Atchison Historic Resources Survey Analysis:
*Summary Report*

Prepared by Deon K. Wolfenbarger
Three Gables Preservation
for the City of Atchison, Kansas
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Mayor          Rita Hartman
Vice-Mayor     Katherine J. Ross
Commissioners M. Scott Knoch
               David Butler
               Larry Purcell
City Manager   Joseph L. Turner
Director of Finance Kelly A. Hegarty
City Engineer  John Hixon
Housing Director Brenda Horton
Citizen’s Advisory Group  
Jim Ewbank
Gunnar Sundby
Dan Garrity
Joan E. Adam

Kansas State Historical Society
Martha Hagedorn-Krass, Survey Project/National Register Coordinator
Carl Magnuson, Grants Manager

Three Gables Preservation
Deon Wolfenbarger, Survey Project Coordinator
Brad Finch, Survey Assistant, photography, computer database
Janice Lee, Historic Research
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The Atchison historic resources survey analysis project was begun in April 1998. The project was funded by the City of Atchison with a matching grant through the Kansas State Historical Society, which receives allocations from the Historic Preservation Fund of the Department of Interior, National Park Service, under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and subsequent amendments. The Atchison historic resources survey analysis was conducted by Three Gables Preservation, with Deon Wolfenbarger serving as project coordinator. Janice Lee assisted with historical context research, and Brad Finch assisted with compiling a survey database as well as serving as photographer. The survey project coordinators for the City of Atchison was originally Brenda Horton, Housing Directory, followed by Kelly Hegarty, Director of Finance. Project coordinator for the Kansas State Historical Society was Martha Hagedorn-Krass.

The Atchison project was originally conceived to fund National Register nominations for individual buildings near the Amelia Earhart birthplace. However, selection of the individually eligible buildings had not occurred at the time of consultant selection. In consultation with staff at the Kansas State Historical Society, it was decided to evaluate the existing reconnaissance level survey in the area surrounding the Amelia Earhart home. Constraints of time and money limited the analysis to the area which extends approximately from the Missouri River to N. 6th Street, and from Commercial to Laramie Street. As approximately 250 buildings were to be evaluated, these boundaries were amended to extend north to include the south side of Kearney Street during the project.

Various groups conducted a number of historic resource inventories in the city over the years because it is recognized in Atchison that historic resources have value—they not only give the city its special character, they also contain information about the city’s history. In addition, each historic structure represents an investment of past generations. By protecting, maintaining, and rehabilitating these investments, the community can realize a savings in energy, time, money, and raw materials. However, it is not enough just to compile information on buildings. Historic buildings or areas with historic or architectural significance need to be identified, in order that a community may plan for the growth, development, and preservation of historic resources.

As noted, the survey analysis of Atchison will prove useful when planning for the neighborhood. The report will preliminarily identify properties that contribute to the area’s visual character or which provide information about its past and are therefore worthy of preservation. These properties could be recognized with some form of designation -- federal (National Register of Historic Places), state, or local. The survey can be used to establish priorities for planning efforts for these resources, such as local historic district zoning. The report, combined with past survey data, will provide city planners with a data base, and will enable the city to meet their planning and review responsibilities under existing State and Federal legislation. Finally, the data gathered in
can provide information for educational programs designed to increase awareness about Atchison’s history and the need for preservation.

This report summarizes the evaluation of the project. Additional products include a map listing buildings and/or districts potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, a Preliminary Site Information Questionnaire for a historic district, continuation sheets for approximately 250 buildings, an addendum which contains all the architectural descriptions on the continuation sheets, and reconnaissance survey forms for buildings not previously surveyed.
(insert Figure 1, survey boundaries map,)
**METHODODOLOGY**

Within the project boundaries illustrated in Figure 1, there are approximately 252 main buildings -- houses, churches, schools, or commercial buildings. All buildings within the boundaries were evaluated at some level, even if those buildings were less than fifty years old (the typical 'cut-off' date for historic buildings). This allowed for an accurate assessment not only of the significance of individual buildings, but of any potential historic districts as well.

**Field Survey**

Prior to this project, Atchison has had three historic resources inventory projects conducted in the residential area north of downtown. There was some overlap between these three projects, and the level of information collected varied from each project. It was initially believed that the surveys were conducted at the reconnaissance level. The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Identification and National Register Bulletin #24, Guidelines for Local Surveys, distinguish between two levels of survey: reconnaissance and intensive surveys. Reconnaissance is a basic inspection of an area, where its resources are characterized in general, and a foundation is developed for deciding how to organize more detailed survey efforts. While this can often be just a "windshield survey" -- noting the general distribution of buildings, different architectural styles, and construction methods -- Atchison's past surveys focused more on collecting historical information about selected buildings.

With the belief that the majority of buildings had been inventoried at varying reconnaissance levels, it was decided to complete additional architectural descriptions for each building. This additional information more thoroughly documents the present physical appearance for each building, and is presented in a "continuation sheet." Combined with earlier surveys, the continuation sheets brings the data for the buildings in the project area up to an intensive level of survey. An intensive level survey is a careful look at the area in order to identify precisely and completely all historic resources in the area. It should produce all the information needed to evaluate historic properties, generally in regards to National Register criteria and integrity. A site visit was made to every building, both historic and non-historic, within the survey boundaries (see Figure 1) in order to collect data on present condition.1 The focus of the field survey was the architecturally features, style, and level of integrity of the individual buildings.

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1Copies of survey sheets for all buildings were not available at the beginning of this project. It was later discovered that comprehensive survey sheets had been completed for a number of buildings within the boundaries. However, as nearly ten years had passed since the last survey, an update on present-day conditions was still warranted if a National Register nomination is to be pursued.
Archival Research
Archival research consistent with intensive level survey had already been conducted on individual resources for the vast majority of buildings within the project boundaries. County records, Sanborn Maps, census data, newspaper articles, published histories, and various scrapbooks in the public library were utilized to provide a good basis for estimating construction date. The previous surveys were particularly strong in recording past owners. Thus duplication of previous research efforts was not warranted for this project.

Additional sources were consulted in order to expand upon the previously established historic contexts for Atchison (see evaluation and “historical summary”). The bibliography at the end of this report lists those sources, found at the Kansas State Historical Society; Kansas Room, Atchison Public Library; Spencer Library, University of Kansas; Johnson County Public Library; and the Missouri Valley Room, Kansas City (MO) Public Library.

Recording of Information
Within the survey boundaries, a continuation sheet was completed for each previously inventoried building. Additionally, a “Kansas Historic Resources Inventory Reconnaissance Form” was completed for each building which had did not have an inventory sheet or data recorded from previous surveys. The survey district included 252 buildings, fifteen of which had not been previously inventoried. A black & white photograph was taken of each resource and was stapled to the continuation sheet or reconnaissance form. Originals of the continuation and survey sheets are filed in the Historic Preservation Office, Cultural Resources Division, in the Kansas State Historical Society. Copies of the continuation sheets will be on file at the Atchison Public Library and the Atchison City Hall.

The information on the continuation sheets was prepared and saved in word processing format, WordPerfect 6.1a for Windows, as well as Word 97. Copies of these files are located with the City of Atchison and the consultant. This will allow the city to update information as the opportunity or need arises, such as when a major rehabilitation project occurs which significantly changes the appearance of a building. Additionally, basic information on each building (such as date of construction, style, wall material, etc.) was entered into Microsoft Access database program. This allows for easy data manipulation and for queries to be undertaken. The information for the reconnaissance survey forms was also entered into the Access database.

Evaluation
After compiling the field survey results, reviewing the previous surveys for historical documentation, and archival research on general historical development was conducted,
the data was reviewed for broad patterns of historical development that were represented by the extant historic resources. An outline of the historic contexts of Atchison has been previously presented in a past survey report prepared by Nancy Sandehn, *Atchison, Kansas: Supplier to the West* (June 1989). The history of the district as it relates to these historical contexts of the city's development is presented beginning on page 9.

Inventoryed buildings were also evaluated according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, first for individual eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, then for their potential to contribute to a National Register district. These evaluations were then summarized on the accompanying map, as well as noted on the continuation sheets. When sufficient concentrations of contributing buildings indicated the potential for listing on the National Register, district boundaries were indicated. A more thorough discussion of the evaluation process is found in the "Recommendations" section of this report.
Atchison possesses a unique history of development -- a history which is reflected in its historic buildings. An understanding of the history of Atchison’s development allows for a more accurate appraisal of the historic significance of the types of buildings that are found here. Thus it is important to place the inventoried buildings in their proper historic context.

As defined in National Register Bulletin #24, Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning, a historic context is “a broad pattern of historical development in a community or its region, that may be represented by historic resources.” Cultural resources have long been examined from some sort of historical perspective; in terms of historic buildings in this country, much of the earliest work tended to evaluate and recognize either those resources associated with famous people or grandiose examples of American architecture. More recently, evaluation of historic buildings in reference to historic contexts revealed important links with local development patterns or broader themes in the state’s history. More accurate appraisals of the significance of surveyed properties are established with locally meaningful terms when they are evaluated in reference to historic contexts. Thus simple workman’s cottages or the neighborhoods in which they are located are better evaluated for their association with a city’s development with a greater understanding of just what that development entailed. Some buildings or districts may have historic significance only if they are evaluated with locally meaningful terms defined by historic contexts. After this evaluation occurs, the criteria for evaluating all types of properties for nomination to the State and National Register of Historic Places can be more successfully applied.

Historic contexts are thus those patterns or trends in history by which a property its understood and its meaning, and thus significance, is made clear. Particular kinds of resources may call for a thematic approach, such as a study of a region’s barns, or automobile-related resources along an early highway. A historic context can be associate with the life of a person or groups of persons that influenced resources. National Register Bulletin 16B notes that when a government, such as at the scale of a town, wishes to evaluated resources within its jurisdiction, then a geographically-based approach would be most appropriate. For geographically-based historic contexts, the following factors may be addressed: the developmental phases in the area’s history; the economic, social, and political forces that affected the area’s physical form, and the factors that gave the community or area its own distinct character.

Previous survey reports for the Mo-Kan surveys presented a historical background of Atchison that utilized this geographically-based approach to historic context development. Broad cultural themes covered different eras of Atchison’s growth were presented. This themes were used herein as a reference for evaluation of the historic buildings within the boundaries of the project, and were expanded upon in order to further refine the contexts for the purpose of National Register eligibility evaluation.
These contexts were based on a review of the recorded history of Atchison, the surrounding region, and the state. Important patterns in the settlement and development of Atchison were determined and defined by time period, geographical limits, and historical themes. Information from these contexts which pertains to this survey phase has been expanded with data gathered through the analysis of previous inventories. Due to the limits of this project's boundaries as well as that of the previous inventories, some historic contexts will require further study and refinement.

**Great Beginnings: Settlement and Overland Trail Days: 1854-1868**

President Pierce signed the Kansas and Nebraska act in 1854, opening up these lands for white settlement. The Kansa Indians had been the first known residents of what is now Atchison, but in 1825, the Kansa and the Osage (located south of the Kansa) signed a treaty with the United States government that ceded their claims to what would be northeast Kansas and agreed to move west and south. The Kickapoo and Delaware were the Eastern Emigrant Tribes assigned the lands that would become Atchison County. The Indians were removed from all but a small area in western Atchison County.

In anticipation of the Kansas and Nebraska Act, speculators began scouting out prospective city locations and organizing. As John Reps, urban historian wrote, “In the summer of 1854 the western bank of the Missouri River swarmed with land surveyors staking out streets for dozens of towns in the three-hundred-mile stretch of river north of Kansas City.” Leavenworth, Kansas was laid out just days after the territory was opened by a group from Weston, Missouri. Nearly three months after the Act has passed, a group of Platte County residents headed west to the new country to select a town site. They may have been induced to travel so far north due to the fact that most of the best claims in the Weston, Missouri, area were already spoken for. The head of the party, Dr. Joseph H. Stringfellow, had moved from Carrollton to Plattsburg, Missouri in order to be conveniently close to the territory when the opening was announced. Stringfellow, along with Ira Norris, Leonidas Oldham, James Martin, and Neal Owens crossed the river at Ft. Leavenworth and followed the Great Military Road north along the river until it turned west. They favored the westernmost point of the deep bend in the Missouri River because it lay approximately twelve miles farther west than any other river community in the Territory of Kansas.

By the time Stringfellow’s party had arrived, two men had already settled in the area of Atchison. George Million a settled on a farm in East Atchison in 1841, and in the late 1840s he ran a store, trading with the Indians for fur and buying hemp to ship down river. According to some sources, he also operated a thriving ferry and outfitting business during the gold rush. When the Kansas-Nebraska bill passed in May 1854, Million squatted on the present town site of Atchison and built a log shanty. The other early
resident of the town site, Samuel Dickson, would become one of the town's first private bankers and the first investor in the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad.

On July 11, 1854, Dr. J.H. Stringfellow, Ira Norris, James Darnell, Leonidas Oldham, James Martin, David Rice Atchison, Elijah Green, E.H. Norton, Peter Abell, B.F. Stringfellow, Lewis Burnes, Calvin Burnes, and Stephen Johnson formed the Atchison Town Company. They named the fledgling town for David Atchison, who was then president of the senate. Account vary as to what Million and Dickson received for their claims to Atchison, but the town company was able to more forward and divide the site into 100 shares, with each member of the company getting five and the rest held for general distribution. On September 21, 1854, the town company held its first sale of lots. Senator Atchison spoke, welcoming people into the Territory but urging that abolitionists be run out. After his speech, 34 lots sold for prices ranging from $35 to $200, with an average price of $63 each. Reputedly, all but two or three of the sales were made to members of the town company, which closely follows a Nebraska newspaper editor's comments after the auction of lots held in Nebraska City that same year:

There must have been a multitude in attendance, which numbered at least seventeen or eighteen, and about five of them were not members of the town company, and against them every patriotic resident of this hopeful neighborhood . . . bid with great and vehement vigor . . . It demonstrated the fact that there was some exchangeable value to lots. Everybody began to feel wealthy, and put on the comfortable airs of proprietary and pecuniary plethora. ²

The original town was laid out on a north/south, east/west grid pattern of streets forming rectangular blocks. The boundaries formed an “L”-pattern on the southwest, and the Missouri River formed an irregular boundary on the east. The north/south streets were numbered, beginning with First Street on the westernmost bend of the Missouri River and ascending to the east. As the Missouri River bent back to the east heading north, additional roads on the bluffs overlooking the river were named. Atchison Street was the only east/west street named; the others were designated “A” through “F” going south of Atchison Street, and “G” through “K” going north.

Lots on the eastern side of town, from the river through the east side of 3rd Street, were oriented to the river, with the narrow ends of the lots facing east, obviously taking advantage of this important transportation link. Lots immediately by the levee were the very narrow and long, giving riverfront advantage to a greater number of businesses. This orientation was typical of river towns on the levee, where the street system had to serve the riverfront, and wholesale and retail businesses needed to occupy locations convenient for unloading. The original plat for Atchison does not indicate where the

town fathers planned for commercial versus residential uses, but as was typical of other river towns, the choice residential sites in Atchison occupied the bluffs overlooking the river upstream from the commercial levee.

In general, it does not appear that much forethought went into the planning of the community, at least in the way of amenities. Block 10 was set aside as the "Courthouse Square." Blocks 71, 105, and 108, set some distance north of what would eventually be the commercial center of town were left open, as was approximately one-third of blocks 35 and 36 on the south side. The purposes of these blocks were left undesignated in an 1858 Atlas, but possibly they were to serve some public good, such as a school or park. That, however, did not occur.

Each original shareholder contributed $25 to a fund to build a hotel and buy a printing office. The following spring the National Hotel on Second and Atchison Streets was completed. By 1857 Atchison had about 50 houses, a post office (established in 1855), three stores, and a newspaper. Hopes for the future growth of the town were strong enough to encourage Stringfellow to lay out North Atchison in 1857. South Atchison was platted in 1858 by Samuel Dickson, West Atchison by L.C. Challiss in 1858, and Spring Garden by G.T. Challiss in 1860. This type of hopeful growth evidenced by numerous plats and additions to a town was not unusual. Many of the new towns in Kansas were growing by leaps and bounds on paper during this period. Atchison had a combination of several factors which led to growth that was real. One example is how it solved the problem of the two opposing sides on slavery.

Atchison, Leavenworth, and many others of the twenty or so Kansas towns along the Missouri River were developed by pro-slavery groups from Missouri. Many of the early inland towns in Kansas, on the other hand, were formed by abolitionists from New England. However, pro- and anti-slavery immigrants in early days did not settle in clearly segregated communities but tended to mingle so that they were frequently close neighbors. Thus Yankee settlers should not necessarily be viewed as "surprising" early residents of both Atchison and Leavenworth, traditional Missouri and pro-slavery strongholds. The explanation was business opportunity. The Yankee presence in Atchison resulted from one of the last investments of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, which was organized in order to "dot Kansas with New England settlements" so that "New England principles and New England influences should pervade the whole territory." (Reps. 1981; p. 72). This group was composed primarily of Abolitionists from New England, and were responsible for creating several new towns along the Kansas River. Its directors saw potential profit in having a port settlement on the Missouri River, and when a company agent scouted the area for sites in 1857, he found the Atchison Town Company short of capital and willing to sell a controlling interest in the city. The sale was made and, in a touch of irony, the agent (Samuel Pomeroy) personally bought
the local newspaper that had been the leading voice of the pro-slavery forces only two years before.\textsuperscript{3}

In spite of living as neighbors, the early years of Atchison were marked by pro- and anti-slavery factionalism. Pro-slavery settlers in Kansas organized the “Law and Order” party, and Atchison was the stronghold. The original town company members were pro-slavery. The first flouring mill was built with investment money from the abolition groups, as was the Congregational church. Pomeroy won over the pro-slavery side by distributing aid during the war troubles of 1858-60 and the drought of 1860. He set up a distributing office in a wooden building opposite the old post office, and disbursed food, clothing and money from July 1860 until the following spring. Pomeroy was also the first mayor of Atchison—by a coin toss. The southern and Free State men had agreed to compromise in local affairs by allowing one side to have four councilmen and the other side three councilmen and the mayor. The Free State won the coin toss and thus the mayoral office. This compromise was another critical key to the success of Atchison. Other Missouri River towns in Kansas which were unable to work out the differences between the different factions on the slavery issue were virtual ghost towns a few years later.

Coming to a truce over the slavery issue, no matter how tenuous, would not have been possible if Atchison’s shipping and commercial advantages had not made it worth the efforts. Atchison was settled the year before the great Mormon immigration westward. Perhaps because of Challiss’s existing dry goods store, Atchison was able to convince about 800-1,000 Mormons to cross the river and outfit themselves for the long trip at Atchison. This early connection with overland travel and outfitting helped establish Atchison’s commercial roots, and allowed it to grow when other river towns quickly withered.

Atchison was particularly suited by its geography for the steamboating and outfitting trade. During these years Atchison thrived because it had one of the best steamboat landing on the Missouri River, the best wagon road in the country leading west, and was several miles nearer Denver than other river towns, all of which made it an important outfitting point from the beginning. Travelers could, by boating down river to Atchison for outfitting, save themselves twelve overland miles—a day’s journey. In early days at least two steamboats, one going up and the other down, landed at the Atchison levee daily. A regular line of sidewheelers traveled between St. Louis and St. Joseph. The average boat carried 500-600 tons of freight as well as passengers.

Atchison’s prominence as a staging point for overland freighters was settled when the Overland Stage Line and the line for Salt Lake City-based freighters chose Atchison as the eastern terminus. The first two lines, Livingston, Kinkead and Co. and Hooper &

Williams, located in Atchison in 1855. More trains [overland freighters] left Atchison than from any other point on the river. It became even more important as a overland staging terminus when the U.S. Post Office Department made Atchison its headquarters and starting point for mail in 1861. Stage coach lines also added to the economic prosperity of the town. The stagecoach line from Atchison to Placerville, California, was 1,913 miles and became longest and most important stagecoach lines in the country. All overland stage lines departed from the Massasoit Hotel, an imposing frame building on the northwest corner of Second and Main Streets.

Atchison's dramatic rise was due more to the patronage of overland ox-team freighters than to outfitting individual emigrants, but the latter did furnish a significant segment in its economic history. In 1858 when many "paper towns" were folding, Atchison grew. It benefited when gold fever struck in September 1858 on the Missouri River. Most of the outfitting pilgrims to Pike's Peak were residents of the vicinity who could depart immediately for the mines, but Atchison was also a stopping point for people going back home from the mines, both successful and unsuccessful.

Some figures from the period give an indication of Atchison's prominence in outfitting the western growth of this country. In the summer of 1858, 24 wagon trains consisting of 775 wagons, 1,114 men, 7,963 oxen, 142 horses, and 1,126 mules transported 3,730,905 pounds of merchandise to Colorado, Utah, and Santa Fe. Daily stage coaches left for Leavenworth, Lecompton, Lawrence, Topeka, and Iowa Point. Russell, Majors and Waddell sent the Central Overland California and Pikes Peak Express Coaches three times a week. During the liveliest period of overland trade, from 1859 to 1866, an estimated "floating" population of 250,000 went west from there.

In 1859-60, major companies included a flour mill (Higby Lewis, at Levee & Atchison), an express company (U.S. Express), a freighter (J.M. Hockaday & Co.), a railroad agent: (F.A. Hunt, Hannibal & St. Joe RR at Levee and Second Streets), a telegraph line (St. Louis & Missouri River Telegraph Line), four agricultural implement dealers, 40 law firms, four bankers, two barbers, seven boarding houses, 13 carpenters and builders, 10 clothing dealers, five confectioners, three druggists, four dentists, 16 grocers, 12 dry goods dealers, four hardware dealers, six hotels, seven churches, five livery stables, nine lumber dealers, four meat markets, 14 physicians, 10 real estate agents, 11 saloons, four stove shops, and five saw mills.

During this period, the city's population nearly doubled and was up to approximately 4,000 in 1859. Understandably, in 1860, residents believed they had a future St. Louis or Cincinnati on their hands. By 1860 several Utah freighters, including Livingston & Kinkead, the most important in Utah, has shipped goods from Atchison. Atchison's greatest increase in trade came from the Mormon trade. This was regarded as the greatest of all Western markets because the population of the whole Salt Lake valley, already estimated at between 20,000 and 30,000, was still growing. Just outside of Atchison, the
The countryside was filling up with farmers eager to produce a surplus. The prairies to the west afforded good grass and camp sites for freighters. An additional economic boost occurred in 1862 when gold was discovered in Montana. As the only means of transportation was the Missouri River, steamboating experienced a revival. Atchison prospered during this period as the cost of shipping merchandise was figured on the pound, and shipping rates demanded were exorbitant. Looking to the future potential of Atchison, the city council ordered property owners on Commercial Street at the levee to lay a brick or stone pavement.

The town’s westward orientation is reflected in the names of five east-west streets in the original plat of Atchison. Originally platted with names as the letters A, B, C, D, etc., during the overland period several were renamed Utah (A) Santa Fe (E), Laramie (H), I (Kearney), Riley (J) mostly likely after the military installation named thus. G became Parallel because it lies on the First Standard parallel South, and C became Commercial.

During the latter part of this period, Atchison emerged as a jobbing center. Merchandise was sold in those days to freighters or merchants, who came to Atchison to place their orders. It was not uncommon for a jobber to sell a $2,000 or $3,000 bill of goods in half an hour. The Bartholow Bros. established the first exclusive wholesale jobbing firm in 1862. They once sold $50,000 worth of tobacco and groceries in one bill to a Salt Lake City firm. They also made a large profit on a $60,000 purchase of tobacco from Glasgow, Missouri, tobacco manufacturers who feared that southern forces would burn their warehouses and factories. While the tobacco was stored in Atchison, a government tax went into effect and as a result the Bartholows more than doubled their money—bought it at 9.5 cents a pound and sold for 60 cents/lb.

Atchison survived the Civil War in good shape. Immediately following the War, Atchison thrived briefly then experienced a “prolong downturn”. The westward shipping of freight continued almost unabated and the levee was extended. There were 31 freighters operating in the city. The year of 1865 was one of the greatest in the overland freighting business in Atchison, with trains running to Colorado, Santa Fe, Utah and Idaho. Trade began to dwindle thereafter, however. While Atchison was well situated in terms of distance and trails west to Denver and Salt Lake, it was not as well located to take advantage of the trade to the Southwest. It was also too far south on the river to garner a good proportion of the Montana trade. To grow, a town needed to be in line with major cities like Chicago or St. Louis, and Atchison wasn’t. Thus Atchison’s eventual decline in western trade was not due to lack of effort, but from unescapable problems of geography.

In the mid-1860s Atchison began to decline as a major site in westward movement of emigrants. By early 1866 businessmen realized that the stagecoach trade was destined to decline, and overland stage ceased operations in the winter of 1866. Atchison no longer functioned primarily as a Missouri River town. To sell to and buy from the hinterland became the ideal market, instead of outfitting the pilgrim. Further setbacks to the town
included a fire in June 1867 that destroyed nearly every building on Commercial Street between Fourth and Fifth Street.

Not surprisingly, few buildings remain from Atchison’s earliest period of settlement and town building. Fires and floods over the years have eventually led to the destruction of nearly all of its earliest commercial buildings. Although Atchison’s population of 2,616 in 1860 indicates that a large number of residential buildings had to have been in existence at this time, the passage of years combined with intentional rebuilding has left within the project area an estimated twelve buildings from this period. Many of these have been altered; some, like the Gaylord Claim Cabin, to such a degree that they no longer represent the historic period. Others, like the three Gothic Revival rental cottages at 615, 617, and 621 N. 3rd Street, have had later alterations that are now historic in their own right. As rare examples of buildings from this earlier period, they may gain added significance from their scarcity.

**Railroads and Atchison--New Links to the West: 1868-1888**

Although the boom days of overland trade were over by the late 1860s, residents still had not given up hope in their town. In a letter to A. Halderman, who had property in Atchison that he wanted to sell, attorney Bailus Waggener warned: “Mr. Otis says don’t be too anxious to sell your property here for in a few years you may ... [regret it] as Atchison is destined to be the metropolis and Rail Road terminus of the West.”

Atchison residents still had reasons to be optimistic about their town. After all, in just a decade and a half, they had seen Atchison grow from just a platted river town in July 1854 in the newly opened territory to a booming metropolis. Aided by its excellent location, and perhaps by aggressive publicity, by August 30, 1855, the settlement had grown large enough for the Territorial Legislature to incorporate it as a town. It was incorporated as a city Feb. 12, 1858, and became the county seat in October 1858. During this period, Kansas also became a part of the union on January 29, 1861.

Atchison had been settled during a period when the advantages of steam navigation over all others seemed secure. Sentiment towards river travel swiftly changed when it became obvious that rail links were necessary for town survival. The beginnings of the railroad era in Atchison actually extend back to March 1858 when an election was called to authorize the issuing of $100,000 in bonds to purchase stock in the proposed Atchison & St. Joseph Railroad. The issue passed and private citizens subscribed an additional

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4 A complete inventory of Atchison’s historic commercial buildings, as well as the residential buildings south of downtown, has not been undertaken. Therefore, conclusions about extant historic structures from this, and all other periods of development, are based solely on the existing surveys of the northern residential portions.

$100,000, allowing construction to begin May 1858. In 1860 the Atchison & St. Joseph Railroad was completed from the western terminus of the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad at St. Joseph to Winthrop, Missouri, a settlement directly across the river from Atchison. A ferry at this point crossed the Missouri to deliver passengers and freight from the east to the wagon companies to be transported to the west. Ground was broken for the construction of the Atchison & Pikes Peak Railroad June 1860, but the road's completion was delayed until 1868 because of the Civil War. When completed, the railroad was renamed the Central Branch Union Pacific.

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad was incorporated by an act of the Kansas Territorial Legislature February 11, 1859, with $150,000 raised in Atchison as the financial base. The first officers were Cyrus K. Holliday, president (and founder of the City of Topeka); P.T. Abell, secretary, and M.C. Dickey, treasurer. The drought of 1860 paralyzed all business, nearly destroying all farming interests and delaying the construction of the railroad. March 3, 1863, Congress made a land grant to the State of KS of alternate sections one mile square and 10 miles wide on the condition that the Atchison-Topeka Railroad be finished on or before 1873. By about May 1872 the line had been extended from Topeka to Wichita and completed northward from Topeka to Atchison. The nationwide financial panic of 1893 and economic depression that toppled banks and industries and crippled commerce throughout the nation caused Santa Fe Railroad to reorganize in 1895; it became the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad.

Racetrack companies continued to be interested in Atchison through the early 1870s. In 1870 nine passenger trains by four different railroads stopped through daily. Railroad service between Atchison and Leavenworth was inaugurated in October 1869 (originally known as the Leavenworth, Atchison and Northwestern Railroad Co.). In 1882, this line became part of the Missouri Pacific, and was extended northwest to Omaha. The Atchison & Nebraska Railroad, completed in 1872, ran north along the west bank of the Missouri River and connected with the main line of the Union Pacific at Columbus, Nebraska. This line later became part of Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Line. Most of the railroads in Atchison were completed by 1872. The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad completed in that year was one of the last, with service between Atchison and Leavenworth. By this date eight different railroad lines terminated within Atchison, and four connected on the Missouri side.

In the 1870s, Atchison had already started to a decline as a major railroad terminal. Kansas City became the gateway to the west and Atchison’s growth (or lack thereof) followed that of Independence, Westport, Leavenworth, and St. Joseph. However, the existing railroads in Atchison were nonetheless significant to business, prosperity, and growth in the coming years. The 1860 City Directory showed 41 firms doing freighting business from Atchison. At one time, said to be 4,600 employees of freighting companies living in Atchison. This is reflected in the large number of residences built for the railroad entrepreneurs and their employees. In 1874, the eight railroads centering in
Atchison employed 733 men in their machine shops and in about their freight and passenger depots. They pumped a monthly aggregate of $74,680 in salaries and supplies in Atchison. Even as late as 1940 the railroad furnished one of the main payrolls in Atchison and constituted the largest tax-paying group in the county.

The railroad years were the true boom years, when industries came to Atchison, the large wholesale firms developed, and the commercial life of Atchison reached its peak. Atchison was one of the first banking centers in Kansas, following Leavenworth. The first national bank was charted in Leavenworth. In 1857 the state legislature had provided for the creation of the Kansas Valley Bank with five branches, but only the branch at Atchison was established in 1858. In 1859, the Exchange Bank of Wm. Hetherington established, and in 1867 Atchison got its first national bank. By 1877 Atchison had six banks with a combined capital of $750,000. Of these, two were national organizations, three existed on basis of state charters, and one was a private banking firm. By 1891, four national banks with total resources of $2,022,000. From 1870-91, Atchison was second only to Leavenworth in total resources of its national banks, and in 1882 was first in state in this respect. During this period no national bank in Atchison failed or went into involuntary liquidation, something "probably no other major town or city in Kansas could have claimed."

Some industries figured prominently in the growth of Atchison during the railroad years, such as grains and milling. One example was Blair Milling Company, started in 1868 when agriculture extended only 100 miles west of Atchison and there was much untilled land in Atchison County. In 1886 an addition to the Blair Mill was built, and the company continued to grow through the twentieth century. By 1900 a cereal mill was added to the plant for the manufacture of corn products and the flour mill increased in size. When John Cain arrived in Atchison in 1872, he started in the grain business. He later began to include milling and exporting of flour from Kansas. His business was largely export ever since. Grain storage was obviously associated with milling, and in 1878, Atchison was reputed to have three of the largest grain elevators in the west.

The lumber business was also grew prominent in Atchison. It had been strong even before the railroad started, when lumber was transported by overland freight in wagon trains. After the railroads, however, the industry grew even more as they greatly facilitated shipping. A prime example was the Hixon Lumber Company, which started in Atchison in 1867. The company provided material for most of the larger buildings in Atchison. By 1878, near the end of the railroads expansion, the lumber trade was still an immense and growing business with pine lumber dealers engaged in a large jobbing trade. The 1878 city directory noted that "The lumber dealers of Atchison rank among our most enterprising and substantial business men and citizens...."

Industries that supported the railroads grew as well. In 1872 the city voted $10,000 in bonds to anyone who would establish a foundry. That same year, Atchison business
leaders underwrote cost of moving Captain John Seaton’s foundry to Atchison from Alton, Illinois. The foundry occupied an entire block and was the largest west of St. Louis. By 1894 the foundry employed 200 men and did work all over the west. Seaton, who also established a theater in town, was said in 1894 to be the wealthiest man in town.

Manufacturing was another important industry to Atchison. During the 1870s, only two cities in Kansas, Leavenworth and Topeka, were more important than Atchison as a manufacturing center in the state. It had a large iron and brass foundry, the largest furniture manufacturer in the state, four machine shops, one cracker manufacturer, one manufacturing confectionery, two breweries, two mill furnishing establishments, and about twenty other manufacturing establishments in different branches on a smaller scale.

Wholesaling and jobbing proved to be one of the most significant commercial enterprises in Atchison. In 1870 Atchison had no exclusively wholesale establishments, but only four years later had a markedly successful wholesale trade of dry goods, groceries, boots and shoes, clothing, hats and caps, and almost every line of trade. In 1874, Atchison had five wholesale grocery houses, three wholesale hardware, six wholesale liquor houses, the largest jobbing drug house in the Missouri Valley, a jobbing house in queensware, crockery and glassware; one wholesale book and stationery house; two wholesale furnishings dealers; a jobbing house in notions and white goods, a manufacturing and wholesale clothing house, four wholesale lumber dealers, a wholesale leather house, a manufacturing and jobbing confectionery, and three commission houses. Yet local residents at the time felt it was in great need of more wholesale establishments! The wholesale grocers claimed that the trade could support a dozen more. The Board of Trade also called for more jobbing establishments, especially in dry goods, boots and shoes, hats and caps, clothing and fancy goods and notions.

Atchison’s prosperity in business was reflected in its growth and in the construction of residences. Population more than doubled from each of the decades from 1860 through 1880. Atchison’s residents were number at 2,616 in 1860, 7,054 in 1870, and 15,103 in 1880. This placed Atchison as the fourteenth most populous city in the west in 1870 and thirteenth most populous in 1880. At its peak, the city numbered 19,000 residents, which included merchants, bankers, lawyers, outfitters, railroaders, architects, builders, and land surveyors. Many of these residents had come from the east and southeast, and their fortunes prospered along with that of the city. During this period, many built large, fine houses that remain today, several of which are extant within the boundaries of this survey project. Atchison’s prosperity and growth didn’t just result in large mansions, however. Simple homes were needed for the thousands of working class citizens, and these also remain in large numbers with the project’s boundaries. During the peak years,

6Comparing with other Kansas cities, in 1870 Leavenworth was second, Lawrence twelveth, and Topeka seventeenth. In 1880, Leavenworth was tenth and Topeka was twelveth.
the housing market was very competitive. An 1872 city directory notes: “Buildings are going up on every side, and they are rented before the basement walls are completed. Not a store, house, or single room can be found today in Atchison untenanted.”

In spite of seemingly spectacular growth, there were some setbacks during this period. The national financial crisis of 1873 and the general depression of subsequent years appears to have slowed Atchison’s growth temporarily, as did the visitation of locust invasions of 1868 and 1871. The latter destroyed two-thirds of the regions growing crop of Indian corn. During the panic of 1873 Atchison banks did keep their doors open and were able to pay their depositors on demand. However, Atchison did not fully recover from the depression until 1879, when it saw a general revival of trade with much building, manufacturing, carrying traffic, jobbing, and all business. Nearly 700 houses built that year, and more needed. As a mark of growth of the railroad business, an elegant and commodious union depot, the most costly structure in the city and the largest depot in state, was built for $120,000.

Atchison’s early geographical location as a river town, however, eventually contributed to its decline. Although Atchison recognized the need for rails to supplement and eventually displace river traffic, its river location was a definite handicap in railroad development. Expansion was possible in basically only one direction -- westward. For all the towns serving Kansas on the west bank of the Missouri river, a railroad bridge was imperative. The river which gave these cities their early advantages also cut them off from eastern connections with Chicago and St. Louis. The town that was first with such a facility would gain an important lead over its rivals. Kansas City was first, dedicating its bridge in July 1869. St. Joseph followed, but Leavenworth and Atchison lagged behind. Leavenworth built its bridge three years before Atchison, though, and even this short period of time gave it important advantages. Atchison was reduced to emphasizing the efficiency and speed of its ferry boats. The failure of Atchison to bridge the river before 1875 dealt a severe blow from which it was unable to recover.

The impact of losing the bridge construction race wasn’t immediate, but in the 1880s, Atchison had trouble obtaining an eastern line. The Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad and the Kansas City, St. Joseph & Council Bluffs Railroad arrived too late to influence the course of events. Atchison’s inability to give wholehearted support to either Chicago or St. Louis resulted in a failure to gain the support of either. Those two were engaged in competition for control of the trade opening in the west. Atchison could have allied itself with one of them to advance its interests. The business leaders of the city were divided in their response as to which to support. Residents also hoped that the eastern terminal of the Central Branch of the Union Pacific would be in Atchison, but instead it ended 100 miles west of Atchison. This would have made the Central Branch the main railroad line to the Pacific coast, placing Atchison in a strategic location with the markets of both Chicago and St. Louis. Another blow to the community was when the Missouri Pacific and Santa Fe Railroads made Kansas City their eastern terminus. Later,
the main line of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe no longer started in Atchison. Thus despite its early advantage, Atchison failed to become the railroad center of the state.

Not only did the delay in constructing the bridge hamper Atchison's efforts to secure additional rail lines, but even after the bridge was constructed, it charged tolls for freight much longer than any of the nearby Missouri River bridges. The towns without toll bridges were able to secure more of the businesses that accompanied shipping enterprises. Realization of these problems eventually helped curtail aspirations for the city's growth.

As noted, the effect of the bridge on the economic growth of the city was not immediate. Atchison experienced a real estate boom in the mid-1880s, along with the rest of Kansas and much of the nation. In Kansas, the real estate growth was brought about by a population explosion, which in turn was spurred by a "wet cycle" in weather patterns. Beginning in 1878 (no one knew at the time that this was atypical) this cycle helped crops and encouraged settlement. Coupled with the rapid increase nationwide in business prosperity from 1877 onward, this encouraged eastern investors to organize mortgage companies for the sole purpose of funneling eastern savings into western farmers' hands. This lending occurred at a faster rate than the banks, at relatively high interest rates, and with only a perfunctory regard for the ultimate security of the loans. The invention of barbed wire was a third stimulant to plains settlement in mid-1870s. All of the above factors combined to give rise to give rise to land values and a profiteering optimism that got out of hand. The prices of lots soared until the boom peaked in the summer of 1887. Then the rains ceased and there was a rush to sell. Scores of mortgage companies, speculating banks, real estate firms, railroad promotion companies, and other businesses dependent upon Kansas farm prosperity were driven out of business. Thousands of families moved eastward out of the state in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

Farms were not the only victims of the boom times. Speculation reached its peak in the numerous booms that broke forth in most of the western towns during the spring and summer of 1887. Along with Omaha, Lincoln, Kansas City, Topeka, and Wichita, Atchison was among the most conspicuous victims of boom fever. Money to lend on city lots seemed to be quite as plentiful as money to lend on farm lands, and with almost unlimited funds available speculation ran riot. "Each community acted as if convinced that is was destined to become a future metropolis and that those who made investments in its real estate could not conceivably lose." Wichita had biggest boom with prices rising to unbelievable heights and speculators making money left and right. Atchison also had a boom but evidently not so great as in Wichita. Thus Atchison's bust was not a severe as in towns like Wichita. In fact, the population actually increased for some of the cities and counties in eastern Kansas along the Missouri River, due to the settlers fleeing from west moving there.

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By and large, though, Atchison’s fortunes in real estate mirrored those of other cities in the region. By 1887, Eastern capitalists had invested heavily in Atchison real estate. Syndicates were formed and new additions were organized and platted with alarming speed. Sixteen subdivisions were made to the city in 1887-’88 alone. The national financial crisis of 1887, coupled with the drought and crop failure of that summer, halted Atchison’s real estate boom. The local city directory of 1890 noted that the crisis didn’t strike as hard in Atchison as elsewhere, but that it did “wreck many a hard earned competency and it will leave its blight, until the energy of our people and our many natural and acquired advantages have again won our deserved prominence.”

Towards the end of this period, the City of Atchison continued to progress many ways in its physical development, not just in the speculation of its real estate parcels. Atchison had become a first class city in 1881. The Atchison Waterworks was completed 1880 December, and most of wealthier residents had water connected and plumbing added. Although there were no parks in Atchison in 1880, it did boast of two theaters: Corinthian hall with seating of 600 and Coliseum Theater, with 300. Accompanying the accouterments of higher culture were five houses of prostitution and 48 liquor saloons. This compares with Lawrence that had 0 and 18, respectively; Leavenworth with 6 and 120, and Topeka with — [unknown] and 32. In 1885, the Atchison Water Works started; street railways were constructed; the Electric, Light and Power plant was built; the first telephone company was organized; and the fire department began receiving wages. Public and/or social buildings were constructed by groups such as the Elks, Masons, and the Young Mens Christian Association. The Post office and Atchison County courthouse were built in or near downtown. Schools included Mrs. Monroe’s Institute, Mt. St. Scholastica, and St. Benedict’s College. The town’s social life centered on two hotels: the Lindell at 4th & Utah streets and the Otis House (later the Byram).

The physical expansion of the town was dictated by the combination of the original grid pattern streets imposed upon the hilly topography of the town site. The hills that surrounded the town were an impediment to the north residential section, while the White Clay Creek hindered residential development in several sectors. Much of the early efforts of city “planners” was to reduce the grades and flatten the creek valley. As the 1880 City Directory stated: “The peculiar configuration of the earth was not favorable for the early building of a metropolis on the site of Atchison. Abrupt bluffs stood up from the banks of the river...” It noted that while this was picturesque but “uninviting for the purpose to which it was dedicated.” Doniphan, five miles north on river, would have been a more favorable site because of its gentle ascent from river. “But the inscrutable edicts of commerce went forth and pronounced that the spot upon which the city now flourishes and thrives should be the favored place.”...

The “Birds Eye View of Atchison Kansas 1880” reveals the hilly topography by illustrating steep grades rising from Commercial to Kansas streets, and again from Kansas.
to Santa Fe streets between 1st and 3rd streets. The creek valley interrupts the nearly solid development of residential houses west of 6th and 7th Streets north of Kansas. South of downtown, hilly terraces are also seen south of Park Street. Residential development is dense and solid north of Kansas street to about 6th Street, but other developed areas are also found east of 9th from Santa Fe north to approximately Kearney, and south of the railroad tracks. Although most of the residential development extended north and south, a large commercial area extended westerly along the railroad tracks, expanding the original commercial area centered around the levee. This commercial area naturally encouraged some residential development to the west.

In the project area north of downtown, approximately 93 residences remain in the survey boundaries from this period, representing the largest period of growth for this neighborhood. Many were very pretentious and costly, as the railroad promoters and other entrepreneurs had impressive local mansions constructed. Many of the high-style homes were constructed in the Italianate style, although some were built in the newly emerging Queen Anne style. Several of the smaller homes showed a stylistic affinity as well, with the Queen Anne style again being one of the most common styles. Other simpler homes had no stylistic leanings, though (at least, not evident from their present appearance). Much as railroads changed the development of towns, rail commerce changed the appearance of simple folks houses. No longer were people dependent upon local materials or folk construction techniques, but instead utilized styles and lumber exported from great distances to construct working class residences. Thus gable-front and gable-front-&-wing houses were constructed in great numbers in Atchison during the railroad years, and over 75% of those remaining were constructed of wood.

"A Finished Town": 1889-1938

Atchison’s physical form and economic configuration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had been determined in previous decades. New buildings were still being constructed, and new businesses were enticed to the community. In general, though, these often replaced earlier buildings or companies. The town population was nearly static, and as noted in an article in a 1914 Kansas City Star article, “Seeing Atchison” (5 April 1914):

Atchison is not a hysterical town. Ever since it was founded it has enjoyed the reputation of being smug and self-satisfied. It has been about as effervescent as the Bank of England. It has been about as shifting as William H. Taft. ... For Atchison does not believe in excitement in any form, and is about as nervous as the rock of Gibraltar... Many Kansas cities have had white ways for years, but Atchison is just installing ten blocks of ornamental lights on Commercial Street. ... From which it is not inferred that the town does not do things. It merely is not impulsive or hasty.
The article goes on to discuss the number of wealthy residents of Atchison, including the richest man in Kansas, William Carlisle, a lumberman whose wealth was estimated at $5 million. Mansions of other residents are noted, and the newspaper also complements the "extraordinary beauty" of the Elks Club, Post Office, and courthouse.

Atchison is a finished town, not in the sense that it has stopped growing, but in the sense that it has no air of newness. All over Atchison there is an air of stability and wealth. The new high school bldg is a monumental structure of its kind, with a magnificent setting on a lofty terrace. The bldg cost $150 thousand. A new hospital nearing completion, cost $40,000, and a new YMCA Building...cost $100,000, the money being raised by public subscription.

The Kansas City newspaper’s attitude towards Atchison may not have been reflected in its citizens, who felt (or hoped) that their community was still growing and moving forward. What cannot be disputed is the large number of wealthy men and women that lived in the city. An earlier article in the Topeka Mail and Breeze ("Atchison’s Rich Folks", 1 April 1898) described Atchison as having more rich men and widows in proportion to its population than any other city in Kansas. The wealthiest at that time was J.P. Brown, who started with the Pennsylvania Railroad, but settled down in Atchison as a broker and speculator. David Auld (president of First National Bank), John Seaton (foundry), and Bailie [sic—sometimes spelled Balie] Waggener (salary from Missouri Pacific Railroad) were the next richest men. Other wealthy citizens the period, and the source of their wealth, include: A.J. Harwi (hardware), DC. Newcomb (dry goods merchant), W.C. McPike and J.C. Fox (wholesale drug firm of McPike & Fox), A.B. Symns (Symns Grocery Co.), W.F. Dolan (wholesale grocer), R.A. Park (president of the Atchison Savings Bank), M. Barrett (president of Atchison National Bank), David Lukens (owner of Diamond flouring mills), S.C. King (county treasurer, farm owner, banker, and money lender), George Pennell (lumberman), F.M. Barker (grain and elevator firm), Gen. W.W. Guthrie (attorney), C.D. Walker (attorney), and E.K. Blair (city mills). Several of the fine residences of these men can be found in the residential area north of downtown.

The article went on to note that Atchison was unusual in its number of rich women, who “apparently enjoy their independence.” Mrs. Lillie Hetherington was said to be worth at least $100,000; her husband was president of the Exchange Bank. Mrs.’s John and Alfred Cain were also in the $100,000 class; their husbands were in the milling and flour exporting business. Mrs. Frank Howard, Mrs. D.J. Holland, and Miss Mary Brown were among others noted. Several of the women were widows, such as Mrs. A.M. Cosgrove, widow of star route contractor. Mrs. J.L. Bliss continued her husband’s jewelry business. Mrs. L.L. Todd, Mrs. Mary Treat, Mrs. E.J. Fiske, and Mrs. E.C. Johnson were others. Many of the women had income-producing property scattered all over town. Several of
the smaller residences within the project’s boundaries were built as rental properties for many of these wealthy widows.

The combined wealth of a number of Atchison’s citizens may have cushioned the blow of various financial panics for some, but others were undoubtedly affected. A nationwide financial panic in the spring of 1893, climaxed by a stock market crash in June ushered in a national depression. In the plains states, this economic distress was augmented by the disastrous effects of the continuing drought. Financial institutions and employing businesses swept into bankruptcy. An early victim was the Kansas Trust & Mortgage Company in Atchison, of which John Ingalls was president. Between mid-June and late July 1893, bank closings in Kansas averaged one a day. The Union Pacific abandoned its Leavenworth Division and went into receivership nationally, as did 73 other railroads in 1893. This included the Santa Fe, which managed to survive without significant change in ownership or control.

Perhaps being more optimistic in their outlook, local newspapers nonetheless felt that Atchison did go through the same economic depression as others did during this period. “A peculiar fact about Atchison is that it did not suffer as its neighbors from the recent hard times. There were no failures here, and its business men experienced nothing more disastrous than the usual summer dullness”. However, there were several references in 1894 newspapers as to how business “is slow lately.” The 1896 City Directory alluded to “A general depression in business circles.” Later in the 1890s, though, nationwide the cheapening of gold boosted wages and prices, and agricultural prices doubled or more as national and world purchasing power increased. Excellent crop years returned as the plains drought ended. The 1899-1900 City Directory notes a “phenomenal growth in the population of the city the last three years” with a substantial increase in the number of homes and places of business [in newer parts of town.] It stated that businessmen generally report an increase of trade over the past few years, especially among wholesale dealers.

Jobbing was still an important sector of Atchison’s economy. Some firms were thriving, such as the Blish, Mize & Silliman Hardware Company. In 1894, their company covered Nebraska, Kansas, Indian and Oklahoma territories and western Missouri. An 1894 newspaper felt that there was still a future in jobbing, stating that “there are dozens of struggling retail merchants in the city who might make both fortune and reputation by engaging in jobbing and manufacturing....”

Up through the first two decades of 1900s, Atchison was still the only place in the area for jobbing and manufacturing. There were no mills or factories or large manufacturing institutions in any of smaller towns in the county outside of Atchison; the remaining citizens of the county were primarily farmers. Atchison was not comparatively speaking a factory town nor a great manufacturing center, but with the decline of the railroads,
industry played a bigger role in Atchison's economy. The red clay of the countryside lent itself to making bricks, which in turn landed Atchison several brickworks. In 1887 heavy deposits of fire clay were discovered and a plant was planned. By the next year three "extensive establishments" had been started: Atchison Pressed Brick & Stone Company, Drury Brick & Tile Company, and Benning, Beattie & Company.

In 1900, Atchison had 111 industrial establishments, ranking it 8th in Kansas in number of establishments. It was 7th in capital ($1,139,313) and 5th in number of wage earners. Manufacturing was considered critical enough to the city's interests that in 1908, the Committee of Forty was formed to promote the commercial and manufacturing interest and general welfare of city. In the 1920s, the Chamber of Commerce's materials wrote of Atchison as primarily a manufacturing and wholesaling city. Important companies in the first decades of the twentieth century included: Manglesdorf Brothers Company, one of the largest wholesaling seed houses in the West; Bailor Plow Company; Atchison Saddlery Company; Glish, Mize and Silliman (wholesale); A. J. Harwi (wholesale); Dolan Mercantile Company and Symns Grocery Company (wholesale grocers); Railway Specialty Company (manufacturer of gasoline-propelled railway track cars); Weiss Cornice Company, John Seaton Foundry Company, Locomotive Finished Material Company, and Fred Stein's Steinite Radio Company.

Grains and milling continued to be important to Atchison's economy through the early twentieth century. In 1938, Atchison ranked fourth in Kansas and tenth in the United States in production of hard wheat flour. Atchison was an important center for farmers. Not only did it serve as a retail center, drawing trade from the surrounding territory for 50-75 miles around, but as a grain center it served both Missouri and Kansas farmers. Northern Missouri an extensive producer of soft Missouri wheat and corn, and farmers hauled great deal of grain to Atchison's market. Atchison might have served more farmers if it hadn't been for the toll bridge. Tolls were higher for farmer's trucks than any other type of traffic: it 50 cents a round trip for farmer's trucks, but only 35 cents for a touring car with four passengers. This also hurt potential livestock trade to St. Joseph, and prevented farmers in Buchanan and Platte Counties in Missouri from coming to Atchison to get supplies. By 1938, when the first free highway bridge was constructed to Atchison over the Missouri River, marketing patterns were fairly well set.

As noted earlier, Atchison's population during this period was virtually static. After booming to 15,105 in 1880, ten years later the population had grown to only 15,559. In 1900, Atchison's residents number 15,722; by 1910, it was 16,429, and in 1920, it had dropped substantially to 12,630. With all the available money in town from its wealthy citizens, however, the physical development of the city was not static. The form of the neighborhoods within the project area were obviously set by the grid street patterns, but new houses were constructed among the existing, or in place of demolished older houses. Some of the houses within the project area were quite large and impressive, indicating this neighborhood retained its distinction for Atchison's upper class citizens. Several
earlier houses were extensively remodeled, some to the point where the form of the older house was obliterated. Other parts of Atchison were growing, however, and an 1894 newspaper noted that a large amount of building was going on in Park Place—"quite a number of houses removed from East Atchison are being located there, and several new houses being built." A few houses within the project boundaries have been documented as having been moved, but the number of residences removed from the neighborhood to other parts of town are unknown. 103 residences remain from this period within the project boundaries. While a large number, this period does cover forty years. Considering that several of the homes built in this period replaced earlier buildings, this would probably indicate that the railroad era was still the period of greatest residential construction in this area.

The new mansions of Atchison’s elite residents were constructed in the latest styles, and many were architect-designed. A Federal Writers Project of 1939 noted that Atchison’s homes were ornate, formal, and traditional in their architectural styles, although the public and commercial architecture followed contemporary trends. Not all of the new houses were high-style, though. There are several simple bungalows and foursquares, typical of the pattern-style houses that are found across the country during the early twentieth century. Additionally, many other houses were remodeled on a smaller scale, often with just the addition of a Craftsman/Prairie-style porch replacing an earlier Victorian-era porch. In the cases of simple vernacular homes, even simple remodelings might remove vestiges of these buildings’ origins.

In 1890, Atchison was "thoroughly lighted by electric lamps, has nearly 10 miles of paved streets, a good water supply, street car lines...and extensive and diverse manufacturing industries." The vitrified brick plants supplied all the brick for Atchison’s streets and enough for several outside contracts. New public buildings continued to be constructed, but the population never grew as it had during the railroad era. With the advent of automobiles, road paving became critical to a community’s success. One of the first concrete roads in the state was built southwest from Atchison. Completed in 1916, US 59 follows the approximate route of this road. The 1938 automobile bridge led to some changes in personal transportation patterns, while the 1875 bridge was converted solely to rail use.
ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

The boundaries for this project are but a small portion of the “Original Town” plat for Atchison. The project area is north of the historic commercial center of town, but lies in the southeast corner of the original northern residential neighborhoods. The entire northern areas is a large, diverse district which is overwhelming residential in character. For the purposes of this survey evaluation project, the boundaries are described as follows: the western edge of the project area runs down 6th Street from Kearney to Santa Fe; then east to 4th Street; then south to Kansas; then east to 3rd Street; then south the alley between Commercial and Kansas; then east to the Missouri River, and north along the river’s edge to the center line of Kearney Street, the northern boundary. There are approximately 252 main buildings within the project’s boundaries, as well as numerous additional outbuildings, such as garages, sheds, and carriage houses.

A few of the numbered streets (2nd and 6th streets) carry relatively high volumes of north/south traffic leading into and out of downtown Atchison. Many of the streets are historic brick-paved: 4th, Kearney, Laramie, Parallel east of 5th, Santa Fe east of 2nd, and N. Terrace south of Santa Fe are some of the major brick streets in the project area. Some of the streets are marked with historic white granite obelisks lettered with the street names. At the intersections of streets in the southern part of the project area, the corners are marked by commercial buildings, social/religious structures, or public buildings. For the most part, though, the character of this area of Atchison is that of a quiet, tree-lined historic residential neighborhood.

Of interest to architectural historians, as well as most home-owners, is style and/or form type of the individual buildings. As the district covers a large area and construction spans a long period, it is natural that a wide diversity of styles and forms would be present. Even though the majority of residences fall within just a few categories, they range from working class homes to high-style mansions. For the purposes of the survey form, architectural types accepted by the National Register of Historic Places was utilized. This in turn relies heavily on forms and styles discussed in Virginia and Lee McAlester’s A Field Guide to American Houses (1984). Vernacular form types are discussed in this book, particularly under the category of “National Folk Houses,” which is further subdivided into six subcategories. However, there are still a great number of vernacular forms which are not adequately covered by the categories found here. Thus, a large number of buildings in Atchison were not categorized by a style or form type descriptor when there was no particular or typical style evident. This does not imply that these

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13 The original northern boundary was Laramie Street, but one additional block north was added to the project.
buildings cannot be classified or described, but merely that existing terminology is not appropriate.

That a wide variety of housing styles or forms can be found in the project area is evidenced by the number of categories used in the physical descriptions: there are twenty-six different styles or building forms, an additional four categories which are descriptors of function, as well as a large number of buildings which fit into no prevailing style or form category. In descending order from the most to least common, the top ten styles or forms found in the project area are: Queen Anne (with 46 examples), “no prevailing style/vernacular”, gable-front-&-wing, gable-front, Italianate, foursquare, bungalow/Craftsman bungalow, Colonial Revival, side gable, and Gothic Revival (8 examples).

As noted, some of the categories are related to building function, such as the “one-part commercial block” and “duplex.” Others are clear examples of architectural styles, such as an Italianate or Colonial Revival house. In determining which category to assign a building, it was clear that several buildings had at one time been examples of a particular style, such as an Italianate residence. Over the years, many of these house have lost many or most vestiges of their identifying architectural elements. In the example given, there were several houses not classified as Italianate which probably had once been examples of this style. If doubt existed as to these buildings’ original architectural style, many were categorized instead either as the more generic Victorian-era style, Queen Anne, or were not classified with any style at all. The most common style or form types found in the Atchison project area are discussed below.

**Style and/or form type**

**Queen Anne**

Queen Anne houses feature steeply pitched roofs with irregular shapes, asymmetrical facades, partial or full-width porches (sometimes wrap-around), varying window types and sizes, and a number of devices to avoid smooth-wall appearances. There are several large extant Queen Anne houses in Atchison, many of them constructed of brick. McAlester divides the Queen Anne style into four shape subtypes, and four decorative detailing subtypes. The most common shape subtype in Atchison is the “hipped roof with lower cross gables”. The “half-timbered” subtype shown above is rare for Atchison. More common decorative detail subtypes are the “spindlework” and “free
classic," of which there are several fine representatives in Atchison. There are also several small, one-story versions of the Queen Anne style in Atchison. Many of these have been altered, leaving only the distinguishing hipped roof with lower cross gables to indicate the original style. A few, however, are virtually intact representatives. They employ many of the same devices found on their larger counterparts -- multiple, irregular rooflines, bay windows, spindlework porches, etc. The "Princess Anne" subtype was commonly constructed after the turn of the century, and derives from the more pretentious Queen Anne style which preceded it. The name (popularized by Old House Journal) alludes to the simpler treatment, particularly on the exterior siding materials (Old House Journal, July 1982). Generally two- to two-and-a-half stories, the Princess Anne house was still asymmetrically massed, like the Queen Anne house, but was generally clad with simple clapboards (or sometimes shingles, or both). The Princess Anne house retained the irregular roofline of the Queen Anne style, corresponding with the asymmetrical floor plan, as well as the steeply pitched roofs. Wrap-around front porches are another element which the two styles had in common. Gone, however, were the elaborate jig-sawn decorations and turned spindlework found on Queen Anne residences. In its place were a few classically inspired features, such as classical porch columns and dentils, which foretold the soon-to-be-changing fashions in American residential architecture. There are 46 extant examples of the Queen Anne style within the project boundaries. Some of these are barely recognizable as Queen Anne houses, and a few may have originally had Italianate features, but retain only general Victorian-era details at this point.

Gable-front-&-wing
Although believed to have also descended from styled Greek Revival houses like the gable-front residences which dominated urban settings, gable-front-&-wing houses are a National folk type housing form (as opposed to a style) which were more common in rural areas. In this form type, and side-gabled wing was added at right angles to the gable-front section, forming an L-shaped plan. The earliest tended to be large houses, usually with stylistic details, while the later ones were simple folk houses. Both one- and two-story examples are found. Some were formed when additions were added to earlier homes. Some of these side wings are one story, with the gable-front wing being two stories (some architectural historians classify these as "upright-&-wings"). Many, however, were
constructed with the two wings from the onset. For the purposes of this survey, if there were two wings, the house was categorized as a gable-front-\&-wing even if the original portion of the house was a gable-front (generally obvious if the front door was located on the facade of the gable-front wing). There were 25 gable-front-\&-wing houses remaining in the project area.

Gable-Front
The folk house gable-front form evolved from the Greek Revival style, where its front-gabled shape mimicked the pedimented temple facades of that style. It was common in New England and the northeast region in the pre-railroad era, and continued with the expansion of the railroads after the 1850s. It became a dominant folk form up through the early 20th century, and was prevalent in several streets in Atchison. The form was particularly suited for the narrow lots on the side (named) streets. Rather than the smaller "shotgun" houses of southern cities, in Atchison and other northern cities the typical gable-front house was two stories with a moderate to steeply pitched roof.\textsuperscript{14} The earliest examples in Atchison probably showed the influence of simple classical forms derived from the Greek Revival style, although most of these vestiges have been removed. Later examples from the early 20th century derive more of their influence from the prevailing Craftsman and Prairie styles, particularly in their porch details. There are 22 gable-front houses remaining in the project area. The three examples shown below reveal the evolution of the gable-front form in Atchison, as it adapted throughout the years to the prevailing architectural fashions.

\textsuperscript{14}Two "shotgun" variants of the gable-front style are extant within the project boundaries, however.
Italianate

Italianate houses, commonly found in the United States from 1840 through 1885, were typically two or three stories tall. In Atchison, virtually all examples are two stories. The houses have low-pitched hip roof with wide, overhanging eaves. Originally, there would be brackets beneath the eaves, but some examples in Atchison are missing these. The windows are tall and narrow, often arched or curved above. The more elaborate examples have decorative crowns above, although the simpler versions in Atchison often just have radiating brick voussoirs. Most typically missing in the extant representatives within the project area are original front porches, which were usually one-story in height and often small (only one bay wide). The most common type of original porch support was a square post with chamfered or beveled corners. Later porches often replace the original porch, though many of these are now historic in their own right.

The project area contained 20 Italianate houses. Several other houses were probably Italianate when originally built, but have lost too many of their distinguishing features over the years. Nonetheless, the project area contains a high number of comparatively intact Italianate residences, particularly in the southern section closest to downtown.

Italianate features applied to gable-front-&-wing folk housing type.

Note the eave brackets and elaborate window hoods.

Listed on the National Register, note the restrained porch.
Pyramidal and Foursquare

While rectangular plan houses were generally covered with a gable roof, houses with a square plan commonly had pyramidal hipped roofs. Although slightly more complex in their roof framing, they required fewer long rafters and were less expensive to build. One-story examples are more typically found in southern states and are true folk forms. After the turn of the century, two-story square houses with hip roofs—today called “foursquares”—were found in pattern books and catalogues with a variety of stylistic details. The two story square plan house became so prevalent that it was adapted and modified to a number of styles. While many foursquares have Prairie or Craftsman detailing, especially those with hip roofs, several borrowed features from the Colonial Revival style. There are 2 pyramidal National Folk houses remaining in the project’s boundaries, and 14 foursquares.

Bungalow/Craftsman Bungalow

Although typically identified with the Craftsman style, the term for the form type “bungalow” has been confusing from its inception after the turn of this century. Generally thought of as a one- or one-and-a-half story house noted for its porch roof extending from that of the main house and sweeping over a verandah, the typical Craftsman features were found in the porch supports (square or tapering wood columns, often on piers), windows with single lower sash and multi-vertical sashes above, materials, and exposed rafters or brackets in the eaves. However, bungalows can be found with ornamentation from other styles as well. In the boundaries for this project, there were 6 extant residences which were categorized as Craftsman bungalows, 10 that were simply “bungalows,” and an additional 6 buildings that had Craftsman features but not the typical bungalow form.
Each building within the survey area was categorized and its architectural features were described. These are found on the individual continuation sheets for each building along with a black & white photograph. Also, the individual descriptions are gathered into an Addendum to this report.

**Condition/Materials/Integrity**

A majority of the buildings within the district are in good condition. The neighborhood has the appearance of being well-kept with cyclical building maintenance generally well-attended to. Several of the historic buildings either currently undergoing work or have been recently rehabilitated and are in excellent condition. Some of these rehabilitation measures, however, have altered the original historic appearances of the buildings. One of the main areas of alteration has been in siding changes. A great number of houses (90) were originally constructed of brick and the vast majority of these retain original wall cladding materials (although some of the brick houses have been painted). These figures, however, do not always reveal the percentage of siding alterations. For example, a building may have originally been sided with weatherboard, but later covered over with vertical plywood panels. Both of these materials are classified in this survey as “wood”, and there are 61 buildings with wood siding in the project area. Stucco is another material which may or may not be original, and it was used over wood as well as brick; there were 38 buildings with stucco covering. The 23 buildings in the project area with asbestos or asphalt siding, and the 23 with various other synthetic sidings (aluminum or vinyl) are non-original. With the former, asbestos and asphalt siding, as unappealing as it may be to the purist in historic preservation, may be a historic alteration. Asbestos siding was used in this country in the first decades after the turn of the century, and was generally discontinued as aluminum siding gained in popularity. Therefore, if asbestos siding is the only alteration to an otherwise intact house, it is likely that the house could still be considered a contributing element to a potential historic district. Siding alterations would preclude individual eligibility, however.
The inventory of historic resources is but the first step in the historic preservation planning process for any community. This planning process is typically five steps, which are:

- Identification
- Evaluation
- Designation
- Protection
- Rehabilitation/Restoration

Identification involves the collection of historical and physical data on the buildings in question. In the case of this project, the inventory was updated from the reconnaissance level to an intensive level. Evaluation should occur at all levels of survey. This should include an evaluation of National Register eligibility, which generally requires construction date, architectural classification, and identification of the level of architectural integrity, a key issue in determining eligibility for designation. The individual continuation sheets (compiled into a single “Addendum” to this report) lists the results of the evaluation in terms of National Register eligibility, as does the following section on “National Register.” The recommendations which follow for future identification and designation complete the survey evaluation process. Recommendations for future projects give examples of the protection phase of preservation planning. Finally, the responsibility for the implementation of the rehabilitation/restoration phase lies with the citizens and the City of Atchison.

Identification

The goal of comprehensive survey (Kansas’ term for intensive survey) “is to document all historic buildings, structures, sites, objects and potential districts in sufficient detail to permit their evaluation and registration in the National Register of Historic Places.”¹⁵ This involves the close inspection of every property, and in the case of historic districts, gathering information on non-historic properties. During the earlier reconnaissance level surveys, it was decided that information was to be gathered on only potentially contributing buildings (i.e., those at least 50 years old or older). For any evaluation to be complete, it is necessary to gather at least minimal information on non-historic (non-contributing) buildings. Thus reconnaissance level inventory forms were completed for the non-historic buildings within the project area. It is recommended that the next step in the identification phase in Atchison is the completion of at least reconnaissance level.

inventory forms for all buildings which were not surveyed in previous projects for the areas north of downtown. Additionally, reconnaissance level survey should be conducted for south Atchison as well. A complete evaluation of the number of building types and their distribution cannot be conducted without a thorough understanding of the entire historic area of Atchison.

Comprehensive level survey would be beneficial to many of the buildings covered in the previous reconnaissance level as well. While a preliminary evaluation of a building’s integrity from the historic period might be possible after a reconnaissance survey, there was little architectural descriptions provided.

There are two options which should be considered for comprehensive survey. First, a comprehensive survey could be conducted prior to any National, state, or even local designation process. By having the documentation and evaluation completed prior to initiating the designation process, the designating agency will establish a legal justification for any designation, and will more likely survive any legal challenge that may arise from a designation case. Without any survey at all, it appears that the City or a commission is designating district or landmarks out of personal preference. With a reconnaissance level survey, the City has made a good-faith effort to evaluate its historic resources. With a properly conducted comprehensive level survey, a thorough evaluation of significance will have been conducted.

A second option is to conduct the equivalent of a comprehensive level survey as the first step of a designation process. If, for example, it is an accepted reality that only a small portion of a neighborhood in Atchison is interested in designation, it would not be cost effective to conduct a comprehensive level survey for all potentially eligible properties only to find out that the majority of property owners are against designation. In this instance, only those areas which have a high degree of acceptance from property owners should be considered for joint comprehensive survey/designation. Indeed, several blocks and buildings in Atchison had already been the subject of intensive survey, and had enough background information for initiating the designation process except for a existing conditions perusal. Priorities for these surveys should be established with local residents, as owner approval is necessary for National Register designation.

Designation

There are three types of historic designation available for resources in Atchison—local landmark designation, state designation, or listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

One duty of the Atchison Historic Review Commission (HRC) is to recommend properties for proposed designations as a historic landmark or historic district. The HRC has been successful in the past in designating several local landmarks and districts, and
recently in acquiring federal grants to pursue additional inventory of historic neighborhoods. Using information gathered from survey reports, both past, present, future, the commission should consider establishing a nominating committee in order to pursue their role in designation. By reviewing the goals of the citizens, city staff, and the commission, assessing the potential threats to the historic resources, and by analyzing the political realities in Atchison, the nominating committee should develop a list of proposed historic districts and landmarks, whether at local, state, or national levels, and assign priorities to this list. This nominating committee could also make recommendations for the city to pursue federal grant money available for National Register nominations.

**National Register of Historic Places**

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation’s official list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. The National Register is maintained by the U.S. Department of the Interior, and in Kansas, the program is administered by the Kansas State Historical Society (also known as the State Historic Preservation Office). National Register listing provides recognition of the architectural, historical, or archaeological significance of properties and districts. In identifying and evaluating significant historic resources for a National Register nomination, much information is compiled. This information can be used in a variety of planning and development activities. In addition, National Register properties are eligible for specific benefits: federal rehabilitation tax credits, federal grant assistance (when funds are available), and limited protection from federal actions. In Kansas, National Register properties are also eligible for Heritage Trust Fund grants and have limited protection from state actions as well. National Register listing does not place any obligations or restrictions on the use or disposition of the property, providing the federal government is not involved.

One objective of the survey evaluation projects was to determine the potential for listing historic resources on the National Register of Historic Places. Thus, in addition to the honorific and educational benefits, federal historic designation is often the catalyst for beginning or continuing preservation efforts within the community. In any level of designation, a building which is of itself worthy of preservation may be individually designated. Additionally, an area containing several buildings which collectively are worthy of preservation may be designated as a district. A historic district may contain within its boundaries buildings which are also individually eligible for listing (referred to in Kansas as key contributing). Usually, though, a district contains resources which may not be individually eligible when viewed singly, but which are significant when viewed as a group. The buildings which are collectively significant to the historic sense of time and place in a district are referred to a contributing historic resources. In these cases, such as residential neighborhoods, the landscape setting is important to consider as well. Oftentimes within the boundaries of a historic district, not every building is historic, or
not all historic buildings have retained enough architectural integrity to be considered “contributing” to the historic character of the district. These resources are classified as non-contributing.

Presently, there are 18 buildings in Atchison listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places, with the Atchison bridge additionally having an official determination of eligibility. Six of these National Register buildings are within the project boundaries. They are:

- **Atchison County Courthouse.** (1870-1899) SW corner of 5th and Parallel. This massive stone Romanesque Revival structure dominates the block with its six story clock tower.

- **Amelia Earhart Birthplace.** (1861) 223 N. Terrace. Significant as the birthplace of Amelia Earhart, this house is also an excellent representative of the Gothic Revival style, with both frame and brick sections.

- **Glancy-Pennel House.** (1872/1894-'95) 519 N. 5th. A landmark free-classic subtype of the Queen Anne style, this two story brick house features many of the devices utilized in the Victorian era to avoid a monotonous surface. Originally constructed for a dry goods merchant, it was later remodeled by the owner of one of the lumber yards, who installed several of the latest architectural ornaments.

- **Glick-Orr House.** (c. 1873/altered 1913) 503 N. 2nd. Built for George Glick, elected governor of Kansas in 1884, the house was completely remodeled in 1913 by his daughter and her husband into this impressive brick, stucco, and wood Tudor Revival mansion.

- **Frank Howard House.** (c. 1885) 305 N. Terrace. This two story Queen Anne brick residence combines Victorian-era spindlework detailing with patterned masonry features. Includes 103 Santa Fe, the former boiler house.

- **Robert L. Pease House.** (c. 1880) 203 N. 2nd. An excellent example of the Italianate style, this brick two-story house was built for Robert Pease, an early settler of Atchison and surveyed the surrounding land.

There are several other buildings within the project boundaries which are potentially individually eligible for the National Register. Many of these are landmark examples of architectural styles and are associated with prominent Atchison citizens, but others are simple but intact examples of early housing styles. The following buildings have potential to be individually listed in the National Register, or, if within a historic district, would be key contributing:
• **John Hanson rental house.** (1907) 312 Atchison
  A late version of a Queen Anne cottage, which is virtually intact and is representative of the many rental houses built in Atchison. May be eligible in conjunction with the adjacent house.

• **Luther Sahler/John Hanson House.** (1882) 316 Atchison. An intact example of an Italianate house, may be eligible in conjunction with the adjacent rental house.

• **Anton Ostertag House.** (c. 1859) 409 Atchison. An early Queen Anne example (possibly remodeled) with several intact features.

• **Atchison Institute.** (1871/1876/1900/1915) 311 Kansas. Although several additions have been constructed over the years, this building may have historical significance as the Atchison Institute and Academy for Young Women.
• **J.W. Allen House.** (c.1889) 500 Kearney
An Italianate house built for druggist J.W. Allen, then sold to a son of miller & grain merchant, Alfred Cain. The house has several nice original features.

• **Dr. D.J. Holland House.** (c.1889) 516 Kearney
Built for Dr. Holland, physician for 4 railroad companies, this house is an excellent frame example of spindlework Queen Anne style.

• **T.J. White House.** (1883) 522 Kearney
Another good example of the Italianate style, with original porch, built for T.J. White, who rose to auditor of the Central Branch Railroad and was later an attorney.

• **Samuel Stoll House.** (c.1898) 320 Parallel.
Representative of the “free-classic” subtype of the Queen Anne style, where the exuberance of the Victorian era is combined with some restrained classically-inspired features.
• **R.A. Park/Heber Mize House.** (c.1864-'66)
  517 Parallel. A massive Romanesque Revival house associated with some of Atchison’s most prominent families, it serves as a visual landmark structure on the corner of 6th & Parallel.

• **Matthew Walters House.** (c.1934)
  203 N. Terrace. Druggist Matthew Walters altered an earlier Victorian house into this unusual example of the Craftsman style.

• **Frederick Koester House.** (c.1871)
  117 N. 2nd. Reputedly the first pressed brick structure in the city, this simplified Italianate house shows the range of the style in Atchison. Built for Koester, who came to Atchison in 1857 as a barber, invested heavily in the town, and became wealthy.

• **J.T. Hereford House.** (c. 1860) 209 N. 2nd.
  A rare surviving example of a hall-&-parlor folk house type, this was built for J.T. Hereford, one of Atchison’s early and important attorneys.
• **D.C. Newcomb House.** (c.1869) 227 N. 2nd. Newcomb was one of Atchison's earliest and most successful department store owners. This two story brick house has Gothic Revival form with later Victorian-era decorative features.

• **W.T. Dolan House.** (c.1881) 302 N. 2nd. Dolan was a wholesale grocer, and his two story brick Second Empire house is a rare example of this style in Atchison.

• **Erhardt-Walker House.** (c.1903/1910) 307 N. 2nd. This excellent example of a turn-of-the-century Prairie-influenced house was built for sporting goods dealer Louis Erhardt. Lizzie Walker purchased it for her daughter, Isabell Brockett.

• **Massasoit Apartments.** (1928). 221 N. 3rd. Two Classical Revival apartment buildings. Atchison had many rental houses but few apartment buildings.
• **Styles-Otis-Hausner House.** (c.1895) 400 N. 3rd. An excellent example of the “free-classic” subtype of the Queen Anne style, which combined classically inspired elements with Victorian-era designs. Built by insurance agent Styles, it was owned the longest by the family of wholesale grocer Henry Hausner.

• **George-Bartholow-Beitzel House.** (c.1886) 401 N. 3rd. Another excellent representative of the Queen Anne style with decorative wrap-around porch and bargeboard.

• **Downs-Hetherington House.** (c.1875) 420 N. 3rd. This two story stucco house was originally Italianate, but has a Classical Revival porch, probably added when the house was moved sometime after 1890.

• **Joseph Schott House.** (c.1903) 603 N. 4th. This impressive brick Italian Renaissance home was the second home built by banker and farmer Joseph Schott.
• **Atchison High School.** (c.1909/1923) 301 N. 5th. A visual and architectural landmark in Atchison, this two and three story Classical Revival school was significant in the area of education as well.

• **First Presbyterian Church.** (1880-'83) 302 N. 5th. Another visual and architectural landmark, this limestone Gothic Revival church dominates the skyline with its two towers.

• **Schulze-Beitzel House.** (c.1884) 526 N. 5th. A rare (for Atchison) frame example of the half-timbered sub-type of the Queen Anne style. Built for dentist William Schulze, his widow sold to C.H. Beitzel, cashier for a wholesale drug company.

• **Aaron Everest House.** (c.1878) 603 N. 5th. An early Italianate house with later wrap-around Classical Revival porch, it was built for attorney Aaron Everest, a partner of B.P. Waggener.
• **James Loper House.** (c.1874) 611 N. 5th.  
Another excellent example of the Italianate style, this time as applied to a simple folk form, an upright-&-wing house. Built for Atchison County treasurer and sometime manager of the *Daily Champion*, James Loper.

• **T.E. Snowden House.** (1919-'20) 614 N. 5th.  
Entrepreneur T.E. Snowden built this Colonial Revival stucco house, which has many classically inspired architectural features.

There are thus minimally twenty-six buildings that may have potential to be individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (or, if listed as part of a district, would be key contributing). These buildings were selected for their architectural and historical significance, as well as for possessing high levels of architectural integrity. Most of the buildings are excellent examples of an architectural style or type of construction, and most also have associations with prominent citizens of Atchison. The occupations of the owners give important insight in the character of Atchison’s commercial strength. While a more typical approach would be to look towards a community’s commercial buildings for those associations, in Atchison that is not possible. Even by 1938, a Federal Writers Project noted that there were few historic buildings remaining in downtown Atchison. The fate of Atchison’s historic commercial buildings further deteriorated when a disastrous flood struck on July 11, 1958. Declared a federal disaster area, many downtown buildings were destroyed at that time. Many of those that were not destroyed were drastically altered with remodeling in an attempt to turn downtown into a modern concept of a mall. Thus, much like many of St. Joseph, Missouri’s historic residences have been listed on the National Register for their association with the commercial growth of the city, so may Atchison’s fine homes represent the economic vitality of various periods of its development. It is clear that this area of Atchison has significant historic associations. Indeed, the story of the city’s development would be incomplete without including the residences of the citizens responsible for much of the growth and prosperity of Atchison.

For the remaining residential properties within the project boundaries, the vast majority would not be eligible for individual consideration, but could be contributing resources.
within a potential historic district. Historic districts are also a more cost-effective manner
of listing a greater number of buildings, even if individually eligible buildings lie within
its boundaries. The single most cost-effective approach to National Register nomination,
and the recommended approach for Atchison, is to prepare a Multiple Property
Nomination Form which outlines the historic and architectural development of the city as
a whole. This “cover document” could then be modified for each area of Atchison as
accompanying nominations were considered. For Atchison, a chronological approach for
the historic contexts, as presented herein, would best cover the entire city. Architectural
significance could be added to the contexts, and covered in the discussion of property
types as well. Property types would include high style buildings as well as the typical
vernacular styles/forms present throughout the city. Definitive arguments for the level of
integrity necessary for registration requirements for contributing and key contributing
buildings would also be presented. Once a thorough cover document was approved,
individually eligible buildings, as well as historic districts, could be nominated with a
minimal amount of documentation beyond the facts pertaining directly to the buildings in
question.

For buildings to be considered as “contributing” to a historic district, they must minimally
retain integrity in at least one of seven defined areas. Preferably, any building
contributing to a historic district would retain integrity in four areas of integrity. While
the vast majority of buildings within the project’s boundaries are historic, some no longer
retain their historic appearance or integrity. The National Register recognizes that change
over time is inevitable, and is indeed becomes historic itself after a period, but too many
alterations to a building often result in a structure which gives every appearance from the
street as being modern. The key to listing in Atchison will be the level of integrity
required for contributing buildings. Upon completion of this project, city staff, interested
citizens, and staff at the Kansas State Historical Society should engage in discussions on
this topic, particularly as it relates to Atchison. The Historical Society has typically taken
a conservative view towards listing in the National Register, preferring to set high
standards for integrity as well as the acceptable percentage of non-contributing buildings.
While this maintains a high level of acceptance from the federal government, it also has
the potential to deny some property owners of real benefits of federal designation. At the
present, income-producing properties on the National Register are eligible for the
previously mentioned rehabilitation tax credits. Approved in committee in Congress are
rehabilitation tax credits for private residential property owners as well. Should this
measure pass, all properties which have the potential to be listed will deserve careful
evaluation.

A cursory review of the historic buildings inventoried in the project area reveals that
changes to structures were the “norm.” The number of changes per building is often
minimal, sometimes only in one area--the siding, porch, or windows. Once again, the
Multiple Property format will help to define an acceptable level of change in order for
buildings to be considered either individually eligible, or eligible as contributing
buildings to a district. In the discussion of property types, the "registration requirement" section should make a convincing argument that certain alterations are not only acceptable, but are typical for specific vernacular housing types. For example, hall & parlor and shotgun houses are virtually unlivable by present day standards due to their extremely small size. Additions are very typical. The registration requirements in a multiple property National Register nomination should be specific as to the size, location, and shape of acceptable additions to these buildings.

Siding and porch alterations are other key areas of consideration. Porch alterations were noted in earlier surveys, and in some instances, new porches had been added in the past nine years (many of these porches were part of rehabilitation projects, though, and were compatible with the original buildings). Most of the porch changes occurred in the early twentieth century. While not original to the house, they have achieved their own significance over time. Typically, non-original siding has been sufficient cause to deny properties consideration for the National Register in Kansas. However, the National Register allows buildings with non-original siding to be listed as contributing buildings within a district. If the siding mimics the original in width and placement, the building may be contributing as its appearance from the street is the same as from the historic period. Additionally, some siding changes have become historic with the passage of time. Asbestos siding has been available in this country since nearly the turn of the century. Although it virtually never mimics the appearance of the original siding, it is now considered a historic material change. Several districts have been listed with asbestos covered buildings as contributing. While restoration/rehabilitation plans should recognize that non-original siding is not desirable or recommended, it should not necessarily preclude listing in the National Register. However, when coupled with numerous other alterations, non-original siding may indeed be an integrity issue.

If one assumes a more liberal approach towards the integrity issue in designation, a large number of buildings might be considered contributing to a potential historic district. The individual continuation sheets (also presented as an "Addendum" report) note this evaluation. However, if a sufficient concentration of contributing buildings is not found, there may not be a district to which these buildings can contribute. Thus, along the north end of N. 2nd street, buildings which might be marginally contributing to a district are, in reality, probably not part of any potential district.

An accompanying "National Register Potential" map shows not only the individually eligible, or key contributing buildings, but a large potential historic district. It is important to note that the boundaries are incomplete on the north and northwestern edge. That is because there is no logical argument for a district to end at Kearney Street. The logistics of this project dictated that the survey analysis encompass approximately 250 buildings, but a windshield survey reveals clearly eligible buildings north of Kearney.
The political realities in Atchison may be that one large encompassing historic district would not be feasible. National Register designation in Kansas, unlike other states, does carry some protection measures which property owners might view as restrictive. As listing in the National Register requires owner consent (in the case of a district, a majority of owners’ consent is required), it would be futile to attempt designation of a large district without residents’ approval. Therefore, one recommended approach would be that smaller districts be designated. The accompanying map also shows a smaller potential National Register district, centered around and referred to as the “Amelia Earhart Historic District” after the most recognized house in the district. This represents a district with thirty-three contributing buildings and one non-contributing building. Within the boundaries, there are three properties (with four resources) already listed on the National Register, and an additional six which are potentially key contributing. There are no non-contributing properties within the potential district. This district does represent a concentration of historic buildings within a neighborhood which overlooked both the river and downtown Atchison. Many of Atchison’s prominent citizens had residences here. There are several fine Italianate houses within this relatively small district, but many other architectural styles are represented as this area remained popular through the years. As part of this grant project, the information about this potential district has been submitted to the Kansas State Historical Society as “Preliminary Site Information Questionnaire” for staff evaluation for National Register potential.

In addition to the small district listed above, other smaller districts may be eligible, but the boundaries become more arbitrary. While completely arbitrary boundaries based solely on the desires of property owners are not recommended, other possible small districts within the property area may have to utilize “owner consent” as justification for boundary edges. However, the Multiple Property Nomination Form recommended above is conducive to nominating smaller, more intact districts as well as larger districts. With the overall architectural and historical significance of Atchison outlined in such a document, the individual districts can be listed when the majority of property owners are interested. It is recommended that an information meeting about the National Register and the ramifications of listing be set up with city and state staff as well as neighborhood residents. Prior to the meeting, staff of the Kansas Historic Preservation Office should visit the neighborhood in person in order to better assess the historic sense of time and place which is evident in the various parts of Atchison.

Kansas Register of Historic Places
All Kansas properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are listed in the Kansas Register. Additionally, some properties which do not retain enough integrity to be listed in the National Register are listed in the Kansas Register. While listing in the Kansas Register does not make property owners eligible for the 20% Investment Tax Credits (ITC) for approved rehabilitation, they are eligible to receive the 80/20 matching grant funds from the Kansas Heritage Trust Fund for selected stabilization and/or
rehabilitation projects. However, as with the National Register, listing on the state register carries protection measures which affect alterations to historic buildings and their environs.

Since it does not make property owners eligible for the rehabilitation tax credits, it is not recommended that state designation be pursued in Atchison until after the Kansas Historic Preservation Program has considered the recommendations for National Register listing for the neighborhood.

**Local Historic Designation/Conservation District Zoning**

A local historic district is designated under a local preservation ordinance, and falls under the jurisdiction of a local preservation review commission. Atchison does not presently have such an ordinance or commission. Normally, a commission consists of local residents appointed by the Mayor. A local historic landmark or district designation is “overlaid” on existing zoning classifications. While a zoning ordinance regulates the use of a property, the historic preservation ordinance deals with its appearance.

Designation of a local landmark or district provides protection for the significant properties and historic character of resources. The ordinance provides the means to make sure that growth, development, and change take place in ways that respect the unique local characteristics of the district. This is done through a process known as “design review”, whereby the commission reviews any proposed demolition, alterations, or new construction within a local district. If a proposed project meets specific guidelines and does not later the character of the district, the commission may issue a “Certificate of Appropriateness” which allows the proposed change to take place.

As note, Atchison does not currently have a local historic preservation commission also has the power to designate buildings or districts which it considers locally significant in architecture or history. If such an ordinance is desired by its citizens, at the minimum, any resource which is recommended for federal designation is certainly worthy of local recognition. However, a preservation commission in Atchison would have the option of considering additional buildings or expanding the boundaries of National Register districts. This can occur when the buildings have a strong local historical significance, but may lack the architectural integrity necessary for federal or state designation. Since local designation carries with it the protection of local review over proposed changes, it sometimes happens that many buildings within a designated local historic district will undergo sympathetic rehabilitation, such as the removal of false siding or the replacement of missing features. The end result may be a district later eligible for the National Register. Considering the larger goal of preservation planning, the city may thus be justified in designating larger historic districts for the local register.
Several cities have adopted "conservation zones" as part of their zoning ordinance, which take into account goals of preserving an entire neighborhood, not just those buildings which are considered "historic" by National Register or even local standards. Usually the buildings which cannot be listed as historic do receive some consideration in a conservation district zone, as do proposals for new construction.

Thus it is possible for local historic districts or conservation district zones to include a greater number of "non-contributing" resources within their boundaries than National Register districts, as well as include buffer zones on the edges of historic districts. For Atchison, one approach would be to consider establishing a large historic district or conservation district zone be established. An area which extends beyond the boundaries of the project area should minimally be considered. Should Atchison pursue local historic designation, the commission would review all alterations, demolitions, and new construction within the proposed boundaries. In a conservation district zone, only those changes cited in the ordinance would be subject to review. The level of review (i.e., just a staff review or review by a commission) would again be cited in the ordinance which establishes the conservation district.
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