



Kansas City Register of Historic Places Application and Nomination Form (H/O Overlay Zoning)

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, please refer to the National Register Bulletin 16A: *How to Complete the National Register Form*. The bulletin is available online at <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets.

1. Name of Site or District

Historic Name(s) Bancroft Apartments

Are you amending an existing historic district? ☐ If yes, Name of District N/A

2. Location

Address if Individual Designation 4301 Troost Avenue

Street Boundaries if a District N/A

County Jackson Zip Code(s) 64110 Council District 3

3. Geographical Data

Acreage of Site or District Less than one acre

Legal Description (If a district please attach legal description on a continuation sheet using the attached template)

The City of Kansas City, Missouri describes the property as WIGHTMAN & HENDERSONS TROOST AVE ADD LOT 1

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected below or on a continuation sheet using the attached template)

The boundary contains only the historic parcel associated with the Bancroft Apartments. The rest of the current parcel does not have any historic associations with the significance of the building and is not included in this nomination.

Zoning Classification for Site or District B3-2

4. Applicant Information

Applications are now submitted through CompassKC. Please contact the Historic Preservation Office for instructions on submission. (816)513-2902.

Name/Title Mason Martel/Senior Project Coordinator

Street & Number 300 East 39th Street Telephone 215-248-1260

City or Town Kansas City State MO Zip Code 64111

5. Property Owner(s) (If in a district please enter 'multiple' and work with City Planning Staff for an owners list)

Name/Title John Wesley Houser/Manager, Cornerstone Rentals, LLC

Street & Number 10 Jackson Street Telephone 470-671-3722

City or Town Newman State GA Zip Code 30263

6. Classification

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply) Category of Property (check only one box) Number of Resources within Property

Contributing Noncontributing

BUILDINGS

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-Local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal
- ☐
- ☒ Building(s)
- ☐ District
- ☐ Site
- ☐ Structure
- ☐ Object

1	0	Buildings
0	0	District
0	0	Site
0	0	Structure
0	0	Object
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings
in Kansas City, Missouri

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

7. Function or Use

Historic Function(s) (Please enter historic functions, i.e., single family dwelling) Current Function(s) (Please enter current functions, i.e., single family dwelling)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

VACANT/NOT IN USE

8. Description

Architectural Classification (Please enter the predominate architectural styles i.e. Colonial Revival, etc.) Materials (Enter predominate materials of the buildings on the site or in the district)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

foundation Stone

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Stone

9. Description

Applicable Kansas City Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for Kansas City 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

Circa 1913

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Sparks, Arthur T. (architect)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

10. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets using the attached template)

11. Additional Documentation

The following items must be included with a final application and nomination. Staff will work with the applicant to prepare these items.

- 1. Maps:** **For an Individual Landmark:** Site map showing location of buildings and proposed boundary.
For a Historic District: Map showing building footprints, the boundary of district, and the buildings that

are contributing or noncontributing to the district.

2. **Photographs:** Representative high quality photographs of the historic site or district

11. Additional Documentation (continued)

- 3. Historic Resource Survey Forms:** A survey form must be prepared for every building, except non-contributing outbuildings, in the proposed designation area, whether a district or an individual landmark. Please contact the Historic Preservation office to see if there is a form already prepared.

Other items may be required by the Commission to assess whether the site or district meets the requirements for listing on the Kansas City Register of Historic Places. Staff will work with you to make sure the nomination is complete. This nomination form will be uploaded as part of the online application through [CompassKC](#). When you are ready to apply, please contact the Historic Preservation office for assistance completing the application.

Historic Preservation Office, Community Planning Division
City Hall, 16th Floor, Room 1603
414 East 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64106
KCHP@kcmo.org (816) 513-2902

12. Fees

- A fee is required to process the application and will be billed through CompassKC. Please contact the Historic Preservation Office for the current fee schedule.

Kansas City Register Designation Fee Schedule

(1) Historic Landmark.....	\$ 207.00
But, if the Building has been previously listed in the National Register.....	\$ 52.00
(2) Historic District.....	\$ 311.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 104.00
Not to exceed a total of.....	\$2,072.00
But, if the building has been previously listed in the National Register individually or as part of a district	\$ 52.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 21.00
Not to exceed	\$ 414.00
(3) Amended a Historic District	\$ 104.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 104.00
Not to exceed a total of.....	\$2,072.00
But, if the building(s) has been previously listed in the National Register individually or as part of a district	\$ 52.00
Plus, per building survey form	\$ 21.00
Not to exceed	\$ 414.00

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

7

Page

6

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Summary

The Bancroft Apartments (circa 1913) is located at 4301 Troost Avenue in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri. The three-story brick building has a rectangular footprint with a flat roof, and stone foundation. The Bancroft Apartments exhibits restrained Classical Revival elements that include an overall symmetrical composition, along with decorative brick, wood, and stone elements. The interior of the building contains two commercial spaces on the first floor: one in the north half and the other in the south half. The upper two floors each contain four apartment units arranged on a T-shaped corridor. The building is an example of the Commercial-Residential Apartment Building property subtype of the Working- and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri property type as described in the *Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri* Multiple Property Documentation Form (the MPDF). The Bancroft Apartment meets the registration requirements of the property type as described below.

The Bancroft Apartments retains integrity. The commercial storefront and residential apartment entrance configurations remain intact though covered with plywood. Non-historic aluminum windows fill many historic masonry openings, but the distinctive historic two-story bay windows, recessed porches, and some wood windows remain. The two first floor commercial spaces are intact and retain historic materials such as mosaic tile and wood floors, and plaster walls. Upper floor apartment units generally retain their historic configurations and materials. Historic wood floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and fireplaces remain in about half of the units. Some unit walls have been removed down to the studs, but their historic configurations are apparent. The Bancroft Apartments retains its exterior ornamentation and is easily recognizable as an example of early twentieth century mixed-use commercial and apartment building in Kansas City.

Elaboration

SETTING AND SITE

The Bancroft Apartments is located in the Manheim Park neighborhood, about a mile northeast of the Country Club Plaza shopping district, and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (*Figure 1*). The National Register-listed Bancroft School (built in phases between 1909 and 1922) is one block to the west, and the South Hyde Park Historic District lines the west side of Troost Avenue, across the street.¹ The immediate area contains a mix of commercial and residential buildings. East Hyde Park (to the west) has a dense concentration of one- to two-story single-family houses and a handful of multifamily apartments that date to the 1900s-1920s. The area to the east has a similar makeup of houses, but with more vacant lots due to demolitions. Current development

¹ Bancroft School: NRIS #11001017, listed 01/12/2012; South Hyde Park HD: NRIS #07001186, listed 11/14/2007. Other than the name, available research has not uncovered a connection between the Bancroft Apartments and the Bancroft School.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

7

Page

7

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

along Troost Avenue is intermittent and contains a mix of early twentieth century commercial buildings and apartments with newer buildings (within the last 30 years).

The Bancroft Apartments occupies most of the north third of a roughly half-acre square parcel (*Figure 2*). Three lots historically made up the parcel, but it is not known when they were combined. Troost Avenue and East 43rd Street line the west, and north sides of the parcel, respectively. Neighboring property lines abut the east and south sides. Troost Avenue is a major north-south corridor with two traffic lanes in each direction and a central turning lane. East 43rd Street is smaller, with just one lane of traffic in each direction. Wide concrete-paved sidewalks line both streets within the public right-of-way.

The current parcel contains the Bancroft Apartments and a rectangular one-story building that abuts the south wall.² The neighboring building was built at the same time as the Bancroft Apartments, but historically functioned as a theater, and has no other historic connection to the apartments. For this reason, the boundary only includes the historic apartment building. The Bancroft Apartments occupies all of the west half of its historic parcel. A non-historic addition and grass verge occupy the rest of the parcel.

EXTERIOR

The Bancroft Apartments is a three-story two-part commercial block building with a rectangular footprint, a stone foundation, and brick walls. Dark brown brick clads the primary west elevation and the north elevation. Common red brick clads the east and south elevations. Enclosed frame porches extend one bay east from the north and south ends of the rear east wall. A flat roof covers the entire building. Brick parapet walls line the primary west wall, along with portions of the north and south walls that do not correspond to the frame porches. A one-story non-historic (built sometime between 1950 and 1957) addition extends east from the south half of the east wall. It has painted concrete block walls with a concrete foundation, a flat roof, and a square footprint.

Brick dentils and a thin band of stone line the parapet walls on the north and west elevations and wrap around the south wall about four feet. Stone coping lines this portion of the parapet. The rest of the south parapet is unadorned, glazed coping lines this portion of the parapet. Historic wood double-hung windows with a 6/1 configuration fill many historic openings of the main portion of the building. Hung wood windows with a 1/1 configuration fill openings that correspond with the rear porches along with some openings along the north and south walls. Non-historic aluminum storm windows cover most openings in front of the windows. Masonry openings have stone sills and flat metal lintels except for those along the masonry portion of the south wall,

² The one-story single-family house seen in the aerial image in *Figure 2* dated to the 1950s and was demolished in 2024. It was not historically associated with the apartment building.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

7

Page

8

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

which have brick arches. Historic storefronts with recessed entrances line the first story of the primary west elevation. Unless otherwise noted, plywood covers all storefront openings. Stone bulkheads line the storefronts. Historic painted metal clads the ceilings of the three recessed entrances along the west elevation. Historic mosaic tile lines the floor in front of the two south entrances. A steel lintel separates the storefronts from a transom that lines each bay. Square glazed panels are visible along the north transom. Plywood lines the south transom; decorative painted panels line the south transom. It is likely that the panels are glazed, but this was not able to be determined during a site visit.

WEST (PRIMARY) ELEVATION

Brick piers visually organize the first floor of the primary street-facing west elevation into two storefront bays (*Photos 1 and 2*). Simple stone capitals are recessed into the masonry at the top of the piers between the first and second stories. A recessed storefront entrance occupies the northwest corner part of the building (*Photo 3*). Storefront walls angle in from the west and north walls to meet the recessed entrance. A second recessed entrance at the south end of the bay accesses the apartment units on the upper floors (*Photo 4*). Brick clads the south recessed wall of the entrance. Between the two entrances, three non-historic aluminum-framed glazed storefront panels fill the rest of the bay. A single recessed entrance extends back into the south bay just north of the center of the bay. The storefront walls angle in to meet the entrance.

The upper two stories are nearly identical. Historic masonry openings divide the upper portion of the wall into three bays. Historic recessed porches fill the two outside bays of each story and extend out about 12 inches beyond the face of the wall (*Figure 3*). Wood brackets line the bottom of each porch. Bracketed wood overhangs with dentils line the top of the third story porches. Historic wrought iron railing lines all porches. Beyond the porches, a historic multilight wood door flanked by narrow multilight wood sidelights fills the center of each bay. A painted textured stucco (or similar) wall fills the rest of the recessed wall. Two masonry openings pierce the center bays of the upper stories. Stone hoods cover both of the bays, and a thick stone sill lines the bottom of the openings.

NORTH ELEVATION

Masonry openings divide the north elevation into eight bays (*Photos 1 and 5*). The frame porch occupies the entire east bay. A storefront bay fills the west bay of the first floor. The west part of the bay is recessed as part of the northwest corner entrance described above. Plywood panels cover the rest of the storefront to the east. A transom covered with plywood spans the upper part of the bay. Looking west to east, two small rectangular openings pierce the first floor between bays 3 and 4 and in bay 6. Plywood fills both openings, and a window AC unit is installed in the east opening. The upper stories have nearly identical fenestration. An opening that

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

7

Page

9

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

corresponds with the recessed west porches pierces the west bay. Masonry openings pierce bays 2 through 4, and 6 through 8. Openings in bays 2 and 7 are larger and extend about a foot lower than the other bays. Plywood covers the openings in bay 7 on the second story and bay 2 on the third. A two-story bay window projects from bay 5. A decorative wood bracket at each end supports a flat roof that slightly projects out from the wall above. Two simple wood brackets line the bottom. Three wood panels line the space between the second and third story windows. A mix of wood windows fills the three openings on each floor. A pair of 1/1 wood windows fill the openings in bay 8 that corresponds with the rear porch.

EAST (REAR) ELEVATION

The rear porch additions project out a few feet from the east wall and visually divide the wall into three bays (*Photos 5 and 6*). The roof spans the open space between the porches. A non-historic concrete block addition with a square footprint, concrete foundation, and a flat roof abuts two-thirds of the wall to the south. A door opening covered with plywood pierces the center of the north wall of the addition. Plywood covers two openings in the north third of the building that abuts the addition. At the upper stories a single opening pierces both stories. A pair of 1/1 windows fill the openings. Plywood covers one half of the south openings and the entire north opening at the third story. Three openings with brick arches pierce the recessed center bay. Remnants of wood joists are visible along the third story. Paneled wood doors with an upper glazed panel generally fill each opening. The north door at the second story does not appear to have an arch.

SOUTH ELEVATION

An adjacent building obscures the entire first floor of the south elevation (*Photos 7 and 8*). The two upper stories have the same fenestration as those along the north elevation.

INTERIOR

FIRST FLOOR

The northwest corner storefront entrance leads to an open commercial space that occupies the north half of the first floor (*Photo Map 2, Photos 9 and 10*). Historic mosaic tile with a floral border covers most of the floor in the west (front) two-thirds of the space. Non-historic wood LVP generally covers the rear third of the floor. The extent of the historic tile is not known. Painted plaster clads the walls, and the floor joists are visible throughout. Short display ledges with wood flooring line the storefront windows. Wood framing for two non-historic rooms occupies the northeast corner. The south storefront entrance leads to an open commercial space that occupies the south half of the first floor (*Photo 11*). Historic wood flooring is visible throughout. Remnants of a pressed

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

7

Page

10

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

metal ceiling generally line the edge of the commercial space. A non-historic opening in the party wall connects the two commercial spaces. The rear addition has an open volume of space with exposed concrete block walls and a concrete floor. Wood trusses are visible along the ceiling (*Photo 12*).

UPPER APARTMENT FLOORS

The center door along Troost Avenue leads to a historic straight-run wood stair that accesses the second floor (*Photo Map 3, Figure 3, Photo 13*). A historic switchback wood stair connects the second and third floors. On each upper floor, a small landing accesses all apartments (*Photo 14*). A narrow corridor leads east from the landing to a secondary door along the east exterior wall that historically accessed a fire escape. The two upper floors have an identical configuration with four historic apartment units each organized on a central T-shaped corridor (*Photos 15 through 21*). Historic wood flooring is present throughout the units. About half of the units retain historic painted plaster walls and ceilings (*Photos 15 and 16*). In the rest, the historic materials have been removed down to the stud walls (*Photos 17, 18, and 20*). A historic fireplace is located in the two west-facing units on each floor that correspond with the balconies along Troost Avenue (*Photo 21*). The two east units correspond with the bay windows and the rear porches (*Photo 19*).

BASEMENT

The basement is a utilitarian space with exposed stone walls and a dirt floor. Floor joists for the commercial spaces above are visible throughout (*Photo 22*).

BANCROFT APARTMENTS INTEGRITY

The Bancroft Apartments retains integrity. The building retains its historic mix of commercial and residential uses and *association*. It has not been moved and retains integrity of *location*. The historic *setting* has been impacted by demolition along Troost Avenue, but the Bancroft Apartments still retain its prominent place at the southeast corner of Troost Avenue and East 43rd Street. The Bancroft Apartments retains integrity of *design, materials, and workmanship*. The historic storefront configurations are intact and retain historic transoms, metal ceilings, and mosaic tile floors. The storefront glazing is likely not historic, but it is in the same location as the historic glazing. In addition, the historic upper porches, bay windows, and stone detailing are intact. The historic rear porch configuration is not known. A wood stair between the porches served as a fire escape, and openings in the east wall from the units suggest that they connected directly to the stairs in addition to the opening from the hallway. The interior retains its historic first-floor commercial spaces and upper apartment units. Although some historic materials are missing from the units, they still retain their basic historic configurations and historic elements such as the fireplaces.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

7

Page

11

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS: COMMERCIAL-RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT BUILDING SUBTYPE³

Requirement	Bancroft Apartments
Contains at least three self-sufficient (with private kitchen and bath facilities) apartment (dwelling) units, but the earliest buildings may contain one- or two-room dwelling units that shared bathing facilities.	Contains eight historic self-sufficient apartment units.
Has a ground floor public-oriented commercial use space.	The two first-floor commercial spaces face west, towards Troost Avenue.
Has at least one, but no more than three floors of residential apartment spaces above the ground floor.	The building has two floors of residential apartments above the ground floor.
Has a separate entrance(s) to the residential units with no lobby area.	The apartment entrance opens to a straight-run stair that leads to the second floor.
May have an entrance vestibule to the upper floors.	There is no entrance vestibule.
Presents the massing and general architectural characteristics associated with mixed-use commercial architecture, including a ground floor storefront.	Although the storefront glazing is not historic, the storefront configurations are intact behind plywood.
Retains sufficient architectural integrity and historic characteristic to enable identification with the property type, including the façade appearance and preferably, although not necessarily, the basic configuration of the original floor plan outlining the public halls and apartment units, and interior trim.	The Bancroft Apartments retain integrity. The storefront configuration, balconies, and the bay windows remain intact. According to the MPDF, “Alterations, such as the removal of ornamental detailing, the replacement of doors and windows, and the scarring of first-floor architectural elements are common and do not necessarily diminish a building's contribution to the historic context.” ⁴
Was constructed primarily between the years 1885 and 1930.	The Bancroft Apartments was built circa 1913.
Is located within the Kansas City, Missouri 1960 boundaries.	The Bancroft Apartments is located within the 1960 boundaries of Kansas City, Missouri.

³ Sally Schwenk, “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (2007), F.24.

⁴ Schwenk, “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” F.26.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

8

Page

12

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Summary

The Bancroft Apartments (circa 1913), at 4301 Troost Avenue in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE as a good example of a Commercial-Residential Apartment Building property subtype, as described in the *Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings of Kansas City, Missouri* Multiple Property Documentation Form (the MPDF). As described in the MPDF, Commercial-Residential Apartments contained dedicated commercial space on the ground floor and residential space on the upper floors.

Designed by local architect Arthur T. Sparks, the Classical Revival building is significant under registration requirement criterion C-5: “Buildings that illustrate types of multi-unit buildings (such as efficiencies, inclusion of retail and recreational services for tenant).”⁵ The building is significant under all three contexts described in the MPDF: “Residential Development Patterns: 1830-1960,” “The Evolution of the Working- and Middle-Class Multi-Family Purpose-Built Apartment Buildings in Kansas City: 1855-1960,” and “Architecture of Working- and Middle-Class Apartment buildings: 1855-1960.”

The Bancroft Apartments illustrates the development along Troost Avenue, a major north-south corridor and racial dividing line in Kansas City. In the early twentieth century, Troost was a prominent commercial corridor with a dense mix of commercial, multifamily apartment buildings, and single-family houses. The period of significance for the Bancroft Apartments (circa 1913) corresponds with the date of construction. The Commercial-Residential Apartment Building property subtype is significant in Kansas City as a marked transition from earlier commercial building types with a small shopkeeper’s flat on the upper story to multiple units above the commercial space. The restrained Classical Revival detailing of the Bancroft Apartments is indicative of larger residential architectural trends in Kansas City at the turn of the twentieth century.

Elaboration

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS: DEVELOPMENT OF TROOST AVENUE

In the late 1800s, Troost Avenue contained a number of large houses around the intersection with Linwood Boulevard and a streetcar line that ran to 33rd Street. While this stretch of Troost earned the nickname “Millionaires Row,” Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show that blocks further south contained a mix of more

⁵ Schwenk, “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” F.4.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

8

Page

13

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

modest residential houses, apartments, and some commercial buildings.⁶ As the population of Kansas City grew in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, development along Troost continued south, and the street around the present-day location of the Bancroft Apartments contained a dense mix of smaller one- to two-story frame houses, brick commercial buildings, and some vacant lots.⁷ Around this time, developers hoping to draw from the burgeoning commercial corridor, built speculative homes nearby. Unfortunately, the housing market in Kansas City tanked around the turn of the twentieth century, and developers began to sell off those houses at cheaper prices. This, coupled with accessible public transportation along Troost Avenue and restrictive housing covenants in many other developments south of Brush Creek and the Country Club Plaza, resulted in a significant influx of Black families to the area.⁸ Signaling a stronger shift towards commerce, by 1929, the city zoned about fifty blocks of Troost Avenue between East 27th and East 75th streets for business use.⁹

Interestingly, city directory listings and Sanborn Maps between 1909 and 1951 show that the number of purpose-built apartment buildings and apartment hotels only moderately increased in a sixteen-block span along Troost Avenue between East 27th Street to the north and Brush Creek (approximately East 47th Street) to the south. Between 1909 and 1920, the number increased from fourteen to twenty-eight. The number of apartments and apartment hotels remained steady between 1920 and 1940 but increased to forty-six by 1951. Today, less than half of those apartment buildings remain along Troost, including the Bancroft Apartments. Several contributing apartment buildings along the east side of Troost, including six buildings on the 4000 block, are within the boundaries of the South Hyde Park Historic District. Today, no apartment buildings along the east side of Troost are listed in the National Register. Troost Avenue continues to function as a major north-south corridor. Commercial development is more sporadic than it was at the turn of the twentieth century through the 1950s, as demolition and new construction has resulted in a loss of many historic commercial and residential resources along the street.

⁶ Brenda Spencer and Michelle Spencer, "Shankman Building," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2017), 8.15.

⁷ Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Kansas City, Missouri*, (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1909, volume 4) various sheets.

⁸ Brianna O'Higgins, "How Troost Became A Major Divide in Kansas City," *KCUR*, March 27, 2014; Dianne Euston and Tim Reidy, "Dissecting the Troost Divide and Racial Segregation in Kansas City," *The Martin City Telegraph*, June 30, 2020.

⁹ Brenda Spencer and Michelle Spencer, "Shankman Building," 8.16.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

8

Page

14

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

BANCROFT APARTMENTS

Construction of the Bancroft Apartments began in 1913 when a \$34,000 permit for the building and the neighboring Bancroft Theatre was issued to owner T. B. Hammond.¹⁰ It is not clear exactly when the building was completed, but local histories state that Arrow Cleaners, an early tenant, opened here in 1914.¹¹ The Bancroft Apartments first appears in the 1918 city directory.¹² By 1920, the directory listed Arrow Cleaners and the Spector Grocery Co. in the two first floor commercial spaces.¹³ By 1925, the Bancroft Apartments and Bancroft Theater continued to occupy the north end of the east side of the block, with three single-family houses at the south end (*Figure 4*). The building enjoyed near-full occupancy through the mid-1930s, and the name of the building changed between 1935 and 1936 to the Morrill Apartments.¹⁴ By 1941, a plumbing supply company occupied at least one of the commercial spaces (*Figure 5*).¹⁵ The building continued to be at or near full occupancy through the end of the 1950s.¹⁶ In 1951, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows a little more development along the east end of the block, with a used car lot and warehouse south of Bancroft, and a few stores at the intersection of East 44th Street (*Figures 6 and 7*). It is not known when the building became vacant.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE WORKING- AND MIDDLE-CLASS MULTI-FAMILY PURPOSE-BUILT APARTMENT BUILDINGS IN KANSAS CITY

The Bancroft Apartments is an example of a *Commercial-Residential* building subtype of the *Working- and Middle-Class Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri* property type. The subtype was “a significant” evolution from a traditional commercial space with retail on the first floor, and the owner on the upper floor. Historian Sally Schwenk notes that the subtype “appeared in both commercial and residential areas at commercial nodes...and provided some of the most affordable housing in the City.”¹⁷ As a major commercial corridor, Troost saw the development of examples of the commercial-residential property subtype, including the Bancroft Apartments. The residential component of the subtype varied in number of units and the overall

¹⁰ City of Kansas City, Missouri, Building Permit No. 10982, 06/20/1913. On file with the City of Kansas City Historic Preservation Office.

¹¹ Barbara Bayer, “Family Business Thrives,” *Kansas City Jewish Life Magazine* (Fall 2014), 16.

¹² Gate City Directory Co., *Kansas City, Missouri, City Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Gate City Directory Co., 1918), 690.

¹³ Gate City Directory Co., *Kansas City, Missouri, City Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Gate City Directory Co., 1920), 547.

¹⁴ *Polk’s Kansas City Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Gate City Directory Co., 1935), 97; *Polk’s Kansas City Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Gate City Directory Co., 1936), 2307.

¹⁵ *Polk’s Kansas City Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Gate City Directory Co., 1941), 1328.

¹⁶ *Polk’s Kansas City Directory* (Kansas City, MO: Gate City Directory Co., 1958), 467.

¹⁷ Schwenk, “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” F.25.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

8

Page

15

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

arrangement. According to Schwenk, the typical example seldom exceeded three stories and contained a separate entrance. A double-loaded corridor arranged most upper floors, and the units provided “the latest in self-sufficient living quarters,” including a private kitchen and bathroom.¹⁸ The rest of the unit configuration varied depending on the intended tenant, and could include everything from a porch, dining room and parlor. The number of bedrooms also varied from a studio configuration to at least two in some middle-class apartments.¹⁹ At Bancroft, each unit contains private kitchen and bathroom spaces with a large living room and a bedroom.

The Bancroft Apartments is eligible under MPDF Criterion C-5: Buildings that illustrate types of multi-unit buildings (such as efficiencies, inclusion of retain and recreational services for tenant). To be eligible as an example of the *Working- and Middle-Class Apartment Buildings* in Kansas City, Missouri property type, a resource must contain at least two self-sufficient apartment units, be at least two stories high, be located within the City of Kansas City 1960 limits, be built between 1885-1960, and “retain sufficient architectural integrity and historic characteristic to enable identification with the property type, including the façade appearance and preferably, although not necessarily, the basic configuration of the original floor plan outlining the public halls and apartment units.”²⁰ The two-story Bancroft Apartments meet this criteria. The building retains its historic storefront configuration, along with the two interior commercial spaces, and eight historic apartment units above. The two first-floor commercial spaces are intact, and the basic configuration of the upper-floor corridors and units is apparent. Removal of historic interior material does not significantly impact the building’s ability to convey its historic mixed commercial/residential function, and the historic upper floor corridor arrangement is still apparent. Other historic materials such as the fireplaces and distinctive bay windows are intact.

Examples of comparable *Commercial-Residential* building subtypes of the *Working- and Middle-Class Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri* property type along Troost Avenue are discussed below.

THE BUILDING AT 3942-3944 TROOST AVENUE (1912)²¹

Also designed by architect Arthur T. Sparks, the building at 3942-3944 Troost Avenue has nearly identical fenestration to the Bancroft Apartments (*Figure 8*). This includes the basic fenestration of the upper stories, with balconies along the street-facing elevation, two-story bay windows at the north and south elevations, and

¹⁸ Schwenk, “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” E.33.

¹⁹ Schwenk, “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” E.34.

²⁰ Schwenk, “Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri,” F.2.

²¹ The building at 3942-3944 Troost Avenue is a contributing resource to the South Hyde Park Historic District, NRIS 07001186, listed 11/14/2007.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

8

Page

16

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

decorative brick and stone elements. The most significant visual difference between the two buildings is the addition of non-historic vinyl siding infill along the storefront openings, but the fenestration of the upper residential floors is intact. A mix of historic multilight double-hung wood windows and plywood currently fill the openings on all elevations. A one-story commercial building historically abutted the north elevation and remnants of a ghost line along the north elevation between the first and second stories are still visible.

THE BUILDING AT 4245-4247 TROOST AVENUE (CIRCA 1913)²²

Located across the street from the Bancroft Apartments, at the northeast corner of Troost Avenue and East 43rd Street, the building at 4245-4247 Troost Avenue is a two-story brick building with a rectangular footprint, flat roof, and minimal stone detailing along the roof and masonry openings (*Figure 9*). The building has a similar storefront configuration as the Bancroft Apartments, with a recessed storefront entrance in the southwest corner, a storefront along Troost Avenue, and a separate residential entrance in the center of the wall. Half-height brick bulkheads along the storefront openings are likely not historic, and glazed storefront panels with aluminum mullions fill the openings. Elsewhere, wood 1/1 double-hung windows fill most masonry openings. It is not known if these are historic. Two one-story commercial buildings line East 43rd Street east of the building. The commercial building that abuts the building at 4245-4247 Troost Avenue is believed to be historic; the other one is not believed to be historic but was in place by at least the 1950s.

THE BUILDING AT 4101-4103 TROOST AVENUE (1908)²³

Located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Troost Avenue and East 41st Street, the building at 4101-4103 Troost Avenue is a two-story brick building with a roughly rectangular footprint, flat roof, and restrained brick and stone decorative elements (*Figure 10*). Brick corbels line the cornice and thick stone sills and lintels line the masonry openings. The main entrance faces northwest and features a non-historic aluminum entrance. One storefront along Troost Avenue appears to be historic and contains wood storefront and transom windows with a recessed glazed wood door. A non-historic pedestrian entrance fills the center opening along the Troost-facing wall. A historic cast iron lintel lines the top of the storefront openings.

²² City of Kansas City, Missouri, Building Permit #10762, 10/22/1912.

²³ City of Kansas City, Missouri, Building Permit #8817, 05/12/1908.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

8

Page

17

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

ARCHITECT ARTHUR T. SPARKS (1881-1960)

Little is currently known about local architect Arthur T. Sparks. His most notable credited building was the Mission Revival-style Parade Park Maintenance Building (1912, 1916 expansion) for the Kansas City Parks Department. According to the National Register nomination for that building, Sparks worked for prominent local firms Howe, Hoit & Cutler, and Shepard and Farrar, along with a few other contractors.²⁴

ARCHITECTURE OF WORKING- AND MIDDLE-CLASS APARTMENT BUILDINGS: 1855-1960

Sparks' design for the Bancroft Apartments and the building at 3942-3944 Troost Avenue incorporated restrained Classical Revival elements that were popular at the turn of the century. As noted by historian Sally Schwenk, architectural tastes in Kansas City shifted from the Victorian influences towards "styles that reflected the demands of rapid growth...new technology, and economic realities of a new era."²⁵ Between 1900 and 1910 Kansas City's population increased over 50 percent and spurred a wave of new apartment construction. As Schwenk observes, these new apartments incorporated elements of either classical styles, or "functional new styles" such as Art Deco.²⁶ At the Bancroft Apartments, elements of the Classical Revival style include the brick dentils, stone window accents, and brick piers with stone capitals between the storefront bays. The overall symmetrical composition of the primary west elevation is another character-defining feature of the style.

CONCLUSION

The Bancroft Apartments (1913) is a good representative example of the *Working- and Middle-Class Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri* property along Troost Avenue. Originally developed with high-end houses, development along Troost Avenue turned towards commercial properties and spurred construction of residential apartments, commercial buildings, and mixed-use commercial/residential buildings. Over time, many of the other mixed-use multifamily apartment buildings along Troost were demolished, leaving remaining ones such as the Bancroft Apartments as relatively rare examples of the type. The Bancroft Apartments meets the registration requirements for a Commercial-Residential Building as outlined in the MPDF and is a locally significant example of the type.

²⁴ Elizabeth Rosin, "Parade Park Maintenance Building," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2008), 8.14-15.

²⁵ Schwenk, "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri," E.8.

²⁶ Schwenk, "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri," E.8.

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

10

Page

18

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

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Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

11

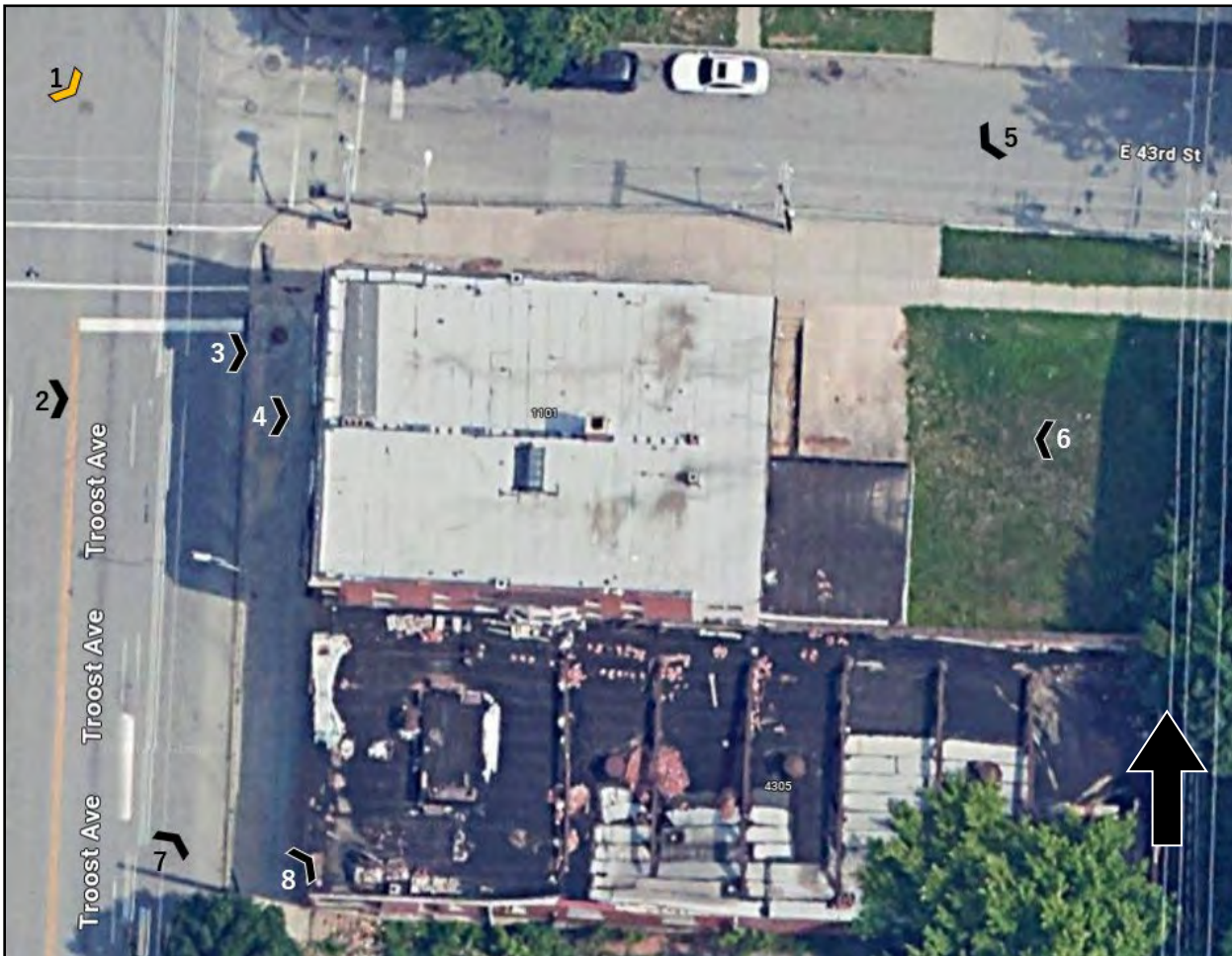
Page

19

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Photo Map 1: Exterior (Google Maps, 2025).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

11

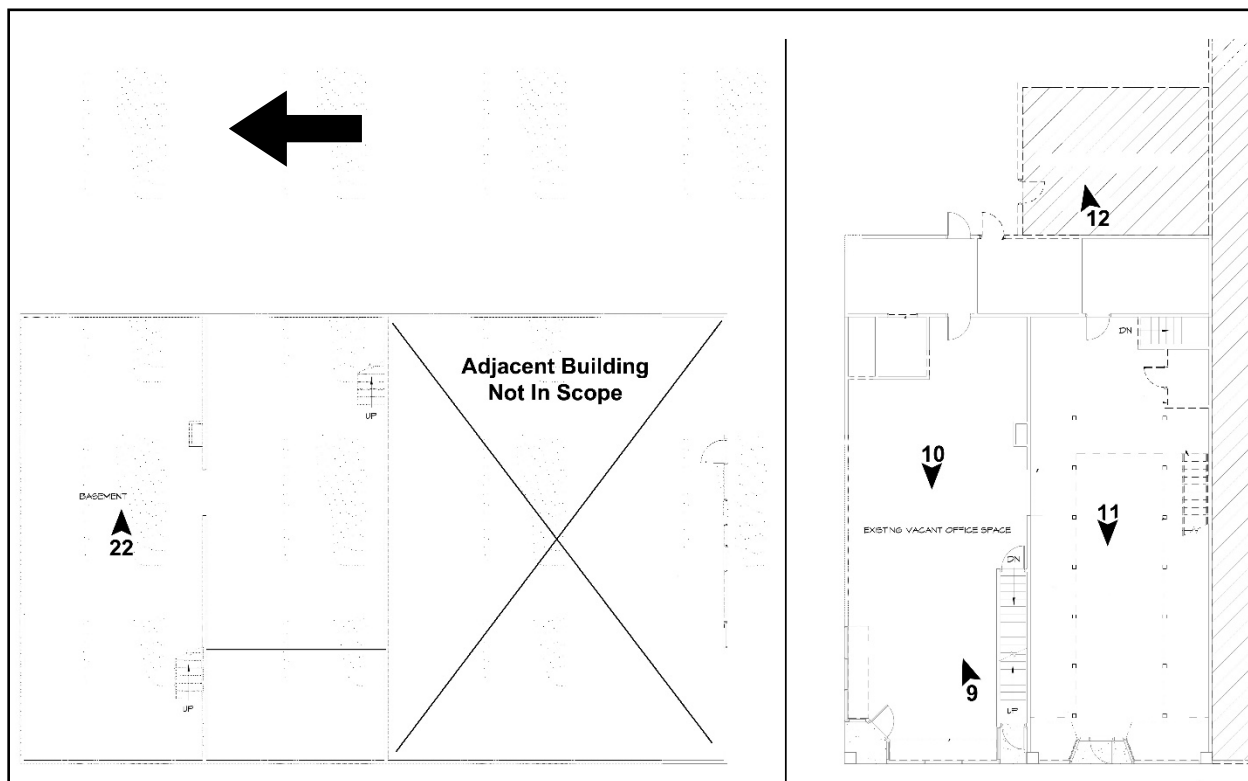
Page

20

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Photo Map 2: First floor (right) and basement (left) (Drawing from Veritas Architecture + Design, 2023).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

11

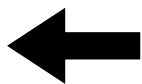
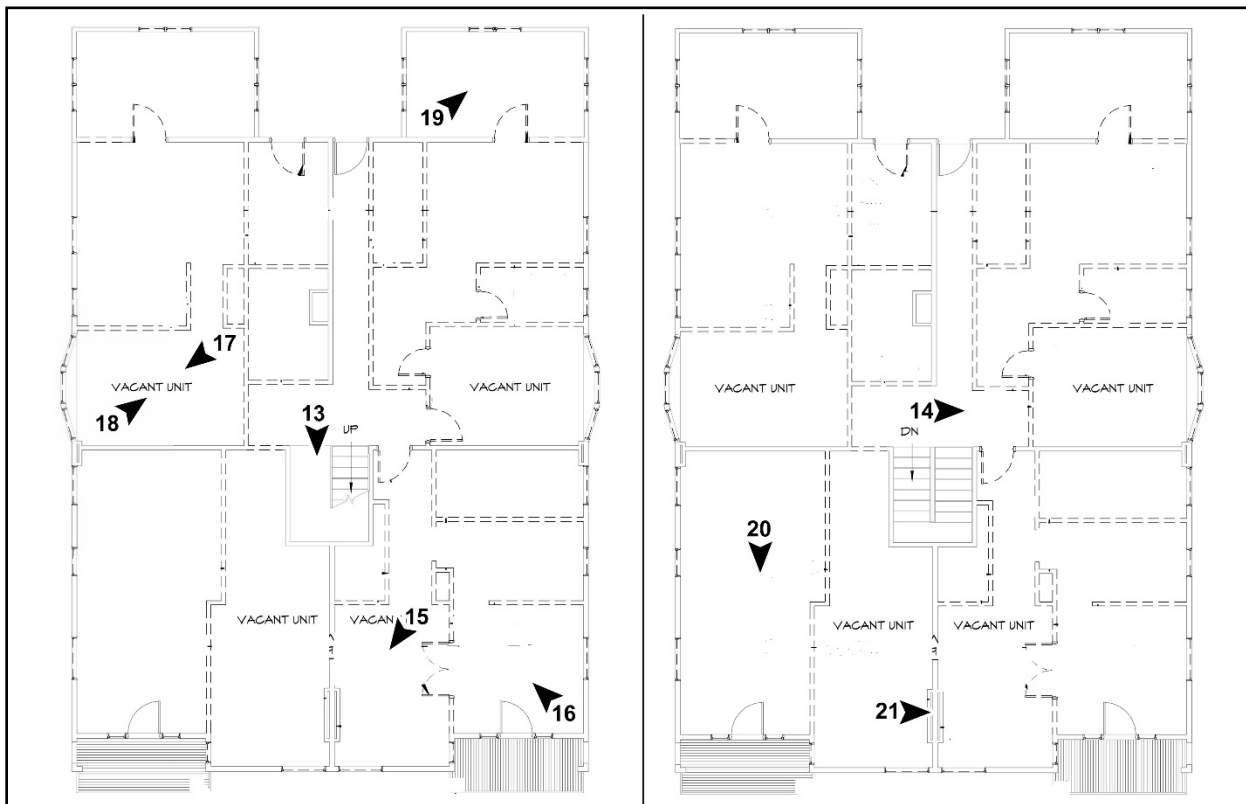
Page

21

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Photo Map 3: Second floor (left) and third floor (right) (Drawing from Veritas Architecture + Design, 2023).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

11

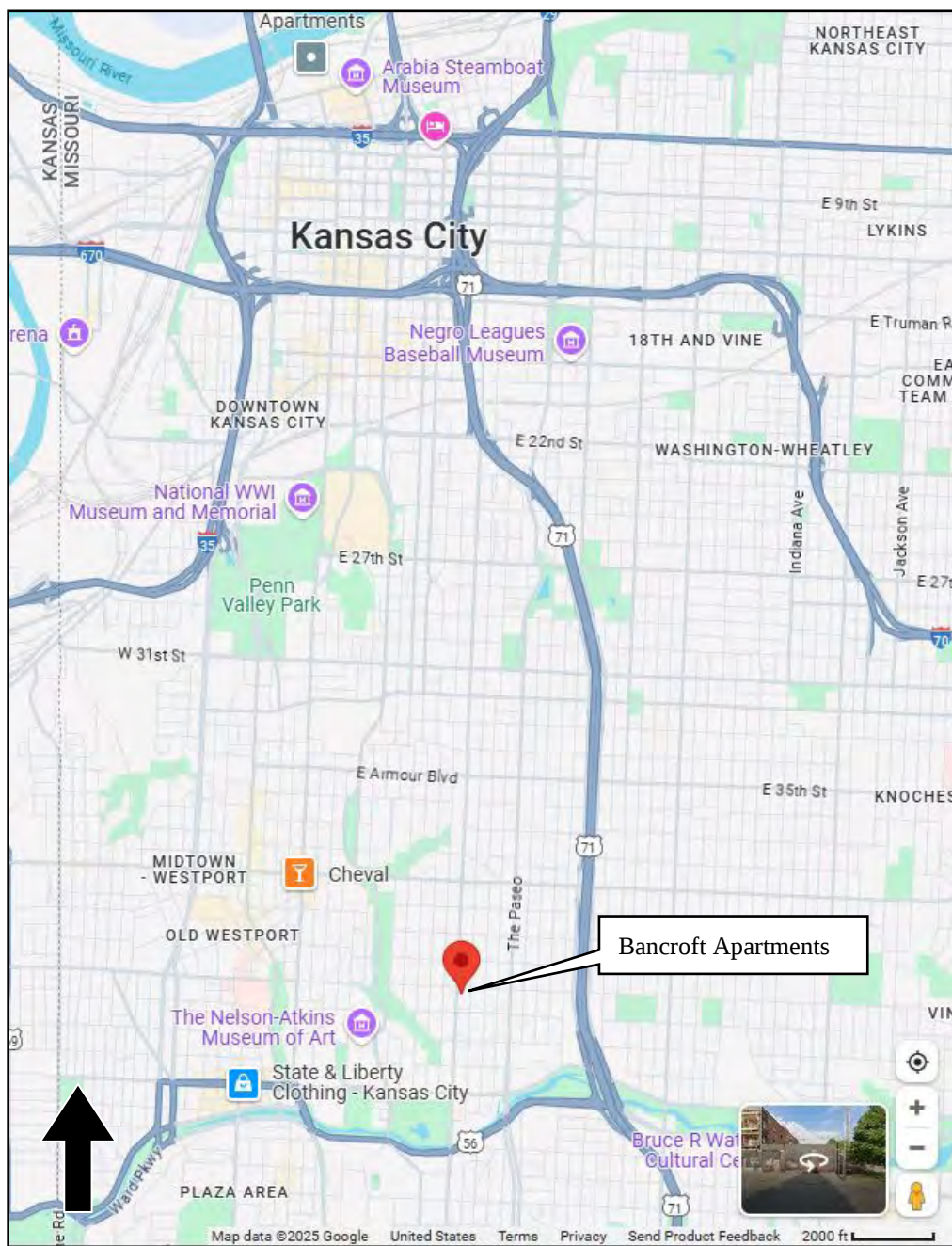
Page

22

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 1: Context map (Google Maps, 2025).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

11

Page

23

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 2: Site map, showing the current parcel boundaries in yellow. The historic boundary is in red. The house seen in the southwest corner of the current parcel was demolished in 2024 (City of Kansas City, Missouri online parcel viewer application, <https://maps.kcmo.org/apps/parcelviewer/> (accessed January 2025)).



Bancroft Apartments: 4301 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

Latitude: 39.048773

Longitude: -94.572264

Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

11

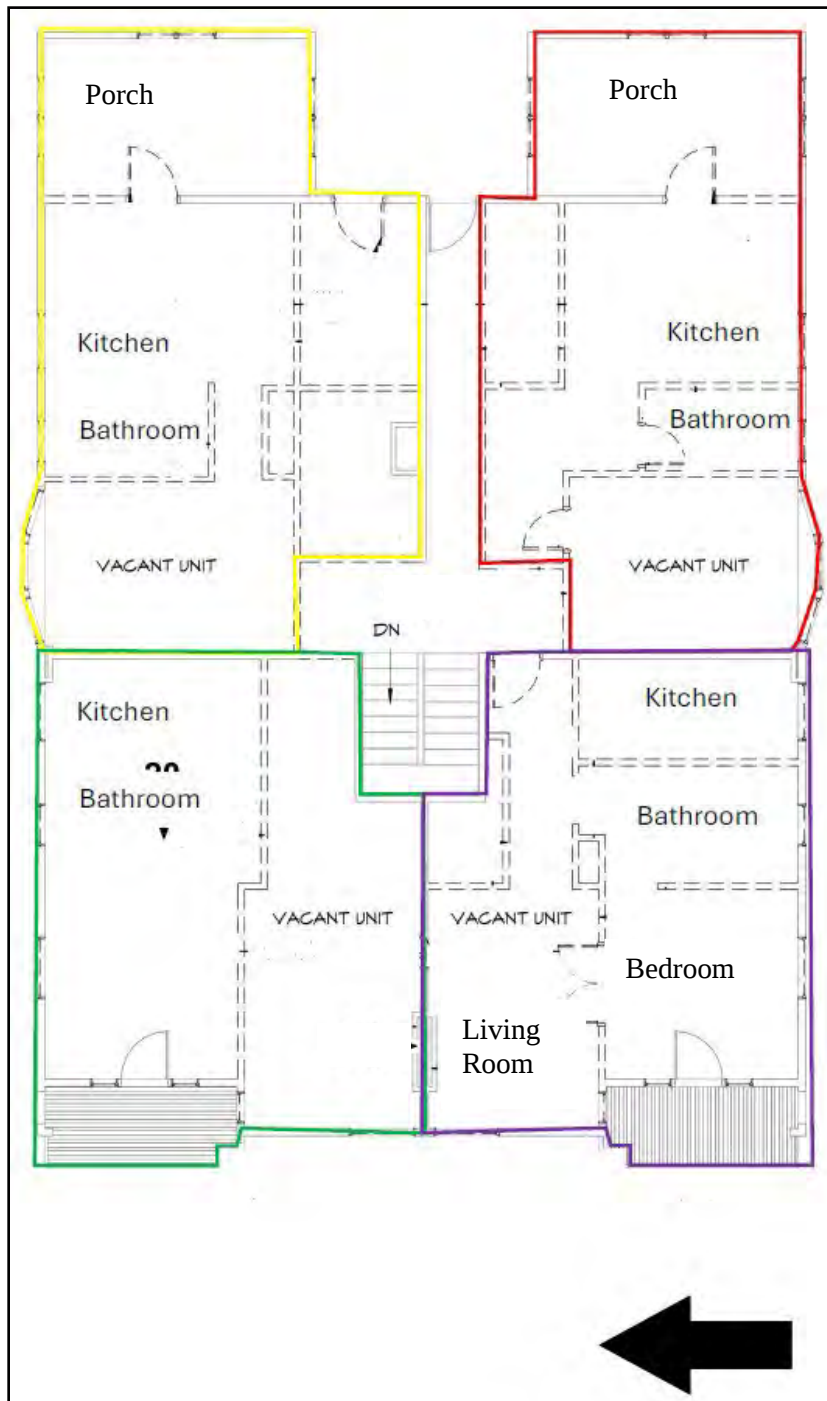
Page

24

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 3: Annotated upper story floorplan, showing approximate apartment divisions, and historic bathroom and kitchen locations (Drawing from Veritas Architecture + Design, 2023, notes by Mason Martel, 2025).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

11

Page

25

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 4: Excerpt of a 1925 atlas map, showing the Bancroft Apartments (Tuttle-Ayers-Woodward Co., *Atlas of Kansas City Missouri, and Environs* (Kansas City, MO: Tuttle-Ayers-Woodward Co., 1925), plate 85).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

11

Page

26

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 5: Excerpt from the 1940 tax assessment photograph, showing the Bancroft Apartments. The Bancroft Theatre can be seen in the background, right (Kansas City 1940 Tax Assessment Photographs, District 10, Block 202, Parcel 27, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri, <https://kc1940.org/district-no-10-map-kansas-city-jacksoncounty-missouri/tax-assessment-block-folder-kansas-city-mo-district-10-block-202> (accessed January 2025)).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

11

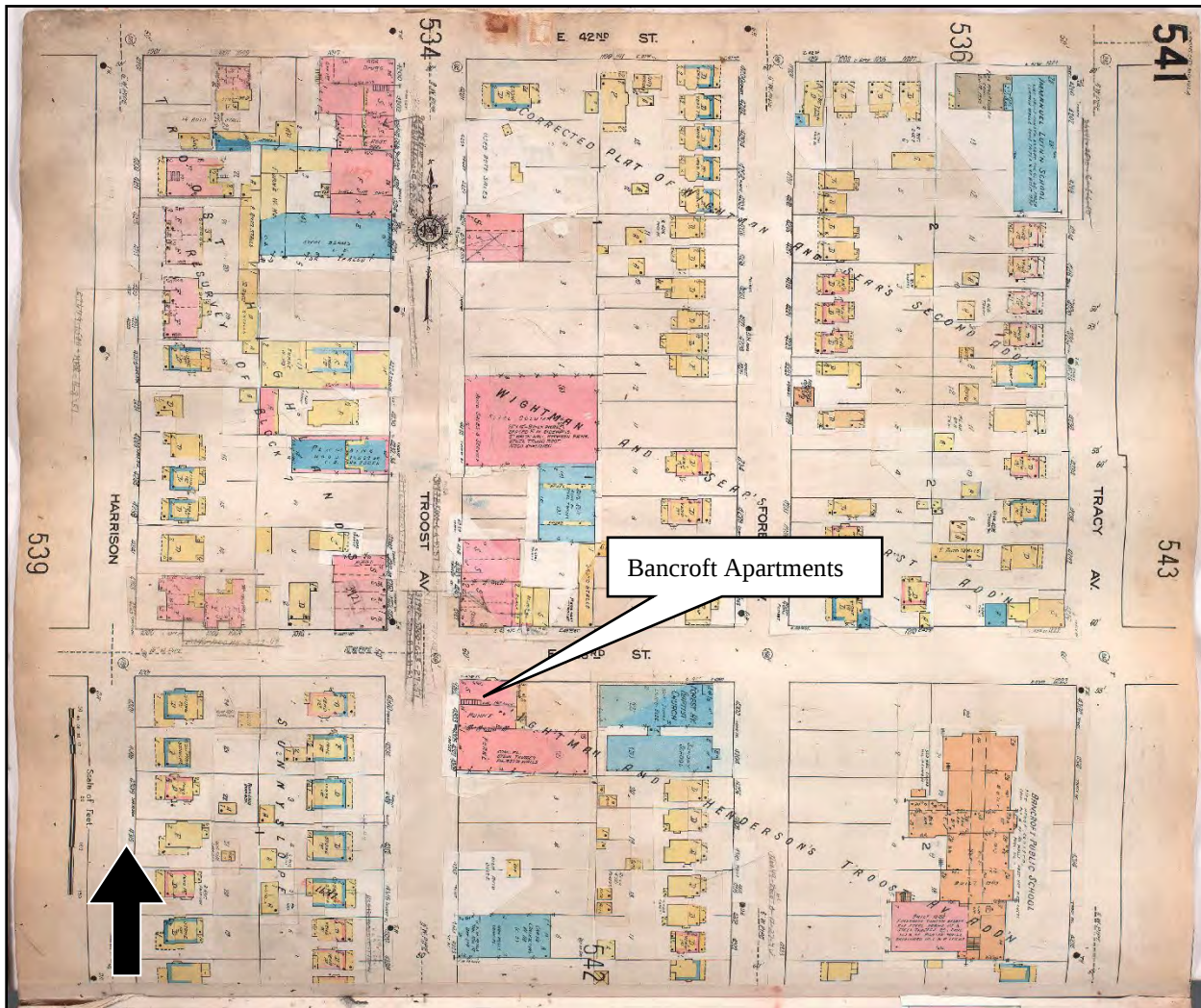
Page

27

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 6: Excerpt of the 1950 Sanborn fire insurance map, showing the area around the Bancroft Apartments (Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Kansas City, Missouri* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1909, corrected to 1950), volume 4, sheet 541).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

11

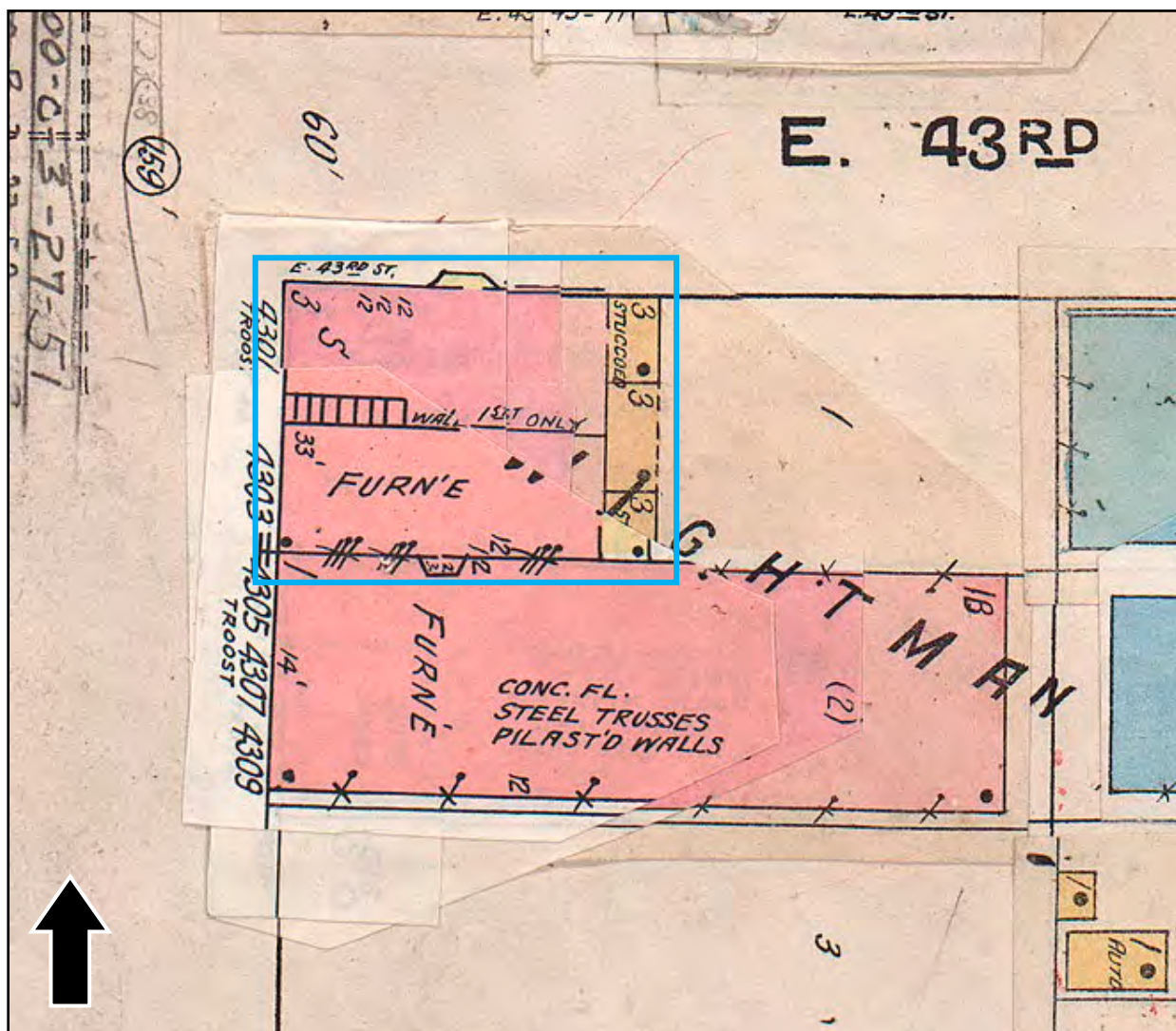
Page

28

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 7: Detail of the 1950 Sanborn fire insurance map, showing the Bancroft Apartments outlined in blue (Sanborn Map Company, *Insurance Maps of Kansas City, Missouri* (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1909, corrected to 1950), volume 4, sheet 541).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section
Number

11

Page

29

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 8: Building at 3942-3944 Troost Avenue (Mason Martel, 2025).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

11

Page

30

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 9: Building at 4245-4247 Troost Avenue (Mason Martel, 2025).



Kansas City Register of Historic Places (H/O Overlay) Continuation Sheet

Section

Number

11

Page

31

Site or District Name

Bancroft Apartments

Figure 10: Building at 4101-4103 Troost Avenue (Mason Martel, 2025).





01: Exterior, northwest corner, view SE.



02: Exterior, west (primary) elevation, view E.



03: Exterior, west elevation, north storefront, view E.



04: Exterior, west elevation, apartment entrance, view E.



05: Exterior, northeast corner, view SW.



06: Exterior, east elevation, view W.



07: Exterior, southwest corner, view NE.



08: Exterior, south elevation (background, partially obstructed), view N.



09: Interior, 1st floor, north commercial space, looking from entrance, view E.



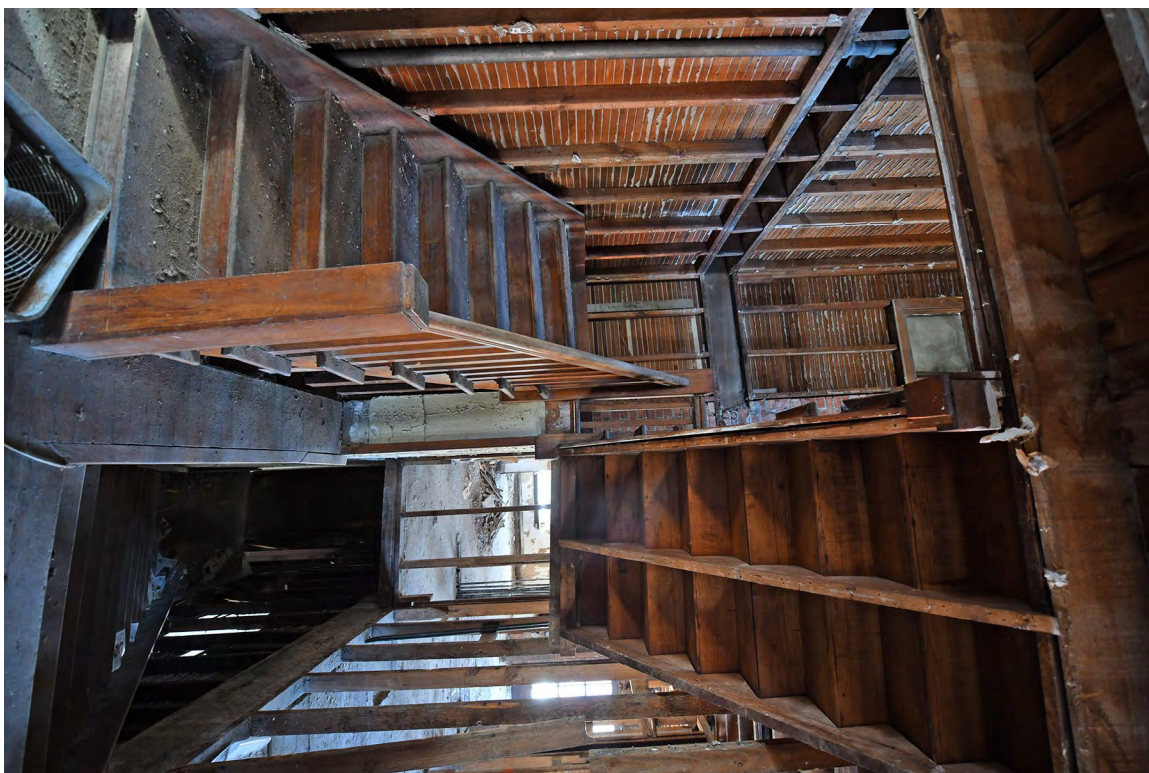
10: Interior, 1st floor, north commercial space, looking from back, view W.



11: Interior, 1st floor, south commercial space, looking from center, view W.



12: Interior, non-historic addition, view NE.



13: Interior, 2nd floor, landing and stairs, view W.



14: Interior, 3rd floor, corridor, view S.



15: Interior, 2nd floor, apartment living room, view NW.



16: Interior, 2nd floor, apartment bedroom, view NE.



17: Interior, 2nd floor, apartment living room, view NW.



18: Interior, 2nd floor, apartment living room, view SE.



19: Interior, 2nd floor, rear sun room, view SE.



20: Interior, 3rd floor, apartment, view W.



21: Interior, 3rd floor, fireplace detail, view S.



22: Interior, basement, north half, view E.

Kansas City Historic Preservation Property Information Form

Address

4301-09 Troost Ave

City: Kansas City **County:** Jackson **Other Info:**

Property Name:

Property Type: commercial **Date Built:** 1913

Architect: Arthur L. Sparks

Builder: Gardner Brothers

Developer:

Permit/Original Owner: T.B. Hammond

Water Permit #: **Building Permit #:** 10982

Research Comments:

1917 City Directory show apartments on the upper stories, with a grocer, cleaners, fine goods and theater in the commercial spaces

Legal Description:

LOTS 1 THRU 3 BLK 1 & VAC PRT OF ST AT NW COR SD LOT 1, Wightman & Henderson's Troost Ave Addition

National Register:

Multiple Property:

Kansas City Register:

Eligibility:

Survey Report (s):