DEVELOPMENT AT 18TH & VINE: UNDERSTANDING PROBLEMS AND FORMULATING STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

by

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Abstract

Redevelopment of the 18th and Vine neighborhood has long been a goal of community leaders in Kansas City. Through the redevelopment there is an opportunity to restore pride to an impoverished area once considered the center of black life in the city. During segregation the area around 18th and Vine was famous for its baseball, jazz, and nightlife. However, the area slowly fell into decay. Since the 1980s there has been a renewed focus on the redevelopment of the area with major additions including: museums, music clubs, restaurants, and space for retail. Difficulty in finding tenants for the new retail space has lead to an uncertainty about how to proceed with the development.

Understanding the failure to attract retail space to the area is a potential guide for future successful development around 18th and Vine. Lessons learned from African American community development include the need to define the community accurately (Dorius 2009), utilize community organizations (Dorius 2009), encourage residential empowerment (Dorius 2009), create economic self-sufficiency (Moore 2005, Katz 2004), encourage middle class black migration (Sampson 2009), and limit the negative effects of gentrification (Kirkland 2008). These lessons along with information gained in the studies of Overtown in Miami, Florida and Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee were applied to the information about 18th and Vine identifying issues associated with redevelopment of the community.

New design strategies and guidelines were developed utilizing the understanding of why the area around 18th and Vine decayed and why new development has thus far failed. A combination of socio-economic and physical strategies is needed to make more informed decisions about future development. The physical strategies are proposed as alternative frameworks of focusing on the core, expanding to the south, and expanding to the west.

The research on development at 18th & Vine has been prepared in an enhanced visual format. Please click HERE to advance to the body of the report.

Development at 18th & Vine

Understanding Problems and Formulating Strategies for the Future

Cole Giesler-Kansas State University-KCDC-2009

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Abstract:

Redevelopment of the 18th and Vine neighborhood has long been a goal of community leaders in Kansas City. Through the redevelopment there is an opportunity to restore pride to an impoverished area once considered the center of black life in the city. During segregation the area around 18th and Vine was famous for its baseball, jazz, and nightlife. However, the area slowly fell into decay. Since the 1980s there has been a renewed focus on the redevelopment of the area with major additions including: museums, music clubs, restaurants, and space for retail. Difficulty in finding tenants for the new retail space has lead to an uncertainty about how to proceed with the development.

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African American Community Development

II. African American Community Development

With the Civil War in 1865 and with the end of slavery new hopes of prosperity and equality were given to African Americans in the United States. When building new communities the African American population soon encountered a difficult environment that often involved racism and economic disparity. In an attempt to find employment, the black population quickly migrated to the city. This began clashes with the predominantly white population that lasted for over a century. African American community development has been a point of conflict, despair, and hope within this country. In order to adequately address African American community development there is a need to define the urban black community, promote strategies for social change in addition to transformation within these poor communities, address the importance of middle class blacks on community development, and to address the effects of gentrification on urban poor communities. The greater understanding of African American community development will guide positive future development of these communities.

A. Defining the urban black community

The increased understanding of the history of urban black communities in the United States is necessary in leading to greater knowledge of and improvements within these communities. The black community has encountered a difficult time in the search for a better life after slavery, which included forced segregation, urban decline, and an utter disregard for life within these communities by the people in power. The struggles and everyday life within these communities during these difficult times have provided an identity and culture that is unique to the urban black community.

The black community in America has been greatly affected by segregation and racism over the past century. The cities of North America where largely industrial and employed a large force of unskilled laborers before WWI. During and after WWI, the demand for workers led many southern blacks to migrate north and seek jobs (McGrew 2001). The migration to the north included over six and a half million black Americans between the years of 1910 and 1970 (Lemann 1992). The huge influx of blacks led to increased lack of comfort and hostility with northern whites. To counter this tension many city officials promoted racial division and supported segregation. Many whites eventually fled to the land surrounding the cities.

The most important new tool used to create segregation in the late 1910s through the 1920s was the advent of zoning within cities. Zoning provided a specific place for elements in the city in order to keep everything within its 'correct' place. In 1917 Buchanan v. Warley declared racial zoning unconstitutional, yet nearly all discriminatory ordinances went unchallenged (McGrew 2001). As a tool for maintaining class and racial segregation planners came to use this power to 'cure' social ills including African Americans and European immigrants. Restrictive covenants or private contracts that limited home sales or rentals to blacks or Jews where also used to enforce segregation along with homeowner associations. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the ability to impose these restrictive covenants in the case of Corrigan v. Buckley (McGrew 2001). These racially restrictive covenants helped nurture and reinforce emerging racial stereotypes (Gotham 2000). Only in 1948 did the United Supreme Court declared racially restrictive covenants unconstitutional (Gotham 2000). The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) also refused to grant mortgage insurance to minorities in urban neighborhood in order to limit home ownership within the black community (McGrew 2001).

The black communities during this time of segregation and extreme racism suffered from prostitution, gambling, and high crime rates. This time also represents a period of cultural significance within the black community with the advent of great music such

as the blues and jazz. In addition it brought about great food and community life. During segregation, the black community prospered with blacks supporting black businesses and culture due to all classes being forced to live together in confined areas. "I mean we were much better off in segregated communities than we are right now…well to do people lived on one side of the street. On the other side of the street you had shot gun house…And on the other end of the street was doctors. But the community was together. And then there was a striving business district right in the community. And the role models were there" Pastor Simmons (Moore 2005). Segregation in a way represented a time of racial unity and harmony within the black community.

Forced segregation ended with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and 1988 in an attempt to disperse urban 'ghettos' by fostering the development of more integrated neighborhoods (McGrew 2001). Title VII prohibited the denial of housing based on race, color, or national origin. Following the Civil Rights Act of 1968 many middle-class blacks left these urban black neighborhoods leaving behind poverty. Cities in the United States have remained relatively segregated even after the end to forced segregation do to the poverty and racial perceptions largely in the housing market (Gotham 2000). The poverty in black neighborhoods after forced segregation eventually left the community vulnerable to 'urban renewal' policies and systematic destruction.

'Urban Renewal' policies that many cities adopted in the 1930s through the 1980s had a sizeable effect on urban black communities. These policies often allowed city officials to declare primarily black communities slum, demolish significant portions of the communities, and relocate the residents to public housing facilities. The policies of the FHA during forced segregation made home ownership difficult for most black families. The black communities were usually the most easy to replace and demolish due to this lack of home ownership (McGrew 2001). Along with the destruction of these communities came large-scale public housing projects with the Housing Acts of 1937 and 1949 which largely targeted minority communities. Whites convinced that these public housing projects would negatively affect property values used them and other reasons to flee the cities in large number farther exasperating the problems. The result of this type of urban renewal and 'white flight' was an increase in the concentration of the black population within cities without communities to live in or middle-class blacks to support them (McGrew 2002).

During the same time highway construction made the situation worse by disproportionately effecting and demolishing black communities. McGrew gives the example of Oakland where construction of a highway displaced 9,000 black residents and only created housing for 1,000 residents effected (McGrew 2003). Cases such as Oakland can be found all over the United States such as in Overtown where a successful black community was divided into four portions by freeway construction giving the final blow to a once vibrant community (Dluhy, Revell, Wong 2002). The connections between federal, state, and local policy with the decay of the black community is obvious when looking at public housing, urban renewal, and inner city highway construction policies (McGrew 2003). These 'urban renewal' projects often have had the affect of removing the aspects of the black community that made the communities work during segregation.

The destruction of these historic black communities has helped enforce the negative perception and stereotypes that whites have long held against blacks. The white populations' perception of social reality often leads to prejudiced attitudes, minority scapegoating, and a tendency to blame blacks for urban decline (Gotham 2000). This destruction and influx of public housing has systematically weakened the positive identity that black Americans have had of their own community. Black Americans today counter and dispel the negative and false stereotypes/perceptions in order

to create a positive identity. This positive identity in the black community today often revolves around the idea of restoring the thriving communities that they once had during forced segregation with newfound freedom (Dorius 2009). The newfound positive identity inspires many leaders throughout communities to develop strategies for social change and transformation.

B. Strategies for social change and transformation within poor communities

Strategies for social change and transformation within poor communities have taken a great importance in the past several years. These strategies try largely to solve a fundamental problem in urban black communities, which is poverty. Sampson recognizes that poverty and its correlates are stubbornly persistent in terms of neighborhood concentration, especially for black areas and are nearly impossible to escape (Sampson 2009). Sampson also recognizes that it takes significant "interventions" by the community at all levels to reduce poverty (Sampson 2009). The defining of social change within urban communities is necessary in determining if the strategies are indeed working. The strategies for social change and transformation within these poor urban black communities that seem to give the best results are community organizations or social empowerment within the community and to strive towards economic self-sufficiency.

Social change within urban poor communities is typically defined as a reduction of poverty (Sampson 2009). With this simple one dimensional explanation of solving social change within a community there is an uncertainty of what social change within these communities actually means. Katz argues that this poverty seen in these urban black communities is a result of decades of failed federal polices that focused on "fix the neighborhood" (improve the physical infrastructure), "fix the people that live there" (expand employment or educational opportunities), or "start over again" (encourage complete gentrification) (Katz 2004). A more uniform and successful strategy would be a combination of these failed federal strategies. "Without general agreement on what community change actually means, it is unclear which strategies and incentives will lead to change in poor urban communities and how we will know when it they achieve their objective" (Dorius 2009). Dorius recognizes that the fundamental problem preventing community change is the lack of understanding what community and change are. The lack of understanding of social change within the urban poor community is understood if the community itself is more involved and empowered to make the changes that the community knows it needs.

Community organizations and community empowerment can play an important role in acquiring social change and transformation within poor black communities. Community empowerment is the process of lifting up the residents of poor communities so they can collectively address specific causes and conditions of their poverty (Dorius 2009). Dorius argues for a holistic approach to community-driven social change. These empowerment themes rely on bringing people of different interests in the community together and making decisions with all parties involved. These community organizations typically focus on bringing people together through communication and decision making with dignity and respect. In addition the organizations focus on changing attitudes and mindsets to overcome barriers, recognize common goals and create vision. Finally, they work on building individual and community self-confidence, and achieving economic self-sufficiency (Dorius 2009). With these focuses, community change becomes more of a will to undertake collective action and a desire to maintain self reliant behavior.

Economic self-sufficiency is an important strategy in obtaining the desired social change and transformation that community organizations strive for in these poor black communities. The

ultimate goal of families is that the low-income communities they live in will eventually be able to obtain the assets necessary to control their own economic destiny despite market forces that otherwise work against them (Dorius 2009). Achieving economic self-sufficiency within these black urban communities is the most realistic way of breaking the cycles of poverty that Sampson talks of. Many lessons can be learned from the positive effects of a history where black Americans were forced to live together, but in doing so achieved a form of economic self-sufficiency that created a vibrant community. Segregation in many aspects represents a time where neighbors shopped at the stores inside the neighborhood and people went to the doctor or hairdresser down the street. In order to achieve this economic self-sufficiency it is necessary for middle class blacks to return to the historic black neighborhoods (Moore 2005).

C. Importance of middle class blacks on community development

The black middle class is vital for a community development that achieves the desired social change and transformation in these urban black communities. Many challenges exist to attracting middle class blacks to these communities. These challenges include the perceived identity/ cultural aspects of the poor community and class tension within the black community. There also exists a racial solidarity and a desire for the black middle class to improve the historic black communities to benefit the race. The urban black community can achieve social change, transformation and attract middle class blacks if they are able to address the challenges while emphasizing the desires of these middle class blacks. "If the exodus of the middle class could destroy the community, then the return of the black middle class could rebuild the community" (Moore 2005).

The black middle class in the United States has an interesting dynamic between class and race that has developed since gains in income following WWII. The black middle class is somewhat isolated from both the white middle class and the poor black communities since the end of forced segregation. It embodies a love for the cultural values of white society, a rejection of the present culture of the black masses, and a keen awareness that they are themselves black and outside of the white community they strive to emulate (Fraizer 1957). Through restoring and reviving the historical black community the middle class blacks often seek to affirm their racial and class identity. Moore argues that the position the black middle class finds itself in leads to a "deep-seated inferiority complex" which drives middle class blacks to organize to improve the historical communities that once created a sense of admiration for middle class blacks (Moore 2005). Due to this struggle to create an identity that is both middle class and black, middle class blacks often seek to form racial solidarity and improve communities while affirming its unique class identity (Moore 2005).

Middle class blacks play an important role in achieving economic self-sufficiency within urban black communities. A viable urban community will attract people of all income categories while also providing the necessary opportunities for the least successful in society (Katz 2004). Middle class blacks have the ability to bring services, jobs, and purchasing power into urban black communities. The image of many of these historic black communities as being the political, economic, and cultural center of black life in the cities helps to attract black middle class residents and more importantly black businesses (Moore 2005). The black businesses then in turn often hire people who live within the community creating wealth in the community. This wealth spent at the black run businesses within the community reduces overall poverty. This process of economic self-sufficiency would not be viable without the initial investment of middle class blacks. In the eyes of many multi-class

community activists the neighborhoods can once again become and economic, political, and cultural power base for the race and middle class black residents are essential to this process (Moore 2005).

Middle class blacks also play a vital role in revitalizing the physical resources within urban black communities. By trying to create a mixed class black neighborhood these middle class blacks must also strive to physically recreate neighborhoods to support their businesses, culture, and lifestyle. The physical recreation often involves the reuse of dilapidated building and development of vacant lots that also creates a sense of community within these neighborhoods. The redevelopment of these neighborhoods also gives middle class blacks a physical and social space where they could enjoy the material benefits of a middle class lifestyle while simultaneously affirming their commitment to racial solidarity (Moore 2005).

To create this environment of a mixed class community that has the potential to create social change and transformation it is important to look at changing the present day image of the poor black community. The images of the 'ghetto' make it difficult for middle class blacks to find these urban poor communities as attractive. Neighborhoods with high crime and "signs of disorder" are prone to developing reputations as "bad" and thus to be avoided even by middle class blacks (Sampson 2009). The image of the community must be changed simultaneously with redevelopment in order to actually attract these middle class blacks to live in and invest in these communities (Moore 2005). The rebranding of the community that takes place is often one concentrating on the social aspects of the black community during segregation in order to create an image of the community that is more positive in the minds of middle class blacks and other urban residents while marginalizing the social aspects of the urban black community today. The marginalization of present day culture within these communities during redevelopment of these neighborhoods often creates tension between middle class blacks and low income blacks. Middle class blacks in attempts to bring about change in the historic black communities use their primary tools of community organizing and a focus on cultural facilities. These tools help to attract these middle class blacks because they can take pride in and see themselves as rebuilding the vibrant black communities (Moore 2005).

The Cultural relationships within the communities also are improved by middle class blacks serving as role models or people to look up to for the youth in these neighborhoods to better educate themselves and take responsibility. These role models are necessary so that new generations of leaders will grow up in the neighborhood and create a sustainable situation. New middle class blacks who move into the area are often able to create an alliance with the older homeowners who have often seen how the urban black community has decayed and also strive for social redevelopment and transformation to the values that where present in black life during segregation (Moore 2005). The multi class system in improving the image of the community, providing role models, and improving the physical situation provides a system where upon neighbors look after each other. Even with the sense of neighborhood and community there remains some class tension within the communities that must be addressed.

Tension between middle class blacks and lower class blacks is often created when trying to change and transform the urban poor communities. Those with middle-class orientation often disdain from the 'ghetto' life and have a self-protective stance from poor individuals, while blacks of a lower class often label blacks who embrace a middle class culture as selling-out or acting white (Moore 2005). The disdain between classes is often a result of misinformation and prejudices. It is vital that blacks of a lower economic standing realize that the middle class blacks who

want to bring about change in the community are really trying to revive the historical communities that where distinctively black. It is also vital that middle class blacks recognize the hardships of poverty and the present culture within the community when seeking change. From this they should realize the error in striving for complete gentrification. Often, the redevelopment strategies and class tension produces a community development agenda that mixes camaraderie and assistance with suspicion and moral reform (Moore 2005).

D. Effects of gentrification on urban poor communities

Gentrification has had broad effects in the redevelopment of black urban poor communities. Gentrification is usually defined as "the process of renewal and rebuilding accompanying the influx of middle-class or affluent people into deteriorating areas that often displaces earlier usu. poorer residents" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2002). This definition most often applied by planners can ignore the serious racial aspects associated with gentrification. While gentrification can mean new economic prosperity in an area through renewed focus, it can also create widespread displacement. Many strategies do exist for implementing the positive economic and social aspects of gentrification without creating class tension, racism, or displacement. Black historical neighborhoods can also benefit from many of the modern neo-bohemian ideas that stress the connections between culture and the local economy.

Gentrification is commonly understood as being related to class transformation within a community. However, in popular belief the pregentrified neighborhood is inhabited mostly by blacks or other people of color, and the people who move in are generally white upper to middle class (Kirkland 2008). The increase of middle class residents into a poor area can have the effects of stimulating the local economy and reducing crime, but also creates a situation where many lower class individuals can no longer afford their rent and the increased cost of living within these communities. While displacement of low income individuals and families is the most notable consequence of gentrification, this phenomenon also creates problems for black home owners who see their property values skyrocket and are systematically driven from communities (Kirkland 2008). The negative effects of residents who are able to remain in neighborhoods affected by gentrification include marginalization, isolation, and alienation. A sudden influx of black middle and upper class residents into a predominantly poor urban neighborhood has the potential to create displacement that in turn would increase class tension.

For the positive effects of an improved economy and a reduction of crime to occur without the negative effects of displacement and lower life standards of poor residents, it is necessary to develop strategies for transforming these poor urban neighborhoods. Many community groups such as CDCs (Central Development Corporations) have arisen as community opposition to these negative effects of gentrification. These community groups tend to focus on quality of life issues in addition to the type and scale of development (Kirkland 2008). These organizations also play a vital role in discouraging displacement by such means as 'Displacement Free Zones' and transforming dilapidated properties into affordable homes (Kirkland 2008). The community groups, due to their mixed class nature, form resistance efforts to forms of development that can be harmful to the community itself. These resistance efforts can in turn lead to greater racial and class unity.

Home ownership within these poor urban black communities is also vital to resisting displacement and complete economic gentrification. In addition, home ownership has been made very difficult with lingering racial inequality in banks and home mortgage lending systems. Kirkland points out that for conventional home purchase loans in 2000 blacks were twice as likely to be rejected

as whites were (Kirkland 2008). Residential policy from the time of forced segregation and urban renewal has been, and continues to be, the main way to see racial inequalities in the United States. New residential policies that encourage minority home ownership and a less biased banking system would go a long way in creating viable urban black communities and reduce the reliance on public housing.

By emphasizing culture such as art, music, and creativity within these urban communities residents are able to reduce the likelihood displacement and marginalization efforts while attracting middle class residents that produce many of the positive effects of gentrification. The focus on culture and improved educational opportunities within these neighborhoods create new visionaries that have the ability to drive new economic opportunities within the community without the necessity to displace residents (Gissen 2006). Gissen shows how creative spirit and drive within neighborhood redevelopment can drive society forward and create common bonds and benefits between the 'poor' creative residents and the more wealthy residents who now reside in the same areas. An emphasis on black culture by both the present residents and an encouragement of black owned businesses to migrate to the community can reduce the negative racial aspects of gentrification while allowing for a multiclass system (Moore 2005).

Many neo-bohemian ideas have arisen that can be applied to the redevelopment of poor urban communities that counter many of the negative effects of gentrification. Most development strategies within communities now tend to focus on "big ticket" development projects and tourism. Alternatively, neo-bohemian development focuses more on the smaller scale cultural offering and offbeat elements of street level culture as important amenities within an urban economy (Lloyd 2002). The idea of neo-bohemia focuses on the authentic cultural and social practices in relation to the interaction with the local economy. Lloyd argues that a creative and innovative work force conflicts with the homogenizing tendencies of intensified capital investment while allowing development take place. Many of the black urban neighborhoods have a creative and innovative work force that is evident within the culture and life of these areas.

Poverty within the black urban neighborhood has become a large problem do to the steady loss of industrial jobs within the United States, which creates a need to rethink how urban economies work on a local level. In recent years the predominant view of redeveloping these urban areas has relied on tourism and large scale projects leading to a "Disneyfication" of urban areas that often fails to relate to the consumption of the residents themselves (Lloyd 2002). Neo-bohemian ideas in contrast to the tourism large project development strategy focuses more on the intersections of consumption and production of the urban spaces themselves. This tends to lead to a more evolutionary process of cultural development. The focus on the evolutionary process and culture while still allowing for development makes middle class infusion within a community possible while discouraging displacement. The lower class elements especially the arts within the community then become vital to the authenticity and thus the economy of the area (Lloyd 2002). Culture within these poor communities would not only rely on what was once there, but rather an accumulation of what was once there mixed with what is there now, and the culture of the incoming middle class residents. This holistic approach allows for economic stability while recognizing the desire for authenticity and diverse street life in the community.

E. Conclusions and Applications to Future Black Development

African American community development has presented a wide range of challenges since the end of slavery in the United States. These challenges have included forced segregation, urban renewal policies, gentrification, and the perception vs. identity of life within these communities. To improve the situation, reduce poverty, and preserve culture within these urban black communities many strategies have been developed. With the knowledge of the urban black community along with strategies for transformation it may be possible to revive these communities to there former glory and sustainability.

These strategies include:

-The need to define the community accurately

-The utilization of community organizations to create positive change

-The encouragement of empowerment within the resident population

-The need for economic self-sufficiency

-A recognition of the importance of middle class blacks in redevelopment and social change

-The need to limit the negative effects of gentrification

Case Studies

III. Case Studies

Overtown

A. Introduction

Overtown in Miami, Florida represents a significant example of decline in a once vibrant urban black community. During the height of the community from the 1920s through the 1960s, Overtown represented the center of black life within Miami. The community is now known as a center of riots and poverty. The decline of Overtown represents an example of how racism and poor urban policy can negatively affect an urban black community. Overtown is located directly north of downtown Miami and was once known as the 'Harlem of the South' (Dluhy 2002) (figure 3.1). Many cultural, physical, and social aspects along with policy decisions contributed to the decline of this once great community. A great deal can be learned and potentially applied to future black urban development and redevelopment from understanding the cultural aspects and history of Overtown.

B. Cultural/Historical Aspects

The historical evolution of Overtown can be traced from periods of racial segregation and community prosperity to a period of neglect and community decline. Only recently have there been attempts at revitalization. Overtown was born when Henry Flagler's railroad company came into Miami with a large black labor force (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). This large influx of population led Miami to designate an area west of the railroad tracks for blacks to live. In 1920, blacks made up 32 percent of Miami's population while occupying only 10 percent of its space (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). During the period of racism and forced segregation the population lived with relative economic self-sufficiency and prosperity. From the 1920s through the 1960s Overtown was the home to many black artists, musicians, and millionaires. The streets of Overtown where filled with people shopping, dinning, and just enjoying life during the time of forced segregation (Figure 3.2). In 1960 the population of Overtown reached nearly 33,000 and had a desirable diversity in the 318 businesses (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). Residents recall Overtown during forced segregation as a community that included all that one needs to live with a wide variety of stores, movie theaters, hotels, restaurants, and local businesses (Dluhy 2002).

With Overtown's thriving economic scene, the neighborhood experienced a large influx of poor blacks from the rest of Florida and southern states during the 1950s leading many of the wealthy and middle-class residents to flee to new black neighborhoods. The influx of population led to tremendous stress on a neighborhood that subjected Overtown to uncontrolled residential decentralization, dramatic demographic turnover, and an erosion of the area economic base (Dluhy 2002). Overtown became vulnerable to future policy changes with the increase in poverty and the erosion of the social fabric of the neighborhood due to increased migration. During the period in the 1950s stricter code enforcement and higher densities changed the neighborhood once consisting of many single-family homes owned by the residents to a neighborhood experiencing a large influx of apartments and absentee landlords. Businesses also began to suffer in the 1950s with an average of about 2 percent of businesses being lost on a yearly basis (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). In-migration and the dispersal of existing residents greatly fragmented political power within Overtown. During this decade Overtown lost 51.2 percent of its population and 33 percent of its businesses (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). With little opposition much of Overtown was razed by highway construction and 'urban renewal' during the 1960s.

Figure 3.1: Overtown

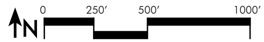


Figure 3.2: Overtown Historical Image (The Overtown Collaborative)

The construction of interstates 95 and 395 physically devastated the Overtown neighborhood. The construction was allowed to take place with the support of predominantly white suburban businesses and little resistance from the weakened black community in the neighborhood. Expressway construction and urban renewal collectively displaced about 12,000 residents during this period (Dluhy 2002). Local city officials with a desire to increase the ability to move people and goods between downtown and the suburbs were willing to sacrifice this black neighborhood (Dluhy 2000).

The original designs of I-95 called for the interstate to largely bypass Overtown and be constructed to the east along the railroad tracks. The original plan was eventually scrapped when city leaders instead decided to build the interstate through Overtown. The new plan was chosen due to a battle with the railroad company, the lower cost of land available in Overtown, the ease of dealing with large property owners in Overtown rather than many homeowners, the lack of thought given to residential relocation, and the lack of political voice black residents commanded at the time (Dluhy 2002). The future expansion of downtown Miami was also cited as a reason that city leaders gave for rejecting the first plan that would have bypassed Overtown. The construction of I-95 and I-35 ended up wiping out massive amounts of housing as well as Overtown's main business district (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). Along with these physical alterations came social problems of a community that not only suffered from a severe displacement of population but also segmentation. The fragmentation of Overtown led to difficulty in transportation and pedestrian connections to businesses and community facilities. Later, Metrorail was routed through the area causing further dislocation and separation within the community.

The goal of 'urban renewal' in Overtown was to improve the condition of the housing for the existing residents rather than displacement. City leaders quickly dismantled and left large areas of Overtown vacant in the anticipation of developers providing new housing for the area. It took nearly 2.5 years for the first residential development to take place (Dluhy 2002). Most middle-class residents and businesses fled the area during this time, leaving the area dominated by poverty and public housing. The combination of 'urban renewal' and the interstate construction killed off many of the already weakened local institutions that provided a sense of collective mobility and cultural independence within the community (Dluhy 2002).

The 'urban renewal' efforts, highway construction, and other policies implemented in Overtown created a great deal of tension between the black community and the City of Miami. Miami city officials to a large extent ignored the situation of poverty and decline within Overtown which led to a great deal of anger in the community. In 1968 Overtown saw its first riot coinciding with the Republican National Convention and the nomination for president of George Wallace in Miami that year. In 1980 Overtown saw its largest riot after the beating and killing of Arthur McDuffie by as many as a dozen white Miami police officers who were later acquitted. Riots also erupted in 1982 after two police officers shot and killed Nevel Johnson Jr. without provocation at an Overtown arcade and were found not guilty (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). The riots show the extreme amount of neglect the city had towards Overtown and how this neglect and failed policy can turn a once vibrant neighborhood into an urban poverty center with crime, drugs, and riots.

Overtown today is largely seen as an area of vacant lots, high unemployment, over-crowded run down housing, and high poverty levels. The community has few long term residents, little business, dilapidated housing, high crime rates, and a reputation as a center of the drug trade (Dluhy 2002). After many years of neglect and inaction there has been a recent push to restore Overtown as a

vibrant urban community. Local community activism has grown in Overtown after the riots in the 1980s to argue that the destruction and 'urban renewal' in the area has destroyed an economically and culturally active community. The urban unrest and riots created a condition where it was no longer an option to ignore this urban black community. Community organizations that have taken hold in Overtown have been successfully able to argue against future projects that would have a negative impact on the community. The organizations are able to do this by reminding the city how the community has already been nearly destroyed by many of these same policies. In 1996, Overtown community activists where able to convince the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Miami-Dade County to reroute a proposed East-West commuter train route around the neighborhood even though the project costs ended up being more expensive (Dluhy 2002). Overtown residents were also recently able to fight a new freeway ramp and gentrification with a new sense of community activism. The quick activism by Overtown residents has been able to successfully mitigate the impacts of transportation projects on this minority community.

Many strategies have been developed in recent years to improve the cultural/economic opportunities within the community. Initial attempts after the riots at providing jobs within the community have fallen far short of their goals with millions of dollars invested and very few jobs created (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). In more recent years there have been attempts at rebuilding Overtown with a Community Decision Support Infrastructure to bring residents to together around community development. This is to be accomplished by identifying assets such as the historic culture of the place and the Lyric Theater, to create a vision for the future as an economically and socially viable place, and to create a sustainable development plan that can serve as a guide to future redevelopment (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). Dluhy, Revell, and Wong argue that Overtown must pursue redevelopment of the Neighborhood without making nostalgia for a lost community a barrier to redevelopment (Dluhy 2002). The rich spirit and cultural history of Overtown has created an environment where the community refuses to give up on redevelopment attempts even with the physical and social aspects currently present in the community.

C. Present Physical Aspects

The present day physical aspects within Overtown created by years of highway construction, 'urban renewal', and policy failures have made the situation where a viable community could develop difficult. The destruction of the infrastructure, businesses, homes, boundaries, and pedestrian elements have greatly influenced the decline of Overtown while making a viable sustainable community in Overtown hard to achieve.

The fragmentation created by highway construction has fashioned four distinct areas within Overtown. The internal circulation situation within the community was also devastated. The existing community connections under the elevated highway are known for crime and filled with squatters and homeless people. The present day mass/void (figure 3.3) shows the distinct separation experienced within the neighborhood and the lack of a focal point and business district within the community. With many of the streets now stopping at the highways the ability to travel between the four areas within the community has also be greatly diminished. Presently there are about 41 businesses left compared to 318 businesses in 1960 (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). The loss in population and businesses has led to a situation where over 39 percent of the land in Overtown is now vacant (Dluhy 2002). These vacant lots have not been maintained and are often full of trash and are overgrown. The pedestrian friendliness and the overall perception of the neighborhood is greatly diminished by the vacant lots. Of the few housing units that remain only 10

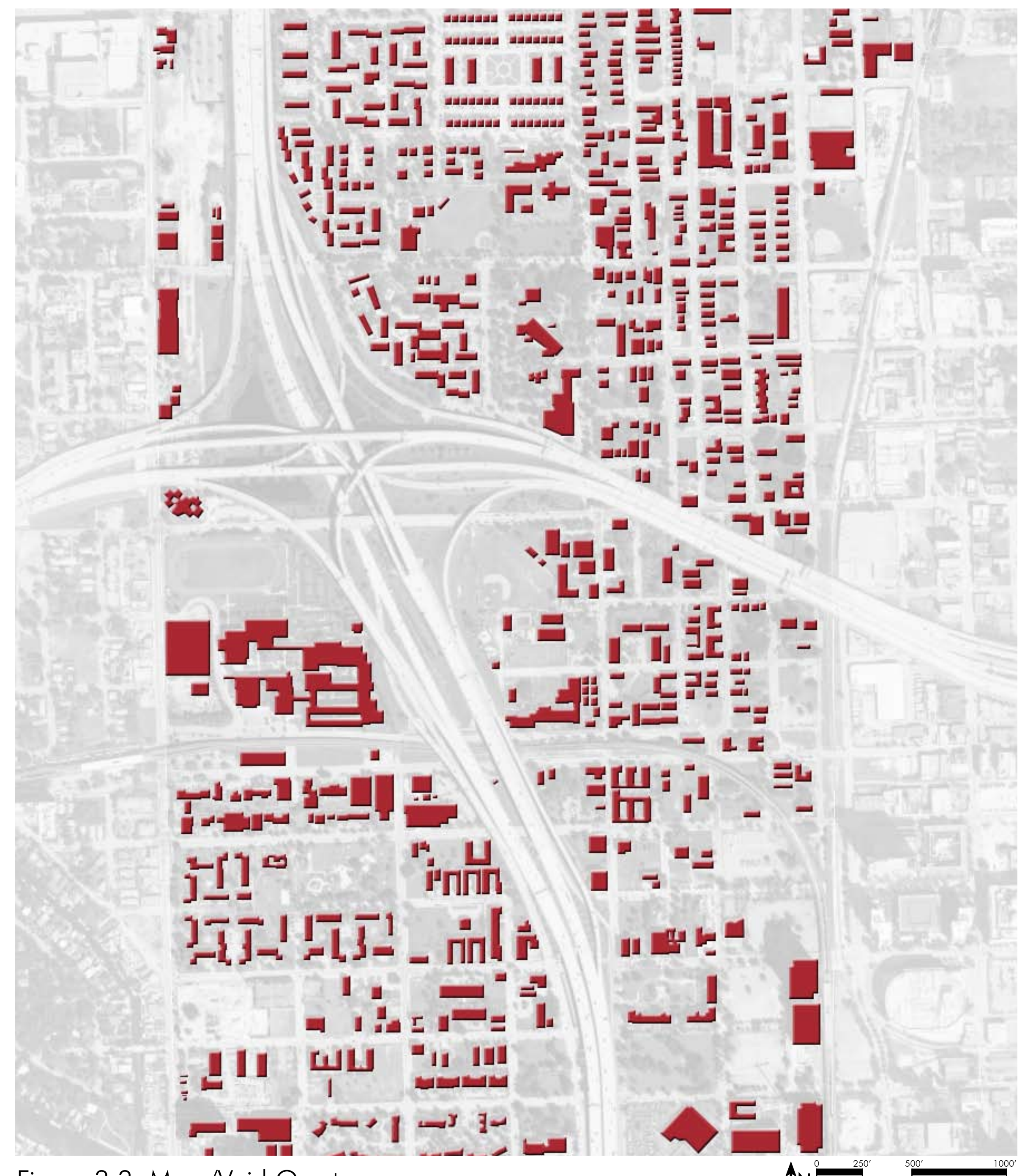


Figure 3.3: Mass/Void Overtown

percent of the total housing is currently owner occupied (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). Very few single family housing units have survived the destruction caused by code enforcement, highway construction, and 'urban renewal'. The lack of owner occupied housing has created a situation where landlords collect the rent with little regard for the physical aspects of the property which they are renting.

The renewed efforts at redevelopment of Overtown are made extremely difficult with these many physical problems within the community. These physical aspects make the idea of a cohesive socially thriving community of Overtown an unlikely reality.

D. Present Social Conditions

The present social conditions within Overtown create a situation where the community has little chance to become at vibrant as it once was during forced segregation. The current population of Overtown is only about 10,000 with 75 percent of that being African American (U.S. Census 2000). During its height in 1960, Overtown had over 33,000 residents (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). The dramatic loss in population has greatly reduced the density of the area needed for the thriving businesses to survive. With over 55 percent of the population of Overtown living in poverty (The Overtown Collaborative 2009) and a median household income of about $13,200 (U.S. Census 2000) severely restricts the potential for future business and social interactions.

The prevalence of poverty and the lack of a mixed-class atmosphere that once existed in the neighborhood have created a void of role-models and community will. The Overtown area once represented the center of black life in Miami and southern Florida but now has only 2 percent of the black population within Miami-Dade County (The Overtown Collaborative 2009). The great reduction of the percentage of the black population that lives within Overtown makes community organizing and city-wide support for redevelopment efforts more difficult. The community of Overtown is perceived as an area of high crime within the larger community of Miami. Many Miami residents remember the riots in the 1980s and the disregard for the neighborhood thus leading to an avoidance of the area. These social aspects demonstrate the negative effects policy can have on urban black communities and the difficulty in reviving many of these areas.

E. Conclusions and Applications to Future Black Development

Overtown in Miami, Florida represents an urban black community that has suffered greatly under policy makers for many years. During forced segregation, Overtown represented the heart of the black community in Miami and became an economically self-sustainable and socially vibrant area. The success of Overtown was ironically erased shortly after the end of forced segregation. The first hit to Overtown can be seen with the in-migration of many blacks from the south who hoped to prosper in this economically rich community. The in-migration drove many of the wealthier blacks out of the community hoping to escape the high densities and increasing poverty. The most devastating impact to Overtown came from the physical destruction caused by highway construction and 'urban renewal'. The destruction served to segment the community while displacing large numbers of residents. The avoidance of the problems created by the destruction led to riots and the near complete decline of the area. Overtown has only recently seen support that has led to plans for community redevelopment while remaining a poverty ridden and desperate place.

Major lessons to learn by looking at the decline of Overtown including:

-The lack of home ownership can leave communities vulnerable.

-The large scale destruction of areas in hopes of development can lead to severe displacement and cripple a community.

-The ignoring and minimizing of a community can lead to greater problems and unrest.

-Both the policy and the physical aspects of a community are vital to its success.

-Community organizations within these urban black communities can effectively lobby for change and prevent farther destruction.

-While history can serve as inspiration and a catalyst for community development, it may also inhibit progress if the focus is too much on nostalgia for a time and place that cannot be reclaimed.

Beale Street

A. Introduction

Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee represents an example of a black urban center that has successfully redeveloped after the decline experienced with 'urban renewal' and community destruction. From the 1920s through the 1950s Beale Street embodied a center of black life and music for a large section of the south. Beale Street quickly declined after the end of forced segregation, but has sense rebounded into a vibrant entertainment district and neighborhood. A great deal can applied to future black urban development and redevelopment from the understanding of the cultural/historical, physical, and social aspects of Beale Street. Many elements of the rebound of this great entertainment district and neighborhood can have significant impact on similar neighborhoods now seeing redevelopment.

B. Cultural/ Historical Aspects

Beale Street is a district that has been able to restore a large amount of that history and culture that was experienced under forced segregation. The historical evolution of Beale Street involves periods of white prosperity, black migration with forced segregation, a thriving musical and social scene, urban renewal and community decay, and a period of rebirth and success. The important history and cultural elements of this street and neighborhood created an atmosphere where the redevelopment could succeed. The success in recent years has led Beale Street to become the number one entertainment district in Tennessee (Worley 1998).

The history of Beale Street involves terrific music, periods of decline, and periods of rebirth. During the Civil War, Beale Street first became known as the headquarters for General Grant (bealestreet.com). Beale Street was the center of South Memphis before consolidating with Memphis in 1849 (Worley 1998). During this time period the neighborhood became home to many wealthy white families who built large homes on the eastern portion of Beale Street. Due to forced segregation and the resulting restrictive access to the main shopping areas in Memphis, black residents began developing commercial space on the western areas of Beale Street. In the 1870s and 1880s Memphis was devastated by epidemics of cholera and yellow fever (Worley 1998). These epidemics disproportionately affected the white population in Memphis. The disproportional affects on the white population created opportunities for black migration into the area. The black population of Memphis grew quickly and soon outnumbered the white population in the Beale Street area. With the lack of an area for the increasing black population to buy the basic services and goods that they needed Beale Street emerged as the cultural center to Memphis' black community.

From the 1890s to the 1960s Beale Street served as the "Main Street of Black Memphis" (Worley 1998). The height of Beale Street came in the 1920s through the 1950s with the rise of a vibrant neighborhood and the birth of the Blues. The Blues on Beale Street were born from W.C. Handley and eventually consisted of legendary artists such as B.B. King, Rufus Thomas, Muddy Waters, and eventually Elvis Presley (Worley 1998). These artists along with other community leaders gave the street and its residents a sense of pride. Beale Street quickly became a center known for music, nightclubs, gambling, and fun times. The residents had a wide range of centers for neighborhood activities from the Church Park Auditorium to W.C. Handy Park (Worley 1998). Blacks, whites, Italians and many other races opened up businesses on the street to capitalize on the successful neighborhood. On Beale Street during this time residents could participate in black parades, celebrate their heritage, and socialize with neighbors and leaders of the black community. Beale Street in this time

Figure 3.4: Beale Street in the 1940s (Worley 1998)

period also became a scene of drinking, prostitution, murder, and voodoo (bealestreet.com). These activities were made possible by a loose enforcement of the law in the city and general content in isolating these activities to Beale Street. The somewhat lack of law supported by Memphis' Boss Crump attracted large numbers of people to the district so that they could escape prohibition and experience the action. Many residents including the middle class and the ministers opposed these activities and did not look fondly on the Blues and the loose morals of the street (Worley 1998). High density single family houses with working families represented a majority of the residential areas around Beale Street.

Figure 3.5: B.B.King on Beale Street (Worley 1998)

Beale Street started to see a decline shortly after WWII when city officials seeking to increase the tax base and gain control encouraged white residents to take over formerly black run businesses that were hurt by the Great Depression. The life in the neighborhood changed significantly when pawnshops, liquor stores, and vacant stores replaced what used to be thriving businesses including grocery stores and neighborhood cafes. The density of Beale Street remained high as Memphis resisted desegregation until well into the 1960s (Worley 1998). When white Memphis residents could no longer resist the eventual desegregation of their communities many decided to leave downtown Memphis. The nearby neighborhoods that the white residents fled became coveted by black residents who where tired of the extreme densities and high crime of Beale Street. The availability of these white neighborhoods with less density and better living conditions encouraged black flight from the area around Beale Street. With fewer residents due to this black flight Beale Street businesses continued to fail.

'Urban renewal' started in Memphis in the 1950s when density was still fairly high but took hold after the exodus from the area in the 1960s. Large sections of housing and businesses were destroyed after city officials declared that they were in disrepair and blighted. While the mostly white city officials claimed they had good intentions and would redevelop, very little was ever built. The Owner of a liquor store commented in 1973, "They keep tearing buildings down and boarding them up, but nothing is ever built" (Worley 1998). George B. Miller Jr. the founder of the Beale Street Development Corporation perhaps gave the clearest example of what 'urban renewal' did to the area by saying, "(The city of Memphis was) involved in urban renewal which I interpreted as Negro removal" (Sitton 1999). Beale Street became an area of few residents and great poverty. In 1966 Beale Street was declared a Historic Landmark by the National Park Service but little stopped the destruction (National Park Service). Beale Street became the

site where Martin Luther King Jr. led his last march to support black sanitary workers as part of his "Poor People's Campaign" in the Memphis community on March 29, 1968 (Worley 1998). The march ended with chaos after intervention of the Memphis Police and the National Guard (figure 3.7). Several Days later on April 4th Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated at the nearby Lorraine Motel. The black community leaders of Memphis through these terrible times continued to advocate strongly for the black community in Memphis and against the continued degradation of the area around Beale Street.

Figure 3.6: Destruction of Palace Theater (Worley 1998)

Figure 3.7: Tanks on Beale Street (Worley 1998)

The redevelopment of this historical and once thriving main street has experienced renewed focus over the last few decades. Beale Street was redeveloped with the goals of, returning commerce to the street, displaying musical heritage, and creating an atmosphere in which blacks and whites both felt comfortable (Sitton 1999). The City of Memphis bought nearly all of the properties along Beale Street in the late 1970s in hopes of redevelopment (Performa 2008). In 1982 when John Elkington and the Performa group took over Beale Street redevelopment there was only two businesses left in the whole district (Worley 1998). Shortly afterwards in 1983 the Tennessee legislature passed a bill allowing alcoholic beverage holders to legally walk around the district with their beverages in their hands (Worley 1998). While controversial at the time, this policy helped attract the necessary entertainment venues and pedestrians needed to revive the street. The decision was made to open the district up 7 days a week giving the district an opportunity to be active at all times. With the leadership of John Elkington

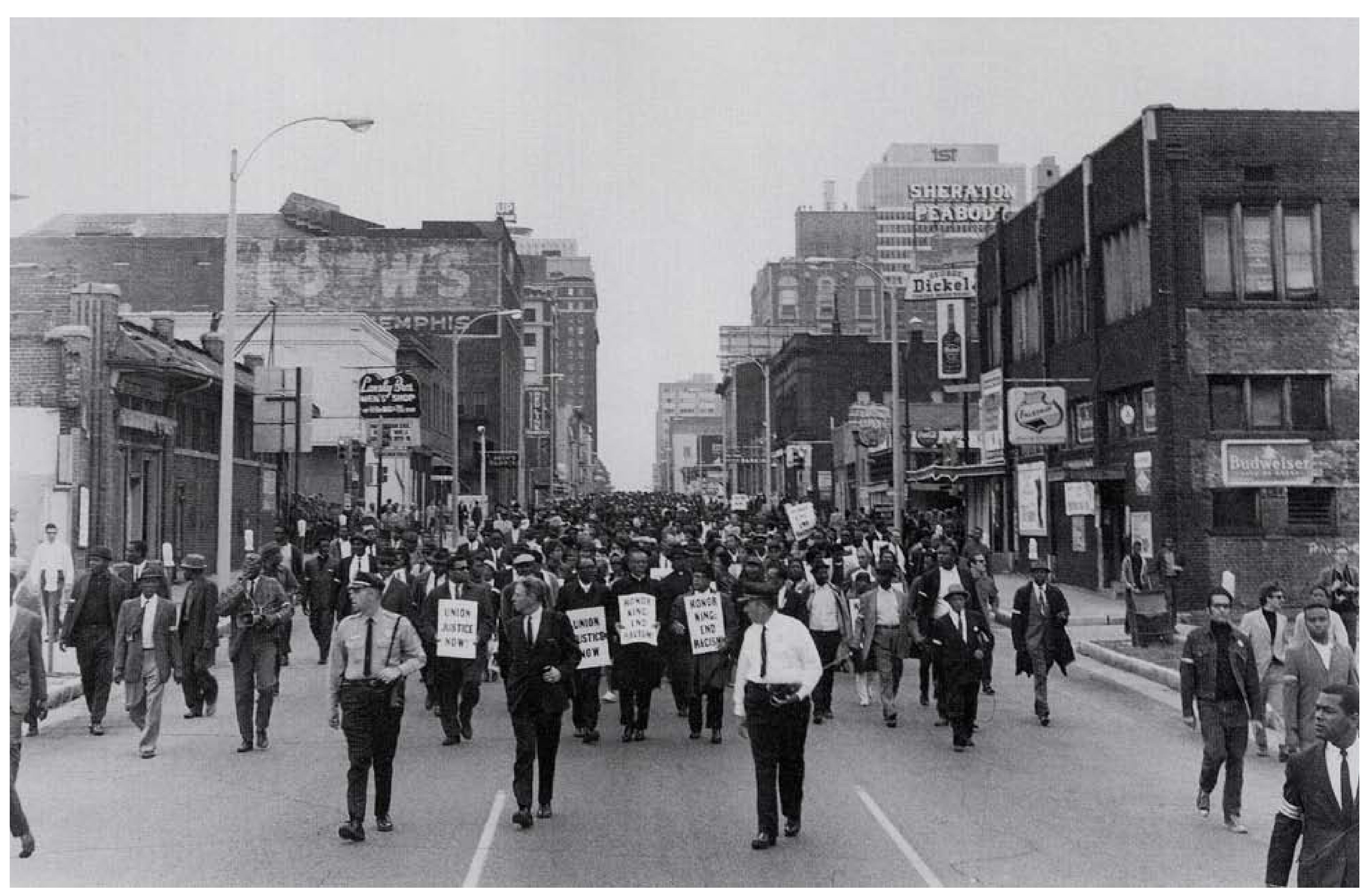


Figure 3.8: Black Leaders Marching after MLK Jr. Assassination (Worley 1998)

and Perfoma, Beale Street was steadily able to attract businesses and clubs into renovated spaces. The company focused primarily on the marketing, leasing, and property management of Beale Street while selecting tenants that represented the entertainment theme and culture.

Beale Street quickly became once again a lively area known for great music and entertainment with new restaurants, retail, clubs, and street performers. The Beale Street Historic District by 1997 had surpassed Elvis Presley's Graceland as the major tourist draw in Memphis and has become the number one tourist attraction in Tennessee (Sitton 1999). With the redevelopment some detractors have become concerned with the possible distortion and exploitation of black culture. Many residents are concerned as Beale Street continues to develop that the developers have become more concerned with money than preserving the black culture and creating a lively scene celebrating the blues. The drive for ever increasing profitability has come with some of the negative effects of gentrification. Several cultural facilities and long time shops have been driven out of the area due to rising property values and rents. George B. Miller Jr. who originally founded the Beale Street Development Corporation in 1973 to combat farther decay of the district noted, "His (John Elkington and Performa) intention is to force off Beale Street anybody who cannot pay the astronomical, tyrannical rents that ingratiates his personal wealth" (Sitton 1999). There have also been questions raised about the benefit of Beale Street to the black culture and poverty levels in Memphis. Even though about 35 percent of venues have minority owners,minorities own only three beer or liquor licenses (Sitton 1999). Beale Street redevelopment is largely seen as a renowned success even with these criticisms and concerns about preserving the culture that was once there.

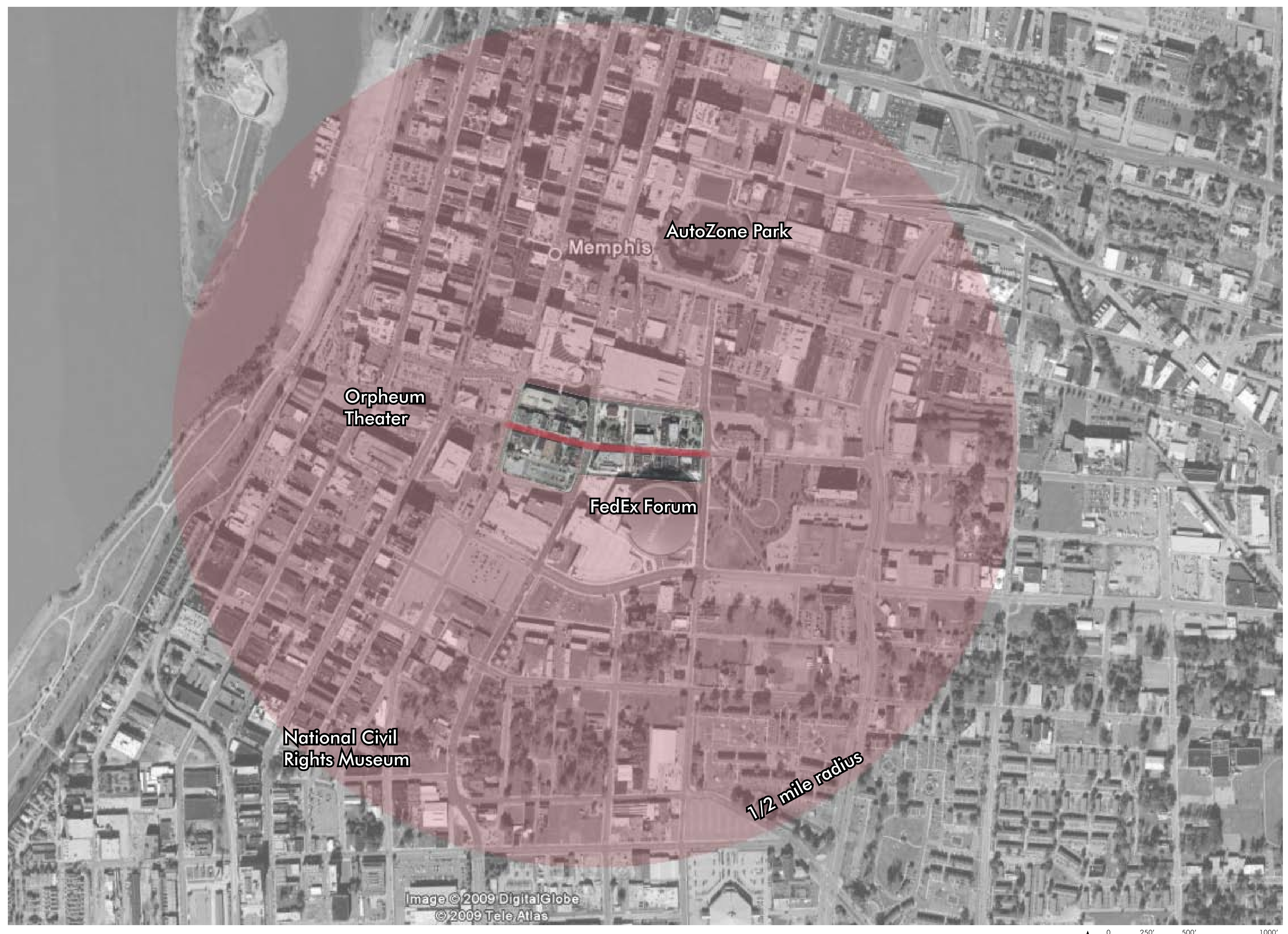


Figure 3.9: Beale Street Walking Distances/ Major Attractions

C. Present Physical Aspects

The present physical aspects of Beale Street represent a lively urban entertainment district with historic buildings and modern features. The core of the Beale Street neighborhood luckily was relatively in place even though these buildings were in dire shape when redevelopment began. Even with 'urban renewal' policies creating destruction in the Beale Street area the district was able to escape segmentation, highway construction, and more widespread destruction experienced within other black communities such as Overtown. The redevelopment of Beale Street was also able to capitalize on the districts location on the southern edge of downtown Memphis.

Within half-mile radius: (figure 3.9)

-254,000 sq.ft. of retail

-Approximately 28,000 workers and 2.2 million square feet of office space

-Approximately 1,200 hotel rooms

-Major Attractions:

FedEx Forum
Memphis Grizzlies NBA team
Annual Attendance: 876,850

AutoZone Park
Minor League Baseball
Annual Attendance: 692,462

Orpheum Theater
Annual Attendance: 300,000

The Beale Street district itself is a lively entertainment district featuring clubs, restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues, and retail (figure 3.11). Beale Street along the two blocks has developed into a dense urban core surrounded by activities (figure 3.10). The activity and physical aspects of this street has created a friendly pedestrian environment with wide sidewalks, narrow streets, window displays, a park, plaza space, and other elements that mimic the historic nature of Beale Street in the past. These elements include the diverse use of signs, variety of stores and entertainment venues, and areas for musicians other performers to create a lively street atmosphere.

Figure 3.10: Beale Street Mass/Void Study

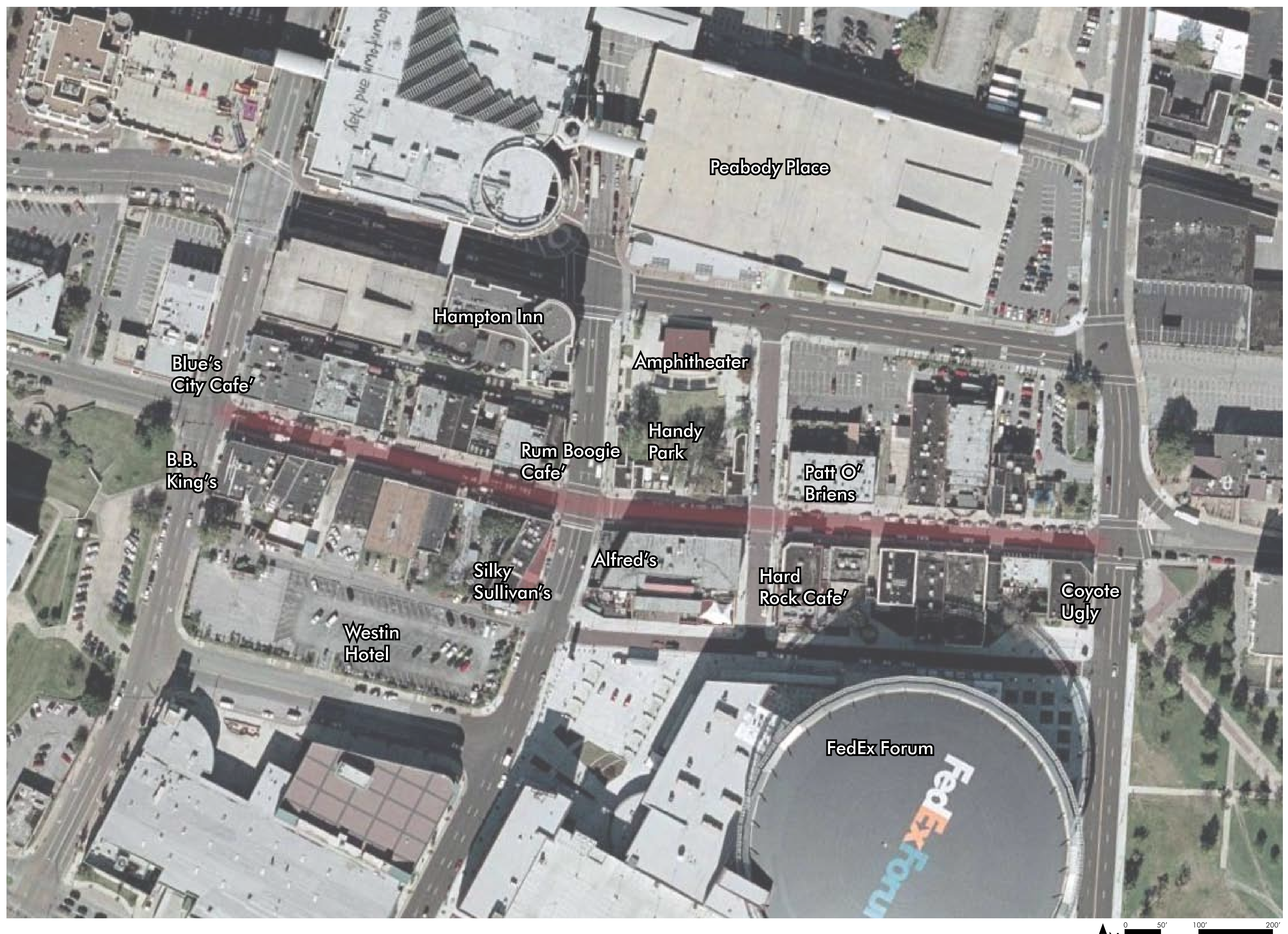


Figure 3.11: Beale Street

Some physical features of Beale Street itself:

-1,250 ft. length of main retail street

-100,000 sq.ft. of resturants, clubs, and retail shops
  Major Tenents:
    -Hard Rock Café
    -BB Kings Blues Club
    -Pat O'Briens
    -Silky Sulliven's
    -Coyote Ulgy

-An average of 5.5 million visitors per year

-Major hotels including the Hampton Inn on Beale Stree with 144 rooms and the Westin Hotel on Beale Street with 203 rooms

-Ample open space including parks and plazas

-An open-air amphitheater that can accommodate up to 3,000 people

-12 foot wide walks

-60ft. street width (building to building) with approximate block size of 460ft x 230ft.

-Streetside parking

The redevelopment that took place steadily for nearly three decades has allowed Beale Street to retain a sense of authenticity in the physical development. The dense street life and physical aspects of present day Beale Street create an atmosphere for a viable entertainment district to exist. Pedestrian scale elements, wide sidewalks, and amenities for tourists and residents allowing there to be activity and life within the district at all times. These physical aspects also respected the historic feel of Beale Street allowing a connection between historic and present day culture of the street. The wide variety of attractions on the street serve to draw a diversity of people to the area and create a fun and exciting environment.

Figure 3.12: Beale St. Today/Street Performance (Worley 1998)

D. Present Social Aspects

The present social aspects evident in Beale Street today are evident of the relative success of the redevelopment of this great district. B.B. King said, “What I see today, when I’m in town long enough to notice, is a place where White folks and Black folks have a good time, make a living, and enjoy the music all along Beale” (quoted in Worley 1998). Community leaders are proud of what they where able to accomplish in the redevelopment of this area while to some degree maintaining the feel of how Beale once was. During the 1970s the population of Beale Street was nearly non-existent, but today the population within walking distance is approximately 7,000 with 58 percent of the population earning less than $35,000 per year (ERA 2008). This 58 percent of the population shows that a multi-class population can exist even after redevelopment. Beale Street today is socially rich with blacks and whites living in and enjoying the area together. The district creates an atmosphere where wide varieties of social interactions occur on a daily basis.

E. Conclusions and Applications to Future Development

Beale Street represents an example of a black urban center that has a history of being a center for black life that declined quickly with ‘urban renewal’ policies following the end of forced segregation and has redeveloped into a successful entertainment district. Beale Street was once known for the Blues and for being a strong black community. Even with strong community leaders who tried to limit the destruction of the community Beale Street declined into what many considered disrepair. The community leaders and organizations were eventually able to preserve much of the street and prime the district for redevelopment. The redevelopment has been successful at reviving much of the cultural, physical, and social aspects in this vibrant community. Future development of similar urban black areas can learn many lessons from both the cultural, physical, and social policies that led the community into decay and the cultural, physical, and social policies that allowed Beale Street to be reborn.

Major lessons and strategies that can be applied from Beale Street:

- The successful redevelopment of an urban black neighborhood that had negatively experienced 'urban renewal' is possible.

- Black and minority business owners are necessary for the success and redevelopment within these communities to retain culture and life.

- Policy decisions can have a huge impact on both the decline and redevelopment of these communities.

- Community leaders and organizations can resist damage to communities and be a forceful element in the reconstruction.

- Strong leadership and a strong vision are needed for successful redevelopment.

- A wide variety of venues, bars, retail, community services, hotels, attractions, and office space can be successful in creating a diverse and active district that is vibrant at all times.

- The black culture can experience some distortion and exploitation in redevelopment of these areas.

- Negative aspects of gentrification such as higher rental rates can push out many cultural and community services with redevelopment.

- Street life is important and the restoration of the physical historical aspects of the street can create a sense of place and cultural identity.

18th & Vine

IV. 18th and Vine

The 18th and Vine neighborhood is an important part of the urban fabric of Kansas City, Missouri. 18th and Vine in history has become known for great music and as one of the birthplaces of jazz. The area soon after the end of forced segregation experienced 'urban renewal' policies that nearly destroyed the community completely and led to a large displacement of residents. With efforts to redevelop this once great neighborhood it is necessary to understand the cultural/historical, physical, and social aspects of the 18th and Vine community.

A. Cultural/ Historical Aspects

The historical and cultural elements of black Kansas City are critical to the understanding of the 18th and Vine District. 18th and Vine has a unique history as a neighborhood that came to be the center of black life in Kansas City. The area has seen multiracial development, implementation of segregationist policies, a thriving culture, and a successful community leading to the districts height in the 1920s through the 1950s. The 18th and Vine district then saw destruction and 'urban renewal' policies that severely decayed the community. Recently there has been a renewed push to redevelop the community using the history as a narrative. In assessing, the redevelopment that has taken place and guiding future redevelopment attempts it is necessary to look closely at the historical and cultural implications of this community.

-18th & Vine and Black Kansas City Before the 1920s

Before the 1920s, Kansas City residents did not live in racially segregated neighborhoods. Census data shows that blacks tended to live in small heterogeneous residential clusters, usually with whites and other minorities (Gotham 2000). Kansas City blacks where evenly dispersed through the city. The city's neighborhoods remained racially mixed even with an increasing black population through the 19th century. The white population did not feel threatened by the black immigration at the time due largely to the percentage of black residents living in the city remaining fairly stable, ranging across 11.7% in 1870, 14.6% in 1880, 10.3% in 1890, and 10.7% in 1900 (Gotham 2000). The high-density population at this time held segmentation towards class with the wealthier residents living on the edges of the city. Large rises in population during this period can be attributed to Kansas City's rise as an industrial center of the Midwest. A large portion of this industrial rise happened around the railroad industry. Kansas City residents at the time did not interpret black culture or behavior as connected to a place and were not likely to exclude black residents from public facilities and accommodations.

The Vine Street area was first developed in the boom of the1800s for middle class residents of Kansas City who wanted to live in suburban comfort (Shirmer 2002). In 1900, Parade Park was developed to serve as the center of this community and to provide a location for parades of local military organizations, large outdoor demonstrations, public gatherings, and sports events (Kansas City Center for Design Education and Research 1995) (figure 4.1). George Kessler soon constructed the Paseo to anchor this land use pattern, connect Parade Park to the north, and anchored 18th street as a commercial strip (figure 4.2).

After 1900, racial residential segregation in Kansas City began to increase dramatically. The great migration of blacks from the south in the years around WWI affected Kansas City drastically. The situation of Kansas City as an industrial center made the city attractive to the southern black population who sought employment. By 1912, a majority of the black population in Kansas City lived in three dense neighborhoods known as "Belvidere", "Hick's Hollow", and the largest, "Lincoln-Coles" or the Vine Street Corridor

Figure 4.1: 18th & Vine Sanborn Map 1896

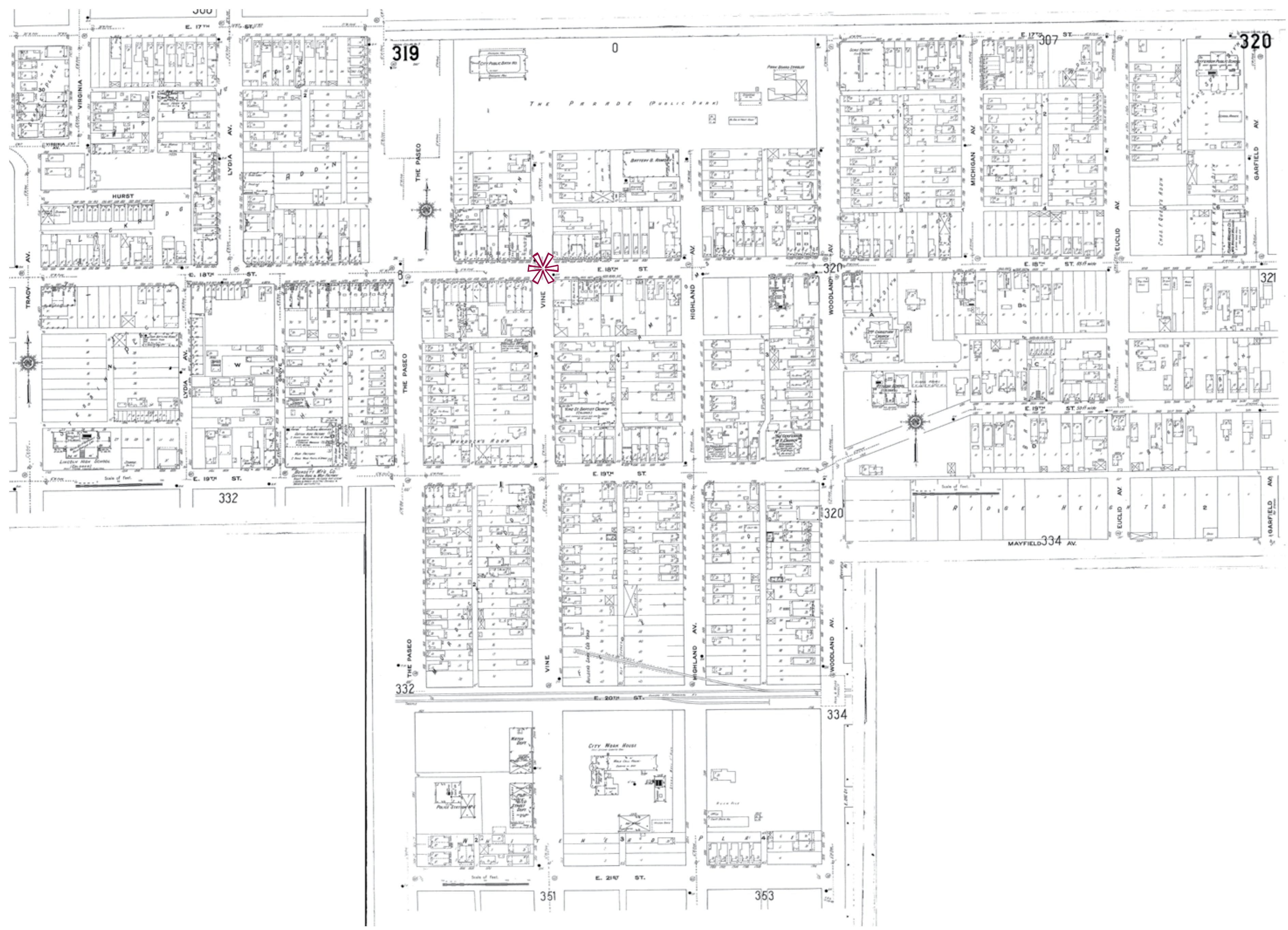
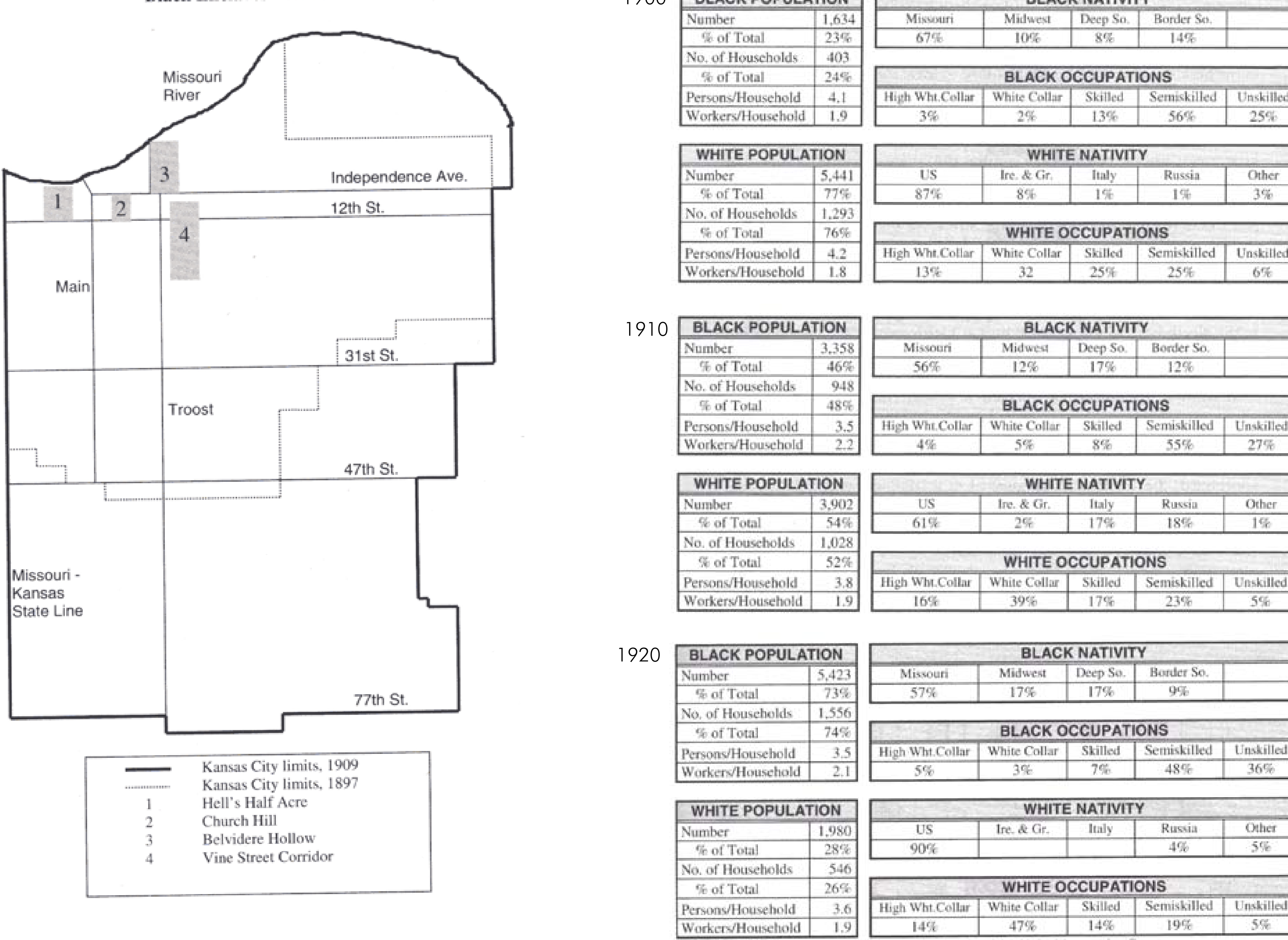


Figure 4.2: 18th & Vine Sanborn Map 1909



1900

BLACK POPULATION	
Number	1,634
% of Total	23%
No. of Households	403
% of Total	24%
Persons/Household	4.1
Workers/Household	1.9

BLACK NATIVITY				
Missouri	Midwest	Deep So.	Border So.	
67%	10%	8%	14%	

BLACK OCCUPATIONS				
High Wht.Collar	White Collar	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
3%	2%	13%	56%	25%

WHITE POPULATION	
Number	5,441
% of Total	77%
No. of Households	1,293
% of Total	76%
Persons/Household	4.2
Workers/Household	1.8

WHITE NATIVITY				
US	Ire. & Gr.	Italy	Russia	Other
87%	8%	1%	1%	3%

WHITE OCCUPATIONS				
High Wht.Collar	White Collar	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
13%	32	25%	25%	6%

1910

BLACK POPULATION	
Number	3,358
% of Total	46%
No. of Households	948
% of Total	48%
Persons/Household	3.5
Workers/Household	2.2

BLACK NATIVITY				
Missouri	Midwest	Deep So.	Border So.	
56%	12%	17%	12%	

BLACK OCCUPATIONS				
High Wht.Collar	White Collar	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
4%	5%	8%	55%	27%

WHITE POPULATION	
Number	3,902
% of Total	54%
No. of Households	1,028
% of Total	52%
Persons/Household	3.8
Workers/Household	1.9

WHITE NATIVITY				
US	Ire. & Gr.	Italy	Russia	Other
61%	2%	17%	18%	1%

WHITE OCCUPATIONS				
High Wht.Collar	White Collar	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
16%	39%	17%	23%	5%

1920

BLACK POPULATION	
Number	5,423
% of Total	73%
No. of Households	1,556
% of Total	74%
Persons/Household	3.5
Workers/Household	2.1

BLACK NATIVITY				
Missouri	Midwest	Deep So.	Border So.	
57%	17%	17%	9%	

BLACK OCCUPATIONS				
High Wht.Collar	White Collar	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
5%	3%	7%	48%	36%

WHITE POPULATION	
Number	1,980
% of Total	28%
No. of Households	546
% of Total	26%
Persons/Household	3.6
Workers/Household	1.9

WHITE NATIVITY				
US	Ire. & Gr.	Italy	Russia	Other
90%			4%	5%

WHITE OCCUPATIONS				
High Wht.Collar	White Collar	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
14%	47%	14%	19%	5%

Source: Twelfth, Thirteenth, & Fourteenth Census of the U.S., Manuscript Census

Figure 4.3: Kansas City Black Zones/Segregation (Schirmer 2002)

Figure 4.4: Historical Demographic Data (Schirmer 2002)

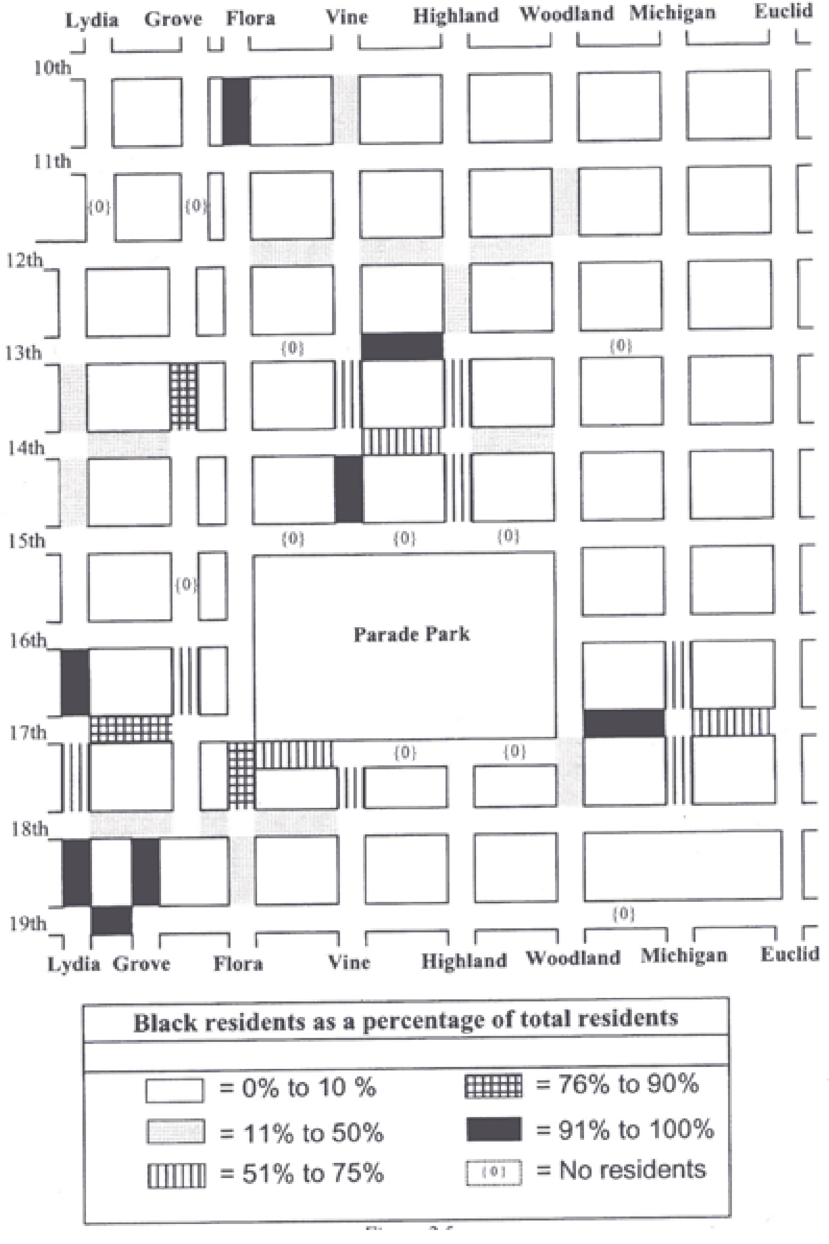
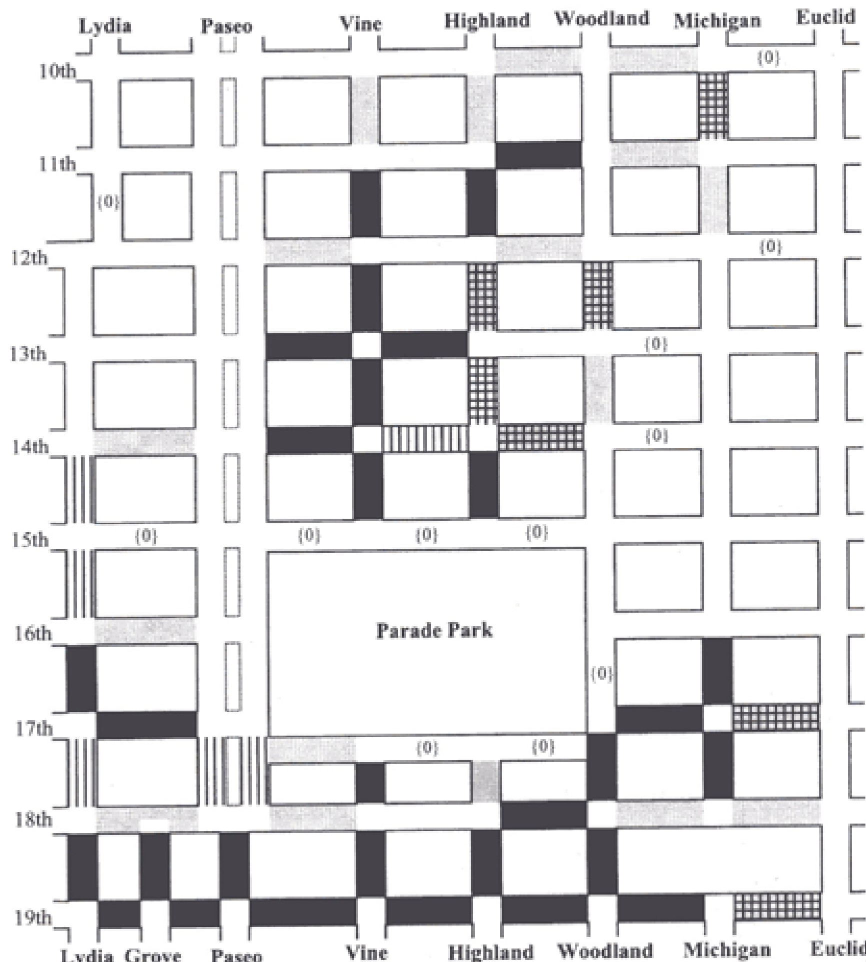


Figure 4.5: Vine Street Corridor 1900 (Schirmer 2002)



(Note: Construction of the Paseo replaced portions of Grove and Flora Streets.)

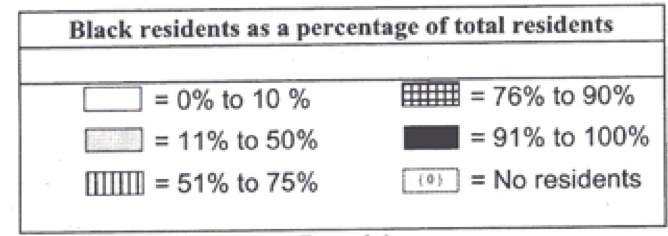


Figure 4.6: Vine Street Corridor 1910 (Schirmer 2002)

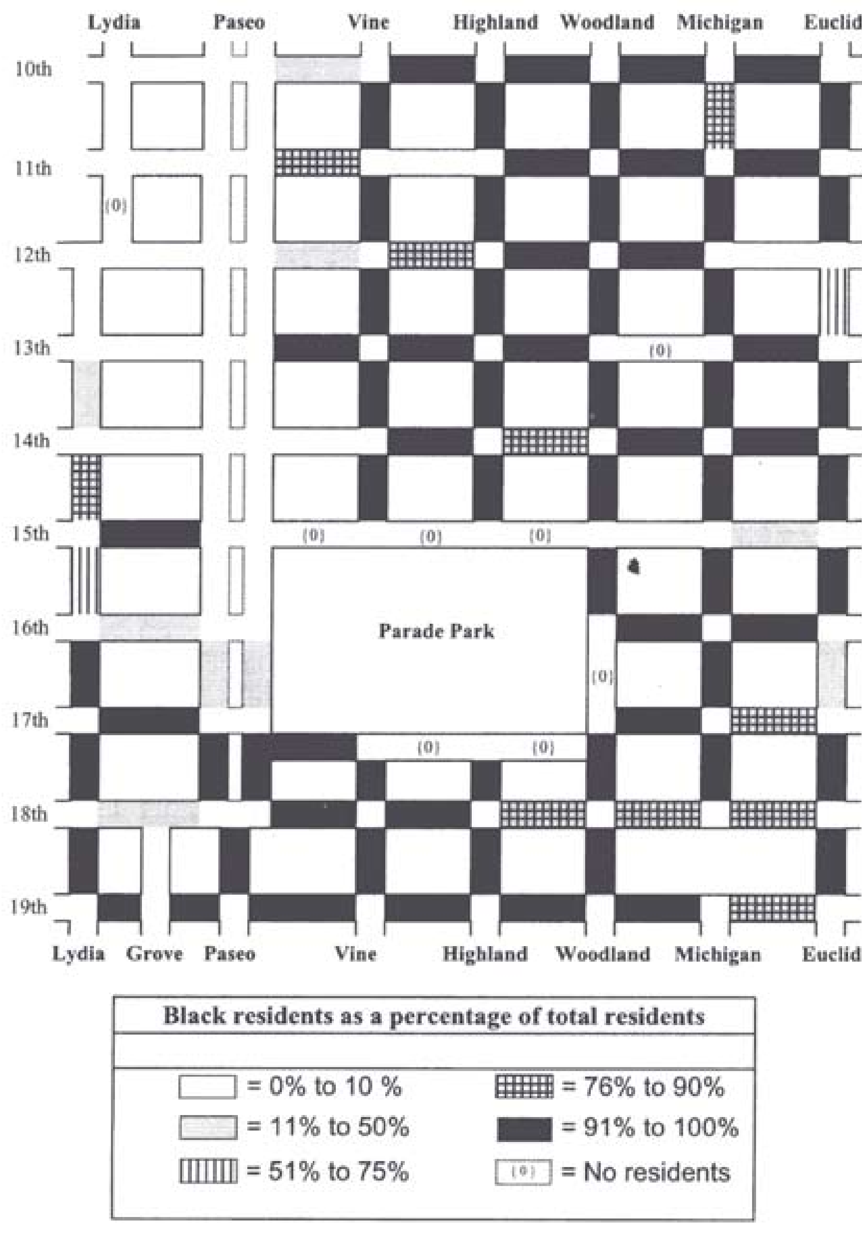


Figure 4.7: Vine Street Corridor 1920 (Schirmer 2002)

(Serda 2003) (figure 4.3). The Lincoln-Coles neighborhood would eventually contain the 18th and Vine district. The black population increased from 17,567 in 1900 to 23,566 in 1910 (a 34.2% increase), 30,719 in 1920 (a 30.4% increase), and 38,574 by 1930 (a 25.6% increase) (Gotham 2000). In the Vine Street Corridor the black population was 1,634 and represented 23% of the total population while in 1920 the black population was 5,423 and represented 73% of the total population (Shirmer 2002) (figure 4.4). The huge gains in black population soon took over the entire neighborhood (figures 4.5-4.7). The influx of black residents led to many conflicts with the white residents mostly due to competition over housing. As the anxieties rose and the black population grew larger and more assertive, the white middle class increasingly associated blacks with negative aspects of urbanism and sought to distance itself from and to exert control over the black population (Shirmer 2002). Many racist tones rose in the city that tended to inaccurately blame blacks for all the negative problems experienced with the new extreme density in the city. Discrimination in the city at this time tended to occur through informal and social means rather than by political means (Serda 2003).

With the rise of the ideas of real estate, zoning, and property values, many public officials began to associate the presence of blacks living in areas with deteriorating neighborhoods, poor schools, and high crime rates. The National Association of Real Estate Boards (NAREB) had many publications warning real estate firms that racial minorities threatened property values and that neighborhoods should segregate (Gotham 2000). Housing surveys in Kansas City were used to reinforce many of the emerging prejudices and stereotypes that made it appear that blacks were responsible for the social problems found in the neighborhoods. The Board of Public Welfare's 1913 "Report on Housing" of Kansas City pointed out the depressed state of neighborhood in which black residents were a majority, repeatedly identifying race as the

underlying cause of housing deterioration, and attributing many urban problems to blacks (Gotham 2000). The public officials in Kansas City, along with the large migration of blacks, created an atmosphere where many residents linked race, space, and behavior. Several publications at the time including the "Kansas City Star" and the "Kansas City Journal" with political undertones amplified these feelings of blacks destroying the city (Shirmer 2002). The linking of blacks with declining property values and social atmosphere within Kansas City led to an environment where racial segregation became desirable for the middle class and wealthy white residents of the city.

Despite these attempts, many middle class black residents were able to obtain property outside of the worst slums. White residents in response to this 'black threat' of moving into the white neighborhoods initially relied on threats and violence to remove black residents from their neighborhoods. A series of six explosions targeted at black families on the eastern flank of Vine Street Corridor (Shirmer 2002). Police made no arrests for nearly two years until, with no evidence, they arrested a random black man in the area. This incident along with many others made clear to the black population that they where not welcomed in certain areas of the city. In 1915, Kansas City enacted its only Jim Crow measure that prevented black schools from locating within 2,400 of a school for whites largely do to fears of blacks spreading south from the Vine Street Corridor (Schirmer 2002). During this period before the 1920s, the black residents came to represent the most threatening aspects of urban life that would inevitably drive the middle class whites out of the center of the city.

- The Height of 18th & Vine and Black Kansas City

The period from the 1920s to the early 1950s represented in many ways the height of the 18th and Vine area as the center of black life in Kansas City (figures 4.8-4.11). While the city became increasingly segregated during this period, the area around 18th and Vine became known for great jazz music, baseball, and economic progress. However, this period was also known for its vices such as gambling, drinking, crime, strippers, organized crime, and exploitation of blacks that were allowed to occur in the community. These vices created largely by outside sources stained much of the moral and reinforced negative stereotypes of the black community in Kansas City. The community during this period came together and formed many community organizations to promote a positive image and to fight for civil rights.

Kansas City white residents during the period from the 1920s through the 1950s turned more to policy in enforcing growing levels of racial segregation within the city. By 1920, many formal steps at segregating blacks beyond housing developed such as efforts to forbid blacks from owning or leasing property or even using white owned businesses in downtown Kansas City (Serda 2003). In June of 1923, Kansas City began hiring professional planners to fashion zoning plans to officially separate land uses, and to fashion racial zoning ordinances (Gotham 2000). The implementation of these zoning ordinances took place over five years after the Supreme Court deemed such ordinances unenforceable. The main tool used in Kansas City to impose racial segregation was racial restrictive covenants imposed by the real estate industry. J.C. Nichols Company built dozens of new subdivisions from 1908 through 1949 that explicitly prohibited all housing sales to blacks (Gotham 2000). J.C. Nichols was one of the first and the most prominent developer in the city to promote these covenants. During this period, the Nichols Company distributed promotional literature throughout the city that aimed at convincing middle class white residents that life in neighborhoods was a mark of social status (Shirmer 2002). There were over 138 racially restrictive covenants recorded on subdivisions in Jackson County that amounted to 62% of all subdivisions (Gotham 2000).

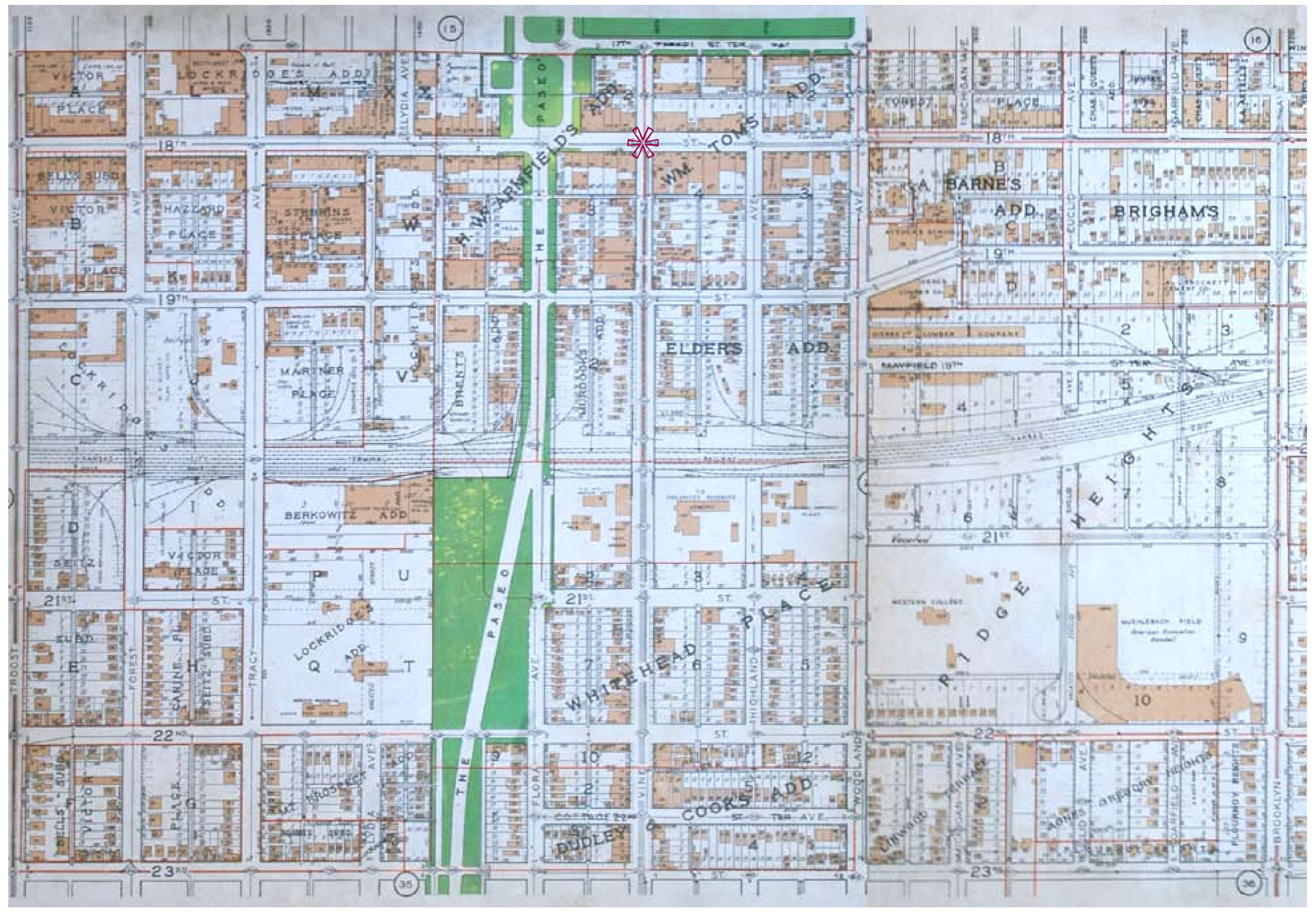


Figure 4.8: 18th & Vine Sanborn Map 1925

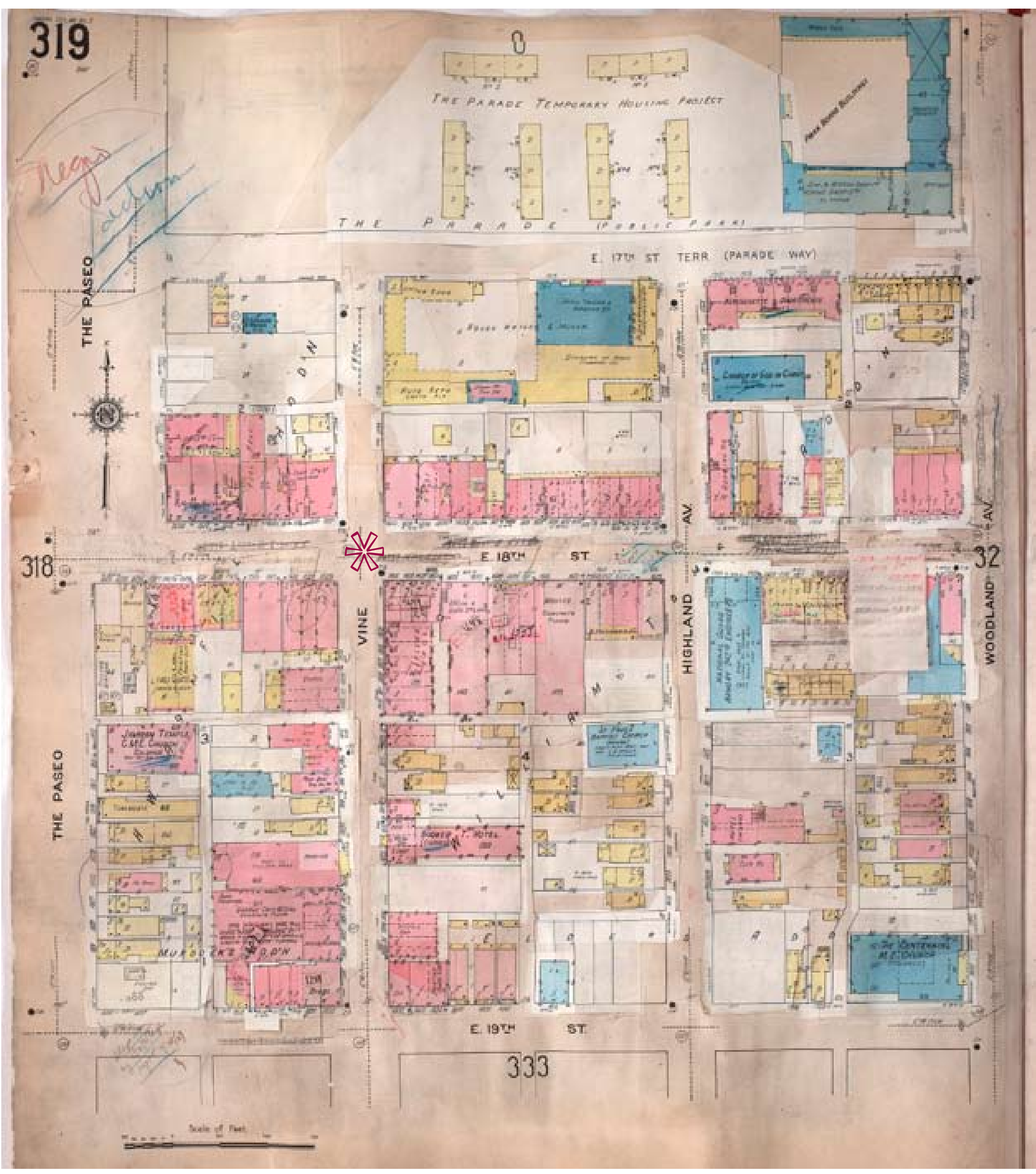


Figure 4.9: 18th & Vine Sanborn Map 1930

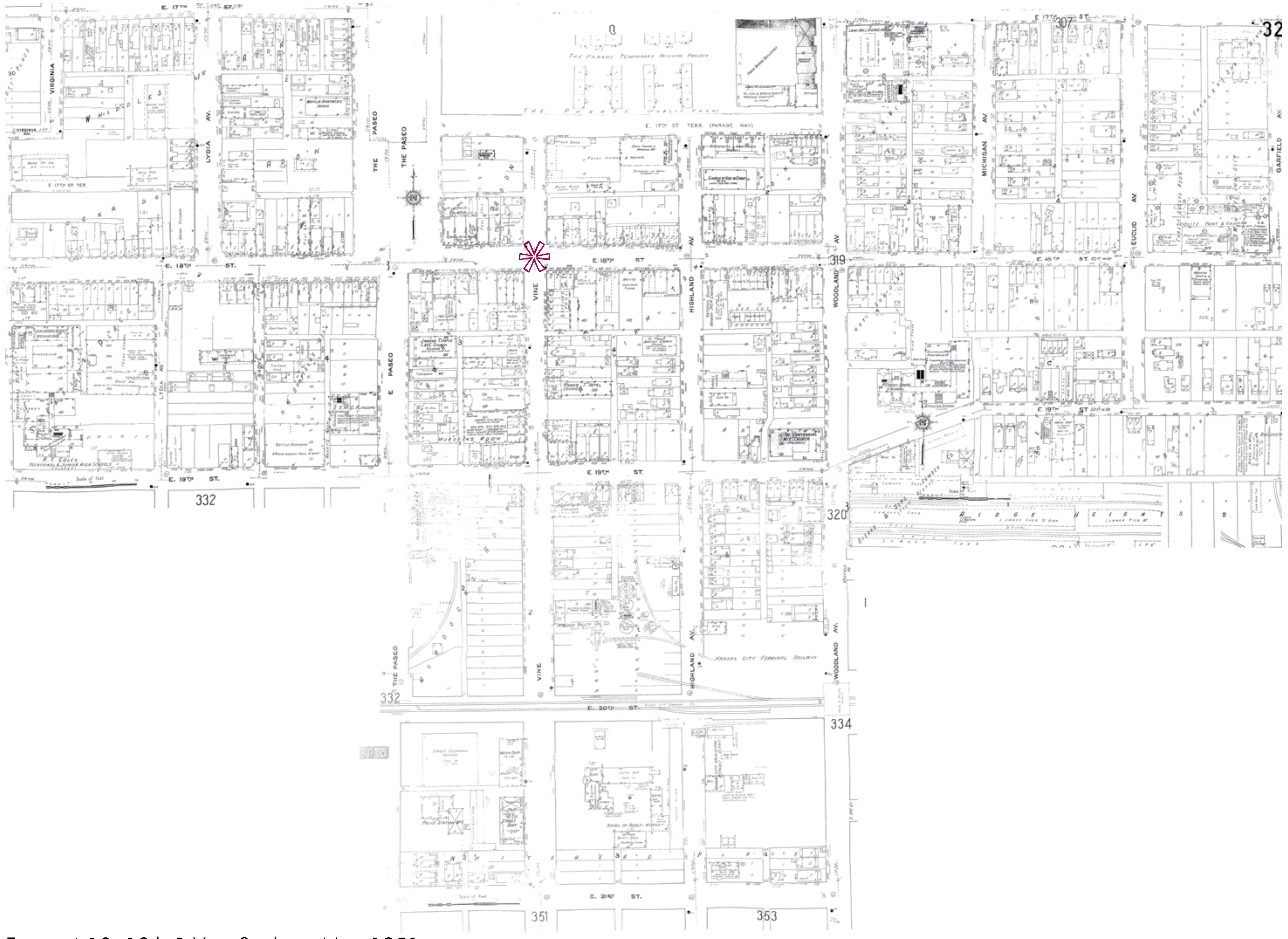


Figure 4.10: 18th & Vine Sanborn Map 1951

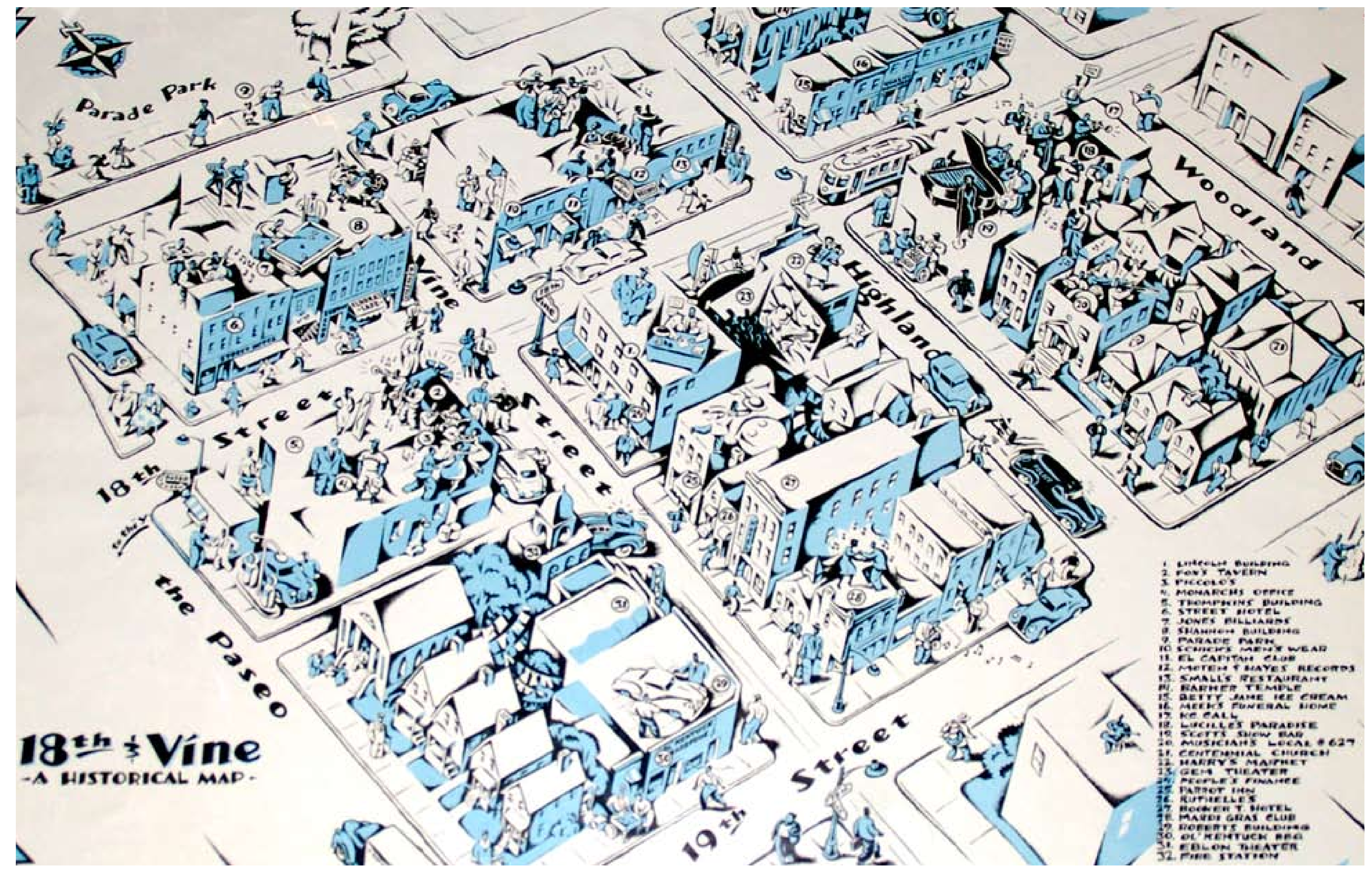


Figure 4.11: Community at its Height (Black Economic Union 1990)

Real estate firms and builders in Kansas City applied the racially exclusive covenants for nearly two decades after the Supreme Court declared them unenforceable. The use of mandatory homeowner associations fostered white community organizations as a means to keep the racial exclusiveness of their neighborhoods (Gotham 2000). Although many civil rights groups began to challenge these practices many private appraisal associations, real estate firms, and banks continued to use this racial language for many decades. During the 1920s, the increasingly segregated black communities saw a rise of segregated commercial districts to meet the community needs.

The black population in Kansas City was soon courted by Tom Pendergast, an unelected political boss, in order to win patronage and take control of the city. Pendergast and his political establishment was able to expand their base in the black community by courting new migrants from the rural South, decrying unfair police treatment of blacks, opposing discriminatory legislation on the state level, and opposing the segregation of Kansas City street cars (Serda 2003). With this support, Pendergast expected blacks to vote and vote often in support of his chosen candidates including Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman. The almost immediate reduction of police terror and intimidation in the black areas of Kansas City led for the black support for Pendergast to solidify (Shirmer 2002). The political machine also constructed many social service facilities in the black community including recreational centers, swimming pools, and hospitals. Along with these successes, the Pendergast machine also represented many disappointments for the black community. Often the political machine failed to live up to all its promises of improving the black neighborhoods, improving health care, and appointing black community leadership within the city government (Shirmer 2002). With the support of Roosevelt, Pendergast was able to control a large portion of all federal relief money coming into Missouri during the Great Depression (Shirmer 2002). This money went largely to negating the negative effects of the white population of Kansas City during the depression. Despite these disappointments within the black community of Pendergast and his machine, the black population continued to give him their votes.

During the Great Depression and Prohibition, Tom Pendergast made Kansas City a wide-open town. Kansas City was able to transcend much of the drabness that much of the rest of urban America experienced at the time and become sort of a “Las Vegas East” (Kansas City Business Journal 1987). While Kansas City still struggled during this time the city did not experience some of the extreme struggles of other American cities. The open atmosphere of Kansas City allowed the commercial district around 18th and Vine to thrive. Pendergast permitted illicit establishments to open up in the district with easy access to alcohol, gambling, and prostitution. With this context, large numbers of people flocked to Kansas City to take advantage of the entertainment found in the city.

Jazz quickly arose as the primary form of entertainment with both legitimate and illicit establishment beginning to feature the music. The forms of vice in the community proved essential ingredients in the rise of Kansas City as a center for jazz performance and innovation. Jazz was known as an edgy and exciting stimulus for both white and black costumers (Serda 2003). While middle class whites in Kansas City generally wanted the draw and access to these entertainment area they did not want the vice associated with the clubs to be located in their neighborhoods. Many whites looked the other way to this vice and accepted the situation as long as the activities took place within the black neighborhoods.

The 18th and Vine area in Kansas City is known as one of the birthplaces of jazz music and culture. In the 1920s and 1930s, the city attracted many of the best jazz groups in the country including Walter Page and Bennie Moten. The Kansas City jazz

Figure 4.12: 18th and Paseo (Black Archives of Mid America retrieved 02/2009)

scene included legendary artists Count Bassie, Pete Johnson, Mary Lou Williams, Charlie “Bird” Parker, and “Big Joe” Turner (Serda 2003). The wide variety of jazz clubs around 18th and Vine created a vibrant and exciting nightlife in the district (figure 22). The black artists and entertainers would perform in both black and white clubs that were located near 18th and Vine. Nearly all Kansas City nightclubs catered to only one race or the other and were owned by whites during this time. The clubs that catered to white patrons often would attract more customers by reinforcing black stereotypes and serving as places for humiliation (Shirmer 2002). Black performers were often taught to act out these stereotypes and dancers were encouraged to participate in prostitution. The white costumers who would visit these clubs would not gain appreciation of true black culture but rather for the preconceived stereotypes of black people being primitive. By combining jazz and illicit practices in these venues, the Pendergast machine helped equate the jazz performers with the vice that white patrons saw in these clubs (Shirmer 2002).

While a few jazz clubs that catered to black patrons, such as the Hawaiian Garden and the Harlem Night Club, provided the same raunchy environment, many clubs who catered to the black population offered an atmosphere free of such vices (Shirmer 2002). Black residents sought venues where they could enjoy the same great jazz music without the stereotypes and vices. The black social clubs and dance halls in the 18th and Vine area included such clubs as the Castle, Cherry Blossom, the Street Hotel Lounge, the Silver Slipper, the Paseo Dance Hall, and Lincoln Theater (Shirmer 2002). The black community found racial and social solidarity in the clubs that demonstrated the many positive aspects of black life. These black clubs provided safety and comfort from the humiliation and stereotypes that the white clubs imposed on the community.

A large segment of the black population in the 18th and Vine area despised the vices being in their neighborhoods and actively fought many of the negative reputation whites had of the community. Tom Pendergast and his political machine were able to retain the most solid support from respectable black neighborhoods outside the areas of vice (Shirmer 2002). Many community organizations including the Urban League, the local NAACP chapter, and several church groups formed during this period to counter the negative stereotypes and racist policies that negatively affected the black population in Kansas City. The most outspoken critic of many policies that negatively affected the black population of Kansas City was C.A. Franklins’ publication the “Kansas City Call” (Shirmer 2002). In 1939, The Kansas City Jazz era came to a relatively quick end with the indictment and conviction of Tom Pendergast on federal charges of income tax evasion (Serda 2003). The reformist government that took control of Kansas City quickly made a point to rid the city of the vice and close down a number of clubs in the 18th and Vine area.

Figure 4.13: Political Meeting in Lincoln Building
(Mark Kauffman/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images 1946)

Figure 4.14: 19th Street in 1930 (Kansas City Public Library retrieved 2/2009)

Baseball also played an important role in the 18th and Vine area during this time. Black baseball players were barred from playing in the major leagues in 1898. The Negro Leagues were formed at a meeting of Midwestern black baseball team owners at the Paseo YMCA in 1920 (Negro League Baseball Museum 2004). The Kansas City Monarchs played at the nearby Muehlebach Field at 22nd and Brooklyn (figure 4.15). They quickly became the best team in the Negro Leagues winning ten pennants and challenged anyone willing to play them. The Monarchs were a source of a large amount of pride in the 18th and Vine area. Many star baseball players played for the Monarchs including Satchel Page, Ernie Banks, John "Buck" O'Neil, and Jackie Robinson. The players quickly became role models and leaders within the community. Large crowds both black and white came to the Vine Street area to watch the team play. In 1945, Major League Baseball broke the color barrier with Jackie Robinson of the Monarchs being recruited to play for the Brooklyn Dodgers (Negro League Baseball Museum 2004). Baseball continued to be an important aspect of the community with the Monarchs continuing to play into the 1950s and Kansas City professional baseball continuing on the site until the 1970s.

The period between the 1920s and the 1950s represented a time where 18th and Vine and the black community in Kansas City created a successful neighborhood that strived on music and community life. The period also represented a time of extreme racism, crime, and exploitation. Many community organizations in the area rose to counter the negative impressions of black people within the city and continued the fight for civil rights. With the downfall of Pendergast the new city leaders not only dismantled the jazz scene and Kansas City but also developed plans to rid the cities of the areas they deemed as slum and blight (Serda 2008)

Figure 4.15: Muehlebach Field 1937
(Kansas City Public Library retrieved 2/2009)

-'Urban Renewal' and the Decline of 18th & Vine

'Urban Renewal' had major effects on the black community of Kansas City. The end of forced segregation of the community marked an important milestone for the civil rights movement within the city but also exposed the 18th and Vine community to 'urban renewal' policies and a loss in population. While the community became more poverty ridden and divided due to construction of public housing and highway, the commercial district around 18th and Vine severely decayed.

The downfall of Pendergast led many community organizations to increase the fight for civil rights within black Kansas City. The development of effective black leadership within the community was largely crippled during the Pendergast years due to black community leaders being hand picked by the political machine (Serda 2008). Many black community members became inclined to take direct action to combat racial exclusions. The new black community organizations including the Urban League, the local chapter of the NAACP, and the Committee on the Practice of Democracy directly fought many segregationist policies. The fights included a strike against Pratt-Whitney who refused to grant equal rights to its black workers, an effort to desegregate city-owned facilities, and many marches and protests against Jim Crow laws (Shirmer 2002). The fights initially led to large amounts of backlash but eventually eroded many segregationist policies in Kansas City.

Kansas City passed the public accommodations ordinance in 1964 requiring all businesses to serve patrons without regard to race (Serda 2008). This ordinance along with the Civil Rights Act passed in 1968 marked the end of lawful forced segregation within the city. Black residents of Kansas City were finally able to shop in the downtown stores and shops lessening the viability and need for the commercial districts that arose within the black neighborhoods. Many of the black middle class in the 18th and Vine area with these new freedoms fled the extreme densities and vice associated with their old neighborhoods. After the passage of many federal housing discrimination laws many white realtors and residents participated in selling whole city blocks to black residents in the neighborhoods around the black community (Gotham 2001). The selling of whole blocks was done to ensure that white residents would not have to deal with the declining property values associated with black residents on their block. White residents were also fleeing out to the new neighborhoods in the suburbs with the rise of the automobile and improved transportation. The result of these practices led to a dispersal of large amounts of residents from the established black neighborhoods and created a gradual but severe toll on the 18th and Vine neighborhood. The loss of residents along with retail and social decline left the area susceptible to many 'urban renewal' projects that would farther decay the community.

Kansas City leaders in the 1930s began to argue that blight within the neighborhoods around the central business district was a major reason for the decline of these downtown areas. The "Kansas City Realtor" published many articles and editorials reporting how the spread of blight and corrosive effects of slums had a negative effect on property values within the central business district (Gotham 2001). The real estate organizations linked the primarily black neighborhoods or blight as a physical threat to the financial viability of the central business district. Missouri created the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA) in 1953 for the planning and administering of local 'urban renewal' activities including slum clearance of blighted neighborhood according to the Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954 (Gotham 2001). The federal government supplied Kansas City much of the money needed to clear these slums in the 1950s through the 1970s in an effort to engineer downtown growth. 'Urban renewal' quickly transformed the downtown core as residential neighborhoods

were cleared to make way for new commercial and industrial land use (Gotham 2001). Kansas City's 'urban renewal' efforts supported by such organizations as the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Redevelopment Corporation, and the Kansas City AIA impressed community leaders and planners around the country (Gotham 2001). These 'urban renewal' activities led to large-scale displacement and quickly devastated the urban black neighborhoods in Kansas City.

The solution many city leaders saw to the large scale displacements associated with 'urban renewal' was public housing. The LCRA launched a total of 18 'urban renewal' projects for 1953 to 1969 affecting over 5,130 acres of land around Kansas Cities central business district (Gotham 2001). The 18th and Vine area was hit hard by these policies. In 1950, the city designated the Attucks neighborhood bounded by 15th Street on the north, 18th Street on the south, Woodland Ave. on the west, and Brooklyn Ave. on the east as one of the first public housing projects (Serda 2003). The project, which lasted form 1955 to 1965, displaced 478 black residents and 85 businesses (Gotham 2001). The Attucks development that followed, later called the Parade Park residential development, displaced most of the original neighborhood residents, and replaced them with low-income residents from other portions of the city experiencing 'urban renewal' (Serda 2003, Gotham 2001). The Attucks project along with other projects in the 18th and Vine area severely severed neighborhood ties and segmented the black population into substandard segregated housing. The dispersal of black residents also made business in the once vibrant commercial centers of the historic black neighborhoods nearly impossible (Serda 2003). 'Urban renewal' quickly became known as 'black removal' within these once stable urban black communities. Mary Jacqueline a resident of the 18th and Vine area said, "There had been semi-economic center for black businesses that were around 12th Street, 18th Street, coming up Vine, say to 25th Street…and all of the clientele was in walking distance mainly because in the 1940s and early 1950s … people lived closer together. With urban renewal and people moving out, they lost their clientele" (qtd. In Gotham 2001). These policies served to concentrate the poor within the select urban black neighborhoods and drive middle class blacks elsewhere. Black community organizations such as the Greater Kansas City Urban League and the "Kansas City Call" regularly voiced opposition to these public housing and 'urban removal' policies with little affect. With the loss of businesses the problems of the neighborhood became farther compounded as residents were now required to travel outside of the neighborhood to obtain groceries and other services.

'Urban renewal' largely failed at the objectives of reversing central city decline, countering decentralization trends, and revitalizing displacement (Gotham 2001). 'Urban renewal' instead served in Kansas City to reinforce the exodus of people and industry, create more urban blight, and exacerbate the urban housing problem (Gotham 2001). The 'urban renewal' policies slowly but efficiently created an area filled largely with industrial buildings and vacant property while displacing large amounts of residents and segmenting the population of the 18th and Vine neighborhood (figure 4.16).

The problems that 'urban renewal' presented to the black community in Kansas City were compounded by highway construction. The Missouri Department of Highways and Transportation was constructing Interstates 70, 29, and 35 to give suburban residents of Kansas City greater access to the downtown (Gotham 2001). The construction of Interstate 70 divided the north end of the old 18th and Vine neighborhood away from the retail and cultural center of 18the and Vine. The construction of US-71 in the 1980s and 1990s greatly damaged the community by destroying many homes and services. The construction completely devastated the neighborhood to the south of 18th and Vine and isolated the

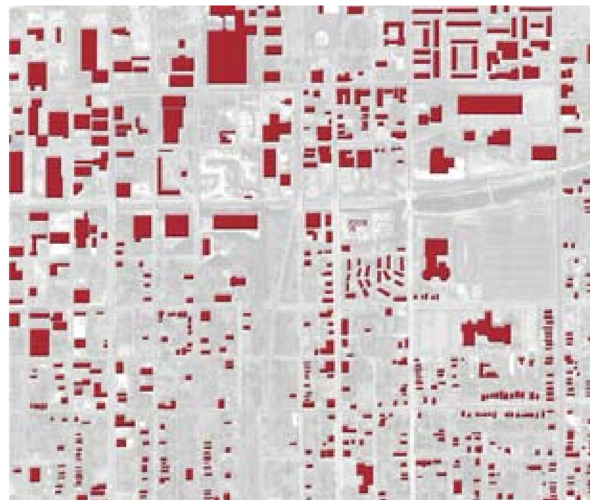
community from the crossroads area and downtown (figure 4.16).

The ‘urban renewal’ policies along with highway construction severely damaged the once thriving community of 18th and Vine. The area quickly became neglected and large areas were demolished. While this period of 18th and Vine was known for destruction and racist policies, many of the community organizations that became powerful at this time would eventually lead the push to revitalize the neighborhood.

1967

1970

1985



1995

Present

Figure 4.16: 18th & Vine Mass/Void

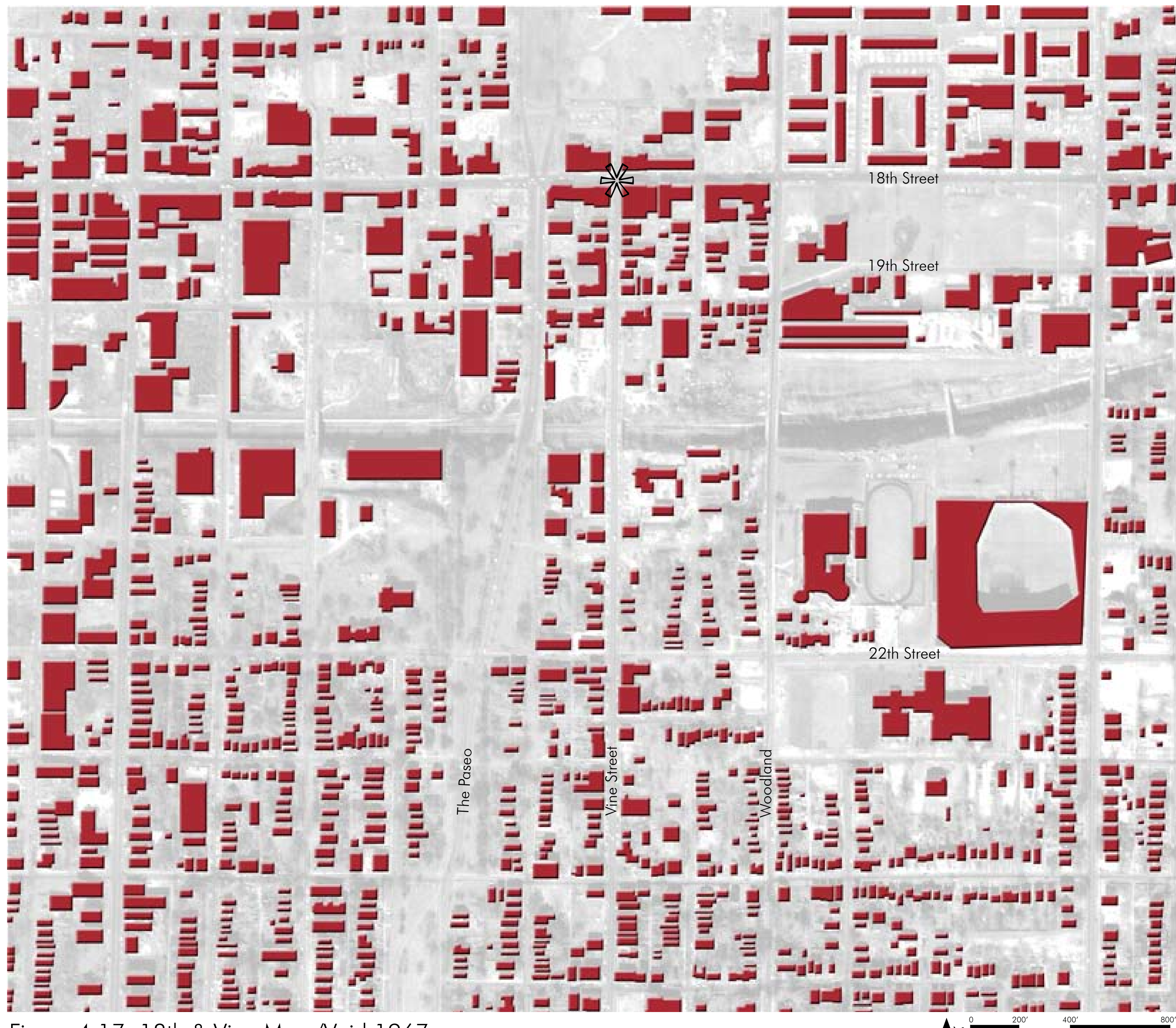


Figure 4.17: 18th & Vine Mass/Void 1967

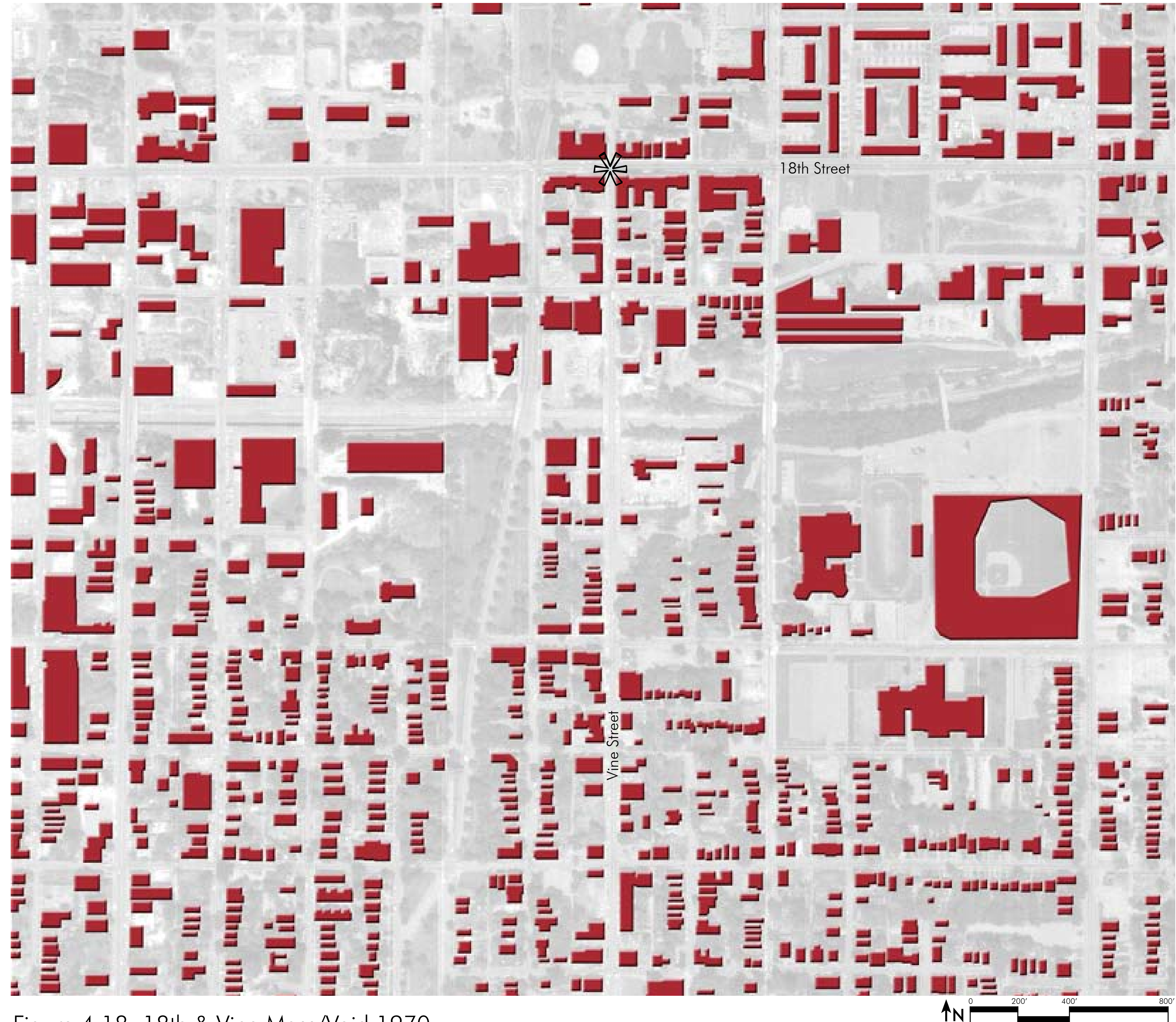


Figure 4.18: 18th & Vine Mass/Void 1970

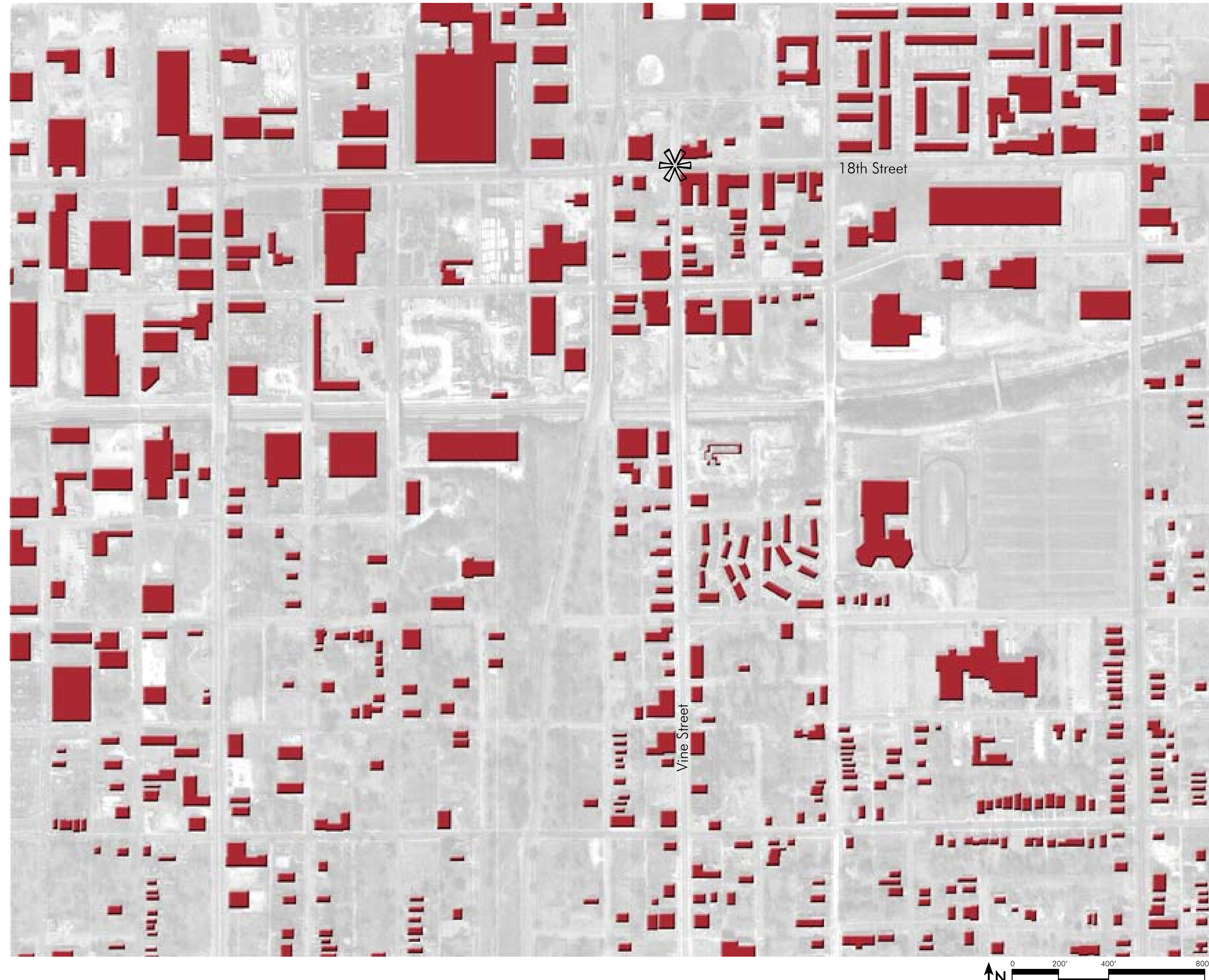


Figure 4.19: 18th & Vine Mass/Void 1985

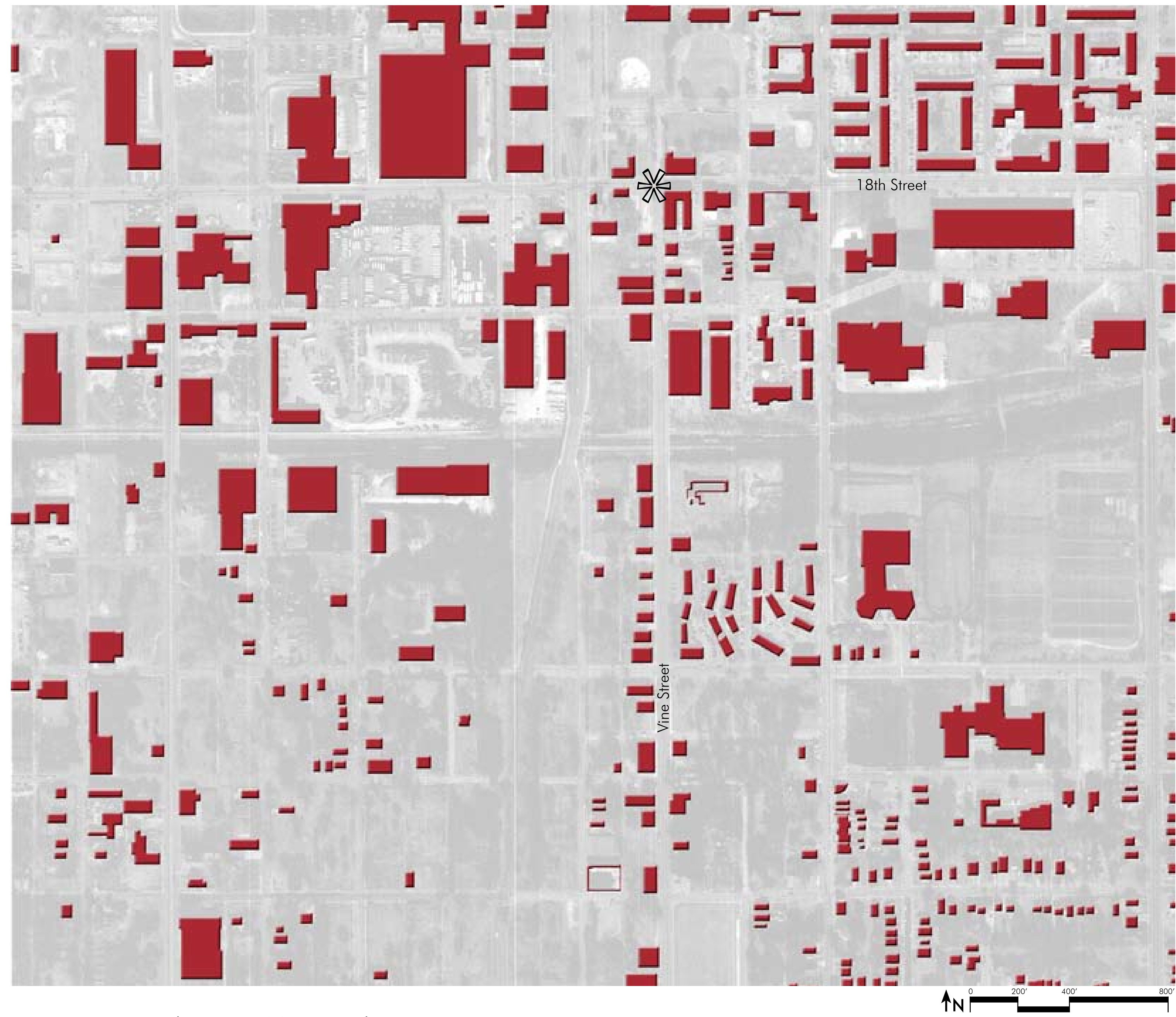


Figure 4.20: 18th & Vine Mass/Void 1995

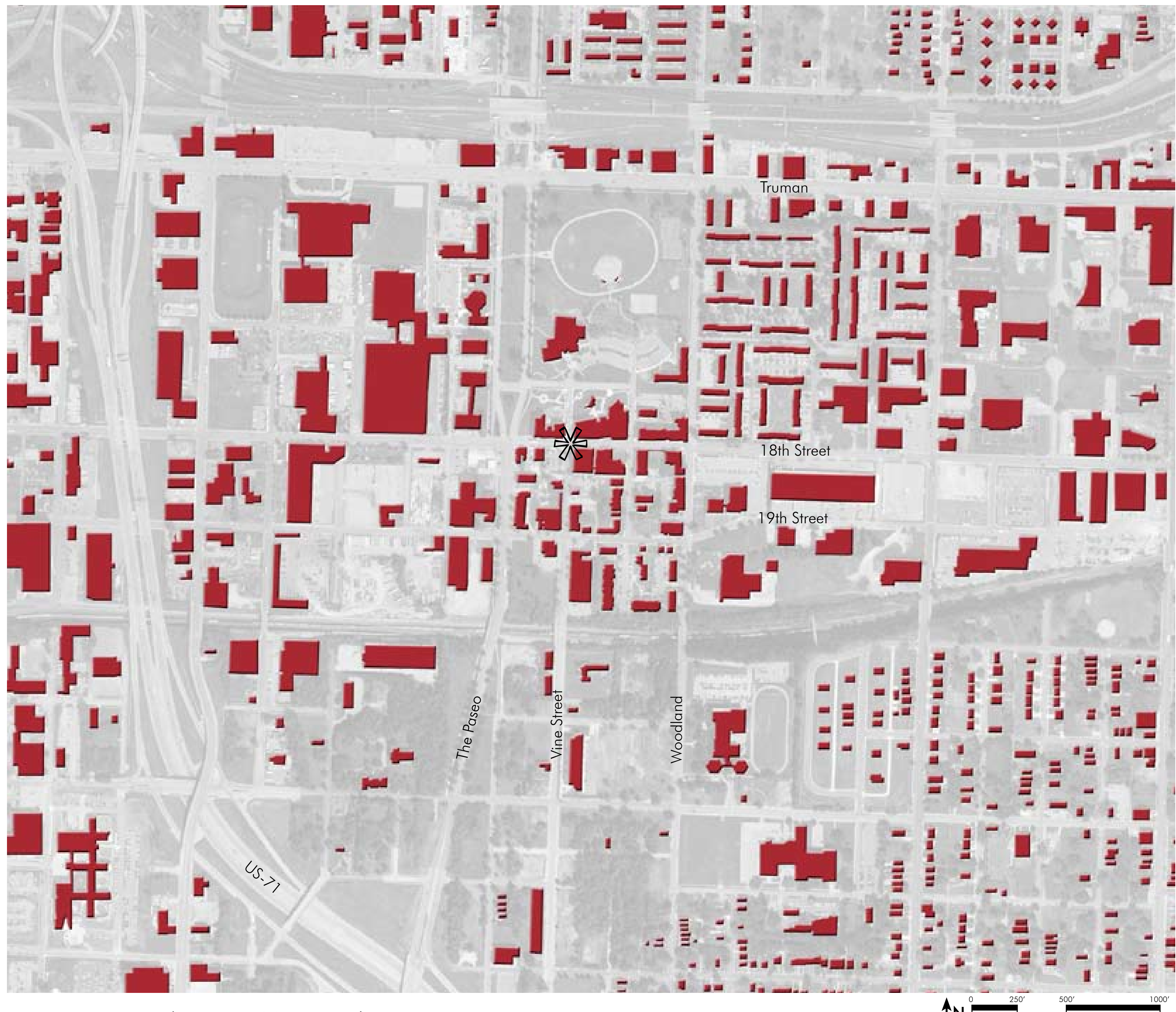


Figure 4.21: 18th & Vine Mass/Void Present

- Redevelopment of 18th & Vine

The restoration of the once historical center of black life in Kansas City at 18th and Vine has become a goal of many community leaders. The redevelopment has seen many difficulties in the past 20 years. A number of unsuccessful efforts have been mounted to redevelop the district around black heritage and jazz music sense the 1960s (Serda 2003). The Black Economic Union began the redevelopment of 18th and Vine by acquiring large tracts of land, tearing down dilapidated buildings, and preparing the land for new businesses (Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation 2008). Specific proposals have centered on using jazz as a means of educating and inspiring young people, developing a new consumer base for local business, and reconstructing 18th and Vine as a physical representation of the neighborhood as a 1930s jazz Mecca (Serda 2003).

In 1989, the rebirth of the district started with the passage of a sales tax revenue package spearheaded by Emanuel Clever II (Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation 2008). The infighting among the community groups and cultural organizations over control of the redevelopment led to few results and many plans in the early years of redevelopment (Serda 2003). This infighting led Mayor Clever to give the Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation and the Downtown Council the responsibility of leading the redevelopment. The early funding was used to renovate the GEM Theater to be used as a performing arts center and to construct a new building to house the American Jazz Museum, Negro League Baseball Museum led by Buck O'Neil, Horace M. Peterson Visitors Center, and a jazz club called the Blue Room. The completion of these two major projects in 1997 marked the beginning of the redevelopment attempts. The redevelopment has seen over $81 million dollars invested in the museums, the GEM Theater, nearly 13,000 square feet of new commercial space, over 300 additional residential units, the Black Archives of Mid-America, and several other improvements (Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation 2008).

Through the redevelopment process many organizations that once had been at the lead of promoting revitalization felt marginalized by local politicians. These politicians through the redevelopment also offended many black business owners by offering relocation incentives to several high-profile enterprises outside of Kansas City while ignoring some black businesses that wanted to move into the area from Kansas City (Serda 2003). The redevelopment has slowed in recent years with difficulty in attracting retail to the district, and many project such as the John 'Buck' O'Neil center have struggled to obtain funding. The lack of clear focus and direction in the project has left many in the community to question the viability of the redevelopment. The projections of the impacts of the museums on the revitalization of the district have proven to be overly optimistic. Gaylord Rogers a local resident says, "This today is nice, but it's false. The legend of Vine isn't about special events. It's about daily life. I don't know if we can ever get that magic back" (qtd in Serda 2003). The difficulties experienced during reconstruction have left critical questions about why the redevelopment has thus far failed to achieve all of the initial goals and how to move forward with the future redevelopment.

B. Physical Aspects

The physical aspects of the area around 18th and Vine display the neighborhood's history and decay. The 18th and Vine area is greatly influenced by its location, lack of clearly defined boundaries, infrastructure, retail and commercial space, property ownership, land use patterns, and aesthetic character. The physical aspects of the 18th and Vine area have greatly deteriorated since the height of the community in the 1930s and have only recently have started to be rebuilt.

- Context:

The 18th and Vine district is located less than one mile south-east of the downtown loop in Kansas City, Missouri. The neighborhood is somewhat isolated from the downtown by I-70 to the north and US-71 to the west. 18th and Vine is also located less than a mile from both the Crossroads district directly to the west and Hospital Hill including UMKC Medical Center, directly to the southwest (figure 4.22). The location, just minutes away from the center of Kansas City, is prime for residential development as the city focuses once again on the redevelopment of downtown. The location also provides opportunities for residential development within walking distance of Hospital Hill with hundreds of employees and students.

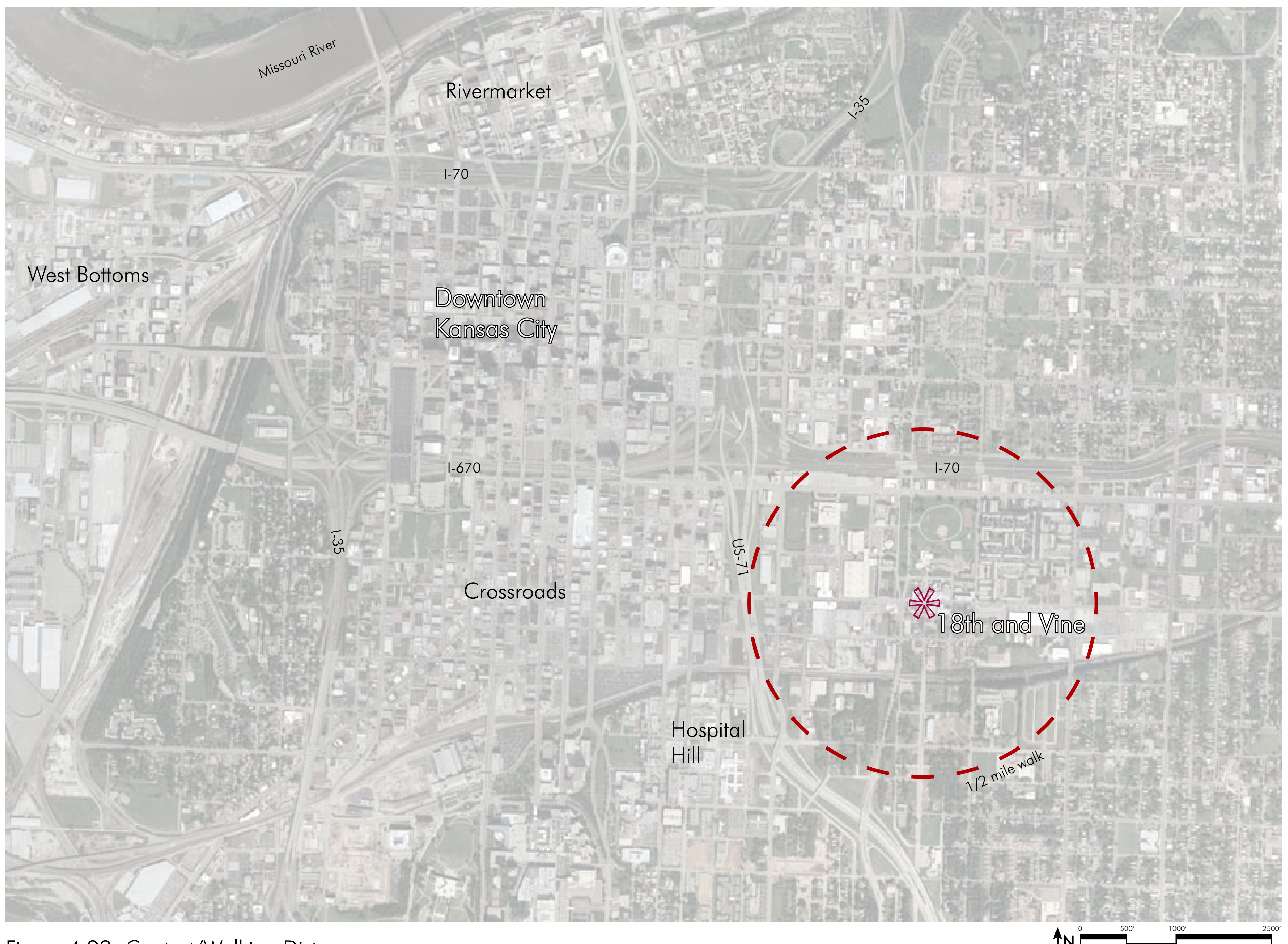


Figure 4.22: Context/Walking Distance

- Boundaries:

The neighborhood around 18th and Vine has long lacked a clear sense of what the exact boundaries are. Disputes over the boundaries created many conflicts with the white residents surrounding the neighborhood during the period of forced segregation. The historic boundaries of the Vine Street Corridor where 10th Street to the North, Lydia Ave to the West, 19th Street to the South, and Euclid Ave. to the East (Shirmer 2002). These boundaries quickly expanded to the south due to the large increase of the black population in Kansas City in the early 1900s (figure 4.23). The subsequent attacks and disputes due to the expanding boundaries have left the idea of defining the 18th and Vine area complex and difficult. The city of Kansas City defines the 18th and Vine and Downtown East Neighborhood as the area between the Paseo, 18th Street, and Interstate 70 (figure 4.24). The boundaries that the city has defined split the main commercial strip along 18th Street in half and do not represent the cultural, physical, or social realities of the area. In the redevelopment of 18th and Vine the Downtown Council and the Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation take a more narrow view of the area and focuses primarily on the six blocks adjacent to the intersection of 18th Street and Vine Street (figure 4.25). The lack of clear boundaries that reflect the realities of the neighborhood make the creation of a defining and cohesive redevelopment plan difficult.

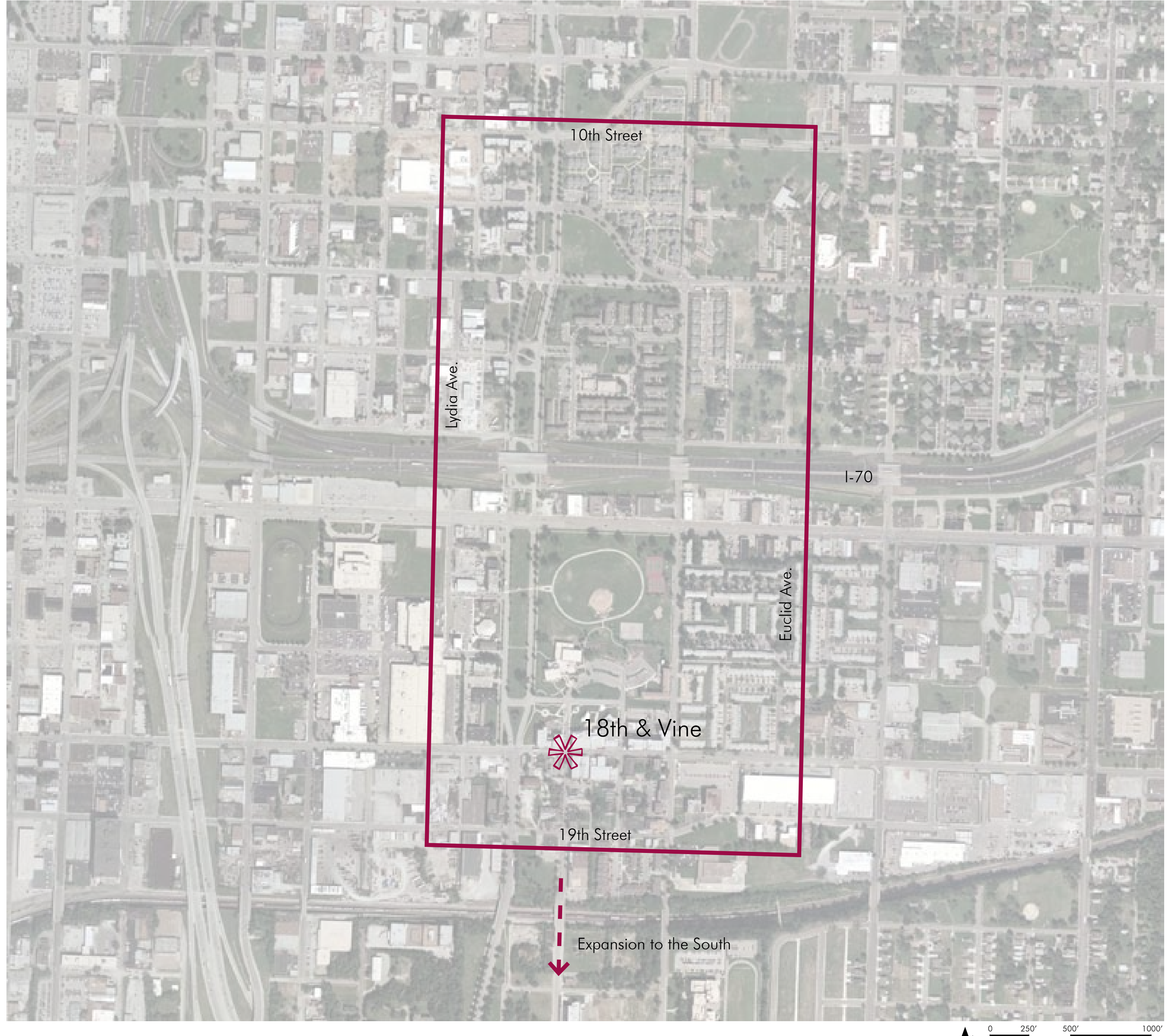


Figure 4.23: Vine District Historic Boundaries - Shirmer

Figure 4.24: Kansas City Neighborhood Map

Figure 4.25: Downtown Council/ Jazz District Redevelopment Focus Area

- Infrastructure:

The infrastructure of the area has played a vital role in the development, decline, and redevelopment of the 18th and Vine neighborhood. During the height of 18th and Vine streetcars and the design of the Paseo reinforced the commercial district along 18th Street and provided access from all over the City. The construction of I-70 and US-71 during the decline of this neighborhood physically removed many street connections to the north and east. Time has also seen destruction of several bridges across the rail tracks to the south of the main commercial district that once served both pedestrians and vehicles alike. While large areas of property have experienced demolition and vacancy, much of the infrastructure of the area including the streets has been preserved. In addition to the streets and highways that provide transportation to and from the neighborhood, KCATA has four bus lines that provide public transportation within the area around 18th and Vine (figure 4.26). The 108 Indiana route provides connections between the heart of the 18th and Vine District to the Crossroads to the west, Downtown to the northwest, and to the area around Swope Pkwy and 51st Street to the south. The 110 Woodland/Brooklyn route connects the center of 18th and Vine with Downtown and the City Market to the north and to the area around 44th Street and Brooklyn Ave. to the south. The 71 Prospect route travels through the north of Parade Park along Truman Rd. and connects to Downtown Kansas City, the Linwood Shopping Center, and travels south along Prospect. The 123-23rd Street route connects 19th Street in the 18th and Vine area to Union Station and Crown Center to the west and Blue Valley to the east.

- Retail:

Retail has been at the center of the redevelopment efforts of the 18th and Vine district. In the six block area directly around 18th and Vine there is 18,982 square feet of retail/entertainment space available within new buildings, and 28,090 square feet of retail/entertainment space available within historic buildings. Within the main retail strip along 18th Street there are four vacant lots that would accommodate additional retail/entertainment totaling 37,345 square feet including a lot on the corner of 18th and Vine. Occupied retail/entertainment space in the district includes; The American Jazz Museum, Negro League Baseball Museum, the Blue Room, KC Jazz & Juke House, KC Friends of Alvin Alley, The Kansas City Call, the Gem Theater, and Harper's Restaurant. Arthur Bryant's Barbeque restaurant is located one block west of the main retail strip at Brooklyn and 18th Street.

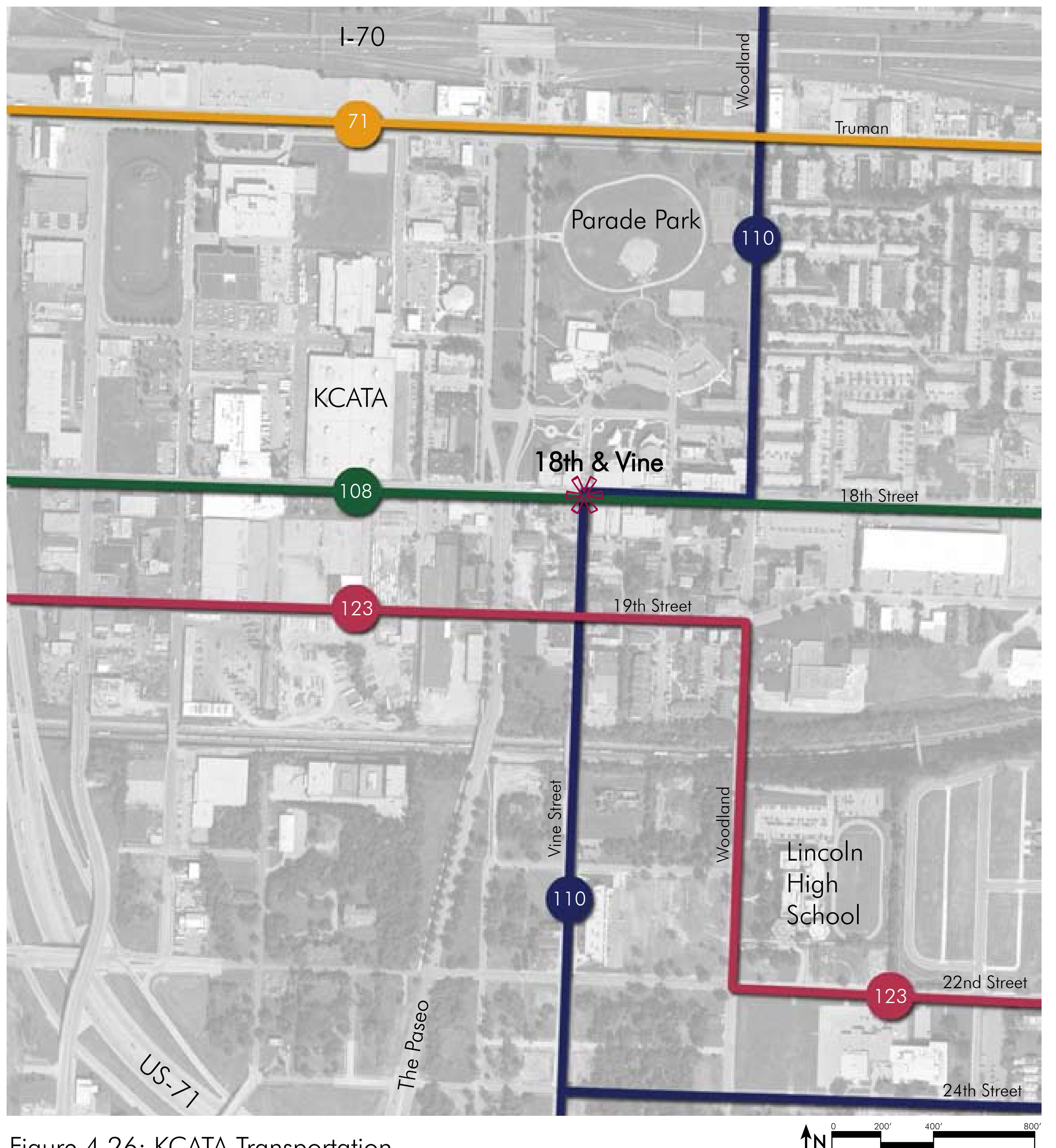


Figure 4.26: KCATA Transportation

Bus Line Key

71 Prospect

110 Woodland/Brooklyn

108 Indiana

123 23rd Street

Figure 4.27: Cultural Institutions

- Cultural Facilities

Cultural facilities and community organizations have played a vital roll throughout the history of 18th in Vine in creating a vibrant neighborhood. These facilities serve the community by providing support to community members and advocating change within the area. The Lincoln Building has served, and continues to serve, as the center of political organization and activism within the community. The many community organizations and cultural facilities existing in the area include; six churches, three schools, the museum complex, the Urban Community Leadership Academy, The Urban League, Full Employment Council, the Black Chamber of Commerce, the future Buck O'Neil Research Center, the Greg Community Center, the Mutual Musicians Foundation, the Black Archives of Mid-America (under construction), the KC Friends of Alvin Alley, and the Kansas City Call Paper (figure 4.27).

-Employment:

-Over 34,000 employees work within a 1 mile radius of 18th and Vine
-Nearby major employers include:
KC Area Transportation Authority
Children's Mercy Hospital
Truman Medical Center

- Education:

-In immediate area within half-mile walking distance:
Lincoln High School and Lincoln College Predatory Academy
-located at 22nd and Woodland
-historic building on hill/ landmark for area

Western Baptist Bible College
-located at 22nd and Tracy Ave.
-2 historic buildings (one vacant)
Attucks School
-located at 19th and Woodland
-National Registration of Historic Places/ original section constructed in 1905
-currently vacant
-planed to be redeveloped in partnership with the University of Missouri Kansas City as a charter school and a University jazz conservatory program
Manual School
-located at Troost and Truman
-former high school
-currently vacant

-Within 1 mile of intersection of 18th and Vine:
UMKC School of Medicine
UMKC School of Dentistry
KC University of Medicine and Biosciences

- Property Ownership:

A wide variety of property owners are involved with the redevelopment of 18th and Vine. Some of the major property owners around 18th and Vine include the 18th and Vine Redevelopment Corp., Belger Realty Company, Inc., Black Economic Union of KC, ECC Vine St. Real Estate Acquisition LLC, City of Kansas City, Historic District Housing, Jazz District Commercial LLC, Jazz District Redevelopment Co., KC Area Transportation Auth., Sands Realty Company Inc., School District of KCMO, Williams Communications Inc., and Parade Park Homes, Inc. (figure 4.28). The largest owner is by far the city of Kansas City which owns over 92 acres of parks, schools, vacant property, and the KCATA in the immediate area (figure 4.29).

Large amounts of property are vacant in the area around 18th and Vine (figure 4.30). Nearly all of the former residential area directly south of the railroad tracks between Hospital Hill and 18th and Vine is vacant. These vacant areas, nearly entirely wiped out with the construction of US-71, have become largely overgrown and full of trash. While Vine Street Real Estate Acquisitions own large amounts of the vacant land east of the Paseo and the city owns nearly all of the vacant property along the Paseo, a majority of the vacant land is owned by a variety of property owners.

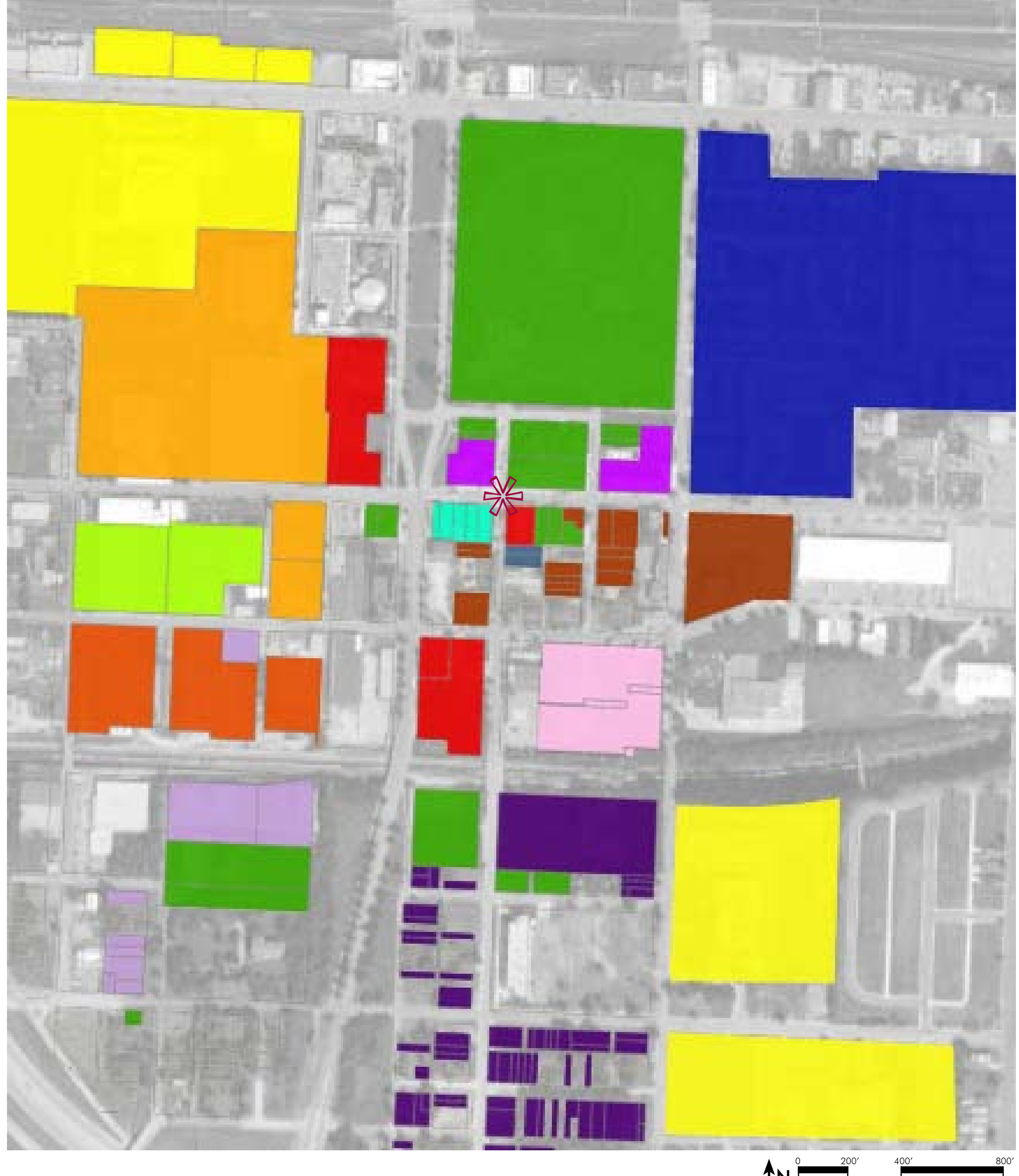


Figure 4.28: Major Property Owners

Major Property Owners

- 18th & Vine Redevelopment Corp.
- Belger Realty Company, Inc.
- Black Economic Union of KC
- City of Kansas City
- ECC Vine St. Real Estate Acquisition LLC
- Historic District Housing
- Jazz District Associates LP
- Jazz District Commercial LLC
- Jazz District Redevelopment Co.
- KC Area Transportation Auth.
- Sands Realty Company INC
- School District of KCMO
- Williams Communications INC.
- Parade Park Homes, Inc.

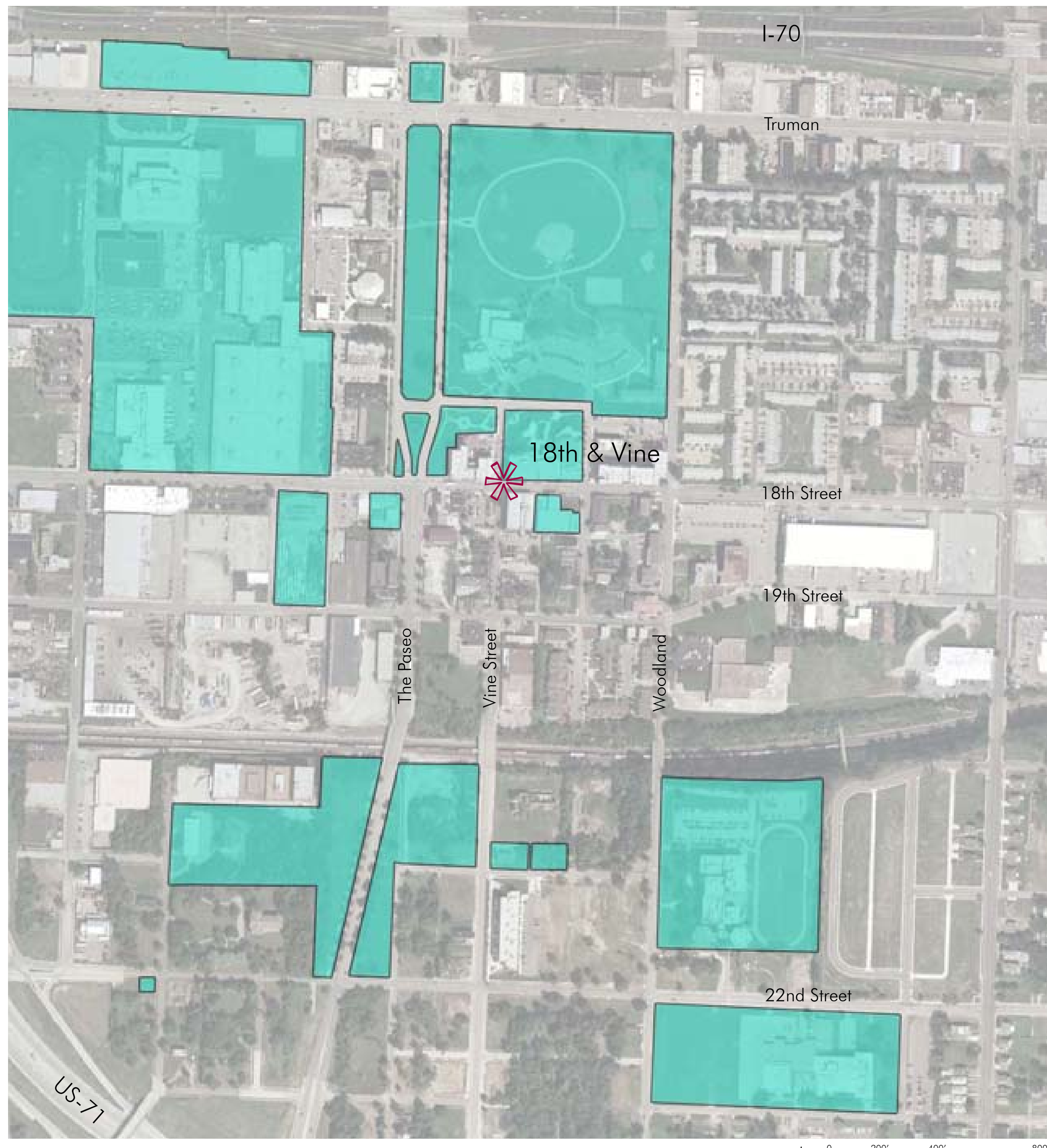


Figure 4.29: Public Owned Property

18th & Vine

Figure 4.30: Vacant Property

- Land Use:

The land use around 18th and Vine has changed greatly since the height of the community. Due largely to the ‘urban renewal’ policies and displacement the current residential areas are segmented and isolated by large amounts of industrial areas (figure 4.31).

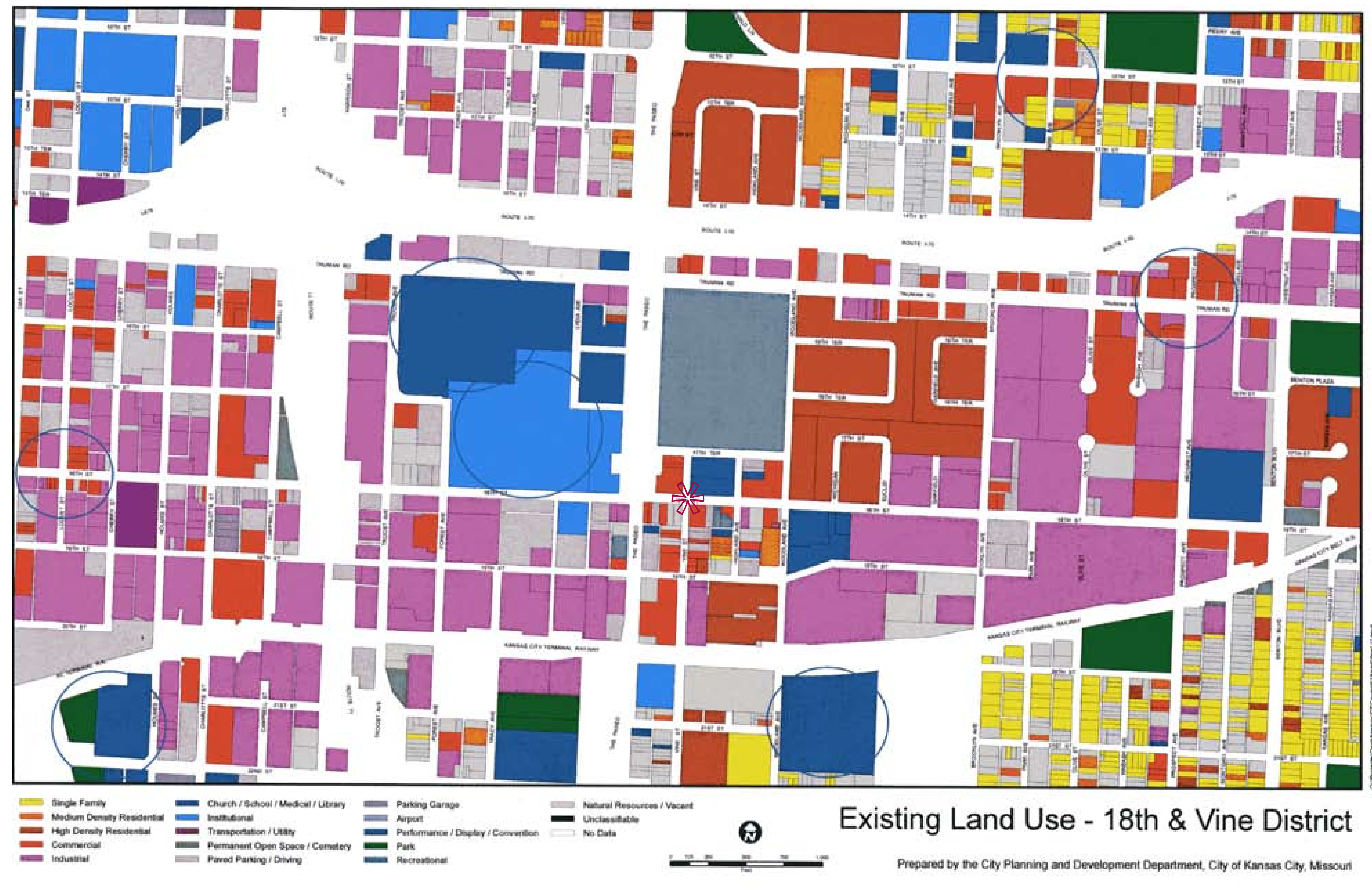


Figure 4.31: Existing Land Use

-Visual/Pedestrian Character:

During the height of 18th and Vine the neighborhood was known for its lively street scene full of pedestrians. The loss of density, dispersion of the population, and decline of the central commercial district caused a great deal of decay in the pedestrian environment and visual character of the community (figures 4.32-4.34). The absence of pedestrians has created a situation where the most vital transportation method in the community has been the car. The most visible aspect of the decline is found in the decay of pedestrian crossings to the south over the railroad tracks (figure 4.35). The redevelopment has tried to bring back much of the same aesthetic qualities through the facades and signage on the new buildings along 18th Street that were once present (figure 4.36). Even with this redevelopment the pedestrian environment and aesthetic qualities are largely disconnected from the rest of Kansas City.

Figure 4.32: 19th and Vine: Historical Image (Kansas City Star 1929)- Present Photo: Deterioration (taken by author)

Figure 4.33: 18th and Vine Historical Image (University of Missouri Special Collection)

Figure 4.34: Present Intersection of 18th and Vine (taken by author)

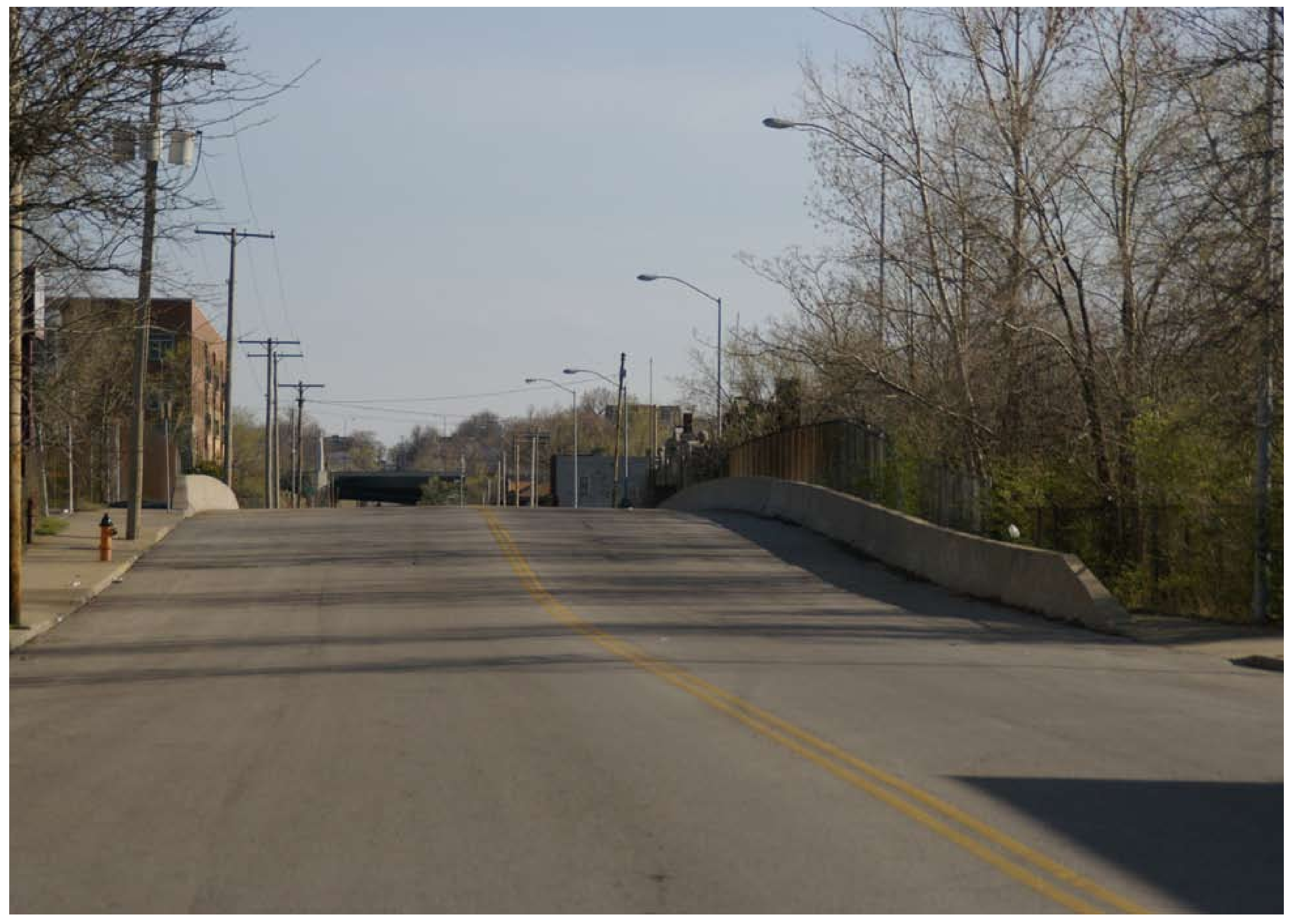


Figure 4.35: Pedestrian Connection across railroad tracks on Vine Street (taken by author)

Figure 4.36: Current Visual/ Pedestrian Character (taken by author)

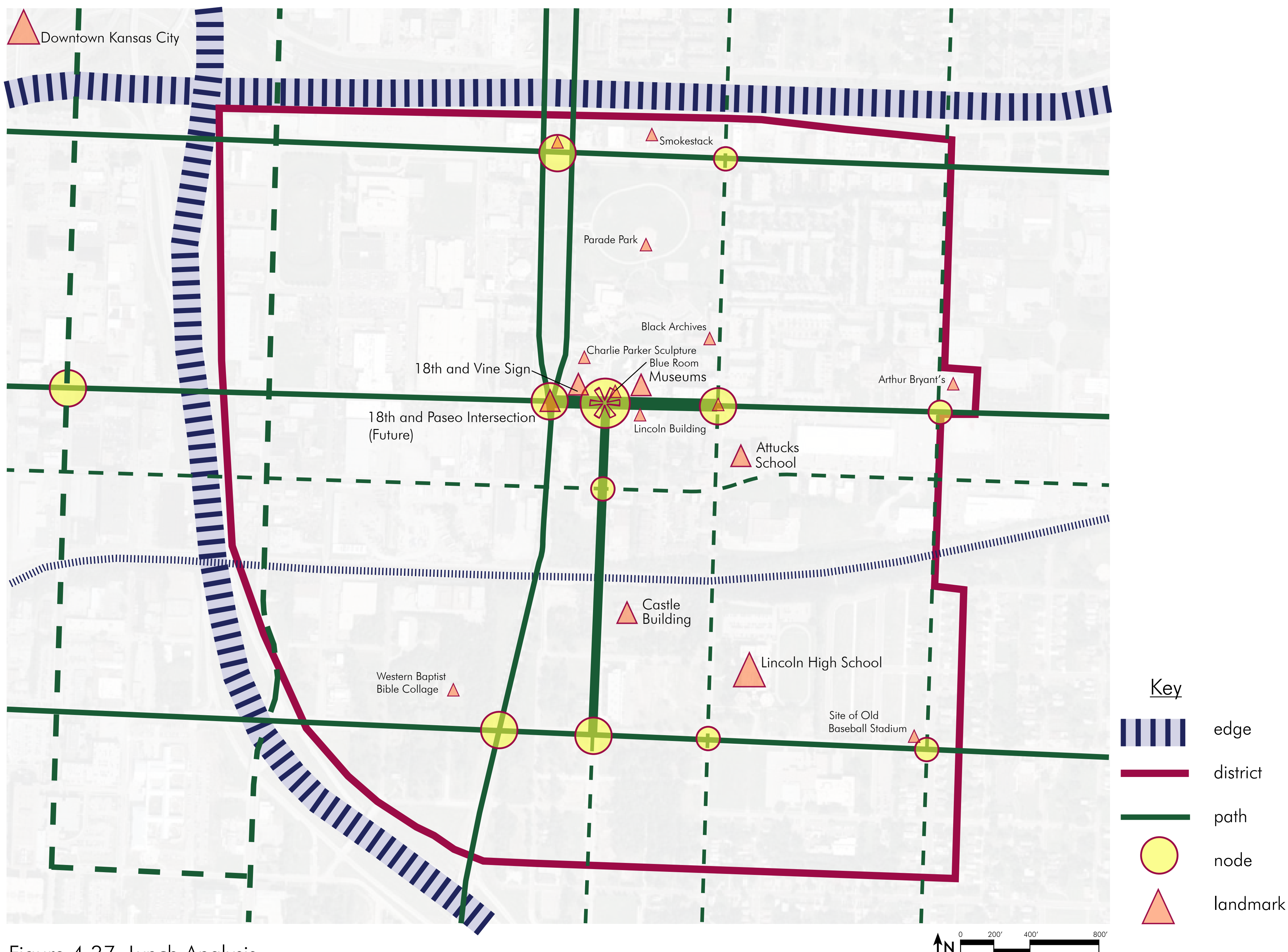


Figure 4.37: Lynch Analysis

-Synthesis/ Lynch Analysis:

The physical aspects of 18th and Vine have been a vital part in the history of development in this once vibrant community. The context, boundaries, infrastructure, cultural facilities, physical redevelopment attempts, property ownership, land use, and visual/ pedestrian character are elements that need to be addressed in order for future development to succeed. To better understand these physical elements it is useful to look at them in the context of Kevin Lynch's work "The Image of the City." Lynch uses the elements of paths, edges, nodes, landmarks, and districts to analysis specific areas within cities. Using these elements for analyzing the physical aspects of the 18th and Vine neighborhood can lead to an improved understanding of how the physical elements within the neighborhood work and how to formulate a more clear definition of the neighborhood (figure 4.37).

Paths: Paths are the channels along which people move throughout the neighborhood. These paths also serve to connect specific features within the community. The path most prominent in the 18th and Vine neighborhood runs from the Paseo to Woodland along 18th Street. This path is the center of the retail area in the neighborhood and represents what most visitors perceive when they think of 18th and Vine. Vine Street from 18th Street to 22nd street represents the historic spine that once held the community together and is pivotal to the experience of pedestrians entering the commercial district from the south. The Paseo, 18th Street, 22nd Street, and Truman Rd. represent the paths most people use when coming to and leaving the neighborhood. These streets represent the first impression and last impression many visitors get of the area surrounding the main retail/ entertainment district located at 18th and Vine.

Edges: Edges represent linear elements that create boundaries between places. While the edges of the 18th and Vine area used to be defined by race they are now mostly defined by highways. The highways I-70 and US-71 create significant edges that are difficult for the community to expand beyond. The construction of these highways closed a large number of streets that used to connect the neighborhood to the areas to the north and west. The railroad tracks represent a minor edge to the neighborhood as they limit pedestrian and vehicular traffic to the south, but to a far less extent than the highways to the north and west.

Nodes: Lynch describes nodes as the strategic points in a city into which an observer can enter. These nodes often become the destination or the identifying factor within neighborhoods. The nodes also tend to be centers of activity within the city. The most vital node in the 18th and Vine neighborhood is the actual intersection of 18th and Vine. When visitors enter this node they often feel as if they arrived at the location of Kansas City Jazz. The junctions of the main streets that run through the neighborhood also serve as nodes and are often centers of activity.

Landmarks: Landmarks are physical elements of the city that serve as point-references that can be easily identified. The primary landmarks visible from the 18th and Vine District are downtown Kansas City and Lincoln High School. The view of downtown to the northwest from the area creates a sense of direction and place within the city. Lincoln High School serves as an imposing structure up on a hill that links the area to the south of the railroad tracks to the retail/ entertainment center to the north. The new 18th and Vine sign at 18th and the Paseo promises to be a landmark that will make the district visible from large portions of Kansas City. The 18th and Vine area also has many local landmarks such as the museums, Parade Park, the castle building to the south, and Arthur Bryant's to the east.

Districts: Lynch describes districts as sections of the city which observers can mentally enter into. These districts usually have a common/identifying character. When entering into the 18th and Vine area it is difficult to identify when one has entered the actual 18th and Vine district. Using the edges made up of the highways, the main paths and nodes, and the landmarks that link the area together it is possible to draw the boundary of the district at roughly I-70 to the north, US-71 to the west, 24th Street to the south, and Brooklyn Ave. to the east. These boundaries and the sense of the district in these areas are not very clear for the case of 18th and Vine.

- Constraints/ Opportunities:

The recent redevelopment of the 18th and Vine area has taken advantage of many physical opportunities but has also been limited by constraints. The redevelopment has seized on the opportunities of vacant land, historic context, and existing infrastructure to create infill cultural, retail, and residential facilities in the center of the district. In analyzing the present physical aspects of 18th and Vine many constraints and opportunities present themselves. A large number of the constraints can also be viewed as opportunities. These constraints and opportunities can help identify the problems limiting the redevelopment of the district while highlighting areas for future redevelopment.

Constraints (figure 4.38):

-Barriers created by highways, railroads, and large industrial areas limit the expansion of the 18th and Vine District.

-The lack of a clear boundary or edge (figures 4.23-4.25) creates a situation where the entry of the neighborhood is difficult to perceive.

-The large number of property owners (figure 4.28) creates an atmosphere where a variety of competing interests exist and large scale redevelopment is difficult.

-The large amount of publicly owned property in the area limits the private development around the 18th and Vine area.

-The vacant property creates an atmosphere of disconnect and decay within the community.

-Deteriorating pedestrian and aesthetic conditions (figures 4.32-4.36) form an environment where the perception of a lack of safety and decaying neighborhood is prominent. The deteriorating conditions also create disconnect both within the neighborhood and to the remainder of Kansas City.

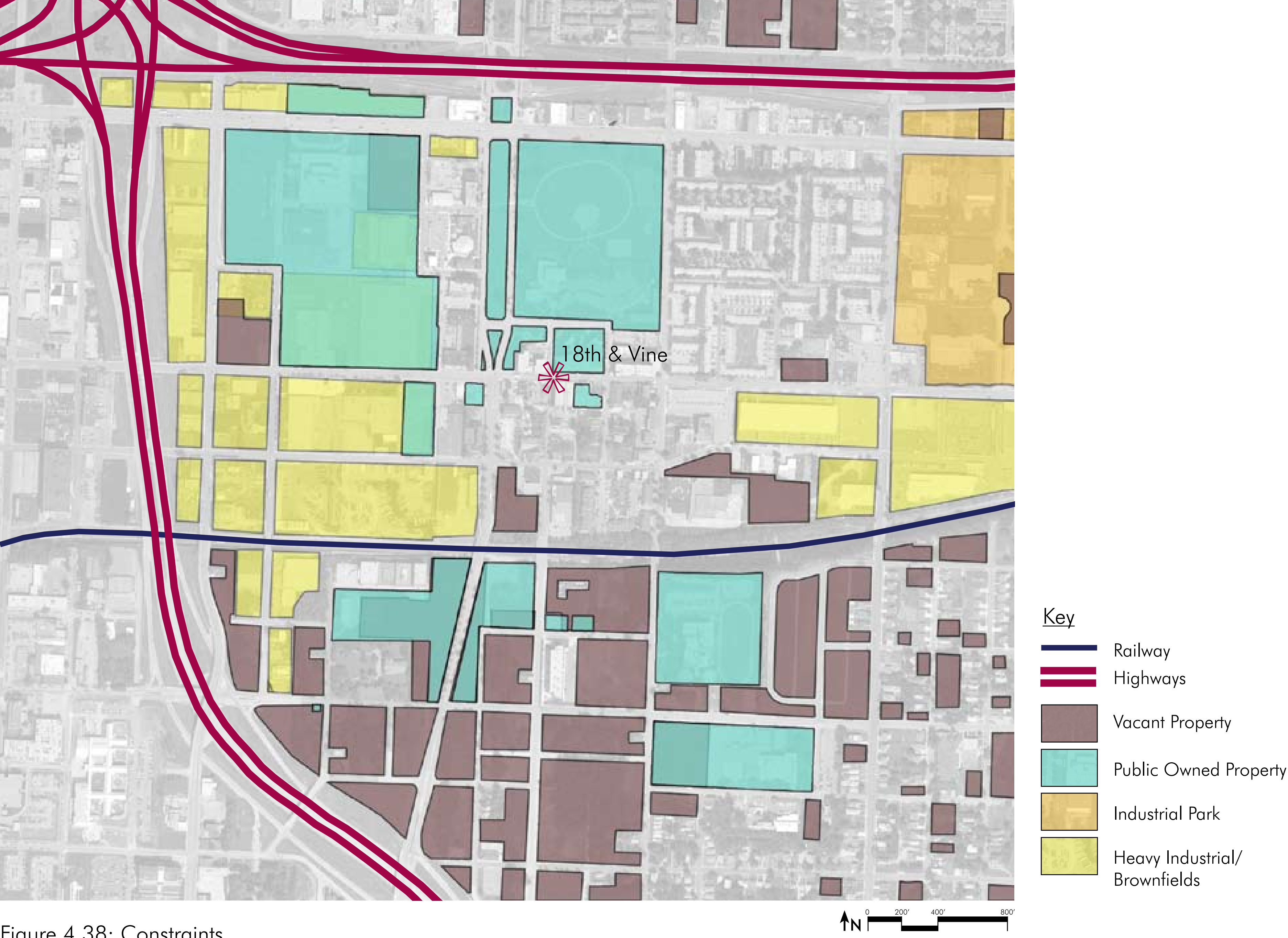


Figure 4.38: Constraints

Opportunities (figure 4.39):

-The 18th and Vine area is located near downtown Kansas City which is experiencing a revival. This makes redevelopment more likely as the city focuses on the center.

-The large number of cultural institutions present in the 18th and Vine area create a sense of support within the community and can come together forming a cohesive plan and vision to lead redevelopment efforts.

-In the area there are large amounts of land available for redevelopment.
The large amounts of public owned property including property managed by the Parks Department and the School District can be opened up for redevelopment or can be reused with new functions.
The vacant land presents opportunities to develop new retail along 18th Street and housing elsewhere.
The KCATA which is switching from a primarily bus service to a more multi-modal transit strategy can be potentially consolidated and free up land along 18th Street. The numerous industrial sites also have the potential of Brownfield redevelopment.

-While I-70, US-71, and the railroad present significant barriers they also create opportunities for improved pedestrian connections. The development of the John "Buck" O'Neil Center on the east side of the Paseo creates an opportunity to improve the pedestrian connections across the Paseo.

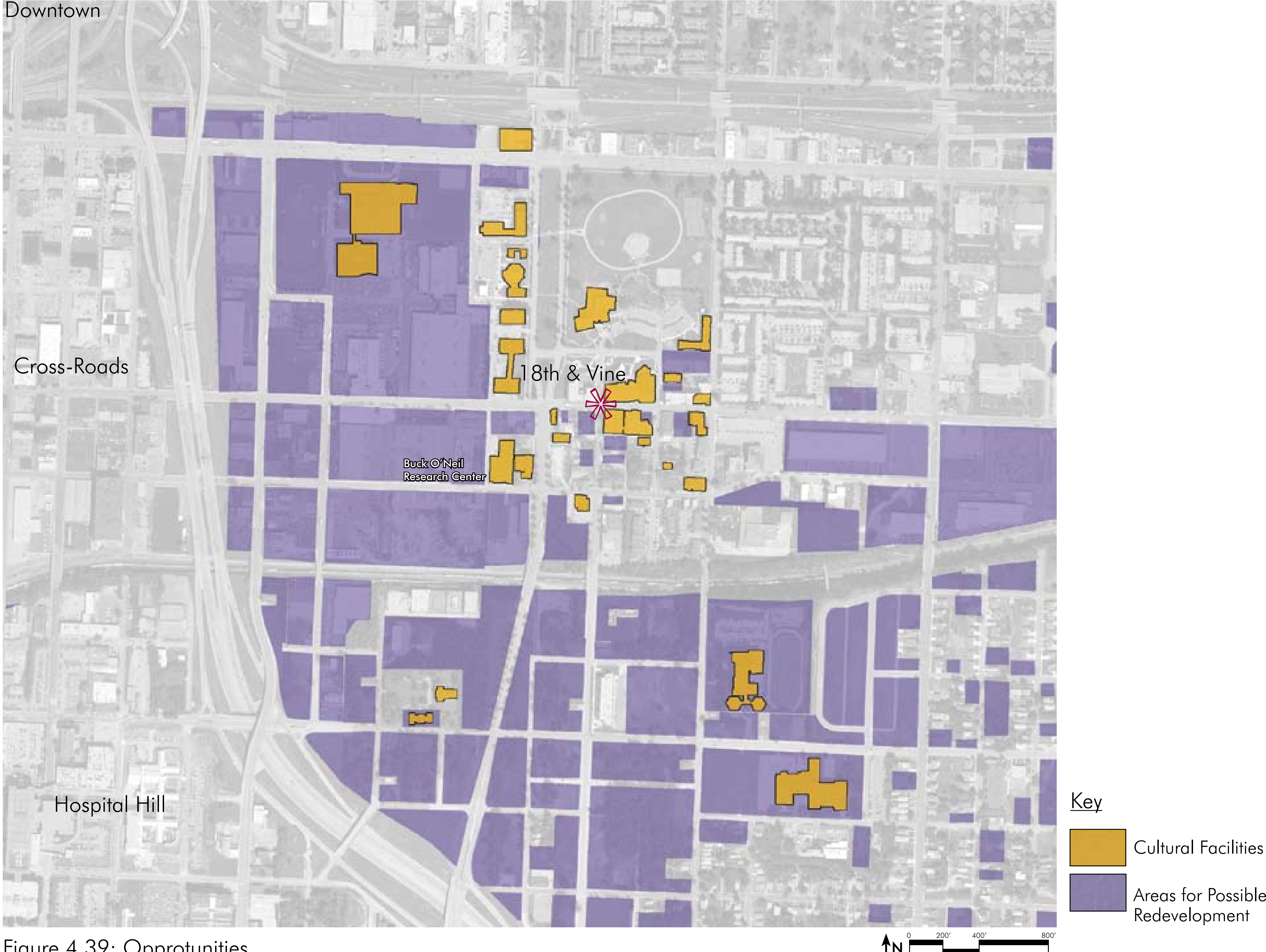


Figure 4.39: Opprotunities

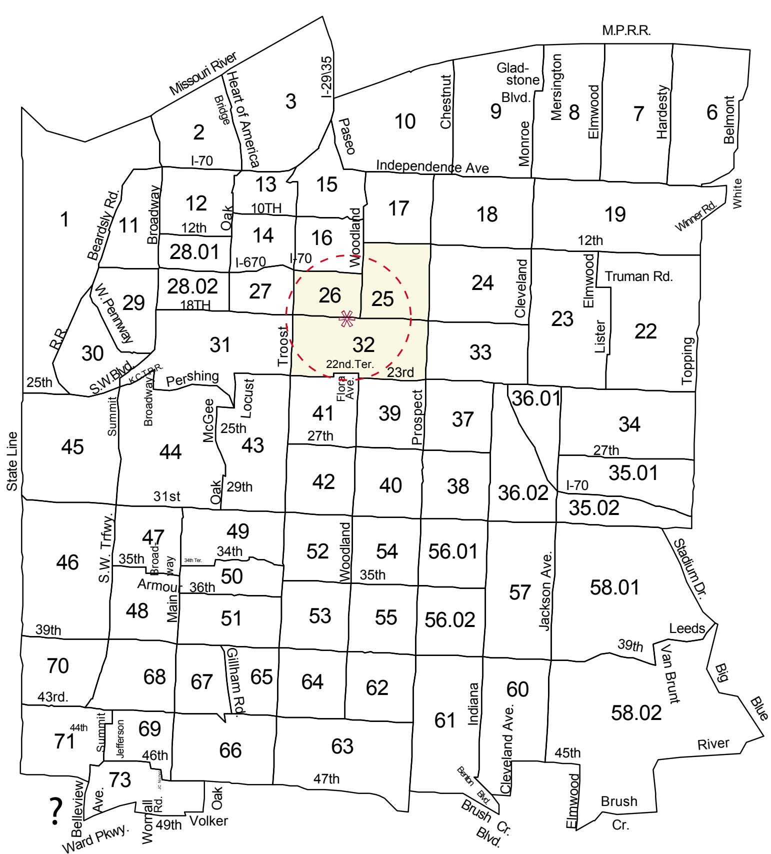
C. Present Social Aspects

The 18th and Vine district was once a vibrant center for social interaction with clubs, dances, and high density community interactions. With the increase in poverty and the decrease in residents the social aspects of this once cohesive community also declined. The present social aspects of the 18th and Vine area after the redevelopment attempts still have a long way to go in order to create a social atmosphere that is similar to what existed in the community during the time of forced segregation.

The current demographics of 18th and Vine show how a community after the end of forced segregation can become more racially segregated. The population in 1920 during the height of jazz and the 18th and Vine district was at 7,403 with only 73 % of that being black. The current population of the 18th and Vine area today is around 2,192 with over 91% being black (Claritas 2007) (figure 4.40). The area around 18th and Vine also became poverty ridden after the end of forced segregation and 'urban renewal' policies forced many middle-class residents out of the area. The pattern of urban decline and increased poverty has started to change with the addition of nearly 300 more residential units with recent development (Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation 2008). The current median household income is near $46,049 (Clartis 2007).

The high poverty levels, the demographics of the place, and the physical condition of the place have led many to perceive the area around 18th and Vine as being crime ridden. While the perception of crime in the area prevents many in the community from visiting the neighborhood and prevents others from moving into the area the Kansas City total crime statistics show that the area around 18th and Vine has similar levels of crime as the rest of downtown (figure 4.41). Areas to the north of 18th and Vine and areas to the south close to the Country Club Plaza have higher crime rates, but often do not receive the stigma that is associated with the 18th and Vine Area.

Attempts of redevelopment have focused on creating a social environment around an appreciation for jazz. While the community still lacks many social opportunities due to a lack of population the redevelopment attempts are progressively making the situation more social. Several large social gathering events take place in 18th and Vine every year. The largest celebration, the Rhythm & Ribs Jazz Fest is held every June attracting some of the best jazz artists while allowing the community to be social and enjoy great food.



Census Tract Demographics - 2007

Census Tract	Population (Race and Ethnic Background)									Population (Age in Years)								Total Households	Median Household Income	Total Families	Housing Units
			Non-Hispanic																		
	Total	Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	White Alone	Black/ African American Alone	American Indian Alone	Asian Alone	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Alone	Other	Two or more races	0 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 to 17	18 to 20	21 to 64	65 and over	Median Age				
25.00	1,511	26	75	1,384	7	12	0	15	18	98	104	91	65	47	922	184	40.1	718	31,282	390	776
26.00	30	3	8	22	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	4	0	1	20	0	32.5	6	75,000	6	15
32.00	651	12	16	585	0	2	0	5	43	57	56	52	23	35	357	71	32.3	268	31,864	181	363
Total 18th and Vine Area	2,192	41	99	1,991	7	14	0	20	61	159	161	147	88	83	1,299	255	35.0	992	46,049	577	1,154
Jackson County, MO	664,655	47,444	458,810	153,810	3,303	8,568	1,109	21,156	17,899	49,659	45,302	44,388	27,735	25,336	389,408	82,827		273,256		170,487	304,552

SOURCE:
Claritas, Inc.

Figure 4.40: 2007 Demographic Data (Claritas)

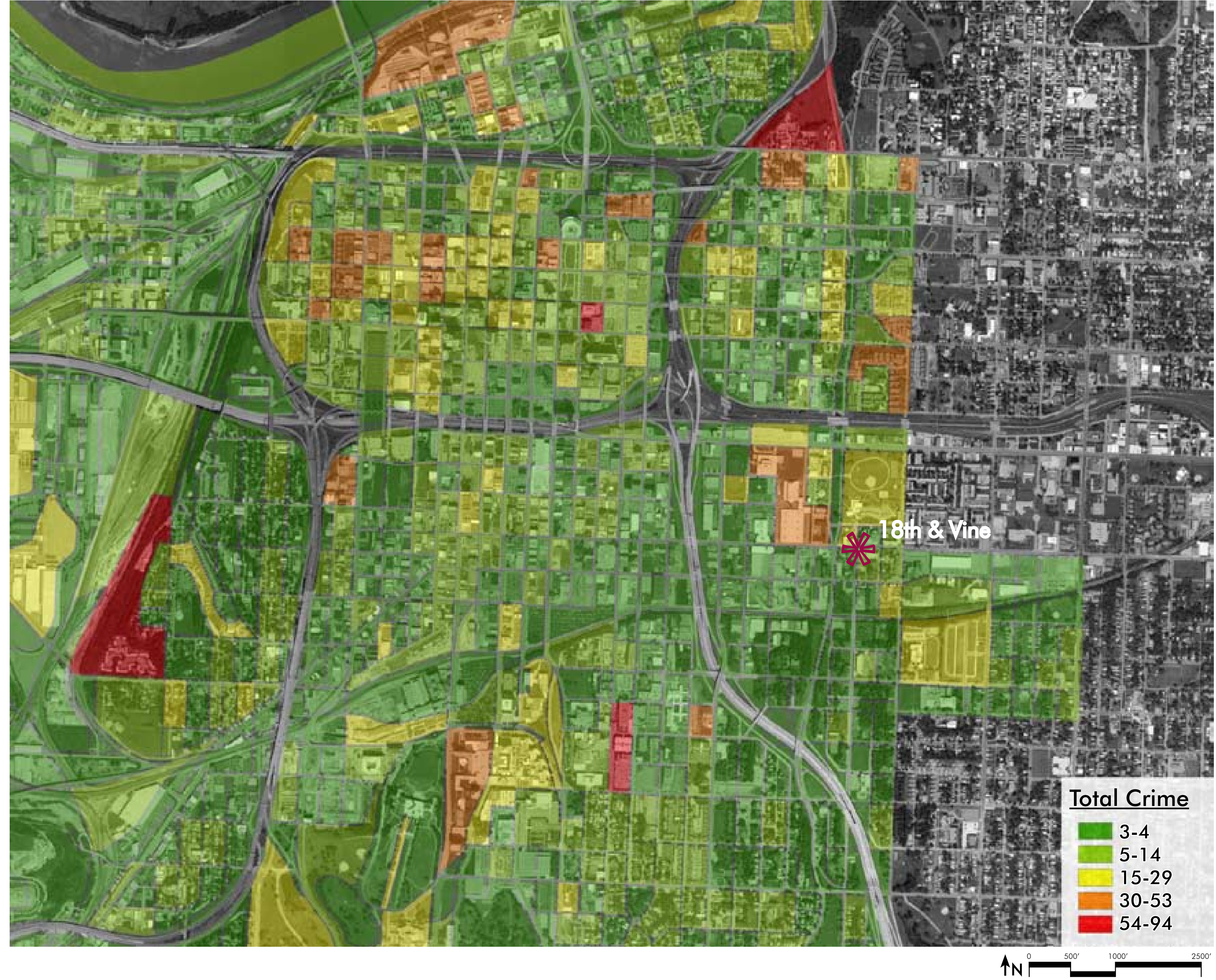


Figure 4.41: Kansas City Crime

Defining the Problems

V. Defining the Problems

The redevelopment has failed to achieve many of its early goals. Including the main goal of returning the 18th and Vine area into a vibrant district by emulating the historical and cultural elements of the past. Drawing from the literature review on African American community development, the case studies of Overtown and Beale Street, and the historical and present day conditions of 18th and Vine it is possible to identify many issues that are serving as limits to the successful redevelopment of the district. The cultural, physical, and social aspects of 18th and Vine lead to an increased understanding of the problems facing this community in its redevelopment.

A. Cultural Aspects

-Vivid remembrance of the height of 18th and Vine as being vice ridden and an area used to reinforce stereotypes of the black community during forced segregation.

-Competing visions among the wide assortment of community organizations and political forces within the redevelopment

-Marketing strategy that focuses on vacant retail rather than life and culture within community

B. Physical Aspects

-Lack of People/Displacement
- Substantial reduction in total population living in area
- Loss and lack of focus on middle class and older blacks
- Increased poverty levels within the population
- Loss of employment opportunities/ People working in area
- Diminished access via transit (tourists)
- Lack of amenities for tourists (hotels, convenience stores)

-Loss of institutions
- Neighborhood services
- City services

-Limitations of area
- Barriers to development

-Lack of visual/ pedestrian comfort

C. Social Aspects

-Perception of lack of safety/ high amounts of crime in area

-Lack of social activities and bonds that develop from everyday life

Future Development

VI. Future Development

Redevelopment of the 18th and Vine area has seen a renewed focus over the past several years. The future development of this community is vital to producing a vibrant and sustainable neighborhood. Learning from the study on African American community development, the case studies, and aspects of 18th and Vine leads to the development of strategies to address the future development. These strategies can then be physically manifested into alternative frameworks guiding future development.

A. Strategies

The understanding of the cultural, physical, and social aspects and issues standing in the way of successful development of 18th and Vine allows for the development of future strategies to overcome these barriers. These strategies address the major lessons learned in the literature review on African American Community Development, in the case studies of Overtown and Beale Street, and the aspects of 18th and Vine itself. These lessons include a need to utilize community organizations, encourage residential empowerment, encourage middle class black migration, limit the negative effects of gentrification, limit displacement, encourage home ownership and residential development, not focus entirely on history, create a diverse atmosphere and culture, encourage black owned businesses, improve street atmosphere, readdress marketing strategies, focus on community institutions, and improve perception of area. Several socio-economic strategies can be addressed by local community and city leaders that can address these lessons and enhance the ability of the district to redevelop. Many physical strategies to improving the neighborhood also exist and can be developed into alternative frameworks to guide future design.

Socio-Economic Strategies:

-Readdress the marketing approach of area to focus more on culture rather than vacant property

-Expand the focus and cultural aspects beyond just Jazz to create a place that has the ability to draw a wider audience and recognize how culture is constantly evolving

-Promote community organizations in supporting the community and creating a common vision forward for future development

-Strive to create a culture that not only mimics the past but is also intertwined with present day black culture

-Implement policies that encourage migration to area
- Encourage migration by black middle class
- Increase employment opportunities
- Encourage home ownership and a multi-class community
- Limit the negative effects of gentrification, specifically displacement

-Adopt a strategy of economic self-sufficiency rather than complete tourism base economy
- Encourage the development of local black owned businesses and institutions that provide services for residents of community
- Implementation of neo-bohemian strategies that use music, art, and culture as the base for the economy

-Promote eyes on the street
    Street performers, street vendors, etc.

-Reinforce the community support infrastructure that encourages community members to look after fellow community members and strives to limit displacement

-Increase number of institutions that serve the community such as:
    Post offices
    Libraries
    Not for profits
    Convenience stores

Physical Strategies:

-Provide increased housing numbers and types within the neighborhood
    High density within the main six blocks of 18th & Vine
    Medium density single family housing to the south

-Create space for music, art, and culture to thrive

-Use historical examples as inspiration for new design in order to retain culture

-Improve streetscape and pedestrian connections to reduce perception of lack of safety and increase walkability

-Increase access to public transportation

B. Alternative Frameworks

From the strategies, dealing with the socio-economic and physical elements within the community, alternative frameworks have been developed to guide future physical development of the 18th and Vine area. While these frameworks are important to physically address the strategies, community and city leaders must also recognize the policy decisions that must be made to adequately realize the strategies. The alternative frameworks serve as the physical manifestation of the strategies and include strengthening the nine block core, expanding to the south, and expanding to the west (figure 6.1). Each of these frameworks addresses the redevelopment of the 18th and Vine area with a different focus area. The strengthening the nine block core strategy focuses on revitalizing the center of the community. The focus of the expanding to the south strategy is creating a successful residential neighborhood. Connections to downtown Kansas City is the main focus of the expanding to the west strategy. For the redevelopment of 18th and Vine to be successful the addressing of all of these frameworks may be necessary, but it is important to start on one framework and focus on all aspects of that framework.

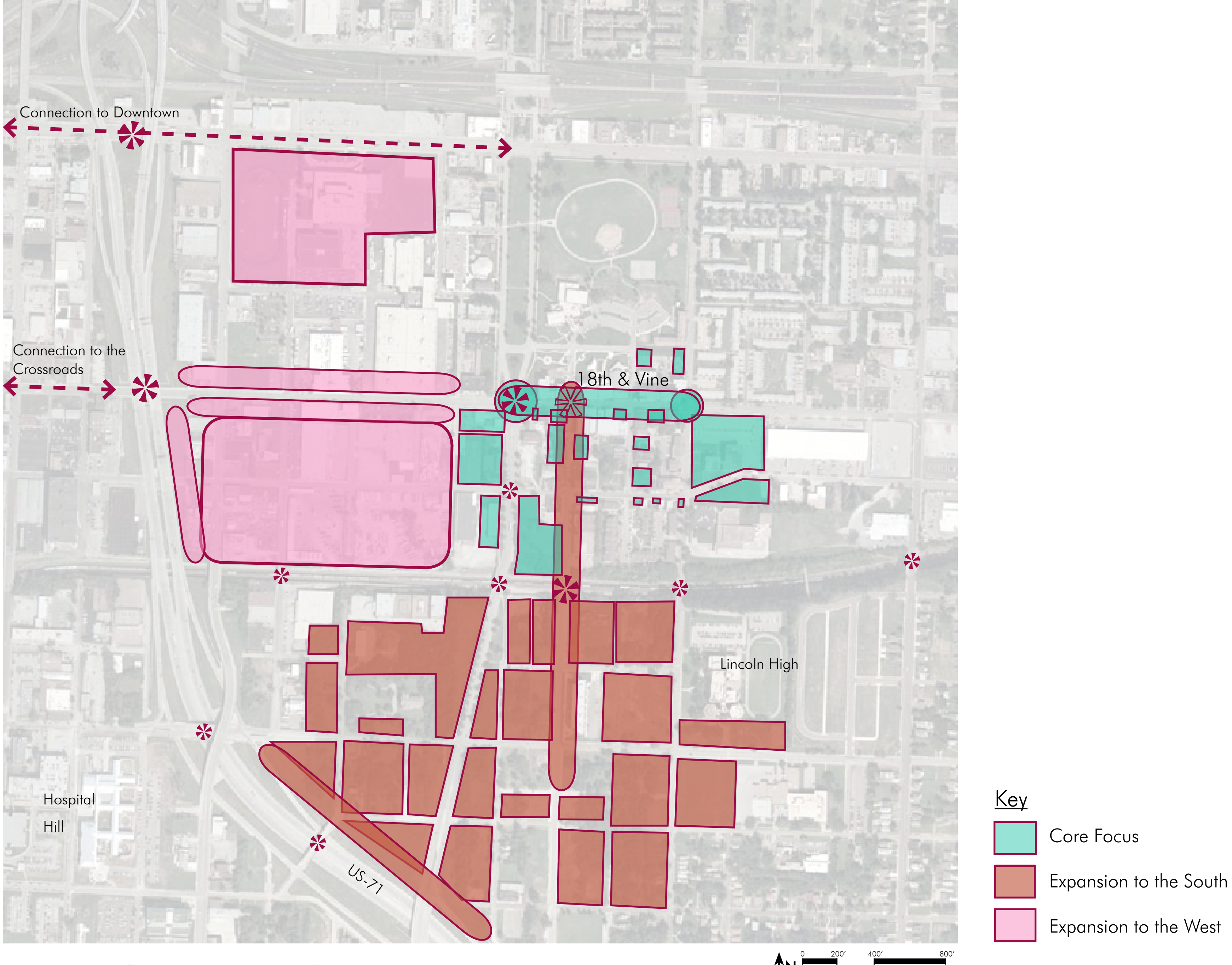


Figure 6.1: Alternative Frameworks

-Strengthening the nine block core (figure 6.2):

Focus on sense of place and retail along 18th Street

Focus on improving and increasing street life and pedestrian environment along 18th Street

Infill high density residential in vacant areas

Readdress intersection of the Paseo and 18th street to create more focus on retail strip and improve pedestrian crossings

Address identification of area main retail strip and district edges

Address tourism concerns such as lack of hotels/ parking

The strengthening of the nine block core requires a strategy that addresses the social and physical concerns with the redevelopment activities. Development in the core should focus on creating a sense of place and increase retail along 18th Street. City and community leaders should focus on filling existing retail areas and infilling retail in the vacant lots along the street. A focus on improving and increasing street life and the pedestrian environment along 18th Street is vital. Traffic calming strategies, improved street crossings, wider sidewalks, and walkability standards are means of improving the pedestrian environment. For the successful redevelopment of the core area of 18th and Vine there is also a need to readdress the intersection of the Paseo and 18th street to focus more on the retail strip and to improve pedestrian crossings. The intersection redesign must restore the Paseo as a means to reinforce the retail along the street instead of bypassing the area. With the proposed "Buck" O'Neil Center on the west side of the Paseo improved pedestrian connections across the Paseo are needed to link to the rest of the core of the 18th and Vine area. The creation of identification elements and sense of place within the core area is important. Hotels and increased parking are necessary within the core to increase the number of people and attract visitors. High density residential infill like the new housing developments should continue to infill vacant areas creating a cohesive environment.

Figure 6.2: Core Focus

-Expanding to the south (figure 6.3):

Focus along Vine Street

Restore residential neighborhood primarily single-family housing

Encourage cultural and community facilities along Vine Street supporting the residential neighborhood to the south

Improve pedestrian connections across rail lines and US-71

Take advantage of proximity to Hospital Hill

By expanding to the south the 18th and Vine district can restore a residential neighborhood that supports the core and reestablishes a residential neighborhood. City and Community leaders should focus on turning the vacant land into a multi class residential neighborhood. The creation of a neighborhood can be achieved using a variety of housing types from high density single family houses to apartment buildings. The focus of this framework should be on Vine Street as the center of the residential neighborhood and to provide connections to 18th Street. Cultural and community facilities should be redeveloped in the historic buildings along Vine Street in order to enhance the prominence of the street and provide a center to the new neighborhood. To successfully create a neighborhood that is linked to the core the pedestrian connections across the rail lines need to be improved. The neighborhood should also take advantage of the workers and students at Hospital Hill and improve pedestrian connections across US-71.

Figure 6.3: Expansion to the South

-Expanding to the west (figure 6.4):

Renew connections with downtown and the Cross-Roads along 18th Street and Truman Road

Redevelop large industrial areas along these two streets into residential area

Find alternative use for the Manuel School

Find funding for completion of John "Buck" O'Neil Research Center

Improve direct public transportation with downtown Kansas City

Expansion to the west is needed to reconnect the 18th and Vine district to downtown Kansas City and the Cross-Roads. The improved connections should be focused along 18th Street and Truman Road. To improve these connections redevelopment of the large industrial areas is necessary. City leaders must also find a use for the Manuel School which takes up a large portion of the area west of Parade Park and is currently vacant. Due to the new MAX line and the proximity to downtown pedestrian connections need to be improved underneath US-71.

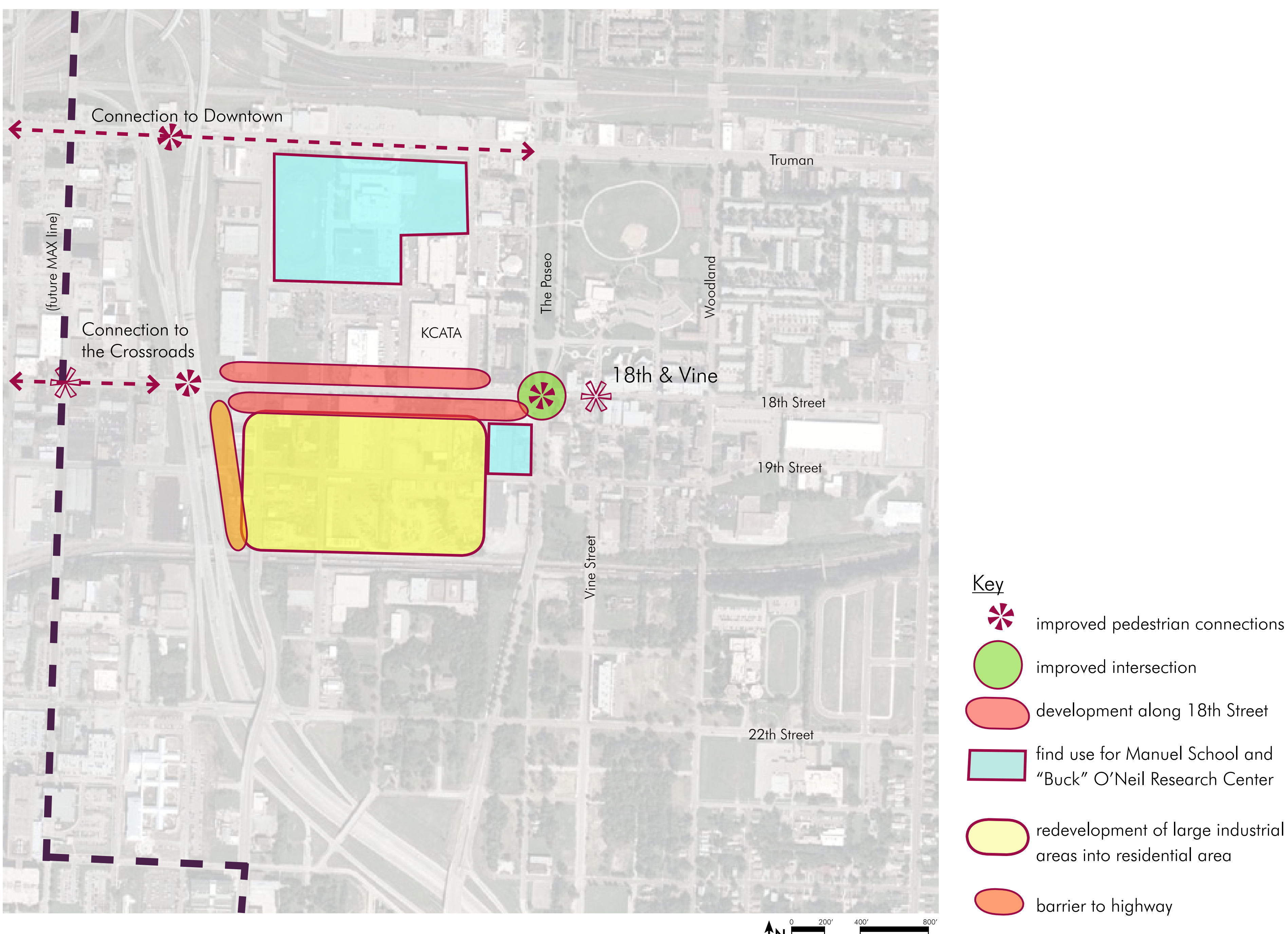


Figure 6.4: Expansion to the West

Conclusions

VII. Conclusions

The 18th and Vine neighborhood in Kansas City, Missouri is a unique area with an interesting history. A recent push has been underway to redevelop this neighborhood once known as a center for baseball, jazz, and nightlife. Redevelopment has recently suffered from a lack of tenants into new retail space and uncertainty of how to proceed. The understanding of African American community development, the case studies, and the 18th and Vine area itself leads to an identification of the problems and strategies for the future.

To acquire a greater understanding of the development of 18th and Vine gaining insight into African American community development as a whole is necessary. The black urban community has seen segregationist policies forced upon them, urban decline and decay of their neighborhoods, severe poverty, and utter disregard for the community. To improve the situation, reduce poverty, and preserve culture within these communities many strategies can be employed. These strategies developed from an increased understanding of African American community development include the utilization of community organizations, the encouragement of empowerment within the resident population, and the need for economic self-sufficiency. The strategies also recognize the importance of middle class blacks in the redevelopment and social change within the community while limiting the negative effects of gentrification.

The redevelopment of 18th and Vine should also draw from the many lessons learned within the case studies of Overtown in Miami, Florida and Beale Street in Memphis, Tennessee. Overtown, once a thriving black community was nearly killed by policy decisions of the past. The community also provides many examples for future development. The major lessons learned from Overtown include; reducing the lack of home ownership, limiting destruction in hopes of redevelopment to lessen displacement, not ignoring or minimizing the communities, organizing into community organizations can be effective, and recognizing that history can serve as an inspiration and catalyst for community development but also may inhibit progress. Beale Street represents a black urban center that has been able to redevelop into a successful vibrant community. The major lessons learned from Beale Street include; redeveloping an urban black neighborhood that has negatively experience 'urban renewal' is possible, encouraging black and minority business owners can create successful redevelopment and preserve culture, developing effective community organizations and leaders is important to resisting damage to the community and advocating for redevelopment, developing a wide variety of entertainment and attractions can be successful in creating a diverse and active district, limiting the distortion and exploitation of the black culture is important, limiting gentrification is vital in maintaining cultural and community services within the area, and encouraging street life can create and sense of place and cultural identity. These lessons applied to 18th and Vine can have positive impacts on the redevelopment efforts going forward.

The understanding of the cultural/ historical, the physical, and the present social aspects have led to the ability to identify the reasons for the redevelopment of 18th and Vine to fail in achieving many of its goals including returning the area into a vibrant district. The cultural problems within 18th and Vine that negatively impact redevelopment include; a remembrance of the height of 18th and Vine as being vice ridden and as an area used to reinforce stereotypes of the black community, many competing visions among the wide assortment of organizations and political forces, and a marketing strategy that focuses on vacant retail rather than the culture of the community. The physical aspects of a lack of people/displacement, loss of institutions, limitations of area, and lack of visual pedestrian comfort also make the successful redevelopment of 18th and Vine difficult. The perception of a lack of safety and high crime in the area along with a lack of

social activities and bonds that develop in everyday life are social problems that need to be addressed for future redevelopment.

To achieve the redevelopment of 18th and Vine that is envisioned by many leaders in the city of Kansas City it is clear that there needs to be a cohesive effort among groups involved and the residents of the neighborhood. This effort needs to address the many socio-economic and physical issues that are restraining the successful redevelopment of the historic district. The need to address these issues and problems are evident when looking at the case studies of Overtown and Beale Street and also the historical and present aspects of 18th and Vine. With community organizations and local politicians coming together around addressing these issues to create a common vision for future development there is a chance that the district may be able to achieve some of its liveliness and former glory.

The development plan must take into account all aspects of what make a successful community work including the cultural, physical, and social aspects. In the common vision community leaders must strive to create a culture that is not only historical based but is attractive to a wide range of people (example Beale Street). To create an economy that is self-sufficient the city and community leaders will have to use policy to encourage businesses to move to the 18th and Vine area. While the sales tax exemption that is in place to encourage the development of businesses is a good thing, city leaders must recognize and address a lack of people in the area. The lack of people is a major concern for new businesses. By implementing policies that encourage people to move to the area city and community leaders can make the largest positive impact on the 18th and Vine neighborhood. To encourage people to move to the area it is necessary to increase employment opportunities and reduce the negative perceptions now given to the neighborhood. In order to maintain a sense of black culture while allowing for growth, policies can be created that encourage home ownership and limit the negative aspects of gentrification including displacement. By creating policy that encourages a multi-class neighborhood city leaders have a chance to influence the creation of a diverse and culturally rich 18th and Vine district. Community organizations also play an important role in providing support and a social atmosphere within the community that can lead to a vibrant district without alienating and displacing a class of the community. City leaders can also change policies in order to reduce the perception of a lack of safety within the community including reversing policies that ban street performers and allowing a loosening of alcohol policies. To achieve this viable neighborhood it is important for community and city leaders to focus early stages of development on services and institutions that support the community. The need to secure funding for the "Buck" O'Neil Center is one example of community support infrastructure that has been stalled and should become again a focus of community and city leaders.

Community leaders, city leaders, and designers must use their physical goals to address not only the physical issues but also the socio-economic concerns for successful redevelopment of 18th and Vine to take place. To address the most significant problem facing the neighborhood of a lack of people it is necessary to provide housing within the community. It is important to create a wide variety of housing to be built that can attract new residents while not displacing existing residents. The creation of space for music, art, and culture to thrive such as the "Buck" O'Neil Center, entertainment venues, and areas that allow for street performances can help reinforce the atmosphere of the place that is 18th and Vine. The opening of the Mid-America Black Archives along with the museums actively keep the historic culture alive and provide examples of the historic design nature for future physical development. It is also important for community leaders in the 18th and Vine district to support improved public transportation whether it is a new BRT MAX line, streetcars, or

light rail line to connect the neighborhood to downtown Kansas City. The improved transportation could entice new residents to the area while allowing for increased tourism.

To implement these strategies and move forward with the redevelopment of 18th and Vine community and city leaders must come together to form a cohesive vision, definition of the community, and plan. The alterative frameworks including strengthening the nine block core, expanding to the south, and expanding to the west can serve as guides of how to manifest these strategies in a physical way. Policies along with the frameworks must be researched, developed, and implemented by the city to achieve the strategies. These policy changes are necessary to create the situation where the 18th and Vine neighborhood attracts residents, businesses, and becomes a successful development. Community involvement and studies on traffic conditions, pedestrian facilities, brownfield redevelopment, and environmental conditions are needed to expand upon the general frameworks.

With a renewed focus on the redevelopment of 18th and Vine, the district can live up to its promises of being a successful and vibrant urban neighborhood that respects the district's historical nature and culture. By learning and taking lessons from African American Community Development, the case studies, and 18th and Vine itself it is possible to approach the future redevelopment with conviction and focus. Successful development of 18th and Vine while preserving the unique culture is possible but will take a determined effort and a broad view of the many aspects necessary to make the development succeed.

Definitions:

Blight:

a deteriorated condition. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2002)

Culture:

the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social groups. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2002)

'Disyneyficatoin':

spaces within a city that are often capital intensive developments that create a fake environment to create tourist bubbles within the city. These area often show a disconnect with residential activities and patterns and are perceived as fake (LLoyd 2002).

Gentrification:

the process of renewal and rebuilding accompanying the influx of middle-class or affluent people into deteriorating areas that often displaces earlier usu. poorer residents. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2002)

Jazz:

American music developed esp. from ragtime and blues and characterized by propulsive syncopated rhythms, polyphonic ensemble playing, varying degrees of of improvisatoin, and often deliberate distortions of pitch and timbre. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2002)

Racially Restrictive Covenants:

contractual agreements between property owners and neighborhood associations that prohibited the sale, occupancy or lease of property and land to certain racial groups. (Gotham 2000)

Slum:

a densely populated usu. urban area marked by crowding, dirty run-down housing, poverty, and social disorganization. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2002)

Street:

It is a public parcel of land adjoining buildings in an urban context, on which people may freely assemble, interact, and move about. (Nation Master Encyclopedia 2008)

Segregaiton:

the separation or isolation of a race, class, or ethnic group by enforced or voluntary residence in a restricted area, by barriers to social intercourse, by separate educational facilities, or by other discriminatory means. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2002)

Sustainability:

intergenerational equity. (Kim, Sungyop 2008).

Traffic Calming:

a set of physical interventions to streets for the purpose of reducing the speed and/or volume of motor vehicles (Dumbaugh 2005).

Walkability:

the extent to which the built environment supports and encourages walking by providing for pedestrian comfort and safety, connecting people with varied destinations within a reasonable amount of time and effort, and offering visual interest in journeys throughout the network. (Southworth 2005).

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