The city of Topeka began near 1st and Kansas Avenue when nine strangers met and took up housekeeping in a cabin originally erected for travelers on the Oregon Road at the Papan Ferry crossing. On December 5, 1854, they agreed to establish a Free-State settlement which became Topeka. Early history focused on "The Avenue" (Kansas Avenue) - the center of commerce and culture on the open prairie. Several structures from Topeka's 1880s building boom still stand as proud reminders of Topeka's early growth - and as reminders of the fine craftsmanship of an earlier era.
1— **Constitution Hall—Topeka**, 427-429 S. Kansas Ave. (1855 and later). This Vernacular style, pitched roof commercial building, now with two 20th-century storefronts, housed the Topeka constitutional convention of 1855. It banned slavery when proslavery forces in nearby Lecompton sought Kansas in the battle for Congressional power. The building also housed religious, social, and town protection meetings. For more information about Constitution Hall, visit Constitution Hall web site.

3— Federal Building, 424 Kansas (1933). Neo-classical. Court case that was eventually sent to the U.S. Supreme Court under title of "Brown vs. Board of Education" originally tried upstairs in main courtroom. Site of 1937 shootout between FBI agent and 2 wanted bank robbers. Gunmen fled after fatally wounding agent; later captured in Nebraska.

4— New England Building, 503 Kansas (1910 and later). Until the late 1960s it was the home of Merchants National Bank (founded by Cyrus K. Holliday). Note decorative terra cotta around windows.
5— **Columbian (Knox) Building**, 112-114 W. 6th (1889). Romanesque-Prairie style; designed by Seymour Davis for Wm. Knox's bank, which failed in 1890s. Offices of prominent businessmen, attorneys, political organizations (e.g., Anti-Saloon League), and other institutions (e.g., U.S. Weather Bureau). On 1901 saloon-smashing visit to town, Carrie Nation snuck in to meet an attorney but had to flee out back door to escape an angry mob. On National Register of Historic Places.

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6— **Union Bus Depot**, 120 W. 6th (1930). Built by Union Pacific using bricks from King's Row rowhouse built on this site by T.K. King in 1871.

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7— Bates Block, 123 W. 6th (1902) and I.O.O.F. Hall, 117 W. 6th (c. 1910). Note round arched openings on Jackson St. side and classical window treatment of Odd Fellows Hall. Tenants have included bakery, grocers, "Tailoring College", and coin shop.

8— New Stormont Building, 107-115 W. 6th (1926). Built on Jane C. Stormont Hospital trust land; Minnesota stone base; Carthage cut stone above. In 1920s was union bus depot; later J.C. Penney store.

9— Commercial Building, 115 E. 6th (pre-1900). Fine example of pre-1900 commercial architecture, long home of Hillmer's Leather Goods.

10— Commercial Building, 117 E. 6th (1908). First was Dibble's Grocery, then Zercher Post Card Co. and Monarch Billiard Parlor.

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11— Commercial Building, 623 Kansas (c. 1880). For many years housed Hall's Stationery Store and Hall Lithographing Co. until 1937.
12— Kresge Store, 635 Kansas (1926) Spanish Colonial Revival building cost $150,000 to build. Note use of wrought iron.


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14— Commercial Buildings, 112-118 E. 7th (pre-1900). Attractive row of Victorian structures. One was Chiles Hotel, owned by black publisher Nick Chiles, who printed Carrie Nation's *The Smasher's Mail*. During Prohibition, night club in #118 raided by police.


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17—**Crosby Store**, 717-723 Kansas (pre-1900). One of great names in Topeka mercantile operations. Brownstone front covered by 1950s "modernization."

18—**Davies Building**, 725-727 Kansas (1888). Washburn Law School offices here (1911-1913). In 1890s Dr. & Mrs. Charles Menninger lived upstairs in 3 rooms (one as office) for $35/month rent. On Nat'l Register.

19—**Commercial Buildings**, 716-732 Kansas (c. 1900-1910). One of last relatively intact rows typifying turn-of-the-century Kansas Avenue.

20—**Darling Building**, 734 Kansas (pre-1887). Originally office of J.C. Darling rubber stamp & seals co. Upstairs in early 1900s was a group of dentists who advertised using a drawing of gap-tooth boy; 40 years later drawing was used as basis for *Mad Magazine*'s "Alfred E. Neuman."

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21—**Majestic Building**, 108 E. 8th (pre-1900). At turn-of-century, housed Majestic Theatre, a vaudeville house which bordered on burlesque; later apartments, and in 1930s-1950s the Wallace and Johnson Hat Shop.

![Thacher Building](image1.jpg)

23 — **Municipal Auditorium/City Hall**, 215 E. 7th (1940). Local architect Ted Greist (designed Topeka High) designed this Art Deco/Moderne bldg.

![Municipal Auditorium/City Hall](image2.jpg)

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24 — **Commercial Building**, 114-118 W. 8th (c. 1888-1910). One of few remaining groupings of late Victorian/early 20th-century buildings downtown; #118 was home of Kansas Newspaper Union (supplied features to newspapers throughout Kansas); #116 housed early business college.
25— Commercial Building, 801 Kansas (1930). Spanish Colonial Revival details, designed by Ralph Scamell; occupied by several stores over years: United Cigar Store (1930s); Walgreen's (1940s); Ray Beers clothing store occupied one of center stores and later expanded through entire building.

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26— Commercial Building, 813 Kansas (c. 1888). 2-story stone structure with a brick front. Housed William Green & Sons, Grocers, for many years.

27— Commercial Building, 821-823 Kansas (c. 1890). 2-story stone building with a brick front. Long time occupant was Santa Fe Watch Company beginning in 1912. New front was installed and building remodeled in 1935.

28— Commercial Buildings, 820-826 Kansas (c. 1900). One of last groupings representative of early 20th-century Kansas Avenue streetscape. Godard Building (822-824) housed Kansas Reserve Bank.

29— Kansan Hotel, 100 E. 9th (1924). Note "Greek temple" (columned pediment) at top. Designed by Sheparde & Wiser of Kansas City. Cost more than $1M when it opened. Hotel closed 1968; now apartments.
30—Garlinghouse Building, (DEMOLISHED IN 2001) 820 SE Quincy (1951); Cuthbert and Suehrk, architects; home office of L. F. Garlinghouse Co., nation's pioneer residential plan-book publishing company; thousands of company's homes built in U.S.

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32—Smith Building, (DEMOLISHED IN 2001) 835 Kansas (c. 1902). Note round arched entrances on 9th St. (a remnant of the Romanesque architecture a decade earlier). Bottom floor was J.E. McFarland Drug Co. #1.

33—Mills Building, 901 Kansas (1910-11). City's first steel frame structure; architect: J.C. Holland; was Mills Dry Goods Co. then Pelletier's department store (1916 to 1970s). Upper floors housed number of doctors and dentists.

34—Commercial Building, 909-911 Kansas (1909). 2-story stone structure with brick and tile front; built for Josephine Norton.

35—Commercial Building, 915-917 Kansas (c. 1910). Facade has Spanish influences, including red roof tile. Occupied 40+ years by Jenkins Music.
36— **Scott Building**, 120 E. 10th (late 1920s). Built for early Chevrolet dealership; remembered as Scott-Puffer-Wahle Co., which sold GM autos.


40— **First Presbyterian Church**, 815 Harrison (1885). Last survivor of 1880s "Avenue of Churches"; style: Gothic Revival; architect: George Ropes; contractor: James Cuthbert. Tiffany Windows installed 1911; most important stained glass in Topeka and possibly Kansas.

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41— **School Administration Building**, 415 W. 8th (1924). Quasi-Gothic in style; home of Topeka School Board until 1978. Also housed classes on 3rd floor until Topeka High moved into new Bethany Square building in 1931.

42— **Masonic Grand Lodge Building**, 320 W. 8th (1916). Impressive domed, circular lobby with Doric columns; marble stair has bronze balusters.

43— **Kansas Life Insurance Building**, 300 W. 8th (1928). Fine classical revival building erected for an insurance company.

44— **Former Fire Department Headquarters**, 719 Van Buren (1927). Handsome Renaissance structure built as Department Headquarters and Station #2. Subsequently remodeled (original cost in 1927: $75,000)
45— Church of the Assumption (1924), Assumption Rectory (1929), and Capitol Catholic High School (1939), 200-220 W. 8th Ave. Outstanding grouping of Italian Renaissance style architecture; city's oldest Catholic parish. Rectory is "Italian villa in midst of the city" by local architect W.E. Glover, architect of many Westboro homes including Tinkham Veale house.

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46— Hindman Barn, 724 Jackson (pre-1880). Remnant of stone livery barn of early grocery operator Samuel Hindman (note wooden cupolas).

47— Kansas Daily Commonwealth Office Site, 716 Jackson, (pre-1880). Wall along cobblestone alley is remnant of office of first important Topeka daily newspaper. Electric light first demonstrated here; housed Brush Electric Light Co., Topeka's first light and electric utility (1881).

49 — **Jayhawk Hotel**, 700 Jackson (1926). When legislature was in session hotel swirled in political intrigue. Show biz names in hotel register: Groucho Marx, Sally Rand, Robert Young, Bing Crosby, Robert Mitchum, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. Ronald Finney held forth in a suite until his financial and political empire collapsed; Arthur Capper had office here. Roof Garden was setting for parties/high school dances. On Nat'l Register.

50 — **Elks Club Building**, 122 W. 7th (1906). Built for B.P.O.E. Lodge 204. In 1930s Chamber of Commerce on 1st floor; "night clubs" in basement. Was Eastern Kansas campaign's Imperial Army Command headquarters in 1917 *Saturday Evening Post* fictional story about "German occupation" of Topeka. On National Register of Historic Places.

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51 — **Insurance Building**, 701-703 Jackson (c. 1920). Gothic elements; erected on site of the first Grace Cathedral of the 1870s.
52 — Commercial Building, 212 W. 7th (pre-1910). In 1913, 1st floor: blacksmith shop; 2nd floor: dwelling. Later housed printing presses.


54 — Security Benefit Building, 700 SW Harrison (1923). Neo-classical gem, built for $200,000, designed by W. E. Glover; beautiful marble lobby.

55 — First Methodist Church, 401 W. 6th (1923). Oldest established church in Topeka (1855), this Gothic temple replaced the rather fantastic 1880s Gothic church building which burned in 1921.

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56 — Mulvane Building, 401 W. 6th (1910). Church classroom building named after Topeka’s prominent Mulvane family, local philanthropists.

57 — Miller's Pharmacy, 422 W. 6th (c. 1905). Plain, brick commercial/residential (upstairs) building, now altered. Upper levels in downtown buildings were used as residences up to WWII.

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58— Greer Residence, 418 W. 6th (c. 1860). One of oldest structures extant in the city; stone vernacular house built for Judge James Greer.


61— Commercial Building, (DEMOLISHED) 522 Van Buren (c. 1900). Housed Oliver McCormick rug cleaning and manufacturing beginning in 1904.

62— Commercial Building, (DEMOLISHED) 217 W. 5th (pre-1900). In 1913 housed lightning rod manufacturer and after 1920, Harding Wheel Co.

63— Old City Jail, (DEMOLISHED) 204 W. 5th (1935). Stone decorative panels above central entrance; simple brick pilasters along south & east facades.

65—Van Dorp Bldg., 507 Jackson (1904). Louis Van Dorp manufactured metal cornices and roofs here. Fine example of adaptive reuse.

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66—Commercial Building, 416 Jackson (c. 1900). Long-time occupant was Nicholas Lux Machine Works. Occupied by early airplane builder A.K. Longren in 1916; painted Longren sign still faintly visible.
67— Commercial Building, 414 Jackson (c. 1900). 1909 usage was as Kansas National Guard Armory; in 1924 it was Topeka Edison Co. garage.

68— Commercial Building, 412 Jackson (c. 1910). Housed carriage and wagon dealer/repairman in 1909; then Ford Auto Repair Shop in 1913.

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69— Topeka Provident Association Building, 335 Jackson (pre-1900). Early 1900s home of TPA, a private charitable organization that aided poor, formed in response to destitution from Flood of 1903. Cooking/sewing classes for girls, boys' club, nursery, library, men's dorm, sick rooms, dental/medical dispensaries. From 1898-1900 was occupied by faith-healers Charles & Sarah Parham's Bethel Healing Mission which later evolved into Pentecostal Movement. Building at 216 W. 4th added later.

70— Commercial Building, 303 Kansas (1882). Many alterations since 1882; has housed mattress manufacturer, auto sales room and mortuary.