

CITY OF  
**TOPEKA**

**A G E N D A**

# LANDMARKS COMMISSION

**Thursday, July 13, 2023  
5:30 P.M.**

**Zoom Video Conference**

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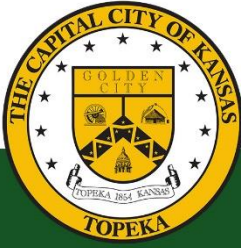
## **MEMBERS OF THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

Melina Stewart (2023 Chair)  
Dave Frederick (2023 Vice Chair)  
Donna Rae Pearson  
Mark Burenheide  
David Heit  
Grant Sourk  
Christine Steinkuehler  
Cassandra Taylor  
Nic Irick

- 
- The Topeka Landmarks Commission holds a public meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month.
  - The following agenda identifies and describes each proposal to be considered by the Commission.
  - Each item to be considered by the Commission will be introduced by the Planning Division Staff. The Commission will then hear and consider arguments both for and against each proposal.
  - Individuals wishing to address the Commission are requested to state their name and address for the official record.
  - Motions on all matters which require a decision by the Commission, are made in the affirmative. On a roll call vote, Commission members then vote yes, no, or abstain based on the affirmative motion.
  - The owner of the local historic landmark or property owner within the local historic district may appeal the Commission's decision to the City Council by submitting a notice of appeal to the Planning Director within 10 calendar days of the decision.



ADA Notice: For special accommodations for this event, please contact the Planning Division at 785-368-3728 at least three working days in advance.



CITY OF  
**TOPEKA**

# LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Agenda for Thursday July 13, 2023

**A. Call to Order**

**B. Approval of Minutes from June 8, 2023**

**C. Announcement of Potential Conflicts**

**D. Action Items**

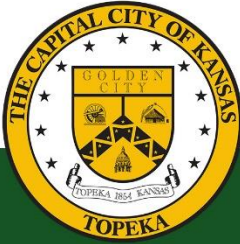
1. **CLGR23/09 by Equity Bank**, requesting a review under Kansas State Preservation Law Review [K.S.A. 75-2724] for the placement of a projecting sign on the northeast corner of the building.
2. **CLGR23/07 by 424 QOZB LLC**, requesting a review under Kansas State Preservation Law Review [K.S.A. 75-2724] for the remodeling of interior 1st floor office rooms at 424 S. Kansas Avenue. This building is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**E. Other Items**

**F. Adjournment**



ADA Notice: For special accommodations for this event, please contact the Planning Division at 785-368-3728 at least three working days in advance.



CITY OF  
**TOPEKA**

**MINUTES**

## Landmarks Commission

**Thursday, June 8, 2023**

**5:30PM**

Zoom Video Conference

**Members present:** Melina Stewart (Chair), Mark Burenheide, Dave Frederick, David Heit, Donna Rae Pearson Grant Sourk, Christine Steinkuehler, Cassandra Taylor (8)

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Michael Hall, Planning Director; William Sharp, Planner, Rhiannon Friedman, Interim Planning & Development Director; Amanda Tituana-Feijoo, Administrative Officer

**Roll Call** – Chairwoman Melina Stewart called the meeting to order with 8 members present for a quorum.

**Approval of Minutes from March 9, 2023 – Motion** by Commissioner Heit; **Second** by Commissioner Sourk.  
**APPROVED** (8-0-0)

**Declaration of conflict of interest/ex parte communications** – Commissioner Taylor declared that she had a potential conflict with the CLGR23/06 by AIM Strategies LLC, and will be abstaining from the vote.

**CLGR23/06 by AIM Strategies LLC**, requesting a review under Kansas State Preservation Law Review (K.S.A. 75-2724) for the remodeling of the exterior and interior 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the building located at 913 S. Kansas Avenue. This building is designated as a contributor to the historic integrity of the South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District.

**Staff:**

William Sharp presented the staff report and staff's recommendation for approval.

**Owner's Representatives:**

Jackie Rakoski- Diediker, Architect One and Seth Wagner, AIM Strategies LLC

**Questions/Comments from Commissioners:**

Commissioner Sourk acknowledged that the concept of the exterior garage door would be a first for Kansas Avenue. He asked if its purpose was for security outside of business hours. Mr. Wagner confirmed that with the increase in homelessness and vandalism, this is an attempt to decrease such activities.

**Motion by Commissioner Heit, second by Commissioner Sourk:** Concur with staff's findings that the proposed interior and exterior alterations to the building at 913 S Kansas Avenue is consistent with the recommendations outlined in the Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines, and will not damage or destroy the historical integrity of the structure, or the surrounding South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District. Approved 7-0-1 (Mrs. Taylor abstained).

**Other Non - Action Items**

Introduction to New Planning team members

**With nothing more on the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 5:41pm.**

# CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT KANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION LAW PROJECT REVIEW REPORT

## TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION

CASE NO: CLGR23/09

by: Equity Bank

**Project Address:** 701 S Kansas Ave

**Property Classification:** Listed on Register of Historic Kansas Places and National Register of Historic Places. *Contributing property* to the South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District

**Standards:** Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines

**Attachments:** Site Plan [ ] Elevations [X] Arch./Const. Plans [ ] Pictures [X]

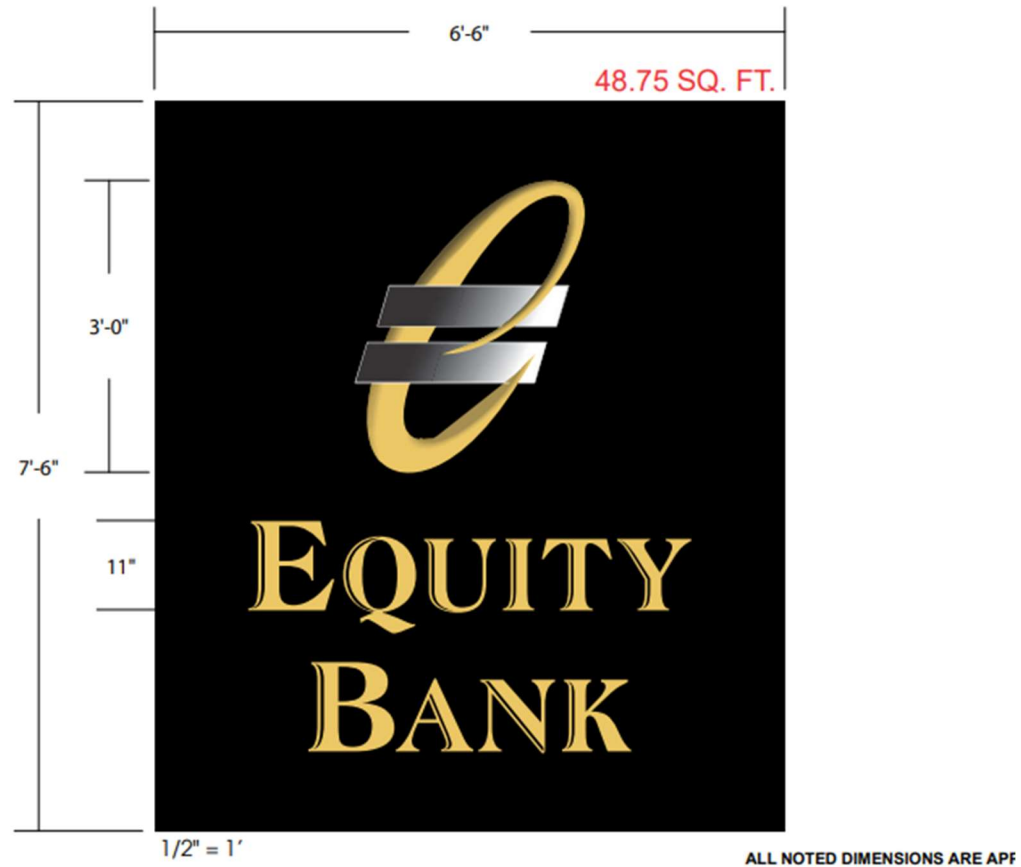
**PROPOSAL:** This proposal is for the placement of an illuminated projecting sign on the front facade of the Central National Bank building. The sign will replace an existing sign at the same location with similar size and dimensions. The Central National Bank is listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places and is a contributing property to the South Kansas Avenue Historic District. The sign will be constructed of painted black aluminum. It will be double faced and internally-illuminated. Overall dimensions of the sign are 7.5 ft x 6.5 ft. The sign will be mounted 11 feet above the sidewalk and the projecting sign will sit perpendicular to the structure.

**BACKGROUND:** The building was constructed in 1927. Built in classical revival style, the Central National Bank building is clad entirely in limestone. The bank was listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places, and the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. Pictured below, a projecting sign sits at the same location as the proposed sign.



Photo from KHRI, 5/19/1976

**PROJECT DETAILS:** The proposed sign will replace an existing projecting sign on the building. The existing sign contains an electronic message center (EMC) for time and temperature. The proposed sign has no EMC. Topeka Municipal Code states that each tenant is allowed to have one projecting sign on their building in the D-1 Downtown District. The Topeka Sign code, TMC 18.10.130, allows for up to a 50 square foot projecting sign at this location. The proposed sign area is 48.75 sf.



*Proposed sign face*

**REVIEW SUMMARY:** The Kansas State Historic Preservation Office requires that all projects occurring on any property listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places be reviewed for their effect on the listed property and the surrounding district. State law (K.S.A. 75-2724) establishes that the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation be used to evaluate changes proposed to any property that is individually listed, or is located within an historic district. The following is an analysis of the application of each Standard to the proposed project.

**Standard 1.** *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

**Analysis:** No change in use is proposed with this project. The placement of the sign will cause minimal alteration to the defining character of the building and its surrounding environment.

**Standard 2.** *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

**Analysis:** Projecting signs are common in downtown Topeka. The picture shown on the first page is from 1976 showing a projecting sign at the same location.

**Standard 3.** *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

**Analysis:** The proposed placement of this sign will not create a false sense of historical development.

**Standard 4.** *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

**Analysis:** No historic features, nor features greater than 50 years of age on this property will be removed as a part of this project.

**Standard 5.** *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

**Analysis:** No distinctive features, finishes, or construction techniques will be removed or altered in conjunction with this project proposal.

**Standard 6.** *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

**Analysis:** N/A

**Standard 7.** *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

**Analysis:** N/A

**Standard 8.** *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

**Analysis:** N/A

**Standard 9.** *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

**Analysis:** The proposed projecting sign will be placed 11 feet off the ground with dimensions of 7.5 ft x 6.5 ft and a sign face of 48.75 square feet. These dimensions comply with the sign regulations in Title 18, Topeka Municipal Code.

*Standard 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

**Analysis:** The proposed sign can be removed in the future without any alteration to the underlying and essential form of the building.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** In the performance of this review under KSA 75-2724, Staff is recommending a finding that the proposed sign to be placed onto the northeast corner of the building at 701 S Kansas Ave **IS CONSISTENT with the recommendations outlined in the Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines, and will NOT damage or destroy the historical integrity of the structure, or the surrounding South Kansas Avenue Commercial Historic District.**

Prepared by: William Sharp, Planner I

**APPEAL TO THE GOVERNING BODY:** If the Landmarks Commission determines that the proposed treatment will damage or destroy the historic integrity of the property and/or the surrounding historic district, the applicant may appeal to the governing body. It will be incumbent upon the governing body to make a determination, after consideration of all relevant factors, that: (1) there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the removal of the facade; and (2) that alternatives to the project include all possible planning to minimize harm to the property and the district that may result from those alternatives.

# SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION

202306223697

\$33.00

LOCATION/ADDRESS: 701 S. Kansas Ave. Topeka KS 66603

NAME OF BUSINESS(es) Equity Bank

IS PROPERTY ON THE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES?  YES  NO ? Maybe

The undersigned hereby makes application to erect \_\_\_\_\_ (total number) sign(s) as specified herein, and does agree that the provisions of the sign ordinance will be complied with whether the same are specified herein or not.

TYPE OF SIGN(S):  GROUND SIGN #(\_\_)  WALL SIGN #(X)  POLE SIGN #(\_\_)  
 TEMPORARY SIGN #(\_\_)  ROOF SIGN #(\_\_)  BALLOON SIGN#(\_\_)  
 PORTABLE SIGN #(\_\_)

WORK TO BE DONE:  NEW SIGN  REWORK/REPLACE SIGN  FACE REPLACEMENT  
IS SIGN ILLMINATED?  YES  NO IF YES, HOW? LED modules

**APPLICATION SHALL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ATTACHEMENTS:**

1. Aerial photo or site plan with location of sign(s) identified
2. Specification drawing (elevation view) including dimensions, materials, illumination method, colors and other relevant information. Plans to scale are preferred and are necessary under some circumstances. Identify scale on plan.
3. Description on site plan or documentation that existing signs to remain or those signs to be removed. For signs to remain, identify size of each sign. For freestanding signs, describe the size and height.
4. For freestanding signs include proposed setback (distance) from nearest property line.
5. For wall signs, projecting signs and other signs attached to buildings include a photo or building elevation drawing showing placement of sign(s) on the building. Include depth and size of sign, and distance from the building surface.
6. New, illuminated signs require an electrical inspection to be completed before installation.
7. Balloon signs may be placed four times a year for one week. Indicate date(s) the balloon sign will be flown: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Company: Luminouse Neon Inc. Address: 1429 W. 4th Hutchinson

Phone: 316-303-2186 Contact for permit & installation: Kevin Himes Email: Khimes@LuminousNeon.com

**Requirements for sign installation & sign hangar contractor**

- 1) Public liability insurance policy covering all operations of \$500,000 combined single limit for liability & property damage per Topeka Municipal Codebook Section 5.150.040
- 2) Plans & specifications including stress diagrams or tabulated stresses, dimensions, materials, & details of construction together with complete details showing methods of anchoring the proposed sign Topeka Municipal Codebook Section 18.15.050
- 3) Site plan showing location on property with dimensions to property lines

OWNER OF PROPERTY: Equity Banc Shares Inc.

Address: 7701 E. Kellogg Ste. 100 Phone: 316-681-1776

Site	Approval _____	Date _____	Disapproval _____	Date _____
Water	Approval _____	Date _____	Disapproval _____	Date _____
Traffic	Approval _____	Date _____	Disapproval _____	Date _____
Historical Review (if applicable)	Approval _____	Date _____	Disapproval _____	Date _____
Planning	Approval _____	Date _____	Disapproval _____	Date _____
Zoning of Property _____	Review Comments: _____			



# J15551 - EQUITY BANK TOPEKA FLAG MOUNT SIGN



ALL NOTED DIMENSIONS ARE APPROXIMATE AND MAY BE MODIFIED SLIGHTLY DURING MANUFACTURING TO ALLOW PROPER COMPONENT USAGE.

## SPECIFICATIONS

- REMOVE EXISTING FLAG-MOUNTED SIGN.
- NEW DOUBLE-FACED, INTERNALLY-ILLUMINATED, ALUMINUM FLAG-MOUNT SIGN PAINTED BLACK.
- ROUTED COPY/GRAPHIC WITH PUSH-THRU ACRYLIC, APPLIED DIGITALLY PRINTED GRAPHICS.
- LED ILLUMINATION.
- INSTALLED ON BUILDING WITH BRACKET/GUY-WIRE.

**CUSTOMER:** EQUITY BANK  
**NAME:** JOHN HANLEY  
**LOCATION:** 701 S. KANSAS AVE.  
 TOPEKA, KS 66603

**DATE:** 2/21/23  
**DESIGN NO:** DW-6489  
**ARTIST:** AW

**SCALE:** 1/2" = 1' • 1/4" = 1'

**APPROVED:**                      **DATE:**

**FOR PERMIT**



**LUMINOUSNeonInc**  
**ART & SIGN SYSTEMS**

# J15551 - EQUITY BANK TOPEKA FLAG MOUNT SIGN

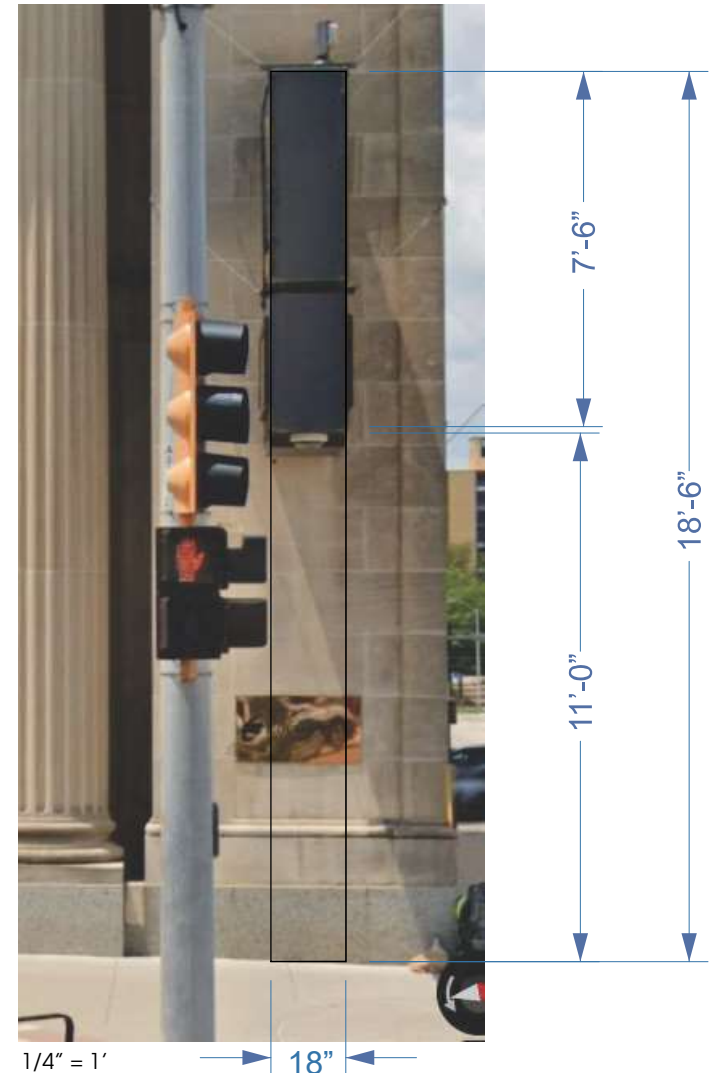
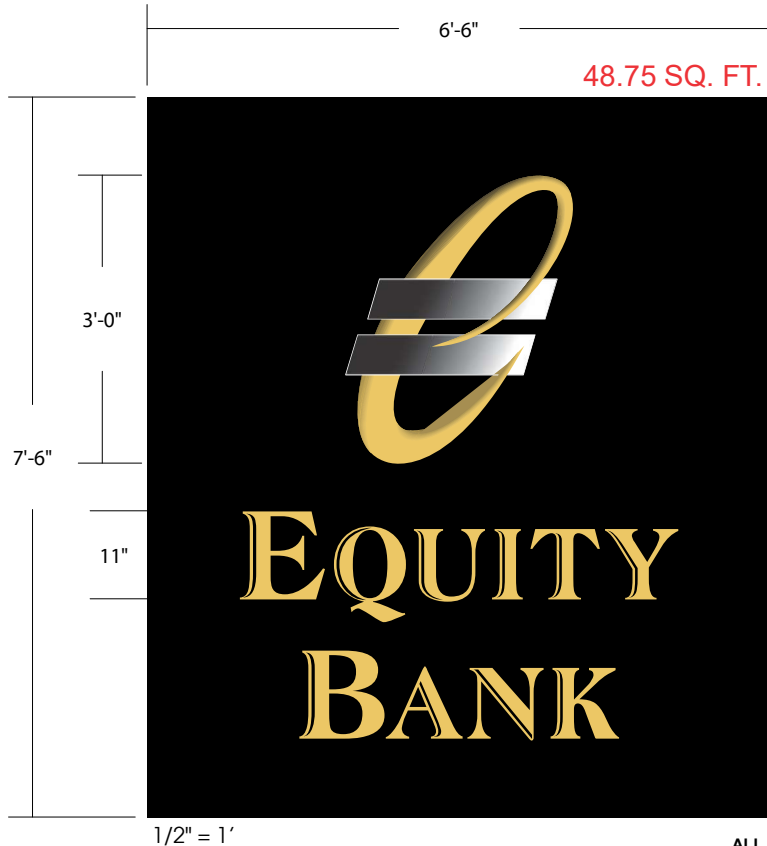


REMOVE



NEW SIGN

1/8" = 1'



**SURVEY REQUIRED TO CONFIRM MEASUREMENTS**

ALL NOTED DIMENSIONS ARE APPROXIMATE AND MAY BE MODIFIED SLIGHTLY DURING MANUFACTURING TO ALLOW PROPER COMPONENT USAGE.

## SPECIFICATIONS

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**FOR PERMIT**



**LUMINOUS Neon Inc**  
 ART & SIGN SYSTEMS

**CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
KANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION LAW  
PROJECT REVIEW REPORT  
TOPEKA LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

**CASE NO: CLGR23/07**

**by: 424 QOZB LLC**

**Project Address:** 424 S Kansas Avenue

**Property Classification:** Listed on the *Register of Historic Kansas Places*, and the *National Register of Historic Places*

**Standards:** Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation; Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines

**Attachments:** Site Plan [ ] Elevations [ ] Arch./Const. Plans [X] Pictures [X]

**PROPOSAL:**

The owner proposes to remodel the interior of the building located at 424 S Kansas Avenue by converting six secondary office rooms located on the first level to one apartment suite. The project will involve removing interior office walls to accommodate for the 2,033 square foot apartment space.



**Main entrance**

**BACKGROUND:**

Built in 1933, the Downtown Topeka Post Office has been an important landmark in Topeka for 100 years. The building was entered into the National Register of Historic Places in 2015 under Criteria A and C. Historically, the post office is most well known as the site for of the *Brown v. Board of Education* trial. The building is also significant under Criterion C for architecture, as a good example of the Classical Revival style.

Regarding the interior first floor, the Post Office nomination form states:

The first floor of the building reflects the standardization of 1930s post office layouts, with its arrangement of dual entrances with vestibules, elongated public lobby, service windows, post office boxes set flush with the face of the lobby walls, workroom, administrative offices, and loading dock. The flooring is quarry tile, with white and verde antique—a dark green serpentine—borders and base. The walls have St. Genevieve gray marble high wainscoting and pilasters. Doors are cased with verde antique serpentine with a cartouche motif, and aluminum doors between the lobby and entry vestibules are decorated with brass rosettes and topped with a spread-winged eagle. The elevators have verde antique casing with brass rosettes; their metal doors are decorated with octagonal panels and rosettes.

There is a preservation covenant attached to the property between the property owner and the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (KS SHPO). The covenant states that, “No construction, alteration or rehabilitation shall be undertaken or permitted to be undertaken that would affect the historic features of the exterior or interior lobby of this property without consultation with and the express permission of the KS SHPO”

On June 15, 2023 KS SHPO made the determination that the proposed project will not adversely impact any of the exterior or interior historic character-defining features of the property.

**PROJECT DETAILS:**

The project involves changes to 1st floor interior office rooms. The office rooms will be converted to an apartment suite. Project details include removal of a door, permanently closing off the backside of two doors, removal of walls, removal of ceiling tiles to expose historic plaster ceiling. In total, the former office rooms will convert to 2,033 square feet of living space.

The renovated apartment will include two separate bathrooms, two closets, two bedrooms, a living room, and kitchen. All work being done will be contained in the secondary offices. No changes will occur to the first floor lobby interior of the building.



**Photo of interior lobby**

**REVIEW SUMMARY:** The Kansas State Historic Preservation Office requires that all projects occurring on any property listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places be reviewed for their

effect on the listed property and the surrounding district. State law (K.S.A. 75-2724) establishes that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation be used to evaluate changes proposed to any property that is individually listed, or is located within an historic district. The following is an analysis of the application of each Standard to the proposed project.

**Standard 1.** *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

**Analysis:** The United States Postal Service still operates inside the first floor lobby. The residential use will be a new feature to the building. Institutional uses have been traditionally associated with the property.

**Standard 2.** *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

**Analysis:** The Kansas State Historic Preservation Office has determined that the proposed project will not adversely impact any of the exterior or interior historic character-defining features of the property. The scope of work for the project is only taking place in secondary spaces on the first floor. In the Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines, the guidelines describe a hierarchy of zones of sensitivity when it comes to making changes to the interior of a building.

**Standard 3.** *Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*

**Analysis:** Construction of this building will not introduce features that will create a false sense of historic development. No historic features or elements from other buildings will be added.

**Standard 4.** *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*

**Analysis:** Removal and demolition of interior office features does not include any elements that have acquired historic significance. The offices within the scope of work for the project have been vacant for several years and it appears that new features have been added inside these offices that would have gained any historic significance over time.

**Standard 5.** *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

**Analysis:** The vast majority of all historic features, finishes, and examples of skilled craftsmanship will be retained and preserved. The removal of those elements within the interior that are historic will not detrimentally alter the buildings historic character.

**Standard 6.** *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities*

*and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

**Analysis:** N/A

**Standard 7.** *Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.*

**Analysis:** N/A

**Standard 8.** *Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.*

**Analysis:** N/A

**Standard 9.** *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

**Analysis:** No new additions or exterior alterations are proposed in association with this project. All new construction within the interior will also be compatible in its massing, scale, and architectural form.

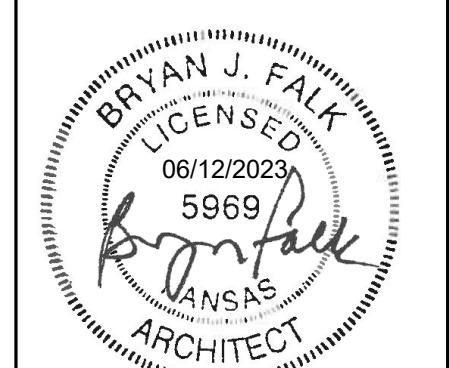
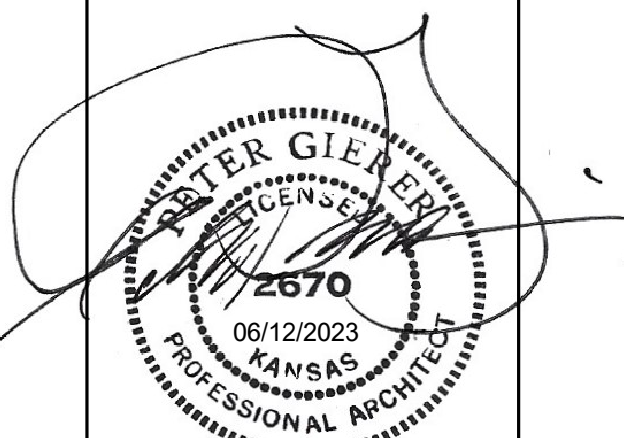
**Standard 10.** *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

**Analysis:** N/A

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** In the performance of this review under KSA 75-2724, staff is recommending a finding that the proposed interior alterations to the building at 424 S Kansas Avenue **ARE CONSISTENT with the recommendations outlined in the Downtown Topeka Design Guidelines, and will NOT damage or destroy the historical integrity of the structure.**

Prepared by: William Sharp, Planner I

**APPEAL TO THE GOVERNING BODY:** If the Landmarks Commission determines that the proposed treatment will damage or destroy the historic integrity of the property and/or the surrounding historic district, the applicant may appeal to the governing body. It will be incumbent upon the governing body to make a determination, after consideration of all relevant factors, that: (1) there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to the removal of interior features; and (2) that alternatives to the project include all possible planning to minimize harm to the property that may result from those alternatives.



DRAWN BY: JES  
CHECKED BY: BJF

**FALK ARCHITECTS**  
© 2023 Falk Architects Inc.

**A155**

SUITE 107



EXISTING PHOTOS

GENERAL NOTES:  
CONTRACTOR SHALL PROVIDE SHOP DRAWINGS FOR ALL CABINETS, APPLIANCES, TILES AND FIXTURES FOR APPROVAL BY OWNER.  
  
SEAL OFF ALL PENETRATIONS TO ENSURE FIRE RATED ASSEMBLY OF 1HR IS MET AT FLOOR, WALL AND CEILING.

**CODE ANALYSIS:**  
**REASON FOR SUBMITTAL - RENOVATION**  
**3B CONSTRUCTION**  
**MIXED USE OCCUPANCY - R2 AND B OCCUPANCY**  
**FULLY SPRINKLED - NO**  
**EXISTING SQUARE FOOTAGE - 160,000 SF**  
**SQUARE FOOTAGE IN SCOPE OF PERMIT: 2033 SF**  
**ACTUAL EGRESS DISTANCE FROM DISTANT CORNER: 126' TO MAIN EXIT**  
**EXIT ACCESS DISTANCE: 52'**  
**MAX EXIT ACCESS DISTANCE: 75'**  
**ACTIVE FIRE SAFETY FEATURES -**  
FIRE EXTINGUISHER  
EXIT SIGNS  
**TOTAL OCCUPANT LOAD - 11**  
**FACILITY NAME - DOWNTOWN HISTORIC POST OFFICE/ COURT HOUSE**  
**FACILITY ADDRESS - 424 S KANSAS AVE**  
**CITY - TOPEKA COUNTY - SHAWNEE**  
**LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT - CITY OF TOPEKA**  
**WATER SUPPLY - CITY OF TOPEKA**  
**LOCAL CITY INSPECTION DEPARTMENT - CITY OF TOPEKA**  
**CODES:**  
2009 INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE  
2021 INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE (IBC)  
2021 INTERNATIONAL EXISTING BUILDING CODE (IEBC)  
2021 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE (IECC)  
2015 UNIFORM MECHANICAL CODE  
2017 NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE  
2018 UNIFORM PLUMBING CODE  
2021 INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE (IFC)  
2015 LIFE SAFETY CODE  
2010 ADA STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBLE DESIGN

**PROFESSIONAL INFO:**  
BRYAN FALK  
BRYAN@FALK-ARCHITECTS.COM  
785-891-9958  
827 N KANSAS AVE. TOPEKA, KS 66608

**IBC CODE NOTES:**  
**508.4 SEPERATION OF OCCUPANCY**  
A 1HR SEPERATION IS REQUIRED BETWEEN OCCUPANCY GROUPS B AND R.

**717.3.2.1 FIRE DAMPER RATING**  
FIRE DAMPERS SHALL BE PROVIDED AT PENETRATIONS FOR FIRE RATED WALLS. ALL DAMPERS SHALL HAVE A 1.5HR RATING.

**TOPEKA LOCAL AMENDMENT NOTES:**

**IBC 903.2.8 GROUP R**  
AN AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER IS NOT REQUIRED FOR A BUILDING CONTAINING NOT MORE THAN 2 SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING UNITS, PROVIDED THAT A FIRE ALARM AND DETECTION SYSTEM ARE INSTALLED.

**Code Plan Legend**

SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
☉	FIRE ALARM SMOKE
☼	FIRE ALARM HEAT
☐	FIRE ALARM PULL STATION
☒	FIRE ALARM
☒	FIRE ALARM HORN
☒	FIRE ALARM HORN /
☐	EXIT SIGN
☐	FIRE EXTINGUISHER
☐	EMERGENCY
☐	EXIT - EXTERIOR
---	1HR RATED WALL

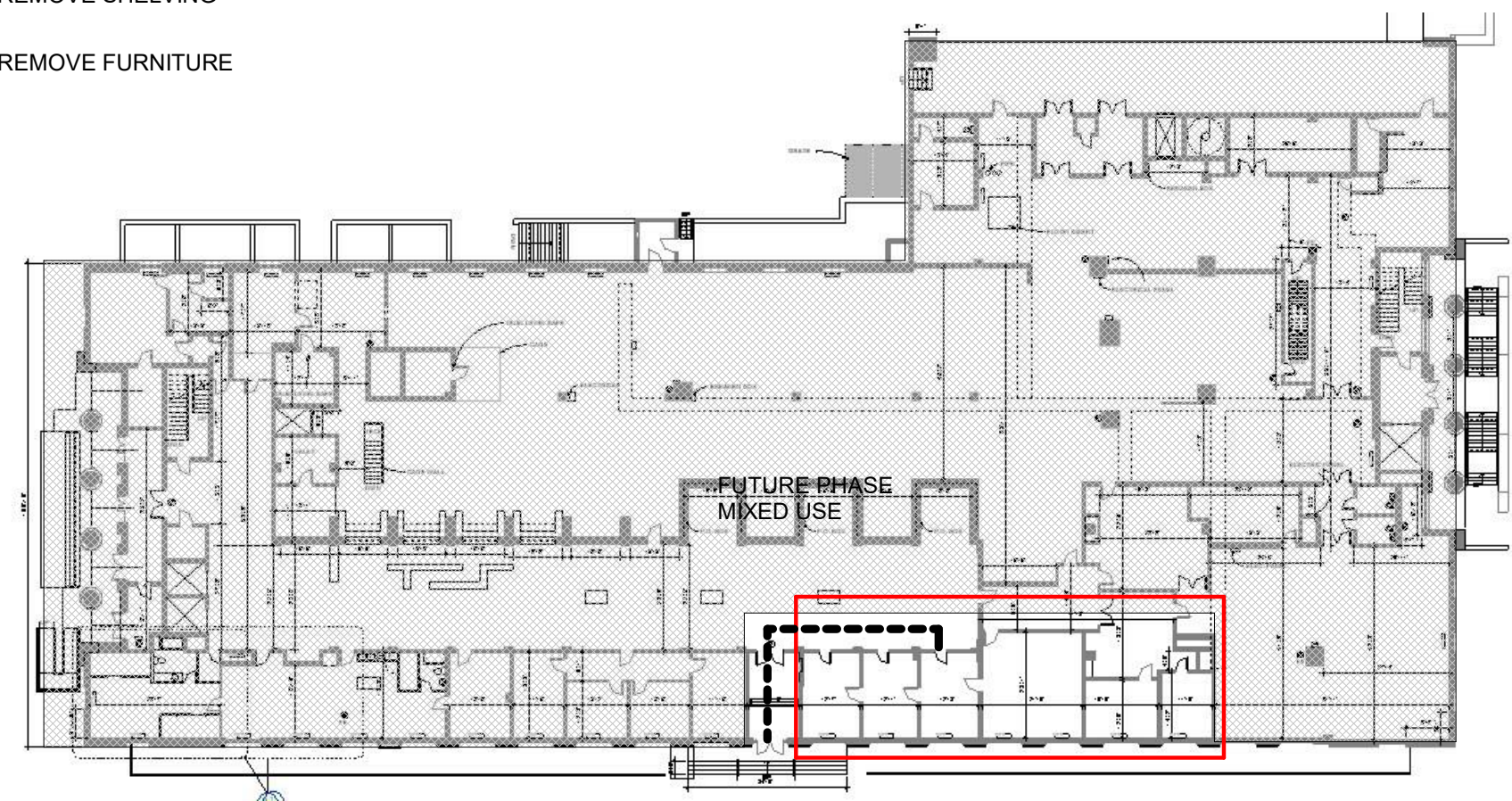
**PARTITION SCHEDULE:**  
TYPE A - 1/2" GYP BOARD ON 2X4 STUD ON 1/2" GYP BOARD  
TYPE B - 1/2" GYP BOARD ON 2X4 STUD ON 1/2" GYP BOARD W/ TILE

**DOOR SCHEDULE**

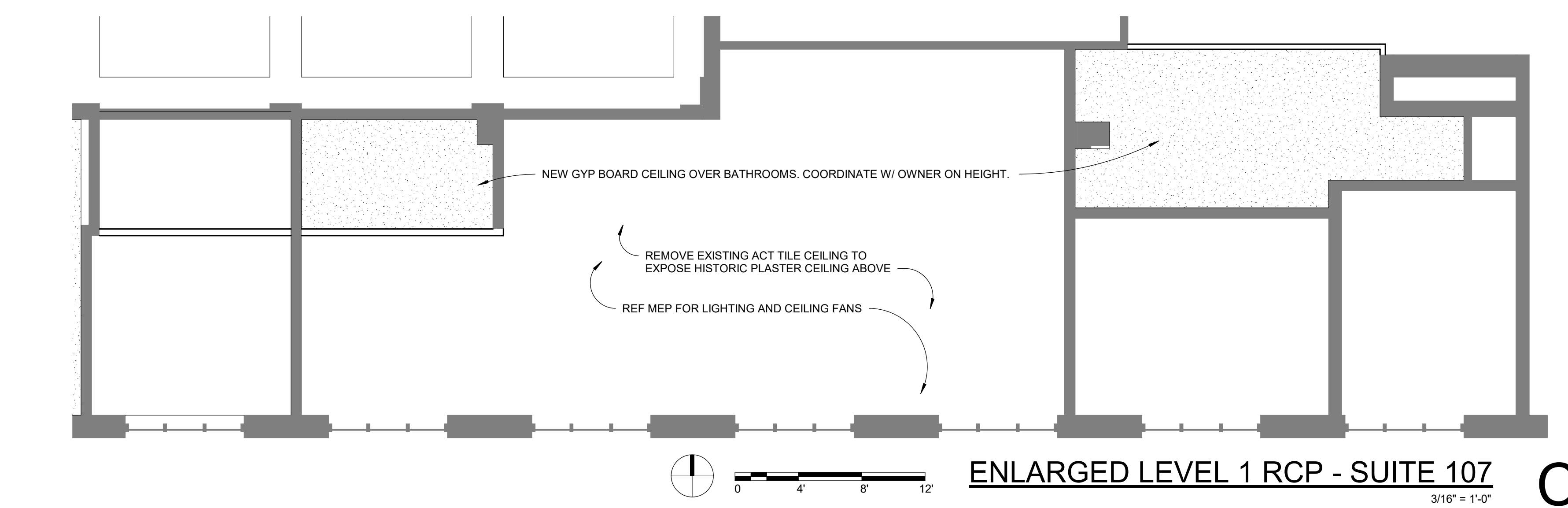
MARK	WIDTH	PHASE	NOTE
107A	30"	EXISTING	ADD NEW DEADBOLT/ ENTRY LOCK SET, ADD CLOSER AND LATCH
107B	30"	EXISTING	PERMANENT LOCK, INFILL BACKSIDE - MATCH EXISTING
107C	30"	EXISTING	PERMANENT LOCK, INFILL BACKSIDE - MATCH EXISTING
107D	36"	EXISTING	DEMO DOOR, FILL IN WALL MATCH EXIST.
107E	36"	EXISTING	ADD NEW PRIVACY BEDROOM LOCK
107F	36"	EXISTING	DEMO DOOR
107G	36"	EXISTING	ADD NEW PRIVACY BATHROOM LOCK
107H	32"	EXISTING	
107I	30"	NEW	PRIVACY BATHROOM LOCK
107J	36"	NEW	POCKET PANTRY DOOR
107K	36"	NEW	PRIVACY BEDROOM LOCK
107L	32"	NEW	VENTED LOUVRE DOOR

**DEMO NOTES**

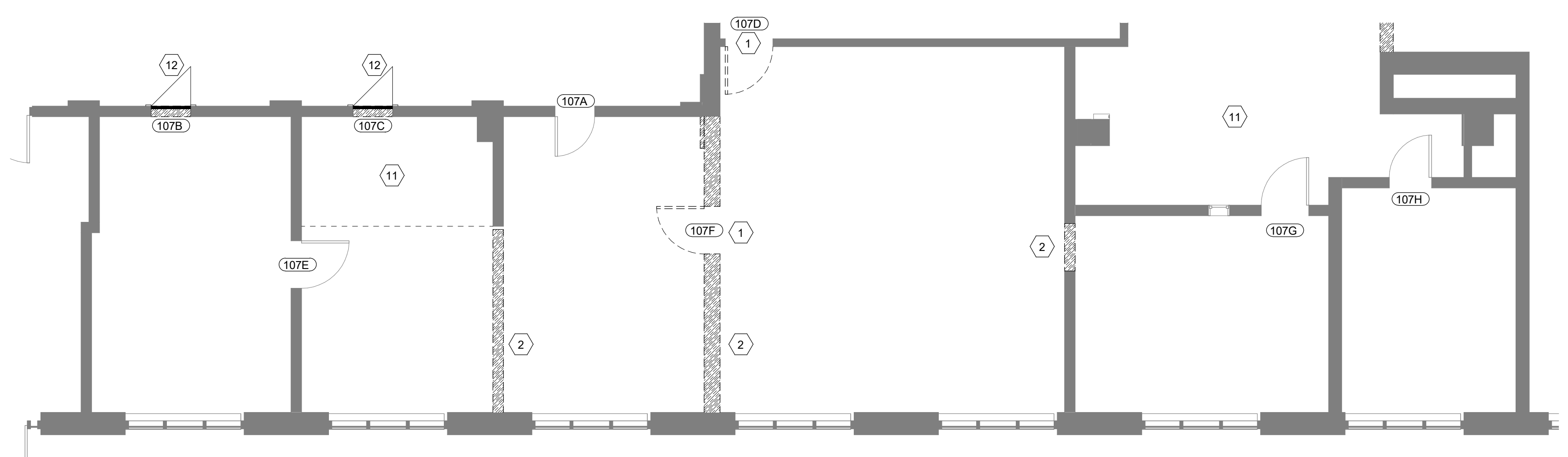
- 1 REMOVE DOOR
- 2 REMOVE WALL
- 3 REMOVE WINDOW
- 4 REMOVE CEILING
- 5 REMOVE RADIATOR
- 6 REMOVE WAINSCOTING
- 7 REMOVE PLUMBING FIXTURES
- 8 REMOVE MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT
- 9 REMOVE SHELVING
- 10 REMOVE FURNITURE
- 11 REMOVE EXISTING CEILING
- 12 PERMANENTLY CLOSE DOOR, SEAL OFF BACKSIDE



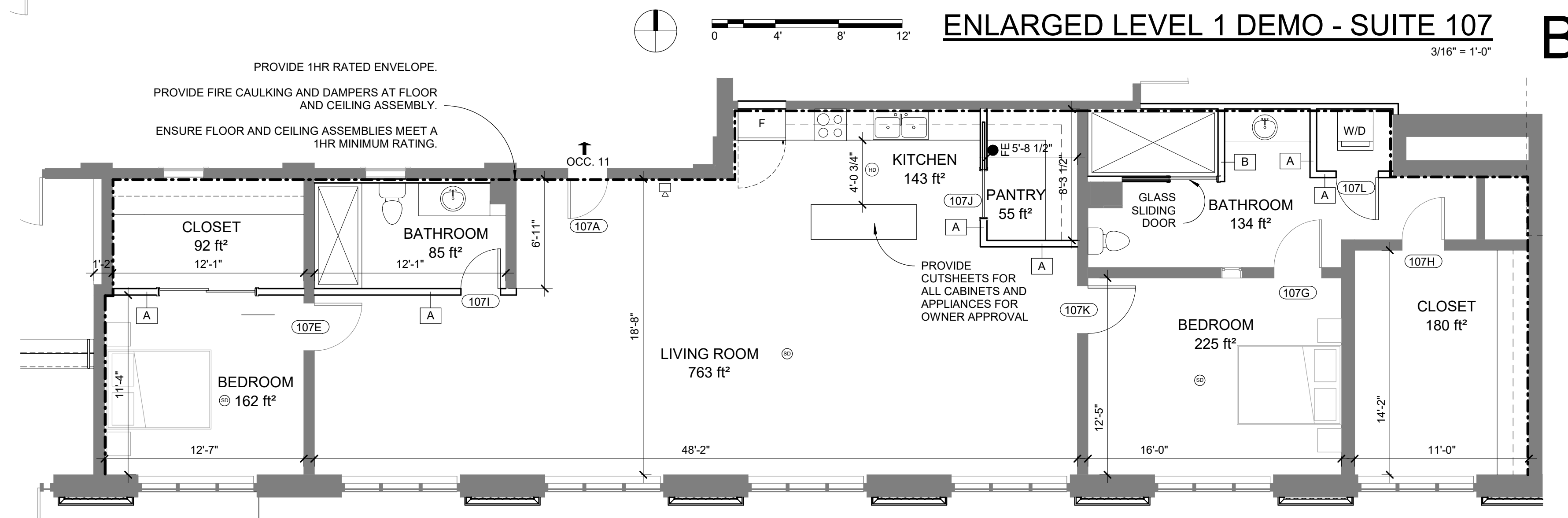
1ST FLOOR AREA PLAN



ENLARGED LEVEL 1 RCP - SUITE 107  
3/16" = 1'-0"



ENLARGED LEVEL 1 DEMO - SUITE 107  
3/16" = 1'-0"



ENLARGED LEVEL 1 PLAN - SUITE 107  
3/16" = 1'-0"

NOTE: SUITE 107 TOTAL AREA - 2033 SQFT

Lawyers Title of Kansas, Inc.  
785-271-9500

CN: 44643

Entered in Transfer Record in my office \_\_\_\_\_

County Clerk

Mail Tax Statement to:

QUIT CLAIM DEED (Statutory)

THE GRANTOR,

The United States of America, by and through United States Postal Service

CONVEYS AND QUITCLAIMS to

424 QOZB LLC, a Kansas limited liability company

for the sum of One Dollar and Other Valuable Consideration, the following described real estate:

Property A: Lots 134, 136, 138, 140, 142 and 144 on Kansas Avenue, and Lot 127, except the Northerly 20 feet thereof, and all of Lots 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141 and 143 on Quincy Street, in the Original Town, City of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas.

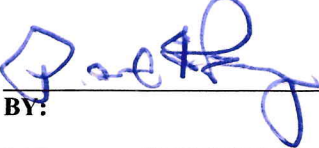
Together with that portion of vacated alleyway running North and South located East of Lots 134 to 144 Even on Kansas Avenue and West of Lots 133 to 143 Odd on Quincy Street, in the Original Town, City of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas. Commonly known as 424 S. Kansas Ave., Topeka, Kansas.

Property B: Lots 109, 111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 127 and 129, on Kansas Avenue, in the Original Town, City of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas. Commonly known as 401 S. Kansas Ave., Topeka, Kansas.

(Subject to easements, restrictions, and reservations of record, and all taxes and assessments that may be levied, imposed, or become payable hereafter. AND Historic Preservation Covenant on Exhibit A, attached hereto)

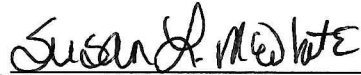
Dated this 23 day of August A.D. 2022

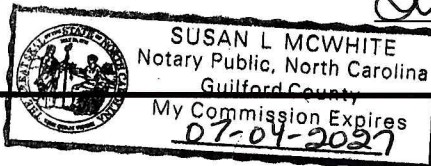
The United States of America, by and through United States Postal Service

BY: 

STATE OF ~~North Carolina~~ COUNTY OF Guilford  
This instrument was acknowledged before me on this 23rd day of August 2022 by:  
The United States of America, by and through United States Postal Service

My appointment expires: 07-04-2027





Notary Public



EXHIBIT A

PRESERVATION COVENANT LANGUAGE  
Topeka Main Post Office

In consideration of the conveyance of certain real property located at 424 South Kansas Avenue in the City of Topeka, in the County of Shawnee, State of Kansas and legally defined as Property A, herein:

- (1) The grantee hereby covenants on behalf of itself, its heirs, successors and assigns at all times to restore, maintain and preserve this property in accordance with the recommended approaches of the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings" (National Park Service, 1997) in order to preserve those qualities that resulted in the eligibility of this Property for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- (2) No Construction, alteration or rehabilitation shall be undertaken or permitted to be undertaken that would affect the historic features of the exterior or interior lobby of this property without consultation with and the express permission of the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (KS SHPO) or a fully authorized representative thereof.
  - a. Exterior and Interior Historic Character-Defining Features of the Property as identified in the National Register of Historic Places nomination form.
- (3) Authorized representatives of the KS SHPO shall be permitted at all reasonable times to inspect the property in order to ascertain if the above conditions are being met.
- (4) In the event of a violation of this covenant, and in addition to any remedy now or hereafter provided by law, the KS SHPO may, following reasonable notice to the grantee, institute suit to enjoin the violation or to require the restoration of the property.
- (5) This covenant is binding on the grantee, its heirs, successors and assigns in perpetuity. All stipulations and covenants contained herein shall be inserted by the grantee verbatim or by express reference in any deed or other legal instrument by which the grantee divests itself of any interest in the property or any part thereof.
- (6) The failure of any person or entity permitted by the terms hereof to exercise any right or remedy granted under this instrument shall not have the effect of waiving or limiting the exercise of any other right or remedy or use of such right or remedy at any other time.
- (7) This covenant shall be a binding servitude upon the property and shall be deemed to run with the land. Execution of this covenant shall constitute conclusive evidence that the grantee agrees to be bound by the foregoing conditions and restrictions and to perform to obligations herein set forth.

State Historic Preservation Office  
Cultural Resources Division  
6425 SW 6th Avenue  
Topeka KS 66615-1099



785-272-8681  
fax 785-272-8682  
kshs.shpo@ks.gov  
kshs.org

Patrick Zollner, Executive Director

Laura Kelly, Governor

KSR&C # 23-06-266  
June 16, 2023

Ken Schmanke  
Owner Representative  
534 S Kansas Ave Suite 175,  
TOPEKA, KS 66603  
via email

Re: Topeka Post Office -424 S. Kansas Avenue - first floor apartment

Mr. Schmanke,

We have reviewed the materials received on June 15, 2023 regarding the above-referenced project in accordance with the preservation covenant we hold on the above-named property as of August 2022. That preservation covenant requires the owner of this property to notify the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) when work is planned in or on the building and obtain permission to proceed. The SHPO has determined that the proposed project will not adversely impact any of the exterior or interior historic character-defining features of the property. As far as this office is concerned the project may proceed under the conditions of the preservation covenant.

This approval and comment does not indicate that this property will or will not be eligible for historic tax credit programs also administered by SHPO. This project may also be subject to additional regulations, ordinances, or reviews under other statutes and ordinances. Please contact the local permitting office for information about any additional requirements.

Please refer to the Kansas State Review & Compliance number (KSR&C#) listed above on any future correspondence for this project. If you have any questions concerning this review, please contact me at [Katrina.Ringler@ks.gov](mailto:Katrina.Ringler@ks.gov).

Sincerely,

Patrick Zollner  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Katrina L. Ringler  
Director, Cultural Resources Division  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

cc: William Sharp, City of Topeka

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: United States Post Office and Court House  
Other name/site number:  
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 424 South Kansas Avenue  
City or town: Topeka State: Kansas County: Shawnee  
Not for publication:  Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
 nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Frank Delabayo FPO 1-15-15  
Signature of certifying official / Title Date  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Patricia Gellner DSHPO 1-9-15  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
Kansas State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

For Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

3.3.15  
Date of Action

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
0	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** GOVERNMENT/ post office and court house

**Current Functions:** GOVERNMENT/ post office

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** Classical Revival

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Limestone, terra cotta

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-10)

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations:

**Areas of Significance:** Law (A), Architecture (C)

**Period of Significance:** 1933, 1951

**Significant Dates:** 1933 (C), 1951 (A)

**Significant Person** (only if Criterion B is marked):

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if Criterion D is marked):

**Architect/Builder:** James A. Wetmore, Acting Supervising Architect (actual architect unknown); James L. Barnes, builder

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8-11 through 8-13)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheet 9-14)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

### Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property:** Less than 1 acre

**Coordinates** (either UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

- 1. Latitude: 39.053205 Longitude: -95.671759
- 2. Latitude: Longitude:
- 3. Latitude: Longitude:
- 4. Latitude: Longitude:

UTM References

NAD 1927  NAD 1983

Zone:

- 1. Easting: Northing:
- 2. Easting: Northing:
- 3. Easting: Northing:
- 4. Easting: Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description:** See continuation page 10-15

**Boundary Justification:** See continuation page 10-15

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title: Kurt Korfmacher, Architectural Historian and Thomas Eisenhour, Historical Architect  
Organization: AmaTerra Environmental, Inc.  
Street & number: 4009 Banister Lane, Suite 300  
City or Town: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78704  
Email: kkorfmacher@amaterra.com  
Telephone: 512-329-0031  
Date: August 2014

**Additional Documentation**

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps** (see continuation sheets MAP-16 and MAP-17)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets FIGURE-18 and FIGURE-19)

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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**Photographs** (see continuation sheets PHOTO-20 through PHOTO-34)

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

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

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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## **Narrative Description**

The United States Post Office and Court House is a four-story building occupying half a city block in the commercial district of Topeka, Kansas. The Classical Revival building, completed in 1933, features a concrete foundation with basement, limestone masonry and structural clay tile over a steel structural frame, Corinthian columns and temple fronts, and fluted pilasters. The flat main roof has two fourth-floor penthouses (also with flat roofs). The footprint of the building is in the shape of the letter "G" with the open side facing north. Exterior windows and public lobby doors are non-historic replacements.

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### Site

The building sits in the south half of the block formed by S. Kansas Avenue, SE 4th Street, SE Quincy Street, and SW 5th Street, in downtown Topeka. SE 4th Street is a major east-west city street that connects the downtown with residential areas to the east and west. S. Kansas Avenue is the primary north-south street that bisects the downtown area and roughly parallels U.S. Highway 75 to the east. Prior to construction of the current building, this block was occupied by the previous post office along with commercial buildings (Figure 1). The building occupies Original Town Lot 129; Quincy Avenue Lots 129, 131, 133, 135, 137, 139, 141, 143; and Kansas Avenue Lots 134, 136, 138, 140, 142, 144.

### Exterior

Stylistically, the four-story building is an eclectic blend of Classical Revival and Art Deco. Classical temple fronts are superimposed on the east and west facades. (Unless otherwise noted, all fabric dates from the period of significance.) The building's main entrance on the west facade is set in a recessed portico with four Corinthian columns and two fluted pilasters supporting a frieze inscribed with the building's name in Roman font and decorated with garlanded bucrania, floral and heraldic designs, all accented in gold leaf. Above the frieze is a dentiled pediment with cartouche. A stepped gable rising above the pediment is flanked by Art Deco eagles. The upper facade terminates in a flat parapet above a simple cornice. Three pair of non-historic aluminum doors with fixed transoms and classically ornamented white marble proscenia access the lobby vestibule from S. Kansas Avenue. Non-historic windows are set into slightly recessed vertical panels on either side of the portico.

The south facade extends the length of the block from S. Kansas to S.E. Quincy Street. The central portion of the facade is recessed and divided into nineteen bays by fluted pilasters supporting an entablature decorated with garlanded bucrania and floral and heraldic designs, accented with gold leaf. Non-historic windows are set into recessed panels as on the west facade. A single pair of non-historic aluminum-and-glass doors in the center of the facade provides access to the lobby from S.E. Fifth Street. Four decorative wall-mounted bronze light fixtures illuminate the entry. An area way extends the length of the facade, providing light and air to the basement.

The east facade is broader, but otherwise similar to the west facade. Due to the change in elevation, which decreases from west to east, the ground floor sits on a raised basement. A double stair leads up to the building entry, which consists of a single pair of non-historic aluminum doors. As on the west facade, the entry is set within a recessed portico. Three recessed vertical window panels flank the portico on either side, with basement windows beneath. A service dock with access into the basement is located at the northeast corner of the facade.



United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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The north facade consists of three-story blocks at the eastern and western ends, with a one-story connection over the workroom and a three-story block beyond, giving the building a G-shaped plan above the first level. Fourth floor penthouses are on the eastern and western ends of the building. Like the main roof, they have flat roofs with non-historic ethylene propylene diene monomer (EPDM) roofing and internal drains.

### Interior

The basement was originally partitioned for storage and a boiler room. A large room at the eastern end of the building opens onto the covered loading dock on Quincy Street. This area has glazed ceramic tile extending 5'-5" above finished floor with plastered masonry walls from the top of wainscot to the exposed concrete ceiling. An elevator to the third floor courtroom, a caged stair, and a cold storage vault are located in this area. The remainder of the basement was later partitioned into smaller rooms that are currently used for storage. Typical finishes in this area are painted masonry walls without base and exposed concrete floors and first floor structure.

The first floor of the building reflects the standardization of 1930s post office layouts, with its arrangement of dual entrances with vestibules, elongated public lobby, service windows, post office boxes set flush with the face of the lobby walls, workroom, administrative offices, and loading dock. The flooring is quarry tile, with white and verde antique—a dark green serpentine—borders and base. The walls have St. Genevieve gray marble high wainscoting and pilasters. Doors are cased with verde antique serpentine with a cartouche motif, and aluminum doors between the lobby and entry vestibules are decorated with brass rosettes and topped with a spread-winged eagle. The elevators have verde antique casing with brass rosettes; their metal doors are decorated with octagonal panels and rosettes.

Counter services are provided at the northern end of the lobby. The original bank teller style service windows have been replaced by three service windows with non-historic pull-down aluminum shutters. Non-historic postal boxes are set in three alcoves along the north wall of the lobby. Two elevators are located in the northwest corner of the lobby. Another elevator that served the third-floor courtroom is located at the Quincy Street entrance. The space south of the public lobby, originally occupied by the bookkeeping department, has been partitioned into a series of offices with carpeted floors and suspended acoustical ceilings. A rustic "Santa Fe Room," designed to resemble a railroad depot, has been added at the northwest end of the lobby in the space formerly occupied by the postmaster's office. The suite of offices in the northwest corner of the floor have painted plaster walls, carpet flooring, and stained paneled wooden doors. Other major first floor spaces include the work room and the former swing room. Both areas have non-historic vinyl composition tile flooring and painted plaster walls with glazed clay tile wainscoting. The swing room, located in the southwest corner of the first floor, has a non-historic suspended acoustical ceiling with fluorescent light panels.

A double-loaded central corridor extends the length of the second floor. Elevators and stairs are in the southwest corner and in the east wing. The corridor has quarry tile flooring with white marble border and verde antique base, painted plaster walls, and a non-historic suspended acoustical tile ceiling. Offices have painted plaster walls and carpet over the original red oak flooring. Office doors are paneled wood with obscure glass in the upper portion and a ventilation grill in the bottom panel. The offices retain their original plaster ceilings but have non-historic suspended fluorescent light fixtures in place of the original incandescent ones.

The third floor contains former court rooms and offices that are currently unoccupied. As on the second floor, a central corridor extends around three sides of the building with offices on both sides. The east wing houses the former courtroom, judge's library, and judge's chambers. Elevators and stairs are in the southwest corner and in the east wing. The corridor has quarry tile flooring with white marble border and verde antique base, painted plaster walls with gray marble wainscoting, and painted plaster ceiling. The courtroom, which also served as an auditorium, has stained paneled wood walls. The dais/stage has a verde antique-clad proscenium and stained

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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paneled wood walls. The courtroom has non-historic carpeting over the original oak flooring, and modern fluorescent light fixtures. The courtroom was sub-partitioned by creating a room in the southeast corner after the historic period of significance. Between the former offices of the U.S. District Court and the U.S. Circuit Court is a law library with wood wainscoting and built-in wood bookcases with wood and glass doors. Non-historic carpeting covers the historic oak flooring.

The fourth floor contains an equipment penthouse and a suite of offices. The equipment penthouse, which is directly above the elevators on the west end of the building, houses the elevators' electric motors and hoisting equipment. Finishes are utilitarian: exposed masonry walls and concrete roof and floors. A stair in the northeast corner leads to the lower floors and a door on the east facade provides access to the roof. Finishes in the offices and corridor in the east wing are the same as on the second and third floors.

### Non-Historic Alterations

Dates of alterations, if known, are shown in parentheses

#### *Exterior*

- Historic windows replaced with bronze-anodized aluminum sashes with tinted glass building-wide (1985)
- Exterior public-access doors replaced with replicas (2011)

#### *Interior*

- Replacement of original incandescent light fixtures with fluorescent fixtures building-wide
- Carpeting installed over the original hardwood floors on second, third, and fourth floor offices
- Original bank-style service windows replaced by aluminum slat roll-up shutters in lobby
- Original lobby desks replaced
- "Santa Fe Room" added in lobby
- Sub-partitioning of former bookkeeping space south of lobby
- Vinyl composition tile flooring in work room
- Sub-partitioning of court room
- Court room ceiling stenciling painted over
- Suspended acoustical ceiling installed in swing room and new first floor offices south of lobby

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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## Statement of Significance

The United States Post Office and Court House is significant under Criterion A at the local level of significance in the area of Law as the site of the district court case of *Brown v. Board of Education* and under Criterion C at the local level in the area of Architecture as a good example of the Classical Revival style applied to a multi-story Federal building.

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## Historical Background and Context

The building was constructed in 1932-33 by the Department of the Treasury headed by Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon. The Public Buildings Act of May 25, 1926, also known as the Keyes-Elliott Act, authorized \$100 million for buildings outside the District of Columbia. The Act stipulated that no more than \$25 million could be spent annually and no more than \$5 million could be spent in any one state. Further, the Secretary of the Treasury and Postmaster General were directed to conduct a nationwide survey to determine the need for new postal facilities and to report annually to Congress on proposed locations and costs. For the first time since 1913, the Secretary of the Treasury was authorized to hire private architects to develop designs and layouts for post offices, although construction documents would continue to be prepared by the Office of the Supervising Architect. The Stock Market Crash of 1929 delayed full implementation of the building program outlined in the Act of 1926; however, as the Public Buildings Program ramped up in the 1930s it was guided by the 1927 survey of needs. In May 1930, Congress amended the Public Buildings Act of 1926 to increase funding for public buildings and also authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to utilize the services of private architects and engineers "to such extent as he may require."

The Post Office and Court House is an example of the style of architecture known as Classical Revival or Neoclassical with Art Deco influences. Many post offices, court houses, and other Federal, state, and local government buildings constructed in the 1920s and 30s were designed in the Classical Revival style. It was popularized by the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago which promoted a renewed interest in the classical forms. Although it is similar to the Colonial Revival style that was widely used for Federal buildings during the same period, the Classical Revival style is more formal and monumental in its design. Windows and doors are arranged formally and symmetrically, with the centrally placed main entrance emphasized by a proscenium or sidelights.

A cornerstone at the southwest corner of the building credits James A. Wetmore as the Acting Supervising Architect. Wetmore, who served as Acting Supervising Architect from 1915-33, was not an architect; he received a law degree from George Washington University in 1896 and joined the Treasury Department that same year. His name appears on the cornerstones of 2,000 Federal buildings.

Tied to the founding of the state of Kansas, the city of Topeka was established shortly after the Kansas-Nebraska Act of May 30, 1854. In December 1854, nine settlers hailing from Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Iowa met and established the town site known as Topeka. The following day the men entered into an agreement and proceeded to survey the land and plot the town site. They formed the Topeka Association and officially named the town in January 1855. In 1857, the city was incorporated.

In the spring of 1855, settlers began pouring into Topeka. Soon a saw mill was erected to accommodate the building needs of all the new residents. Upon the discovery of limestone, more permanent structures surfaced, such as Constitution Hall (where the first state constitution was written), hotels, churches and houses. Topeka became the county seat of Shawnee County in 1859. Kansas was admitted into the United States on January 29, 1861 and Topeka was chosen as the state capital. During the late-19th century Topeka experienced

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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tremendous growth due in large part to the arrival of the railroads, particularly the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (AT&SF) Railway. The AT&SF brought approximately 5,000 jobs to Topeka. Utilities expanded and the entire city experienced a building boom. However, this boom time fell prey to a brief depression during the 1890s, during which the population dwindled, and the AT&SF went into receivership.

During the early-20th century, Topeka's economy regained stability relying on the recovered railroad, meat packing and agricultural industries and the population grew. In celebration of Kansas's 50th anniversary, the city sought to update the buildings along Kansas Avenue and the city once again experienced a building boom. This growth halted during the 1930s and new construction was limited to government buildings. During World War II, the economy shifted to manufacturing and government/military services. The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company and Forbes Air Force Base both opened during the war. The Morrell Meat Packing Plant closed in 1951 but manufacturers such as Hallmark Card and Dupont helped diversify the economy. The city appointed an Urban Renewal Authority to revitalize many of the older decaying areas of the city in 1956.

In March 1855, F.W. Giles became the first Postmaster General and the city received its first mail in May. The original post office was in Sidney J. Case's house on the east side of Quincy near Second Street which also contained a blacksmith's shop. Later in 1855, the post office was moved to one of the first frame buildings in Topeka. It shared the space with the newspaper, a dry goods store, a hotel and the Garvey residence and law office. For the next thirty years, the post office moved to approximately ten different locations, twice due to fire.

In 1878, the U.S. Congress passed a bill to construct a U.S. Courthouse and Post Office in Topeka. Designed by architect Col. John G. Haskell, the Romanesque Revival building was completed in 1884 for \$180,000. The post office incorporated a clock tower that had been salvaged from a local Methodist church. This clock was so beloved by the community that they took up a collection to move it to another court house during the demolition. This post office was razed before construction began on the current post office at 424 South Kansas Avenue.

During the 1930s, the U.S. Government constructed two post offices in Topeka: a smaller facility at 935 North Kansas Avenue and a larger building at 424 South Kansas Avenue that also housed the U.S. Court House. According to a 1920 newspaper article, the former post office was too small for the volume of mail in Topeka and the property for the new site was purchased from various citizens for \$107,800. In 1920, the plans were going to be "thrown open to architectural competition and a standard type of building will not be erected." Vice President Charles Curtis (under President Herbert Hoover) and Senator Arthur Capper lobbied to get an outstanding facility for their hometown of Topeka.

Construction of the Post Office and Court House began on January 29, 1932 by the Indiana-based James L. Barnes construction firm. W.N. Collier, Federal district engineer of Kansas City and Frank L. Moore, Federal resident engineer, supervised the construction. The total cost of the building was \$615,512.67. The building opened to the public at noon on December 9, 1933 with no formal ceremony. The first floor contained the lobby, the work room, the bookkeeping department and offices of the postmaster and assistant postmaster. The second floor held offices for the Bureau of Animal Industry, Post Office Inspector, Prohibition Bureau, District Attorney, Agricultural Economics, Navy, Army, Officers' Reserve, Coast Guard, and Internal Revenue Collector. The U.S. District Court was on the third floor, and it contained the U.S. Circuit Court, the U.S. Marshall's office and holding cells, Clerk of the District Court, and the following offices: Probation Officer, Naturalization Bureau, Geological Survey Bureau, and the Agricultural Extension Bureau. The roof contained two penthouses: one for the Weather Bureau and one for elevator machinery. The building was formally dedicated on August 20, 1934.

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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### *Brown v. Board of Education*

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) attempted to challenge the idea that “separate but equal” was a valid constitutional argument. While these efforts met with some success in improving the conditions at black schools, segregation remained a common practice in many parts of the country (particularly in the southern states).

In 1951, the NAACP turned its efforts to Topeka, where segregation was allowed under Kansas law but not required. Thirteen families filed a class action lawsuit against the Board of Education of Topeka arguing that segregation resulted in unequal facilities. The children of the affected families, some living in integrated neighborhoods, had to walk to bus stops for transport to their distant black elementary schools despite the presence of nearby white schools (that in some cases were safer for the children to reach). Oliver Brown, the lone male plaintiff, was chosen as the head of the lawsuit to help lend political weight (as it was felt that a male plaintiff would be better received by the court than a female).

The Topeka law firm of Scott, Scott and Scott, along with Robert Carter (the top assistant of Thurgood Marshall), argued before U.S. District Court Judge Walker Huxman to end racial segregation in the city’s public schools. Using the results of a 1940 psychological study on the impact of segregation as evidence, the plaintiffs argued that segregation had a negative impact on school children and thus the schools could never be equal. The study, conducted by psychologists Kenneth Clark and Mamie Phipps in New York, used dolls of different races to test how children viewed themselves and their self-worth. The study concluded that segregation planted feelings of inherent inferiority in black children, thus impacting their psychological health and development. On August 3, 1951, Judge Huxman, while sympathetic to the psychological impact of segregation on the plaintiffs’ children, nonetheless found that the Board of Education’s segregation policies did not violate *Plessy v. Ferguson* and dismissed the plaintiff’s suit.

The case was quickly appealed, but sat at the Supreme Court for several months before finding a place on the Court’s docket. Initially combined with one other similar case, *Brown v. Board of Education* eventually encompassed five cases by the time it was finally argued in front of the Court in December 1952. *Brown* was chosen as the lead case because it was the first to arrive, and the only non-southern case before the Court. Nine months passed after oral arguments without word from the Court, and in September 1953 Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson died unexpectedly of a heart attack. President Eisenhower named Earl Warren to the Court as his replacement, and the case was reheard in December 1953 for Warren’s benefit. On May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that “separate but equal” in the nation’s public schools was a violation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and thus unconstitutional. The psychological impact of segregation was too great, and in the words of Chief Justice Warren, “[s]eparate educational facilities are inherently unequal.”

### Significance

The Post Office and Court House is locally significant under Criterion A for Law as the site of the 1951 district court hearing of the suit brought by Oliver Brown against the Topeka Board of Education. The suit was later combined with four other cases into *Oliver Brown et al. v. the Board of Education of Topeka* that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) argued before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1952 and 1953.

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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The building is eligible under Criterion C at the local level of significance for Architecture as a good example of the 1930s blend of the Classical Revival and Art Deco styles applied to a multi-story Federal building. The characteristics of the Classical Revival style of architecture in this building are:

- Classical columns with Corinthian, Doric or Ionic capitals;
- A full-height columned front porch topped with a classical pediment;
- Formal and symmetrical arrangement of windows and doors;
- The main entry flanked by pilasters or side lights or placed within a proscenium, and capped with a flat entablature, broken pediment or rounded fanlight.

The historic exterior character-defining features of the building exemplify its Classical Revival-Art Deco hybrid style and the unique interior features allow the building to stand out as architecturally significant.

Significant exterior character-defining features are:

- Mass and scale of the building;
- Symmetrical, classically-inspired arrangement and detailing of the west, south, and east facades;
- Classical temple front with Corinthian columns and fluted pilasters on the east and west facades;
- Entablature decorated with garlanded bucrania, floral, and heraldic designs accented in gold leaf;
- Dentiled pediment with cartouche;
- Stepped gable flanked by terra cotta eagles;
- Flat parapet with simple cornice;
- Design and materials of doors to public lobby;
- Classically decorated white marble doorway proscenia on west facade;
- Window locations and opening sizes;
- Decorative wall-mounted bronze light fixtures on the south facade; and
- Exterior stairs on east facade decorated with bas-relief eagles.

Significant character-defining features of the lobby are:

- Volume and layout of the lobby and vestibules;
- Gray marble wainscoting;
- Flooring of quarry tile accented with gray-and-white mosaic tile and white marble, and verde antique serpentine base;
- St. Genevieve gray marble high wainscoting and pilasters;
- Verde antique serpentine door casing topped with a cartouche motif;
- Entry vestibule interior metal doors and frames decorated with brass rosettes topped with a spread-winged eagle sculpture;
- Metal elevator doors decorated with octagonal panels and rosettes;
- Elevator door casing of verde antique serpentine with brass rosette medallions; and
- Wall-mounted display cases with verde antique serpentine casing.

The period of significance for the building under Architecture is 1933, the year of completion. Although changes have occurred to the building in the years following the period of significance, they do not substantially alter the significant character-defining features of the building nor impact its historic integrity to a degree that it can no longer convey its significance. The building retains sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to convey its significance under Criterion C.

Criterion B was considered and rejected. The case was argued by lawyers from the Topeka law firm of Scott, Scott, and Scott, assisted by attorneys from the NAACP. Research is inconclusive regarding the role of

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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Thurgood Marshall in the district court case. Other buildings have a longer and more direct association with the life of Justice Marshall, including the Thurgood Marshall United States Courthouse in New York City, where Marshall served from 1961 to 1965 as a judge of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and the Anthony Bowen YMCA in Washington D.C. where Marshall often stayed while preparing his arguments for the Supreme Court case. No information came to light regarding any other prominent individual who was significantly associated with the building during the historic period.

Criterion D was also rejected because the Post Office and Court House does not possess, or is likely to possess, information important in history.

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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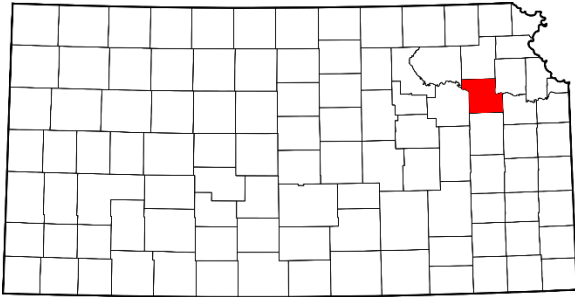
**Section 10: Boundary Continuation Sheet**

**Verbal Boundary Description:** South half of the city block bounded on the north by SE 4th Street, on the east by SE Quincy Street, on the south by SW 5th Street, and on the west by S. Kansas Avenue, in Topeka, KS.

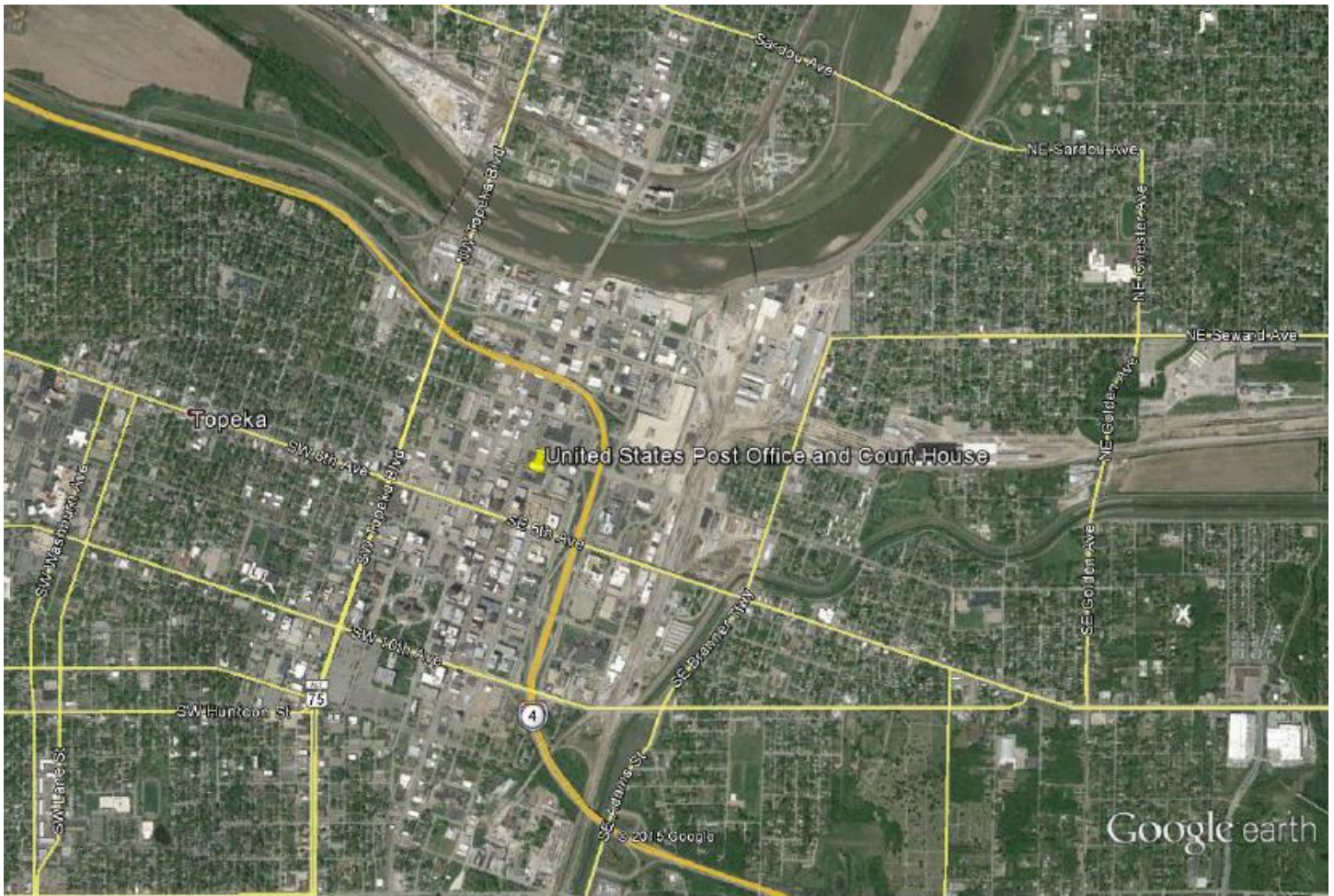
**Boundary Justification:** The boundaries encompass the entirety of the parcel occupied by the United States Post Office and Court House and conform to its historic land boundaries.

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

Map 1. Shawnee County (highlighted) is in northeastern Kansas (Source: Wikipedia)

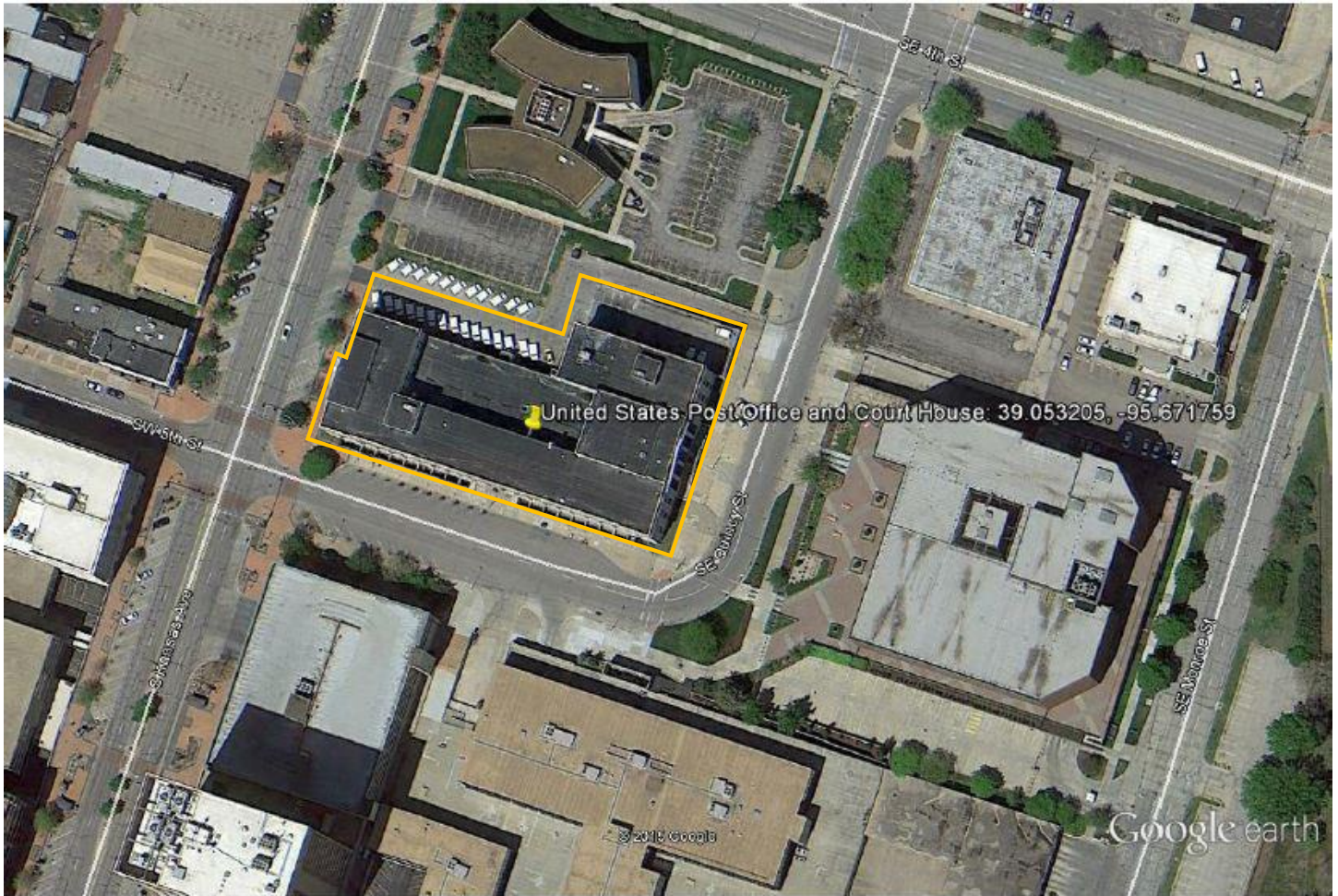


Map 2. The United States Post Office and Court House is located in downtown Topeka (Source: Google Earth)



United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

Map 3. Google Earth map of the nominated property's boundaries and latitude and longitude coordinates.



Google earth

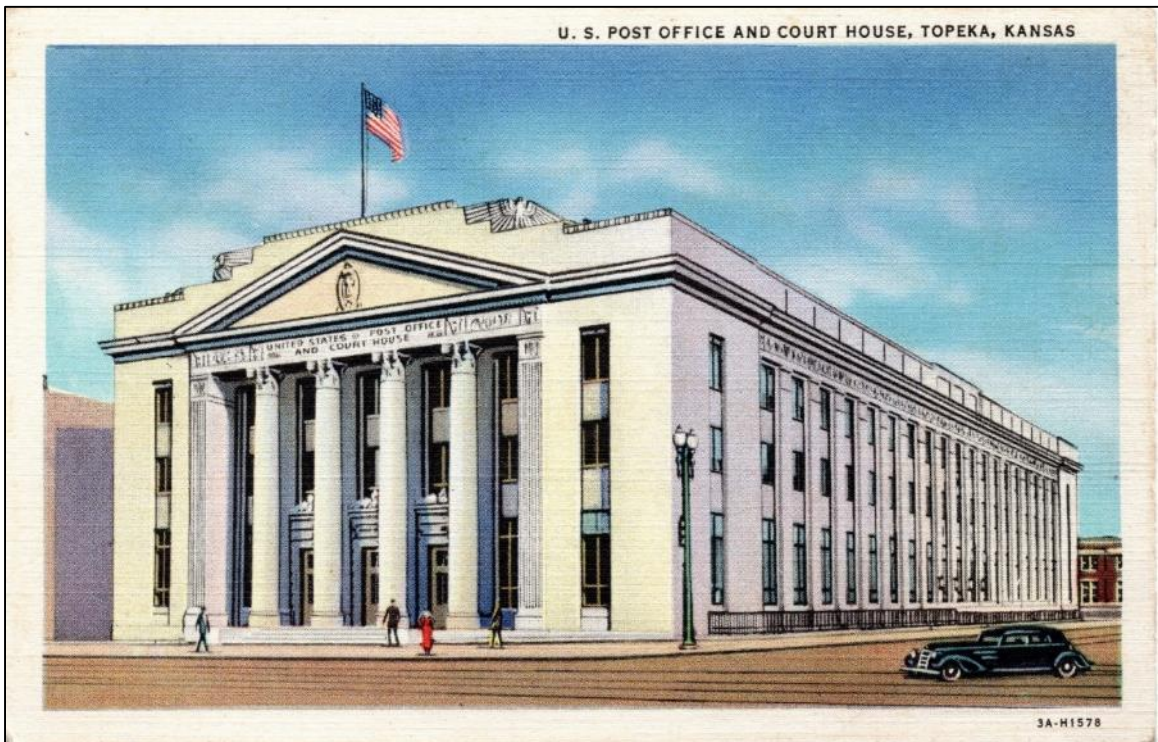


United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

Figure 1. Former Topeka post office circa 1914, demolished 1931.



Figure 2. United States Post Office and Court House, 1933.



United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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Figure 3. A construction progress photograph from November 1, 1933 shows the building's original casement windows.



United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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## Photographs

The following information pertains to all current photographs provided for this property:

**Name of Property:** United States Post Office and Court House

**City or Vicinity:** Topeka

**County, State:** Shawnee County, Kansas

**Photographer:** Thomas P. Eisenhour

**Date Photographed:** February 2014

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0001

Description of Photograph(s): Oblique view of west and south facades, facing east.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0002

Description of Photograph(s): View of west facade, facing southeast.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0003

Description of Photograph(s): Detail of eagle bas-relief on west facade, facing southeast.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0004

Description of Photograph(s): Detail of entry on west facade, facing east.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0005

Description of Photograph(s): Oblique view of south facade, facing northwest.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0006

Description of Photograph(s): Detail of entry on south facade, facing northwest.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0007

Description of Photograph(s): Oblique view of east facade, facing northeast.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0008

Description of Photograph(s): View of garage and north facade, facing southwest.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0009

Description of Photograph(s): View of north facade and penthouses, facing southwest.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0010

Description of Photograph(s): View of the main lobby, facing northwest.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0011

Description of Photograph(s): Detail view of west entry vestibule doors, facing west.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0012

Description of Photograph(s): View of courtroom, facing northwest.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0013

Description of Photograph(s): View of courtroom, facing south.

Photograph Number: KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0014

Description of Photograph(s): View of second floor corridor, facing east.

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0001

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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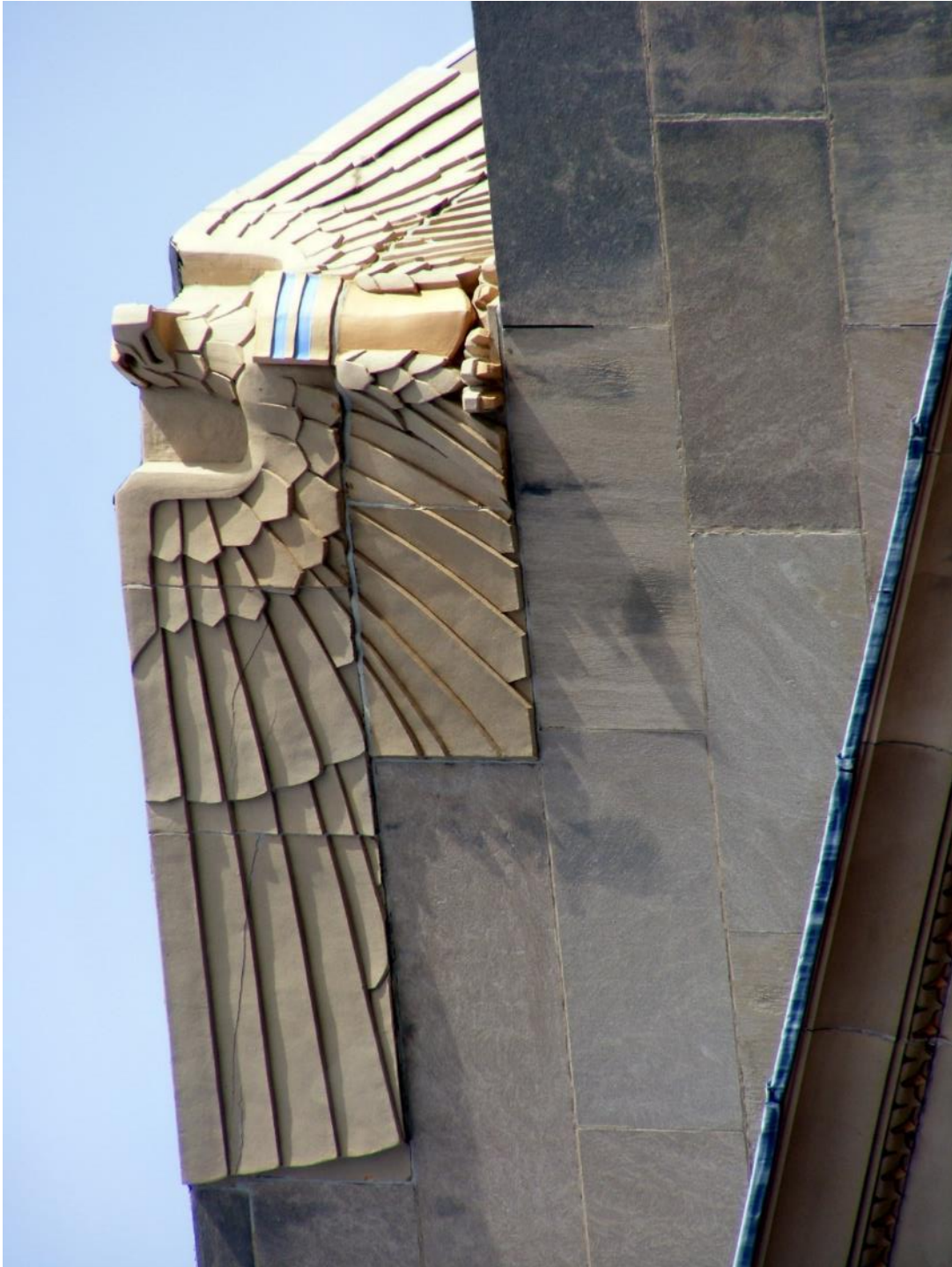


KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0002



United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0003

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0004

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0005

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0006

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0007

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0008

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0009

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0010



United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0011

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0012

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0013

United States Post Office and Court House, Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas

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KS\_Shawnee County\_United States Post Office and Court House\_0014



OKLAHOMA STATE CAPITOL  
UNITED STATES POST OFFICE  
AND COURT HOUSE

SW 5th St SE

s Ka



ONLY





DEPARTMENT OF POSTS AND COURTS  
UNITED STATES POST OFFICE  
AND COURT HOUSE

UNITED STATES  
POST OFFICE

NO  
LEFT  
TURN

Handicap  
P

Handicap  
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UNITED STATES  
POST OFFICE

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS IN 1792

NO  
PARKING  
ANY  
TIME









CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE  
NO RETAIL SALES, PLEASE



THANK YOU  
FOR VISITING  
REMEMBER YOU CAN  
GET POST AND MORE  
AT usps.com

  
SHIP  
PACKAGES  
HERE

  
Apply for a  
U.S. Passport  
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EXIT



EXIT

