**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic name</th>
<th>Fire Station No. 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other names/site number</td>
<td>KHRI # 177-5400-01724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of related Multiple Property Listing</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### 2. Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street &amp; number</th>
<th>934 NE Quincy St</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City or town</td>
<td>Topeka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Shawnee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>KS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip code</td>
<td>66608</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this **X** nomination **request** for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property **X** meets **does not meet** the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

- **national**
- **statewide**
- **local**

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

- **X** A
- **B**
- **C**
- **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO

Date: __________

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property **___** meets **___** does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date: __________

Title: ____________________________

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- **entered in the National Register**
- **determined eligible for the National Register**
- **determined not eligible for the National Register**
- **removed from the National Register**
- **other (explain:)**

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action: __________
5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT – Fire Station

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT – Fire Station

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: Italian Renaissance

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: CONCRETE, CERAMIC TILE, STONE - Limestone
roof: ASPHALT
other: 

Fire Station No. 1
Shawnee County, Kansas

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources, if applicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary -
Fire Station No. 1 is located at 934 NE Quincy Street, one block east of N. Kansas Avenue. Designed by the Topeka architectural firm of Cuthbert and Suehrk in 1940, this 1 ½ story structure was designed to serve the single function of a single engine fire station. This Station was constructed to replace the original Fire Station No. 1 (1874-1939) which was located only one block to the west at the southeast corner of NE Gordon Street and N. Kansas Avenue. Several internal components still in use within the new Fire Station No. 1, such as the hose crane and tower, were salvaged from its predecessor.

The building's footprint measures 50' x 50' and faces west-northwest, parallel to the intersection of NE Quincy Avenue and NE Gordon Street. Its features were designed around a square, symmetrical floor plan with the sleeping quarters separated from the daily living rooms of the firefighters by the fire engine bay. The fire engine bay is located in the central portion of the structure.

The Station is a poured concrete structure with concrete walls, floors, and ceilings obscured by tan brick veneer. The walls were constructed above a concrete block foundation and partial basement under the east half of the structure. The most significant exterior feature is the dormer above the main engine door in the center of the building's west façade. This dormer extends from the center of the hipped roof roughly two feet past the primary west façade. The eaves under the dormer roof are detailed with carved wood brackets. Below the west eave lies an engraved carved Indiana limestone inlay bearing the name "Fire Station No. 1", flanked by two carved limestone tiles, one on either side.

On the rear façade, a low-rising tower projects from the roof, opposite the dormer above the central door for the engine. This tower extends only as high as the central point of the hipped roof, and is clad in 3" wood clapboard siding. This tower is original to the structure and is used to hang and dry firehoses on a regular basis.

The building is in excellent condition. Its windows were replaced in 1953 following a major flood. A drop ceiling was also installed in the 1980s throughout all the Station's living spaces to cover the ductwork from the central air conditioning. The building retains its historic integrity and character-defining features.

Elaboration -
Setting
Fire Station No. 1 occupies a total of nine lots, each measuring 25' x 162'. The building itself and its associated parking occupy the northern half of these lots, while the remaining southern half of the lots remain vacant. During construction of the Station in 1940, a tent was erected on this vacant portion to house the engine, all necessary equipment, and the firefighters.

The front of the building faces west toward NE Quincy Street and is set back approximately 30 feet from the curb. This distance provides a safe and efficient turning radius for the engine entering and leaving the Station. A public sidewalk lies adjacent to and parallel with the curb along NE Quincy Street. There is also a public traffic-light at the intersection north of the Station at NE Quincy, and NE Gordon Streets, coupled with a station controlled traffic light approximately 40' to the south. Both of these traffic lights are controlled by the Station to ensure quick and safe ingress and egress of the engine.

When Fire Station No. 1 was built in 1940, the intersection of NE Gordon and NE Quincy Avenues was developed exclusively for low-density residential uses. In 1966, the Kansas Avenue Bridge over the Kansas River was realigned, linking Kansas Avenue on the south to Quincy Street on the north. This realignment shifted traffic away from N. Kansas Avenue and onto NE Quincy Street, thus re-categorizing its functional classification and capacity. This change in classification and purpose also shifted the predominant uses of the land adjacent to NE Quincy St. from low-density residential to other non-residential uses.
Fire Station No. 1
Name of Property

**Building Description**

Fire Station No. 1 is an example of a mid-20th Century bungalow-type fire station, featuring two main functional areas within its interior. One area is dedicated exclusively to the fire engine and associated apparatus and equipment, and the other is dedicated as the fire fighter's living quarters.

The building's structure is reinforced concrete, consisting of poured concrete floors, walls, and ceilings. The partial basement and foundation is constructed of concrete block. The one and one-half story building has a full-hipped roof, currently with asphalt shingles. The original roofing material was a red, flat clay tile that accentuated the Station's Italianate architectural style. This roofing material has been removed and replaced with red asphalt shingles. The hose-tower on the building's east end is clad in 3" painted wood clapboard siding and is capped with a flat, vulcanized sheet-rubber roof. A chimney rises above this roof that vents the building's gas furnace.

All exterior edges of the hipped roof and the dormer have projecting eaves. The eaves under the dormer extend approximately 10" from the exterior façade, are painted red, and are highlighted with contrasting painted (brown) wooden brackets spaced every 15", common features in Italianate style. The remaining eaves under the roof are composed of solid wood, extending only 6" from the exterior façade walls. These eaves are painted brown to match the brackets under the eaves of the dormer.

The exterior masonry is composed of a uniform tan brick, laid in a running bond pattern from the foundation to the eaves. The running bond pattern is interrupted every 6 layers, or 18 inches, with a single row of common bond. This pattern is repeated for a total of 4 rows of common bond brick within each façade.

The original windows were steel casements, framed with static sidelights, and a narrow transom above. These windows were replaced with aluminum-clad wood-framed and single-pane casements. All windows were most recently replaced during the 1980s. Each window does retain a cut Indiana limestone sill at their base. Each sill projects less than two inches from the brick veneer.

**West Façade (Front)** – The front façade consists of a single bay for the engine flanked by two recessed walls to give a symmetrical composition. The single-bay door lies beneath the extended dormer projecting west from the central apex of the hipped roof. Between the dormer and the bay doorway lies the engraved Indiana limestone block inlay that identifies this building as Fire Station No. 1. The bay door has been modernized to open mechanically on call. The doorway, however, maintains its original characteristics within its framework. Below the engraved limestone block inlay is a single row of stack bond soldier brick. The stack bond soldier pattern is repeated above the engraved station name and separates this inlaid stone from the cornice that lies beneath the eave below the dormer. On either side of the engraved stone lies a single row of stack bond stretchers. On either side of this row of stack bond brick is a carved Indiana limestone tile. These tiles are square in shape, are equal to the height of the engraved stone featuring the station name, and are framed by a single row of stack bond stretcher brick and stack bond soldier brick. Approximately 24" below each carved stone tile is a copper wall sconce with an amber-glass surround. These sconces appear to match the original exterior wall lights, as documented in a photograph of the Station in 1940. On either side of the central door bay is the continuation of the tan brick veneer of the west façade. Centered within each of the walls north and south of the central bay door are two side-by-side single-pane casement windows.

**South Façade** – The south face of the building lacks decorative ornamentation or details, other than the continuation of the 6 row-running bond/1 row common bond pattern that is featured on all faces of the building. The south face features three windows, each with an Indiana Limestone sill and wood-frame/aluminum-clad casements. Two windows are located within the western 2/3rd of the southwall. Each of these windows are casements, each half containing a single pane. The 3rd window is located within the eastern 1/3rd of the south wall. This window is a single-pane and non-functioning. Immediately below this window is a window opening into the basement. The eave is composed of solid wood, extending only 6" from the exterior façade walls. These eaves are painted brown to match the eaves around the rest of the building. Attached to the end of this eave is a non-historic aluminum gutter. Downspouts from this gutter are located at the far east and west corners of this face of the building, as well as an interior downspout, placed immediately east of the eastern-most window. An air conditioning condenser and a gas and electric meter are located below the eastern-most window along this façade, in the same vicinity as the third interior downspout.

**East (Rear) Façade** – The rear façade is simple and asymmetrical in composition. The cladding is the same color of brick and maintains the same bond pattern as exemplified on the other faces of the building. The eave is composed of solid wood, extending only 6" from the exterior façade walls. The hose tower is centered within the roof and measures roughly
8’ x 8’ x 8’. The hose tower is clad in 3” wood clapboard siding. The siding is painted a shade of neutral light tan that is lighter in color than the brick façade of the first level of the building. An opening for ventilation is centered approximately 12” below the top of the tower on the south face with silver aluminum-clad louvered. The rear entrance to the building is located below the left (south) edge of the hose tower. A single window is between the door and the building’s southeast corner. Located directly below this window is a window opening into the basement. Between the door and the window are the building’s electric meter and junction box. The north two-thirds of the rear façade is blank and absent any architectural details, other than a smaller window about 4’ from the building’s northeast corner. Both windows on this façade are single-pane, wood frame, with aluminum cladding.

**North Façade** – The north façade of the building faces NE Gordon Street and functions as the public entrance to the Station. This face continues the 6-row-running bond/1 row common bond pattern of the brick, interrupted by 3 windows and a doorway. The windows each have an Indiana limestone sill, and all three are aluminum-clad over wood frame. The central window is a casement window with two side-by-side panes, while the two windows near the east and west corners of this façade are single-pane. The public entrance to the Station is positioned closer to the western one-third of this building’s face. Downspouts are located at the east and west corners, as well as near the center of the façade. An air-conditioning compressor is located to the east of the central casement window. This compressor leads to a junction box that is adjacent to the left (east) of the central downspout. The eave is composed of solid wood, extending only 6” from the exterior façade walls. These eaves are painted brown to match the eaves around the rest of the building. Attached to the end of this eave is a non-historic aluminum gutter.

**Interior** – The interior of the structure has remained mostly unaltered since its original construction in 1940. The original floorplan remains unchanged, as well as all basement and ground-floor wall and floor finishes. Smaller changes to the finishes of individual rooms have been made during the 1990s and early 2000s, such as the installation of drop ceilings to conceal conduit and electrical lines resulting from the provision of central air conditioning and fluorescent lighting. Doors and associated hardware, such as hinges, handles, and door-closers, were all likely replaced following the flood in 1953. The floorplan is largely symmetrical, with rooms on three sides of the main central engine bay.

**Office** - The office for Fire Station No. 1 is located within the building’s northwest corner. In this office are all communications equipment necessary for station operations, television, chairs, and a retractable Murphy bed for the use of a firefighter during the night-shift. The office features two windows, one double-wide casement on the west wall, and one single-wide casement located on the north wall. Each window also features a concrete tile windowsill that matches all windows throughout the building in color and material. The Murphy bed is stored behind a door, located on the room’s east wall, adjacent to the primary doorway. Interior walls are finished with a painted cement veneer, while floors are covered with an original vinyl 12” x 12” tile. The ceiling is an acoustic-foam board drop-ceiling, placed approximately 8” below the original concrete ceiling.

"**Sitting** Room" - The living room is referred to within this Station as the Sitting Room, and is the primary public entrance to the Station from NE Gordon Street on the north. This room is positioned directly to the east of the Station office. This room has one exterior doorway and one large window opening, both located on the north wall. The window features the concrete tile window sill that is present below windows throughout the building. This window is also aluminum-clad with a wood base and is a single-pane, two-panel casement. The east wall is centered with a cased opening to the kitchen, while the south wall features only one doorway to the central engine bay, located near the southwest corner of the room. The doorway to the office is also located near this southwest corner along the west wall. Similar to the office, the ceiling is acoustic-foam board drop-ceiling placed approximately 8" below the original concrete ceiling. The flooring is 12” square vinyl tiles.

**Kitchen** - Extending east of the living room through a cased doorway is the kitchen. The kitchen was remodeled in 2010 but retains its original floorplan. The north wall of this room has no ornamentation, other than a chair rail approximately 30” above the floor. Centered within the east wall is a single-panel casement window, with a cement tile windowsill and an arched recess within the soffit above this window. Cabinetry, counters, and the sink fill the remainder of this wall. The east half of the south wall is occupied with more cabinetry and counters placed below a soffit, measuring approximately 18” from the ceiling, and extending approximately 30” from the wall. The flooring in this kitchen is consistent with the 12” vinyl tile that is present within all rooms along the building's north side. This room retains its original ceiling of poured concrete with a smooth concrete finish.

"**Oil Room**" - The room adjacent to the kitchen extending south is referred to as the "Oil Room." The primary function of this room serves as a storage space for fire-fighting clothing and protection. The equipment storage space measures approximately 7’ x 7’, and has a concrete floor and ceiling, with concrete finish walls. The north wall is finished with a wooden cupboard, while the south wall is finished with shelves. The main entrance to the Oil Room was originally
equipped with a door on a hinge. This door, however, has since been removed to facilitate quicker and easier access to equipment and clothing necessary for response to fire calls.

_Basement_ – Access to the basement is along the east wall, located between the Oil Room and the Hose Tower. The partial basement lies under the east half of the building. Walls of the basement are constructed of concrete block and mortar, covered with a painted water-proofing compound. Access to the basement is via a poured concrete staircase that lies flush with the eastern basement wall. The floor and ceiling are also poured concrete. The ceiling height is approximately 8-feet. Located within the basement are the building's furnace, water heater, and workshop. Windows are placed within the east and south walls of the basement. Each window is approximately 2' x 3' in size, is single-pane, and remains framed in its original wood. The top rail of each window is placed flush with the ceiling.

_Hose Tower_ - Continuing south along the east engine bay wall is the doorway to the ground-level of the hose tower. This interior of the tower is roughly 7' x 7' in size and is finished with poured concrete walls on the north, east, and south. The west wall opens to the engine bay via two French doors to allow for greater ground-level access. The interior of the tower rises 2 stories and is used to elevate and dry fire hoses between uses.

_Rear Entrance/Exit_ – The southeast corner of the main engine bay is a hallway that leads to the rear entrance/exit. Within the hallway is the staircase leading to the upper level of the hose tower and the Station's exercise room. A wooden doorframe surrounds the opening from the engine room where there was historically a door. The actual door was removed at a previous unknown date, as evidenced by the door hinges that remain visible on the south door jamb. The walls of the hallway are finished in painted concrete. The ceiling is finished with painted concrete, approximately 9 feet in height. The floor also continues the same treatment of painted concrete as the central engine bay. Dimensions for the hallway are roughly 7' (east/west) x 4' (north/south).

_Stairwell_ - The exterior walls of this stairwell are a painted concrete finish over a poured concrete base. The stairs that rise into the hose tower are the original yellow pine wood risers. As the tower extends above the first level of the building, the walls of the hose tower change from concrete to exposed-stud wood walls. The mechanical lift to raise and lower the hoses for drying also sits on its original wooden platform within the tower's 2nd level.

_Lavatory_ - The room that anchors the building's southeast corner serves multiple purposes, including the building restroom, shower facility, and personal locker room for the firefighters. The dimensions of the room measure approximately 15' (north/south) x 25' (east/west) x 9' in height. There are two identical windows within the lavatory, each measuring approximately 36" wide x 40" high. One window sits on the east wall and separates the lockers within the room (north interior wall) from the shower (southeast corner). The second window is within the south wall and sits between a second row of lockers and the lavatory sinks. The ceiling, floor, and upper portions of three walls are all finished with painted concrete. The north wall is mostly obscured by a row of lockers that extend from the floor to the ceiling. The western corner of this wall features a doorway into the main engine bay, straddled by the same concrete finish as the ceiling along the top 3' of the wall. Below this finish is a golden/tan concrete tile extending down to the floor. This same finish treatment is replicated along the room's eastern wall. The southern wall is finished with the golden/tan concrete tile only below the windowsill. The window in the southern wall is framed completely with the same concrete tile in a quoin pattern. The lavatory's western wall is finished in painted concrete block. The sink/shower and toilet facilities are not original and were introduced into the building during a remodeling project in the 2010s.

_Dormitory_ - To the west of the station lavatory is the dormitory. The dormitory is the largest room within the building other than the central engine bay located in the building's middle section. The north, south, and west walls of the dormitory are poured concrete, while the east wall, shared with the lavatory, is concrete block. The floor and ceiling are also poured concrete with a painted concrete finish. A large casement window is placed in the west exterior wall, while two casement windows of similar size are placed within the south wall. These windows are all aluminum-clad, wood-framed, and single casements that replaced the original steel casement windows. The windows also feature the concrete tile sill that is present below windows throughout the building. There are two doorways into the dormitory. One doorway is located in the north wall near the dormitory's eastern wall. The second doorway is within the room's eastern wall and opens to the lavatory and locker room. Both doorways appear to match the post-1953 replacements that are located elsewhere within the Station.

_Second-Level_ - The Station's 2nd level had remained unfinished until 2008. In that year, sheetrock was added to the ceiling joists, along with lighting and carpeting. This space now functions as a gym and fitness room for firefighters. The room's ceiling incorporates the projecting dormer over the engine bay door to the west and the hose tower on the east. The resulting ceiling reflects a tall, central height for the majority of the east/west orientation of the room while sloping downward toward the floor extending north and south.
Main Engine Bay – The main engine bay is the largest room within Fire Station No. 1, measuring approximately 35’ deep x 20’ wide. All rooms within the fire station can be accessed directly from the main engine bay, except for the kitchen and the Station’s second level. The north, east, and south walls are all finished with a 5’8” rise of gold/tan concrete tile, above which is a painted concrete to the ceiling height of 12’. The ceiling is also constructed of poured concrete, as well as the floor. The room’s west wall is dominated by the engine-bay door that exits onto NE Quincy Street. The north wall has two doorways. The western-most doorway enters the Station’s office, while the 2nd doorway enters the Station’s sitting room. The engine bay’s eastern wall features open-cased doorways to the “oil room” and rear entrance hallway, and traditional cased doorways to the basement and hose tower. The engine bay’s south wall features two doorways, one to the Station’s lavatory, and the other to the Station’s dormitory.

Alterations - Fire Station No. 1 has been in continuous use since its original construction in 1940. Since then, several changes have been made to the building to modernize and replace outdated features, or to modernize the facility for the safety and convenience of firefighters. Several of these changes occurred following a flood in 1953 that resulted in the submersion of the first level. Cleanup from the flood required the replacement of the casement windows and the replacement of the Station’s wooden doors and wooden cabinets in the kitchen. Complete records of these changes are maintained at the City of Topeka Fire Department Headquarters, the Office of Facilities Management, and the City Engineer’s Office.

The building remains in good condition and retains significant character-defining features and historic integrity. Except for the roof and windows, the building completely retains its original appearance. No structural changes have occurred that would have resulted in an altered floor plan, and no additions have been made. Within the interior, only changes to add new facilities in the kitchen and bathroom, finishes of the 2nd level, and placement of a drop-tile ceiling in the living room and office have been made.
Fire Station No. 1  
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas  
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

X B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Permit of Significance

1940

 Significant Dates

1940

 Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Cuthbert & Suehrk

Bowers Construction

Period of Significance (justification)  
Fire Station No. 1’s period of significance is limited to the year 1940 when this Station was constructed.
Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary
Fire Station No. 1 is deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its Architecture. The building is also associated with the geographical growth and development of the City of Topeka. The Station is an example of an eclectic, mid-20th century fire station and Italianate Revival influences. Designed by the renowned Kansas architectural firm Cuthbert & Suerhk, Station No. 1 embodies the mid-20th-Century functionality required by professional firehouses in materials and construction techniques, while incorporating Italianate influences in its appearance and choice of exterior materials.

Unlike the other fire stations in Topeka constructed at this time, this Station did not utilize New-Deal era funding options of the Great Depression. Use of the New Deal programs like WPA & PWA for infrastructure projects required the use of skilled labor, which requisitely required the payment of higher wages for those workers. Coinciding with the year of construction (1940) was the beginning of WWII, which reduced the availability of skilled labor throughout the country. For this reason, the City of Topeka chose to utilize all available local resources, particularly the bond passed by voters in 1926, to engage in the construction of Fire Station No. 1, excluding the use of the New Deal-era programs.

Elaboration

Historical Fire Service in Topeka1 – The City of Topeka functioned without a dedicated fire service from its founding in 1854 until February of 1870. The first recorded fire was during the winter of 1854-1855 when flames from a small fire ignited the thatched roof of the cabin occupied by the City’s founders. Being the only occupied “home” within the City at that time, City founder Fry W. Giles declared the City to be in “ruins.”

After this first fire, no other fires were recorded during the City’s first decade. This absence removed the impetus to establish a system with which to fight fires. This lack of need, however, changed on April 24th, 1867. On that date, an earthquake was recorded that centered near the City of Manhattan, Kansas. Tremors from this quake were reported as far east as Carthage, Ohio. This earthquake caused damage to much of the City, including the start of several fires to both homes and businesses.3

Two years later, in 1869, fires destroyed two prominent buildings, the S. D. McDonald Building, and the Ritchie Block. The loss of these prominent buildings convinced the citizenry and City leaders that the time had come to purchase firefighting machinery, and to begin the assembly of a system for firefighting at the municipal level. In 1870, the Topeka City Council authorized and funded the acquisition of a steam pump and fire wagon, which arrived on February 5th. These items were purchased before the appointment of any official personnel to operate the equipment. Realizing this omission, City officials soon appointed Tobias Billings as the engineer of the steamer, and T. J. Anderson as his assistant. These two firefighters then comprised the Topeka Fire Department, which, in addition to the steam pump and fire wagon, depended on volunteers in the close vicinity at fires.4

In October of that same year, two volunteer companies were organized, and all equipment was stationed in a converted blacksmith shop in the 500 Block of SE Quincy Street.5 The companies were known as Steamer Company No. 1, Hose Companies Nos. 1 and 2, and “Safety” Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 (a new ladder truck had arrived in October from the factory). Collectively, these companies numbered a total of 65 members, one of whom was a paid firefighter on regular duty and a City policeman when not on duty.6

The converted blacksmith’s shop served as the City’s sole fire station until 1874, when the original Fire Station No. 1 was constructed across the Kansas River in North Topeka. Fire Station No. 1 was located at the southeast corner of N Kansas

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1 Several Fire Station nominations were submitted within a few year period, this history is similar to Fire Station No 2, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas.
2 Ripley, John W., Fire Service in Topeka, the Early Years, Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin No. 63, 1986, p. 3
4 Ripley, John W., Fire Service in Topeka, the Early Years, Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin No. 63, 1986, p. 7
5 National Register Nomination for Fire Station No. 2” (Topeka, Ks. Kansas State Historical Society, 2002) Sec. 8, p 7
6 Ripley, John W., Fire Service in Topeka, the Early Years, Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin No. 63, 1986, p. 7
The construction of Fire Station No. 1 marked the beginning of municipal firefighting in Topeka. Within the subsequent 15 years, four additional fire stations were constructed. Fire Station No. 2 was constructed in 1878 in the rear portion of the new City Hall, located at SE 7th Street & S. Kansas Avenue. The construction of Fire Station No. 3 followed in 1882 in the 300 Block of NE Quincy Street, followed by Station No. 4 in the 700 Block of SW Clay Street (1887), and Station No. 5 in the 600 Block of SE Lake Street (1890). The construction of each of these fire stations in Topeka was a direct result of the growth of the City and the resulting demand by businesses and residents for reduced response times.

Beginning in 1920, the City began an active campaign to annex areas that would assist in “straightening” Topeka’s irregular boundaries and street alignments. In 1921, five boundary extensions were proposed by Topeka’s Planning Board along the city’s northern, eastern, and western edges. One of these areas was adjacent to and east of the area currently occupied by Fire Station No. 7. The annexation of the land for Station No. 7 was achieved in 1924, followed by the substantially more land to the west and south in 1926 and 1927. These annexations enabled suburban development within these areas, resulting in a population increase of 28% for the City of Topeka from 50,022 in 1920, to 64,120 in 1930.

In 1926, physical improvements and the establishment of new fire stations took on a new life. Through a special election held on November 2nd of that year, Topeka’s voters authorized a bond of $250,000, to be used for the enhancement and expansion of fire protection services throughout the City.

According to the US Census, Topeka’s population in 1920 was 50,022, while in 1930, this number had risen to 64,120. This is a growth rate over the decade of 28.2%. Topeka’s population in 1940, however, had grown to 67,883, reflecting the growth of only 5.9%, which could be seen along the City’s southern and western periphery.

The need for additional fire coverage in these areas had been expected as evidenced by the passage of the municipal bond in 1926. The Great Depression had slowed the pace of growth, but to compensate for this economic downturn, the Federal Government created the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935 to help cities and communities across the nation maintain and build new infrastructure and keep Americans working. Coupled with the municipal bond approved by Topeka voters in 1926, the WPA was responsible for the construction of three new fire stations in Topeka, all built in the year 1935. These fire stations were: No. 5, moved from its location in East Topeka to the intersection of S. Topeka Ave and SW 17th St.; No. 6, located at 1419 NE Seward Avenue in the Oakland neighborhood; and No. 7, located near the southwest corner of SW 12th Street and SW Oakley Street. Fire Station No. 7 also received a new fire engine, which was the only such piece of firefighting apparatus purchased with WPA funding.

Fire House Designs

The first quarter of the 20th Century also coincided with the nationwide transition from the traditional horse-drawn pump-wagon method of firefighting to the emerging technology of the motorized fire truck. Topeka purchased its first motorized fire engine in 1912, which was housed at the Fire Department Headquarters at Fire Station No. 2. The transition to motorized equipment meant that stations could now be built to consolidate the housing of engine, hose, and ladder companies that had previously been all-volunteer, and scattered in several locations. Furthermore, stations no longer needed to be designed to accommodate a stable for the horse.

One of the premier references to the evolution of fire stations built within the United States is Rebecca Zurier’s The American Firehouse, And architectural and Social History. Zurier notes a fundamental shift in the design of the American firehouse during the age of the transition from the horse and steam pump and wagon to the internal combustion engine. Fire Station No. 1 was the first fire station in the City of Topeka to accommodate a combustion-engine fire truck, as opposed to the traditional horse and wagon. As such, its design was altered from the traditional approach for fire stations that featured two-story design with the fire-pole and living quarters located on the 2nd level, to a uniformly single-level design. The new fire station was modeled in the same approach as the “bungalow,” where all company living quarters were placed on the ground level. This change in design was in part to the wholesale adoption of the internal combustion engine.

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7 The Topeka State Journal “Planning Board Would Add Territory to City Straightening Boundary,” (15 June 1921) p. 1
8 Ruth Keenoy, Survey Report, Colins Park, Topeka, Kansas 2017
fire engine, and also to a wealth of changes in firefighting apparatus, firefighting procedures, firefighter scheduling changes, and changes in city planning.\textsuperscript{10}

As long as fire stations required horses to haul their firefighting apparatus, the traditional firehouse of the 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} Centuries were essentially modified barns, or at best, as one article described stations in New York City in 1912, “ornate and pretentious livery stables.” The accommodation of the horse as a necessary component of firefighting apparatus required the firehouse to contain haylofts, feed rooms, stalls, hanging harnesses, and the high-ceilinged rooms that accommodated them. The inclusion of these necessary accommodations for horses within the traditional firehouse resulted in various health concerns for firefighters, chief among them was a condition referred to as the “ammoniacal vapors,” which was simply a reference to the unsanitary smells attributable to the horses on the main level. The removal of horses and their accommodations afforded both a cleaner environment for the firefighters, and also the ability to place the living spaces of the firefighters closer to the fire engines.\textsuperscript{11}

This “cleaner environment” manifested itself through several different means. These means can be categorized under the categories of building materials, firehouse floor plan, and the physical location of the firehouse, itself.

In terms of building materials, the transition from the horse and pump wagon to the combustion engine fire truck coincided with the widespread focus on the sanitation and cleanliness of fire stations. Enabling this focus on sanitary conditions was the adoption of poured concrete as a favored material for many public and municipal buildings. Many such projects resulted from the New Deal era Works Progress Administration (WPA) programming. Thomas Williamson followed these national trends in his design for Fire Station No. 1, utilizing poured concrete as its predominant and principal building material. The use of this material also enabled Fire Station No. 1 to replace wood floors with linoleum and glazed ceramic tile, and window sills and walls with concrete tile. These hard, non-porous surfaces greatly enabled the overall sanitation and cleanliness of the firehouse.

The second area of transformation for the American firehouse was the overall floorplan and design. Without the horse and stable, no longer was there a need for multiple levels to separate those spaces occupied by both humans and horses. All facilities necessary for the firefighters could be placed on the ground floor within easy access to the fire engine. This rearrangement of the floor plan eliminated the necessity for inclusion of the iconic, but dangerous, “fire pole” that enabled quick access from the living quarters above to the fire wagon and horses below. Firefighters, themselves, welcomed the removal of the pole, primarily because of the injuries frequently incurred in its use. Night alarms that brought firefighters out of a deep sleep were the primary cause, as awakening men often suffered hernias, broken ankles, and deep muscle sprains.\textsuperscript{12}

The rearrangement of the firehouse floorplan also brought with it the introduction of a kitchen for the in-house use of firefighters. Bungalow stations constructed at this time included a kitchen at the rear of the building. In older buildings, the now unnecessary stalls could be removed, leaving room for a cooking and eating area.\textsuperscript{13} Upon the advent of the multiple-shift scheduling of firefighters, one member of the firehouse was appointed as the shift “cook,” while other firefighters adopted the job of cleaning and washing dishes.

Perhaps the most notable alteration to firehouse design was that fire stations could subsequently be placed further within residential neighborhoods. This change in the placement of fire stations relative to their surroundings subsequently meant that the fire house would need to reflect a more residential style of architecture to “blend in” with the developing suburbs of American cities. Firemen's journals described “bungalow firehouses” as any one-story fire station designed to look like a house.\textsuperscript{14} In fact, some of the first bungalow stations were designed by city architects to appease irate residents of exclusive neighborhoods who did not want an ugly, institutional building on their block.\textsuperscript{15}

When Fire Station No. 1 was built in 1940, the intersection of NE Gordon and NE Quincy Avenues was developed exclusively for low-density residential uses. In 1966, the Kansas Avenue Bridge over the Kansas River was realigned, linking Kansas Avenue on the south to Quincy Street on the north. This realignment shifted traffic away from N. Kansas Avenue, and onto NE Quincy Street, thus re-categorizing its functional classification and capacity. This change in classification and purpose also shifted the predominant uses of the land adjacent to NE Quincy St. from low-density residential to other non-residential uses.

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p. 160
\textsuperscript{12} Gerry & Janet Souter, The American Fire Station, (Osceola, WI, MBI Publishing Co. 2000) p. 136
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p. 159
Architecture of Fire Station No. 1

Fire Station No. 1 was designed as a bungalow fire station, complete with a kitchen, dormitory, and engine bay, all placed on the same ground-level, designed to blend in with its residential surroundings. Its massing, scale, and materials all reflect an attempt to integrate its purpose and function as a municipal fire station, yet concurrently establish itself as an aesthetic and functional asset within its surroundings.

Architect - Charles Cuthbert was a native Topekan, serving as the state architect for Kansas from 1925 until 1930 under Governor Ben Paulen. In 1927, he was joined in his practice by his classmate at Washington University School of Architecture William Suehrk. The firm of Cuthbert and Suehrk designed many Topeka buildings, including the 1928 Gem Building at 508 W. 10th Street and the 1951 Garlinghouse Building at 820 South Quincy Street. Their accomplishments within the City of Topeka include the Charles M. Sheldon Community House, the Stormont Hospital, and the Valley Park School. Other notable works within the city of Topeka include East Topeka Jr. High School, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Old Topeka Fire Station No. 5, and Topeka Fire Station No. 6.

Fire Station No. 1 embodies several features that are common with the Italianate style. Its use of a low-hipped roof, balanced and symmetrical shape, and detailed brackets under the eave above the engine-bay door are character-defining Italianate features. The use of a light-tan brick, coupled with natural stone sills under the windows, and an original clay-tile roof are also common elements of Italianate design. The building could be identified as an example of 'classical eclecticism' as Talbot Hamlin defined it in his book American Spirit in Architecture. For the architect, Hamlin claimed, "historical style was an aid only, a means to be used as the designer wished, freely or strictly." Rather than concentrating on identifying 'styles', Hamlin felt that one had to consider buildings as examples of specialized building types.

The historical roots of Italianate architectural styles come from Italian Renaissance architecture. This style dominated in Italy until the 19th Century when various aspects of the style were adopted by English-speaking architects who were attempting to replicate Roman designs.

This newly developed Italianate style flourished in England throughout the 1800s, where it became known as the picturesque movement. Italianate architecture in England departed from the centuries-old tradition of Neoclassical, where order and proportion were dominant stylistic elements. This departure was achieved primarily through the use of the landscape as a prominent feature of the house. British-born landscape architect Calvert Vaux (1824-1895), and the American architect Andrew Jackson Downing brought this combination of landscape and Italianate style to North America through Downing’s book Rural Cottages and Cottage-Villas and the Gardens and Grounds Adapted to North America (1842). Throughout the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, architects reinterpreted the style for buildings in the United States, thus making Italianate architecture, as reflected in the built environment, a unique American style.

This 'specialization of building types' could explain the differences embodied by Fire Station No. 1 as designed by Cuthbert & Suehrk, and a true Italianate design as might be displayed in a building constructed for a different function. In all of Cuthbert & Suehrk’s work in Topeka, it is apparent that the function of the building supersedes purity of design according to their traditional architectural characteristics. Fire Station No. 1 is a firehouse, and was designed, first and foremost, to function as a firehouse. As such, it can be recognized as a state-of-the-art facility in 1940. In addition to its function, however, Cuthbert & Suehrk added several characteristics of Italianate style to produce a public building that was attractive and would be looked upon for generations as a community asset to foster the growth and quality of life in North Topeka.

Summary-

Fire Station No. 1 is an excellent example of an early-Mid-20th Century bungalow firehouse, constructed during the emergence of the nation from the Great Depression and the beginning of WWII. The use of the bungalow design enabled North Topeka to continue its economic and social viability as a functioning part of the greater City of Topeka. The Station was constructed at a modest cost, due to the reuse and deployment of many functional components of the previous Station No. 1, which was located at the corner of NE Gordon and N Kansas Avenue. This Station was built in 1940, during the latter years of the Great Depression. New Deal program funding was not sought to assist in the construction of this Station due to the lack of qualified and skilled labor at this time. Instead, funding was used from a bond issued by the City of Topeka in 1926 to upgrade and/or replace the City’s existing fire stations. The Station was also constructed using a method of poured concrete, as opposed to stone, block masonry, or wood construction methods. This method of

17 Brenda Spencer, “National Register Nomination for Fire Station No. 2” (Topeka, Ks. Kansas State Historical Society, 2002) Sec. 8, p 2
construction reduced costs and greatly enhanced durability and longevity. As such, it is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion ‘C’ for its Italianate architectural influences and it is associated with the growth and development of Topeka, which is why it was constructed.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


Krause, Keith S., Impact of Water on the Development of Topeka, a History, Topeka, Kansas, 1993

Motor Fire Apparatus, Fire and Water Engineering, Volume 51, 1912


Topeka Capital Journal, September 21, 1952

Topeka Daily Capital, Nov. 28, 1954

Topeka Daily Capital, Dec. 19, 1954

Topeka Daily State Journal, Nov. 12, 1927

Topeka Daily Capital, Nov. 4, 1926

The Power Wagon, Fire Department Motors, No. 88, Chicago, IL, 1912

Zurier, Rebecca, The American Firehouse, an Architectural and Social History, Abbeville Press, New York, 1982
Fire Station No. 1
Shawnee County, Kansas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.82 acres

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.
(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: WGS84
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 39.068327° -95.664239° 3  
Latitude: 39.068327° Longitude: -95.664239°  
Latitude: Longitude:

2 4  
Latitude: Longitude:  
Latitude: Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)
EUGENE ADDITION, Lot 96 +, LT 96, 98, 100 LESS BEG AT NW COR L T 100, E 40 SW 40(S0, N 30 TO POB, & LESS W 10 LT 96 & 98 QUINCY ST SECTION 29 TOWNSHIP 11 RANGE 16

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected) Limited to the boundaries of the building’s parcel and the vacant adjacent property that housed firefighters in a tent during construction.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy Paris
organization City of Topeka Planning & Development Department  
date 9-9-2020
street & number 620 SE Madison St.  
telephone 785-368-3728

city or town Topeka  
state Kansas  
zip code 66607
e-mail tparis@topeka.org

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name City of Topeka
street & number 620 SW Madison  
telephone

city or town Topeka  
state KS  
zip code 66607

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.
Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.

Name of Property: City of Topeka Fire House No. 1
City or Vicinity: Topeka
County: Shawnee
State: KS
Photographer: Tim Paris, City of Topeka Preservation Planner
Date Photographed: June 11, 2020

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include a description of view indicating the direction of camera:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photo Number</th>
<th>View</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>NE</td>
<td>Front elevation from the southwest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Front and side elevation from the northeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Eave detail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>NE</td>
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<td>#6</td>
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<td>Front entrance south sconce and decorative carving</td>
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<td>Lavatory doorways to dormitory and main engine bay</td>
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<td>NE</td>
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<td>#36</td>
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<td>#37</td>
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<td>#38</td>
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<tr>
<td>#39</td>
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<td>Basement south and west foundation walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 1

Photo 2
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 5

Photo 6
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 9

Photo 10
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 11

Photo 12
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 13

Photo 14
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 15

Photo 16
Fire Station No 1
Shawnee County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State

Photo 17

Photo 18
Fire Station No 1

Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas

County and State
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 21

Photo 22
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 23
Fire Station No 1
Shawnee County, Kansas

Photo 24
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 25
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 26

Photo 27
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 30

Photo 31
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 32

Photo 33
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 34
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 35
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 37
Fire Station No 1
Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 40
Fire Station No 1

934 NE Quincy St.
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas
Boundary Map
Fire Station No 1

934 NE Quincy St,
Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

Boundary Map
Fire Station No 1

Name of Property

Shawnee County, Kansas

County and State