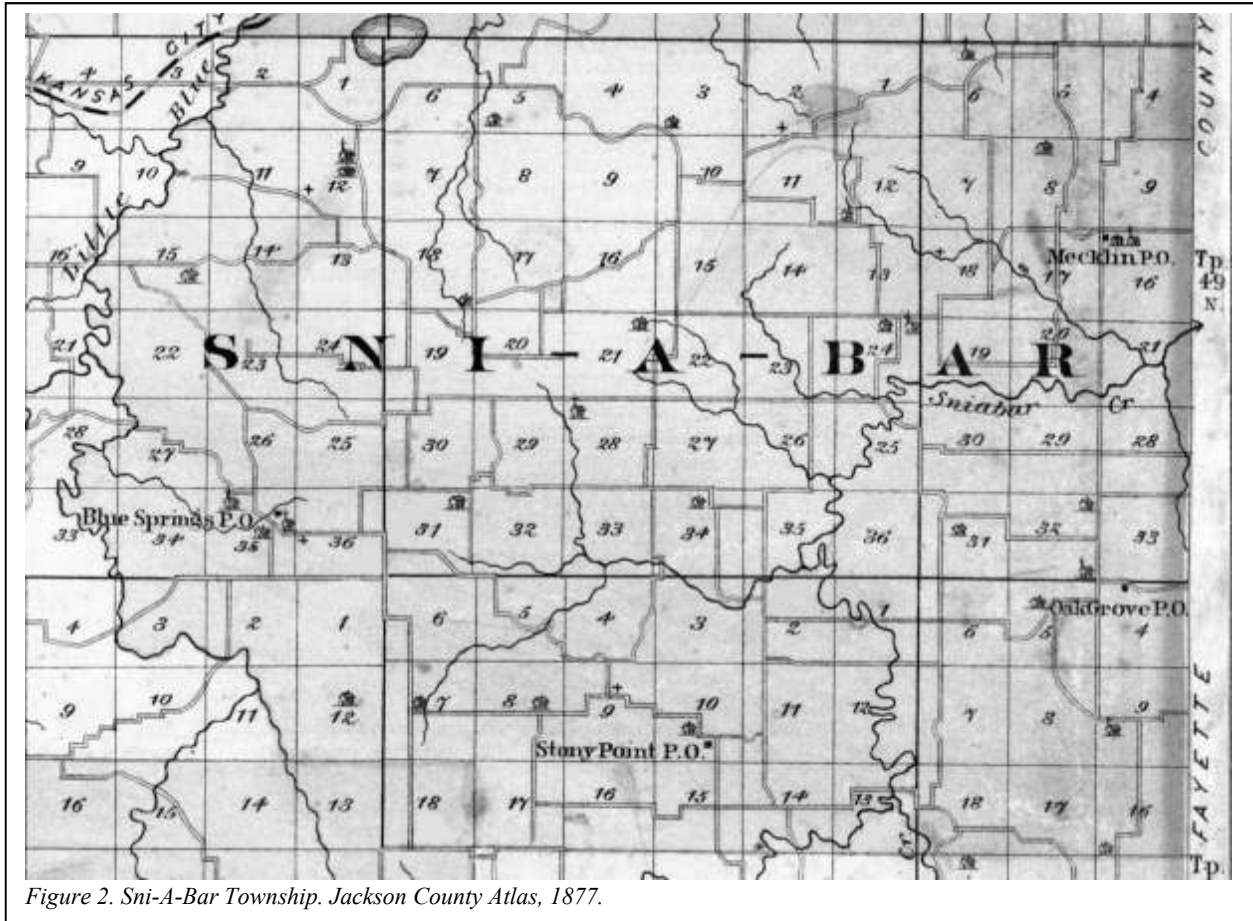


Figure 2. Sni-A-Bar Township. Jackson County Atlas, 1877.

The earliest documented settlers in the Blue Springs area were individuals from Virginia and Kentucky. At least eight individuals were known to have settled in the area in the early 1830s, including Jeremiah Wood, George Burrus, and William Clark. Another six individuals settled in the area by the end of the decade.¹⁰ These men cleared the land, constructed homes, and worked the soil.

In addition to other land in the area that he purchased in 1833, Jeremiah Wood registered with the U.S. Land Office on November 6, 1835 the purchase of forty acres in the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of Section (S) 36, Township (T) 49, Range (R) 31.¹¹ Within two years

¹⁰ *The History of Jackson County, Missouri*, (Kansas City, MO: Birdsall, Williams & Co., 1881), 315. Google Books: <http://books.google.com/books?id=CH0UAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=history+of+jackson+county,+missouri&hl=en&sa=X&ei=7ziNUaDeLKq90gGt6YG4Cg&ved=0CC0Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false> (Accessed 3 May 2013).

¹¹ U.S. General Land Office, Lexington Register of the Land Office, *Certificate No. 3537*, Jeremiah Wood, Township 49-N, Range 31-W, Section 36. Ancestry.com: http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=1246&iid=RHUSA2007B_MO0210-00136&fn=Jeremiah&ln=Wood&st=r&ssrc=&pid=1120869 (Accessed 3 May 2013).

Wood built a farmhouse with Gothic Revival elements (2207 SW Walnut Street) on the north side of the road that bisected Section 36 (now SW Walnut Street). Wood's house reflected his success as a tobacco farmer. George Burrus purchased two forty-acre tracts of land in S35, T49, R31 in 1837.¹² One of Burrus' tracts, the southeast quarter of the northeast quarter of S35, T49, R31, included the site of the original village of Blue Springs. Franklin Smith, a Virginia state assemblyman, arrived in 1838. He registered the village name as Blue Springs when he was appointed Post Master in July 1848.¹³ The following year, Smith purchased the forty-acre tract immediately west of Burrus, establishing his post office and general store on the property.¹⁴ The small village expanded as the surrounding farms grew in size and wealth and as the community demanded more businesses and services, such as mills, churches, schools, and other mercantile entities.

Agriculture was the primary occupation of the county in its early decades. Farms flourished in the rich, fertile soil near the river valley. Corn, tobacco and hemp were the primary crops. Hailing from the South, many of the new immigrants relied on slave labor to assist with farming, although the landowner often worked in the fields alongside his slaves. The majority of slaveholders owned between one and five slaves.¹⁵

Missouri's status as a slave state and the induction of Kansas as a free state in 1854 was a major factor in the border skirmishes between the states, affecting many lives in the years leading up to and during the Civil War. Guerilla tactics used by both sides defined the conflict in Jackson County. Kansas "Jayhawks" and Missouri "Bushwhackers" countered gruesome attack with gruesome attack: stealing slaves, destroying property, and killing the opposition. Many Missouri guerilla fighters found refuge and support in the rural areas of the county, including the farms in and around Blue Springs.¹⁶

Once the Civil War officially began in 1861, the violence only intensified. Although both the Union and Confederate Armies were present in Jackson County, most altercations were small-scale skirmishes or subversive attacks meant to deplete the morale and supplies of the Union Army. Despite the ever-present possibility of violence, many residents of the Blue Springs area

¹² U.S. General Land Office, Lexington Register of the Land Office, *Certificates No. 4319 and 4320*, George Burrus, Township 49-N, Range 31-W, Section 35. Ancestry.com: http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=1246&iid=RHUSA2007B_MO0220-00455&fn=George&ln=Burrus&st=r&ssrc=&pid=1121686 (Accessed 3 May 2013).

¹³ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington, D.C.; *Record of Appointment of Postmasters, 1832-Sept. 30, 1971*; Roll #: 72; Archive Publication #: M841. Ancestry.com: http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=1932&iid=30439_065457-00012&fn=Franklin&ln=Smith&st=r&ssrc=&pid=1094316 (Accessed 10 May 2013).

¹⁴ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 315.

¹⁵ Schwenk, 71.

¹⁶ Schwenk, 82.

continued about their daily lives, trying to maintain their farms and businesses. When the opportunity arose, the guerillas would strike and the Union was forced to react rather than proactively control the insurgency. In an attempt to cut off civilian support to the guerillas, Federal troops arrested female relatives of opposition leaders in mid-August of 1863. This only fueled the anger of Confederate supporters, particularly after a number of prisoners died or were injured following the collapse of the building in which they were held.¹⁷ In retaliation, William Quantrill, one of the most notorious leaders of the Bushwhackers, led a large party of men in an infamous raid on Lawrence, Kansas. Quantrill's raid killed 183 and devastated property. Union leaders recognized that their reaction had to be swift and severe.

By the end of August 1863, Union Brigadier General Thomas Ewing issued "General Order No. 11" to Jackson, Bates, Cass, and Vernon counties.¹⁸ Order No. 11 forced families to evacuate rural areas in these four counties. Many Blue Springs residents proved their loyalty to the Union and moved to Hickman Mills or Independence; others choosing not to take the loyalty oath moved to central or eastern Missouri or to neighboring states. In a response that was more emotional than it was regulated, Union troops burned the abandoned farms, fields, and communities, including Blue Springs. The church, the school, many farms, and much of the small village were destroyed.¹⁹ Only one pre-Civil War resource remains extant in the Survey Area. Jeremiah Wood's home on Walnut Street was not destroyed, although the north side sustained some fire damage shortly after the family evacuated.

After the war, families returned to property that had been destroyed by fire or overrun by weeds and wild animals. These hard-working people, at most one generation removed from the pioneers who settled the region, rebuilt their farms, businesses, and communities. Although old animosities remained and sometimes flared up, the village of Blue Springs once again

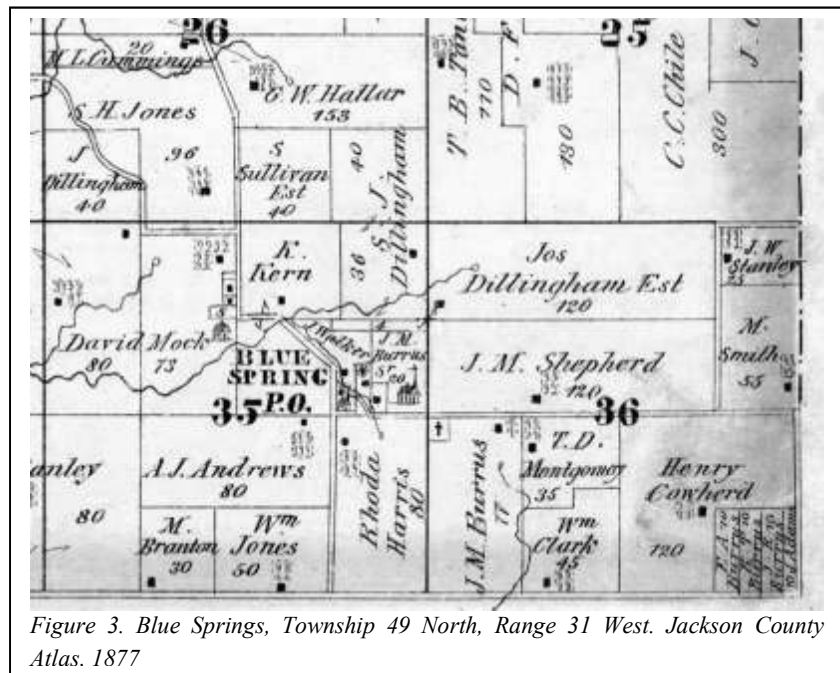


Figure 3. Blue Springs, Township 49 North, Range 31 West. Jackson County Atlas. 1877

¹⁷ Schwenk, 89-90.

¹⁸ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 288-289.

¹⁹ Schwenk, 91.

flourished. By 1877, Blue Springs had 150 inhabitants, the majority of whom were farmers, exporting grain and pork. The village boasted a steam saw, a grist mill, two churches, and a primary school. (Figure 3). The business directory for that year identified two Baptist elders, two physicians, two blacksmiths, a lawyer, a hotel proprietor, a justice of the peace, a grist and saw mill operator, and James Walker, the postmaster and owner of the general store.²⁰

RAILROAD AND INCORPORATION

The Chicago & Alton Railroad Company (C&A) had extended the southern end of its line from Alton, Illinois to Mexico, Missouri, through St. Louis, when the Panic of 1873 weakened the economy. As Kansas City began to recover, by 1876 the region was again attracting business as a major commercial center. The C&A was one of the first railroad companies to recognize and take advantage of this recovery. In 1877, C&A representatives began meeting with Kansas City officials to lay the groundwork for extending the line through Jackson County. When the final

route of the newly renamed Kansas City, St. Louis & Chicago Railroad was announced, the railroad passed through Sni-A-Bar Township, roughly one mile from the village of Blue Springs.²¹ Due to the steep grade at the village, the railroad selected a nearby site with level terrain on which to run the track and construct the depot.

Residents and village leaders decided that to take best advantage of this opportunity the village should relocate to the land adjacent to the railroad route. Shannon Knox had moved to Jackson County from Sumner, Illinois around 1865 and established a highly successful grain and mercantile business supplied by a 320-acre farm southeast of Independence. Having previously worked for the Ohio & Missouri Railroad running a telegraphy office, Knox understood the economic importance of rail

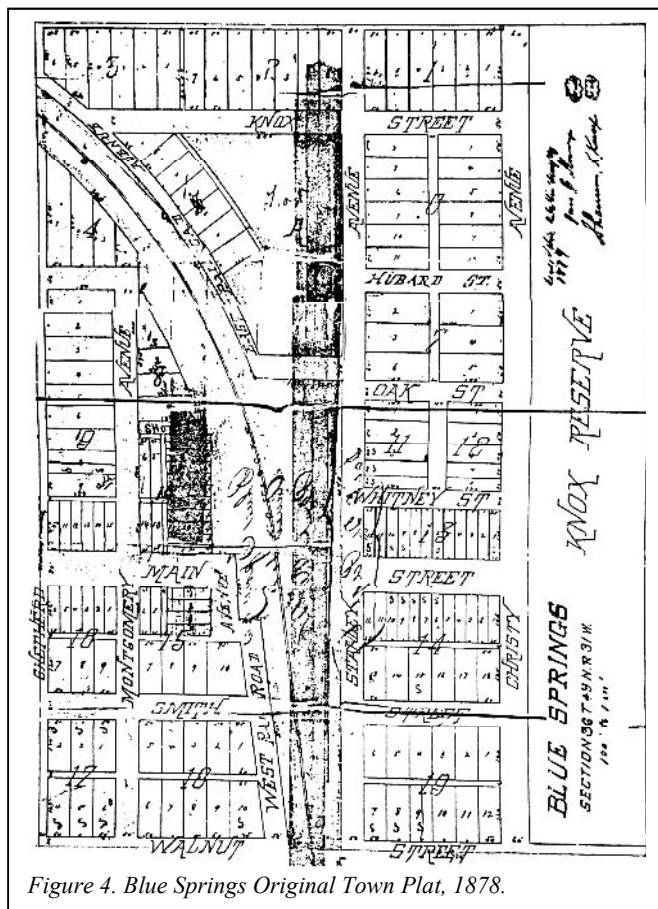


Figure 4. Blue Springs Original Town Plat, 1878.

²⁰ *Missouri State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1876-1877* (St. Louis, MO: R.L. Polk & Co., 1877), 94. State Historical Society of Missouri, Archives. Walker was appointed Post Master after Smith moved to Colorado in 1854. *Record of Appointment of Postmasters, 1832-Sept. 30, 1971*.

²¹ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 544.

access. In September 1878, Knox recorded with the Jackson County Register of Deeds the “Plat for the Town of Blue Springs” on previously undeveloped land in the southeast quarter of the northeast quarter of S36, T49, R31, just one-half mile east of the original village.²² The nineteen-block plat straddled the railroad bed as it curved in a northwesterly direction towards Kansas City. (Figure 4). Block and lot sizes varied, with narrow commercial lots fronting Main Street and larger residential lots further from the tracks. Within a year, Knox had sold half of the lots, including the parcel on Main Street on which Charles W. Mock constructed the first business building, a drug store and post office. Mock teamed with John K. Parr to operate these businesses. The Parr family became the first residents of the new town site.

The Kansas City division of the Chicago & Alton Rail Road officially opened on April 18, 1879 and began running passenger trains roughly one month later.²³ The following year, Jackson County granted Blue Springs incorporation as a village.²⁴ The businesses listed in the 1881 Blue Springs Business Directory covered all of the young town’s basic needs. Edward Jones and J.W.



Figure 5. Blue Springs Lumber & Milling Co., c.1900.
Courtesy Blue Springs Historical Society.

Hoover built the Hoover, Jones & Co. – Blue Springs Flouring Mill in 1879 to process locally harvested grains. Thomas D. Montgomery and A.J. Andrews formed Andrews & Montgomery Lumber to compete with the Luttrell Family’s Blue Springs Lumber & Milling Company, founded in 1878 in the 1200 Block of Main Street. (Figure 5). Montgomery also served as Justice of the Peace and undertaker,

while Andrews was a lawyer.²⁵ There were also grocers, blacksmiths, carriage shops, general stores, a hardware store, physicians, a barber and a teacher. In 1881 Blue Springs had two churches (Baptist and Presbyterian).²⁶ The directory also listed city officials, including Mayor J.A. Webb and five city councilmen, all of whom also ran local businesses.²⁷

²² “Plat of the Town of Blue Springs” Jackson County Register of Deeds, Book 2, Page 61.

²³ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 556.

²⁴ Schwenk, 99.

²⁵ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 319. The Blue Springs Business Directory from 1881 was reproduced in this publication.

²⁶ The current First Baptist Church occupies the same site an earlier church of the same denomination, built in 1881.

²⁷ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*. 319.

The block of Main Street between Christy (11th) Street and Stanley (12th) Street filled quickly with business establishments, creating a strong commercial core just one block east of the railroad. A railroad depot and two hotels (Chicago & Alton Hotel and Denver House) served those traveling by rail. The Chicago & Alton Hotel is the earliest extant business building in the Blue Springs. (Figure 6). Edmund B. Field established the first private bank, the Bank of Blue Springs, in 1883 in the



Figure 6. Chicago & Alton Hotel., c.1906.
Courtesy Blue Springs Historical Society.

corner storefront of 1100 Main Street. Field constructed a home for his family at **1608 SW**



Figure 7. 1608 SW Walnut Street. 2013.

Walnut Street. (Figure 7). Most business owners erected dwellings nearby within the newly platted town. Although other villages, such as Grain Valley and Oak Grove were also along the C&A route, Blue Springs remained the largest town in Sni-A-Bar Township. After the initial spurt, commercial and residential development in Blue Springs continued at a steady pace through the 1880s and 1890s.

By 1904 the population reached 475, and Blue Springs incorporated as a city of the fourth class.²⁸ Over the next decade infrastructure improvements brought legitimacy to the new city. Telephone service began in 1905, the city constructed sidewalks in 1911-1913, and J.W. Stanley established an electric light plant in 1914, offering an alternative to kerosene and carbide lighting, but only from sunset until eleven in the evening.²⁹ In the following decade, the modern public utilities serviced most homes in the city center, attracting new residents to Blue Springs. New and larger, though still modest, dwellings soon filled undeveloped lots along Main, Smith, and Walnut Streets, and the cross streets that marched outward from the commercial core. In 1924, a new \$40,000 **Blue Springs School** replaced an earlier school building. (Figure 8). The new school was designed to offer both primary and four-



Figure 8. Blue Springs School, 205 NW 16th Street. 2013.

²⁸ Although Blue Springs population hovered around 500 immediately after 1900, the minimum population required for the incorporation of a previously incorporated village was 200 persons.

²⁹ *At the River's Bend*, 96.

year high school courses. During this period, business owners constructed permanent masonry buildings in the commercial center, while the lumber yards and flour mill thrived with direct access to the railroad. Using cinders purchased from the C&A Railroad, the city graded and covered nearly all of its streets by 1926.³⁰ By 1929, Missouri Public Service operated central water and electrical systems. Jackson County also pursued infrastructure improvements during the 1920s, particularly the improvement of county roads that connected municipalities as well as federal and state highways.³¹

On the afternoon of March 6, 1926, a fire tore through the commercial buildings on the north side of Main Street. The Independence Fire Department responded to an alarm at 3:50 pm, but could not save the six wood frame buildings at the west end of the block.³² The 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the gap in the commercial center left by the fire, although a small filling station had already been constructed on one lot. (Figure 9). Masonry buildings were constructed on the remaining lots over the following decade, reestablishing the streetwall by 1940.



Figure 9. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1927.

The Blue Springs community also established several social clubs and more churches early in the twentieth century.



Figure 10. 1117 and 1121 W Main Street.

Both the Knights of Pythias and the International Order of Odd Fellows had established local chapters by 1900. The 1909 **Knights of Pythias** building at 1121 W Main Street (the front façade is joined with 1117 W Main Street) is one of the oldest buildings standing on the north side of Main Street. (Figure 10). Several different religious denominations moved their congregations from the old Blue Springs village as their members resettled. Their

³⁰ M.E. Ballou, "Blue Springs: A Town where Civic Pride Predominates," *Jackson County, Missouri, Its Opportunities and Resources*, (Jackson County, Missouri, 1926)

³¹ Schwenk, 106-108.

³² "Fires in 1926," *Independence, Missouri, Fire Department Log Book*. Photocopy from Blue Springs Historical Society. Blue Springs did not have its own fire department at the time.

frame churches were replaced by larger buildings as the population grew in the twentieth-century. The architecture of each church reflected a different stylistic influence, from the late Victorian era **Methodist Church** at 1600 SW Smith Street (*Figure 11*) to the Prairie style **First Baptist Church** at 1405 W Main Street (*Figure 12*). The German Evangelical Church established a presence in Blue Springs in 1906 when Kansas City pastor John Sauer purchased ten acres just southwest of the newly incorporated city. Sauer established a retirement community for former pastors or their widows and families and built modest single-family dwellings for the residents. Over the next thirty years, the community grew to twelve houses.³³



Figure 11. Methodist Church, 1600 SW Smith Street. 2013.



Figure 12. First Baptist Church, 1405 W Main Street. 2013.

Well into the twentieth century the Blue Springs economy was based largely on the agricultural production of the surrounding farms, and like communities nationwide, it was greatly affected by the national agricultural depression of the 1920s and the economic burdens of the Great Depression that followed. Farms that had expanded to meet demand both at home and abroad during World War I were forced to sell their land or reorganize after demand evaporated and prices plummeted in the following years. Those displaced from the agricultural economy had difficulty finding work elsewhere. Local small businesses and farms employed a small segment of the city’s workforce. Others sought work outside the city and township. The new network of county and state roads made it possible to commute to meat processing, steel, and automotive plants in Kansas City, for those lucky enough to obtain jobs. New Deal programs such as the Works Project Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) were a major source of employment for Blue Springs workers in the mid- to late-1930s.³⁴ WPA workers built Prairie Lee Lake in nearby Lee’s Summit and the gymnasium addition to the Blue Springs School in 1938. Nearly 200 men from the Blue Springs area worked on dams, terracing, and drainage as part of various CCC projects.³⁵ Few buildings were privately constructed during this

³³ Sally Schwenk, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form “German Evangelical Pastors Home Historic District,” Blue Springs, Missouri, 1987, 8-4. This historic district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 13, 1988.

³⁴ *At the River’s Bend*, 263.

³⁵ *At the River’s Bend*, 263.

time, although locals did build several single-family homes as well as commercial buildings to replace those that burned in 1926. While the population of Blue Springs hovered around 500 from 1890 to 1920, it grew to 700 in 1930 and nearly 800 in 1940.

With the onset of World War II, the National Preparedness Program converted existing manufacturing facilities and constructed new plants to support the war effort, creating many new jobs in Jackson County. In 1941, the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant began producing small-caliber ammunition for the United States Army. After reaching its peak employment of nearly 21,000 persons, Lake City closed in 1945, only to reopen in 1950 to support the Korean War. Many Blue Springs residents worked at the Lake City plant, located roughly five miles north of the city. Proximity to this large employer drew new residents to Blue Springs. The Leeds Assembly Plant for General Motors, located on the east edge of Kansas City, Missouri, also contributed its facility to the support of the war effort.

In keeping with national trends of the 1940s and 1950s, individuals and families sought suburban or small-town places like Blue Springs as an alternative to the aging density of major cities like Kansas City. The availability of personal automobiles and the improvement and/or construction of county, state, and interstate roadways and highways increased the accessibility of these once remote locations.

The 1950s was a period of significant expansion for Blue Springs. The population jumped from 788 in 1940 to 1,065 in 1950, primarily due to the increased activity at the regional industrial plants both Lake City and Leeds, as well as the phenomenon of general suburban growth. The City embarked on several capital improvement projects to improve the quality of life in Blue



Springs, including a school building program and the construction of a central sewer system to support the proposed new residential developments surrounding the downtown core.³⁶

Thomas J. Ultican Elementary School was

constructed in 1954 as part of this expansion. (Figure 13). The City selected a large open lot two blocks west of the existing Blue Springs School for the new building, whose sprawling modern plan conformed to contemporary architectural trends.

³⁶ *At the River's Bend*, 265.

The population of Blue Springs more than doubled in the 1950s, reaching 2,555 by 1960. This was the start of period of exponential growth. Desegregation of urban schools along with the desire for suburban living prompted a mass exodus from Kansas City beginning in the 1960s. Small towns such as Blue Springs, Oak Grove, and Grain Valley offered the quality of life and educational opportunities that many families sought. With the opening of Interstate 70 (I-70) in 1965, Blue Springs residents could travel to Independence and downtown Kansas City as easily as those living in neighborhoods within those cities. Residential developments sprang up wherever the Blue Springs city limits expanded, and commercial development lined the transportation corridors, particularly along I-70 and MO 7. Accessibility to a solid workforce and reliable transportation attracted industrial development as well, including Fike Metal Products Corporation; Alton Box Board, which made shipping containers beginning in 1963; and Rupert Manufacturing Company, which produced prismatic highway reflectors beginning in 1956.³⁷

These forces have continued to effect tremendous growth through the late twentieth century, although the pace tapered off more recently: 6,779 (1970), 25,936 (1980), 40,153 (1990), 48,080 (2000), and 52,575 (2010).³⁸ The largest population increase occurred in the 1970s when the trends begun in the 1960s fully materialized in Blue Springs. The demand for housing resulted in the outward expansion of the city limits, specifically to the north and south of the original town, to accommodate new developments. Churches, schools, and local commercial centers were constructed to support these areas.

CONCLUSION

The current city of Blue Springs began as a convenient stopping point along the route from St. Louis to Independence, the outfitting post for the overland trails heading west. The area had all the elements desirable for settlement: a spring for purified water, prairie land for grazing livestock, fertile soil for farming, and substantial forests for timber. The small village grew steadily from the 1830s to the 1860s. After the upheaval of the Civil War destroyed parts of the city, the Blue Springs community slowly rebuilt. When the Chicago & Alton Railroad decided to build a route less than two miles from the original settlement in 1879, local residents opted to move their community in order to take full advantage of this new economic opportunity. Following the growth initially prompted by the railroad, Blue Springs incorporated in 1904 and expanded the city limits in 1931. Following the slow years of the Great Depression, wartime industry and Post-War suburban expansion spurred tremendous growth in Blue Springs. The expansion of the city between the 1970s and 1990s has drawn focus away from the historic core, particularly the commercial center. Ample open land enabled Blue Springs to expand outward, retaining rather than replacing most of its original commercial and residential neighborhoods. As

³⁷ *At the River's Bend*, 265.

³⁸ U.S. Decennial Census.

early as the 1980s, the residents of Blue Springs recognized the importance of preserving their historic resources. While there have been both successful retention and heartbreaking loss of historic buildings, those efforts to revitalize the historic core through the built environment continues today through the efforts of both city officials and engaged residents.

SURVEY RESULTS

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY AREA

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Blue Springs Historic Resources Survey Area includes about 135 acres in the heart of downtown Blue Springs, Jackson County, Missouri. The Survey Area roughly encompasses the properties from the north side of Main Street to the south side of Walnut Street, between 7th Street Terrace and 23rd Street. It also includes the resources in the 1400 to 1800 blocks between Main and Vesper Streets, along with the block between NW 14th Street, NW 15th Street, Vesper Street, and the railroad tracks. The railroad right-of-way carves a slight S-shaped path through the center of town, dividing the Survey Area roughly in half along its north-south axis. The southwest section of the Survey Area overlaps the boundaries of the German Evangelical Pastors' Home National Register Historic District, which contains sixteen contributing and four non-contributing resources. In total, the survey examined 258 primary resources plus 90 secondary resources, such as garages or sheds.

The Survey Area is predominantly residential, with some commercial and religious buildings interspersed. The majority of the commercial resources are concentrated at the north and east ends of the Survey Area. Several resources originally constructed as residences have been converted to commercial use. The surveyed resources illustrate a variety of residential, commercial, and religious property types and architectural styles constructed in Blue Springs shortly after its establishment on this site in 1879 to the completion of the most recent dwelling in 2009. Variations in the character and types of resources provide information about the historic patterns of development that occurred in Blue Springs.

The Survey Area is relatively flat, with a slight dip in topography near the railroad tracks, particularly at Main Street. The irregular rhythm of the streets form blocks of varying sizes and shapes, although the axial grid remains clear except at the railroad tracks. The orthogonal street grid follows the Blue Springs convention with numbered streets running north-south and named streets running east-west. Gravel or asphalt alleys, running north-south, bisect some blocks. These conditions also create wide variations in lot sizes and shapes.

Main Street and Walnut Street are the primary east-west thoroughfares through the Survey Area, although Main Street terminates at the west end of the Survey Area. The importance of these streets to the prevailing traffic pattern is indicated in the handling of the railroad tracks. While a bridge spans the tracks at Walnut Street, a gated signal regulates the crossing at Main Street.

Smith, Summit, and Vesper do not cross the tracks at all. Tenth and Fifteenth Streets are primary north-south streets, with a new bridge crossing the tracks at NW 15th Street. Blinking lights and stop signs regulate traffic throughout the Survey Area. The remaining narrow city streets are unstriped two-way roads. With the exception of Main Street, the roads do not have curbs, although even on Main Street the curbs end at 15th Street. Concrete sidewalks intermittently line the streets. The residential streets that do have sidewalks have grass easement strips that separate them from the road, otherwise lawns directly abut the streets.

Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century residential development with mid-century infill characterizes the Survey Area. A handful of buildings representing religious, social, and governmental uses such as churches, social halls, and City offices are interspersed among the commercial and residential properties. The few late-twentieth century commercial, residential, and religious buildings scattered throughout the Survey Area exhibit a contemporary design aesthetic but with massing and materials similar to the surrounding resources.

The Survey Area includes both single-family and multi-family residential properties constructed between the 1880s and the 2000s. The residential lots are generally long and narrow. The land surrounding each building is predominantly flat. About one-third of the properties have one or more detached outbuildings, while fifty homes have attached garages. The irregularity of setbacks and the orientation of resources compounds the variability created by the range in block and lot sizes.

The majority of the commercial buildings front Main Street between 8th and 15th Streets, although several former single-family residences remain at the east end of the street. The historic commercial buildings along Main Street typically form a uniform streetwall abutting the sidewalk, particularly in the 1000 and 1100 blocks. Newer construction and residential conversions are set back from the street, often to accommodate parking.

HISTORIC PROPERTY TYPES

To assist in understanding the historic property types found in the Survey Area, Rosin Preservation identified and surveyed properties based on their original function as well as their architectural style and/or vernacular building form/type. A property type is a set of individual resources that share physical or associative characteristics. Property types link the ideas incorporated in the historic contexts with the actual historic resources that illustrate those ideas. By examining resources according to (1) original function and (2) architectural style, the analysis addressed both shared associative (functional) characteristics as well as physical (architectural style/building form/type) characteristics.

ORIGINAL FUNCTIONAL PROPERTY TYPES

Drawn from the National Register subcategories for function and use, the consultant identified different categories of historic building functions for the surveyed properties. While the functions of some buildings have changed from their original use, this analysis was based on the original building function. Figure 14 shows the distribution of primary resources by historic function.

Figure 14: PROPERTY TYPES

TYPE	TOTAL
RESIDENTIAL: SINGLE-FAMILY	191
COMMERCIAL	44
RELIGIOUS	6
RESIDENTIAL: MULTI-FAMILY	5
GOVERNMENTAL	4
EDUCATIONAL	3
HEALTH CARE: HOSPITAL	1
RESIDENTIAL: HOTEL	1
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: WATERWORKS	1
SOCIAL	1
TRANSPORTATION: RAIL-RELATED	1
TOTAL	258

Residential Property Types

Residential property types account for 76 percent of the resources in the Survey Area. Although these structures express a limited range of building forms and architectural styles, they provide considerable information about the influences that shaped the city as it grew throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century.

Single-Family Residential Functional Property Type

With 191 such resources, single-family dwellings are the predominant property type surveyed. Their significance derives from the information they impart about the distribution and appearance of single-family dwellings erected in this community and reflect the wide variety of socio-economic groups dispersed throughout the town as it grew. This property sub-type illustrates a variety of architectural styles and vernacular folk house forms that were popular during the era of their construction. All are detached dwellings located on rectangular lots platted on a grid system. The width of street frontage varies by lot. In general, the single-family

residences are one- to two-and-one-half story buildings constructed with masonry foundations; masonry, wood, stucco, or synthetic wall cladding; and asphalt shingle gable or hip roofs.

Multi-Family Residential Functional Property Type

The Survey Area includes five multi-family properties. Most are duplexes or four-plexes that date from the mid- to late-twentieth century. They have simple rectangular forms and restrained architectural styles, mostly the Colonial Revival. These rectangular buildings typically have concrete foundations and brick walls or brick veneer with minimal applied ornament.

Commercial Building Property Type

Comprising 17 percent of the surveyed resources, the relatively few commercial buildings are located in concentrated areas along Main Street and at the east end of Walnut Street. The majority of commercial buildings have retail sales or service functions that are typical of small towns. They are business houses designed for small operations providing wholesale or retail sales involving the receipt and disbursement of goods. Usually sited on one or two lots, the older commercial buildings have rectangular plans with the short side facing the street. Newer, mid- to late-twentieth century buildings are more commonly situated at the center or rear edge of the lot with the long side facing the street and parking in front. The majority of the commercial buildings in the Survey Area are one story tall. The few two-story commercial buildings are almost all located in the 1100 block of Main Street. The two-story design incorporates public spaces on the first floor and office, residential, meeting, storage, or light industrial spaces on the second floor. Storefronts housed retail or wholesale vending, public entry, showroom, or office spaces. Stylistic treatments for the commercial properties in the Survey Area reflect architectural styles popular in the era in which they were built. They typically have a flat roof and masonry construction. Depending on the date of construction, structural elements include load-bearing brick walls, concrete block, or steel construction. Similarly, storefronts incorporate combinations of brick, glass block, stone veneer and wood.

Other Property Types

This survey also identified six religious properties (churches); three educational resources (schools); three government resources (City Hall and two government office buildings); one former hospital; one social hall; one waterworks (water tower); and one transportation/rail-related resource (railroad depot). Because the survey included so few examples of these property types, it is not possible to define characteristics for the buildings in each category. However, it is worth noting that all have exterior architectural treatments that reflect conscious design choices specific to their functions and periods of construction. The Blue Springs School and the historic portion of First Baptist Church, in particular, have high style exterior designs.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND FORMS

Classifications based on shared physical attributes include categorization by architectural styles and/or vernacular building forms or types. The architectural styles and forms identified in the Survey Area and assigned to the properties follow the terminology and classifications accepted by the National Register of Historic Places program. This hierarchy and nomenclature relies heavily on the forms and styles discussed for residential buildings in *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester and the Transportation Research Board's report "A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing." Richard Longstreth's *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* provided the classifications for commercial buildings. *A Field Guide to American Houses* includes common vernacular forms of architecture adapted throughout the country under the category of "National Folk Houses."³⁹ Longstreth classifies commercial buildings by building function and form, such as the "one-part commercial block." Such terminology is often combined with the building's style (i.e., "Italianate one-part commercial block").

In 2012, the Transportation Research Board released the National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 723, titled *A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, (NCHRP Report 723). This report redefines Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split-Level dwellings as "forms" rather than "styles," using massing, layout, and shape rather than applied ornament and materials to inform classification.⁴⁰ The TRB report was used to identify post-war dwellings in the Survey Area.

The 258 buildings surveyed include 89 that represent a formal architectural style, although one-third of those express only elements of a particular style and 193 examples of building forms. Most of the resources that represent a formal architectural style do so in a subtle way that evokes the era in which it was constructed but with restrained stylistic features. The majority of resources are classified by their form because stylistic ornament was never part of the original design or has since been removed. Figures 15 and 16 show the distribution of properties by building style and type.

³⁹ The term "vernacular" is used in its broadest application and refers to common local and/or regional building forms and the use of materials specific to a particular period.

⁴⁰ Emily Pettis et al., *A Model for Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 723, (Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board, 2012).

Figure 15: ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

STYLE	TOTAL
CRAFTSMAN	18
COLONIAL REVIVAL	13
CAPE COD	11
QUEEN ANNE	10
FOLK VICTORIAN	7
MODERN MOVEMENT	7
EARLY 20TH CENTURY COMMERCIAL	4
NEO-ECLECTIC	5
NEO-CLASSICAL	3
PRAIRIE	3
TUDOR REVIVAL	2
GOTHIC REVIVAL	2
BRUTALIST	2
NEO-COLONIAL	1
CLASSICAL REVIVAL	1
TOTAL	89

Figure 16: ARCHITECTURAL FORMS

STYLE	TOTAL
RANCH	29
SIDE-GABLE	17
FRONT-GABLE	16
ONE-PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK	14
BUNGALOW	12
CROSS-GABLE	12
TRANSITIONAL RANCH	11
GABLE-FRONT-AND-WING	11
FREE-STANDING COMMERCIAL BLOCK	11
HALL & PARLOR	11
TWO-PART COMMERCIAL BLOCK	10
HIPPED WITH LOWER CROSS GABLES	7
MINIMAL TRADITIONAL	6
FLAT-ROOF COMMERCIAL	6
I-HOUSE	5
AMERICAN FOUR-SQUARE	4
HIPPED/CROSS-HIP	4
PYRAMIDAL ROOF	3
QUONSET HUT	1
RAILROAD DEPOT	1
RAISED RANCH	1
SPLIT-LEVEL	1
TOTAL	193

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Single-family residences were the dominant functional and architectural building type surveyed. The residential architecture of the Survey Area represents a range of styles from the late nineteenth century Victorian styles through the Neo-Eclectic style with its postmodern interpretation of historical styles, as well as the gamut of nineteenth and twentieth century folk house forms.

Victorian Period Residential Architectural Styles

The Victorian Era in America (roughly 1860 to 1900) occurred during a time of rapid industrialization when building components were mass produced and easily shipped via the seemingly ever-expanding network of railroads.⁴¹ Mail-order catalogues, plan books, and builders' guides helped to spread these styles quickly to cities and towns throughout the country. The flexibility provided by the newly popularized balloon frame allowed irregular floor plans, which was a departure from the traditional arrangements of square or rectangular "pens."⁴² The availability of standardized lumber, provided by the local lumber yard or shipped in by rail, and mail-order trims produced forms that moved beyond the basic cube with protruding bays, multiple gables and towers ornamented with shingles, friezes, spindles, ornamental windows, and wrap-around porches.

The Jeremiah Wood House, **2207 SW Walnut Street**, was built in 1837 as a simple frontier house trimmed with Folk Victorian details and Gothic Revival features, including the center gable, spindles, and a decorative frieze. (*Figure 17*).



Figure 17. 2207 SW Walnut Street. 2013.

With the exception of the Wood Residence, the earliest residences in the Survey Area were constructed between 1880 and 1900 following settlement of the new townsite. While many of these early dwellings are small, vernacular interpretations of popular architectural styles, there are several high-style examples of Victorian-era dwellings in the Survey Area, primarily the Queen Anne style. Other resources that date to this era represent the Folk Victorian style with simpler floor plans and more restrained ornament.

Queen Anne

The Queen Anne style was extremely popular in the Midwest during the late 1800s to about 1910, and was often used in smaller, more-rural communities such as Blue Springs up to World War I. The style came to America from England during the 1880s, evolved from a style

⁴¹ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984), 239.

⁴² McAlester, 239.

developed by a group of nineteenth century architects. The style was named for Britain's Queen Anne, who reigned between 1702 and 1714 when classical ornament was often applied to traditional medieval structures.⁴³ A Queen Anne residence's most-character-defining feature is its overall form. The massing of Queen Anne homes features protruding cross-gables and turrets that contribute to an asymmetrical form (**1704 SW Walnut Street**). (Figure 18). Additional exterior decoration was achieved through wall overhangs, voids, extensions and the application of a variety of materials.



Figure 18. 1704 SW Walnut Street, 2013.



Figure 19. 110 NW 17th Street, 2013.

As the Queen Anne style evolved, the emphasis on patterned wood walls became more pronounced. The one-story partial, full, or wrap-around porches that extended across the façades of these houses typically feature turned or jigsawed ornamental trim. Extensive one-story porches are common and accentuate the asymmetry of the façade. They always address the front entrance area and cover part or all of the front façade. It

is not uncommon for these porches to extend along one or both sides of the houses. The most common configuration is the hipped roof with lower cross gables. Examples of this roof type in the Survey Area include **110 NW 17th Street** and 1505 W Main Street. (Figure 19). This shape subtype commonly incorporates towers or turrets. The Free Classic Queen Anne incorporates classical design elements such as the Palladian window, dentils, and classical columns. An example of the Free Classic decorative subtype is the house at 105 SW 15th Street.

Folk Victorian

The Folk Victorian style reflects the simplification of earlier Victorian styles combined with the influence of other styles such as the Italianate or Gothic Revival. These dwellings are based on National Folk forms and were made possible with the advent of the railroad. Folk Victorian dwellings have simpler rectangular or L-shaped footprints and minimal ornament, often relegated to the porch and the gable ends. Several resources in the Survey Area exhibit elements of the Folk Victorian



Figure 20. 1401 SW Walnut Street, 2013.

⁴³ Poppeliers, John C. and S. Allen Chambers, Jr. *What Style Is This? A Guide to American Architecture*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003, 72.

style, with slightly more ornament than a National Folk home. The house at **1401 SW Walnut Street** is an intact example of a Folk Victorian dwelling. (*Figure 20*).

Eclectic Period Residential Architectural Styles

The McAlesters divide the Eclectic Period of American residential architecture into three subperiods: Anglo-American, English, and French Period Houses; Mediterranean Period Houses; and Modern Houses. The Eclectic Movement drew inspiration from American Colonial-era architecture as well as the architecture of Europe. Designs emphasized strict adherence to stylistic traditions and minimal variation and innovation. During the same time period, and in contrast to the European and Colonial American-influenced designs, Modern houses also appeared. Dwellings in this subcategory represent the burgeoning impact of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie School, and European modernism in the early twentieth century.⁴⁴ The National Register of Historic Places differentiates between the Revival styles of European and Colonial American antecedents and the distinctly American styles reflecting influences emanating from Chicago (Prairie School) and California (Arts and Crafts). Under the National Register classification of "Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals," the McAlesters' Anglo-American, English, and French Period Houses are synonymous with Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, Late Gothic Revival, Italian Renaissance, and French Renaissance styles. The National Park Service general category of "Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements" includes residential architecture in the Prairie School and Bungalow/Craftsman styles.

Anglo-American, English, and French Period Houses

Colonial Revival

The term "Colonial Revival" refers to the rebirth of interest in the styles of early English and Dutch houses on the Atlantic Seaboard. The Georgian and Adams styles, often combined, form the backbone of the revival styles. Those built in the late nineteenth century were interpretations of the earlier colonial style, while those built from about 1915 to 1930 were more exact copies of the earlier adaptations. As their use continued into the mid-twentieth century, the style became more simplified.⁴⁵ Thirteen resources express the Colonial Revival style in some way, though form or ornament. The residence at **1705 SW Walnut Street** is an excellent example of the



⁴⁴ McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988) 318-19.

⁴⁵ McAlester, 234-36.

Dutch Colonial subtype of the Colonial Revival. (Figure 21). Character-defining features include the gambrel roof and symmetrical façade. Later resources that exhibit the Colonial Revival style include the 1965 apartment building at 110 SW 10th Street, with its symmetrical façade, hipped roof, and full-width front porch with bracketed posts.

Another example of a resource in the Survey Area that expresses elements of a Revival style includes the Tudor Revival residence at **1802 SW Walnut Street**, built in 1937. (Figure 22).



Figure 22. 1802 SW Walnut Street, 2013.

Modern Houses

Craftsman

Craftsman houses date from circa 1905 through 1930. Most evolved from the early designs of Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene who practiced architecture in California from 1893 to 1914. The Greene's designed both elaborate and simple bungalow houses that incorporated designs inspired from the English Arts and Crafts movement and from Asian architecture. Popularized by architectural magazines and builder pattern books, the one-story Craftsman house became popular nationwide during the early decades of the twentieth century as the most fashionable style for a smaller house. Identifying features include low-pitched roofs; wide eave overhangs, often with exposed roof rafters; decorative beams or braces under gables; and full- or partial-width porches supported by square piers.⁴⁶ Eighteen resources represent the

Craftsman style in varying degrees, making it the most common stylistic expression in the Survey Area. The low-pitched roof with exposed rafter tails, front gabled porch, and multi-light double-hung windows with vertical muntins on the house at **1807 SW Walnut Street** clearly exemplify Craftsman design. (Figure 23). The house at 1508 SW Smith is an excellent example of a home that references the Craftsman style through its windows and rafter brackets.



Figure 23. 1807 SW Walnut Street, 2013.

Prairie School

Prairie School is a uniquely American architectural style that originated with Frank Lloyd Wright and other Chicago architects around the turn of the twentieth century. Pattern books spread the style throughout the Midwest over the next decade. Prairie School houses have a rectangular mass capped by a shallow gable or hipped roof. Banded windows, contrasting trim

⁴⁶ McAlester, 453-54.

details between stories, and wide overhanging eaves underscore the strong horizontal emphasis of these design treatments.⁴⁷ The square porch supports, wide eaves, and strong horizontal massing identify the dwelling at **1601 W Main Street** as a Prairie School design. (*Figure 24*). An excellent and rare example of the style in Blue Springs, it may be individually eligible for listing in the National Register.



Figure 24. 1601 W Main Street, 2013.

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURAL FORMS

Throughout the nation's history, its citizens erected modest dwellings constructed of locally available materials without stylistic embellishments. The early colonists brought with them the building traditions of Europe and, using locally available materials, adapted them to their new communities. Frame buildings constructed of hewn timbers and covered with thin wood siding dominated the early folk building in New England, where massed plans more than one room deep became the norm. In the early settlements of the Tidewater South, frame houses that were one room deep became common. As settlement expanded to the West, the Midland tradition of log buildings evolved from blending the two Eastern traditions.

Simplified vernacular interpretations of Victorian forms (Folk Victorian) were popular throughout the country in the late nineteenth century. These were closely related to and often based on National Folk forms, representing more elaborate, high-style designs applied to the same forms. The character of American folk housing changed significantly as the nation's railroad network expanded in the decades from 1850 to 1890. Builders of modest dwellings no longer relied on local materials. Instead, railcars could rapidly and cheaply move mass manufactured construction materials (pre-cut lumber, nails, window and door frames, and ornamental details) from distant plants. It was not long until vernacular houses of light balloon or braced framing replaced hewn log dwellings. Despite the change in building technique and materials, the older folk house shapes persisted. The resulting houses were simple dwellings defined by their form and massing, but lacking identifiable stylistic characteristics. Even after communities became established, folk house designs remained popular as an affordable alternative to more ornate and complex architectural styles.⁴⁸ These traditional prototypes and new innovative plans comprise distinctive families of residential forms that dominated American folk building through the first half of the twentieth century.

⁴⁷ McAlester, 439-41.

⁴⁸ McAlester, 89-90.

Housing forms nationwide evolved once again following the lean building years of the Great Depression and World War II. While people flocked to metropolitan areas for employment opportunities, not all of them wanted the full urban living experience. Suburban development offered an appealing solution. Together, a general sense of prosperity, a housing shortage bolstered by high demand, and both government and private support for home ownership produced exponential growth of suburban areas. A surge in automobile ownership and the development of the federal highway system made an abundance of undeveloped land accessible for development.⁴⁹ As in previous decades, the modest size of the new housing forms and the use of mass-produced and/or prefabricated components made them affordable. Minimal Traditional dwellings evolved from earlier historical revival styles, while the Ranch house was a new form that reflected changes in attitude and aesthetics. Variations and iterations of these forms include Transition Ranch, Raised Ranch, Split-Level, and Split-Foyer.

Throughout the mid-twentieth century, residents of small cities and towns like Blue Springs expanded their boundaries, improved their infrastructure, and welcomed scores of new residents. Forty-eight resources in the Survey Area represent one of these postwar forms, including Ranch (29), Transitional Ranch (11), Minimal Traditional (6), and one each of the Raised Ranch and Split-Level houses. Aside from the resources that are clearly identifiable as one of the postwar forms, the remaining modest dwellings have simple forms and little or no ornament. Roof form is the primary characteristic used to identify these resources in the Survey Area. Seventy resources were identified by their roof type alone, including Front-Gable, Side-Gable, Cross-Gable, and Hipped types. These dwellings are typically either one story or one-and-a-half stories.

Gable Front and Wing House

The Gable Front and Wing house gained popularity in small towns and rural areas as settlers brought with them earlier stylistic influences such as Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, and Victorian. In this form, a secondary side-gable block placed perpendicular to the main gable-



front gives the house its distinctive L-shaped massing. Architectural ornament is minimal. Both the one-story and two-story forms became common in the Midwest in the late nineteenth century. The residence at **1607 SW Smith Street** is a good example of one of the eleven Gable Front and Wing houses identified in the survey, with its steep cross-gable roof, narrow windows, and minimal ornament. (*Figure 25*).

⁴⁹ Pettis, 50.

Hipped Roof with Lower Cross Gables

The survey identified seven resources solely by roof type with a hipped roof and lower cross gables. These asymmetrical forms are the vernacular versions of the Queen Anne style. The primary one- or two-story block of the house has a hipped roof. Gabled wings or dormers projecting slightly from the front elevation often have shallow peaks. Additional details, such as patterned shingles, verge boards, finials, and cresting, emphasize the complexities of the forms but are used sparingly on these simplified designs. Eclectic fenestration adds to the intricacy of the Queen Anne designs. Window patterns include simple one-over-one double-hung sashes, front-gable picture windows, narrow paired windows, and single panes surrounded by small colored glass squares. One-story porches are common and accentuate the asymmetry of the façade. They always address the front entrance area and cover part or all of the front façade. The house at **201 NW 17th Street** is a compact one-story dwelling with a primary hipped block and a projecting gabled wing. (Figure 26). A small porch connects the two sections. Two-story examples of this form in the Survey Area exhibit more overt references to the Queen Anne style, such as the house at 1509 W Main Street.



Figure 26. 201 NW 17th Street, 2013.

I-House and Hall & Parlor

The I-house and Hall & Parlor forms are late-nineteenth century residential forms found in rural areas throughout the country. These simple forms have a center entry hall flanked by single rooms on either side. The entire house is one-room deep and capped with a side-gable roof. While the Hall & Parlor house is a single story, the I-house is two stories, with the second-story floor plan identical to the first. These wood frame houses were often built in areas with access to mass-produced materials distributed by rail. They were the upgraded farmhouses and early houses constructed in new towns. The I-house often employed the balloon frame, a light-weight wood frame whose vertical members rose the entire height of the house. The railroad increased the accessibility of the primary components of the balloon frame, primarily longer pieces of lumber and mass-produced metal nails. Alterations and additions were often constructed on the rear elevation. The Survey identified five examples I-house form and eleven examples of the Hall & Parlor form. The dwelling at **704 SW Walnut Street** is a simple example of the I-house form, with its narrow, rectangular plan and center entrance. (Figure 27). The residence at 109 SW 9th Street



Figure 27. 704 SW Walnut Street, 2013.

is an example of the Hall & Parlor form. Although alterations to the siding, windows, and porch compromise its integrity, the early form remains visible on the symmetrical facade.

Post-World War II Housing Types

Following World War II, there was a distinct shift in American residential architecture. Modern styling and simplicity replaced the period architecture popular in the pre-war era. The 2012 NCHRP Report 723 outlines the national context for postwar housing and a process for identifying and evaluating the various property types that were constructed in great numbers during this time period.⁵⁰ The most common property types constructed between 1940 and 1975 include Minimal Traditional, Transitional Ranch, Ranch, Raised Ranch and Split-Level. Some designs reflected regional preferences; others resulted from new technologies and/or energy conservation parameters. The prevalence of these forms in the Survey Area illustrates the postwar housing boom experienced in Blue Springs.

Minimal Traditional

Minimal Traditional dwellings evolved in the 1940s from the Tudor Revival style of the 1920s and 30s. The simplified version that evolved after the Depression typically retained the dominant front gable form and the exterior chimney while lowering the pitch of the roof, tightening the eaves and removing most of the decorative ornament, as can be seen at **1708 SW Walnut Street**. (Figure 28). The facades feature a small inset entrance and asymmetrical fenestration. Minimal Traditional resources often exhibit overt Tudor Revival details, such as wood and stucco false half-timbering, that highlight this architectural influence. While compact in plan, these dwellings often incorporate an attached garage. The survey identified six dwellings that express the Minimal Traditional form.



Transitional Ranch

As explained by the name, the Transitional Ranch bridges the design gap between the Minimal Traditional dwelling and the true Ranch form. Also known as the Compact Ranch, this form has a small footprint and lack of ornament similar to the Minimal Traditional house paired with fenestration types and eaves similar to the Ranch. The house at **1801 W Main Street** has the compact but linear floor plan, large picture window, and attached garage common to the Transitional Ranch form. (Figure 29).



⁵⁰ Pettis, 1-2.

Ranch House

The basic Ranch House is a low, wide one-story building with moderate to wide eaves. The low-pitched roof may be gabled or hipped; the façade may be symmetrical or asymmetrical; and the plan may or may not include an integrated garage. The survey identified twenty-nine examples of the Ranch form, making it the most common identifiable property type in the Survey Area. As illustrated by **1402 SW Smith Street**, these simple dwellings have side-gable roofs, asymmetrical facades; aluminum, vinyl, or asbestos shingle siding with brick or stone veneer, a variety of window types and sizes, and an attached garage. (Figure 30).



Figure 30. 1402 SW Smith Street, 2013.

COMMERCIAL BUILDING FORMS

Commercial architecture is distinguished first by building form and second by its architectural style. In *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*, Richard Longstreth identifies and categorizes buildings common to central and neighborhood commercial areas according to the composition of their façades. Despite intricate detailing and stylistic treatments or the lack thereof, the organization of the commercial façade can be reduced to simple patterns that reveal major divisions or zones. Due to their functional nature, many commercial buildings exhibit restrained architectural details. In addition to the storefront, cornice, and parapet, important character-defining elements of commercial buildings include corner posts, bulkheads, transoms, signs, and doors.

The Survey Area includes 45 commercial resources. These small buildings occupy narrow city lots at prominent intersections or along commercial corridors. The 1000 and 1100 blocks of Main Street reflect the historic commercial core of Blue Springs. Early- to mid-twentieth century one and two-story masonry buildings line the wide street. Along the 1100 block they form the solid streetwall that typifies a historic commercial center. The commercial resources are concentrated on the east side of the railroad tracks, although there are a few such resources in the two blocks of Main Street west of the tracks. As commercial development grew along Highway 7, just east of the Survey Area, several residential resources on Main and Walnut Streets were converted to commercial use. Their residential forms, however, remain visible. Most of the surveyed commercial buildings are simple, one or two-story forms. The traditional building material is brick, while mid-century commercial buildings were often constructed of concrete block. The Survey Area also includes free-standing mid-twentieth century retail stores that break the traditional pattern of setbacks, size, massing, and materials.

The most conspicuous alterations to commercial buildings in the Survey Area reflect the modernization or infill of first-story display windows and entrances. Many of these alterations have left the original openings and spatial relationships of the storefront intact but obscured. Other changes are more easily reversible, such as the addition of awnings and applications of wood or metal sheathing over original openings or transoms. Utilizing Longstreth's basic commercial building property types, the historic commercial buildings identified by the survey include One- and Two-Part Commercial Blocks, as well as later Free-Standing Commercial Block forms.

One-Part Commercial Block



Figure 31. 1118 W Main Street, 2013.

The One-Part Commercial Block building has only a single story and is a simple cube with a decorated façade. In several examples, the street frontage is narrow and the façade comprises little more than plate glass windows and an entrance with a cornice or parapet spanning the width of the façade. The storefront of **1118 W Main Street** was altered, but the commercial function remains clear. (*Figure 31*).

Two-Part Commercial Block

Slightly more complex than their one-story cousins, Two-Part Commercial Block buildings are typically two to four stories in height, although the Survey Area contains buildings no taller than two stories. They have a clear visual separation of use between the first-story customer service/retail space and the upper-story office, meeting room, or residential uses. Similar to One-Part Commercial Block buildings, the styling of the first story focuses on the storefront glazing and entrance(s).



Figure 32. 1117 and 1121 W Main Street, 2013.

The design of the upper stories identifies the building's architectural influences. Good examples



Figure 33. 1120 and 1124 W Main Street, 2013.

of Two-Part Commercial Blocks in the Survey Area include **1117 and 1121 W Main Street** and **1120 and 1124 W Main Street**. (*Figures 32 and 33*). Alterations include the infill of the storefront openings and the replacement of the second story windows. Patterned brickwork and stone lintels provide the only ornament on either building.

Free-Standing Commercial Block

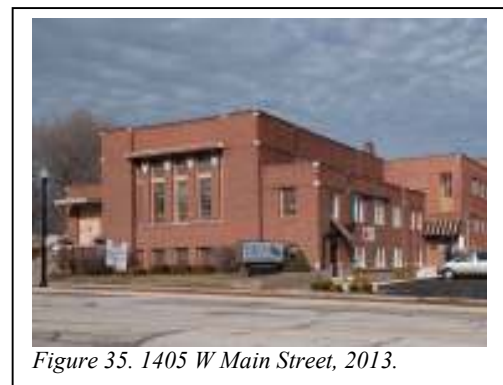
The years following World War II witnessed a general shift in American commercial architecture away from the densely packed commercial blocks that lined W Main Street. Adapting to the widespread ownership of the automobile, developers erected individual buildings on large lots of land, following the model begun by roadside development in the 1920s. In front of the building was a large area of open space. Initially this might be landscaped green space or filling station gas pumps, although it was soon put to use for parking. The Modern Movement also ushered in new ways of thinking about buildings. Rather than structures that enclosed space, architects began to think of commercial buildings as three-dimensional objects that defined space. Parking lots on one or all four sides of a building became dominant defining features of the commercial landscape, relegating the building to the role of back drop.⁵¹ The former U.S. Post Office at **1405 SW Smith Street** is an excellent example of a mid-twentieth century Free-Standing Commercial Block. (Figure 34). Brick and tile along with storefront and ribbon windows express the simple Modern Movement features.



RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

Religious buildings are often more architecturally expressive than commercial buildings, although they are generally conservative in their selection of an architectural idiom. Classical motifs and traditional styling with historical antecedents are the most common stylistic treatments.

The survey included six churches. Constructed between 1900 and 1950, they represent common architectural styles and religious building forms from their period of construction. The rectangular form, engaged pilasters, and elaborate art glass highlight the vague Wrightian influence of the Prairie style **First Baptist Church** at **1405 W Main Street**. (Figure 35). The large brick building constructed prior to 1920 occupies the same location as the congregation's first church built decades prior. Post Modern and Brutalist additions compromise the integrity of the church. The complex



⁵¹ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street*, (Washington, DC: The Preservation Press, 1987), 126-131.

roofline and Palladian windows of the Methodist Episcopal Church at 1600 SW Smith Street communicate its religious function, despite the addition of non-historic siding. A three-story Modern Movement educational building attaches to the southwest corner of the church. The building at **206 NW 16th Street** is an example of a small, neighborhood church tucked in among the surrounding residences. (Figure 36).



Figure 36. 206 NW 16th Street, 2013.

DATES OF CONSTRUCTION

Using the information provided by the Blue Springs Historical Society, as well as the Jackson County Tax Assessor, city atlases, Sanborn Insurance Company maps, listings in city directories and architectural style, the consultants estimated dates of construction for the surveyed buildings. Dates of building additions, alterations, and outbuildings were not considered in the analysis. Figures 37 and 7 present the distribution of buildings by dates of construction.

Figure 37: ESTIMATED DATES OF CONSTRUCTION

ERA	TOTAL	PERCENT
PRE-1900	56	22
1901 – 1940	95	37
1945 – 1965	71	27
1966 – 1991	29	11
1997 - PRESENT	7	3
TOTAL:	258	100

It is interesting to note that there were three major construction periods in Blue Springs, each producing different types of buildings that together form the historic core of the city. Although they are fairly evenly distributed, the most active period was after 1900 but before the end of World War II. The entire city of Blue Springs grew exponentially in the postwar era, including within the Survey Area, when a large number of residential resources were constructed in planned subdivisions and on vacant lots in older neighborhoods.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

All properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places must retain sufficient architectural integrity to convey the period of time for which they are significant. As described above in the Methodology, each building received an integrity rating of Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. Figures 6 and 8 illustrate the results of the Integrity Analysis.

Figure 38: ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY

INTEGRITY	TOTAL	PERCENT
EXCELLENT	30	11
GOOD	90	35
FAIR	77	30
POOR	25	10
LESS THAN FIFTY YEARS OF AGE	36	14
TOTAL:	258	100

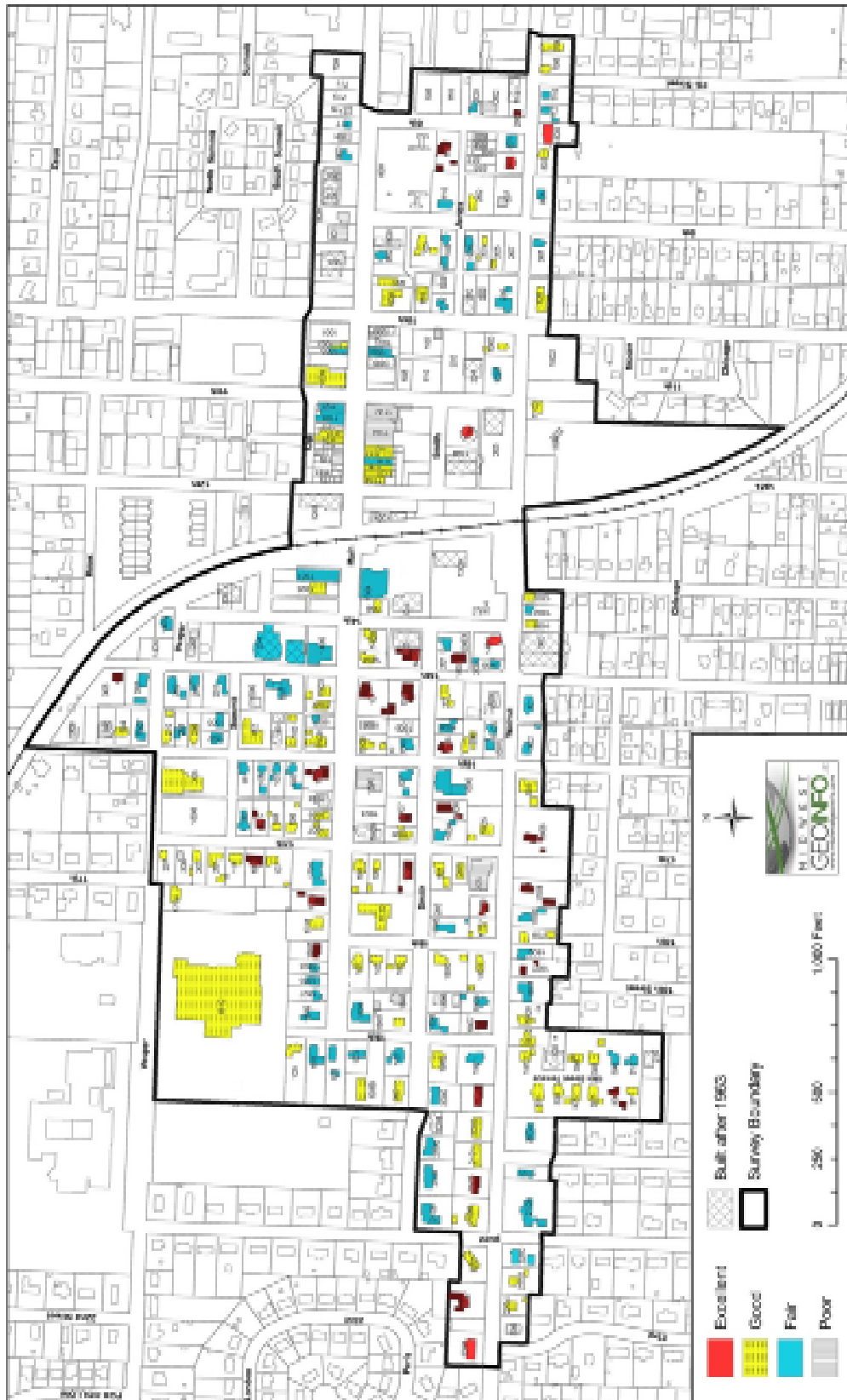
Integrity ratings represent a sliding scale of alterations to the historic fabric and the features of individual buildings. Both the quantity of changes and the reversibility of changes affected the ranking each building received. Buildings rated “Excellent” and some rated “Good” may be individually eligible for register listing if they also have significant associations that meet one or more of the National Register Criteria. Buildings that received an integrity rating of “Good” and some rated as “Fair” could be listed as contributing resources to a historic district. An integrity rating of “Poor” and in some cases “Fair” reflects the presence of numerous alterations that significantly diminish architectural integrity, regardless of historical significance. It is possible that many of the surveyed buildings rated “Fair” may retain some or all of their original historic fabric behind later alterations, such as siding, and if these changes were reversed they may improve their integrity ranking and register eligibility.

While eleven percent of the surveyed resources were evaluated as “Excellent,” very few have significant associations that meet the criteria for individual listing in the National Register. Likewise, the “Good” and “Fair” resources that could potentially qualify as contributing to a Historic District are not located in large enough concentrations to convey significant associations.

FIGURE 39 – DATES OF CONSTRUCTION



FIGURE 40 – ARCHITECTURAL INTEGRITY



SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS

As documented in the Historic Context and in the Survey Findings, the Blue Springs Historic Resources Survey represents the full spectrum of the city's history. The built environment testifies to the rapid residential development that occurred immediately following the relocation and founding of the town and then again during the mid-twentieth century when suburban growth changed the face of the landscape after World War II. While this development was substantially complete by the 1960s, increased commercial development along MO 7 has begun to encroach on traditionally residential areas at the east end of the Survey Area, replacing or modifying residential resources. Rosin Preservation offers the following recommendations for future preservation action. Figure 41 illustrates the existing Local Historic District, Local Landmarks, and National Register designations.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND LANDMARKS

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Based on the findings and recommendations of the 1986 Historic Resources Survey, the City of Blue Springs passed an ordinance in 1990 to designate a group of residential resources as a local historic district. The roughly square district is bounded by SW 15th and SW 16th Streets on the east and SW 18th and SW 19th Streets on the west. The properties on the north side of Main Street and those on the south side of Walnut form the north and south boundaries. The local district includes the German Evangelical Pastors' Home National Register Historic District at the southwest corner. More than two-thirds of the resources in the local district are considered significant and are subject to the requirements of the ordinance regarding alterations and construction. This district represents the densest concentration of intact historic residential resources in Blue Springs and reflects the residential building types popular in the early history of the developing town.

LOCAL LANDMARKED PROPERTIES

Four properties are local landmarks, designated by ordinance in April, 1987. These are the single house at **305 NW 15th Street** and the small group of resources on the south side of Main Street, including the **Dillingham-Lewis House (101 SW 15th Street)**, the **Brownfield House (105 SW 15th Street)**, and the **Chicago & Alton Hotel (1506 W Main Street)**. These properties include the residences of individuals and families important to the early development of Blue Springs. The brick house at 305 NW 15th Street is a rare example of residential masonry construction in the area. All retain excellent integrity. Landmark designation offers a level of protection to these resources as alterations are subject to review by the Blue Springs Historic Preservation Commission.

POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The Survey Area encompassed several clusters of buildings dating from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries that retain “Good” or “Fair” integrity. Some of these pockets initially appeared to merit consideration for designation as one or more National Register historic districts. However, further analysis determined that none possesses the level of significance necessary to meet the National Register criteria. Instead, Rosin Preservation recommends re-examining the boundaries of the 1990 local historic district to ensure the inclusion of resources that adequately represent the development of Blue Springs. This may involve reconsidering the status of resources that at the time of listing were non-contributing due to age. The process could also include re-evaluating portions of the original 1986 boundary recommendations, particularly NW 17th Street between Main and Vesper Streets. The designated district did not include all of the area originally recommended for a variety of reasons, including owner objection. Owner sentiment as well as integrity and significance should be re-assessed in order to determine whether a boundary increase is possible. It is possible that additional research, beyond the scope of this project, could identify an area of significance or historical associations for individual buildings or groups of resources that would elevate their status to National Register eligible. Similarly, the reversal of unsympathetic alterations might restore sufficient integrity to reconsider the Register eligibility of one building or a group of buildings.

NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY

Based on date of construction, architectural integrity and historical associations, analysis of the survey data identified resources that appear eligible for listing in the National Register as well as resources that do not appear to be register-eligible. All of the register-eligible properties appear to meet one or more National Register criteria as well as the requirements for historical/architectural integrity. Figure 42 illustrates the Survey Recommendations.

REGISTER-LISTED PROPERTIES

The Survey Area includes a small residential enclave nominated to the National Register as the German Evangelical Pastors’ Home Historic District. This residential district was designated to the National Register in 1988. The twenty resources (twelve contributing buildings, four contributing structures, one non-contributing building, and three non-contributing structures) line SW 19th Street Terrace and the south side of Walnut Street. **Eleven** residential resources retain integrity and continue to communicate the historic context for which District was designated. Alterations to one resource have compromised its integrity since the District was listed. One new resource was constructed within the District and a second resource was constructed just outside the southern boundary of the District. The surveyed resources that contribute to the German Evangelical Pastors’ Home Historic District are:

- **301, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 309, 311 SW 19th Street Terrace**
- **1808, 1810, 1812 SW Walnut Street**

The residential buildings at **300 and 312 SW 19th Street Terrace** were built after the period of significance. While these residential buildings have excellent integrity, a similar scale and character, and have a function identical to the surrounding resources, they were constructed outside the period of significance and are therefore non-contributing.

It is unclear which secondary structures (garages and carports) were contributing and non-contributing at the time of the nomination.

INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES

The survey identified **four properties** that appear to meet the criteria for register listing as individual resources with local significance. More research would be necessary to fully understand the significance of these resources. These properties are:

- **205 NW 16th Street (Blue Springs School)**: locally significant under Criteria A for the area of Education and Criterion C for the area of Architecture for its association with the local educational system and with WPA program activities during the Great Depression.
- **2207 SW Walnut Street (Jeremiah Wood House)**: locally significant under Criterion A for Exploration/Settlement and Criterion C for Architecture.
- **1601 W Main Street (J.E. Quinn House)**: locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture as an excellent local expression of the Prairie School.
- **1405 SW Smith Street (U.S. Post Office)**: locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture as an excellent example of a government building designed to express the tenets of the Modern Movement, a rare local example of this idiom within the historic downtown core.

One additional resource, the **Chicago & Alton Hotel (1506 W Main Street)** may also be individually eligible, despite the fact that it has been moved from its original location. While moved buildings are generally not considered eligible for register listing, there are some exceptional circumstances under which they can be designated. According to the National Register Bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, a moved resource may be eligible under Criterion C if it is significant solely for its architectural value or under Criterion A if it is the single surviving property most importantly associated with a significant event. The orientation, setting, and general environment of the new location must be comparable

to the old location and must remain compatible with the significance of the resource. The argument can be made that the Chicago & Alton Hotel meets these requirements. The building could be eligible under Criterion A for its direct associations with the founding of the town following the establishment of the railroad. It is the earliest extant business constructed specifically to serve the needs of those utilizing the railroad and the only surviving commercial building from this era. Although the hotel was originally constructed to face the railroad tracks along SW 13th Street, in its current location the building still faces a primary transportation corridor, Main Street. The building was moved in the 1980s in order to save it from demolition when it was threatened by expansion of the lumber yard. The Chicago & Alton Hotel is one of three buildings identified as a part of a local landmark designation. This offers some protection of the resource and assists in highlighting the importance of the building to the Blue Springs community.

The historic **Chicago & Alton Depot (1104 SW Walnut Street)** was also moved in order to save it from demolition. The one-story stucco building was constructed in 1926 after the original 1879 depot burned. Threatened with demolition by Kansas City Southern Railroad, City officials, the Blue Springs Historical Society, and concerned citizens rallied to save the building. In 2012, the building was moved from a lot on the north side of Main Street, adjacent to the tracks, to a city-owned park on the south side of Walnut Street. The historical society continues to raise funds to preserve and restore the structure, including plans to replace the stucco cladding that was deteriorated beyond repair. While the building is an important piece of Blue Springs history and it remains one of two resources directly associated with the presence of the Chicago & Alton Railroad, the location, setting, and orientation of the current site are not comparable to its historic location, thus compromising its integrity. The loss of original fabric (stucco) further compromises its integrity. It is unlikely that the depot meets the requirements for moved properties and would therefore not be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

LOCAL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Rosin Preservation also recommends exploring the creation of conservation districts as a means to recognize and protect the historic character of the Survey Area. Conservation Districts are a tool that is used nationwide for maintaining the character of existing neighborhoods and providing protection to historic resources that do not retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the National or local registers. Locally designated, Conservation Districts can stabilize property values in older neighborhoods while protecting the unique qualities of these communities. Conservation Districts can also establish specific design guidelines to direct improvements that will upgrade historic resources to meet National Register criteria as contributing elements to a National Register and/or local district. For instance, non-historic siding is a common alteration

that will preclude many properties from being listed as contributing resources. By creating a Conservation District prior to designating a historic district, the City can encourage property owners to reverse siding alterations, increasing the number of properties that are deemed contributing. In Conservation Districts, design review is limited to major changes (such as new construction, exterior alterations, and demolition). This provides protection against adverse changes to the visual context of the district, while encouraging property owners to make appropriate changes that reinforce the qualities that define the district.

To be designated as a Conservation District, a group of structures and/or landscape elements should have developed more than fifty years ago and retain distinctive architectural and historic characteristics worthy of preserving, although they may lack the historical, architectural, or cultural significance to qualify as a Historic District. A Conservation District may also be designated due to its identifiable setting, character, or association expressed through unifying exterior features. The Survey identified three areas that reflect the historic development of Blue Springs and retain sufficient historic and architectural character to be considered for this designation. These include:

1. **1000 and 1100 blocks of W Main Street** These two blocks comprise the historic commercial core of Blue Springs. One- and two-story masonry buildings sit on narrow city lots. These buildings form a solid streetwall that directly abuts the public sidewalk, particularly in the 1100 block. Exterior alterations compromise the integrity of the majority of the buildings in the district, but these resources still clearly reflect their historic, and current, commercial function. Guidelines for façade improvements, alterations, and infill could improve the integrity and density of the commercial core, eventually rendering it eligible for local or National Register designation.
2. **NW 15th, 16th, and 17th Streets (Main Street to Railroad Tracks)** These blocks contain residential resources with a common size and scale that create an identifiable character consistent with a late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century residential neighborhood. Later resources, including mid-century houses are compatible with the scale of the earlier resources. Although exterior alterations to siding, windows, and porches often compromise the integrity of these resources, possibly preventing them from becoming included in the local historic district, the guidelines included with the Conservation overlay could assist homeowners with improvements to their properties that restore integrity, eventually rendering it eligible for local designation.
3. **SW 8th, 9th, and 10th Streets (W Main Street to SW Walnut Street)**: These blocks include early residential resources that directly abut commercial corridors. This neighborhood contains a mix of housing types and sizes that developed naturally. Other than the fact that the neighborhood is primarily residential, there is no unifying physical characteristic that defines it as a district. Commercial pressures at the boundaries, particularly along Main and Walnut Streets threaten the character of this area. Several

resources constructed as residences have been converted to commercial use. While the change in use alone does not impact integrity, it could heighten pressures to replace existing buildings with non-compatible new construction.

The conservation of these areas, particularly the historic commercial core, can spur property owners to make appropriate changes and renovations to their buildings to improve the facades. With more improved facades, an area is more likely to be eligible for listing in the National Register.

FUTURE IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION EFFORTS

The Survey Area encompassed the early corporate boundaries of Blue Springs, including resources associated with original platting of Blue Springs and early expansion. Considering the exponential increases in population and the city limits beginning in the 1960s, a survey of post-war residential developments could yield a great deal of information about the development of Blue Springs during this era and assist in the formation of strategies for future preservation efforts.

FIGURE 41 – EXISTING HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

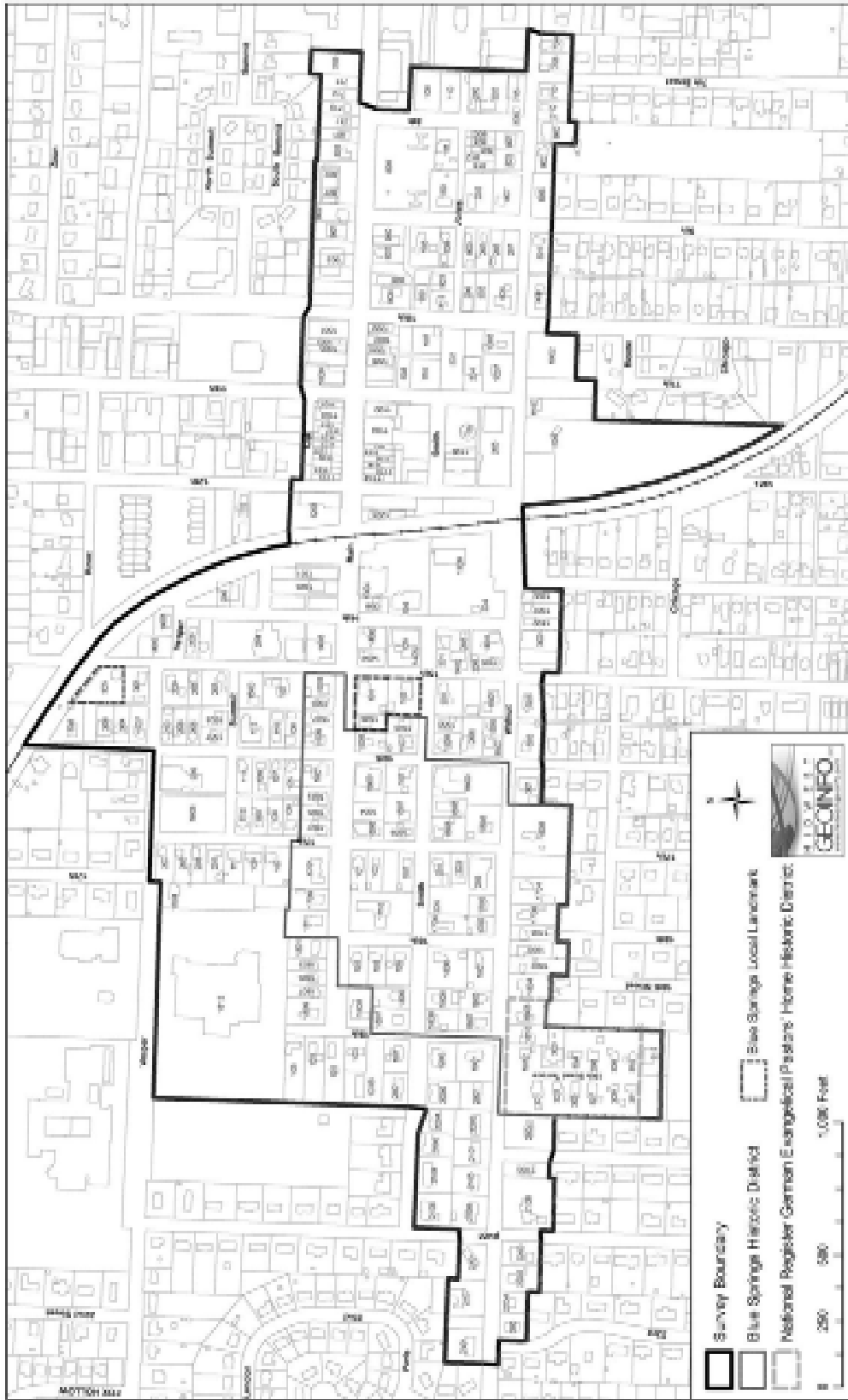
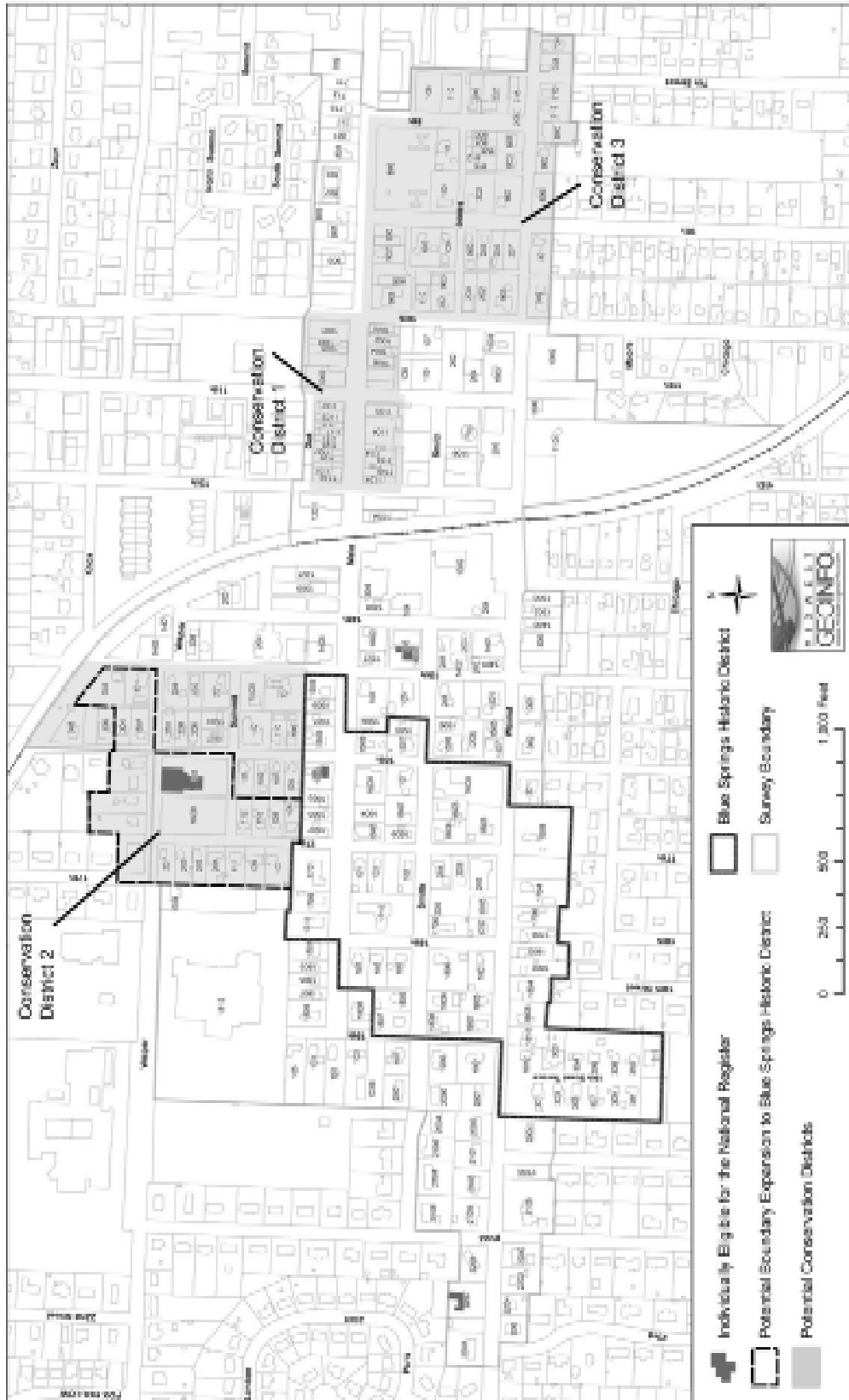


FIGURE 42 – PRESERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS



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APPENDIX

MAPS (11X17)

Figure 1. Survey Area

Figure 39. Dates of Construction

Figure 40. Architectural Integrity

Figure 41. Existing Historic Designations

Figure 42. Preservation Recommendations