

**NCHRP 25-62: POSTWAR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES AND  
SECTION 106: PILOTING THE METHODOLOGY FOR  
EVALUATING HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**

**Pilot Study Results**

**Contractor's Report**

**Prepared for  
National Cooperative Highway Research Program  
Transportation Research Board  
National Research Council**

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# 1. Project Background

This National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) project is intended to provide a guide for practitioners to better understand how to evaluate post-World War II (postwar) commercial properties for National Register of Historic Places (National Register) eligibility for transportation projects in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (Section 106). For the purpose of this project, the postwar period was defined as 1945 to 1980. Five property types were selected for inclusion in the evaluation methodology: retail stores, shopping centers, office buildings, office parks, and commercial strips.

The results of the project are organized into two parts. *Postwar Commercial Properties and Section 106: A Methodology for Evaluating Historic Significance* focuses on the evaluation methodology that is intended to guide National Register eligibility evaluations for postwar commercial properties. It is organized into three sections: commercial property type descriptions and character-defining features, how to develop a historic context, and evaluating eligibility. It also includes an introduction to the selected pilot study properties, a summary of the pilot test results, and a discussion of the challenges posed by the postwar commercial property type. The report is accompanied by a downloadable, comprehensive bibliography for postwar commercial properties.

This document (*Postwar Commercial Properties and Section 106: Piloting the Methodology for Evaluating Historic Significance*) focuses on the pilot study component of the project. It includes an introduction to the selected pilot study properties and the complete pilot study reports and recommendations, which serve as models for the application of the methodology and approach to the eligibility evaluations that may prove to be beneficial examples for practitioners. None of the pilot study results constitute an official determination of eligibility or ineligibility under Section 106.

## 2. Introduction to Pilot Studies

The pilot study task served as an opportunity to test the evaluation methodology (methodology) for postwar commercial properties. The project team identified five pilot study locations for testing, which included one place-based study area with multiple commercial properties (equivalent to a project Area of Potential Effect [APE]) and type-based study areas, where the team evaluated two individual property types in two separate locations.

The project team elected to focus on the commercial strip for the place-based study area and shopping centers and office buildings for the type-based study areas. In identifying the pilot study locations and properties, the team selected diverse geographic locations and those that would represent the U.S. broadly in terms of socioeconomic, development, and architectural trends, thus providing examples that would commonly be encountered by state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and practitioners. The selected pilot study properties and locations in five states are identified in Table 1 and on the map provided in Figure 1.

**Table 1. Pilot study properties**

<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Primary Author</b>
Office Building/ MacPherson Realty Company	12733 Lake City Way Seattle, Washington	1960	Painter Preservation
Office Building/Slade Laundromat	2558 Emogene Street Mobile, Alabama	c.1963	NV5
Shopping Center	5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard Sacramento, California	1947-1954	Painter Preservation
Greenbrier Shopping Center	2000-2060 Plank Road Fredericksburg, Virginia	1971	Dovetail Cultural Resource Group
South Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip	South Harvard Avenue Tulsa, Oklahoma	Various years	Mead & Hunt, Inc.

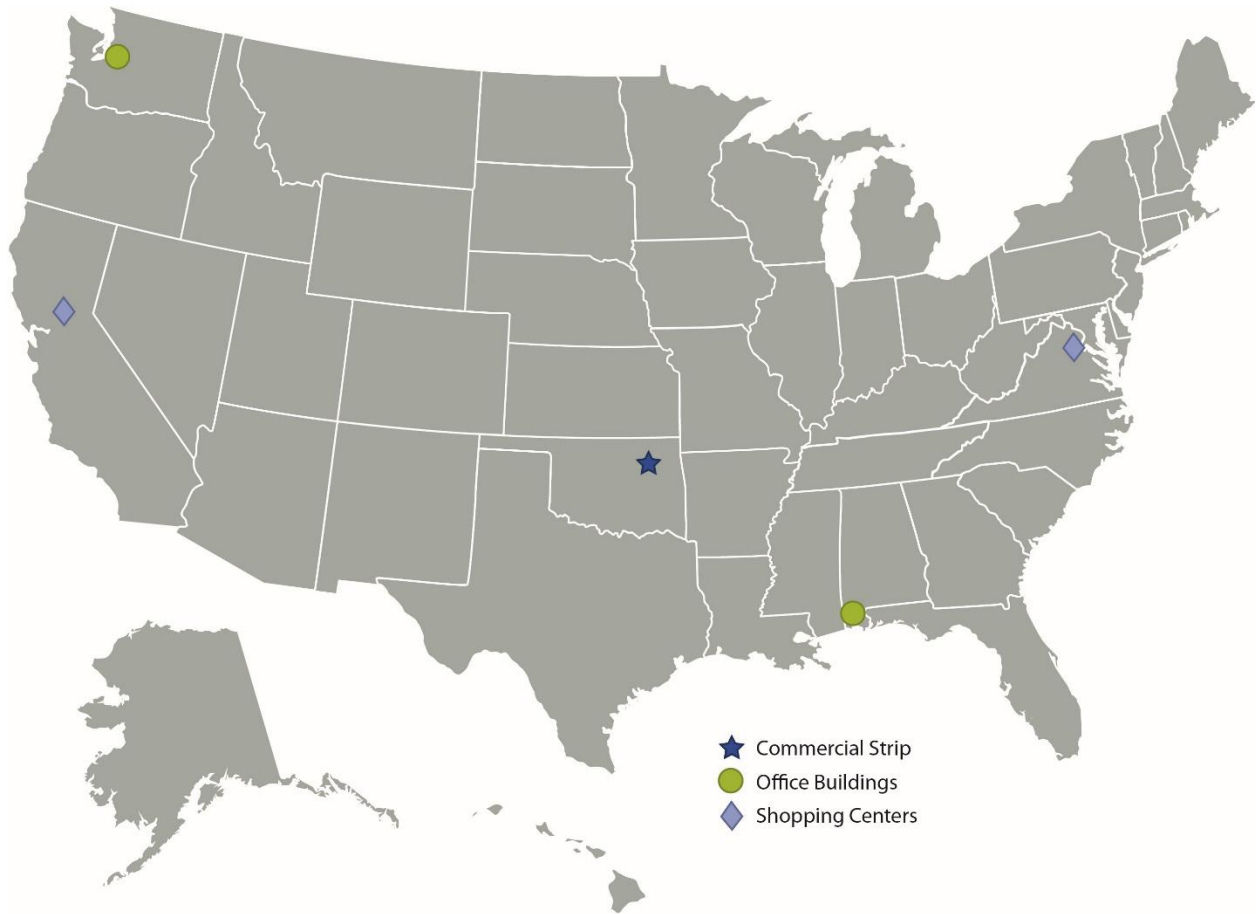


Figure 1. Pilot study test locations.

For each pilot study property, the project team conducted a site visit and intensive-level research, developed an original historic context, and prepared a National Register eligibility evaluation that adhered to the project methodology. Each property was evaluated for potential eligibility under *Criterion A: History* and *Criterion C: Architecture* using the methodology. The project team also completed the Postwar Commercial Evaluation Methodology: Application Worksheet (Application Worksheet) as part of the process.

The pilot study evaluations resulted in eligibility recommendations made by the project team and reviewed by the research panel. The pilot study results were provided to their corresponding state DOT cultural resources staff and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff with a request for a courtesy review and input. It is important to note that the evaluations were completed for demonstration purposes only. None of the pilot study results have an official determination of eligibility or ineligibility under Section 106. As examples for practitioners, the complete pilot study evaluations and Application Worksheets are included in the appendices.

**Appendix A. Pilot Study and Application Worksheet: MacPherson  
Realty Company Office Building**

**12733 Lake City Way NE**  
**MacPherson Realty Co. Building**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
**Architectural Description**

**Location and setting**

The office building at 12733 Lake City Way is located in the Cedar Park neighborhood in the heart of Lake City (see Figure 5). Lake City is a former independent community that is now a part of the City of Seattle. It is located about nine miles from the heart of Seattle, which has a population of approximately 730,000 people (2020). The most commonly taken route to access Lake City from downtown Seattle is to travel north on Interstate-5 (I-5), and then in a northeasterly direction on Washington State Route 522-E (SR 522-E) also known as Lake City Way NE (see Figure 2). The road then continues north, encircling the north end of Lake Washington, at which point it is known by its historical name of Bothell Way, before continuing east to Bothell (see Figure 18).

The heart of Lake City is at the east-west NE 125<sup>th</sup> Street; the subject property is located between NE 127<sup>th</sup> Street and NE 130<sup>th</sup> Street, or about one-and-one-half suburban-size blocks north of the center of the commercial strip that characterizes the neighborhood (see Figure 3).<sup>1</sup> From the point that Lake City Way begins, at the juncture of SR 522-E and I-5, development along the street is characterized by low-intensity uses such as car lots, mini-storage buildings, and mostly free-standing commercial buildings, although there are also small-scale shopping centers along the route of this commercial strip (see Photo 15). Today the areas on either side of Lake City Way as well as 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE are transitioning to mid-rise multi-family development, much of it with retail uses on the ground floor (see Photos 12, 14). The street itself has two lanes of traffic in either direction with some parallel parking lanes and either a planted medium or lefthand turn lane in the center. The street in front of the subject property has a planted median.

The block on which the subject property is located is bounded by 130<sup>th</sup> Street NE on the north side, Lake City Way on the east, 127<sup>th</sup> Street NE on the south, and NE 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the west. The block itself is very typical of the blocks in the area. To the north, on the northeast corner of the block, is a freestanding Wells Fargo Bank that is surrounded on three sides by parking and has a three-lane drive-through (see Photo 11). Moving in a clock-wise direction, the next building is the subject building, which is set back from the street (see Photo 12). Behind (west of) this building on a separate parcel is a one-story building housing the Seattle Drum School. To the south, in the southeast corner of the block, is a small shopping center with a discount grocery, auto parts store, hardware store, and a restaurant, with a large parking lot to the south (see Photo 13). To the west, in the southwest corner of the block, is a small strip mall that primarily houses restaurants. This appears to be associated with the larger shopping center. The northwest quadrant of the block contains primarily residential uses, beginning with a mid-rise (six story) senior affordable housing building. The rest of this block is made up of nine buildings of two, three, and seven stories that appear to all be apartments. Across Lake City Way, traveling north to south, are three businesses in two one-story professional office buildings, two newer (2001) multi-family apartment buildings directly across from the subject property, and three one-story commercial buildings (127<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE does not continue through in this location) (see Photo 14).

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<sup>1</sup> Note that 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, which runs north-south just west of Lake City Way, is also a commercial street.

**12733 Lake City Way NE**  
**MacPherson Realty Co. Building**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
**Architectural Description**

**Building**

Overview. The office building at 12733 Lake City Way NE is a two-story office building on a raised basement, making the building appear to be three stories at the front and two at the rear on this sloped 17,015-square-foot lot (see Photo 6). Two one-story additions are located on the rear (west) side and two metal shipping containers are located near the rear of the building (see Photo 8). The building footprint is largely rectangular, with the exception that the front facade is parallel to the road (see Photo 1). As a result, this face is slightly canted. The building has flat roofs and a short parapet that encircles the roof of the main building and first addition. The second addition has wide eave overhangs with exposed rafters and knee brackets. The lot itself is a parallelogram, with the exception of a narrow extension to the west, with two slanted faces on the east and west paralleling the road, and two straight sides, north and south, that are perpendicular to the road (see Figure 3, Photo 1). The front facade of the building faces east, toward Lake City Way (see Photo 3). The 1960 curtain wall building is 6,258 square feet in size (assessor).

The building is wood-frame construction, with an aluminum exoskeleton and transparent glazing alternating with opaque black panels.<sup>2</sup> The roof is built-up and the foundation is concrete. The rear additions have wood cladding.

The pattern of transparent-to-opaque panels on the building is consistent on the second and third levels on the front, south side, and a portion of the north side facade. Windows are relatively small and square. On the front façade they display a pattern of one fixed sash alternating with two, one-over-one-light sash, the bottom sash being a hopper-style window. The side facades display the same pattern, with the exception that the single-light, fixed sash windows alternate with one two-over-two-light windows. The solid spandrel panels vary in height, with tall panels between the second and third floors, two-thirds-height panels at the lower level of the second floor, and one-third-height panels above the ribbon windows at the third level. Wide mullions alternate with narrow mullions and wide vertical elements at the corners (see Photos 3, 4, 5).

Front (east) facade. The front (east) facade of the MacPherson Realty Co. building is three stories (see Photo 3). The upper two floors are as described above, with transparent and opaque curtain wall panels with fixed and operable windows. The raised basement level, which is at grade on the building front, has an L-shaped footprint. The front facade here is set back from the face of the main portion (the second and third levels) of the building by five feet. The set-back wraps around the corner on the south side, allowing for a side entry that accesses the front of the building. The overhang is supported by two simple round columns on the south side and in the center, and with a concrete wall on the north side. The entry door is aluminum frame with full-height glass. The concrete wall, which is broken off at the front face of the building, is clad in stone veneer on the south (interior) side. There are no other features on this facade. The bottom level,

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<sup>2</sup> Note that Assessor records state that the building is framed in 2" x 4" wood framing. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, updated to 1965, also show the building as wood frame construction, while an article published in the May 10, 1959 issue of the *Seattle Daily Times*, prior to the building's construction, state that it was constructed of reinforced concrete.



**12733 Lake City Way NE**  
**MacPherson Realty Co. Building**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
**Architectural Description**

below the overhang, was enclosed with an approximately six-foot-high wrought-iron fence with a gate on the south side about 2021.

*North side facade.* The north side facade is composed of a solid concrete wall at the ground level (see Photo 2). The second and third levels display a curtain wall in the same pattern as seen on the front facade at the front (east side) of this facade. At the second level is a long, narrow terrace (60' by 5') that is enclosed by an approximately 5' high chain-link fence that is woven with vinyl for an opaque appearance and covered with a wood frame shed roof clad in corrugated fiberglass. The west end of this terrace reaches the grade at the back of the lot. The window wall on the back wall of this terrace consists of broad, paired, one-over-one-light windows with hopper-style windows in the lower pane. A flush door is located at the terrace level on the far east end and at the west end. A tall chain link gate encloses the terrace on the west side and prevents access to the rear yard. The walls here are clad in T 1-11.

*Rear (west) facade.* Visible on the rear facades are the two additions to the building, clad in T 1-11 (first addition) and plywood with battens (second addition) (see Photo 8). At the first level is a bank of five fixed windows with wood and possibly vinyl frames under a deep overhang, overlooking the rear yard with their metal containers. At the second level is a two-light sliding window with what appears to be an anodized aluminum frame on the left (north) side). Visible at the ground level on the right (south) side is a steep ramp to a side entry door with a vertical wood balustrade. There are no other features on this facade.

*South side facade.* The portion of the south side facade that is the original building has the same window pattern on the second and third levels as the front of the building (see Photos 6, 7). At the lower level are four ganged, two-over-two-light windows with roughly the same proportions as the windows above. To the right (east), at the ground level, is the previously described door leading to the front entry. The far west bay on the main body of the building contains a secondary entry to the building, which has a double door with an aluminum frame and full-height glass (see Photo 7). A flat roof is supported by two simple round metal posts. Each side of this entry vestibule is enclosed with a one-over-one-light window of full-height glass. Visible inside the entry is a stair to the upper level. To the left (west) of this entry are the two additions to the building. The first addition is two stories in height and is clad in T 1-11. A two-light sliding window with aluminum frames is at the lower level. At the upper level is a paired, one-over-one-light window with a fixed pane over a hopper-style window. A wide concrete ramp is located below the windows, as though this used to be an entry. The addition to the left (west) is one story. An entry with a flush door abuts the first addition here. A stairway with four steps and a vertical wood balustrade accesses this door. To the left is the previously mentioned ramp, which also accesses the landing for the entry door. This addition is clad in plywood with battens.

*Changes over time.* The 1965 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows that the building at 12733 Lake City Way NE shows the small 'notch' on the north side that is occupied by a second-level terrace today, but no rear additions (see Figure 17). The shop and dwelling north of the building that is also evident on historic aerial photos was also still in place, showing the evolution of the site from residential/commercial uses to commercial use. An internal division between the three-story portion of the building towards the front that is occupied by a shop (according to the Sanborn map) is separated from the two-story portion to the rear

**12733 Lake City Way NE**  
**MacPherson Realty Co. Building**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
**Architectural Description**

that is occupied by an office (again, according to the Sanborn map). The 1960 Assessor photo reveals that the concrete wall with stone cladding on the northeast corner of the building extended toward the street, separating the parking area to the north from the parking area in front of the building (see Figure 14). By the time of the 1974 Assessor photo this wall had been broken off at the face of the building (see Figure 16, Photo 10). The first addition to the building, which is two stories in height and on the west elevation, was constructed in 1969 (Assessor records) (see Figure 15). No date was found for the one-story second addition. Additionally, no date was found for the siting of the two metal shipping containers in back of the building. The wrought-iron fence on the front facade was constructed ca 2021 (see Photos 3, 4, 5). The chain-link fences bordering the property predate 2017.

Site. The 17,015-square-foot lot on which 12733 Lake City Way NE is located is shaped like a parallelogram with one narrow extension to the west on the north side (see Figure 3). The building is set back from the street to the east at a sufficient depth to accommodate four diagonal parking spaces. A narrow concrete sidewalk is located at the street (see Photos 12, 15). Diagonal parking is located to the north of the building, accessed from the bank parking lot to the north (see Photos 1, 2). A driveway and parallel and perpendicular parking is located to the south (see Photo 4). The lot is enclosed by a chain-link fence on the south and west sides. On the north side the concrete wall that forms the base of the building at the first level is topped by a chain-link fence west of the wrap-around portion of the main body of the building. An internally lit pole sign spells out three business names: Star Point Stone Massage; Lake City Smiles Family Dentistry; and Denture Clinic Inc. (see Photo 5). It is located in the southeast corner of the lot. The lot is paved in asphalt, with a wide curb cut that extends from the south driveway and allows for access to the parking in front of the building. A concrete stairway with deep, shallow steps extends from the entry at the southeast corner of the building to the secondary entry at the end of the original portion of the building on the south side, paralleling the entry drive (see Photo 9). A small tree is located adjacent to the stairway; this is the only landscaping on the site.

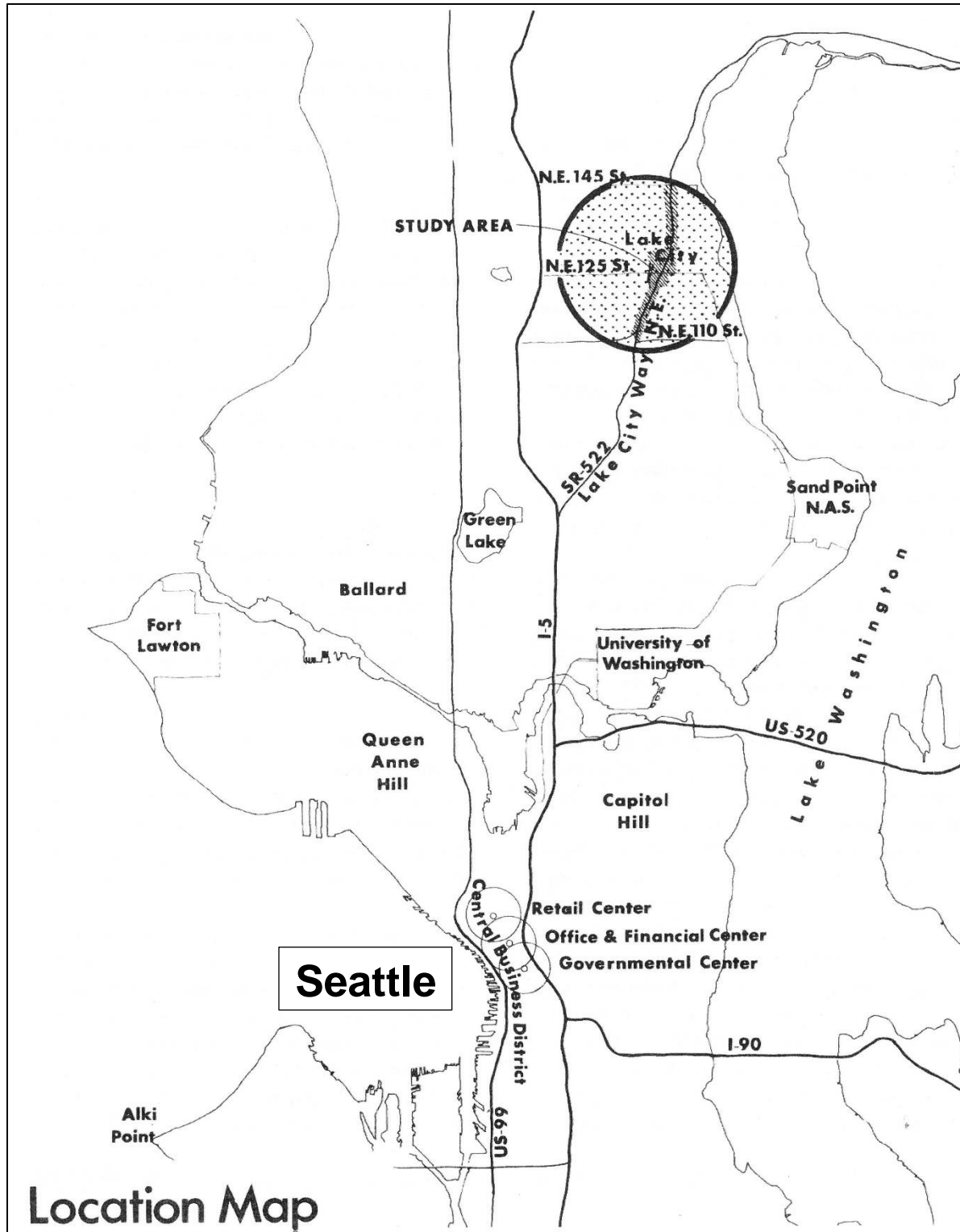
12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Figures – Current Maps

Figure 1 – Location map



12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Figures – Current Maps

Figure 2 – Regional location map



Source: Seattle Gateway Improvement Plan

12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Figures – Current Maps

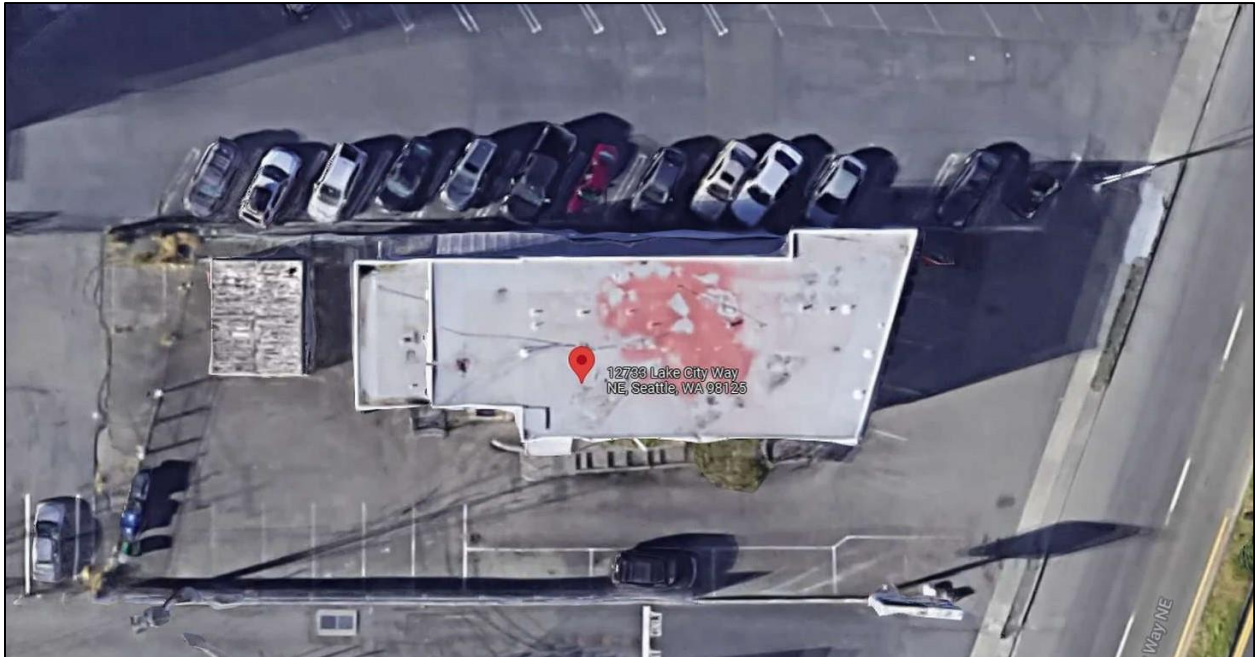
Figure 3 – Parcel map



Source: King County Assessor

12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Figures – Current Maps

Figure 4 – Site plan, aerial view

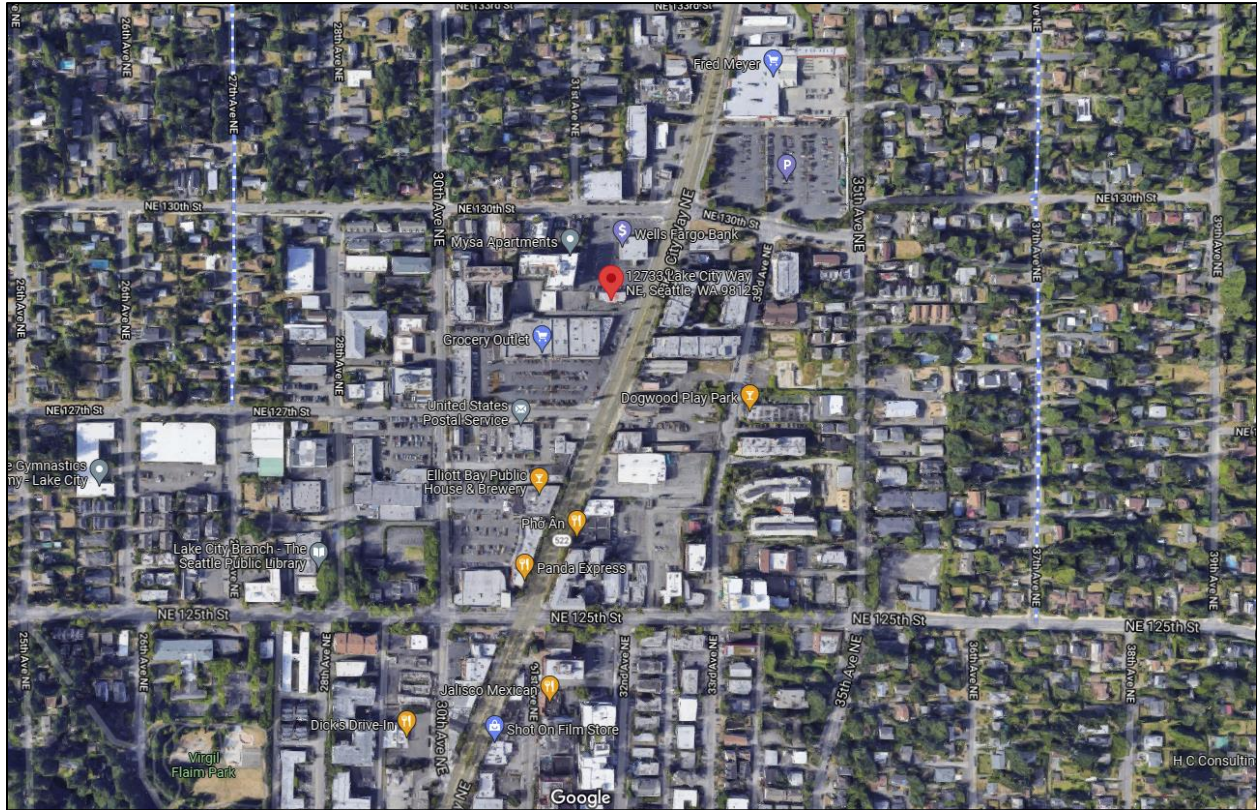


Source: Google maps (map data © 2023 Google)



12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Figures – Current Maps

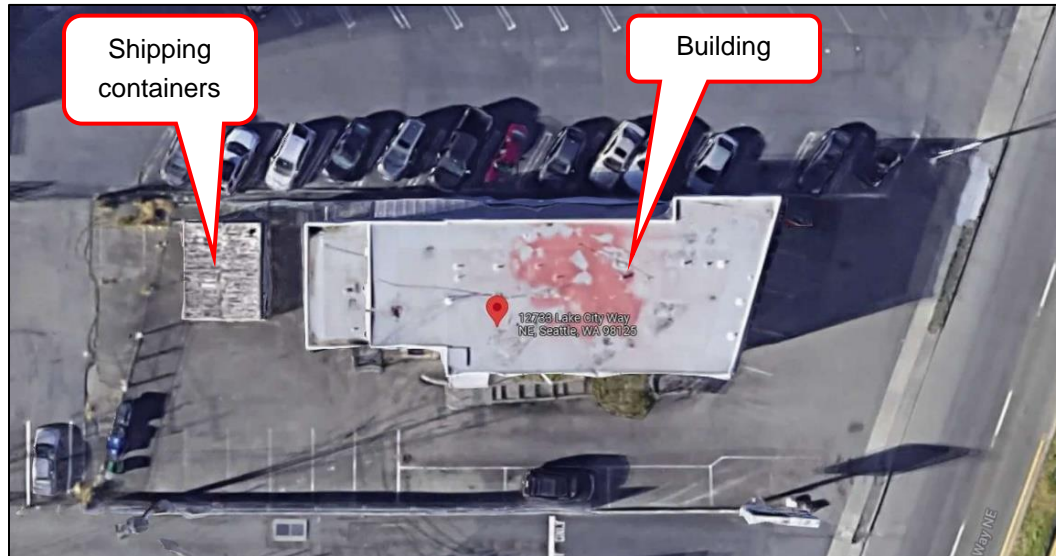
Figure 5 – Neighborhood context



Source: Google maps (map data © 2023 Google)

12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 1 – Overview – aerial view



Source: Google maps (map data © 2023 Google)

Photo 2 – East (front) and north side facades, looking northwest (Note, photos 2-15 were taken January 13, 2022)





12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 3 – Front (east) facade, looking west



Photo 4 – South side and front (east) facades, looking west



12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 5 – South side and front (east) facades with pole sign



Photo 6 – South side facade, looking north





12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 7 – South side facade, west end, looking northwest

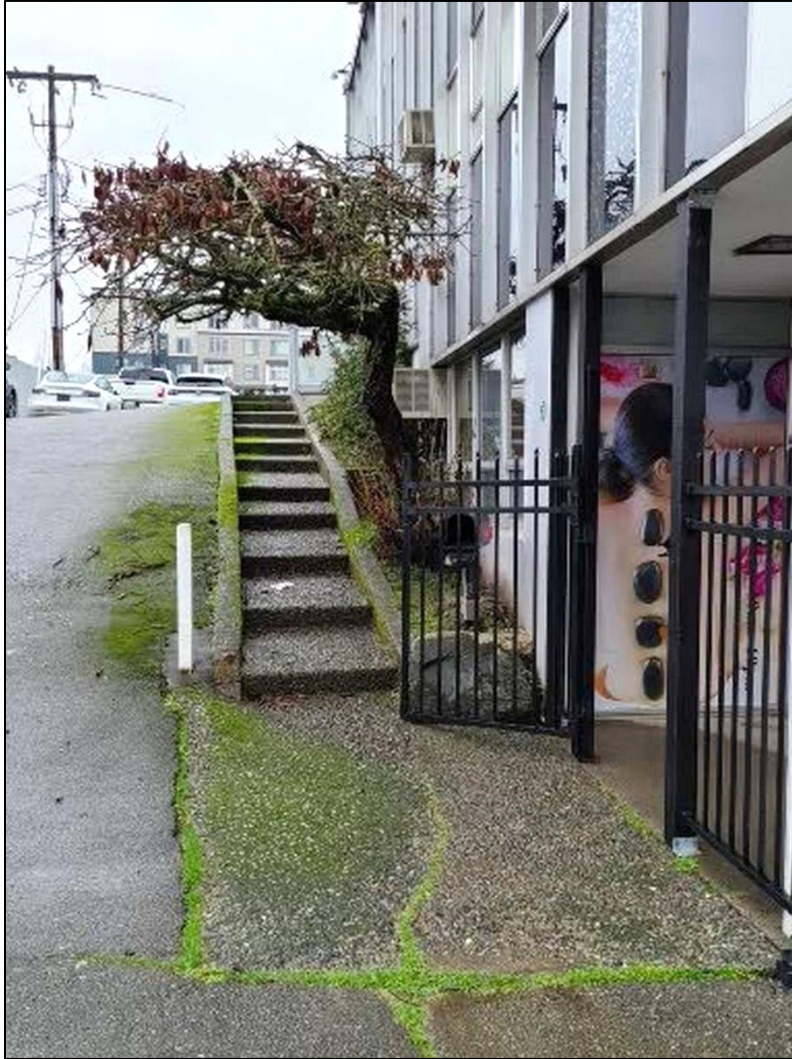


Photo 8 – Rear (west) facade, looking northeast



12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

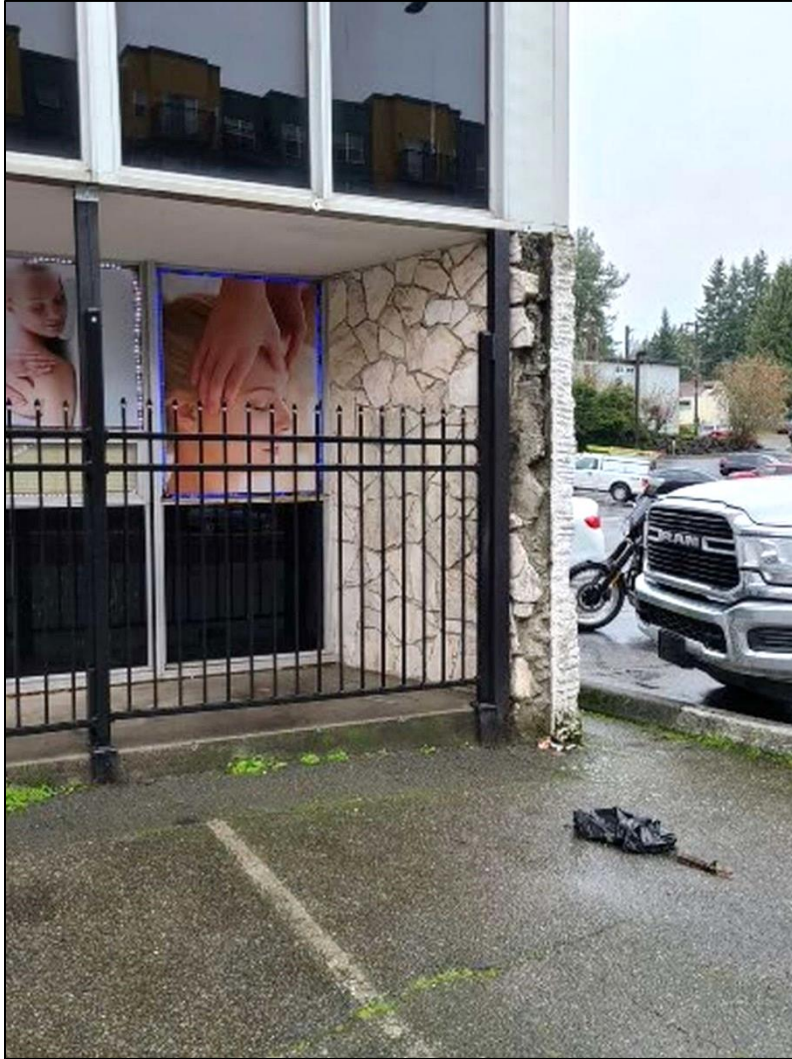
Photo 9 – Staircase on south side of building





12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 10 – Detail on northeast corner of building, looking northwest



12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 11 – Setting – Bank to north



Photo 12 – Setting – Apartments to northwest





12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 13 – Setting – Building at south, looking north



Photo 14 – Setting – Building across street from 12733 Lake City Way NE, looking northeast



12733 Lake City Way NE  
MacPherson Realty Co. Building  
Seattle, Washington  
Current Photos

Photo 15 – Setting - Lake City Way NE looking north





**12733 Lake City Way NE**  
**MacPherson Realty Co. Building**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
**Historical Context**

**Introduction**

The 1960 MacPherson Realty Co. office building at 12733 Lake City Way NE was constructed as an office building and remains in that use to this writing (2022). The building was designed by the respected Seattle mid-century architecture firm of Detlie & Peck and built by Nelse Mortensen & Co.<sup>3</sup> It was developed for the family-owned MacPherson Realty Co., the largest real estate firm in the area at mid-century, as a branch office.<sup>4</sup> The property was owned when built by Mac-Rent, Inc., which continued its ownership until 1993.<sup>5</sup> When the building opened, MacPherson Realty Co. occupied the first floor, while the second and third floors were reserved for professional and medical offices.<sup>6</sup> The building is located a block-and-a-half north of the heart of Lake City, which was an unincorporated community before being annexed to the city of Seattle in 1954. Lake City as a whole, which comprises several neighborhoods, has been described as extending from NE 85<sup>th</sup> to NE 145<sup>th</sup>, the City of Seattle northerly limits, and from I-5 to Lake Washington.<sup>7</sup> The area developed primarily in the post-World War II (postwar) era as an auto-oriented commercial strip. It is about 9 miles north of the heart of downtown Seattle.

**A Brief History of Lake City**

As timber that could be harvested via navigable waters became scarce in the Puget Sound area, the demand rose in the northern reaches for a means to access inland forests. To meet that need Daniel Hunt Gilman, Thomas Burke, and partners conceived the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway, which was incorporated in 1885.<sup>8</sup> Its primary purpose was to transport logs from the communities north of Seattle and coal from Issaquah to Seattle for further shipping.<sup>9</sup> By 1888 it was completed from Lake Union around the north end of Lake Washington and south to Issaquah. The route followed the edge of the lake to avoid the challenges of steeper topography (see Figure 6). Towns developed along the route, including Lake City, Kenmore, and Bothell.<sup>10</sup> The railroad was subsumed by the transcontinental Northern Pacific Railroad in 1892 but the route through Lake City continued to operate through 1963. By 1970 the rail lines in the region merged under the ownership of the Burlington Northern Railway, and in 1971 the railroad petitioned to abandon the line. The route from Seattle to Kenmore is memorialized by the Burke-Gilman Trail, which was later extended to Bothell.

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<sup>3</sup> "Under Construction," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 10, 1959.

<sup>4</sup> "Big Realty Company Operated by Family," *Seattle Daily Times*, September 19, 1954:69. "Under Construction," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 10, 1959.

<sup>5</sup> King County Assessor, <https://blue.kingcounty.com/Assessor/eRealProperty/Detail.aspx?ParcelNbr=1453600522>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>6</sup> "MacPherson In Quarters At Lake City," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, December 4, 1959.

<sup>7</sup> Steven Jay Abrams, "Lake City, From Rages to Riches to Rags to Riches," (manuscript), sociology course, University of Washington, 1980. Wilma, David, "Seattle Neighborhoods: Lake City Thumbnail History," [http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file\\_id=3449](http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file_id=3449), accessed February 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Heather M. MacIntosh, "Seattle, Lake Shore & Eastern Railroad Company," *HistoryLink.org*, <https://www.historylink.org/file/1736>, accessed February 2022. The railroad also served to transport coal from Issaquah to the urban center.

<sup>9</sup> Mimi Sheridan, *Lake City Professional Center Landmark Nomination Application*. Prepared for City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board. Prepared by Mimi Sheridan, Cultural Resource Specialist. January 6, 2009:9.

<sup>10</sup> Today the route is memorialized by the Burke-Gilman Trail.

**12733 Lake City Way NE**  
**MacPherson Realty Co. Building**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
**Historical Context**

The land on which Lake City is located today was originally used for logging. The Puget Mill Company, later Pope and Talbot, acquired much of what became Lake City.<sup>11</sup> The company logged the land by towing logs to the water and then shipping them to a mill. It later sold the logged-over land for agricultural uses and residential plats, including the Cedar Park plat on which the MacPherson Realty Co. building is located today (see Figure 7).<sup>12</sup> The subject property was surveyed by engineer Clyde D. Pike and platted in 1922 by W. H. Talbot, president of the Puget Mill Co.<sup>13</sup>

What was historically the Bothell Road (Lake City Way NE today), connecting Seattle and Bothell through Lake City, began as a crude wagon road. The need existed to create a link between these shingle and lumber-producing towns. It served as a catalyst to growth until the 1910s, when agriculture took the place of timber harvesting. The rise of the automobile created a demand for better roads. The Gerhart Erickson Road, so named for the person who advocated for the road in the Washington legislature, opened in 1909.<sup>14</sup> In May 1913 the highway was completed from Seattle through Lake City and Kenmore to Bothell and Everett, a destination over 20 miles north of Seattle (see Figure 6).<sup>15</sup> In 1910 it was paved with Warrenite, an inferior material. It was then repaved with brick in 1918 and with asphalt in 1928.<sup>16</sup> Because of the road's historical importance in accessing the area, the route has long been a state route.<sup>17</sup>

The Bothell Road was named Victory Way in 1924, commemorating World War I, and later Bothell Way. A new demand on the road was created when Washington State instituted prohibition in 1916, followed by the Volstead Act of 1919, giving rise to the flourishing of speakeasies and roadhouses. Lake City and neighboring towns were outside the Seattle city limits and while Prohibition was enforced within the city, conditions were more favorable for these businesses beyond the city of Seattle boundaries. Eleven speakeasies were mapped by Lake City historian Emogene Inglet between NE 85<sup>th</sup> Street and just north of NE 145<sup>th</sup> Street, established from 1922 to 1934.<sup>18</sup> Other businesses followed. After the repeal of prohibition in 1933, these businesses flourished openly.

In the 1920s auto-oriented businesses, including auto camps and cafes that catered to travelers, began appearing along the major roads throughout the city of Seattle, particularly on Aurora Avenue N. (the Pacific Highway or Highway 99) and Lake City Way or Bothell Way north of Seattle, and Rainier Avenue South, south of the city. Service stations and repair shops appeared not only on arterials but on

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<sup>11</sup> The area between 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and the lake, from NE 117<sup>th</sup> Street and NE 160<sup>th</sup> Street was purchased from the Puget Mill Co. by D.H. and R.H. Lee and platted in 1906. David Wilma, Wilma, David, "Seattle Neighborhoods: Lake City Thumbnail History," [http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file\\_id=3449](http://www.historylink.org/essays/output.cfm?file_id=3449), accessed February 2022.

<sup>12</sup> Sheridan, 2009:9.

<sup>13</sup> "Cedar Park," (Cedar Park Plat Map), King County Department of Assessments, 1923.

<sup>14</sup> Sheridan, 2009:10.

<sup>15</sup> City of Bothell Landmark Preservation Board, *Downtown Landmark and Historic District Feasibility Study*, November 2019.

<sup>16</sup> Imogene Inglet, *Lil' Ol' Lake City*, 2013:35.

<sup>17</sup> Sheridan, 2009:10.

<sup>18</sup> The Jolly Roger at 8720 Lake City Way was one such establishment. It was nominated as a Seattle Historic Landmark in 1979 but burned in a suspected arson fire in 1989.

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neighborhood streets. Besides catering to the automobile-driving public, Lake City Way was important because it was the main road connecting Seattle with Bothell and Everett, a destination more than 20 miles north of Seattle. As on Aurora Avenue N., businesses were not constrained by the spacing of streetcar stops in the city, which had historically influenced the nature of development there, and each business had to be large enough to provide parking.<sup>19</sup>

By the mid-1930s a thriving business district had developed in Lake City and in 1936 local citizens called for the three-lane Victory Way to be expanded to four lanes.<sup>20</sup> In 1937 the fledgling town boasted the following businesses:

. . . nine grocery stores, two meat markets, four feed and flour stores, one drug store, two dairies, eight restaurants, one beverage store, one five and ten cent store, two lumber yards, three auto camps, six auto repair garages . . . eight oil and gas stations, a Puget Sound Power and Light office, a printing plant, a weekly newspaper, the Lake City Star, three barber shops, one furniture store, two electrical appliance stores, one radio shop, six fuel yards and one greenhouse (see Figures 9, 10, 11).<sup>21</sup>

The town had one doctor and one civil engineer. The post office operated out of the Lake City Drugstore.

Highway 99 (Aurora Avenue N. today) was constructed west of Lake City Way. It was completed to the Snohomish County line in 1912 and reached Everett in 1927, replacing Lake City Way as the favored access to that city. This affected the businesses in Lake City.<sup>22</sup> Access to Highway 99 from Lake City was improved; however, with the construction of east-west NE 125<sup>th</sup> Street in 1930, which linked Lake City Way (and Sand Point Way NE) to Highway 99 and eventually to I-5.<sup>23</sup> Another important event that affected Lake City was the construction of the Northgate Shopping Center in 1950, the northwest's first regional shopping mall, which is also credited with being the first shopping mall in the nation.<sup>24</sup> Lake City was also affected by the construction of I-5, which reached this area by 1967 and drew through traffic from Lake City Way.

In the 1940s several small areas north of the University District were annexed and, in 1950 two areas north of 85<sup>th</sup> Street and west of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE were added. Larger annexations occurred in 1953-54,

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<sup>19</sup> Mimi Sheridan, *History Property Survey Report: Seattle's Neighborhood Commercial Districts*. Prepared for City of Seattle, Department of Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation Program. Prepared by Mimi Sheridan, Cultural Resource Specialist. November 2002.

<sup>20</sup> Inglet, 2013:47.

<sup>21</sup> Steven Jay Abrams, "Lake City, From Rages to Riches to Rags to Riches," (manuscript), sociology course, University of Washington, 1980.

<sup>22</sup> Sheridan, 2002.

<sup>23</sup> Highway 99 was the main route from Seattle to Vancouver BC when constructed> It also extends south of the city with several alternative names.

<sup>24</sup> Sally B. Woodbridge and Roger Montgomery, *A Guide to Architecture in Washington State*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1980:232. Gordon, Karen, *Report on Designation, Lake City Library*, City of Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, June 19, 2001:2.

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including the Lake City annexation, which established the present city limits by setting the northern boundary at 145<sup>th</sup> Street (see Figure 12).<sup>25</sup>

The postwar era was not the first time that the city of Seattle had annexed existing communities. Between 1890 and 1907 eight towns and cities adjacent to Seattle were incorporated: Ballard, Columbia City, South Park, West Seattle, South Seattle, and Southeast Seattle (see Figure 8). After World War II Seattle undertook another round of annexations. At that time the northern boundary west of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE was at 85<sup>th</sup> Street. East of that point the boundary was at NE 55<sup>th</sup> Street. Although this area had been developed for many years, its character was distinctly different from the character of development within the city limits. Residential and commercial lots sizes tended to be larger here. Even in the 1950s many parcels still had agricultural uses such as greenhouses or small (five acre) farms raising chickens, berries or produce, as was possible in Lake City at this time due to available open land (see Figure 17). Stores were scattered, with fewer commercial districts than in Seattle, and its later growth was shaped by the automobile, giving it a linear development pattern with large-scale businesses with parking lots. These large lots would prove to be very conducive to large commercial developments and residential subdivision, all of which proliferated during the 1950s to the 1970s and continues to this day.<sup>26</sup>

Lake City was incorporated as a township in 1949. After World War II, veterans and their families moved into the area which, according to Seattle historian Roger Sale, was considered less expensive, along with the nearby neighborhoods of View Ridge, Wedgwood, and Olympic Hills.<sup>27</sup> In other words, the attraction was that it was relatively affordable. Also according to Sale, “It was the era of the bulldozer, the ranch-style house, the shopping center, the long runs of commerce on arterials filled with car lots, drive-ins, real estate agencies.”<sup>28</sup> This did not speak positively to the quality of postwar development in Lake City.

When annexed to the city of Seattle in 1954, the business strip consisted of 20 blocks. The businesses along Lake City Way were impacted again by the construction of the Northgate Shopping Mall in 1950, with its pleasant interiors, abundant parking, and excellent access via I-5 by 1967. At the time Lake City did not have sidewalks and received less through traffic due to the competition from other north-south routes, specifically Highway 99 and the I-5 freeway. In 1973 the Chamber of Commerce conceived of the Gateway project and accompanying street and pedestrian improvements to help remedy the situation.

A profile in an R.L. Polk City Directory of the area prepared in 1973-1974 noted that while the area had been a stable one that housed upper middle-class families, headed by individuals in professional and technical fields and management, it was declining in income and household size (note that this was the era following on the “Boeing Bust” of 1970 and an era of high inflation and high energy costs in general). Up until that time the area exhibited a high percentage of single-family homes (in contrast to multi-family

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<sup>25</sup> Sheridan, 2009:11.

<sup>26</sup> Sheridan, 2002. Note that today the redevelopment of the Northgate Mall and the presence of a new light rail station just over two miles away is helping to drive the intensification of housing in this area

<sup>27</sup> Roger Sale, *Seattle Past to Present*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1978 (1976):190. Olympic Hills is part of the Lake City neighborhood.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

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structures) and a high percentage of owner-occupied homes. The businesses also had an “exceedingly” low turnover rate.<sup>29</sup> The total population was 49,463 and the number of households was 18,908.<sup>30</sup>

In 1977 the Seattle urban design firm MAKERS was hired to develop an improvement plan for Lake City. The firm defined four problems with what it termed a prototypical mid-twentieth-century commercial strip. They were: its appearance; a lack of convenience for the shopper; a lack of organization; and the need to attract new businesses to the area.<sup>31</sup> The need for diversity in the businesses was described in the planning document as follows: “A collection of good specialty shops exists in the core shopping area near 125th and Lake City Way. This area, however, lacks ‘drawing card’ businesses - usually a major retailer such as a large new supermarket or small department store - within walking distance of these specialty stores. This ‘drawing card’ business is needed to attract new shoppers from outside the area.”<sup>32</sup> The sidewalks, street improvements, including new paving and landscaping, and the street profile that was envisioned at that time are still extant on Lake City Way. The study also recommended canopies over the storefronts and better signage. While the plan recommended a central gathering space, a small pocket park was constructed at the southwest corner of 125<sup>th</sup> and Lake City Way, with a remnant of a historical building serving as a gateway to the park.

A sewer district for Lake City was envisioned as early as 1947, the largest sewer project planned to date for a suburban district, at a cost of \$3.5 million.<sup>33</sup> Until this point Lake City had been dumping its sewage in Lake Washington, as had other suburban cities around Seattle.<sup>34</sup> This no doubt paved the way for future growth as well.

**Developmental History**

Lake City developed primarily in the postwar era, but the subject block redeveloped very slowly. A 1936 historic aerial photograph of the block bounded by Lake City Way NE, NE 127<sup>th</sup> Street, 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and NE 130<sup>th</sup> Street shows a few houses and what appears to be remnant orchards. The next map, dated 1952, shows what appears to be the shop and house that is illustrated in the 1965 Sanborn map; the land on which the future office building would be located was vacant.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> City of Seattle Office of Policy Planning, *Lake City Community Polk Profile of Change 1973-1974*, Seattle, WA: R.L. Polk & Co., 1977:9-2.

<sup>30</sup> Abrams, 1980. Drawing from the Polk profile, it was speculated that a reason for the decline in families in Lake City was that they were moving to farther out suburbs. Articles by the MacPherson Realty Co. at this time noted that more houses were available due to people moving out of the area during the Boeing decline. The population in 1949 was estimated to be 40,000 to 43,000 people.

<sup>31</sup> MAKERS, *Lake City Seattle Gateway Improvement Plan*. Prepared for City of Seattle Department of Community Development and Lake City Business and Community Development Association. Prepared by MAKERS. February 15, 1977:2. The subject property is at the north end of the study area for the project.

<sup>32</sup> MAKERS, 1977:3.

<sup>33</sup> “Sewer-Project Plans Detailed, *The Seattle Star*, February 28, 1947:20.

<sup>34</sup> Sale, 1978:197.

<sup>35</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance map, 1952 updated to 1965.

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The 1965 Sanborn Fire Insurance map for the subject property shows that the parcel was occupied by the MacPherson Realty Co. building, addressed as 12733-37 Bothell Way, with a three-story shop in front and a two-story office in the back. Directly adjacent to the building was a one-story shop addressed as 12737-39. This housed the National Bank of Commerce in the 1960s through at least 1970. In back of this building (to the west) was a house, addressed as 12739 Lake City Way. At this time the lot was configured in its historical configuration as Lot 3 in Block 3 of the 1923 Cedar Park tract.<sup>36</sup>

In 1967 the name of Bothell Way was changed to Lake City Way NE, which remains the name of the street as of this writing. Aerial photos show that in 1968 the office building was in place and the two smaller adjacent buildings were no longer extant.<sup>37</sup> The bank, the Seattle Drum School building, and the commercial shopping strip to the south of the office building were in place but the northwest quadrant of the block was still occupied by houses. The blocks in the vicinity appeared to be occupied by commercial buildings fronting the street, with plentiful parking (see Figure 15). The only change to the block in 1980 was the new strip mall in the southwest corner, which is perpendicular to the existing commercial shopping strip that developed earlier (see Photo 13). It was not until 2006 that multi-family housing in the form of four duplexes appeared on the block. By 2009 the senior housing to the rear (west) of the office building had been constructed and in 2017 the land to the north of the office building had been cleared for multi-family development (see Photo 12).

**Current Conditions**

Lake City Way still serves as the primary vehicular access to Lake City. Commercial development along Lake City Way continues largely from I-5 north to Sheridan Beach, which is a suburban residential community on Lake Washington, and picks up again in Kenmore, at the north end of the lake (see Figure 2, 18). This approximately 18-mile stretch of low-scale commercial uses front largely postwar suburban residential development. Today the business district in Lake City is transitioning to low- and mid-rise residential multi-family uses with retail at the ground floor, including on the block in which the MacPherson Realty building is located, although fewer retail uses are developing here.

In the 1990s the City of Seattle adopted an “urban villages” strategy for concentrating growth in the city and discouraging sprawl. The intent of the plan was to allow for apartments, townhouses and condos in about two dozen neighborhood hubs, along with shops, parks and buses.<sup>38</sup> Eleven urban villages were identified for the area north of Lake Union, largely the northern portion of the city, including Lake City. The plan retained much of the city’s single-family neighborhoods, however, and growth has exceeded the city’s efforts to accommodate it in an effective and racially equitable way.

The heart of Lake City was rezoned in conjunction with the city’s most recent update of their Comprehensive Plan, in part to remedy some of these shortcomings. The center of Lake City and its

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<sup>36</sup> “Cedar Park,” (Cedar Park Plat Map), King County Department of Assessments, 1923.

<sup>37</sup> This is now used for parking.

<sup>38</sup> Daniel Beekman, “Seattle’s long-standing ‘urban village’ strategy for growth needs reworking, new report says,” Seattle Times, July 27, 2021.

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primary pedestrian-oriented area, which was included in the 1977 urban design plan for the area, is generally considered the two blocks north and two blocks south of NE 125<sup>th</sup> Street and includes the subject property. Sidewalks were widened (or added where missing), a median strip was added, and trees were planted, as a result of the 1977 project. In 2007 Neighborhood Design Guidelines that spoke to the intended architectural and urban design character of Seattle's North District and Lake City were adopted. These were revised in 2013.

In 2016 zoning for the heart of Lake City Way was changed to be more pedestrian friendly, by disallowing long blank walls and parking in front of buildings, among other provisions. Building height limits in the subject block and immediate surrounding area are 65', where they had previously been 40'.<sup>39</sup> The block within which 12733 Lake City Way NE is located has been re-zoned "P", requiring more pedestrian-oriented uses and building standards and denser development. The zoning allows for larger buildings also, which is possible in part because lots in the area are relatively large (see Photo 12). The present multi-family development across the street from the MacPherson Realty Co. building is 400' long, which is longer than many urban city blocks (see Photo 14).<sup>40</sup> While the parking strip in front of the MacPherson Realty Co. building is 'grandfathered in' at this time, if the building undergoes substantial redevelopment, it may have to conform to current design guidelines.

**Ownership**

The building at 12733 Lake City Way NE was owned by Mac-Rent, Inc. when developed in 1960. In 1993 it was sold to Howard K. Anderson and Dorcas Anderson. In 1995 the property was sold to Robert Yushi Xie and the associated American Family, LLC. It is still owned by this party today.

**The MacPherson Realty Co.**

The MacPherson Realty Co. built the office building at 12733 Lake City Way NE as a branch office for its real estate company, whose headquarters was in the University District. MacPherson Realty Co., a family-owned business as of this writing (2022), was founded by William Raymond MacPherson Sr., who was from Canada and immigrated to the U.S. about 1910. He worked as a dairyman until 1928, when he began selling real estate. He opened his company, MacPherson Realty Co., in the University District, north of downtown Seattle, in 1932. In 1946 the company surpassed \$1,000,000 in annual sales.

William died in 1949 and the company was taken over by two of his sons, William Raymond Jr. (1919-1988) and Murdock D. MacPherson (1921-2016), who began with the company after returning from service in the military during World War II.<sup>41</sup> William was president, and Murdock served as vice president and manager of land development. Murdock was also in charge of the Lake City office, at which time they

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<sup>39</sup> No date was identified for this change, but it may have been instituted in conjunction with a new master plan for the NE 125<sup>th</sup> Street and Lake City Way area in 2001.

<sup>40</sup> "Lake City Urban Design," Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development, <http://www.seattle.gov/opcd/ongoing-initiatives/lake-city-urban-design#whatwhy>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>41</sup> MacPherson also had a son Thomas and daughter Ann. Both went on to form their own real estate offices. Ann Segal was also a successful builder.

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had four offices. Also participating in the family business was the elder Mrs. MacPherson, the widow of William R. MacPherson, Sr. She worked for the company until she was 93.<sup>42</sup>

A 1954 *Seattle Daily Times* article declared MacPherson Realty Co. the largest real estate firm in the state.<sup>43</sup> The company boomed in the 1950s and 1960s and continued to ride the wave of new residential construction as well as sales of “used” residences through the Seattle area recession of the 1970s and the financial uncertainty in mortgage lending in the 1980s.

In 1962 MacPherson Realty sold more than \$25,000,000 worth of homes in Seattle in the first eight months, the largest one-firm home sales volume recorded in Pacific Northwest real estate history, according to the *Seattle Daily Times*.<sup>44</sup> At that time, they had six offices in the Puget Sound area.<sup>45</sup> In 1966 company sales totaled \$43,630,609, with a little over half of the sales attributed to new home sales, a little less than half attributed to used home sales, and a smaller percentage in land sales.

One of the keys to MacPherson’s success was their participation in Seattle’s Parade of Homes. The Parade of Homes, which coincided in time with National Home Week, ran from 1949 until 1960.<sup>46</sup> This program was a collaboration between the *Seattle Times* and the Seattle Master Builders. In 1963 MacPherson Realty Co. had 12 houses listed; in 1966 Murdock MacPherson was co-chair of the event.

The economic downturn in the Seattle area in the early 1970s was caused by the faltering of the region’s largest employer, the Boeing Company, and inflation and the energy crisis on the national level, it caused a slowdown in the residential real estate market and a general recession.<sup>47</sup> Nonetheless, MacPherson Realty continued to do well. In 1973, it saw a net volume in sales of \$9.1 million in January, with 359 homes with an average sale price of over \$26,000. It was the highest volume they had experienced since 1932 and it was accomplished with conventional, rather than government-sponsored, financing. The company had ten offices at that time. The real estate market in Seattle began to recover by the mid-1970s and MacPherson Realty grew to twelve offices by 1975.

One of MacPherson’s largest subdivisions, conceived by Murdock MacPherson, was Kingsgate, a planned community on the Eastside (east of Seattle and Lake Washington) with over 2,000 lots, which was sold with fully developed infrastructure, developed playgrounds, parks, three school sites, and a site

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<sup>42</sup> “Annie J. MacPherson, 98: Was Always Proud to be Irish,” (obit.), *Seattle Daily Times*, August 3, 1991:88.

<sup>43</sup> “Big Realty Company Operated by Family,” *Seattle Daily Times*, September 19, 1954.

<sup>44</sup> “Realty Firm’s Sales Exceed \$25,000,000,” *Seattle Daily Times*, September 23, 1962.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Houser, “Database of the Annual Seattle Area Parade of Homes, 1949-1960.” [https://dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Parade\\_of\\_Homes\\_Study.pdf](https://dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/Parade_of_Homes_Study.pdf), accessed February 2022.

<sup>47</sup> Sharon Boswell and Lorraine McConaghy, “Lights out, Seattle,” *100 Years in the Pacific Northwest*, The Seattle Daily Times [Centennial Edition], <https://special.seattletimes.com/o/special/centennial/index.html>, accessed August 2021.



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for a commercial shopping center.<sup>48</sup> The MacPherson Realty Co. was also known for the development of the Ocean Shores resort on the Washington coast.

When William R. MacPherson, Jr., died in 1988 the company had 19 offices.<sup>49</sup> The business transitioned to William Sr.'s four grandchildren in 1990, who bought out the company in 1991 and ran it for 28 years from an office in Shoreline, a city just northwest of Lake City.<sup>50</sup> Murdock MacPherson continued as a consultant to the company as the transfer was made to the next generation. In 2019 William MacPherson's great grandson Kyle Moore became president of the company. It is now known as MacPherson's Property Management, Inc. and is located in Lynwood, a city five miles north of Shoreline.<sup>51</sup> Mac-Rent, the property management arm of MacPherson's Realty Co., which had owned the MacPherson Realty Co. building on Lake City Way since it was constructed, sold the building in 1993.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> "New Housing Development on Eastside," *Seattle Daily Times*, June 28, 1964.

<sup>49</sup> "William MacPherson, Head of Real-Estate Firm, Dies," August 16, 1988.

<sup>50</sup> Shoreline is about four-and-one-half miles northwest of Lake City.

<sup>51</sup> "MacPherson Family Story," *MacPherson's Property Management, Inc.*, <https://macphersonspm.com/about-us/>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>52</sup> King County Assessor.

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**The Architects**

The following profile of the architects who designed the MacPherson Realty Co. building begins with individual profiles of John Stewart Detlie and Raymond Holmes Peck and concludes with a profile of the Detlie & Peck partnership, which was in effect from 1957 to 1960, the year they collaborated on the MacPherson Realty building in Lake City, Seattle.

John Stewart Detlie. John Stewart Detlie (1908-2005), an artist and architect, was born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and received his B.S. in engineering from the University of Alabama in 1928. During this time he worked for Albert Kahn of Detroit for one summer. He was awarded a B.Arch. and M. Arch. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1932 and 1934. Detlie began his career working for Warner Brothers and MGM Studios, where he served as an art director from 1934 to 1942, winning an Oscar nomination for the production design of *Bitter Sweet* in 1940.

During World War II he worked in Seattle's camouflage program while serving as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Corps of Engineers in 1942. This work involved camouflaging nearly 26 acres of the Boeing Company's Seattle B-17 plant to confuse enemy bombers. Detlie used his skills as a set designer to cover Boeing's Plant 2 with three-dimensional wire, plywood and canvas structures that were made to look like a town, including trees, houses and schools, instead of a wartime airplane factory.<sup>53</sup> After the war, in 1946, Detlie joined the architecture firm of Young & Richardson, becoming a full partner in 1952.<sup>54</sup>

Under the name Young, Richardson, Carleton & Detlie, the firm produced a wide variety of projects. Among its most notable work is Gaffney's Lake Wilderness Lodge, which received a National AIA Honor Award in 1952 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) in 2003.<sup>55</sup> Detlie also designed Terry-Lander Hall (1953, 1957) and McCarty Hall (1963) at the University of Washington, the Seattle Parks Department Administration Building (1948), and the Children's Orthopedic Hospital (1951-52), the Zeta Beta Tau Fraternity (1960), Bellevue Christian Church (1960) and several Goodyear Tire stores in the Puget Sound area.<sup>56</sup> The Men's Residence Hall was awarded an AIA National Merit Award in 1955.<sup>57</sup>

Detlie was also very involved in the arts in Seattle. He was a founder and the first president of Allied Arts of Seattle, which was instrumental in convincing the Seattle City Council to create a Municipal Arts Commission, which in turn laid the groundwork for building the Seattle Center and hosting the 1962

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<sup>53</sup> "John S. Detlie," Docomomo\_US\_Wewa, <https://www.docomomo-wewa.org/architect/detlie-john-s/>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>54</sup> The company evolved over time to become The Richardson Associates (1967-77) and then TRA (1977-97) before being absorbed by the international engineering firm of Black & Veatch. Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, editor, *Shaping Seattle Architecture, A Historical Guide to the Architects*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2014:487.

<sup>55</sup> Phillip Seven Esser and Kate Krafft, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, Gaffney's Lake Wilderness Lodge*, September 13, 2001.

<sup>56</sup> Ochsner, Jeffrey Karl, editor, *Shaping Seattle Architecture, A Historical Guide to the Architects*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2014:432.

<sup>57</sup> "John Stewart Detlie Sr. (Architect)," Pacific Coast Architecture Database (PCAD), <https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/2366/>, accessed February 2022.

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World's Fair.<sup>58</sup> He also served as the first chair of the Washington State Arts Council and president of the Washington State Chapter of the AIA in 1953.

In 1964 Detlie left Seattle and moved to Los Angeles. While there he worked for the noted architectural firm of Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Mendenhall (DMJM) and completed commissions in Baltimore and Honolulu.<sup>59</sup> Detlie retired to Palm Springs and passed away in Westlake Village, California in 2005.

Raymond Holmes Peck. Raymond Holmes Peck (1917-1998) obtained his B.S. in architecture from the University of Idaho in 1940 and thereafter worked for the Austin Company and served in the U.S. Navy. He was employed by John T. Jacobson of Seattle in 1945-1946 and was in private practice from 1947 to 1957. A simple Minimal Traditional house featured in a 1947 issue of the *Pacific Northwest Book of Homes* brought early attention to Peck, which he was able to build on in his practice.<sup>60</sup> Another early project was the International style Les Teagle Restaurant (1954) in Seattle.

In 1955 Peck designed and built an office for his business, which he shared with fellow architect John C. O'Brien, with whom he collaborated periodically. Together they designed the Monticello apartments in 1957. Peck's International style office building was featured in the November 1955 issue of *Pacific Architect & Builder*. He also designed a model home for the 1956 Parade of Homes in Bellevue.

He formed a partnership with John Stewart Detlie in 1957 and stayed in this partnership until 1960, the date the building at 12733 Lake City Way NE was constructed. After leaving Detlie & Peck he continued to practice on his own. A notable project at this time was the Polynesian Restaurant on Pier 51 near the Seattle ferry dock (1961), and the Polynesian Restaurant in Spokane (1962).

Peck formed a partnership with Clyde Raymond Merriwether, a pioneering Black architect, in 1963 and stayed in that partnership until 1971.<sup>61</sup> He served as the associate architect and construction supervisor for Seattle's Cinerama Theater that year (1963). One of the best-known buildings he designed in Seattle is Dick's Drive-in, the prototype for the Dick's Drive-in that is a little over two blocks from the subject property, at 12325 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.<sup>62</sup> Peck also designed the model homes for MacPherson's Glendale subdivision. He died in Seattle in 1998.

Detlie & Peck. Detlie left the Young, Richardson, Carleton & Detlie firm in 1956 and formed a partnership with Raymond H. Peck. Projects under this partnership included the American Optical Company (1957), a

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<sup>58</sup> "Special Collections," University of Washington, <http://content.lib.washington.edu/>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Michael C. Houser, "Raymond H. Peck," *Docomomo\_US\_Wewa*, <https://www.docomomo-wewa.org/architect/peck-raymond-h/>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>61</sup> Jeffrey Karl Ochsner, editor, *Shaping Seattle Architecture, A Historical Guide to the Architects*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2014:461.

<sup>62</sup> Gail Dubrow and Alexa Berlow, "Vernacular and Popular Architecture in Seattle," in Jeffrey Karl Ochsner's *Shaping Seattle Architecture, A Historical Guide to the Architects*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2014:357.

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house at 3879 51<sup>st</sup> Ave NE (1958), the Sandpoint branch of the Tradewell Store (1958), the Lakeview Lanai Apartments (1958), the Mercer Vista Apartments (1959), the General Cable Corp. Office and Warehouse (1960), and the subject property.

One of Detlie & Peck's most well-known commissions is the Temple de Hirsch Sinai Sanctuary on Seattle's Capitol Hill. They designed the 1960 building in consultation with B. Marcus Priteca, FAIA, the internationally known theater designer associated with the Pantages theater chain.<sup>63</sup> The Temple de Hirsch is Seattle's largest synagogue, established in 1899.<sup>64</sup> The building won a Seattle AIA Honor Award in 1962.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Miriam Sutermeister, "B. Marcus Priteca" in Jeffery Karl Ochsner's *Shaping Seattle Architecture, A Historical Guide to the Architects*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2014:219.

<sup>64</sup> Their first temple, constructed in 1907, was demolished in 1992. Thomas Veith, Thomas, "History of the Central Area." Seattle, WA: City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Historic Preservation Program, 2009:41.

<sup>65</sup> "Awards," *AIA Seattle*, <https://aiaseattle.org/> accessed February 2022.

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**Curtain Wall Construction<sup>66</sup>**

Curtain wall construction, which is the type of construction and stylistic expression seen on the MacPherson Realty Co. building, typically combines masonry and/or steel frame construction.<sup>67</sup> It was pioneered by Pietro Belluschi's 1948 Equitable Savings & Loan Building in Portland and became popular during the mid-twentieth century and the "quintessential symbol of post-World War II modern architecture."<sup>68</sup> Curtain wall construction was most often associated with commercial and institutional building types during this period. In addition to being identified with its typical stylistic treatment, curtain wall construction refers to the material itself, its manufacture, installation, and the construction methods with which it is associated.<sup>69</sup>

Separating the structural system of a building from its window wall was attractive to building designers and owners because it allowed more light in building interiors and created more flexibility in the use of interior spaces. The larger glazed areas in curtain wall construction, which allowed for natural light in interior workspaces, was made possible by new methods of manufacturing glass and made practical by widespread use of air conditioning after World War II. Improvements in sealants and insulation materials also made this form of design and construction practical.

The metal most commonly associated with mid-century curtain wall construction is aluminum, which replaced steel in the postwar era as the material of choice for this application. Aluminum framing for curtain wall construction is extruded and can, as a result, take on any cross-sectional shape. Aluminum was readily available and inexpensive after World War II, as the output of the nation's aluminum plants was adapted to civilian purposes.

The use of exterior curtain walls also rationalized the construction process, leading to greater efficiencies in building production. Whether the curtain wall was fabricated primarily on site or prefabricated in large panels, the metal components were produced at the factory, leading to labor savings on site. Materials were lighter than traditional masonry, allowing for easier handling and reduced shipping costs. A number of materials are used for the spandrel panels under the windows in curtain wall structures, but the most popular are metal or glass. Glass panels were manufactured under the names Spandrelite and Vitrolux and came in eight and sixteen colors respectively. Porcelain enamel on steel, which can also be manufactured in numerous colors, is a popular material and finish for spandrel panels. Aluminum and stainless steel are also used.

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<sup>66</sup> Adapted from *Spokane Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century Architectural Survey Report*. Prepared for the City of Spokane, Spokane Historic Preservation Office. Prepared by Painter Preservation and helvetica. 2017.

<sup>67</sup> An illustration of the proposed building that was published on May 10, 1959 in the *Seattle Daily Times* noted that the building was to be reinforced concrete construction with a glass-and-aluminum paneled exterior. Assessor records and the 1965 Sanborn Fire Insurance map, however, notes the construction as wood frame.

<sup>68</sup> Theodore H. M. Prudon, *Preservation of Modern Architecture*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2008:107.

<sup>69</sup> Prudon, 2008:107.

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As the postwar decades progressed, additional materials such as thin stone veneer, precast concrete, prefabricated brick masonry panels, as well as new generations of glazed products became popular, in addition to the glass, aluminum and brick veneer of the immediate postwar era.<sup>70</sup>

Curtain wall construction is a rarity among the older buildings in the Lake City Way corridor. The buildings that were constructed in the postwar era were often simple, wood-frame buildings displaying the more typical components of a commercial storefront. In contrast, curtain wall construction was more typically seen in urban, rather than suburban, settings such as downtown Seattle and Bellevue. The curtain wall building as a style and method of construction, however, is increasingly rare even in urban settings. The Puget Sound Power & Light headquarters in Bellevue,<sup>71</sup> the City of Seattle Public Safety Building<sup>72</sup> and the Seattle Main Public Library, all curtain wall buildings, are no longer extant.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Stephen J. Kelley, "Aluminum," in Thomas C. Jester's, *Twentieth-Century Building Materials, History and Conservation*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 1995.

<sup>71</sup> Constructed 1955-1956, demolished 2006, it was considered one of the most technologically advanced as the first in this area to use a central control panel for supervision of all mechanical systems. "Puget Sound Power and Light Company Building, Downtown, Bellevue, WA," *PCAD*, <https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/building/10256/>, accessed May 2022.

<sup>72</sup> "Puget Sound Power and Light Company Building, Downtown, Bellevue, WA," Pacific Coast Architecture Database, <https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/>, accessed May 2022.

<sup>73</sup> Sally B. Woodbridge and Roger Montgomery, *A Guide to Architecture in Washington State*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1980:125.

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Figure 6 - Bothell Road, ca 1911



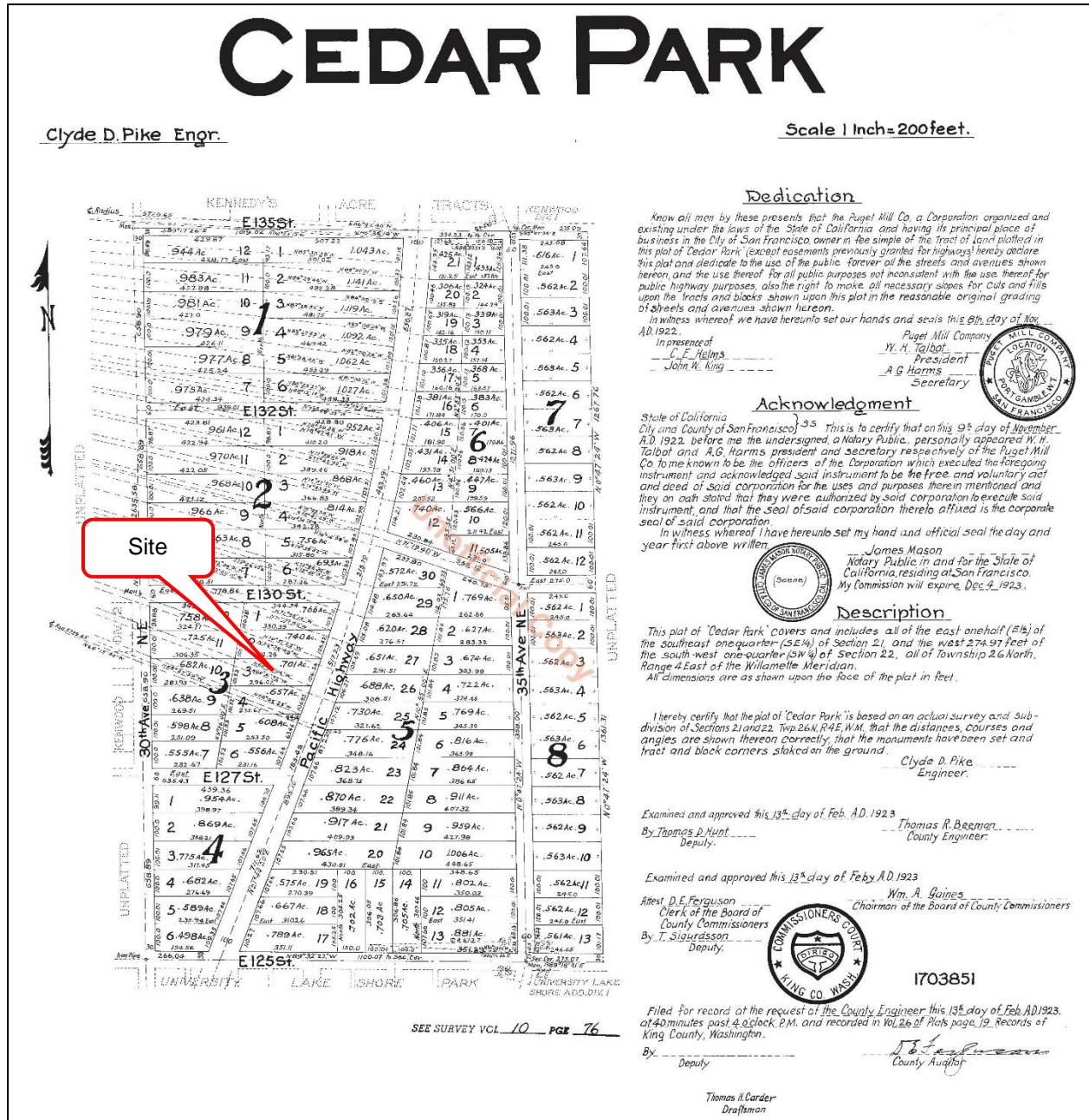
**Property of Museum of History & Industry, Seattle**

*Source: Museum of History and Industry, Webster & Stevens, photographers*



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Figure 7 - Cedar Park Tract, 1922

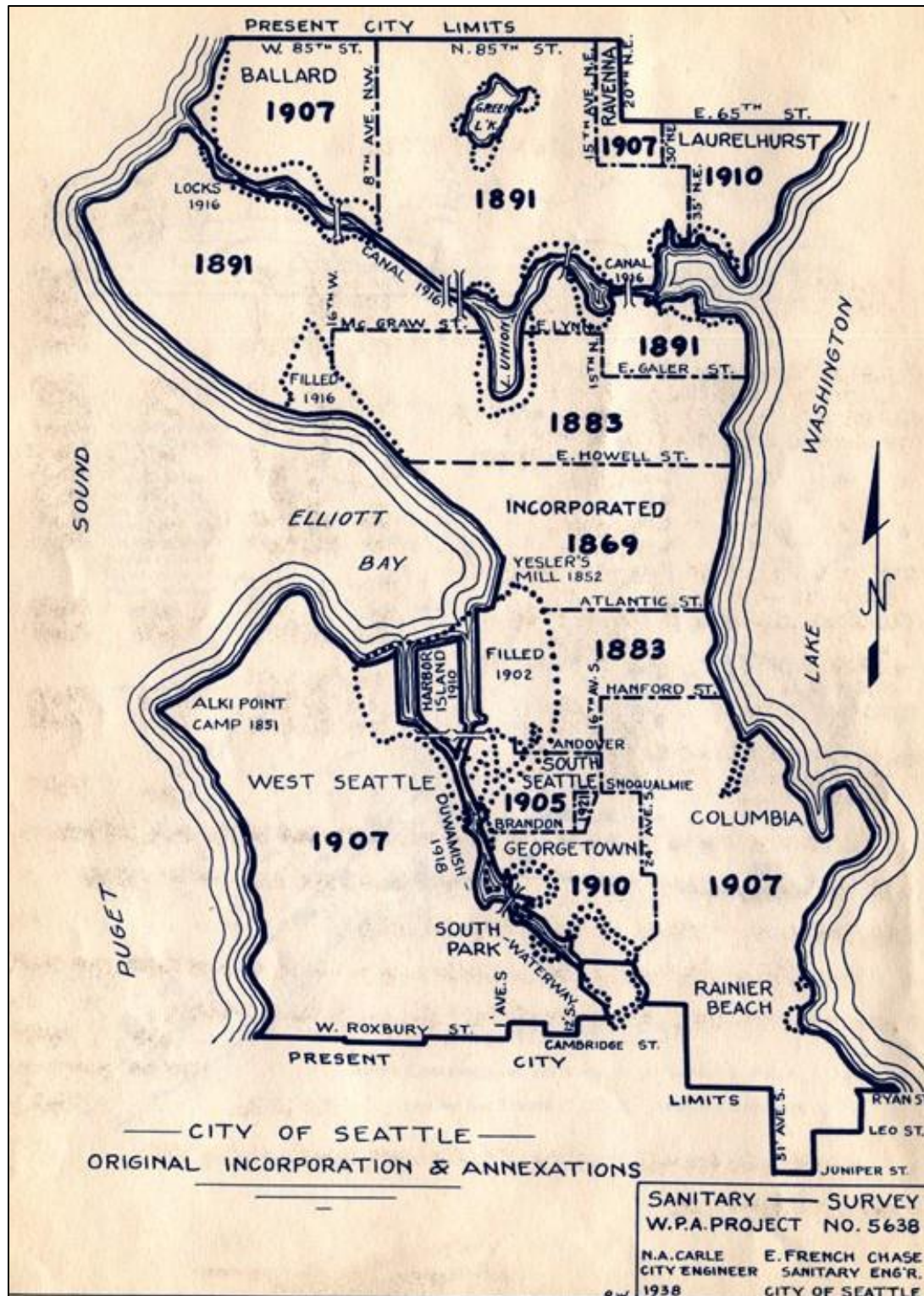


Source: Sacramento County Assessor



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Figure 8 - Seattle's corporate limits in 1938 (Lake City was not yet annexed)



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Figure 9 - Lake City Way at 125<sup>th</sup>, 1942



Source: Lake City Chamber of Commerce via Lil' Ol' Lake City

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Figure 10 - Beacon Light Tavern at Lake City Way and 125<sup>th</sup>, ca 1942



Source: Lake City Chamber of Commerce via Lil' Ol' Lake City

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Figure 11 - Ed's Ice Cream Grill at 12530 Lake City Way, ca 1945

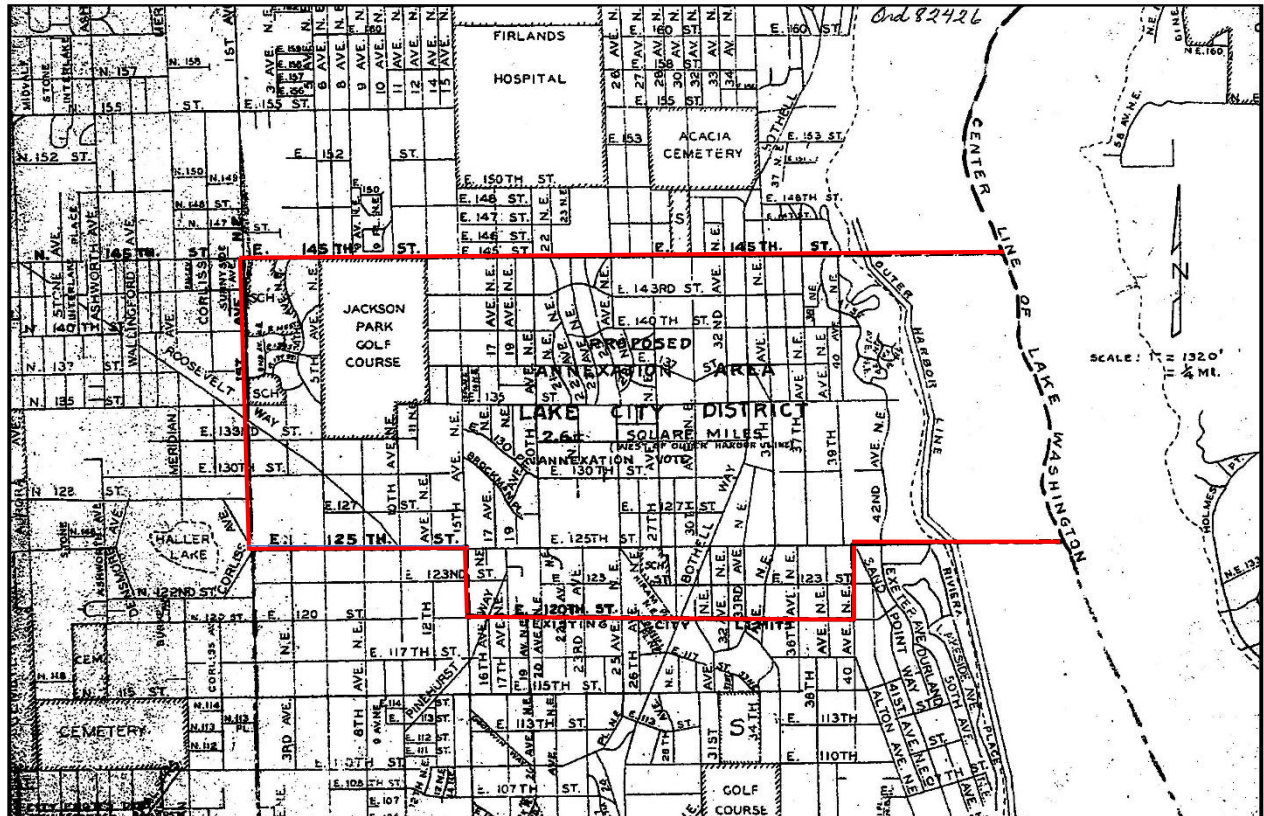


Source: Lake City Chamber of Commerce via Lil' Ol' Lake City



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Figure 12 - Lake City 1954 annexation area,, outlined in red



Source: City of Seattle

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Figure 13 - Illustration of building published in the *Seattle Daily Times* on May 10, 1959



Source: *Seattle Daily Times*

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Figure 14 - MacPherson Realty Co. in 1960



Source: King County Tax Assessor Property Record Cards, Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Branch

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Figure 15 - MacPherson Realty Co., rear facade, ca 1974



Source: King County Tax Assessor Property Record Cards, Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Branch



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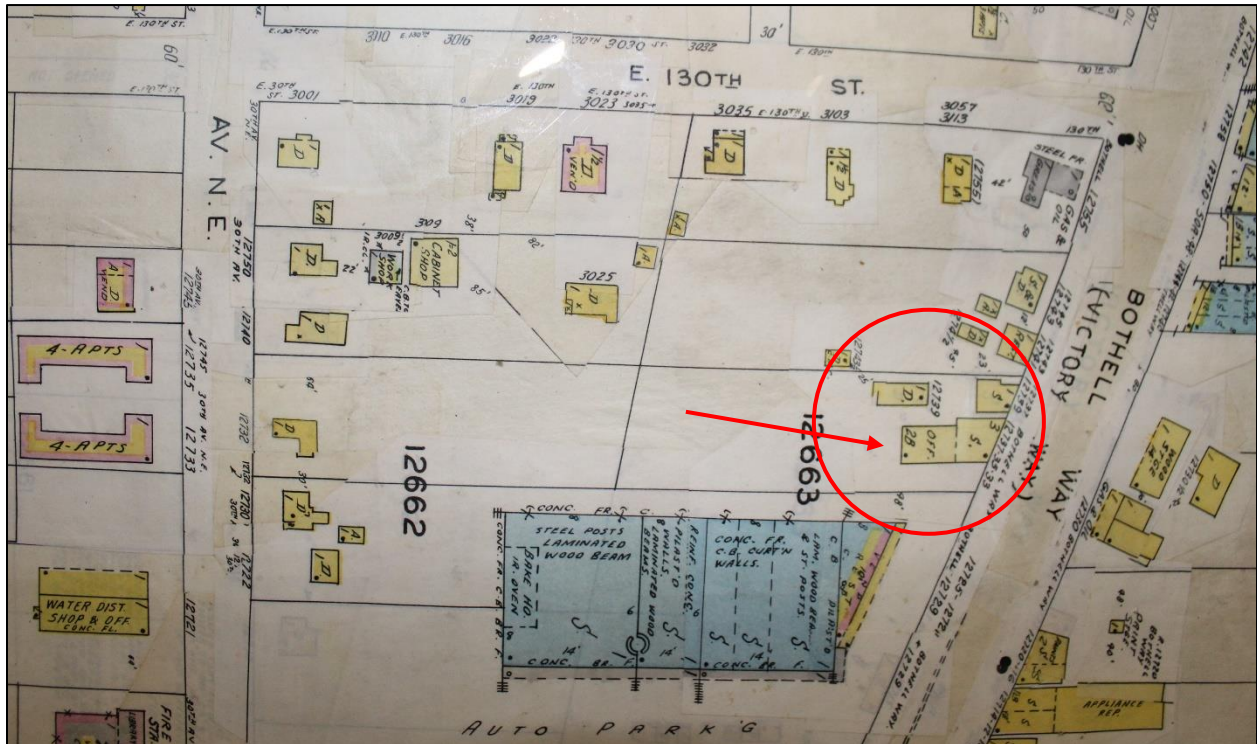
Figure 16 - MacPherson Realty Co., front facade, ca 1974



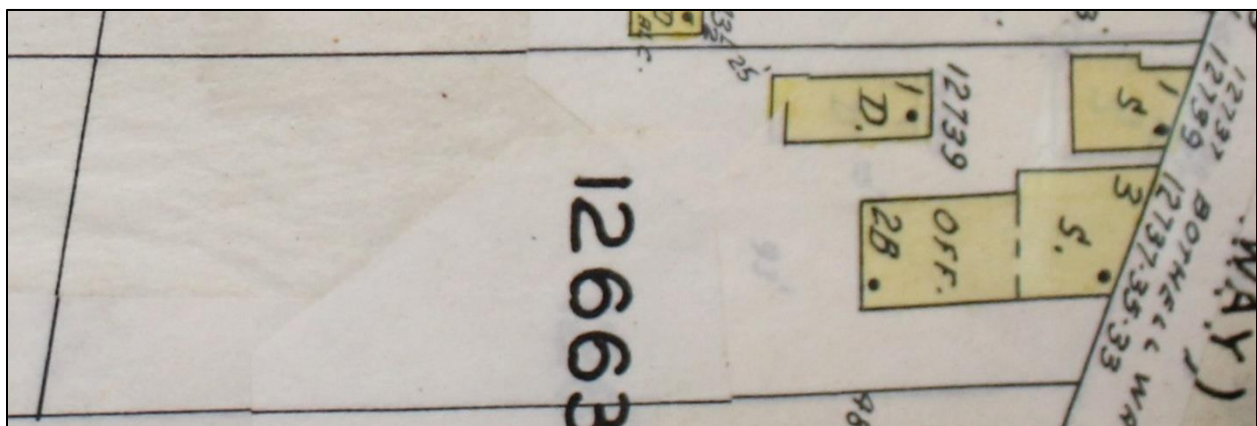
Source: *King County Tax Assessor Property Record Cards, Washington State Archives, Puget Sound Branch*

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Figure 17 - MacPherson Realty Co. in 1965



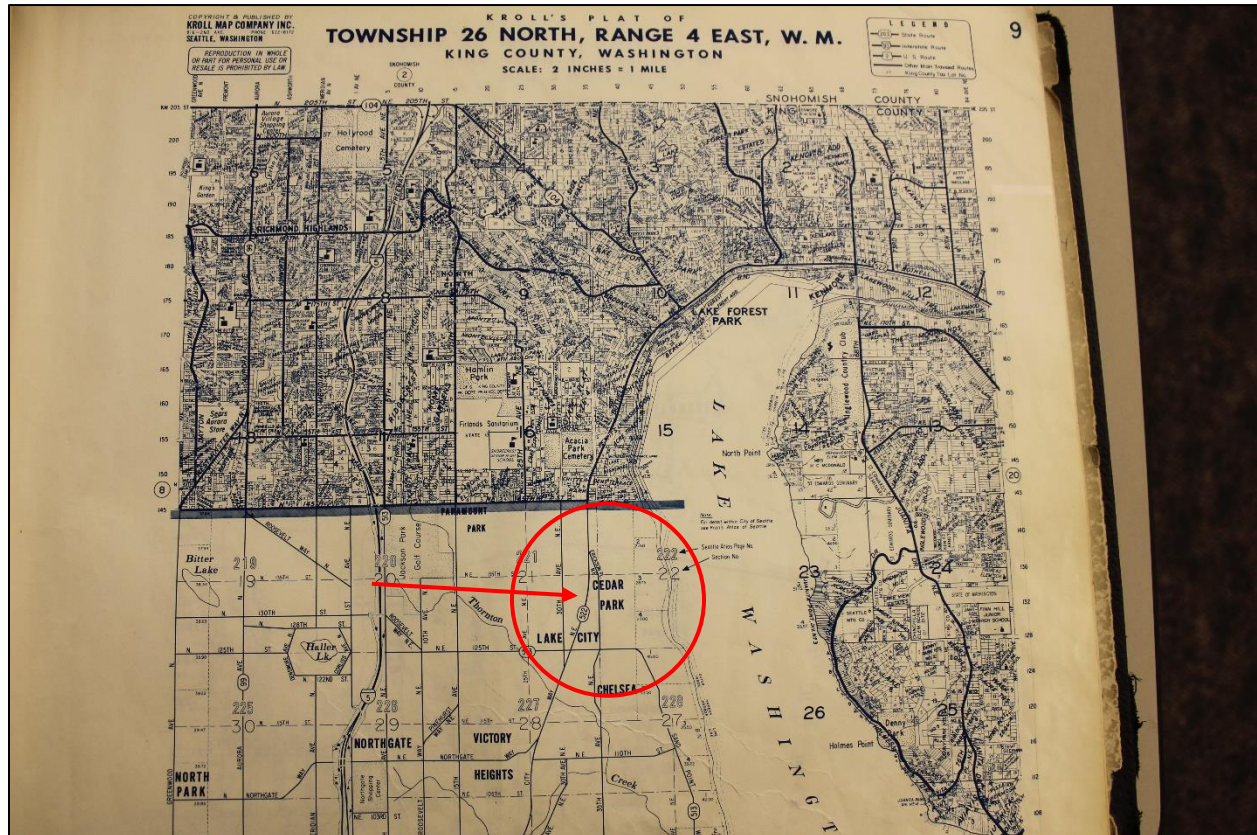
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance map, Seattle Public Library



Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance map, Seattle Public Library

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Figure 18 - North Seattle neighborhoods after construction of Interstate 5



Source: Kroll Map Company



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**Summary**

As a building type, the office building at 12733 Lake City Way NE in Seattle is a free-standing office building. It was developed as professional offices for the real estate firm of MacPherson Realty Co. and medical/dental offices for tenants, which is consistent with the description of an office building provided in the evaluation methodology prepared for National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Project 25-62 (hereafter referred to as the evaluation methodology). The two-story building on a raised basement was constructed in 1959 and opened in 1960. Consistent with the features of these buildings offered in the evaluation methodology, the building has a primary entrance on the suburban automobile-oriented setting of Lake City Way at the ground (raised basement) level and a secondary entrance off the side facade serving the two upper floors. A large pole sign close to the street advertises the businesses within the building today. Surface parking is located around the perimeter of the building in various configurations. Designed by the Seattle architecture firm of Detlie & Peck, the building is a curtain wall building in style and construction method. It is somewhat unusual in that it is a relatively small curtain wall building in a very suburban setting.

**Evaluation**

The MacPherson Realty Co. building at 12733 Lake City Way NE in Seattle is evaluated here under Criteria A, B, and C for its significance and potential for listing in the National Register. It is not evaluated under Criterion D, as this criterion is typically reserved for evaluating archaeological resources and focuses on information value.

*Criterion A*

The building was evaluated under Criterion A in the area of significance of Commerce, which is defined in *National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* as, “the business of trading goods, services, and commodities.”<sup>74</sup> It is located on Lake City Way, an 18-mile-long corridor with about 20 core blocks of businesses. Historically, during World War II and in the postwar era, the commercial buildings here were small-scale, one-story frame buildings with relatively simple storefronts (see Figures 4, 5, 6). Later years have seen the development of retail buildings and shopping centers, including national and regional chains and businesses that may be locally owned. Today redevelopment is occurring in the form of mid-rise housing, some with retail uses on the ground floor. The MacPherson Realty Co. branch at this location served the rapidly growing real estate industry in this northern suburb of Seattle. It was ultimately one of 19 branch MacPherson Realty Co. offices that primarily served the growing suburban centers north and east of Seattle. The building is not significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce because it was one of 19 such offices throughout the metropolitan Seattle area.

The building was evaluated under Criterion A in the area of significance of Community Planning and Development. According to *National Park Service Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, Community Planning and Development is defined as, “The design or development of

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<sup>74</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*. Washington DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1997:40.

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the physical structure of communities.”<sup>75</sup> However, no evidence was found that this building was constructed in any consistent or planned way within the commercial node at the time that the building was developed, even though the area was annexed to the city of Seattle in 1954 and with an initial construction date of 1959 could have been part of a more consistently planned commercial center.

The 1965 Sanborn Fire Insurance map showing the subject property revealed that single-family houses were mixed in with commercial development along the corridor in these postwar years. The property did not demonstrate innovative or significant planning or site planning principles. It also did not influence zoning requirements or comprehensive plans for the area, or changes in local design or zoning practices.

The neighborhood was among many neighborhoods north of Seattle that were developed in suburban-style commercial development and was subsequently annexed to the city of Seattle. This neighborhood pre-dated Seattle’s suburban expansion, however, and in this sense did not greatly contribute to the suburban expansion of the region. It was a part of the demographic shift that occurred in the postwar era in which suburban areas were populated, but Lake City was one of many north end and east side communities that participated in this trend. While the building was more substantial than other commercial buildings in the area at the time it was constructed, it did not appear to influence the development of similar commercial buildings.

It was not until the 1990s, when the City of Seattle initiated the concept of “urban villages,” a planning strategy for concentrating growth in the city’s neighborhoods and discouraging sprawl, that focus on how this commercial node in Lake City should develop in the future was initiated.<sup>76</sup> This period of time is outside the period of significance for this study, however. The MacPherson Realty Co. building is not significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development.

The MacPherson Realty Co. building is not eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A in the areas of significance of Commerce and Community Planning and Development.

*Criterion B*

The MacPherson Realty Co. building was evaluated under Criterion B for its association with the MacPherson family, who owned the MacPherson Realty Co. in Seattle from its founding in 1932 and continues to own it to the present day (2022). The company owned this building from 1959, when it was constructed, until 1993.<sup>77</sup> According to *National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, a property may be significant for its association with a prominent family, although the role of specific individuals must be identified.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Today the city is implementing mid-rise residential development in the neighborhood, in recognition of a light rail station and redeveloped regional shopping mall about two miles away, a relatively recent development.

<sup>77</sup> The building was owned by Mac-Rent, the property management arm of MacPherson Realty Co.

<sup>78</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Washington DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1990, rev 1995:15. See pp. 23-24 for a history of the MacPherson family and their relationship to the business.



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MacPherson Realty Co. is credited with being the largest real estate company in the Seattle area at mid-century, surviving even the Boeing downturn and energy crisis of the 1970s. It is an unusual company for being privately held by one family for four generations. The building was developed by MacPherson Realty Co. and was clearly designed to stand out among the relatively low-scale, simple buildings of Lake City Way NE and advertise the services of the company (see Figure 9). However, it was one of 19 real estate offices operated by the company at its peak and this was not a headquarters building. The headquarters building was on University Avenue, another commercial hub in north Seattle. After the building was sold in 1993, the third generation of MacPhersons moved the company headquarters to Shoreline for 28 years, another north Seattle community not far from the MacPherson Realty Co. building. The subject building is not known to be the most important or most representative building associated with the family business. The headquarters building was established in the University District by company founder William MacPherson, Sr. The subject building was constructed when sons William MacPherson, Jr. and Murdock MacPherson were running the company. Murdock was established as manager of this office. Because this office was one of an estimated six branch offices in the Puget Sound area when built, and was ultimately one of 19 MacPherson Realty Co. offices, it is not eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B for its association with the MacPherson family.

*Criterion C*

The building was evaluated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a good example of a type, period, or method of construction; in this case, curtain wall construction, which is a name that can refer to the style of the building and the method of construction. Architecture is defined in *National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* as, "The practical art of designing and constructing buildings and structures to serve human needs."<sup>79</sup> There are several areas in which a building or buildings may be significant for architecture. These are because the building embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; because the building represents the work of a master; because the building possesses high artistic value; or in the case of a historic district, because the buildings represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.<sup>80</sup>

The MacPherson Realty Co. building is significant under Criterion C as a good representation of a type, period, or method of construction in the Lake City Way corridor. It is representative of a type/style, as a curtain wall building, a commercial office building in the curtain wall style. It is representative of a period, in that curtain wall buildings were particularly popular for commercial and institutional buildings in the postwar era. New materials were incorporated as part of the style as time went on, but this building is indicative of the immediate postwar era. It is also representative of a method of construction. Curtain wall buildings could either be pre-fabricated in large panels or assembled on site; either way, the metal components were produced at the factory. This is in contrast to the prevalent wood-frame commercial buildings along this corridor when the office building was developed.

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<sup>79</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 16A:40.*

<sup>80</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.* Washington DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1990, rev 1995:17.

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A curtain wall building is known for being representative of postwar commercial and institutional properties. This building stands out in its setting along Lake City Way NE as being unusually large (historically) and for the relative sophistication of its architectural design in this suburban strip. A key feature is the overall boxy form of the building with its flat roof. Other character-defining features include the characteristic aluminum frame with the strong horizontal lines created by the glass and aluminum – in this case black - paneling. While curtain wall buildings can display or incorporate different materials, the materials seen in this building are the most common. The building has a front overhang over the raised basement that incorporates the main entry and a stone-faced wall on the north side of this ground level. It has two small additions to the rear (west facade) and possibly the addition of a wood frame and roof over a terrace on the north side. The stone-faced wall has been slightly damaged. A wrought-iron fence has been recently added under the front overhang, but this feature is easily removed. These alterations have some effect on the integrity of the building, but the main public sides (the south and east front facades) are intact and convey the design significance of the building. It is a good representation of this style as applied to a postwar commercial property in this local setting, particularly as compared to similar property types here. It is not innovative as compared to like properties in the region, but it is singular in this local setting for its design and use of materials. It is a distinctive example of a small, Contemporary office building – in this case a curtain wall building – in the Lake City Way NE context that displays the character-defining features of the style and retains a sufficient level of integrity to convey its significance.

The building was also evaluated under Criterion C as the work of a master, in this case the firm of Detlie & Peck, a Seattle-based architecture firm that practiced at mid-century. Detlie & Peck, who were in practice together for four years, were a respected firm. Detlie in particular was known for his work as an art director in Hollywood, winning an Oscar for his art direction. He was also known for designing the camouflage for the Boeing B-17 manufacturing plant during World War II. He is probably best known for the design of Gaffney's Lake Wilderness Lodge, which he designed while employed by Seattle's Young, Richardson, Carleton & Detlie, which won a national AIA Honor Award. Detlie & Peck as partners are best known for the design of the Temple de Hirsch Sinai Sanctuary in 1960, in which they partnered with nationally known theater designer B. Marcus Priteca. However, this particular building at 12733 Lake City Way NE did not appear in any of the research resources on the firm, with the exception of a brief PowerPoint presentation on curtain wall construction prepared by Washington state architectural historian Michael Houser, who called it out as a good example of a small-scale curtain wall office building. As noted in the evaluation methodology, a building may be important for its association with an architect or architecture firm, but must reflect a particular phase or aspect of an architect's work. Research did not reveal this to be the case with this building. This building does not rise to the level of importance seen in, for example, in the Temple de Hirsch Sinai Sanctuary, which is well documented. While designed by a reputable architecture firm in Seattle, research did not identify it as being significant within the oeuvre of the architecture firm of Detlie & Peck and therefore it is not recommended as significant as the work of a master.

The building was not found to possess high artistic values. Rather it is a good example of a type, period, or method of construction, which is a curtain wall building. It is a good example of an architectural style applied to a commercial property that is important within its local context. It also utilizes innovative design,

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materials or construction techniques that, while found in other locations in the Seattle area, is unusual for its rarity within the local context.<sup>81</sup>

The subject building possesses significance under National Register Criterion C. In order to be eligible for listing in the National Register, a building must also retain sufficient historic integrity to convey its significance. It must serve as an important example within its historic context and should retain the aspects of integrity most important to its area of significance, which entails retaining its character-defining features that relate to these aspects of integrity.

The following is an evaluation of the building's integrity, as defined in *National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.<sup>82</sup>

Location – the building retains integrity of location.

Design – the building retains enough of its design characteristics to be considered a good representation of a particular type, period and method of construction. A few design modifications have taken place on non-public facades.

Setting – the immediate setting of the building remains intact. Although the parcel is slightly smaller than it was historically, the building remains a free-standing office building surrounded by parking. The larger setting of the block and beyond is redeveloping into more intensive uses. The shopping center to the immediate south was in place as early as 1965 (the office building was constructed in 1959 and occupied in 1960).

Materials – the materials of the building have been altered slightly with the addition of two wood-clad additions on the rear of the building.

Workmanship – it is likely that the workmanship of the building has been altered slightly on the rear facade with the addition of small wood-frame, wood-clad additions, which contrast with the 'machined' appearance of the main building. However, these are on the rear of the building and not highly visible from public views.

Feeling – the building retains its aesthetic expression and historic sense represented by a postwar curtain wall building.

Association – the building retains its direct link between its historic occupation by the MacPherson Realty Co., which developed and occupied the building from 1960 to about 1993, by being sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to the viewer.

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<sup>81</sup> Note that the building type is also increasingly rare elsewhere, as these buildings are lost to redevelopment.

<sup>82</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 15*, 1995:44.

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The MacPherson Realty Co. building retains the aspects of location, setting, workmanship, feeling, and association. Slight modifications have taken place that have some impact on the design and materials of the building, but it remains sufficiently intact to convey its historic character. The building scale is uncommon for a commercial building in this local setting, which is a major transportation corridor and commercial strip. No other curtain wall buildings, particularly with the dramatic coloration of this black and 'white' (transparent) building, are known to be located in the business core of the Lake City Way commercial strip. The MacPherson Realty Co. building retains sufficient integrity to convey the reasons for its significance and is eligible for listing under Criterion C for its architecture, as representative of a type, period, or method of construction in this local setting.

*Conclusion*

The MacPherson Realty Co. building is significant in the area of Architecture under Criterion C as a good representation of a type, period, or method of construction in the Lake City Way corridor. It is representative of a type/style, as a curtain wall building and as a commercial office building in the curtain wall style. It is a rare example of a curtain wall office building in the Lake City corridor, a commercial strip that is approximately 18 miles in length, but whose business core is approximately 20 blocks and that was historically populated by modest, wood-frame vernacular commercial buildings.<sup>83</sup> The building also retains sufficient integrity to convey the reasons for its significance. The period of significance for the building is 1960, the year it was constructed. Its level of significance is local. The boundary is the entirety of the tax lot on which the building is located, including the building footprint and associated site features, including circulation, parking, and landscaping.

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<sup>83</sup> The unique design of the MacPherson Realty Co. building in this setting is based on a brief windshield reconnaissance survey conducted the second week of January 2022. It is also corroborated in literature on the commercial strip, which was identified as having primarily modest examples of one-story commercial vernacular buildings at mid-century.

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**12733 Lake City Way NE**  
**MacPherson Realty Co. Building**  
**Seattle, Washington**  
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# Postwar Commercial Evaluation Methodology: Application Worksheet

**Property name:** MacPherson Realty Co.

**Property type:** Office Building

**Property location:** Seattle, Washington

## Identification of Character-defining Features

### Checklist of Character-defining Features Present – Office Buildings

#### ***Building:***

- ☒ Standalone single- or multi-story building that houses professional service companies or practices
- ☒ Single or multiple tenants
- ☐ Vernacular with limited architectural detail
- ☒ Displays elements of architectural style or regional influences
- ☒ Orientation typically for the automobile with associated parking lot or structure
- ☒ Central building entrance that may have architectural or landscape emphasis
- ☐ Separate entrances for each business tenant
- ☒ Secondary entrances on side and rear elevation with little architectural emphasis
- ☐ A public lobby (often in a building with a central entrance)

#### ***Location/site features:***

- ☒ Located in suburban setting
- ☐ Located in downtown pedestrian-oriented setting
- ☒ Suburban building on a major transportation corridor or associated side street with vehicular access
- ☐ Landscaping and other exterior furnishings (benches, tables, etc.)
- ☒ Signage displaying the name of the building or tenant(s) (free standing or on the building)
  - ☐ Signage located on the building
  - ☒ Freestanding signage along the road
- ☒ On-site parking in a dedicated parking lot or parking structure, with or without lighting
- ☐ Refuse and/or recycling area near the rear

### **Analysis of Character-defining Features**

How does subject property represent the property type:

Loss of or changes to character-defining features:

# Research

## Resources Consulted (annotate list as needed)

- ☒ Community and regional histories: Seattle Past to Present; special newspaper features on Seattle history; regional histories – “Lil’ Ol’ Lake City”; regional online encyclopedia neighborhood histories
- ☐ Clippings files:
- ☒ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1905 updated to 1965
- ☐ Historic photographs: Assessor photos of building; historic photographs of strip
- ☒ Aerial images: Historic Aerials (web-based program)
- ☒ City directories: R.L. Polk Directories
- ☐ U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps:
- ☒ Historic property surveys and inventory records: Listed in State’s database; “Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Washington State” presentation by Washington SHPO; presence in Seattle neighborhood commercial survey
- ☐ Prior DOT compliance surveys:
- ☒ Tax assessor records: King County Tax Assessor records; includes historic building records and photos; plat maps
- ☒ City council meeting minutes: Annexation records
- ☒ Reports from community and city planning boards: Planning studies, urban design studies, design guidelines, zoning ordinances
- ☒ Newspaper articles and advertisements: Seattle Daily Times; Seattle Post Intelligencer; Seattle Star
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce publications:
- ☐ Industry and trade publications and periodicals:
- ☐ NR Nominations and Determinations of Eligibility (Phase II) reports: Nominations of related buildings due to location or architect
- ☐ HABS documentation:
- ☐ Oral interviews with building owners, tenants, and/or employees:

Additional resources consulted: Databases, archives, and publications on architects; regional architectural histories; histories of building materials; corporate history on website

Repositories consulted (list all): Seattle Public Library Seattle History Room; Shoreline Public Library; King County Assessor; City of Seattle Municipal Archives; King County Puget Sound Archives; University of Washington Special Collections; Museum of History and Industry (Seattle)

Analysis of most helpful sources: Historic maps, King County and city records, resources on architects

## Application of GIS Tools

How used and intended results:



Was it useful:

If not used, why: Not applicable

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

What was done:

Was it useful:

## **Historic Trends**

### **Historic trends considered for association with subject property**

#### ***Suburbanization:***

Dramatic shift from residing in urban areas to developing low-density suburbs: Development of suburbs here seemed to address a growing market rather than a market shift

Retail businesses and offices leaving downtown and following the population shift to the suburbs: Did not occur here, although it occurred in the vicinity at the regional shopping mall

Expanding highways/Interstates transformed land use and provided easy vehicular access to the developing suburban areas: Developing highway and freeway drew traffic from this arterial

Developers of residential subdivisions encouraged to incorporate associated commercial areas: Commercial district pre-dated suburban development here

Commercial developers worked within system of established zoning and land development regulations: Commercial development predated suburbanization

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Was an existing commercial center, particularly during Prohibition when speakeasies and the like flourished here

If trend was applicable, how was that identified? What sources or information assisted with making an association?

#### ***Automobile culture:***

Rapid increase in automobile ownership: Not particularly noted

Commercial property established along busy thoroughfare/highway to accommodate the automobile traveling public: Commercial development here could accommodate the automobile because it was not dense, and there was plenty of space for parking

Drive-ins and drive-throughs became commonplace: Not particularly observed

Sited at busy intersections or access ramps: This traditional commercial strip had an existing center

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Commercial node predated suburbanization of area

***Social and cultural trends:***

Growing families relocated to the suburbs; increased commercial development in suburban areas: Not particularly noted; area became attractive to growing technical, professional population

Redlining and discriminatory practices: Not observed

Civil Rights movement and racial integration: Not observed

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? This existing center was over ten miles from the areas in Seattle in which this racial segregation was occurring

***Consumerism:***

Shopping as a recreational activity: Not relevant here

Specialty retail stores catering to those with discretionary income: Not relevant here

Shopping centers as a destination with amenities for the entire family: Regional shopping mall was two miles away; that was a draw

Large suburban supermarkets replacing neighborhood grocery stores: Not a factor here

Discount and big box stores gaining popularity: Not a factor here

Development of regional and national brand recognition and commercial advertising: Over time more regional chains were seen here, but not a historical factor

Application of scientific/rational planning policies to retail sales: Not a factor here

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? This small (but long) commercial strip catered to small scale businesses historically

***Commercial design and setting:***

Precast concrete blocks, concrete masonry units, or poured concrete for quick and lower-cost construction: Not a factor

New materials and/or technologies incorporated into building design (i.e. glass curtain walls, AC) :  
Building displays glass curtain walls and aluminum framing

Early use of large glass retail storefronts: Not relevant

Landscaping as essential part of the commercial environment: Not a factor

Early use of energy-efficient materials: Not a factor

Early use of large parking lots: Parking lots existed but weren't particularly 'planned'

Signage as an integral component: Signage existed as a practical matter

Building components could be easily modified to serve tenant: Not observed here

Separation of the sites that house the retailing/management services from industrial/manufacturing processes: Not a factor

Modern design to "rationalize" the workplace/commercial space design and layout modeled for efficiency:  
Not known to be a factor

Form/function influenced by human relations or environmental psychology: Not known to be a factor

Advancements in science and technology influencing architectural design: The curtain wall and extruded aluminum frame were newer building technologies; use of aluminum after WWII widespread as material was applied to commercial uses

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Building technology was innovative or new, but other factors such as new trends influencing layout were not observed

### ***Architecture:***

Representative of architectural style: Yes, curtain wall

Representative of regional variations/influences: Not particularly

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

## **Comparisons**

How were comparisons identified: Brief windshield survey; observation

Challenges in identifying comparisons: Was not a particular challenge here because the building stood out in this corridor and was most often associated with urban settings in the region, not suburban settings

**Appendix B. Pilot Study and Application Worksheet: Slade  
Laundromat**

## **PILOT STUDY – APPLICATION OF GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

2558 EMOGENE STREET, MOBILE, ALABAMA 36606

### **HISTORIC PERIOD BUSINESSES:**

ORIGINALLY AND FORMERLY SLADE LAUNDROMAT

### **PROPERTY TYPE:**

RETAIL STORE

### **PROPERTY LOCATION:**

NORTH SIDE OF EMOGENE ST., AT CENTER OF BLOCK  
BETWEEN FLORIDA ST. AND COLVIN ST. INTERSECTIONS  
(PARCEL ID: R022907230007005.000)



Photo 1 (2-15-2022): Facing north across Emogene Street.



This single-story, masonry commercial building located at 2558 Emogene Street in midtown Mobile, Alabama, was constructed in late 1962 or early 1963 (see Photo 1).



Photo 2 (2-15-2022): Facing west; note integrated, poured concrete walkway.



Photo 3 (2-15-2022): Facing west/northwest.

Its exterior envelope was formed with bearing walls made of concrete blocks, which rest on a concrete foundation poured at grade level (see Photos 1 through 3). Its flat-roof structure consists of concrete T-beams, so the wood-framed interior partition walls are not load bearing. Currently vacant, the structure was originally purposefully built for use as a laundromat, and it has been utilized for its intended function throughout its entire business history to date, prior to its recent acquisition by new owners. Located in the middle of the first block west of Emogene Street's crossing intersection with Florida Street, it stands on a level lot along the street's north side and faces south (see Figure 1 and Photos 4 through 7).<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1: 2558 and 2562 Emogene Street share parcel. Source: City of Mobile GIS Dept, 2022.

The building is the newer and eastern one of two sited within a rectangular double lot that measures 150 feet wide (east-west) and 93.58 feet deep (north-south) (see Figure 2 and Photo 2). This plot (recorded as Mobile County Parcel R022907230007005.000) contains 0.29 acres (12,744 square feet) within an early twentieth century land subdivision named Florida Heights.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 2: Mobile County Parcel R022907230007005.000 (Lot 5 resurvey of Lots 9 and 10).

<sup>1</sup> City of Mobile GIS Department, Mapping Applications.  
<https://cityofmobile.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=44b3d1ecf57d4daa919a1e40ecca0c02>

<sup>2</sup> Mobile County Revenue Commission, Key Number: 779835;  
<https://esearch.mobilecopropertytax.com/Property/View/779835>





Photo 4 (2-15-2022): Facing northwest across Emogene Street, with 2562 Emogene Street adjacent to the west.



Photo 5 (2-15-2022): Facing north/northeast across Emogene Street, with 146 Florida Street adjacent to the east.



Photo 6 (2-15-2022): Facing east/southeast along Emogene Street from the Colvin Street intersection.



Photo 7 (2-15-2022): Facing northwest across Emogene Street, past the east front corner of 2559 Emogene Street.

Although both structures on the property front the east-west aligned Emogene Street, the two component lots that were historically combined to form one merged parcel (now called Lot 5), prior to its initial development, were originally both roughly 50-foot-wide lots (referred to as Lots 9 and 10), platted side-by-side. As such, these constituted two of a series of eight identical lots arranged in a row along the east



side of Colvin Street, the intersecting, north-south oriented roadway that parallels Florida Street (see Figure 3 and Photo 6).



Figure 3: Original Lots 9 and 10 combined in block's southwest corner. Source: City of Mobile GIS Dept, 2022.

## Architectural Description

The evaluation methodology prepared for National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Project 25-62 (hereafter referred to as the evaluation methodology) identified several character-defining features that are common elements of a mid-twentieth-century retail store. Of these, the subject building exhibits the following (full or partial):

- Standalone building
- One story in height
- Oriented toward the street
- Design and architectural emphasis on storefront
- Vernacular in style with limited architectural detail
- Displays elements of architectural styles common to the period or regional influences



- Large display windows or glass walls on facade
- Open interior floorplan
- Secondary entrances on side and rear elevation with little architectural emphasis

The subject building also displays typical location/site features that are common to mid-twentieth-century retail stores. It conveys the following site planning aspects and amenities (from the evaluation methodology):

- Located on a major transportation corridor or associated side street with vehicular access
- On-site parking in a dedicated, off-street parking lot or parking structure, with or without lighting
- Refuse and/or recycling area near the rear

Further, the building formerly had prominent signage on the building displaying the name of the tenant, but this longstanding signage atop the storefront's facade has recently been removed.



Photo 8 (2-15-2022): Facing north/northeast.



Photo 9 (2-15-2022): Facing northeast; note integrated, wraparound sidewalk to parking lot.



Photo 10 (2-15-2022): Facing east/northeast.



As described above, the one-story building is freestanding and its facade is oriented toward the passing street. It has dedicated, off-street parking and delivery vehicle space, within an open, asphalt-paved surface lot along the building's west side (see Photos 8 through 10). An integrated sidewalk of poured concrete spans the front facade and wraps the west front corner to extend back alongside the west elevation. This west elevation is not a design focal point; it just adjoins the lot's row of perpendicular parking spaces. Both side walls are without fenestration, and the western walls are bereft of ornament or any detail, consisting only of stacked rows of concrete blocks that support the roof and provide interior shelter and wall space (see Photos 9 through 11).



Photo 11 (2-15-2022): Facing north/northwest along east side elevation from front corner.

The building's fenestration is essentially limited to its storefront, with a fully glazed window wall comprising nearly the full width of the facade, appropriate for commercial and retail storefronts during its period of construction (see Photos 12 and 13). The window wall comprises multiple, large sheets of plate-glass panels within an aluminum framework. The framework holds a paired set of fully-glazed double doors near the west corner; four square panes of plate glass across the remainder of the space to the east; rectangular, glazed bulkhead panels below the square plates; and rectangular, glazed transom panels across the top. Two square transom panels above the doors fit together as a paired set of side-by-side sliders; the numeric address is painted on the east transom, and the glazed frame to the west can slide behind it, leaving a mesh-screened open transom for ventilation. Since this full-width and full-height glazed facade is south facing, directly into the intensity of summer sunlight, the pivoting metal doorstops attached to the fronts of both doors' lower stiles undoubtedly received frequent use.



Photo 12 (2-15-2022): Facing north/northwest.



Photo 13 (2-15-2022): Facing north/northeast.





Photo 14 (2-15-2022): Facing east.



Photo 15 (2-15-2022): Facing southeast





Photo 16 (2-15-2022): Facing east/southeast

The building's south-facing facade is set back approximately 30 feet from Emogene Street's north edge-of-pavement (see Photo 8). The space between the facade's integrated concrete sidewalk and the public concrete sidewalk is paved, presumably to allow quick drop-offs and pickups (see Photos 12 and 13). No shrubbery or other landscaping is present. The parcel's double lot extends back 93.58 feet from Emogene Street, and the approximately 2,500-square-foot building covers most of this depth (see Figures 2 and 3).<sup>3</sup> The building's main body is rectangular and deeper than it is wide, but a smaller, square block is appended to the rear (see Photos 11, 12, and 14-16). This rear wing appears to be an original component of the building; it engages just over half of the main body's rear, but it also projects eastward and is thus offset approximately six feet (see Photos 11 and 12). The building's secondary, west-facing service entry into this non-public area is placed near the rear of this block, and it holds a single paneled metal door; no window openings pierce the wing's walls (see Photo 16).

As a relatively simple, concrete-block structure, with side and rear elevations that are almost devoid of fenestration or embellishment, the building may be considered an example of a vernacular, one-part commercial block building of masonry construction with limited architectural detail, albeit one reflecting the influences of the Modernist styles' rectilinear hallmarks, including the utilization of a window wall and a flat roof.<sup>4</sup> However, the building is not bereft of design and architectural emphasis; it is just confined to the storefront. The selected adornment is strongly expressed, through banding and repetition of component items and geometric shapes and motifs. For example, the window wall's three stacked rows of square and rectangular sheets of fixed glass are not applied ornament, but integral to the composition and weathertight function of the exterior envelope; yet, they fit into and help highlight the building's rectilinear theme (see Photo 17). The east and west ends of this slightly recessed window wall are

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<sup>3</sup> Mobile County Revenue Commission, Key Number: 779835;  
<https://esearch.mobilecopropertytax.com/Property/View/779385>

<sup>4</sup> Alabama Historical Commission: Historic Building Survey Form Instructions

flanked by masonry corner panels of concrete blocks. Interspersed amongst the plain concrete blocks that primarily make up these enframing end segments of the facade wall are decorative Concrete Masonry Unit (CMU) blocks (see Photos 17 through 19). For unknown reasons, other than artistic license, the vertical, full-height faces of these east and west front corner panels are finished differently, even though they bookend the glass storefront. At the west corner, adjacent to the double doors, the exterior edges are each formed of a stacked course of standard concrete blocks. In between are four vertical ribbons of stacked CMU blocks. Each ribbon is delineated, and separated from the next, by a deep groove or striation (see Photos 17 and 18). At a distance, these appear to have been created by routed incisions hand cut precisely into the centers of standard blocks. Closer inspection indicates that the vertical channels were formed: a) by the interior use within the panel of smaller, thin face blocks, turned vertically like sailor bricks, with a gap spaced between every other paired set; or b) alternatively, that each block is similar to a standard dimension, but had a decorative, vertical central channel cut into the front face at the factory, for use in finishes where decorative effect was desired.



Photo 17 (2-15-2022): Facing northeast; note screened transom over entryway.





Figure 18 (2-15-2022): Facing north; note pattern of vertical grooves to left of entryway.



Photo 19 (2-15-2022): Facing northwest to east front corner.

At the opposite, east corner, the vertical panels of CMU block wrap the corner; the south-facing panel is narrower than the wraparound extension that continues approximately eight feet back along the east side, and there stands about one-inch proud of the standard, horizontally oriented concrete blocks that make up the remainder of the east elevation (see Photo 19). The south- and east-facing front corner panels are both formed of vertically set CMU blocks (see Photos 19 through 21). Within almost each stacked course of vertically turned blocks, specialty CMU blocks with hollowed out, rectangular niches in their vertical faces are interspersed at regularly repeated, offset intervals. The recesses in these blocks are approximately three inches deep, and the blocks are installed to protrude from the panels' plain-faced blocks by approximately one inch. Across the front panel each full course has two of the special niched blocks, separated by three standard-face blocks, for a total of 14 (see Photo 19). Around the corner, the alternating courses that compose the side panel are each fitted with either three or four of the special CMU units, for a total of 25 installed (see Photos 20 and 21). In both cases the specialty blocks are painted turquoise, and against their pink painted backdrop, their paint color and the shadows created by their recesses together project geometric, diagonally oriented crossing patterns. The CMU units were made in a block factory but are an unusual variety of concrete block. They are an integral part of the wall structure rather than ornamental.

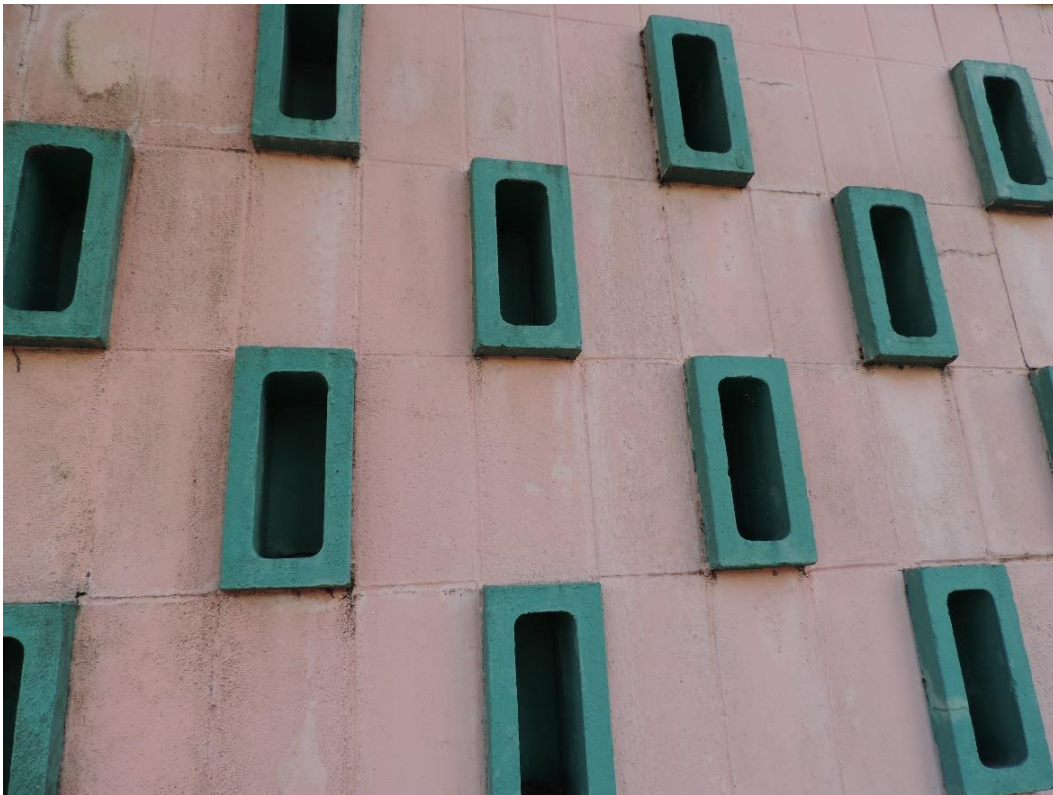


Figure 20 (2-15-2022): Facing west to front corner of east side elevation.





Figure 21 (2-15-2022): Facing west/southwest to front corner of east side elevation.

Whoever purchased these CMU blocks and had them installed made an unnecessary choice, but preferred and specified a distinctive selection of components that still perform a material role and contribute to the building structure. Research did not reveal who submitted these as part of the building design or its exterior appearance, or who installed them during construction; relatives of the former owner do not possess any blueprints, and the city archives did not locate any records of building plans or construction permits affiliated with this parcel or address.<sup>5</sup>

## Developmental History

Until the sale of the lot and its two buildings near the end of 2020, the parcel was owned for almost six decades by George M. Slade and Henrietta O. Slade. After they married in 1957, the Slade family opened and ran the Slade Laundromat enterprise. According to the 2014 obituary for George M. Slade, this local chain (also called “Slade’s Laundromat”) eventually had three outlets.<sup>6</sup> George M. Slade was born in Mobile in 1931, but was raised during his early youth approximately 60 miles north of Mobile, at a family homestead in Washington County, Alabama, near the town of McIntosh.<sup>7</sup> After graduating from Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn University) in 1953, he served through late 1955 as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force, stationed variously at air bases in Georgia, Texas, and Alaska. After leaving active duty he returned to Mobile and thereafter started his laundry business, which, as the obituary reports, he operated for 35 years. According to Mrs. Henrietta Slade, the Emogene Street facility was the only one of

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Henrietta O. Slade, June 1, 2022.

<sup>6</sup> George Slade Obituary – Mobile, AL. <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/mobile-al/george-slade-6165860>

<sup>7</sup> George Morgan Slade Memorial. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/142944019/george-morgan-slade>

the chain's three outlets where her husband owned the property and building; the other two locations, both in west Mobile, were housed in leased spaces in shopping centers.<sup>8</sup> As streetscape photographs taken in December 2007 and May 2011 show, a successor operated the facility as the Emogene Laundromat.<sup>9</sup> These images also impart that the building once had prominent rooftop signage affixed across the facade (see Photos 21 through 25).<sup>10</sup> In these early-twenty-first century photographs, the exposed remnants of five rectangular, upright sign panels are still visible atop the center of the facade's roofline, although the majority of their surfaces and all of their patterns are covered by the "Emogene Laundromat" advertisement. Their number and arrangement suggest that an earlier version of the applied signage presented the Slade business name as a sequence of oversized lettering, displayed along an inline series of separate panels.



Photo 22: Google Street View image taken in December 2007.

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<sup>8</sup> Interview with Henrietta O. Slade, June 1, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Google.com. Street View feature. 2558 Emogene St, Mobile, Alabama image capture, December 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Google.com. Street View feature. 2558 Emogene St, Mobile, Alabama image capture, May 2011.





Photo 23: Google Street View image taken in December 2007.



Photo 24: Google Street View image taken in May 2011.



Photo 25: Google Street View image taken in May 2011.



Photo 26: Google Street View image taken in May 2011.

Although no building permit records were located at the Mobile Municipal Archives, the mid-to-late twentieth century sequence of City of Mobile directories (R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers), available at the Mobile Public Library's Local History and Genealogical Branch, did provide background information on the initial date of construction and earliest operation of this building.<sup>11</sup> Research showed that the lot affiliated with Mobile County Parcel ID R022907230007005.000 has remained consistent for decades, but it did not provide build dates. As described above, this parcel occupies the west half of the block along Emogene Street's north side, between Florida Street to the east and Colvin Street to the west. Accordingly, it encompasses the land on the northeast corner of the intersection of Colvin into Emogene.

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<sup>11</sup> R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers

Between 1954 and 1960 the city directory listing for 2558 Emogene Street is for a Phillips, John W. (“2558 Phillips John W”). Interestingly, there is no address in 1954 for 2562 Emogene Street, which is presently assigned to the current, side-gable, wood-frame building, a former residence that now stands on the northeast corner of the intersection of Emogene and Colvin Streets, immediately to the west of the current building at 2558 Emogene Street (see Photos 26 through 28). In 1954, the address at 2558 Emogene Street is attributed to Phillips, and the directory entry notes that “Colvin” is the next street to the west. The same listing continues annually, unchanged, through 1959, still without mention of a building affiliated with the 2562 address. These entries seem most likely to be for a residential listing through this timeframe; thus, it is implausible for them to have been connected to the current, masonry block building. The listing and existence of the frame house is corroborated by a 1956 Sanborn Map Company Fire Insurance Map (“MOBILE, ALA, 299E-VOL.4”), which marks only a single, square building footprint near the northeast corner of Colvin and Emogene Street, and further denotes it as a dwelling (or “D”) (see Figure 4).<sup>12</sup>



Figure 4: 1956 Sanborn Map Company Fire Insurance Map; MOBILE, ALA – VOL. 4, Sheet 299 E.

<sup>12</sup> Sanborn Map Company Fire Insurance Map. Library of Congress 2022.





Photo 27 (2-15-2022): Facing east/northeast from Colvin Street intersection to 2562 Emogene Street.



Photo 28 (2-15-2022): Facing north to south front facade of 2562 Emogene Street, on shared parcel.

In 1961 a building of some type at 2558 Emogene Street is listed in the city directory as being occupied by “Jumonville’s Dress Shop drsmkrs.” There is still no mention of any building at 2562 Emogene Street. In the 1962 edition, 2558 Emogene Street is noted as “vacant,” but there is still no mention of the address at 2562. This directory also notates the first reference to 2601 Emogene Street, “Van’s Photo Sup[ply],” a large commercial building (extant) on Emogene Street’s south side, directly across from the T intersection of Colvin Street (see Photo 29).



Photo 29 (2-15-2022): Facing south/southwest to 2559 (ahead) and 2601 Emogene Street (at right, to west).

The 1963 edition of the directory offers the first appearance of separated 2558a and a 2558b Emogene Street entries: 2558a Slade Laundromat and 2558b Morris Luke (Morris Luke Guitar Studio); 2562 Emogene is still absent from listing. 2562 Emogene Street finally appears in 1964, with the very same listing as that affiliated the previous year for Morris Luke and the Morris Luke Guitar Studio. 2558a Emogene Street is the Slade Laundromat, but the b-side entry reads, “2558b No Return.”

In synopsis, it appears the current 2558 Emogene Street building was constructed in late 1962 or early 1963. The 2558 address must first have been assigned to the frame house on the corner, which was John W. Phillips’ longtime residence or perhaps office, then housed a dress shop for a year or two. George M. Slade likely bought the entirety of the oversized lot, which offered surplus land, then constructed the new building on its east edge for the laundromat. He preserved the existing frame building on its west edge for rental property but had it re-designated as 2558b for one year, before its address subsequently was changed to 2562 Emogene. In the Mobile city directory’s joint 1965-1966 edition, George M. Slade (“GEO M SLADE”) was listed as the proprietor at 2558A Emogene Street. The arrangement of these addresses on the same parcel remains in place (see Photo 30). However, the origin of the laundromat building is difficult to corroborate through review of overhead photography, because the



footprint of 2558A Emogene Street's size is too small, and the image clarity too low, to be certain about its presence in ensuing aerial images from 1967 and 1974.<sup>13</sup>



Photo 30 (2-15-2022): Facing east to 2562 (at left, to west) and 2558 Emogene Street (at center, to east).

## Local Historic Context

On the 1940 U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic map, the westernmost extent of Emogene Street ends at the Florida Street intersection, with only a brief, unpaved extension for perhaps the one block to Colvin Street portrayed (by dashed lines) as being in place (see Figure 5).<sup>14</sup> As drawn, this nearby section of Florida Street remained just outside the west edge of the Mobile city limits. However, this same map depicts that Florida Street was already a major north-south thoroughfare in this part of town, which was then on the far west outskirts of the city's street grid. To its immediate west was an area of dry land that was then occupied by small farmsteads and local dairies. Yet, within approximately one mile to the west, these meadows, fields, and pastures transitioned to a large lowland area called Wragg Swamp (through which Interstate 65 now passes), as well as the bottomlands along Eslava Creek, which flowed out of the swamp. Before World War II, Mobile maintained a generally stable population, but the city's geographic expansion was nonetheless limited in part by these extensive, encumbering wetlands.

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<sup>13</sup> University of Alabama Aerial Photography Archive, Aerial Photography of Mobile County: Mobile and Mobile West, 1955, 1967, and 1974.

<sup>14</sup> United States Geological Service, 2022. 1940 edition of MOBILE, ALA quadrangle 1:31680 topographic map.



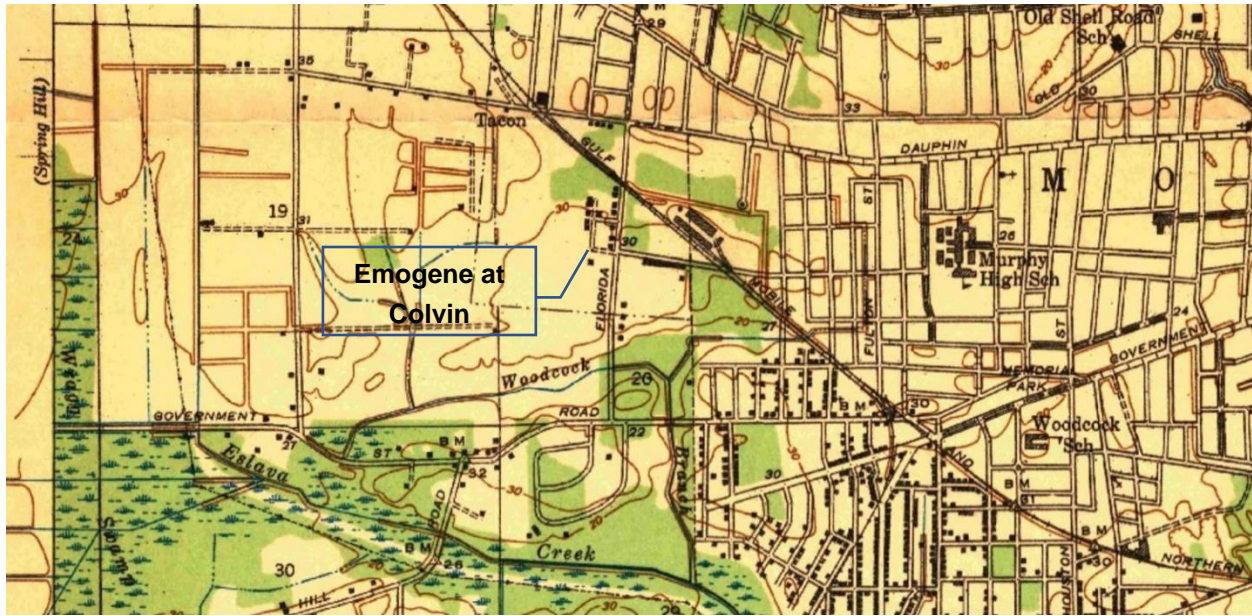


Figure 5: Selected portion of 1940 USGS quadrangle showing the general location of the subject property at the intersection of Emogene and Colvin streets.<sup>15</sup>

Historically and to date, intown Mobile has offered few major, north-south roadways, a circumstance that is particularly noticeable in the midtown area. Due in part to its location along the west bank of a river and with a bay beyond, to the east, the purpose for development of most transportation routes, through much of the city's history until the mid-twentieth century, has been on facilitating the movement of conveyances to and from the downtown commercial, governmental, and institutional district to the residences and farmsteads in the western hinterlands. Furthermore, there was no direct way to cross the Mobile River and Mobile Bay by roadway until the late-1920s construction of a built-up causeway, which would soon become a segment of both U.S. Highway (US) 90 and US 98. Prior to its completion, slow and inconvenient bay ferries provided the only option to traverse the bay and the wide river delta above it. Since practically only one direction of travel was available, the city's widest and most prominent thoroughfares, which also carried the city's major streetcar routes, were arranged radially, stretching west from downtown. As with most of the other north-south oriented connectors in intown Mobile, Florida Street has only ever carried two travel lanes, yet it has nonetheless long served as a major north-south transportation corridor. It is prominently illustrated as such on both the 1922 and 1940 quadrangles, which makes clear its role in enabling easy passage between and across the handful of major east-west oriented roadways (see Figure 6).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> United States Geological Service, 2022. 1940 edition of MOBILE, ALA quadrangle 1:31680 topographic map.

<sup>16</sup> United States Geological Service, 2022. 1922 edition of MOBILE, ALA quadrangle 1:62500 topographic map.

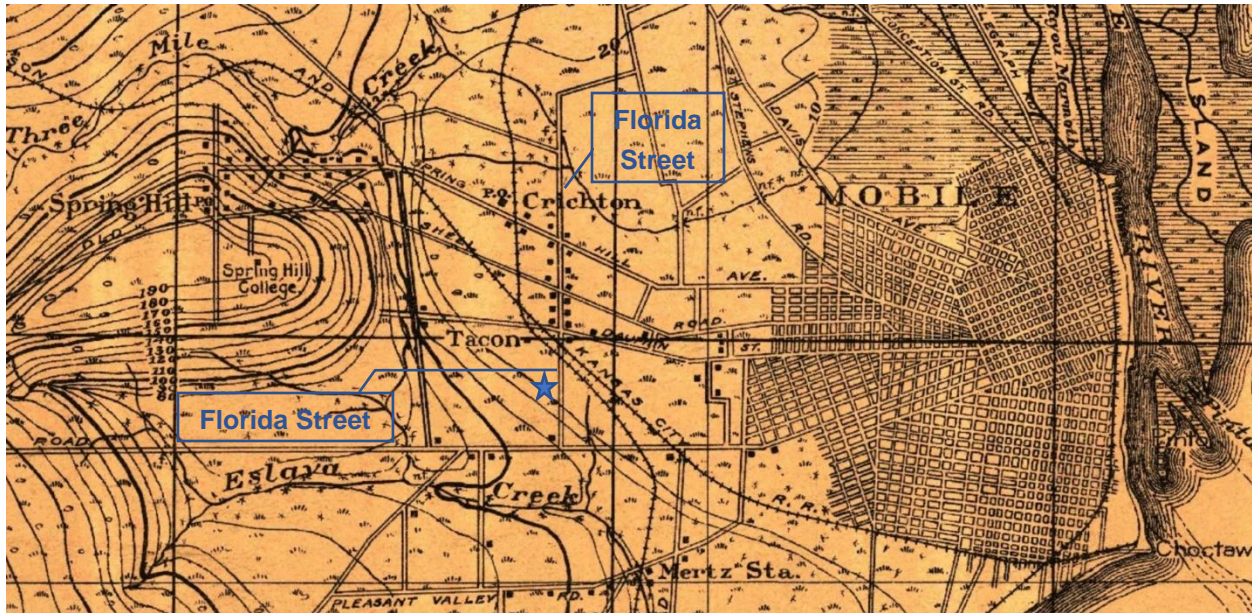


Figure 6: Selected portion of 1922 USGS quadrangle showing the general location of the subject property, near center of image.<sup>17</sup>

Mobile's relative stasis through the twentieth century's first four decades rapidly changed during World War II.<sup>18</sup> The city's population swelled quickly and substantially, due in large degree to the growth in shipbuilding activity at the shipyards along the Mobile River, where more than 200 new ships were produced, and the war-related efforts at the newly developed Brookley Army Air Base (later Air Force Base, until its eventual closure in 1969).<sup>19</sup> During the war years, 89,000 people moved to the Mobile area to assist with wartime production, mobilization, and shipping of supplies by rail and from Brookley Field and the Alabama State Docks, thereby increasing Mobile County's overall population by more than 60 percent.<sup>20</sup> Many of these newcomers to Mobile stayed at their jobs and in the city at the close of the war.

Between 1940 and 1960, Mobile's population more than doubled and reached its still intact peak of about 202,000.<sup>21</sup> As in many other parts of the country, there was a great demand for new housing. The mostly undeveloped pastureland west of Florida Street and east of Wragg Swamp became prime real estate for the needed post-World War II (postwar) housing construction (see Figures 7 through 9). Emogene Street was extended due west approximately one mile; its new length was depicted on the 1953 edition of the USGS quadrangle map. Aerial images from 1955 show that an explosion of new housing took place along the full length and to both sides of its extension westward (see Figures 8 and 9).<sup>22</sup> These neighborhoods still exist, comprising typical examples of postwar era housing stock, which was commonly designed for compliance with Federal Housing Administration regulations and financing. Appropriately, given the siting of these new residential developments along the western edge of Florida Street and Mobile's pre-World

<sup>17</sup> United States Geological Service, 2022. 1922 edition of MOBILE, ALA quadrangle 1:62500 topographic map.

<sup>18</sup> Scotty E. Kirkland. "Port of Mobile." Encyclopedia of Alabama.

<sup>19</sup> Allen T. Cronenberg. "World War II and Alabama." Encyclopedia of Alabama.

<sup>20</sup> Scotty E. Kirkland. "Mobile." Encyclopedia of Alabama.

<sup>21</sup> World Population Review.com. "Mobile, Alabama Population."

<sup>22</sup> University of Alabama Aerial Photography Archive. Mobile County Aerial Photography: Mobile West, 1955.



War II city limits, the most prominent and sizable of these neighborhoods was given the name “Westlawn,” a geographic reference that remains in use today, though the subdivision is no longer considered West Mobile, but rather Midtown (see Figures 9 and 10). As indicated in associated advertisements, the development of the Westlawn subdivision actually was initiated during the war years, and it was accessed via Florida Street.<sup>23</sup> Although the 1953 USGS map illustrated that much of Wragg Swamp was still in place and intact despite then encroaching developments, another notable transportation improvement it marked in the area, in addition to the Emogene Street extension, was US 90's southwestern extension, inclusive of and made possible by a four-laned bridging of the swamp's Eslava Creek drainage (see Figure 9).



Figure 7: Selected portion of 1944 USGS quadrangle showing the general location of the subject property at the intersection of Emogene and Colvin streets.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *The Mobile Labor Journal*, May 12, 1944 edition, published in Mobile, Alabama. Source: Newspapers.com

<sup>24</sup> United States Geological Service, 2022. 1944 edition of MOBILE, ALA quadrangle 1:62500 topographic map.



Figure 8: 1955 aerial photograph, with the Florida Street at Emogene Street intersection at center of image.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> University of Alabama Aerial Photography Archive. Mobile County Aerial Photography: Mobile West, 1955.





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**LIVE IN  
WESTLAWN**

**Where You Can Be At Home**

**City Privileges —**

**Country Atmosphere**

Where You Can Have A Victory Garden  
And Grow Your Fresh  
Vegetables

**— FOR RENT —**

Nice 5 Room Homes:  
Frame & Asbestos Shingles \$50 Per Mo.

**Brick Homes .....\$55 Per Mo.**

Built on large lot, landscaped with grass, shrubbery and flowers. Paved streets and all modern conveniences, including gas range, gas hot water heater and electric refrigerator in kitchen, gas heaters, window shades, hardwood floors throughout, modern bathroom and fully enclosed screen porch. Each house has either garage or car ports. School nearby for your children. City Mail Delivery. Reliable garbage collection. Modern sewer system.

**WESTLAWN**

**“Mobile’s Most Attractive Subdivision”**

OFFICE OPEN DAILY AND SUNDAY UNTIL 6:00 P. M.

**PHONE 6-7130**

IF BY BUS—Take Government to Emogene bus and transfer at loop to the regular Westlawn bus which will bring you direct to the Rental Office.

IF DRIVING—Go out either Old Government, Dauphin or Old Shell Road to Florida Street. Main entrance to Westlawn is located on the west side of Florida Street, approximately two blocks north of Old Government street Road (Grant Street).

Figure 10: Advertisement of new Westlawn subdivision in May 12, 1944, edition of the *Mobile Labor Journal*.<sup>27</sup>

Because of Emogene Street’s new status as the westward pathway into the heart of these expansive new neighborhoods, and Florida Street’s long-held status as a major, crosstown roadway in the city, the formerly vacant lands around the new, four-way intersection of Emogene and Florida Streets became a locally prominent new commercial node (see Figure 11). However, its commercial importance was at its peak only during the brief, 15- to 20-year period between the war and the development of two new, modern malls nearby, on large swaths of drained swamp, that occurred in the early and mid-1960s, commensurate with and stimulated by the construction of Interstate 65 through the same land (see Figure 12).

<sup>27</sup> *The Mobile Labor Journal*, May 12, 1944 edition, published in Mobile, Alabama. Source: Newspapers.com



Figure 11: 1960 USDA aerial photograph, with the Florida Street at Emogene Street intersection at center of image.



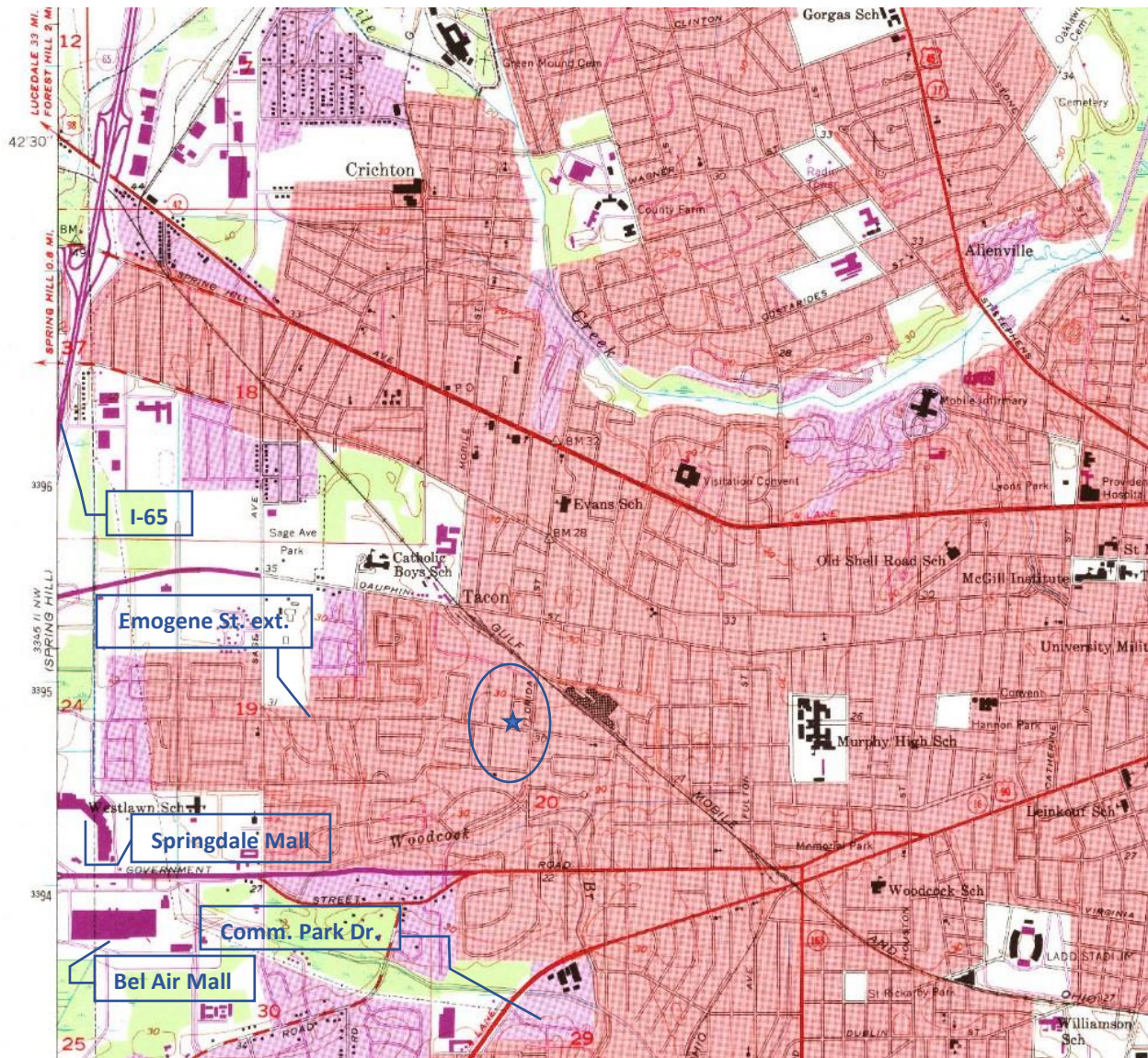


Figure 12: Selected portion of 1967 USGS quadrangle showing the general location of the subject property near the center of image.<sup>28</sup>

During the late 1940s through the 1960s the influx of traffic through the intersection stimulated development. Two commercial buildings across the street from 2558 Emogene Street, at 2559 and 2601 Emogene Street (Van's Photo Supply), were both constructed (see Photos 6 and 29); and an early iteration of a supermarket was established on the large commercial block that extended southward behind them (Photos 31 through 34). According to 1955 and 1967 aerials, a large bowling alley (recently demolished) was built at the commercial block's center, between the supermarket and the pair of buildings at 2559 and 2601 Emogene Street.<sup>29</sup> Due to its Florida Street location and address, this alley was fittingly named "Florida Bowl" (see Photos 31 through 34). This collection indicates why 2558 Emogene Street probably seemed a good location for a new laundromat in the early 1960s. It was sited

<sup>28</sup> United States Geological Service, 2022. 1967 edition of MOBILE, ALA quadrangle 1:62500 topographic map.

<sup>29</sup> University of Alabama Aerial Photography Archive. Mobile County Aerial Photography: Mobile West, 1955; 1967.



just west of a longstanding, heavily traveled corridor, on the north edge of a burgeoning neighborhood commercial node, comprising businesses supporting and supported by the growing families who had purchased the hundreds of new postwar houses just westward along the Emogene Street extension. Cataloguing the list of these businesses in the immediate vicinity that opened, primarily on the southwest and southeast corners of the intersection of Florida and Emogene Streets, but including the laundry, elucidates how they all might together have catered to the daily needs and lifestyles of the nearby residents: grocery store; photograph supply and processing; bowling alley and restaurant; and (after all that), laundry (see Photos 29 and 31-34).



Photo 31: May 2011 Google Street View image of former Florida Bowl and Greer's Grocery, facing west.



Photo 31: April 2013 Google Street View image of former Florida Bowl, facing northwest from Florida Street.



Photo 32: June 2011 Google Street View image of former Florida Bowl and Greer's Grocery, facing west.



Photo 34: April 2013 Google Street View image of former Greer's Grocery, facing north from Ralston Road.

### ***Comparable Examples within Local Historic and Geographic Context***

In the immediate vicinity of the intersection of Emogene and Florida Streets, several other intact commercial buildings of mid-twentieth-century origin exhibit a somewhat more traditional exterior appearance than that put forward by the laundromat building at 2558 Emogene Street. Although, at time of their completion, these buildings utilized sheet glass windows and flat roofs without raised parapets, and they offered some provision for off-street parking—all common traits of postwar-era retail or small office building storefronts—their facades were still finished in brick veneer, and they were comparatively conservative and utilitarian in their overall aesthetic character (see Photos 33 through 36). Thus, these neighboring buildings can be interpreted as representations of a transitional phase, during which some postwar commercial buildings adhered, in some but not all aspects, to long-established norms of single-story, brick-based commercial blocks that were formerly prevalent throughout the country during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries. Thus, though their storefronts may be fitted with and

focused about then modern, steel-framed or aluminum-framed window walls, brick veneer remains the primary masonry material employed to surround them.

A couple of examples of these more visually plain commercial buildings, which are roughly contemporary in age to 2558 Emogene Street, remain in place and intact nearby along Florida Street, south of the Emogene Street intersection; these include small retail and commercial office buildings at 154-158 and 201-203 S. Florida Street (see Photos 35 and 36).



Photo 35 (5-23-2022): facing southwest to 154-158 S. Florida Street; remodeled former grocery to south (left).



Photo 36 (5-7-2022): facing southeast to 201-203 S. Florida Street.

To the contrary, the Florida Bowl's curvilinear front presented an alternative and much more distinctive and extravagant approach, which broke away from not only reliance on previously predominant rectilinear forms, but also from the historically normative choice of standard bricks, marble, stone, or cast stone as the principal masonry components to make up the facade (see Photo 31). As on 2558 Emogene Street's



facade, decorative CMU blocks likewise were conspicuously incorporated into the facade of the bowling alley; however, this building, which exhibited the integration of concrete block materials as structural ornament, and was thus more in keeping with the street front presentation of the nearby laundromat building, is no longer extant.

It appears a few other examples of retail store buildings, office buildings, or other types of commercial buildings that share a focus on facade compositions involving concrete masonry units, arranged in artful or distinctive patterns, are in place nearby, at least within a slightly expanded vicinity of the postwar developed area of midtown Mobile. At this time, three other such intact structures that are mostly unaltered and are comparable, in terms of scale, material makeup, aesthetic detail, and date of origin, have been identified close by, in relative proximity to the Emogene at Florida Street commercial node. All three of these comparable buildings are sited along the north or south sides of Commercial Park Drive, and these respective structures are variously located approximately 0.90 to 0.95 miles south of 2558 Emogene Street, if the distances between are measured in straight lines. As its name indicates, Commercial Park Drive is a business park, and it was laid out as a cul-de-sac, 0.25 miles long and oriented west-to-east, with a turnaround circle at its far east end. The development was made possible by the above-mentioned extension of US 90/Government Street, which was constructed circa 1952, as confirmed both by USDA aerial images from that year and by the illustration of its new path on the revised 1953 edition of the USGS map for the MOBILE, ALA quadrangle (see Figure 9).

This roadway project, another focused on one of the city's major east-west oriented thoroughfares, finally achieved a bridge crossing over Eslava Creek. Moreover, it redirected the route of US 90 from its original, curvy, two-lane course, which had diverged from Government Street's existing, wide, four-lane right-of-way, and tied the new alignment directly to Government Street's former western dead end, along Eslava Creek's east bank. Since Government Street was historically Mobile's central spine and connected at its east end to US 90's Bankhead Tunnel, which was opened in 1941 to carry traffic under the Mobile River, the completion of this highway improvement project immediately made the lands along the city's southwestern edge appealing to new commercial developments.<sup>30</sup> Commercial Park Drive was plotted and graded around 1958-1959 on previously undeveloped land along Eslava Creek's south bank; a USDA aerial photograph confirms that several buildings were already in place alongside it by November 1960.<sup>31</sup> Thus, the creation of this office and business park coincided with the circa 1960 opening nearby of Mobile's first mall, Springdale Mall, and it preceded the circa 1968 opening of the city's second mall, Bel-Air Mall (see Figure 12). The dead-end corridor called Commercial Park Drive stretches east from its tee intersection with US 90/Government Boulevard, and it runs up and over the knob end of a low ridge (see Figures 12-14 and Photos 37-42). The three comparable buildings astride it have been given the following addresses: 2463 Commercial Park Drive; 2470-2472 Commercial Park Drive; and 2510-2520 Commercial Park Drive.

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<sup>30</sup> University of South Alabama, Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Bankhead Tunnel Gallery.

<sup>31</sup> University of Alabama Aerial Photography Archive. Mobile County Aerial Photography: Mobile West, 1960.



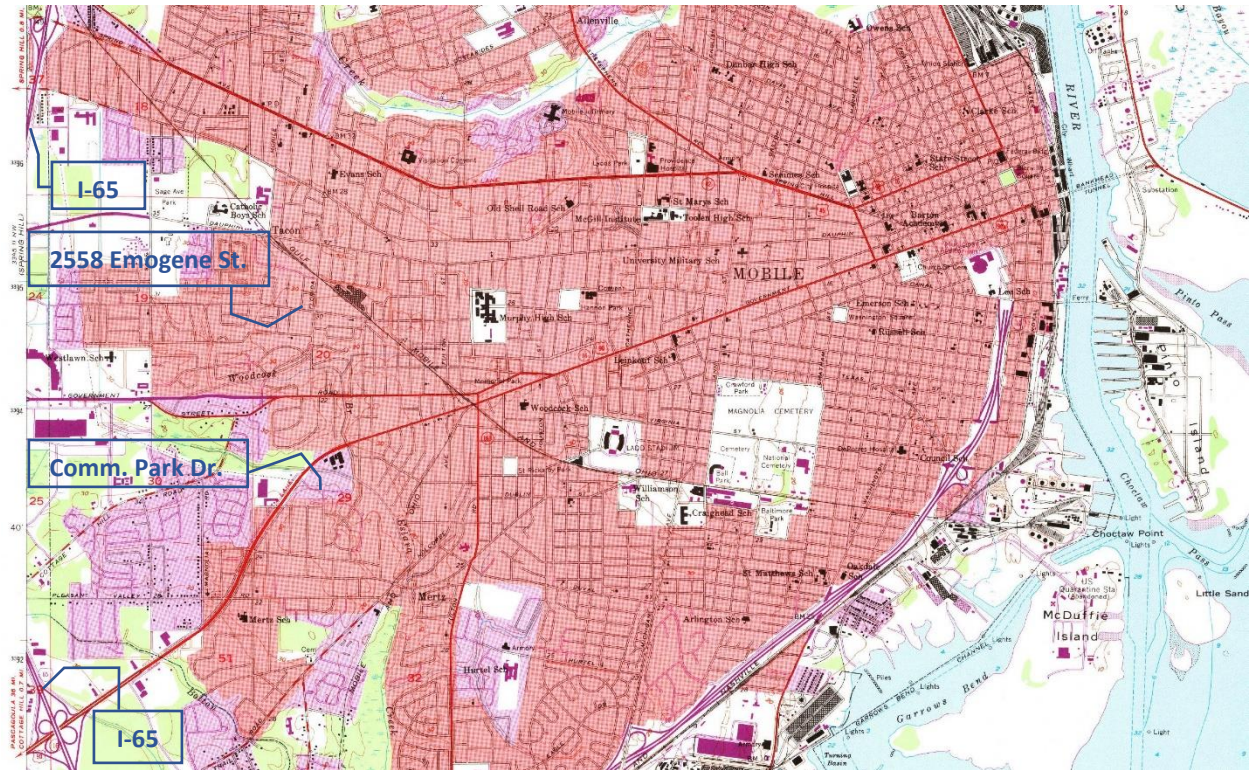


Figure 13: Selected portion of the 1967 USGS quadrangle.<sup>32</sup>



Figure 14: Locations of buildings comparable to 2558 Emogene. Source: City of Mobile GIS Dept, 2022.

According to Mobile County Revenue Commission parcel records, 2463 Commercial Park Drive was built in 1964, and 2470-2472 Commercial Park Drive was constructed in 1965. However, the latter's footprint

<sup>32</sup> United States Geological Service, 2022. 1967 edition of MOBILE, ALA quadrangle 1:62500 topographic map.

appears to be visible on a November 1960 USDA aerial photograph, as one of a handful of buildings in the new development that were already in place by then (see Figure 15).



Figure 15: 1960 USDA aerial photograph, showing apparent outline of 2470-2472 Commercial Park Drive.

The available property records give no date of construction for the third building set at 2510-2520 Commercial Park Drive. Nonetheless, all three of these buildings are discernable in an ensuing USDA aerial image from 1967 (see Figure 16). Likewise, all are notated as “Office[s]” by the Mobile County Revenue Commission, which describes the structure of their exterior walls as consisting of “C B 8” Plain” or “Concrete Block, 8” Plain.” The contemporary, circa 1963 laundromat building at 2558 Emogene Street is also described as comprising exterior walls of “Concrete Block, 8” Plain,” but, alternatively, it is noted as a “Service/Shop Low Partition.”

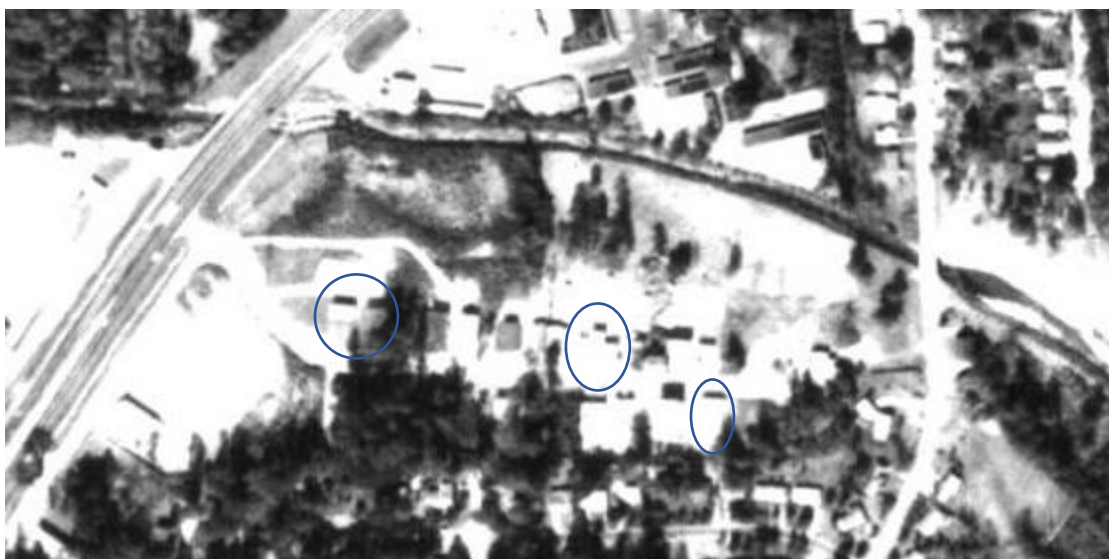


Figure 16: 1967 USDA aerial photograph showing outlines of Commercial Park Drive comparable buildings.



2510-2520 Commercial Park Drive comprises two separate, but connected, office buildings arranged in an ell at the business park's west end, on the north side. Exterior galleries, supported by deliberately oversized, concrete block piers, span the facades of both sides of the interior elbow (see Photos 37 and 38). Faux representations of quoin blocks have been formed at the building's exterior corners, by installing wraparound ribbons of multiple square CMU blocks that protrude slightly to create a banded effect. The wraparound corner treatment of these faux quoin projections is similar in concept to the two-sided geometrically patterned panels that are visually folded around the right angle of 2558 Emogene Street's southeast front corner. Further, the ell's two, interior facades each incorporate a narrow, vertically arranged, decorative band, made by installation of two, side-by-side stacks of blocks with shallow, diamond-shaped niches recessed into the outer edges of their faces. One period block manufacturer artfully referred to a wall surface formed by such a pattern—especially one utilizing their own blocks—as producing a “Shadowal[li]” effect.<sup>33</sup> To a degree, the narrow vertical stacks with recessed surfaces that are here arrayed to create relief, and thus the interplay of light and shadow, produce an effect similar to the incised striations at the west edge of 2558 Emogene Street's facade. The exterior wall surfaces of this set of buildings are intact, and still display the above-described original details, but the original flat roofs have been modified by being built up into low-pitched, side-gabled roof structures.

2470-2472 Commercial Park Drive is located just east of the business park's center, along the corridor's north side. This office building comprises two side-by-side office blocks, with each affiliated with one of the numeric addresses (see Photos 39 and 40). The entire, unified roof structure of this conjoined office building uses the same type of pre-cast concrete T-beams that make up the roof of 2558 Emogene Street. Also, as with the laundromat building, the builders of this office complex employed narrow, upright, hollowed out CMU blocks. However, in this case, they serve as breeze blocks that are components of the screen wall panels along the outside edges of the office block's east and west porte cocheres. Used as such, the open centers of these decorative CMU blocks actually serve a more functional purpose, as they help ventilate the narrow, single-bay porte cocheres, and provide screening shade from the morning and afternoon sunlight that enters the sheet glass window walls that form the office's side elevations. Also, the application of these CMU blocks, oriented vertically in the same way as those on the laundromat building, is different here for although they constitute the office building's primary embellishment, they are not installed anywhere on the street facade. Moreover, the rationale for their selection had a more practical and purposeful basis than the purely aesthetic considerations that determined their provision for the unfenestrated corners of 2558 Emogene Street's facade.

2463 Commercial Park Drive is sited near the business park's east end, adjacent to the turnaround loop, and is the only one of the three comparable buildings to be located on the corridor's south side. This office building appears to incorporate a small warehouse area at its rear, and, since about 1970 it has housed a distributorship for industrial instruments, valves, and other related equipment. The narrow, rectangular building is turned perpendicular to the street, and the doors and windows of its facade face east, overlooking and providing access to and from its east side parking lot (see Photos 41 and 42). Like 2558 Emogene Street, all but one side of the building is without ornament, but unlike the laundromat building, the spare and restrained garnishment is not applied to the side-facing facade, but is rather incorporated into the blind, north end wall that adjoins the street, and presents a wall face formed entirely of square blocks or block ends. As at 2558 Emogene Street, this building's only adornment comes from

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<sup>33</sup> Superlite Builders Supply Co., Phoenix, Arizona. Source: Modern Phoenix LLC

the integration of some decorative CMU blocks arranged in a repetitive geometric pattern. These particular concrete blocks resemble the appearance of, and may be formed of, a hollow-core CMU block, standing upright, that has been cut in half, so the remaining, vertically oriented exterior faces project as parallel ears.



Photo 37 (5-7-2022): facing northeast to west facade of 2510 Commercial Park Drive.



Photo 38 (5-7-2022): facing east past to facade elbow of 2510-2520 Commercial Park Drive.





Photo 39 (5-7-2022): facing northeast to 2470-2472 Commercial Park Drive; note T-beams.



Photo 40 (5-7-2022): facing north to east end of 2470-2472 Commercial Park Drive.



Photo 41 (5-7-2022): facing southwest to east side of 2463 Commercial Park Drive.



Photo 42 (5-7-2022): facing south to north elevation of 2463 Commercial Park Drive.

## Eligibility Evaluation for the National Register of Historic Places

The former laundromat building at 2558 Emogene Street in Mobile, Alabama, is considered not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) under Criterion A, as evaluated in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Commerce, Social History, and Ethnic Heritage, for it has no known associations with specific events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history, either locally or at a regional, state, or national level. Since the building has for most of its existence been involved with the retail laundry business, it has been a minor but sustained contributor to local economic activity, both within midtown Mobile and the compact commercial node at the intersection of Emogene and Florida Streets, for over four decades, from the early 1960s through much of the twenty-first century's first decade. However, no information has been discovered to indicate that the laundry activities were noteworthy or groundbreaking on any technical or business front within the laundry industry. Moreover, the design and layout of the building itself does not reflect, convey, or derive from any notable advancements in the fabric care and clothes laundering processes. Thus, it did not play a significant role in the development of the state's, county's, or city of Mobile's textile laundry industry, nor was the business itself important in the context of local commercial development. The building housed one of the three outlets of a local laundry business, which never expanded outside the city of Mobile, and, as noted above, was the only one not located within a leased section of a shopping center strip. Also, as described previously, no information indicates that this building, or the laundry business it housed, was a formative contributor to the postwar development of the commercial node around the intersection.

Instead, per its circa 1963 date of origin, the laundromat was one of the last buildings added to the collection of commercial buildings and complementing businesses within the vicinity of the crossing thoroughfares. In addition, the building is not known to have been the site of any gatherings or the developmental outgrowth of any trends or movements that suggest potential significance in the area of Social History. Further, there are no known associations that suggest the building presents potential historic significance in the area of Ethnic Heritage. In 2020 the property, including its laundromat building, was purchased by persons of Vietnamese-American descent. Yet, since the building is still currently

vacant, and this recent acquisition is outside the building's historic period chronology, there are no connections of significance, at this time, to the history of persons having origins in Asia. No other areas of potential significance under Criterion A were found to apply to the building.

Likewise, the building at 2558 Emogene Street is considered not eligible for the National Register under Criterion B. No person historically associated in any way with the facility, either through its initial design or construction or its long period of operation as a laundromat, is known to be a significant figure whose activities and contributions to history are demonstrably important within any local, state, regional, or national contexts. Although Mr. Slade continuously and successfully operated his business for nearly four decades, no evidence has yet indicated that this laundry enterprise was groundbreaking or otherwise important in comparison to other commercial ventures or laundry operations in Mobile, within the state of Alabama, or even along the Gulf Coast or throughout the greater southeastern region of the U.S.

Additionally, the laundromat building is considered not eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Since its side walls are almost devoid of fenestration or any elements apart from their concrete-block structure, most of this retail store building's exterior envelope evinces a utilitarian and non-descript, vernacular example of a common mid-twentieth-century, masonry commercial building form, which adapted and implemented only the practical precepts of the International style or other Modernist styles, specifically the utilization of rectilinear, box-like forms and flat roofs. The repetitive and expressive use of modestly decorative CMU blocks at the front corners of the facade's window wall effectively counterbalances the rest of the building's utilitarian presentation. Yet, although 2558 Emogene Street's south-facing facade is eye-catching, its overall composition does not appear to be especially coherent as an example of a cohesive, well-ordered design. Both front corners of the facade utilize repeated patterns of CMUs, and both apply these to form protrusions and recesses to create relief, along with resultant patterns of light and shadow that change through the day as the sun sweeps across the facade. Regardless, the disparate treatment of the facade's two front corners seems more reflective of a partly incongruent pastiche of forms and motifs. Essentially, the building is a simple, utilitarian masonry box, visually enhanced by the installation of a smattering of pre-cast, CMU block items that were readily available from the inventory of a manufacturer's product catalog.

Furthermore, although there does not appear to be an abundant inventory of vernacular examples of masonry commercial buildings from the mid-twentieth century within the city of Mobile's midtown area, the presence of several other comparable buildings nearby, within a short distance from 2558 Emogene Street, affirms that they are not especially rare either. As is appropriate, the CMU block applications across these four contemporary buildings from the 1960s, all representing some degree of influence of Modernist architectural or stylistic attributes, vary amongst their specific placements on the buildings and in their qualities, from the practical and useful to the functional but superfluous. For instance, at 2558 Emogene Street, the arrangements of CMU blocks at the facade's corners have some structural value, in that they fill a void in a standing wall that needs to be closed, but their installations in lieu of plain concrete blocks are unnecessary and without practical benefit. Thus, in comparison with these other three geographically close examples, and in the light of the then prevailing Mid-Century Modernist ideal of form following function, the laundromat building does not perhaps cogently balance the blend of function and whimsy that is key to the most noteworthy and conceptually appropriate installations of decorative CMU blocks in the context of postwar era masonry vernacular commercial architecture. Another comparable building at 2470-2472 Commercial Park Drive utilizes very similar CMU block work in a way that is more

strictly functional, as part of a screen wall that admits light while simultaneously providing shade, but also in a fashion that is evocative of an artistic intent and sensibility.

No records have been found to credit any architects, builders, or other contractors with the building's construction. Therefore, the property does not appear to represent the work of a master. In addition, the property does not possess high artistic value and is not demonstrative of the pure expression of a particular architectural style. The building at 2558 Emogene Street is not an outstanding or exceptional example of a masonry commercial building from the mid-twentieth century, and it is considered not eligible for the National Register under Criterion C.

Lastly, 2558 Emogene Street is not eligible for the National under Criterion D because it has not yet yielded nor is likely to yield information important to the history of building design or technology.

Despite lacking significance under the National Register Criteria of Evaluation, the laundromat building at 2558 Emogene Street does retain a high degree of integrity in all aspects of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Although the nearby bowling alley has been demolished and the former grocery store has been remodeled, these were never directly visible from the laundromat building. Within its immediate setting along Emogene Street, just west of the Florida Street intersection, the notable but only substantial change to the streetscape setting since 1963 has been the non-historic construction, in 2003, of the adjacent, two-story commercial building on the adjoining parcel to the east, at 146 S. Florida Street. With regard to aspects of design, materials, and workmanship, the laundromat building's integrity has only been slightly diminished by the removal of the sign panel that was formerly affixed atop the facade's center.

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# Postwar Commercial Evaluation Methodology: Application Worksheet

**Property name:** Slade Laundromat

**Property type:** Retail store

**Property location:** North side of Emogene St., at center of block between Florida Street and Colvin Street intersections (Parcel ID: Mobile Co. R022907230007005.000)

## Identification of Character-defining Features

### Checklist of Character-defining Features Present – Retail Store

#### ***Building:***

- ☒ Standalone building
- ☒ Generally, one story in height
- ☒ Oriented toward the street
- ☒ Orientation typically for the automobile with associated parking lot or structure
- ☒ Design and architectural emphasis on storefront
- ☒ Vernacular in style with limited architectural detail
- ☒ Displays elements of architectural styles common of the period or regional influences
- ☐ National chains typically demonstrate a standardized design and signage
- ☐ Entrance may have an architectural emphasis and a vestibule, canopy, awning, or overhang
- ☒ Large display windows or glass walls on facade, may extend to side elevations
- ☒ Open interior floorplans
- ☒ Loading docks, secondary entrances, etc. placed away from key public-facing elevations, often on rear elevation
- ☒ Rear stockrooms or non-public areas
- ☒ Secondary entrances on side and rear elevation with little architectural emphasis
- ☐ Prominent signage on the building

#### ***Location/site features:***

- ☒ Located in suburban setting
- ☐ Located in downtown pedestrian-oriented setting
- ☒ Located on a major transportation corridor or associated side street with vehicular access
- ☐ Landscaping elements, planters, and other exterior furnishings (benches, tables, etc.) may be present
- ☐ Signage displaying the name of the building or tenant(s) (free standing or on the building)
  - ☐ Signage located on the building
  - ☐ Freestanding signage along the road
- ☒ On-site parking in a dedicated, off-street parking lot or parking structure, with or without lighting
- ☐ Refuse and/or recycling area near the rear



### ***Analysis of Character-defining Features:***

How does subject property represent the property type: As notated and outlined above, the subject property and the building it contains exhibits the integration of a majority of the typical character-defining features that are common to postwar, single retail store buildings, especially so for those of masonry, concrete-block construction.

Loss of or changes to character-defining features: Building formerly had prominent signage displaying the name of the laundromat business, but this longstanding signage, which was affixed atop the storefront's façade, has recently been removed.

## **Research**

### **Resources Consulted (annotate list as needed)**

- ☒ Community and regional histories: Encyclopedia of Alabama: "Mobile"; "Port of Mobile"; and "World War II and Alabama".
- ☐ Clippings files:
- ☒ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1956 edition for MOBILE, ALA, 299E-VOL.4.
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- ☐ Historic property surveys and inventory records:
- ☐ Prior DOT compliance surveys:
- ☒ Tax assessor records: Mobile County Revenue Commission, 2022, Property Details for Key Number 779385.
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- ☒ Newspaper articles and advertisements: The Mobile Labor Journal (Mobile, Alabama), May 12, 1944 edition: advertisement for new Westlawn subdivision.
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce publications:
- ☒ Industry and trade publications and periodicals: Company advertisement for Superlite Bricks and Blocks. Superlite Builders Supply Co., Phoenix, AZ.
- ☐ NR Nominations and Determinations of Eligibility (Phase II) reports:
- ☐ HABS documentation:
- ☒ Oral interviews with building owners, tenants, and/or employees: Interview with Henrietta Slade, spouse of laundromat owner/operator George M. Slade.

Additional resources consulted: Find-a-grave.com: "Memorial for George Morgan Slade."; Radney Funeral Home, Mobile, Alabama: "Obituary for George Morgan Slade, September 9, 1931 – October 17, 2014."

Repositories consulted (list all): Mobile Municipal Archives; Mobile Public Library's Local History and Genealogical Branch; University of South Alabama Libraries and Archives, Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library; Bankhead Tunnel Gallery.

Analysis of most helpful sources: No source or sources stood apart as being most helpful....

## **Application of GIS Tools**

How used and intended results: City of Mobile GIS Department, Mapping Applications were utilized to determine the size and dimensions of the subject parcel.

Was it useful: Yes, but GIS tools were not especially beneficial in this particular case, since the subject property constitutes a single building on a single parcel.

If not used, why:

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

What was done: Stakeholder engagement was considered unwarranted in this case, since the subject property constitutes a single, privately owned building on a single parcel.

Was it useful: Not applicable to this property

## **Historic Trends**

### **Historic trends considered for association with subject property**

#### ***Suburbanization:***

Dramatic shift from residing in urban areas to developing low-density suburbs: Postwar suburbanization trends played an overall general role in growth of the surrounding area but were not especially applicable to this particular property, as this building was constructed approximately two decades after the initial major development of the Florida Street at Emogene Street commercial node and the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Retail businesses and offices leaving downtown and following the population shift to the suburbs: Emogene Street's circa 1950 extension to west and resultant status as a westward pathway into the heart of expansive new neighborhoods helped create a locally prominent new commercial node. Nonetheless, the subject building is not an example of early relocation to this node, since it was not constructed until about 12 years later.

Expanding highways/Interstates transformed land use and provided easy vehicular access to the developing suburban areas: During the late 1940s through the 1960s, the influx of traffic through the Emogene St. at Florida St. intersection stimulated commercial development on three of the four corners and for a short distance off the intersection. However, both of these streets were and continue to be two-

lane city streets, located, since circa 1950, within a westward extension of Mobile's street grid; neither thoroughfare forms part of a highway system.

Developers of residential subdivisions encouraged to incorporate associated commercial areas: This aspect and possibility was considered, yet no evidence was uncovered that this building was an outgrowth of any master plan or developer incentives; instead, it was simply the personal initiative of a local, small business owner/operator.

Commercial developers worked within system of established zoning and land development regulations: Not applicable to this particular property, which was built not by a developer but at behest of a business owner for a singular, specific purpose and use (laundromat).

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

If trend was applicable, how was that identified? What sources or information assisted with making an association?

### ***Automobile culture:***

Rapid increase in automobile ownership: Due to this building's construction circa 1963, nearly two decades postwar, the rapid rise in automobile ownership, resulting in part from consumer demand from returning soldiers, had already largely taken place during the 1950s; by 1963, American automobile culture was well progressed.

Commercial property established along busy thoroughfare/highway to accommodate the automobile traveling public: Assuredly, the laundromat's commercial building was intentionally sited alongside the western extension of Emogene Street, at a convenient location between its locally prominent intersection with Florida Street and the postwar residential neighborhoods just to the west, and thus along a local travel route, from downtown Mobile to its mid-twentieth century suburban neighborhoods, that was easily accessible to passing cars. Nonetheless, the building is located not along a highway, but rather it is sited close alongside a paved, two-lane surface street within the city's expanded street grid.

Drive-ins and drive-throughs became commonplace: Not applicable to this particular property; although some laundromats would incorporate drive-through windows, this example did not.

Sited at busy intersections or access ramps: Not directly applicable, although certainly contributory, to this property's specific location. The laundromat was not located immediately adjacent to the relatively busy crossing of two standard, two-lane surface streets, but rather was one half-block removed. Perhaps most noticeably, it was well and conveniently sited between this intersection and the postwar residential neighborhoods just to its west, and thus along a route home from downtown Mobile to its mid-twentieth-century suburban neighborhoods.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

***Social and cultural trends:***

Growing families relocated to the suburbs; increased commercial development in suburban areas: Subject property was sited just west of a longstanding, heavily traveled thoroughfare, on the north edge of a burgeoning neighborhood commercial node, comprising businesses supporting and supported by the growing families who had purchased the hundreds of new, postwar houses just westward along the Emogene Street extension.

Redlining and discriminatory practices: No evidence discovered of applicability of these aspects/practices to this subject property.

Civil Rights movement and racial integration: No evidence discovered of applicability of these aspects/practices to this subject property.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

***Consumerism:***

Shopping as a recreational activity: This premise is not applicable to the subject property; although the building technically housed a retail business, it did not offer shopping opportunities or merchandise for purchase, but rather functioned as a laundromat.

Specialty retail stores catering to those with discretionary income: As above, this premise is not applicable to the subject property.

Application of scientific/rational planning policies to retail sales: As above, this premise is not applicable to the subject property.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

***Commercial design and setting:***

Precast concrete blocks, concrete masonry units, or poured concrete for quick and lower-cost construction: Such application is clearly represented by this subject building, in that it undoubtedly does reflect the selection of precast concrete blocks, concrete masonry units, and/or poured concrete for quick and lower-cost construction; however, the use of the above materials does not appear to have been, in this case, solely specified for lowest-cost, as the concrete units were also chosen to provide ornament.

New materials and/or technologies incorporated into building design (i.e. glass curtain walls, AC) : Although the subject building does certainly utilize a glass curtain wall, this incorporation in the circa 1963 facade design would not be considered an early example of the use of glass walls (as a then new technology).



Early use of large glass retail storefronts: Although the subject building does certainly make use of a large glass retail storefront, this incorporation as a key element in the circa 1963 facade design would not be considered an early example of glass window walls.

Landscaping as essential part of the commercial environment: Not applicable to the subject property.

Early use of energy-efficient materials: Not applicable to the subject property.

Early use of large parking lots: Not applicable, since the property's parking lot was not notably large, even in context of some surrounding commercial properties, and its off-street parking lot was not an early example, either, since the earliest commercial buildings featuring their own off-street parking lots, near the Florida St. and Emogene St. intersection, were originated over a decade prior to the subject property.

Signage as an integral component: Not currently applicable or conveyed, since the former signage once affixed atop the facade has been removed over the last decade; moreover, as mentioned, the previous signage was affixed, and not an integral component of the building facade.

Building components could be easily modified to serve tenant: Not applicable to the subject property, which was built for specific, sustained use as a laundromat facility.

Separation of the sites that house the retailing/management services from industrial/manufacturing processes: Premise is not applicable to this small subject property.

Modern design to "rationalize" the workplace/commercial space design and layout modeled for efficiency: Premise is not applicable to this small subject property.

Form/function influenced by human relations or environmental psychology: Premise is not applicable to this small subject property.

Advancements in science and technology influencing architectural design: Premise is not applicable to this small subject property.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

### ***Architecture:***

Representative of architectural style: The subject building represents the contributory influences of more defined, academically identified Modernist architectural styles, but, overall, it can perhaps best be considered and evaluated as a vernacular aesthetic composition.

Representative of regional variations/influences: Premise is not known to be applicable to this subject building.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

## Comparisons

How were comparisons identified: Through initial scanning of current aerial imagery of the greater vicinity around the subject property, as well as review of mid-twentieth century USGS topographic map editions, and, last, by way of straightforward vehicular tours along major thoroughfares and through commercial areas in the neighborhoods nearby the subject property.

Challenges in identifying comparisons: Simply that there was no abundance of comparable properties, at least in architectural terms of comparable layout, form, massing, typology and/or style, and, crucially, similar material makeup.

**Appendix C. Pilot Study and Application Worksheet: Shopping Center**

**5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard**  
**Sacramento, California**  
**Architectural Descriptions**

**Location and setting**

The shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard is located south of downtown Sacramento and the California State Capitol. This area as a whole is characterized by a series of corridors that radiate out from the city and includes highways, arterials, and rail corridors. The roughly north-south Freeport Boulevard, on which the subject property is sited, is located somewhat west of center south of the city. The two arterials that most closely resemble Freeport Boulevard (both to the east of the boulevard) are 24<sup>th</sup> Street, which is west of the light rail corridor, and Franklin Boulevard, which is west of Highway 99 (see Figures 2, 9).

The subject shopping center is located on the east side of Freeport Boulevard between Irvin Way and Oregon Drive (see Figures 3, 4, 5). It is approximately 3.25 miles south of central downtown Sacramento and a little more than one mile north of the Sacramento Executive Airport as the crow flies. The shopping center is addressed as 2104 Irvin Way and 5001 Freeport Boulevard on the north end and 2005 Oregon Drive and 5171 Freeport Boulevard on the south end. Freeport Boulevard itself is characterized by small commercial malls, shopping centers, and freestanding commercial buildings along most of its length in this area, although a few blocks of single-family residential development extend all the way to the boulevard from surrounding neighborhoods.

Behind the commercial buildings, to the east and west, are primarily mid-twentieth-century single-family residences in planned subdivisions (see Photos 20, 21). The subject mall is located within the bounds of Hollywood Park Units #2 and #3 within the commercial parcels that are adjacent to the street, which is very typical in this area (see Figures 7, 8). The neighborhood within which the subject mall is located is called Hollywood Park and the neighborhood to the west is South Land Park. To the north of Hollywood Park is the Carlton Tract and to the south is Mangan Park.

The Hollywood Park neighborhood is described as roughly bounded by Sutterville Road to the north, Freeport Boulevard to the west, 24<sup>th</sup> Street to the east, and Fruitridge Road to the south.<sup>1</sup> It is known for its Minimal Traditional-style residences and some excellent examples of Contemporary, New Formalist, and Googie commercial architecture, as well as more ordinary vernacular commercial development that dates to the mid-twentieth century (see Photo 24).

Much of Freeport Boulevard as a whole displays this pattern of commercial and residential development from Sacramento City College (on the east side of the street) and the William Land Golf Course (on the west side of the street) on the north; and the south end of the Sacramento Executive Airport and Bing Maloney Golf Course (both on the east side of the boulevard) on the south (see Figure 14). The closest major east-west road, which is nearly ten miles in length, is Fruitridge Road, which is located between the subject property and the north end of the airport (see Figure 13).

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<sup>1</sup> *Mid-Century Modern in the City of Sacramento, Historic Context Statement and Survey Results*. Prepared for the City of Sacramento Community Development Department. Prepared by GEI Consultants, Inc. and Mead & Hunt, Inc., September 30, 2017:2-33.



**5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard**  
**Sacramento, California**  
**Architectural Descriptions**

The shopping center comprises four one-story, mostly rectangular buildings. The site, which is oriented slightly northeast to southwest, is within a block bounded by Irvin Way on the north, Alma Way on the east, Oregon Drive on the south, and Freeport Boulevard on the west. It is approximately 1.42 acres in size. To the north of the shopping center is a free-standing commercial building (see Figure 4). To the east are single family homes (see Photos 3, 20, 21). And to the south is a small, two-building commercial site with three businesses, including the post-and-beam Hollywood Hardware store.

**Building(s) overview**

The site comprises four, one-story structures on four separate parcels that are either party wall structures or separated by approximately 6' (see Figure 5).<sup>2</sup> The parcels are owned by separate parties. All buildings display the basic components of a modern storefront building. They are constructed primarily of brick masonry although one has one addition of concrete masonry units, with flat, built-up roofs and (likely) slab concrete foundations. An exception is Building 2, which includes a shallow, barrel-arched portion flanked by end units with very shallow pitched gables. Most, however, have a flat roof with a tall straight fascia on a deep mansard-type front overhang (awning or canopy) that extends over the front sidewalk, to which is affixed the name of the business, many in both English and Chinese. Most sport large storefront display windows and doors of full-height glass with wood or aluminum frames. An exception to the large, single-light windows occurs on the building on the far south end (a ca 1955 addition), which has smaller, one-over-one-light and two-over-two-light windows (see Photo 15). Most storefronts are clad in brick veneer under the windows, although the design of the brick varies (see Photo 13). They are all vernacular commercial buildings. The buildings, which date from 1947 to 1954, were part of a 1952 annexation.

Table 1 shows the addresses present in the shopping center by building, the current business names, and 1952 business names (the first building in the center was constructed in 1947 and the last one was constructed in 1954; the 1952 directory is a good representation of early businesses).

**Table 1: Businesses in buildings in 2022 and 1952**

Address	Current businesses (2022)	Businesses in 1952
<b>Building 1</b>		
2104 Irvin Way	Sweet & Joy	Medina Shoe Repair
2108 Irvin Way	Not applicable	Fred Gutt Tailor
5001 Freeport Boulevard	Happy Hour Foot Spa	F.D. Ott confectionary
5005 Freeport Boulevard	The Rosewood Room	Hollywood Vogue (5003)
5011 Freeport Boulevard	New Hong Kong Wok	J.D. Tapp tavern
5019 Freeport Boulevard	New Hong Kong Wok	Checker Club (5015)
<b>Building 2</b>		
5021 Freeport Boulevard	Jade Fountain café	Not applicable
5031 Freeport Boulevard	Jade Fountain café	J.P Ruddy bakery
5037 Freeport Boulevard	QQ Beauty Salon	Not applicable

<sup>2</sup> This space is actually a 20' alley that was part of the original Hollywood Park Unit #2 subdivision. It appears to have been partially encroached on by an addition to Building No. 1 and a small addition to Building No. 2, as well as a utility cabinet attached to Building 2.

**5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard  
Sacramento, California  
Architectural Descriptions**

Address	Current businesses (2022)	Businesses in 1952
5039 Freeport Boulevard	Crystal Aquarium (closed)	Not applicable
5041 Freeport Boulevard	Freeport Liquor	Cardinal Grocery/Serv-U Meats
5043 Freeport Boulevard	Pocket Club Pool	Not applicable
5051 Freeport Boulevard	Excel Computers	W.M. Whitten optometry
5049 Freeport Boulevard	Vacant	Not applicable
5051 Freeport Boulevard	Vacant	Not applicable
5061 Freeport Boulevard	Not applicable	Spotless Cleaners/ Vasconcellas watch repair
5069 Freeport Boulevard	Ho Chin Market	Not applicable
5071 Freeport Boulevard	GX3 Reptiles (closed)	Mrs. Wieger ceramic studio
<b>Building 3</b>		
5081 Freeport Boulevard	Shannon's Drapery (closed)	N/A (bldg. const. 1954)
<b>Building 4</b>		
5101 Freeport Boulevard	Tealicious	J.E. Phillips drugs
5121 Freeport Boulevard	BQ Food Inc., B&N Market	E.P. Lawrence dept. store
5131 Freeport Boulevard	Boba café	Not applicable
5141 Freeport Boulevard	Model Nails	Mrs. F.L. Hays beauty shop
5151 Freeport Boulevard	Lily's Hair Design	Hollywood Hardware
5161 Freeport Boulevard	Vacant	Not applicable
5171 Freeport Boulevard	Cloud 9 Cigars	Not applicable
2001 Oregon Drive	Vacant	N/A (bldg. const. ca 1955)
2005 Oregon Drive	Freeport Massage	N/A (bldg. const. ca 1955)

**Building 1** is the northernmost building and is addressed as 5001 Freeport Boulevard in assessor records (APN 018-0191-001) (see Photos 5, 6, 7). The vernacular commercial building is 5,868 square feet in size and was constructed in 1949, prior to the 1952 annexation of the area (assessor data). There are four businesses in this building. It consists of two storefronts on the north side with apparently one business and five storefronts on the west side with three businesses. There are two simple pole signs serving this building (there were originally three), one of which says "Taxes Impuestos" and one that says "Dry Clean Today" and "Used & Out of Print." None relate to businesses presently in the building. Other signs are mounted on the canopy overhang or on the building itself.

This building has a rectangular footprint and a deep eave overhang of T 1-11 with a metal coping on the front (Freeport Boulevard) and north facades (see Photo 6). The east (rear) facade has no overhang and the south facade, which is separated from Building 2 by about 6' feet, has a parapet wall. The overhanging eaves have a tall fascia to which signs are affixed in some locations (see Photo 5). The soffit of the overhang is finished in boards with long fluorescent lights down the center.

The building is brick masonry construction with a built-up roof and concrete slab foundation. Additional finish materials include T 1-11 cladding, paint, and stucco. Storefronts are located on the north and west (front) facades. Storefront windows are typically large, fixed windows in wood frames with a bulkhead clad in T 1-11. Front doors have anodized aluminum frames with tall, fixed lights. There are two small, shed-

**5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard**  
**Sacramento, California**  
**Architectural Descriptions**

roof additions to the rear of the building (see Photo 7). The south storefront (an apparent addition to the New Hong Kong Wok) is constructed of concrete block. On the north end of the rear facade are three double-casement windows of six lights each with metal frames. Doors on the rear facades are typically flush. The 1949 building constructed prior to the 1952 annexation of this area to the city.

Alterations. The most consistent features on this building are the brick masonry piers that separate the storefronts (with the exception of the south storefront, which is constructed of concrete masonry units) and the overhanging canopy that unites the building. All other storefronts are different, with different cladding, different window and bulkhead proportions, and a variety of other materials. All storefronts but the south storefront share large display windows with narrow muntins and frames. The building appears to be in moderate condition and retains fair integrity.

**Building 2** is addressed as 5041 Freeport Boulevard in assessor records (APN 018-0191-002) (see Photos, 8,9,10). The vernacular commercial building is 12,250 square feet in size. The vernacular commercial building was constructed in 1947 (assessor data). It consists of nine-to-ten storefronts and eight businesses (several businesses appear to be vacant or are being remodeled). There is one pole sign serving this building that says, "Freeport Liquor," which serves the liquor store. All businesses have internally illuminated signs mounted on the tall fascia.

This building is one of the middle buildings in this shopping center, immediately south of the north-end building. The deep eave overhang has a slanted fascia, giving it a mansard-like appearance. It is clad in T 1-11 with a narrow coping and wraps around the front portion of the side facades. This is an added feature. The overhang is supported by regularly spaced round metal posts. The underside is finished with what appears to be plywood, and lighting is regularly spaced downlights. The rest of the roof is complex. It is composed of three parts, with a shallow, barrel-shaped roof in the center, flanked by two slightly pitched gable roofs, all oriented east to west. On the rear facade of the building this results in no eave overhang in the center, with stepped parapets to each side. The remainder of the roofs on the side facades have short parapets. The building is a party wall structure with Building 3 to the south.

The building is brick masonry construction. Roofing materials are unknown; it likely has a slab foundation. Other materials on the front facade include a painted finish on the brick, T 1-11 cladding, and what appears to be stucco on a concrete coating under the windows on some bays. Two of the storefronts have mid-century style single angle canted bays (see Photo 10). Storefront windows are typically fairly narrow, with transoms with wood frames. Front entries typically have one or two-leaf doors with transoms and aluminum frames. There are a variety of doors on the rear facade and very few other openings.

Alterations. This building varies in cladding and materials, including brick, T 1-11 cladding in two different patterns, and concrete stucco. Many windows have wood frames, although some have aluminum frames. Doors vary in materials and design. Windows also vary in proportions from storefront to storefront. The Ho Chin Market was being renovated in 2022, so the windows were boarded up and not visible. The storefronts are unified by the metal poles supporting the awning and the awning design, which is an added feature. The building is in relatively poor condition and has fair integrity.

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**Building 3** is addressed as 5081 Freeport Boulevard in assessor records (APN 018-0191-003) (see Photos 11, 12, 13, 19). The vernacular commercial building is 3,920 square feet in size and was constructed in 1954 (assessor data). There was one business in one storefront in this building; it is currently vacant. One pole sign, which served this business, reads "Drapery, Shades, Upholstery, Mini-blinds." One internally lit box sign is mounted on the tall, canopy overhang on the building frontage.

The building is one of the middle buildings in this shopping center, immediately north of the southernmost building. It has a rectangular footprint and a deep eave overhang from which rises a tall fascia of corrugated material with a narrow coping; this feature wraps around the front of each side facade. The building forms a parapeted party wall with the buildings to the north and south. The front overhang is open, with exposed rafters. There is no overhang on the rear of the building.

The building appears to be brick masonry construction with Roman brick cladding and stuccoed pilasters and bulkheads on the front facade with a stucco finish on concrete masonry units on the rear. The roof appears to have a built-up or membrane finish, and the foundation is likely slab concrete. There is a slightly offset entry on the front facade that consists of a two-leaf aluminum-frame door with full-height glass and a transom window. It is flanked by large plate glass windows (one on the right, four to the left), with a secondary entry and another window bay to its left (north). The rear facade is finished in stucco with a single flush door with a metal awning. The building is in the process of being renovated (see Photo 12).

Alterations. The building permit for the sign for Shannon's Drapery was issued in 1975, indicating that the business had been in place since that time. The building was recently vacated and is now (2022) being renovated. It has consistency in design, with Roman brick and stucco cladding and windows with consistent proportions. The awning appears to be an added feature. The building is in poor condition and has good integrity. Since it is being renovated, it is not known what the final appearance will be.

**Building 4** is addressed as 5141 Freeport Boulevard in assessor records (APN 018-0191-004) (see Photos 13, 14, 15, 16). The vernacular commercial building is 13,411 square feet in size and was constructed in 1948 (assessor data), prior to the 1952 annexation of the area. There are about seven businesses in this building (two appear to be combined and one unit is vacant). It consists of ten storefronts, including the south-facing storefronts. A pole sign in front of this building reads, "Lilly's Hair Design, Cigarette Store, and Boba Café," all of which appear to be active businesses in the building. Other signs are internally lit box signs that are composed of free-standing letters and logos that are mounted on the fascia that fronts the overhang.

This building is on the south end of the shopping center and has storefronts on the front facade and south end facade. It displays a slight jog toward the south end in this otherwise rectangular building, where the south addition is set back slightly from the main face of the building. This addition appears to have been constructed about 1955, when the name of the physician who occupied the addition was first listed in the directories. The deep eave overhang has exposed rafters. There is no overhang on the back of the building. The building forms a party wall with Building 3 to the north.



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The building is brick masonry construction with a built-up roof and a slab concrete foundation. The large storefront windows are primarily framed in aluminum, although the windows of the northernmost shop are framed in anodized aluminum. The tall fascia of the overhanging eaves is finished in T 1-11 placed in a diagonal pattern on the body of the fascia, with narrow vertical boards that separate the bays.

The doors are one- or two-leaf doors, most with aluminum frames and transom windows. The low bulkheads under the windows are finished in brick veneer of a standard dimension but in varying colors and finishes. The southernmost bay has windows on the front facade that are placed high under the eaves. These are paired and ganged, one-over-one-light windows with metal frames. There are three entry doors on the south façade. Windows, with the exception that the windows flanking the central door, are double casement windows of three lights each. Three paired, one-over-one-light windows also occur on the rear facade of this addition. There are doors for each bay on the rear (east) facade but few other openings.

Alterations. The storefronts for this building vary but are consistent in including the basic features of a modern commercial storefront. Brick veneer finishes differ in design and color and windows and doors include wood, aluminum, and anodized aluminum materials. The awning is a unifying feature, although it is not known when that was added. The signage has been recently (ca 2021) redone (see Photo 14). It is not a unifying feature but is in better condition than the previous signage. The south addition, which was added ca 1955, can be said to have gained significance in itself. The building appears to be in good condition and has fair integrity.

**Site**

Freeport Boulevard is a four-lane arterial (two lanes in each direction) in this block with a controlled central turn pocket. Parallel parking occurs on each side of the road. On the east side, beyond the parking lane, is an asphalt and concrete sidewalk, followed by a fire lane on the actual property site, which is controlled through red-painted concrete curb stops (see Photos 17, 18). Beginning on the west side of the site and continuing clock-wise, on the west (front) side of the building(s) is perpendicular parking, adjacent to the driving lane that is between the fire lane and the parking area. A broad curb cut is located at the south end and at about the center of the block onto Freeport Boulevard

Concrete sidewalks are located on the north side of the block with perpendicular parking to the immediate north of the building. On the rear of the building is a concrete sidewalk that is wide enough to include space for dumpsters (see Photo 16). These areas are both paved and unpaved. The sidewalk is followed by a parallel parking lane within the right-of-way of Alma Way (see Photo 20). On the south side of the block is a concrete sidewalk on the north side of Oregon Drive and perpendicular parking adjacent to the building. Because Oregon Drive curves at this point, a triangular paved pad is located between the sidewalk and parking area. There are raised curbs along Freeport Boulevard and rolled curbs elsewhere on the block. Two of the block corners have accessibility ramps, both on Freeport. There are four simple pole signs along the block face, each with illuminated signs with individual business names (see Photo 17). There is no overarching name for the shopping center and seemingly no anchor business.

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**Character-defining features**

The vernacular commercial storefronts, which number between one and ten per building, display the basic character-defining features of a storefront. They include display windows (with the exception of the north- and south-facing portions of the buildings); storefront entries, often with transom windows; deep eave overhangs or canopies over the front sidewalk with lighting mounted on the soffits; and signage on the building and/or eave overhangs. Roofs are largely flat and entries are at grade. The north, west and south facades include perpendicular parking against the exterior building walls. The rear facades of the storefronts include secondary entries and few openings. Openings may consist of small windows or louvered vents or both. The sidewalks or setbacks here contain space for dumpsters. Utilities are mounted on the walls. Parallel parking on Alma Way serves the rear entries to the buildings.

**Summary changes over time**

The buildings in this shopping center were constructed in 1947, 1948, 1949, and 1954, according to assessor records. The annexation of the area took place in 1952. As a result, it is assumed that all the building permit records are not in one place. It is also not known what every storefront looked like originally. However, certain assumptions can be made about age and whether or not changes have taken place based on design or materials. For example, the canted storefront with a low planter on Building 2 can be assumed to date from the original building design (see Photo 10). A bulkhead clad in Roman brick can be assumed to be original or close in time to the original construction of the building. Anodized aluminum storefronts can be assumed to be a later addition, whereas wood window frames are likely original. Building 3 is being renovated at this time (2022). It appears Building 4, with its T 1-11 awning, was renovated in relatively recent years and the signage has been upgraded within the last year (ca 2021). Building permits on record for the shopping center with the City of Sacramento, however, tend to be sign permits, electrical permits, and other utility permits. Research did not identify building permits for the structures.

The only known substantial change to the complex as a whole is the ca 1955 addition to the 1948 southerly building, which added two offices. There is a concrete masonry addition to the south end of Building 1 as well, which allowed for an expansion of the New Hong Kong Wok restaurant. Other buildings and storefronts appear to have been incrementally changed over time. For the most part, each storefront is different. They share components, such as brick veneer under the display windows, but the storefronts display a variety of brick types from Roman brick veneer to running bond with various colors of mortar (see Photo 13). Some are finished in a layer of stucco cement. Window frames may be wood, aluminum, or anodized aluminum. Doors are aluminum or anodized aluminum. The design of the eave overhangs (awnings) vary from building to building. They vary in design profiles, supports, lighting design, and material finishes. Signage also differs. It ranges from painted or screened signage on canvas or vinyl that is mounted on the face of the building to new, free-standing, internally backlit signs mounted directly on the fascia of the overhang (see Photo 15). Pole signs, all of which have internally backlit signs, appear to be dated and more than half do not reflect the businesses currently present in the complex.

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Figures - Current Maps

Figure 1 – Location map





5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard

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Figures - Current Maps

Figure 2 – Regional location map

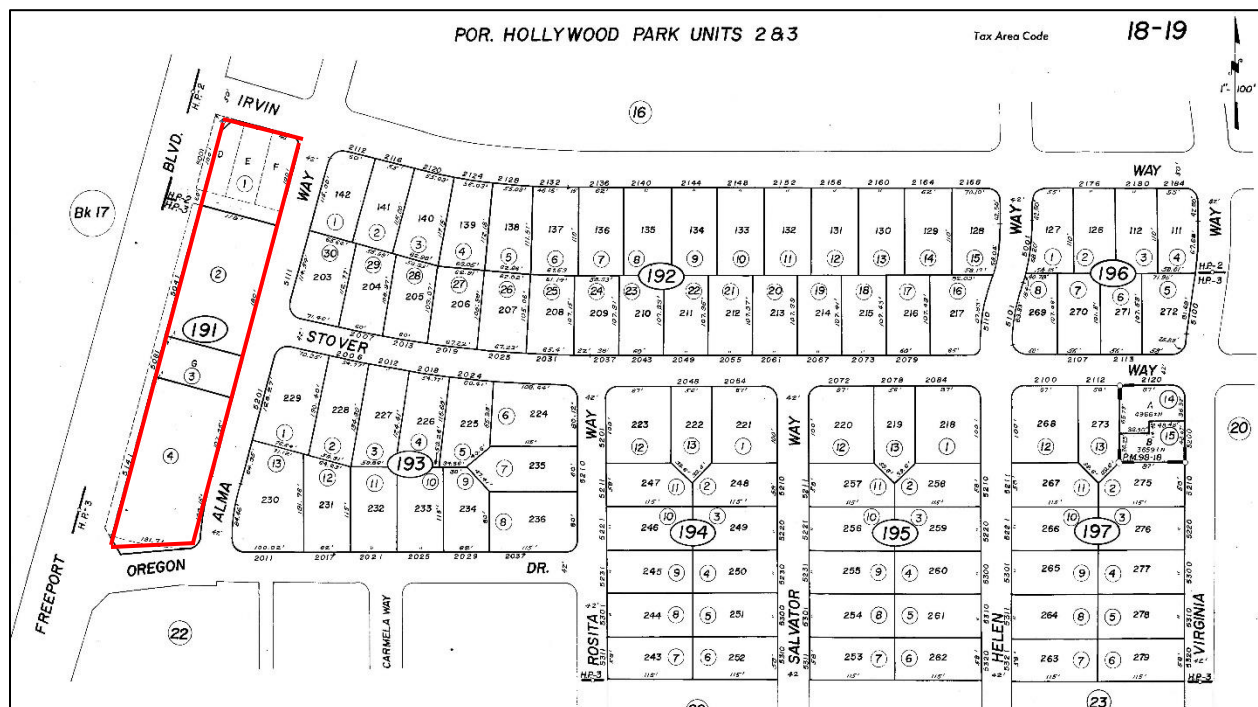


Source: USGS 1:24,000 topo map, 2021



5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard  
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Figure 3 – Parcel map; see Figure 5 for individual parcels



Source: Sacramento County Assessor

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Figures - Current Maps

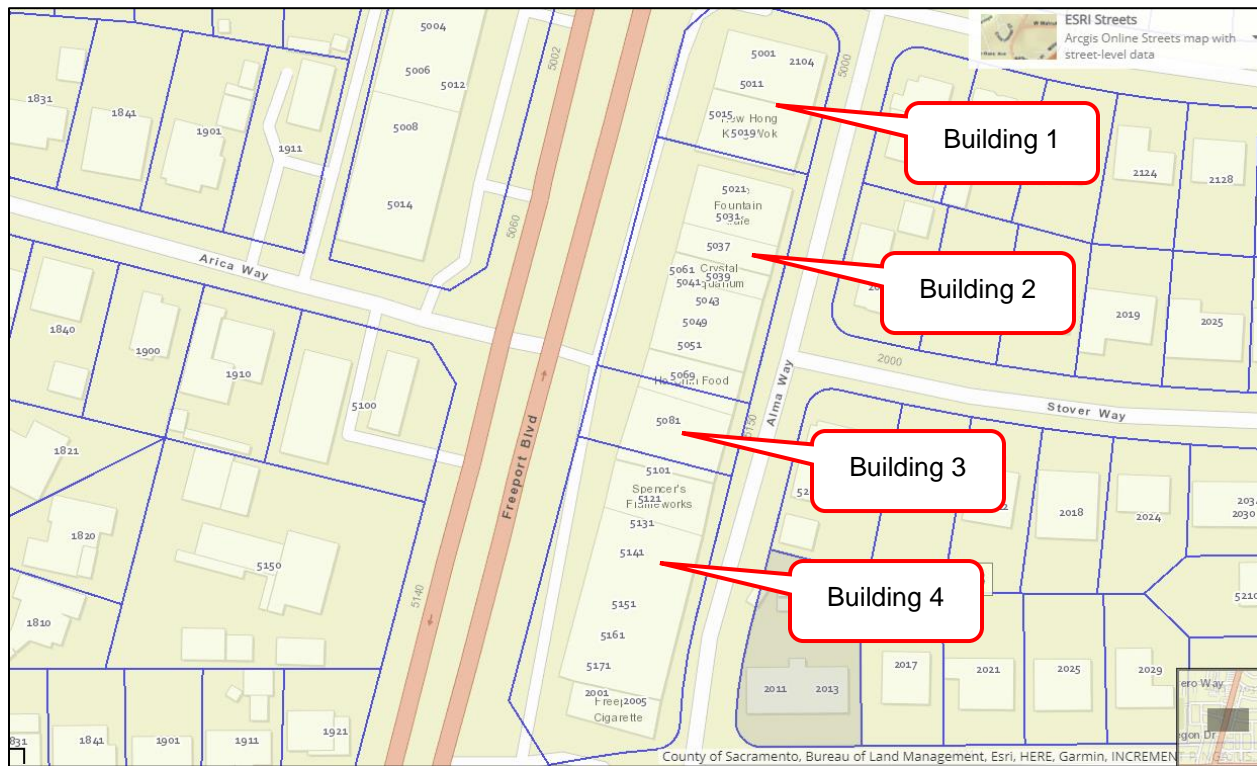
Figure 4 – Site plan, aerial view



Source: Google Earth (imagery ©2023 CNES/Airbus, Maxar Technologies, Sanborn, U.S. Geological Survey, USDA/FPAC/GEO, map data ©2023)

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Figures - Current Maps**

**Figure 5 – Site plan, map view (parcel lines are blue)**



Source: Sacramento County GIS



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**Current Photos**

**Photo 1 – Overview – west (front) facade, looking southwest**



**Photo 2 – Overview - west (front) and south facades, looking north**





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**Photo 3 – Overview – east (rear) facade, partial view, looking north**



**Photo 4 – Building 1 – north and west facades, looking southeast**



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Photo 5 – Building 1 – front (west) overhang, looking south





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**Photo 6 – Building 1 – front (west) facades, partial view, looking southeast**



**Photo 7 – Building 1 – rear (east) facade, partial view, looking northwest**



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Photo 8 – Building 2 – front (west) facades, looking southeast



Photo 9 – Building 2 – front (west) facades, partial view, looking southeast





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Photo 10 – Building 2 – 5021 Freeport, front (west) facade, looking east



Photo 11 – Building 3 – 5081 Freeport, front (west) facade, looking south



**5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard  
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**Photo 12 – Building 3 – 5081 Freeport, front (west) facade, under repair**





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Current Photos

Photo 13 – Building 3 & 4 – 5081 & 5101 Freeport, front (west) facades, juxtaposition of brick styles



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Photo 14 – Building 4 – 5121 Freeport, front (west) facade, looking east



Photo 15 – Building 4 – 2001-2005 Freeport, south facade, looking north





**5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard  
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Current Photos**

**Photo 16 – Building 4 – rear (east) facade, partial view, looking west**



5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard  
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Current Photos

Photo 17 – Site – sidewalk on site, looking north



5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard  
Sacramento, California  
Current Photos

Photo 18 – Site – parking area on west side



Photo 19 – Site – pole sign, typical





**5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard  
Sacramento, California  
Current Photos**

**Photo 20 – Setting – Alma Way, east of site, looking north**



**Photo 21 – Setting – Oregon Drive, looking east**





5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard  
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Current Photos

Photo 22 – Setting – 5000-5014 Freeport, looking south



Photo 23 – Setting – 4930 Freeport, former Freeport Plaza Shopping Center, looking southeast



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Current Photos

Photo 24 – Setting – 4910 Freeport, former United California Bank



Photo 25 – Setting – Freeport Boulevard, looking south from site



**5001 – 5171 Freeport Boulevard**  
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**Historic Context**

**Introduction**

The shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard is located south of Sacramento, the capital city of California, which is located in the Sacramento Valley, in the northern portion of California's Central Valley, northeast of the city of San Francisco. Incorporated in 1850, Sacramento got its start with the California Gold Rush (see Figure 1). The most salient feature of the Sacramento Valley is the Sacramento River and Sacramento–San Joaquin River Delta. The site itself is located about 3.25 miles south of the heart of the city of Sacramento, represented by the capital campus, and nearly two miles east of the Sacramento River (see Figure 2). The four subject buildings were developed from 1947 to 1954, within an area that was annexed to the city in 1952. The area as a whole developed primarily as shopping centers and retail stores along the arterial commercial strip, with single-family development behind them, for the most part. Exceptions are the large William Land Park, which is north of the subject site, and what is now the Sacramento Executive Airport, south of the site, both located along Freeport Boulevard. The initial developers of the plats of Hollywood Park Units #2 and #3 were Dr. S. Nicholas Jacobs and Dolores I. Jacobs, who were apparently developing the land as an investment. The real estate firm that purchased the land and organized the sale of lots beginning in 1947 was the Sacramento-based Frank MacBride, Jr., to whom the Jacobs sold the subdivisions (see Figures 10, 11). No architect or single builder was identified for the buildings, and no evidence was found that Frank MacBride developed the commercial buildings himself, although his office was listed in advertisements for residential lots in the two subdivisions.<sup>3</sup> The buildings were developed as a four-building shopping center, constructed in 1947 (Building 1), 1949 (Building 2), 1954 (Building 3), and 1948 (Building 4). They are individually owned buildings on four separate parcels. Research did not reveal whether they were developed by different individuals, but the fact that each displays a different design and were constructed separately would appear to indicate they were developed individually.

*Commercial Character.* The Freeport Boulevard corridor displays a full range of commercial building types, from free-standing retail buildings, to shopping centers, to traditional shopping malls of various sizes (see Photos 22, 23, 24). There are small shopping centers anchored by a grocery store or drug store, and larger malls. There are commercial vernacular buildings and malls, and high-style commercial buildings or commercial buildings with Googie details, and more innovative malls. There are examples of each in the immediate vicinity of the subject site. There are also examples of shopping centers that have replaced or been expanded from earlier free-standing buildings in the corridor, which represents an intensification of uses. Some businesses represent national or regional chains and some appear to be locally owned, as is the case of the businesses at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard

One building in the vicinity of the subject property is listed in the Sacramento Register of Historic & Cultural Resources. This is the historic Senator Savings and Loan, now the Freeport Chase Bank at 4701 Freeport Boulevard, which was identified as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) in a 2017 survey that was developed in conjunction with the mid-century historic context that was prepared that year for the city.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> No similar advertisements in the classified ads or historic photos for sales or rentals of the commercial properties.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Bowen, *4701 Freeport Boulevard Primary Record, Senator Savings and Loan Association building*. Prepared for City of Sacramento. Prepared by GEI Consultants, Inc. and Mead & Hunt, 2017.

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Other mid-twentieth-century buildings or shopping centers of interest in the vicinity of the subject property are not listed in the local or other registers but are nonetheless of interest. Some have been documented in the *Mid-Century Modern in the City of Sacramento, Historic Context Statement* and many were reported on extensively by *The Sacramento Bee* when constructed. Others have been documented as part of Sacramento Mid-Century Modern tours. A number of them were also designed by architects that were significant locally and beyond, including the 1965 New Formalist former United California Bank at 4910 Freeport Boulevard by Sacramento architect Dean F. Unger and the very fashionable former Crossroads shopping mall at 5770 Freeport Boulevard, by the nationally known Ernest J. Kump Associates of Palo Alto, constructed in 1966 (see Photo 24).

*Transportation Networks.* The shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard developed along a road originally constructed to access the town of Freeport in the mid-nineteenth century, but did not serve development of any density south of the city of Sacramento until these areas were developed and annexed to the city in the mid-twentieth century. The city of Sacramento slowly expanded to the south, north, and east in this era. Transportation networks radiated out from the south side of the city, in a series of corridors that that included highways, arterials, and rail corridors (see Figures 2, 9). The commercial development was designed to accommodate the automobile, the preferred mode of travel in these new neighborhoods. The roughly north-south Freeport Boulevard, on which the subject property is sited, is located somewhat west of center, south of the city. The two arterials that most closely resemble Freeport Boulevard in terms of commercial development (both to the east of the boulevard) are 24<sup>th</sup> Street, a four-lane arterial west of what is today a light rail corridor, and Franklin Boulevard, which is west of Highway 99. Most of the commercial development on 24<sup>th</sup> Street is clustered around the intersection of 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Fruitridge Road; however, Franklin Boulevard (County Highway J8) is a five-lane arterial with similar building types as seen on Freeport Boulevard, with many shopping center buildings (see Figure 13). The commercial development begins at about Sutterville Road and continues south. It does not appear to have the same number of relatively high-style buildings and shopping centers as Freeport Boulevard and South Land Park. It repeats the mid-century commercial development patterns, but in more vernacular forms.

**Early History**

*Freeport Boulevard.* The subject property is located on Freeport Boulevard, which is a commercial arterial that extends south from the city of Sacramento as an extension of 19<sup>th</sup> Street, transitioning to Freeport Boulevard south of Interstate-80 (I-80) on the southern border of the city proper (see Figures 2, 9). Freeport Boulevard was historically the road that connected Sacramento to the small town of Freeport to the south, on the Sacramento River. Today this is marked by the intersection of Freeport Boulevard, west of I-5, and Cosumnes River Boulevard. The Freeport Bridge is a short distance south of this intersection. Freeport, which was about ten miles south of the California State Capitol at Sacramento, was conceived by the Freeport Railroad Company during the California Gold Rush as a means to bypass the



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Sacramento Embarcadero (port) and associated taxes.<sup>5</sup> The railroad was to connect with the Sacramento Valley Railroad at a midpoint between Sacramento and Folsom. Plans for the railroad were recorded in May 1863.<sup>6</sup> The town boomed for three years with a population of 300 to 400.<sup>7</sup> A school and a number of substantial residences developed in Freeport in the late 1800s.<sup>8</sup>

The 1894 soils map of Sacramento County showed the area south of the city, bordering the road to Freeport, as being devoted to a variety of orchards and crops including hops and alfalfa. As Freeport Boulevard continued south, these crops gave way to grain (wheat and barley) and grass. The land closer to the town of Freeport was planted in orchards.<sup>9</sup> Like the subject property itself, the commercial properties that are extant along Freeport Boulevard did not begin to develop until the late 1940s through the 1960s.

*The Pierce and Wilson Tract.* 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard is within what was called the Pierce and Wilson Tract when first surveyed in the modern era on October 15, 1896.<sup>10</sup> The survey was completed by A.S. Winn (also seen as A.G. Winn), an engineer and surveyor, for E.P. Wilson. Seven lots were surveyed and four were identified with owners: Lot 1, Mrs. M.E. Dodge; Lot 2, E.P. Wilson; Lot 3, F. Pierce; and Lot 4, N.S. Wilson. The lots were within Section 24 of T8N and R4E (Mt. Diablo BM). The survey was recorded on December 12, 1896.

Further subdivision took place in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and by the time of the 1903 map of Sacramento County, the land was composed of four parcels, owned by F. Piece, N.S. Wilson, E.P. Wilson, and C.B. Wilson, with E.P. Wilson owning the largest parcel (see Figure 6).<sup>11</sup> The area as a whole was referred to as Sutter. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) map from 1902 shows only one building in the vicinity of the subject property, which was about halfway between the Sutterville Road, the southern boundary of the city of Sacramento until the mid-twentieth century, and the east-west Fruitridge Road, north of the Sacramento Municipal Airport.

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<sup>5</sup> "Plan of located line of the Freeport Railroad," May 1863.

[http://www.sacramentohistory.org/admin/photo/869\\_1663.pdf](http://www.sacramentohistory.org/admin/photo/869_1663.pdf), accessed February 2022.

<sup>6</sup> "Plan of located line of the Freeport Railroad," May 1863.

[http://www.sacramentohistory.org/admin/photo/869\\_1663.pdf](http://www.sacramentohistory.org/admin/photo/869_1663.pdf), accessed February 2022.

<sup>7</sup> "Freeport, California," *Wikipedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freeport,\\_California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freeport,_California), accessed February 2022.

<sup>8</sup> "Freeport," *Center for Sacramento History*, <https://sacramento.pastperfectonline.com/search>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>9</sup> McClatchy, James, "Map of Sacramento County, California showing uses of the soil." James McClatchy & Co., Publishers, 1894.

<sup>10</sup> The first survey in the area was conducted in 1852 and approved in 1865. As late as 1872, however, the NW quarter of Section 24 was part of an awarded grant, while the remaining quarter sections were returned to the U.S. as "swamp and overflow land." Nonetheless, land was awarded within the swamp land to several parties in the 1860s. It is not known whether John S. Wilson, who was awarded 160 acres there for his military service, was a relative of the later Wilson owners.

<sup>11</sup> Britton & Rey, H. J. Furley, "Official Map of Sacramento County, California. Compiled from Official Surveys by J. C. Boyd, County Surveyor, 1903," <https://neatlinemaps.com/sacramento/nl-00637/1903-britton-rey-official-map-of-sacramento-county>, accessed February 2022.

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**Developmental History**

The Developers. The next survey of the subject property occurred in November 1945 in preparation for the subdivision of Unit #2 of Hollywood Park, the northern portion of the subject property. It was conducted by engineer Joseph E. Spink and prepared for S. Nicholas Jacobs and Dolores Irvin Jacobs, husband and wife, and recorded on July 29, 1946. The next survey was undertaken in November 1947, also by Spink. It was again undertaken for S. Nicholas Jacobs and Dolores I. Jacobs, in preparation for the subdivision of Unit #3 of Hollywood Park, the southern portion of the subject property, and recorded on November 26, 1947. On the plat drawings the land was still referred to as the Pierce Wilson Tract (see Figures 7, 8).

The 1952 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows that the subject property was still outside the city limits at this time, although the roads were in place and annexation of this area would take place that same year. The Sacramento Drainage Canal Levee traveled east-west to the south of the area between the north-south Southern Pacific Railway and the north-south Western Pacific Railway.

In a complex real estate deal, Hollywood Units #2 and #3 were sold via shares to real estate developer Frank MacBride, Jr. of Sacramento and paid for with a promissory note.<sup>12</sup> Although the land was worth \$175,000 according to an assessment made by MacBride, a promissory note worth approximately \$122,550 was paid off in four installments between 1948 and 1951.<sup>13</sup> Frank MacBride continued to sell the lots through the late 1970s (see Figure 10).<sup>14</sup>

The Annexations. Discussion of the city's plans to annex the areas south of the city of Sacramento began in *The Sacramento Bee* in the mid-1940s (see Figure 12). A headline on April 13, 1946, read, "Tracts South Of The City Take First Annexation Step." The article noted that residents south of the city in the vicinity of Freeport Boulevard were petitioning for annexation, based on a Notice of Intent brought forward by the property owners and presented to the city council. This annexation would cover the area between the two north-south railroad tracks and go as far south as the Sacramento Municipal Airport (the Sacramento Executive Airport today) and would include Hollywood Park and nine other tracts (see Figure 14). Expanded and improved sewer and water service was part of the discussion in this annexation proposal.<sup>15</sup>

A large newspaper feature in 1953 announced, "Sacramento Expands Southward Through Four Annexation Elections."<sup>16</sup> The city completed four annexations in three months, adding 18,043 people to the city, bringing the total population of the city to 155,615 people. Among the businesses that were annexed was a Raley's grocery store and shopping center at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Fruitridge Road, opened in

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<sup>12</sup> Jacobs v. Comm'r of Internal Revenue, 21 T.C. 165 (U.S.T.C. 1953) (court case).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> A headline on April 13, 1946 read, "Tracts South Of The City Take First Annexation Step," *The Sacramento Bee*, page 4.

<sup>16</sup> "Sacramento Expands Southward Through Four Annexation Elections," *The Sacramento Bee*, November 4, 1953:56.

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1953, at a commercial crossroads about two-thirds of a mile (as the crow flies) from the subject property, south of Hollywood Park (see Figure 13). The subject property was part of the Sutterville Heights annexation of November 21, 1952, which generally extended from the south boundary of the city at William Land Park to the Sacramento Drainage Canal on the south, and the Southern Pacific line on the west to 24<sup>th</sup> Street on the east. It brought 10,166 people into the city, and 1,011 acres of land.<sup>17</sup> The 1954 USGS map was the first to show the complete street grid in the vicinity of the subject property and its relationship to the city limits.<sup>18</sup>

*Policies and Planning.* The population estimate for Sacramento and immediate surrounds in 1947 was 119,984 people, according to the profile in the city directory from that year.<sup>19</sup> From 1946 to 1955 the city completed a total of 28 separate annexations (see Figure 12). At the same time, a 1955 special census indicated that the city had seen a 6.2% decline in population between 1950 to 1955 within the area measured before the annexations occurred. And the Old City had seen a corresponding population decline of 14.2%. The special census of 1955 indicated a population of 157,182 and more growth was forecasted as additional annexations were occurring at the time the 1959 plan was being developed.<sup>20</sup> Although the prognostications were vague, the discussion seemed to indicate that population growth was anticipated as significant within the annexed areas, such as those annexations south of the city that included the Hollywood Park Units #1-4.

The 1959 General Plan for Sacramento showed the Freeport Boulevard corridor as earmarked for “General Commercial” development along its length in the vicinity of the subject property, surrounded by industrial land to the south, in the vicinity of the airport, and medium density residential land at the north end, south of William Land Park. The proposed locations of shopping centers and malls were shown (see Figure 15). The intent of the commercially designated land was described as follows. It was intended that commercial development in the central business district would become more intense. Despite what was shown along Freeport Boulevard, however, the intent of the plan was stated as, “This Land Use Plan recommends the non-expansion of shoestring commercial developments along major streets and substitutes the location of organized shopping centers spaced about one mile apart at the intersection of major streets and highways.”<sup>21</sup>

The map accompanying the 1965 General Plan for Sacramento County continued to show “Other Commercial” along either side of Freeport Boulevard from the south side of William Land Park to about the halfway point (traveling south) at the airport on the west side of Freeport.<sup>22</sup>

The policies in the 1985 Sacramento County General Plan were to encourage the concentration of commercial activities in downtown Sacramento as the “major employment, cultural, and governmental

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<sup>17</sup> City of Sacramento Historic Growth by Annexation, s://division/info/annexation/annexhist.xlw, December 2013.

<sup>18</sup> USGS 1954.

<sup>19</sup> *Sacramento City Directory*, Sacramento, CA: Sacramento Directory Company, Publishers, 1947.

<sup>20</sup> Sacramento Planning Division, *A General Plan for Sacramento*, 1959:5.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Sacramento County, “Sacramento County General Plan 1965,” (map), 1965.

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center for the region” (3.2.1). Other policies included maintaining business districts in the outlying areas “as vital community activity, commercial, and employment centers” (3.2.2) and encouraging retail sales and service type commercial and office facilities to locate in shopping centers or established commercial groupings. “Do not start new strip commercial districts” (3.2.3).<sup>23</sup>

The 2004 *Sacramento City General Plan* (updated from 1988) continued to show Freeport Boulevard from south of William Land Park to the mid-way point of the airport (traveling south) as an existing major commercial district. Going forward, the plan stated that the “Commerce/Neighborhood Commercial and Office” land use designation referred to small shopping centers, shopping malls, and smaller office developments that offered goods and services for the daily needs of adjacent residential areas. “These uses may be located adjacent to residential areas without significant adverse impacts.”<sup>24</sup> Goals included ensuring that “all areas of the City are adequately served by neighborhood/community shopping districts” and to encourage investment and patronage for centers and strips that are ‘blighted, have a high vacancy rate, or a lack of variety of goods and services’ through direct assistance or flexible zoning to encourage revitalization.<sup>25</sup>

**The Businesses and the People**

*The Property Owners.* All the property owners involved in the land subdivision of the subject property and its development from the turn of the nineteenth century through the 1970s appear to have invested in the property on a speculative basis.

The land that would later become Hollywood Park Units #2 and #3 was surveyed by A.S. Winn (also seen as A.G. Winn), an engineer and registered surveyor in Sacramento, in 1896. Four lots were created at this time, totaling about 48 acres (another approximately 94 acres were included in the survey). By the time of the 1903 map of Sacramento the lots were owned by F. Pierce, N.S. Wilson, E.P. Wilson, and C.B. Wilson (see Figure 6). Real estate transfers that were published in the last decade of the nineteenth century reveal that several transfers of properties between these principles occurred at this time. There is no record of the land being utilized for anything but real estate speculation. It is called the Pierce Wilson Tract to this day.

The first developers of the land on which the commercial property sits were the couple who subdivided Hollywood Park Unit #2 and Unit #3 (see Figures 7, 8). This couple, Dr. S. Nicholas and Dolores Irvin Jacobs, apparently undertook the project for investment purposes. S. Nicholas Jacobs (1882-1964) was a surgeon who was the founder of Doctor’s Hospital on Sutter Street in San Francisco. When he died it was known as the Golden Gate Hospital, which he sold in 1959 after operating it for 23 years. He did research at the University of California and taught at Stanford University before opening his practice. Dr. Jacobs and his second wife, Dolores Irvin Jacobs (1909-1995), lived in San Francisco in the 1930s but by 1940

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<sup>23</sup> Sacramento County Policy Planning Commission, *The Sacramento County General Plan*. Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, July 1982 as amended April, 1985:67.

<sup>24</sup> Sacramento City Council, *The Sacramento City General Plan*, January 1988 as amended through December 2004:4-10.

<sup>25</sup> Sacramento City Council, 2004:4-17.



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had moved to Ross, an exclusive community in Marin County, where Mrs. Jacobs often appeared in the society pages of the *Marin Independent Journal*. Their modern home in Marin County, referred to elsewhere as an estate, was featured in the *San Francisco Examiner* in 1951. They apparently still held their residence in the prestigious Pacific Heights neighborhood of San Francisco while living in Marin County.

Hollywood Park Units #2 and #3, within which the subject property is located, was sold by the Jacobs to Frank MacBride, Jr., a real estate developer in Sacramento, for a promissory note valued at \$175,000 that was paid off from 1947 through 1951 (see Figures 10, 11).<sup>26</sup> The buildings were constructed in 1947 (Building 2), 1948 (Building 4), 1949 (Building 1), and 1954 (Building 3). MacBride did not hold title to Hollywood Park Units #2 and #3 until after the first three buildings were constructed.

Frank MacBride, Jr. (1912-2010) founded his real estate firm of MacBride Realty Co. in 1936 according to the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary advertisement for his company. At the time the firm had four offices and 50 trained staff, including five managers. Frank MacBride, Jr. was the son of a Sacramento area candy manufacturer. His other son, Thomas J. MacBride, was a state assemblyman and attorney. A third son was a California State Grange official. The family had been located in Sacramento since 1914. Numerous classified advertisements placed by the MacBride Realty Co. to sell houses and property were seen in the *Sacramento Bee* in the 1950s through the 1970s.

No one builder was identified for the residential or commercial properties, although builder John Fernandez of Sierra Builders is named as the developer of 128 Minimal Traditional homes in Hollywood Park, which he called Hollywood Park View.<sup>27</sup> An article by Jason Holt of Hollywood Park also identified the company of Parsons and Jacobs as building in the area in the 1930s.<sup>28</sup> Sales records from Fernandez and other builders document that multiple houses were being built at once and then sold to individuals in the late 1940s.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, builders might work in several subdivisions. For example, John Fernandez built more than 1,000 homes in eight subdivisions during his 45-year career including South Land Park Village and Hollywood Park.<sup>30</sup> He also built the Raley's grocery store at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Fruitridge Boulevard, the major grocery store in proximity to the subject property, and other commercial buildings (see Figure 13).

*The Neighborhood.* The article by Jason Holt for the *Hollywood Park Herald* was developed for the 2016 Sacramento Mid-Century Modern Home Tour and re-published in the *Hollywood Park Herald* in Fall 2016.<sup>31</sup> Holt noted that the subdivisions were marketed to middle class buyers, for the most part. He

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<sup>26</sup> The sale was apparently made necessary due to ill health. The Jacobs were eventually held liable to the IRS for \$42,109.63 for the transfer of the property that took place beginning in 1948. This was later resolved. *Jacobs v. Comm'r of Internal Revenue*, 21 T.C. 165 (U.S.T.C. 1953).

<sup>27</sup> Jason Holt "A Brief History of Hollywood Park," *Hollywood Park Herald*, Fall 2016.

<sup>28</sup> Holt, 2016:4. Note that this must have occurred in another section of Hollywood Park, because Units #2 and #3 did not develop that early.

<sup>29</sup> "Capital Builders Sold More Than 100 Homes In Month," *The Sacramento Bee*, February 12, 1949:9.

<sup>30</sup> "John Fernandez, Local Builder, Dies At 79," *The Sacramento Bee*, July 8, 1966:33.

<sup>31</sup> Holt, Jason, "A Brief History of Hollywood Park," *Hollywood Park Herald*, Fall 2016.

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called it, “. . . the epitome of an all-American post-war suburb.” Holt talks about the social nature of the place, where families celebrated holidays together and where the businesses were considered part of the neighborhood: “Ott’s Ice Cream, which was located at the corner of Freeport and Irvin, gave free ice cream cones to students who earned at least three A’s on their report card. Hollywood Park resident E.P. Lawrence’s Variety Store, located nearby, held yo-yo contests and hula hoop competitions for neighborhood children.” In 1959 Lawrence opened the 18,000 square foot Lawrence’s Department Store in the Hollywood Plaza Shopping Center just north of the subject property. It attracted local patrons as well as those from the surrounding suburbs. This business, which was previously at 5121 Freeport, likely served as an anchor store when at this address.<sup>32</sup>

Holt noted that from the late 1960s the neighborhood experienced somewhat of a decline as some families moved to newer suburbs and “many original residents who remained were now too old to maintain their properties.” But new families moved in in the late 1990s and 2000s and the area experienced a revival, as new residents appreciated the location and affordability of the older suburban development and invested in the properties. It was voted “Best Neighborhood” by the *Sacramento News and Review* in 2010.<sup>33</sup>

The Businesses. The following table illustrates the types of businesses that were in place within the subject buildings for about a 30-year period, from 1952 through 1981, which follows the time from when the area was annexed (but before Building 3 was constructed in 1954) and how long they were in business. It is evident that sometimes a business might change its name, e.g. J.P. Ruddy bakery in 1952 to Hollywood Bakery in 1953 (in the earliest years it was popular for the business to take on the proprietor’s name). At times it appears that the business stayed the same, but acquired a new owner; for example, Riverside Fabrics became Shannon’s Riverside Fabrics about 1975. The range of businesses demonstrated that the property operated as a neighborhood shopping center, with such long-time, diverse businesses as a shoe repair, tailor, ice cream store, tavern, women’s clothing store, bakery, fabric store, grocery and meat store, cleaners, jewelers, shoe store, pharmacy, and department or variety store. Several businesses, such as the Hollywood Vogue women’s clothing, Medina Veteran’s Shoe Repair, and the Checker Club Tavern, were present the entire approximately 30 years that were researched (see also Table 1).

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<sup>32</sup> Holt, 2016:6.

<sup>33</sup> Holt, 2016:6.

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**Table 2: Businesses in the shopping center, 1952-1981**

<b>Building 1:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2101 Irvin Way</b> – Medina Veteran's Shoe Repair, 1952 through 2021; now Sweet &amp; Joy</li> <li>• <b>2108 Irving Way</b> – Fred Gutt Tailor, 1952 through at least 1965</li> <li>• <b>5001 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Ott's Confectionary/Ice Cream, 1952 through at least 1960 + Hollywood Vogue women's clothing, ca 1965 through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>5003/5003 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Hollywood Vogue women's clothing, 1952 through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>5011 Freeport Boulevard</b> – J.D. Tapp tavern, 1952; Hollywood Bottle Shop, 1953 through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>5015 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Checker Club tavern, 1952, through at least 1981</li> </ul>
<b>Building 2:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5031 Freeport Boulevard</b> – J.P. Ruddy bakery, 1952; Hollywood Pastry Shop, 1953; Merritt's Gallery Picture Frames, 1965; Freeport Vacuum, 1981</li> <li>• <b>5039 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Riverside Fabrics, 1970; Shannon's Riverside Fabrics, 1975; Postal Instant Press, 1981</li> <li>• <b>5041 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Cardinal Grocery Stores &amp; Serv-U Meats, 1952; Fairway Market &amp; O'Brien's Gold Star Meats, 1960, 1965</li> <li>• <b>5051 Freeport Boulevard</b> – W.M. Whitten optometry, 1952; Roger J. Barr optometry, 1960 + Hollywood Jewelers, through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>5061 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Spotless Cleaners, Vasconcellas watch repair, 1952; Spotless Cleaners/ Hollywood Jewelers, 1953; Spotless Cleaners, 1960 through at least 1970; Ho Chin Co. grocery, 1981</li> <li>• <b>5069 Freeport Boulevard</b> – The Shoe Box, 1953; Ho Chin Co. grocery, 1965, through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>5071 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Mrs. Wieger ceramic studio, 1952; Unique ceramic studio, 1953.</li> </ul>
<b>Building 3:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5081 Freeport Boulevard</b> - Phil's Pharmacy – beginning ca 1960 until ca 1975; Shannon's Fabrics, 1975 until ca 2021.</li> </ul>
<b>Building 4:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5101 Freeport Boulevard</b> – J.E. Phillips drugs, 1952; Phil's Pharmacy, 1953; Freeport Auto Supply, 1960; Freeport Hobby &amp; Ceramics, 1970; Taylor's Instant Framing, 1975, through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>5121 Freeport Boulevard</b> – E.P. Lawrence dept. store, 1952; Lawrence's Variety Store, 1970; Riverglen Carpets, 1981</li> <li>• <b>5131 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Blossom Shops, Inc., 1981</li> <li>• <b>5141 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Mrs. Hays beauty shop, 1952; Hollywood Beauty &amp; Barber Shop, 1953; Hollywood Barber Shop, 1975; Workshop Barbers, 1981</li> <li>• <b>5151 Freeport Boulevard</b> – Hollywood Hardware, 1952 (&amp; Post Office, 1955); Dave's Shoes, 1970, through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>2001 Oregon Drive</b> – R.S. Westover, dentist, 1960, through at least 1981</li> <li>• <b>2005 Oregon Drive</b> – Harold R. Kelly, physician, 1955; Frank R. Manford &amp; Hilda J. Keppler, chiropractors, 1981</li> </ul>

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**The Chinese in Sacramento**

Chinese and Chinese Americans have a strong presence in the subject shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard, as well as in the suburbs south of Sacramento in general and in other commercial suburban enclaves. The Chinese came to California at the outset of the California Gold Rush and like thousands of others, made their way to the gold fields through Sacramento. They also settled in Sacramento, developing businesses that catered to the miners, among other commercial activities. The heart of what became Chinatown in early years is generally described as I and J Streets between Front and Sixth Streets.<sup>34</sup> In addition to commercial activities in Sacramento, which contained the largest population of Chinese immigrants outside of San Francisco, Chinese were instrumental in completing the transcontinental railroad and in many other ways, built the infrastructure of the west. Chinese nationals continued to immigrate to the U.S. in the second decade of the twentieth century to settle permanently as conditions worsened in China. Later, they fled Communist China.<sup>35</sup>

Chinese and other ethnic minorities, such as the Japanese, settled in enclaves in Sacramento, where they could avoid the rampant discrimination and develop and patronize their own business communities. Chinatown and Japantown were destroyed during the urban renewal era in Sacramento, necessitating the dispersal of residents and businesses. After overcoming housing discrimination through legislation and reformed real estate practices, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and other minorities settled in the suburbs, followed by their businesses, churches, and social organizations. The transformation of 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard shopping center represents this trend, which, according to available research, began about 1965 with the opening of the Ho Chin Co. grocery

Discrimination against Chinese was formalized with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, and which continued to be in effect in various forms until 1943, when the prohibition against Chinese naturalization was lifted. Chinese and Chinese Americans in Sacramento at mid-century, as well as other ethnic minorities, however, were most impacted by urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s, when Sacramento's Chinatown in the West End was redlined (a process whereby property seekers were denied mortgages due to poor conditions). And at the same time, they faced housing discrimination, making renting and buying property in other parts of Sacramento very difficult.<sup>36</sup> Urban renewal in Chinatown was followed by the construction of I-5, which bifurcated this part of the city, further impacting it as an ethnic enclave.<sup>37</sup> As one author noted, "Two major conditions occurring simultaneously, the flight of families to single house

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<sup>34</sup> I and J Streets became the center of the redevelopment of the Capitol Mall, as well as the site of the new Chinese cultural center in the 1970s. "Front Chinatowns to Ethnoburbs . . . Part II Sacramento," *Sacramento Chinese Culture Foundation (newsletter)*, July 2012:4.

<sup>35</sup> "From Chinatowns to Ethnoburbs . . . Part II Sacramento," *Sacramento Chinese Culture Foundation (newsletter)*, July 2012:4.

<sup>36</sup> Racially restrictive covenants that affected minorities' abilities to obtain an FHA sponsored mortgages was legally enforceable until 1948. Thomas W. Joo, "Urban Renewal and Sacramento's Lost Japantown," *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, Vol. 92, Issue 3, March 6, 2018:1010.

<sup>37</sup> Note that Japantown was also completely destroyed by urban renewal, which impacted both residences and businesses. Joo, 2018:1022.



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dwellings in the suburbs and the political force of redevelopment, seemed to spell doom to the once colorful bustling center.”<sup>38</sup>

Sacramento's Chinese and Chinese American community had begun to change in other ways in this timeframe. Chinese Americans who fought in World War II were able to take advantage of the GI Bill. While many Chinese valued education, this opportunity further catapulted many into the middle class.<sup>39</sup> Chinese families began moving to the suburbs, paralleling the general move to the suburbs at this time.<sup>40</sup> Many Asians settled in South Land Park, west of Hollywood Park, among other mid-century neighborhoods that developed south of Sacramento at this time.

The Chinese were limited in what types of businesses they could engage in by early legislation. Chinese grocery stores were a business that they participate in and at which they excelled. “By 1960, Chinese American owned stores were twenty percent of the total number of grocery stores and supermarkets in the city, even though Chinese Americans were only 1.3% of the population in the Sacramento area.”<sup>41</sup> The first known Asian business in the subject shopping center was the Ho Chin Co. grocery and stock room (still extant today as the Ho Chin Market), which first appeared ca 1965. Chinese and other Asians continue to have a large presence in the industry, now represented by the modern supermarket. In just two examples, the large grocery store that anchors the fashionable South Hills Shopping Center is now a Vietnamese market and the very popular Oto's Marketplace, a Japanese market across the street from the subject property, is a destination market in the city.

A group of Chinese Americans were also involved in development in the south suburbs. Daniel S. Chan, who owned a wholesale produce company, among other businesses, developed commercial and residential properties in South Land Park with his brothers in the early 1950s and in Riverside Estates in the 1960s.<sup>42</sup> They were among the parties that built the shopping center at Sutterville Road and South Land Park Drive, on the south border of the William Land Golf Course, which is anchored by a Sprouts grocery store today.

Transition to Asian businesses. Businesses catering to the Asian community began appearing in the shopping center in the mid-1960s with the appearance of the Ho Chin Co. grocery and stock room (still extant today as the Ho Chin Market). Asian-oriented businesses at the time of the 1996 city directory include the Hong Kong Wok (5019, likely a restaurant), Chan Mike Wan Restaurant (5021), Kushi Salon (5037), and Lilly's Hair Design (5051, still extant). Today the businesses that cater in part to an Asian

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<sup>38</sup> “Sacramento's Chinese of Yee Fow,” (manuscript), <http://www.yeefowmuseum.org/yeefowhistory.pdf>, accessed February 2022:8. A new Chinatown or rather Chinese cultural center in Sacramento was constructed in the 1970s after urban renewal but it never regained the same character as the original. In the meantime, many residents had fled to the suburbs. “From Chinatowns to Ethnoburbs . . . Part II Sacramento,” *Sacramento Chinese Culture Foundation* (newsletter), July 2012:4.

<sup>39</sup> “New politics, customs gain foothold,” *The Sacramento Bee*, June 17, 1986:1.

<sup>40</sup> The newly developing suburbs south of Sacramento is only one place in the city that was developing. The city also expanded to the north and east.

<sup>41</sup> “Introduction to Sacramento's Chinatown,” Chinese American Museum of Northern California, <https://chineseamericanmuseum.com/sacramentochinatown>, accessed February 2022.

<sup>42</sup> “Daniel S. Chan, a family businessman of many parts,” *The Sacramento Bee*, April 15, 2004:86.

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clientele and that are likely Asian-owned include the Happy Hour Foot Spa, the New Hong Kong Wok, the Jade Fountain Café, the QQ Beauty Salon, the Ho Chin Market, Tealicious, BQ Food and B&N Market, Boba Café, and Lilly's Hair Design. All these businesses have signs in both English and Chinese.

Property ownership today. Each of the four buildings in the shopping center is owned by a separate party (as is the similar shopping center across Freeport Boulevard). Three out of four of the buildings are owned by parties with Chinese names. An exception is Building 3, which was purchased from a family with a Chinese name. These three owners live relatively close by, according to the mailing addresses associated with the properties.

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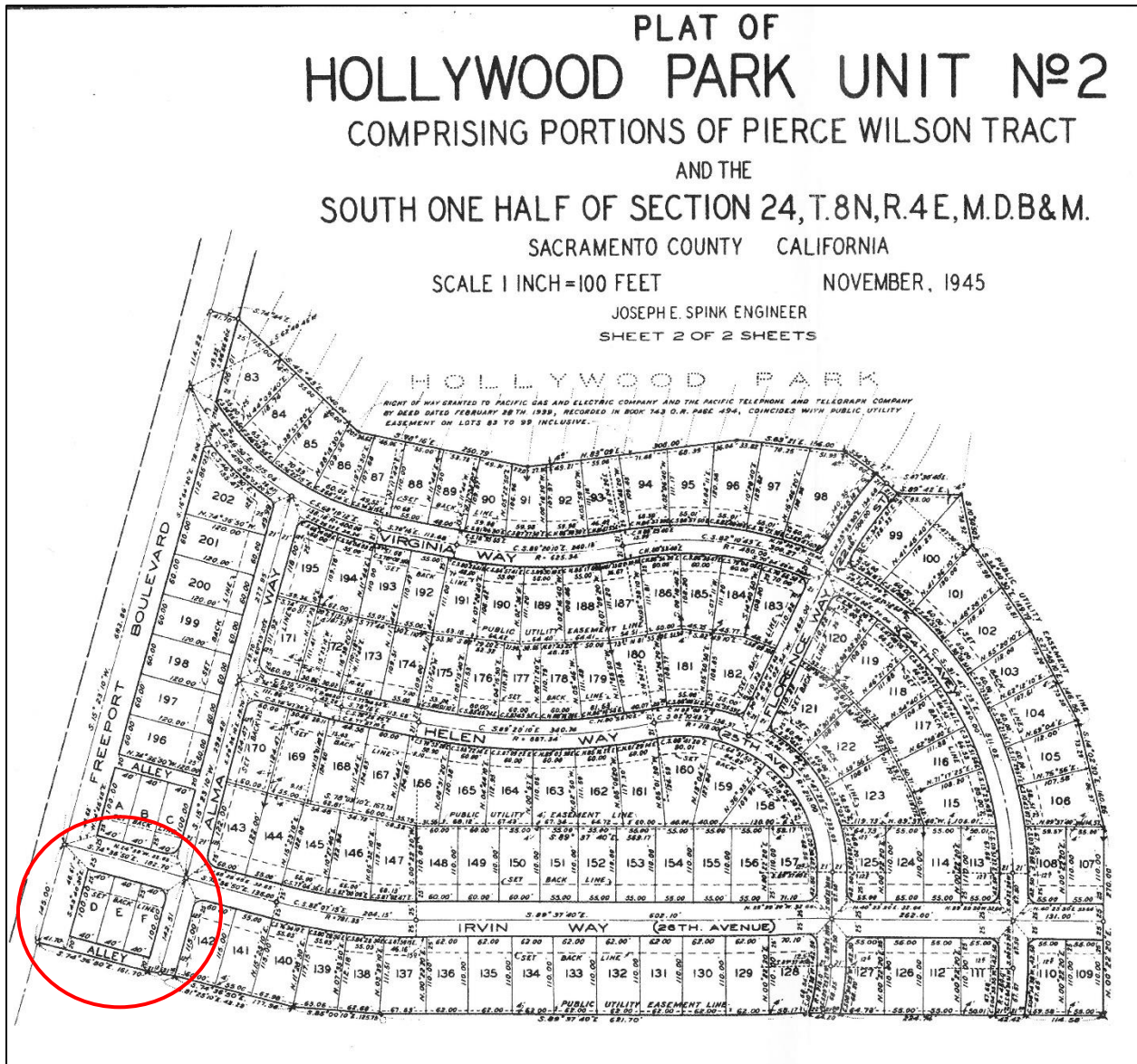
Figure 6 - 1903 map of Sacramento County (excerpt)



Official map of Sacramento County, Compiled by J.C. Boyd, County Surveyor

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Figure 7 - Hollywood Park Unit #2, 1945, commercial parcels are circled

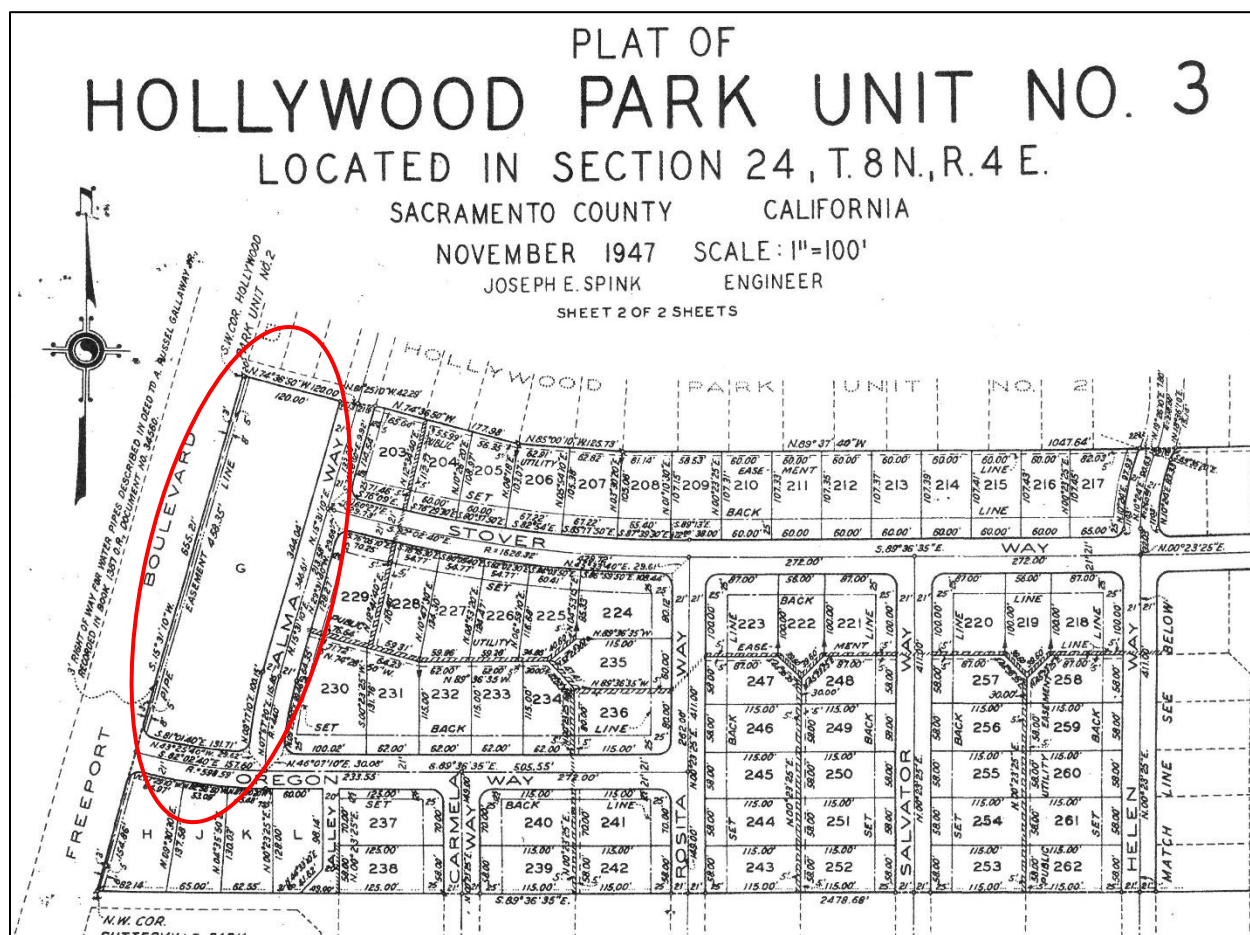


Source: Sacramento County Assessor



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Figure 8 - Hollywood Park Unit #3, 1947, commercial parcels are circled

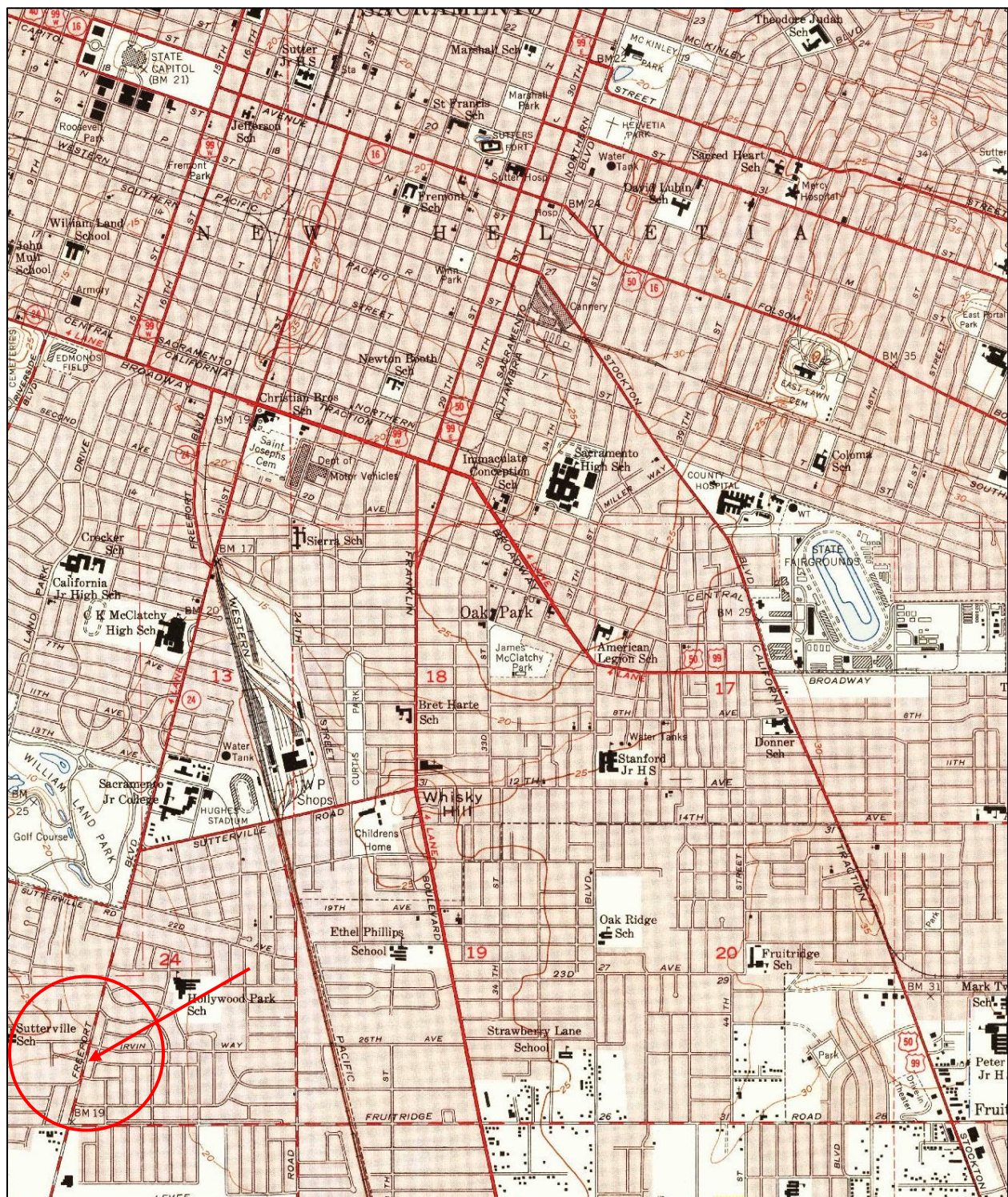


Source: Sacramento County Assessor



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Figure 9 - 1954 map shows subdivision developments south of the city

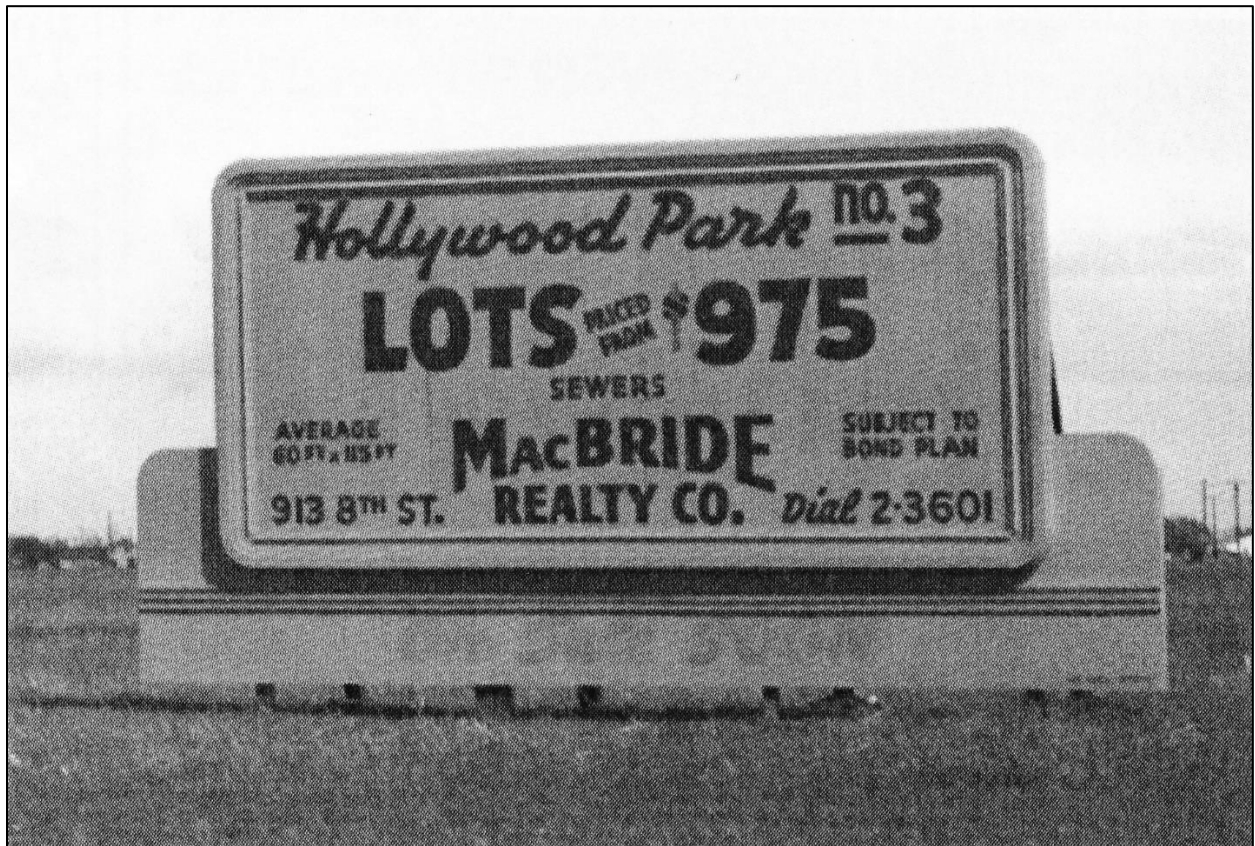


Source: USGS map, Sacramento East, 1:24,000



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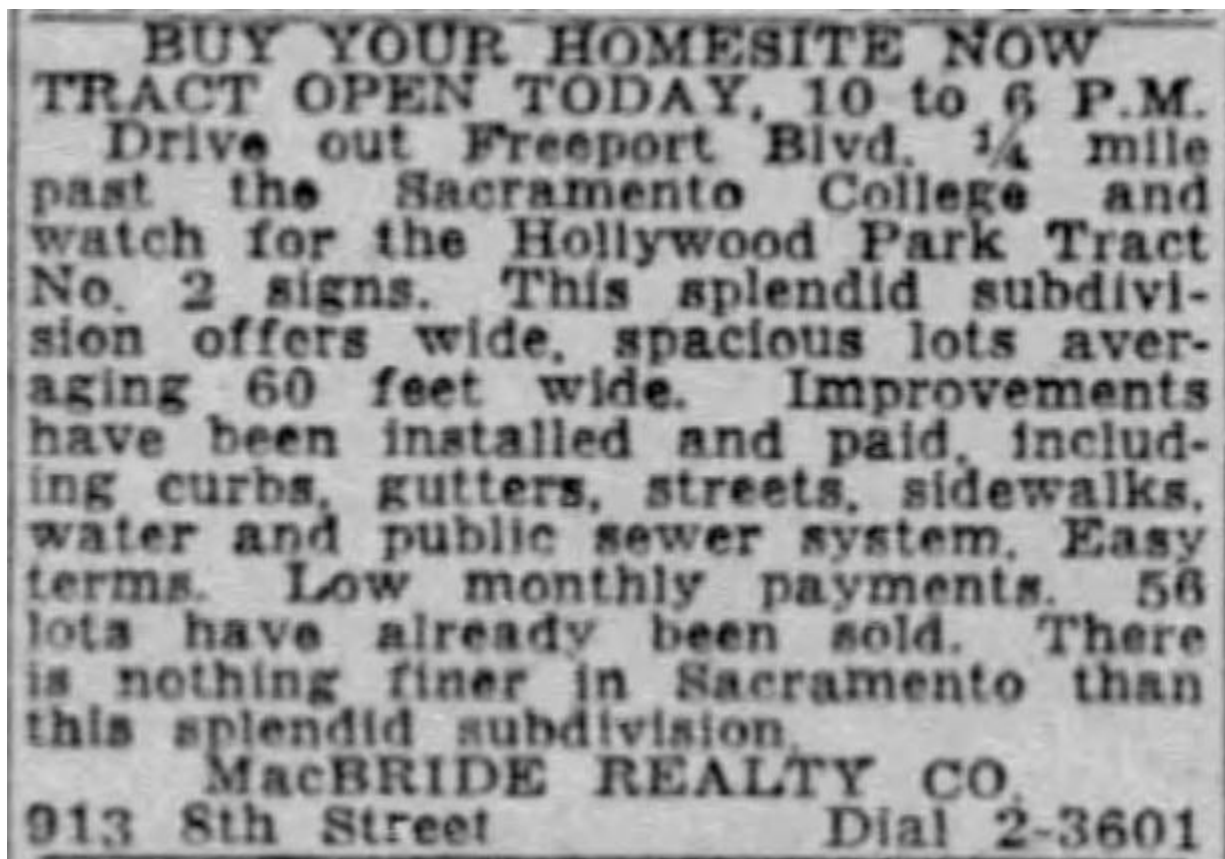
Figure 10 - Sales sign for Hollywood Park No. 3, McBride Realty Company



Source: *Hollywood Park Herald*, Fall 2016

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Figure 11 - Classified advertisement from August 2, 1947 for Hollywood Park homes

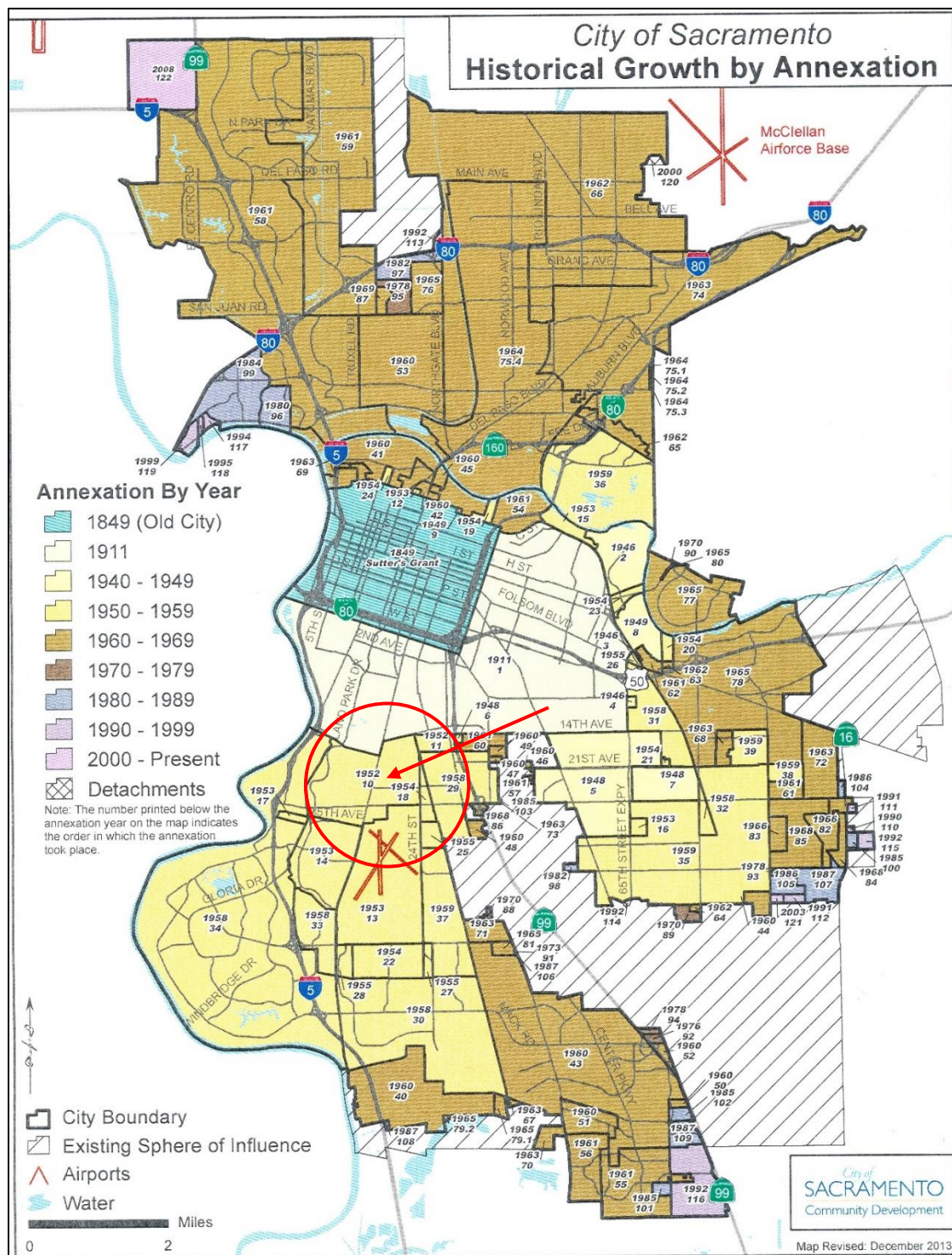


Source: *The Sacramento Bee*



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Figure 12 - Annexations



Source: City of Sacramento

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Figure 13 - Raley's grocery at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Fruitridge Road, Hollywood Park to left



Source: *The Sacramento Bee*, November 4, 1953

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Figure 14 - Freeport Boulevard looking north from airport, 1955

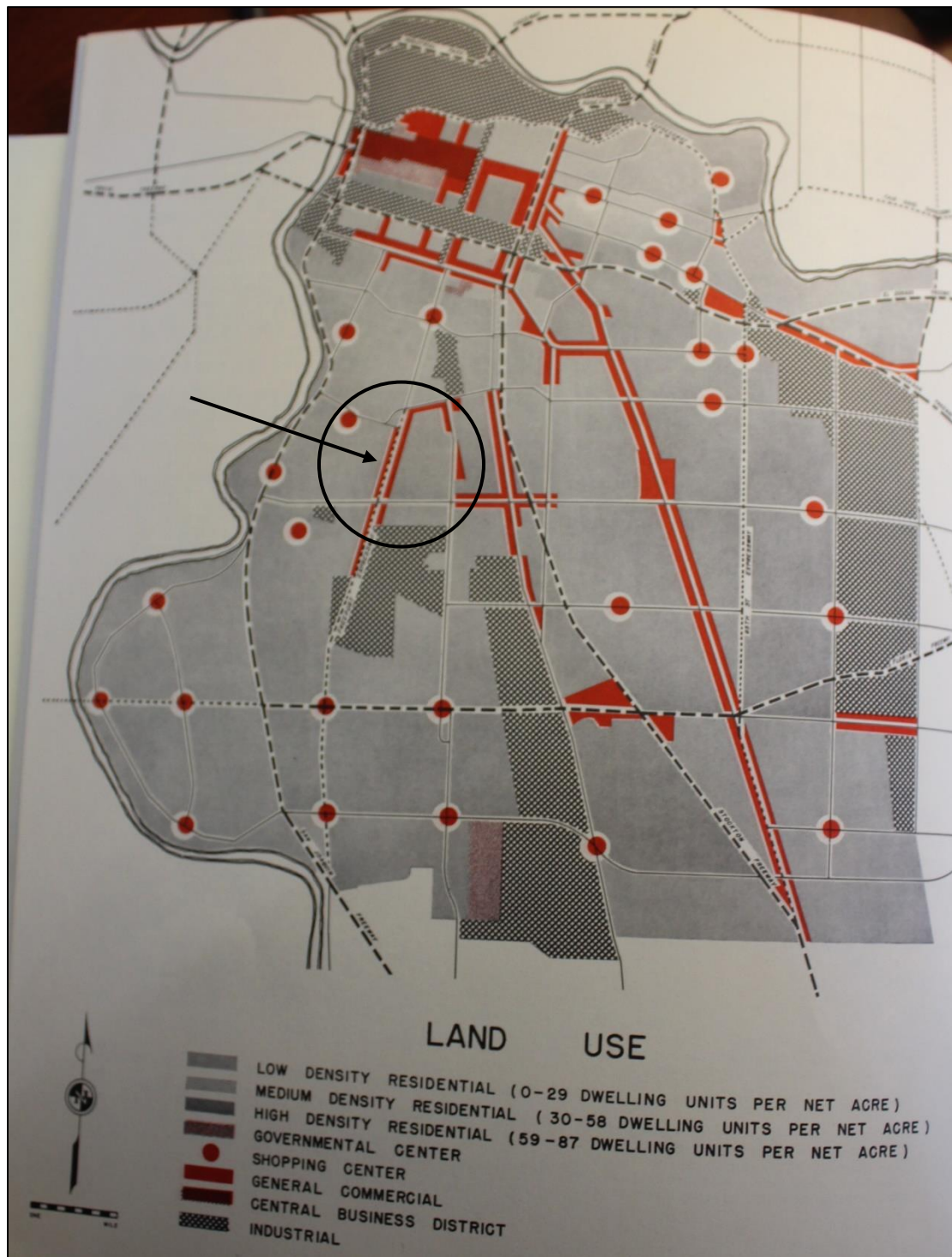


Source: Center for Sacramento History



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Figure 15 - The Sacramento County General Plan Land Use map, 1959



Source: The Sacramento County General Plan



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**Summary**

As a resource type, the shopping center (sometimes referred to as a strip mall) at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard in Sacramento is a grouping of four separate buildings laid out in a linear pattern on four parcels housing approximately 20 commercial businesses with separate storefronts. The development was constructed from 1947 to 1954 as part of the Hollywood Park Units #2 and #3, two subdivisions with single-family development behind the commercial buildings along Freeport Boulevard. This is a typical development pattern within the approximately two-mile-long commercial strip of the major transportation corridor of Freeport Boulevard between William Land Park and the Sacramento Executive Airport. The subdivisions were sold to real estate developer Frank MacBride, Jr., who bought the land between 1947 and 1951. No architect or single builder was identified for the design and/or construction of the buildings. The buildings developed individually, each on its own parcel.<sup>43</sup> The parcels are owned by four separate parties today.

When developed, the shopping center operated as a neighborhood shopping center, offering such goods and services as a shoe repair, tailor, ice cream store, tavern, women's clothing store, bakery, fabric store, grocery and meat store, cleaners, jewelers, shoe store, pharmacy, and department or variety store. It appears the shopping center was at one time anchored by Lawrence's Variety Store, but this business moved to another center and into a larger facility in 1959.

Beginning ca 1965, the first Chinese or Chinese American owned business moved into the shopping center, the Ho Chin Co. grocery and stock room (still extant). This coincided in time with the decimation of Chinese (and other underrepresented groups) traditional business districts and homes in downtown Sacramento through urban renewal. These neighborhoods were then further impacted by construction of I-5, forcing the communities to relocate. It also coincided in time with progressive legislation and less discriminatory housing practices, which allowed them to do so. Today the businesses cater to the Chinese community, judging by the signage, which is in both Chinese and English, and the types of businesses. The most common businesses are restaurants, grocery stores, and salon-type businesses (personal services). The buildings are owned by people with Chinese names, with the exception of Shannon's Drapery or Building 3 (now closed). The former owner of this shop bought the building from an owner with a Chinese name.

The one-story buildings are vernacular in design. With the exception of Building 3, which was occupied by one business since ca 1975, the individual storefronts vary in design. The storefronts display the components of a storefront, for the most part, including large display windows, awnings or canopies that extend over the sidewalk along the frontage, and signage, typically mounted on the fascia of the awning. The continuous awnings, regularly punctuated by signage for the individual businesses, provide a unifying element on Buildings 2, 3, and 4. At one time free-standing pole signs appear to have served the buildings, but almost all of these signs are now out of date, in that they do not reflect the names of the businesses that occupy the center today. Lighting is mounted on the soffits of the awnings. Utility spaces,

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<sup>43</sup> Hollywood Park Unit #2 was platted in 1945 and the building was developed in 1947. Hollywood Park Unit #3 was platted in 1947 and the first building was constructed in 1948. Before 1947 there was only one commercial parcel in Hollywood Park Unit #3. By 1954, the construction date of the last building, there were three.

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where dumpsters and utilities are located, are at the rear of the building and parking is located around the perimeter of the building with the exception of the rear of the building, where workers make use of on-street parking. Most of the parking is perpendicular to the storefronts, with only a fire lane, sidewalk and utilities located between this parking and the on-street parking lane on Freeport Boulevard.

Today Building 4 has newer freestanding signage mounted on its face. This is an exception, however, to what is seen on the other buildings. As of January 2022 Building 3 was being remodeled; it is not known what its final appearance will be. There is, for the most part, little consistent architectural expression in the storefronts. Materials are varied and include brick masonry, brick veneer, T 1-11, stucco, corrugated metal, and aluminum or anodized aluminum for doors and windows, with some wood-frame windows.

**Evaluation**

The shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard was evaluated for significance and its potential for listing in the National Register as a shopping center, as defined in the evaluation methodology prepared for National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Project 25-62 (hereafter referred to as the evaluation methodology). It was evaluated under Criteria A, B, and C. Evaluation under Criterion D is typically associated with archaeological resources and focuses on the information potential of a resource. Therefore, the shopping center was not evaluated under Criterion D.

*Criterion A*

The shopping center was evaluated under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce, Social History, Ethnic Heritage, and Community Planning and Development.

The shopping center was evaluated under Criterion A in the area of Commerce, which is defined in *National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*, as “the business of trading goods, services, and commodities.”<sup>44</sup> The shopping center is part of an approximately two-mile-long commercial strip that includes the institutional uses of Sacramento City College, the Sacramento Executive Airport, and William Land Park. However, most of the corridor is developed in free-standing retail buildings and shopping centers within this five-lane transportation corridor and commercial strip. Various architectural styles are represented but most buildings and developments display a vernacular commercial expression. Both national or regional chains and what appear to be independently developed stores are represented. When developed, the subject shopping center was a neighborhood shopping center—in this case independently owned—supplying the types of goods and services that typically cater to residents in an immediate neighborhood. Today the shopping center also appears to be a neighborhood shopping center with independently owned buildings and businesses. While the businesses are different than what they were historically, they also appear to cater to a local clientele.

Because of the modest nature of the buildings, their commonality in the corridor, and the apparent local market, the shopping center is not significant in the area of Commerce. While one business—Lawrence’s Variety Store—appeared to be significant within the community in the early days of the shopping center,

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<sup>44</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*. Washington DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1997:40.

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this anchor had moved on by 1959 to a larger space. The businesses were not identified as an early example of a retail chain, as all appear to be locally owned. No business was identified as representing a significant trend in postwar consumerism. Rather, the businesses both historically and today appear to respond to the ordinary needs for goods and services in the community.<sup>45</sup> The shopping center is not significant in the area of Commerce as compared to other similar properties in the area. The shopping center is not significant under Criterion A for Commerce because of the commonness of these types of local businesses and buildings and the modest setting along this corridor.

The shopping center was also evaluated under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development. Community Planning and Development is defined as, “The design or development of the physical structures of communities” in *National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*.<sup>46</sup> Areas to the south of the city of Sacramento, including Hollywood Park Units #1 through #4, were planned developments that were annexed to the city, along with 28 other annexations that occurred in the postwar era (this development was annexed in 1952, before the last building was constructed in 1954). Hollywood Park consists of single-family homes, most of which are behind the shopping centers and commercial development along Freeport Boulevard. Despite planning policies that attempted to discourage this type of development (“no more strips!”), the corridor was zoned and platted for these commercial types, which is the most common type in the transportation corridor. The city did encourage larger shopping centers in specific nodes (see Figure 15), such as the shopping center at 24<sup>th</sup> Street and Fruitridge Road, two miles from the subject center. It is not clear whether Sacramento was successful, however, in the overall planning goals to concentrate more commercial development in nodes.

While this shopping center was part of a planning process in which vacant land was planned and platted and utilities installed, it did not appear to result in innovations in planning and development during its period of significance. While it was part of the trend toward suburban expansion south of Sacramento, it did not influence resulting development in design or site planning. It was among many developments associated with the demographic shift that populated the suburbs, including supplying the necessary commercial properties that supported the new neighborhoods. It did not introduce new commercial types or businesses nor influence trends in zoning or planning. Thus, the shopping center is not significant for its association with community planning and development policies nor development innovations in the postwar era, as described in the evaluation methodology.

The shopping center was evaluated under Criterion A in the area of Social History and Ethnic Heritage – Asian. Social History is defined in *National Register Bulletin 16A* as, “the history of efforts to promote the welfare of society, the history of society and the lifeways of its social groups.”<sup>47</sup> Ethnic Heritage – Asian is defined as, “The history of persons having origins in the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.”<sup>48</sup> The development at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard became associated with the Chinese

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 16A*, 1997:40.

<sup>47</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 16A*, 1997:41.

<sup>48</sup> Op. cit.

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and Chinese American community when Chinese business owners and/or operators began to move into the development in the mid-1960s. Chinese first came to Sacramento to establish businesses that served California's Gold Rush. They lived in their traditional neighborhood until it was decimated by urban renewal and the construction of the I-5 freeway when, like many others, including other underrepresented populations, they moved to the suburbs, establishing businesses, churches, and social institutions outside the downtown proper.

The shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport is occupied by businesses that are among many that cater to an Asian (and other) clientele and that today occupy shopping centers and freestanding retail stores in the suburbs, including those in the immediate vicinity of the subject properties. There are many examples of this throughout the area. The fashionable South Hills Shopping Center is now anchored by a large Vietnamese grocery, and a portion of Stockton Avenue has been designated "Little Saigon" by the City of Sacramento. The folded plate Mahoroba Japanese Bakery (a block away) is a destination bakery. And the 50-year old Otos Marketplace, which specializes in Japanese and Asian food, is located nearby as well.

Other retail businesses also responded to the same social trends and changing demographics that influenced the location of this center.<sup>49</sup> No specific significant event was identified with the location of this shopping center. No one business or business owner from underrepresented social groups was identified and no services were found that stood out as particularly important to the local community. While the shopping center no doubt provides employment opportunities within the underrepresented community, it is not dissimilar in this regard from other shopping centers within the commercial strip. Per guidance provided by the evaluation methodology, the shopping center is not significant under Criterion A in the areas of Social History or Ethnic Heritage.

The shopping center is not significant under Criterion A in any of the areas of significance discussed in this evaluation.

*Criterion B*

Criterion B applies to properties associated with individuals whose specific contributions to history can be identified and documented as significant in our past at the local, state or national level.<sup>50</sup> Research did not reveal the individual(s) responsible for development of the shopping center, whether a developer, architect or builder. Frank MacBride, Jr., a real estate agent and developer, bought Hollywood Park Units #2 and #3 between 1947 and 1951, but no direct association was found between him and the shopping center itself, although many ads documented his company's role in selling residential lots. Further, MacBride was one of numerous real estate developers operating south of Sacramento at the time. No evidence was found that MacBride was particularly significant for his contribution to the community. The shopping center is not significant under Criterion B for its association with a significant individual.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>50</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Washington DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources, 1990, rev 1995:14.

<sup>51</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 15*, 1995:15.



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*Criterion C*

The shopping center was evaluated under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture. Architecture is defined in *National Register Bulletin 16A, How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* as, “the practical art of designing and constructing buildings and structures to serve human needs.”<sup>52</sup> There are several areas in which a building or buildings may be significant for architecture: embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of a master; possess high artistic value; or, in the case of a historic district, represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.<sup>53</sup>

The shopping center, a common building type, was evaluated for its potential for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, as its most likely association under Criterion C. The center is an example of a linear shopping center, sometimes called a strip mall. As explained in the evaluation methodology, these property types are a connected series of separate commercial businesses located in a single building or grouping of buildings with separate storefronts. These types of centers are ubiquitous along this and other commercial strips south of Sacramento, as well as throughout the country.

The shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard is typical of this building type in that it offers a variety of commercial services and is located in proximity to surrounding single-family housing, its consumer base as a neighborhood shopping center. Individual buildings and storefronts display the components of retail storefronts, but they do not have a continuous appearance, in design terms, across the facade, nor are the canopies a unifying design element. They are present, but each building has a different canopy design and canopies within an individual building can also differ. It is not known whether the buildings had a more uniform appearance prior to any alterations that may have occurred over time and that resulted in the current appearance.

The shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard is ubiquitous as a type along this and other commercial corridors south of Sacramento. It is one of many examples of its type, period, and/or method of construction. Also like a number of others, it displays a vernacular commercial expression. Guidance provided in the evaluation methodology stipulates that for a property or properties like this to be eligible under Criterion C for its design, it must exhibit features that are distinctive and considered important with its local or regional context. This center does not appear to meet this criterion, based on a windshield-level comparison with like shopping centers in this commercial strip. This shopping center is not distinguished beyond being an example of a type that is indicative of this period and which is to this day a common architectural solution to providing goods and services along a transportation corridor. There is also nothing unusual about the method of construction for this center, which is brick masonry construction clad in a variety of finish materials.

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<sup>52</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 16A*, 1997:40.

<sup>53</sup> *National Park Service Bulletin 15*, 1995:17.

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The shopping center was also not found to be significant under Criterion C for the other reasons mentioned in *National Register Bulletin 15* or the evaluation methodology. No architect or master builder was identified for the buildings. Local real estate developer Frank MacBride, Jr. bought the subdivisions within which this shopping center is located about the same time that the buildings were developed, but no architect or builder was found for the buildings themselves and the shopping center was not found to have high artistic value. As such, the shopping center does not possess significance under National Register Criterion C.

Further, while research did not reveal the original design of the individual buildings, it appears they have been heavily modified over time, judging by the materials and design features displayed on the buildings. The building(s) as a whole have fair-to-moderate integrity. They have been impacted by changes in design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Because the shopping center was not found to possess significance under National Register Criteria A, B, or C, it is not necessary to further evaluate its integrity.

In summary, the shopping center at 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard does not possess significance under Criteria A, B, or C and is therefore recommended not eligible for listing in the National Register.

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# Postwar Commercial Evaluation Methodology: Application Worksheet

**Property name:** 5001-5171 Freeport Boulevard

**Property type:** Shopping Center

**Property location:** Sacramento, California

## Identification of Character-defining Features

### Checklist of Character-defining Features Present – Shopping Centers

#### ***Building:***

- ☐ Standalone one- or two-story building with two or more individual stores
- ☒ Houses a variety of commercial services
- ☐ Includes anchor store
- ☐ Originally designed and developed as a single unit; facade may display elements of unified design
- ☒ Includes more than one building within the complex
- ☒ Vernacular with limited architectural detail
- ☐ Displays elements of architectural style or regional influences
- ☒ Large display windows or glass walls on facade
- ☒ Individual storefronts distinguished by storefront width, variation in windows and entrances, signage
- ☒ Individual store signage on building, or on/under awning or canopy
- ☒ Sidewalks along facade covered by awning or canopy
- ☒ Open interior floorplans
- ☐ Rear stockrooms or non-public areas
- ☒ Loading docks, etc. placed away from key public-facing elevations and often on the rear elevation

#### ***Location/site features:***

- ☒ Located along a current or former main thoroughfare or tributary to a thoroughfare
- ☒ Oriented toward the street and/or parking lot with vehicular access
- ☒ Dedicated parking lot with or without lighting
- ☒ Freestanding signage the overall shopping center near the roadway and/or on the building
- ☐ Landscaping elements, planters, furnishings, etc.
- ☐ Additional standalone retail buildings or secondary shopping centers in outlots
- ☐ Physical buffer between the shopping center and surrounding residential neighborhood
- ☒ Refuse and/or recycling area near the rear

### **Analysis of Character-defining Features**

How does subject property represent the property type:

Loss of or changes to character-defining features:

# Research

## Resources Consulted (annotate list as needed)

- ☒ Community and regional histories: An Illustrated History of Sacramento County; History of Sacramento County
- ☐ Clippings files:
- ☒ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1915 republished in 1952
- ☐ Historic photographs:
- ☒ Aerial images: Historic Aerials (web-based program)
- ☒ City directories: Sacramento City Directory, Haines Criss-Cross Directory
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- ☐ Prior DOT compliance surveys:
- ☒ Tax assessor records: Sacramento County Assessor records; Assessor parcel maps; recorded plats
- ☒ City council meeting minutes: Resolution for annexation
- ☒ Reports from community and city planning boards: Sacramento County General Plan 1965; 1985; General Plan for Sacramento, 1959; Sacramento City General Plan 1988-2004; Historic growth by annexation (map)
- ☒ Newspaper articles and advertisements: Sacramento Bee, numerous articles; San Francisco Examiner
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce publications:
- ☐ Industry and trade publications and periodicals:
- ☐ NR Nominations and Determinations of Eligibility (Phase II) reports:
- ☐ HABS documentation:
- ☐ Oral interviews with building owners, tenants, and/or employees:

Additional resources consulted: Articles and manuscripts – various; videos and documentaries – various; museum publications; court case; home tour publications (includes general history); US census; BLM survey plats; newspaper advertisements and features

Repositories consulted (list all): Sacramento Public Library; Center for Sacramento History; Sacramento County Assessor

Analysis of most helpful sources: Maps (various); Mid-Century Modern City of Sacramento Historic Context Statement

## Application of GIS Tools

How used and intended results:

Was it useful:



If not used, why: Not available?

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

What was done:

Was it useful: Not applicable

## **Historic Trends**

### **Historic trends considered for association with subject property**

#### ***Suburbanization:***

Dramatic shift from residing in urban areas to developing low-density suburbs: This was a factor, particularly as urban renewal and redevelopment affected the downtown

Retail businesses and offices leaving downtown and following the population shift to the suburbs: This was a factor; commercial zones were platted along with residential subdivisions

Expanding highways/Interstates transformed land use and provided easy vehicular access to the developing suburban areas: Former rural routes redeveloped into major arterials

Developers of residential subdivisions encouraged to incorporate associated commercial areas: Subdivisions were platted with space for commercial development; also reflected in planning and zoning

Commercial developers worked within system of established zoning and land development regulations: Yes

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

If trend was applicable, how was that identified? What sources or information assisted with making an association? Newspaper articles, newspaper ads, planning documents, other articles

#### ***Automobile culture:***

Rapid increase in automobile ownership: Not identified

Commercial property established along busy thoroughfare/highway to accommodate the automobile traveling public: Zoning accommodated commercial development along arterials

Drive-ins and drive-throughs became commonplace: Not identified

Sited at busy intersections or access ramps: Strip development more common

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? May be assumed; not called out particularly

***Social and cultural trends:***

Growing families relocated to the suburbs; increased commercial development in suburban areas: Not called out particularly

Redlining and discriminatory practices: This was a factor. When redlining became illegal (and other influences) Chinese were able to relocate to this area

Civil Rights movement and racial integration: Racial integration occurred once redlining and housing discrimination was made illegal

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Influence of urban renewal in city influenced suburban relocation for underrepresented groups

***Consumerism:***

Shopping as a recreational activity: Yes, design of shopping malls with special features became a factor

Specialty retail stores catering to those with discretionary income: Not necessarily called out

Shopping centers as a destination with amenities for the entire family: Not necessarily called out

Large suburban supermarkets replacing neighborhood grocery stores: This was a factor in relocation of Chinese business people to suburbs

Discount and big box stores gaining popularity: Not called out particularly

Development of regional and national brand recognition and commercial advertising: Not known to be a factor

Application of scientific/rational planning policies to retail sales: Not known to be a factor

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Analysis of development from this point of view not identified

***Commercial design and setting:***

Precast concrete blocks, concrete masonry units, or poured concrete for quick and lower-cost construction: Not applicable

New materials and/or technologies incorporated into building design (i.e. glass curtain walls, AC) : Not applicable

Early use of large glass retail storefronts: Not necessarily early ? Began in this development in late 1940s

Landscaping as essential part of the commercial environment: No

Early use of energy-efficient materials: No

Early use of large parking lots: No

Signage as an integral component: No

Building components could be easily modified to serve tenant: This was apparently the case

Separation of the sites that house the retailing/management services from industrial/manufacturing processes: Not observed

Modern design to “rationalize” the workplace/commercial space design and layout modeled for efficiency: Not applicable

Form/function influenced by human relations or environmental psychology: Not applicable

Advancements in science and technology influencing architectural design: Not observed

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Not a particularly progressive or advanced design in materials, design or function

### ***Architecture:***

Representative of architectural style: No, vernacular commercial

Representative of regional variations/influences: Not observed except in signage

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Not an advanced example of design

## **Comparisons**

How were comparisons identified: Brief windshield survey; observation

Challenges in identifying comparisons: Numerous comparative examples

**Appendix D. Pilot Study and Application Worksheet: Greenbrier Shopping Center**



# Greenbrier Shopping Center

The Greenbrier Shopping Center at 2000-2060 Plank Road (State Route 3) in the city of Fredericksburg, Virginia, is located on the south side of Plank Road east of its interchange with Interstate Highway 95 (I-95) and southwest of the downtown core of Fredericksburg. Originally constructed in 1971, the shopping center occupies two legal parcels (GPIN 7779-11-2918 and 7779-11-1700) comprising approximately 17.4 acres, primarily covered by a large, paved-asphalt parking lot with the building occupying the southern half (see Figure 1 and Photo 1). The property's primary vehicular entrance is at the northeast corner via Plank Road; however, four additional entrances are present: two on Plank Road from the north and two on Altoona Drive from the west. Two restaurants and a curbed strip of manicured grass dotted with trees, shrubs, and one sign separates the parking lot from Route 3. The parking lot is dotted on the north side of the building with lampposts while the area to the south, utilized primarily for deliveries and services, are lit by lighting attached to the building. Associated with the shopping center (the primary resource) are a sign and a former bank building, which is now a restaurant.

## Architectural Description

### Exterior description

The primary resource of the Greenbrier Shopping Center at 2000–2060 Plank Road (State Route 3) is a one-story, multi-bay shopping center (see Photo 2). The linear building, oriented north towards Plank Road, is composed of two building periods: the west and central portion was constructed around 1971, while the easternmost portion was built by 1973.<sup>1</sup> The original portion of the building features an anchor store at the west connected to a row of smaller commercial spaces attached to another anchor store and another row of smaller commercial spaces. The eastern end of the original portion connects to the large anchor store added later on. The anchor stores are several feet taller than the sections of smaller commercial spaces, visually differentiating them from one another.

The building sits on a continuous concrete foundation and has a steel structural system clad in concrete block with a stretcher-bonded brick veneer. It has a flat roof with a brick parapet with metal coping lining all elevations except for the rear (south elevation). Metal mechanical units pierce the roof primarily along the southern half of the building. Each commercial unit or space on the facade (north elevation) features a single- or double-leaf, metal-framed, glass, commercial-style door flanked by large, metal-framed, plate-glass windows. Although uncommon, several entrances are topped by metal-framed jalousie windows. The addition of this window type was likely dictated by the use of the commercial space that requires more ventilation.

Most of the facade is covered by a full-height, engaged covered walkway (see Photo 3). The covered walkway in front of the anchor stores features a taller brick-clad parapet and is detailed with row lock, brick-lined, arched openings divided by squared brick-clad columns.

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<sup>1</sup> Nationwide Environmental Title Research, LLC [NETR] 1971.

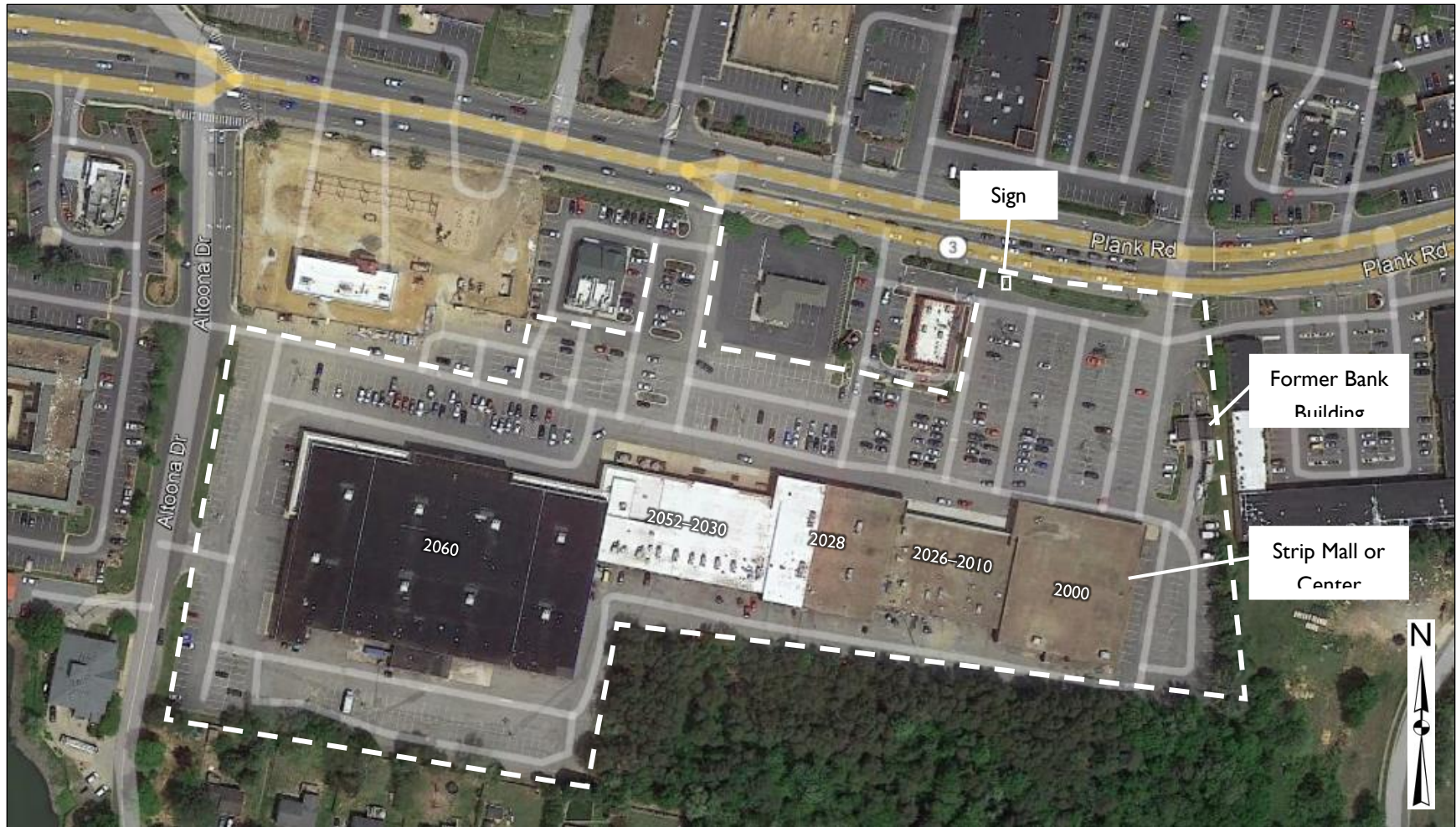


Figure 1: Site plan of the Greenbrier Shopping Center on current aerial with address numbers.<sup>2</sup> Not to scale.

<sup>2</sup> Google Earth 2021.

Along the sections of multiple smaller commercial units, the covered walkway features a pent sheathed in single lock metal sheeting along the parapet as well as an awning in between the squared brick-clad columns. The area between the pent parapet and the awning is parged. Backlit lettered signage is appended to the parged space above each storefront or directly onto the brick-clad facade for the anchor stores. The ceiling beneath the covered walkways features fiberboard drop ceiling tiles. A portion of the facade of the western section of smaller storefronts features a taller stuccoed parapet with inlaid arches.

Secondary entrances meant for employees or deliveries, primarily focused on the rear elevation, are filled with single-leaf, metal doors (see Photo 4). These entrances open onto the pavement, but in the eastern half of the rear elevation are covered with a flat metal awning and accessed by a concrete pad, likely utilized as a loading dock. One secondary entrance for address 2010, located on the rear elevation in the eastern half of the building, features a glass-block window surrounded by brick infill. The western half of the building also contains several sectional, metal garage doors (east of address 2046), one of which is topped by a steel lintel, and several window openings with brick infill (west of address 2052). A one-story, flat-roofed extension is appended to the south elevation of the easternmost anchor store section of the building. It is clad in the same materials as the core.

The c.1973, one-story, multi-bay anchor store building (currently containing Burlington Coat Factory, address 2060) was appended to the west elevation of the core of the shopping center (see Photo 5). It is clad in the same materials as the core; however, brick pilasters are evenly spaced along the north and west elevation, creating visual breaks. A similar covered walkway with pent awnings and squared brick-clad columns spans the north elevation and wraps to the north half of the east elevation. The primary entrance to the store is further emphasized by a full-height covered walkway with a tall brick parapet projecting from the north elevation. At the southwest corner of the anchor store building are three sectional, metal garage doors and a single-leaf pedestrian entrance surrounded by fixed, metal-framed, plate-glass windows.



*Photo 1: Overview of eastern anchor store (2000 Plank Road), looking southeast.*





*Photo 2: Views of the facade (north elevation) of the addresses 2028–2052 of Greenbrier Shopping Center looking southwest (top), southeast (middle), and southwest (bottom).*





*Photo 3: View of individual store entrances (address 2014), looking southwest.*



*Photo 4: View of rear individual store entrances, looking northeast at addresses 2056 (top) and 2000 (bottom).*



*Photo 5: View of western anchor store currently occupied by Burlington Coat Factory (address 2060), looking southwest (top) and southeast (bottom).*

## **Interior description**

The interior throughout each commercial unit in the shopping center is divided into two primary spaces: an open concept store space in the front and a separated storage and employee space in the rear (see Photo 6). Each unit is modified to fit the specific needs of the commercial enterprise occupying it. Walls are drywalled with metal or wire shelving appended. Flooring is typically laminate tile, carpet, vinyl, or a combination of types. Larger units feature roof supporting steel poles or drywall-enclosed columns.





*Photo 6: Interior views of 2012 Plank Road, looking south (top), and 2000 Plank Road, looking south (bottom).*



## Secondary resource description

A c.1971, one-story, former bank building that currently functions as a crab shack is located northeast of the shopping center (see Photo 7). The building is clad in a combination of stretcher-bonded brick veneer and T1-11 siding and is covered by a flat roof with thick metal coping. Appended to the metal coping on the north and west elevations is metal panel signage. An off-centered drive through with a clearance of 9 feet, 8 inches that extends north-south through the building is concentrated on the western side of the building. A T1-11-clad half-wall with a wood post created from two two-by-fours extends from the west side of the drive through. A concrete curb lines the drive through and two brick columns are exposed on the eastern wall, indicating a portion of the eastern side of the building was open at one point. Several single-leaf, wood storm or metal doors are located on the north and south elevations and on the east wall of the drive through. At least three order windows, covered by a wood-framed screen or vinyl-framed sliding window, are present. One is located on a small shed-roofed projection on the south half of the west elevation with a shed-roof covered area supported by wood posts. The interior of the eastern portion of the building is open and features counters; the western portion was not accessible during survey.

A c.1990, metal, monument sign on a single pylon is located north of the shopping center on the grassy strip lining the northern boundary of the property along Plank Road (see Photo 8). It reads “Greenbrier Shopping Center” with a tree design, as well as the names of the current commercial enterprises occupying the building.



*Photo 7: Former bank building, northwest oblique, looking southeast.*



*Photo 8: Greenbrier Shopping Center sign, looking west.*

## Historic Context

Located on the outskirts of the city of Fredericksburg and constructed around 1971, the Greenbrier Shopping Center at 2000–2060 Plank Road was built by the Greenbrier Center Associates, a partnership between Guy E. Beatty and Stoney D. Elmore and the Rowe family estate. In 1973 an additional anchor store was added onto the center. The shopping center was part of a phase of development creating a commercial gateway from the west to the downtown center of Fredericksburg. Over the last several decades the shopping center has mostly retained its configuration and landscape; however, the center's facade has been slightly altered.

## Development in the Fredericksburg area: mid-twentieth century to the present

As was true in many areas surrounding metropolitan regions throughout the Mid Atlantic during the mid-twentieth century, residential and commercial development was spurred by transportation advances, in particular, the highway system. This was especially true for the Fredericksburg area, as it is located between Washington, D.C., to the north and the city of Richmond, Virginia, to the south. To gain a greater understanding of mid-twentieth-century transportation development and its effect on the Fredericksburg area, it is necessary to review where roads and thoroughfares stood prior to such advancement.

In the early twentieth century Fredericksburg-area transportation networks were growing at a steady rate. Transportation corridors providing routes for agricultural and industrial projects intended for markets in Spotsylvania County tended to follow east and west water courses.<sup>3</sup> “With the establishment of cities and towns along the Fall Line, north-south travel along roads and later rails gained greater importance.”<sup>4</sup> In 1918 the original portion of State Route 7, today's State Route 3, was defined between Culpeper to

<sup>3</sup> Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors 2021:5-2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Fredericksburg and continued along the Northern Neck, bringing traffic a vehicular east-west thoroughfare to utilize.<sup>5</sup>

Considerable transportation growth occurred with area roadways after the formal establishment of the state's Department of Highways in 1927.<sup>6</sup> Initially, the Virginia General Assembly established the State Highway Commission in 1906 tasked with increasing the Commonwealth's highway mileage on an annual basis. By 1927, a formal agency was established called the Department of Highways after a reorganization of state government; however, the commission was still in operation and overseen by the Department of Highways. Eventually, the commission's name was changed to the Virginia Highway and Transportation Commission in 1974 and then the Virginia Highway and Transportation Board in 1985 and the agency was expanded and became the Virginia Department of Transportation in 1986.<sup>7</sup>

In 1927, an important route through Fredericksburg was made official. Twenty-five years in the making, the Jefferson Davis Highway—also called the Washington-Richmond Highway, U.S. Highway No. 1 (U.S. Route 1), and, most recently, the Emancipation Highway—was operational after more than two decades of public meetings, newspaper editorials, and legislative and financial debate.<sup>8</sup> “Fredericksburg was chosen over Orange or Staunton as the path to Richmond, and the decision changed [the] city forever.”<sup>9</sup> During this period much of Fredericksburg's population was employed in the city's industrial sector, while the surrounding area remained largely rural and occupied by moderately sized farms. By the Great Depression, Fredericksburg's population included tens of thousands of people, many of whom were employed by large factories located south of town, while local agriculture did not recover to its former grandeur after the Civil War.<sup>10</sup> The city in particular remained heavily industrial in nature throughout most of the first half of the twentieth century, while residential and commercial expansion occurred to the west and north.<sup>11</sup>

The years after World War II were crucial in defining the current landscape for the entire Northern Virginia region. The federal government expanded, bringing with it lobbying groups as well as research and development enterprises.<sup>12</sup> The Federal-aid Highway Act of 1956 paved the way for I-95, rolling southward from Washington, D.C. This superhighway allowed commuters and residents an easy way to reach their offices within the District of Columbia or travel across the eastern edge of the county. By the 1960s, 154 miles of Interstate Highway were constructed in the Commonwealth and increased to 825 miles by the 1970s.<sup>13</sup> The State Highway Commission noted that “this type of road promotes safety, saves travel time, reduces the strain on drivers, and aids the economic development of the area.”<sup>14</sup> The segment of I-95 passing through the Fredericksburg area was completed during the 1960s.

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<sup>5</sup> State Highway Commission 1922.

<sup>6</sup> Virginia Department of Transportation [VDOT] 2006:30.

<sup>7</sup> VDOT 2006:30, 105.

<sup>8</sup> Schricker 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> City of Fredericksburg 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Johnston and Smith 2001; United States Geological Survey 1926, 1944.

<sup>12</sup> Evans 1989:130.

<sup>13</sup> VDOT 2006:34.

<sup>14</sup> VDOT 2006:40.

While the Interstate was being constructed, the State Highway Commission concurrently worked on an arterial road program that “in conjunction with the interstate system [would] connect every city within the commonwealth of 5,000 or more and nearly every town having a population of 3,500 to 5,000.”<sup>15</sup> They predicted that within a 40-mile radius of every Virginia town and city would be an arterial route or Interstate. As approved by the 1964 General Assembly, these arterial roads were primarily built parallel to existing two-lane primary routes, creating four-lane divided facilities like some of Route 3 is today.

The Fredericksburg area grew exponentially throughout the remainder of the twentieth century. The area’s position midway between Washington, D.C., and Richmond, and twentieth-century innovations in both highway and rail travel along a north-south corridor, were determining factors in the area becoming a “sprawling bedroom community favoring the homogenized corporate and residential architecture of suburban America.”<sup>16</sup> Concurrently, agriculture began to decline as the state and county’s principal foundation to its economy. The completion of the Route 1 bypass in the 1940s and I-95 in the 1960s made Fredericksburg and the surrounding area a convenient place of residence for Washington, D.C., commuters as well as military employees at Fort Belvoir, Quantico, and Dahlgren Base.<sup>17</sup> These improvements, as well as the distance to the Metropolitan D.C. area, had a visible effect on the population in the Fredericksburg area, including Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties. As demonstrated in Table 1, the Fredericksburg area in particular experienced exponential growth.

**Table 1: Population growth in the Fredericksburg area between 1950 and 1980.<sup>18</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>City of Fredericksburg</b>	<b>Spotsylvania County</b>	<b>Stafford County</b>
1950	12,158	9,600	11,900
1960	13,369	13,200	16,900
1970	14,450	15,700	24,600
1980	15,322	32,900	40,500

Although downtown Fredericksburg retains much of its historic landscape, many areas along the city’s outer fringes have been greatly altered through large-scale residential and commercial growth, particularly around the I-95 interchanges. Commercial and residential development continued in the area due to its proximity to Washington, D.C., and the inclusion of the federal government and military offices and institutions. By the late 1970s an “edge node” developed, clustered around the I-95 interchange with Plank Road (Route 3). This escalated traffic problems, which were reported along the William Street to Plank Road (Route 3) stretch at “Fredericksburg’s western outskirts where the opening of new shopping centers and restaurants” was occurring.<sup>19</sup> Some examples of this work to alleviate traffic issues included adding a stop light at the entrance to the Greenbrier Shopping Center and to Altoona Drive on the western side. Further, the establishment of the regional rail line, Virginia Railway Express (VRE), in 1992 provided another option to regional commuters.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> VDOT 2006:42.

<sup>16</sup> Spotsylvania County Board of Supervisors 2021 5-2; VDOT 2006:47.

<sup>17</sup> City of Fredericksburg 2019.

<sup>18</sup> Fredericksburg City Council 2015:19; National Association of Counties 2022a, 2022b.

<sup>19</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1978:5; Hayden 2003:154–155.

<sup>20</sup> Taube 2008.



In 1970 the City of Fredericksburg conducted a thorough analysis of “its population, economy, transportation network, housing supply, and public services and facilities” and presented the findings, along with a recommended land use plan, in a comprehensive plan for the city.<sup>21</sup> This eventually led to the 1984 annexation of 4.4 square miles of land from Spotsylvania County, including the land on which the Greenbrier Shopping Center is situated. Although the City undertook several annexations, this last particular instance allowed it to benefit from the commercial activity and housing construction deliberately drawn away from the urban core by the newer highways.<sup>22</sup>

While the pace of development had steadily increased in the Fredericksburg area and areas farther north in recent decades, the remainder of Spotsylvania County only recently experienced similar growth (see Figure 2 and Figure 3). The predominantly rural nature of Spotsylvania County began to see impacts in the late twentieth century. In 1980 the first indoor mall in this area, Spotsylvania Mall, was constructed on the west side of I-95 off Route 3 and had anchor stores such as JC Penney, Leggett, Sears, and F.W. Woolworth Company.<sup>23</sup> Silver Companies constructed the Central Park shopping complex covering more than 300 acres that used to be a golf course and farmland in 1995.<sup>24</sup> Both are located approximately 1 mile west of the current resource.

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<sup>21</sup> Fredericksburg City Council 2015:19

<sup>22</sup> Fredericksburg City Council 2015:153.

<sup>23</sup> Dennen 1999:C4; Midgal 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Silver Companies 2019.

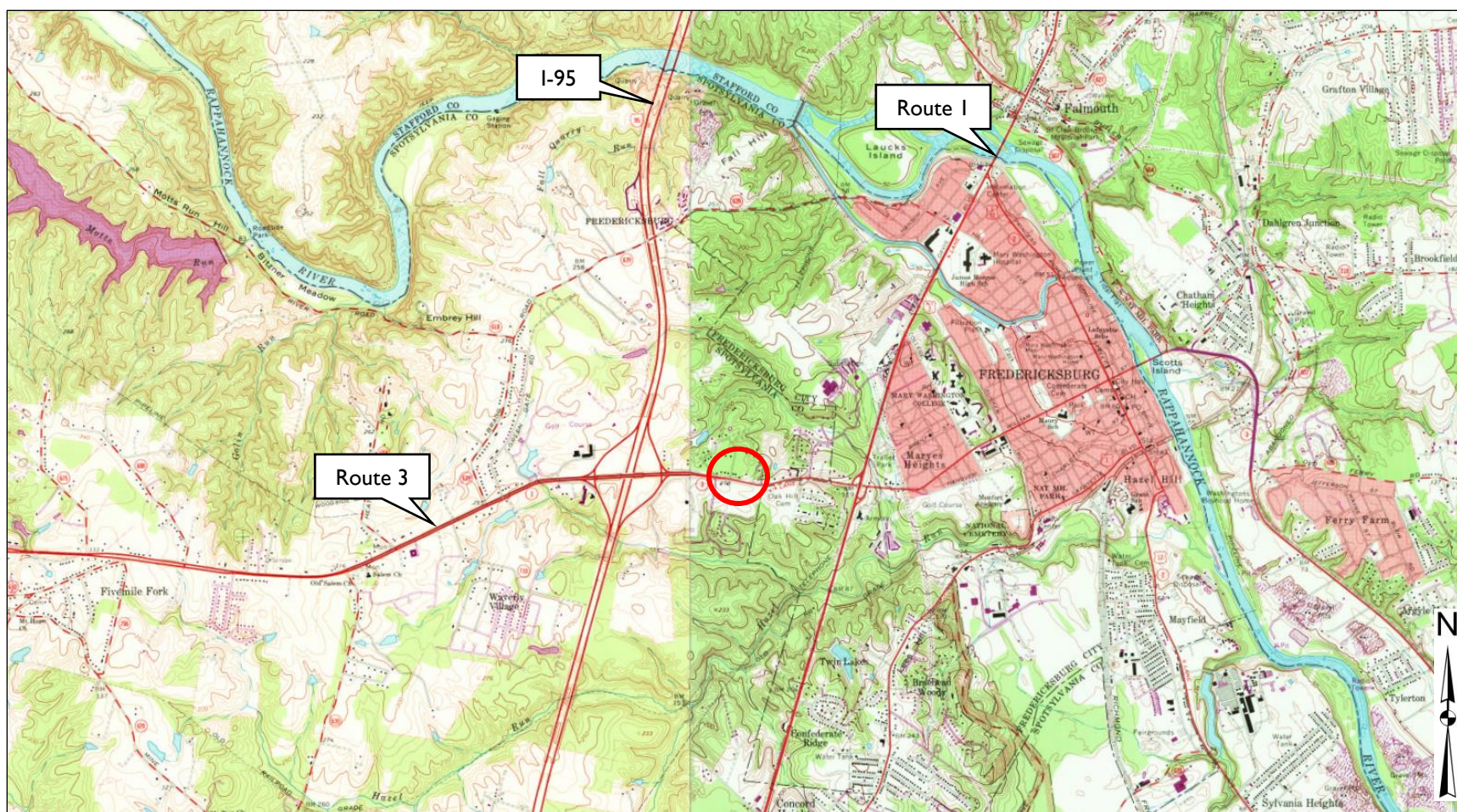


Figure 2: 1971 (right) and 1972 (left) U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangle map of the Fredericksburg Area with approximate location of the Greenbrier Shopping Center circled in red.<sup>25</sup> Not to scale.

<sup>25</sup> USGS 1971, 1972.



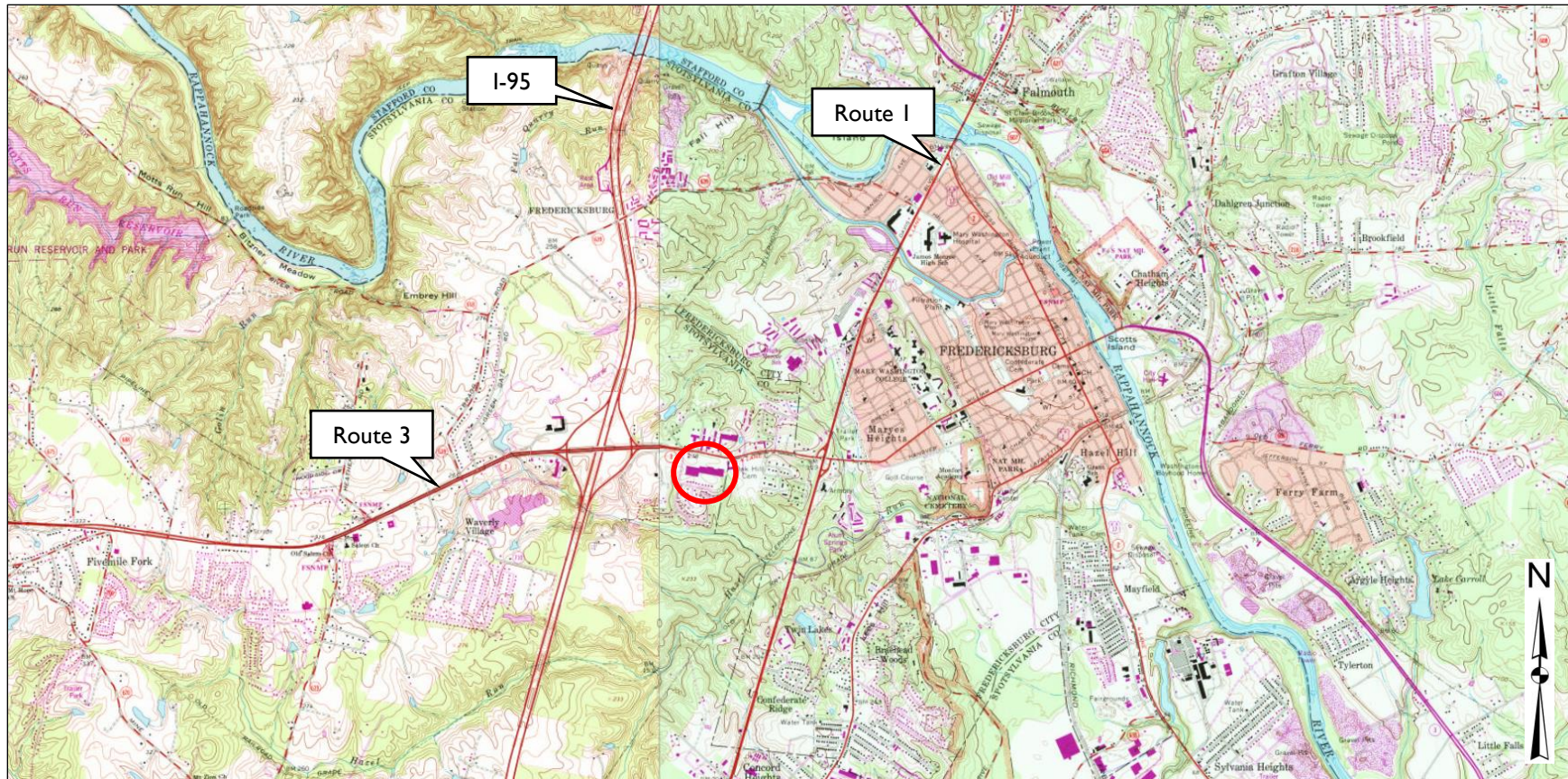


Figure 3: 1984 USGS topographic quadrangle map of the Fredericksburg area with approximate location of the Greenbrier Shopping Center circled in red.<sup>26</sup> Note the increase in development in all directions from the downtown area of Fredericksburg compared to Figure 2. Not to scale.

<sup>26</sup> USGS 1984a, 1984b.

In the 1990s shopping centers in the area were slowly turning into “aging hulk[s], retail dinosaur[s] in an age of glitzy malls.”<sup>27</sup> The Fredericksburg Shopping Center, Greenbrier Shopping Center, and Westwood Shopping Center (located north of Greenbrier) were losing their major retailers to newer shopping centers. In 1991 it was noted that 11 of 19 stores at the Fredericksburg Shopping Center, eight of 15 at Greenbrier, and five of 17 at Westwood were open.<sup>28</sup> The store closings were attributed to the development of the Spotsylvania Mall and spinoff development on the Route 3 corridor, which was steadily siphoning off companies that would otherwise have been located in shopping centers within the city. The City’s economic development director gave priority on how to deal with the slow demise of shopping centers in the area by looking into easing zoning restrictions to allow for non-traditional uses without requiring a special permit, renovating the aging Route 1 corridor and other older thoroughfares, and working with the developers who own the centers.<sup>29</sup> Concurrently, the International Council of Shopping Centers noted a redevelopment trend of these facilities with an approximately 35-percent rise between 1989 and 1990.<sup>30</sup>

The Fredericksburg area continues to be a popular place to live for federal government and military commuters, and both residential and commercial development are on the rise. The population of Spotsylvania County was estimated at 134,238 people in 2018, rising from 122,449 in 2010, while Fredericksburg increased from 90,300 residents in 2000 to approximately 112,000 in 2020.<sup>31</sup>

## **Development of the Greenbrier Shopping Center**

In May and June 1970 the Greenbrier Center Associates, a Virginia limited partnership, purchased several parcels on the south side of Plank Road (Route 3) in Spotsylvania County from Dorothy D. Rowe, Peyton D. Rowe, Maurice B. Rowe, III, Joyce M. Rowe, Dorothy Rowe, John G. Castles, Lambertus Verburg, and the Silvey Chevrolet Oldsmobile Cadillac, Inc. (see Figure 4 and Figure 5).<sup>32</sup> Greenbrier Center Associates, consisting of Guy E. Beatty and Stoney D. Elmore and based out of Alexandria, Virginia, was created with the intent to develop and operate a shopping center on a certain tract consisting of approximately 11.9 acres, similar acreage to the two other major shopping centers that were already under operation in the Fredericksburg area at the time: Fredericksburg Park and Shop and the Fredericksburg Shopping Center.<sup>33</sup> According to an article published in *The Free Lance-Star*, initial investment in the project was estimated at \$2 million.<sup>34</sup> Included in the center’s development plans were extra lanes on Route 3 to deal with both eastbound and westbound traffic by adding a storage lane and an extra eastbound lane.

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<sup>27</sup> Dennen 1991:15.

<sup>28</sup> Dennen 1991:15.

<sup>29</sup> Dennen 1991:15.

<sup>30</sup> Dennen 1991:15.

<sup>31</sup> National Association of Counties 2022a, 2022b.

<sup>32</sup> Spotsylvania County Clerk of Circuit Court Office, Spotsylvania, Virginia [SCCCCO]:1970:Deed Book [DB] 258:121–138.

<sup>33</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1970:16; 1992:C6; SCCCCO 1970:DB 258:121–126; The Washington Post and Times Herald 1962:B6.

<sup>34</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1970:16.



As was typical of many shopping centers at the time, a “big strong store forms the keystone of any shopping center of any size” while “strong local tenants with diversified lines” round out the remainder of the commercial space.<sup>35</sup> At the time of the grand opening on August 24, 1971, the “130,000-square-foot center [...] contain[ed] two major stores, 16 specialty shops and twin theater complex.”<sup>36</sup> One of the anchor stores was to be occupied by a Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company, Inc. (A&P) discount foods store. A&P was set to lease and occupy one of their anchor stores in the soon-to-be constructed shopping center.<sup>37</sup> The store was to be their largest grocery store in the Commonwealth for that time at approximately 23,500 square feet.<sup>38</sup> The lease stated that in the event of further development of the shopping center, the parking facilities should always maintain a minimum ratio of three-to-one times the square footage allotted to the stores; however, the lessor would be responsible for providing driveways, sidewalks, and approaches. Vehicular entrances into the parking area of the shopping center did not feature traffic stop lights until 1978, when the state’s highway department planned road work to account for the escalated traffic problems created by the opening of new shopping centers and restaurants.<sup>39</sup>

Drug Fair, Inc., filled the western anchor store of the original building in August 1971 with a major outlet store and a junior department store.<sup>40</sup> The outlet store estimated to have 18,000 square feet of sales space while the other nearby already established department store had about 50,000.<sup>41</sup> The layout of Greenbrier’s Drug Fair, Inc. featured a fountain at the front of the store rather than at the rear as seemed to be typical for other of the company’s locations. Other businesses that initially occupied the central commercial spaces included Nu Look One-Hour Cleaners, Radio Shack, The Sewing Bee, Chic Hairstylists, and the National Bank of Fredericksburg.<sup>42</sup> A freestanding bank in the outlot building for the Virginia Savings & Loan Association was also included in the original design.

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<sup>35</sup> The Washington Post and Times Herald 1968:C1, C5.

<sup>36</sup> Moore 1971:9.

<sup>37</sup> SCCCCO 1970:DB 259:256.

<sup>38</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1970:16; Moore 1971:9.

<sup>39</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1978:5.

<sup>40</sup> The Evening Star 1971:19; The Free Lance-Star 1970:16.

<sup>41</sup> Moore 1971:9.

<sup>42</sup> Moore 1971:9.



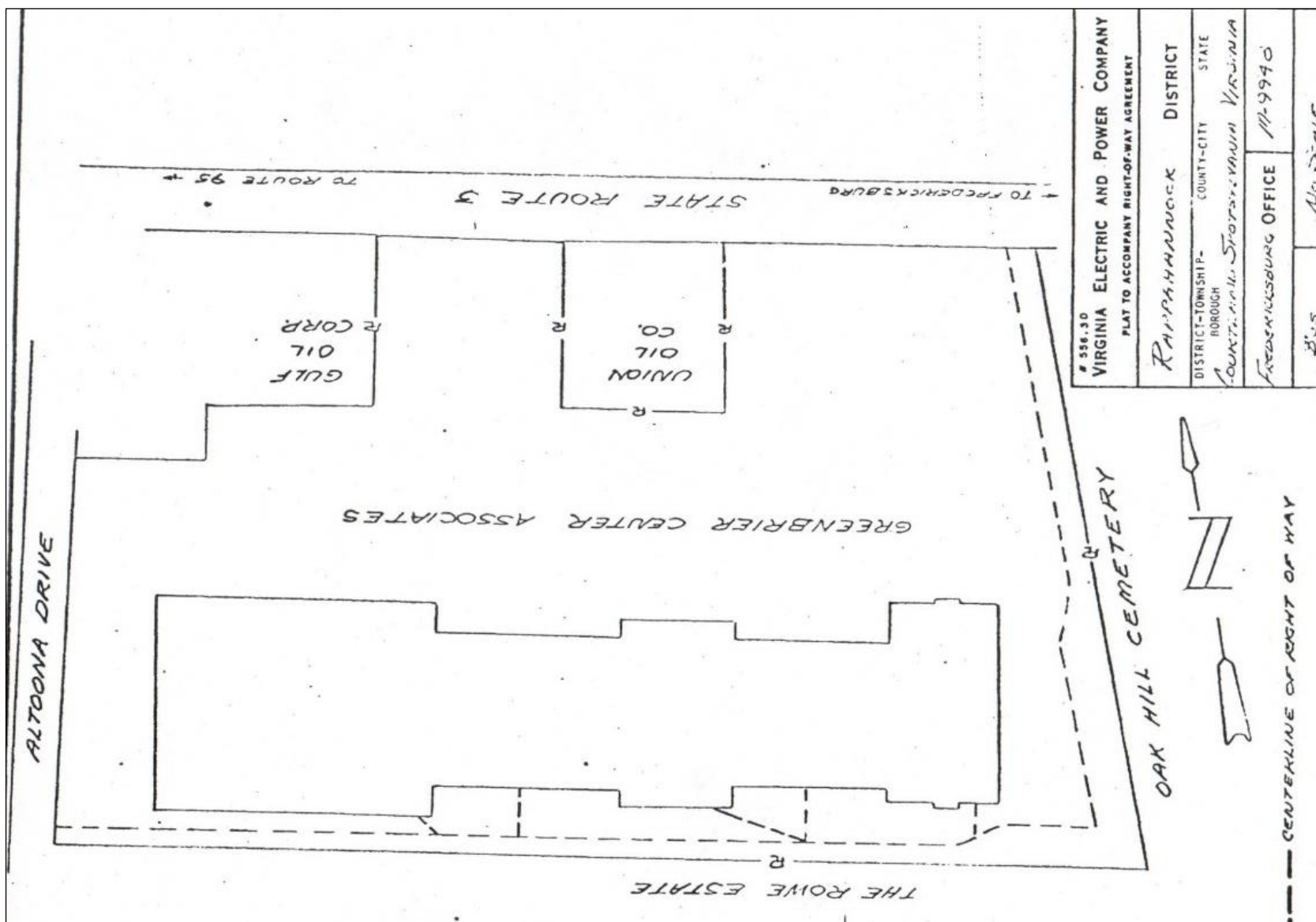
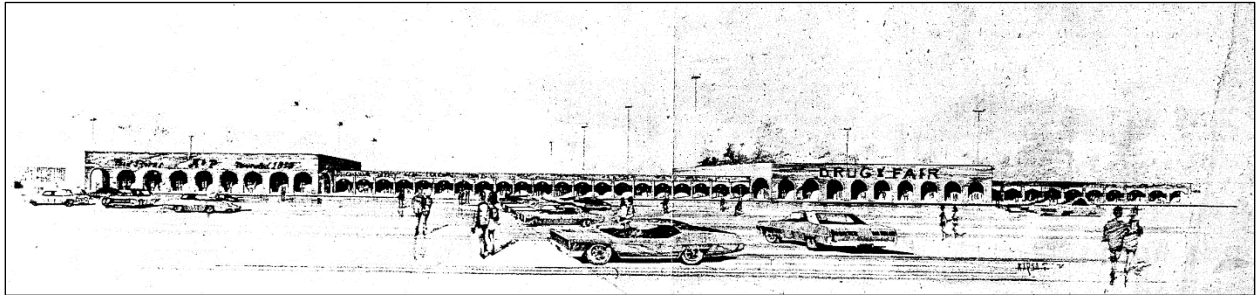


Figure 5: 1971 Virginia Electric and Power Company Plat No. M-9948 of the Greenbrier Shopping Center property.<sup>44</sup> Not to scale.

<sup>44</sup> SCCC 1917:DB 277:284.

Images from the 1970s indicate the facade of the shopping center originally featured a metal sign with store names above each unit along the parapet of the covered walkway as well as the parged arched openings between each column providing uniformity and cohesion (see Figure 6 through Figure 8).<sup>45</sup> Brick plant beds were also situated along these sections of the sidewalk that extended north of the covered walkway at this time, some of which still exist.



*Figure 6: Greenbrier Shopping Center conceptual design published in The Free Lance-Star in 1970.<sup>46</sup>*



*Figure 7: 1971 image of the Greenbrier Shopping Center.<sup>47</sup>*

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<sup>45</sup> Central Rappahannock Heritage Center [CRHC] ca. 1973; The Free Lance-Star 1970:16).

<sup>46</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1970:16.

<sup>47</sup> Fitzgerald 1971:9.





*Figure 8: c.1973 Images of an Antique Car Show held at the Greenbrier Shopping Center, looking southeast towards A&P (Unit 2000, top) and looking southeast at units 2010–2020 (bottom).<sup>48</sup>*

In May 1972 the Greenbrier Center Associates signed a lease with the F.W. Woolworth Co. to occupy a new anchor store being added to the western side of the center (see Figure 9 and Figure 10).<sup>49</sup> The store was projected to occupy approximately 80,155 square feet as well as feature an automotive center and a year-round garden center along its west elevation (see Figure 10). In September 1973 the Woolco

<sup>48</sup> CRHC ca. 1973.

<sup>49</sup> SCCC 1972:DB 300:320–327.

Department Store opened at the Greenbrier Shopping Center.<sup>50</sup> An article published by *The Free Lance-Star* ahead of the store's opening described that the merchandising was designed for the Fredericksburg area in particular based on research surveys conducted by a private firm.<sup>51</sup> "Because of the semi-rural area encompassing Fredericksburg, [Darrell R.] Williams, the store's general manager at the time,] said the line of men's work clothes and the hardware department are expanded."<sup>52</sup> It also featured the largest sporting goods section of any of its East Coast stores, as well as a public cafeteria and snack bar. Apparently revolutionary for the area, this Woolco location also utilized a computer system designed by the Pitney-Bowes company to manage information on sales volume, registers, credit, and merchandising.<sup>53</sup>



Figure 9: c. 1973 image of the construction of the Woolco department store at the Greenbrier Shopping Center, looking southwest.<sup>54</sup> Note the theater at the end of the c. 1971 portion of the shopping center in the lefthand side of the image.

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<sup>50</sup> The Free Lance Star 1973:2.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> The Free Lance Star 1973:2.

<sup>53</sup> The Free Lance Star 1973:2.

<sup>54</sup> CRHC ca. 1973.

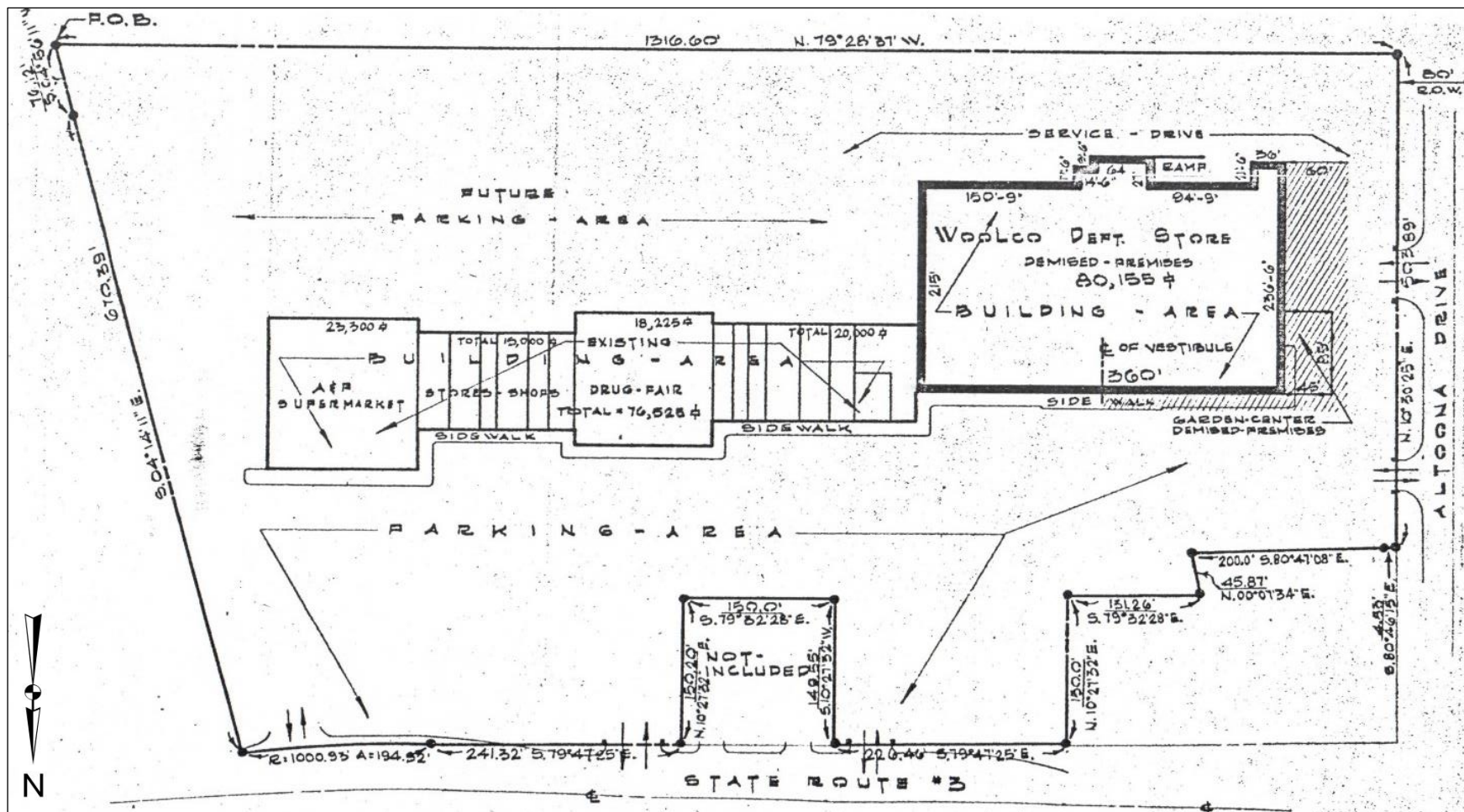


Figure 10: 1972 plat of the Greenbrier Shopping Center property detailing the west addition to the shopping center.<sup>55</sup> Not to scale.

<sup>55</sup> SCCC 1972:DB 300:327.

Occupation of the Greenbrier Shopping Center throughout the years has ebbed and flowed as is typical of shopping suburban shopping centers. In the early 1980s K-mart Corporation opened one of its stores in the former Woolco section of the center.<sup>56</sup> In 1994 a list of leases included Burlington Coat Factory, Minnesota Fabrics, Inc., Friendly Ice Cream Corporation, J&J Tactical Shop, Inc., Showtime Pizza, Inc., and more.<sup>57</sup> As previously noted, the shopping center experienced some dire times as retailers moved to newer shopping centers along newer travel corridors. However, Greenbrier was able to weather this storm and eventually, New Jersey-based Burlington Coat Factory entered into the western anchor store in the 1990s while Big Lots occupied the eastern anchor store in the 2000s. In 2014 Decatur's Crabs opened in the detached original National Bank of Fredericksburg branch building with a drive-through.<sup>58</sup> Other food establishments also tried to operate out of the former bank building prior to 2014 but were unsuccessful. The crab operation remains to this day. Around 2015, commercial occupancy in Fredericksburg was on the rise and Greenbrier Shopping Center was fully leased.<sup>59</sup> Currently, several storefronts sit empty as the COVID-19 pandemic put many smaller commercial enterprises out of business.

### **Guy E. Beatty, Stoney D. Elmore, and their partnership**

Guy E. Beatty, Jr. (more commonly known as Guy E. Beatty) was a "real estate developer, entrepreneur, and one the nation's leading philanthropists" who "began his real estate empire in 1962."<sup>60</sup> As his success and experience increased, Beatty kept much of the work "in-house" under various businesses using his own name, including development, contracting, building, leasing, and occasionally design such as Beatty-Elmore Construction, Co., Beatty Management Co., Inc., and Beatty Realty Co.<sup>61</sup> In 1972 he was elected to the board of the First Federal Savings and Loan Association of Arlington.<sup>62</sup> He was also a director of Peoples Bank and Trust Co. of Fairfax, a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers, and a member of the Northern Virginia Builders Association. Beatty's development interests also included residential. A few years after the construction of the Greenbrier Shopping Center, Beatty planned and constructed the Greenbrier Garden Apartments located to the east on Route 3 at its intersection with William Street and Greenbrier Drive.<sup>63</sup> He also partnered with the Rowe estate family members to develop the Altoona residential subdivision between the shopping center and the apartment complex.<sup>64</sup> Later in his career his management firm was also invested in an auto dealership with the Horvath Group.<sup>65</sup>

Stoney Dewey (D.) Elmore "worked as a brick mason and then eventually started his own construction company, Elmore Brothers" after serving in the U.S. Navy.<sup>66</sup> He initially began his construction career in building private homes and then transferred to commercial construction until he retired in the 1980s.

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<sup>56</sup> SCCCCO 1983:DB 590:357.

<sup>57</sup> City of Fredericksburg Circuit Court, Fredericksburg, Virginia [CCFCC] 1994:DB267:444.

<sup>58</sup> Gould 2014.

<sup>59</sup> Estes 2015.

<sup>60</sup> Charleston Post & Courier 2013.

<sup>61</sup> The Evening Star 1969:47, 1971:37; 1972:40.

<sup>62</sup> The Evening Star 1972:40.

<sup>63</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1975:14.

<sup>64</sup> The Free Lance-Star 1970:16.

<sup>65</sup> The Washington Post 1989:F01.

<sup>66</sup> Skinner & Smith Funeral Home 2013.



Elmore partnered with Beatty primarily in the late 1960s and early 1970s in commercial development in Northern Virginia.<sup>67</sup>

Beatty-Elmore Construction Co. was known for other commercial and office development in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The company built the Little River Shopping Center in Annandale, Virginia, which was designed by Kohler, Misner, & Daniels, AIA, and won an excellence in construction award from the Northern Virginia Builders Association in 1969.<sup>68</sup> The Little River Shopping Center, which featured 97,000 square feet of store space and parking for over 600 cars, bears significant resemblance to the Greenbrier Shopping Center with its covered walkway with Roman arched openings, sidewalks with plant beds, and general configuration featuring two anchor stores and 18 smaller stores (see Figure 11).<sup>69</sup> Research did not reveal much regarding Kohler, Misner, & Daniels or if they designed the Greenbrier Shopping Center. However, the similarities between the Little River Shopping Center and the subject property are undeniable, signifying they were likely involved or Beatty and Elmore utilized the plans for the previous project for the Greenbrier Shopping Center. Today, the Little River Shopping Center features a new facade and configuration (see Figure 12). Beatty and Elmore were also known to work with the architectural firm on other projects as well, such as a five-story, 100,000-square-foot office building on Route 7 in Tysons Corner or the 10-story office building known as the Heritage Building in Annandale.<sup>70</sup>



*Figure 11: 1968 image of the Little River Shopping Center in Annandale, Virginia.<sup>71</sup>*

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<sup>67</sup> The Evening Star 1968a:77, 1969:47, 1970:56, 1971:37.

<sup>68</sup> Northern Virginia Sun 1969:14–15.

<sup>69</sup> The Evening Star 1968a:77, 1968b:15.

<sup>70</sup> The Evening Star 1969:47.

<sup>71</sup> The Evening Star 1968b:15.



*Figure 12: Current view of Little River Shopping Center in Annandale, Virginia.<sup>72</sup>*

### **Architectural context**

To place the subject property in context, several nearby shopping centers in the Fredericksburg area, as well as those developed along the other major thoroughfares of Route 1 and I-95 in the region, were surveyed, some of which reflect a similar architectural style and form. Within Fredericksburg and the surrounding counties along the I-95 corridor, many shopping centers date to the third quarter of the twentieth century and help place the Greenbrier Shopping Center into the suburbanization and commercial development context of the area and Northern Virginia as a whole.

In the early 1960s the Glassman Construction Company built a shopping center known as the Fredericksburg Park and Shop Center on the west side of Route 1 within the Fredericksburg city limits (see Photo 9).<sup>73</sup> This building had several anchor stores, the largest of which was at the center's northern end, interspersed by smaller commercial spaces.<sup>74</sup> When the building and its associated parking area were completed in 1963, some of the original retailers to occupy space included Super Giant, Peoples Drug Store, and Kresge Merchant Mart.<sup>75</sup> In the 1970s three additional standalone commercial buildings were constructed on the property; further and more drastic changes to the shopping center occurred around 2010, when the northernmost anchor store was demolished to make away for a new parking garage and commercial space.<sup>76</sup> During this period the traffic pattern at the northern end was also altered. Today known as Eagle Village, the Fredericksburg Park and Shop Center has a facade that is visually differentiated by various storefront styles and types, which could have been done to resemble the variety of building types often found along a historic downtown street. Noteworthy character-defining elements that influence this appearance include dormers, copulas, tall parapets with wide cornices, various roofing materials, and jack arches. Despite the changes, the shopping center does retain much of its original core including two anchor store spaces, the three 1970s buildings, and two freestanding signs.

<sup>72</sup> Google 2021.

<sup>73</sup> The Washington Post, Times Herald 1962:B6.

<sup>74</sup> NETR 1963.

<sup>75</sup> The Washington Post, Times Herald 1962:B6.

<sup>76</sup> NETR 1971, 1980, 2010.



However, compared to the Greenbrier Shopping Center, this example has been significantly altered. This resource has not been previously recorded with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR).



*Photo 9: Eagle Village/Fredericksburg Park and Shop Center, looking northwest (top) and southwest (bottom).*

Just north of the Fredericksburg Park and Shop Center/Eagle Village on Route 1 is the Fredericksburg Shopping Center addressed at 503 Emancipation Highway. Constructed in 1962, this resource originally included a one-story, L-shaped building comprising at least one large anchor store flanked by several smaller anchor stores (see Photo 10).<sup>77</sup> Although the building has undergone some cosmetic changes, overall it retains its original shape and design. Despite being vacant, the anchor store space survives, and overall, store fronts have a uniform look through the use of similar materials and embellished parapets. The shopping center now also includes several freestanding buildings that house individual stores and fast-food restaurants and a sign. In comparison with the Greenbrier Shopping Center, the Fredericksburg Shopping Center is a more altered example of this property type in the area and retains less historic integrity. This resource has not been previously recorded with the DHR.

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<sup>77</sup> Dennen 1991:15; NETR 1963.



*Photo 10: Fredericksburg Shopping Center, looking west (top) and northwest (bottom).*

Located south of the Greenbrier Shopping Center is the Four Mile Fork Shopping Center at the intersection of Route 1, Lafayette Boulevard, and Courthouse Road (see Photo 11). In 1970 one building that housed the Nichols Discount Store was constructed on the west side of a large parking lot; over the next decade the shopping center expanded to be an L-shaped building with at least one other anchor store and several smaller commercial spaces.<sup>78</sup> Another early retailer located within this center was Peoples Drug Store.<sup>79</sup> In the early 2000s the building's facade was updated and modified, especially at the western (original) end with the incorporation of metal and concrete embellishments. The long, easternmost wing retains an overall uniform look, with a covered walkway supported by square columns covered in a brick and stone veneer. The many cosmetic exterior changes that have occurred in this shopping center in recent decades have negatively impacted this resource's historic integrity of design, material, and workmanship; however, it continues to function and feel like a shopping center. This example is much larger than the Greenbrier Shopping Center; however, it features much more obvious modifications, rendering it a lower level of historic integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. This resource has not been formally recorded with the DHR.

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<sup>78</sup> Jett 2015; NETR 1971, 1980.

<sup>79</sup> The Daily News Leader 1985:110–111.





*Photo 11: Original, heavily altered 1970s building associated with the Four Mile Fork Shopping Center (top) and 1970s wing (bottom).*

Within Stafford County, approximately three miles northeast of the Greenbrier Shopping Center, is Earl's Shopping Center (DHR #089-5495) at 300 Chatham Heights Road (see Photo 12). The original building associated with this resource was a single, one-story, 1940s store. Known as Earl's Supermarket, this building had a brick facade, large storefront windows, and a double-leaf, metal-framed commercial door.<sup>80</sup> In the 1960s the south side of the building was expanded with an asymmetrical, Contemporary-style section and a long, linear wing with smaller commercial spaces, thereby largely creating the shopping center as it appears.<sup>81</sup> The original core is now occupied by Earl's True Value Hardware and, although it continues to function as the only anchor store, is visually distinct from the remainder the shopping center. The later wing addition has a brick veneer on the facade and narrow pent overhangs, providing shelter for the sidewalk. Each commercial space has its own metal-frame door and storefront window, as well as a sign above the overhang. This shopping center also has a tall sign in its parking lot near the road. In 2015 the DHR determined this resource not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places

<sup>80</sup> Cooper n.d.

<sup>81</sup> Cooper n.d.; NETR 1963, 1971.

(NRHP) as it did not feature any outstanding architectural merit and is commonplace throughout the area. Both this resource and the Greenbrier Shopping Center feature the same limited amounts of modifications and retain a similar amount of historic integrity.



*Photo 12: Original 1940s building and 1960s addition (top) and 1960s wing (bottom) of Earl's Shopping Center.*

The Olde Forge Shopping Center (DHR #089-5627) is located southeast of the intersection of I-92 and Route 17 (Warrenton Road) approximately 4 miles north of the Greenbrier Shopping Center in Stafford County. The small strip shopping center was constructed c.1969; however, it is not visible in historic aerials or topographic mapping until 1978.<sup>82</sup> Smaller in scale than the Greenbrier Shopping Center, this resource features a small, fairly linear building featuring character-defining characteristics such as a covered walkway along the facade, a faux mansard roof sheathed in metal sheeting, a facade that faces the road, and signage (see Photo 13). Appended to the northwest elevation of the building is a one-story, gable-roofed section with a front-gabled projection. Unlike the Greenbrier Shopping Center, this resource does not contain an anchor store; however, it does feature a freestanding outlot building (currently an auto service store). The shopping center appears to retain much of the original design, materials, and stylistic elements such as the unique flaring concrete roof supports along the facade's covered walkway. The Olde Forge Shopping Center was determined not eligible for listing in the NRHP by DHR staff in

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<sup>82</sup> USGS 1978.

2018 as it was not a noteworthy example of a particular style, type, or method of construction. Both this resource and the Greenbrier Shopping Center feature the same limited amounts of modifications and retain a similar amount of historic integrity.



*Photo 13: Olde Forge Shopping Center (DHR #089-5627), looking east.*

Located along the popular Route 1 thoroughfare and the I-95 corridor in a heavily populated area of eastern Prince William County and north of Fredericksburg is the Triangle Plaza Shopping Center (DHR #212-5054). The strip shopping center, constructed in 1964, is situated on a sloping strip of land between the northbound and southbound lanes of Route 1. The facade faces the northbound lanes. The property has “typical features of a mid-twentieth-century shopping center, including a covered walkway along the façade, faux mansard roof covered with wood shingles, and plate-glass windows on the storefronts” (see Photo 14).<sup>83</sup> A long, linear, one- to two-story strip shopping center is built into a hill and once contained one or two anchor stores. Other buildings and objects on the property include a bank, signage, and lighting. The shopping center has a moderate to high level of historic integrity of materials, workmanship, and design as the building’s original exterior materials are currently being covered over and other exterior renovations have occurred. The resource was determined not eligible for listing in the NRHP by DHR staff in 2018 as not being a significant example of a mid-twentieth-century shopping center. Albeit a larger example, when compared with the subject resource, the Triangle Plaza Shopping Center features a similar amount of modification and level of historic integrity.

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<sup>83</sup> Traum 2018.





*Photo 14: Triangle Plaza Shopping Center (DHR #212-5054), southern end (top) and center and northern end (bottom), looking northeast.*

The Dumfries Shopping Center (DHR #212-5051) is a 1965, one-story, strip shopping center located in eastern Prince William County just north of the Triangle Plaza (DHR #212-5054), along Route 1. The resource features similar attributes as the Greenbrier Shopping Center such as a covered walkway along the facade, plate-glass windows on the storefronts, and the facade faces the road, which is separated from the building via a parking lot (see Photo 15). The strip has anchor stores at either end of the linear building with smaller stores between. Unique to this resource is a small courtyard that features planters and a brick-clad walkway located between two sections of the strip. The building has had some exterior renovations such as replacement materials, but they do not significantly impact its historic integrity, similar to the Greenbrier Shopping Center. The resource was determined not eligible for listing in the NRHP by DHR staff in 2018 as it is typical of a mid-twentieth-century shopping center.





*Photo 15: Dumfries Shopping Center (DHR #212-5051), central portion, looking northeast (top), courtyard, looking east (bottom left), and signage, looking northwest (bottom right).*

These examples illustrate the ubiquitous nature of this property type throughout the immediate vicinity of the current resource as well as the region; however, it also shows that although each example is fairly similar to one another, architects or developers applied their own design elements that occasionally befitted the area in which the property was built. Compared to the Greenbrier Shopping Center, several of the shopping centers in the immediate vicinity have been more heavily altered such as the former Fredericksburg Park and Shop and the Fredericksburg Shopping Center. However, in the region, the current resource features a similar number of modifications and levels of historic integrity as those examples that have been previously recorded and determined to be not eligible for listing in the NRHP by DHR staff.

## Eligibility Evaluation

The Greenbrier Shopping Center is located outside the downtown area of the city of Fredericksburg on the east-west primary thoroughfare of Route 3 near an interchange of the heavily travelled north-south I-95 corridor. The property was constructed during a period of increased suburban development in this area stimulated by the establishment of the I-95 corridor and the local interchange, creating easier access for both residents and the regional workforce to complete all necessary shopping needs at one location in

an “edge node.”<sup>84</sup> Its location between Washington, D.C., to the north and Richmond to the south made Fredericksburg a prime pitstop for travelers. The Greenbrier Shopping Center was developed off of this I-95 interchange as a concentrated commercial stop for area residents and commuters, but it was not the first of its kind in this area as detailed in the Architectural Context earlier in the text. It has not been moved from its original location and continues to function as a shopping center. It retains many character-defining features such as its basic strip plan, large display windows, slightly individualized storefronts by signage, pedestrian-friendly covered sidewalk, interior functional space division, and rear-focused stocking and employee-only areas. Similar to the examples referenced earlier in the text, moderate changes have been made to the facade as well as its secondary resource, somewhat negatively impacting its integrity of materials, workmanship, and design. The area surrounding the property has been further developed with other commercial properties and residential subdivisions since its initial construction, particularly with newer chain commercial buildings. This is not atypical for the area or along the travel corridors the property is located on. Therefore, the resource retains a moderate to high level of historic integrity of location, feeling, setting, and association.

Similar to other areas situated outside of downtown areas or city centers, suburbanization sprawled during the mid-twentieth century and “developers responded to the disarray of unplanned commercial corridors.”<sup>85</sup> Shoppers increasingly favored shopping in the suburbs rather than in city centers, leading to an increase of retail sales in the suburbs of 165 percent by the 1960s.<sup>86</sup> This was especially influenced by the construction of highways such as I-95 in eastern Virginia. The city of Fredericksburg and surrounding counties experienced this growth on a slightly delayed timeline. The primary north-south thoroughfare prior to the 1960s was Route 1, which traveled through downtown Fredericksburg. In the late 1940s a bypass was created to reroute traffic on the western side of the city. As a result, commercial properties such as strip malls and shopping centers began to appear, attracting not only local area residents with their large grocery and drug stores, but also those from further away in King George and Orange Counties.<sup>87</sup> This type of development was further exacerbated throughout the 1960s by the construction of I-95 and an interchange therewith slightly further west of the city. As the twentieth century progressed into its final quarter, the east-west thoroughfare of Route 3 was also widened and intersections were upgraded, including in front of the Greenbrier Shopping Center, continuing to make further travel to convenient commercial concentrations even more attractive. These continuous upgrades to vehicular routes surrounding the Fredericksburg area directly influenced the increased commercial development and suburban sprawl during the last half of the twentieth century.

In order for a resource to be considered eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A, “a property can be associated with either (or both) of two types of events: a specific event marking an important moment in American prehistory or history [or] a pattern of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a State, or the nation.” However, the National Park Service (NPS) goes on to say that “mere association with historic events or trends is not enough, in and of itself, to qualify under Criterion A: the property’s specific association must be considered important as

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<sup>84</sup> Hayden 2003:154–155.

<sup>85</sup> Manning et al. 2019:F-33.

<sup>86</sup> Gournay and Corbin Sies 2002:61.

<sup>87</sup> Dennen 1991:15.

well.”<sup>88</sup> According to the evaluation methodology prepared for National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Project 25-62 (hereafter referred to as the evaluation methodology), because this resource type is so prolific, the post-World War II shopping center should be associated with an important theme, differentiating it from other similar examples. Areas considered for significance during this evaluation include Social History, Community Planning and Development, and Commerce. Although the Greenbrier Shopping Center was constructed towards the beginning of a suburban expansion period associated with the arrival of I-95 in Fredericksburg, and provided area and surrounding county residents with access to larger retailers, it was not the first of its kind in the area, nor did it introduce a new commercial venture or commercial development concept. It is also not known to be associated with a particular ethnic or religious group. Residential development to the east on the north and south sides of Route 3 was already under construction prior to the arrival of the Greenbrier Shopping Center, with other commercial development occurring almost simultaneously. As suggested by the NPS and the evaluation methodology, mere association with this movement does not warrant NRHP eligibility as the resource must be significant within this trend. The shopping center does not appear to retain a sufficient amount of historic significance related to the themes of Social History, Community Planning and Development, or Commerce. For these reasons, the Greenbrier Shopping Center is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A.

According to the NPS, architects, engineers, builders, and artists are often represented by their works, which would be more appropriately considered under Criterion C.<sup>89</sup> However, their homes, studios, or offices could be considered under Criterion B. For this particular resource, the property’s association with Guy E. Beatty is better evaluated under Criterion C. Furthermore, the resource has no known association with an individual who is “significant within a historic context” or has “gained importance within his or her group or profession,” which are necessary qualifications for it to be eligible under Criterion B.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, the Greenbrier Shopping Center is recommended not eligible under Criterion B.

As outlined in the *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, distinctive characteristics are the “physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction” and “merely exhibiting features common to a particular commercial property type from this time period does not alone serve to convey significance in the area of Architecture and Landscape Architecture under Criterion C.”<sup>91</sup> Additionally, the evaluation methodology states that a commercial property should exhibit features that are distinctive and considered important within the local or regional context and through comparison with other similar examples of its type.

The Greenbrier Shopping Center is not the first of its kind in the Fredericksburg area nor along the I-95 corridor in Northern Virginia as previously discussed. It is not known to employ any innovative or significant planning or landscape design principals or standards that are not visible elsewhere in the vicinity. Landscape design in particular is fairly simplistic, comprising a large parking lot between the

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<sup>88</sup> Shrimpton et al. 1990:12.

<sup>89</sup> Shrimpton et al. 1990:16.

<sup>90</sup> Shrimpton et al. 1990:14.

<sup>91</sup> Shrimpton et al. 1990.

building and the roadway dotted with lighting and plant beds incorporated into the sidewalk lining the building. Compared to similar local and regional properties such as the Fredericksburg Park and Shop Center, Fredericksburg Shopping Center, and the Four Mile Fork Shopping Center, the current resource is of a property type, form, and design that appears to be ubiquitous throughout the region. Stylistically, the Greenbrier Shopping Center features a simplistic design and muted architectural elements, such as the arched openings for the walkway, as well in its landscape design. This basic approach appears to be fairly common throughout the Northern Virginia region. Other previously recorded examples by DHR staff retain a similar amount of historic integrity and significance as the subject resource. Innovative designs, materials, and construction techniques for the Greenbrier Shopping Center were not identified during the course of this study. Compared to another known shopping center (the Little River Shopping Center) built by Beatty, this resource is a better example; however, compared to the roster of Beatty's work, the current resource is not one of his best-known works nor the best representative example of his work throughout his lifetime. For these reasons, the Greenbrier Shopping Center is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion C.

As an architectural resource, the Greenbrier Shopping Center was not evaluated under Criterion D.

The Greenbrier Shopping Center is recommended not eligible for listing in the NRHP under any criteria.



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# Postwar Commercial Evaluation Methodology: Application Worksheet

**Property name:** Greenbrier Shopping Center

**Property type:** Shopping Center

**Property location:** 2000-2220 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, Virginia

## Identification of Character-defining Features

### Checklist of Character-defining Features Present – Shopping Centers

#### ***Building:***

- ☒ Standalone one- or two-story building with two or more individual stores
- ☒ Houses a variety of commercial services
- ☒ Includes anchor store
- ☒ Originally designed and developed as a single unit; facade may display elements of unified design
- ☐ Includes more than one building within the complex
- ☐ Vernacular with limited architectural detail
- ☐ Displays elements of architectural style or regional influences
- ☒ Large display windows or glass walls on facade
- ☐ Individual storefronts distinguished by storefront width, variation in windows and entrances, signage
- ☐ Individual store signage on building, or on/under awning or canopy
- ☒ Sidewalks along facade covered by awning or canopy
- ☒ Open interior floorplans
- ☒ Rear stockrooms or non-public areas
- ☒ Loading docks, etc. placed away from key public-facing elevations and often on the rear elevation

#### ***Location/site features:***

- ☒ Located along a current or former main thoroughfare or tributary to a thoroughfare
- ☒ Oriented toward the street and/or parking lot with vehicular access
- ☒ Dedicated parking lot with or without lighting
- ☒ Freestanding signage the overall shopping center near the roadway and/or on the building
- ☐ Landscaping elements, planters, furnishings, etc.
- ☒ Additional standalone retail buildings or secondary shopping centers in outlots
- ☒ Physical buffer between the shopping center and surrounding residential neighborhood
- ☒ Refuse and/or recycling area near the rear

### **Analysis of Character-defining Features**

How does subject property represent the property type:

Loss of or changes to character-defining features:

# Research

## Resources Consulted (annotate list as needed)

- ☒ Community and regional histories: Fredericksburg Comprehensive Plan, Spotsylvania Comprehensive Plan
- ☐ Clippings files: N/A
- ☐ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: N/A
- ☒ Historic photographs: Central Rappahannock Heritage Center of car show (ca. 1969)
- ☒ Aerial images: 1971, 1972, 1980, 1982, 1987, 1994, 2002–206, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018
- ☐ City directories:
- ☒ U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps: 1944, 1978, 1984
- ☒ Historic property surveys and inventory records: Spotsylvania County Land Records
- ☒ Prior DOT compliance surveys: VDOT compliance reports and road-history report
- ☒ Tax assessor records: Readily unavailable at Spotsylvania County Courthouse.
- ☐ City council meeting minutes:
- ☒ Reports from community and city planning boards: County and City Comprehensive Plans
- ☒ Newspaper articles and advertisements: Evening Star, Washington Post, Free Lance-Star, Northern Virginia Sun
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce publications:
- ☐ Industry and trade publications and periodicals:
- ☐ NR Nominations and Determinations of Eligibility (Phase II) reports:
- ☐ HABS documentation:
- ☒ Oral interviews with building owners, tenants, and/or employees: Attempted with current owners (associated with developer/building) to get in touch with family of developers. They were not interested in assisting us.

Additional resources consulted: Other suburbanization contexts from surrounding states such as the Maryland Suburbanization Context, 1961–1980.

Repositories consulted (list all): Central Rappahannock Heritage Center, Central Rappahannock Regional Library, Newspapers.com, DC Public Library Digital Resources, Virginia Chronicle, Fairfax County Library

Analysis of most helpful sources: Newspapers were the best resource overall followed by land records.

## Application of GIS Tools

How used and intended results: Fredericksburg GIS

Was it useful: To obtain land record information

If not used, why:

## Stakeholder Engagement

What was done: Reviewed available data on similar resources on the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' (DHR) Virginia Cultural Resource Information System (VCRIS) database.

Was it useful: Will utilize for contextuials/comparisons.

## Historic Trends

### Historic trends considered for association with subject property

#### ***Suburbanization:***

Dramatic shift from residing in urban areas to developing low-density suburbs: Yes

Retail businesses and offices leaving downtown and following the population shift to the suburbs: Yes

Expanding highways/Interstates transformed land use and provided easy vehicular access to the developing suburban areas: Yes

Developers of residential subdivisions encouraged to incorporate associated commercial areas: Unsure

Commercial developers worked within system of established zoning and land development regulations: Yes

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research?

If trend was applicable, how was that identified? What sources or information assisted with making an association? Yes, as the area in which the property was constructed was in the process of being further developed residentially and commercially. Historic mapping and aerials in particular were useful in identifying this trend as well as analyzing historic contexts from are comprehensive plans and newspaper articles.

#### ***Automobile culture:***

Rapid increase in automobile ownership: Yes, but happened before the construction of the resource.

Commercial property established along busy thoroughfare/highway to accommodate the automobile traveling public: Yes, the shopping center is located along the primary east-west thoroughfare (Route 3) in the Fredericksburg area and near its interchange with I-95.

Drive-ins and drive-throughs became commonplace: Yes, but not applicable to this property.

Sited at busy intersections or access ramps: Yes, approximately 0.52 mile from the Interstate-95 (I-95) and Route 3/Plank Road intersection (I-95 Exit 130).

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Large parking lot indicates the focus on automobile culture, travel, and commuting.

***Social and cultural trends:***

Growing families relocated to the suburbs; increased commercial development in suburban areas: Yes, increased commercial and residential development in the area during the time of construction. Around the mid-twentieth century, Fredericksburg began the transformation from small town, bedroom community surrounded by moderately populated rural and agricultural to a rapidly growing suburban community.

Redlining and discriminatory practices: None known for the property of study; however, not previously uncommon for surrounding residential subdivisions dating about 20+ years earlier (e.g., Jackson Manor).

Civil Rights movement and racial integration: None known for the property of study.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Nothing found in any research to suggest any significance under this area.

***Consumerism:***

Shopping as a recreational activity: Yes, the shopping center not only included “necessities” such as a grocery store and drug store but also smaller commercial enterprises that catered towards hobbies, fashion, and electronics such as Sew & Sew, Radio Shack, hair salons, as well as banks.

Specialty retail stores catering to those with discretionary income: Not sure if this counts but, Discount A&P Foods.

Shopping centers as a destination with amenities for the entire family: Yes.

Large suburban supermarkets replacing neighborhood grocery stores: Yes, Discount A&P Foods.

Discount and big box stores gaining popularity: Yes, Woolco

Development of regional and national brand recognition and commercial advertising: For individual businesses, perhaps. But not for the center itself.

Application of scientific/rational planning policies to retail sales: None known.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Does not appear it was at the forefront in this area or along the transportation corridor in which it is located. No unique or innovative businesses were known to be present at the property.



***Commercial design and setting:***

Precast concrete blocks, concrete masonry units, or poured concrete for quick and lower-cost construction: Yes.

New materials and/or technologies incorporated into building design (i.e. glass curtain walls, AC) : None known.

Early use of large glass retail storefronts: Yes.

Landscaping as essential part of the commercial environment: No.

Early use of energy-efficient materials: None known.

Early use of large parking lots: Not the earliest in the area of Fredericksburg; a shopping center on Route 1/College Avenue intersection was the earliest. But certainly, one of the earliest.

Signage as an integral component: Yes.

Building components could be easily modified to serve tenant: Yes, at the interior.

Separation of the sites that house the retailing/management services from industrial/manufacturing processes: Yes.

Modern design to “rationalize” the workplace/commercial space design and layout modeled for efficiency: None known or visible during the field survey.

Form/function influenced by human relations or environmental psychology: None known.

Advancements in science and technology influencing architectural design: None known.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Not known to be an innovative design or unique in the area or region.

***Architecture:***

Representative of architectural style: No

Representative of regional variations/influences: Yes, another example with a similar design and architectural features was constructed by the developer/building in Northern Virginia (Little River Shopping Center in Annandale); however, this example retains a higher level of integrity of materials, design, and workmanship.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Not a particularly unique or significant example of the property type. Nor was it the first in the area.

## **Comparisons**

How were comparisons identified: Property Type in Fredericksburg Area as well as along the popular thoroughfares in the area/region.

Challenges in identifying comparisons: Knowledge of the area is helpful and few previously recorded examples with the SHPO.

**Appendix E. Pilot Study and Application Worksheet: Commercial Strip**

# **Pilot Study**

## **South Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip**

**Tulsa, Oklahoma**

### **General setting**

The South Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip (S. Harvard Avenue Strip) Potential Historic District is located approximately 3.5 miles southeast of downtown Tulsa, in an area initially considered to be South Tulsa but is referred to as mid-town today. It is ten blocks long, extending from U.S. Highway (US) 64 in the north to East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street in the south (see Figure 1) and generally includes properties fronting South (S.) Harvard Avenue, although commercial properties are also located along prominent cross streets. S. Harvard Avenue is a major north-south thoroughfare and this section has four lanes of traffic, two in each direction, and a center turn lane. East (E.) 31<sup>st</sup> Street south to the E. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street intersection, the road narrows and continues south with no turn lane. Concrete sidewalks are present along most of the roadway, which features curb and gutter. Several intersections and crosswalks are signalized. The streetscape includes grass and paved terraces between the curb and sidewalk, and some locations include shrubbery, mature trees, or road signs.

Commercial development continues south of E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street but is limited to the east side of the roadway; the Ranch Acres residential subdivision is located on the west side of the roadway in this area.

Commercial development extends to the east and west along E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street, which runs perpendicular to S. Harvard Avenue, and in some areas commercial buildings have been constructed on former residential lots of neighborhood feeder streets. Single-family, middle-class, residential subdivisions abut the commercial properties along the extent of the strip.

Forty-five commercial buildings are included in this evaluation, which are generally set back on their lots allowing for paved off-street parking in front and/or on the side. Largely vernacular in appearance, the buildings were constructed between c.1940 and 2020 and feature common materials and forms, with limited stylistic details present. Most commercial buildings have mounted signage near the roofline, and freestanding signs are located in parking lots near the roadway, in easy view of passing motorists.



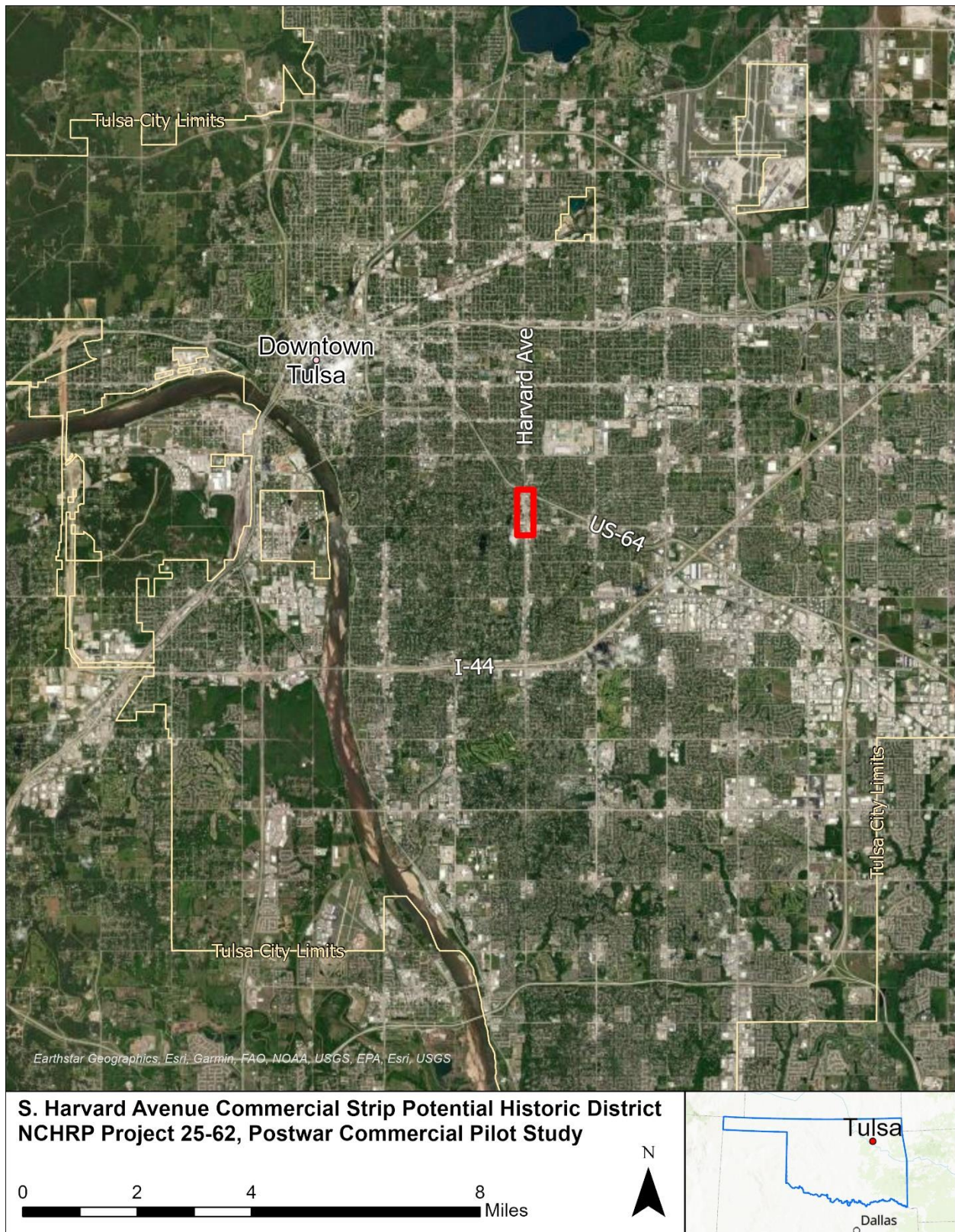


Figure 1. Project location map.



## Architectural descriptions

The following description begins at the north end of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip from the US 64/Oklahoma State Highway (OK) 51 overpass (at approximately E. 26<sup>th</sup> Street) and moves south to E. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, describing individual properties. Included are the historic name of all buildings within the strip, construction date, if known, and the general architectural description. The descriptions are based on the appearance at the time of the pilot study site visit, which occurred in November and December 2021. A complete listing of properties within the potential district is included in Table 1, and a map of the district is included in Attachment A.

### ***Harvard Village Professional Center, 2570 S. Harvard Avenue***

Completed in 1956, this former office building now houses a funeral home. The one-story, rectangular-plan building has a flat roof. A flat awning with round posts shelters a walkway that spans the facade, and a flat-roof porte cochere extends from the main entrance. Entrances on the facade are wood panel doors with classically inspired surrounds, which feature fluted trim, dentils, and a fan detail overhead. Walls are clad in brick veneer; windows are vinyl hung sash units. An addition on the side has metal panel cladding and a metal bay door. A paved parking lot is located in front of the building. Landscaping includes grass and mature trees; a small non-historic-age sign is on the lawn near S. Harvard Avenue.



*Figure 2. Harvard Village Professional Center, view facing north.*

### ***Former Spraker Volkswagen Automobile Dealership, 2615 S. Harvard Avenue***

Two commercial buildings are on this lot. A one-story, L- plan, c.1965 former car dealership is near the south lot line. The building has a flat roof, with extended eaves over the showroom sidewalk. Walls are concrete block. Aluminum-frame window walls enclose the showroom on three sides, and showroom entrances are aluminum-frame glass doors. A large carport area is located on the north side of the building, and a c.1970 addition is attached to the rear. A c.1970, one-story, rectangular-plan, flat-roof office building is immediately north of the auto dealership. It has similar materials, window walls, and details as the car dealership. The building has a large, paved parking lot that features lights and a non-historic-age freestanding sign.



*Figure 3. Car dealership, view facing northeast.*

**Harvard Village Shopping Center, 2602-2622 S. Harvard Avenue**

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1955 shopping center houses seven storefronts. It is set back from S. Harvard Avenue, with a large lit parking lot in front. The building is of concrete-block construction and has a flat roof. A 2022 remodel resulted in new metal cladding on the parapet and flat awning over the walkway that spans the facade. Storefronts vary in width and window configuration, and most have aluminum-frame display windows over brick-veneer knee walls and aluminum-frame glass doors. A delicatessen at the north end has a metal-frame window wall storefront and a walk-up/pick-up window on the side. A paved alley provides access to rear secondary entrances. A non-historic-age prefabricated shed is behind the shopping center, and a historic-age freestanding illuminated sign is in the parking lot.



*Figure 4. Harvard Village Shopping Center, view facing south/southwest.*

**Freedom Car Wash, 2635 S. Harvard Avenue (infill)**

Constructed in 2017, this one-story, rectangular-plan car wash has an arched metal roof with a square tower feature fronting S. Harvard Avenue. Walls are clad in metal panels, and large metal-frame window walls extend along the front and side. Two large bay openings allow vehicle access on the front and rear. A lighted paved parking lot extends around the building and contains two drive-thru kiosks and a non-historic-age sign. Landscaping is limited to a planting bed and grass along the building.



*Figure 5. Car wash, view facing northeast.*

**Former Sipes Supermarket, 2710 S. Harvard Avenue**

Completed in 1954, this one-story, rectangular-plan former Sipes Supermarket now serves as a retail store. The flat roof has a parapet over the main entrance and display windows. Walls are clad in stucco with stone veneer accents. Windows are fixed metal units, and a metal-frame automatic door is on the facade. A loading dock area with a bay door and secondary entrances is on the side elevation. A 1980 addition to the side almost doubled the square footage and included shed-roof portions facing the parking lot and S. Harvard Avenue. The expansive parking lot has historic-age lights and a non-historic-age illuminated sign. Landscaping is limited to planting beds along the building and a few trees.



*Figure 6. Former Sipes Supermarket, view facing south/southwest.*

**Aldi Grocery Store, 2711 S. Harvard Avenue (infill)**

This one-and-one-half-story, rectangular-plan grocery store was constructed c.1990. It has a flat roof with a shed-roof, two-story portion over the entrance. It is of concrete-block construction and also features metal panel, brick veneer, and engineered wood cladding. A flat-roof metal canopy is situated over the entrance and cart corral area. Windows are metal fixed units, and the main entrance has a metal-frame, double automatic sliding door. A large lit parking lot wraps around the building and contains a non-historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign.





*Figure 7. Aldi Grocery store, view facing northeast.*

***Former Service Station, 2726 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, rectangular plan c.1965 former service station was converted to use as an auto repair facility. It has a flat roof with a metal shed-roof awning over the office/waiting area. Walls are stucco with metal siding along the roofline. Windows are fixed metal units, and the office entrance is a metal-frame glass door. Two large bay openings have overhead doors. A non-historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign with round metal supports is located within the paved parking lot near S. Harvard Avenue.



*Figure 8. Former service station, view facing southwest.*

***Former Radio Shack, 2730 S. Harvard Avenue***

This c.1965, one-story, rectangular-plan commercial building is of concrete-block construction and was formerly a Radio Shack retail store. Modern stylistic influences include a flat roof with extended awning over the facade-wide walkway, large aluminum-frame storefront window walls, and stone veneer accents. A small parking lot is in front of the building, with access from S. Harvard Avenue. A large, freestanding, historic-age, illuminated sign is near the road in the parking lot.



Figure 9. Former Radio Shack store, view facing northwest.

**Retail Store, 2731 S. Harvard Avenue**

This retail store consists of a two-story, c.1950, rectangular-plan massing with a c.1960, one-story, flat-roof addition to the rear. The main massing has a hip roof clad in asphalt shingles, and new metal awnings over the storefront and side entrances. The stucco-clad building features a brick knee wall on the front. Upper windows are fixed replacement units. A small side parking lot is accessed from E. 27<sup>th</sup> Place South. A large, freestanding, illuminated sign is along the sidewalk fronting S. Harvard Avenue.



Figure 10. Retail store and sign, view facing northeast.

**Storage Units, 2733 S. Harvard Avenue (infill)**

Constructed in 2001, this one-story, rectangular-plan building houses 12 storage units. It has a flat roof, stucco walls, and overhead bay doors. There is no other fenestration.



*Figure 11. Storage units, view facing east.*

**Restaurant, 2745 S. Harvard Avenue**

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1954 restaurant building has a flat roof; the metal pent roof was installed in a 1993 remodel when it was converted into a Village Inn restaurant. The awning has square brick supports on either side of a central entry vestibule. Walls are clad in brick veneer, and textured concrete block is visible on the rear elevation. Windows are fixed metal units. An incorporated planter is located at the southwest corner and extends along the west side of the building. A large, illuminated, non-historic-age sign is within the parking lot, which extends from the side to behind the restaurant. Planting beds line the west side of the building.



*Figure 12. Restaurant, view facing east.*

**Former Service Station, 2748 S. Harvard Avenue**

This former service station now houses a restaurant. The 1955 building has two non-historic-age additions: one facing S. Harvard Avenue and one on the rear of the building. The flat roof has a flat eave



overhang on the facade. Walls are clad in stucco, horizontal wood siding, and metal. New doors and windows have been introduced and historic bay doors have been enclosed. A limited amount of parking is in front, and a larger parking lot is accessed via E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street South. A large, illuminated, non-historic-age, freestanding sign is in the parking lot at the corner of E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street South and S. Harvard Avenue.



*Figure 13. Former service station converted to a restaurant, view facing southwest.*

#### **Retail Store, 3245 E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street**

This c.1965 retail store has a flat roof and a rectangular plan. The one-story building is of concrete-block construction and features patterned blocks and vertical column elements on the east side. The storefront wraps around the southeast corner of the building and consists of metal-frame windows and a corner entrance. A paved parking lot is adjacent to the building. A brick planter is on the south side of the building, with landscaping and lawn lining E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street South.



*Figure 14. Retail store, view facing northwest.*

#### **Office, 3323 E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street**

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1970 office building has a flat roof. A pent-roof awning spans the recessed storefront facing E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street South. The main entrance is flanked by aluminum-frame window walls. Angled stucco-clad wing walls at the southwest and southeast corners extend the lines of the awning and feature arch details. Walls are stucco and windows along the west side have canvas awnings. Limited parking is available in front of the building, with additional parking in the rear. Landscaping includes a planting bed and grass strip with mature shrubbery and trees.





*Figure 15. Office, view facing northeast.*

***Former Service Station, 2803 S. Harvard Avenue***

This 1954 oblong-box service station has been converted to use as a dog spa. The one-story, rectangular-plan building has a corner office/reception area with wraparound fixed windows, and three former service bay doors have been enclosed with window walls. A flat metal canopy with metal pole supports extends from the office over the former pump island. Limited paved parking is available fronting S. Harvard Avenue and on the side of the building, with additional parking located on the rear. A non-historic-age illuminated sign is in the parking lot at the corner of S. Harvard Ave and E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street South. The south side of the building abuts another commercial building (the Colony Pub, see below) to the south.



*Figure 16. Former Service Station, view facing southeast.*

***Retail Store/Restaurant (Braum's), 2806 S. Harvard Avenue (infill)***

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1991 commercial building houses a Braum's fast food restaurant in the south portion and a convenience food market in the north portion. The roof is flat with decorative metal gables over the entry and on the south side of the building. The south restaurant portion also features an asphalt-shingle pent roof detail, and has metal-frame window walls with square brick columns at the corners. The north portion of the building is clad in brick veneer; drive-thru lanes wrap around the north

and west sides, with pick-up windows on the west elevation. A large lighted parking area fronts S. Harvard Avenue and contains a non-historic-age illuminated sign.



*Figure 17. Retail Store/Restaurant, view facing northwest.*

### **Colony Pub, 2809 S. Harvard Avenue**

This one-story, rectangular-plan building was constructed in 1959 to house the Colony Pub. It has a side-gabled roof clad in asphalt shingles with a prominent tapered brick chimney centered on the west-facing facade and dove-cote feature in the gable ends. A wide shed-roof entry porch with square wood posts has recently been partially enclosed with wood plank wing walls. Windows are vinyl, replacement, hung sash units. The north side abuts the former gas station building to the north. A historic-age, illuminated, freestanding sign is in the parking lot northwest of the building. Parking is available fronting S. Harvard Avenue and on the east side.



*Figure 18. Colony Pub, view facing northeast.*

### **Fast Food Restaurant, 2819 S. Harvard Avenue**

This one-story, 1975, fast food restaurant has a rectangular plan. The flat roof has an exaggerated metal faux mansard awning on the front and sides. The indoor dining room features aluminum-frame window walls, and a drive-thru window is on the north side. Walls are clad in stone veneer and stone piers define an outdoor dining area fronting S. Harvard Avenue. A historic-age, illuminated, freestanding sign is within this dining patio; paved parking is available adjacent to the building.





*Figure 19. Fast food restaurant with dining patio in front, view facing northeast.*

***Fellowship Congregational Church, 2900 S. Harvard Avenue (non-commercial)***

This one-story, 1970 Usonian church is set back on a large lot, with a lawn and mature trees providing a buffer along S. Harvard Avenue. A c.1935 sanctuary/classroom building with 1950 additions is west of this building. A large parking area is on the side of the building.



*Figure 20. Church (1970 Sanctuary), view facing northwest.*

***Office/Storage Warehouse, 3307 E. 29<sup>th</sup> Street***

While this large c.1960 office/storage warehouse facility fronts E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street, it has an E. 29<sup>th</sup> Street address. The large irregular-plan building consists of a double gable warehouse and a flat-roof office portion. The warehouse portion has a corrugated metal roof, metal panel-clad walls, a metal slab entry door, and two large overhead bay doors. The office has brick veneer walls and fixed windows. A historic-age, flat-roof addition is at the southeast corner of the building. A large gated and chain-link-fence enclosed parking lot is behind the building. Three non-historic-age prefabricated sheds are within the parking lot.



*Figure 21. Storage Warehouse, view facing southwest.*

***Warehouse, 2901 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, 1957 office building and former warehouse has a rectangular plan and a flat roof. Fronting S. Harvard Avenue, the facade has an incised concrete feature wall, a flat awning with metal pole supports over the main entrance, and a ribbon window. Walls are clad in brick veneer and windows are fixed metal units. The original warehouse space on the rear has been converted to office space. Parking is available in a lighted parking lot to the rear. Landscaping includes planting beds along the buildings, lawn areas in the front and sides, and mature trees.



*Figure 22. Office and former warehouse, view facing southeast.*

***Shopping Center, 2911-2917 S. Harvard Avenue***

This small, one-story, rectangular-plan, c.1955 shopping center houses four storefronts. The building is on a sloping lot and has a staggered roofline. The roof has an asphalt-shingle, pent awning over the walkway that spans the storefronts, which feature brick veneer accents and wing walls and aluminum-frame window walls. A strip of paved parking spaces is adjacent to the storefronts and additional parking is available at the rear of the building.





*Figure 23. Shopping center, view facing east.*

**Retail Store, 2921-2929 S. Harvard Avenue**

This property consists of a c.1940 two-story portion and a c.1955 one-story portion that have been combined to house one retail store. The roof is flat and an asphalt-shingle, shed-roof awning spans the facade. The building is clad in stone and brick veneer and features an angled corner entrance and aluminum-frame window wall storefront. The c.1940 portion includes a secondary entrance with a canvas awning, and a balcony overlooking the street. A non-historic-age, illuminated, freestanding sign is at the north end the front parking area, and additional parking is available on the side.



*Figure 24. Retail store, view facing northeast.*

**Office, 3311 E. 30<sup>th</sup> Street**

This one-story, rectangular-plan, c.1965 office building is on the same lot as the shopping center at 2911-2917 S. Harvard Avenue and the retail store at 2921-2929 S. Harvard Avenue. The flat roof has an asphalt-shingle pent-roof awning. Walls are clad in brick veneer. The facade has two entrances with paired windows on either side. A large parking lot is on the side of the building. A paved sidewalk extends along a portion of the facade; sign remnants are on the front lawn.



*Figure 25. Office, view facing north.*

**Former Service Station, 3003 S. Harvard Avenue**

This 1960 former service station now serves solely as an auto garage. It has a one-story, rectangular plan with a metal, side-gable roof. A gable canopy extends from the office area over the former pump island. Walls are clad in metal and stucco with stone veneer accents. Windows are metal fixed units. Alterations include the new metal roof that appears to have changed from a flat profile to a side-gable, and a large non-historic-age addition on the rear of the building. Parking is available fronting S. Harvard Avenue and on the side. Freestanding signage features include remnants of a historic-age sign, and a non-historic-age illuminated sign, both in the front parking lot.



*Figure 26. Former service station, view facing southeast.*

**Ranch Plaza Shopping Center, 3023 S. Harvard Avenue**

This one-story, 1961 shopping center has a flat roof and an L-plan. The long end of the building fronts E. 30<sup>th</sup> Place with a lit parking lot in the ell. Walls are of concrete-block construction with brick veneer on the storefronts and sides. Storefronts, consisting of aluminum-frame fixed windows, vary in door and window placement. A c.1995 remodel resulted in a stucco-clad awning with round columns and decorative gables over the full-width walkway. A non-historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign is within the parking lot, and landscaping is limited to shrubs near the sides of the building. A service alley wraps completely around the rear of the building.





*Figure 27. Ranch Plaza Shopping Center, view facing northwest.*



*Figure 28. Ranch Plaza Shopping Center, view facing northeast.*

***Harvard Center Office Building, 3010-3020 S. Harvard Avenue***

Sited on a large sloping lot, this irregular-plan office building was constructed in 1965 and features a three-story main massing with an exposed basement level at the rear, and two wings extend from the side. The main portion displays modern elements with smooth brick veneer and distinctive protruding concrete window frames. An exterior stairwell has been added to the side (north) elevation. The building has non-historic-age metal awnings with square brick posts on the front facade and side elevations. Lighted parking lots surround the building, and a non-historic-age freestanding sign is in the parking lot near S. Harvard Avenue.



*Figure 29. Harvard Center Office Building currently known as the Zoellner Center, view facing southwest.*

***Storage Facility, 3030 S. Harvard Avenue (infill)***

Constructed in 2020, this large three- and four-story, rectangular-plan storage facility has a flat roof. Walls are stucco-clad and windows are metal fixed units. Four large bay doors are on the facade fronting E. 30<sup>th</sup> Place. Landscaping includes planting beds wrapped around the front and side of the building.



*Figure 30. Storage facility, view facing southwest.*

***Home Federal Savings and Loan, 3045 S. Harvard Avenue***

This two-story, 1958, Late Moderne building houses a bank on the main floor, with second-floor office space. The rectangular-plan building has a flat roof and a central tower, and exterior finishes include brick and marble. Flat awnings over the front and side entrances emphasize horizontality. Windows are metal fixed units and include ribbon windows on the second story and in the tower. A three-lane drive-thru with a canopy has been added to the rear. Landscaping includes planting beds and a few trees along the front and sides of the building. Paved parking surrounds the bank, and a non-historic-age, freestanding sign is at the corner of S. Harvard Avenue and E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street.



*Figure 31. Bank, view facing northeast.*



***Newport Square Shopping Center, 3321-3333 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street (infill)***

This one-story, L-plan shopping center was constructed in 1988. It has a flat roof, brick-veneer walls, and metal multi-light display windows. A sidewalk, with metal or canvas awnings over single or paired storefronts, extends across the front of the shopping center; the corner storefront entrances are recessed. A large, paved parking lot and a freestanding, non-historic-age, illuminated sign are in the ell. Landscaping includes raised brick planting beds, plus planting beds along E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street.



*Figure 32. Newport Square Shopping Center, view facing north/northeast.*

***Ranch Acres Shopping Center***

Ranch Acres is a complex of buildings on a commercial block bound by E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street on the north, E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Place to the south, Jamestown Avenue on the east, and S. Harvard Avenue on the west (see Figure 33). The development includes two L-shaped shopping center buildings in a nested configuration: a 1954 building (Ranch Acres west) and a 1958 building (Ranch Acres east). A 2014 supermarket (Wal-Mart Neighborhood Market) anchors the southeast corner of the shopping center. A 1955 service station (3344 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street) and a 1955 restaurant (3147 S. Harvard Avenue) are outlot buildings within the overall development.

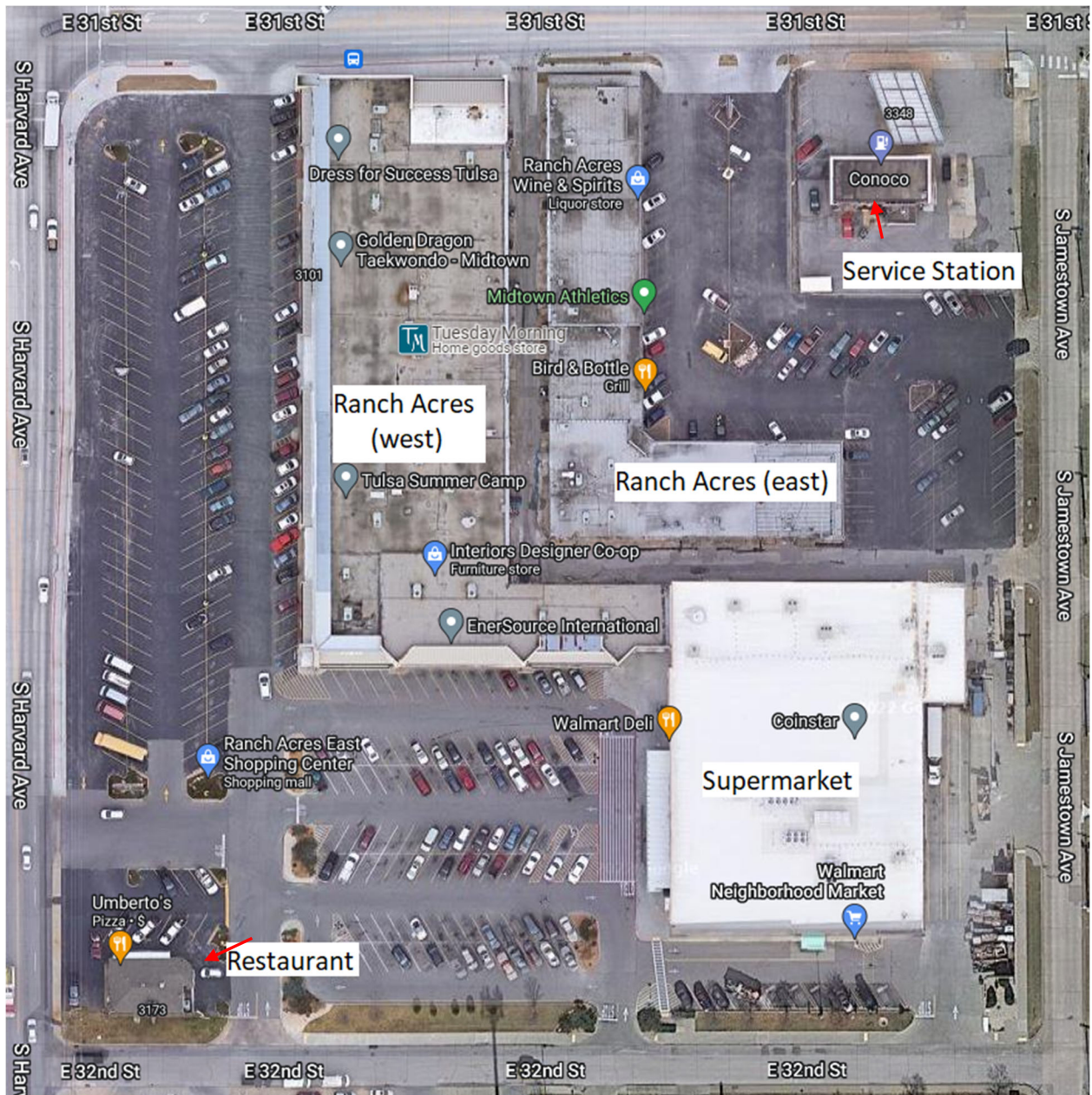


Figure 33. Aerial image of Ranch Acres shopping center and outlot buildings. S. Harvard Avenue is at the far left. Google Earth image; Imagery © 2023 Maxar Technologies, USDA/FPAC/GEO Map data.

#### *Ranch Acres (west), 3103-3133 S. Harvard Avenue*

Constructed in 1954, this one-story shopping center has an L-plan. The flat roof has a stucco-clad parapet and signage area. A 1983 remodel resulted in new elements and materials, such as shed-roof canopies with square brick and round stuccoed supports, and angled wingwall elements at the corners. Also in 1983, the Safeway Supermarket anchor was relocated to a new larger building at the southeast corner of the shopping center. Walls are clad in brick and fieldstone veneer, and stucco. A walkway extends along seven storefronts, which consist of replacement, fixed, metal display windows and window walls. A non-historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign is in the large lit parking lot fronting S. Harvard Avenue at the south end.



The one-story, rectangular plan Walmart supermarket is a 2014 alteration that replaced the 1983 Safeway Supermarket. The flat roof has a stepped parapet. The facade is dominated by a flat-roof entry vestibule. Wall cladding includes stone veneer and stucco. Windows are metal fixed units; a pharmacy drive-thru window is located on the side. A non-historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign is in the shared shopping center parking lot.



*Figure 34. Ranch Acres (west) Shopping Center, view facing northeast.*



*Figure 35. Supermarket, view facing southeast.*

*Ranch Acres (east), 3324 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street*

This one-story, 1958, L-plan shopping center has a flat roof. Walls are clad in stone and brick veneer, with both common and stacked patterns present. Storefronts vary in width and configuration, including angled walls and recessed entrances. Storefronts have original, aluminum-frame, display windows or window walls, and most doors are also original. Several storefronts have incorporated brick planters. A replacement canvas-covered flat awning extends over the walkway and the storefronts. The associated large lit parking area features small, landscaped islands, and a historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign.



*Figure 36. Ranch Acres (east) Shopping Center, view facing southwest.*



*Figure 37. Ranch Acres (east) Shopping Center, view facing southwest.*

#### *Service Station, 3344 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street*

This one-story, rectangular-plan service station was constructed in 1955. It has a flat roof with a wide metal fascia. Walls are clad in brick veneer and vertical metal siding. The office/waiting area has aluminum-frame windows and three bay openings have overhead doors. A c.2000 flat canopy with round metal supports is over the pump islands. A non-historic-age, prefabricated shed is behind the gas station.





*Figure 38. Service station, view facing southeast.*

***Restaurant, 3147 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1955 restaurant building has an asphalt-shingle hip roof. Walls are clad in fieldstone veneer, aluminum siding, and pressed wood paneling. Windows are metal fixed units, and the main entrance is a metal-frame door. The building has several alterations, including the enclosure of front and side picture windows with paneling, construction of a c.1990 atrium addition on the side elevation, and moving the main entrance north of the atrium, which changed the orientation of the building. A non-historic-age illuminated sign with a metal pole support is in the parking lot, which wraps around the restaurant.



*Figure 39. Restaurant, view facing southeast. Note this entrance is now a secondary entrance.*

***Walgreens, 3112 S. Harvard Avenue (infill)***

Constructed in 1994, this one-story rectangular-plan Walgreen's has a flat roof. Walls are clad in brick veneer with stucco in the upper portions. The main entrance is located at the northeast. A drive-thru window with a gable-roof extension is located on the side. A paved parking lot extends around the building and two non-historic-age illuminated signs front S. Harvard Avenue. Landscaping is limited to shrubs next to the building and around a sign.



*Figure 40. Walgreens, view facing northwest.*

***Former Humpty Dumpty Supermarket, 3126 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1955 supermarket has a flat roof. It formerly housed a Humpty Dumpty while today it contains a Natural Grocers. Walls are clad in brick veneer, which has been updated c.2010 with stone veneer accents and stucco texturing on the front and sides. Oriented towards a large lit parking lot to the south, the main entrance and window wall are set within a projecting entry portico. A loading dock is on the side. The expansive parking lot features historic-age lights, islands with sidewalks and vegetation, and a non-historic age, freestanding, illuminated sign. Landscaping includes mature trees within the parking lot islands and along the south end of the lot.



*Figure 41. Former Humpty Dumpty supermarket, view facing north.*

***Former Service Station, 3203 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, rectangular-plan, c.1960 former service station now houses a retail store. The roof is flat with a flat metal parapet on the front and side and earlier pent roof element visible on the rear. Walls are clad in brick veneer. Windows are fixed, metal, replacement units. Three large bay openings fronting S. Harvard Avenue have been enclosed with concrete and glass block; an addition extends the building footprint to the south. The pump island has been removed and sidewalk has been added on the front and side. Parking is available along S. Harvard Avenue and on the side.



Figure 42. Former service station, view facing southeast.

**Harvard Center Shopping Center (Phil's Diner), 3316-3320 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and 3215-3325 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Place**

This shopping center consists of two rectangular-plan commercial buildings arranged back-to-back. A small one-story unit housing three storefronts faces E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. A longer one-story building fronting E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Place with six storefronts has a second-story office space on the east side. Both buildings have flat roofs and modern metal shed-roof awnings with round metal pole supports over the walkways that extend across the storefronts. Storefronts are generally large metal fixed windows over brick knee walls, with metal-frame glass doors. Both buildings have lighted parking lots, and they share a freestanding sign at the corner of S. Harvard Avenue and E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Place.



Figure 43. North portion of the Harvard Center Shopping Center.



Figure 44. South portion of the Harvard Center Shopping Center.



***Retail Store, 3229 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, rectangular-plan retail store was constructed in 1955. This building abuts the commercial building to the south. It has a flat roof with a low parapet and walls are clad in brick veneer, with fieldstone accents around the angled corner entrance. Non-historic-age metal awnings are over the main entrance and windows; a large aluminum-frame display window fronts S. Harvard Avenue. A small paved parking lot is located behind the building. Landscaping includes shrubs along the facade. A non-historic-age sign is located near the entrance



*Figure 45. Retail store, view facing east/southeast.*

***Retail Store, 3233 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1953 retail store abuts the commercial buildings on both sides. It has a flat roof and walls clad in brick veneer. The display windows and the main entrance have aluminum frames. Alterations include a side addition and an infilled window and door on the facade. Large signs are affixed to the building along the roofline. Parking is available in front and behind the building.



*Figure 46. Retail store, view facing east.*



***Retail Store, 3235 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, rectangular-plan, 1954 retail store abuts the commercial building to the north. It has a rectangular plan and flat roof. Walls are clad in brick veneer and vinyl siding. The storefront has an aluminum-frame display window, projecting brick wing walls, and a brick planter. A 1975 remodel resulted in an asphalt-shingle shed-roof awning and enclosure of several windows on the facade. Parking is available fronting S. Harvard Avenue and at the rear.



*Figure 47. Retail store, view facing east.*

***Ranch Acres Veterinary Hospital, 3241 S. Harvard Avenue***

Constructed in 1956, this veterinary office has a rectangular plan. The flat roof has wide eaves at the entrance. The facade is clad in stone veneer and features a projecting wing wall, slightly recessed windows and main entrance, and integrated stone planters. Windows are replacement, fixed, metal units in front. Parking is available on the side and rear of the building; a paved brick plaza is located between the sidewalk and the building. A historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign is located adjacent to the side elevation of the building.



*Figure 48. Veterinary office, view facing east.*

***Restaurant, 3245 S. Harvard Avenue***

This one-story, 1958 restaurant sits at the rear of the lot with a large paved parking lot fronting S. Harvard Avenue. The building has a rectangular plan and a flat roof with an eave overhang along the facade. Walls are brick veneer and windows have been infilled with vertical wood planks and plywood. A historic-age, freestanding, illuminated sign is located in the parking lot.



*Figure 49. Restaurant, view facing east.*

### **Dental Office, 3247 S. Harvard Avenue**

This one-story, rectangular-plan, dental office was constructed in 1954. It has a low-pitch, front-gable roof that is covered with asphalt shingles. Walls are clad in brick veneer, with a flat parapet and screen wall on the facade. The main entrance is recessed behind the screen wall and sheltered by deep overhanging eaves. Stone planters and low shrubbery wrap around the front and sides of the building. Non-historic-age signage includes the awning across the facade and a wood sign located on the front lawn. A parking lot is to the rear.



*Figure 50. Dental office, view facing east.*

**Table 1. Properties within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District**

*Note: Map number is tied to the district map provided in Attachment A.*

Historic Name	Address	Map #	Date	Major Infill/Alteration <sup>1</sup>
Harvard Village Professional Center	2570 S. Harvard Avenue	1	1956	Converted to funeral home
Spraker Volkswagen Auto Dealership	2615 S. Harvard Avenue	2	c.1965	None identified
Harvard Village Shopping Center	2602-2622 S. Harvard Avenue	3	1955	2022 exterior remodel
Freedom Carwash	2635 S. Harvard Avenue	4	2017	Infill
Sipes Supermarket	2710 S. Harvard Avenue	5	1954	1980 remodel doubled size; c.2010 exterior remodel
Aldi Grocery Store	2711 S. Harvard Avenue	6	c.1990	Infill
Service Station	2726 S. Harvard Avenue	7	c.1965	None identified
Radio Shack	2730 S. Harvard Avenue	8	c.1965	None identified
Retail Store	2731 S. Harvard Avenue	9	c.1950	None identified
Storage Facility	2733 S Harvard Avenue	10	2001	Infill

<sup>1</sup> Major infill and modernization refers to substantial changes to the property. Isolated changes to windows, doors, siding, or signage are not included.

**Table 1. Properties within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District***Note: Map number is tied to the district map provided in Attachment A.*

<b>Historic Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Map #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Major Infill/Alteration<sup>1</sup></b>
A Q Chicken House Restaurant	2745 S Harvard Avenue	11	1954	1993 exterior remodel
Service Station	2748 S. Harvard Avenue	12	1955	Exterior remodel
Retail Store	3245 E. 28 <sup>th</sup> Street	13	c.1965	None identified
Office	3323 E. 28 <sup>th</sup> Street	14	1970	None identified
Sinclair Service Station	2803 S. Harvard Avenue	15	1954	None identified
Braum's Fresh Market	2806 S. Harvard Avenue	16	1991	Infill
The Colony Pub	2809 S Harvard Avenue	17	1959	2022 exterior remodel
Fast Food Restaurant	2819 S. Harvard Avenue	18	1975	c.1990 exterior remodel
Congregational Church	2900 S. Harvard Avenue	19	1970	Non-commercial
Office/Storage Warehouse	3307 E. 29 <sup>th</sup> Street	20	c.1960	None identified
Warehouse	2901 S. Harvard Avenue	21	1957	None identified
Shopping Center	2911-2917 S Harvard Avenue	22	c.1955	None identified
Retail Store	2921-2929 S. Harvard Avenue	23	c.1940/c.1955	None identified
Office	3311 E. 30 <sup>th</sup> Street	24	c.1965	None identified
Service Station	3003 S. Harvard Avenue	25	1960	c.2010 exterior remodel
Ranch Plaza Shopping Center	3023 S. Harvard Avenue	26	1961	c.1995 exterior remodel
Harvard Center Office Building	3010-3020 S. Harvard Avenue	27	1965	c.2000 exterior remodel
Storage Facility	3030 S. Harvard Avenue	28	2020	Infill
Home Federal Savings & Loan	3045 S Harvard Avenue	29	1958	None identified
Newport Square Shopping Center	3321-3333 E. 31 <sup>st</sup> Street	30	1988	Infill
Ranch Acres (west) Shopping Center	3103-3133 S. Harvard Avenue	31	1954	1983 exterior remodel, 2014 supermarket addition
Ranch Acres (east) Shopping Center	3324 E. 31 <sup>st</sup> Street	32	1958	None identified
Service Station	3344 E. 31 <sup>st</sup> Street	33	1955	None identified
Ike's Chili	3147 S Harvard Avenue	34	1955	c.1995 exterior remodel
Walgreens	3112 S. Harvard Avenue	35	1994	Infill



**Table 1. Properties within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District***Note: Map number is tied to the district map provided in Attachment A.*

Historic Name	Address	Map #	Date	Major Infill/Alteration <sup>1</sup>
Humpty Dumpty Supermarket	3126 S. Harvard Avenue	36	1955	c.1995 exterior remodel
Service Station	3203 S. Harvard Avenue	37	c.1960	None identified
Harvard Center Shopping Center (Phil's Diner)	3316-3320 E. 32 <sup>nd</sup> Street	38	1961	None identified
Harvard Center Shopping Center	3215-3325 E. 32 <sup>nd</sup> Place	39	c.1965	None identified
Retail Store	3229 (3231) S. Harvard Avenue	40	1955	None identified
Retail Store	3233 S. Harvard Avenue	41	1953	c.2000 exterior remodel
Retail Store	3235 S. Harvard Avenue	42	1954	c.2000 exterior remodel
Ranch Acres Veterinary Hospital	3241 S. Harvard Avenue	43	1956	None identified
Restaurant	3245 S. Harvard Avenue	44	1958	None identified
Dental Office	3247 S. Harvard Avenue	45	1954	None identified

***Building alterations and evolution***

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District retains a series of 45 standalone, independently developed commercial properties stretching for ten blocks, the primary character-defining feature of the commercial strip property type. Many of the individual buildings display character-defining features specific to the subject property type. For example, the shopping centers are one-story buildings with individual storefronts, large display windows, and walkways that stretch along the facades. Individual commercial buildings are largely vernacular in design with large display windows. Both shopping centers and individual buildings are sited toward the street with parking between the building and the road. The strip also retains the following location and site character-defining features: located along a main thoroughfare; prominent signage to attract motorists placed on the buildings and along the roadside; and individual parking lots, many of which are lit.

Twenty-one of the commercial buildings along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip reflect notable changes to the streetscape. Of these, 14 have undergone major alterations and no longer reflect their historic appearance due to individual property remodels. In addition, six are modern infill construction, and they tend to be larger and occupy an entire block, which visually breaks the rhythm of the streetscape.

**Historic context****Introduction**

Similar to countless cities across the United States, the post-World War II (postwar) period was transformative for Tulsa, Oklahoma. Between 1945 and 1970 Tulsa more than tripled in geographic area with residential and commercial growth concentrated south and east of downtown. The S. Harvard

Avenue Strip Potential Historic District stretches along approximately ten blocks of S. Harvard Avenue south of downtown and within this area of postwar growth (see Figure 1 for a location map). To better understand the development of the corridor, the following brief historic overview provides contextual information on overarching national trends, pre- and postwar growth, transportation, and commercial development in Tulsa.

### **National postwar trends**

The demand for suitable housing intensified by 1945 as housing construction had been constrained by World War II. Slowly at first, then picking up steam, more than 13 million homes were built across the country between 1945 and 1954. A number of young families flocked to suburbs, which offered single-family housing in self-contained subdivisions that often provided conveniences such as neighborhood parks, schools, churches, and commercial areas as part of the development.<sup>2</sup>

The growing automobile culture and improved infrastructure facilitated this postwar residential and commercial suburban growth nationwide. U.S. auto production boomed immediately following the war, as 100 million vehicles were produced in 15 years to meet the pent-up demand. With increased mobility and the growth of the national highway program, suburban areas were made increasingly accessible, enabling many workers to live further away from their workplace. Commercial properties, including shopping centers, motels, restaurants, and offices, developed along urban highways and interchanges.<sup>3</sup> In Tulsa, this type of development occurred along major thoroughfares following suburban development, especially to the south and east of downtown.

Commercial developmental patterns changed rapidly in the postwar period as increased prosperity led to recreational shopping and dining. Influenced by both transportation development and suburbanization, department stores, specialty shops, and even office buildings began to move out of downtown, the traditional commercial core of American cities. Commercial development generally occurred along major thoroughfares with new residential subdivisions nearby. Multi-storefront buildings known as shopping centers provided convenience of one-stop shopping and ample parking. New stand-alone suburban department stores often anchored shopping centers, drawing shoppers away from the established city center. Shopping centers often spurred additional nearby commercial development, such as restaurants, freestanding retail stores, and even service industries, such as medical or dental offices. Banks began to establish individual suburban branch locations in order to cater to nearby residents. Grocery shopping also changed in this period. Geared towards automobile versus foot traffic, supermarkets with modern departments and services began to supplant mall neighborhood grocery stores. In addition, stand-alone office buildings were established outside of downtown.

### **Pre-World War II Tulsa**

Prior to World War II, Tulsa boasted a well-developed transportation system that included airports, railway and streetcar lines, and U.S. and State Highway connections. Each of these modes of transport shaped

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<sup>2</sup> Mead & Hunt, Inc. and Louis Berger Group, Inc., *A Model For Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing* (Prepared for the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 723, 2012), 49.

<sup>3</sup> Mead & Hunt, Inc. and Louis Berger Group, Inc., *A Model For Identifying and Evaluating the Historic Significance of Post-World War II Housing*, 50–51.

Tulsa into a thriving center of industry and commerce. Two airports, located northeast and south of downtown, lured flying schools and aviation factories during the wartime military build-up. Established to ship oil and agricultural products, multiple rail lines radiated outward from the city's industrial areas located northeast of downtown and west of the Arkansas River. The Missouri, Kansas, and Texas (MKT) Railroad, which marks the north end of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip, extended southeast from Osage, through Tulsa, and on through the nearby towns of Broken Arrow and Muskogee before veering south. Tulsa's early suburbs of the 1920s and 1930s followed streetcar lines, extending outward like spokes from the city center. In addition, State and U.S. Highways, including the storied US Route 66 (US 66), provided regional and interstate connections. Crossing the city generally along Admiral Boulevard, US 66 spurred commercial development along its length.

In addition to downtown Tulsa, pre-World War II commercial areas included nodes that developed along streetcar lines. Between 1905 and 1936 streetcar lines connected the downtown area to oil fields in the west, industrial areas along the railroad tracks in the west and east, and residential neighborhoods in south and east Tulsa. Commercial nodes consisting of neighborhood groceries, specialty stores, and other services developed near stops. One example is the commercial area that developed along Sixth Street, roughly between Peoria Avenue and Quaker Avenue in east Tulsa, with businesses generally established in the 1920s following the establishment of the streetcar servicing Sixth Street.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, State and U.S. Highways and subsequent convenience services, such as gas stations, diners, and tourist courts, drew commercial development outside of downtown. Over time, housing and additional commercial and industrial development continued to move further out from the downtown following or adjacent to Tulsa's transportation corridors, a process accelerated by automobile ownership.<sup>5</sup>

The automobile had the greatest impact on shaping Tulsa's postwar growth. In 1925 Tulsa County had more paved miles of highway than any other county in the state.<sup>6</sup> By 1938 highways traversing the city of Tulsa included US 64, US 66, US 75, and US 169, and OK 33 and OK 51. As was common for early Oklahoma highways, US 64 and OK 51 followed section line roads as they approached Tulsa and continued on city streets within the city limits. City streets consisted of neat grids and gently curving roads laid out within the section lines. As shown in a 1938 Oklahoma Highway inset map, US 64 and OK 51 ran concurrently and was locally named S. Harvard Avenue (see Figure 51).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Sixth Street Commercial/Residential Historic District, Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, Section 8, Page 7-9; Page 19, National Register # 9000687.

<sup>5</sup> Judith A. Martin and David A. Lanegran, *Where We Live: The Residential Districts of Minneapolis and Saint Paul* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 4–5.

<sup>6</sup> State Highway Commission, "Oklahoma State Highway System 1925" (Oklahoma: State Highway Commission, 1925), [https://www.odot.org/maps/state/pdfs/map\\_state\\_1925.pdf](https://www.odot.org/maps/state/pdfs/map_state_1925.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> State Highway Commission, "Oklahoma State Highway System 1925."

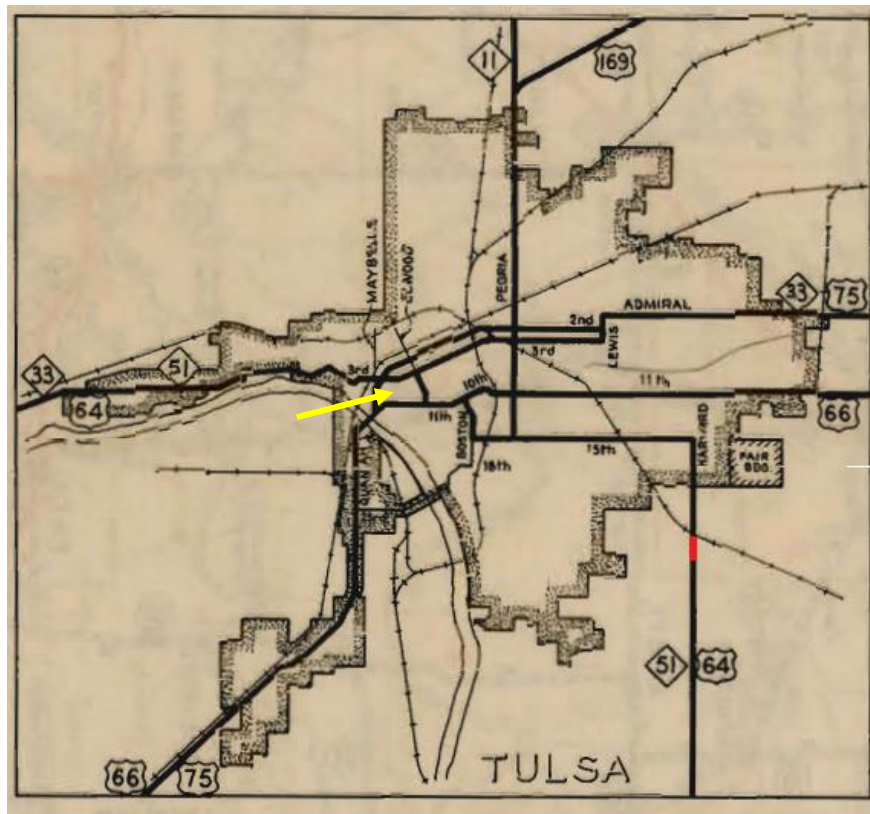


Figure 51. Inset 1938 Oklahoma State Highway map showing rail and highway connections. The approximate S. Harvard Avenue Strip location is indicated in red and the railroad corridor to its north is the MKT. The general downtown area is indicated by the yellow arrow.<sup>8</sup>

During the build-up to World War II, Tulsa diversified its economic base. With its well-developed transportation system, the former oil boomtown was well-positioned to attract new industries. The Douglas Aircraft Company was among the defense-related industries established in Tulsa before the war, and the city continued to develop as a regional aviation center. Despite labor and material shortages, manufacturing prospered in Tulsa and factories spent more than \$7 million expanding plants during the war.<sup>9</sup> Wages rebounded from Depression-era levels and as per capita income rose, retail sales figures soared 187 percent between 1940 and 1945.<sup>10</sup>

In the same period, Tulsa's population increased from 142,157 to 185,000 residents. This influx exacerbated the existing local housing shortage, especially adequate working-class housing. Working with the federal government, the city hastily constructed hundreds of new dwellings in north Tulsa, most were small units and some were barracks, to house the thousands of workers. Building codes were waived for many of these, resulting in substandard structures.<sup>11</sup> Through the mid-1940s Tulsa's population followed ingrained patterns related to racial segregation and unequal economic distribution.

<sup>8</sup> Oklahoma Department of Highways, "Map Showing Condition of Improvement of the State Highway System" (Oklahoma: State Highway Commission, April 1938), [https://www.odot.org/maps/state/pdfs/map\\_state\\_1938.pdf](https://www.odot.org/maps/state/pdfs/map_state_1938.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> The \$7 million figure excludes the aviation industry in Tulsa.

<sup>10</sup> Danney Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Council Oak Books, 1997), 174, 181, 185.

<sup>11</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 171–73.



West Tulsa, with its refineries and industrial development, was largely low-income, blue-collar, White residents. North Tulsa was predominantly Black residents and Hispanics of Mexican descent likely lived in north or west Tulsa.<sup>12</sup> East Tulsa was mostly middle-class White, and South Tulsa was largely upper-middle-class and professional White. Both East and South Tulsa were home to the small but vital Jewish population.<sup>13</sup> Other ethnic groups, including Native Americans and Asian Americans, also resided in Tulsa during this period; however, research did not reveal any known enclaves. Following the war and the departure of temporary workers, the hastily constructed war-time housing alleviated overcrowded conditions in areas with Black residents, yet the need for additional residential and related commercial development remained. In the west and north areas of the city, commercial growth and new residential development was limited as compared to the more affluent eastern and southern areas.<sup>14</sup>

### **Postwar growth and transportation development**

Tulsa followed the national trend towards suburbanization once war-time restrictions were removed. The home-building industry boomed to meet demand, resulting in growth in all directions outward from Tulsa's urban core, but especially to the south and east. At the time, developers coordinated with the city to include municipal services and new residential subdivisions were annexed accordingly as they were developed. These small annexations occurred frequently. In 1948, for example, the city's land area increased by just one square mile, despite annexing 43 housing additions and other small tracts. Other years larger gains occurred when Tulsa annexed nearby villages or crossroads communities.<sup>15</sup> The city continued this incremental approach through 1965.

As was common across America, automobile ownership in Tulsa soared following World War II, which worsened traffic congestion. In the late 1940s planners from the local to federal level worked to ease traffic issues. City leaders attempted to raise support for a downtown limited access expressway, the "Inner Dispersal Loop," but were initially unable to convince residents to fund it. It would take another ten years to pass the needed bond issue. State and federal highway planners rerouted some U.S. Highways through Tulsa (not including US 64 or OK 51 within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip) and planned a system of limited-access expressways outside of downtown.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1950s the City of Tulsa began to improve its roads and streets to accommodate the ever-increasing traffic. As suburbs expanded south and east of downtown, former section line roads, such as Harvard, Peoria, Utica, Lewis, and Yale Avenues, became thoroughfares and linked to developing neighborhood feeder roads. Major streets such as Peoria and Lewis were widened and 15<sup>th</sup> Street became a four-lane boulevard.<sup>17</sup> S. Harvard Avenue was also widened to four lanes during this period.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Michael M. Smith, "Hispanics.," *Oklahoma Historical Society*, n.d., <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=HI014>.

<sup>13</sup> "Tulsa: Historical Overview," *Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life*, 2022, <https://www.isjl.org/oklahoma-tulsa-encyclopedia.html>.

<sup>14</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 252.

<sup>15</sup> Tulsa City Council, "A History of Tulsa Annexation" (City and County of Tulsa, 2004), 9.

<sup>16</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 252; "Memorial Dedication & Revision History SH 51," *Oklahoma Department of Transportation*, accessed January 13, 2022, <https://www.odot.org/memorial/legal/sh51.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 196.

<sup>18</sup> Beryl Ford, "26th & Harvard, 1967," 1967, Beryl Ford Photographic Collection, Accession # B1533, Tulsa City-County Library and Tulsa Historical Society and Museum.

Construction of a downtown highway loop finally gained Tulsa voter approval in 1957. The Inner Dispersal Loop connected a network of limited access expressways already under construction and financed with state and federal money.<sup>19</sup> One of these expressways, US 64/OK 51, was relocated along a new route, extending southeast from the downtown loop parallel to the MKT Railroad corridor to Broken Arrow southeast of Tulsa. Harvard Avenue continued to serve as a main north-south thoroughfare within the city, connecting residential areas to highways and neighborhood feeder roads. These and other road improvements were timely, as Tulsa had 261,685 residents in 1960, a 43 percent population increase over the previous decade. Tulsa also had one of the country's highest automobile-per-capita rates by 1965.<sup>20</sup> Completed in the mid-1960s, the new expressway provided easy auto access to the north-south city thoroughfares (Harvard, Utica, Lewis, and Yale Avenues, see Figure 52) and improved accessibility to the growing neighborhoods in southeast Tulsa.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 254.

<sup>20</sup> Courtney Ann and Glen Vaughn-Roberson, *City in the Osage Hills* (Boulder, Colo.: Pruett Publishing Company, 1984), 175.

<sup>21</sup> In 1999, the Tulsa expressway carrying US 64 and OK 51 to the southeast was renamed the Broken Arrow Expressway.



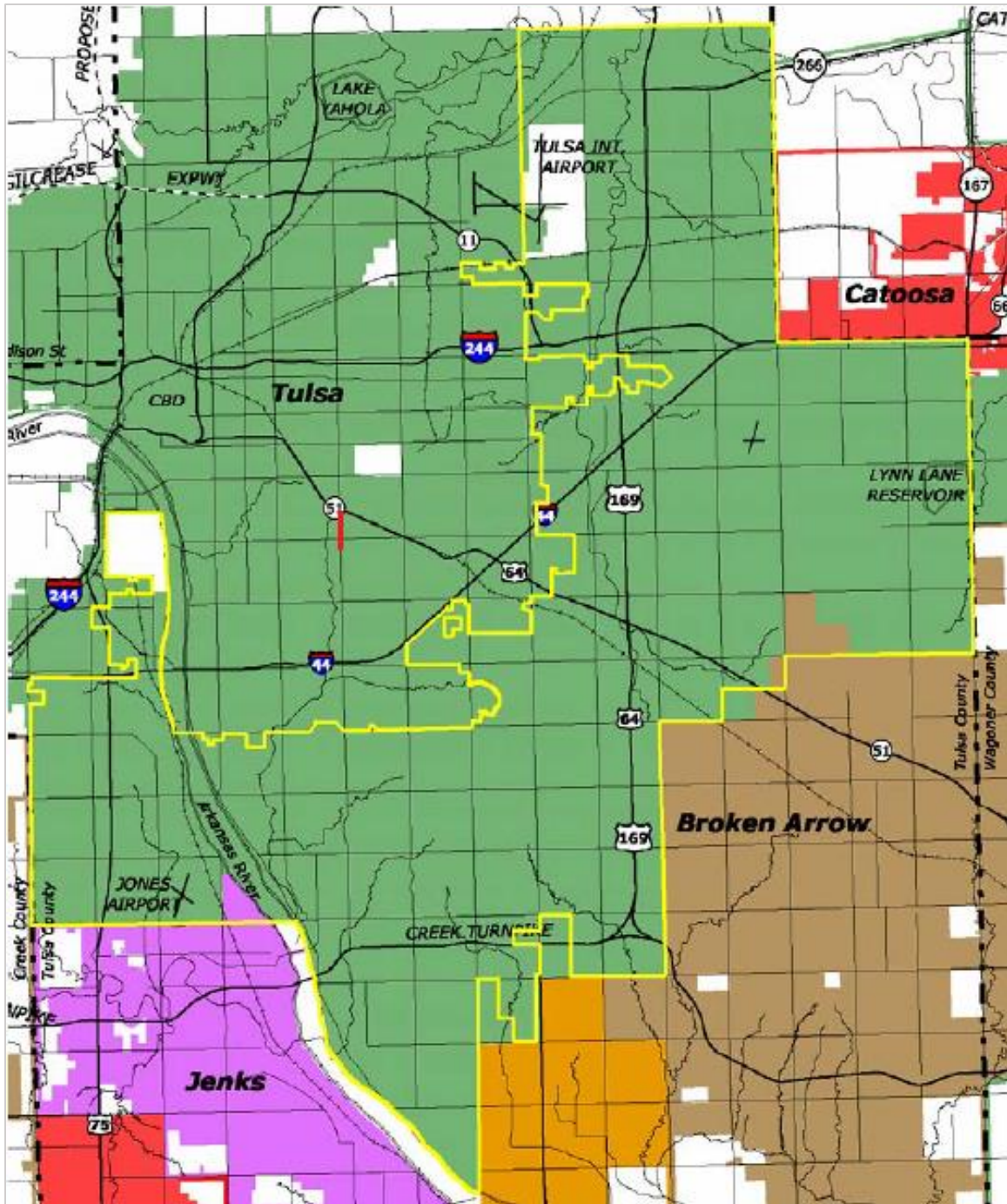


Figure 53. Map showing the 1966 annexation outlined in yellow. The approximate S. Harvard Avenue Strip location is identified in red.<sup>25</sup>

By 1970 Tulsa's population topped 330,350, an increase of 26 percent from 1960. A resurgence in the state's oil production spurred growth in the late 1970s and beyond, and Oklahoma's unemployment rate became the lowest in the country. Riding the economic upturn, Tulsa launched an unprecedented capital improvement program in 1980. Projects included waterline, sewer, and street improvements such as

<sup>25</sup> Tulsa City Council, "A History of Tulsa Annexation," 16.



resurfacing and widening. Along S. Harvard Avenue, which was already an established throughfare, improvements encompassed reconfiguring turn medians and intersections.<sup>26</sup>

### **Commercial growth and the rise of shopping centers**

In the 1940s Tulsa's commercial center remained in the downtown area. However, increased traffic and limited parking became a constant struggle for shoppers. As the city expanded in the late 1940s, developers began to construct small "strip" shopping centers along throughfares and at the edge of new residential subdivisions.<sup>27</sup> In addition to strip malls that featured several storefronts in a single building, shopping center development often included freestanding retail stores, offices, and other commercial buildings. Often a department store or large grocery store "anchored" a shopping center, providing services that drew in shoppers. Other commercial development happened concurrently, often near established centers and residential subdivisions, including gas stations, specialty retail, and service-related businesses such as dry cleaners. In *City of the Osage Hills*, authors Courtney Ann and Glenn Vaughn-Roberson note that shopping centers were constructed at a higher rate in Tulsa during the late 1940s than other cities of the same size. By 1950 Tulsa had 40 shopping centers.<sup>28</sup>

In 1952 Tulsa's first major suburban commercial development, Utica Square, opened at 21<sup>st</sup> Street and S. Utica Avenue in southern Tulsa. Many considered it a gamble at the time due to its location, then thought far removed (at approximately 2 miles) from downtown. However, the site proved to be ideal, as it was a rapidly developing area. Easily accessible to motorists, Utica Square was nestled between two residential neighborhoods (Woodward Park, platted 1919, and Bryn Mawr, platted 1924) The original complex included four buildings with multiple storefronts, some with second-story office space, as well as a standalone retailer and bank. Original occupants included two grocery stores, a five-and-dime store, and a cafeteria. In addition to a variety of local and regional retailers, Utica Square offered the most important thing in urban commercial retail estate: an abundance of free parking (see Figure 54). As was common nationally, additional development soon followed nearby, including the Utica Square Medical Center and Utica Square apartments. As it became the fashionable place to shop, Utica Square drew business away from downtown. Downtown retailers sought to compete by offering parking vouchers; however, within ten years most major retailers had relocated to suburban locations.<sup>29</sup> Two former downtown department stores, Renberg's and Vandever's, opened freestanding retail stores within Utica Square in 1955 and 1956, respectively.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Janet Pearson, "Oklahomans Wrote History in the '80s," *Tulsa World*, December 31, 1989, <https://tulsa-world.com/archive/oklahomans-wrote-history-in-80s/article>; Austin Hellwig, "11th Street and Harvard Avenue Looking North, Image A," 1986, transcript, Austin Hellwig Photographic Collection, Accession # ah1345, Tulsa City-County Library.

<sup>27</sup> Bob Foresman, "\$450,000 East Side Shopping Mart to Be Started.," *The Tulsa Tribune*, July 2, 1948, 3, Vertical files, Tulsa City and County Library.

<sup>28</sup> The authors do not cite a reason for this higher rate of shopping center development. Vaughn-Roberson, *City in the Osage Hills*, 169.

<sup>29</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 257; "...Retail," *Tulsa World*, March 9, 1997.

<sup>30</sup> "Malls Dot Tulsa Landscape" (*Tulsa World*, March 9, 1997), Available in vertical files, Oklahoma Room, Research Center, Tulsa City and County Library. Note: a freestanding Sax Fifth Avenue Store was constructed in 1985.



Figure 54. Aerial image showing the Utica Square commercial complex in 1964. Note downtown Tulsa in the distance.<sup>31</sup>

Continued residential and accompanying commercial development to the south and east resulted in a steady migration of commercial activity away from the downtown commercial core. In the wake of Utica Square's success, shopping centers and other commercial properties were constructed increasingly further away from downtown, generally to the south and east. Examples include general commercial development in south Tulsa's Brookside neighborhood in the early 1950s, along S. Peoria Avenue near 34<sup>th</sup> Street and continuing south, and also the Sheridan Village Shopping Center (no longer extant), which opened to fanfare in 1958 at Admiral Place and Sheridan Avenue in east Tulsa.<sup>32</sup> South of the MKT Railroad corridor, commercial development, including professional offices, restaurants, and auto-related businesses, occurred primarily along north-south thoroughfares serving adjacent neighborhoods, including S. Harvard Avenue. During this period Tulsa's center of population, wealth, and influence became concentrated in the area bound by 21<sup>st</sup> Street south to 41<sup>st</sup> Street and Utica Avenue west to

<sup>31</sup> "Throwback Tulsa: Utica Square Was Not so Upscale When It Opened on This Day in 1952," *Tulsa World*, May 22, 2021, <https://tulsa-world.com/news/local/history/throwback>.

<sup>32</sup> "Brookside Then and Now," *Historic Tulsa*, August 28, 2009, [http://historictulsa.blogspot.com/2009\\_08\\_01\\_archive.html](http://historictulsa.blogspot.com/2009_08_01_archive.html); Jennifer Loren, "Tulsa Losing Iconic Landmark," *Oklahoma's Own News On 6*, November 14, 2008, <https://www.newson6.com/story/5e3676172f69d76f62087871/tulsa-losing-iconic-landmark>.

Sheridan Avenue.<sup>33</sup> In addition to Utica Square and a half dozen other commercial strips, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip (2650-3300 blocks of S. Harvard Avenue) is within this area.

During this period of rapid growth the City of Tulsa made efforts to guide development to best serve its residents. A 1960 *Tulsa Comprehensive Plan* discussed commercially zoned parcels. At the time only one-fifth of commercially zoned land was in commercial use. The plan noted that “a large amount of land zoned commercially remains vacant because of its poor location, small size, odd shape or lack of demand,” which was attributed to over-zoning.<sup>34</sup> Problems may result when land is zoned for a high intensity of use (over-zoning), such as a property being unfeasible for development due to high land prices.<sup>35</sup>

The 1960 plan identified five aspects of commercial land use improvements, one of which included conserving and rehabilitating existing commercial shopping districts. Another aspect centered on restricting the spread of “strip commercial zoning” in an effort to reduce its impact on the urban center.<sup>36</sup> In an effort to guide commercial development, the 1960 plan identified and analyzed the geographic distribution of existing neighborhood and community level shopping centers across Tulsa. Sixteen existing neighborhood shopping centers and two community shopping centers were recorded. The plan proposed an additional 12 neighborhood shopping centers and one community shopping center to serve populations in locations that lacked sufficient commercial development. Of the 13 proposed developments, five were located within one mile of the developing US 64/OK 51 expressway, and only one was in south Tulsa.<sup>37</sup>

Several additional factors influenced commercial development in the 1960s. Downtown had reinvented itself as a business center, housing local branches of national firms, such as Gulf Oil and Texaco. Additionally, the booming local economy drew start-up businesses, which increased demand for office space city-wide. Large office buildings began to be constructed outside of downtown to house businesses and branch offices, generally along major thoroughfares adjacent to established and developing commercial and residential areas.<sup>38</sup> Tulsa professional office space expanded greatly through the mid-1960s to accommodate new and expanding businesses. Further, Tulsa had a healthy percentage of people with money to spend. Local annual family incomes topped the national average and retail sales rose with the expanding standard of living. At the time, shopping became “easier” with the one-stop-shopping concept employed by shopping centers, supermarkets, and retail chains—such as Woolco (no longer in business)—that offered a range of consumer products at discounted prices (many of which eventually developed into “big box” stores).<sup>39</sup> In 1963 alone retail sales rose 15 percent and grocery sales

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<sup>33</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 252–53, 263.

<sup>34</sup> Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, “Comprehensive Plan, Tulsa Metropolitan Area” (City of Tulsa, March 1960), C–4, Page 1, Tulsa City-County Library.

<sup>35</sup> Marc A. Weiss, *The Rise of the Community Builders* (Washington D.C.: Beard Books, 1987), 102–9.

<sup>36</sup> Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, “Comprehensive Plan, Tulsa Metropolitan Area,” C–4, page 1.

<sup>37</sup> The plan did not define standard for neighborhood vs community shopping center. Tulsa Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, “Comprehensive Plan, Tulsa Metropolitan Area,” C–4, page 6.

<sup>38</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 244–45, 255, 257.

<sup>39</sup> “The Past And Future of America’s Biggest Retailers,” WBEZ, Chicago, *NPR*, (November 19, 2012), <https://www.npr.org/2012/11/19/165295840/the-past-and-future-of-americas-biggest-retailers>.

20 percent.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, as previously mentioned, transportation improvements, such as the completion of the US 64/OK 51 expressway in the mid-1960s, further accelerated commercial and residential construction by providing convenient access to previously undeveloped land, especially in south and east Tulsa.<sup>41</sup>

### **Continued commercial expansion**

In 1967 Tulsa's first indoor shopping mall, Southroads Mall, opened at 41<sup>st</sup> Street and Yale Avenue (see Figure 55). This retail model offered variety and convenience under one roof and included vast parking lots and parking garage space. Additional standalone stores and fast food restaurants lined the parking lot perimeter, with signage visible from the road. The immediate and huge success of Southroads led to construction of additional indoor malls further south, which both preceded and influenced nearby residential development.<sup>42</sup>



*Figure 55. Erection of the Southroads Mall sign, with the mall in the background.*<sup>43</sup>

Urban sprawl became a concern to many by the 1970s. At the time, Tulsa Mayor Robert LaFortune launched efforts to address the city's uneven growth through development of a new master plan: *Vision 2000*. A 1971 preliminary study reflected that the city's prior efforts (1960 *Tulsa Comprehensive Plan*) to minimize commercial strip mall development were only minimally effective. While the study stated that

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<sup>40</sup> While the source discussed business growth in the early-to-mid-1960s, they did not provide an exact timeframe for the expansion of Tulsa office space. Vaughn-Roberson, *City in the Osage Hills*, 161, 166, 175.

<sup>41</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 256–57; “Memorial Dedication & Revision History SH 51.”

<sup>42</sup> “Malls Dot Tulsa Landscape”; Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 268.

<sup>43</sup> “Throwback Tulsa: Indoor Shopping Mall Was New for Tulsans in '67,” *Tulsa World*, November 13, 2014, <https://tulsaworld.com/news/local/history/throwback>.



these efforts were met with limited success in the southern areas, it did not explain why; commercial strip mall construction remained strong to the north and east.<sup>44</sup> When completed in 1972, *Vision 2000* included 19 areas of policy recommendations to achieve “balanced growth” with focus on development within north and west Tulsa and the central city. However, the plan lost political support in the mid-1970s and two major initiatives—a downtown retail complex and a northeastern Tulsa residential development—were ultimately unsuccessful.<sup>45</sup>

Despite efforts to control unidirectional expansion, Tulsa’s population growth and commercial center continued to expand towards the south and east. By the early 1970s this shift resulted in substantial commercial competition southeast of the once favored area bound by 21<sup>st</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Streets, from Utica Avenue to Sheridan Avenue.<sup>46</sup> In 1976 Woodlands Mall, Oklahoma’s largest indoor mall with 1.2 million square feet of commercial space, opened in south Tulsa at 71<sup>st</sup> Street and Memorial Drive. Commercial zoning to the east allowed further retail growth along the newly widened 71<sup>st</sup> Street, including freestanding retail stores and additional smaller shopping centers.<sup>47</sup> Shoppers flocked to the expansive new Woodlands Mall, drawing patrons away from earlier indoor malls such as Southroads Mall.

### **Post-1980 developments**

Following the oil industry’s bust in 1982, Tulsa lost 40,000 oil industry and related manufacturing and supply jobs within 18 months. The local residential real estate market also suffered. Statewide, previous demand for commercial properties led to over-construction, and eventually the bottom fell out of the commercial real estate market. Commercial vacancies soared due to over-supply and weak demand.<sup>48</sup> In response, Tulsa city leaders focused on job creation and this, coupled with expansion of existing companies, resulted in recovery of the local economy by the late 1980s.<sup>49</sup> During this period “big box” retailers gained popularity and became more prevalent within commercial areas, often redeveloping or replacing existing buildings.<sup>50</sup>

In the 1990s close-in living (outside downtown but close to the city center) rose in popularity and several of Tulsa’s older neighborhoods experienced a commercial resurgence. Most notable among these are the Brookside area of South Peoria (between E. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and E. 45<sup>th</sup> Place), the “Cherry Street” portion of E. 15<sup>th</sup> Street (from Peoria to Lewis), and Whittier Square (centered around Admiral Boulevard and Lewis Avenue). Featuring unique restaurants and specialty shops in historic-age buildings and shopping

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<sup>44</sup> Glen R. Turner & Assoc., Marcou, O’Leary & Assoc, Inc., and Hammer, Green, Siler Associates, *Alternatives For Urban Growth And Form, Technical Report*, 24.

<sup>45</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 264; Cathy Ambler and Rosin Preservation, LLC, *Downtown Tulsa Intensive-Level Historic Resources Survey* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: City of Tulsa, October 7, 2009), 93.

<sup>46</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 268.

<sup>47</sup> “...Retail”; Susan Every-Douze, *Tulsa Times, A Pictorial History: Coming of Age* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: World Publishing Co., 1997), 189.

<sup>48</sup> David Baird and Danney Goble, *Oklahoma, A History* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 255–57; Mary Jo Nelson, “The 1980s 10 Turbulent Years,” *The Oklahoman*, December 31, 1989, <https://www.oklahoman.com/article/2302082/the-1980s-10-turbulent-years>.

<sup>49</sup> John Hamill, *Tulsa, The Great American City* (Montgomery, Alabama: Community Communications, Inc, 2000), 21.

<sup>50</sup> “The Past And Future of America’s Biggest Retailers.”

centers, these and other neighborhood commercial areas continue to serve adjacent subdivisions and the larger community.<sup>51</sup>

### **Development of S. Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip**

Prior to World War II the S. Harvard Avenue Strip was a developing corridor outside the city limits. Before the current expressway configuration, S. Harvard Avenue carried US 64/OK 51 with the MKT Railroad overpass marking its north end (the strip continues for ten blocks south to S. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street). East of S. Harvard Avenue, the Kirkwood, Belle Aire Heights, and Albert Pike Additions (from the tracks south to E. 38<sup>th</sup> Street) were platted as residential neighborhoods by 1932 (see Figure 56).<sup>52</sup> However, lots within them were largely improved on an individual basis from the early 1940s through the mid-1950s.<sup>53</sup> Commercial businesses began to develop along the corridor, including the Blue Jay Court tourist camp at 2617 S. Harvard Avenue (nonextant). Extant pre-1945 buildings within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip include the c.1940 Fellowship Congregational Church sanctuary (west end of the large lot at 2900 S. Harvard Avenue) and a two-story, stone-clad, c.1940 commercial building at 2921 S. Harvard Avenue that has retail space on the ground floor (Parkhurst Flowers in 1949, now The Spiritual Rose) and office space above. The area south of E. 30<sup>th</sup> Street was largely undeveloped land at this time; however, there were some scattered residences that predate the subdivisions on large rural-type lots along S. Harvard Avenue.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Goble, *Tulsa! Biography of the American City*, 277–78.

<sup>52</sup> “Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1932,” 1:600 (Sanborn Map & Publishing Company, n.d.), Key map.

<sup>53</sup> Carl E. Gregory, “Tulsa.,” *Oklahoma Historical Society*, accessed June 25, 2022, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=TU003#:~:text=At%20its%20incorporation%20on%20January,had%20a%20population%20of%207%2C298>.

<sup>54</sup> “Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962,” 1:600 (Sanborn Map & Publishing Company, n.d.), Sheet 415.

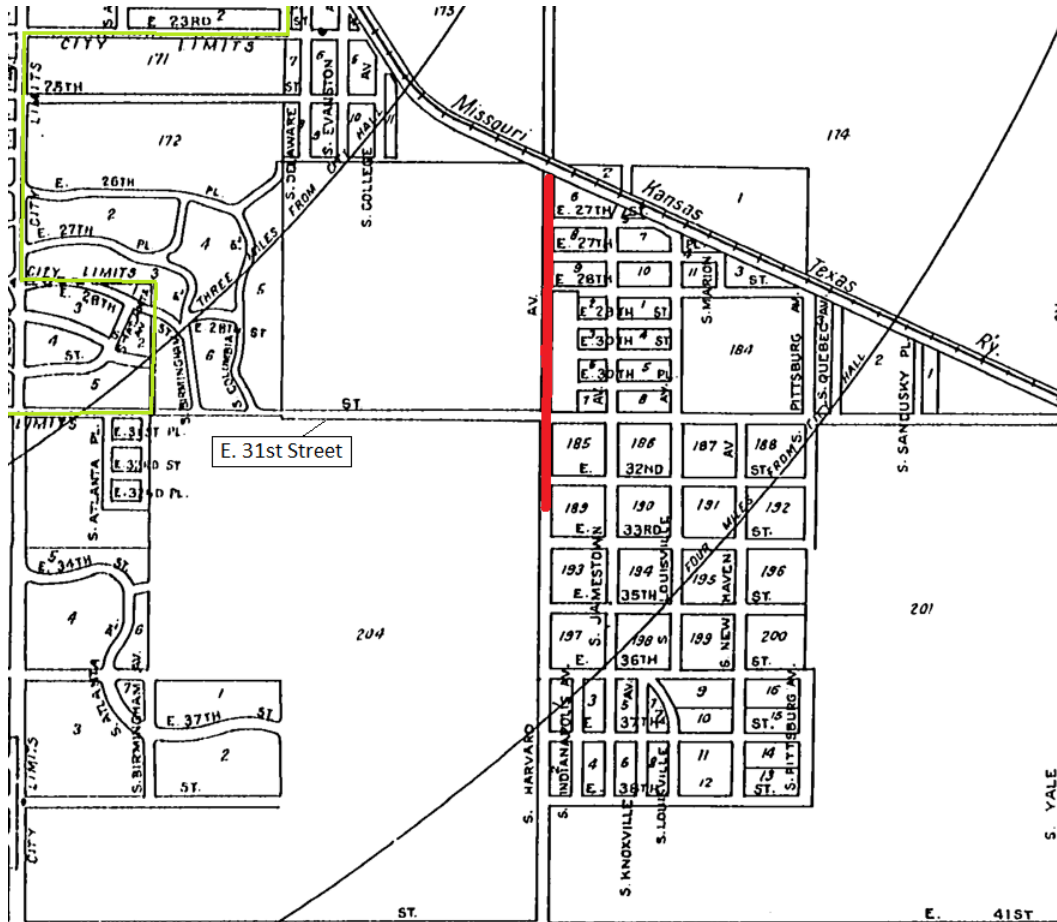


Figure 56. Detail from 1932 Sanborn key map showing early development along S. Harvard Avenue. City limits are indicated in green and the approximate S. Harvard Avenue Strip location is identified in red.

Note the MKT corridor in the north and residential plats to the west and east.<sup>55</sup>

The late 1940s saw increased development in the area, both residential and commercial, as was typical across Tulsa with easing of wartime restrictions. New residential subdivisions began to develop west of S. Harvard Avenue. City directories show several new commercial properties scattered along S. Harvard Avenue. Those within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip included filling stations and auto garages, neighborhood grocery stores, specialty stores, restaurants, and even a night club at 2717 S. Harvard Avenue (Rocky's Continental, nonextant).<sup>56</sup>

### 1950s growth and development

Similar to other locations in Tulsa, commercial development along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip accelerated in the 1950s and was largely fully developed by 1970. As was common at the time, shopping centers and other commercial businesses were often included as components of new residential neighborhoods or followed shortly after to service the new residential population. Six residential subdivisions located along the corridor had associated commercial development fronting S. Harvard Avenue. Several properties that anchored larger commercial or mixed commercial/residential

<sup>55</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1932," Key map.

<sup>56</sup> A review of Polk City Directories for Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma from the years 1946, 1947, 1948, and 1950.

development, including a restaurant, shopping centers, freestanding retail stores, and a bank, are highlighted below in chronological order.

*A Q Chicken House (Restaurant), 1954, 2745 S. Harvard Avenue*

A restaurant has been operating on the northeast corner of S. Harvard Avenue and E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street since 1954, although the names and proprietors have changed through the years. City directories show a short-lived steakhouse at this location through 1955, then after a year of vacancy it became Powers Restaurant, which operated in this location through 1968. It changed hands several times before becoming Lee's Restaurant in 1980. In the early 1990s the restaurant became the Village Inn and it was remodeled and given its signature green faux mansard roof. Once one of several, this is the last of Tulsa's Village Inn restaurants in operation.

*Ranch Acres Shopping Center (west), 1954, 3103-3133 S. Harvard Avenue*

The Ranch Acres Shopping Center, by builder/developer I.A. Jacobson, opened at the southeast corner of E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street and S. Harvard Avenue in 1954. Jacobson began constructing the luxury Ranch Acres residential subdivision west of S. Harvard between 31<sup>st</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Streets in 1949, and planned the \$2.5 million shopping center and a medical center (at 3102 S. Harvard, nonexistent) to serve the new community. Consisting of an L-plan building with 11 storefronts, Ranch Acres encompassed 86,000 square feet. Architect Paul L. Murphy designed the "modified-ranch-type" shopping center, which featured Colonial Pink stone-veneer and brick on the facade (see Figure 57). A new Safeway supermarket, with its distinctive bow-string truss roof, anchored the south end of the center (nonexistent). Period newspaper articles lauded amenities such as air-conditioning, covered walkways completely surrounding the perimeter, and free parking for 700 vehicles.<sup>57</sup> Fifteen merchants welcomed large crowds, which included Tulsa's mayor and other dignitaries, to the official grand opening in 1954.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> "Ranch Acres, Shopping Center Designed To Blend With District," *Tulsa World*, c.1954, Vertical Files, Tulsa City and County Library.

<sup>58</sup> "Ranch Acres Opening Held," *Tulsa World*, c.1954, Vertical Files, Tulsa City-County Library.





Figure 57. View of popular Ranch Acres restaurant showing the covered walkway, large windows, stone veneer, and adjacent parking.<sup>59</sup>

*Ranch Acres Shopping Center (east), 1958, 3324 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street*

A second Ranch Acres building was completed in 1958. Sited behind the first building, together the two formed a nested-L-plan (see Figure 58).<sup>60</sup> Mirroring the earlier building's architectural style and finishes, the east Ranch Acres building featured 16 smaller storefronts and ample, lit parking. A gas station at 3348 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street was constructed at the northeast corner of the parking lot in the same timeframe.

*Humpty Dumpty Supermarket, 1955, 3126 S. Harvard Avenue*

Additional 1950s development in the vicinity of the Ranch Acres residential subdivision includes the freestanding Humpty Dumpty supermarket at 3126 (then 3206) S. Harvard Avenue (see Figure 58).<sup>61</sup> The regional chain established this branch in 1955, no doubt in part due to the excellent location at a major intersection at the northeast corner of the Ranch Acres subdivision. Unlike the small neighborhood groceries that relied on foot traffic, this modern supermarket, with its expansive, lit parking lot and easy access from the busy thoroughfare attracted the automobile consumer. Serving as a Humpty Dumpty through 1970, this building subsequently housed numerous other commercial businesses before becoming a natural foods grocery store in 2013.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Beryl Ford, "Borden's Cafeteria, 31st & Harvard," 1955, Beryl Ford Photographic Collection, Accession # B4019, Tulsa City-County Library and Tulsa Historical Society and Museum.

<sup>60</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 418.

<sup>61</sup> The location is confirmed through Sanborn maps (1962).

<sup>62</sup> *Polk's Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, City Directory, 1970* (Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1970), 405; "Natural Grocers to Open Store on Harvard Avenue near 31st," *Tulsa World*, July 30, 2013, [https://tulsa-world.com/business/retail/natural-grocers-to-open-store-on-harvard-avenue-near-31st-street/article\\_5a4d072d-3969-596c-af11-619aee822d0b.html](https://tulsa-world.com/business/retail/natural-grocers-to-open-store-on-harvard-avenue-near-31st-street/article_5a4d072d-3969-596c-af11-619aee822d0b.html).

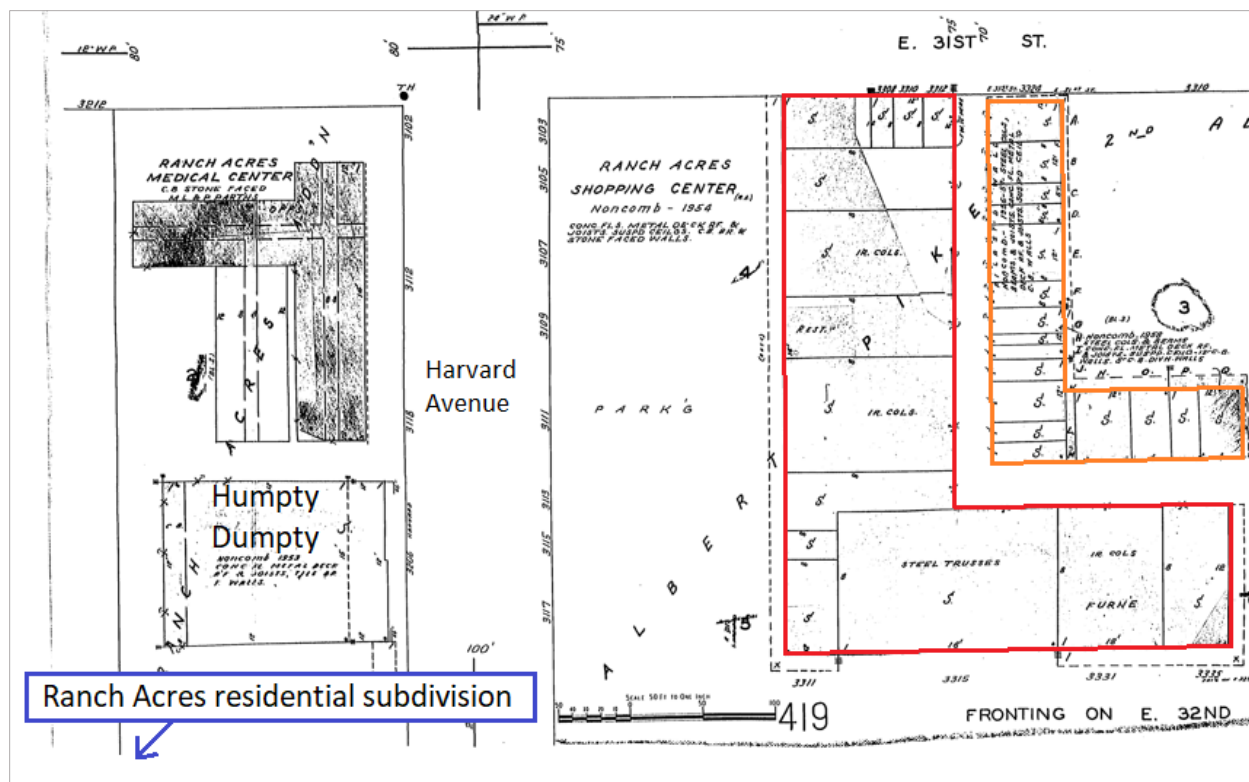


Figure 58. Detail from 1962 Sanborn map showing Ranch Acres related commercial development, with west Ranch Acres Shopping Center shown in red, east Ranch Acres Shopping Center in orange, and the Humpty Dumpty supermarket on the west side of S. Harvard Avenue.<sup>63</sup>

Six commercial properties constructed between 1953 and 1958 are at the south end of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip. They line the east side of the street between 32<sup>nd</sup> Place and E. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street across from the Ranch Acres Subdivision, and include two specialty offices: the Ranch Acres Veterinary Hospital and a dental office. Four additional buildings house three retail stores and a restaurant. The retail stores and professional offices front S. Harvard Avenue, with limited parking available in front and behind the buildings, while the restaurant is set back with an expansive parking lot along the roadway (see Figure 59).

<sup>63</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," 419.

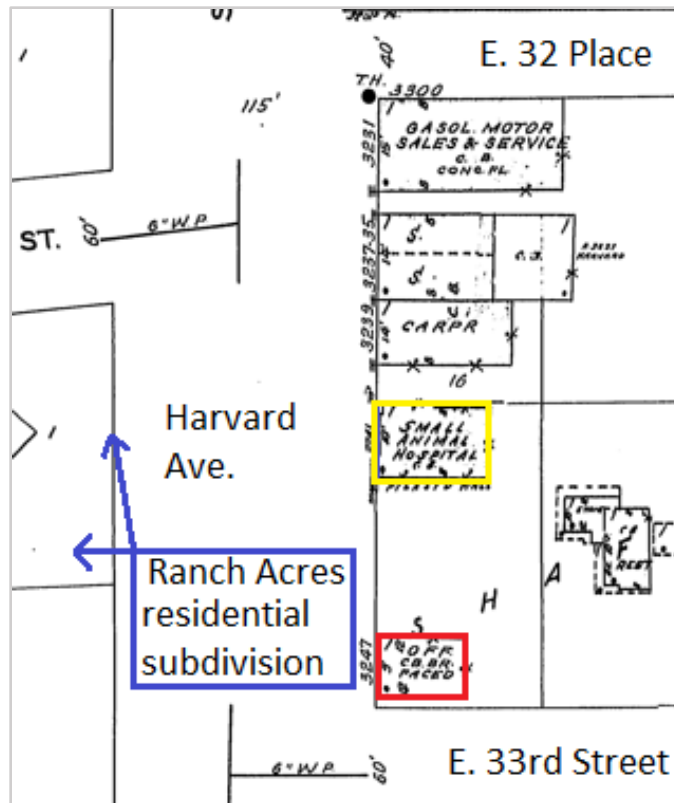


Figure 59. Detail from 1962 Sanborn map showing 1950s commercial development, with the Ranch Acres Veterinary Hospital shown in purple and the dental office shown in red.<sup>64</sup>

#### *Dental Office, 1954, 3247 S. Harvard Avenue*

A dental office was established at the southeast corner of S. Harvard Avenue and E. 33<sup>rd</sup> Street by Dr. Feron G. Waters in 1954. Consistent with other buildings on this block, it is a modest size, one-story, rectangular-plan building designed to fit with the nearby residential development. Dr. Waters was in solo practice here through 1971 and continued with various partners until his retirement in 1985. The dental office became Ranch Acres Family Dentistry by 2000.

#### *Ranch Acres Animal Hospital, 1956, 3241 S. Harvard Avenue*

In 1956 Dr. Murray Sherber moved to Tulsa to open a veterinary practice: the Ranch Acres Veterinary Hospital. Sherber remained in practice at this location until retiring in 1983.<sup>65</sup> The small one-story veterinary office reflects the Ranch form as seen through the massing, use of materials, implied massive chimney, and incorporated planters, which relates well visually with the residential forms across S. Harvard Avenue. The building serves as a veterinary hospital to the present day.

#### *Harvard Village – Sipes Supermarket, 1954, 2710 S. Harvard Avenue*

The freestanding Sipes supermarket preceded the “Harvard Village” development at the north end of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip. Under construction in 1953 and completed in 1954 at 2710 S. Harvard Avenue, the store faced north towards its dedicated parking lot. At the time the regional grocery chain had four

<sup>64</sup> “Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962,” 419.

<sup>65</sup> Bill Sherman, “Tulsa Remembers Escaping Holocaust,” *The Daily Oklahoman*, November 13, 2010.

locations in Tulsa, with the E. 27<sup>th</sup> Street and S. Harvard Avenue location described as “in Harvard Village” (see Figure 60). Boasting 16,000 square feet of space, the grocery store featured an in-store bakery and a full complement of departments. Sipes had a spacious, lit, parking lot and convenient location with easy auto access to developing residential neighborhoods. It was remodeled in 1980 and continued to serve as a Sipes until 1991.<sup>66</sup>



Figure 60. A c.1955 Sipes advertisement.<sup>67</sup>

#### *Harvard Village Shopping Center, 1955, 2602-2622 S. Harvard Avenue*

Ed Cohen, then president of the Tulsa Homebuilders Association, completed the Harvard Village Shopping Center, just north of the new Sipes store, at 2602-2622 S. Harvard Avenue in 1955. Designed to accommodate six to eight small retailers, Harvard Village housed a range of businesses (see Figure 61). Initial retailers included Cinderella’s Shoe Store, Gertrude’s Beauty Salon, and a small lamp shop. While tenants routinely changed over the years, some became neighborhood fixtures. Steve’s Sundries, Books and Magazine’s anchored the center of Harvard Village for 58 years, between 1955 and 2013.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Bruce Curtis, “Sipes Closes Last Site,” *Tulsa World*, February 21, 1992; Nancy Schallner, “Sipes Food Market,” *Tulsa Gal*, November 28, 2010, <http://www.tulsagal.net/search/label/Sipes%20Food%20Market>; “Sipes’ Store Work Finished,” *Tulsa World*, September 19, 1980.

<sup>67</sup> Schallner, “Sipes Food Market.”

<sup>68</sup> Margaret Zulpo, “After 40 Years, Harvard Village Still Going Strong,” *Tulsa World*, April 12, 1995, 4; News On 6, “Iconic Tulsa Bookstore Steve’s Sundry To Close At Year’s End,” *News On 6*, September 19, 2013, <https://www.newson6.com/story/5e3639ed2f69d76f62057360/iconic-tulsa-bookstore-steves-sundry-to-close-at-years-end>.





Figure 61. a c.1970 photographs of the northern portion of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip from Sipes rooftop showing Harvard Village shopping center sign (blue arrow) and parking lot. The MKT Railroad and US 64/OK 51 overpasses are visible in the background (red arrow).<sup>69</sup>

*Harvard Village Professional Building, 1956, 2570 S. Harvard Avenue*

An office building was constructed at 2570 S. Harvard Avenue, just north of the Harvard Village shopping center, in 1956.<sup>70</sup> While sources did not reveal a shared builder or developer with the shopping center, the office took the name Harvard Village Professional Building. The one-story, rectangular building with brick-veneer cladding housed 15 professional offices through 1998, when it was acquired by Moore's Funeral Home for mortuary use.<sup>71</sup>

*Home Federal Building, 1958, 3045 S. Harvard Avenue*

With the influx of rising young professionals to nearby subdivisions, Tulsa's Home Federal Savings and Loan established a "Ranch Acres" branch at the northeast corner of the E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street/S. Harvard Avenue intersection to win their accounts (see Figure 62). It hired Tulsa architects Joseph R. Koberling and Lennart Brandborg to design a two-story Late Moderne building. Featuring strong horizontal lines and a soaring tower, the building's bold massing and streamlined styling reflected that of the developing commercial district. Exterior finishes include brick and marble. The building, completed in 1958, featured a spacious bank lobby on the main floor, second-floor office space, and a basement-level atomic bomb

<sup>69</sup> Ford, "26th & Harvard, 1967."

<sup>70</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 415.

<sup>71</sup> *Polk's Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, City Directory, 1960* (Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1961), 311; "Moore Funeral Homes and Crematory; Fitzgerald Funeral Service, Tulsa Traditions of Strength and Care for More than 80 Years," *Tulsa People*, January 10, 2020, [https://www.tulsapeople.com/moore-funeral-homes-and-crematory-fitzgerald-funeral-service/article\\_69ec5c80-a7ed-5cc1-8e3e-e1abc80f8069.html](https://www.tulsapeople.com/moore-funeral-homes-and-crematory-fitzgerald-funeral-service/article_69ec5c80-a7ed-5cc1-8e3e-e1abc80f8069.html).

shelter.<sup>72</sup> Housing numerous offices in addition to the savings and loan, the building became known as the Home Federal Building. It became Sooner Federal Savings and Loan in 1974 and a Bank of Oklahoma branch in 1992.<sup>73</sup>



Figure 62. Views of the Home Federal Building at 3045 S. Harvard Avenue under construction in 1957 (left) and today (right).<sup>74</sup>

### **Growth and development in the 1960s**

Continued growth in the 1960s included some re-development within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip. By this time the corridor was largely “built out” with commercial properties, and residential properties had all but disappeared from the S. Harvard Avenue streetscape. In addition, some of the properties on cross streets were also constructed for commercial use or were redeveloped from residential to commercial use.<sup>75</sup> Large developments and anchor properties from the 1960s are highlighted below in chronological order.

#### *Ranch Plaza Shopping Center, 1961, 3023 S. Harvard Avenue*

In 1961 the Ranch Plaza Shopping Center was constructed on a long narrow lot at the northeast corner of the intersection of S. Harvard Avenue and E. 30<sup>th</sup> Place. Oriented to the south, the center initially consisted of a long rectangular building housing suites “A” through “I.” A residential lot to the east was acquired (and a house removed), which allowed for construction of a freestanding retail store just south of the suite I, and a wide alley (see Figure 63).<sup>76</sup> By 1967 the narrow drive between the buildings was enclosed to provide more retail space, transforming the shopping center to an L-plan.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Kirby Lee Davis, “These Walls: Home Federal Savings and Loan Building,” *The Journal Record*, April 5, 2021, <https://journalrecord.com/2012/04/05/these-walls-home-federal-savings-and-loan-building-real-estate/?token=>.

<sup>73</sup> 1990-91 *Tulsa, Oklahoma, City Directory* (Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1991), 350; 1974 *Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, City Directory* (Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1974), 297; Davis, “These Walls: Home Federal Savings and Loan Building.”

<sup>74</sup> “Home Federal Savings,” 1957, Glenn Condon Photographic Collection, Tulsa Historical Society and Museum.

<sup>75</sup> United States Geological Survey, “High Altitude Aerial Photograph Facing North Over Tulsa, OK,” September 10, 1967, Digital Collections, AB1VBUH00000001\_112\_a, Tulsa City-County Library; “Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962,” Sheets 415, 418, 419.

<sup>76</sup> “Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962,” Sheet 418. Field interview with owner of Ann Arthur store, Suite J.

<sup>77</sup> United States Geological Survey, “High Altitude Aerial Photograph Facing North Over Tulsa, OK.”

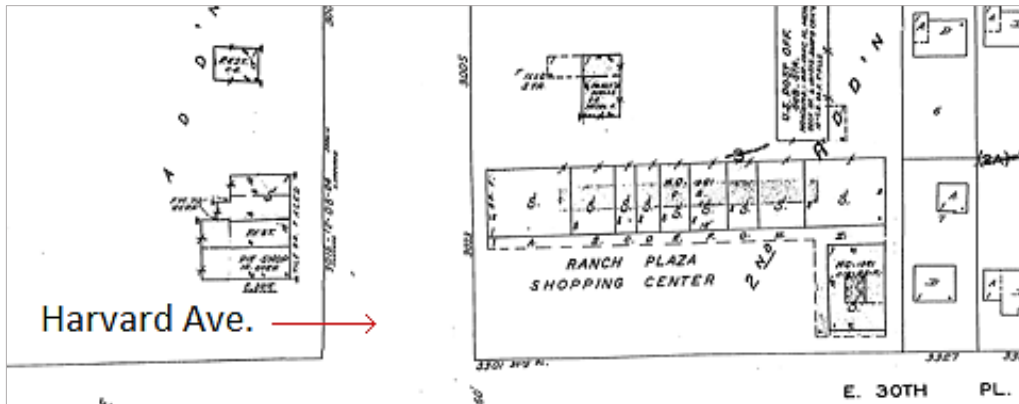


Figure 63. Detail of 1962 Sanborn map showing development of Ranch Plaza shopping center.<sup>78</sup>

#### Harvard Center, 1961, 3215-3325 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Place

Additional shopping center development occurred at the south end of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip in 1961. A small three-storefront building fronting E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street launched the Harvard Center shopping center. The one-story, flat-roof building features brick-veneer walls, aluminum framed windows and doors, and an awning over the facade-wide walkway. A small lot provided off-street parking. The c.1965, removal of a lumber yard to the south (fronting E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Place) and acquisition of a residential lot to the east allowed for construction of a second Harvard Center building (see Figure 64).<sup>79</sup> Facing south, it displayed the same architectural style and finishes as the earlier building. In addition to six storefronts, a second-story portion at the east end provided office space. Both buildings continue to serve as mixed commercial office space.

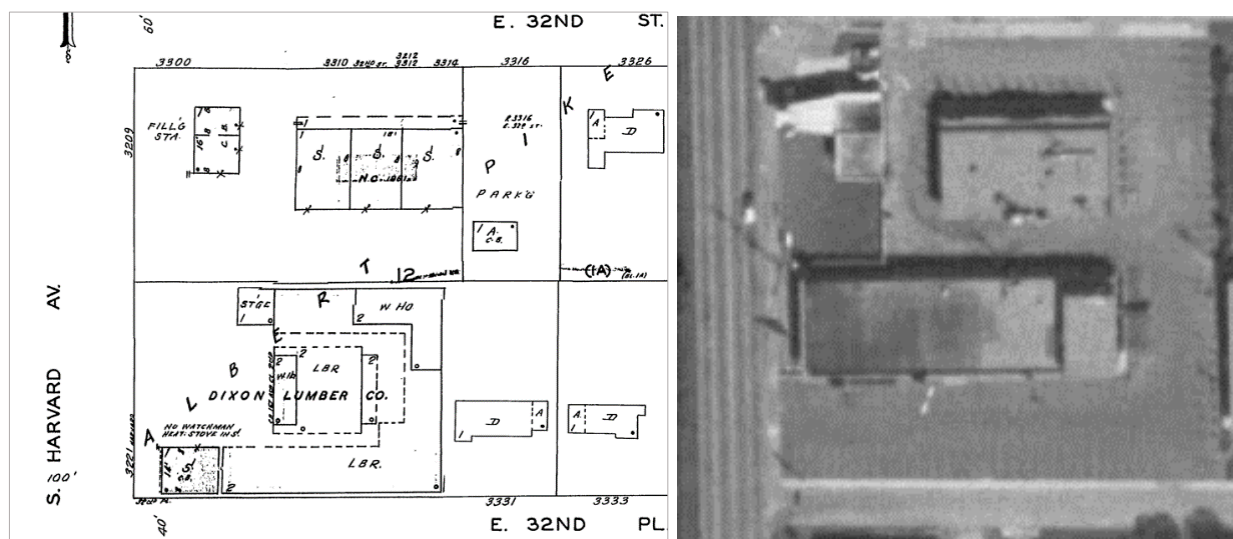


Figure 64. The initial Harvard Center development in 1962 at left and completed shopping center in 1967 at right.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 419.

<sup>79</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 419.

<sup>80</sup> United States Geological Survey, "High Altitude Aerial Photograph Facing North Over Tulsa, OK"; "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 419.

*Professional Office, 1965, 3010-3020 S. Harvard Avenue*

Reflecting the immense mid-1960s growth in Tulsa office units, a large professional office building was constructed at 3010-3020 S. Harvard Avenue in 1965. An entire block from E. 30<sup>th</sup> Street to E. 30<sup>th</sup> Place was redeveloped, including removal of a restaurant and a row of four other retail stores to make way for the new building.<sup>81</sup> City directories from the 1960s show 14 professional offices located here, ranging from petroleum corporations to doctors, dentists, and lawyers.<sup>82</sup>

*Radio Shack Retail Store, c.1965, 2730 S. Harvard Avenue*

Another notable standalone retail store constructed during the 1960s is the building at 2730 S. Harvard Avenue. The new building replaced a smaller retail store and was sited further west on the lot to allow for more parking.<sup>83</sup> Constructed to house a Radio Shack electronics franchise, the building reflected the modern commercial style common in the neighborhood. The store served as a Radio Shack through 2017.<sup>84</sup>

*Spraker Volkswagen Auto Dealership, c.1965, 2615 S. Harvard Avenue*

Redevelopment at the north end of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip included the demolition of the Blue Jay Court tourist court and an associated restaurant to make room for an auto dealership.<sup>85</sup> Robert Spraker operated the Spraker Volkswagen showroom and body shop out of this location through the early 1990s (see Figure 65). After a brief hiatus as Clark Motor Car in 1995, the building again became Spraker Volkswagen; today the building houses Hourglass Collision.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 418.

<sup>82</sup> Review of Tulsa City Directories from 1960, 1965, 1968, and 1969.

<sup>83</sup> United States Geological Survey, "High Altitude Aerial Photograph Facing North Over Tulsa, OK," "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 415.

<sup>84</sup> Mary Hanbury, "Radio Shack Is Closing 552 Stores- See If Your Store Is One of Them," *Insider*, March 17, 2017, <https://www.businessinsider.com/list-of-radioshack-stores-closing-2017-3>.

<sup>85</sup> "Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962," Sheet 415.

<sup>86</sup> "Auto Dealer Robert Spraker Dead at 70," *Tulsa World*, January 15, 1993, [https://tulsaworld.com/archive/auto-dealer-robert-spraker-dead-at-70/article\\_ef39a50c-07a9-56d0-97a6-f549befb8ab3.html](https://tulsaworld.com/archive/auto-dealer-robert-spraker-dead-at-70/article_ef39a50c-07a9-56d0-97a6-f549befb8ab3.html); United States Geological Survey, "High Altitude Aerial Photograph Facing North Over Tulsa, OK." Review of Tulsa city directories between 1968 and 2000.





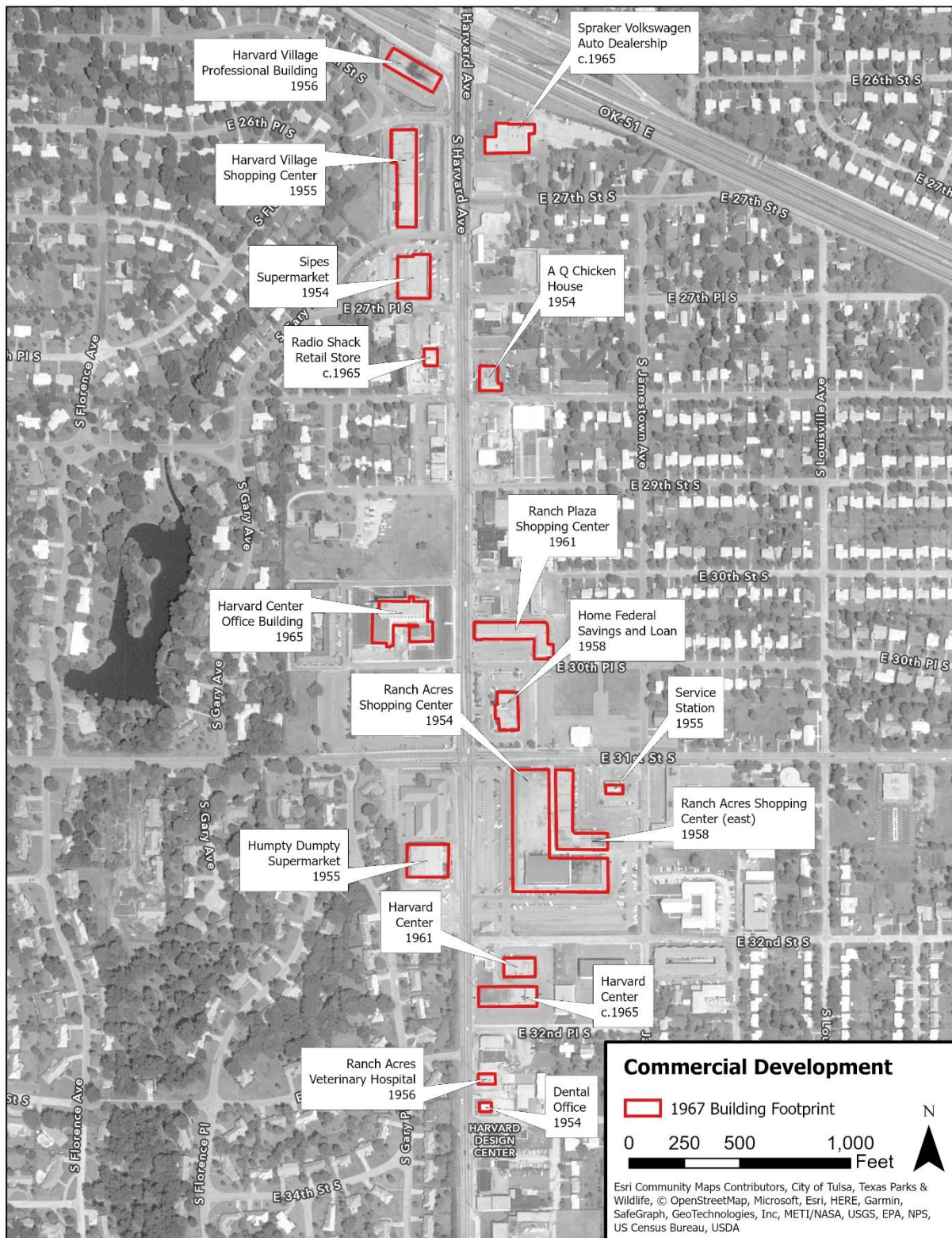


Figure 66. Select 1950s and 1960s development within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip featured in the discussion above.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> United States Geological Survey, "High Altitude Aerial Photograph Facing North Over Tulsa, OK."

In the 1970s change along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip was limited. New development included a Usonian-style chapel constructed by the Fellowship Congregational Church in 1970, in the center of the church's expansive lot at 2900 S. Harvard Avenue. Limited redevelopment of older areas included removal of a residence to construct a small office at 3323 E. 28<sup>th</sup> Street in 1970.<sup>89</sup> Other additions that year included a fast food restaurant constructed at 2819 S. Harvard Avenue.<sup>90</sup>

Throughout the 1970s the S. Harvard Avenue Strip remained a busy commercial area, even as the commercial heart of the city continued to shift further south and east. Neighborhood shopping centers generally catered to convenience services and small specialty businesses, which remained relevant to area shoppers. A review of Tulsa City Directories shows relatively few commercial vacancies across the range of commercial buildings along the corridor.<sup>91</sup> Long-term tenants (15+ years) within the Ranch Acres Shopping Center reported typical sales increases of 5 to 10 percent per year from 1968 through 1980.<sup>92</sup> In addition, S. Harvard Avenue Strip merchants made strides to stay current and attract customers through periodic face-lifts or renovations. Some businesses, such as the Sipes grocery store, expanded in 1980. In this case, the store size doubled and employed 60 people.<sup>93</sup>

Overall, the commercial growth and development along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip between 1945 and 1980 is typical of Tulsa, in that similar commercial development took place during the same period all over the city, and especially in southern and eastern areas. The array of services—including gas stations, restaurants, freestanding retail stores, offices, and shopping centers—lining former section line roads near existing and developing subdivisions mirror those constructed in a multitude of other locations.

### **1981 to the present**

The close of the twentieth century brought continued redevelopment to the S. Harvard Avenue Strip. In 1983 the western portion of Ranch Acres Shopping Center (fronting S. Harvard Avenue) underwent a major renovation. The anchor tenant, Safeway, constructed a new store at the east end of the center, which doubled the square footage to 36,000 square feet. The old space was remodeled to provide additional storefronts and parking. In addition, the entire western Ranch Acres received an exterior update that included new stucco wall treatment, awnings, and signage board.<sup>94</sup> Other period development included construction of the Newport Square shopping center at 3321-3333 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street in 1988. The following year Moore's Funeral Home acquired the Harvard Village Professional Building (2570 S. Harvard Avenue) and converted the space into funerary use.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Carl E. Gregory, "Tulsa."

<sup>90</sup> Carl E. Gregory, "Tulsa."

<sup>91</sup> *1980 Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, City Directory* (Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1980), 334; *1981 Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, City Directory* (Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1981), 341; *1985 Tulsa, Tulsa County, Oklahoma, City Directory* (Dallas, Texas: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1985), 397.

<sup>92</sup> Martin Zook, "Ranch Acres Success Enters New Age," *Tulsa World*, June 12, 1983, Vertical Files, Tulsa City and County Library.

<sup>93</sup> "Sipes' Store Work Finished."

<sup>94</sup> Zook, "Ranch Acres Success Enters New Age."

<sup>95</sup> "Moore Funeral Homes and Crematory; Fitzgerald Funeral Service, Tulsa Traditions of Strength and Care for More than 80 Years."

In the 1990s “big box” stores and additional fast food restaurants became part of the S. Harvard Avenue Strip. Changes included the 1990 removal of a night club and public pool in the 2700 block to construct a Staples retail store (2711 S. Harvard Avenue). In 1991 an entire block of small retail stores between 2800-2824 S. Harvard Avenue were removed to accommodate a Braum’s Fresh Market (2806 S. Harvard Avenue), a regional fast food hamburger chain with an attached convenience market.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, the Ranch Acres Medical Center was razed in 1994 to construct a Walgreen’s Pharmacy at 3112 S. Harvard Avenue.<sup>97</sup>

The streetscape continued to change in the 2000s. Major redevelopment included the 2014 demolition of the Safeway at Ranch Acres to make way for a Walmart Neighborhood Market grocery store. In 2017 a longtime freestanding retail store at 2635 S. Harvard Avenue that housed Trippet’s Shoe Store was razed to construct the Freedom Car Wash.<sup>98</sup> In addition, the southern end of the Harvard Village Shopping Center was reconstructed at an unknown date, and the entire shopping center facade was remodeled in 2021.<sup>99</sup>

## Summary

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip reflects common trends of postwar commercial growth and transportation development in Tulsa. Evolving from an emerging commercial area on the outskirts along US 64/OK 51/S. Harvard Avenue in 1945, to a rapidly growing and middle-class area in the 1950s and 1960s, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip is one of several locations within the city that became a diversified and mature commercial strip. Limited redevelopment along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip occurred over time and continues to the present day. Completion of the expressway, which removed US 64/OK 51 traffic from S. Harvard Avenue in the late 1960s, undoubtedly improved congestion along the corridor, while providing even greater access to a wide number of through motorists and residents alike. Adjacent residential neighborhoods remain middle-class, and while they have diversified from the historically White demographic, no racial or ethnic enclaves are known to be present.

From small standalone retail stores or offices to sizable shopping centers and multi-story office buildings, businesses along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip continuously provided a range of goods and services catering to the nearby residential areas.

## Evaluation

The S. Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip Potential Historic District was evaluated for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility under *Criteria A* and *C* as a commercial property type. As a ten-block collection of 45 commercial properties constructed over a period of time, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip is best considered for significance as a potential historic district, a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. As a result, the following evaluation focuses on the property as a potential historic district and omits applicable guidance related to *Criterion C* for individual properties.

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<sup>96</sup> “Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1915, Revised 1962,” Sheet 415.

<sup>97</sup> Carl E. Gregory, “Tulsa.” Review of Tulsa City Directories between 1990-91 and 1995.

<sup>98</sup> Carl E. Gregory, “Tulsa.”

<sup>99</sup> Carl E. Gregory, “Tulsa.”; United States Geological Survey, “High Altitude Aerial Photograph Facing North Over Tulsa, OK.”



As a historic district, the evaluation did not consider *Criterion B* as no single individual was responsible for commercial development of the district as a whole. The period of significance considered is c.1940-1975, which coincides with the dates of construction for the concentration of buildings built within the historic period.

### ***Criterion A***

As discussed in the evaluation methodology prepared for National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Project 25-62 (hereafter referred to as the evaluation methodology), to be eligible for the NRHP under *Criterion A*, a direct and important association with one or more NRHP areas of significance should be established for a commercial strip. Commercial development may be a significant trend in the postwar period; however, a property's mere association with commercial development during this time period is not sufficient to meet NRHP criteria. A property must demonstrate a specific association with an important postwar theme(s) as identified in the property-specific historic context. Based on the evaluation methodology and the historic context, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District was considered for NRHP significance in the areas of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Social History.

### ***Commerce***

As outlined in the evaluation methodology, when considering the application of *Criterion A* in the area of Commerce, the following questions may assist in determining if a historic district possesses significance related to this theme. The questions are followed by their application to the subject S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District.

- Was the commercial property occupied by a group of retailers or businesses that is considered significant within the community, region, or state?
- Did the commercial historic district include a group of retailers or businesses that operated as the first or an early example of a local, regional, or national chain?
- Did the collection of commercial properties occupant or business represent a significant trend in postwar consumerism?
- Did the collection of commercial properties provide services for a region that demonstrates its importance with the commerce theme?

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District is a ten-block collection of commercial buildings that were constructed by a number of individual owners and developers largely between 1950 and 1975 and housed various businesses. As outlined in the historic context, the strip originally featured shopping centers, supermarkets, retail stores, restaurants, service-oriented properties, and an office building that provided typical neighborhood-level services. While a number of national and regional chains were located along the strip—including Sipes and Humpty Dumpty supermarkets (both local or regional chains) and a Radio Shack retail store (a national chain)—they were not the first or earliest examples of these chains and they reflect only a small percentage of the properties within the district. The properties within the strip were common to numerous other areas in Tulsa that provided shopping opportunities for the

surrounding residential suburban development. Retail stores and shopping centers were relatively small and lacked amenities that would have drawn customers from a wider consumer base, such as prominent national retailers or entertainment venues. The strip does not demonstrate commercial importance at the regional level and does not possess significant associations related to *Criterion A* in the area of Commerce.

#### *Community Planning and Development*

As outlined in the evaluation methodology, when considering the application of *Criterion A* in the area of Community Planning and Development, the following questions may assist in determining if a property possesses significance related to this theme. The questions are followed by their application to the subject S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District.

- Does the collection of commercial properties demonstrate innovative or significant planning principals or standards that originated during the period of significance?
- Did construction of the commercial properties contribute greatly to early suburban expansion or influence overall development in a community or region?
- Did the collection of commercial properties inspire new and influential trends in environmental conservation or site planning?
- Did the collection of commercial properties introduce new commercial types to a suburban location?
- Was the development of the commercial properties influential in relationship to zoning requirements or comprehensive plans? Is the commercial strip a planned commercial development that demonstrates new or influential planning principals, standards, or zoning requirements from the period?

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District represents postwar planning practices and standards that were well established in Tulsa prior to 1960. While the strip reflects some planning principles for commercial development outlined in the 1960 *Tulsa Comprehensive Plan*, such as being of sufficient size and in a convenient area with convenient access, these were well-established principles and do not demonstrate significance or innovation. Construction of the properties along the strip followed general development patterns and established zoning requirements in Tulsa, and the property types themselves were already well-established in the city at the time of strip development. The commercial strip was not the impetus for development in the surrounding area, which already had established with residential subdivisions, and was not found to be influential in development in southeast Tulsa. The strip did not also inspire new or influential trends in environmental conservation.

Based on the research, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District does not have any known associations with social or demographic changes or influential tenants that demonstrate an association with a particular group. The strip is within southeast Tulsa, a historically White, middle-class area within the city in which the demographics remained fairly constant through the study period. The S. Harvard

Avenue Strip Potential Historic District does not have significant associations related to *Criterion A* in the area of Community Planning and Development.

### *Social History*

As outlined in the evaluation methodology, when considering the application of *Criterion A* in the area of Social History, the following questions may assist in determining if a property possesses significance related to this theme. The questions are followed by their application to the subject S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District.

- Is the collection of commercial properties an important hub or gathering place within a community that serves as a formal or informal meeting place?
- Was the commercial property collection developed in response to a demographic shift in a community or did it spur demographic change?
- Was the commercial property collection developed in response to changes in an important social or cultural movement or trend?
- Was the commercial property collection the site of a specific event within an important social or cultural movement or trend?
- Was the collection of commercial properties built on a site that was cleared by an urban renewal project?
- Was the group of businesses operated by a minority or an individual(s) from a historically underrepresented group and important to that group or the community?
- Did the commercial properties have a unique or influential tenant mix that demonstrates association with a particular group?
- Did the commercial properties provide services to a particular racial or ethnic group or another historically underrepresented group and important to the group or the community?
- Did the commercial properties provide employment opportunities directed to a particular racial, ethnic or historically underrepresented group and was important to that group?
- Does the commercial property collection demonstrate strong associations with social and demographic changes?

Development of properties within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District followed common postwar commercial and suburban development trends in Tulsa and does not reflect important cultural or social movements. Research did not reveal that properties served ethnic or historically underrepresented groups or had associations with individuals that were important within these communities. The S. Harvard

Avenue Strip Potential Historic District does not have significant associations related to *Criterion A* in the area of Social History.

### ***Criterion C***

As discussed in the evaluation methodology, to be eligible for the NRHP under *Criterion C*, a property must meet one of the following:

- Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction
- Represent the work of a master
- Possess high artistic value
- Represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (historic districts)

### ***Architecture***

Under *Criterion C*, Architecture is the area of significance that is most likely to apply to the historic district embodies importance for commercial design or construction. As outlined in the evaluation methodology, when considering the application of *Criterion C* in the area of Architecture, a commercial strip (historic district) may possess significance as a concentration of postwar commercial properties that collectively demonstrate a distinct and unified grouping of various postwar commercial properties that is important within the local or regional context.

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District is a collection of commercial buildings along ten blocks constructed primarily between c.1940 and 1975 that reflect a variety of property types that were prevalent during the postwar era. Although the potential district historically included a variety of commercial properties that provided services for the surrounding neighborhood, such as supermarkets and retail stores, the grouping of commercial properties is not distinct as there are many similar concentrations of postwar commercial properties within southeast Tulsa and the community as a whole.

To identify the prevalence of commercial strip properties in Tulsa, the project team reviewed zoning and construction dates and developed “heat” maps to identify concentrations of postwar commercial properties in southeast Tulsa that were in the vicinity of S. Harvard Avenue. Historic aerials were reviewed to corroborate construction dates for the buildings. The team also conducted virtual and in-person drives of the concentrations to confirm property use and age along with identification of integrity factors, such as modern infill and remodeling of properties. Within southeast Tulsa the team identified similar concentrations of postwar commercial properties, including those found along major north-south thoroughfares such as S. Peoria Avenue, Yale Street, and S. Memorial Avenue (see the Southeast Tulsa Heat Map in Attachment B). These postwar commercial areas all feature an auto-focused arrangement with parking typically separating the commercial buildings from the road. They vary in density with some commercial properties stretching two blocks and others extending for up to ten blocks. Each of these areas include shopping centers and standalone commercial buildings from the postwar period (1945-1980, see the individual heat maps in Attachment B).



Therefore, within the context and review of postwar commercial areas in southeast Tulsa, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District was not found to be distinctive. The S. Harvard Avenue Strip is one of many postwar commercial areas that developed organically as individual developers or businesses saw opportunities to establish and/or expand along transportation corridors near new suburban residential development. In contrast, Utica Square (discussed in the historic context) was identified as a distinct and cohesive collection of postwar commercial properties that was developed to be a regional draw within the city of Tulsa. It was collectively designed as one development offering various types of services for its clientele, including a supermarket and five-and-dime store, along with businesses attracted away from downtown Tulsa.

In addition to not being distinctive, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District does not retain a unified grouping of postwar commercial properties. While there is a collection of 45 pre-1980 buildings along ten blocks, the potential district lacks unification due to the changes that have occurred to the postwar properties after 1980. As typically found in commercial areas, many of these buildings have been modernized to attract customers and/or to accommodate new businesses. Additionally, post-1980 infill construction is present in the form of both commercial and non-commercial properties. Remodeled and modern infill constitutes 47 percent of the potential historic district. Table 1 indicates the properties that have been modernized and those that are modern infill.

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District is not a distinct and cohesive grouping that represents the overall historic commercial environment of various postwar commercial properties important within the local or regional context of Tulsa. As a result, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District is not significant under *Criterion C* in the area of Architecture.

#### *Community Planning and Development*

As outlined in the evaluation methodology, when considering the application of *Criterion C* in the area of Community Planning and Development to a commercial strip (historic district), the following questions may assist in determining if it possesses significance related to this theme. The questions are followed by their application to the subject S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District.

- Does the collection of commercial properties convey early, unique, or specific design principles related to community development?
- Does the collection of commercial properties in its design and execution reflect important advances, established principles, or popular trends in community planning and development?
- Did the collection of commercial properties win an award or receive recognition from professional or trade organizations for its design?
- Did the commercial properties introduce development or design patterns that became influential and were repeated in the local community or regional area?

The properties in the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District developed individually over a number of years. Research did not reveal cohesive early, unique or specific design principles represented

or design based on overarching master plan. Additionally, there is a lack of unified design present, no known association with awards or recognition for planning or design, and no identified influences on development or design patterns in the community or Region. As a result, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District does not have significance related to *Criterion C* in the area of Community Planning and Development.

### *Landscape Architecture*

As outlined in the evaluation methodology, when considering the application of *Criterion C* in the area of Landscape Architecture to a commercial strip (historic district), it should be considered whether significant qualities are embodied in the overall design or plan. The businesses in the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District developed individually over a number of years and there is no overall cohesive landscape design within the district. In addition the majority of individual properties are lacking plantings, lighting, greenspaces, or circulation patterns that reflect landscape designs of the period. As a result, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District does not have significant associations related to *Criterion C* in the area of Landscape Architecture.

### **Integrity**

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District does not possess significance under *Criteria A* or *C*; therefore, review of integrity is not warranted.

### **Recommendation**

The S. Harvard Avenue Strip Potential Historic District is recommended not eligible for the NRHP under *Criteria A* or *C*.

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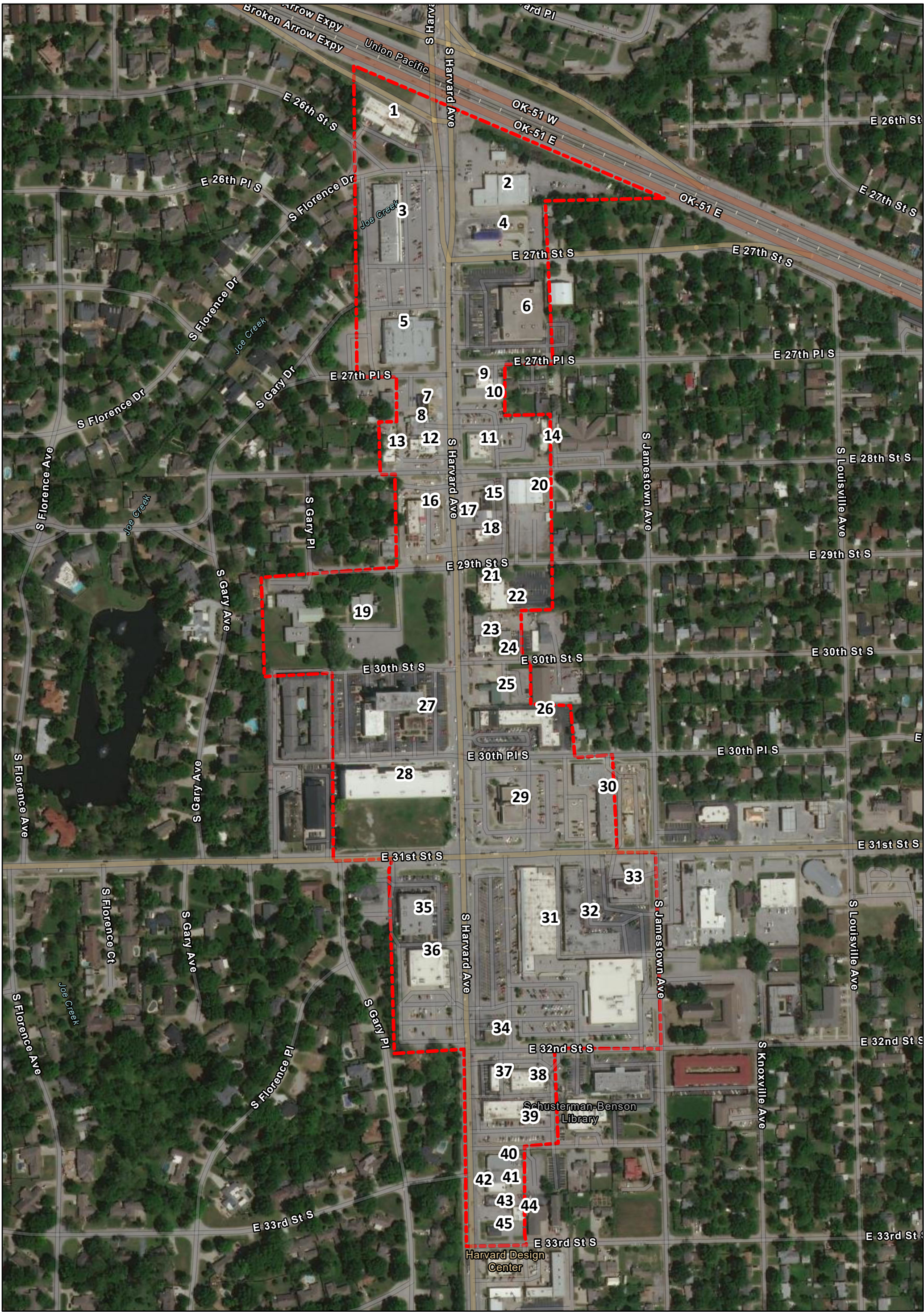
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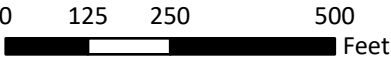
**Attachment A. South Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip Potential  
Historic District Map**





S. Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip Potential Historic District

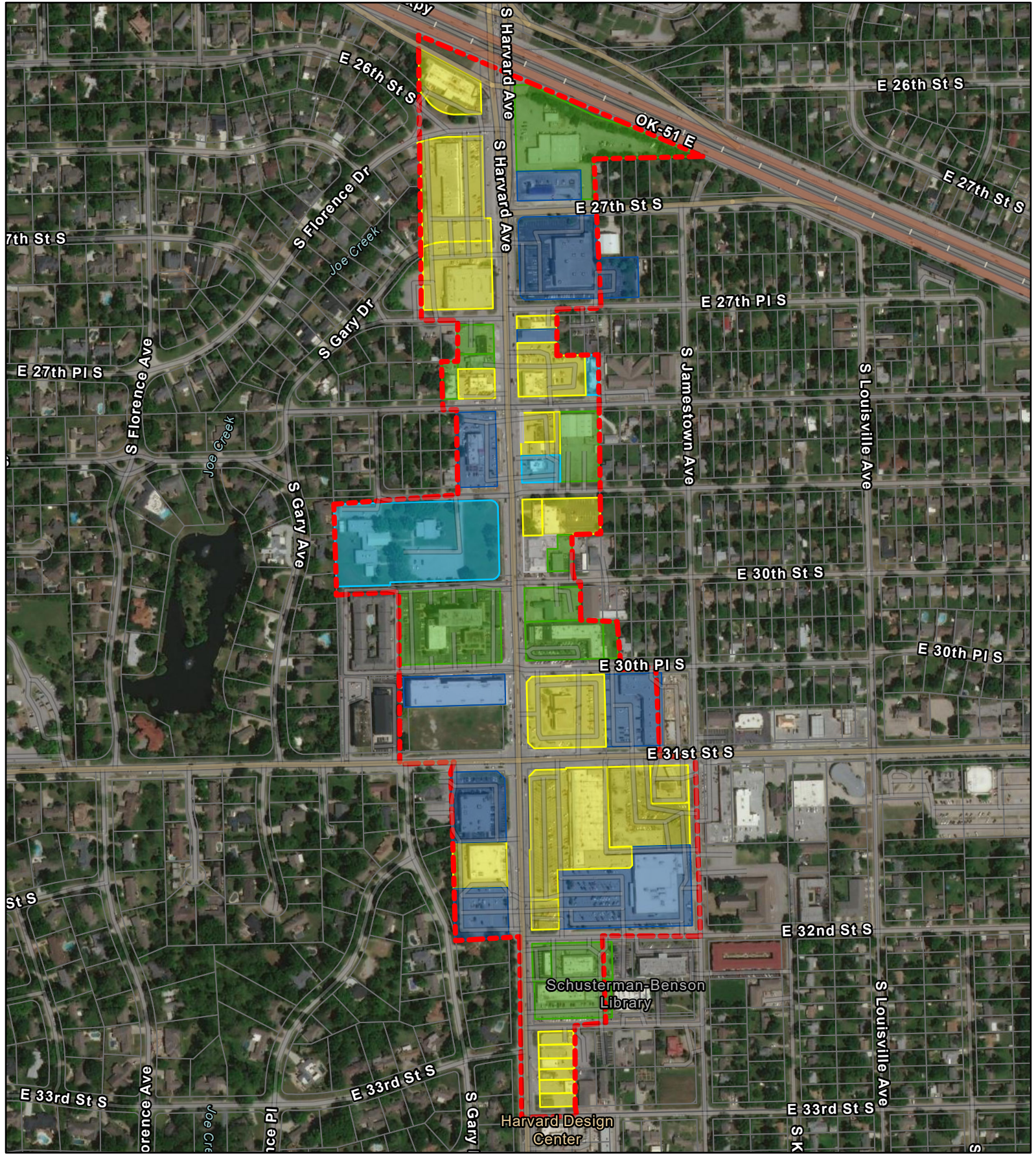
 Potential Historic District Boundary






## **Attachment B. Heat Maps**









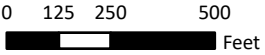


### S. Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip Potential Historic District

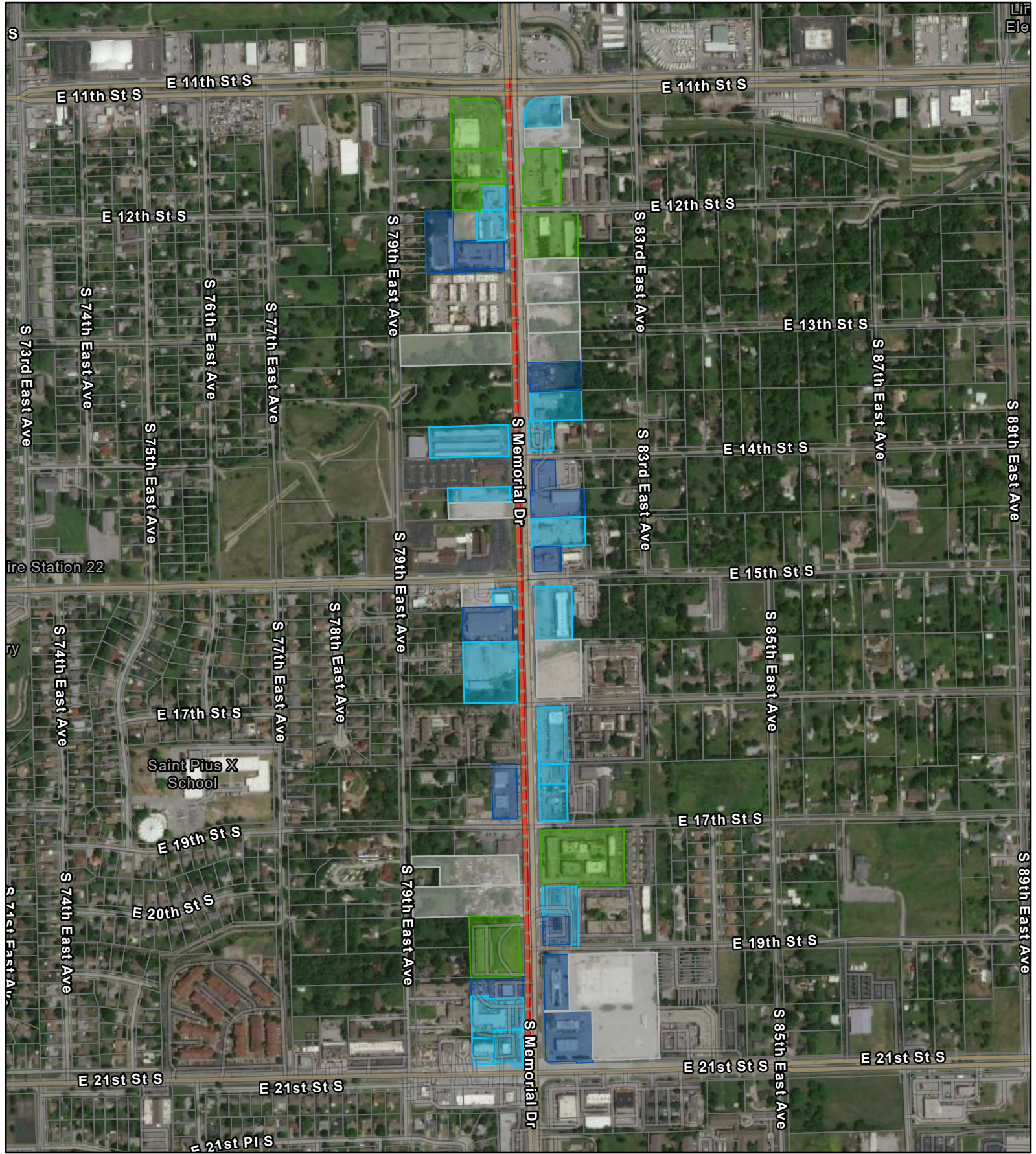

**Potential Historic District Boundary**

**Parcel Year Built Date**

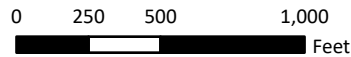
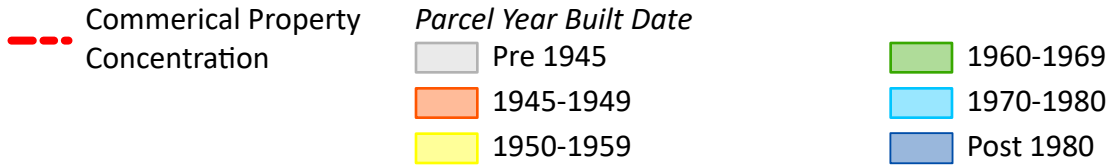
	Pre 1945		1960-1969
	1945-1949		1970-1980
	1950-1959		Post 1980



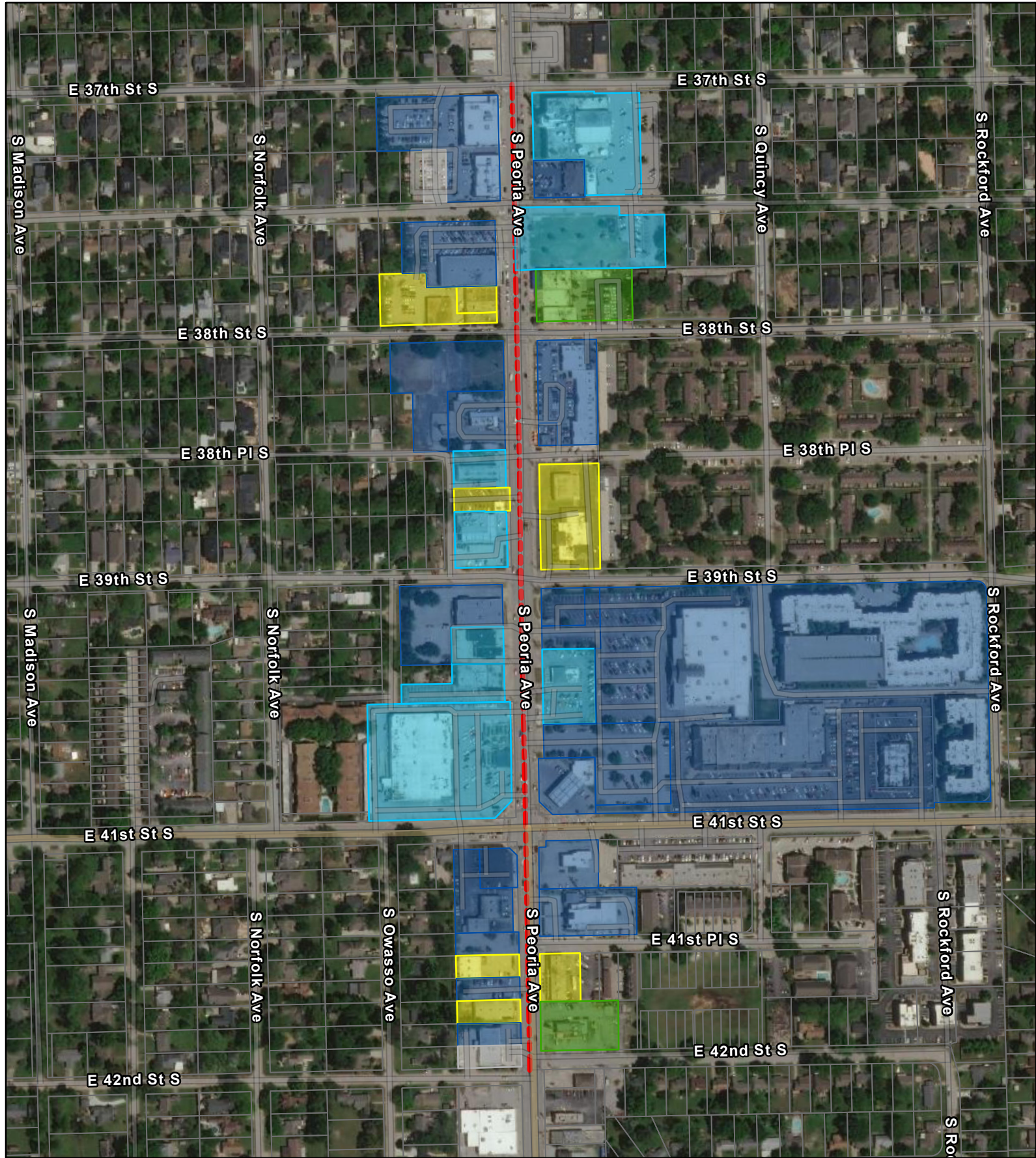




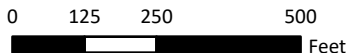
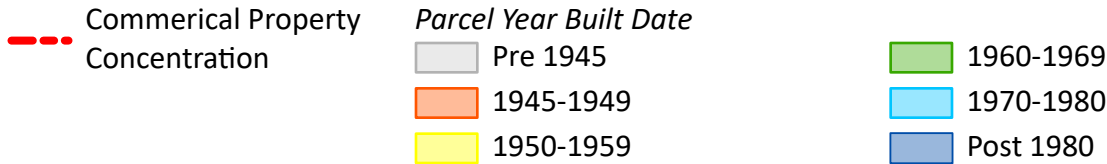
**South Memorial Drive Commercial Property Concentration**







South Peoria Avenue Commercial Property Concentration









# Postwar Commercial Evaluation Methodology: Application Worksheet

**Property name:** South Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip

**Property type:** Commercial strip

**Property location:** South Harvard Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma

## Identification of Character-defining Features

### Checklist of Character-defining Features Present – Commercial Strip

#### ***Building:***

☒ Series of various standalone, independently developed commercial properties stretching from one to several blocks long

#### ***Location/site features:***

- ☒ Located along a main thoroughfare or a road that previously served as a thoroughfare
- ☒ Prominent signage to attract motorists, placed on the buildings and/or along the roadside
- ☒ Individual parking lots, with or without lighting

### Analysis of Character-defining Features

How does subject property represent the property type: The South Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip (S. Harvard Avenue Strip) in Tulsa encompasses ten city blocks and represents a range of standalone, independently developed, commercial property types constructed primarily between 1950 and 1980. Properties have prominent signage to attract motorists and individual parking lots, many with lighting. The individual commercial properties also exhibit character-defining features specific to their property type.

Loss of or changes to character-defining features: The two main impacts to character-defining features are remodels and redevelopment. As is the nature of commercial architecture, storefronts were often updated to remain competitive/viable. Commercial properties facing S. Harvard Avenue were far more likely to have been remodeled than those fronting side/neighborhood feeder streets. Along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip, historic-age commercial buildings – in some cases entire blocks – have been removed to construct modern retail stores or fast food restaurants.

## Research

### Resources Consulted (annotate list as needed)

- ☒ Community and regional histories: Tulsa Historic Preservation Commission has a history 1905-1945 for background; Tulsa City-County (CC) Library/Research Center has several books/resources. Most notably: Tulsa, Biography of The American City; City in the Osage Hills; Tulsa, The Great American City
- ☒ Clippings files: Vertical files at the Tulsa CC Library
- ☒ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: Accessed via the Tulsa CC Library and Library of Congress websites, years provided (1915, updated to 1962) covered the pilot study area; also the key map from a 1932 update.

- ☒ Historic photographs: Multiple local repositories have historic images along the Tulsa Commercial Strip: The Tulsa Library, The Tulsa World (newspaper), The Tulsa Historical Society
- ☒ Aerial images: Obtained through County Assessor's office with GIS data and through the Tulsa CC Library digital map collections. Set from 1960 downloaded for commercial strip area.
- ☒ City directories: Tulsa City Directory 1921, accessed through the Tulsa Library website; Tulsa CC Library Research Center has full set.
- ☐ U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps:
- ☒ Historic property surveys and inventory records: Reconnaissance Level Survey of Tulsa, Parts 1 and 2, available at City CLG website.
- ☒ Prior DOT compliance surveys: Reached out to ODOT Cultural Resource historians who searched their databases; one report was identified (TCSP-272E(042)TC, 2013) for a project along 31st Street that extended west from the intersection with South Harvard Avenue. No commercial buildings were evaluated in this report.
- ☒ Tax assessor records: Tulsa County Assessor records/GIS used in initial identification of Tulsa Commercial Strip. Mead & Hunt purchased GIS data on 12/10/2021 for project mapping and analysis.
- ☒ City council meeting minutes: 2004 City Council-sponsored publication: A History of Tulsa Annexation available online.
- ☒ Reports from community and city planning boards: 1960 City of Tulsa Master Plan; research document for the 1972 Tulsa Master Plan: Vision 2000; both available at the Tulsa CC Library Research Center.
- ☒ Newspaper articles and advertisements: Web-based research at Newspapers.com
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce publications:
- ☐ Industry and trade publications and periodicals:
- ☒ NR Nominations and Determinations of Eligibility (Phase II) reports: Checked SHPO website for listed properties (none identified in pilot study area) and DOE List; city of Tulsa Historic Preservation Commission website featured links to National Register Nominations. Most notable: Ranch Acres Historic District; Oil Capital Historic District; Sixth Street Commercial/Residential Historic District. The nominations provided general contextual information; however, they were residential or pre-war commercial districts or in another area of Tulsa.
- ☐ HABS documentation:
- ☒ Oral interviews with building owners, tenants, and/or employees: 12/1/2021 informal interview with owner of Ann Arthur store at 3023 S Harvard Ave, Suite J, Ranch Plaza Shopping Center.

Additional resources consulted: City of Tulsa Planning Department – provided limited historic zoning documents. Most notable of these are a Tulsa zoning map from 1956; corporate limit maps for 1977, 1978, and 1980; and Zoning Code, City of Tulsa for 1970, 1975, and 1980. Census Bureau – population statistics and prior national postwar studies/contexts.

Repositories consulted (list all): Library of Congress ([https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn07276\\_013/](https://www.loc.gov/item/sanborn07276_013/)); Tulsa City and County Library (<https://www.tulsalibrary.org/research>); Tulsa Historical Society/Tulsa History Museum (<https://tulahistory.pastperfectonline.com/> and <https://www.tulahistory.org/>); Oklahoma SHPO website (<https://www.okhistory.org/shpo/thematics>); Tulsa County Assessor (<https://www.assessor.tulsacounty.org/assessor-maps-agree.php>); Tulsa World (Newspaper) (<https://tulsaworld.com>); Newspapers.com; Oklahoma Historical Society (<https://www.okhistory.org/>);

Tulsa Preservation Commission/City of Tulsa Planning Department  
(<https://tulsapreservationcommission.org/tulsa-history/urban/>); ODOT Cultural Resources

Analysis of most helpful sources:

## **Application of GIS Tools**

How used and intended results: Created “heat maps” of commercially zoned properties in Tulsa, color-coded by year to illustrate development over time. Utilized the map to identify other concentrations of potential postwar commercial strips for comparisons.

Was it useful: Yes, the heat mapping was helpful in several ways. As mentioned above, it helped to identify potential comparison areas within Tulsa. Further, the graphic helped with understanding and analysis of the South Harvard Avenue Commercial Strip. It was used to identify “holes” (areas of redevelopment/ modern infill) within a commercial strip or particular areas of historic commercial density. GIS aided in understanding the evolution of commercial construction over time. In addition, heat maps communicated a lot of information in a concise manner that enhanced the written report.

Other layers of GIS data, such as subdivision layers, were used to investigate the relationship between residential and commercial use within a single subdivision.

If not used, why: N/A

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

What was done: No stakeholder engagement was completed.

Was it useful: N/A

## **Historic Trends**

### **Historic trends considered for association with subject property**

#### ***Suburbanization:***

Dramatic shift from residing in urban areas to developing low-density suburbs: Yes, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip reflects this trend. This area represents businesses establishing along a transportation corridor to support the recent development and expansion of residential subdivisions at the outskirts of Tulsa; however, so do multitude other locations in Tulsa.

Retail businesses and offices leaving downtown and following the population shift to the suburbs: Yes, considered this trend. The S. Harvard Avenue Strip reflects this trend; however, so do a multitude of other locations in Tulsa.

Expanding highways/Interstates transformed land use and provided easy vehicular access to the developing suburban areas: Yes, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip reflects this trend; however, this happened all over Tulsa so was not unique to this location.

Developers of residential subdivisions encouraged to incorporate associated commercial areas: Yes, considered this trend. The S. Harvard Avenue Strip reflects this trend; however, so do a multitude of other locations in Tulsa.

Commercial developers worked within system of established zoning and land development regulations: Not applicable.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? NA, this area is applicable.

If trend was applicable, how was that identified? What sources or information assisted with making an association? The 1956 Tulsa Zoning Map, 1960 Tulsa Master Plan, 1972 Tulsa Master Plan documents, plus Tulsa zoning code for the years 1970, 1975, and 1980, and the 2004 report "A History of Tulsa Annexation," all assisted in making this association.

### ***Automobile culture:***

Rapid increase in automobile ownership: Yes, Tulsa experienced a significant increase in automobile ownership in the postwar years.

Commercial property established along busy thoroughfare/highway to accommodate the automobile traveling public: Commercial properties were established along S. Harvard Avenue – a busy transportation corridor – to accommodate the automobile travelling public. This strip is just one example of several locally that illustrate this trend.

Drive-ins and drive-throughs became commonplace: The types of businesses established along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip largely catered to local residents versus the auto traveler (more supermarkets, offices, and shopping centers and less drive-ins, drive-throughs, gas stations and motels).

Sited at busy intersections or access ramps: Yes, north end features ramps to US 64/OK 51 and the intersection with 31st Street is busy.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? N/A

### ***Social and cultural trends:***

Growing families relocated to the suburbs; increased commercial development in suburban areas: Yes, residential development in adjacent areas but not driving commercial development.

Redlining and discriminatory practices: Local histories and a 1940 Redline map of Tulsa indicate the S. Harvard Avenue Strip is in a historically White middle-class area. Research showed that north Tulsa was historically Black and that the city's demographics began to change following WWII – a trend that



continued through the study period and to the present day. However, no evidence of a racial or ethnic enclave in or near the S. Harvard Avenue Strip was identified.

Civil Rights movement and racial integration: Research did not reveal any events related to civil rights tied to the S. Harvard Avenue Strip. Research did not reveal associated or adjacent neighborhoods that had redlining or discriminatory practices, or neighborhoods that were home to minorities.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? No evidence of activities, events, or trends related to civil rights, racial integration, redlining, or discriminatory practices was revealed.

### ***Consumerism:***

Shopping as a recreational activity: This theme comes through to a limited degree. While several shopping centers and freestanding retail stores are within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip, they generally cater to local residents versus acting as a regional draw. This is one of several postwar commercial strips in Tulsa and it does not stand out as a better example of this theme than any other location. Tulsa's first major commercial shopping area developed outside downtown (Utica Square, 1952) is a better example of this theme than the S. Harvard Avenue Strip.

Specialty retail stores catering to those with discretionary income: See above.

Shopping centers as a destination with amenities for the entire family: S. Harvard Avenue Strip are generally small-to-medium with limited amenities that would appeal to families.

Large suburban supermarkets replacing neighborhood grocery stores: Three supermarkets are within the S. Harvard Avenue Strip; one is recent infill (replacing an earlier Safeway), and the other two have been greatly altered through the years with expansions/and or remodels and they no longer reflect their historic appearance.

Discount and big box stores gaining popularity: No historic examples along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip have been identified.

Development of regional and national brand recognition and commercial advertising: N/A.

Application of scientific/rational planning policies to retail sales: N/A.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? See above.

### ***Commercial design and setting:***

Precast concrete blocks, concrete masonry units, or poured concrete for quick and lower-cost construction: Present, although no early or innovative designs are identified.

New materials and/or technologies incorporated into building design (i.e. glass curtain walls, AC): No examples of emerging materials/technologies.

Early use of large glass retail storefronts: Present; however, not early examples.

Landscaping as essential part of the commercial environment: Most buildings lacked intentional landscaping. It was largely limited to a planting bed or shrubbery near the entrance and occasionally some grass or a tree.

Early use of energy-efficient materials: None identified.

Early use of large parking lots: None identified.

Signage as an integral component: Signage is prevalent for most businesses. However, most signage does not date to the historic period.

Building components could be easily modified to serve tenant: This is especially true for the shopping centers, which have housed a number of different tenants over the years.

Separation of the sites that house the retailing/management services from industrial/manufacturing processes: Did not come through in research.

Modern design to “rationalize” the workplace/commercial space design and layout modeled for efficiency: Some buildings along the strip, such as supermarkets, exhibited modern design and layouts modeled for efficiency. Newspaper research supports the effort given to the interior layout of the former Sipes, Humpty Dumpty, and Safeway supermarkets. However, the Sipes and Humpty Dumpty buildings have been altered over time and have diminished integrity, and the Safeway is nonextant.

Form/function influenced by human relations or environmental psychology: Not observed in buildings along the S. Harvard Avenue Strip.

Advancements in science and technology influencing architectural design: Not observed.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? This area is applicable; however, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip does not have great examples of early commercial design.

### ***Architecture:***

Representative of architectural style: Overall, the S. Harvard Avenue Strip is a collection of vernacular commercial buildings – with a few exceptions: the Late Moderne Bank of Oklahoma (former Home Federal Savings & Loan) and the Ranch Acres shopping center, which reflects the Ranch form. Other buildings are more vernacular in form or have experienced substantial alterations.

Representative of regional variations/influences: None identified.

Why is this area not applicable? What is showing up or lacking in research? Generally vernacular with a high incidence of non-historic age remodels, reconfigurations, and modern infill.

## **Comparisons**

How were comparisons identified: Comparison commercial strips were identified using GIS to locate concentrations of commercially zoned parcels along thoroughfares that were built between 1945 and 1980.

Challenges in identifying comparisons: Postwar commercial development occurred throughout Tulsa along primary thoroughfares. Even with GIS tools, it was challenging to determine comparison concentrations. With the ongoing remodeling and infill along these corridors, streetview was not always a reliable tool as many properties have experienced exterior alteration, or new properties have been constructed, since the imagery was obtained.