A STUDY OF HISTORIC RURAL AMERICA

by

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A REPORT

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Abstract

Similar to their urban counterparts, rural communities consider preservation of a site based on their most vital economic features. With the growing minority and non-white cultures becoming more predominant in American society, so too has the culture and significance of historic events changed. More emphasis is now on the surrounding environment of those landmarks historically preserved rather than just the landmarks themselves. And in turn with the environment, more grants and awards are passed down to those sites and locations that provide more options to limiting excess space and energy while utilizing them to the fullest potential. Some conflicts still occur in relation to preserving historical integrity with development, but the total consensus is that historic preservation provides economic benefit more than loss.

Keywords: rural, communities, restoration, historical, significance, sustainability, rehabilitation, cultural, interviews, Kansas, register,

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Acknowledgement

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Dedication

To my Mom and Dad, along with sisters Pamela, Laura, Maria, Patricia. You are the most important part of my own history, and I'm glad I could be a big part of yours. Let us continue making history together for a very long time.

To Irene Loughery, who holds a special place in my heart. May you find rest and peace.

Chapter 1: Introductions and Research Layouts

Introduction and Research Question

Preserving the history of a site or history of a person, place, or thing has made many strides since the early days of grassroots preservation. The movement to protect George Washington's home at Mount Vernon has created an incentive not for only communities, but for the federal government to protect and preserve parts of history that have had a formation in the country's birth and life. Laws like the 1935 Historic Sites Act and the 1966 National Preservation Act helped build support and legislation that helped protect many of the nation's landmarks and buildings from wear and tear as well as providing resources to keep them protected (Page and Mason, 2004).

As of now, there are over 90,000 sites on the National Historic Register, including the territories and the District of Columbia. Numerous more sites are found in the state registers of all 50 states, along with several resources that can help reduce costs of repair or restoration (United States National Park Service, 2015). Many of these sites are documented and placed on local websites run by the state departments, and nominations continue to be sent to the National Register of Historic Places in order to be recognized, in some shape or form, as historically significant.

Historic preservation is the fundamental basis of keeping many of the sites mentioned above active. Following a set guideline related to the rules regarding the stages of preservation like rehabilitation and restoration, this holds a fundamental part in the rejuvenation of old and decrepit sites in turn with protecting and preserving those under threat of demolition or loss. Urban and rural communities share many of these philosophies; from the emphasis of importance to history and condition of the site (National Park Service, 2016). The condition of many of these historic sites, however, can be a big part of the current challenges today in rural historic preservation.

Rural communities are still facing a social situation. Millennials and younger generations of Americans are moving away from smaller communities and never returning home. The rural communities they leave behind do not hold the extravagant appeal as urban cities do, where the

price of living may be high but the salary is even higher (Dure, 2014). May 23, 2007 marked the first time in history where the worldwide urban population outranked that of rural areas. And the United States has been past this for many years, as the 1920s was the first decade where urban areas where in greater quantity than their urban counterparts (United States Census Bureau, 1995).

Even worse, Americans are losing interest in their own history. Saba Naseem working at Smithsonian (May 2015) reports on several cases where Americans fall short on education. The first being the group called PoliTech of Texas Tech University, where questions like "Who won the Civil War" or "Who is our [current] vice president" were met with "not sure" or "I have no idea" (PoliTech, 2014). The second was the National Assessment of Educational Progress in 2014 (2014). A test was given to 8th graders across the country, and showed that while not much has changed since a previous testing in 2010, out of 29,000 participants only 18 percent were proficient in knowledge of American history (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2014).

Historic preservation is important for meeting not only the demands of protecting a community's past, but also updating and evolving to meet the wants of the present. However, as more and more rural communities lose people capable of carrying on that history, some of it becomes lost and forgotten. This is true nationwide, as since the documentation of historic sites began in the 1970s to today, the same number of sites registered now have also been lost in some shape or form (United States National Park Service, 2015). The research question that must be addressed for the continued growth of historic rural America. *What are the challenges and opportunities present in historic sites in rural America, specifically in the state of Kansas?*

Shifting Demographics and Local Challenges

Kansas is one of the states that has been plagued with migration out of rural communities by the younger generations. Much of the population and land area is devoted to agriculture, and has a historically slow population growth record. Similar to many of the sparsely populated communities throughout the Great Plains region, while communities hosting larger metropolitan

areas flourish, most rural communities farther away from these areas fall behind and lose many of their younger populations.

Throughout this report, the strategies and challenges that are present in Kansas communities as residents try to preserve their sites will be brought into further light. In terms of the effects of a shifting population more focused on urban areas than the failing communities that younger generations leave behind. Lastly, strategies and opportunities present that not only give rural communities an edge in how they preserve. The final result should not only provide a good picture of the communities that shape the state's history, but also the benefits that go into preserving such sites and the consequences of leaving them behind.

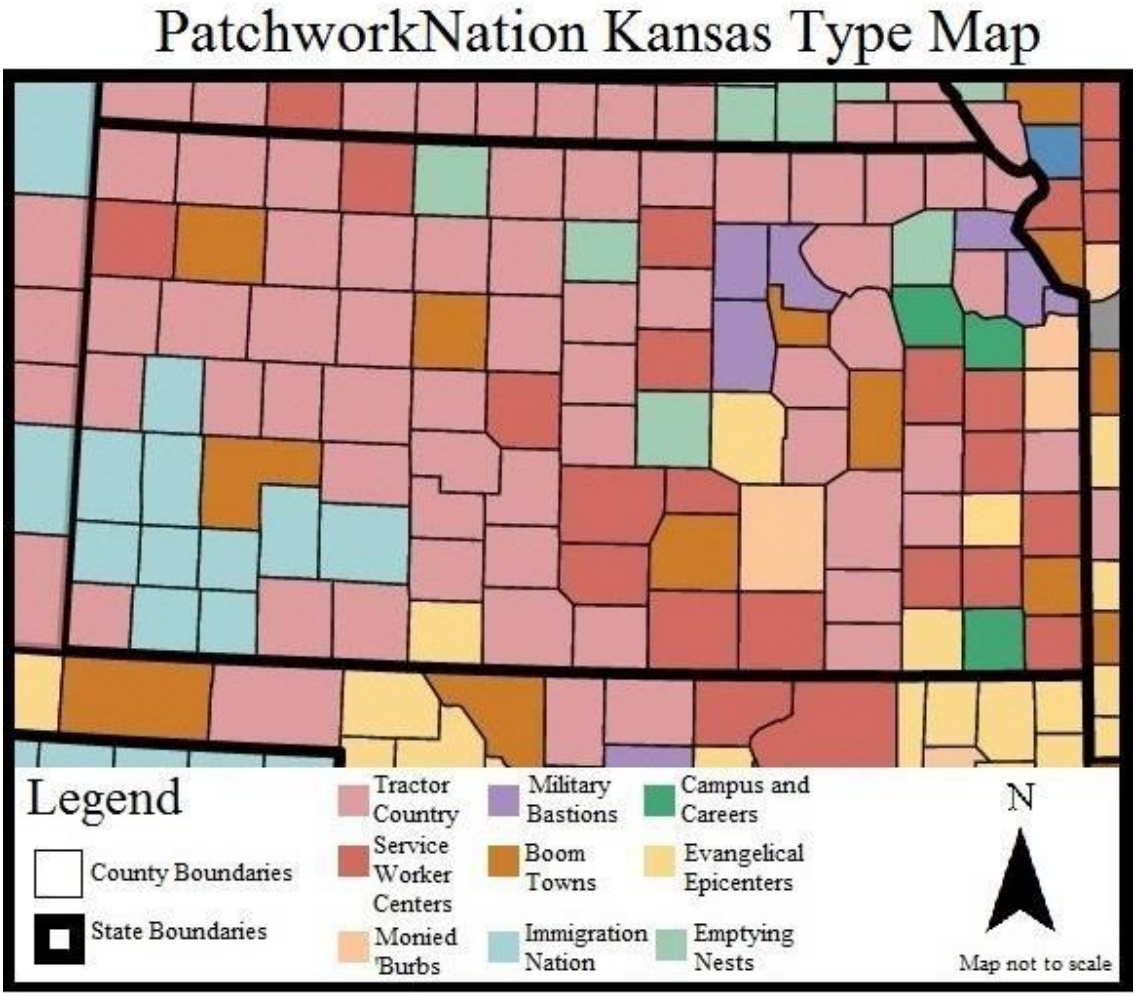

Figure 1: A zoomed-in portion of the PatchworkNation map, detailing Kansas county types. Original content by Chinni and Gimpel, 2010. Edited by John Heiman.

Figure 1.1 is a map of the community types of Kansas distinguished not only by the main type of economy, but by the demographics of the people living there. For Kansas, a large number of them are considered more "rural" because of this. The importance of this classification, along with other information and examples regarding historic preservation, are found in the literature review in the next section.

Economically, there is a detail worth noting. Much like the rest of the United States, Kansas suffered with the 2008 recession. Statewide, state unemployment was as high as seven percent, with numbers not far below in the year previous and the year following 2010 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). However, there are low unemployment numbers in the western part of Kansas, along with Nebraska, South Dakota, and other Great Plains states. Part of the reason, as Chinni has mentioned, areas focused on agriculture do not suffer economically as metro areas (Chinni, 2011).

The underlying fact, however, lies in migration of young people. The 300 counties that lost 10 percent of their population are losing them to counties or urban cities with the best jobs: the higher education jobs that these counties do not have. And over half of these counties in negative migration are based in agriculture. To also put that in comparison, the two regions of Evangelical Epicenters and Minority Central (a majority of them in the southern U.S.) have about 30 counties each with this falling population trend. Three other regions have about 20 counties each in the similar situation (Chinni and Gimpel, 2010).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Main Literature

The challenge for rural areas today deals heavily with the people that live (or no longer live) in these communities. For a long time, the United States population has been shifting from the rural to the urban in order to find jobs available. And while the country still continues to grow, rural areas are falling behind. Close to 100 years ago, 72 percent of the people in the country lived in rural communities. As of 2010, that number has fallen drastically. In a population of over 300 million people, 23 percent of all citizens live in those rural areas, down by 20 percent in the past decade. Mark Mather (2011), a representative of the research group Population Reference Bureau, cites the lack of jobs is one reason. But he mentions this cause is a spiral effect. Without good paying jobs in rural communities, young people refuse to work in rural communities. Because young qualified people do not work there, companies refuse to move there (Mather, 2011).

In relation to the Great Plains region, an area where population is declining faster than other, this is quite relevant and more noteworthy. The problem here, in relation to population migration, is not that these areas are gaining enough people. Quite the contrary, as between 1950 and 2007, the population has almost doubled and is currently keeping a similar growth rate as the rest of the United States. Bearing in mind that much of the growth is influenced by metro areas like Denver and Kansas City, the situation is that the population growth is the excess of deaths over births. In the Great Plains, the smallest counties in population (less than 10,000 residents, saw mostly negative net migration, and a little over half of them saw this as well as natural decrease in population. Of the 261 counties examined in the study, 133 saw both forms of population loss (United States Department of Commerce, 2009).

Patchwork Nations (2011) is one resource that looks into the diversity of each county (and community therein) when it comes to social values, economic resources, and cultural diversity. One of the areas talked about in text (and has a deep connection with the Great Plains region) is the counties that make up Tractor Country. This area, defined by the text, is an area heavily based on agriculture, holds fast to traditional values, and having low economic stride as well as

low income housing. Many of these counties are in the states of Kansas, Nebraska, and the two Dakota states, and some including the mountainous states of Montana and Wyoming, all with common trends of negative rural migration (Chinni and Gimpel, 2011).

When discussing issues in historic preservation, a thing to consider is overall development. Economic development is one of the important features to consider with the growth of every community. However, there are several factors that are heavily effective against rural communities. One of the reasons that rural communities are failing in development is that some communities lack an effective plan in taking responsibility towards their own development. Falling behind in investing in the community is another problem. This relates heavily with little dollars that support a development plan towards a community. Lastly, a different focus in looking at development in the wrong places can be harmful, especially if some communities do not open up to regional strategies and extending outward to neighbors in the area (Macke and Markley, n.d.).

Some important features to know about the National Historic Register, as well as historic preservation, is the kind of arguments that can be brought up against historical planning. Ken Bernstein from Los Angeles Conservancy highlights some of the falsehoods behind preservation. Buying or selling historic property can be a challenge depending on the community (though tax credits are available in every state). Additionally, while a site may be registered in the state or national level, it does not guarantee a property is protected from demolition in the future, especially if economic prosperity is in question (Bernstein, n.d.)

In an article about what procedures and features to consider when dealing with historical preservation, Paul Philippot (1982) highlights the philosophy and procedure behind preservation. He talks about what should and should not be preserved must be looked at as the whole picture behind the object in question, rather than what is obvious. This is followed later by looking at the surroundings. He counts open-air museums as more of a last resort, and that they can accidentally cause “a projection of fantasy into objects of the past”. Lastly, he mentions how much historical objects have changed and evolved with time. And to keep that history alive in such preservation, those changes must be kept pristine as well (Philippot, 1982).

Tishler (1982) backs this up by how important the landscape is in history, as opposed to one significant building or landmark. He encourages future historical planners and architects to work with landscape architects in preserving the natural landscapes and culture of the site. Bringing up the idea of cultural landscaping (cultural groups that influence the landscape they live in), this has been a topic of interest since the late 19th century, and has experienced a resurgence with the arrival of the Green movement in the 1970s. Such was the influence of this movement and idea that has led to the emergence of the United Nations' equivalent of the National Historic Register: the Convention for the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage. The U.N. works with additional programs worldwide to preserve the natural and cultural history of the whole human race (Tishler, 1982).

In a quest to do more with less, the green movement helps pave way for the sustainability movement. While reuse of resources is one of the priority lists in sustainability, in inclusion there are also the principles of using cleaner energy, promoting social equality and prosperity, preserving the natural environment around the site. In New Orleans, with the redevelopment and restoration of the well renowned French Quarter, the approval of adding solar panels on top of the buildings in this historic area was called into question. More specifically, the protests stemmed from the Vieux Carré Commission, which is a preservation group of the city working to preserve the French Quarter. Their argument stemmed from the aesthetics of the French Quarter are taken away with the use of solar panels. However, many of the residents agree that this is consistent with the growth of New Orleans, and the Quarter should not be treated as "some sort of outdoor museum" like Williamsburg in Virginia (DuBiner, 2011).

With the emergence of the Green Movement in the 1960s and 1970s, the historic preservation movement had the benefit of reuse of resources as well as rebuilding the old that relate back to protecting the environment. This was seen in concerns about the health of community residents as well as the fuel crisis in the 1970s, which made rehabilitating a good option. However historic preservation had to compete for funds with local community priorities like public service and law enforcement. Congress changed this in 1976 with the establishment of Rehabilitation Tax Credits (RTCs), which provides an incentive in tax abatement up to "20 percent credit for qualified rehabilitation expenditures of historic structure" (p. 121). Many of the RTCs given have benefited downtowns, and these RTCs can work alongside federal programs, especially

ones involving low income housing and community development block grants (Ryberg-Webster and Kinahan, 2014).

Grant making also extends to post-restoration as well. In a recent edition published by the Topeka Capital Journal in 2015, the local Dillon House was granted the J. Timothy Anderson award, a nationally ranked award nicknamed "Timmy". A Timmy award is based upon historic restoration projects created by the National Housing & Rehabilitation Association. This award, primarily, focuses on the restoration of architecture aesthetics as well as marketing and innovation for expanded use. The Dillon House now houses Pioneer offices that were upgraded since they arrived in 2013 and was the primary group in the restoration. In addition, prior to finishing touches, the group earned $1.6 million for Historic Tax Credit and property tax rebate from Shawnee County's Neighborhood Revitalization Program (Chilson, 2015).

Commonplace with any sort of change can bring about negative notions and skepticism. When the National Park Service considered making the Flint Hills region extending through Kansas and Oklahoma into a national monument, Pottawatomie County was in disagreement of the idea. Some mentions of the distrust between the county and the National Park Service come from a previous issue brought up with the construction of the Tuttle Creek Dam, and how the Army Engineer Corps did not hold true to their promise of reconstruction of county roads. Besides this, there is a direct relation to how the county acted similarly to the Old West settlers; they were happy to make life work on their own without the "evil" government interfering with their lives. The intrusion made the residents feel that they were having their property taken away from them, and that was something they refused to tolerate (Balbridge, 1993).

The problem with one of the greatest benefits found in historic preservation is that rural areas have problems accessing resources. But economics is one issue that the Texas Historic Commission touches upon when talking about preservation issues. Diversity and looking at the cultural landscape of the state of Texas is necessary if sites more obscure and hidden from public eye are going to survive. Advice that can be applied for additional states include promoting historic preservation to the younger generation, especially in early education. Updating information provided about a site via web is equally important, not only to provide an economic

impact of sites in a community but also promoting a site to a much wider audience (Texas Historical Commission, 2013).

Preserving a culture and tradition is one of the key elements in keeping history alive in a community while providing an opportunity to expand it. For those that need help finding a mesh in what can or should be done, the National Trust for Historic Preservation holds up 5 different principles that need to be considered in keeping heritage while promoting to an outside audience. One principle involves collaborating beyond a regional scale, especially when communicating with the citizens about what they look for in tourism or if they want it at all. Another is that focus in tourism should be on quality and authenticity, highlighting the community traditions and history that makes them come alive (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2016)

Kansas has several strategies when taking on historic preservation. Most notably in the state capitol city of Topeka, there are several goals that is laid out in the historic preservation plan that is set to preserving cultural identity and expanding the interest and care necessary to make historic preservation easier to work with in the future. One goal they are currently integrating is making preservation a huge part of city life, most notably in the downtown area. Using the private sector of the city to its fullest potential is another strategy, as homeowners and incoming residents look at the quality when coming to a new community. Lastly, a strategy to provide more fascination to the history of Topeka through storytelling while integrating history as a core development and economic strategy can also help draw appreciation to the history of a community large or small (City of Topeka, 2013).

Literature Conclusion

The literature section covers the major points of what is a part of rural historic preservation. First, how each state practices historic preservation, from the laws and the acts protecting said sites to what is the basics that are considered in planning. Secondly, the criteria and requirements of a registered site. Thirdly, the reasons behind why historic preservation should be considered more seriously in economic development. And lastly the presentation of challenges and opportunities that are present in the future of rural historic preservation, along with rural communities overall.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Rational for Methodology

Mentioned before in the introduction, there are several resources present to access information and history behind the Kansas Historic Register. Much of the data revolves around the official nomination and approval of said historic sites, which relate to the nomination process used by the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the Kansas Historical Society (2016) keeps an accurate list of the full history of the Kansas even well beyond the state's admission to the Union. Much of the data, however, sites the primary history of the site and how it received the nomination. There is little additional information found about the sites in question (Kansas Historical Society, 2016).

The methods of contacting rural communities in Kansas are conducted in this fashion primarily for this reason. Recent issues or the non-quantitative data that can affect these sites are not always clear in the State Historic Register. Challenges to update the site, or the possible alienation of a site due to economic or population change, are not clear in information provided by the Kansas Historic Society or official city websites. Asking community representatives about the challenges they face provides an individual and unique response throughout the entire state of Kansas, while also showing a collective trend within these kind of responses.

One-on-one communication is also the preferred method because of the authenticity and weight behind contacting individuals directly linked to the communities. There can be no one better to represent the community and talk about current situations affecting a town's history than one who lives and works within said community. It need not matter if many of the representatives interviewed do not have a full knowledge about historical preservation or are experts in the craft. What matters most is that they have a general idea about the kind of challenges that currently affect the community and, in relation, how some of the town's history can be lost because of it.

Interviews and Methodology

The planned contacts throughout the interviewing process were narrowed to sites under the Kansas State Historic Register posted by the United States Department of the Interior through the National Park Service in conjunction with Kansas Historical Society. Each county has a link to the site along with an application for historic recognition. Both follow a similar structure in the sites that are preserved, and in relation to the nomination process, any site that is recognized in the National Historic Register is also recognized in the State Historic Register for Kansas. Some sites that are state registered, however, are not recognized nationally. For the report, the focus is on the approximately 1,500 sites that are on the Kansas State Historic Register (though national significance will be brought up because of this).

Dividing the communities into a reasonable allocation is related back to the population growth and migration loss mentioned earlier. Several counties over the past five years have experienced positive growth in both population and migration. Others have not, continually showing the trend of population shifts towards ever-growing urban areas. Using the information gathered by the United States Census Bureau, of the 105 counties in the State of Kansas, 72 of them (about 68%) have seen negative migration. This is related back to the communities selected, as of the selected communities called, 68% of them are in counties with negative migration (United States Census Bureau, 2015).

Rural communities have always been ambiguous to define, with each state varying what constitutes as a rural area. For rural areas defined by the United States Census Bureau, the definition of a rural area is "any community or area outside of metropolitan areas". Several of these rural communities fall in different clusters. For example, unincorporated communities that have very small populations and have no local government supporting them. Urban clusters are similar in relation to the criteria set for the selection below, as the population within these clusters range from 2,500 to 50,000 (United States Census Bureau, 2015).

This experimentation sets a barrier for the communities used in the interview process. The communities that are communicated via phone call have a maximum "ceiling" limit and a minimum "floor" limit. The top limit in population size is 15,000 residents, while the bottom limit is 2,000 residents. Cities with no more than 15,000 residents and no less than 2,500

residents are contacted for this study. The reason here is based upon what the Census Bureau defines as rural areas. Cities with populations above 50,000 residents is considered a "metropolitan urban area" or similarly "metropolitan statistical area".

There is another criterion that the communities that are contacted need to fall into in order to be a part of this study. Several communities in Kansas fall under the four metropolitan statistical areas with populations set in urban areas. Those four areas are the Kansas City, Topeka, Manhattan, and Wichita metropolitan statistical areas. All of these areas have populations exceeding 50,000 residents, which automatically sets them as urban areas by default. Many of the communities that are in close range of these metropolitan areas will not be included, as their closer proximity to these metropolitan areas makes them more inclusive to urban comprehensive and historic planning.

The map of the communities asked is shown below on Figure 3.1. Many of these communities have populations under 10,000, and a majority of them contacted are also the county seats of their respective areas. This is one of the biggest benefit for rural communities, as these cities have the history found in local government affairs as well as a place where different service jobs are available. In addition, many of these communities are found in the eastern part of the state, with a few of these communities lying past the divide of Interstate 35 that goes south from the community of Salina.

All the questions asked towards the community relate back to the literature above. The emphasis is what the community representatives themselves regard as important to the history of the town, and what holds more of a challenge to each community individually as they continue working in keeping a town alive. Additional information about access to funding (either through local organizations devoted to historic preservation, or funds granted by the state) also can help shed light on burdens that could be either touched upon or remedied with available resources.

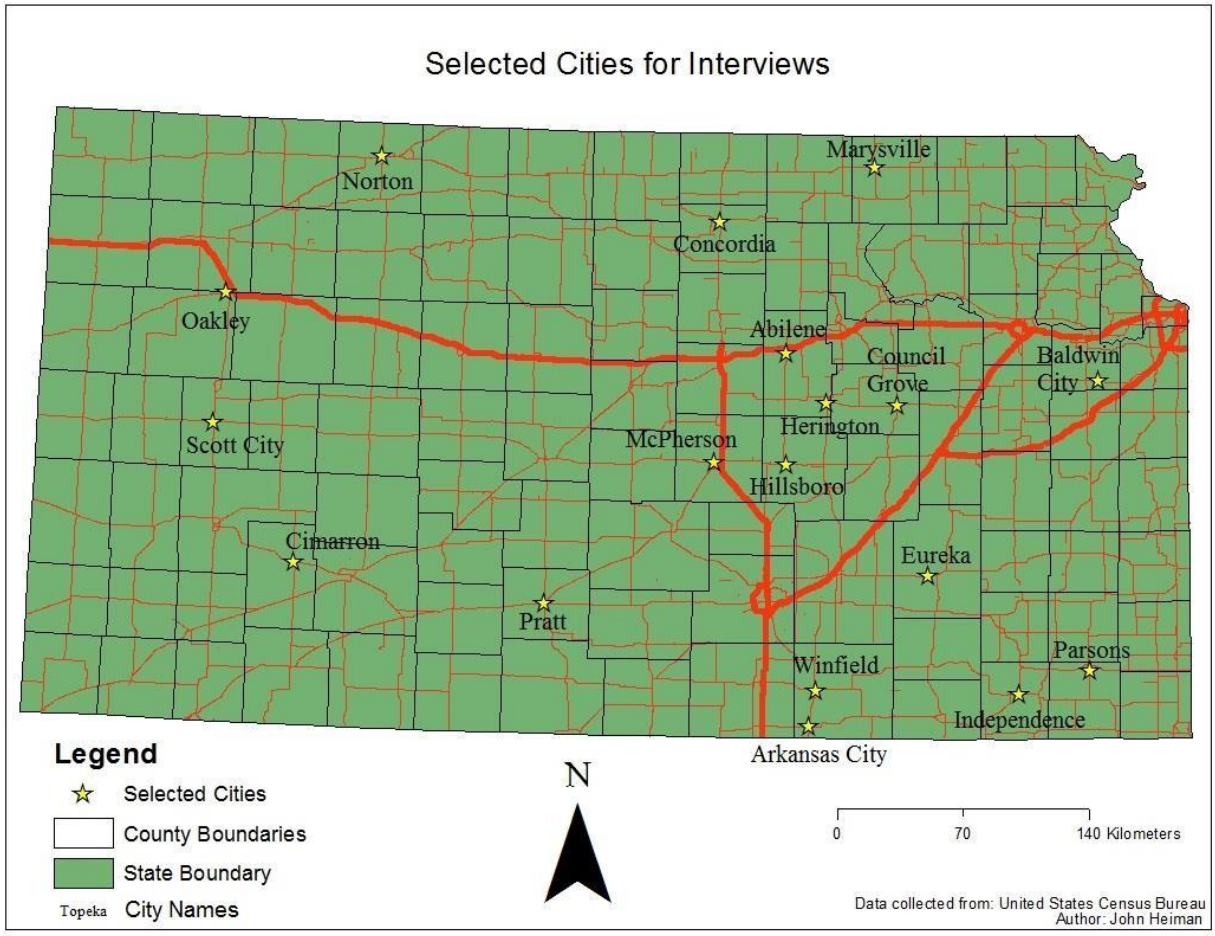

Figure 3.1: A map of Kansas detailing locations of the interviewed cities for the methodology and additional findings. The eighteen communities contacted are highlighted with a yellow star, and names of each community are placed near each of them. Author: John Heiman, 2016.

The questions asked throughout the interviews were based heavily on the readings above. Many rely on the standards and principles of historic preservation set by the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office.

- What is the most important historic site in your community?
- Does the site in question hold local historic significance, or does it have some state or national history that makes it well noted?
- Give a brief review, in your own words, the importance of the landmark/location (is it generally active, kept as a museum, used for local activities, or just provide a feature recognizable to the town?)
- Does your landmark receive benefits or grants from an organization, government, or subsidy by law?
- If it does not, can the landmark reach a larger audience if given a chance? Can/does it reach out beyond the community boundaries?
- Are there issues to update it (install new equipment or features to the location that could enhance the site in some way?)
- What challenges, externally or internally, are present in said location? Is this an internal or external challenge?
- Do you have any questions for me?

The questions asked in this interviewing process are sent to individuals who are either historical preservation staff in charge of the site, or are historically knowledgeable about the community and can describe current situations properly. The names of the individuals are found in the bibliography, and the answers to their questions are given anonymously in the following section. This helps keep the questions flexible (wordings of the questions were varied depending on responses) and also keep the answers unique and data ready.

Data Collection

Questions in Interview	Graph related to question?	Example readings/data related to question
1.What is the most important historic site in your community?	Yes (by type)	Phillport article; National Trust for Historic Preservation;
2. Is the site in question hold local historic significance, or does it have some state or national history that makes it well noted?	Yes	Kansas Historical Society National Register Listings both state & national register
3. Give a brief review, in your own words, the importance of the landmark/location (how big of a role it plays in the community)	Yes	NPS Evaluation (Rural Landscapes), PatchworkNation
4. Does your landmark receive benefits or grants from an organization, government, etc?	No	Kansas SHPO website concerning rules and awards granted; Topeka preservation plan
5. If it does not, can the site reach a larger audience if given a chance? Can/does it reach out beyond the community boundaries?	No	Preservation Media Kit; 21st Century Rural America;
6. Are there issues to update it, or is there more concern about leaving it the same?	Yes	21st Century Rural America, Preservation Issues, Preservation Myths,
7. What challenges, externally or internally, are present in the community that are the most damaging?	Yes	Data from United States Census Bureau dealing with population change, other issues in historic preservation in genreal
8. Do you have any questions for me?	No	n/a (This question clarifies possible confusion and gives interviewee the chance to hear more about my end of work if need be.)

Table 3.1: An Excel table distinguishing the questions asked and their relation to the literature. Author: John Heiman, 2016.

Many of the questions are related to the challenges seen in the survival of rural communities within Kansas overall; lack of resources and lack of younger population. Questions about the general purpose of the site and benefits they have towards their community are based upon the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office, as they have numerous grants and funds available ranging from roof repair to window replacing (Kansas Historical Society, 2016). Other literature talks about the importance of the culture of preservation and the weight communities give it in regard to future development. These questions help provide a clear picture of the current challenges within a community, the ways that the communities try to tackle these challenges, and the distinct identity of each one.

The questions in Table 3.1. address the concerns and information about preservation in these communities and the sites' impact in shaping what the town is as well as what it can become in the future. Each site holds its own story, with its own weight in what makes it so valuable to a small rural town. How the town perceives that history by protecting it from public eye or closing access temporarily can relate heavily back to not only protecting the site from excess traffic, but also from economic strain. Lastly, how far the site can reach in notability and what kind of challenges are present in each of the communities.

The responses are gathered into an Excel table and grouped together by questions asked. Their responses are posted in the next chapter, and who gave each of the responses are given anonymously. For some of the questions asked, there are pie charts detailing the response of the communities collectively to many of these questions. The categories will be set based upon some of the information gathered from both the literature and the methodology sections (which communities faced more economic challenges, and which ones have a firm stance on preservation in their community).

Data coding was based upon some of the categories they are listed under the state historic register like a religious facility or a historic district. These are sorted together to display what seems to be common features (or trends) found when rural communities value in terms of investing in historic sites, as well as what comes easier for them to preserve. "Yes" and "no" responses are seen more with questions regarding access to grants and ability to expand and promote a community's historic site in a larger regional scale. More details about how the responses were sorted are covered in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings and Results

Findings and Results

The graphs below highlight the anonymous responses that the Kansas rural communities made in response to these questions. While many of them were asked to the letter as Table 3.1., additional questions were asked about each of the unique features in each community that required some additional elaboration. For the sake of anonymity, how they responded is not recorded in the graphs and within this chapter. Each of the topic responses will be covered briefly in regard to how they responded, but much more detail will be given in the following chapter.

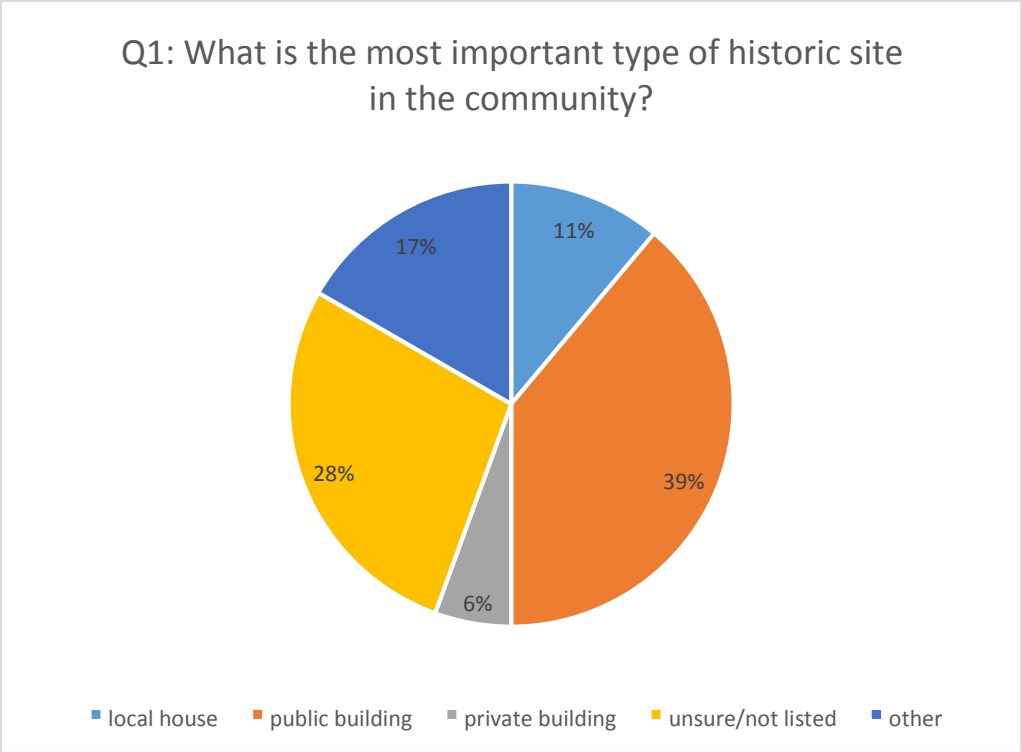

Figure 4.1: Pie graph detailing responses to the first question on Table 3.1. Author: John Heiman, 2016.

Narrowing down the type of building types that were categorized in this first question was set on the main purpose of the building. For public buildings, there include buildings like courthouses, businesses, restaurants, and other public facilities conducting forms of business. Local housing

often delves into privately owned areas, as some of these have current homeowners keeping track of them or are vacant. Similarly, private buildings are those not kept track of by the state or community in terms of funding or management. The priority of keeping the private sites intact often falls to the homeowners of the private homes.

Private buildings were the buildings that were often outside city government involvement and the process of preservation. These are often large historical houses currently owned by private individuals who were not listed or named. Similarly, the local houses follow the same criteria, but some are operated as museums or under used in a different function. The buildings listed as other are much larger or are either open space or business districts. A majority of these are districts, though about a third of the communities said that the district was the most important site within the community.

To clarify some of the unsure or undefined responses, some of the communities could not define one single historic site that stood out as a main feature or held main importance to the community. Part of this relates back to the number of sites in a community, as a limited number can sometimes make it hard to pinpoint which one holds the bigger concern in preservation talks. Other communities citied other sites not listed on the State Historic Register that they felt yielded and promoted community history more effectively.

Question 2 clarified the importance that the historic sites yielded to their community. Historic preservation throughout the state of Kansas is heavily influenced by the money available in the community. This is almost universal, especially in communities that are growing in population. While the challenge may be the same, the reason behind them is much different. Communities with lower populations (ones below 10,000) are the first to establish economic woes and concerns in keeping money for their historic sites. This also in turn influences how some of the sites have changed from their original structures over the years.

Many of the communities varied in different levels of how each of the site impacted history, be it locally or nationally. The larger number of them found that local history was the predominant driving force in many of the sites preserved. However, there were several more communities that concluded that some of their sites held national significance. The one falling in the least

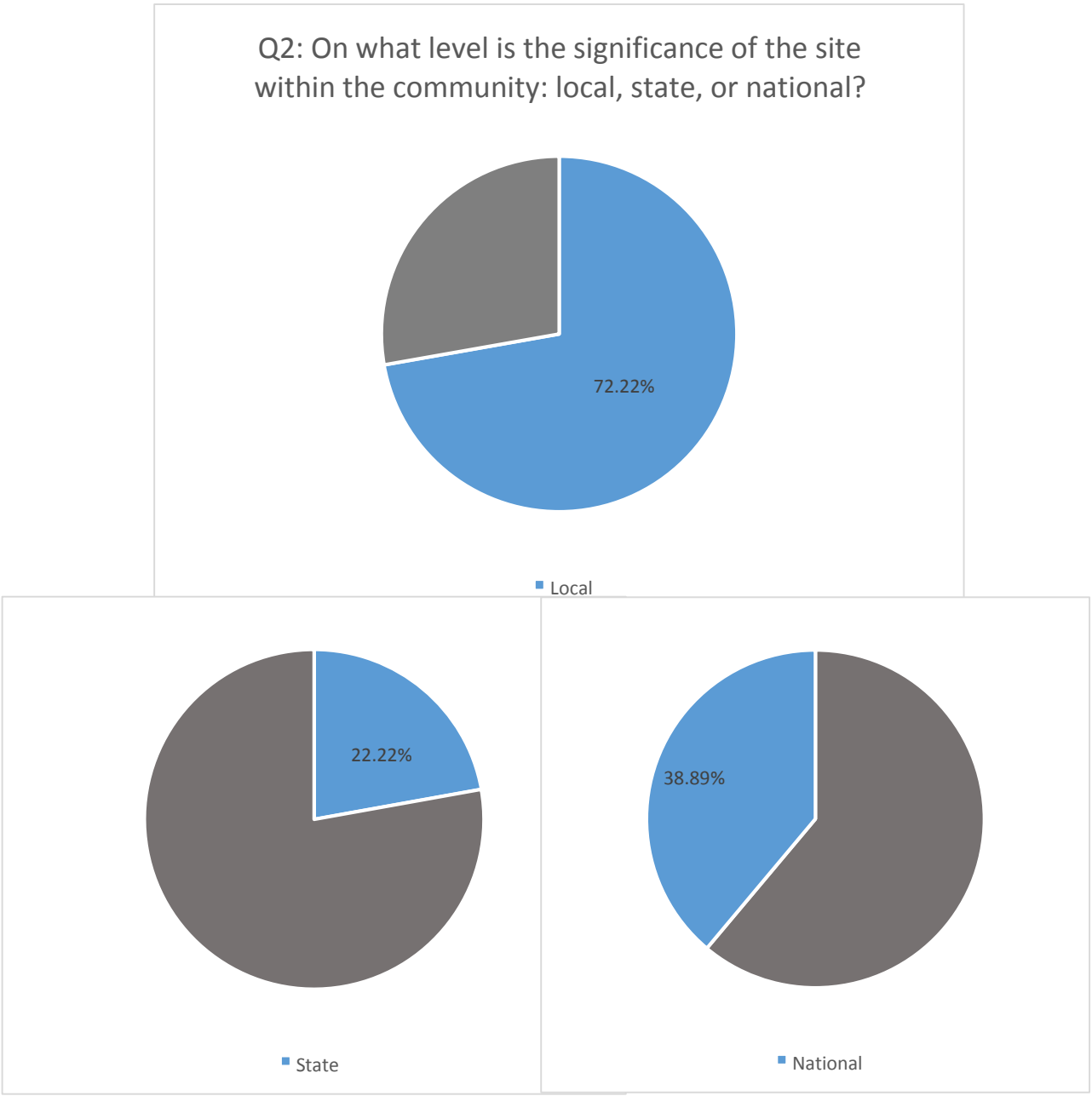

Figure 4.2.: Three graphs that detail the responses to question 2 from Table 3.1. Author: John Heiman, 2016.

responded, surprisingly enough, was those of state significance. How this can be such a different factor can be related back towards question 3, which asks more about the importance of the sites within the communities and what purpose they serve now.

The communities responded often based upon the most important roles that the community plays in modern day context. Many of them have little contribution found with American history, and so put more emphasis on keeping their local history active and protected. Most of these communities responded with multiple answers, like the sites within the community hold local and national history. Overall, the majority of the responses reflected local based desires and independent ideals found within rural communities.

Question 3 asked more about each of the sites on an individual level: what impact they have on the community at large. Many of the responses are summed up in the figure below, but there are some points to mention. For those that responded with more local history, the sites in question were more personal and more geared towards the common man: large houses, restaurants, hotels, and buildings that sometimes predate the state's birth in 1861. These are sites most found on the list, and often are ones either most used and/or most protect.

When defining public service, these were often regarded as the kind of social and economic benefits that these sites contribute within a city. Districts, government buildings, and parks are many of the sites coded and discussed with the questions above and are considered part of public services. In addition, restaurants, department stores, and general buildings put to effective public use are cited as part of this group.

Museums and memorials hold a different public purpose than those listed off previously. The primary functions of these museums and memorials is often treated more as a monument of the past; a feature with a clear identity and often left alone. Some of these are old homes or buildings contributing to some sort of history talked about in Question 2. Others are actual museums containing artifacts of the past and, much as any museum, are left pristine and alone. Others are park spaces or open areas dedicated to key moments in early history (archeological sites) or those where an important battle has taken place (national park).

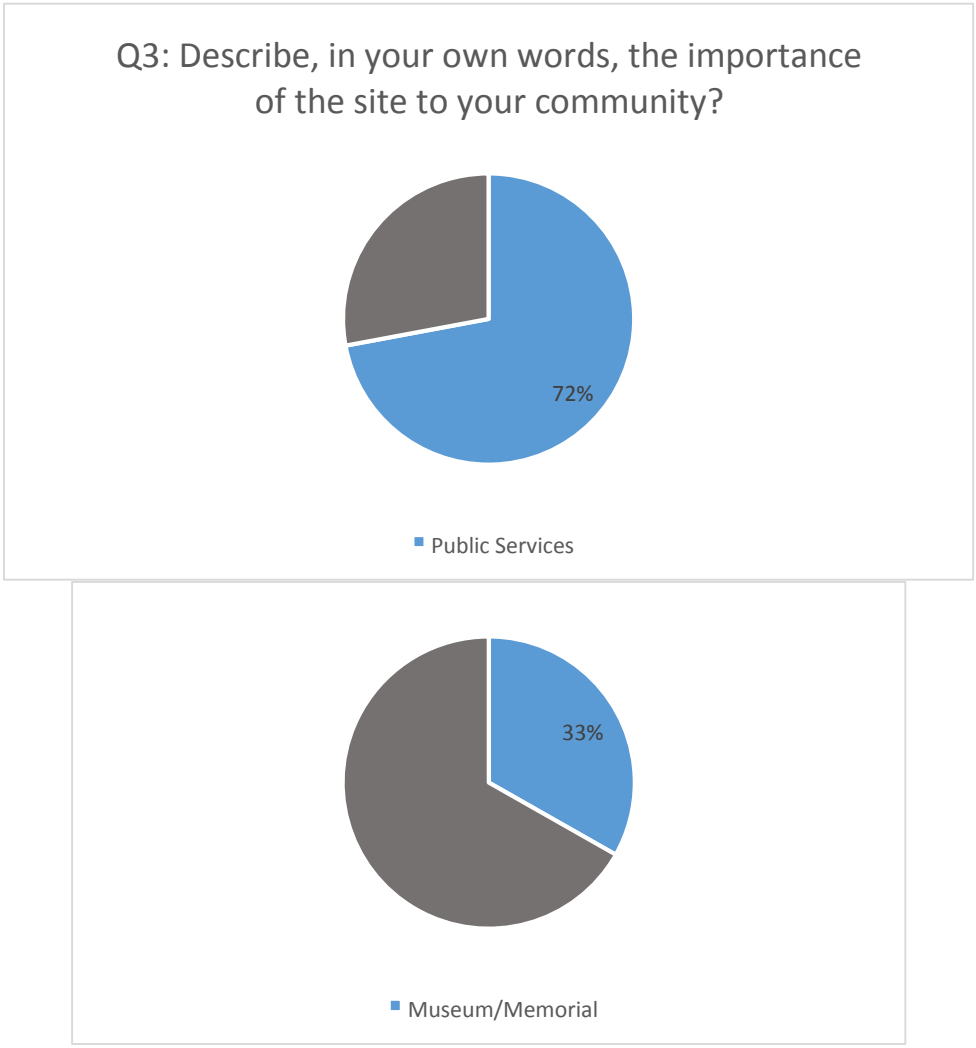

Figure 4.3.: Pie graph highlighting responses to question 3 from Table 3.1. Author: John Heiman, 2016.

Question 6 asks the communities if there are still adjustments that need to be made for their historic sites or leaving them be for now. This question was asked to see if a community seeks different changes to their historic sites, or are more interested in protecting and preserving them. Many of the respondents were happy about the current situation they were in, and did not find much of an issue keeping the historic sites the way they currently are now. However, some communities felt a lack of adequate care present, or more can still be done for some of their sites.

And of the 18 communities contacted, only 2 of them were unsure about the case of updating or making changes.

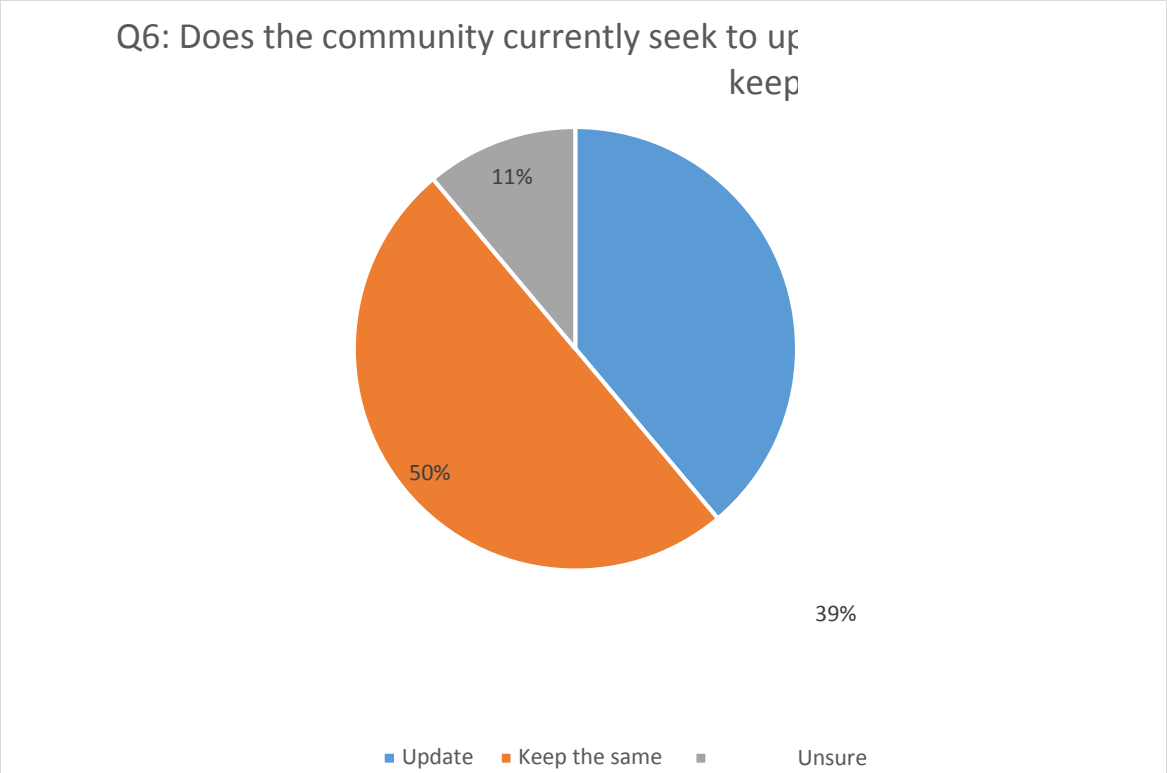

Figure 4.4.: Pie graph highlighting responses to question 6 from Table 3.1. Author: John Heiman, 2016.

The final question brings the responses of what each community feels can be most damaging for the historic sites in their community. A majority of them felt concerned about money to help keep them active, as access to grants and loans are limited and retention of their funds are also limited. Maintenance and constant wear-and-tear has also been brought into the discussion, as the constant need to keep a site maintained is a challenge in relation to finding the funds to make this possible. Finally, loss of population wraps up the majority major response, with smaller issues that will be discussed in the following chapter.

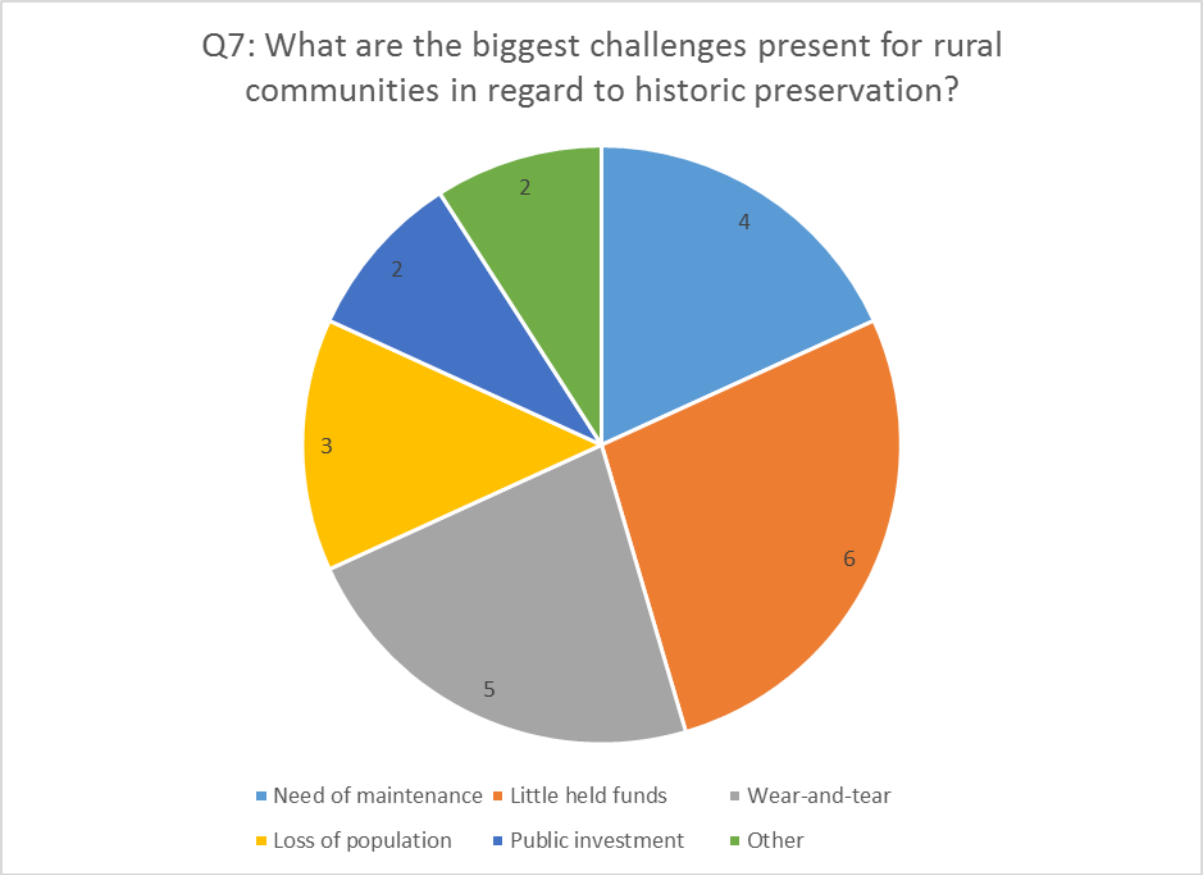

Figure 4.5.: Pie graph highlighting responses to question 7 from Table 3.1. Author: John Heiman, 2016.

Other responses for the communities were rather surprising. One case was when a representative of one such community talking about a possible conflict with the mining of resources nearby. The site in question is well protected and has established a strong boundary for its premises, but the nearby mining is still detrimental to the site and can pose a possible problem at a future time. A couple of other communities cited problems with outside groups, whether it is about how two groups manage a site together or private owners that do not meet requirements for a site. Lastly, lack of sufficient guidelines and professionals in preservation was touched upon, but only a couple of communities stated this as a big issue.

The other two questions asked, but were not graphed, were more about how each of the communities responded to financial strain and promoting their historical sites on a larger scale. The question regarding grants and funds relates back to the financial assistance provided by the

Kansas Historical Society (2016). One such award is the Heritage Trust Fund, which was brought up on several occasions with the communities contacted, and several of them mentioned the fund was used to help secure extra protection or revitalization for their own sites. The consensus from the final result of asking this question is that a majority of these sites have to rely upon local communities to survive, and those intervened through the state provide either additional help or a last resort.

The question regarding how a community can promote their sites are based upon how the National Trust for Historic Preservation (2015) does so through its Preservation magazine. In a section called Preservation Media Kit, there are several ways a group or community can promote a historic site within the magazine for a set amount of time. And unfortunately, the prices are not cheap, as rates grow higher and higher (upwards of $12,000) that include the length of information present, how long the promotion is set, and how large the picture is. Advertising some of these spaces on a magazine can be counterproductive for a community, especially dependable on the distance of the city from a major road and the costs in buying advertising space (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2015).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Findings in Greater Detail

Money does not flow heavily through rural communities, and the reason is the greatest weakness of rural communities: straight agriculture. Communities in Tractor County have placed heavy emphasis on the growth of livestock and crops as opposed to larger economics driving the country like, in one utility that was hit the hardest during the crash, expensive housing. Similarly, because of the lower price of housing in these remote areas, Tractor County has remained fairly stable. While it does not show much in terms of population, it speaks wonders when a community in the recession can hold 5% unemployment even out of the recession (Chinni and Gimpel, 2011).

The problem with this, as discussed with those interviewed during the phone calls, is that the older generation still remains within these communities as younger people are leaving. A majority of the communities talked to had correspondents who were much older and have worked with their respective cities for a long time. But as these representatives grow older, there are limited options to those coming in and filling the shoes of these workers. Some larger communities are more adapt at filling these positions, but those with less people and less resources are not.

Many rural and small towns established minimal enabling powers in order to maintain order and safety for its residents. Historically, as seen with the Kansan community of Oswego updating their ordinance to address, designating historic sites was not integral to town administration. Therefore, these towns may not have an enabling ordinance voted into law. They also lack a local authority like a historic committee or organization to protect some of these sites. Because of this, the local historic resources that can have the option of being protected are not given the representation needed in order to be preserved (City of Oswego, 1989).

Historical preservation benefits local economies with the guardianship of resources and sites being rehabilitated, but the economic benefit is still not very prominent in the Great Plains states. This has little to do with having a decreased net migration rate that causes people and jobs to stay away. Rather, as mentioned by Chinni and Gimpel, this has been a common trend in this

region of the country. Rather than suffer severe economic loss and struggles most cities have to deal with, many of the rural communities remain stable despite losing social resources (Chinni and Gimpel, 2011). Because of this loss, it heavily relates to the lack of money present within these communities.

In rural communities, culture is the heaviest emphasis in historic preservation. And while some cases work in keeping a historic site up-to-date and serviceable, the environment of the rural landscape and early history should not be forgotten. Eric Sloane (1955), writing prior to the environmental movement and the reemergence of historic preservation, puts heavy criticism of the idea of progress throughout the United States. This is seen especially when he talks about the highways that are beginning to shape the nation. In looking at the old utilities that once filled the landscape 200 years ago, like covered bridges and old windmills, he puts heavy emphasis on the craft and complete design of the structure rather than the beauty or history of it. Sloane even emphasizes the importance of minimal change in one paragraph:

"Although we are in a healthy era of attic-cleaning, even the most modern-minded must agree that some of the old things are worth saving. Deep thoughts and sacred memories can sometimes be preserved through symbols which at the moment appear insignificant or out of date. Every half century or so, an industry will undergo a hardy change when even its letterheads and trade marks are modernized, yet an old established business may lose recognition by discarding familiar symbols. One industrialist was urged to redesign the name and trade design of his business. "There isn't any design" The advertising man told him, "that can't be benefited by a periodic streamlining and change." "I wonder then," the industrialist commented, "why they don't modernize the American flag (Sloane, 1955)."

Cultural change can and will happen to be sure. Recent trends in how we use our energy and protect our environment, as well as how we define a family will have some sort of impact on what happens in the future for small town communities. However, much like the economy has had a slow impact reaching rural areas, so too will the culture change be slow and steady. This relates back to population growth; as urban communities are experiencing more ethnic shifts faster than rural communities are. Smaller rural communities have a better chance at accommodating cultural change because of slow growth of incoming migrants, and can adjust plans accordingly if need be.

Much of the sites that were mentioned held some economic or social benefit. What is really key is the location of these sites. Because many of these are local houses, business districts, government buildings, or other buildings providing public services for the community, many of these sites are located in the oldest parts of these communities: the downtown areas. As mentioned in an article on HubPages (2011), and discussed on several occasions with future planning, downtowns are the main centers of influence within the city, often the centerpiece of all city functions. And nowhere is that more important in keeping a town active than within smaller communities rooted in history. Especially within rural communities trying to keep money and people around (HubPages, 2011).

Protecting and utilizing historic sites within or close to the downtown of each community is the most important task in growing economic opportunity and further growth and development within rural communities. The continued promotion of a historic downtown is important to create an appealing visual of community pride, as well as showing a growing incentive to outside groups that the community is worth investing with. And without the ability to neither reach out to larger populations or showcase the best of what a Kansan rural community is, the challenges are far greater for a community to stay active and keep residents within them. Sites outside the downtown will, in time, benefit from the future growth that internal development provides.

With more of a concern for using less space for more functions or activities, community downtowns are important for job growth and community identity. Historic districts play a vital role in both case, serving as a way to keep the historical aesthetics of the town in merging with the new age as well as providing a stable source of income for the rural communities they reside in. One such program that helps working in revitalizing downtown areas (and discussed in one interview) is the Main Street program, or more appropriately titled Main Street America (2016). This helps promote community pride and growth in communities of all sizes, and are heavy in working with the residents in order to rehabilitate downtowns that have trouble keeping up with demands (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2016).

For some of the larger communities contacted, there was a heavier need for constant maintenance for many of their sites as well as a desire to have more of a stronger presence in the

historical preservation presence. Those at the other end seek many methods of funding in maintaining their own sites, and the majority the funds gathered come from the state. This comes as a "first come, first serve" basis, as communities often have to compete for funds that are in limited supply. This is especially true if a site is in immediate need of repair, or recent plans can put a sight in jeopardy. Lack of resources to keep things repaired and functioning can be detrimental to a community overall.

Local groups are not the only people that contribute to the growth and expansion of Kansas history. From communities like Concordia, McPherson, and Abilene, many of these communities have different methods of providing tours or promoting themselves in a larger regional context than other communities. Ranging from yearly festivals inviting the Scottish clans around the country to celebrate, or a guided tour provided through cellphones and tablets, creative ideas are not in short supply when it comes to promoting the history of rural Kansas for travelers and residents alike. How each community does promote itself is variable, but each one should be as unique as it is memorable.

The greatest advantage a community can have for helping meet current challenges is transportation. Many of the sites showing less strain and more professional historic staffing lie in areas closer to the interstates and main roads across Kansas. Access to fast moving transportation helps a community stay active in the job market, where resources are able to be transported as efficiently and quickly as possible. And the largest hub, the larger communities that are on or near these channels are the ones that have the most economic advantage. This is especially true when considering the importance of the early train routes governing the placement of these old communities like Parsons or McPherson.

Consequently, communities farther west of these larger traffic outlets, and farther from metropolitan areas, cited the most trouble with keeping (or for that matter, gathering) funds for maintaining these historic sites. Access to major transportation routes do not guarantee a thriving community, or county for that matter. Some counties with negative growth over the past 5 years lie in the eastern part of the state, more specifically in the southeast. As found by the United States Census Bureau (2016), a majority of the population loss comes from the western part of

the state, seen more in counties like Logan, Meade, and Decatur (United States Census Bureau, 2016).

Several resources point out different ways to increase growth in bringing young people back into rural communities. One of the main ones, according to Amanda Radke of BEEF Daily (June 11, 2013), is the reliability and connectivity of the Internet. In order to compete in a growing urban environment and culture, rural communities need to consider investing in the Internet to not only communicate to farther distances more effectively, but also being able to work closer to home. This is important, as there are large distances between some rural communities, and driving is a limited resource given the fluctuating gas prices. Supporting local businesses is another one of the recommendations, but the internet seems to hold much more weight when competing with urban communities (Radke, 2013).

As the nation continues to use the World Wide Web to store numerous amounts of information, including their own historical sites, it is becoming more of a necessity to have many of the information available for viewing online. Most importantly, these have to be manageable and easy to access for the general public. Smaller communities do not have the available resources or necessity to meet those demands, and remote communities are less likely to be given resources to make internet more in demand for those coming in. However, in regard to historic preservation, there is a glimmer of hope. Many of these communities are beginning to welcome the use of their home webpage to promote and inform visitors about these historic places. While more steps are necessary, the first is to spread the word and open up possibilities of change.

Much of the significance of the sites in the selected communities, a majority of the time, hold more local significance than state or national significance. This varies on the community, as some of them have a larger impact on the nation's history than other communities nearby. These are related back to the people who had once lived and worked in these small communities. Doctors, dentists, generals, and farmers; all in some shape or form having a great influence in the town's early history. And these are the people that the towns cherish and wish to carry on through the legacy of preservation. Each of them were a chapter in the early part of Kansas history, but gave much more to the communities they lived in.

Moreover, the lack of grants and funding from outside sources found in much smaller communities cannot be attributed to distrust in government alone. Many of these smaller communities hold more weight in working out their own strategies and raising funds for themselves as opposed to having the government. The cases of both Pottawatomie County (1993) and Patchwork Nation (2011) come to mind. Because of a frontier-like attitude and community pride, many of these communities have events more towards the promotion and "country" lifestyle that are all on their own.

Battling the elements is standard to any construction project. Keeping them active throughout the years is always a challenge, especially if there are incidents and conflicts with nature can result in the damage of property. Natural wear-and-tear is one of the most noted challenges these rural communities have. In fact, it is the main reason so much money continues to go into all forms of preservation. Consider this notion, however; the price to prevent constant erosion within historic sites is high. And that is a price most rural communities cannot pay without help.

No matter the size of the community, it is recommended that some sort of plan related to protecting historic sites is present in every neighborhood. Arthur Ziegler, Jr. and Walter Kidney (1980) provide their own two cents on the matter with a couple of strategies present for smaller communities to consider. One is using legal authority to help dilute situations in upgrading or using a historic site. Another is having an organization present before possible damage to a site, avoiding an outrage that can occur when it is too late to do so (Ziegler, Jr. et al, 1980).

When arguing the case about Kansas and its cultural history, there are two prominent factors to consider in what should be considered or open to possible preservation. The prehistory of the Native Americans that once inhabited the land is important, and two of the sites talked about in the interview process were cited as the last locations of Native American prominence and, in a sense, the "modernizing" of the state. This is one feature that needs to be highlighted for future rural communities, as it is often here that the connection between nature and man is at its most prominent.

One of the city representatives mentioned the early days of naming the counties of Kansas. Since the state was in a rush to receive approval to join the Union, many of the county names were also added in a rush. Because of this, many of the counties throughout Kansas share names of

generals that served in the early years of the Civil War. Many of these soldiers did not come from the state of Kansas, but the naming of the counties this way carries more importance than given first thought.

From the interviews, it has been found that it is fairly easy to promote historic sites within the communities to a wider audience. Across these rural communities, many of these small towns have local customs and festivals that help bring a large crowd together and presenting the best a small rural community can offer. From guided tours and innovative uses of technological tools, to yearly festivals devoted to an entire foreign culture, many of these rural communities provide different ways in not only earning money to keep these historic sites active, but also spreading the good word about how quiet and welcoming many of these communities are. And these promotions are what smaller communities need to stay active and keep resources funded.

The conversations with representatives of Independence and Abilene highlighted the challenge of loss within rural communities. Abilene suffered their own loss due to a tragic accident that left one of their historic sites burnt beyond repair. The community of Independence, on the other hand, lost one of their own sites due to two conditions. One relayed back to a limited public discussion about the fate of the site in question, and the other relates to limited time available to counter the demolition. Much controversy erupted because of this, and it is one that should not be taken lightly in the future. The success of a historic site, after all, is just as dependent on the populous as it is to the future development and growth of the town.

While some buildings may be lost over time, there are several that have changed their original functions or purposes throughout the years. Such cases include an old courthouse converted into a department store, a local house changed to a museum, university buildings with multipurpose functions, and a library that hosts public meetings on the side. Some have been converted simply because old organizations have disbanded or could not maintain current conditions (like the university buildings). Others have adjusted accordingly due to lack of space. What matters here is the presence of adaptability and change. If this can carry over with future cultural changes, rural communities will be much better off and more prepared to make those changes.

Final Summary

The uphill fight for funding and maintaining these historic sites are the biggest challenges present within rural communities. It is a reflection of pride and the feel of a small farm town. Similar to this, population loss and natural erosion are a challenge to keep historic sites preserved and active. But challenges today are not so different from developmental and social challenges seen in the state's past. With new emerging technologies that are more accessible, and growing cultural and social identities very much different from old ideas, rural communities have an opportunity to tackle some of these changes early to keep their history protected for years to come. And while the change is slow and less bearing, it is coming through small segments. And while the character of the communities in Kansas do not have to change to meet the demand, it should rise up to the task of incorporating multiple cultures within them.

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Appendix

Citations for Figure 3.1.

Set in Excel format.

Data collected	Name of Date Type	Series ID/Publisher	Area/Area Type	Data output
All Roads Shapefile	2015 TIGER/Line Shapefiles	United States Bureau of Census, Geography Division	Kansas Statewide	2015
Places Shapefile	2015 TIGER/Line Shapefiles	United States Bureau of Census, Geography Division	Kansas Statewide	2015
Counties Shapefile	2015 TIGER/Line Shapefiles	United States Bureau of Census, Geography Division	Kansas Statewide	2015
All data above retrieved from https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php. Map made using ArcMap Version 10.4				