

4601

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name Crown Center Historic District
Other names/site number N/A
Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location

Street & number Bounded by Main St., Pershing Rd., 27th St., McGee St. Trfy, Grand Blvd. N/A not for publication
City or town Kansas City N/A vicinity
State Missouri Code MO County Jackson Code 095 Zip code 64108

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

 national statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria: x A B x C D

[Signature] 9/20/19
Signature of certifying official/Title JP Date
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

[Signature] 11-14-19
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Crown Center Historic District
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

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

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public – Federal

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

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
6	4	buildings
3		sites
5	7	structures
4	3	objects
18	14	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE/TRADE: Business
- COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store
- DOMESTIC: Hotel
- RECREATION AND CULTURE: Theater
- RECREATION AND CULTURE: Work of Art
- RELIGION: Religious Facility
- TRANSPORTATION: Road-Related (Vehicular)
- INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Manufacturing Facility
- LANDSCAPE: Plaza

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE/TRADE: Business
- COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store
- DOMESTIC: Hotel
- RECREATION AND CULTURE: Theater
- RECREATION AND CULTURE: Work of Art
- RELIGION: Religious Facility
- TRANSPORTATION: Road-Related (Vehicular)
- INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Manufacturing Facility
- LANDSCAPE: Plaza

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque Revival
- MODERN MOVEMENT
- MODERN MOVEMENT: New Formalism
- MODERN MOVEMENT: Brutalism
- MODERN MOVEMENT: Postmodern

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- foundation: CONCRETE
- walls: CONCRETE
BRICK
- roof: SYNTHETIC
- other: GLASS

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Crown Center Historic District
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

Areas of Significance

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE (Crown Center Hotel)

Period of Significance

1955-1958

1966-1974

Significant Dates

1967

1973

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Barnes, Edward Larrabee

Harry Weese & Associates

Kivett & Myers

Welton Becket & Associates

Crown Center Historic District
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 49.3 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>39.08388</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.58399</u> Longitude:	4	<u>39.07814</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.58097</u> Longitude:
2	<u>39.08363</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.57973</u> Longitude:	5	<u>39.08020</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.58325</u> Longitude:
3	<u>39.07806</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.57863</u> Longitude:	6	<u>39.08228</u> Latitude:	<u>-94.58412</u> Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

_____ NAD 1927 or _____ NAD 1983

1	_____	_____	_____	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rachel Nugent (National Register Coordinator)

organization Rosin Preservation, LLC date August 2019

street & number 1712 Holmes telephone 816-472-4950

city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

e-mail rachel@rosinpreservation.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
 - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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.).

Crown Center Historic District
Name of Property

Jackson County, Missouri
County and State

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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.

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: Crown Center Historic District
City or Vicinity: Kansas City
County: Jackson State: Missouri
Photographer: Brad Finch, f-stop Photography
Date
Photographed: January 2018

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

- 1 of 19: Crown Center Historic District, Crown Center Square, view SE
- 2 of 19: Crown Center Historic District, Crown Center Square, view SW
- 3 of 19: Crown Center Square, view SW
- 4 of 19: Crown Center Shops and Crown Center Hotel, view W
- 5 of 19: 2405 Grand and Pershing Road Office Buildings, view NE
- 6 of 19: Hallmark Square, view N
- 7 of 19: Crown Center Square, view E
- 8 of 19: Crown Center Hotel, view NE
- 9 of 19: North of Crown Center Historic District to Central Business District, view N
- 10 of 19: Pershing Road Office Building and East boundary, view NW
- 11 of 19: Hallmark Corporate Entrance and Parking Lot, view N
- 12 of 19: Our Lady of Sorrow Catholic Church, view W
- 13 of 19: *Bringing the Pieces Together*, view NW
- 14 of 19: Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage, view NE
- 15 of 19: Parking garage entrance between Hallmark Headquarters buildings, view N
- 16 of 19: Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building, view E
- 17 of 19: Crown Center Shops bridge over Grand Boulevard, view N
- 18 of 19: Crown Center Hotel and The Link over Grand Boulevard, view NW
- 19 of 19: *Shiva*, view S

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1. Crown Center Historic District – Context Map. *Source: Google Maps, 2019.*

Figure 2. Crown Center Historic District – Site Map. *Source: Google Maps, 2019.*

Figure 3. Crown Center Historic District – Site Map with Latitude/Longitude Coordinates. *Source: Google Maps, 2019.*

Figure 4. Crown Center Historic District – Resource Map. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, Rosin Preservation, 2018-2019.*

Figure 5. Crown Center Historic District – Boundary Map, Contributing and Non-Contributing resources. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, 2018.*

Figure 6. Crown Center Historic District – Photo Map. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, 2019.*

Crown Center Historic District

Jackson County, Missouri

Name of Property

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- Figure 7.** Willys-Overland Building at 25th Street and Grand Avenue. Source: Hallmark Archives.
- Figure 8.** 1925 map showing former Hall Brothers Building at southeast corner of Grand Avenue and 26th Street (outlined) and the Willys-Overland Building at Grand Avenue and 25th Street (outlined). Source: Tuttle, Ayers, Woodward, *Atlas of Kansas City and Environs*, 1925.
- Figure 9.** Circa 1956 photograph of the Hallmark Headquarters buildings, view south, with the Hallmark McGee Building on the left, and the Hallmark Grand Building on the right Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc.
- Figure 10.** Circa 1966 photograph of the enlarged and expanded Hallmark Headquarters buildings, view southeast, with the re-clad Hallmark Grand Building in the right foreground. Source: Hallmark Archives.
- Figure 11a.** Crown Center Redevelopment Area Map with boundary approved in Crown Center Redevelopment Plan. Source: *Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, 1967, Hallmark Archives.*
- Figure 11b.** Crown Center Redevelopment Area Map with boundary approved in Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, as well as proposed NR Boundary. Source: *Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, 1967, Hallmark Archives.*
- Figure 12.** Victor Gruen's Land Use Plan, submitted with the "Crown Center Redevelopment Plan," 1967. Source: *Hallmark Archives.*
- Figure 13.** 1925 map showing immediate vicinity of Hallmark headquarters; Hallmark Grand Building outlined (Hallmark McGee Building not yet constructed). Includes proposed NR Boundary. Source: Tuttle, Ayers, Woodward, *Atlas of Kansas City and Environs*, 1925.
- Figure 14.** Circa 1966 photograph showing the 70-foot-tall limestone bluff between Main Street and Grand Avenue, view northeast from top of Liberty Memorial. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.
- Figure 15.** 1969 study model of Crown Center (lower left) superimposed on aerial of Kansas City, view northwest. Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, *Crown Center 6*, August 1969.
- Figure 16.** Edward Larrabee Barnes (left) and CCRC president Lynn Bauer (right). Source: *Kansas Citian*, "Crown Center architect named," July 1967, 30.
- Figure 17.** Crown Center groundbreaking ceremony, September 16, 1968. Left to right: Charles Curry, Mayor Ilus Davis, J.C. Hall, Donald Hall, Lynn Bauer. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.
- Figure 18.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Square and Pershing Road Office Buildings. Source: "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973, 175.
- Figure 19.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Square and the Mayor's Christmas Tree. Source: *Hallmark Archives.*
- Figure 20.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel (left) and interior garden (right). Source: "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973, 115, 121.
- Figure 21.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Shops (middle), Crown Center Square (foreground), and the Crown Center Hotel (background, right). Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.
- Figure 22.** Circa 1980 photograph of Crown Center with Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Building, IBM Corporation Building, and Hyatt Regency Hotel visible at upper left, view northeast. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.
- Figure 23.** (Left) Circa 1987 photograph of 2405 Grand office building facing Crown Center Square, view northeast. (Right) Circa 1969 photograph of Crown Center model showing high-rise office tower (outlined) on Crown Center Square. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.
- Figure 24.** Map of existing completed development and proposed future development, 1974. All of the buildings in area "6" are proposed residential resources, specifically townhouses and mid- and high-rise apartment buildings. Source: *The Urban Land Institute Project Reference File: Crown Center, October-December 1974. City of Kansas City Planning and Development Department Library.*
- Figure 25.** Map of Downtown Kansas City Missouri, from "Central Business District Kansas City Missouri Study," 1956.
- Figure 26.** Scale model of Quality Hill Center, c. 1958. The red line encompasses the resources that were built as part of the Quality Hill Center redevelopment plan and currently extant. Source: "Expand Plans on Quality Hill," *Kansas City Times*, February 3, 1959, 4.

Crown Center Historic District

Jackson County, Missouri

Name of Property

County and State

- Figure 27.** Prom Sheraton Hotel, 1963. *Source: "Plan 102-Room Hotel Addition," Kansas City Times, November 1, 1963.*
- Figure 28.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel, view southwest. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*
- Figure 29.** Section of the Crown Center Hotel from 1973 promotional pamphlet. *Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri.*
- Figure 30.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel, view east from Main Street. *Source: "Crown Center." Architectural Record, October 1973.*
- Figure 31.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel's guest room tower and glass elevator shaft. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*
- Figure 32.** 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel's interior garden on the exposed north face of the limestone bluff. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*
- Figure 33.** Historic section drawing (top) and aerial plan (bottom) of the Crown Center Hotel. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*
- Figure 34.** 2015 photograph of Ten Main Center, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Richard Welnowski, "Ten Main Center," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2015.*
- Figure 35.** 1978 photograph of Missouri Division of Employment Security Building, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Ehrlich, George. Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1992, pg. 141.*
- Figure 36.** 1977 photograph of Missouri State Building, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Ehrlich, George. Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1992, pg. 144.*
- Figure 37.** 2013 photograph of typical terminal at Kansas City International Airport. *Source: Rosin Preservation, LLC. "Kansas City International Airport Terminal Complex," Eligibility Assessment, 2013.*
- Figure 38.** 2017 image of Municipal Court Building, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Google Street View, 2017.*
- Figure 39.** Circa 1968 photograph of Harry Weese. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Chicago's Harry Weese: The Man and His Architecture," Crown Center 4, May 1969. Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri.*
- Figure 40.** 1971 image of the Crown Center Hotel under construction, with the Liberty Memorial visible in the background. *Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri.*
- Figure 41.** 2301 Main Street (One Pershing Square), Kansas City, Missouri, completed 1980. *Source: Commercial Cafe, 2018.*
- Figure 42.** Mercantile Bank & Trust Building, completed 1974. *Source: National Register nomination, Brad Finch, 2009.*
- Figure 43.** Mercantile Bank & Trust Building, completed 1974. Detail of building base. *Source: National Register nomination, Brad Finch, 2009.*
- Figure 44.** Parking Garage Diagram, 2018. *Source: Hallmark Archives.*
- Figure 45.** Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building, c.1956. *Source: Hallmark Archives.*
- Figure 46.** Geographic Areas for Market Study, 1966. *Source: Larry Smith and Company, 1966.*
- Figure 47.** Crown Center Hotel and Crown Center Shops parking garage diagram. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation Archives.*
- Figure 48.** Union Station Link (#31, 2000) from Crown Center Hotel (#7) to Union Station (1914) outside the boundary of the proposed District, elevated enclosed walkway, view northwest. *Source: Shane Hauschild, 2018.*
- Figure 49.** Connection between the District and the residential resources. This connection only exists only at one level. From Level 3A of Parking Garage to San Francisco Tower. *Source: Shane Hauschild, 2018.*
- Figure 50.** Connection between the District and the residential resources. This connection only exists only at one level. From San Francisco Tower to Level 3A of Parking Garage. *Source: Shane Hauschild, 2018.*
- Figure 51.** First Baptist Church of Columbus, Indiana, completed 1965. Historic photograph, c.1965. *Source: Wikipedia: First Baptist Church (Columbus, Indiana).*
- Figure 52.** United States Embassy, Accra, Ghana, completed 1960. Historic photograph, c. 1960. *Source: Marine Embassy Guard Association.*
- Figure 53.** Circa 2015 image of the George L. Mosse Humanities Building, Madison, Wisconsin. *Source: Aaron Hathaway, "Debunking the bunker: Is the Humanities building riot proof?," The Badger Herald, December*

Crown Center Historic District

Jackson County, Missouri

Name of Property

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5, 2015, <https://badgerherald.com/banter/2015/12/05/debunking-the-bunker-is-the-humanities-building-riot-proof/>. Accessed December 19, 2017.

Figure 54. 1975 image of the Metropolitan Correctional Center, Chicago, Illinois. Source: Baldwin, Ian. "The Architecture of Harry Weese," *Places Journal*, May 2011, <https://placesjournal.org/article/the-architecture-of-harry-weese>. Accessed December 14, 2017.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Crown Center Historic District
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUMMARY

The Crown Center Historic District (District) occupies roughly forty-nine acres on the southern edge of downtown Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri (*Figure 1*). The L-shaped District has thirty-two buildings, sites, structures, and objects that form the nucleus of Crown Center superblock. It includes the headquarters of Hallmark, Inc. (Hallmark) that was a catalyst for its development. The streets that bound the District are Pershing Road, Gillham Road, E. 27th Street, and Main Street (*Figures 2 and 3*). Grand Boulevard runs north-south through the District. The mixed-use property includes low-rise and high-rise office, retail, parking, and hotel buildings; landscaped public squares; and large-scale artworks. Of the thirty-two resources, eighteen are contributing (*Figures 4 and 5*). There are six contributing buildings, three contributing sites, five contributing structures, and four contributing objects (sculpture and fountains). The fourteen non-contributing resources are designated as such due to age (#12, 2405 Grand, 1987) or lack of association with the historic context for which the District is significant (#18, Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church¹). There are four non-contributing buildings, seven non-contributing structures, and three non-contributing objects (sculpture and fountains). The non-contributing resources are generally much smaller in scale than the contributing resources. The contributing resources reflect the urban planning trends and architectural styles popular at the time of construction, primarily from the 1950s to the 1970s. The most common materials in the District are concrete, metal, and glass, which reflect the architectural styles represented in the District, specifically the Modern Movement, New Formalist, Brutalist, and Postmodern styles. The interrelationship between the buildings and sites was intentional when the owners of Hallmark formed the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation to oversee the planning and development of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area, of which the Crown Center Historic District is the central and original commercial/recreational core. The District forms a cohesive mixed-use enclave that frames a large public square; one portion of that frame is the multi-building Hallmark headquarters, which was integral to this planned development.

ELABORATION

SETTING

The 49.3-acre Crown Center Historic District (District) is in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, about one mile south of the city's central business district (*Figure 1*). Primary streets that bound the District are Pershing Road, Gillham Road, E. 27th Street, and Main Street. Grand Boulevard runs north-south through the District and is a contributing structure (#20). Streets that have historically run east-west through the District, such as the contributing structure E. 25th Street (#31), were vacated to facilitate the Crown Center redevelopment project. The District has an irregular street layout, accommodating the variances of terrain and

¹ The reason for the non-contributing status of this resource is explained in the individual property description.

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Crown Center Historic District
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

large, multi-block buildings, sites, and structures within the District. The geography of the District is characterized by a rise in the terrain on the east and west sides. A prominent seventy-foot-tall limestone bluff is located at the northwest corner of the District. The District boundaries encompass a portion of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area (*Figure 3*). There are resources that are in the Crown Center Redevelopment Area that are not included in the District because they are not associated with the commercial/recreational development that was the primary focus of the initial construction campaign completed by 1974. These resources include three resources associated with the 1976 residential development southeast of the District; office buildings, parking garages and lots, and landscape resources south of the District that date to between 1990 and 2005; and office and hotel resources built between 1977 and 1980 in the block immediately north of the District. Outside the District and outside the Crown Center Redevelopment Area, Union Station, a passenger and freight rail hub constructed in the Beaux Arts style in 1914 and rehabilitated in the early twenty-first century. The Liberty Memorial, a 217-foot-tall concrete monument completed in 1926 to honor those who fought in World War I, occupies the bluff top immediately west of Main Street, outside the District boundary. Hospital Hill, a complex of medical buildings operated by Truman Medical Centers and the University of Missouri-Kansas City in addition to other institutions, is located outside the District boundary to the east of Pershing Road. Longfellow Park, a 3.42-acre public park, built c.2005, and early twentieth century multi-family housing units are located across Gillham Road to the east, outside the District boundary. Sheila Kemper Dietrich Park, a 2.5-acre public park which has been open space since before the 1950s and has play equipment that dates to the 1990s, is also located across Gillham Road to the east, outside the District boundary. National Register listed Union Cemetery is located across E. 27th Street to the south of the District boundary, along with new large-scale apartment complexes currently under construction (*Figure 2*).

Numerous low-, mid-, and high-rise buildings serving commercial office, retail, and hotel functions define the physical composition of the District, giving an urban feel to the area (*Photo 7, Figure 6*). The buildings in the District tend to have large footprints. Concrete, glass, and metal cladding are predominant building materials in the District. Pedestrian traffic is concentrated around the Crown Center Square (#6) and the Hallmark Square (#10), designed landscapes and contributing sites. The buildings and structures within the District surround and frame these two public open spaces, and together form a superblock that is the visual, physical, and functional core of Crown Center. Parking is concealed in parking garages (#3 and garages associated with #8, #9, and #15) throughout the District; there are no surface parking lots in the District. The buildings are large in scale and distanced from each other, although there are a variety of connections between them, explained below. The streets in and around the District have pedestrian sidewalks. Main Street, Grand Boulevard, and Gillham Road are north-south arteries leading from the District north to the central business district. There are no public east-west streets through the District.

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Crown Center Historic District
Name of Property
Jackson County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

METHODOLOGY FOR COUNTING RESOURCES

The resources in the Crown Center Historic District cannot be nominated individually outside the context of the District due to their associations with a single development plan. However, it is possible to assign them individual contributing statuses and count them individually within the nomination, as they were designed to be distinct resources, though conceptually related through the development plan. Although there was one development plan under which these resources were designed, all were designed to function independent of one another, despite connections to other resources. The methodology for counting resources is described below (*Figures 4 and 5*).

Individual resources are defined through context (date of construction and original function) and the independence of the structural system. Each resource identified as a building has its own independent set of architectural plans, independent utility service, and separate operations. Each building, on the exterior and interior, communicates its independence from other resources, through design and physical separation (doors and walls). The District has ten buildings, six contributing and four non-contributing. The resources identified as structures also have independent structural systems or defined boundaries. There are fourteen structures in the District. The five contributing structures include a parking garage, two roadways that run through the District, an ice-skating rink, and a swimming pool. The seven non-contributing structures include six elevated skywalks and one parking lot. The District has three designed landscapes that are contributing sites. Two are public plazas at the heart of the district while the third is relatively more private and accessible from one of the contributing buildings. The District has seven resources that are identifiable as objects. There are two sculptures (one contributing, one non-contributing) and five fountains (three contributing, two non-contributing).

The resources in the District exhibit a variety of connections to one another, as well as to other buildings outside the boundaries of the District. The connections between buildings include enclosed elevated skywalks or bridges, vehicular tunnels or ramps, or doorways if the buildings directly abut one another. These connections do not obscure the boundary between one resource and another. There is one instance in the District where a space that was originally built as part of Crown Center Shops (#9) was acquired for use by Crown Center Hotel (#8) during a later renovation. This 2,700 square-foot space (out of the 654,800 square-foot hotel and the 400,000 square-foot retail building), is located on the third floor of both buildings. A solid wall was installed where there was once a storefront in the Shops and a new door was cut in the wall on the Hotel side. From the public corridors abutting this space, both in the Hotel and in the Shops, the repurposing of this space has not impacted the ability of either resource to convey its historic function. This alteration does not blur the separate functional character of each building; it does not create the impression of a single building. This is the only instance where the boundaries between buildings have been altered.

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Crown Center Historic District
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County and State
N/A
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The District has six elevated skywalks or enclosed walkways that connect resources to buildings inside and outside the boundaries of the District (#13, #14, #21, #22, #23, and #29). The six skywalks are non-contributing structures because they were constructed outside the period of significance. However, the original 1967 Crown Center Redevelopment Plan listed elevated pedestrian bridges over streets in and around the development (inside and outside the boundaries of the District) as resources that might be constructed as part of the redevelopment project.² These non-contributing structures were constructed years after completion of the resources they were designed to connect. Typically, when an enclosed skywalk is attached to buildings inside and outside a proposed historic district, the boundary would be drawn at the exterior wall of the nominated building, keeping the entire skywalk out of the boundary. At the Crown Center Historic District, the property associated with the nominated buildings, typically a grass lawn, extends beyond the building envelope. The skywalk extends over lawn before crossing out of the district boundary to connect to the other building across the street, thus, part of the skywalk is in the boundary and part of it is out of the boundary. The enclosed walkway (#29) between the parking garage of Crown Center Shops (#9) and the San Francisco Tower building outside the District boundary is a non-contributing structure because it was constructed on top of the existing Crown Center Shops parking garage, simultaneously with the San Francisco Tower. The two-story bridge between the two Hallmark Headquarters buildings (#1 and #2) is not a separate resource because it was designed and constructed as part of the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1). Likewise, the elevator and stair tower with a one-story connector was designed and constructed as part of the Rice Innovation Center and the parking garage below (#15) and is therefore not identified as a separate resource.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS

1. Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building	Contributing Building
2501 McGee Trafficway	
Modern Movement (1955); Postmodern (1982)	1955, 1958, 1966, 1982, 1985
Welton Becket and Associates (1955)	Long Construction Co. (1955)
Kivett & Myers & McCallum (1958)	Frank Quinlan Construction Co. (1958)
Kivett & Myers, Marshall & Brown (1966)	Bob Eldridge Construction Co. (1966)
Edward Larrabee Barnes, Marshall & Brown (1982)	J.E. Dunn Construction Co. (1982)
Davis, Brody & Associates (1985)	
Photos 1, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16	

The Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building at 2501 McGee Trafficway occupies a roughly 8-acre parcel at the southeast corner of the intersection of the vacated E. 25th Street (#31) and McGee Trafficway on the east side of the District. The Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building

² Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of a Development Plan," 1967, 51. Hallmark Archives.

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is constructed on a rocky, hillside parcel with terrain that rises from the northwest to the southeast. The 1955 eight-story building was designed in the Modern Movement style as a cube built into the hillside. The hill cuts into the concealed southeast corner of the building, so the lower floors have a smaller footprint that wraps the hill, while the upper floors have a larger footprint that extend over the hill. The building has a reinforced concrete foundation and structural framing, and a flat roof. The north portion of the building has an irregular footprint. A smaller ninth story was added in 1958. A rectangular wing, constructed in 1966, extends to the south from the west side of the north portion (*Photo 1*). A rectangular eleven-story tower rises from the west side of the north portion of the building. The tower contains the elevators, main circulatory stairwell, and HVAC systems. The building has two primary entrances. The entrance at the northwest corner of the building accesses Hallmark Square (#10) (*Photo 6*). The other entrance is on the east side of the south wing and accesses a landscaped parking lot (#16) off Gillham Road. The configuration and cladding of the east side of the building dates to the 1982 renovation.

The north elevation of the building is comprised primarily of a glass, porcelain enamel panel, and aluminum frame curtain wall (*Photo 1*). Several of the windows in the curtain wall have awning sashes. The base of the north elevation is clad with corrugated metal siding. An elevated enclosed pedestrian bridge (c.1991, #21) connects the north elevation of the building to the south elevation of the Pershing Road Office Building (#4). The northwest corner of the building steps inward from bottom to top (*Photo 7*). Portions are clad with a glass, porcelain enamel panel, and aluminum frame curtain wall and the remainder is clad with historic corrugated metal siding with punched vents. The rectangular eleven-story tower rises from the northwest corner of the building, with Hallmark Cards signage affixed to the north side (*Photo 1*). Most of the tower is clad with architectural concrete, while the top story has metal-framed plate glass windows. The entrance lobby at the northwest corner has fully glazed fixed window bays with metal framing. The entrance doors contain fully glazed single-leaf doors in metal frames that flank a centered revolving door. On the rectangular south wing (added in 1966 and connected to the west elevation of the north section of the building), the base of the north elevation and small portion of the west elevation have original square tile cladding in shades of grey and brown. A two-story elevated bridge, completed in 1955, extends from the west side of the wing to the east side of the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2) (*Photo 1*). The north side of the bridge has an aluminum frame curtain wall with porcelain enamel panels and fixed glass windows. The south side has an aluminum frame curtain wall with porcelain enamel panels (*Photo 15*). This bridge was designed and constructed as part of the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building and is therefore not identified or counted as a separate resource. The west elevation of the south wing has corrugated metal siding (*Photo 15*). Ribbon windows with fixed tinted glass and small rectangular vents are spaced along the elevation (*Photo 16*).

The historic corrugated metal siding wraps around the south elevation of the south wing. The south elevation does not have any openings, only two small vents. A six-story elevator and stair

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tower abuts the south elevation, but is part of the 1980 Parking Garage (#15). The stair tower does not connect to each floor of the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building, only each floor of the parking garage. In 1985, when the Rice Innovation Center (#15) was constructed on top of the 1980 Parking Garage (#15), a single story was added to the elevator and stair tower to provide a hallway that served as an internal connection between the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building and the Rice Innovation Center (#15). This connector was designed and constructed as part of the Rice Innovation Center and parking garage and is therefore not identified or counted as a separate resource.

Due to the rising terrain, only the eighth story is visible on the east side of the building (*Photo 11*). The east elevation of the 1966 south wing section is clad with concrete panels and has interspersed fixed tinted windows at regular intervals. A 1982 concrete and corrugated metal barrel vaulted canopy with a metal-framed fanlight window shelters the corporate entrance in the east elevation, also added in 1982. Three recessed single-leaf fully glazed doors flank a centered revolving door in the sheltered vestibule. Only the upper floors are visible on the south side of the north portion of the building. The eighth floor is at ground level and is clad with granite panels at the base and concrete panels above with interspersed fixed square tinted windows at regular intervals. While the eighth floor dates to the original 1955 construction, the cladding dates to the 1982 renovation. The 1958 ninth floor is recessed and has a fully-glazed tinted window wall with metal framing. The west side of the building has historic corrugated metal cladding at the base with multiple vehicular entrance bays. The upper portion has a fully glazed metal framed curtain wall. Hallmark Cards signage is affixed to the northeast side of the building.

Exterior alterations to the building include the construction of the ninth floor in 1958, the construction of the south wing in 1966, the recladding of the east and south elevations that face the corporate parking lot (#16) in 1982, and the one-story connector between Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building and the Rice Innovation Center (#15) in 1985.³ The primary north and west elevations retain their original 1955 and 1966 appearance.

2. Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building

Contributing Building

2501 Grand Boulevard

Modern Movement: New Formalism

1916, 1966

Mils, Rhines, Bellman and Nordhoff (1916)

Kivett & Myers with Marshall & Brown (1966)

Bob Eldridge Construction Co. (1966)

Photos 1, 2, 6, 15, 16

The Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building at 2555 Grand Boulevard occupies a roughly 4.9-acre parcel at the southeast corner of the intersection of Grand Boulevard and the vacated E. 25th Street. The six-story Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building has an irregular footprint, a

³ It is unknown what the 1966 cladding material was for the east and south elevations.

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concrete foundation, and a flat roof with a concrete cornice (*Photo 2*). The oldest structural component of the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building dates to 1916 and forms the core of the north portion of the building. The four-to-six-story 1916 core was constructed by Mills, Rhines, Bellman and Nordhoff as an automobile sales building and had a reinforced concrete structural frame, flat concrete slab floors, brick cladding, steel sash windows, and a flat roof. Hallmark renovated and occupied the building in 1936. The only remaining visible historic fabric from the 1916 building are interior mushroom concrete columns. In 1955, a two-story enclosed bridge was attached to the east elevation, internally connecting the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building with the newly constructed Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) (*Photo 1*). This bridge was designed as a part of the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building and is therefore not a separate resource. In 1966, the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building gained its current appearance through an extensive remodeling. Floor space was added to the top of the 1916 core, bringing the entire portion to six floors. A 700,000-square-foot, L-shaped, six-story addition that more than doubled the overall floor space was added to the south. The historic core and the addition received a unified Modern Movement cladding. A spiral ramp at the south side of the addition allowed for roof-top parking. Warwick Trafficway was rerouted to accommodate the addition.

The base of the north elevation is recessed and clad with precast concrete panels. The upper floors are visually divided into seventeen vertical bays by squared concrete piers. Each bay contains metal siding flanked by thin tinted window strips. Squared concrete fins edge the window strips to deflect glare. In the fourth bay from the northwest corner, an enclosed glass and metal pedestrian bridge (c.2003, #22) above the recessed base extends to the north and connects the building to the south wing of the Crown Center Shops (#9). East of the pedestrian bridge, small recessed areas at the base of the metal siding are filled with corrugated metal siding. The three bays west of the pedestrian bridge have a fixed, metal-framed window with five lights in this space. The west elevation is divided into twenty bays and has similar cladding (*Photo 16*). The recessed base is clad with concrete panels, while the upper bays are divided by concrete piers and clad with metal flanked by thin tinted strip windows edged with concrete. The space below the metal siding in each bay contains a fixed, metal-framed window with five lights. The south elevation is clad with corrugated metal siding with interspersed metal vents. The west side of the south elevation extends out and contains a spiral vehicular ramp to access the roof. The ramp and rooftop parking are not in use. At the southwest corner, an enclosed glass and metal pedestrian bridge (c.2003, #23) connects the building to the Shook Hardy & Bacon Headquarters Building (2003) at 2555 Grand Boulevard, outside the District. The east side of the south elevation has multiple vehicular loading bays. The east elevation has the same cladding as the north and west elevations (*Photo 15*). The two-story enclosed bridge extends from the center of the elevation, connecting the building to the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1). The east elevation is divided into seven bays south of the bridge, and six bays north of the bridge. The six bays north of the bridge face Hallmark Square (#10) (*Photo 6*). The metal siding in the upper floors are covered with six different canvas screens with printed

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imagery. At the base is a glazed window wall, with aluminum-framed fully glazed doors providing access to the Hallmark Visitors Center and Kaleidoscope, a children's entertainment center on the first floor that dates to 1966.

Exterior alterations to the building include the addition and recladding of the 1916 building in 1966, and the c.2003 construction of the elevated enclosed walkways (#22 and #23) that connect to the adjacent buildings inside and outside the boundaries of the District.

3. Crown Center Underground Parking Garage

Contributing Structure

2425 Grand Boulevard

No Style

1971

Barnes, Edward Larrabee

Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

Photos 7, 15

The Crown Center Underground Parking Garage is on the east side of Grand Boulevard, south of its intersection with Pershing Road, underneath Crown Center Square (#6) and the Pershing Road Office Building (#4). The full extent of the garage is within the boundaries of the District. The roof of the underground parking garage forms the foundation for the square and the buildings. The Crown Center Underground Parking Garage connects on one level via an underground tunnel (two drive lanes) that runs east-west beneath Grand Boulevard to one level of the underground parking garage that is part of the Crown Center Hotel (#8).

The six underground levels, which combined have 2,300 parking spaces, are color-coded to assist users (*Figure 44*). The levels are inter-connected by stairwells and elevators, which also provide access to each section of the Pershing Road Office Building (#4) at different levels. Pedestrians can enter and exit the garage via openings flanking the sets of stairs to the terraces in the Crown Center Square (#6) (*Photo 7*). A pair of glass doors provides access to the enclosed atrium between Grand Avenue Bank & Trust Building (#5) and 2405 Grand Boulevard (#12), below The Link (#13). There are four vehicular garage entrances. The entrances include one at the intersection of McGee Street and Pershing Road under the north edge of the Pershing Road Office Building (#4); one at the south elevation of the Pershing Road Office Building (#4) off East 25th Street (#31); one at the terminus of McGee Street under the south edge of Hallmark Square (#10) (*Photo 15*); and one at East 25th Street (#30) under the west edge of Hallmark Square (#10).

The underground parking garage has a reinforced concrete structure with concrete floors, concrete masonry unit walls, and concrete mushroom cap columns. Each level throughout has fluorescent lighting and painted navigational signage. One pair of straight concrete ramps near the southeast end of the garage connects all but the lowest level, which has its own pair of straight ramps.

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A 16,000-square-foot central heating and cooling plant, designed by Black & Veatch, was incorporated into the southwest corner of the underground garage in the lower levels. It began operating in 1970 and was designed to be visually isolated from public access areas in the garage. The plant provides hot and cold water and serves as the distribution point for electrical power on independent systems to each of the Pershing Road Office Building (#4), the Crown Center Shops (#9), and the Crown Center Hotel (#8). The heating and cooling plant is still operable inside the garage.

There have not been any alterations to this structure.

4. Pershing Road Office Building
2400-2480 Pershing Road
Modern Movement
Barnes, Edward Larrabee
Photos 1, 5, 6, 10

Contributing Building
1971
Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

The Pershing Road Office Building is a single building with a zig-zag footprint but steps up from northwest to southeast, giving the appearance of five interconnected sections (*Photos 1 and 5*). The north section of the building begins directly south of the intersection of McGee Street and Pershing Road. The building continues to the southeast, stepping upwards one story with each section, and terminates at the northwest corner of the intersection of Pershing Road and the vacated E. 25th Street (#30). The floor plates vary in size, depending on how many sections of the building connect at each floor, totaling approximately 600,000 square feet of combined office space. The building has a concrete foundation, reinforced concrete structure, and each section has a flat roof with a prominent rectangular penthouse. The lowest floor of the south end of each section projects westward. From north to south, the corresponding addresses for the five sections are 2400, 2420, 2440, 2460, and 2480 Pershing Road. The entrance to each building is sheltered under a covered breezeway accessible from Crown Center Square (#6) or from paved driveways off Pershing Road. The buildings can also be accessed via elevators from the Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3), a portion of which is underneath the office complex.

Precast concrete panels with a pebbled aggregate and wide, deep joints clad the buildings. Horizontal, fixed tinted solar windows delineated by concrete panels form strong horizontal lines on the upper floors by bays. The upper windows are four feet tall and twenty-six feet wide. In general, the windows on the lower floors have two lights with a metal muntin. On the west and east elevations, the seventh-floor windows are recessed and have six lights with metal muntins. The seventh-floor windows are seven feet tall and twenty-six feet wide. The low westward extensions on the west side of the buildings lack the banded fenestration of the upper floors (*Photos 1 and 7*). The west elevation of the extensions contains a single two-light fixed tinted window. The penthouses have concrete panel cladding, no fenestration, and metal vents (*Photo*

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6). At the north and south elevations are vehicular entrances to the Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3). At the south elevation of the south building, an enclosed glass and metal pedestrian bridge constructed c.1991 (#21) connects the complex to the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) at 2501 McGee Trafficway (*Photo 10*). Metal canopies with curved skylights are placed at the driveway curb at each breezeway. The entrance breezeways are paved with brown brick pavers. The building entrances are recessed and contain a metal-framed glazed wall with double-leaf doors.

The only exterior alteration to this building is the construction of the enclosed skywalk (#21) to connect to the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) c.1991.

5. Grand Avenue Bank & Trust Building⁴

Contributing Building

2401 Grand Boulevard

Modern Movement

1972, 1988

Barnes, Edward Larrabee

Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

Photo 7

The two-story Grand Avenue Bank and Trust Building at 2401 Grand Boulevard is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Pershing Road and Grand Boulevard (#20). The two-story approximately 16,000-square-foot Grand Avenue Bank and Trust Building has a rectangular floorplan, a concrete foundation, and a flat roof (*Photo 7*). The north, west, and south elevations are clad with precast concrete panels. The north elevation has six bays on each floor. The bays are filled with rectangular fixed tinted windows with two lights. The second-floor windows are recessed. On the west elevation is a centered, recessed, fixed, two-over-two tinted window with a horizontal concrete mullion. The building is accessed via an atrium flanking the south elevation, created in 1988 in the space between this building and the adjacent 2405 Grand at Crown Center Square (#12). The atrium abuts the south elevation of the building, and the roof of the atrium is formed by The Link (#13) an elevated pedestrian bridge and skylights constructed in 1988. The atrium entrance is within a metal-framed window wall with fully-glazed double-leaf doors. The south elevation retains its original exterior cladding and fenestration. The south elevation has a recessed entrance vestibule at the west end with concrete aggregate flooring and glazed double-leaf metal-framed entrance doors with a large glazed transom. This entrance was historically open until the building at 2405 Grand (#12) and The Link were constructed in 1987 and 1988, respectively. The central four bays are two stories and divided by concrete piers. Each bay contains a two-over-two fixed window with a metal horizontal mullion. The eastern bay contains a recessed entrance vestibule with double-leaf glazed doors and a large glazed transom. The east elevation abuts the northernmost section of the Pershing Road Office Building (#4) but does not directly connect.

⁴ Grand Avenue was renamed Grand Boulevard in 1990 with passage of Ordinance 900446, see Resource #20.

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Exterior alteration to this building includes the conversion of the space between the Grand Avenue Bank & Trust Building and 2405 Grand (#12) to an atrium when The Link (#13) was constructed one story above ground level and enclosed the space in 1988.

6. Crown Center Square

Contributing Site

2425 Grand Boulevard

No Style

1973, 1987

Barnes, Edward Larrabee

Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

Marshall & Brown

Photos 1, 2, 3, 4, 7

The approximately 3.5-acre Crown Center Square is a designed landscape bound by Grand Boulevard to the west (*Photos 2, 3, and 4*). The office building at 2405 Grand Boulevard (#12) and the Pershing Road Office Building (#4) bound the north and east sides of the square (*Photo 7*). The south side of the square is bound by the south wing of the Crown Center Shops (#9) and Hallmark Square (#10), which is set at a higher grade than the square (*Photo 1*). Crown Center Square features landscaped terraces with paved walkways, paved open space with street furniture and fountains (#24, #25, and #26) integrated into the surface of the square, and a covered ice-skating rink (Crown Center Ice Terrace, #7). Around the fountain and extending about 220 feet to the west, the square is paved with rough granite blocks in varying hues. The three fountains and the Ice Terrace, described below, are contributing objects, as they were part of the original design for the landscaped plaza. The square is also the roof of a portion of the Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3). Pedestrians can access the Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3) via open entrances that flank each set of stairs to the upper terraces. The northwest corner of the square was altered in 1987 when the office building at 2405 Grand (#12) was constructed.

Grass lawn strips edge the west-center portion of the square. The west side of the square, north and south of the fountains and granite-paved area, is paved with red brick laid in a herringbone pattern intersected with running lines of brown brick. The southwest side of the square in front of the south wing of the Crown Center Shops (#9) has small grass lawns, evenly spaced deciduous trees, streetlamps, and patio furniture. At the southwest corner, a circular concrete vent with metal grating corresponds to an underground heating and cooling plant located in the Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3). The northwest side of the square in front of the 2405 Grand office building (#12) has deciduous trees, streetlamps, and patio furniture. The east side of the square fronts the stair-stepped Pershing Road Office Building (#4). The terrain rises and the terraces are accessed by stairways and walkways paved with concrete and granite. Terraces have grass lawn squares intersected by wide pedestrian paths paved with concrete aggregate pavers leading to the breezeways under the interconnected sections. Flights of granite stairs with metal handrails connect the pathways as they rise with the terrain. The west terraces have interspersed outdoor seating areas formed from large concrete

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aggregate blocks and landscaped spaces with low bushes and trees. The terraces are landscaped with grass lawns and deciduous trees; some have concrete aggregate patios with integrated benches. Some of the walkways lead to breezeways that provide access to the Pershing Road Office Building (#4).

Alterations to this site include the construction of 2405 Grand (#12) at the northwest corner of the Square in 1987. The construction of this building reduced the size of the square, but was always intended as part of a later phase of the Redevelopment Plan.

7. Crown Center Ice Terrace
2425 Grand Boulevard
No Style
Barnes, Edward Larrabee
Photos 1, 3, 7

Contributing Structure
1973, c.1985
Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

An 11,000-square-foot ice skating rink is located at the south edge of the Crown Center Square (#6) at an upper terrace (*Photos 1 and 7*). The rink has a square footprint, a concrete base and concrete kneewalls. A large permanent canvas tent covering with metal framing was installed c.1985 (*Photo 3*). The only alteration of this resource is the construction of the canvas covering installed c.1985.

8. Crown Center Hotel
1 East Pershing Road
Modern Movement: Brutalism
Harry Weese & Associates
Photos 2, 4, 8, 18, 19

Contributing Building
1973, 1988, 2000, c. 2007
Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

The Crown Center Hotel is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Pershing Road and Grand Boulevard at the northwest corner of the District (*Photo 4*). The site contains a 70-foot-tall natural limestone bluff, integrated into the lobby of the building. A circular, recessed pool is an original design feature located on the hotel grounds in the crux of the L-shaped guest room tower (#28) (*Photo 8*). A grass lawn with plantings and a curving concrete pedestrian path fill the space surrounding the pool (#28). A downward vehicular ramp provides access to the building at the northwest corner. In front of the lobby base, an asphalt-paved driveway leads to the front entrance and the underground parking garage, and landscaped islands with trees and additional plantings. Alexander Calder's Shiva (#11) sculpture is located on the grass lawn at the northeast corner of the site (*Photo 19*).

The building consists of a five-story rectangular base, above which a fifteen-story L-shaped tower rises. The south wing of the L-shaped tower rises from the foundation rather than the lobby base (*Photo 2*). The hotel has a poured-in-place reinforced concrete foundation and

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structure, precast concrete panel cladding, and a flat roof. The five-story lobby base abuts the north face of the limestone bluff. The lobby base faces north towards Pershing Road. The exterior walls of the north, east, and west elevations have precast textured concrete panels designed to look like coursed block. The north elevation has a recessed base level containing the primary entrance at the west end. The entrance is comprised of two sets of revolving doors flanked by two pairs of fully glazed double-leaf doors. A glass transom spans the entrance. A c.2007 curved glass and metal canopy shelters the entrance. Multiple sets of metal-framed fixed windows span the level to the east of the entrance. The underside of the level above has a coffered concrete ceiling; the level lacks fenestration. The rooftop of the lobby wing has tennis courts and an outdoor track.

The east elevation has two historic openings, one a service door towards the north end, and the second a primary entrance with a metal and glass storefront (*Photo 18*). A metal and glass vestibule was added to the exterior at this entrance in 1988 to attach The Link (#13), an elevated, enclosed pedestrian bridge that connects the buildings in the District to the east across Grand Boulevard (*Photo 18*). An existing door in the west elevation at the first story was utilized to connect The Union Station Link (#14) in 2000. The Union Station Link is an enclosed pedestrian bridge which is elevated above the northwest corner of the property as the bridge crosses Pershing Road to the north and Main Street to the west to connect to the 1914 Union Station.

The L-shaped tower rises from the south edge of the lobby base and the south wing extends southward. The west and south ends of the tower are cut at 45-degree angles, with the west slanted end cantilevered out over the northwest edge of the limestone bluff. The north and east elevations of the L-shaped tower are seventeen bays wide. The south and west elevations are eleven bays wide. The angled ends are four bays wide. Each bay is recessed and corresponds to an interior guest room, containing two metal-framed fixed windows with a metal balconette at one side. The end bays on the north and east elevations are smaller, containing one recessed thin fixed window. The elevator shaft at the crux of the tower is visible from the exterior through a fixed, metal-framed, multi-light window wall. Each side of the square-shaped penthouse has fourteen bays; each bay contains a fixed metal-framed window. At the crux of the L-shaped tower, a one-story, square-shaped penthouse containing a restaurant/lounge rises from the roof.

The Crown Center Shops (#9) abut the east and southeast sides of the hotel; the shops and the hotel are connected through pairs of glass doors on the mezzanine and third floors, as well as an opening from the lobby to the corridor of the shops on the first floor. These two buildings are functionally and operationally separate. The expansion joints between these buildings are visible at each of these openings. These two buildings were designed concurrently by separate architects and in different styles, but coordinated through their connections.

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The four-level underground parking garage (*Figures 29 and 44*), accessible from the driveway off Pershing Road to the north, is a concrete structure that is integrated into the foundation of the building. Elevators at each level connect to the hotel lobby above. The top level of the garage is rectangular and shorter than the lower levels. The three lower levels are longer rectangles with a canted northeast corner. The top level has an opening to the underground vehicular tunnel that leads to the Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3). This level also has a single ramp that leads up to the first level of the parking garage associated with Crown Center Shops (#9).

Exterior alterations to the building include the 1988 construction of The Link (#13) vestibule at the south end of the east elevation, using an existing entrance; the 2000 construction of The Union Station Link (#14) at the north end of the west elevation at the first story, using an existing opening; and the c. 2007 construction of the canopy over the primary lobby entrance on the north elevation.

9. Crown Center Shops
2450 Grand Boulevard
Modern Movement: Brutalism
Barnes, Edward Larrabee
Marshall & Brown
Photos 1, 2, 4, 5, 17

Contributing Building
1973, 1982, 2000, c.2003, c.2011
Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

The Crown Center Shops occupies roughly 3.45 acres and contains over 400,000 square feet of retail space. The three-story, L-shaped building has a concrete foundation, pre-cast concrete aggregate cladding, and a flat roof. The west wing of the building runs north-south for approximately one block along the west side of Grand Boulevard (*Photo 4*). At the south end of the west wing, the third floor extends to the east over Grand Boulevard (*Photos 1, 2, and 7*). The remaining portion of this south wing on the east side of Grand Boulevard is three stories and approximately one block long. The west wing contains shopping and dining establishments and a theater. The portion of the south wing spanning over Grand Boulevard contains a department store. The rest of the south wing contains two recreational attractions, LEGOLAND Discovery Center and SEA LIFE Aquarium. The L-shaped footprint of the building encloses the west and south sides of Crown Center Square (#6).

The primary entrance to Crown Center Shops is located on the east elevation of the portion of the building west of Grand Boulevard, across from Crown Center Square (#6). The east elevation is clad with rectangular, light beige precast concrete aggregate panels. Large white and taupe-hued pebbles used in the aggregate give the panels a rough finish. Wide and deep joints between the panels create emphasis. Vertical rectangular panels are used in the center of the elevation, while horizontal rectangular panels are used at the top and bottom of the wall. The concrete aggregate panels flanking the wide, three-bay primary entrance on the east

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elevation have a vertical corrugated face, creating strong vertical lines. The three entrance bays are recessed and clustered in the center of the east elevation; the outer bays are wider than the center bay, which is delineated by two piers clad with corrugated concrete aggregate panels. Each bay contains a window wall comprised of square plate glass panels assembled in a grid and connected with vertical glass fins with metal brackets. A non-original, glass-walled entrance vestibule, installed circa 2000, extends outward from the center bay. The vestibule is sheltered by a non-original curved glass and metal awning supported by four centrally-placed painted metal columns. The entrance vestibule has four sets of double-leaf glazed aluminum-frame doors. Raised metal lettering that reads "Crown Center Shops Restaurants" is affixed to the concrete aggregate panels north of the primary entrance.

South of the primary entrance is a small Postmodern addition constructed in 1982 and opened as a restaurant called the Crystal Pavilion (*Photo 2*). The addition has a concrete foundation and a multi-gabled skylight roof. The exterior is constructed of a steel frame with glass and painted aluminum panels. An entrance to the restaurant is located inside the Crown Center Shops, as well as on the exterior of the east elevation of the addition. The exterior entrance vestibule incorporates square glass lights in an aluminum grid with double-leaf entrance doors. An elliptical fanlight with flanking porthole windows is above the doors. A tall skylight monitor oriented on a bias rises above the entrance vestibule. The glass and aluminum grid with fanlight and porthole windows is repeated in the four stepped bays that recede to the south.

At the third level of the south end of the west wing, the building extends to the east and crosses over Grand Boulevard. The north side of the wing is clad with corrugated precast concrete panels. On the north elevation of the wing, in the center of the portion of the wing that extends over Grand Boulevard, is a curtain wall with a metal-framed grid comprised of three rows of square fixed windows in the center and one row of square enamel panels at the top and bottom. The underside and the south elevation of the wing are clad with smooth precast concrete aggregate panels in a beige tint with a stucco finish (*Photo 17*). The remaining portion of the south wing is on the east side of Grand Boulevard and is three stories. It has a flat roof and the north elevation is clad with precast concrete panels with a pebbled aggregate. On top of the south wing is a square penthouse level oriented on a bias to the building containing the American Restaurant (*Photo 5*). The penthouse is clad with precast concrete aggregate panels with a stucco finish. At the west end of the south wing, a fan-shaped, three-story elevator lobby vestibule extends from the building. The vestibule has a metal-framed glass curtain wall with double-leaf glazed entrance doors. East of the elevator lobby vestibule, a c.2011 canopy with curved rolled steel members shelters most of the first level of the north elevation of the south wing. The canopy is affixed to the elevation with a large steel frame with signage attached. Centered under the awning is an entrance vestibule with the address 2475 Grand Boulevard. The vestibule contains two sets of double-leaf aluminum-frame glazed entry doors set in a metal-framed window wall. Four fixed display windows of varying sizes flank each side of the entrance vestibule. Only the third level of the east elevation of the south wing is visible due to

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grade. The elevation lacks fenestration and is clad with precast concrete panels with a pebbled aggregate.

The south elevation of the south wing is clad with precast concrete panels with a stucco finish. On the south elevation of the south wing, a c.2003 skywalk (#22) connects the building to the north elevation of the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2). Along the south elevation is an attached pedestrian walkway with a flat roof and a metal handrail with horizontal rails. The east end of the walkway terminates at Hallmark Square (#10). The penthouse-level American Restaurant is accessed via an elevator lobby entrance on the south elevation. The elevator lobby is accessed via a slightly recessed fully-glazed single-leaf door with fixed fully-glazed sidelights. Fixed multi-light windows with metal mullions and frames pierce the northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast elevations of the penthouse.

The Crown Center Hotel (#8) abuts the north and most of the west elevations of the building. The shops and the hotel are connected through pairs of glass doors on the mezzanine and third floors, as well as an opening from the lobby to the corridor of the shops on the first floor. The two buildings are functionally and operationally separate. The expansion joints between these buildings are visible at each of these openings. These two buildings were designed concurrently by separate architects and in different styles, coordinated through their connections.

A twelve-level parking garage is attached to the west side of the Crown Center Shops (*Figure 44*). The garage was designed and built as part of the Crown Center Shops. The garage is rectangular in plan with two adjacent sections of six levels each, offset from one another by a half level. The levels are numbered and color coded. Pairs of metal slab doors at the center of the east side of the garage open to a stairwell that connects all levels of the garage with the three stories of the Shops. A single ramp at the lowest level of the garage connects to the top level of the garage built along with the Crown Center Hotel (#8) (*Figure 47*). There is one vehicular entrance to this garage from Grand Boulevard, immediately south of where the south wing crosses the street. An enclosed walkway (#29), constructed in conjunction with the San Francisco Tower in 1976, sits atop the garage entrance. The walkway contains a pair of metal slab doors that connect the third level of the parking garage to a hallway in the San Francisco Tower, which is outside the District boundary.

Exterior alterations to the building include the construction of the Crystal Pavilion in 1982, construction of the glass and metal vestibule at the east entrance in 2000, construction of the skywalk to the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2) in c.2003, and the construction of the canopy at the entrance to the recreation spaces in the south wing in c.2011.

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10. Hallmark Square
Barnes, Edward Larrabee
Photos 1, 6

Contributing Site
1973

The approximately one-acre Hallmark Square designed landscape was created circa 1973 upon the completion of the Crown Center Shops (#9) to the west and the Crown Center Square (#6) to the north (*Photo 6*). Hallmark Square sits on top of the Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3). The vacated E. 25th Street (#31), an east-west street that connects to Pershing Road, terminates at the east side of Hallmark Square. Hallmark Square is accessible to the public and provides access to the Hallmark headquarters buildings (#1-2) (*Photo 1*). The rectangular square has a circular asphalt-paved driveway. The center of the driveway has an oval-shaped island with brick pavers, granite curbing, and two flagpoles in the center. The edges of the square surrounding the driveway have concrete paving with inlaid brick-paved sections containing planted trees. Pedestrians can access the Crown Center Square (#6) from the northeast corner of Hallmark Square. A terrace with two flights of stairs leads from Hallmark Square down to Crown Center Square, allowing for pedestrians to walk among the two squares. A metal canopy at the south edge of the square creates a sheltered walkway between the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) and the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2). There are no alterations to this site.

11. *Shiva*
Alexander Calder
Photos 18, 19

Contributing Object
1965, 1974, 1987

Alexander Calder's *Shiva* is a painted steel sculpture placed approximately 90 feet southwest of the intersection of Pershing Road and Grand Boulevard, on the grounds of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) (*Photo 18*). The sculpture is set back from the corner on a small rectangular, flat green lawn, close to the northeast corner of the Crown Center Hotel. Deciduous trees line the north and east perimeters of the lawn. Low shrubs surround a low monument sign for the Crown Center Hotel at the north end of the lawn. Public sidewalks line the north and east perimeters of the flat lawn. Alexander Calder's *Shiva* was created in 1965; Hallmark Cards acquired the sculpture in 1974 for beautification of the Crown Center Square (#6). *Shiva* was originally located at the northwest corner of the square until it was moved to its current location in 1987 to accommodate the construction of the 2405 Grand office building (#12). *Shiva* is a stabile, or a non-kinetic sculpture. The six-legged sculpture is painted a red hue that is a signature color of the artist (*Photo 19*). The sculpture is eighteen feet tall and twenty-two feet long. Depth and width of the sculpture is created by the intersections of its steel components. Other than moving the sculpture, no alterations have been made to this object.

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12. 2405 Grand at Crown Center Square
2405 Grand Boulevard
Modern Movement: Postmodern
Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum
Photos 4, 5, 7

Non-Contributing Building
1987
McCarthy Construction Co.

The fourteen-story 2405 Grand office building is located near the southeast corner of the intersection of Grand Boulevard and Pershing Road (*Photo 7*). The primary entrance is on the south elevation and oriented towards Crown Center Square (#6) (*Photo 4*). A concrete sidewalk with small planted trees abuts the west elevation of the building. The Link (#13), a glass and metal pedestrian skywalk, abuts the north elevation of the building and, along with the enclosed open space below, fills the space between this building and the adjacent Grand Avenue Bank and Trust Building (#5) to the north. The fourteen-story, 232,000-square-foot building has a rectangular footprint, a concrete foundation, and a prominent, square-shaped penthouse with a standing-seam metal clad pyramidal roof. The first two stories are clad with pink granite panels. The upper stories are clad with pink-tinted precast concrete panels. Fenestration is tinted, metal-framed, fixed glazing. The first floor of the south elevation has eleven bays. The three center bays contain the recessed primary entrance. The entrance is comprised of a glass and metal window wall with a glazed revolving door flanked by double-leaf glazed, chrome-plated metal-framed doors. Granite panels frame the entrance and are cut to mimic voussoirs. Two-story granite-clad square piloti flank the entrance and support the third level. The fourth through the tenth floors on the south elevation are nine bays wide, with a wide center bay containing a ribbon window. The outer bays each contain a fixed three-over-three metal-framed window, with tall upper lights and short lower lights. The windows are set within a grid of granite panels. Above the tenth story to the roof, the center bay becomes a glass and metal window wall that expands from the center bay outward towards the edge of the building as the bays in the grid step outward with each story (*Photo 5*). The north elevation is identical to the south elevation. The east and west elevations have the two-story pink granite base. The third through twelfth stories have seven bays, each containing a fixed three-over-three metal-framed windows with tall upper lights and short lower lights. A grid of granite panels frames the window bays. Above the twelfth story, there are two outer bays flanking the glass and metal window wall that continues around from the north and south elevations. A one-story penthouse with a pyramidal roof extends from the center of the building. There have been no exterior alterations to this building. The building retains integrity but is non-contributing because it was constructed outside the period of significance.

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13. The Link

Non-Contributing Structure

No Style

1988

Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership

Photos 9, 18, 19

The glass and steel elevated pedestrian skywalk called The Link is 880 feet long and raised approximately twenty feet off the ground, with its southwest end located at the east elevation of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) (*Photo 18*). The south portion of The Link curves across Grand Boulevard and runs between 2405 Grand (#12) and the Grand Avenue Bank and Trust Building (#5) (*Photo 19*). An atrium is formed in the space underneath The Link between the two buildings. The Link then turns north, running between the east elevation of the Grand Avenue Bank and Trust Building (#5) and the west elevation of the Pershing Road Office Building (#4), then crosses Pershing Road and curves to the northeast. The Link's northeast end is located at the southwest corner of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, outside the District boundary (*Photo 9*). The Link has a triangular shape with eighteen-foot sides comprised of green solar glass panes and painted steel beams. The floor of the link has concrete cladding visible on the underside of the structure. Metal beams on circular concrete bases support the structure. Only the portion of The Link within the District boundary is counted in the nomination. There have not been any alterations to this structure. This structure retains integrity but is non-contributing because it was constructed outside the period of significance.

14. Union Station Link

Non-Contributing Structure

Ehrenkrantz Eckstut & Kuhn

2000

The approximately 810-foot-long Union Station Link is an elevated glass and metal pedestrian skywalk. The southeast end of the Union Station Link originates at a pair of glazed doors that fill a historic punched opening in the west elevation of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) lobby, located in the northwest corner of the District. The Union Station Link travels north through the west side of Washington Square Park, a five-acre public park outside the District, and then crosses west over Main Street. The bridge ends at the east elevation of Union Station, located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Pershing Road and Main Street. The portion of the Union Station Link that is north of Pershing Road is outside of the Crown Center Historic District.

The pedestrian skywalk consists of flat-roofed enclosed spans connected by cylindrical drum columns containing stairs or elevators. Each drum column has a shallow conical roof. The bases of the drum columns and the spans feature limestone trim. The structure is supported by painted steel beams and girders and the sides of the skywalk feature fixed glazed window walls. The roof of the skywalk spans and drum columns is clad with silver zinc decking. The interior of the skywalk is climate-controlled and lighted. Informational signage is located inside the drum columns. There have been no alterations to this structure. This structure retains integrity but is non-contributing because it was constructed outside the period of significance.

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15. Hallmark Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage
2650 Gillham Road

Non-Contributing Building

Modern Movement: Late Modern

1980, 1985

Barnes, Edward Larrabee (1980)

Marshall & Brown (1980)

Davis, Brody & Associates (1985)

Photos 1, 13, 14

The Hallmark Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage occupies a roughly five-acre parcel at the southeast corner of the District. The terrain rises fifty feet from west to east, exposing the west elevation of the parking garage. The Hallmark Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage consists of a six-story parking garage constructed in 1980 with the two-level office and creative laboratory space, constructed in 1985, on top (*Photo 1*). Five levels of the garage are above ground in the west portion of the building while the east portion is below grade due to the sharply rising terrain (*Photo 14*). The south elevation illustrates the steep rise in the grade that conceals the lowest levels. The garage has parking for approximately 1,700 vehicles. The visible elevations of the garage show the reinforced concrete frame with open bays filled with vertical wood slats for ventilation. The garage is accessed from vehicular entrances to the second level in the center of the west elevation and to the top level at the east end of the south elevation. An exit ramp from the lowest level is located at the west end of the north elevation.

The two-level innovation center rises from the top of the garage. The first level of the Innovation Center has a slightly smaller floor plate than the garage below. The second level, situated at the east half of the building, is less than half the floor area of the first level. The Hallmark Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage is internally connected to the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) at the northwest end of the building through a corridor that tops the multi-story elevator and stair core built in 1980 to span the vacated E. 26th Street, between the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) and this building. Because this connector was constructed with the parking garage, it is considered part of the Rice Innovation Center resource, not a separate resource.

The roof is flat. The north elevation of the first level of the Innovation Center is clad with precast concrete square panels laid in a grid with wide, deep joints. The panels are interspersed with fixed, square-shaped windows with reflective glass. A metal-framed reflective glass ribbon window is above. The east elevation is set back from the roadway behind a landscaped lawn. The first and second floors are aligned and feature a slight curvature (*Photo 13*). The elevation is clad with precast concrete panels and both levels have a ribbon window with reflective glass. The first level of the Innovation Center, at the south elevation, is clad with corrugated metal siding. At the east end of the elevation are three vehicular loading bays. Thin reflective glass ribbon windows interspersed with square fixed windows are along the remainder of the elevation

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to the west. The north and south elevations of the smaller second level have metal-framed window walls with reflective glass, while the west elevation has corrugated metal siding interspersed with reflective glass windows. The grade drops steeply immediately west of the loading dock.

The drop in grade exposes four levels of the five-level concrete parking garage on the south elevation. The concrete structural grid of the façade includes continuous vertical elements while the horizontal bands project outward from the façade at each bay between the vertical components. The bays that are partially exposed by the changing grade are infilled with concrete. A panel composed of stained wood slats fills each bay. The top (sixth) level of the garage has twenty full bays. The three bays at the east end have overhead metal garage doors for three vehicular entrances. The remaining seventeen bays have the wood-slat panels. The fifth level of the garage has twelve full bays, all with wood slats. The fourth level has eight bays and the third level has four bays.

On the west elevation, the slope continues down, exposing the lowest level of the garage at the north end. The upper four levels have twenty-five bays, each containing wood slats, except for the three center bays on the third level, which are infilled with concrete. The three bays below this on the second level are open as the garage entrance. The second level has eleven full bays on the north end of the entrance and eleven partial bays infilled with concrete on the south end of the entrance. Only a small portion of the first level is visible at the north end of the façade.

The north elevation of the garage is three bays wide. The westernmost bay at each level is open with wood slats. The two remaining bays at each level are infilled with concrete, except at the lowest level, which has an open vehicular entrance two bays wide. The westernmost bay contains a single pedestrian entrance with a metal slab door.

Alterations to this building include the 1985 construction of the Rice Innovation Center on top of the 1980 Parking Garage. This building retains integrity but is non-contributing because it was constructed outside the period of significance.

16. Hallmark McGee Bldg Corporate Entrance & Parking Lot Non-Contributing Structure
Modern Movement: Postmodern
Barnes, Edward Larrabee **1982**
Marshall & Brown **J.E. Dunn Construction Co.**
Photo 11

The Hallmark McGee Building Corporate Entrance Parking Lot abuts the east and south sides of the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1). The Hallmark McGee Building Corporate Entrance Parking Lot was constructed in 1982 corresponding to a rehabilitation of the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building's (#1) corporate entrance, located on the east façade of the

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south wing of the building (*Photo 11*). The asphalt-paved parking lot is approximately 2.2 acres and is accessed by two asphalt-paved drives from Gillham Road. Lawns with low bushes and a sidewalk frame the north and west sides of the parking lot. The rectangular parking lot has approximately 100 spaces that flank five interspersed landscaped medians with granite curbing. The median that aligns with the barrel vault of the corporate entrance is larger and features a 150-foot-long rectangular pool of water with terraced levels and granite walls (*Photo 11*). At the west end of the pool in front of the entrance, a circular basin contains a fountain with multiple jets (#30). This fountain was constructed with the parking lot and is therefore a non-contributing object. Low, manicured shrubs line the pool. The remaining medians feature grass with manicured shrubs and trees in formal rows. Streetlamps are interspersed throughout the parking lot. A pink-tinted concrete sidewalk with granite curbing lines the edges of the parking lot. There have been no alterations to this structure. This structure retains integrity but is non-contributing because it was constructed outside the period of significance.

17. *Bringing the Pieces Together*
Gordon MacKenzie
Photo 13

Non-Contributing Object
1986

Gordon MacKenzie's *Bringing the Pieces Together* was designed in 1986 and commissioned by Hallmark Cards to be placed on the grounds of the Hallmark Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage (#15). The sculpture is comprised of two separate pieces constructed of Cor-Ten steel, which is designed to rust (*Photo 13*). The south piece is one puzzle piece that is 76 by 168 by 24 inches. The north piece has two stacked, interlocking puzzle pieces and is 182 by 148 by 30 inches. Each piece sits on a shallow concrete base. The sculpture is placed approximately 180 feet northwest of the intersection of E. 27th Street and Gillham Road, on the grounds of the Hallmark Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage (#15). The area contains a rectangular strip of grass lawn with several varieties of deciduous and coniferous trees irregularly dispersed throughout the site. The site is relatively flat with concrete sidewalks lining the east and west perimeters. There have been no alterations to this object. This object retains integrity but is non-contributing because it was constructed outside the period of significance.

18. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church
2554 Gillham Road
Late Victorian: Romanesque Revival
Brinkman, Henry W.
Photos 12, 16

Non-Contributing Building
1923
Gosche, Nichols F.

The Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church and the associated rectory (#19) sit on an approximately 1.3-acre parcel situated at the northwest corner of the intersection of East 26th Street and Gillham Road, surrounded by Hallmark, Inc. property (*Photo 16*). The Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church was designed by Henry Brinkman and completed in 1923 in the

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Romanesque Revival style. The primary façade of the church faces east onto Gillham Road. The church is constructed of brick with stone and terra cotta accents and features a front-gabled central mass flanked by a 146-foot-tall square tower to the south and a shorter, 77-foot-tall square tower to the north (*Photo 12*). The towers have hipped roofs. Red clay tile clads the roof of the central mass and the towers. The primary entrance on the east elevation is recessed within a one-story, flat-roofed loggia featuring three round arches supported by granite columns with Corinthian capitals and stone bases. The entrance has three sets of double-leaf wood doors with stained glass fanlights. The entablature above the loggia is accented with terra cotta and has an engraved frieze that reads "CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS" topped with dentils and a balustrade. The upper half-story of the sanctuary is articulated with a terra cotta and stained glass rose window. Brick corbeling and terra cotta coping accents the cornice. Round arch stained glass windows are within the towers and along the secondary elevations of the church. The south tower features brick diapering and two open belfries with round arch openings supported with stone Corinthian columns. The cornice of the lower belfry features terra cotta ornamentation and dentils. The opening of the upper belfry has a Palladian design. The shorter north tower has a belfry with round arches and stone Corinthian columns and a dentiled terra cotta cornice.

The Latin Cross-shaped building has a long gabled nave with two lower cross-gables towards the west end of the building. West of the towers, the north and south elevations each have four tall round-arched stained-glass windows. The north and south elevations of the cross-gabled wings have tall round-arched stained-glass windows with a rose window at the top of the arch. These features exemplify the Romanesque Revival style. The west elevation has no fenestration in the main part of the church, only in the one-story section that extends from the lowest level of the church.

There have been no exterior alterations to this building. This building retains integrity but is non-contributing because it did not have a direct association with Hallmark or Crown Center during the period of significance. The parcel that contains the Church and the Rectory (#19) is not in the original 1967 Crown Center Redevelopment Area (*Figure 11*). This building may be eligible for individual listing in the National Register under a separate context.

19. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Rectory
2554 Gillham Road
Postmodern
Barnes, Edward Larrabee
Marshall & Brown
Photo 16

Non-Contributing Building
1982
J.E. Dunn Construction Co.

The 1.5-story rectory has approximately 3,000 square feet and was constructed in 1982 and designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes with Marshall & Brown. It has a rectangular footprint and

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is located with its longer east and west elevations parallel to Gillham Road. It is set back from Gillham Road and connected to the church by a pergola with brick square piers and wood slats. The rectory has brick veneer cladding and a shallow hipped roof (*Photo 16*). The upper half-story at the north end of the rectory has a slightly higher-pitched hipped roof. The roof is clad with red clay tiles. The entrance is at the south end of the east elevation. Evenly spaced windows along the east elevation are one-over-two with metal frames. A wide brick chimney rises from the north elevation. There have been no exterior alterations to this building. This building retains integrity but is non-contributing because it is not associated with the areas of significance that apply to the District.

20. Grand Boulevard
Photos 2, 7, 9, 17, 18

Contributing Structure
c.1900, 1990

Grand Boulevard is a public road that bisects the District from north to south, between Crown Center Hotel (#8) and Crown Center Shops (#9) on the west and Crown Center Square (#6), the northeast office buildings, and the Hallmark Headquarters buildings on the east (*Photo 2*). The elevated east wing of the Crown Center Shops spans Grand Boulevard at the southwest corner of the District (*Photo 17*) while the Link (#13) spans Grand Boulevard on the north side of the District (*Photo 18*). Grand Boulevard connects the River Market area, which was the original commercial center of Kansas City, through the Central Business District and the Crossroads, to the Crown Center Redevelopment Area (*Photo 9*), where it terminates in a westward turn into Main Street one block south of Crown Center. From the Central Business District southward, Grand Boulevard is a four-lane thoroughfare, roughly sixty-five to seventy feet wide. It is a divided street with a low concrete median only in the portion of the road that runs through the District (*Photo 7*). Concrete public sidewalks line Grand Boulevard. Grand Boulevard retains its historic alignment through the District, which pre-dates the presence of Hallmark. The street was named Grand Avenue until the City of Kansas City passed Ordinance No. 900446 in 1990 to designate this stretch of the road, from Main Street to the Missouri River Levee Road, as part of the Kansas City park and boulevard system and rename it with the appropriate title. The ordinance acknowledges that the change in designation for this street originated in the City's 1983 Plan for Parks, Boulevards and Parkways and its 1988 Grand/Main Corridor Plan. This resource is contributing because it was incorporated into the development plan in 1967.

21. Skywalk between #1 and #4
Photo 10

Non-Contributing Structure
c.1991

A narrow enclosed, elevated pedestrian bridge spans the vacated E. 25th Street to connect the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) and the Pershing Road Office Building (#4) (*Photo 10*). The skywalk has metal panels cladding the base of the span with glazed panels and a fully glazed gabled roof above. Cylindrical concrete posts support the span on either side of the

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street. There have been no alterations to this structure. It retains integrity but was constructed outside the period of significance and is therefore non-contributing.

22. Skywalk Between #9 and #2
Photo 10

Non-Contributing Structure
c.2003

A narrow enclosed, elevated pedestrian bridge spans the vacated E. 25th Street to connect the open walkway on the south side of the Crown Center Shops (#9) to the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2) (*Photo 10, in the background beneath #21*). The fully glazed skywalk has a flat metal roof. Cylindrical steel tube trusses support the spans. The skywalk retains integrity but was constructed outside the period of significance and is therefore non-contributing.

23. Skywalk Between #2 and 2555 Grand Blvd
Photo 16

Non-Contributing Structure
c.2003

A narrow enclosed, elevated pedestrian bridge from the southwest corner of the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2) crosses outside the boundary of the District to connect to the Shook, Hardy & Bacon Building at 2555 Grand Boulevard (2003), which is outside the District boundaries (*Photo 16*). The fully glazed skywalk has a flat metal roof. Cylindrical steel tube trusses support the spans. This span has a single ground support where four tube steel members connect to a single concrete foundation below the center of the span. The skywalk retains integrity but was constructed outside the period of significance and is therefore non-contributing.

24. Crown Center Square Southeast Fountain
25. Crown Center Square Center-East Fountain
26. Crown Center Square Center Fountain
2425 Grand Boulevard (Crown Center Square)
Barnes, Edward Larrabee
Photos 1, 4, 7

Contributing Object
Contributing Object
Contributing Object
1973
Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.

At the west edge of Crown Center Square (#6), fronting an approximately 100-foot-long portion of Grand Boulevard, is a square-shaped, level fountain with an underground reservoir topped by pavers with alternating hues in a checkerboard pattern and forty-nine water jets that shoot streams of water up to sixty feet high (#26) (*Photo 4 and 7*). A metal handrail and spaced granite benches surround the fountain. Another long, rectangular fountain (#25) oriented north-south is located directly east of the other fountain (*Photos 1 and 7*). It has a rectangular basin with five jets that empty water down into a rectangular basin below, creating a short waterfall. The base of the waterfall basin is edged with a granite kneewall. A third rectangular fountain (#24), is located at the southeast corner of Crown Center Square, immediately east of the Ice Terrace (#7) (*Photo 1*). The third fountain is a simple rectangle with five jets. The three fountains

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are contributing objects, as they were part of the original design for the landscaped plaza. The fountain basins are edged with large-aggregate concrete.

27. Crown Center Shops East Fountain **Non-Contributing Object**
2450 Grand Boulevard
Marshall & Brown **2000**
Photos 2, 4

Identical sections of a rectangular fountain (#27), constructed in 2000, flank the primary entrance to the Crown Center Shops (#9) and are connected beneath the paved walkway to the entrance (*Photos 2 and 4*). This fountain was constructed outside the period of significance and is therefore non-contributing.

28. Crown Center Hotel Rear Garden; Swimming Pool **Contributing Site; Structure**
1 East Pershing Road
Modern Movement: Brutalism **1973**
Harry Weese & Associates **Eldridge & Sons Construction Co.**
Photo 8

This description includes two distinct resources, a contributing site (rear garden) and structure (swimming pool). The designed landscape in the area southwest of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) guest room tower includes a circular recessed pool area and a grass lawn. The recessed concrete pool area is an original design feature (*Photo 8*). Planter beds with tall evergreen shrubs line the raised northeast part of the curved pool area. Planter beds with low deciduous shrubs line the southwest part of the curved pool area. A grass lawn with a curving concrete pedestrian path fills the space surrounding the pool. Deciduous and evergreen trees are interspersed throughout the grass lawn, although there are denser concentrations of trees along the perimeter of the landscaped area. The D-shaped pool is concrete with a set of circular steps centered at the southwest end. A small tunnel at the east end of the pool connects to a zero-entry entrance within the building. This provides a sheltered entrance to the heated pool.

29. Enclosed walkway between #9 and San Francisco Tower **Non-Contributing Structure**
2450 Grand Boulevard
Modern Movement: Brutalism **1976**
Norman Fletcher, The Architects Collaborative

An enclosed walkway (#29), constructed in conjunction with the San Francisco Tower in 1976, sits atop the entrance to the Crown Center Shops (#9) parking garage. The walkway contains a pair of metal slab doors that connect the third level of the parking garage to a hallway in the San Francisco Tower, which is outside the District boundary. The walkway is concrete on the bottom and west sides. An aluminum-framed glazed wall spans the east side of the walkway and

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angles eastward at the top to connect to the concrete wall. The walkway is non-contributing because it was constructed in conjunction with the San Francisco Tower in 1976, outside the period of significance.

30. Hallmark McGee Building Corporate Entrance Fountain **Non-Contributing Object**
Barnes, Edward Larrabee **1982**
Marshall & Brown **J.E. Dunn Construction Co.**
Photo 11

Within the Hallmark McGee Building Corporate Entrance & Parking Lot (#16), the median that aligns with the barrel vault of the corporate entrance features a 150-foot-long rectangular pool of water with terraced levels and granite walls (*Photo 11*). At the west end of the pool in front of the entrance, a circular basin contains a fountain with multiple jets. This fountain was constructed with the parking lot and is therefore a non-contributing object.

31. East 25th Street (vacated) **Contributing Structure**
Photo 10 **1967**

This contributing structure is a segment of the vacated East 25th Street, roughly 450 feet long from Pershing Road on the east to Hallmark Square (#10) on the west (*Photo 10*). Concrete sidewalks line the asphalt paved street. A c.1991 enclosed skywalk (#21) spans the vacated East 25th Street between Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) and Pershing Road Office Building (#4). The street was terminated and vacated as part of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan in 1967.

INTEGRITY

The Crown Center Historic District retains excellent integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It clearly communicates its significance as a large-scale mixed-use redevelopment project designed in accordance with a prepared plan. There have not been any major changes to the individual resources or the District overall that compromise its integrity. Alterations to siding and windows, common in early-twentieth century historic districts, has not occurred in the Crown Center Historic District. The most common alterations are the additions of non-historic canopies at main entrances, which has occurred in three locations (Crown Center Hotel (#8) and Crown Center Shops (#9) entrances to each wing). This does not compromise integrity because the buildings are so large that this is a relatively small alteration by comparison, and it does not impact the ability of the building to communicate its historic function and association with the Redevelopment Plan. Entrances are also slightly altered where non-historic skywalks are added. This does not compromise the integrity of the District because skywalks were discussed in the original 1967 plan as resources that could be constructed in the Redevelopment Area. The District remains in its original

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location on the south edge of downtown Kansas City, one mile from the central business district. Its **setting** remains intact, with the monumental Union Station and Liberty Memorial structures outside the boundary to the west, medium-density commercial areas outside the boundary to the north, dense hospital complexes outside the boundary to the east, and predominantly residential neighborhoods outside the boundary to the south and east. Main Street and Gillham Road on the east and west sides of the District still function as primary commercial thoroughfares connecting downtown to Midtown. Grand Boulevard terminates at Main Street two blocks south of the District.

The Crown Center Historic District retains integrity of **design**, specifically as it embodies the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, approved in 1967 and amended through 1974 to focus on the construction of the commercial and recreational resources in demand at the time. Crown Center Square (#6) forms the heart of the redevelopment area, a recreational resource around which office, retail, and hotel buildings rise. Each of the resources in the District, including the Hallmark Headquarters buildings (#1 and #2), orients itself towards the Square to frame this large public gathering space. The Hallmark Headquarters buildings are integral to the design of the District, both physically and contextually. One resource is non-contributing because it does not relate to the context for which the Crown Center Historic District is significant. The Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church (1923) pre-dates any of Hallmark's improvements to the area and retains its historic religious function and architectural integrity. The individual resources within the District also retain integrity of design. Alterations to these resources have been limited to building interiors, as Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation intended when they planned speculative office and retail space. While interior configurations and finishes have been refreshed and updated to meet tenant needs, these alterations do not impact the ability of the resources to communicate their historic function and association with the larger District. Other than the church, mentioned above, the resources identified as non-contributing are designated as such due to disassociation with the District's context rather than a loss of integrity due to alterations.

The District and its component resources, including the Crown Center Hotel, which is nominated individually under Criterion C for Architecture, retain integrity of **materials**, documenting the range of quintessential materials used for mid- to late-twentieth century buildings and landscapes, specifically concrete, metal, and glass. The **workmanship** of these buildings is demonstrated by their simple geometric forms, the textured and smooth concrete work, stripped of ornament to highlight the high quality of construction, particularly for the Brutalist buildings. Workmanship is also visible in the arrangement of buildings and site to execute the plan and create defined spaces, such as Crown Center Square and Hallmark Square around which the buildings are oriented.

Crown Center Historic District retains integrity of **feelings** and **associations** that communicate its significance as a large-scale planned development. Buildings and structures completely

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encircle Crown Center Square and Hallmark Square to communicate the historic commercial and recreational functions of these open spaces as the heart of the redevelopment area. Although Grand Boulevard passes through the District, elevated pedestrian walkways (contributing and non-contributing resources) span the road, further enclosing Crown Center Square and uniting the resources that orient towards it. Crown Center Historic District communicates a distinct sense of place and retains the feelings and associations of a planned redevelopment project.

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SUMMARY

The Crown Center Historic District (District) is eligible at the local level under National Register Criterion A for exceptional significance in the area of COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT. Within the District, one resource is exceptionally significant under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. The District encompasses the commercial and recreational resources that were prioritized in the initial building campaign of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan (Redevelopment Plan or Plan), between 1967, when it was adopted, and when it was amended in 1974. Hallmark Cards, Inc. (Hallmark) developed and privately funded this mixed-use urban community clustered around the company's headquarters. The collection of historic resources encompassed within the District dramatically altered the local built environment, providing new office space, a large retail shopping center, and a luxury hotel, all focused around two interconnected and landscaped public squares (*Figure 4*). The Redevelopment Plan was successful in revitalizing the declining commercial area it was designed to replace, in making it a destination for visitors and employers, as exhibited in the continued occupancy of the buildings. The initial building campaign that focused on commercial and recreational resources was successful in spurring additional public and private investment inside and outside the boundaries of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area, including the construction of office buildings, the restoration and revitalization of Union Station, and eventually the construction of the Streetcar line. The resources in the District are significant as the cohesive core of Crown Center that fully communicate its multi-use function and intentionally designed public spaces. All subsequent construction in the Crown Center Redevelopment Area was an extension of the first building campaign that was built out from but did not alter this well-defined core. The Hallmark Corporation, as the driving force behind this investment, focused the development around its headquarters; the resources that comprise the Hallmark headquarters are included in the District boundary. The periods of significance for the District are 1955-1958 and 1966-1974, both associated with the Community Planning & Development area of significance. The first period of significance begins in 1955 when the Hallmark Corporation constructed a new building to house its administrative and manufacturing facilities; it ends in 1958 with completion of the ninth story of the new building. Completion of this first construction campaign illustrated the commitment of the Hallmark Corporation to maintaining its headquarters in downtown Kansas City and influencing the development around it. The second period of significance begins when construction resumed in 1966 with the expansion of the headquarters buildings. This period of significance includes the clearance of land; the preparation, presentation, and acceptance of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan by the City Council in 1967, a significant date; and the construction of the buildings that form the central commercial and recreational core of Crown Center, beginning in 1969. The second period of significance ends in 1974 with completion of resources most in demand as the first building campaign of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan. While residential buildings were part of the original plan, the lack of demand for these resources due to the rise of the suburbs, meant that the residential resources, the scope of which was formally scaled back through an amendment

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to the plan in 1974, were constructed several years after the commercial and recreational resources in the initial building campaign. Thus, the 1976 Santa Fe Apartments and San Francisco Tower are not included in the boundary for the District. The District meets Criteria Consideration G; it is exceptionally significant at the local level as a successful plan that revitalized not just the Hallmark/Crown Center property, but spurred independent redevelopment that has created a thriving commercial center and visitor destination.

The Crown Center Hotel (#8) is exceptionally significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE as a significant example of master architect Harry Weese's designs and as a significant example of the Brutalist style in Kansas City. Although this resource cannot be nominated as an individual resource due to its interconnectedness to the Crown Center Shops (#9), the design of the Crown Center Hotel stands apart from the other resources in the District; within the context of the District, it can be evaluated independently for its architectural significance. The luxury hotel was designed by Chicago-based master architect Harry Weese as a highly-visible component of Crown Center. Completed in 1973, Weese designed the Crown Center Hotel in the Brutalist style, reflected through the building's monumental massing, bold geometric angles, reinforced concrete frame, rough-faced ribbed-concrete panel cladding on the exterior and interior, and deeply recessed windows. The manner in which Weese addressed the natural seventy-foot-tall limestone bluff at the southwest corner of the site further distinguishes the design. The bluff physically elevates the monumental massing of the building, and its north face is exposed in the hotel lobby, styled as a tropical garden. The Crown Center Hotel is one of Kansas City's best examples of the Brutalist style and is unparalleled in the city for its distinct incorporation of the natural landscape. The American Institute of Architects awarded the Crown Center Hotel its prestigious "Distinguished Building" title, praising Weese's design for its attention and adaptation to the natural landscape.⁵ Dr. Robert Bruegmann, Professor Emeritus of Art History, Architecture, and Urban Planning at the University of Illinois - Chicago and author of *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, assessed the Crown Center Hotel as "a spectacular invention," noting that the Crown Center Hotel was set apart from Weese's other Brutalist buildings by "the extraordinary relationship with site, both on the exterior and the rock wall on the interior."⁶ The rear landscaped area with the hotel pool (#28) is an integral part of the design and is therefore also associated with the architectural significance of the Crown Center Hotel. The period of significance of the Crown Center Hotel is 1973, the year construction was completed. The hotel is not yet fifty years of age, but meets Criteria Consideration G for listing, as it is exceptionally significant at the local level as an outstanding and distinct example of the Brutalist style in Kansas City, Missouri and as a significant example of the work of master architect Harry Weese. The Crown Center Hotel retains integrity to communicate its exceptional architectural significance.

⁵ Dr. Robert Bruegmann and Kathleen Murphy Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010), 166.

⁶ Dr. Robert Bruegmann, e-mail message to author, December 19, 2017.

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ELABORATION

HALLMARK CARDS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CROWN CENTER

The history and significance of the Crown Center Historic District are inextricably linked to the Hallmark Corporation and its founder Joyce Clyde (J.C.) Hall. The growth of the latter guided and determined the development of the former. J.C. Hall, the entrepreneur who built Hallmark Cards into an international greeting card company, was born in David City, Nebraska, in 1889.⁷ With an ambitious eye towards starting his own postcard wholesaling business, the young J.C. Hall moved to Kansas City, Missouri, in 1910; his brother and business partner, Rollie followed within one year.⁸ The brothers, sensing that the postcard collecting craze was on the decline, decided to diversify into greeting cards. As the company expanded its distribution network and increased production, it rapidly outgrew each facility it rented.⁹ In 1923, Hall decided to construct a new building to house the greeting card company. The new building's location at the southeast corner of the intersection of 26th Street and Grand Avenue, one mile south of downtown Kansas City, was selected by a vote of the Hall Brothers' employees.¹⁰ The company, still officially called Hall Brothers, also began using the "Hallmark Cards" logo on their inventory in the late 1920s.¹¹

J.C. Hall remained at the helm of the 300-person company while incorporating more executive talent and creating specialized departments. This led to product innovations such as the greeting card display rack and licensing deals with pop culture characters like Mickey Mouse, which sparked relationships between Hall and others who were envisioning large-scale building projects, like Walt Disney.¹² The continually-growing company was again in need of larger facilities. In 1936, J.C. Hall purchased the 240,000-square-foot, six-story Willys-Overland Building, located approximately one block north of the Hall Brothers facility at 26th Street and Grand Avenue (*Figure 7*).¹³ The Willys-Overland Building, constructed in 1916 as an automobile factory and sales building, occupied roughly one city block and was situated south of 25th Street between Grand Avenue and McGee Street (*Figure 8*). After a year-long renovation, the company effectively doubled its operating space, which allowed the company to increase its employees to eight hundred.¹⁴ Hall Brothers emerged from the war years as a recognized

⁷ Patrick Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring* (Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing), 8.

⁸ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 27.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 44-45, 48. Hall's company was in the Starr Piano Building at 1025 Grand Avenue prior to relocating to the Meyer Building at 1114 Grand Avenue. Neither of these buildings is extant.

¹⁰ Although the location of this building is within the boundaries of the proposed historic district, the building at 26th and Grand Avenue is no longer extant. It was demolished as part of the Crown Center Redevelopment Project.

¹¹ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 57.

¹² *Ibid.*, 66-67.

¹³ *Kansas City Star*, "A new Hall Bros. home," January 16, 1936. This building was enlarged and re-clad to become Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2).

¹⁴ *Kansas City Star*, "A new Hall Bros. home," January 16, 1936; Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 72-73.

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leader in the greeting card industry. In 1954, the company name officially changed from Hall Brothers to Hallmark Cards, incorporating the ubiquitous crown logo.¹⁵

HALLMARK HEADQUARTERS EXPANSION

By 1950, Hallmark Cards (Hallmark) employed over 2,000 people and produced more than one million cards per day.¹⁶ Hallmark had once again outgrown its headquarters building and needed larger facilities to keep pace with growth. To that end, in 1950 J.C. Hall purchased seven and one-half acres of undeveloped land on the east side of McGee Street between 25th and 26th streets.¹⁷ The newly-acquired site, located directly east of the existing Hallmark facilities in the Willys-Overland Building, consisted of steep, hilly terrain that was generally considered unfeasible to develop due to excavation and grading costs. J.C. Hall envisioned an expansion of the Hallmark facilities through the construction of a new building on the site that would connect to the Willys-Overland Building via a bridge over McGee Street. He hired Los Angeles architect Welton Becket, principal of Welton Becket & Associates, to design the new headquarters facility.

Hallmark's new \$8 million headquarters (#1, *Figure 45*), completed by the end of 1955, Becket's distinct design featured a 760,000-square-foot Modern Movement building constructed of reinforced concrete and a glass, porcelain enamel panel, and aluminum curtain wall.¹⁸ The new headquarters building was connected to the former headquarters building by a two-story enclosed bridge elevated thirty feet above McGee Street.¹⁹ Together, the two buildings constituted the Hallmark Headquarters, with the new 1955 building, called the Hallmark McGee Building (#1), housed the administrative, creative, and manufacturing departments while the former headquarters in the Willys-Overland Building, now called the Hallmark Grand Building (#2), housed the storage and distribution operations (*Figure 9*). A small landscaped park was placed at the northwest entrance to the Hallmark McGee Building. The Kansas City architectural firm Kivett & Myers & McCallum designed a ninth floor for the Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building in 1958, indicating that Hallmark continued to improve its facilities as needed.²⁰

In 1966, Hallmark hired architects Kivett & Myers with Marshall & Brown to remodel and extensively enlarge the Hallmark Grand Building to be more visually compatible with the Hallmark McGee Building. The firm also designed an addition to the Hallmark McGee Building.²¹ The work added a sixth story to the top of the Hallmark Grand Building, and a 700,000-square-foot, six-story addition to the south elevation to more than double the overall floor space of the

¹⁵ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 88-89.

¹⁶ *Kansas City Star*, "Hall's to build," March 24, 1950.

¹⁷ *Kansas City Star*, "Hall's to build," March 24, 1950.

¹⁸ *Kansas City Star*, "Hallmark card plant rises as a monument to design," January 2, 1955.

¹⁹ Hallmark Cards, Inc., "Welcome to the New Home of Hallmark Cards," Pamphlet, 1955. Hallmark Archives.

²⁰ Bryan Putnam, "Year-end brings occupancy of new Hallmark addition," Press Release, 1958. Hallmark Archives.

²¹ Fred Fitzsimmons, "Plan Hallmark plant addition," *Kansas City Star*, September 5, 1965.

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building. The entire Hallmark Grand Building was then re-clad with Modern Movement building materials, specifically precast concrete panels and metal fins. In addition to the improvements to the Hallmark Grand Building, the Hallmark McGee Building received a 330,000-square-foot, addition on its rear elevation. The project brought the total floorspace of the Hallmark Headquarters to more than 2,250,000 square feet, provided additional space for offices, production, and warehousing. Upon the completion of the expansion project in 1966, Hallmark occupied nearly eighteen acres in midtown Kansas City (*Figure 10*).

ENVISIONING CROWN CENTER – A PLAN DEVELOPS

In 1923, when J.C. Hall's growing greeting card company relocated its headquarters south of the central business district, the immediate area contained low- and mid-rise brick and concrete-frame buildings housing manufacturing, service, and warehousing functions, as well as some late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century residential resources south of Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building (#1) (*Figure 13*).²² The formal street grid was discontinued and the blocks were irregular in shape due to the uneven terrain. The Liberty Memorial in Penn Valley Park was under construction one block to the west atop a large hill. Union Station, opened in 1914 just north of the Liberty Memorial site at the bottom of the hill, was already a hub of passenger and freight rail activity. Rail lines cut an east-west swath through the valley between the hills and bluffs to the south and the gentle rise to the downtown commercial center on the bluff of the Missouri River to the north. Southeast of Union Station was a prominent natural limestone bluff nearly two thousand feet long and seventy feet high, spanning from Pershing Road south to 27th Street between Main Street and Grand Avenue (*Figure 14*). The Plaza Hotel and a row of one- to three-story brick and concrete-frame buildings stood at the north base of the bluff along 24th Street. By 1950, nearly all of the commercial buildings housed auto-related sales and service companies. A few one- and two-story frame houses were scattered throughout the area, primarily along Grand Avenue and concentrated in a two-block area between 26th and 27th streets, McGee Trafficway and Gillham Road (*Figure 13*). Occupants of these houses were white working-class individuals and small families; most of the occupants were renters while the few owner-occupied properties functioned as lodging houses.²³ Larger parcels of land north of the Hall Brothers building were undeveloped and contained surface parking lots. Not long after the company relocated its headquarters to the Willys-Overland Building at 25th Street and Grand Avenue in 1936, J.C. Hall slowly began acquiring adjacent available land. Hall's strategy was to protect his initial investment, stating, "We didn't want to wake up some morning with an undesirable operation in front of us."²⁴

In the ensuing years and particularly after the end of World War II, Kansas City experienced the nationwide trend of families and businesses leaving the city center for new suburban

²² Tuttle-Ayers-Woodward Company, *Atlas of Kansas City and Environs*, 1925.

²³ U.S. Decennial Census, 1940, Available at Ancestry.com (accessed March 18, 2019).

²⁴ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 176. It is unclear what sort of "undesirable operation" Hall meant,

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communities. Urban areas struggled with blighted buildings, population loss, and a decline in commercial vitality. J.C. Hall did not relocate his company to the growing fringes of Kansas City. Instead, Hall increased his company's urban foothold, opening a Hallmark retail store in 1950 in Kansas City's central business district and dramatically expanding the midtown headquarters complex in 1955.²⁵ Concurrently, Hall continued to acquire undeveloped real estate in the area adjoining the headquarters. By the mid-1950s, the surrounding blocks to the north, south, and west of the Hallmark headquarters were characterized by vacant buildings, used car lots, and a few aging residences due to post-war urban decline.²⁶ The prominent limestone bluff across from Union Station had become an epicenter for billboards, inspiring the nickname "Signboard Hill," and many – including J.C. Hall – viewed it as an unflattering eyesore.²⁷ Hall recounted that at this time, "I began thinking seriously about what we'd do about this property – something besides just protecting our own company's operations."²⁸ In 1958, Signboard Hill was put up for sale, and Hall purchased the land for \$225,000 with the idea that it would be a good site for a luxury hotel because of its proximity to Union Station.²⁹ In the following years, Hall continued purchasing surrounding parcels and further considered how they might be redeveloped. He later recalled, "We spent plenty of time studying it, and decided that we could do our neighborhood and Kansas City and its citizens some good."³⁰ In this slow but steady way, Hall's idea for a large redevelopment proposal surrounding the Hallmark headquarters, one mile south of the central business district, took hold and grew. It was this idea that would be realized as Crown Center within the next two decades.

J.C. Hall's goal was for Crown Center to be a catalyst for revitalization in Kansas City that would augment the downtown business district rather than compete with it. As Donald Hall, J.C. Hall's son who would succeed him as president of Hallmark Cards in 1966, recounted, "We wanted to give some real support to our downtown area, with a completely planned community, and we were content to see our financial returns coming along at a later time."³¹ In the spirit of civic responsibility, which paralleled self-interest in protecting a substantial investment, Hall wanted to curtail the epidemic of suburban flight by offering an urban alternative, hopefully leading to new investment in other areas of Kansas City.³² Another important component of the vision for Crown Center was the intention for it to be a mixed-use development. By providing a range of commercial (office, retail, and hotel), residential, and recreational functions, Crown Center

²⁵ Ibid, 114.

²⁶ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Kansas City, 1950, Volume 3, Sheets 342, 367, and 369, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library. These maps show the blocks within the boundary of the Crown Center Historic District as well as the blocks south of the southern boundary.

²⁷ Tom Yarbrough, "Kansas City's Crown Center: From Blight to Bright," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 16, 1973. Signboard Hill is in the Crown Center Historic District. It occupies the northwest corner of the District where the Crown Center Hotel (#8) now stands, and continues south of the District along Main Street to E. 27th Street.

²⁸ Yarbrough, "Kansas City's Crown Center."

²⁹ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 176; Yarbrough, "Kansas City's Crown Center."

³⁰ Yarbrough, "Kansas City's Crown Center."

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

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would be a “city within a city,” offering urban living and working spaces and serving as a hub of commerce and tourism.

J.C. Hall routinely consulted numerous movers and shakers in business, design, architecture, and urban planning as his vision for Crown Center took shape. One of Hall’s advisors was Walt Disney, who was planning his extensive network of amusement parks as Hall was developing the framework for Crown Center.³³ Donald Hall recalled a planning meeting between his father, Disney, and developer James Rouse, stating, “Disney had just purchased most of the land that would be home to EPCOT...Rouse was talking about the planned community he wanted to build outside of Baltimore, and Dad was talking about our plans. Each was envisioning his own way to build a new community.”³⁴ Hall also consulted with the prominent Modern Movement architect Edward Durrell Stone, who was designing the Hallmark Gallery on Fifth Avenue in New York City, architect I.M. Pei, and industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss.³⁵

Starting in 1958 and continuing through the 1960s, Larry Smith & Company of Seattle conducted economic feasibility studies (1962 and 1966) that forecasted Kansas City’s need for residential and office units to determine the types of buildings that would make up Crown Center.³⁶ Smith’s studies evaluated population trends throughout the Kansas City Metro Area, which included urban areas such as downtown Kansas City, Kansas and downtown Kansas City, Missouri, as well as suburban areas such as Johnson County, Kansas, as well as Clay, Cass, and Platte counties in Missouri. He further divided the geographic area of the study into the Inner Urban Area and the Suburban Area. The Inner Urban Area consisted of the west side of Kansas City, Missouri north of Linwood Boulevard (roughly 33rd Street) and the east side of the city north of 63rd Street, up to the Missouri River, using Troost Avenue as the dividing line between east and west (*Figure 46*). The Central Business District (CBD) is highlighted within the Inner Urban Area. The proposed Crown Center Redevelopment Area is also within the Inner Urban Area.³⁷ Smith then surveyed residential, commercial, and hotel projects from 1960 to 1966 to evaluate existing supply and project demand. The projected demand for multi-family housing units, based on Crown Center planning to meet 5 percent of the total share of demand, was a total of 2,900 units by 1985, with 1,300 units by 1975.³⁸ By contrast, the projections for office demand were underestimated. Smith conducted a similar evaluation of existing supply

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 102.

³⁵ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 177; Olga Gueft, “A Kansas City tycoon flouts the cynics with Crown Center,” *Interiors*, July 1973, 47.

³⁶ Larry Smith and Company, “Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Demand Analysis for Development Planning,” October 1, 1966; Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, “Crown Center: The Office Environment,” Pamphlet, n.d., 2. As will be discussed below, the actual population growth and distribution in the Kansas City metro area did not rise to the projected population growth and distribution, which resulted in the redesign of elements of the Plan, specifically, the substantial scaling back of new residential resources.

³⁷ Smith, “Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Demand Analysis for Development Planning,” iii.

³⁸ Smith, “Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Demand Analysis for Development Planning,” 11. As mentioned in the note above, the population growth did not continue as expected, therefore demand dropped. Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation constructed fewer units overall (435) than the amount projected for 1970 (600).

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and projected demand for office space, using the same geographic areas but analyzing square footage rather than units. Smith estimated that to meet a 10 percent share of the demand, Crown Center would need to provide 180,000 square feet by 1970, 440,000 square feet by 1975, and a total of 900,000 square feet of office space by 1985, or 1,340,000 square feet to meet 15 percent of demand.³⁹ The 1966 study was also conservative in its estimates of demand for hotel rooms, with projected demand to be between 250 and 500 rooms.⁴⁰ While the projected demand for retail space was based on the amount of residential units in the development, Smith estimated the development could sustain 50,000 square feet of retail space (food, drug, and variety).⁴¹

Smith outlined specific actions that he felt would minimize risk. These included the use of state urban redevelopment law to obtain tax abatements and assist with property acquisition; designing retail and hotel buildings with multiple stories to maximize value; and the creation of a prestige office environment that would command higher lease rates. Smith was also instrumental in finalizing the geographic boundary of the Redevelopment Area (*Figure 11a*). Gruen and Larry Smith began partnering with Victor Gruen, a prominent Los Angeles-based urban planner and architect who advocated for mixed-use developments, as early as the 1952 to provide the design ideas and economic analysis to fully support a development project.⁴² Land-use studies for Crown Center began in 1961 and continued through 1967.⁴³ While Smith prepared the economic and market analysis, Gruen prepared renderings of the proposed project and a detailed land-use plan (*Figure 12*).⁴⁴ Gruen's plan laid out the primary functions of defined parcels within the Redevelopment Area and is consistent with what was eventually constructed, particularly regarding the initial building campaign.⁴⁵ While the map did not identify phases, the land use study identifies office, professional, business, and commercial in the parcel immediately north of the Hallmark Headquarters buildings and hotel, cultural facility, and residential from north to south on the westernmost parcel on the west side of Grand south of Pershing Road. The only two discrepancies between the functional distribution in Gruen's plan

³⁹ Smith, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Demand Analysis for Development Planning," 23. By 2003, Crown Center Development Corporation constructed 2,808,000 square feet of office space. The buildings within the District boundary, completed within the period of significance exceeded the 1975 amount with 616,000 square feet; by 1985 there was 848,000 square feet in the District, let alone the additional office resources outside the District boundary.

⁴⁰ Smith, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Demand Analysis for Development Planning," 27. Crown Center Hotel (#8) provided 735 rooms in 1973 and a subsequent hotel outside the boundaries of the District provided an additional 730 rooms.

⁴¹ Smith, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Demand Analysis for Development Planning," 30. Crown Center Shops (#9) exceeded that estimate eightfold.

⁴² Karen Lang Kummer, National Register of Historic Places, "Urbana-Lincoln Hotel/Lincoln Square Mall," Champaign County, Illinois, NR Listed September 8, 2006. Available on-line from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, <http://gis.hpa.state.il.us/pdfs/164523.pdf> (accessed March 18, 2019).

⁴³ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center: The Office Environment," Pamphlet, n.d.; Larry Smith and Company, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Demand Analysis for Development Planning."

⁴⁴ "K.C. project land use is Gruen plan," *Los Angeles Business News*, February 20, 1967; "Offices, Apartments, Hotel in Huge Project," *Kansas City Star*, January 8, 1967. Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of a Development Plan," 1967. Hallmark Archives.

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and the resources that were built were the location of the retail (south of the Hallmark Grand Building (#2) in Gruen's study rather than on the west side of Grand, Crown Center Shops (#9)) and the extent of the proposed residential resources (all of the land in the Redevelopment Area south and west of the Hallmark Headquarters buildings).⁴⁶ As Hall's abstract ideas for Crown Center developed into concrete details, he explored how Missouri's urban redevelopment law could help make his vision possible.

MISSOURI'S CHAPTER 353 LAW AND THE CROWN CENTER REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

From its inception, Crown Center was envisioned as a redevelopment project that would be privately financed by Hallmark Cards. Based in part on the recommendation of Larry Smith & Company, Hall explored the use of state and local redevelopment laws that would enhance the economic feasibility of the project. These were Missouri's Chapter 353 Law, R.S. Mo. 1959 (Chapter 353), informally known as "The Urban Redevelopment Corporations Law"; and Chapter 61 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, informally known as "The Urban Redevelopment Ordinance," which was the means of enacting Chapter 353 legislation at the local level.⁴⁷

The concept of urban renewal programs had taken hold in the United States in the 1940s as a way to alleviate the economic decline and physical decay of inner cities caused by the mass exodus of people and businesses to the expanding suburbs.⁴⁸ Initially, federally-funded urban renewal programs focused on subsidizing the removal of blighted properties.⁴⁹ Subsequent state-level programs often provided tax incentives to urban redevelopment projects to encourage private investment on inner-city tracts that were cleared or had been locally-designated as blighted.⁵⁰ Missouri's Chapter 353 Law was enacted in 1943, repealed, and then re-enacted in 1945.⁵¹ To encourage inner-city redevelopment by private entities, Chapter 353 allowed local public authorities to transfer their powers of eminent domain to private redevelopment corporations, allowing the private entities to acquire the land needed for proposed projects. Missouri's law diverged from other states' statutes where the local authority retained the power to acquire land through purchase or eminent domain and then provide the

⁴⁵ The building campaigns and phases of the plan will be discussed below.

⁴⁶ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project," 1967. As will be discussed later in this document, the extent of the residential construction was scaled back significantly from what was originally proposed.

⁴⁷ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project," 1967.

⁴⁸ Robert Kipp, "Crown Center: An Emerging Vision for Urban Development," April 20, 1995, 6. Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Charles N. Kimball Lecture Series, Kansas City, Missouri.; Michael M. Shultz and F. Rebecca Sapp, "Urban Redevelopment and the Elimination of Blight: A Case Study of Missouri's Chapter 353," *Urban Law Annual: Journal of Urban and Contemporary Law* 37 (January 1990): 3, available online: https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1251&context=law_urbanlaw.

⁴⁹ Kipp, "Crown Center: An Emerging Vision for Urban Development," 6.

⁵⁰ Shultz and Sapp, "Urban Redevelopment and the Elimination of Blight," 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

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cleared land to the private developer at a reduced cost.⁵² Chapter 353 also authorized tax incentives; eligible projects received a property tax freeze for ten years on improvements to the property, followed by a fifty percent property tax abatement on improvements for the next fifteen years.⁵³ There was no abatement of taxes on the land. On October 9, 1950, Kansas City enacted an ordinance, Chapter 61 of the Revised Ordinances of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, to accept the authorized powers and incentives outlined in Chapter 353.⁵⁴

Under these state and local ordinances, approved redevelopment plans could access assistance with the acquisition and clearance of land proposed for redevelopment, as well as tax abatement to facilitate the financing of the project. The first step in participating in these redevelopment programs, required the establishment of a corporation whose name included "redevelopment corporation."⁵⁵ The redevelopment corporation must present a plan to the legislative authority (city or other municipality), wherein the property owners affected by the plan are invited to comment. The legislative authority must also determine the area to be redeveloped through the presented plan is "blighted," defined in the state law as "[T]hat portion of the city within which the legislative authority of such city determines that by reason of age, obsolescence, inadequate or outmoded design or physical deterioration, have become economic and social liabilities, and such conditions, are conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, crime or inability to pay reasonable taxes."⁵⁶ Although the corporation requesting approval typically commissioned the blight study, the legislative authority was granted wide discretion in designating blight, as that determination was ruled by the courts as an exercise in legislative power.⁵⁷ The legislative authority reviewed the planned redevelopment to determine whether it served to promote the welfare, health, and safety of the public, and the corporation's finances to determine them adequate to complete the project.⁵⁸ The corporation was required to submit amendments to the legislative authority for approval when it decided to change the plan from what was originally approved.⁵⁹

The first application of Chapter 353 law in Kansas City was spearheaded by real estate developer Lewis Kitchen. Kitchen's residential redevelopment project under Chapter 353 was approved in 1950 and called for ten high-rise, middle-income apartment buildings to be constructed in Quality Hill, a blighted residential neighborhood located immediately west of Kansas City's central business district. Ultimately, five of the apartment buildings were

⁵² Ibid, 5.

⁵³ Ibid, 5; *New York Times*, "\$200-million renewal projects on Kansas City drawing boards," February 5, 1967.

⁵⁴ Jack Roy Bohanon, "A History and Economic Analysis of the Kansas City, Missouri Federal Urban Renewal Program" (master's thesis, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1971), 16.

⁵⁵ Shultz and Sapp, "Urban Redevelopment and the Elimination of Blight," 6.

⁵⁶ Missouri Revisor of Statutes, Chapter 353, "Urban Redevelopment Corporations Law," Section 353.020(2). Available online at <http://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=353.020&bid=18985&hl=>.

⁵⁷ Shultz and Sapp, "Urban Redevelopment and the Elimination of Blight," 11.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 12-13.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 9.

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constructed.⁶⁰ Subsequent redevelopment in Kansas City utilizing Chapter 353 incentives primarily focused on single-use developments, projects that were either predominantly residential or commercial.⁶¹

To begin the process of having the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan approved under the redevelopment laws, Hallmark Cards chartered a new, wholly-owned subsidiary on November 3, 1966, called the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation (CCRC).⁶² Lynn Bauer, a tenured Hallmark executive who oversaw the company's real estate and construction programs, was elected president of CCRC, and Donald Hall was appointed a co-director.⁶³ After substantial consultation with architects, planners, and market studies, Hall honed his vision for a mixed-use "city within a city", which was outlined in the 1967 Crown Center Redevelopment Plan (Plan). The Plan included as an exhibit, Victor Gruen's Land Use Study map (*Figure 12*). The Plan proposed new construction that would provide a million square feet of office space spread among low rise, medium rise, and high rise buildings to accommodate tenants with varying needs (*Figure 15*); one thousand hotel rooms spread among a high-rise luxury hotel and two motor inns; between 2,000 and 2,500 apartment units spread among buildings of various heights and interconnected through skywalks; a retail and recreational center to serve those living and working nearby and to provide shopping and entertainment options for all Kansas City residents; a landscaped public square and parks facilitated by street closures and realignments; and nearly 7,000 concealed parking spaces to accommodate workers, visitors, and residents.⁶⁴

While previous successful projects were primarily single-function, either predominantly residential or office, J.C. Hall's mixed-use proposal for Crown Center was a large redevelopment area with multiple new buildings and structures serving recreational, hotel, commercial (retail, business, and professional), and residential functions. The Crown Center Redevelopment Plan was initially divided into four phases. Phase 1 included the underground parking garage, a large office complex, a luxury hotel, four to five hundred residential units, and public open space. Phase 2 would be the retail complex and additional residential units. Phase 3 would be a second luxury hotel north of the central core of Crown Center and additional retail units to the south of the existing development. Phase 4 would be additional office space and additional residential units, all to the south.⁶⁵ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation submitted an amendment in December 1970 to consolidate the Phase 2 retail component into

⁶⁰ The three remaining apartment buildings constructed in 1950 (Quality Hill Towers at 817, 905, and 929 Jefferson Street) and another apartment building (910 Penn) constructed under the same amended plan were listed in the National Register on April 3, 2017. Rachel Nugent, National Register of Historic Places "Quality Hill Center Historic District," 2017.

⁶¹ A more in-depth analysis of comparable properties will be discussed below.

⁶² Bill Moore, "Plan huge urban center," *Kansas City Star*, January 4, 1967.

⁶³ Bill Moore, "Plan huge urban center."

⁶⁴ Bill Moore, "Plan huge urban center."

⁶⁵ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of a Development Plan," 1967, 26-58. Hallmark Archives.

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Phase 1 and to scale back the residential component. This amendment was approved. *Table 1*, below, presents the proposed and the actual amounts of either units or square feet for each of the functional components in each phase of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan.

Although Gruen and Smith studied and reported on the current and future growth of Kansas City, the actual population growth and distribution in the Kansas City metro area did not rise to the projected population growth and distribution. This resulted in the redesign of elements of the Plan, specifically, the substantial scaling back of new residential resources. Urban Kansas City experienced significant “white flight” from the 1950s through the 1980s. The suburbs north of the Missouri River and southwest of the city on the Kansas side of the state line grew substantially in the mid-twentieth century and drew individuals and families away from the urban core of Kansas City. This greatly reduced the demand for high-end urban residences like those planned for Crown Center.

From the outset, the phases outlined in the Plan did not fully align with market demands in Kansas City at the time. As explained in the table below, Crown Center grew in building campaigns that aligned with the primary functional focus at the time of construction. The first building campaign, completed by 1973, included the hotel, office space, retail space, and parking, along with the central public gathering space, due to the demand for commercial and retail functions. It is this initial building campaign encompassed within the Crown Center Historic District. There were no residential units constructed by 1974. The next building campaign included the residential units west of the initial development, completed in 1976 and scaled back significantly from what was planned. This building campaign more closely aligns chronologically with the campaign that included the resources in the block north of the initial development. In the block immediately north of the District, office buildings were completed by 1977 and the hotel completed by 1980. Following construction of the 1980 hotel, the building campaigns become even more loosely defined. The focus of development remained on office space and parking, with office buildings constructed in 1985, 1991, and 2003.

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Table 1. Crown Center Redevelopment Plan phases. Proposed vs. Actual by function.⁶⁶ Source: *Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, 1967 and Amendments to Development Plan, 1970, Hallmark Archives.*

	Residential		Hotel Units		Office Sq. Feet		Commercial Sq. Feet		Parking Spaces	
	Prop	Actual	Prop	Actual	Prop	Actual	Prop	Actual	Prop	Actual
Ph. 1 1968 - 1976	457	245 (1976)	750	735 (1973)	693,801	616,000 (1973)	356,000	400,000 (1973)	3,505	3,523 (1971- 1973)
Ph. 2 -----	410	0	0	0	320,000	0	89,000	0	2,181	0
Ph. 3 1977 - 1980	899	0	0	730 (1980)	200,000	700,000 (1977)	8,000	0	1,625	1,700 (1980)
Ph. 4 1985 - 2003	216	0	90	0	0	1,492,000 (1985,- 2003)	0	0	285	1,520
Total	1,982	245	840	1,465	1,213,801	2,808,000	453,000	400,000	7,596	6,723

J.C. Hall's years of consultation and planning for Crown Center were distilled into one extremely important presentation at Kansas City's City Hall on January 4, 1967.⁶⁷ Utilizing maps and drawings from Victor Gruen's land-use study (*Figure 11*), Donald Hall presented the boundary and proposal for the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan in a bid to gain approval to use the Chapter 353 incentives. The presentation was given to the City Plan Commission and the City Council. Both entities would need to approve the plan for it to be eligible for Chapter 353 incentives.⁶⁸ Regarding the plan, Donald Hall declared, "Let private industry take a crack at urban renewal. Let one firm replace eighty-five acres of blight with a model urban community."⁶⁹ After the presentation, the City's reaction was positive; Mayor Ilus Davis declared the plan "a milestone in Kansas City's growth."⁷⁰

The boundary of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area, located about one mile south of Kansas City's central business district, encompassed approximately twenty-five city blocks clustered around the Hallmark Headquarters, totaling nearly eighty-five acres of land (*Figure*

⁶⁶ Differences between what was proposed and what was actually built will be discussed in a later section of this document.

⁶⁷ Bill Moore, "Plan huge urban center," *Kansas City Star*, January 4, 1967.

⁶⁸ *New York Times*, "\$200-Million Renewal Projects on Kansas City Drawing Boards," February 5, 1967.

⁶⁹ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 178.

⁷⁰ "Hallmark Announces Huge Development Project," *Kansas Citian*, January 1967.

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11). The Redevelopment Area did not include the Hallmark Headquarters buildings (#1 and #2) and the Our Lady of Sorrows Church (#18) and grounds.⁷¹

At the time of the January 4, 1967 presentation, Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation (CCRC) already owned approximately 75 percent of the land within the Redevelopment Area. Approval of the Plan transferred the City's power of eminent domain to CCRC, to use should it encounter any trouble acquiring the remaining 25 percent.⁷² Three months later, three property owners lodged formal objections with the finance committee of the city council.⁷³ While these companies did not oppose the entire plan, they objected to the inclusion of their properties in the Redevelopment Area. Lawyers representing the existing companies, Independent Creamery Company, Reeves-Wiedeman Co. plumbing and heating wholesaler, and Meyer Optical, Inc. argued that these properties were not blighted and if the companies were to move, they would require adequate compensation.⁷⁴ Although CCRC argued that it wanted to treat all property owners the same as those who voluntarily sold their properties and moved without compensation, the finance committee approved the plan with two amendments that addressed the concerns of the objecting property owners. The amendments required compensation of \$25,000 for moving expenses, mirroring what is allowed in the federal urban renewal program, and required that CCRC provide two year's notice before these companies would have to move.⁷⁵ CCRC agreed to the conditions and the city council unanimously approved the plan, including the amendments, on March 31, 1967.⁷⁶

CCRC did not use eminent domain to acquire the remaining properties once the property owners agreed to the compensation and notification requirements approved with the Plan, but did take advantage of the tax abatement incentive associated with the urban renewal ordinance. The incentive included ten years of 100 percent abatement of taxes on the improvements (buildings constructed in the Redevelopment Area, not the land), followed by fifteen years at 50 percent abatement. The twenty-five-year abatement applied to each building as it built, so there would be gradual increase to amount of taxes paid. CCRC would be responsible for costs associated with street improvements and relocation of utilities. At the time, CCRC estimated that the project would cost the company over \$100 million and take fifteen years to complete, starting in 1968 and finishing in 1983.⁷⁷ The development plan was designed to be flexible to accommodate market demand fluctuations, allowing for final-phase construction to begin as late

⁷¹ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of a Development Plan," 1967. Hallmark Archives.

⁷² "Missouri State Role in Project," *The Kansas City Times*, January 5, 1967.

⁷³ "Objections on Crown Project," *The Kansas City Times*, March 21, 1967.

⁷⁴ "Objections on Crown Project," *The Kansas City Times*, March 21, 1967.

⁷⁵ "Crown Would Pay for Moving," *The Kansas City Times*, March 23, 1967.

⁷⁶ "Crown Center Plan Approved," *The Kansas City Times*, April 1, 1967.

⁷⁷ Bill Moore, "Plan huge urban center," *Kansas City Star*, January 4, 1967.

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as January 1, 1990.⁷⁸ While the boundary of the Redevelopment Area did not change, some details of the original plan evolved over the years, due primarily to the way the demand for various functions (commercial vs. residential) in the Kansas City metro area diverged from the Larry Smith & Company economic feasibility study. To date, Crown Center is the largest redevelopment project in Kansas City completed under Chapter 353 law. The spirit of the multi-functional, mixed-use nature of the original Plan is intact today. The District represents the first building campaign of resources completed in accordance with the commercial and recreational priorities of the Plan and market demand at that time.

THE CITY WITHIN A CITY RISES

On March 31, 1967, two months after Donald Hall's presentation, Kansas City approved the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan.⁷⁹ CCRC immediately proceeded to demolish most of the blighted properties in the project area. New residences were found for the nineteen families displaced by the redevelopment, business relocated to other parts of the city, and the three objecting companies were compensated for having to move.⁸⁰ While J.C. Hall originated the vision for Crown Center, the job of executing the redevelopment project fell to his son, Donald Hall. The Halls' interest in architecture led both men to take an interest in the design philosophy of Crown Center. This was expressed in early literature promoting Crown Center:

As a private development, Crown Center has among its goals a community that will set new standards in quality of design and attention to detail. The parent company, Hallmark Cards, is a design-oriented firm with a deep commitment to both good taste and imagination. Crown Center has proceeded in the belief that this commitment can be translated into a convenient inner-city location that will make a contribution to modern urban planning.⁸¹

To realize this goal, CCRC designated Edward Larrabee Barnes the master planner and coordinating architect of Crown Center on June 15, 1967 (*Figure 16*).⁸² At the time, Barnes was a well-known Modern Movement architect based in New York City with previous experience as

⁷⁸ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of a Development Plan," 1967. Hallmark Archives.

⁷⁹ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Fact Sheet," Pamphlet, 1968.

⁸⁰ Residents were relocated to sites scattered throughout the city, not one single location. Similarly, the existing businesses relocated to various locations throughout the city. Independent Creamery and Meyer Optical are no longer in business, due to market forces rather than the relocation from the Crown Center Redevelopment Area. Reeves-Wiedeman Co. continues to operate a plumbing supply business with multiple locations in Kansas City. Other than these three companies that opposed only the fact that they originally were requested to relocate without compensation, not the plan as a whole. A search of contemporary newspaper coverage did not reveal any other opposition to the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan.

⁸¹ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center: The Office Environment," Pamphlet, n.d., 6.

⁸² Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Fact Sheet," Pamphlet, 1968.; "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973, 114.

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the master planner of Yale University. As master planner of Crown Center, Barnes was responsible for coordinating the work of all involved architects. Barnes would also personally design most of the buildings, sites, and structures for Crown Center in the first building campaign: an underground parking garage, an office complex, a public square, and a retail-entertainment center. Chicago based architect Harry Weese designed the hotel. CCRC broke ground and construction officially began in September 1968 (*Figure 17*).⁸³ The resources constructed in this initial building campaign correspond to the primary focus of the development, commercial (retail and office) and recreational resources, which were still in demand in the urban core of Kansas City in the late-1960s and early-1970s.

As the physical resources of Crown Center began to take shape, the structure of the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation grew and gained definition beyond its original basic function of enacting a redevelopment plan. Within the Redevelopment Corporation, separate divisions oversaw architecture and design, building maintenance, landscape design and maintenance, office leasing, retail leasing, and parking management. Additionally, the Corporation developed the Office of Cultural Affairs to manage the extensive programming for the cultural spaces in Crown Center Shops (#9) and Crown Center Square (#6), which occurred year-round. CCRC continuously consulted with Hallmark to incorporate art in and around the property, which had always been a priority for Hallmark. The Crown Center Hotel originally operated under an independent management organization, separate from Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation; this operational separation continues today. Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation developed a comprehensive approach to the execution and management of the property.

The minimization of automobile traffic and above-ground parking was necessary for Crown Center to present a pedestrian-friendly landscape integrated with multi-functional buildings, sites, and structures. An informational pamphlet for Crown Center published in 1969 stated, "The automobile will serve Crown Center tenants and residents, but will not be allowed to dominate the landscape."⁸⁴ To achieve this vision, Barnes designed an extensive underground garage that would be the first component of Crown Center to start construction, with excavation beginning in the fall of 1968.⁸⁵ The 935,000-square-foot Crown Center Underground Parking Garage (#3) occupied the center of the Redevelopment Area, north of the Hallmark Headquarters. It was designed to lie underneath the Pershing Road Office Building (#4) and the Crown Center Square (#6). One block of McGee Street, from Pershing Road south to 25th Street, was vacated to accommodate the underground garage, square, and office complex. Levels of the garage opened in 1969; it was fully completed by 1971, offering six underground levels with space for 2,300 cars. At the time of its construction, it was the largest privately-

⁸³ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, *Crown Center 1*, December 1968.

⁸⁴ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center: The Office Environment," Pamphlet, n.d., 10.

⁸⁵ The full extent of this garage is within the boundary of the District.

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owned underground parking garage in the country.⁸⁶ The parking garage served both office workers and visitors to Crown Center.

A prestige office community that would attract top businesses was an integral component of Crown Center's multi-functional environment. The first office buildings in Crown Center to be completed was the Pershing Road Office Building (#4), located at 2400 through 2480 Pershing Road, on top of the underground garage (*Figure 18*). Barnes designed the complex, which was completed in 1971. Overall, the speculative office complex offered 600,000 square feet of rentable space; the interior design allowed for the leasing of a complete building, a full floor or floors, or segments within floors.⁸⁷ Crown Center touted the integrated landscape between the office building (#4), the public square (#6), and the parking garage (#3) as a "total environmental design," planned to create a modern and pleasant office environment in which workers could enjoy park-like grounds uninterrupted by above-ground parking lots.⁸⁸ In 1972, a two-story office building designed by Barnes in the same architectural language as the Pershing Road Offices opened; it was adjacent to the northernmost Pershing Road Office Building and was constructed for the Grand Avenue Bank and Trust Company (#5).⁸⁹ Alluding to the upcoming components that would continue the mixed-use nature of Crown Center, pamphlets for the Pershing Road Offices expressed that within walking distance workers could "shop and dine in exciting facilities" and participate in recreational activities on the square.⁹⁰ By the end of 1972, thirty-eight different firms operated within the Pershing Road Office Buildings.⁹¹ Tenants included the international headquarters of the American Nurses Association and the regional headquarters of the American Hospital Association.

Barnes designed and conceived of the Crown Center Square (#6) as a focal point for the urban community at Crown Center, both through its central location within the Redevelopment Area and its function as a public space (*Figure 18*). Crown Center Square is crucial to defining the physical and associative core of Crown Center. It is the primary feature that is unique to this redevelopment plan, compared with other redevelopment areas in Kansas City, and continues to communicate the character of the entire redevelopment. Construction began in 1971, and the square opened to the public in 1973.⁹² The ten-acre Crown Center Square lay east of Grand Boulevard (#20), south of Pershing Road, and north of the vacated 25th Street (#31). Barnes designed the square to provide an inviting landscaped space in which workers, residents, and visitors to Crown Center could enjoy a quick respite or experience a cultural or recreational

⁸⁶ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center: The Office Environment," 8, 11.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 8.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 1.

⁸⁹ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Walk up, drive-in, or sit-down; you can take your choice at the new Grand Avenue Bank," *Crown Center 10*, April 1972.

⁹⁰ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center: The Office Environment," Pamphlet, n.d., 6.

⁹¹ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Year's end finds office complex in high gear," *Crown Center 13*, February 1973.

⁹² Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Square now ready for public use," *Crown Center 14*, April 1973.

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event. This designed landscape was in keeping with the city's long history of beautification using a network of parks and boulevards. The Pershing Road Office Building framed the Square on the east, while the Crown Center Shops (#9), a retail-entertainment building, which also opened in 1973, framed the Square on the west and south. The square featured a fountain (#26) with a 2,000-square-foot, cobblestone-paved area containing forty-nine jets that would shoot vertical water streams and muffle traffic sounds from Grand Boulevard.⁹³ The fountain could be turned off, turning the paved area into programmable open space. The remainder of the Square featured paved pedestrian terraces with small trees, grass lawns, and shallow rectangular pools (#24 and #25). The east side of the Square led up to the terraced garden levels of the Pershing Road Office Building. Crown Center's Office of Cultural Affairs programed year-round entertainment and cultural events for the Square, with the director stating, "From its inception, Crown Center has been designed as a place for people."⁹⁴ Such events included festivals, concerts, auctions, theater products, trade shows, the Mayor's Christmas Tree (*Figure 19*), and outdoor art exhibits. An 11,000-square-foot ice skating rink, the Crown Center Ice Terrace (#7), opened at the southeast corner of the Square in the fall of 1973.⁹⁵ In 1974, a stabile sculpture by renowned artist Alexander Calder named *Shiva* (#11) was placed on the northwest corner of the square, contributing to the beautification of the grounds.

Signboard Hill, the billboard-covered limestone bluff that inspired J.C. Hall's vision of redevelopment, was transformed as the location of Crown Center's first luxury hotel. To ensure that this new hotel would be a distinct architectural statement, J.C. Hall and CCRC selected Chicago-based architect Harry Weese. Prior to initiating construction, CCRC amended the Plan in December 1970 to enlarge the proposed luxury hotel from 400 rooms to 750 rooms.⁹⁶ Construction began in 1971, as the Pershing Road Office Building to the east was nearing completion, and finished in May 1973 at a cost of \$30 million. Called the Crown Center Hotel (#8) upon its opening, Western International Hotels operated the building while Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation continued to own it. The design of the high-rise Crown Center Hotel, situated at the southeast corner of Pershing Road and Main Street, incorporated the limestone bluff into the design of the lobby (*Figure 20*). This building, along with the associated swimming pool, is individually recognized within the District as exceptionally significant for its expression of the Brutalist style as well as an important work by master architect Harry Weese, as explained below. The opening of the hotel created 1,000 new jobs in the heart of the city.⁹⁷

⁹³ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Dancing waters come to Crown Center Square," *Crown Center 12*, November 1972.

⁹⁴ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Square now ready for public use," *Crown Center 14*, April 1973.

⁹⁵ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Square now ready for public use."

⁹⁶ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of Amendments to a Development Plan," 1970, 5-6. Hallmark Archives. This amendment removed the proposed motor inns from the plan.

⁹⁷ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Hotel brings 1,000 new jobs to Kansas City," *Crown Center 13*, February 1973.

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Edward Larrabee Barnes also designed Crown Center's three-level 400,000-square-foot retail and entertainment building, called the Crown Center Shops (#9). The December 1970 amendment to the Plan that enlarged the size of the hotel, moved the construction of the Shops into the first building campaign, rather than waiting for the second phase of construction.⁹⁸ This reflects the desire to complete the retail and recreational component of the plan to meet the reality of the market at the time, which prioritized commercial office space, retail shops, and tourist attractions in urban areas. Construction began in 1971, and the restrained Brutalist-style building opened to the public in September 1973 with approximately eighty-five shops and three restaurants. The incorporation of the Crown Center Shops into the "city within a city" provided additional functions that would serve visitors and tourists as well as daily workers and future residents. The Crown Center Shops, in an urban setting was oriented toward the pedestrian-focused Crown Center Square, emphasizing the importance of the square as the core of Crown Center. The L-shaped building was designed to frame the southwest corner of the Crown Center Square.⁹⁹ The south wing faced north onto the square had a penthouse containing The American Restaurant, which opened in February of 1974. Architect Warren Platner of New Haven, Connecticut, a former associate of Eero Saarinen, designed the restaurant. The American Restaurant's full-height windows overlooked the Crown Center Square and its interior featured extensive white oak woodwork in a dramatic, lacy pattern. Typical regional shopping malls were anchored by at least one large department store. While the Crown Center Shops contained Halls Department Store, an up-scale department store founded by the Hallmark Corporation, the building also featured a multi-level collection of specialty boutiques and a dining pavilion offering international cuisines, as well as a marketplace with stalls containing local produce, bakeries, butcheries, and gourmet foods.¹⁰⁰ Paul Laszlo Associates, a southern California interior design firm, designed the Halls Department Store to allow for flexibility as trends in merchandising and lifestyles changed.¹⁰¹ Visitors to the Crown Center Shops could park underground and take elevators directly to the building, while office workers could traverse Crown Center's landscaped square to the building. The Crown Center Shops visually harmonized with the adjacent Pershing Road Office Building and the Crown Center Hotel through its monumental scale and precast concrete panel cladding. The Hotel and the Shops were designed separately, by different architects, but were designed to have multiple points of connection, for ease of use by hotel guests. These buildings framed Crown Center Square (#6). Upon the completion of the Crown Center Shops, the budget for the redevelopment project had reached \$200 million. The American Institute of Architects celebrated the progress of the

⁹⁸ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of Amendments to a Development Plan," 1970, 5-6. Hallmark Archives. This Amendment reduced the scope of the proposed new residential resources to two towers and dozens of townhouses or small apartment buildings for a total of 400 units, all to be completed by 1974.

⁹⁹ The Plan proposed keeping Grand open by constructing a bridge over it and a tunnel under it. The underground parking garage served as the tunnel while the east wing of the Shops served as the bridge over the street.

¹⁰⁰ Halls Department Store is a subsidiary of Hallmark Cards and the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation.

¹⁰¹ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Specialty store to offer shopping by lifestyle," *Crown Center 12*, November 1972.

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redevelopment by organizing a tour of Crown Center in 1973 in which over 6,000 people visited the growing complex (*Figure 21*).¹⁰²

Following the completion of the initial building campaign in 1974, comprised of the essential commercial and recreational core of Crown Center, focus shifted to the residential resources as the final component of the formal first phase of the plan. Even as the initial building campaign neared completion and CCRC had yet to construct any residential units, each subsequent formal phase included a residential component, to be constructed south and west of the Hallmark headquarters buildings, for an eventual expected resident total of 8,000 persons.¹⁰³ However, the draw of suburban development in the greater metro area reduced the demand for residential resources in downtown Kansas City and prompted CCRC to substantially reduce the scope of proposed residential construction by roughly 95 percent, which it did through a formal amendment to the Plan in 1974.¹⁰⁴ This decision provides the end date for the second period of significance for the Crown Center Historic District because the resources constructed by 1974, which did not yet include any residential resources, set the functional pattern of resources constructed in subsequent building campaigns and in redevelopment efforts independent of Crown Center. The success of the office and hotel buildings in the District spurred the construction of similar types of buildings beyond the boundaries of the District and beyond the boundaries of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area.

AFTER 1974 AND OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES: THE PLAN CONTINUES

Outside the boundaries of the proposed Crown Center Historic District, development within the Crown Center Redevelopment Area continued in the late 1970s through the early 2000s, with a focus on the office and hotel functions that proved successful in the initial building campaign. Crown Center's singular residential component was the next portion of the redevelopment to take shape, although not nearly on the scale that was originally planned. CCRC hired Norman Fletcher of The Architects Collaborative in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to design this component of the project. In 1973, the residential community was planned to have two 30-story apartment towers and six low-rise condominium and apartment buildings, all situated south of the Crown Center Hotel along the central and south ledge of the limestone bluff between Main Street and Grand Boulevard.¹⁰⁵ The Demand Analysis for Development Planning report that Larry Smith & Company produced for the CCRC in 1966 had projected population growth and distribution throughout the Kansas City metro area, defined as Jackson, Clay, Platte, and Cass counties on the Missouri side of the state line, and Johnson and Wyandotte counties on the

¹⁰² Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, *Crown Center 13*, February 1973.

¹⁰³ Mildred F. Schmertz, "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973, 115. Hallmark Archives.

¹⁰⁴ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Redevelopment Project: Kansas City, Missouri, Application of Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation for Approval of Amendments to a Development Plan," 1974, 5-6. Hallmark Archives.

¹⁰⁵ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center Apartments," Pamphlet, April 1973.

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Kansas side. Based on population trends from previous decades, Smith & Company projected that each county would continue to experience growth through 1990.¹⁰⁶ The reality was that while the populations of the suburban counties (Clay, Platte, and Cass in Missouri and Johnson in Kansas) grew in larger percentages than expected, the population of the urban counties of Jackson in Missouri and Wyandotte in Kansas slowed significantly in the 1960s and even contracted in the 1970s.¹⁰⁷ People were leaving the urban centers for the suburbs in great numbers and the demand for residential resources in the traditional core of Kansas City dropped precipitously.

While the location and general architectural aesthetic of the residential components were executed per the earlier plan, the density was scaled back substantially to one thirty-two-story condominium tower and one seven-story garden apartment building, with landscaped private grounds that incorporated a one-story clubhouse, a pool, tennis courts, and an integrated underground parking garage; all spread out on the same site designated for the previously denser, more extensive concept. While research does not provide a definitive explanation of why the project was scaled back, the reduced demand due to metro area population distribution out of urban areas was likely a primary factor, along with the fact that the recession of the mid-1970s coupled with multiple local labor strikes drove up the cost of building materials, especially steel. Together, the residential sector was named "Crown Center West" referring to its location along the west side of the Redevelopment Area. The seven-story garden apartment building, called the Santa Fe Place Apartments, opened first in September 1976 and contained approximately 110 rental units. The San Francisco Tower, containing 135 units, and the associated private clubhouse, the Monterey Club, opened by the end of 1976.¹⁰⁸ A glass-encased walkway connected the San Francisco Tower with the third level of the parking garage associated with the Crown Center Shops (#9) through a pair of metal slab doors. The resources in the "Crown Center West" residential development are oriented towards each other, around a private elevated landscaped courtyard. They have a private parking garage under the Monterey Club. With the exception of the one enclosed walkway (#29) between the third level of the garage that is part of the Crown Center Shops (#9) and the San Francisco Tower, the residential resources are not connected to other resources (buildings, structures, or sites) in the District or other resources in the Crown Center Redevelopment Area.

By 1977, the budget for Crown Center had reached \$350 million, and construction had been focused on the center of the Redevelopment Area (primarily within the boundaries of the District), immediately north of the Hallmark Headquarters and surrounding the primary public space of Crown Center Square (#6). The resources that comprise the primary core of Crown

¹⁰⁶ Larry Smith & Company, "Demand Analysis for Development Planning: Crown Center Redevelopment Project, Kansas City, Missouri," October 1, 1966, 4.

¹⁰⁷ Smith, "Demand Analysis for Development Planning," 4; U.S. Decennial Census for Jackson, Clay, Platte, and Cass counties in Missouri and Johnson and Wyandotte counties in Kansas, 1950-1990.

¹⁰⁸ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Ceremony marks start of residential complex," *Crown Center* 12, November 1972.

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Center, specifically the resources in the District, remained fully occupied and utilized through the 1970s and 1980s. For its next phase of building, Phase 3 in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the success of the office and hotel resources constructed in Phase 1, along with a realistic analysis of market demands led Crown Center away from residential construction to the construction of more office buildings and another luxury hotel in the northern section of the Redevelopment Area, north of Pershing Road and outside the boundary of the District. In 1977, CCRC, in a joint venture between The Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, the International Business Machines (IBM) Corporation, and Walter Shorenstein, a San Francisco-based realtor, constructed a high-rise and a mid-rise office building. The Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company would be the primary occupant of the skyscraper, while IBM would occupy the satellite building. The buildings were completed in 1977 and designed by Fujikawa Conterato Lohan and Associates, successor to the Office of Mies van der Rohe in 1975. Across McGee Street to the east, CCRC began construction on a second luxury hotel. Initially the Hyatt Corporation was going to build their hotel in downtown Kansas City, but had trouble securing a site. Based on the success of the Crown Center Hotel, the Hyatt Corporation ultimately decided to locate their new high-rise hotel in Crown Center.¹⁰⁹ The Hyatt Regency Hotel, designed by Kansas City-based architects Patty, Berkebile, Nelson, Duncan, Monroe, LeFebvre Architect Planners, Inc. (PBNMML) was completed in 1980. The luxury high-rise hotel featured a sixty-foot-high lobby atrium and a forty-story guest tower with over 700 rooms. A circular revolving restaurant topped the building (*Figure 22*).¹¹⁰ Unfortunately, it would also be a site of public tragedy. Two suspended walkways in the atrium lobby collapsed during a crowded event on July 17, 1981, killing 114 people.¹¹¹ The cause of the collapse was eventually determined to be an inadequate design of the vertical rods supporting the walkways. After the disaster, the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation had independent mechanical and structural engineers review every building and structure in Crown Center. The Hyatt Regency Hotel re-opened in October 1981.

The first half of the 1980s included the further expansion of the Hallmark Headquarters and executive changes at the company. At the beginning of the 1980s, Hallmark accounted for about 30 percent of the greeting card publishing industry in the United States and had expanded its international operations into the United Kingdom and Australia.¹¹² The on-going success of the company necessitated subsequent additions, expansions, and remodeling to their headquarters complex in the Crown Center Redevelopment Area. In 1980, Edward Larrabee Barnes designed a five-story reinforced concrete parking garage for Hallmark employees that was constructed south of the Hallmark McGee Building (#1).¹¹³ In 1982, Hallmark expanded the Hallmark McGee Building and remodeled its corporate entrance. Barnes also designed the expansion and remodel, in conjunction with local architects Marshall & Brown. The expansion

¹⁰⁹ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 203.

¹¹⁰ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 203.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 205.

¹¹² *Ibid*, 203.

¹¹³ This garage forms the base for the Hallmark Rice Innovation Center (#18), constructed in 1985.

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added nearly 123,000 square feet to the eighth and ninth floors of the Hallmark McGee Building, providing space for four-hundred new employees in Hallmark's design and product management divisions.¹¹⁴ The corporate entrance remodel included the addition of a landscaped parking lot (#16) with a center fountain (#30), located on land that was acquired through a deal with the Our Lady of Sorrows Church (#18) in 1980. In exchange for the land to create the parking lot, Hallmark paid for the construction of a new rectory to the north of the existing church.¹¹⁵ In 1985, Davis Brody Architects designed the Hallmark Rice Innovation Center (#15), constructed on top of the 1980 five-story parking garage south of the Hallmark McGee Building, completing the Hallmark Headquarters as it appears today. Hallmark installed Gordon MacKenzie's bronze sculpture *Bringing the Pieces Together* (#17) on the east lawn of the Rice Innovation Center in 1986.

J.C. Hall passed away at the age of 91 on October 29, 1982.¹¹⁶ The shrewd businessman and entrepreneur remained chairman of the board of Hallmark Cards until a few years before his passing. He lived to see his company turn into an international greeting card giant responsible for the largest redevelopment project in Kansas City's history.¹¹⁷

Crown Center's next ambition was to make the community an attractive choice for midsized conventions. To accomplish this, an elevated pedestrian skywalk was designed that would link the complex's two luxury hotels and the 2405 Grand building. The City Council approved the skywalk, amending the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan for the tenth time to accommodate the new structure, as skywalks and pedestrian bridges were included in the original plan.¹¹⁸ In 1987, CCRC constructed a fourteen-story office tower, designed by the Dallas office of Hellmuth Obata & Kassabaum, with 232,000 square feet of space on the northwest side of Crown Center Square within the boundary of the District (*Figure 23*).¹¹⁹ Called the Link (#13), construction on the \$5 million-dollar skywalk began in November 1987.¹²⁰ Zimmer Gunsul Frasca of Portland, Oregon designed walkway.¹²¹ Completed in 1988, the skywalk provided an enclosed, climate-controlled link between the meeting rooms and guest suites of the Crown Center Hotel and the Hyatt Regency Hotel (1980), outside the District Boundary, traveling through the space between 2405 Grand (#12) and Grand Avenue Bank & Trust (#5) along the way.

Beginning in the late 1980s, CCRC shifted focus towards new construction in the southern area of the Redevelopment Area. In July 1988, CCRC announced that the Morrison Hecker Curtis Kuder & Parrish law firm would relocate their headquarters to Crown Center, kickstarting the

¹¹⁴ George Koppe, "Hallmark, Block expand corporate offices," *Kansas City Star*, April 25, 1982.

¹¹⁵ Jenny Deam, "Cathedral Strikes Neighborly Stance in Hallmark's Shadow," *Kansas City Star*, November 3, 1982.

¹¹⁶ Regan, *Hallmark: A Century of Caring*, 214.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 216.

¹¹⁸ Chris Lester, "High walks would link Hyatt, others," *Kansas City Star*, May 1, 1987.

¹¹⁹ Chris Lester, "Insurance brokerage anchors new buildings," *Kansas City Star*, November 15, 1987.

¹²⁰ Chris Lester, "Crown Center pushes for convention trade," *Kansas City Star*, November 5, 1987.

¹²¹ Donald Hoffman, "A new path from which to view KC," *Kansas City Star*, March 12, 1989.

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construction of a new office tower¹²² located between Main Street and Grand Boulevard, immediately south of Crown Center West, the 1976 residential complex. The Crown Center Redevelopment Plan was amended to approve the new building. While the plan originally designated this site for residential construction, the amendment allowed the office building instead. Named 2600 Grand after its legal address, construction began in 1988, with Henry Cobb of I.M. Pei & Partners of New York City as the lead designing architect and Robert Berkebile of Kansas City-based PBNI Architects Inc. as executive architect.¹²³ The fourteen-story office tower faced south onto a two-acre park, called Kiley Park for its design by landscape architect Dan Kiley. Grand Avenue, by then renamed Grand Boulevard, was re-aligned to facilitate the creation of Kiley Park.¹²⁴ A parking garage for seven hundred vehicles was attached to the north elevation of the office building. Overall, the 2600 Grand/Kiley Park project cost \$48 million and was completed in 1991.

Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation continued to evaluate what was working within its development to inform future development decisions. Crown Center hired Denver-based firm Hammer Siler George Associates to conduct a two-year market and land-use analysis, which was completed in 1989.¹²⁵ The study called for additional green space and additional office space near Kiley Park as well as additional construction in the north sector of the Redevelopment Area near the Hyatt Regency.¹²⁶ It also called for fifteen acres of residential development south of 27th Street. After the release of the study, Crown Center experienced a construction hiatus during the mid-1990s when the real estate market slowed.¹²⁷ Construction of the proposed office building north of the Hyatt Regency began in late 1997. The office building, called 2301 McGee after its legal address, was designed by BNIM Architects (formerly PBNI) and completed in 2000. In 2000, another glass-enclosed pedestrian skywalk opened, this time linking Crown Center Hotel with Union Station (Union Station Link, #14).¹²⁸ In 2001, construction began on a 24-story office tower located east of 2600 Grand. The tower at 2555 Grand Boulevard would be the new headquarters of the law firm Shook Hardy & Bacon. Zimmer Gunsul Frasca designed the Shook Hardy & Bacon Headquarters Building and an adjacent nine-story parking garage for building tenants; both were completed in 2003. There were no major alterations to the Crown Center Redevelopment Area until 2017 when the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation sold the vacant land south of 27th Street, between McGee Trafficway and Gillham Road, to a private developer who, a year later, began construction on a large-scale residential project.

¹²² Chris Lester, "Law firm's move to Crown Center sparks plan for tower," *Kansas City Star*, July 19, 1988.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Chris Lester, "2 million square feet of office space," *Kansas City Star*, March 19, 1989.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Mark P. Couch, "Crown Center rebirth - aggressive moves drive development," *Kansas City Star*, May 16, 2000.

¹²⁸ Jeffrey Spivak, "From dream to reality, project hasn't been easy," *Kansas City Star*, May 26, 2000.

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CRITERION A: COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Crown Center Historic District is significant because it encompasses the initial building campaign of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, from 1968 to 1974, with the multiple functions (office, retail, hotel, parking, and public open space) that were the primary focus of the development at the beginning based on market demand for those functions. The success of this building campaign determined the growth and function of subsequent construction campaigns in the area inside and outside the Crown Center Redevelopment Area. J.C. Hall and the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation (CCRC) intended for Crown Center to help revitalize downtown Kansas City by complementing the central business district, rather than competing with it. The first phase outlined in the 1967 Crown Center Redevelopment Plan included office, luxury hotel, and parking, along with 400 residential units housed in roughly twenty-four buildings of various sizes. Subsequent phases were to include additional residential resources and a large retail center in the second phase; residential and office resources in the third phase; and residential, office, and hotel resources in the fourth phase. The total number of residential units was expected to exceed 2,200 and the buildings would have filled the redevelopment area south of the Hallmark Headquarters (*Figure 24*). As explained above, the development of Crown Center was more clearly executed through informal building campaigns rather than formal phases. The commercial and recreational resources planned for Crown Center were the main priority of the first building campaign because these functions were still in demand in the urban core of Kansas City through 1974. CCRC then constructed some residential units to satisfy limited demand, but then continued to build office space. The Plan was amended in 1970 to bring the construction of the retail resource into the initial building campaign. The first phase was further amended in 1974, before the construction of any residential units, to reduce the scope of the proposed residential resources to two high-rise towers and one mid-rise apartment building. The timing of the construction of residential resources, completed in 1976, better aligned with the second building campaign, which included the 1977 office buildings and 1980 hotel north of the District. By the time construction of the residential resources ended in 1976, only one high-rise tower and one mid-rise building were constructed. Amendments to the third phase in February 1975 and the fourth phase in October 1977 removed all additional residential resources beyond the two 1976 buildings constructed for a total of 245 units. Contrary to the initial plan which envisioned residential resources (high-rise towers, mid-rise apartment buildings, and townhouses) filling the blocks south of the Hallmark Headquarters buildings, no additional residential resources were constructed in the Crown Center Redevelopment Area until 2018. The change in scope to eliminate any additional residential resources reflects the market realities of the time, when the construction of single-family developments in rapidly growing suburban areas north and southwest of downtown continued to draw residents out of Kansas City's urban core and greatly reduced the demand for urban apartments and condominiums. Although the demand for residential resources was not what planners and market analysts had expected, the demand for commercial and recreational facilities remained

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strong, hence the cohesion of the initial building campaign and its inclusion in the District boundaries.

By 1974, the multiple buildings, sites, and structures of Crown Center, as encompassed in the Crown Center Historic District, reflected the multi-functional environment championed by architects and planners such as Victor Gruen, who heavily influenced the plan, and Louis G. Redstone. Gruen and Redstone published books that advocated for intentionally designed open spaces surrounded by a mix of functions that would support a variety of activities and attract people at all hours of the day.¹²⁹ They recommended that the ideal combination of features to revitalize a downtown should include a public gathering space for cultural events, multi-level parking structures, protected pedestrian walkways, and “a balanced mix of new office, shopping, and recreational facilities.”¹³⁰ Redstone’s book, *The New Downtowns*, published in 1976, outlined specific components that planners should incorporate to achieve the goal of revitalization. The variety of recommended components included a pedestrian mall, a downtown regional center, a megastructure, an underground concourse, walkway systems and skyway bridges, plazas, and public art.¹³¹ Kansas City’s Crown Center was among the significant case studies presented in Redstone’s book, as a successful example of “how private industry can be instrumental in rebuilding deteriorated areas of the inner city.”¹³²

Crown Center replaced an area filled with parking lots, bluffs, and low- and mid-rise industrial warehouses and manufacturing facilities, along with a small concentration of residential resources. The proof that Crown Center was a successfully executed plan was its continued use and occupation, which sparked the construction of additional similar resources that redeveloped the area, both inside and outside the District boundaries and the boundaries of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area. The City began collecting property taxes on the earliest buildings in the 1980s. During construction and the ten-year 100 percent tax abatement period between 1967 and 1976, the City lost between \$8,000 and \$36,000 in tax revenue.¹³³ However, by the time the abatement ended for all except the resources constructed in 2003, the City collected more than \$3 million in tax revenue.¹³⁴

Within the boundaries of the District, in 1986, most of the retail space in the Crown Center Shops was leased, and Crown Center management credited the opening of additional restaurants and a six-theater complex in the Shops with increasing patronage, particularly in the

¹²⁹ Victor Gruen, *The Heart of Our Cities: The Urban Crisis, Diagnosis and Cure*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964); Louis G. Redstone, *The New Downtowns. Rebuilding Business Districts*, (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1976), 19.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Redstone, 19-69.

¹³² Ibid, 118.

¹³³ “Would Pay for Crown Moving,” *The Kansas City Star*, March 23, 1967. This amount is in 1967 dollars and has not been adjusted for inflation.

¹³⁴ James Fitzpatrick, “Union Station: Will it get taxes on Crown Center?” *Kansas City Star*, January 15, 1994. This amount is in 1994 dollars and has not been adjusted for inflation.

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evening hours.¹³⁵ In April 1987, the American Heartland Theater opened in the Shops, expanding entertainment options by providing live performances. The Pershing Road Office Building had been more than 98 percent leased through the 1980s, emphasizing the need for additional office space, hence the construction of the fourteen-story office building 2405 Grand (#12).¹³⁶ Outside the District boundaries but still within the boundary of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, office and parking were the predominant functions of the resources constructed in subsequent phases. Hallmark constructed additional buildings to its headquarters complex (Rice Innovation Center, #15) on land previously designated in the Plan for residential resources.

The physical limitations of the surrounding area, with the bluff and Liberty Memorial/Penn Valley Park to the west, the bluff with Children's Mercy Hospital complex to the east, and Union Cemetery to the south limited the direction in which redevelopment efforts could spread. The biggest impact was to the north of the District, which established a strong connection to the commercial areas north of Crown Center, specifically the Crossroads Industrial District on the north side of the train tracks and the Central Business District one mile north. The momentum for the revitalization of 1914 Union Station grew from the success of the adjacent Crown Center. The growing popularity of air travel reduced the demand for train service, which started Union Station into decline. The station was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, which generated some interest in the building, but not enough to spark a rehabilitation.¹³⁷ In 1973, the City entered into a development contract with a Canadian development company that constructed two mid-rise office buildings on the east and west sides of Main Street, north of the District, between 1979 and 1986.¹³⁸ The Canadian company failed to follow through on its promise to rehabilitate the Station and by 1985 the building was completely vacant as Amtrak terminated service. The rehabilitation of Union Station began in 1996 with public and private financing, after a lengthy lawsuit.¹³⁹ When the restoration of the station and construction of the new science museum were complete in 1999, the revitalized cultural and recreational center of Union Station and Science City initiated a physical connection to the established visitor facilities at Crown Center and constructed the Union Station Link (#14). While the Kansas City real estate market experienced a significant downturn in the late 1980s and early 1990s that generated a lull in activity, beginning in 2000, Crown Center once again chose to feed off its proximity to the renovated Union Station and take an active role in development. The resources in the District were the solid core of office, retail, and hotel functions from which the rest of the development continued to grow. The construction of additional convention facilities and remodeling of the Crown Center Shops, along with the long-standing Kaleidoscope facility and the newly established connection to Union Station, declared Crown Center as a destination for

¹³⁵ Mike Hendricks, "Blend is successful in urban bazaar," *Kansas City Star*, April 13, 1986.

¹³⁶ Chris Lester, "Timing no big factor at 2405 Grand," *Kansas City Star*, July 12, 1987.

¹³⁷ M. Patricia Holmes, National Register of Historic Places, "Union Station," listed February 1, 1972.

¹³⁸ "Timeline," Union Station website, <https://www.unionstation.org/timeline>.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

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conventions and families.¹⁴⁰ In 2011, Crown Center invested in the creation of two recreational facilities: Legoland and Sea Life Aquarium. In 2016, the City built a new streetcar line with a terminus at Pershing Road and Main Street to connect Union Station and Crown Center to the River Market on the north side of the Central Business District. Crown Center continues to thrive, based on the success of the first phase of the redevelopment.

The District encompasses a physically defined space that feels like a distinct place, known throughout Kansas City, where the surrounding resources are oriented inward, toward each other, Crown Center Square (#6), and Hallmark Square (#10). Construction of 2405 Grand (#12) and The Link (#13), in 1987 and 1988 respectively, complemented the Hallmark and Crown Center resources completed by 1974. Like the resources that form the Crown Center Historic District, 2405 Grand and The Link frame Crown Center Square and Hallmark Square as intended in the original redevelopment plan (*Figure 24*). In 1974, CCRC amended the plan to substantially scale back the scope of the proposed residential development. The amendment removed most of the planned residential resources. The two residential buildings completed in 1976 were oriented towards their own private courtyard, rather than Crown Center Square, the focal point of the Crown Center redevelopment.

Comparable Properties

The Crown Center Redevelopment Area, at eighty-five acres, remains the largest redevelopment project undertaken in Kansas City. When one considers just the forty-nine acres that comprise the Crown Center Historic District, it is still the largest mixed-use redevelopment project in Kansas City.¹⁴¹ There are few redevelopment projects in Kansas City with which to compare Crown Center.¹⁴² All of these projects used the state's Chapter 353 legislation to assist in land acquisition. The most analogous is the North Side Redevelopment Area, followed by Quality Hill Center. These examples are described below.

In 1955, the City Plan Commission studied public and private urban redevelopment projects in Kansas City's Central Business District and surrounding areas. All of the existing and approved projects identified in the 1955 study were residential projects (*Figure 25*).¹⁴³ Two of the projects identified as study areas contained mixed uses. While a few of these completed and proposed projects came close to Crown Center in land size, none created the distinguishable multi-functional space on the scale accomplished at Crown Center. The Eastside Study Area, fifty-eight acres on the east side of the central business district, resulted in large expanses of

¹⁴⁰ Mark P. Couch, "Crown Center Emerges into 21st Century as New Power – Since 1995, the Hallmark subsidiary has dropped its complacency to focus on development," *The Wichita Eagle*, May 21, 2000.

¹⁴¹ Chris Lester, "2 million square feet of office space," *Kansas City Star*, March 19, 1989.

¹⁴² Cydney Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield, National Register of Historic Places nomination, *Ten Main Center*, 12-13, NR listed November 2, 2015. <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/15000760.pdf>.

¹⁴³ City Plan Commission, "Central Business District Kansas City Missouri Study." Summary of Land Use Survey. Kansas City, Missouri, 1956.

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surface parking lots with some scattered peripheral commercial resources.¹⁴⁴ Public housing projects just outside the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the central business district included multiple low-rise apartment buildings, while one project on the east side had high-rise apartment buildings.¹⁴⁵

The city's first redevelopment project was the Quality Hill Center, between 1950 and 1960, on the bluff at the northwest corner of the city (*Figure 26*).¹⁴⁶ The private redevelopment cleared roughly six blocks of vacant or blighted land for the construction of six high-rise apartment towers and a low-rise motor inn. Jesse F. Lauck designed five identical ten-story apartment buildings in 1950; Kivett & Myers designed a single ten-story apartment building in 1958.¹⁴⁷ While developer Lewis Kitchen planned for a total of ten residential towers along with office and retail resources, five of the towers and the commercial resources never came to fruition, due primarily to lack of demand for residential units in downtown Kansas City, which could not compete with suburban development.¹⁴⁸ While the extant buildings remained occupied, they could not overcome the decline of the commercial and residential area to spark a revitalization. Like Crown Center, Quality Hill overestimated the need for residential space in downtown Kansas City. Quality Hill Center was a successful residential redevelopment project, but much smaller in size than Crown Center and more limited in function.

The next comparable private project focused on revitalizing an area at the north end of the central business district.¹⁴⁹ The North Side Redevelopment Corporation, formed in 1952 and headed by James M. Kemper, purchased land identified in Kansas City's 1947 Master Plan as needing redevelopment. The North Side plan proposed apartment and motor hotel components, in addition to the commercial office resources associated with Commerce Bank, the economic entity that provided the capital for the redevelopment. Architects Keene, Simpson & Murphy designed the thirteen-story International Style blond brick Walnut Tower Apartments, completed at 722 Walnut Street in 1963.¹⁵⁰ The Prom Motor Hotel was constructed at 6th and Main streets in 1959 with a large addition in 1963 (*Figure 27*).¹⁵¹ Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum (HOK) designed the nine-story Executive Plaza Office Building at 8th and Main streets in 1972-1974

¹⁴⁴ Millstein and Warfield, 12-13.

¹⁴⁵ The public housing projects, T.B. Watkins (1953) and Choteau Court (1956) located two miles east of Quality Hill, and West Bluff (1956), less than one mile southwest, have retained but modified the two- to three-story apartment buildings. The Wayne Miner public housing project, located two miles east of Quality Hill, was distinctly different from contemporary public housing projects. Planned in 1956 and completed in 1960 as the city's largest public housing project, Wayne Miner Court included five ten-story V-shaped buildings.

¹⁴⁶ NR Listed April 3, 2017. Nugent, "Quality Hill Center Historic District".

¹⁴⁷ Nugent, "Quality Hill Center Historic District," 3-4.

¹⁴⁸ Nugent, "Quality Hill Center Historic District," 17-18.

¹⁴⁹ The information regarding the Northside Redevelopment project comes from the "Quality Hill Center Historic District" nomination, 2017, 18.

¹⁵⁰ "Apartment on Walnut," Kansas City Times, February 17, 1959, 1. Microfilm Clippings, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁵¹ "Plan 102-Room Hotel Addition," Kansas City Times, November 1, 1963. Microfilm Clippings, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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with a distinctive Late-Modern reflective glass curtain wall on all elevations.¹⁵² The apartment building and the office buildings are extant and retain integrity while the hotel was demolished in 2007. Crown Center is significantly larger in scale and its redevelopment plans remains more intact than the North Side Redevelopment. Crown Center was substantially more successful in creating a community gathering place and a development that continued to grow with new businesses, convention facilities, and recreational features. The Crown Center Historic District meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration G in relation to Criterion A: Community Planning and Development, as it has achieved exceptional significance for properties less than fifty years of age. Contemporary and current scholars evaluate Crown Center, and primarily the initial building campaign, as an important local example of a planned development that incorporates multiple functions and designed open space. It is the largest and most cohesive example of such a development in Kansas City.

HALLMARK AND CROWN CENTER'S ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS¹⁵³

The diverse built environment of Crown Center represents the work of many prominent architects and planners working in the United States during the last half of the twentieth century. The mixed-use, planned environment and architectural styles represented in Crown Center reflect leading trends and theories from the mid-twentieth century into the present era. This design approach dramatically altered Kansas City's built environment by creating a visually and functionally unique multi-use business and recreational hub. Crown Center is the only example of a mixed-use superblock in Kansas City. It exemplifies the characteristics of this unique mid-to late-twentieth century property type, specifically the large private development that spans vacated streets and the functional variety of the buildings that comprise the development. Hallmark hired leading local, national, and international architects and planners, such as Victor Gruen, Edward Larrabee Barnes, Welton Beckett, Kivett & Myers, Hellmuth, Obata, & Kassabaum (HOK), and Harry Weese, to design both the Crown Center plan and the individual component buildings, structures, and landscapes. They also incorporated large works of art by Alexander Calder and Gordon MacKenzie into the public spaces, in keeping with Hallmark's aesthetic for its own facilities. As a result, the contributing resources in the proposed District represent a uniquely varied and intact local collection of designed landscapes and architectural styles that flourished from the mid-century into the present, including Modern Movement, New Formalism, Brutalism, and Postmodernism.

¹⁵² Rachel Nugent and Sophie Roark, National Register of Historic Places nomination, "Executive Plaza Office Building," NR listed March 13, 2017. <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/100000750.pdf>.

¹⁵³ The biography and contribution of Harry Weese, architect of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) is discussed below in the section titled *Criterion C: Architecture*.

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CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The Crown Center Hotel and the associated rear garden with the swimming pool (#8 and #28) are significant under Criterion C for Architecture as an important local example of Brutalist architecture and as an excellent example of the work of architect Harry Weese. As explained in Section 7, buildings within the Crown Center Historic District can be considered on an individual basis, as they were designed to be distinct resources, though conceptually related through the development plan. Although there was one development plan under which these resources were designed, all were designed to function independent of one another, despite connections to other resources, described below. At the northwest corner of the District, the Union Station Link (#14), is an elevated enclosed walkway that connects from the second floor of the Crown Center Hotel to Union Station (1914) located to the northwest across Main Street and Pershing Road outside the District. A punched opening with a pair of doors in the Crown Center Hotel provides access to the Union Station Link. The Union Station Link has five supports that connect to the ground, only one of which is on the Crown Center Hotel property. The supports include stairs and elevators that provide access to the ground (*Figure 48*). Near the northeast corner of the District, The Link (#13) connects the Crown Center Hotel to the Hyatt Regency Hotel (1980) in the block north of Pershing Road, outside the District. The Link utilizes a historic entrance on the east side of the Crown Center Hotel and historic ground-floor entrances of the office buildings. The Crown Center Shops (#9) abut the east and southeast sides of the hotel; the shops and the hotel are connected on the interior through pairs of glass doors on the mezzanine and third floors, as well as an opening from the lobby to the corridor of the shops on the first floor. These two buildings are functionally and operationally separate. The expansion joints between these buildings are visible at each of these openings. These two buildings were designed concurrently by separate architects and in different styles, but coordinated through their connections.

The Crown Center Hotel (which includes the grounds and the swimming pool), designed by Chicago-based architect Harry Weese in the Brutalist style and completed in 1973 (*Figure 28*). It was the first luxury hotel in Crown Center, an eighty-five-acre mixed-use redevelopment area privately financed by greeting card giant Hallmark Cards. Weese designed the Crown Center Hotel to embrace the natural seventy-foot-tall limestone bluff on the site and to project a monumentality befitting its function as a luxury hotel in an ambitious redevelopment project. The hotel featured a concrete frame with pre-cast concrete panel cladding and consisted of a five-story lobby wing abutting the north face of the bluff with four levels of underground parking below, and a fifteen-story L-shaped guest room tower rising from the top of the bluff (*Figure 29*). The west and south ends of the tower were dramatically cut at 45-degree angles, with the west end cantilevered over the bluff (*Figure 30*). A glass-encased bank of elevators at the northeast crux of the tower provided circulation between the two portions of the hotel and afforded

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expansive views (*Figure 31*). The north face of the bluff was exposed inside the lobby wing and augmented with a waterfall, pool basins, plantings, boulders, and pedestrian catwalks to become an indoor tropical garden (*Figure 32*). The first full level of guest rooms in the hotel began seventy feet above street level on the sixth floor in the L-shaped tower. At the top of the tower, a square-shaped penthouse with full-height windows contained a restaurant called the “Top of the Crown” which also offered panoramic views of the city. The strong geometric lines of the hotel were continued in the circular sundeck with semi-circular inset all-weather pool, located on top of the bluff in the base of the crux of the tower (*Figure 33*). The Crown Center Hotel’s design and massing reflects a significant example of Brutalist architecture in Kansas City.

The Brutalist architectural style retains the flat rooflines and strong geometric forms of the Modern Movement ethos while simultaneously employing building materials like poured and pre-cast concrete to convey weight and monumentality.¹⁵⁴ The primary building material, most often concrete, is left exposed on the exterior and interior of the structure to visually reinforce the massive weight of the building and to express its structural form. The exposed concrete typically retains a rough or patterned face from the inclusion of an aggregate or the retention of impressions left by the formwork used in the casting process. Unlike many expressions of the Modern Movement-era philosophy (such as the Miesian style), Brutalist architecture treats fenestration as voids in the plane of the overall structure, rather than as a smooth continuation of the wall of the building. Following this treatment, windows and doors are often recessed into the wall, creating deep shadows and allowing the structure of the building to convey the most visual impact. The Brutalist style’s contrast of recessed fenestration within a massive, textured concrete frame can express an abstract sculptural quality that architectural historian Carole Rifkind typifies as “Abstract Monumentality.”¹⁵⁵ Indeed, a predominant visual characteristic of the Brutalist style is of monumentality and massiveness. These hallmarks are expressed in Weese’s design for the Crown Center Hotel. The hotel exhibits strong geometric lines, particularly in the canted ends of the L-shaped guest room tower. The hotel’s reinforced concrete frame with pre-cast concrete panel cladding reflects the aesthetic of the Brutalist style and its expression of structural form. The concrete panels on the hotel have a rough-faced exposed aggregate finish, reflecting the style’s embrace of textured concrete surfaces. Concrete coffers articulate the building on the exterior and interior of the hotel and add a dramatic sculptural quality. The hotel’s guest room tower is punctuated with deeply-recessed windows that emphasize the concrete form and contribute to the sculptural quality of the building. The hotel’s exposed concrete, strong geometric lines, and prominent massing project a monumentality that is a character-defining feature of the Brutalist style.

¹⁵⁴ Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996), 279.

¹⁵⁵ Carole Rifkind, *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture* (New York: Plume, 2001), 124.

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The term “Brutalist” was coined in the early 1950s by Swedish architect Hans Asplund as the design philosophy was gaining traction in European architectural circles, particularly through the work of British architects Paul and Alison Smithson.¹⁵⁶ Brutalist architects were influenced by the post-World War II expressionist designs of Le Corbusier, especially his Unité d’Habitation, an eighteen-story apartment block completed in Marseilles, France, in 1952.¹⁵⁷ In Corbusier’s Unité d’Habitation, architects observed his ability to transcend the stark, slim boxes that had become an instantly recognizable visual trope of the Modern Movement aesthetic.¹⁵⁸ Corbusier employed rough-cast concrete, or “beton brut,” in which the material expressed a rugged, raw characteristic through the texture left on the surface from the formwork used during the casting process.¹⁵⁹ The raw concrete coupled with the building’s monumental scale achieved Corbusier’s goal of honestly expressing the apartment block’s structure while also creating an emotional response.¹⁶⁰ Proponents of the Brutalist design philosophy seized on these characteristics, resulting in the monumental raw concrete buildings so closely associated with the style. The sculptural quality and textured concrete cladding of the Crown Center Hotel reflect the Brutalist style’s embrace of Corbusier’s postwar visual aesthetic. Just as Corbusier and subsequent Brutalist designs expressed the raw structural form of a building, the Crown Center Hotel’s concrete structure is a character-defining feature, exposed on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.

By the early 1960s, the Brutalist style was influential in American architectural design.¹⁶¹ Important American examples of the style include the Yale Art and Architecture Building in New Haven, Connecticut, designed by Paul Rudolph in 1958 and completed in 1963; the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington D.C., designed by Marcel Breuer Associates in 1963 and completed in 1968; and Boston City Hall, designed in 1963 by Kallmann, McKinnell & Knowles and completed in 1969.¹⁶² The monumental style’s projection of authority was particularly desirable to clients constructing institutional and government buildings.

In Kansas City, Missouri, one of the earliest expressions of the Brutalist style’s sculptural quality is seen in Ten Main Center at 920 Main Street (NRHP listed 2015).¹⁶³ The twenty-story office

¹⁵⁶ Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1966), 10; Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780*, 280.

¹⁵⁷ Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780*, 282.

¹⁵⁸ Banham, *The New Brutalism*, 16.

¹⁵⁹ Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780*, 282.

¹⁶⁰ Mark Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture: Buildings in their Cultural and Technological Context* (Lebanon, New Hampshire: University Press of New England, 1999), 264.

¹⁶¹ Stacy Sone and Carolyn Toft, “Pet Plaza,” *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 2004, 8-16.

¹⁶² Rifkind, *A Field Guide to Contemporary American Architecture*, 124; Gelernter, *A History of American Architecture*, 277.

¹⁶³ George Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1992), 141-142; The National Register nomination for Ten Main Center typifies the building’s style as “Abstract Monumentality,” a term coined by architectural historian Carole Rifkind to denote the Brutalist style’s contrast of recessed fenestration within a massive, textured concrete frame, evoking an abstract sculptural quality.

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tower was designed by California-based architect Charles Luckman and completed in 1968 (*Figure 34*).¹⁶⁴ Ten Main Center was a dramatic departure from previous office towers in the city that expressed the slick glass and steel curtain wall construction of the Miesian style. Instead, Ten Main Center exhibited a more complex sculptural form through its pre-cast concrete panels with deep reveals that created a strong contrast between light and shadow.¹⁶⁵ Another important early example of the style in Kansas City was the Missouri Division of Employment Security Building at 1411 Main Street, completed circa 1967 and designed by local firm Shaughnessy, Bower & Grimaldi (*Figure 35*).¹⁶⁶ Despite being only four stories, the Missouri Division of Employment Security Building projected authority through its wide massing, stacked geometric shapes, and textured concrete panel cladding. The building lacked a repetitive rhythm of window openings as seen in Ten Main Center and the guest tower of the Crown Center Hotel. The building was demolished early in the twenty-first century. Another example of the style in Kansas City is seen at the Missouri State Building, completed at 615 E. 13th Street in 1968 and designed by local firm Kivett & Myers (*Figure 36*).¹⁶⁷ The five-story building employs a pattern of pre-cast concrete panels with a grid of deeply recessed windows similar to Ten Main Center. Kivett & Myers also used the Brutalist style for the Kansas City International Airport at 601 Brasilia Avenue. Designed from 1965 through 1967 and opened in 1972, the airport is composed of three low-slung, horseshoe-shaped terminals radiating from a circular hub. The terminals have an exposed concrete structure with varying textures and a large aggregate composition (*Figure 37*).¹⁶⁸ Another government building in Kansas City designed in the Brutalist style is the Municipal Court Building, completed in 1973 at 1101 Locust Street and designed by Linscott, Haylett and Associates (*Figure 38*). The three-story building exhibits a monumental geometric massing through its projecting cornice, thin rectangular windows, and textured concrete cladding. On a less imposing scale than the Crown Center Hotel, the building exhibits interesting geometric angles through the use of inverted corner piers and rows of concrete fins below the cornice.

Constructed towards the end of the Brutalist style's influence in American architecture, the Crown Center Hotel embodies the core traits of Brutalism in a striking design that incorporates the site's natural topography to create a distinct and exceptionally significant example of the style in Kansas City. The hotel's reinforced concrete frame and textured pre-cast concrete panel cladding convey weight and massiveness. The ends of the L-shaped guest room tower, perched on top of the bluff, are dramatically cut at 45-degree angles, with the west end cantilevered over the limestone bluff. The raw concrete structure and cladding of the hotel are exposed on the exterior and the interior, with portions of the ceiling employing square concrete coffers that

¹⁶⁴ Cydney Millstein and Mary Ann Warfield, "Ten Main Center," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 2015, 7-1.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*; Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, 142.

¹⁶⁶ Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, 142; Stacy Sone and Carolyn Toft, "Pet Plaza," 8-16.

¹⁶⁷ Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, 144.

¹⁶⁸ Rosin Preservation, LLC, "Kansas City International Airport Terminal Complex," *Eligibility Assessment*, 2013, 3.

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impart a vivid sculptural quality. The guest room windows in the tower are deeply recessed, reinforcing the visual impact of the concrete frame while contributing to the impressive sculptural form of the tower. The square-shaped penthouse at the crux of the tower further adds to the monumental mass of the hotel. Among the extant examples of the Brutalist style in Kansas City, the Crown Center Hotel represents a distinct and particularly dramatic representation of the style's character-defining features. In contrast to low-rise examples of Brutalism in Kansas City such as the airport, the Missouri Division of Employment Security Building, the Missouri State Building, and the Municipal Court Building, the Crown Center Hotel has a soaring, monumental presence due to its height, massing, and sharp geometric angles. Furthermore, the monumentality of the Crown Center Hotel is magnified by its embrace of the natural seventy-foot-tall limestone bluff on the site. In comparison to Kansas City's other extant Brutalist buildings on relatively flat terrain, the limestone bluff presented a unique design challenge and opportunity that ultimately melded well with the Brutalist aesthetic. The hotel design's integration with the natural topography creates an impressive and robust presence that sets the Crown Center Hotel apart from other Brutalist designs in Kansas City, including other high-rise examples of the style such as Ten Main Center. This presence is acutely felt from the street level west of the guest tower, where the concrete-clad, sharply-angled wing is dramatically cantilevered over the limestone bluff. This juxtaposition of natural and man-made elements is continued on the interior of the hotel, where the north face of the exposed limestone bluff is preserved as an indoor garden with a waterfall, pool basins, boulders, and plantings. While the Brutalist style was typically reserved for government or institutional buildings, such as the Missouri Division of Employment Security Building and the Municipal Court Building, the Crown Center Hotel is an excellent representation of the Brutalist style in Kansas City. The hotel's exceptional architectural distinction lies in its unparalleled design by master architect Harry Weese that integrates the hallmarks of the Brutalist aesthetic with the raw, rugged qualities of the natural landscape.

The innovative design of the Crown Center Hotel has drawn assessment from architectural practitioners, writers, and historians. The hotel was featured as the cover story for the July 1973 edition of *Interiors* magazine, in which editor Olga Gueft noted the hotel's height and dominating position, stating "...the shaping of its 30,000 cubic yards of concrete embody some of Crown Center's most daring fantasies."¹⁶⁹ Regarding the dramatic interior garden, Gueft wrote, "The confrontation between the civilized, carpeted interiors and the primeval rawness of the lush foliage...of the hillside is an exciting experience."¹⁷⁰ The Crown Center Hotel was also extensively reviewed in the October 1973 edition of *Architectural Record*, in which it is described as a "remarkable building," noting "from the street, the massing is spectacular" and that "its elements are superbly organized around the rockface."¹⁷¹ In his 1992 book *Kansas City*,

¹⁶⁹ Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," *Interiors*, July 1973, 48.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973, 118.

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Missouri: An Architectural History, architectural historian George Ehrlich describes the Crown Center Hotel's design as "crisp, and somewhat formidable" and asserts that the limestone bluff garden "provides a dramatic transitional space that is unique to the city, and has few parallels elsewhere. The exciting...spatial experience has become a major tourist attraction to in the city [and has] contributed to the flow of people to and through Crown Center."¹⁷² Initial impressions of the Crown Center Hotel by architectural critics were favorable, and nearly all noted the integration of the natural landscape with the building's design. Ehrlich's assessment of the Crown Center Hotel as "somewhat formidable" underlines the evolution of public perspective towards the Brutalist style in the years since its heyday in American architecture; yet, his summation of the building highlights its relationship to the limestone bluff contributing to the building's enduring draw as a tourist attraction.

HARRY WEESE, MASTER ARCHITECT

In addition to being an important local example of the Brutalist style, the Crown Center Hotel is also a significant example of the work of architect Harry Weese. Weese's (*Figure 39*) design for the Crown Center Hotel received the prestigious "Distinguished Building" award from the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1975.¹⁷³ The institute formally recognized the building as "a first-rate hotel integrated into its site and urban context; the imaginative use of site generates a spectacular garden."¹⁷⁴ Indeed, the Crown Center Hotel stands out among Weese's portfolio of work as an excellent example of his ability to integrate architectural design with the natural landscape.

Harry Mohr Weese was born in 1915 in Evanston, Illinois, an upper-middle class suburb of Chicago, and received a Bachelor of Architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1938.¹⁷⁵ During his college studies, Weese traveled to Europe and journeyed through several countries to gain additional perspective on the practice of architecture. Weese came away from the trip with an acute impression of a European embrace of the land and use of local building methods, believing that "man and nature were in closer contact there than in the United States."¹⁷⁶ The experience was instrumental to Weese's development of a personal design philosophy that drew inspiration from the local landscape and traditions.¹⁷⁷ After graduating, he received a one-year fellowship to study city planning at Michigan's Cranbrook Academy of Art, where his peers included Eliel Saarinen and Charles and Ray Eames. Weese

¹⁷² Ehrlich, *Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990*, 157-158.

¹⁷³ Bruegmann and Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, 166.

¹⁷⁴ The American Institute of Architects, "Chicago Architectural Awards – 1975," Art Institute of Chicago. Published online at: http://www.artic.edu/sites/default/files/libraries/pubs/1975/AIC1975ChicagoArchitect_comb.pdf. Accessed December 8, 2017.

¹⁷⁵ Elizabeth Rosin and Elizabeth Patterson, "Mercantile Bank & Trust Building," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 2009, 8-24. Biographical information on Harry Weese under the subheading "Criterion C: Harry Weese, Master Architect" is from this source unless otherwise noted.

¹⁷⁶ Bruegmann and Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, 19.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 19, 74-75.

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then located to Chicago, Illinois, and joined the firm of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM). During this time in Chicago, Weese continued his interest in urban issues by joining with a group of like-minded architects and planners to publish a journal about city planning and urban design.¹⁷⁸ After the war, Weese returned to Chicago, and formed Harry Weese and Associates in 1947. Weese's firm worked prolifically throughout Illinois, designing single and multi-family residences and commercial stores throughout the 1950s. Weese also continued to pursue urban planning opportunities, consulting for the Chicago Plan Commission and joining Chicago's Urban Renewal Committee.¹⁷⁹ During this time Weese advocated enhancing the economic vitality of city centers by making blighted areas available for the "highest and best" use while providing subsidies for displaced residents to find housing.¹⁸⁰ Weese also utilized his connections with the Saarinens to obtain a building commission with Irwin Miller to design several properties in the architecturally progressive city of Columbus, Indiana. One of these was the First Baptist Church of Columbus, Ohio, which was completed in 1965 (*Figure 51*). The First Baptist Church was recognized as National Historic Landmark in 2000 for its architectural design and notes the design's sensitivity to the natural terrain.¹⁸¹ While this building is not comparable to the Crown Center Hotel in form or architectural expression, there are similarities in the approach to using the site. Weese used the topography of the site to create a two-story building that had at-grade entrances to both stories, and the height of the hill to subtly and naturally emphasize the monumentality of the building.¹⁸²

Weese gained international attention through his design for the United States Embassy in Accra, Ghana, in 1957 (*Figure 52*). After studying the site and local architectural examples, Weese created a design that incorporated local mahogany wood and raised the building on pilotis to protect it from termite damage, which he had observed on other buildings in the area.¹⁸³ The attentive design and Weese's use of local materials received coverage in *Time* magazine. The attention Weese received from the embassy design brought him further commissions. He was named a fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1961, when he was in his mid-forties. Weese continued to champion urbanism, recognizing the importance on providing housing options within inner-city environments and increasing urban density during an era when middle-class families were actively moving out of the city and into suburban neighborhoods.¹⁸⁴ Weese's growing firm designed several housing developments, particularly in the Hyde Park, Chicago area. The firm also designed campus buildings for the University of

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 27.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 34.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 35.

¹⁸¹ Laura Thayer, Louis Joyner, and Malcolm Cairns, "First Baptist Church of Columbus," *National Historic Landmark Registration Form*, 2000, 8.

¹⁸² Ibid, 9.

¹⁸³ Bruegmann and Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, 97.

¹⁸⁴ Ian Baldwin, "The Architecture of Harry Weese," *Places Journal*, May 2011, <https://placesjournal.org/article/the-architecture-of-harry-weese>. Accessed December 14, 2017; Bruegmann and Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, 43. This is not meant to imply, however, that Weese specialized solely in building housing projects. Rather, Weese supported the model of providing housing in inner city neighborhoods, while throughout his career designing a wide range of buildings, including multi-family housing.

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Wisconsin at Madison and Reed College in Portland, Oregon, and worked on city planning initiatives for Southwest Washington D.C. and South Town in Vienna, Italy; he planned an entirely new town near Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Weese did not specialize in a specific building type or architectural style.¹⁸⁵ Rather, Weese gained a reputation as an architect who could work in a range of mediums to create a design that was responsive to local site conditions and needs. This reputation continued to bring Weese's firm a multitude of commissions, including the design of a new rail-based public transportation system for Washington, D.C., which came in the late 1960s. The commission was the largest public works project at the time, and the first in which the appointed architect was given equal decision-making power with the project engineers.¹⁸⁶ The Washington D.C. Metro opened in 1976 and featured a unified design motif of barrel-vaulted ceilings with coffered concrete panels that was widely praised for its grandeur.¹⁸⁷

Early in 1969, Weese was chosen as the architect for the Crown Center Hotel. While Edward Larrabee Barnes employed a contemporary aesthetic using concrete panels, banded fenestration, and large rectangular massing for the rest of the early buildings in the Crown Center Historic District, these buildings were very distinct from the Brutalist aesthetic Weese employed for the Crown Center Hotel. The Crown Center Hotel was prominently situated at the highest point in the redevelopment area and Weese was the first new architect to be chosen to design a building for Crown Center.¹⁸⁸ Crown Center informational newsletters and pamphlets touted the Chicago architect's credentials, noting his views in favor of urban revitalization and his attentive design for the American Embassy in Ghana.¹⁸⁹ The choice of Harry Weese, by then an internationally-recognized architect strongly in favor of inner-city development, was in keeping with Hallmark Card's reputation as a design-oriented firm.¹⁹⁰

Weese likely received the Crown Center Hotel commission because his reputation and body of work demonstrated a support for inner-city revitalization as well as a keen attention to local site conditions. These traits meshed well with the Crown Center project, which aimed to revitalize nearly eighty-five acres on contiguous city blocks in Kansas City, and the specific site of the

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 75.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, 184.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 188-189.

¹⁸⁸ "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973; Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Chicago's Harry Weese: The Man and His Architecture," *Crown Center 4*, May 1969.

¹⁸⁹ Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Chicago's Harry Weese: The Man and His Architecture," *Crown Center 4*, May 1969.

¹⁹⁰ Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri. The Hallmark Cards company expressed the following in early literature promoting Crown Center: "As a private development, Crown Center has among its goals a community that will set new standards in quality of design and attention to detail. The parent company, Hallmark Cards, is a design-oriented firm with a deep commitment to both good taste and imagination. Crown Center has proceeded in the belief that this commitment can be translated into a convenient inner-city location that will make a contribution to modern urban planning."; Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Crown Center: The Office Environment," Pamphlet, 1968, 6.

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Crown Center Hotel, which was dominated by a seventy-foot-tall limestone bluff. Western International Hotels, the company that would operate the new hotel, expressed their preference for efficient vertical circulation in the building.¹⁹¹ Weese created his design for the Crown Center Hotel to address this one explicitly expressed client need and incorporate the rugged terrain of the site. Weese's design featured a five-story lobby wing with underground parking abutting the north face of the bluff and a fifteen-story guest tower with strong geometric lines perched on top of the bluff; the wing and the tower of the hotel were connected via a glass-encased elevator shaft, allowing for the efficient vertical circulation desired by the client. Western International Hotels praised Weese's design, noting "the building has very classic contemporary lines and conveys a feeling of great dignity and strength."¹⁹² Construction on the Crown Center Hotel began in 1971 (*Figure 40*), and it was completed in 1973. On its opening day in May, the *Kansas City Star* called the building "the most dramatic and commanding structure" in Crown Center.¹⁹³ Indeed, the hotel's design, composed of rough-faced concrete panels executed in bold geometric angles, and its integration with the bluff gave it a strong, monumental presence. It towered above the other buildings that had been constructed in Crown Center, and continued to be visually distinct in massing, height, and design when the Crown Center Shops (designed by Barnes) opened later in 1973.

By the mid-1970s, Harry Weese and Associates had solidified its international reputation as a top architectural firm, and in 1978 the firm was named Outstanding Architectural Firm of the Year by the American Institute of Architects. The firm continued to operate with offices in Chicago, Washington, and Miami. Weese retired from the firm in the early 1990s, and passed away in 1998 in Mateo, Illinois, at the age of 83. Weese's enduring legacy has been as a postwar American architect who supported the idea that architecture should lead to a more enjoyable urban experience by championing the revitalization of cities and creating designs attentive to the physical and social environment in which the building would function.¹⁹⁴

Comparable Design Concepts

Over the course of his career, Weese did not specialize in a specific architectural style. Among his body of work dating from the early-to-mid 1970s, there are a few examples in addition to the Crown Center Hotel that reflect characteristics of the Brutalist style. For the South Lower Campus of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, he designed the six-story George L. Mosse Humanities Building in the Brutalist style. The building was completed in 1970 and occupied the entire expanse of its site, due to the complexity of academic programs the building had to house

¹⁹¹ Bruegmann and Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, 165.

¹⁹² Western International Hotels, "Crown Center Hotel," Pamphlet, November 1970. The pamphlet, released after Weese's design was approved, also contained an operational philosophy and an interior design philosophy to "emphasize the sensitive contemporary features of the building and to maintain the continuity of the architectural concept combined with an optimum of comfort and good taste."

¹⁹³ Bruegmann and Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, 165.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 75-77.

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(Figure 53).¹⁹⁵ The building was designed with a concrete structure, limestone panel cladding, and canted base walls with pilotis supporting its monumental upper mass. In 1975, Weese's Metropolitan Correctional Center in Chicago was completed. The twenty-eight-story prison tower features a right triangle floorplan with irregular, recessed, thin rectangular windows punctuating the concrete exterior (Figure 54).¹⁹⁶ Of Weese's Brutalist designs, the Crown Center Hotel exhibits a keen attention to the natural landscape that makes it a distinct Brutalist building in his career. Dr. Robert Bruegmann, Professor Emeritus of Art History, Architecture, and Urban Planning at the University of Illinois at Chicago and author of *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, assessed the Crown Center Hotel as "a spectacular invention," noting that the Crown Center Hotel was set apart from Weese's other Brutalist buildings by "the extraordinary relationship with site, both on the exterior and the rock wall on the interior."¹⁹⁷ The hotel's distinct design that embraced the natural limestone bluff was noticed by the Chicago chapter of the American Institute of Architects, which awarded the building its prestigious "Distinguished Building" title, praising it as "a first-rate hotel integrated into its site and urban context."¹⁹⁸

Among the highlights of Weese's long career, the Crown Center Hotel is an exemplary design that demonstrates his attention to the physical environment in which a building functions and its role within the fabric of a cityscape. As a locally-significant example of an important work by a master architect, the Crown Center Hotel superbly demonstrates a particular idea of Weese's craft, the integration of landscape with a building's design to meet site-specific needs. Weese's body of work in Kansas City is limited to the Crown Center Hotel and two additional buildings: an eight-story office building located at 2301 Main Street, called One Pershing Square, completed in 1980; and the Mercantile Bank & Trust Building, located at 1101 Walnut Street (Figures 41 and 42-43, respectively). The twenty-story Mercantile Bank & Trust Building was completed in 1974 in the Modern Movement aesthetic with a distinct exposed steel structure and a sunken retail plaza.¹⁹⁹ Although the built-up site lacked any distinctive terrain features previously, Weese created a space that was out of plane with rest of the street. The raised cantilevered floors of the building's base created an empty volume similar to the lobby area surrounding the exposed bluff in the Crown Center Hotel. The Mercantile Bank & Trust Building was listed in the National Register in 2009 for architectural significance as the only example in Kansas City of an exposed articulated steel frame, an important method of construction. One Pershing Square, completed in 1980,²⁰⁰ is an eight-story rectangular office building with pre-cast

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 51; Aaron Hathaway, "Debunking the bunker: Is the Humanities building riot proof?," *The Badger Herald*, December 5, 2015, <https://badgerherald.com/banter/2015/12/05/debunking-the-bunker-is-the-humanities-building-riot-proof/>. Accessed December 19, 2017.

¹⁹⁶ Ian Baldwin, "The Architecture of Harry Weese," *Places Journal*, May 2011, <https://placesjournal.org/article/the-architecture-of-harry-weese>. Accessed December 14, 2017.

¹⁹⁷ Dr. Robert Bruegmann, e-mail message to author, December 19, 2017.

¹⁹⁸ The American Institute of Architects, "Chicago Architectural Awards – 1975," Art Institute of Chicago. Published online at: http://www.artic.edu/sites/default/files/libraries/pubs/1975/AIC1975ChicagoArchitect_comb.pdf. Accessed December 8, 2017.

¹⁹⁹ Rosin and Patterson, "Mercantile Bank & Trust Building," *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 2009, 7-1.

²⁰⁰ Bruegmann and Skolnik, *The Architecture of Harry Weese*, 231.

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concrete panel cladding, bays of tinted fixed windows, and a flat roof. The bands of windows are similar to the fenestration patterns on both the Crown Center Hotel and the Mercantile Bank & Trust Building. While the parking lot is sunken several stories on the east side of the building, the front (west) elevation does not provide any indication of the grade change at the rear. When compared to One Pershing Square and the Mercantile Bank & Trust Building, the Crown Center Hotel more clearly embodies Weese's reputation as a master architect who created designs which were responsive to the site's terrain. The Crown Center Hotel is an important example within Weese's body of work as it illustrates his skill in executing a design in the Brutalist style while also illustrating his commitment to incorporating setting and the natural terrain of the property into his design, a combination he had not previously explored. Weese used large-aggregate concrete and solid asymmetrical forms to express monumentality, one of the character-defining features of Brutalism. The large open interior space of the lobby has expansive concrete coffered ceilings while incorporating the natural limestone bluff of the site as one of the lobby's walls. Additionally, Weese's personal beliefs about the urban built environment and city revitalization are reflected in the Crown Center Hotel's provenance as a building within an ambitious redevelopment project designed to reinvigorate an inner-city area. Crown Center Hotel meets Criteria Consideration G as a resource that has achieved exceptional significance within the last fifty years as the scholarly analysis of this building has identified it as an important expression of the Brutalist style in Kansas City. Likewise, the architecture community has recognized Harry Weese for this design, specifically noting the incorporation of the limestone bluff into the lobby as an important expression of his design concepts, although in a combination that he had not previously explored. Crown Center Hotel is exceptionally significant for both its architectural style and as the work of a master, architect Harry Weese.

CONCLUSION

Crown Center Historic District is exceptionally significant as the largest redevelopment project in Kansas City. It is unique for its mixed-use function, specifically the integration of commercial, professional, business, and retail spaces, along with hotel and recreational facilities, and for its comprehensive planning and design. The boundaries of the District encompass the initial building campaign completed by 1974, which focused on the commercial and recreational resources that were most in demand at the time of construction. The residential resources, intended as part of the first formal phase of the project, were constructed in 1976, several years after the resources in the initial building campaign due to the reduced demand for urban residential resources during the height of suburban development elsewhere in the metropolitan area. The nominated resources frame the central Crown Center Square (#6), a public open space, designed for utilization by visitors to the Crown Center Hotel (#8) and Crown Center Shops (#9), and employees of the office buildings (#1, #2, #4, #5, and #12). The success of the initial building campaign, as exemplified by the resources within the District, determined how the area surrounding the central core of Crown Center developed. The Crown Center development

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was successful in revitalizing that area of Kansas City, not just within the boundaries of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area, but surrounding it as well. The success of Crown Center spurred adjacent development associated with Union Station. Once the Union Station rehabilitation was complete, Crown Center reinvested in its property to create a family-friendly recreational destination. Science City in Union Station, the recently-built streetcar from Union Station through the Central Business District, and Legoland and Sea Life Aquarium, along with Kaleidoscope and family restaurants in the Crown Center Shops illustrate the success of the mixed-use development. Additional office space and hotel facilities dominated the construction that followed the first phase, both inside and outside the boundary of the Crown Center Redevelopment Area, illustrating how the nominated property influenced the revitalization of the surrounding area. Crown Center, specifically the historic core of the redevelopment centered on Crown Center Square and encompassed within the boundaries of the National Register District, embodies a distinct sense of place that was not achieved in any other redevelopment project in Kansas City. Continued occupancy of the buildings and the large open space of Crown Center Square illustrate the success of this revitalization project.

The two periods of significance associated with Community Planning & Development, 1955-1958 and 1966-1974, reflect the active construction of resources by the Hallmark Corporation and the Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation to further their plans for a broad approach to redeveloping this area of Kansas City. The 1974 date is also the date that Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation filed an amendment to reduce the scope of the residential component of the plan. The District meets Criteria Consideration G for resources that have achieved significance in the last fifty years as it is exceptionally important as a successful mixed-use development in Kansas City. It is the largest and most cohesive planned development in the city. Additionally, the Crown Center Hotel, individually, is exceptionally significant as an excellent example of Brutalism in Kansas City and as an important work in the portfolio of master architect Harry Weese. The period of significance for the Hotel is 1973, the date of construction. Chicago architect Harry Weese designed a unique building that incorporated the seventy-foot limestone bluff that had previously defined the property, into the lobby of the luxury hotel. The Crown Center Hotel exemplifies the character-defining features of the Brutalist style, specifically its monumentality conveyed through its solid, asymmetrical form and large-aggregate concrete as the primary material. The Crown Center Hotel remains an important example of the Brutalist style in Kansas City and in the varied portfolio of Harry Weese as he embraced the Brutalist style.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the proposed Crown Center Historic District are Pershing Road on the north; Pershing and Gillham roads on the east; East 27th Street, the south and west perimeter of the Hallmark Headquarters buildings (#2 and #15), and the south perimeter of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) and Crown Center Shops (#9) on the south; and Main Street on the west.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries encompass the intact group of resources that represent the first completed phase of the Crown Center Redevelopment Plan and embody the full intention of the Hallmark Corporation to develop a model mixed-use urban center outside Kansas City's traditional central business district, yet still in the heart of the urban core. The District includes the Hallmark Headquarters and the physical area that was the fully-realized first phase of the Redevelopment Plan. These resources are oriented toward the central public square and are intentionally interconnected. The resources outside the boundary, including the residential buildings, have minimal physical connections to the nominated buildings and are neither connected to nor oriented toward the public square. They are visually excluded from and do not express feelings of association with the primary core of Crown Center.

The nominated buildings have four points of physical connection to resources outside the boundaries of the proposed district (*Figure 1*).

1. At the northwest corner of the District, the Union Station Link (#14), is an elevated enclosed walkway that connects from the second floor of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) to Union Station (1914) located to the northwest across Main Street and Pershing Road. A punched opening with a pair of doors in the Crown Center Hotel provides access to the Union Station Link. The Union Station Link has five supports that connect to the ground, only one of which is on the Crown Center Hotel property. The supports include stairs and elevators that provide access to the ground (*Figure 48*).
2. Near the northeast corner of the District, The Link (#13) connects the Crown Center Hotel (#8) to the Hyatt Regency Hotel (1980). The Link is an elevated enclosed walkway that spans Grand Boulevard, goes between Grand Avenue Bank & Trust Building (#5), Pershing Road Office Building (#4), and 2405 Grand (#12) creating an atrium, and then extending over Pershing Road and McGee Street to connect to the Hyatt. The Link utilizes a historic entrance on the east side of the Crown Center Hotel (#8) and historic ground-floor entrances of the office buildings.
3. At the southwest corner of the District, an elevated enclosed walkway (#23) connects the Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building (#2) to the Shook Hardy & Bacon Headquarters Building (2003) at 2555 Grand. This connector was constructed in 2003 with the office Shook Hardy & Bacon Building and utilizes punched openings in the Hallmark building.
4. The garage of the Crown Center Shops (#9) abuts the residential resources of the Santa Fe Place Apartments (1976) and the San Francisco Tower (1976). However, the only connection between the residential resources and any of the resources in the proposed

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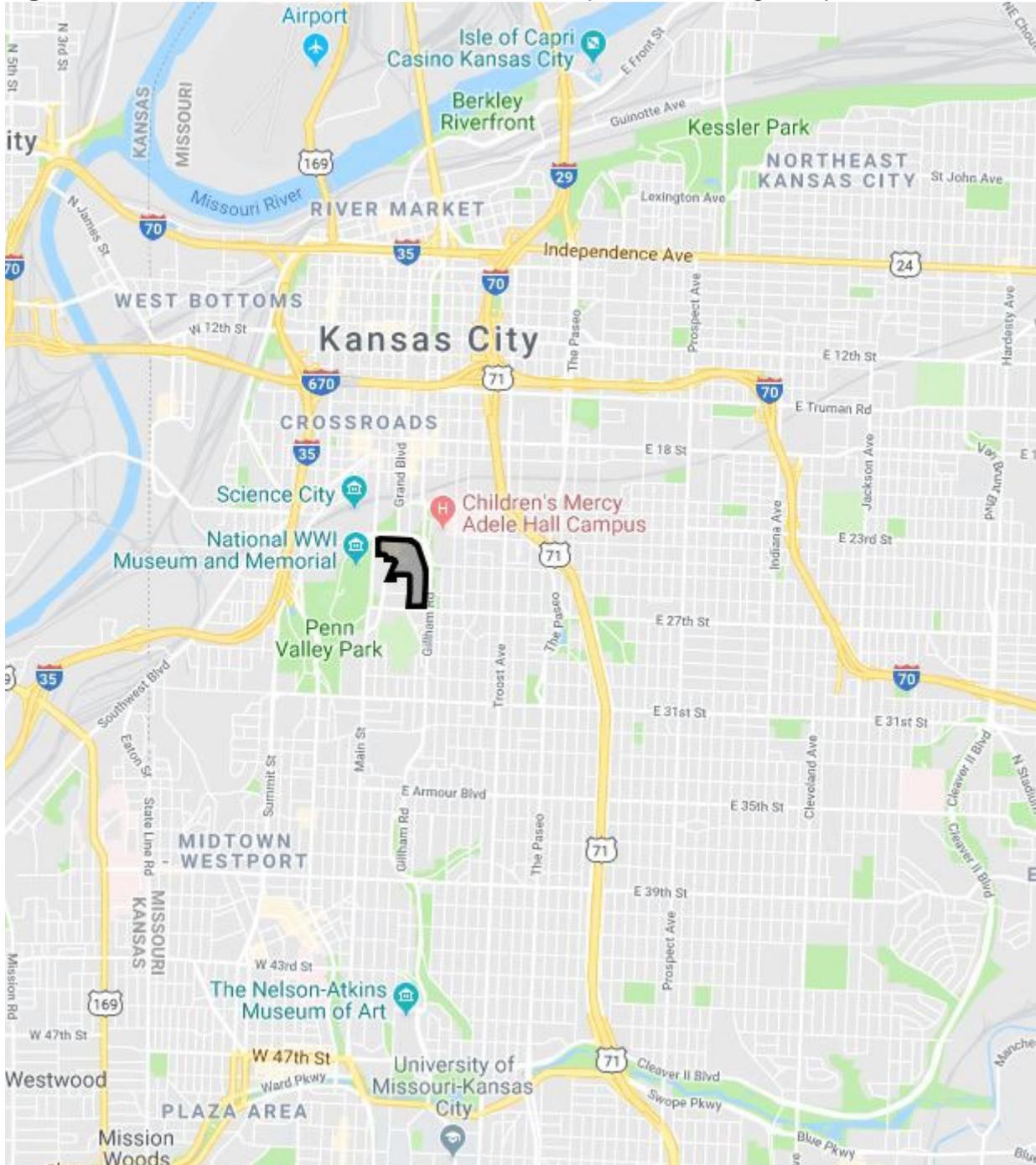
District is a single pair of metal slab doors at one level of the parking garage associated with the Crown Center Shops (#9) to an enclosed walkway (#29) that leads to the San Francisco Tower (*Figures 49 and 50*). The walkway rests atop the entrance to the Crown Center Shops garage.

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Figure 1. Crown Center Historic District – Context Map. Source: Google Maps, 2019.

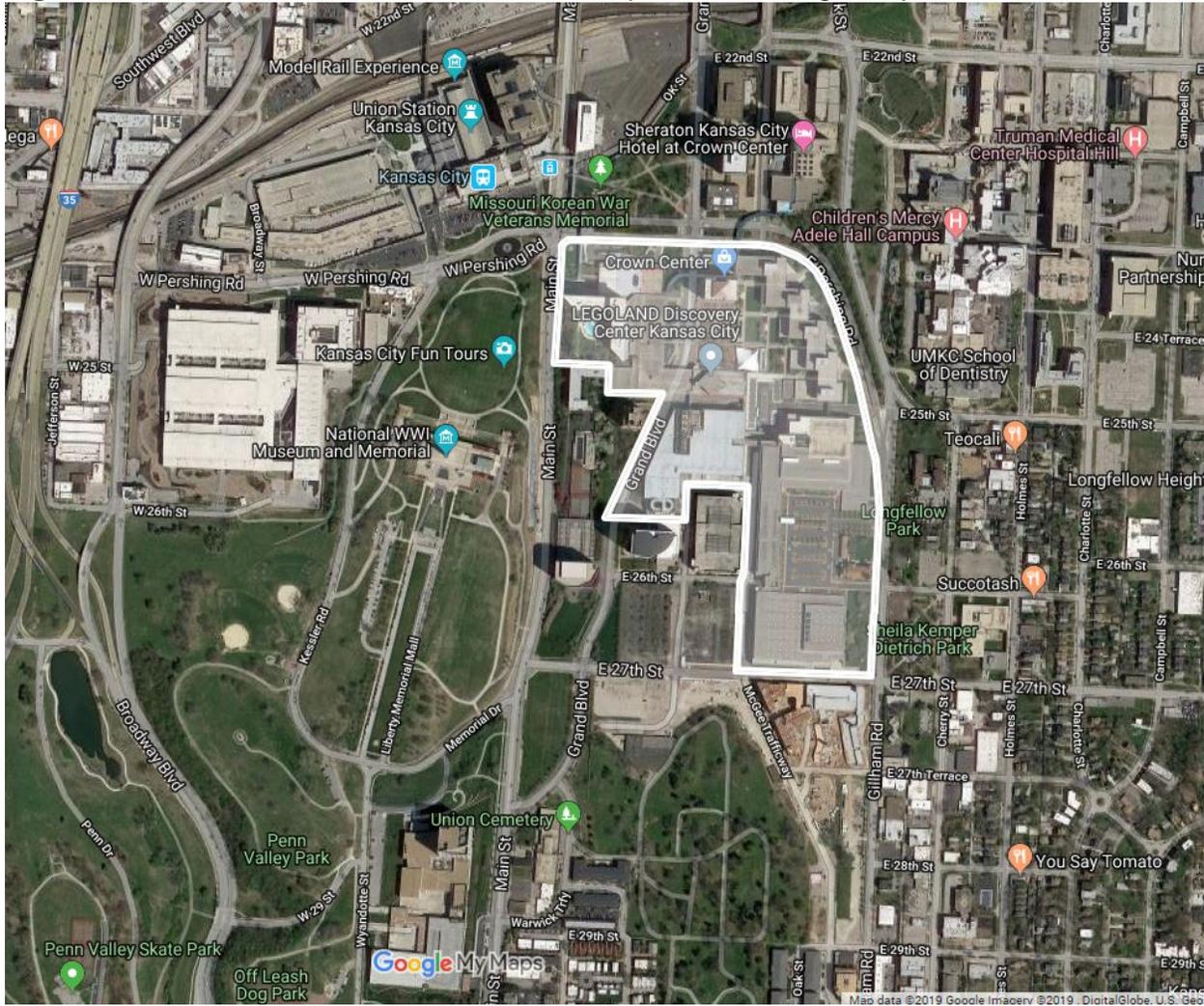


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Figure 2. Crown Center Historic District – Site Map. Source: Google Maps, 2019.



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Figure 3. Crown Center Historic District – Site Map with Latitude/Longitude Coordinates.
Source: Google Maps, 2019.

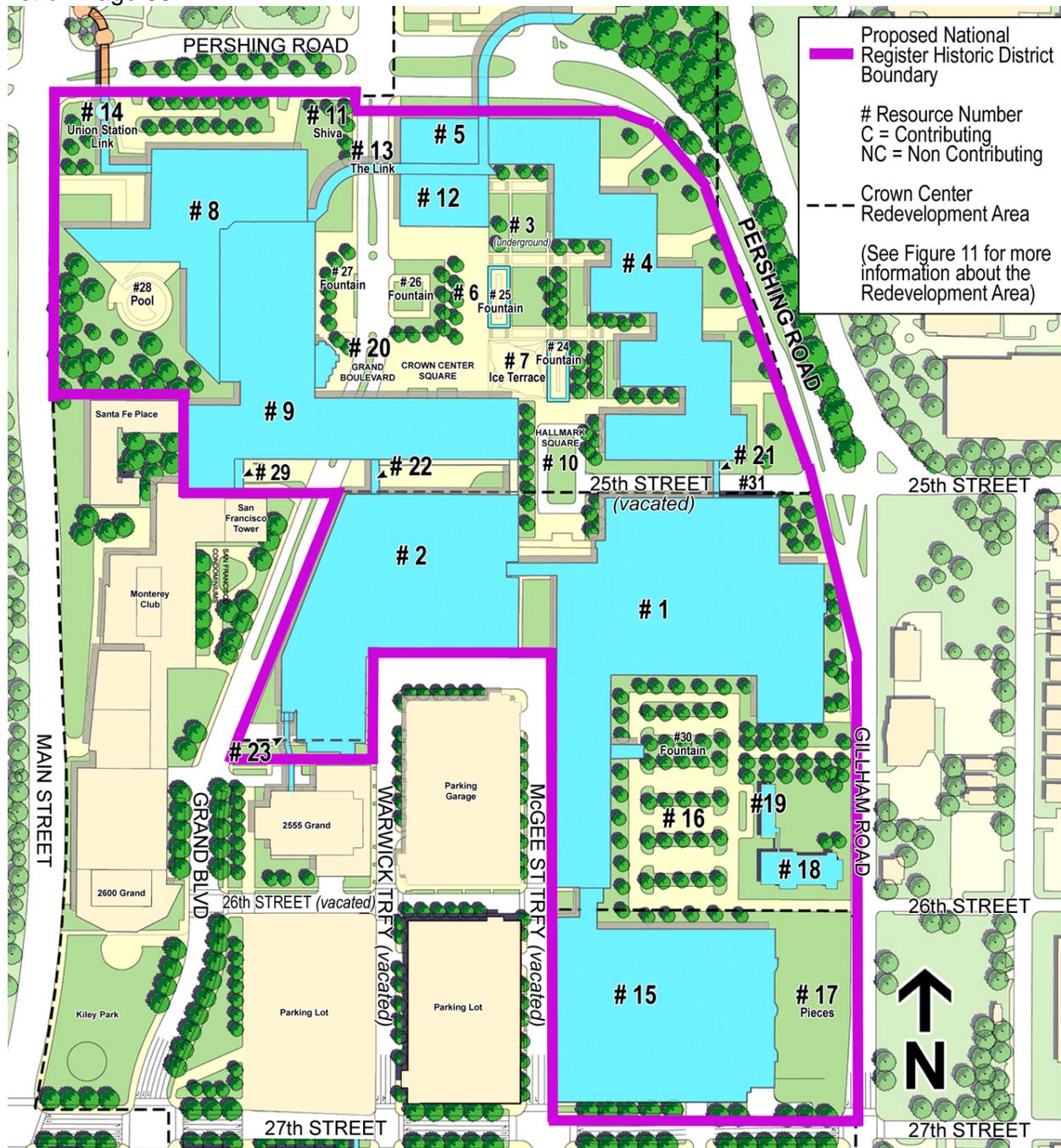


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Figure 4. Crown Center Historic District – Resource Map. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, Rosin Preservation, 2018-2019.* See the corresponding resource list on Page 86.

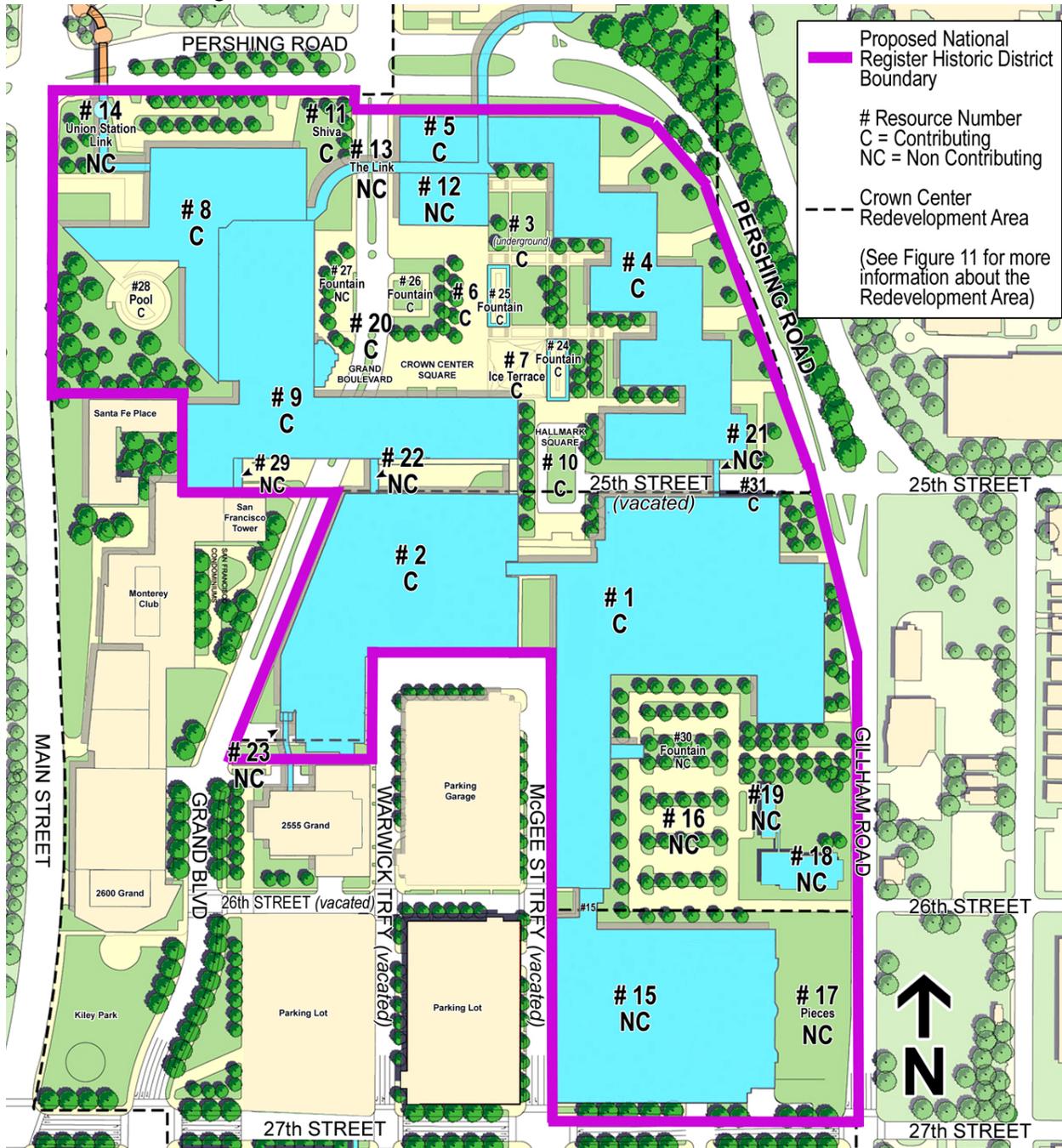


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Figure 5. Crown Center Historic District – Boundary Map, Contributing and Non-Contributing resources. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, 2018.* See the corresponding resource list on Page 86.



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Resource List associated with Figures 4 and 5:

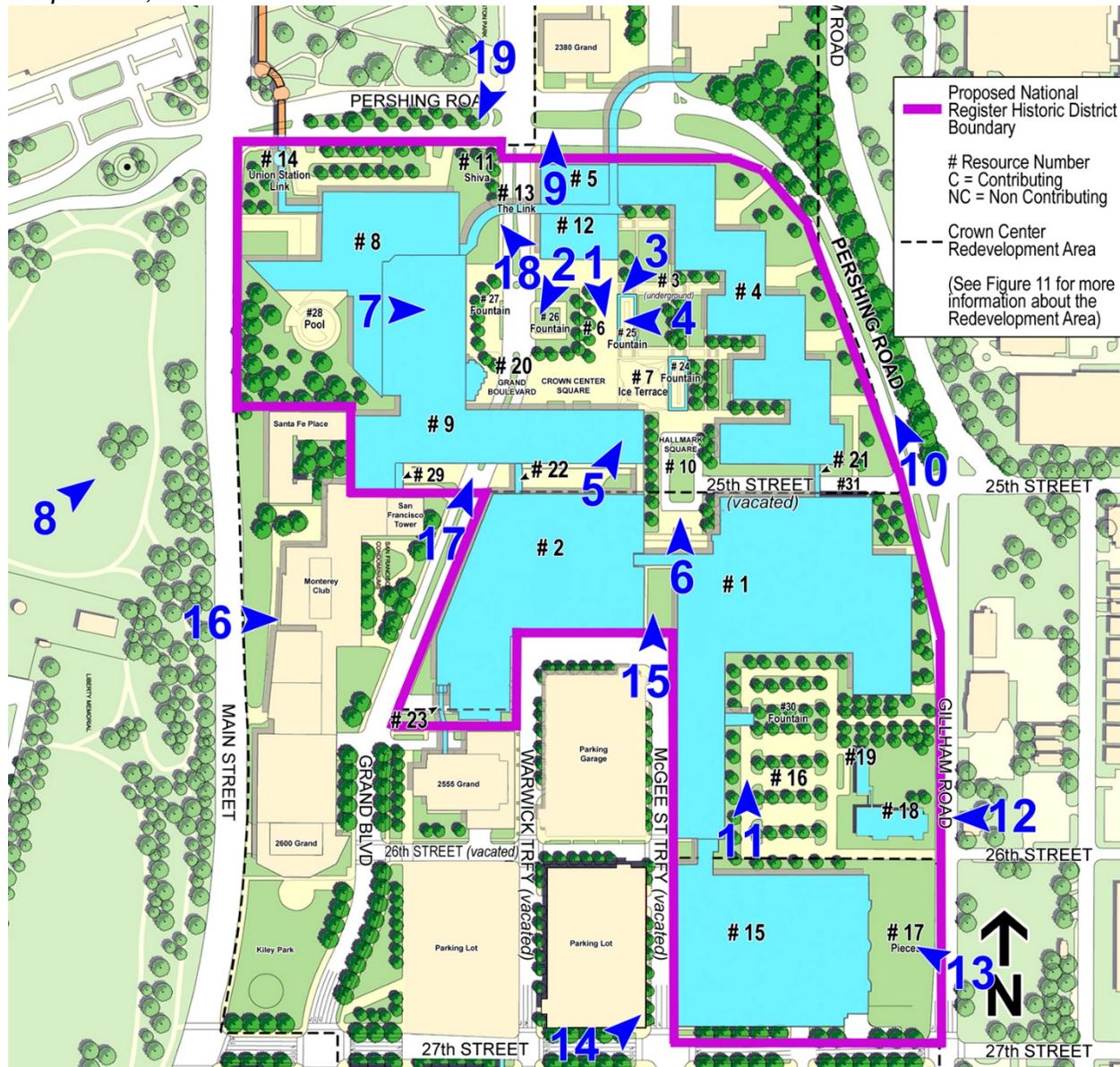
- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building | Contributing Building |
| 2. Hallmark Headquarters Grand Building | Contributing Building |
| 3. Crown Center Underground Parking Garage | Contributing Structure |
| 4. Pershing Road Office Building | Contributing Building |
| 5. Grand Avenue Bank & Trust Building | Contributing Building |
| 6. Crown Center Square | Contributing Site |
| 7. Crown Center Ice Terrace | Contributing Structure |
| 8. Crown Center Hotel | Contributing Building |
| 9. Crown Center Shops | Contributing Building |
| 10. Hallmark Square | Contributing Site |
| 11. <i>Shiva</i> | Contributing Object |
| 12. 2405 Grand at Crown Center Square | Non-Contributing Building |
| 13. The Link | Non-Contributing Structure |
| 14. Union Station Link | Non-Contributing Structure |
| 15. Hallmark Rice Innovation Center and Parking Garage | Non-Contributing Building |
| 16. Hallmark McGee Bldg Corporate Entrance & Parking Lot | Non-Contributing Structure |
| 17. <i>Bringing the Pieces Together</i> | Non-Contributing Object |
| 18. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church | Non-Contributing Building |
| 19. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Rectory | Non-Contributing Building |
| 20. Grand Boulevard | Contributing Structure |
| 21. Skywalk between #1 and #4 | Non-Contributing Structure |
| 22. Skywalk Between #9 and #2 | Non-Contributing Structure |
| 23. Skywalk Between #2 and 2555 Grand Blvd | Non-Contributing Structure |
| 24. Crown Center Square Southeast Fountain | Contributing Object |
| 25. Crown Center Square Center-East Fountain | Contributing Object |
| 26. Crown Center Square Center Fountain | Contributing Object |
| 27. Crown Center Shops East Fountain | Non-Contributing Object |
| 28. Crown Center Hotel Rear Garden; Swimming Pool | Contributing Site; Structure |
| 29. Enclosed walkway between #9 and San Francisco Tower | Non-Contributing Structure |
| 30. Hallmark McGee Building Corporate Entrance Fountain | Non-Contributing Object |
| 31. East 25 th Street (vacated) | Contributing Structure |

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Figure 6. Crown Center Historic District – Photo Map. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, 2019.*



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Figure 7. Willys-Overland Building at 25th Street and Grand Avenue. Source: Hallmark Archives.

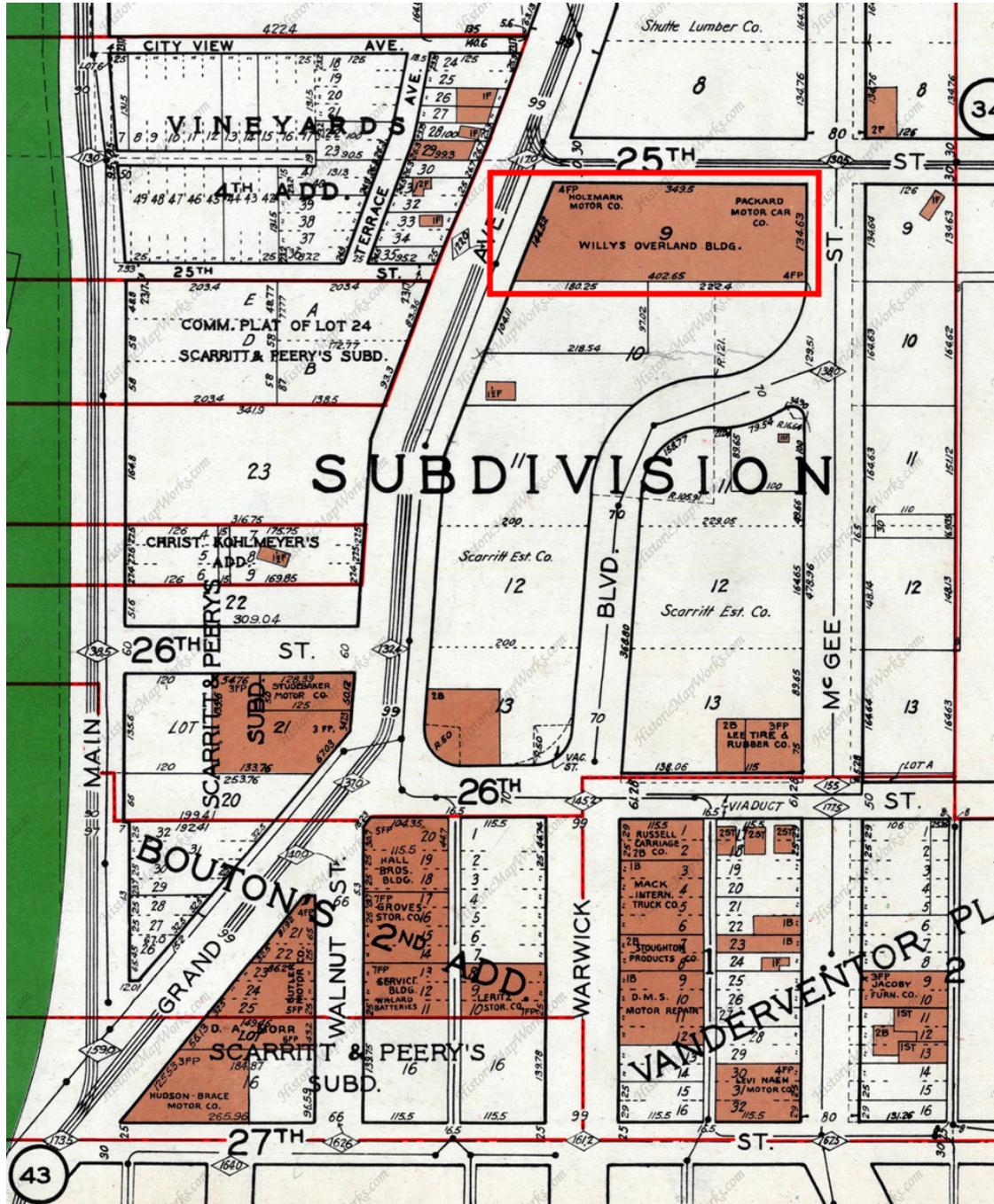


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Figure 8. 1925 map showing former Hall Brothers Building at southeast corner of Grand Avenue and 26th Street (outlined) and the Willys-Overland Building at Grand Avenue and 25th Street (outlined). Source: Tuttle, Ayers, Woodward, *Atlas of Kansas City and Environs*, 1925.



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Figure 9. Circa 1956 photograph of the Hallmark Headquarters buildings, view south, with the Hallmark McGee Building on the left, and the Hallmark Grand Building on the right Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc.



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Figure 10. Circa 1966 photograph of the enlarged and expanded Hallmark Headquarters buildings, view southeast, with the re-clad Hallmark Grand Building in the right foreground. Source: Hallmark Archives.

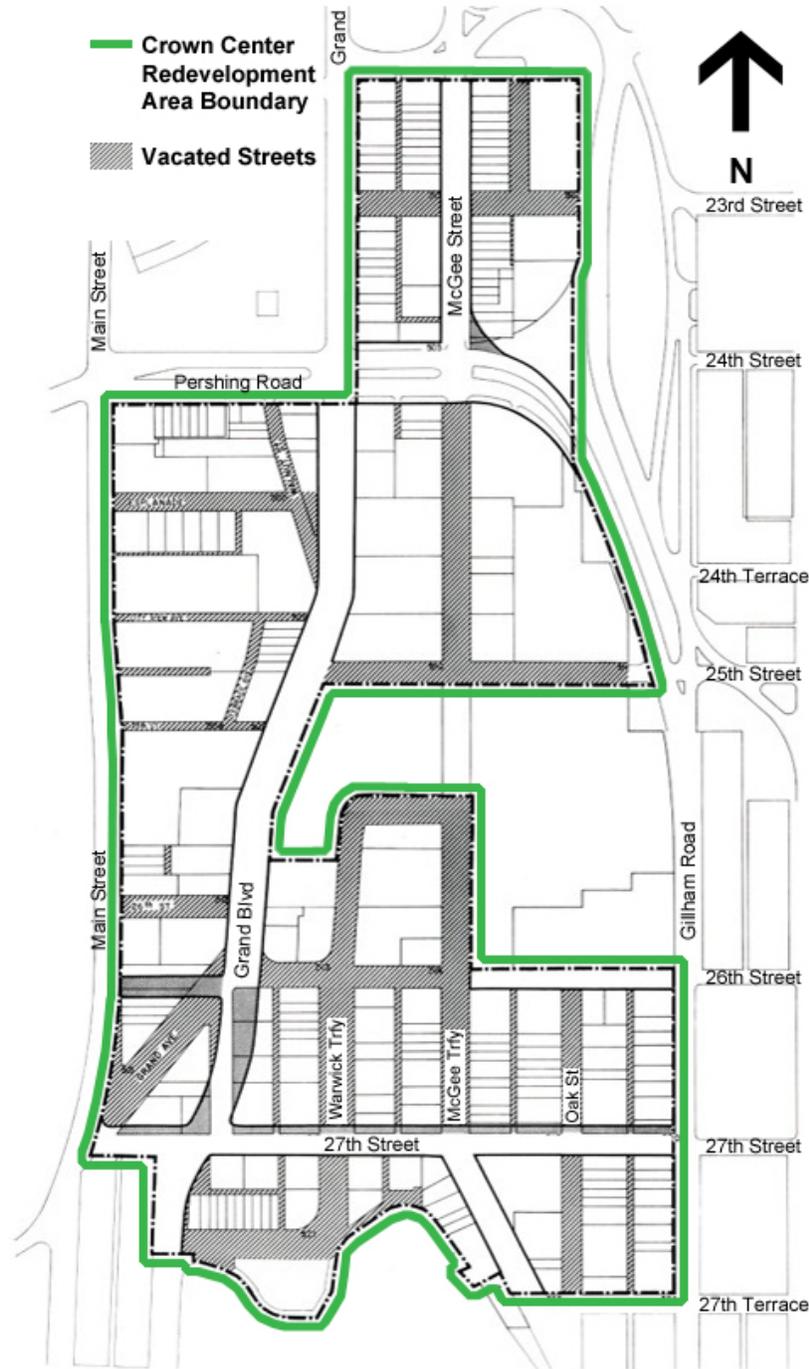


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Figure 11a. Crown Center Redevelopment Area Map with boundary approved in Crown Center Redevelopment Plan. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, 1967, Hallmark Archives.*



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Figure 11b. Crown Center Redevelopment Area Map with boundary approved in Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, as well as proposed NR Boundary. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Plan, 1967, Hallmark Archives.*

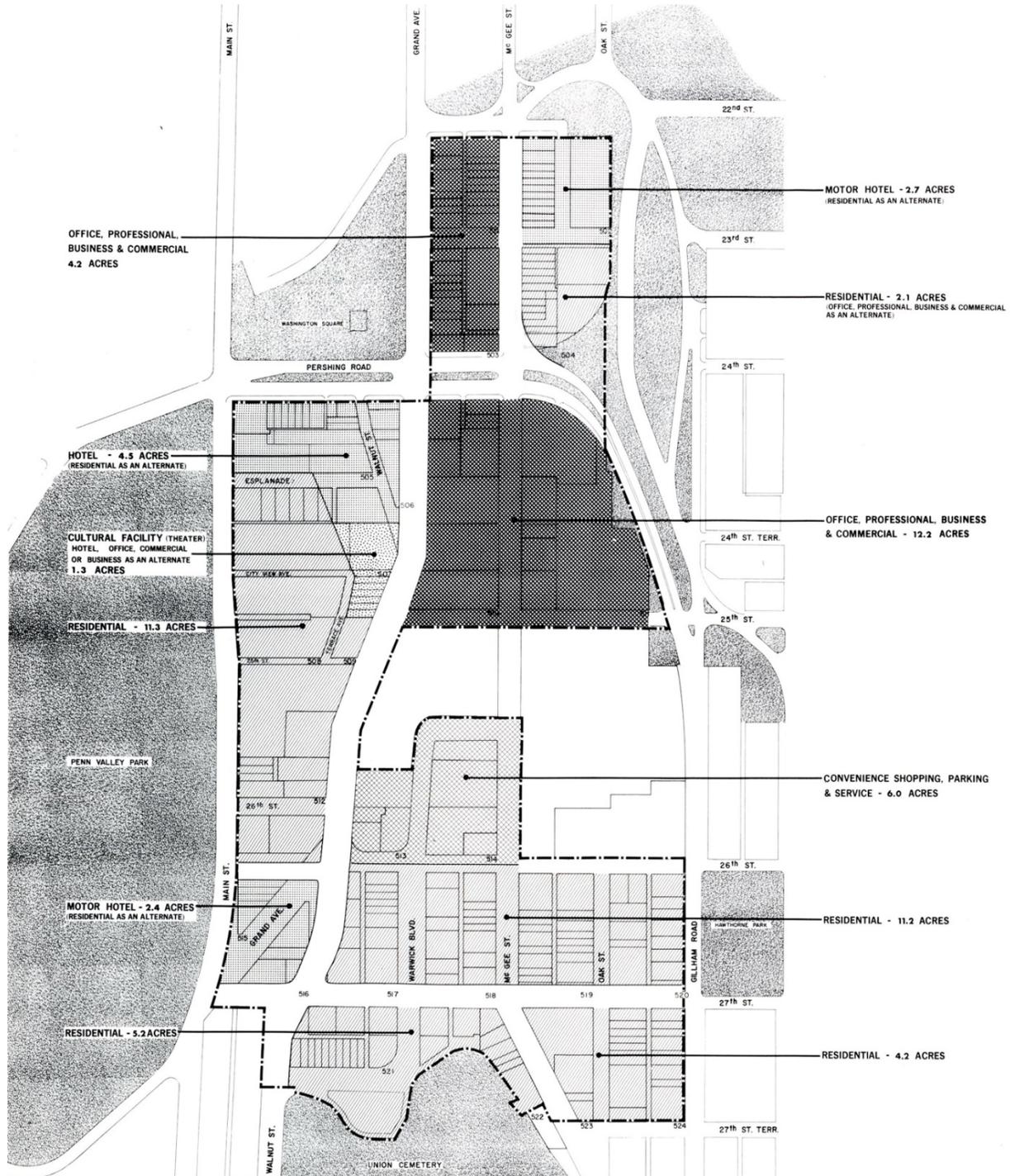


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Figure 12. Victor Gruen's Land Use Plan, submitted with the "Crown Center Redevelopment Plan," 1967.
Source: Hallmark Archives.

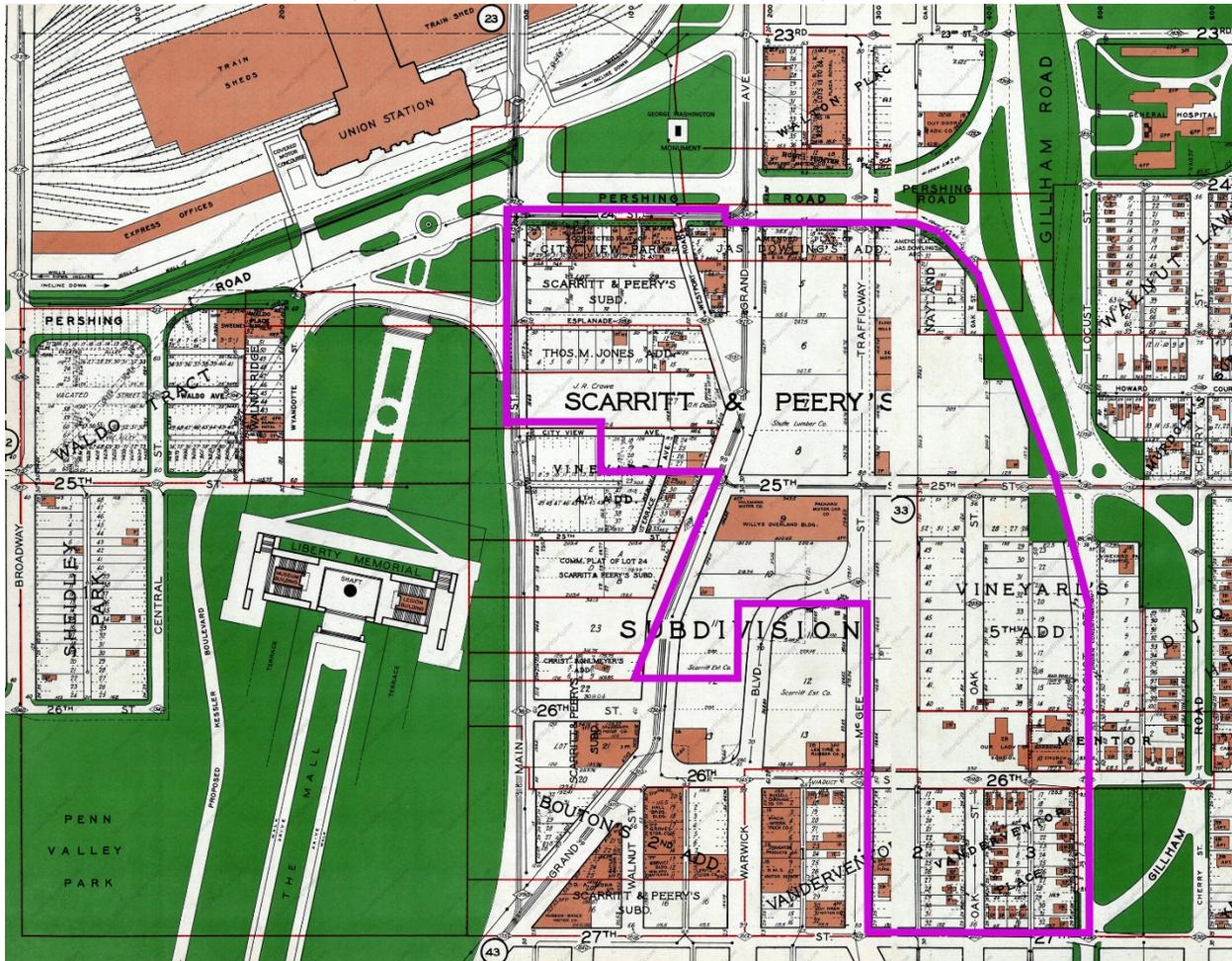


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Figure 13. 1925 map showing immediate vicinity of Hallmark headquarters; Hallmark Grand Building outlined (Hallmark McGee Building not yet constructed). Includes proposed NR Boundary Source: Tuttle, Ayers, Woodward, *Atlas of Kansas City and Environs*, 1925.



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Figure 14. Circa 1966 photograph showing the 70-foot-tall limestone bluff between Main Street and Grand Avenue, view northeast from top of Liberty Memorial. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.



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Figure 15. 1969 study model of Crown Center (lower left) superimposed on aerial of Kansas City, view northwest. Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, *Crown Center 6*, August 1969.



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Figure 16. Edward Larrabee Barnes (left) and CCRC president Lynn Bauer (right). Source: *Kansas Citian*, "Crown Center architect named," July 1967, 30.



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Figure 17. Crown Center groundbreaking ceremony, September 16, 1968. Left to right: Charles Curry, Mayor Ilus Davis, J.C. Hall, Donald Hall, Lynn Bauer. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.



Figure 18. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Square and Pershing Road Office Buildings. Source: "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973, 175.



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Figure 19. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Square and the Mayor's Christmas Tree. *Source: Hallmark Archives.*



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Figure 20. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel (left) and interior garden (right). Source: "Crown Center," *Architectural Record*, October 1973, 115, 121.



Figure 21. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Shops (middle), Crown Center Square (foreground), and the Crown Center Hotel (background, right). Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.



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Figure 22. Circa 1980 photograph of Crown Center with Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Building, IBM Corporation Building, and Hyatt Regency Hotel visible at upper left, view northeast. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.

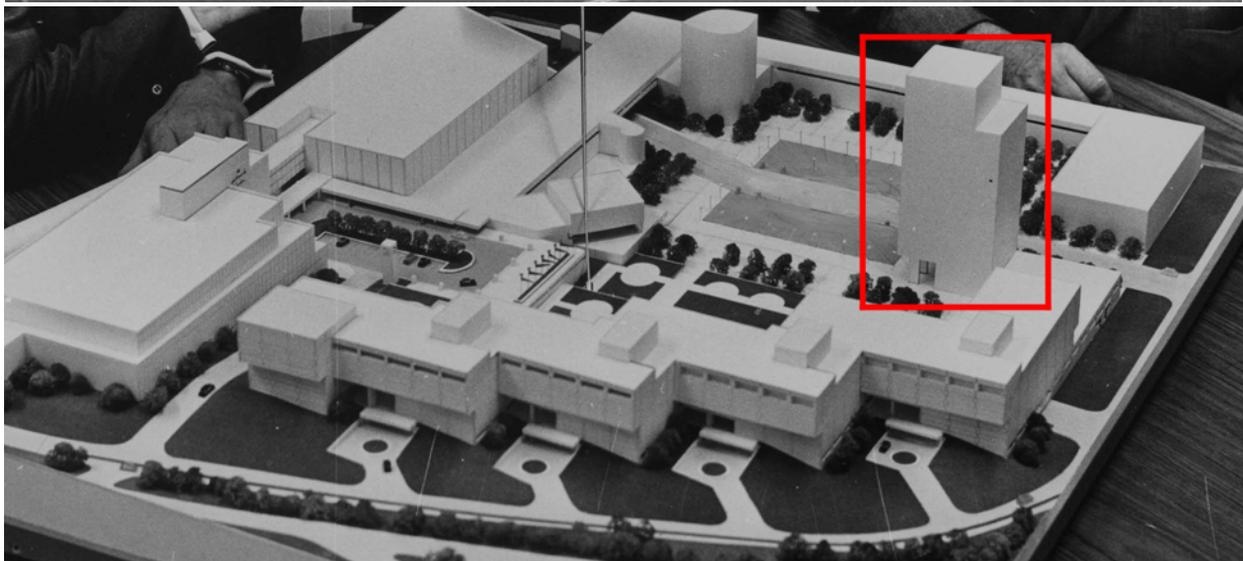


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Figure 23. (Top) Circa 1987 photograph of 2405 Grand office building facing Crown Center Square, view northeast. (Bottom) Circa 1969 photograph of Crown Center model showing high-rise office tower (outlined) on Crown Center Square. Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City.

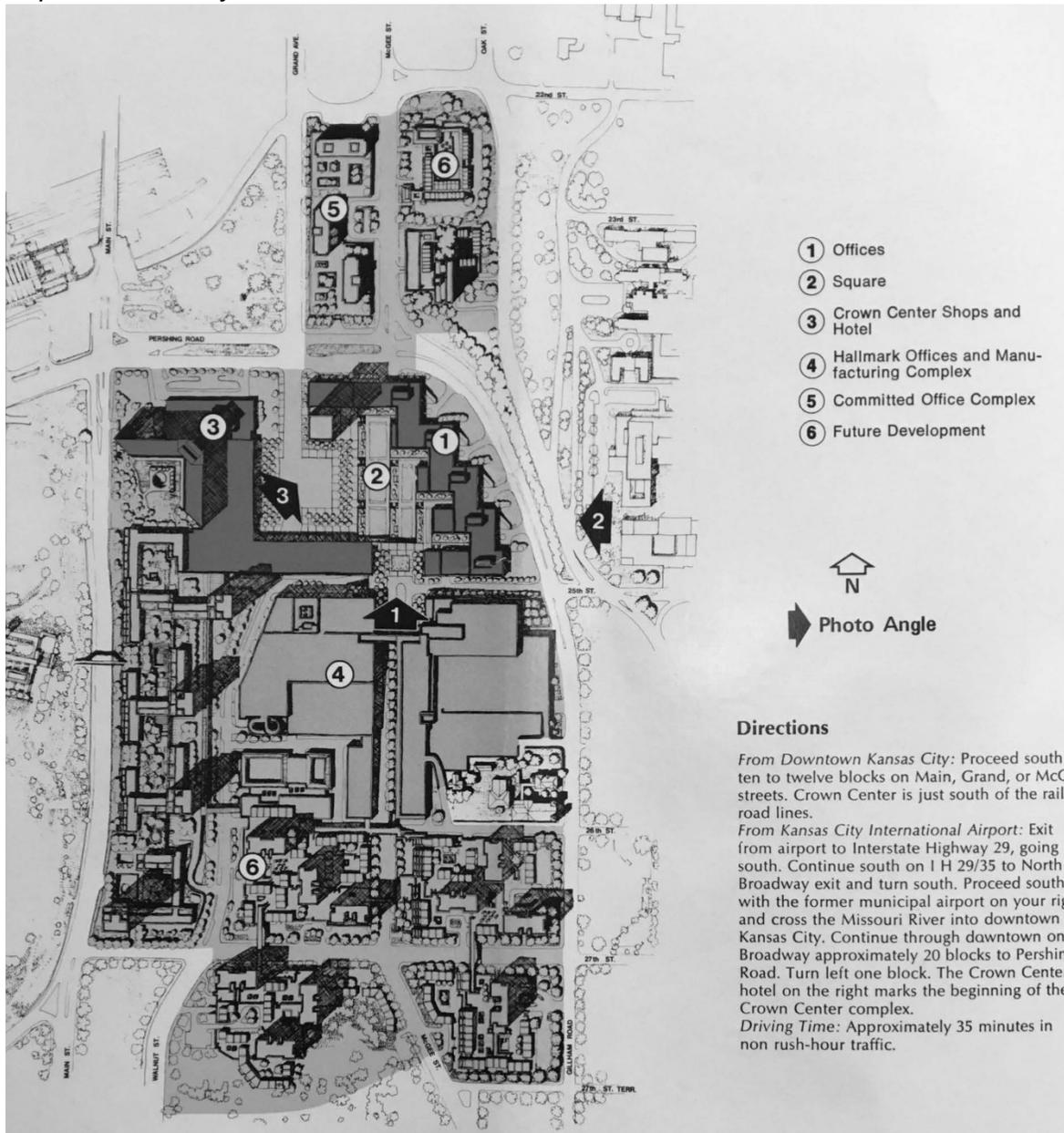


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Figure 24. Map of existing completed development and proposed future development, 1974. All of the buildings in area “6” are proposed residential resources, specifically townhouses and mid- and high-rise apartment buildings. *Source: The Urban Land Institute Project Reference File: Crown Center, October-December 1974. City of Kansas City Planning and Development Department Library.*

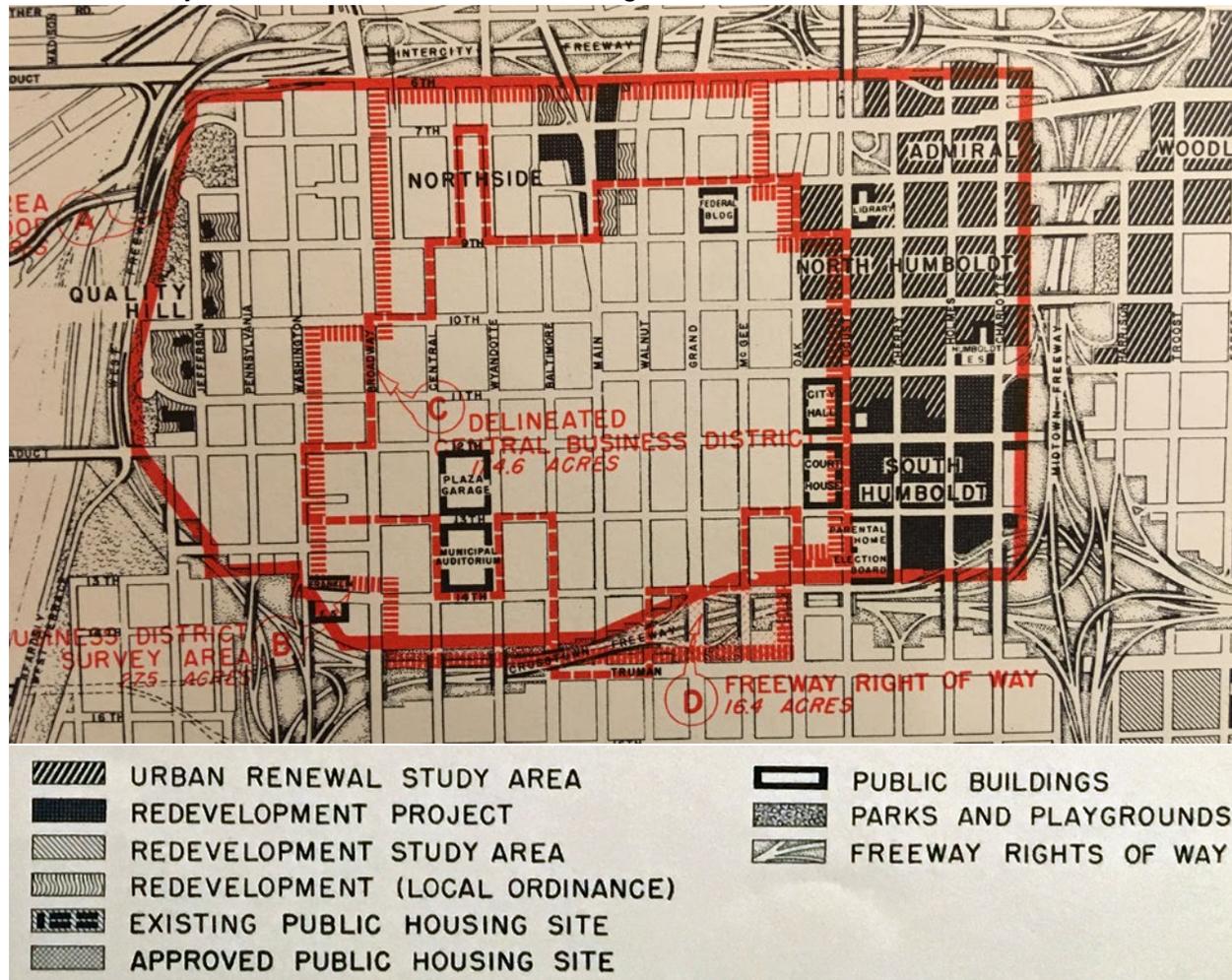


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Figure 25. Map of Downtown Kansas City Missouri, from "Central Business District Kansas City Missouri Study," 1956. Below is a detail of the legend.

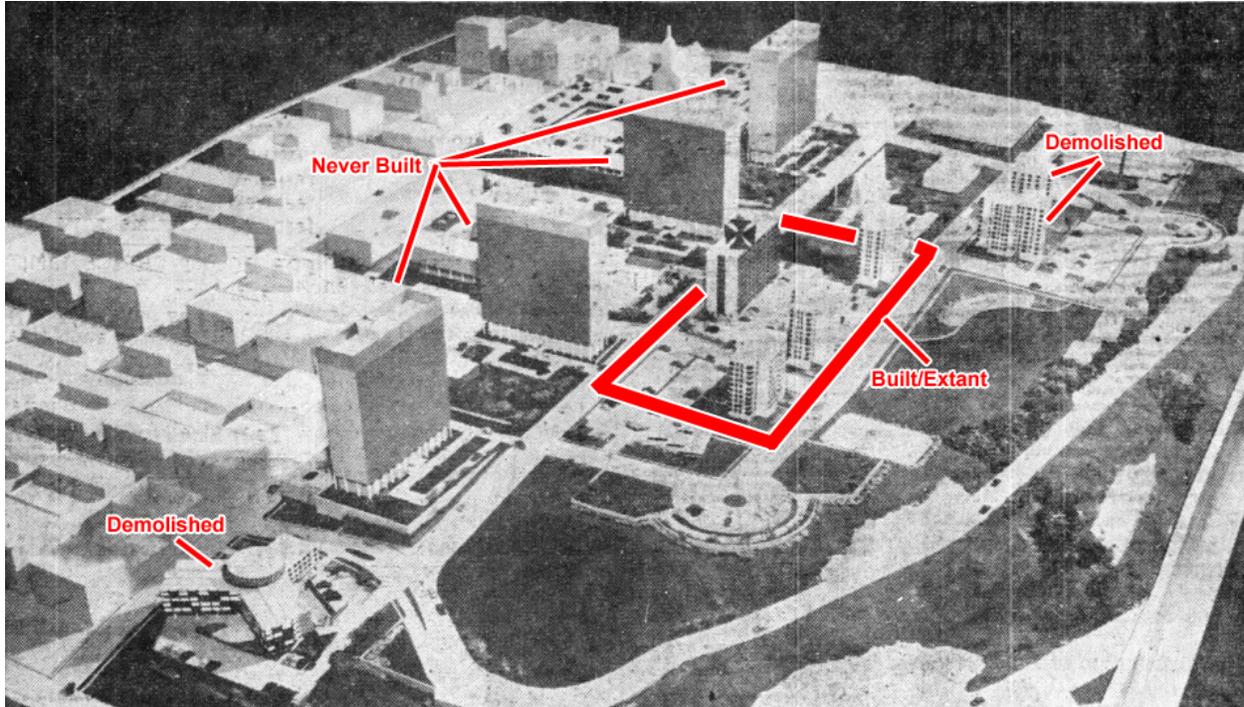


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Figure 26. Scale model of Quality Hill Center, c. 1958. The red line encompasses the resources that were built as part of the Quality Hill Center redevelopment plan and currently extant. Source: "Expand Plans on Quality Hill," *Kansas City Times*, February 3, 1959, 4.

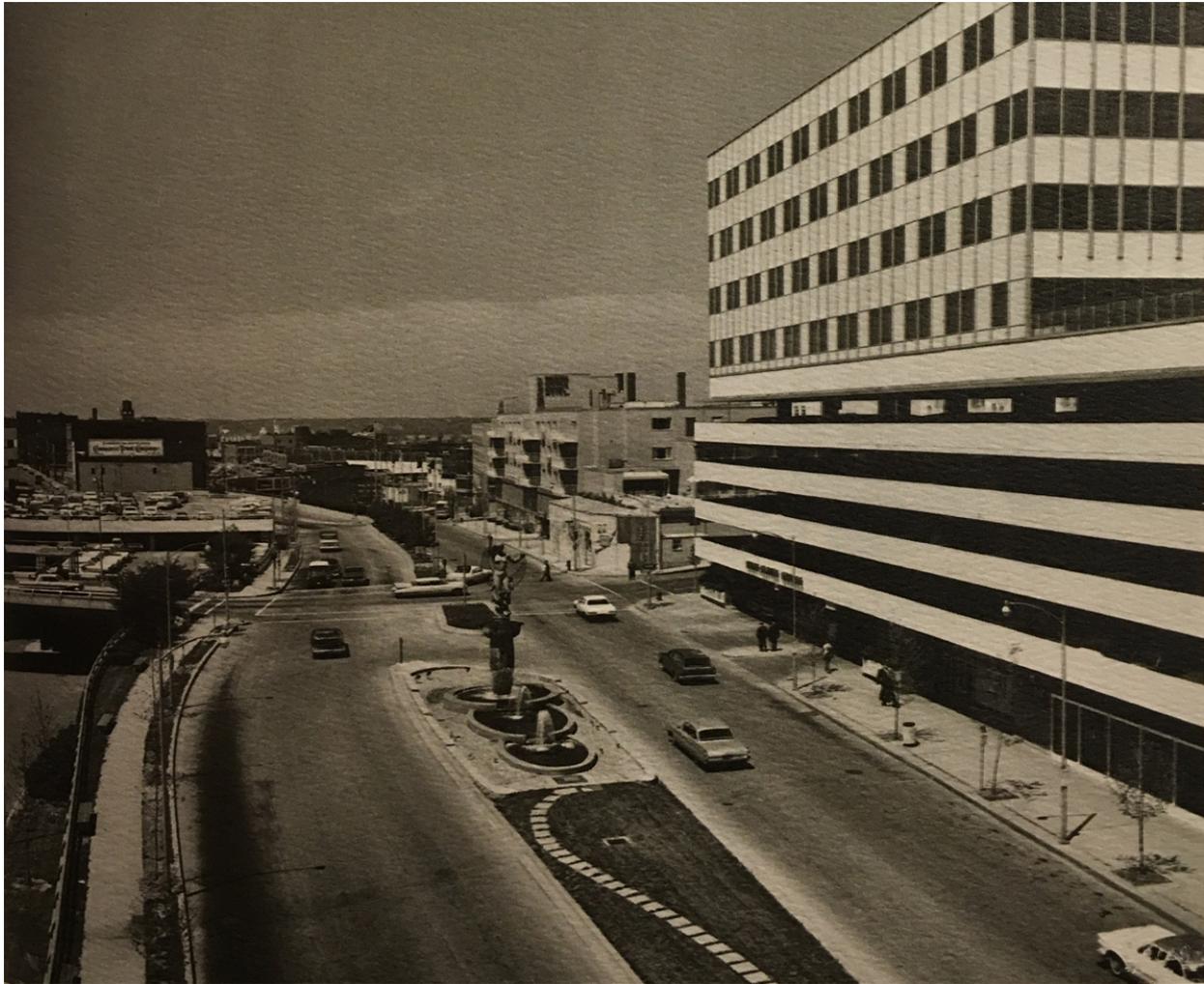


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Figure 27. Prom Sheraton Hotel, 1963. Source: "Plan 102-Room Hotel Addition," *Kansas City Times*, November 1, 1963.



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Figure 28. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel, view southwest. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*

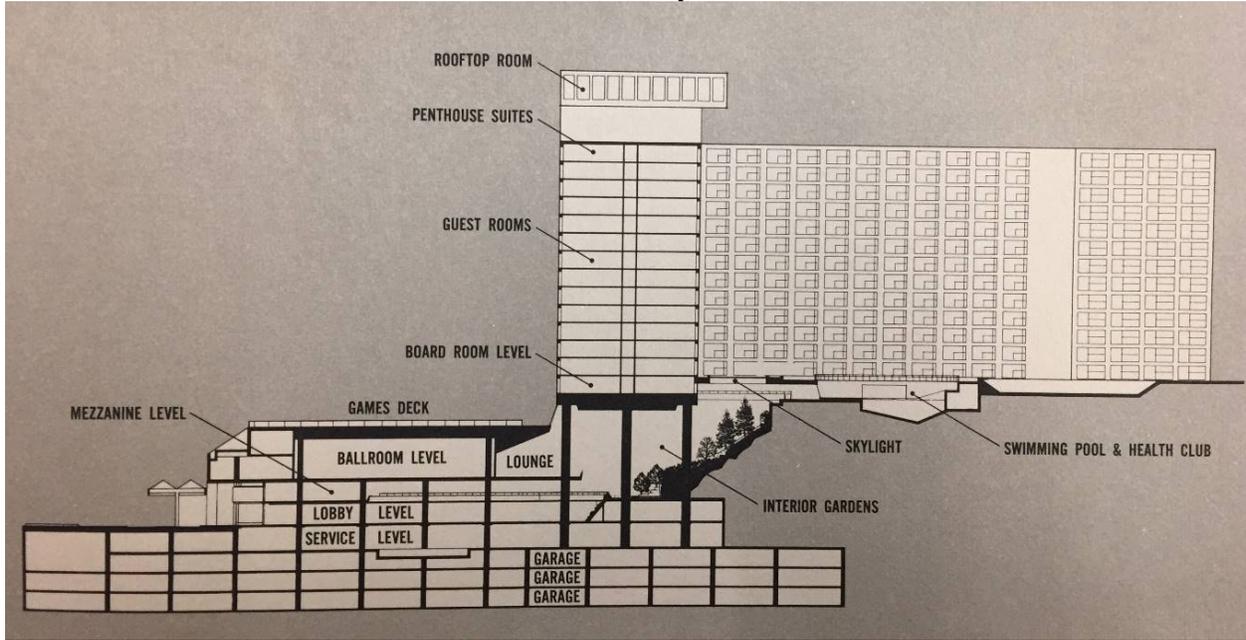


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Figure 29. Section of the Crown Center Hotel from 1973 promotional pamphlet. *Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri.*



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Figure 30. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel, view east from Main Street. *Source: "Crown Center." Architectural Record, October 1973.*



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Figure 31. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel's guest room tower and glass elevator shaft. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*



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Figure 32. 1973 photograph of the Crown Center Hotel's interior garden on the exposed north face of the limestone bluff. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*

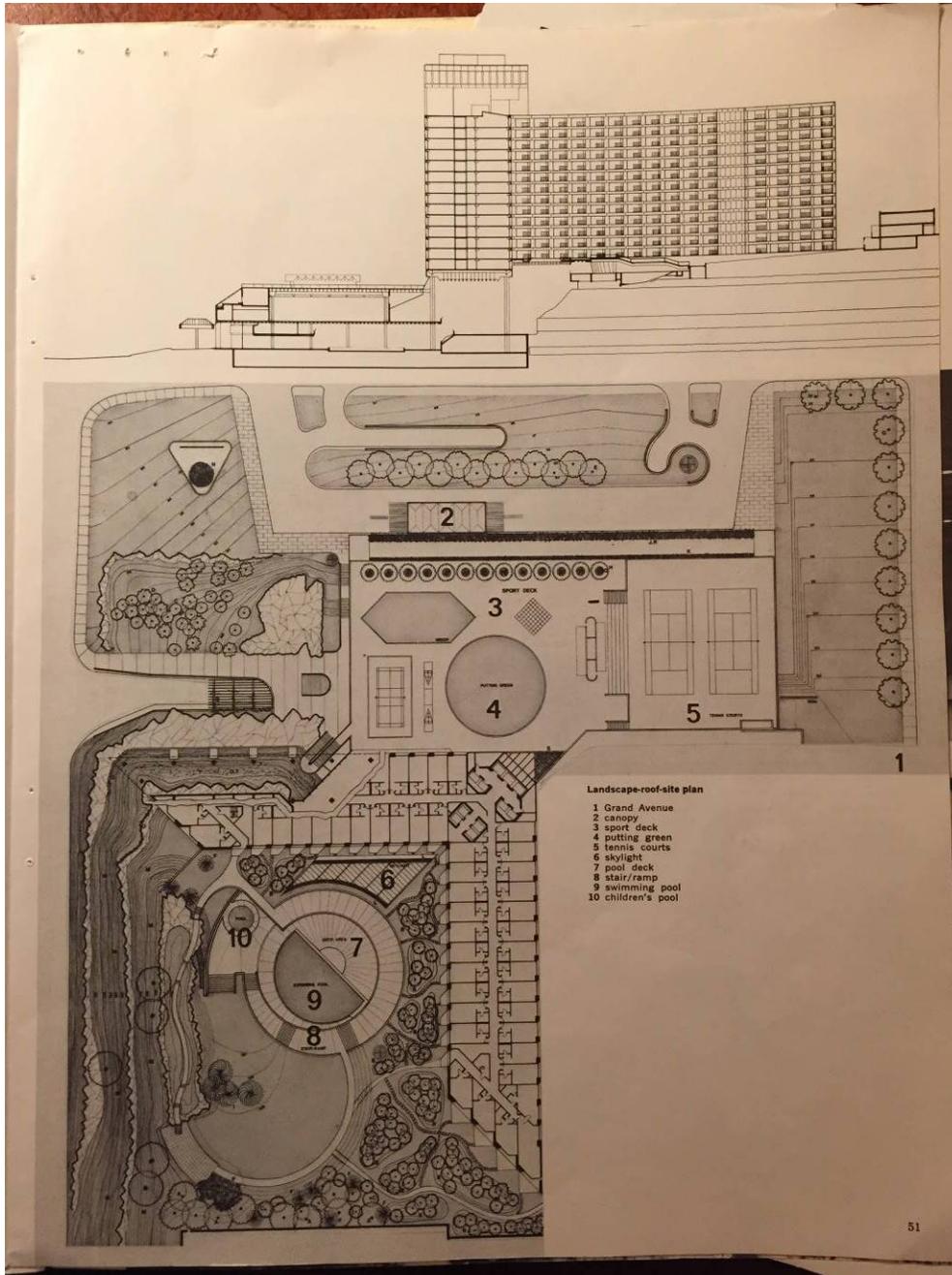


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Figure 33. Historic section drawing (top) and aerial plan (bottom) of the Crown Center Hotel. *Source: Olga Gueft, "For Kansas City, a tropical hillside garden inside a world class hotel at Crown Center," Interiors, July 1973.*



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Figure 34. 2015 photograph of Ten Main Center, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Richard Welnowski, "Ten Main Center," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2015.*



Figure 35. 1978 photograph of Missouri Division of Employment Security Building, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Ehrlich, George. Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1992, pg. 141.*



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Figure 36. 1977 photograph of Missouri State Building, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Ehrlich, George. Kansas City, Missouri: An Architectural History, 1826-1990. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1992, pg. 144.*



Figure 37. 2013 photograph of typical terminal at Kansas City International Airport. *Source: Rosin Preservation, LLC. "Kansas City International Airport Terminal Complex," Eligibility Assessment, 2013.*



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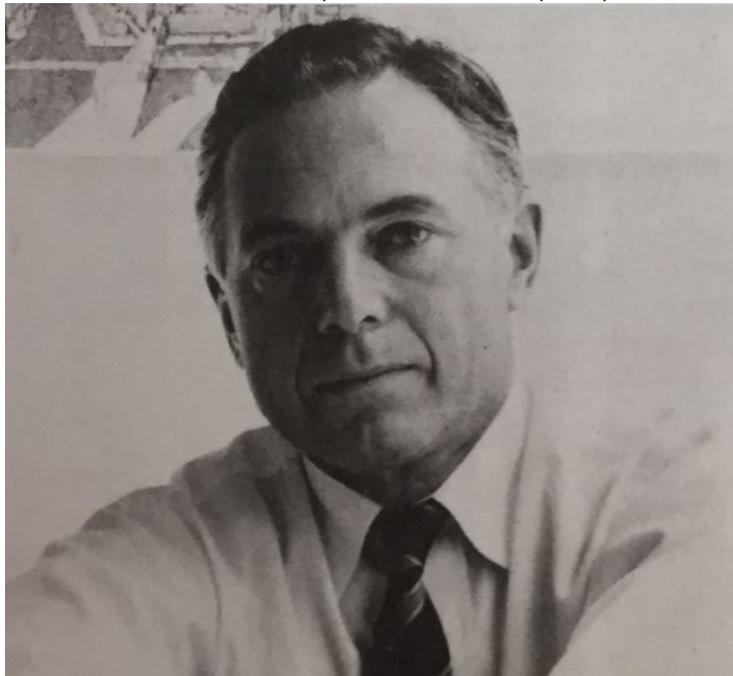
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Figure 38. 2017 image of Municipal Court Building, Kansas City, Missouri. *Source: Google Street View, 2017.*



Figure 39. Circa 1968 photograph of Harry Weese. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation, "Chicago's Harry Weese: The Man and His Architecture," Crown Center 4, May 1969. Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri.*



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Figure 40. 1971 image of the Crown Center Hotel under construction, with the Liberty Memorial visible in the background. *Source: Hallmark Archives, Hallmark Cards, Inc., Kansas City, Missouri.*



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Figure 41. 2301 Main Street (One Pershing Square), Kansas City, Missouri, completed 1980.
Source: Commercial Cafe, 2018.



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Figure 42. Mercantile Bank & Trust Building, completed 1974. *Source: National Register nomination, Brad Finch, 2009.*



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Figure 43. Mercantile Bank & Trust Building, completed 1974. Detail of building base. *Source: National Register nomination, Brad Finch, 2009.*



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Figure 44. Parking Garage Diagram, 2018. Source: Hallmark Archives.

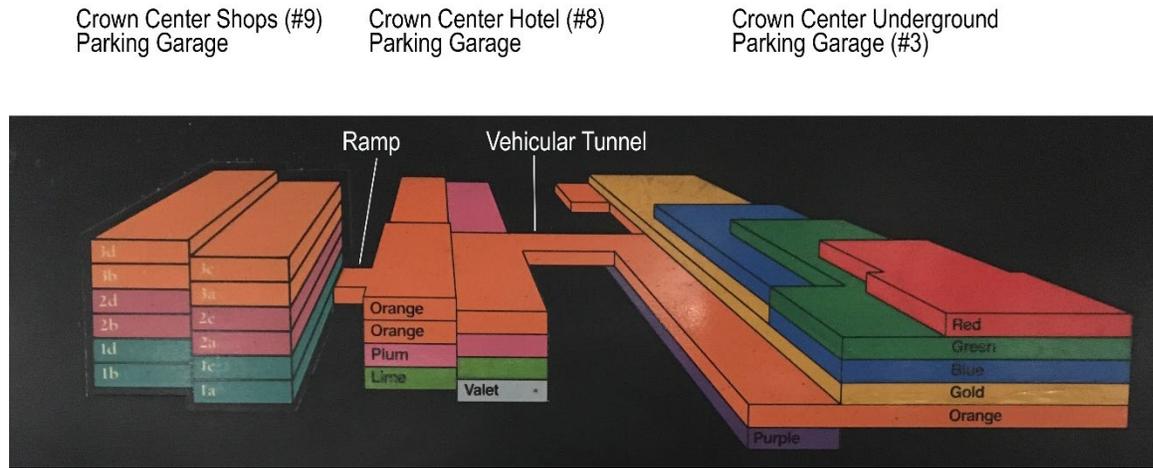


Figure 45. Hallmark Headquarters McGee Building, c.1956. Source: Hallmark Archives.

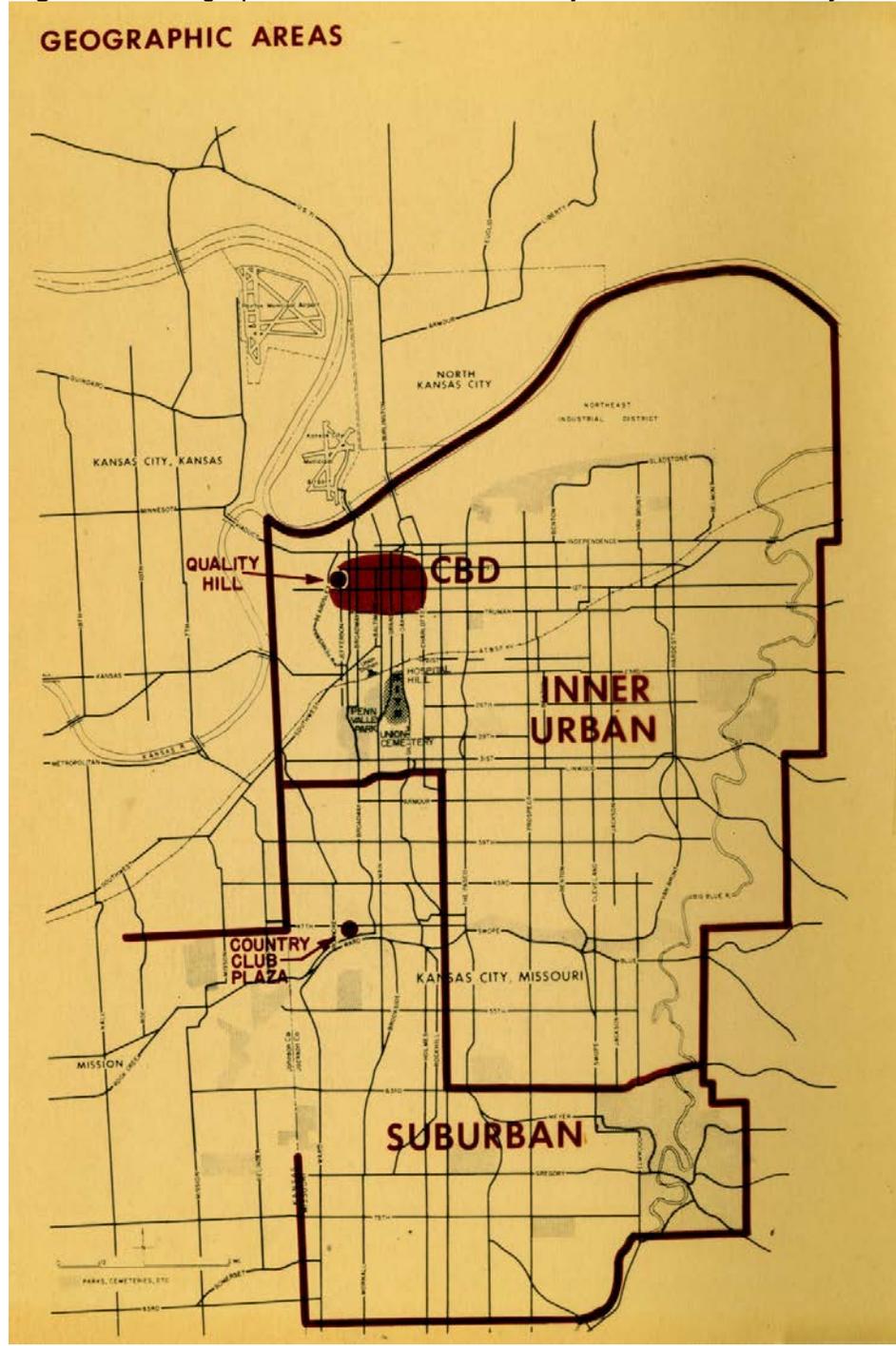


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Figure 46. Geographic Areas for Market Study, 1966. Source: Larry Smith and Company, 1966.

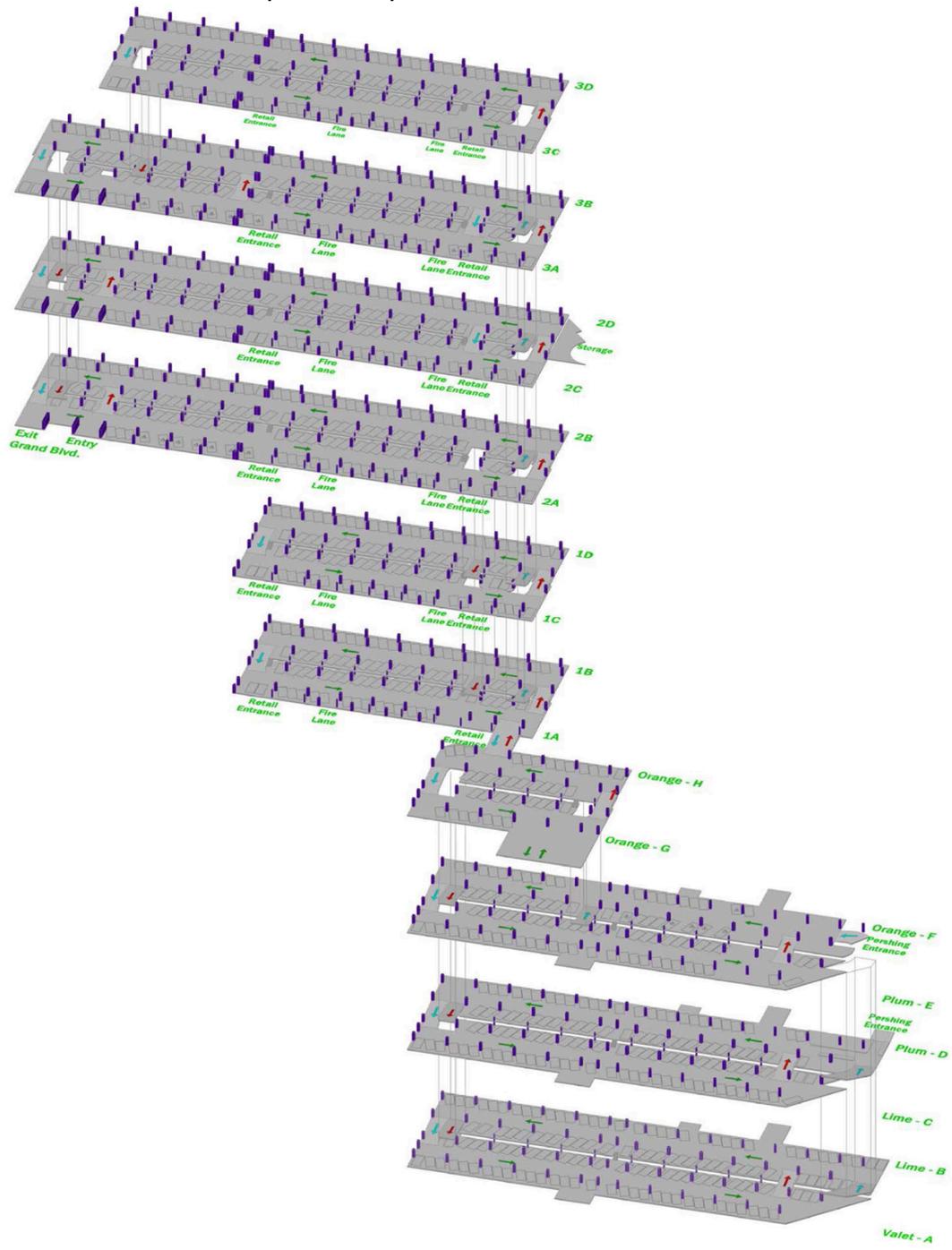


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Figure 47. Crown Center Hotel and Crown Center Shops parking garage diagram. *Source: Crown Center Redevelopment Corporation Archives.*



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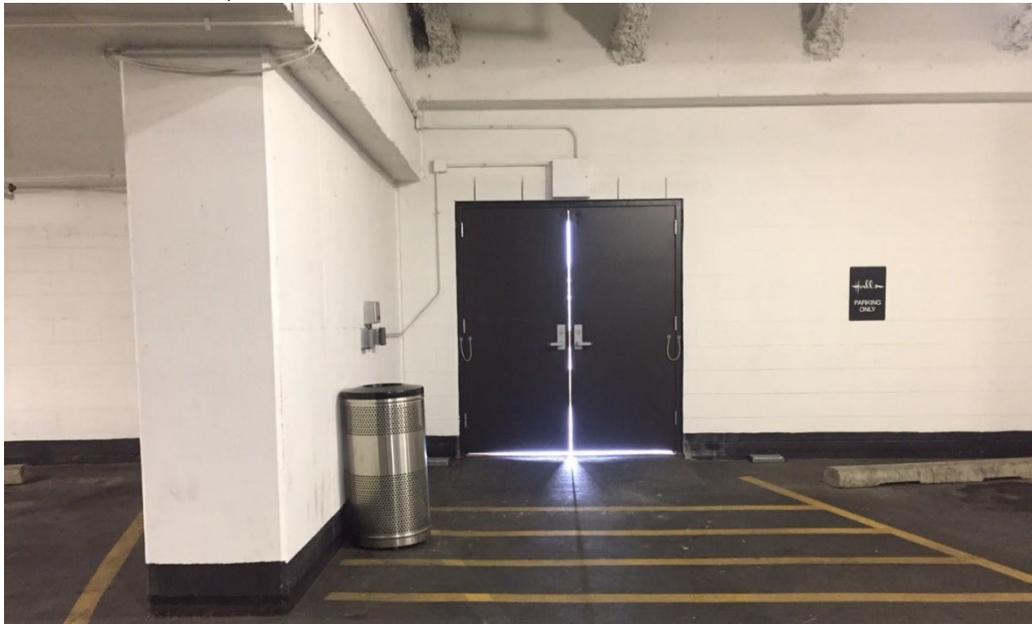
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Figure 48. Union Station Link (#31, 2000) from Crown Center Hotel (#7) to Union Station (1914) outside the boundary of the proposed District, elevated enclosed walkway, view northwest. Source: Shane Hauschild, 2018.



Figure 49. Connection between the District and the residential resources. This connection only exists only at one level. From Level 3A of Parking Garage to San Francisco Tower. Source: Shane Hauschild, 2018.



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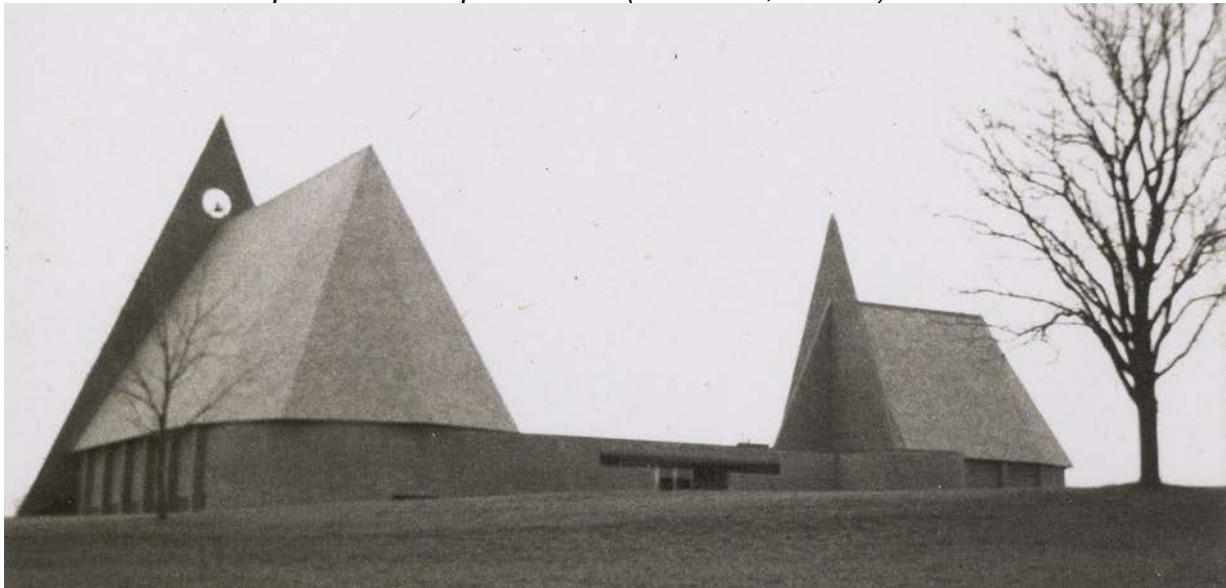
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Figure 50. Connection between the District and the residential resources. This connection only exists only at one level. From San Francisco Tower to Level 3A of Parking Garage. Source: Shane Hauschild, 2018.



Figure 51. First Baptist Church of Columbus, Indiana, completed 1965. Historic photograph, c.1965. Source: *Wikipedia: First Baptist Church (Columbus, Indiana)*.



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Figure 52. United States Embassy, Accra, Ghana, completed 1960. Historic photograph, c. 1960. *Source: Marine Embassy Guard Association.*



Figure 53. Circa 2015 image of the George L. Mosse Humanities Building, Madison, Wisconsin. *Source: Aaron Hathaway, "Debunking the bunker: Is the Humanities building riot proof?" The Badger Herald, December 5, 2015, <https://badgerherald.com/banter/2015/12/05/debunking-the-bunker-is-the-humanities-building-riot-proof/>. Accessed December 19, 2017.*



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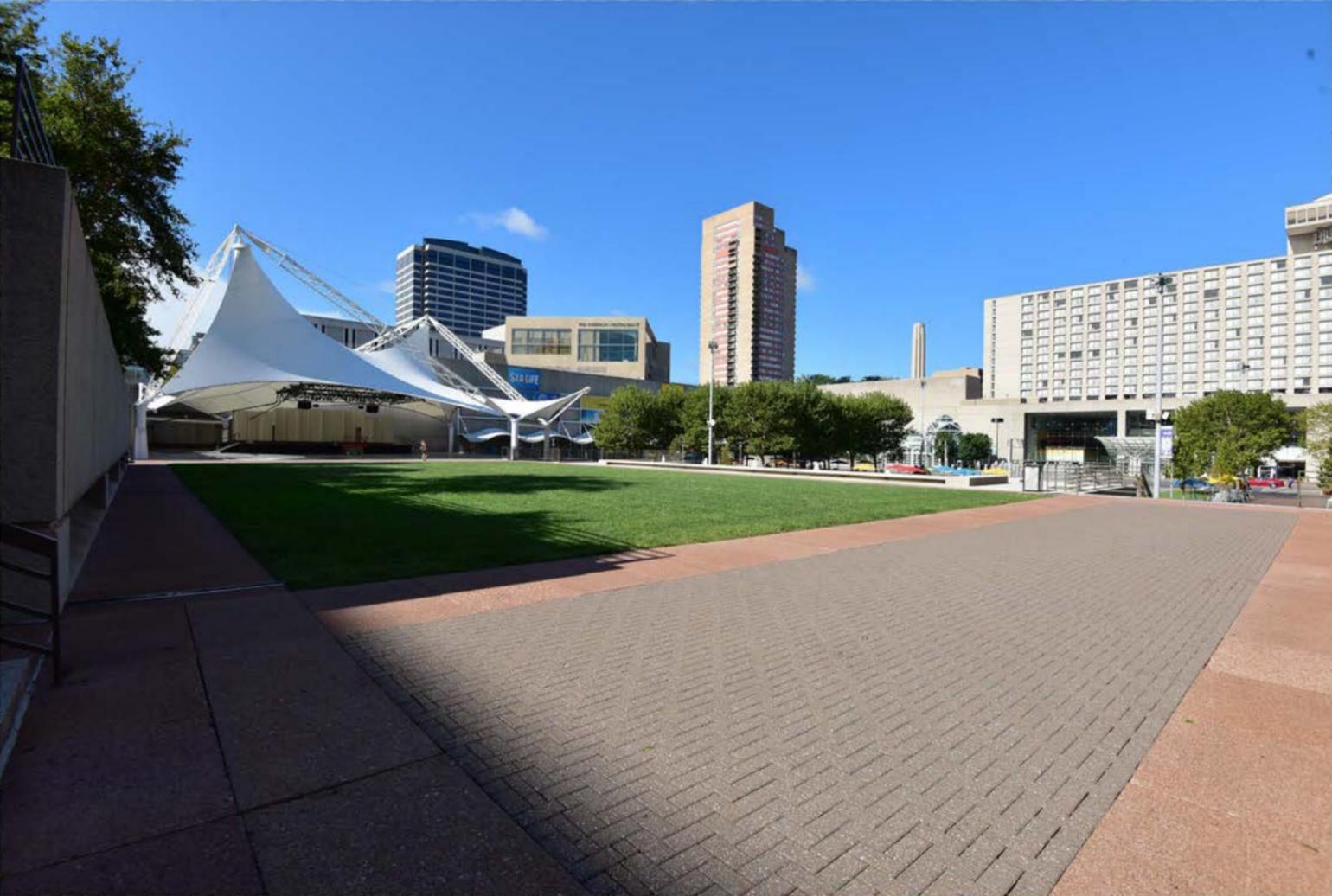
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Figure 54. 1975 image of the Metropolitan Correctional Center, Chicago, Illinois. *Source: Baldwin, Ian. "The Architecture of Harry Weese," Places Journal, May 2011, <https://placesjournal.org/article/the-architecture-of-harry-weese>. Accessed December 14, 2017.*



























OUR LADY OF SOUVIERS







Private
Parking ↑
P
Visitor
Parking ←
25th & Grand

NO
PEDESTRIAN
TRAFFIC
ON RAMP

STOP

Private
Parking
Visitor
Parking
25th & Grand

C
P
S





SEA LIFE

THE AMERICAN RESTAURANT



AMERICAN
RESTAURANT
SEA LIFE
LEGOLAND
HALLMARK
VISITORS CENTER
KALEIDOSCOPE







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 9/30/2019 Date of Pending List: 10/25/2019 Date of 16th Day: 11/12/2019 Date of 45th Day: 11/14/2019 Date of Weekly List: 11/15/2019

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 11/14/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria

Reviewer Barbara Wyatt Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2252 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**City Planning and Development Department
Citywide Planning Division
Historic Preservation Office**

16th Floor, City Hall
414 East 12th Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106-2795
kchp@kcmo.org

(816) 513-2902
Fax (816) 513-2899

July 16, 2019

Toni M. Prawl
Missouri State Historic Preservation Officer and
Director, Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176

Re: **National Register Nomination** for the *Crown Center Historic District*

Dear Dr. Prawl:

As a Historic Preservation Planner for the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, a Certified Local Government, I am pleased to inform you that the Commission has reviewed the nomination to the **National Register of Historic Places** for the *Crown Center Historic District* bounded by Main Street, Pershing Road, 27th Street, McGee Street Trafficway and Grand Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri. At the July 15, 2019 hearing of the nomination, the Historic Preservation Commission made a motion to recommend **approval** of the nomination of the *Crown Center Historic District*.

A public notice was printed in the *Daily Record* on July 5, 2019. The City Historic Preservation Office received no letters or calls in opposition to the nomination. Preservation staff recommended approval of the nomination. If you have any questions, please call me at 816-513-2901.

Sincerely,

Bradley Wolf
City Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Mayor Sly James
Troy Schulte, City Manager
Jeffrey Williams, AICP Director of the City Development Department
Rosin Preservation, Nomination Preparer



NATURAL RESOURCES

Michael L. Parson, Governor

Carol S. Comer, Director

SEP 25 2019

Memorandum



Date:

To: Joy Beasley, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

From: Mike Sutherland, Deputy SHPO, Missouri SHPO

Subject: **Crown Center Historic District, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, National Register of Historic Places Nomination**

Our state review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, approved the above nomination on **August 16, 2019**. All owners and appropriate elected public officials were notified and provided at least thirty (30) days to comment on the above proposed nomination in accordance with Section 36CFR60.6, interim regulations, using the exact notification format recommended by the National Register. **The enclosed disc contains the true and correct copy of the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.**

Please find enclosed the following documentation:

 1 CD with original National Register of Historic Places registration form and Correspondence file

 Multiple Property Documentation Form

 Photographs

 1 CD with electronic images

 Original USGS map(s)

 2 Piece(s) of correspondence (cover letter and signature page)

 Other: _____

Comments:

 Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed

 The enclosed owner objection(s) do do not constitute a majority of property owners.

 Other: _____