United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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

historic name  High Rise Apartments
other names/site number  KHRI # 009-202
Name of Multiple Property Listing  NA
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number  1101 Kansas Avenue  NA  not for publication
city or town  Great Bend, Kansas  NA  vicinity
state  KS  county  Barton  zip code  67530-4460

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this ___ 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 ___ 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:  ___ A  ___ B  ___ C  ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  Date
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

<table>
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<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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<td>(Check as many boxes as apply.)</td>
<td>(Check only one box.)</td>
<td>(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)</td>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: ____

### 6. Function or Use

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<td>DOMESTIC/multiple-dwelling</td>
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### 7. Description

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<th>Materials</th>
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<td>MODERN MOVEMENT: New Formalism</td>
<td>foundation: Concrete</td>
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<td>walls: Concrete</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brick</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>other:</td>
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**Narrative Description**

**Summary Paragraph** (Briefly describe the current, 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.)

*High Rise Apartments*, located at 1101 Kansas Avenue, is a twelve-story high-rise senior public housing tower located in the downtown commercial core of Great Bend, Kansas. Constructed in 1972 by the Great Bend Housing Authority, the building was designed by the Springfield, Missouri-based architecture firm Butler and Associates. The building is designed in the New Formalist style, clad in light brown king size brick with sculptural brick piers at each corner. It has a cruciform footprint with dark glazed fenestration. At the top floor of the building is a cantilevered projection on all four elevations, comprising community spaces and balconies. At the interior, all floors are arranged on a cruciform plan with a central elevator lobby and stair. There are north, south, east, and west halls connected by a corridor. Finishes within the building include brick and gypsum board walls, flooring of carpet and vinyl tile, and gypsum board ceilings. Floors 2-11 are nearly identical and house apartment units. The 12th floor houses tenant amenity space and a conference room. The building has a high degree of integrity.

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**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

**Setting:** *High Rise Apartments* is located in downtown Great Bend, Kansas. The street network in downtown Great Bend is generally on a grid system. The blocks surrounding the subject building are characterized by low-lying landscape, low-rise, and low density commercial development ranging from one- to three-stories. One block to the south of the complex is US Route 56, an east-west highway that largely follows the historic Santa Fe Trail. One block to the east is US Route 281, which extends north and south and serves as the Main Street in Great Bend. Businesses located on the main arterial street have angled parking; those located on adjacent streets include surface parking areas. Outside the commercial core are residential blocks that measure approximately 300 feet by 300 feet with a central north-south unpaved alleys. These residential streets are lined with low-rise single-family houses. Landscaping along the commercial roads is minimal, but residential blocks have significant tree cover.

*High Rise Apartments* is located at the east of city block bounded by 11th and 12th Streets on the south and north, and by Main Street and Kansas Street on the west and east. The size of the block is approximately 3.18 acres. On the blocks immediately surrounding are one- and two-story commercial buildings. Directly to the west of the site is a paved north-south alley between 11th and 12th Street, dividing the block vertically. To the west of the alley is a one-story bakery, a knife and gun store, and surface parking. Sharing the eastern half of the block, located on the northern third, is a two-story insurance office with surface parking.

**Site:** Specifically, *High Rise Apartments* is located on a rectangular parcel, approximately 0.64 acres (28,000 sq. ft.) in size, sited at the southwest of the block. The parcel is approximately 140 feet north and south and 200 feet east and west. The building occupies approximately 75% of the parcel and is roughly centered. The cruciform shaped building is sited at a 45-degree angle so that the elevations face to the lot corners. The base of the building is slightly elevated with the grading of the site sloping down approximately three feet to street-

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1 Given the generic name of the apartment building, *High Rise Apartments* is italicized whenever the phrase specifically references the Great Bend senior public housing project.
level. The site is landscaped, with trees lining the street-facing edges of the lot and shrubbery in gravel plant beds along the elevations and walkways. The northwest corner of the site has a paved circular area with four benches facing one another, shaded by a large tree. To the south of this circular pad are two concrete shuffleboard courts. The southwest corner of the lot is bisected by a drive that leads to a small surface parking lot, resulting in a small oval containing a tree and a rock border along the drive. Benches can also be found along the sidewalk next to 11th Street at the south. Flat pathways from the sidewalk to the building are paved and gently curving. Some walkways lead to stairs up to the building’s entries, but the main walkway leading from Kansas Avenue is a ramp with railings on both sides. The secondary entrance off of the alley and 11th Street also has a stair and a ramp leading to the entry. Lamp posts illuminate the walkways. There is a flagpole located at the northeast of the site, near the building.

Structure: The building is twelve stories, steel frame with concrete slab floors and concrete footings. The framing is organized rectilinearly around a central elevator and stair core with four wings. The central core measures rough 52 feet east-west and 45 feet north-south. With a cruciform footprint, the building measures approximately 100 feet east-west and 95 feet north-south. Rectilinear superstructure of steel-framing forms the wings, which extend from the central core roughly 20 feet north and south, and 24 feet east and west.

Exterior: The New Formalist building features symmetrical north-south and east-west elevations, with sloping decorative brick piers at the ends of the wings. These piers terminate at the bottom into decorative brick arches at the first floor, and into the cantilevered 12th floor at the top. The building is clad in light brown king size brick. All four elevations are similar in design with consistent materials, including the light brown brick, tan spandrels out of Cor-span metal siding, and a combination of fixed and sliding anodized aluminum frame windows with dark tinted glazing. The variations between each elevation are discussed in more detail below. The elevations are oriented at 45 degrees to true north, with plan north at the northeast.

East and West Elevations: The east and west elevations are four bays across and mirror images of one another, with entrances to the lobby at the first floor of both elevations. The east elevation faces the intersection of 11th Street and Kansas Avenue. The first floor of the east elevation is characterized by a porch, with an entrance ramp that connects to the at-grade sidewalk. An arched opening is located at the north and south of the projecting bay, filled with a storefront window. At the south is the entry door, recessed from the building plane is a glass single-leaf door flanked by sidelights. At the center-south is a storefront window. At the center is a 2-light storefront window. At center-north is a fixed casement style window. At the north is a single-leaf door. Large letters reading “Great Bend Housing Authority” are affixed to the brick wall of the open porch. The entry doors are set in a full-glass aluminum-framed storefront, situated at the south.

The west elevation is secondary and faces 12th Street and the alley. The first floor of the west elevation of the building is characterized by a loading dock, and another entrance ramp. A punched arch window opening is located at the north and south of the projecting bay. The north is filled with a fixed pane of glass. At the south is an aluminum glazed single-leaf door. The windows at the south-center follow the same pattern as the upper floors. At the center are paired doors, and at the north, the recessed entryway leads to a porch with an aluminum glazed single-leaf door flanked by sidelights. Both elevations’ entrances lead to a lobby, approximately 900 square feet.

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2 For ease of reading and understanding, for the duration of this narrative northeast will be plan north.
3 King size bricks are 9 5/8 inches long, 2 5/8 inches high, and 2 3/4 inches wide.
The second-through-eleventh floors of the east and west elevations are symmetrically organized and have a strong vertical emphasis. The elevations are characterized by four-bay central projections that extend approximately 20 feet from the core. The projections are defined by four bays, which flank a small central brick pilaster approximately 10 inches wide. The bays of the projection are recessed from the brick pilasters and decorative brick piers by approximately five feet. The outer bays of the projection are roughly ten feet wide. Fenestration consists of tripartite windows at the outer bays, with a larger fixed central pane and smaller flanking sliding panes. Three-inch tan Cor-span metal siding panels fill the spandrels between the windows on each floor of the projecting bay.

The central bays of the second-through-eleventh floors of the projections are approximately four and a half feet wide, and contain paired symmetrical horizontal sliding aluminum windows. The central bays are flanked by major pilasters that are approximately two feet wide and extend roughly three feet from the building. A set of paired asymmetrical windows at the corners of the projecting bays meet at a right angle. The larger is casement style. The smaller companion is fixed. Some of the windows are in poor condition and no longer open.

At the 12th floor, the projections extend further outwards into a cantilevered community space, and an open balcony clad in Cor-span metal paneling.

North and South Elevations: The north and south elevations are mirror images of one another. The north elevation, which faces Kansas Avenue, is defined at the first floor by a patio area, accessible from the lobby by an aluminum glazed single-leaf door flanked by sidelights. Decorative arched openings are located at the first floor, at each corner of the projecting wing. One of these arches has been filled with a storefront window at the west. At the east, the arch is infilled with a stucco-like material. Fenestration at the center of the first floor matches that of the second-through-eleventh floors. At the center and center-east are single-leaf doors with a screen door. East of the easternmost door is a paired window.

At the south elevation, punched arch openings are located at the east and west corners of the projecting wing. A tripartite full-glass aluminum frame sliding door is found at both the north and east of the porch, the central frame of which is a slider, the flanking lights of which are fixed and of similar size. At the center of the porch are two fixed frame full-height windows, separated by the central minor pilaster.

The second-through-eleventh floors of the north and south elevations are symmetrically organized and have a strong vertical emphasis. The elevations are characterized by four-bay central projections that extend approximately 20 feet from the core. The projections are defined by four bays, which flank a small central brick pilaster approximately 10 inches wide. The bays of the projection are recessed from the brick pilasters and decorative brick piers by approximately five feet. The outer bays of the projection are roughly ten feet wide. Fenestration consists of tripartite windows at the outer bays, with a larger fixed central pane and smaller flanking sliding panes. Three-inch tan Cor-span metal siding panels fill the spandrels between the windows on each floor of the projecting bay.

The central bays of the second-through-eleventh floors of the projections are approximately four and a half feet wide, and contain paired symmetrical horizontal sliding aluminum windows. The central bays are flanked by major pilasters that are approximately two feet wide and extend roughly three feet from the building. A set of paired asymmetrical windows at the corners of the projecting bays meet at a right angle. The larger is casement style. The smaller companion is fixed. Some of the windows are in poor condition and no longer open.
At the 12th floor, the projections extend further outwards into a cantilevered enclosed community space clad in Cor-span metal paneling.

Roof: The roof is flat, clad with a modern synthetic membrane and has a roughly twelve-foot high brick penthouse located in the center, above the elevator and stair shaft. The penthouse contains the elevator machine room.

Interior: The building contains twelve stories. The first floor has the lobby and office spaces, as well as two apartment units. Floors two-through-eleven are similar with resident units, though floors five and eight also have a laundry room. The twelfth floor contains tenant amenities like the library, exercise room, and meeting rooms. Vertical access is located within the building’s central core, provided by two elevator cabs and adjacent paired full-height fire stairs north of the elevators. The elevators are accessed at the southern elevation of the core, while the stairs are accessed at the east and west elevations of the core.

The building is accessed from the east and west through matching entryways. At the center of the lobby is a reception desk and to the southwest is an open lounge and mailroom. A metal dedication plaque in the lobby provides information of the original Housing Authority of Great Bend Board of Commissioners. To the southeast is a conference room. Behind the reception desk are two small private offices. At the north of the lobby are the elevators. To the east and west of the elevators are maintenance and back-of-house rooms, and at the far north are two additional housing units. At the northwest and northeast are fire-rated corridors that provide egress from the fire stair. Finishes throughout the first floor include exposed brick walls, gypsum board walls and ceilings, simple flat wood baseboards, simple metal window and door surrounds, and wall-to-wall carpeting. The elevator cabs are paneled wood.

The second-through-eleventh floors are arranged on a cruciform floor plan with a central core comprised of an elevator and stair, encircled by corridors that lead to short hallways extending to each of the four corners of the building. These corridors and hallways provide access to the apartments. The elevators open to an L-shaped elevator lobby. Corridor finishes vary, but all have wall-to-wall carpet. Other finishes include wallpaper, brick, and gypsum board walls, and limited areas of a modern chair rail. At the all upper floors except the fifth and eighth floors, the north and south wings have two one-bedroom apartments, and the east and west wings contain three efficiencies. The fifth and eighth floors feature a mechanical room, laundry room, and two-bedroom unit at the north wing, with two one-bedroom units at the south wing, and three efficiency units each at the east and west wings.

In general, the units range from approximately 450 square feet for efficiency units to 550 square feet for one-bedroom units. Due to the design of the corridors, most units have chamfered corners at the entry, with one wall of the living room at a roughly a 45-degree angle. Only the efficiencies located in the middle of the east and west wings are typical rectangular units. Unit finishes include wall-to-wall carpet, brick and gypsum board walls, and gypsum board ceilings. Each unit has a closet and storage space. Kitchens and bathrooms have vinyl tile floors. The laundry rooms on floors five and eight have utilitarian finishes with vinyl flooring, exposed brick, and a chair rail.

The twelfth floor consists of the tenant amenity spaces and a conference room. The elevators open to an L-shaped lobby. At the south is a large assembly room with an attached kitchen, approximately 1,000 square feet in size. This room is cantilevered out beyond the face of the building. At the east is a series of small interconnected rooms, which as designed included a games room, TV lounge, and arts and crafts room. The
east balcony is found beyond these rooms, through the conference room. At the west is a library, with a balcony beyond them. At the north is a large mechanical room, also cantilevered.

**Alterations:** The building is in good condition and has undergone minimal changes since it was constructed. No significant changes have been made to the site. On the exterior, select doors were replaced with modern aluminum glazed doors, though within the historic openings and generally matching the historic appearance. Similarly, windows were replaced in the 1980s and again in 2012. Window replacements retained the original openings and new windows matched the historic configurations. On the interior, the elevators were modernized. On floors eight through eleven, three efficiency units were modified into two one-bedroom units. Other changes have been limited to cosmetic details such as the installation of new carpet and wallpaper in certain areas.

**Integrity:** *High Rise Apartments* retains a high degree of integrity. As discussed below, the building is locally eligible for listing under Criteria A and C. It remains in use as public housing. There have been no substantial alterations and only slight modification to the exterior and interior. As such, character-defining features have all been retained and in good condition. National Register Bulletin 15 describes integrity as the capability of a resource to convey its significance, and evaluates integrity based on a set of seven aspects detailing a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Specific to the seven National Register Aspects of Integrity, *High Rise Apartments* meets all seven.

**Location:** The *High Rise Apartments* is in its original location.

**Setting:** The setting of the *High Rise Apartments* is essentially intact. It remains proximate to the downtown commercial core while also proximate to close-in single family houses. The overall development pattern of low-rise horizontal development with low density development on largely flat terrain remains.

**Feeling and Association:** The building has remained in use as affordable housing since its construction in 1972. Therefore, the building retains direct association with the events for which it is significant. As it is in the same use, it also exudes the feeling of its original design, use, and significance as public housing.

**Design:** The building retains integrity of design, as minimal alterations were completed over the years. There have been no significant additions or alterations to the exterior, and the primary interior spaces and circulation patterns are generally intact. The building retains the original design Butler and Associates developed in 1967.

**Materials and Workmanship:** Materials and workmanship both relate to the presence of historic fabric, and for the purposes of this evaluation are similar. Window replacements dating to 2012 are in the same configuration as the historic. The primary entrances have remained in the same location. At the interior, the corridors and apartment units remain intact, and finishes are reflective of the original palette of materials. Overall, the building retains a high degree of the original materials and workmanship.

A standard measure of whether a building retains integrity is whether it would be recognizable to a contemporary from its period of significance. In the case of the *High Rise Apartments*, the answer is yes.
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.

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<td>A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.</td>
</tr>
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<td>x</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.</td>
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### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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<td>ARCHITECTURE</td>
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### Period of Significance

1972

### Significant Dates

1972

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

### Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)


### Architect/Builder

Architect: Butler and Associates
Builder: Hahner, Foreman, and Cale

### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is 1972 when construction was completed. Under both Criterion A and C, the property is significance as a local demonstration of federal senior public housing. As such significance relates to its construction and not use.
In 1970, with federal funding and federal design direction from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Great Bend Housing Authority (GBHA) began construction of High Rise Apartments. The GBHA was created in 1967 for the specific purpose of building senior public housing utilizing available federal funding. High Rise Apartments was the physical manifestation of GBHA’s work and remains the only public housing building owned and operated by the GBHA. As such, the apartment tower is locally significant under Criterion A for POLITICS/GOVERNMENT. This policy dates to the Eisenhower Administration and the passage of the Housing Act of 1956. This act prioritized federal funding for senior housing construction and resulted in the first federally-funded public housing designed solely and specifically for seniors in the country. The Kennedy Administration redoubled senior housing efforts with the Housing Act of 1961. The combination of these housing acts resulted in a significant boost in federal funding for senior public housing. The policy was further developed under the Johnson Administration as part of his Great Society platform, particularly unleashing extensive federal funding that resulting in projects throughout the country. The trend ended in 1973 when the Nixon Administration placed a moratorium on new public housing starts and shifted federal policy to a voucher system. Parallel to eligibility under Criterion A, High Rise Apartments is eligible under Criterion C for ARCHITECTURE as a local physical expression of senior public housing architecture. Designed in the New Formalist style, prototypical design adhered to modernist design principles, with efficiencies and one-bedroom units stacked in a single high rise building surrounded by a larger green space. This modern design by architecture firm Butler and Associates was complimented by spaces for on-site social services, activity and social rooms, dining rooms, and similar public spaces that encouraged holistic senior living. To a significant degree, High Rise Apartments is fully reflective of federal policy and design standards pertaining to senior public housing, and embodies all of the building type’s character defining features. As discussed below, although just less than 50 years old, the property fulfills Criterion Consideration G.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Developmental History:

Completed in 1972, High Rise Apartments is both the first and only public housing building and senior public housing building in the city of Great Bend. In the late post-war years, Great Bend experienced a rising demand in satisfactory quality affordable housing to serve the growing population of elderly in the city. While Great Bend’s population remained steady through the 1950s at approximately 16,000 residents, it was an aging population. The 1960 census indicated that approximately 15% of the population consisted of elderly people.4 There was also a limited and aging housing stock; for the entire population, just 5,492 total housing units were reported, and many were in poor condition.5 Some of the elderly sought refuge at Catholic institutions, while others stayed with family, or attempted to live on their own. However, studies showed that 7% had no access to any of these options and had incomes that limited access to quality units in the private housing market.6

Beginning in the mid-1960s, Great Bend’s city government recognized the issue of housing for seniors and began discussions regarding a potential low-rent housing development. A 1965 editorial was published in the

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5 In 1960, Great Bend’s total population peaked, listed as 16,670 in Census records.
Great Bend Tribune entitled “Life Begins at Forty” advanced that discussion. That editorial argued the case for federally subsidized housing for the elderly. The issue was not isolated to Great Bend and other communities throughout the state began to also explore senior public housing.

In Great Bend, the discussion accelerated in 1966 when Hobart A. Joiner began to lobby before the Great Bend City Council. Joiner was a housing consultant based in Wichita. He had learned via informal discussions with the city clerk that the finance committee of the Great Bend City Council was exploring the feasibility of a local public housing development. Joiner’s consulting firm specialized in Turnkey housing development. His firm had worked with several other cities in Kansas to help facilitate public housing projects, particularly for the elderly, including the city of Russell, Kansas, 40 miles north, where he proposed a 90-unit development which was not constructed due to expiration of Russell’s workable program.

Initially, the Mayor asked Joiner to prepare a report on the current state of housing in the city, and the need for public housing. Over a period of several months, Joiner conducted a partial survey of the elderly and existing housing units. Of the 392 houses surveyed, 171 were dilapidated or in poor condition. Poor housing was defined as units which needed more repair than would be provided in the course of regular maintenance. These defects included open cracks in walls or foundations, rotted building materials, structurally unsound porches, broken steps or railings, broken windows, worn or inoperable doors, or deteriorated chimneys. Dilapidated housing was defined as housing of a small or negative value which does not provide safe and adequate shelter or endangers health, safety, or well-being of the occupants and has one or more critical defects that require considerable repair. This category included buildings with defective construction. In order to qualify as “dilapidated,” the buildings must have been in such poor condition that they needed extensive repair, rebuilding, or demolition.

On March 6, 1967, Joiner submitted his report and findings to the Mayor and City Council. His conclusion identified the need for low-rent senior housing in the city and called on the City government to take action. Joiner found that not only was there a shortage of affordable units for the elderly, but also a lack of quality and safe housing units. Options were limited and many seniors were relegated to Great Bend’s existing outdated and inexpensive hotels and apartment buildings, such as the Senate Hotel, the Zarah Hotel, or the Highland Apartments. Joiner has found each of these to be substandard. According to Joiner’s report, approximately 140 new senior housing units were necessary to adequately address the housing shortage.

Two months after Joiner’s report, on May 25, 1967, the City of Great Bend created the Great Bend Housing Authority (GBHA). Initial members were City Commissioners Delbert Williams, Glenn Scheutz, and John Carpenter with Carpenter serving as Chair. GBHA’s charge was narrow, as described in their mission statement: To create senior public housing units. At the outset, there was no consensus on exactly to fulfill this charge. To this point, Great Bend, like other communities, relied on the private market place to create...
affordable housing. This reliance was not working. Yet, to this point in time, the Great Bend had no prior experience with public housing.17

The GBHA’s efforts to provide senior public housing were not without local resistance. Some council members expressed concerns that public housing of any sort would attract “undesirables.”18 Many Great Bend residents objected that this was not an appropriate government role, with some even suggesting that developing public housing was “communistic.” Joiner’s report addressed some of these opinions and trepidations, emphasizing that popular farm programs, water programs, and other utility programs all stemmed from similar federal government initiatives. Joiner also framed the context of the proposed public housing as being for seniors and the disabled, rather than low-income housing for families generally.19

During the preliminary planning stage, the GBHA knew they wanted a downtown site and a local architect.20 In light of his experience, Joiner recommended a high-rise development financed through the Turnkey method, a method where the developer or builder would hire their own architects and present their proposals to a local housing authority. One of the touted benefits of the Turnkey method was cost-savings, which were about 10% less than traditional public housing construction.21 For comparison, Joiner provided a list of Turnkey developments managed by the Fort Worth HUD Office to GBHA. Among other things, this list revealed that in 1966 there were seven senior public housing projects in Kansas, totaling over 1,250 units.

Financing of the high-rise project had not yet been determined, though multiple Turnkey housing specialists courted the GBHA, including H.A. Joiner’s firm, Joiner and Associates, who wanted to continue involvement in the project through completion. Despite the initial engagement of H.A. Joiner in the development planning, the GBHA was not fully committed to the use of his firm. One stumbling block was that Joiner relied on an in-house architecture partnership with the architecture firm Greger and Wells. However, GBHA wanted a local architect. Also in question were professional references. Throughout January and February of 1967, City Council asked Joiner’s references, specifically from housing authorities located in other Kansas cities. Though none of the references were outwardly negative, background checks of Joiner, Harry Greger, and Lawrence E. Wells returned less than stellar financial track records. This fact, coupled with some disagreements regarding the site and financing options, led the GBHA to consider other options.22

By June of 1967, the GBHA was beginning to doubt the viability of the Turnkey concept, and was in discussion with a different public housing consultancy: the Springfield, Missouri-based architecture and engineering firm Butler and Associates. Hoping that the GBHA would formally engage his firm for their development, architect and public housing specialist Everett Eugene Butler of Butler and Associates offered to fly several members of the GBHA 550 miles southeast to Missouri to visit a project of theirs in Poplar Bluff in the summer of 1967. Butler and Associates had designed the $2.7 million Twin Towers Apartments in Poplar Bluff (MO-12-3&4), a landmark development that housed 156 units for the elderly in two towers, with an additional 36 units in a low rise building.23

17 Fort Worth Regional HUD Office, list of cities with Low-Rent Housing Programs.
20 H.A. Joiner to John Carpenter, July 29, 1967
22 H.A. Joiner to John Carpenter, July 29, 1967
23 Great Bend Housing Authority, “Great Bend High Rise History.”
Butler had over ten years of experience designing low-rent public housing, including other high-rises and devoted 95% of his practice to public housing design, constructing thousands of units of public housing for families and seniors across Missouri and Kansas.24 His firm also employed other professionals with extensive experience in public housing, including two financing experts, Frank Kessler, and Jack Bertoglio, an economist, Phillip Koehne, and an attorney, Trumann Moss. Butler was born on January 23, 1928, in Mexico, Missouri. He graduated from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri with his Bachelor of Architecture in 1952. Butler worked as a draftsman for various architectural firms until starting his own practice in May of 1955. In 1959, he became president of Butler and Associates.25

By July 1967, Butler and Associates’ vision for Great Bend was a high-rise project akin to their proposed twin 14-story towers development in Poplar Bluff, and the firm assisted GHBA in obtaining HUD’s funding of additional units.26 Joiner and Associates was officially notified that their firm had not been selected in August 1967; a letter to Joiner by the chairman of the Housing Authority relates that the GBHA voted unanimously to obtain the services of Butler and Associates.27 With the choice of Butler over Joiner, GBHA was rejecting the Turnkey model in favor of competitive bidding, a decision validated by a feasibility study which was conducted earlier in August of 1967.

Under leadership from Butler, the GBHA moved through the rest of the formal process for obtaining federal funds for the project through the conventional method of applying for a grant for planning, to purchase the site, and construction. In August 1967, they applied for planning funds for a low-rent public housing development for the elderly. HUD approved a planning grant for $40,000 for Great Bend’s proposed senior public housing development. Among other things, the planning grant allowed GBHA to hire staff and an executive director for the housing authority, David Lake, was selected shortly thereafter.28

Butler’s design was then submitted, for which HUD approved $1,903,650 with vocal support from the city’s republican Congressman, Keith Sebelius. Sebelius touted the benefits of the development in a statement to the Great Bend Tribune, boasting that “it will stand as an example of what others can do to help revitalize rural and small-town America.”29 A letter dated February 1, 1968, written by the Fort Worth HUD office, referenced that the Great Bend development would be subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which prohibited discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives Federal funds or Federal assistance of any kind.30

Scouting for the site had proved difficult and was a topic of contention since planning began. In 1969, a representative from the Fort Worth HUD office visited potential sites for development around Great Bend. That the site is located centrally in the city was key, a factor which contributed to the choice of Butler’s high-rise tower. The selected site at the 1100 block of Kansas Avenue, with its central location near the commercial center of Great Bend, fulfilled Butler’s vision. For construction to begin on the site, four extant single-family homes occupying the site needed removal. By mid-November 1970, one home was demolished and three of the homes were carefully relocated as far as Hoisington, over 10 miles north of Great Bend.31

24 Great Bend Housing Authority, “Great Bend High Rise History.”
28 Great Bend Housing Authority, “Great Bend High Rise History.”
30 Earl D. Bullington to John M. Carpenter. February 1, 1968. Great Bend Housing Authority Archives, Great Bend, Kansas.
As construction progressed, questions also arose as to the tower design for seniors, with some residents voicing the opinion that it would be more logical to house the elderly at ground level in one-story buildings. In most small cities in rural Kansas, development traditionally took the form of low-rise, horizontal construction. However, the high-rise tower design was viewed as the favorable option for a number of practical reasons, including the lower cost of land due to constructing on a smaller footprint. Other variables relating to design and location were rooted in federal regulations, including the requirement that senior public housing be located in immediate proximity to commercial activity and other services. Another factor to consider was constructing housing in a potential flood zone. Federal regulations prohibited any federally-financed housing from being built in a flood zone, which excluded a significant amount of land in Great Bend. In Great Bend, these were the issues which the GBHA had to contend with, and the Chairman of the GBHA previously noted there was no room in downtown Great Bend to build out and that the development had to be within walking distance of a commercial center to serve the residents.

The design for High Rise was rooted in HUD guidelines regarding scale, site, and floor plan. As with federal public housing programs dating back to the 1930s, federal dollars was linked to strong design guidance and standards to ensure quality but also control costs. The resulting 12-story building concept became known for its standout height in Great Bend and was thus called “High Rise.” An innovative aspect of the design was the 12th-floor community space/tenant activity center which, in many of Butler’s previous projects, had been located on the ground floor (as was common in senior public housing design). The tenant amenities included an assembly room, kitchen, game room, arts and crafts room, television lounge, library, and laundry room. The 45-degree placement of the building provided sweeping views of the town and surrounding landscape – 10 miles or more on a clear day – and optimal natural lighting. The completion of the plans for High Rise Apartments was the subject of statewide attention, making the news in publications as far away as Wichita.

After nearly three years of project planning, the GBHA solicited bids for contractors, selecting the lowest bidder, Hahner Foreman, and Cale, at $1,833,700 for a 12-story building. While most of the 11 other bidders were Kansas-based, Hahner, Foreman, and Cale was local to Great Bend. The GBHA signed the contract with the local general contracting company on November 13, 1970, and also engaged several other Great Bend businesses, including Peterson, Inc. for the mechanical contracting, including plumbing, heating, and air conditioning, and Amerine Electric for the electrical work.

Ground-breaking for the tower was conducted in 1970. Work began on the building with the driving of 180 pilings 64 feet into the underlying bedrock. A 128-foot crane was used to sink the casings. Commencement of construction on the project was considered by the Great Bend Tribune as one of the local highlights of 1970, and a subject of great anticipation for 1971. Unfortunately, architect Everett Butler would not live to see the completion of High Rise Apartments, as he and planning technician Larry Sexton were killed in an airplane accident in January 1971. Following his death, Butler’s wife Pat took over management of Butler and Associates. The progress of construction was followed with interest and the local newspaper, the Great Bend Tribune, which regularly reported on the status of the construction, complete with images, noting that by the

33 Great Bend Housing Authority, “Great Bend High Rise History.”
time construction was finished over 850,000 bricks had been laid. All work on the project was completed in January of 1972. When completed, High Rise Apartments became the tallest building in Kansas west of the Hilton Inn in Hutchinson (also known as Baker Hotel).

In June 1972, HUD closed on KANS-41-1. The total development cost for the 12-story tower totaled roughly $1.8 million. The GHBA held an open house on August 27, 1972, to showcase the new state-of-the-art building. Excitement for the project’s completion was such that the line to view the completed building at the open house “wound its way from the sidewalk outside to the elevators inside.” Over 3,000 visitors attended, and 55 apartments were rented out to local seniors. Rents for the units ranged from $10-$60 based on income. Most of the open house, more than 35 apartments were rented, with paperwork being completed on 20 more. Most of the tenants were single elderly women, though there were also some elderly men. Ruth Moore was the first to apply for residency in the new building, and Cammie Baldwin became High Rise Apartments’ first tenant. Eligible tenants were 62 years of age or older. In the case of couples, at least one of the pair had to be 62. Income could not exceed $3,500 for single residents and $4,000 for couples. Applications were to be filled out in person in the presence of a housing official due to the length and complexity of the documentation required.

New residents adjusted well to their new environment after moving into High Rise Apartments, with many expressing enjoyment of the views from their units, and of the communal atmosphere that living with other seniors generates. As Christmas 1972 arrived, residents of High-Rise Apartments looked back on their first year living in the building fondly. The unanimous consensus was that the seniors’ new living situations were much better than what they were previously accustomed to. Residents described their new apartments as “so clean, so cozy, so attractive, and such a nice view.”

In 1973, the GBHA employed an activities coordinator to meet the elderly tenants’ needs, including exercise classes, luncheons, and entertainment. Meeting minutes of the Great Bend Housing Authority from the 1970s through the late 1980s show that there was consistently a waitlist for occupancy in the building, particularly for the one-bedroom units. Social activities were still going strong into the 1990s, with a “mock wedding” performed by residents in January 1990. Minimal alterations have been performed on the building since construction, with such alterations including replacement of select doors and windows in the 1980s and 2010s. High Rise Apartments continues to function as public housing today.

**Criterion A: POLITICS/GOVERNMENT**

High Rise Apartments was constructed in 1972 as public housing built specifically for the elderly by the Great Bend Housing Authority (GBHA). The property is locally significant under Criterion A for POLITICS/GOVERNMENT. Specifically, High Rise Apartments was developed directly in response to federal

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38 “Up up up”, *Great Bend Tribune*, August 1971.
42 Great Bend Housing Authority. “Great Bend High Rise History.”
policy for public housing for senior citizens. This policy began with the Eisenhower administration with the passage of the Housing Act of 1956. Upon election, the Kennedy Administration redoubled efforts with the passage of the Housing Act of 1961. The combination of the housing acts resulted in a significant boost in federal funding for affordable senior housing. The policy was further developed during the Johnson Administration as part of his Great Society platform. The overall trend resulted in several hundred senior housing projects around the country. The trend ended in 1973 when the Nixon Administration placed a moratorium on new construction and shifted federal policy to replace publically-constructed and managed housing projects to a public housing voucher system. *High Rise Apartments* is the first and only example of this historic context in Great Bend.

**Federal Policy for Public Housing and Senior Public Housing**

Public housing built specifically for the elderly was largely non-existent until the 1950s. For much of America’s history, the societal expectation was for family members to care for the elderly. As the 19th century progressed, the rise of charitable organizations and religious groups drew other groups and the more privileged elderly out of the almshouses and into institutions, hospitals, and other care facilities. By the 1920s the almshouses were overrun with impoverished elderly, embodying “distresses of abandonment, disgrace, poverty, loneliness, humiliation, and degradation.”

The Federal government intervened on behalf of senior citizens for the first time in 1935 with the Social Security Act, as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal legislation. In order to eliminate the problems of the almshouses, the act stipulated that seniors living within almshouses could now receive federal pensions. However, by blocking almshouse residents from pensions, aged individuals in need of long-term care were forced to seek shelter in private institutions. The resulting proliferation of the sanitariums made it clear to lawmakers that not all elderly individuals could be supported in their own homes with monthly federal pensions, and that many older adults required long-term care and additional financial assistance, including housing.

Legislation for local-level public housing initiatives emerged with the passage of the Wagner-Steagall Act of 1937, which provided subsidies to local public housing authorities (PHAs), building on the 1934 National Housing Act, which created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). However, the majority of the action which this legislation initiated was targeted towards families, and seniors were left to fend for themselves in the private marketplace, often occupying deteriorated downtown hotels. The first known public housing project specifically for the elderly was the Fort Greene Houses in Brooklyn, New York, built-in 1942 and funded through state bond funds. As described by Kevin Eckert in *The Unseen Elderly*, “the downtown elderly, among the most limited body in income and coping resources, find themselves with fewer housing options and supportive neighborhoods.”

After World War II, demand for senior housing rapidly grew, with a steadily increasing senior population. In 1900, older Americans were only 4% of the general population. In 1950, seniors represented 8% of the overall

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52 The Unseen Elderly, p. 18.
population. By 1970, it was 10% and in 1980, 11.5%. The majority of seniors, 14.6 million or 73%, lived in urban areas with 6.8 million in highly urbanized central cities. As characterized by sociologist Margaret Clark in *The Unseen Elderly*, “inner city elderly are, both physically and psychologically sicker than their age peers in other groups. They have a harder time surviving...like the rats that are often their only company.”

The *Oregonian* described similar situations in Portland: “thousands of Portland’s senior citizens, living in unhealthy, drafty buildings, with unsafe stairways; buildings with vermin, rodents, debris and filth, buildings with inadequate plumbing or situations where too many people share a dirty, poorly lighted toilet facility.”

In 1960, average social security income nationwide was $99.33 per month with rent often taking upward to 50% of that income.

In 1958, President Eisenhower signed the White House Conference on Aging Act create a national citizens' forum to focus attention on the problems of older Americans and to make consensus policy recommendations on how to enhance the economic security of this demographic group. This directly led to the 1961 White House Conference on Aging, which called on Congress to expand public housing for seniors.

Most importantly, Eisenhower signed the Housing Act of 1956 into law, which gave priority to the development of public housing for seniors. The law also modified eligibility requirements to allow one and two-person households if the occupants were over 65 and increased construction allowances per room for units of one or two rooms intended to cover the higher costs of smaller rooms. Unfortunately, despite these initiatives, by March 1960, only 681 elderly public housing units had been built. One of the first was a high-rise in Somerville, Massachusetts.

During the Kennedy presidency, public housing programs generally benefited from a shift in the political climate and gradual acceptance by the real estate and building industries. A keystone Kennedy initiative was the Housing Act of 1961, which provided $4.88 billion in loans and grants to communities around the country for varied forms of public and subsidized housing. The Housing Act of 1961 not only expanded federal funding for low-income senior public housing, but also liberalized financing for seniors to purchase their own homes. The 1961 Act also provided funds for seniors to rehabilitate their own homes and funding for nursing homes. In addition, the federal program of direct loan to non-profit organizations for the construction of housing for the elderly was expanded. A stimulus from the Public Housing Administration to local housing authorities granted an additional $10 per month per unit for elderly housing units. As a result, senior housing increased exponentially across the U.S. For context, the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) financed as many projects in 1961 as the previous five years combined.

President Lyndon B. Johnson elevated the HHFA to a cabinet-level position, forming the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and directed Congress to expand government housing programs.

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53 *The Unseen Elderly*, p. 17.
Under Johnson’s leadership, the Housing Act of 1965 was passed, which authorized 60,000 units of public housing over the next four years, followed by the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 which set an ambitious goal of 26 million new dwellings, including 6 million new units for low and moderate-income households over the next 10 years. Accordingly, average public housing starts rose to more than 35,000 in the 1960s, and by 1970, the total number of public housing units built, under construction or planned had reached 1,155,300. HUD particularly encouraged the Turnkey program as a blend of federal policy and funding joined with private enterprise. HUD Secretary for Renewal and Housing Assistance, Don Hummel, helped to spearhead the program, illustrating its benefits over traditional federal public housing stating that “We have a new program for enterprisers and the enterprising.” Among the earliest and most influential of the Turnkey program housing developments was Claridge Towers in Baltimore, which was constructed for the elderly. Claridge received widespread attention for its 20% savings in construction cost and a savings of three years in construction timeline versus the traditional public housing method. Under the Turnkey program, a wide variety of housing units were constructed from high rises to one-story single-family units. When policy changes under President Johnson in 1968 increased the funding for HUD programs, the review period for applications became longer due to the influx of new applications. The gestation period, already long due to the process of planning, acquiring the site, and bidding for architects and contractors, lengthened with longer review times at HUD. The shift to the voucher system under the Nixon Administration in 1973 gave this policy a hard temporal edge.

Public Housing and Senior Public Housing in Kansas

While the roots of federal public housing policy trace back to the late 1930s, the earliest public housing legislation in Kansas was passed in 1957, and later expanded in 1961. These statutes included the authorization for municipalities to establish housing authorities. The state’s largest municipalities, including Kansas City, were the first to establish such housing authorities. The Kansas City, Kansas Housing Authority (KCKHA) was the first local housing authority in the state, established in 1957. In 1962, the KCKHA built the first public housing development in the state, named Juniper Gardens. Located on 33-acres in northeast Kansas City, Juniper Gardens consisted of 390 residential units for low-income families in one- and two-story multifamily apartment buildings. As KCKHA moved forward, other large cities in Kansas began to follow. Topeka established a housing authority circa 1961, and Wichita in 1965.

Amongst small cities and towns in rural Kansas, housing authorities trailed the larger cities by several years with many formed, like Great Bend, after 1965. Examples include Atchison, Chanute, Dodge City, Garden City, Goodland, Kinsley, Leavenworth, Newton, and Parsons. In terms of construction, the Garden City Housing Authority, founded in 1970, opened a 45-unit low-income housing development for families named Redwood Place in 1978. While the project was planned years prior, legal issues and financing problems continually halted construction, delaying completion for years.

In most rural cities, including Great Bend, the concept of public housing for families was regarded by citizens as an inappropriate governmental function, while others expressed concerns about attracting “undesirables.” Conversely, the concept of providing safe and convenient public housing for senior citizens was endearing to citizens.

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62 “Meet Your New Partner.”


locals in these communities. In many rural cities across Kansas, again such as Great Bend, housing authorities were established specifically and solely to address senior housing.

Projects varied from one community to the next. Smaller towns tended toward smaller developments with either single and duplex housing structures, or low-rise apartment buildings as a function of population. Goodland constructed the three-story, 48-unit Sparks Towers circa 1971, accompanied by the three-story, 36-unit Handy Towers in 1981. Iola constructed a three-story apartment building and 20 freestanding duplexes in 1971. Oak Manor, a three-story, 60-unit apartment building, was constructed in Kinsley in 1968. A three-story, 76-unit building named Park Place Apartments was constructed circa 1970 in Lyons.65

While preliminary plans for public senior-housing in several small to mid-size cities including Linn, Washington, and Hanover were initiated as early as 1966, the state’s first high-rise public housing development for seniors did not arrive until years later. Built in 1969 by the KCKHA, Wyandotte Towers is a 15-story, 302-unit skyscraper, and is one of the tallest buildings in Kansas City, Kansas.66 Several “downtown” high-rise public housing developments were constructed across rural Kansas during this period. In Atchison, the former Hotel Atchison was demolished to develop Mall Towers, a 10-story, 150-unit senior public housing building constructed circa 1971.67 Chanute constructed the five-story, 50-unit Osage Village circa 1972. In Coffeyville, a high-rise project was proposed by architect Charles High, but the project could not secure funding, and was not built. Leavenworth constructed Planters II, a 104-unit, 10-story public housing tower, circa 1975.68 The Parsons Housing Authority constructed Belmont Towers in 1969. Designed by Tulsa firm Mid-Continent Planners and Constructors, and contracted by Cowen Construction, Belmont Towers was the first project built in the Parsons Urban Renewal Area. The seven-story development featured 100 Turnkey residential units for seniors.69 In Newton, Mid-Town Towers was constructed in 1974. This seven-story apartment building consisted of 100 residential units which serviced elderly and handicapped citizens.70

In 1973, President Nixon placed a moratorium on new construction, and shifted federal policy to supplant publically-constructed and managed housing projects with a public housing voucher system. By the late 1970's, the KCKHA and other housing authorities across the state began administering a federal rent subsidy program for eligible low-income households living in privately-owned housing, which evolved into the Section 8 housing voucher program.

Public Housing and Senior Public Housing in Great Bend

When it was founded in 1967, the Great Bend Housing Authority (GBHA) was the 41st housing authority in the state of Kansas. The GBHA was established contemporaneously with housing authorities in larger cities in Kansas including Salina (1967) and Lawrence (1968). Prior to the formation of the GBHA, a report conducted by H.A. Joiner found that there were 2,440 people in the city aged 65 and older, 546 of whom had incomes below $3,000.71 The study also established that there were 963 deteriorated or delineated houses in the city. The GBHA was created in response to this report, specifically for the purpose of addressing the senior housing issue which Great Bend faced in the late 1960s.

68 “Planters II New High Rise Name,” The Leavenworth Times, November 27, 1974, 1.
70 “Newton has ‘Skyscraper’,” The Salina Journal, December 22, 1974, 43.
71 Great Bend Housing Authority, “Great Bend High Rise History.”
The development of High Rise Apartments is reflective of the shift in housing policy in the late 1960s and early 1970s towards providing housing for the elderly. Following the trend established by Kansas City and other cities, Great Bend utilized HUD financing to construct affordable housing for those aged 62 and older. Such financing was secured after the planners and architects for the project, in conjunction with the GBHA, selected a location and design which adhered to federal regulations.72

While many rural cities aimed to construct adequate affordable housing for senior citizens, few constructed housing towers of comparable scale to High Rise Apartments. When High Rise Apartments was completed in 1972, the building was hailed by the community as a symbol of the growth and progress which Great Bend had experienced in the 1960s and 1970s. After the introduction of the Section 8 program, the Great Bend Housing Authority expanded their mission to include providing housing voucher programs to low-income families, while keeping the new program separate from their operation of High Rise Apartments.73 The building remains a distinct visual landmark, and continues to service the community in the capacity of affordable housing.

High Rise was the first and remains the only public housing development in Great Bend.

**Criterion C: ARCHITECTURE**

High Rise Apartments is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a local physical embodiment of federal policy relating to the design and construction of senior public housing. The Great Bend Housing Authority (GBHA) constructed the building following guidance from HUD. The subject building itself, designed in the New Formalist style by architecture firm Butler and Associates, embodies design principles established by HUD for elderly public housing. The design of the building reflects the rise of a new class of federally funded buildings dedicated to senior public housing. This new trend in public housing design began in the late 1950s and continued through the early 1970s.

**Design of Elderly Public Housing, 1956-1973**

While federal public housing dated to the 1930s, senior housing as a federal policy concern did not appear until the 1950s. To a large extent, federal design guidelines and standards followed best practices developed in that decade. One of the earliest public design discussions of senior public housing was in 1961. That year, the professional journal *Progressive Architecture* focused specifically on “Public Housing for the Elderly.” The lead article began with a detailed survey of the senior housing problem noting 16 million seniors (65 and older) nationwide, of which 51% were single and living alone. It detailed that most of this population faced physical, emotional, social, and economic problems, and all were anticipating diminishing financial and physical health. The article then details the housing requirements including the importance of eliminating stairs. The authors conclude that there are two types of buildings which would be most appropriate: one-story cottage-style buildings and high-rise construction. The authors also note the importance of residents remaining within their current neighborhood, though they anticipated this would require zoning modifications.74

That same issue of *Progressive Architecture* offered “One Solid Achievement” as the prototype for elderly housing. Conceived in 1956 and completed in 1959, Victoria Plaza in San Antonio, Texas is a nine-story, T-

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73 Great Bend Housing Authority. “Great Bend High Rise History.”
shaped tower with 185 units located on a 2.7-acre site with fountained gardens and parking. Through interviews, architects determined that potential residents did not favor cottages on the edge of town, but rather wanted to live near the center of the city. The high-rise design also offered “the advantages of superior natural ventilation and separation from street sounds.” 75 The first floor incorporated spaces for health, recreation, library, and a senior counseling center. Access to the upper floors was via paired elevators to spacious yet flexible units. The next year, the Association of Schools of Public Health Journal offered an article entitled “Housing for Senior Citizens” by E. Everett Ashley, which offered high-rise towers as “outstanding example[s]” of what senior housing should look like. In particular, the article noted the presence of the social programming and recreational/social areas that included a community kitchen, library, and counseling office or clinic. 76

Organizations including the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (the AFL-CIO) recommended, “sponsoring such housing that dwellings for the elderly should contain special features and equipment required by the elderly, including adequate community facilities and services, insofar as possible should as be integrated into the community as a whole.” 77 In addition, elderly housing was viewed as a “new” problem, which would need a certain degree of flexibility in its implementation. There was also recognition that while there was a high demand for elderly housing in many U.S. cities, elderly housing projects should be more accessible to amenities and neighborhoods. 78

Within this professional design context, HHFA laid out guidelines for the design of new elderly housing in a 1962 internal memo prioritizing housing, “designed and located to promote the dignity and maximum independence of the individual older person.” The memo further stipulated that housing for seniors cannot be molded to a single pattern, but should offer a wide range of opportunities for the maximum exercise of free choice of living arrangement. Urban, rural, and suburban housing, therefore, would be designed to fit with the surrounding fabric. 79 The HHFA also stressed design with an emphasis on physical safety including such features as the avoidance of steps and thresholds; easy-to-reach kitchen equipment; sit-down sinks; non-skid floors; site-down tubs and showers; wider doors and corridors; safety and grab bars in bathrooms; higher heat control; waist-level ovens and safety shut-offs on stoves; accessible wall plugs; and dwelling units whose size and design permit easy maintenance. HHFA “encourage[d] imaginative design, adequate size of units, and elements of beauty in architecture and furnishings…this will go toward boosting one’s evaluation of self and induce a sense of pride and belongingness.” 80

While HHFA accepted varying building forms, the architectural community at large was universally accepting the high-rise housing form in urban areas where available land to develop was limited. As early as 1957, the industry, through the influential publication Progressive Architecture, generally viewed high-rise apartments as the solution to urban growth, particularly within the framework of Urban Renewal. Rather than the chaos of perimeter housing developments, the editors of Progressive Architecture concluded that the high-rise offered

75 Ibid.
77 Statement of Boris Shishkin Secretary, Housing Committee, AFL-CIO before the Housing Subcommittee on Banking and Currency. July 11, 1962.
78 “The 1961 White House Conference on Aging.” 70.
80 Memorandum.
“controlled multiple housing,” emphasizing the livability of high rise providing natural light and air with panoramic views in response to limited land availability.81

Early senior public housing examples followed the prototype of Victoria Plaza by then codified by HHFA. One early project was in the Pacific Northwest, Northwest Towers in Portland, Oregon. Conceived in 1960, the high rise was completed in 1964. The 150-unit, the 13-story project was lauded by HHFA as exemplary and warranting replication. Similar examples can be found in cities throughout the country: Atlanta’s 1966 17-story Palmer House, Seattle’s 1967 17-story Jefferson Terrace, Chicago’s 1968 9-story Drexel Square, Baltimore’s 14-story Lakeview Tower and Philadelphia’s 1973 9-story Germantown House, to name but five of hundreds. Of the initial projects constructed under the Housing Act of 1961, high-rise, elevator buildings prevailed.82

The editors of Progressive Architecture revisited senior housing in 1967. This time, the 15-story George Crawford Manor in New Haven, Connecticut, was presented as, “making architecture work for the elderly in an urban environment.” One resident was quoted as saying, “I went from Hell to Heaven when I moved from the boarding house to Crawford Manor. The overwhelming opinion of the residents is that Crawford Manor is an exciting place in which to live. The garden to the rear will relieve some of the pressure for social space during the summer and the enclosure, with its handsome wall, provides a usable private green space in the middle of the city.”83

In addressing this form of public housing, it is important to draw a distinction between the high-rise designs for families and those for seniors. High-rise designs for families from this are epitomized by the infamous Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, designed by Minoru Yamasaki following the principles of Le Corbusier’s “Tower in the Park.” Competed in 1955, Pruitt-Igoe consisted of 33 11-story apartment buildings on a 57-acre site. In total, the complex had 2,870 apartment units. While the architecture was initially hailed, crime and decay resulted in its demolition in 1971 as gangs came to control significant portions of the complex. In contrast, the high-rise paradigm for seniors was typically limited to a single building and typically set on a landscaped site. The difference in population allowed for housing authorities to better manage, control, and maintain the site.

Character-defining Features of Federally Funded Senior Public Housing

As illustrated by Victoria Plaza, the “model” senior public housing project, particularly in commercial centers, was high-rise construction of 9-17 stories. These high rises were located proximate to downtown commercial areas, generally in predominately residential areas with single family houses. The designs traditionally embodied principles of modernism, consisting of a central rectilinear high-rise building with limited ornamentation set in a surrounding larger landscaped green space. The first floor featured a smallish lobby leading to paired elevators, but also included substantial community spaces such as meeting rooms, hobby/recreation rooms, library, and a larger dining room with kitchen. Social rooms often were designed to open onto the greenspace. Frequently, the first floor included offices for the associated housing authority. The elevators provided access to the upper floors which were defined by simple single- or double-loaded corridors leading to efficiency and one-bedroom units (oftentimes, the efficiency units were stacked on one side of the building while one-bedroom units were stacked on the opposite). Buildings occasionally included a small number of two-bedroom units, and generally featured on-site housing for property maintenance or management.

Laundry rooms could be found on each floor or, in some cases, on alternating floors. Residential units were compact, flexible, and durable with large windows for light, ventilation and views.

The essence of the Victoria Plaza model, with funding flowing through the Johnson Administration, was then replicated multiple times in nearly every major community in the United States.

**High Rise Apartments as an Example of Federal Policy**

*High Rise Apartments* is the first and only public housing development constructed by the Great Bend Housing Authority. The building is an exemplary representation of federal standards relating to the design and construction of high-rise public housing for seniors. The 12-story tall, 101-unit building is surrounded by low-lying terrain and low-rise commercial and residential development. In location, it is convenient and proximate to downtown. The grounds are inviting, with well-maintained lawns, and accessible and accommodating walkways. The lobby and GBHA offices provided security, and sociability. Tenant amenity rooms provided both organized activities and opportunities for independent recreation. Dining areas allowed communal and public meals. In layout, the tower has a simple floor plan, with fireproof construction, sound attenuation, and good lighting. The design was not constrained by simple economics, with elements like the cantilevered balconies which, because the tenant amenity spaces are on the top floor, give every resident access to the views. Other architectural features such as the incorporation of brick arches at the lobby level illustrate that frugality was not the foremost priority of the GBHA. Rather, the GBHA and architect Everett Butler sought to create a visually-engaging, standout structure which would provide dignified, affordable housing for the city’s elderly utilizing the modern New Formalist style of architecture. The resulting building stands out in Great Bend as the only high-rise anywhere near the city; it is, therefore, an excellent example of the community landmark such public housing developments could be when the architects were given the freedom to experiment within the HUD design guidelines. The tower design was functional and economical but also offered a visually pleasing and positive living environment for residents.

High Rise Apartments fully express every character-defining feature of senior public housing developed in from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s. These features include location near goods and services, barrier-free accessibility, incorporation of elevators, and community and amenity spaces. With a high degree of integrity, it is an outstanding local example of the building type.

**Criterion Consideration G - Properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years**

The construction of *High Rise Apartments* was an expression of federal policy that dates to the 1950s to create public housing for seniors. That policy and associated design developed and evolves through the 1973 until the Nixon Administration shifted public housing to a voucher system. Generally, public housing was late to Kansas. Although federal programs created public housing in the 1930s, the first public housing agency was formed in Kansas City in 1957, and the first actual housing project in Kansas was Juniper Garden in Kansas City, built in 1962 by the Kansas City Housing Authority. Specific to senior public housing, the first project was Wyandotte Towers, also built in Kansas City in 1969.

The City of Great Bend first began exploring then need for senior public housing in mid-1960s. It began to explore the potential development of senior housing in 1967, leading to the formation of the GBHA. Beginning in 1967, consultants Butler and Associates began to work on High Rise design, completing the designs in 1970s. Construction on the tower began in November 1970 and was completed in January 1972, making the building 48 years old.
High Rise Apartments

Name of Property

Barton County, KS

County and State

Criteria Consideration G is intended to aid in the evaluation of buildings that are less than 50 years old. High Rise Apartments, built in 1972, is 48 years old. The focus of Criteria Consideration G is to ensure that sufficient time has passed to allow an understanding of the resource being contemplated for listing in the National Register.

Criteria Consideration G is designed to apply to resources which are of exceptional importance. National Register Bulletin 15 acknowledges that the phrase “exceptional importance” is not an implication that a given property must be of national significance to qualify. Instead, “exceptional importance” is a measure of the resource’s importance within the appropriate historical context, whether it be of local, state, or national scale. Examples provided by Bulletin 15 of resources which may qualify include public housing developments, as “an outstanding expression of the nation's post-war urban policy.”

Criteria Consideration G does recognize that as buildings near the 50-years mark, Criteria Consideration G analysis may not be necessary. For example, there are three instances in which a property that is less than 50 years old is exempt from Criteria Consideration G analysis. One instance is specific to historic districts and does not apply to the High Rise Apartments. The other two relate to the time of design and initiation of a buildings construction. The first instance is “a resource whose construction began over fifty years ago, but completion overlaps the fifty year period by a few years or less.” High Rise Apartments construction began in 1970 and was completed in 1972. The second is “a resource that is significant for its plan or design, which is over fifty years old (e.g., the plan or design), but the actual completion of the project overlaps the fifty year period by a few years.” High Rise was designed by Butler and Associates beginning in 1967 and the design was submitted to HUD for funding by December, 1969. High Rise Apartments meets these criteria.

Apart from whether Criteria Consideration G applies, the more fundamental question is whether sufficient time has passed to understand the historic context of the resource. As a product of the senior public housing trend that began in the mid-1950s, sufficient time has passed to understand the trend and how the specific resource fits into the trend. As discussed, High Rise Apartments is significant as a local expression of federal policy to develop senior public housing between 1956 and 1973 and is the only example of such a building in Great Bend. While its date of completion is less than 50 years old, the property is associated with a historic trend that is well over 50 years old, and the building fully represents the historic values embodied in that trend. The building is an intact expression of that policy and building type, a “model” design with roots cemented in the mid-1950s. Conceptually, this property is not indistinguishable from the models developed earlier in other parts of the country.

High Rise Apartments meets Criteria Consideration G.

Conclusion:

High Rise Apartments was completed in 1972 as senior public housing by the Great Bend Housing Authority under the Housing Act of 1949. The property is locally significant under Criterion A for POLITICS/GOVERNMENT and Criterion C for ARCHITECTURE and meets Criteria Consideration G.

85 Added for clarification.
The initiative for public housing capitalized on the availability of federal funding in the creation of 101 senior housing units, in a distinct high-rise tower design. This project represents the Great Bend Housing Authority’s assumption of the need to provide affordable and quality senior housing. The building also illustrates the GBHA’s broad commitment to create not just shelter for the elderly, but a holistic program that encouraged independent senior living through thoughtful site selection, design, and amenities that catered to elderly residents. The period of significance is 1972 when construction was completed. High Rise is the only example of this historic context in Great Bend. Across Kansas in rural cities with populations in the early-1970s comparable to Great Bend’s population at the time of High Rise’s construction, there are only a few other high-rise public housing developments for seniors. Amongst this select group of buildings, High Rise Apartments is unique in its scale and design. The building retains integrity to convey the historic values of a model senior public housing development. Alterations have been minor and have not changed the character of the building.
9. Major Bibliographical References

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


Butler, Everett E. to Delbert Williams. August 2, 1967. Great Bend Housing Authority Archives, Great Bend, Kansas.


Carpenter, John to H.A. Joiner, August 23, 1967. Great Bend Housing Authority Archives, Great Bend, Kansas.


“Great Bend High Rise History.” *Great Bend Housing Authority*.


“HUD Officials to Tour Proposed Housing Areas”. *The Kansas City Times* (Kansas City, MO), 14 February 1970.

“HUD Okays $1,903,650 For Low Rent Housing.” *Great Bend Tribune* (Great Bend, KS). December 16, 1969.


“Planter II New High Rise Name,” *The Leavenworth Times*, November 27, 1974, 1.


“Senior Citizen Housing Discussed by Commission”. *The Emporia Gazette* (Emporia, Kansas), 21 March 1968.

Statement of Boris Shishkin Secretary, Housing Committee, AFL-CIO before the Housing Subcommittee on Banking and Currency. July 11, 1962.


High Rise Apartments                         Barton County, KS
Name of Property                             County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: ____________________________

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): ____________________________

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  0.64 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter “Less than one” if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: ____________________________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. 38.362393, -98.763886
2. 38.362389, -98.764361
3. 38.362931, -98.764371
4. 38.362935, -98.763896

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The legal boundary for High Rise Apartments is City of Great Bend tax parcel ID 0051882804031007000.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all property historically related to High Rise Apartments.
11. Form Prepared By

name/title      Cindy Hamilton/Lee Riccetti                      date
organization    Heritage Consulting Group                     telephone 215-248-1260
street & number 15 West Highland Avenue                     email chamilton@heritage-consulting.com
city or town    Philadelphia                                   state PA        zip code 19118

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)
- Local Location Map
- Site Plan
- Floor Plans (As Applicable)
- Photo Location Map (Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).
High Rise Apartments

Barton County, KS

Appendix

Image 1: Butler & Associates, Rendering of *High Rise Apartments*

Source: Great Bend Housing Authority Archives
Image 2: 1970 *Wichita Beacon* newspaper article detailing the design and plan for *High Rise Apartments*,
Source: Great Bend Housing Authority Archives
Image 3: 1970 newspaper article detailing the relocation of three houses to make room for the construction of *High Rise Apartments*,
Source: Great Bend Housing Authority Archives
Looking at the achievements of 1970 in Great Bend and the area, one can better focus '71. With the accomplishments of the past, and the plans for the future, '71 focuses on progress.

Two of the major building projects which will be the focus of attention this year are the Great Bend Housing Authority’s high-rise apartment building and the community college’s dormitory, which are expected to be completed this year. The memorial hospital, which was planned for next year, and the planned urban renewal project on the former Community Junior College campus which should be started this spring.

Image 4: 1971 newspaper article featuring High Rise Apartments as an example of Great Bend’s achievements in 1970,
Source: Great Bend Tribune
High Rise Apartments

Image 5: 1971 newspaper article detailing the progress of construction on High Rise Apartments, Source: Great Bend Housing Authority Archives
High Rise Apartments

Barton County, KS

Name of Property

County and State

IT WAS LIKE THIS MOST OF THE AFTERNOON at the Great Bend Housing Authority's open house at the new high rise apartment building. An estimated 3,000 people viewed the two furnished apartments on display and the surrounding countryside from the observation area on the 12th floor.

Seven More Die
In Irish Fights

RELIEF FAINS — A British army sergeant and at least six other persons died in weekend shootings and bombings in Northern Ireland, and the Roman Catholic guerrillas announced they would step up the violence.

The Irish Republican Army's Provisional wing said Sunday night it would intensify its campaign of terror because the force was deaths and over the Catholic community.

Police and British officials accused the IRA of responsibility for the deaths but said that the Catholic minority in the province was providing increasing help to British troops.

The weekend deaths brought the confirmed toll in three years of communal violence to at least 278, including 235 persons killed this year.

An IRA gunman shot down the sergeant at a post at the edge of the Crumlin housing estate in Londonbridge Sunday night following a raid by Catholics in the area. The sergeant was

High Rise Open House Attracts Large Crowd

A long line of people snaked its way from the sidewalk outside to the elevator inside most of Sunday afternoon as the response to an open house at the Great Bend Housing Authority's high rise building far exceeded estimates.

The twelfth-story building was visited by an estimated 3,000 people, with many more not counting the lines to view the building. The Authority is planning a dedication ceremony in the near future with several more days during which the public can tour the building.

David Lyle, executive director, said Monday, "On behalf of the Authority, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who toured the high rise apartment complex Sunday. I must apologize for any inconvenience."

Lake said the plan was to have members of the Housing Authority show groups through the building, explain the operation and answer any questions. "The turnout was as much greater than anticipated, it was impossible to do this and cut down on the waiting time."

General Information

There were some questions asked by the people attending, and Lake said that six came up most frequently. Since many of the visitors might have asked the same questions, had there been time, he offered the following information to The Tribune.

There are more than 55 apartments rented, with paperwork being completed on 35 more. The rent is different for each apartment as it is computed on the basis of each tenant's income. There is a maximum rent of $10 per month. The current rent range is $19 to $60. The apartments are not furnished.

The doors of the building are locked each evening, strictly for security reasons. Each tenant has a key to the doors and are free to come and go as they please. Each tenant's rent is for water, gas and electricity. Telephone and cable TV are payable by the tenant.

The executive secretary said any questions may be directed to the Housing Authority Office, 11th and Kansas.

State Officials Take Court Action On 'Short Ballot'

TUPPER, Kan. (AP) — State Auditor Clay E. Eudrick and state Treasurer Walter C. Pewsey disclosed today they are appealing to the State Supreme Court a district court ruling which upheld validity of the executive officials' constitutional amendment vote on the November general election ballot.

Deal with the court, they noted, would end uncertainty for Wichita attorney Earl Moore who would be the receiver if the public ballot may be voided.

There was a successful challenge in the amendment in 1990, getting it nullified after Kansas voters had approved it. He is representing Eudrick and Pewsey as the challenge to the amendment this year.

The amendment would overrule the First Article of the state Constitution.

Along with other things, it would eliminate the state auditor...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Property</th>
<th>County and State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Rise Apartments</td>
<td>Barton County, KS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Image 7:** 1972 photograph of the completed and opened *High Rise Apartments*,
Source: Great Bend Housing Authority Archives
Image 8: Aerial photograph of Kansas Avenue from Main Street, Great Bend, Kansas. Note that *High Rise Apartments* stands out in the surrounding landscape.

Source: greatbendkansas.net
Photographs:
Submit clear and descriptive photographs under separate cover. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch 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 does not need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name of Property:</th>
<th>High Rise Apartments</th>
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<tr>
<td>City or Vicinity:</td>
<td>Great Bend</td>
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<tr>
<td>County:</td>
<td>Barton County</td>
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<tr>
<td>State:</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer:</td>
<td>Heritage Consulting Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Photographed:</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Photo 1 of 27: Exterior View, North Elevation, Looking Southwest
Photo 2 of 27: Exterior View, North Elevation, Looking Southwest
Photo 3 of 27: Exterior View, North Elevation, Looking Southwest
Photo 4 of 27: Exterior View, North and East Elevations, Looking West
Photo 5 of 27: Exterior View, East and South Elevations, Looking North
Photo 6 of 27: Exterior View, East Elevation, Looking North
Photo 7 of 27: Exterior View, East and South Elevations, Looking Northeast
Photo 8 of 27: Exterior View, West and South Elevations, Looking East
Photo 9 of 27: Exterior View, Looking Northwest
Photo 10 of 27: Interior View, First Floor, Looking South
Photo 11 of 27: Interior View, First Floor, Looking Northwest
Photo 12 of 27: Interior View, First Floor, Looking Southwest
Photo 13 of 27: Interior View, First Floor, Looking North
Photo 14 of 27: Interior View, Second Floor, Looking Northeast
High Rise Apartments

Name of Property: High Rise Apartments

County and State: Barton County, KS

Photo 15 of 27: Interior View, Second Floor, Looking Southeast

Photo 16 of 27: Interior View, Second Floor, Unit 901, Looking Southwest

Photo 17 of 27: Interior View, Second Floor, Unit 901, Looking East

Photo 18 of 27: Interior View, Third Floor, Stair, Looking West

Photo 19 of 27: Interior View, Third Floor, Looking Southeast

Photo 20 of 27: Interior View, Third Floor, Looking Northeast

Photo 21 of 27: Interior View, Fourth Floor, Unit 410, Looking South

Photo 22 of 27: Interior View, Fourth Floor, Unit 410, Looking East

Photo 23 of 27: Interior View, Fourth Floor, Unit 410, Looking East

Photo 24 of 27: Interior View, Fourth Floor, Unit 410, Looking Northeast

Photo 25 of 27: Interior View, Fourth Floor, Unit 410, Looking Southwest

Photo 26 of 27: Interior View, Twelfth Floor, Library, Looking Southwest

Photo 27 of 27: Interior View, Twelfth Floor, Looking Southwest
High Rise Apartments
Barton County, KS

Name of Property
County and State

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.
High Rise Apartments: Boundary Map
1101 Kansas Avenue
Great Bend, Kansas

Datum Points:
1. 38.362393, -98.763886
2. 38.362389, -98.764361
3. 38.362931, -98.764371
4. 38.362935, -98.763896
High Rise Apartments: Context Map
1101 Kansas Avenue
Great Bend, Kansas

[Map of the area showing 1101 Kansas Avenue and its surroundings]