

Balancing History, People, & Place  
Adaptive Preservation of Paseo Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri

by

Mackenzie D. Wendling

A REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning  
College of Architecture, Planning and Design

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Approved by:

Major Professor  
Hyung Jin Kim, Ph.D.

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## **ABSTRACT**

To be active and valued public spaces all urban landscapes, especially historic, must be adaptable to the dynamic sociocultural, environmental, and economic conditions of their context. Historic preservation is often met with deference to the past over the needs of the present. This is true of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri. Formerly known as Paseo Boulevard, MLK Jr. Boulevard was the first parkway of Kansas City's world famous Parks and Boulevard system. This report and the resulting projective designs balance historic preservation and community needs on the cultural landscape. The mixed-method study collected data through historical map and image analysis, stakeholder interviews and a public survey. The data was synthesized and used to inform design interventions. The objectives of the research-informed designs are twofold. One, through creative placemaking they communicate the multi-narrative histories of Paseo Boulevard north of 18th Street. Two, designs aim to increase the landscape's use-value by proposing a variety of culturally relevant programming. The results of the study have the opportunity to inform policy and design of Paseo Boulevard north of 18th Street in Kansas City, Missouri.

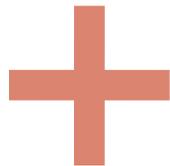
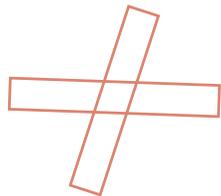
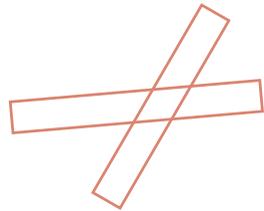
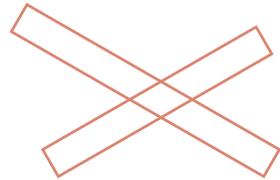
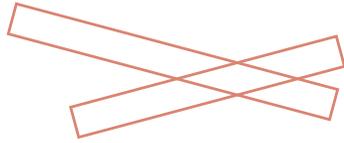
# BALANCING HISTORY, PEOPLE, & PLACE

Adaptive Preservation of Paseo Boulevard  
in Kansas City, Missouri

Mackenzie D. Wendling  
Landscape Architecture Master's Report

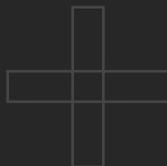
## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

To be active and valued public spaces all urban landscapes, especially historic, must be adaptable to the dynamic sociocultural, environmental, and economic conditions of their context. Historic preservation is often met with deference to the past over the needs of the present. This is true of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri. Formerly known as Paseo Boulevard, MLK Jr. Boulevard was the first parkway of Kansas City's world famous Parks and Boulevard system. This report and the resulting projective designs balance historic preservation and community needs on the cultural landscape. The mixed-method study collected data through historical map and image analysis, stakeholder interviews and a public survey. The data was synthesized and used to inform design interventions. The objectives of the research-informed designs are twofold. One, through creative placemaking they communicate the multi-narrative histories of Paseo Boulevard north of 18th Street. Two, designs aim to increase the landscape's use-value by proposing a variety of culturally relevant programming. The results of the study have the opportunity to inform policy and design of Paseo Boulevard north of 18th Street in Kansas City, Missouri.



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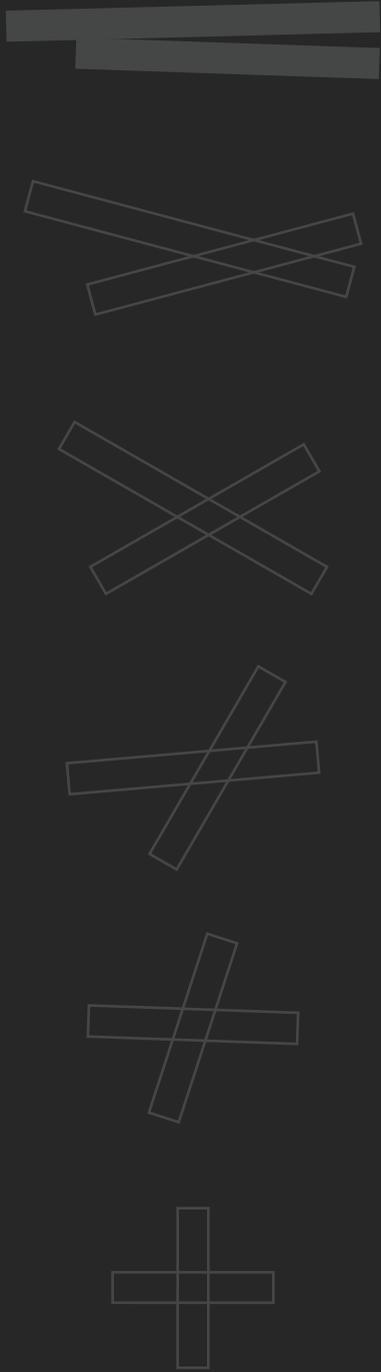
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## INTRODUCTION

Historic preservation is the visual and tangible protection of cultural identity. Cultural identity is the feeling of belonging to a group. According to the Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, preserving historic places allows cities to maintain a sense of permanency, heritage, and collective identity. Without collective identity, the social structure and sense of community within a place may be threatened (Rabinowitz 2018).

Paradoxically, studies provide evidence that following the designation of a historic district, neighborhoods in New York City experienced significant increases in socioeconomic status. Historic designations may make neighborhoods less accessible to low-income residents and in some cases may result in residential displacement (McCabe and Ellen 2016). This is particularly alarming for low-income, long-time residents of newly designated historic districts. The data leads one to ask, is top-down historic preservation always the best way to preserve cultural identity?

Historic preservation has come to be associated with deference to the past over the needs of the present (Otero-Pailos, Langdalen, and Arrhenius 2016). This is true of Paseo Boulevard in east Kansas City, Missouri. The everyday life, use, and meaning of the parkway is isolated from, rather than engaged with the preservation of the cultural landscape.

In Kansas City, low-income neighborhoods east of Troost Avenue have been vital contributors to the city's culture. The city's contributions to jazz music, distinctive barbecue flavors, and enduring love for baseball, have all grown from African American neighborhoods in east Kansas City.

In the summer of 2016, Kansas City's Parks and Boulevard System was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The designation includes Paseo Boulevard, a north-south parkway that runs through several low-income, predominantly African American neighborhoods. Paseo Boulevard, commonly referred to as The Paseo, was the first formal parkway of the Kansas City Parks

and Boulevard system. The physical design of Paseo Boulevard is quintessential to the identity and character of Kansas City. The need to preserve the parkway is evident. If Paseo Boulevard's historic designation does lead to residential displacement, communities near The Paseo face the threat of physical and cultural erasure.

In an era of rapid urbanization, cultural landscapes, like Paseo Boulevard, require responsiveness to changing urban, economic, environmental and sociocultural conditions. They must reflect the diverse, hyper-complex and dynamic society that we live in today while simultaneously honoring the collective and multi-narrative histories of their locale. Preservation alone is not enough to protect the cultural identity of a place. Urban landscapes, particularly historic, must become adaptable and therefore resilient to the dynamic conditions of the city. Doing so would allow them to be active and valued components of their neighborhoods.

Data collected through historical research, stakeholder interviews and a public survey, has informed design interventions that balance the site's historical significance and the community's needs. The objective of the research-informed designs' are twofold. One, through creative placemaking they communicate the multi-narrative histories of Paseo Boulevard. Two, designs attempt to increase the landscape's use-value by proposing a variety of culturally relevant programming. The results of the study have the opportunity to inform policy and design of Paseo Boulevard north of 18th Street in Kansas City, Missouri.

## STUDY SITE: PASEO BOULEVARD

This study investigates Paseo Boulevard in east Kansas City. Mid-way through this research, in January 2019, the Kansas City Council voted to rename Paseo Boulevard to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Due to the recency of the change and for clarity, this report will refer to the boulevard as Paseo Boulevard or The Paseo.

Paseo Boulevard is a major north-south parkway in Kansas City, Missouri. In its entirety, the boulevard runs 19 miles, 85 city blocks (Figure 1.1). The roadway stretches from Cliff Drive and Lexington Avenue on the bluffs above the Missouri River to

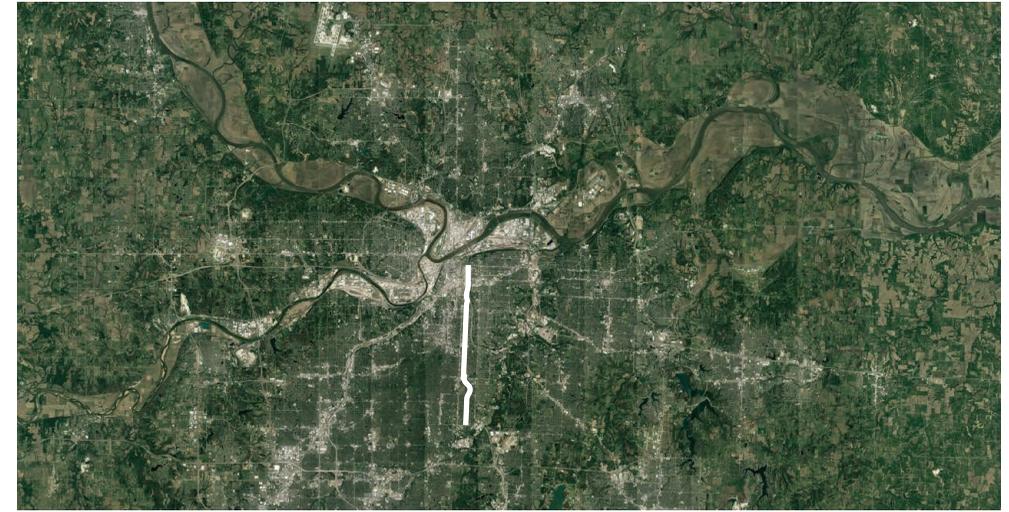


Figure 1.1  
A bird's eye view of the Kansas City metropolitan area, Paseo Boulevard is highlighted in white and runs 19 miles in its entirety (Wendling 2019)

5 miles

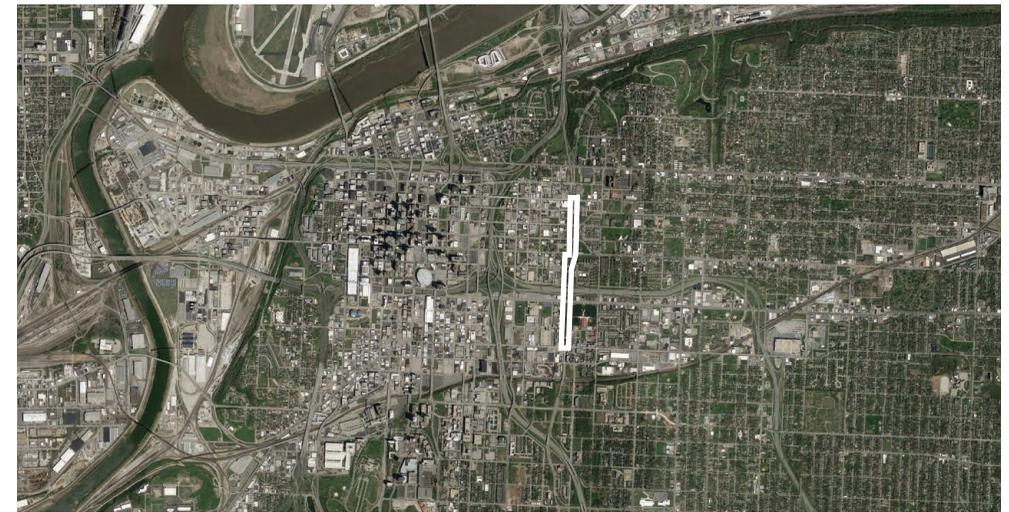


Figure 1.2  
A bird's eye view of downtown Kansas City, the focus area of Paseo Boulevard is highlighted in white (Wendling 2019)

4000 ft

85th Street and Woodland Avenue. The entire parkway holds 223 acres of boulevard parkland dotted with several Beaux-Arts-style decorative structures and architectural details. This research examines Paseo Boulevard between 9th and 17th streets. (Figure 1.2, Figure 1.3). George Kessler designed the roadway and park space between Independence Avenue and 18th Street in 1893. Many consider this portion of Paseo Boulevard as the first boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri.

*Figure 1.3  
The site boundaries are defined by the boulevard's right-of-way to the east and west, 9th street to the north and 17th street to the south (Wendling 2019).*



## DILEMMA

Paseo Boulevard is a historic landscape of national acclaim and global significance. However, the landscape is not an active or accessible component of the urban neighborhood. Tensions run high in communities east of Troost Avenue. Since The Paseo's establishment, racial and socioeconomic strains have been hyper-present in east Kansas City. Neighborhoods near the corridor and historic district have come to be associated with high profile crime, poor access to education, and significant blight. The Paseo Gateway Transformation Plan refers to neighborhoods near the intersection of Paseo Boulevard and Independence Avenue as areas of high poverty, high property vacancy rates, and places where concentrations of violent crime are frequent ("Paseo Gateway Transformation Plan" 2013). Research-informed design interventions might help activate the corridor for pedestrian and recreational use. Additionally, they may help alleviate some of the problems the community faces.

Like many historical sites, an institutionalized review board manages the preservation of Paseo Boulevard. Thus far, preservation of The Paseo has been approached with deference to the past over the needs of the present. The current preservation model recognizes only one of many historical narratives. The unintentional result being the dissemination of a partisan and single-narrative history. This further separates The Paseo from its urban and social contexts. The departmental silo of historic preservation perceives the sociocultural, environmental, and economic conditions of The Paseo as constraints. The everyday life, use, and meaning of Paseo is isolated from, rather than engaged with, the preservation of the cultural landscape. Conventional preservation efforts are not enough to enhance Paseo Boulevard or reconnect the parkway and community (Figure 1.4) (Figure 1.5).

## RESEARCH QUESTION

*How can The Paseo be preserved as a historical asset while increasing the site's use-value?*

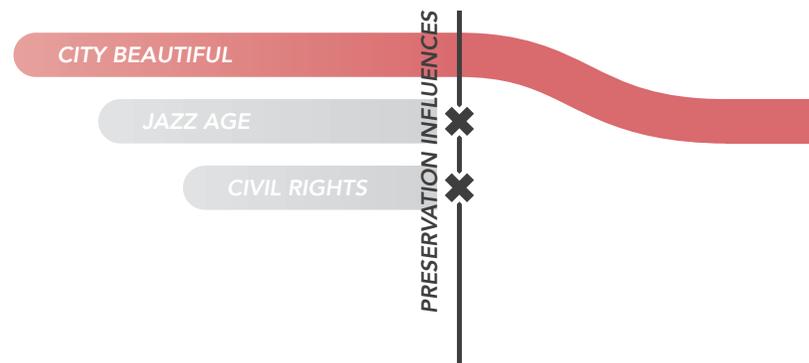
## PROJECT GOALS

This project proposes design solutions that balance historic preservation and community open-space needs on Paseo Boulevard. In order to do so, one must understand what the historical assets on The Paseo are and why they are worth preserving. One must also understand the open-space needs of the community. Design and program interventions should address community needs and showcase historical assets. Research-informed interventions aim to better communicate the complex histories of the site to a broad audience. Lastly, research-informed design interventions need to align with the goals of the Kansas City Parks and Recreation department.

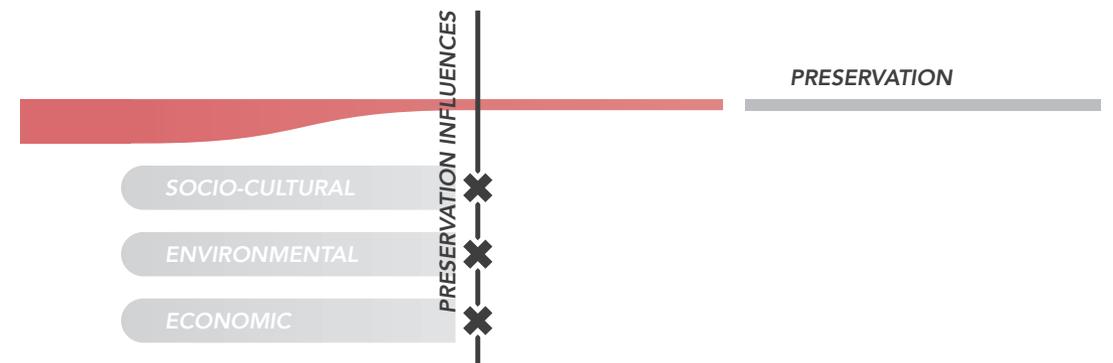
## CONVENTIONAL PRESERVATION MODEL ON PASEO BOULEVARD

Figure 1.4  
The dilemma in conventional preservation (Wendling 2019).

The current model for preservation recognizes only one of many historical eras. This may further separate The Paseo from its urban and social context.



The current model perceives existing social, environmental, and economic conditions as project constraints.



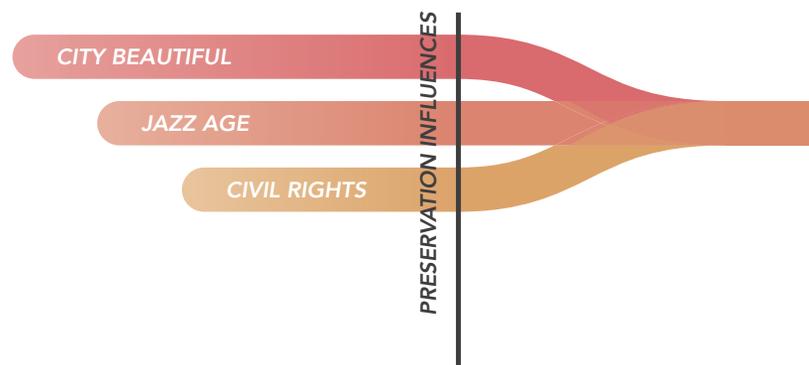
Conventional preservation efforts are not enough to enhance Paseo Boulevard. The history of the site becomes diluted. The parkway and community remain inharmonious.

PRESERVATION

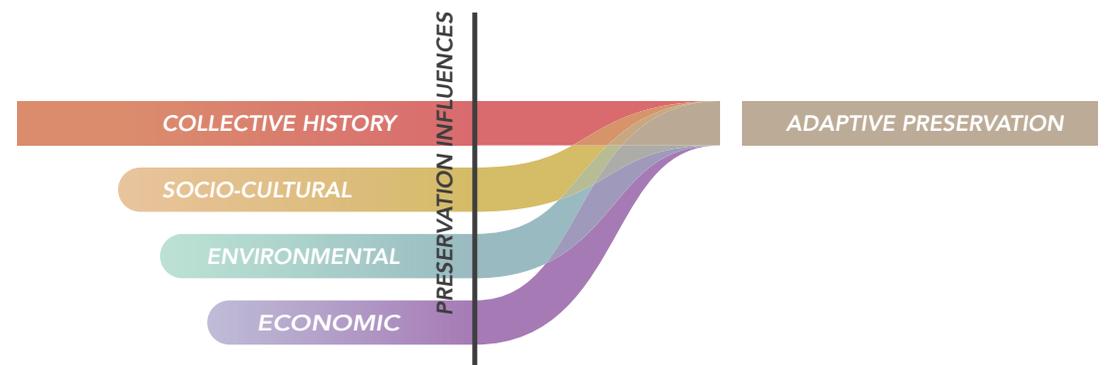
## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION MODEL ON PASEO BOULEVARD

Figure 1.5  
The opportunity in adaptive preservation (Wending 2019).

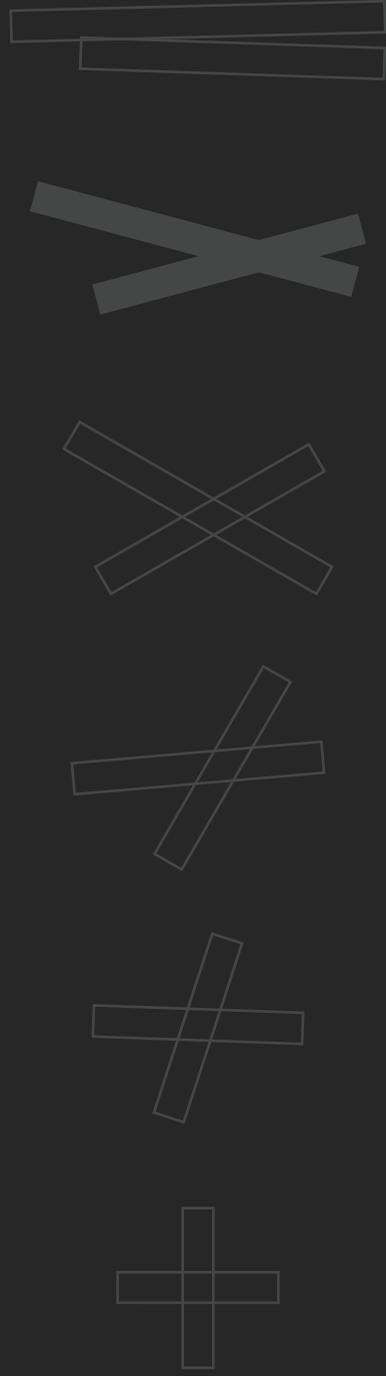
The proposed model for preservation incorporates many histories of the site and nearby communities. It allows for the discovery of alternative histories.



The proposed model re-frames constraints as opportunities. As a result, the site will better relate to its context.



A “yes, and” approach to preservation results in a holistic narrative that responds to the past and anticipates the future.



# LITERATURE REVIEW

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation is an undertaking that seeks to preserve, conserve and protect buildings, objects, landscapes or other artifacts of historical significance. Preservation attempts to protect the cultural identity of people and places of significance.

The Athens Charter was a 1933 document about urban planning published by the Swiss architect Le Corbusier. The charter advocated for the conservation and restoration of culturally significant built works to support cultural heritage (Le Corbusier 1933). The Athen's Charter has been influential to Historic preservation in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In Taxidermy or Translation, a 2018 article in the Journal of Architectural Education, Mark J. Neveu challenges the Athens Charter by asking, "Who decides what to preserve?" Neveu raises the question of if there is value in preserving architecture through translation, rather than through taxidermy. Preservation as taxidermy freezes a built work in time and fixes it to a particular date. What Neveu refers to as preservation as translation is most similar to the adaptive preservation model this research will explore. Preservation as translation allows for the preserved work to tell many different histories simultaneously. It also enables buildings and landscapes to adapt to changing performance demands (Neveu 2018). The question of adaptive preservation is whether the altered work can be considered the same work as was intended to preserve.

The United States National Trust for Historic Preservation is a privately funded non-profit organization, which began in 1949. The 1933 Athen's Charter influenced the organizational structure and philosophy of the Trust. The organization set goals that provide "leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities" according to the Trust's mission statement.

The destruction of Pennsylvania Station, in New York City in 1964 shocked many into supporting preservation. In the 1960s new

laws and international agreements extended preservation “from ancient monuments to whole districts and buildings a few decades old” (Abramson 2012). On an international level, the New York-based World Monuments Fund was founded in 1965 to preserve historic sites worldwide.

In 1966, the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) established the National Register and the process for adding properties to it. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the United States federal government’s official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation for their historical significance. A property listed in the National Register may qualify for tax incentives. The National Register of Historic Places has grown from its legislative origins in 1966. In 1986, citizens and groups nominated 3,623 separate properties, sites, and districts for inclusion on the National Register, a total of 75,000 separate properties (Hertfelder 1987). Of the more than one million properties on the National Register, 80,000 are listed individually.

Over the past few generations, the field of historic preservation finds itself at the beginning of a critical transition. Recently, preservationists have begun to revise or replace outdated theories based on the authority of Western concepts and institutionalized practices. According to Jorge Otero-Pailos, Professor and Director of Historic Preservation at Columbia University, preservation has come to be associated with deference to the past over the needs of the present (Otero-Pailos, Langdalen, and Arrhenius 2016). This is particularly true on Paseo Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri where the everyday life, use, and meaning of Paseo is isolated from rather than engaged with preservation. The book *Experimental Preservation* questions conventional preservation and challenges the idea that preservation bureaucracies always act for the common good (Otero-Pailos, Langdalen, and Arrhenius 2016).

Laurajane Smith has criticized what she calls the “Authorized Heritage Discourse” which is practiced by organizations like UNESCO and the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Authorized Heritage Discourse established top-down criteria for choosing objects, buildings, and sites according to “universal values.” Smith argues the criteria set forth by these organizations impede the possibility of these values evolving. They also preclude the possibility of people freely choosing objects of their own - a

situation especially true in the case of disenfranchised people and neighborhoods (Smith 2004). Smith’s discourse raises the question: to what degree can communities choose and preserve objects free from institutional intervention?

## **URBANIZATION + CHANGING PREFERENCES**

According to Arthur C. Nelson, a professor of urban planning at the University of Utah, the period of 2010 to 2030 will have dramatic effects on American urban landscapes (Nelson 2009). As Nelson predicted in 2009, cities now find themselves in the midst of dramatic shifts in demographics, changing residential preferences, and tenure choices. In 2018, many American cities struggled to adapt to these changes while ensuring that cities are places of equality and environmental and cultural stewardship. Urbanization and changing preferences place additional strain on cities and their parks and recreation departments.

In reviewing mayoral speeches for the National League of Cities’ annual State of the Cities report, Brooks Rainwater was able to paint a detailed picture of the most pressing issues happening in American cities (Rainwater 2017). Brooks Rainwater is the senior executive director of the Center for City Solutions and Applied Research at the National League of Cities. His research, in 2017, found common concerns of economic development, public safety, and infrastructure as core issues for American cities. Paseo Boulevard north of 18th street directly relates to each of these emergent themes.

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

## KANSAS CITY'S FOUNDING

At the confluence of two rivers and at the edge of the western frontier, the area now known as Kansas City would become a major shipping and transportation hub between East and West. Throughout the 1840s, the population and importance of the Town of Kansas swelled. For settlers heading west, the Town of Kansas and nearby Independence and Westport became starting points on the Oregon, Santa Fe, and California trails. Between St. Louis and California, the area surrounding the confluence of the Kansas River and Missouri River was one of the few substantially populated areas (Whitney 1908).

In 1865, the Missouri Pacific railroad reached Kansas City. Because of the Missouri River's expansive width and fast moving waters, many believed it impossible to span. In 1869 French-American engineer, Octave Chanute, designed and built the Hannibal Bridge (Figure 2.1). The bridge was the first permanent rail crossing of the Missouri River (Whitney 1908). The \$1 million investment proved instrumental in establishing Kansas City, Missouri as a major city and rail center (Figure 2.2). In the fifty years following the bridge's completion, the city's population would quadruple (Shortridge 2012).

By the late 1800s, Kansas City was like many other American cities at the time. An unpleasant and unplanned boomtown built with little concern for public health, sanitary conditions, or regard for expansion (Figure 2.3). The city's central location and river connections allowed Kansas City to become a commercial center of national interest. With the coming of the railroads, the number of connections to and from Kansas City rapidly increased. The city distinguished itself as the meatpacking capital of America, a dominant grain distributor, and briefly the center of the nation's oil industry (Shortridge 2012). A wide variety of trades flooded the town's economy and sparked rapid industrialization and urbanization. With the rapid urbanization came overcrowding and poor sanitation. Kansas City's leadership foresaw a need for careful survey and city planning to address these problems.

Figure 2.1  
Hannibal Bridge opened  
for boat passage (Missouri  
Valley Special Collections)



Figure 2.2  
Railroad Yards in West  
Bottoms (Missouri Valley  
Special Collections)



Figure 2.3  
Kersey Coates Terrace  
north of Twelfth Street,  
before roadway was graded  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)



## THE CITY BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT

The City Beautiful Movement was a reform philosophy of North American urban planning during the 1890s and 1900s. The philosophy emphasized beautification and monumental grandeur in cities. Advocates believed that beautification would promote a harmonious social order. The City Beautiful Movement aimed to increase the quality of life and create moral and civic virtue among urban populations. The movement borrowed mainly from contemporary Beaux-Arts and neoclassical architectures, which also emphasized order, dignity, and harmony (Bluestone 1988).

In the 19th century, crowded tenement districts heightened birth rates, and urbanization dramatically altered life in urban America. Public demand for city parks and efficient roadways grew. The City Beautiful Movement responded to both demands with tree-lined boulevards, inspired by those in Paris. Many cities, including Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Dallas, and Kansas City invested in planning and building boulevard networks to enhance urban life and harmoniously connect business districts and residential suburbs.

Parkways, boulevards, border roads, and park roads are terms used during the city beautiful movement to describe links in a comprehensive park system. For this research, the word boulevard describes all types of park roads. Regardless of their nomenclature, boulevards of the City Beautiful Movement had three primary functions: aesthetic, economic, and connecting (Wilson 1964).

## GEORGE E. KESSLER + KANSAS CITY

In 1887, the City Beautiful Movement inspired German immigrant, wealthy businessperson, and founder of the Kansas City Smelting and Refining Company, August Robert Meyer (Figure 2.4). Meyer began campaigning for a new parks system in Kansas City, Missouri. Five years prior, in 1892, Mayor Benjamin Holmes appointed August Meyer as the president of the city's first park board. Mayor Holmes and Meyer would later hire landscape architect and engineer, George E. Kessler (Figure 2.5) to design the city's park system to address problems surrounding sub-standard living conditions, health, and sanitation (Wilson 1964).

Figure 2.4 (Left)  
Portrait of August Robert Meyer (1851-1905).  
(Wikipedia Commons)

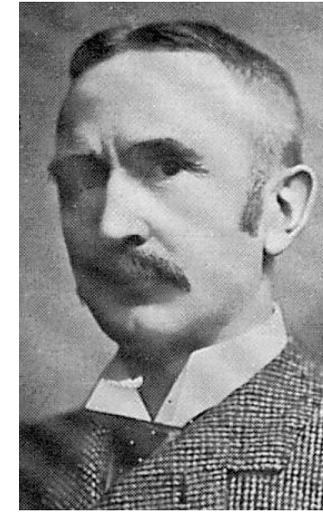


Figure 2.5 (Right)  
Portrait of George E. Kessler (1862-1923). (Wikipedia Commons)



In October of 1893, the Office of the Board of Park and Boulevard Commissioners presented a comprehensive report and survey to the city's leadership. The survey reviewed Kansas City's topography, traffic patterns, population density, land uses and made projections for future development. The document contained three primary sections: a letter of transmittal to the mayor, a detailed report from the board, and an engineer's report ("Report of the Board of Park and Boulevard Commissioners of Kansas City, Missouri" 1893).

According to George Kessler, Kansas City's Parks and Boulevards System is "the result of a careful survey of [Kansas City's] needs at the time, and anticipation of reasonable growth" (Kessler 1917). In a 1917 article titled The Kansas City Park System and Its Effect on the City Plan, Kessler describes the intentions behind the Parks and Boulevard System and its resulting impacts. He viewed Kansas City's road networks as "lines of communication." The ambitious plan aimed to unite communication networks of Kansas City as a homogeneous whole (Figure 2.6). Kessler claimed that execution of the plan would improve health and living standards, and in turn, dramatically increase land values citywide. Before zoning law, the parks and boulevard network aided in holding the commercial and industrial areas without serious shifting. George Kessler appreciated both the geographical conditions and the spirit of

Kansas City when he wrote: “Not always do cities require the radical dreams of diagonal lines, sometimes insisted on in theory; and least of all would that sort of development properly apply to so rugged a city as Kansas City when its topographical eccentricities are understood” (Kessler 1917). Kessler used the design of the parkways and boulevards as a means to re-introduce nature into what was becoming a congested city (Hogan 2017).

George Kessler worked with the city’s dramatic bluffs and rippling topography to design an interconnected network of stately parks and boulevards (Figure 2.6). Kessler’s designs successfully balanced formalized landscape design trends and the natural, found beauty of Kansas City (Hogan 2017).

### KESSLER’S EDUCATION

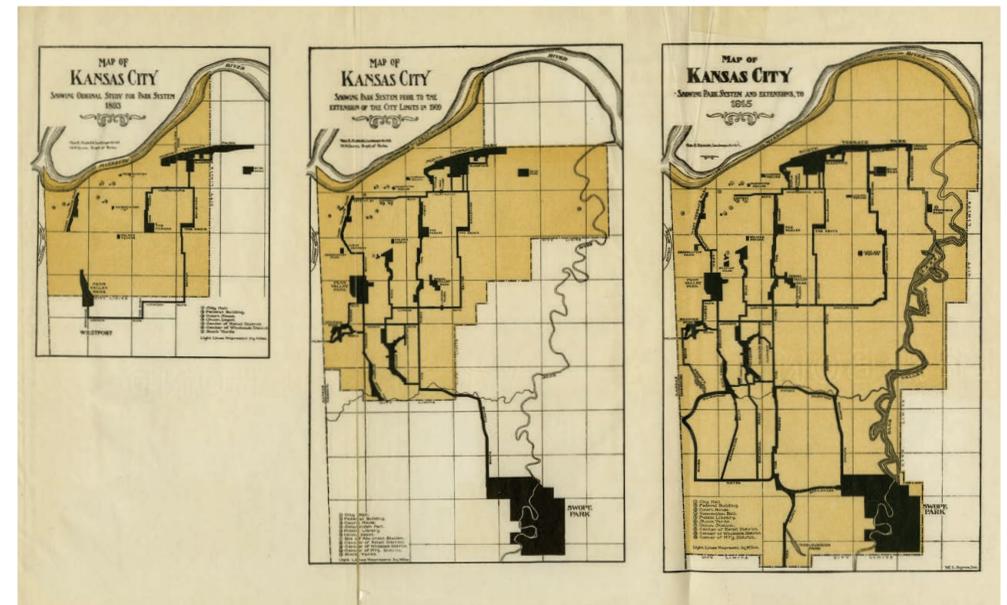
Kessler was especially adept at balancing formal and informal designs due to his schooling. In the mid-1850s, he undertook a two-year apprenticeship at the private landscape gardening school at the Grand Ducal Gardens in Weimar, Germany (Wilson 1964). At Grand Ducal, under the watchful eyes of esteemed gardeners, Hofgärtner Armin Sckell and Garteninspector Julius Hartwig, Kessler was educated in botany, forestry, and design. 19th century Germany supported the emergence of native landscape architects, in particular, F.L. von Sckell, and Peter Joseph Lenne. These designers worked to transform many of Germany’s baroque gardens into parks resembling the naturalistic, picturesque English garden pioneered by Sir Humphrey Repton and Lancelot Capability Brown.

Kessler spent several months working at the firm of Haage and Schmidt, a German plant nursery in Erfurt, Germany. He received further schooling in Charlottenburg and Potsdam where he studied at Gaertner Lehr Anstalt, the school of garden design; technical engineering study at Gartner-Lehranstalt; study with Hofgärtner Theodore Neitner at the Neue Garten and study at the Polytechnicum, the leading horticultural library in Germany (Culbertson 2005). Kessler completed a course in civil engineering at the University of Jena, after which he traveled central, and Western Europe and southern England for one year with a tutor to study civic design in many major European cities including Paris and Moscow (Culbertson 2005). Kessler returned to New York

City in October 1881 with advanced knowledge of horticulture, landscape design, and civil engineering.

Today, Kansas City’s boulevards and parkways continue to serve as a blueprint from which the city grows in harmony with challenging topography and scenic views (“Boulevard and Parkway Standards of Kansas City, Missouri” 2010). The system is essential to the historical identity of Kansas City, the recreation and transportation needs of its residents, and the unification of its districts. Kansas City’s Parks and Boulevard System is of national historical and cultural significance for its innovative planning and contributions to the City Beautiful Movement in the early 20th century. Kessler’s plan for a system of interlocking parks and boulevards enhanced virtually all elements of urban life. The Parks and Boulevard system is essential to the character and historical identity of Kansas City and provides residents with recreation opportunities.

Figure 2.6  
Maps of Kansas City  
Showing Park Systems from  
1893 to 1915. (Missouri  
Valley Special Collections)



## **SIGNIFICANCE OF KANSAS CITY'S PARKS AND BOULEVARDS**

Around 1920, Andrew Write Crawford, a city planner from Philadelphia, wrote, "Of all the actual accomplishments that American cities can boast, within the last twenty years, none surpass the park and parkways system of Kansas City. That system, by and of itself, is making that city world famous." (Crawford 1920). Parkway such as Ward Parkway and Paseo Boulevard are iconic of Kansas City's charm. In 1946, French writer Andre Maurois wrote: "Who in Europe, or in America for that matter, knows that Kansas City is one of the loveliest cities on the earth? Yet it is true" (Maurois 1948). Although there is little context surrounding Maurois' statement, it is likely that the park and boulevard system influenced the author. The book *A City Within A Park* proclaims "there are those now, and there were those in earlier times, who have declared without reservation that the park and boulevard system is Kansas City's most distinctive, and distinguished feature." The authors further affirm the system's importance to the identity of the city in stating that the Parks and Boulevard system is to Kansas City's Identity as Central Park is to New York City's (Mobley and Harris 1991).

### **NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Some of Kansas City's oldest parks and boulevards are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Kansas City Parks and Boulevards Historic District. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the United States' historic places worthy of preservation. It is part of a national program "to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archaeological resources" ("National Register of Historic Places Official Website--Part of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior" n.d.).

The boulevards in the 2016 National Register of Historic Places nomination meet Kessler's four requirements for boulevard design. One, Kessler required that the routes of boulevards must offer good grades. This is necessary to both reduce the cost of maintenance and to make driving agreeable. Secondly, Kessler required that boulevards be located in a "naturally slightly locality." Third, lands that abut upon such boulevards must be of a character

satisfactory and suitable for good residences. Lastly, there must be no costly natural or artificial obstacles to remove to permit proper widening of the streets (Wilson 1964). These four criteria should remain in any projective designs to protect the historic integrity of the site.

Kansas City's parks and boulevards range in "periods of significance" from 1895 to 1965. Period of significance refers to the period during which significant events and activities occurred on the site ("Kansas City Parks and Boulevards Historic District" 2016). In this case, the period of significance means the timeframe when specific elements of the parks and boulevard system were most influential to landscape architecture, community planning, entertainment and recreation, transportation, and architecture and art (the five categories chosen by the applicant - the Missouri Department of Natural Resources). The landscape was reviewed and is held in esteem for its association with George Edward Kessler, the primary landscape architect and engineer responsible for the planning of the Kansas City Parks and Boulevard system. The historic district is significant for its contributions to and advancement of Landscape Architecture, Community Planning, Entertainment and Recreation, Transportation, and Architecture and Art ("Kansas City Parks and Boulevards Historic District" 2016).

### **LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Kansas City has a strong history of open space preservation, mostly reliant on the city's unique and historic Parks and Boulevards System ("Boulevard and Parkway Standards of Kansas City, Missouri" 2010). The expansive Parks and Boulevard system is a defining feature of Kansas City's character and is an essential piece of the city's historical identity.

The Kansas City park and boulevard system provides recreation activities to residents and visitors of the city. Kansas City Parks and Recreation provides facilities, programs and recreational opportunities for the city that "contributes to an aesthetically pleasing environment and enhanced quality of life" ("Reference Book, Kansas City Parks and Recreation" 2017). The department manages and maintains approximately 12,000 acres of parkland.

## PASEO BOULEVARD

In 1893, in the new Park Board's first comprehensive planning effort, August Meyer, in partnership with George Kessler, proposed the first elaborate formal parkway that is now Paseo Boulevard. In his book titled *The City Beautiful Movement in Kansas City*, William Wilson calls The Paseo "The jewel" of Kansas City's Park system (Wilson 1964) (Figure 2.7). The Paseo was named for the 'Paseo de la Reforma' in Mexico City (Figure 2.8). The roadway cuts diagonally across Mexico City's urban grid. Unlike Mexico City's Paseo, Kansas City's was designed to follow the existing gridiron street pattern (Lee 1995). Kessler categorized The Paseo as a hybrid between a boulevard and a park, from its inception it was considered a parkway as opposed to a boulevard. The Paseo was to be .75 miles long, extending from Ninth to Seventeenth Street. Kessler's plan called for the demolition of two north-south city streets – Grove Avenue, to the west, and Flora Avenue, to the east. The Paseo was built in the area between the two former streets. Kessler designed The Paseo to demonstrate how natural beauty could coexist with formal civic development. He fashioned individual parks out of the rectangular, interior lots that were formed by intersecting streets (Lee 1995).

By 1896, Grove Avenue, which would form the southbound part of The Paseo Boulevard, had already seen a considerable amount of residential development. The plan for The Paseo did not require a change in the western boundary of Grove Avenue, and therefore did not directly affect the homes that lined the west side of Grove. Many of these homes were replaced with apartment buildings over the following decades ("Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Kansas City, Missouri" 1896).

The Paseo's development had minimal impact on the residential properties along the west side of Grove Avenue. Dissimilarly, it called for the complete removal of all properties along its east side. The plan involved the creation of the parkway, which would separate the northbound and southbound roads. Kessler's plan called for an additional ten feet of street and the 100-foot-wide parkway. These were made possible from the removal of properties that had faced west toward Grove Avenue and east toward Flora Avenue. The city purchased the properties along Grove and Flora Avenues in 1896 and spent the following two years flattening them ("Sanborn Insurance Map Kansas City, Missouri" 1896).

Figure 2.7  
1906 Map Showing the  
Park and Boulevard System.  
Paseo outlined in pink.  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)

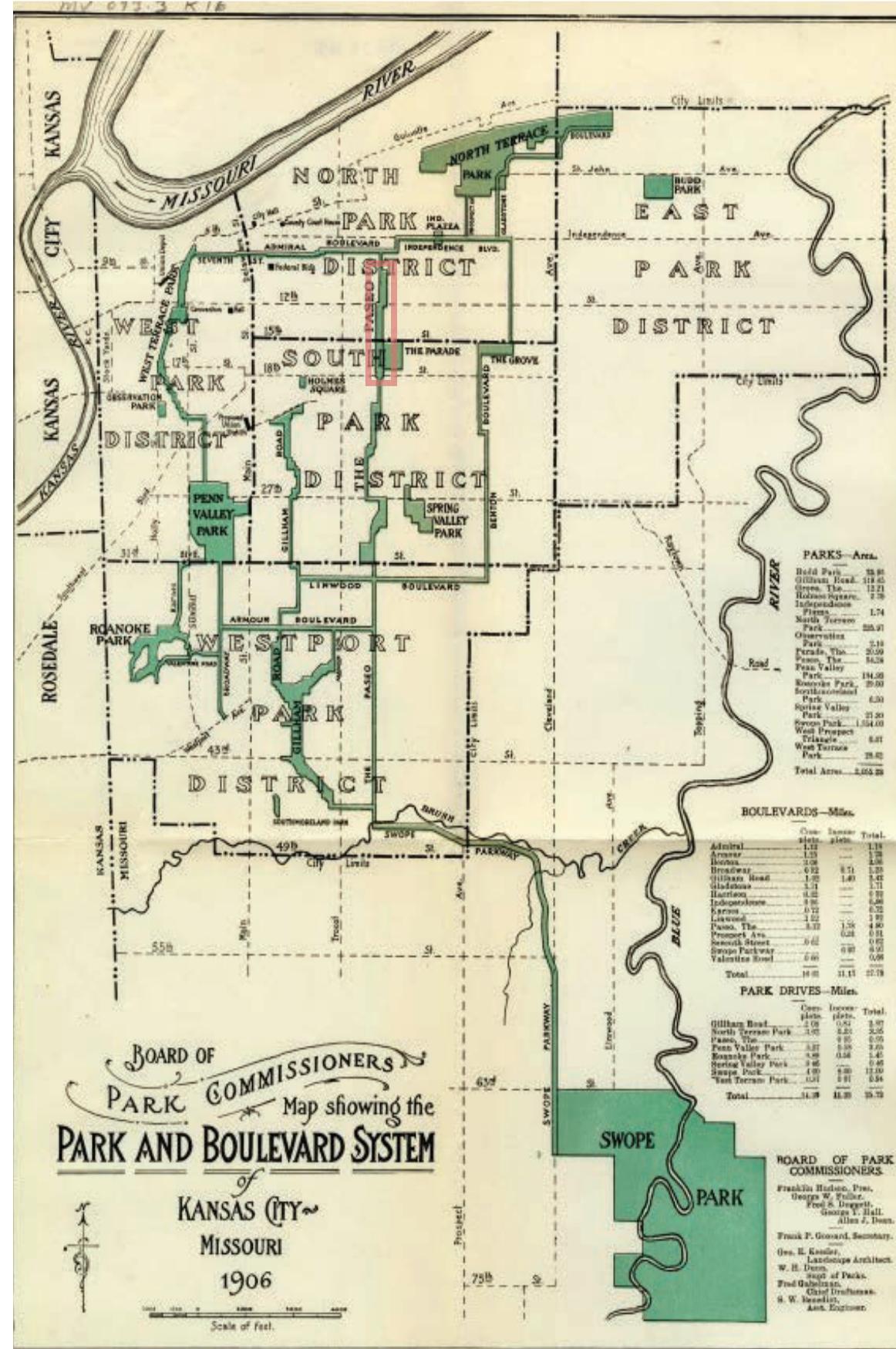




Figure 2.8  
*'Paseo de la Reforma' in  
 Mexico City  
 (Burlingame 1904)*



Figure 2.9  
*A 1897 photograph looking  
 northeast between 9th  
 and 10th Streets before  
 redevelopment. (Missouri  
 Valley Special Collections)*



Figure 2.10  
*A 1897 photograph  
 looking northeast at the  
 land between Grove and  
 Flora Avenues before  
 redevelopment. (Missouri  
 Valley Special Collections)*

The Paseo's development resulted in the clearance of what some called blighted areas (Lee 1995) (Figure 2.8). A 1912 report of the Board Of Public Welfare praised the role of the park board in slum clearance stating that "Few cities in the United States have better housing for the middle class and for a large part of the working class" (Wilson 1964). A 1922 article in the Kansas City Star notes that "Many of the younger generations of Kansas Citians, viewing the city's park and boulevard system as it exists today, fail to realize that the improvements were not only desirable in themselves, but supplanted eyesores that were disgraceful blots on the appearance of the city ... . The beautiful Paseo... was carved from a most unattractive district of ramshackle buildings and narrow streets" (Kansas City Star 1922).

After clearing the site, the city began constructing The Paseo between 9th and 17th Streets and completed the construction in 1899. The parkway followed the natural topography, sloping downward between 9th and 18th Streets. Although vast expanses of the parkway, including the angled span between 12th and 13th Streets, had initially been left as large open spaces, the parkway featured a variety of architectural and landscaped features. Among such features were the terracotta, cut stone and timber pergola constructed between 10th and 11th Streets, the sunken gardens and a Spanish cannon at 12th, a lake, fountains, and the elevated Terrace between 12th and 13th Streets (Lee 1995).

Paseo Boulevard is a small part of Kansas City's historic parks and boulevard system. The National Register of Historic Places recognizes the northern-most 1.1 miles of the 19 miles long Paseo Boulevard as historically significant ("Kansas City Parks and Boulevards Historic District" 2016). This report studies Paseo Boulevard between Independence Avenue and 18th Street. Kansas City may soon begin the application process to extend the National Register of Historic Places designation to southern sections of Paseo Boulevard (Campbell 2016).

## CLASS AND RACE TENSIONS IN EAST KC

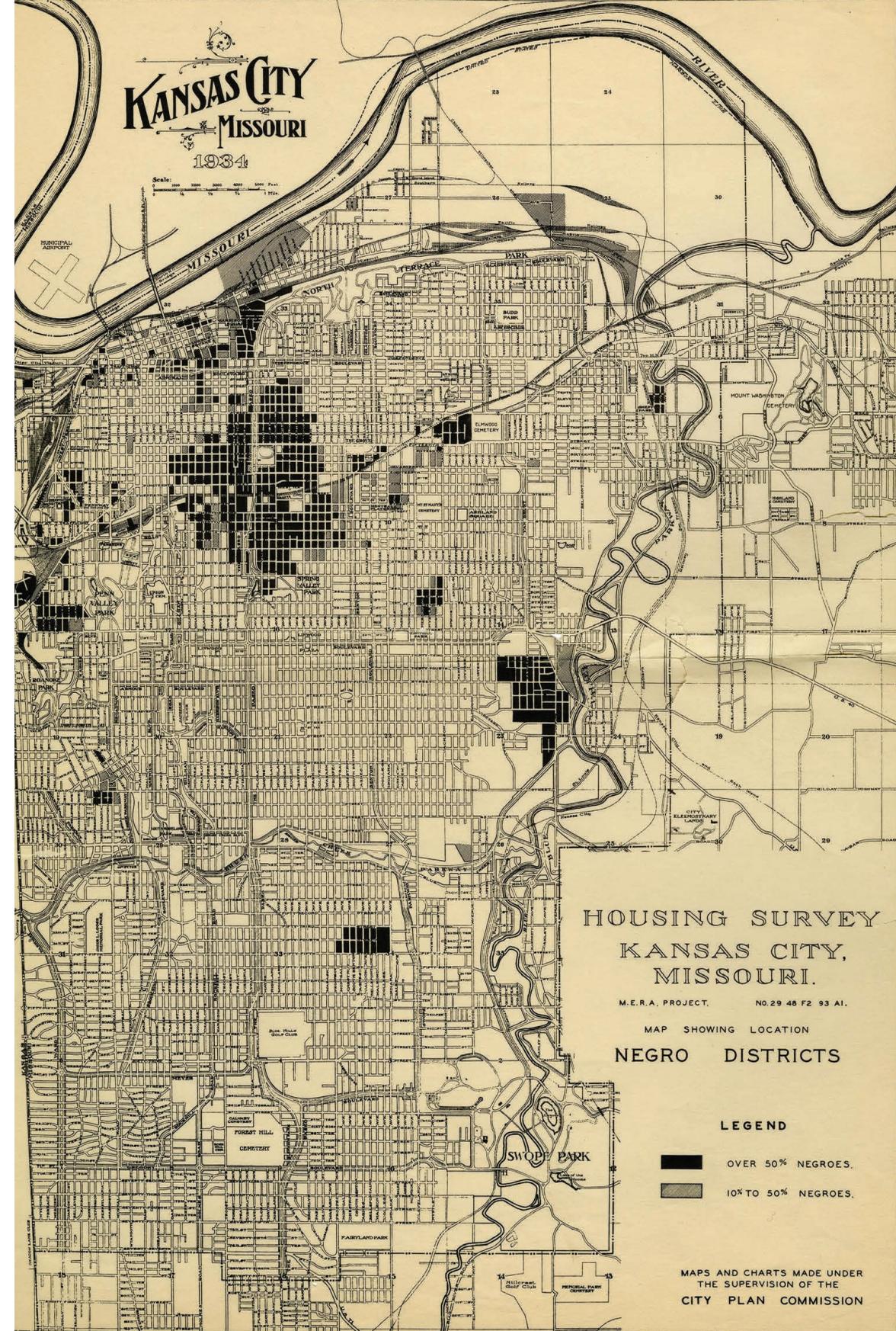
Prior to the construction of Paseo Boulevard, the City of Kansas City, Missouri evicted African-American and Irish households already living in the area. The City forcibly removed these households to overcrowded slums throughout Kansas City (Schirmer 2002).

Simultaneously, real estate developer J.C. Nichols began work on the Country Club Plaza in southwest Kansas City. Shortly after its opening in 1923, The Country Club Plaza eclipsed The Paseo and became the most desirable residential neighborhood in Kansas City. Nichols influenced real estate and planning in Kansas City and across America. His goal was to “develop whole residential neighborhoods that would attract an element of people who desired a better way of life, a nicer place to live and would be willing to work in order to keep it better.” To enforce this idea, J.C. Nichols relied on restrictive covenants. Before land-use zoning, restrictive covenants were used to control the uses of the lands in the neighborhoods. Most of the covenants used by Nichols restricted the lands to residential uses, and contained other features such as setback and free space requirements. However, homes in the Country Club District were restricted with covenants that prohibited African Americans and Jewish people from owning or occupying the homes (Worley 1990). Nichols did not invent the practice, but he used it to exclude ethnic minorities from living in his neighborhoods. His ordinances were used as a blueprint to spread such practices nationwide.

Additionally, urban “white flight,” “panic-selling” and blockbusting near Paseo Boulevard helped to segregate Kansas City. Blockbusting is the practice of convincing owners to sell property cheaply for fear of people of another race or economic class moving into the neighborhood. J.C. Nichols’ racist policies further segregated low-income and marginalized groups in neighborhoods surrounding Paseo Boulevard. Kansas City’s early urban renewal and beautification projects, like Paseo Boulevard, demolished racially integrated neighborhoods, geographically concentrated African Americans, and furthered marginalized populations from economic opportunity (Schirmer 2002).

Just four blocks west of The Paseo, Troost Avenue, once the eastern edge of Kansas City, and a “millionaires row,” is now widely

Figure 2.11  
Housing Survey Kansas City,  
Missouri: Map Showing  
Location: Negro Districts  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)



recognized as one of the city's most prominent racial and economic dividing lines (Schirmer 2002). When the economy went through a decline in the 1890s, this made the newly built homes along the Paseo affordable to a less-affluent, predominantly African-American community. Before desegregation, Lincoln High (Figure 2.12) offered the only post-elementary education to African Americans, further increasing and centralizing the population of African-American residents in the jazz district now known as 18th and Vine (Schirmer 2002).

At the height of segregation and amid continual challenges for resources and facilities, Lincoln High still drew nationally renowned black artists and educators, successful and prominent individuals who could have been teaching at any prestigious university in the country but for their race (Dennis 2018). Alumni Jeremiah Cameron would announce that as Lincoln High students, "we knew about Negro music, Negro literature, and Negro achievements" (Dennis 2018). Despite racial tension and systematic racism, African American and black culture thrived in east Kansas City.

Today, neighborhoods near the corridor and historic district have come to be associated with high profile crime, poor access to education, and significant blight. The Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan refers to neighborhoods near the intersection of Paseo Boulevard and Independence Avenue as areas of high poverty, high property vacancy rates, and places where concentrations of violent crime are frequent. Just 1.5 miles south, on the opposite side of highway 71, Paseo Boulevard borders Beacon Hill. In 1998, beginning under then Mayor Emanuel Cleaver, the Beacon Hill neighborhood was deemed blighted and tagged for what was billed as one of the largest urban redevelopment projects in the nation.

Three decades later the Beacon Hill redevelopment is coming to fruition, the impacts of which are evident by longtime residents. Dee Evans, who has lived in her home at 25th and West Paseo for 38 years, told the Kansas City Star "It's scary because I'm an existing resident that I think, one day, will be pushed out." Another longtime resident of Beacon Hill, Allen represents the third generation of his family to live in the 1,200-square-foot house, bought over 100 years ago, at 26th and Tracy. Allen told the Kansas City Star that he does not just worry about losing his

neighborhood. He's equally concerned that memories of Beacon Hill as a historic place that once housed black lawyers, clergy, Monarchs baseball players and doctors who once practiced at the long-gone and black-owned Wheatley-Provident Hospital will be soon forgotten (Adler and Randle 2017).

*Figure 2.12  
The new Lincoln High School  
building on Woodland Ave  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)*



*Figure 2.13  
Jazz band including Lincoln  
High alumnus Walter Page  
(Kansas City Museum)*



## CONTEXT + SITE INVENTORY OVERVIEW

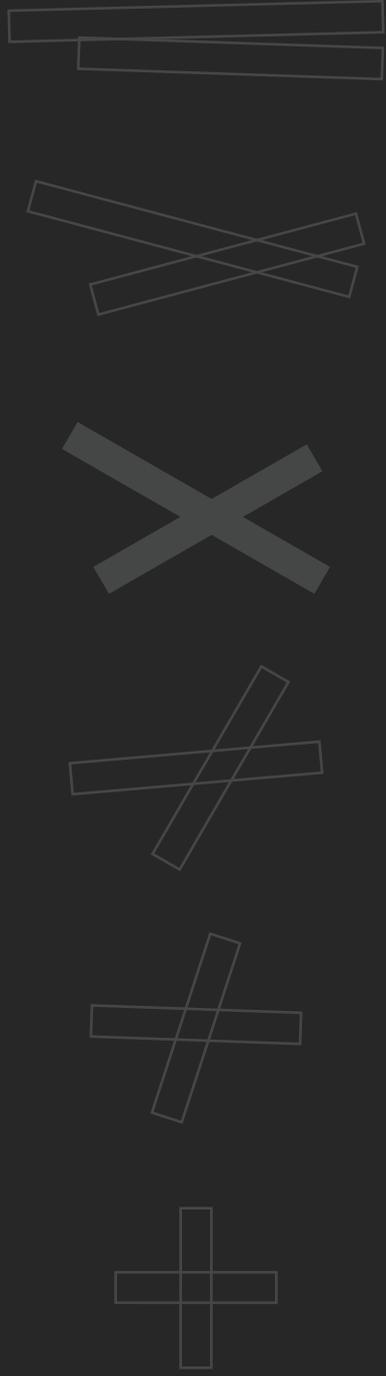
Paseo Boulevard is a small part of Kansas City's historic parks and boulevard system. The National Register of Historic Places recognizes the northern-most 1.1 miles, from Independence Avenue to East 18th street, as historically significant ("Kansas City Parks and Boulevards Historic District" 2016, Campbell 2016). This report studies Paseo Boulevard between East 9th street and East 17th street. The 0.8 miles studied in this research has the widest medians and the most potential for answering the research question (Figure 2.15).

The Paseo is a six-lane divided roadway with a right-of way of approximately 200 feet. Within the right-of-way is a expansive center median of approximately ninety-feet. The median is planted with shade trees of varying varieties and maturity. The roadways of The Paseo contain three lanes of one-way traffic; the eastern section carries northbound traffic, with the western section carrying southbound traffic. Additionally, the boulevard is bordered on both the east and west sides by shade trees (a combination of mature and younger varieties such as Pin Oak) and a concrete sidewalk and curb.

At its entire length from Independence Boulevard to 18th Street, the central lawn forms individual parks within each block. As such, The Paseo is adorned with several architectural elements in these areas. Specific elements of the Paseo photographed and documented in the Kansas City Parks and Boulevards Historic District registration form include the August Meyer Memorial, the Women's Leadership Fountain, the Pergola, the Black Veterans Memorial, the stonewall and terrace with the William T. Fitzsimons Memorial Fountain, the Sunken Gardens, the Pergola at Truman Road and the John Williams Memorial, the Salvatore Grisafe Memorial and the traffic light at the intersection of The Paseo and Linwood Boulevard ("Kansas City Parks and Boulevards Historic District" 2016).

Figure 2.14  
Research focus area and  
notable historical buildings  
and landmarks.  
(Wendling 2019)





# RESEARCH STRATEGY

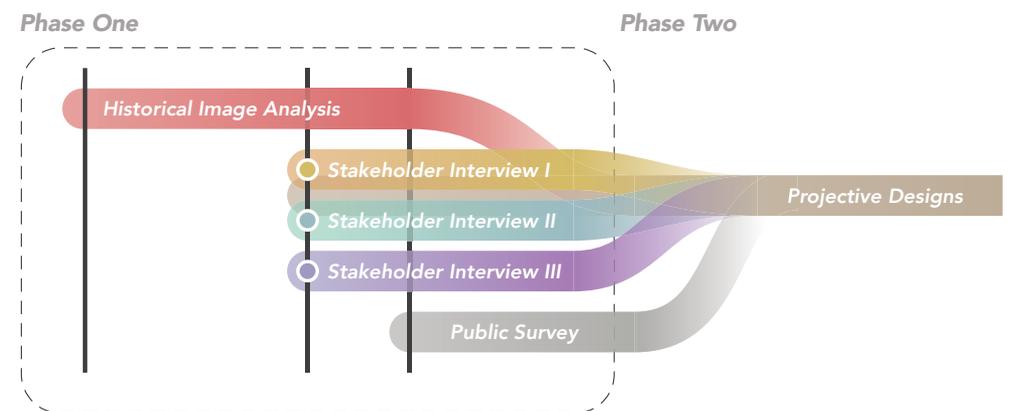
## RESEARCH OVERVIEW

This mixed-methods study identifies multi-narrative histories of Paseo Boulevard and proposes design interventions based on the economic, environmental, and social conditions of the site and its context. There were two overlapping and fluidly defined phases to this research. Data collection through historical map and image analysis, interviews with stakeholders, and an online survey made up phase one of this research. Data analysis and resulting projective designs made up phase two.

Combining both qualitative and quantitative research broadened the perspective of this research and allowed for more holistic design solutions. The data collected in this study includes both observations and statistical analyses. An advantage of using this two-phase, mixed-methods research strategy is that the data provide supplemental evidence and support for the findings.

Chapter three describes the four methods in detail. Following their descriptions, the chapter describes how the methods form a research strategy aimed at answering the research question.

Figure 3.1  
Research Strategy Diagram  
(Wendling 2019)



## METHODOLOGY

Historical image analysis, stakeholder interviews, a public survey, and projective designs come together to answer the research question: How can The Paseo be preserved as a historical asset while increasing the site's use-value?

The research began with historical image analysis. Collecting and examining the sources provided evidence of Paseo Boulevard's many histories. Historical image analysis answered many questions about previous conditions and uses of The Paseo. Nevertheless, it also raised many questions. Questions that would be answered by stakeholder interviews.

Through three stakeholder interviews, the questions raised in the historical research portion eventually were answered. Baseline information regarding the daily uses and future visioning of Paseo Boulevard was gathered through these interviews. Each stakeholder represents a different special-interest group with interest in the visioning of The Paseo. Data gathered from interview responses helped formulate the public survey that was promoted and distributed within the community.

## HISTORICAL MAP AND IMAGE ANALYSIS

Working with primary image sources such as historical maps, photographs, drawings, and postcards was instrumental to this research. Much of the historical information gathered from these sources is not documented in the literature. These sources act as critical historical evidence. They provide essential information about the historical design, form, and function of Paseo Boulevard through various eras of Kansas City history.

The framework used to analyze and draw conclusions from these images was a modified version of the acronym COMA, for Content, Origin, Motive, and Analysis. Descriptions of each stage are described on the adjacent page.

## HISTORICAL MAP AND IMAGE ANALYSIS CONT.

### Content

Studying these sources began with visually skimming it and noting initial observations. Evaluating for content included asking questions such as - What is happening? Does the source represent an event or moment in time? Whom is the source portraying? Do figures in the source represent a specific group of people or class of people? What are they doing? How are they dressed? What is suggested by their body language and facial expressions?

### Origin

Secondly, sources were analyzed based on their origin. This process began by identifying the date of the source. If the date is unknown, the researcher made inferences of the date based on context, content, and cross-examination with similar sources. Additionally, a critical part of understanding a source is knowing who created it and where it originated.

### Motive

Next, sources were evaluated based on their intent. All visual sources are created for a purpose, often to inform, promote, or entertain. By understanding the origin of a visual source inferences can be made of the source's motive. Understanding the motive of a visual source can reveal necessary information about an era's political, economic, and social climate.

### Analysis

The final stage in evaluating a visual source was to collectively interpret the content, origin, and motive. This required critical thinking on behalf of the researcher. It is essential to understand the claims each source made and to understand the methods it used to do so. This began by examining the content's factual accuracy by asking questions like - Does the source present a fair and accurate depiction of its subject? Could the source potentially be misleading by presenting false or exaggerated information?

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The primary goal of the interviews was to gather baseline information directly from stakeholders. Data regarding stakeholder opinions, perspectives, and preferences proved beneficial to the research. This qualitative portion of the study helped to clarify issues found in the historical visual source analysis and in site analysis. Additionally, interviews with stakeholders helped identify areas of agreement across stakeholder groups. Lastly, stakeholder interviews revealed potential human and financial resources that may benefit Paseo Boulevard in the future.

### Interview Questions

- Why is your department, organization, or institution important to Kansas City?
- What do you know about the Kansas City Parks system?
- What is the role of your department, organization, or institution in maintaining and preserving the historical legacy of the neighborhood? Of the Parks and Boulevard System?
- What are your thoughts on the renaming of Paseo Boulevard to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard?
- Why is it important that the Parks and Boulevard System be on the National Register of Historic Places? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this designation?
- Describe Paseo Boulevard?
- What opportunities are there to activate The Paseo?
- How do you envision the future of Paseo Boulevard? What do the streets look like? How are people using the park and the streets? Who are those people, what do they look like, and how are they using the space?
- What opportunities exist for public-private partnerships near Paseo Boulevard?
- How do you envision equitable development happening in east Kansas City? What role do parks play in that?
- Who else might be interested in discussing the future of The Paseo with me?

The interview questions listed above were asked of each stakeholder interviewed. Both the prepared questions and ad-hoc questions were asked of the interviewees. Interviews were in person, one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. Results from interviews influenced the design of the public survey.

## PUBLIC SURVEY

A brief online survey further expanded the research and allowed for community input. Surveys tested the findings from stakeholder interviews with a broader audience across East Kansas City. The target population for the survey was anyone who lives in Kansas City and is familiar with Paseo Boulevard. The survey was promoted at local events and through numerous organizations near Paseo Boulevard. The questionnaire contains multiple choice, Likert scale ranking, and open-ended questions.

The 25-question survey took an average of seven minutes to complete (Figure 3.2). The survey was only available in English, limiting responses of a diverse neighborhood. The survey questions were optimized for mobile. A few of the questions in the survey did not meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), meaning people with disabilities may not have been able to complete the survey. The survey was preceded by two screening questions. One, *Are you 18 years old or older?* and two, *Are you familiar with Paseo Boulevard North of 18th Street in Kansas City, Missouri?*

Word of mouth and vinyl stickers with a QR code helped promote the online survey. The researcher asked local businesses and organizations to help promote the survey in newsletters and websites.

Eye-catching vinyl stickers were scattered along The Paseo to help promote the survey. Passersby could scan the QR code on the sticker with their smartphone. The QR code leads to a landing page that describes the research and leads visitors to the Qualtrics online survey. These removable stickers were put onto street sign poles, benches, trashcans, and other metal surfaces.

The data collected from the survey was compiled and analyzed against the other data collected in this study. The online survey heavily influenced projective designs for Paseo Boulevard.

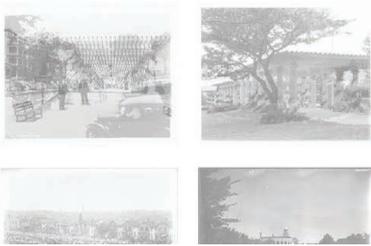
PUBLIC SURVEY CONT.

PRESERVE + ADAPT PASEO 

## PRESERVE + ADAPT THE PASEO

Balancing historic preservation and community needs on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri

TAKE THE SURVEY



Describe this landmark's significance

This landmark is important to me 

This landmark is historically significant 

Describe why this landmark is significant (optional).

Parking	Plazas and gathering spaces
Public restrooms	More trees
Music performance space	More lighting
Barbecue and picnic areas	Children's playgrounds
Improved crosswalks	More flowers
Fitness equipment	Public art and sculpture
Sports courts	Cultural and historic signage

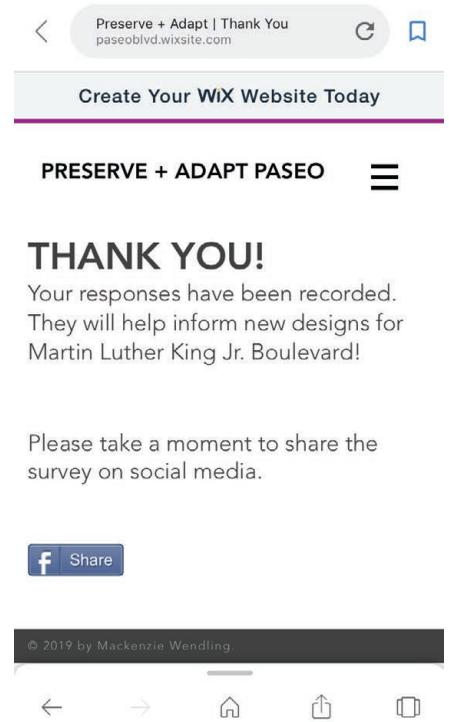


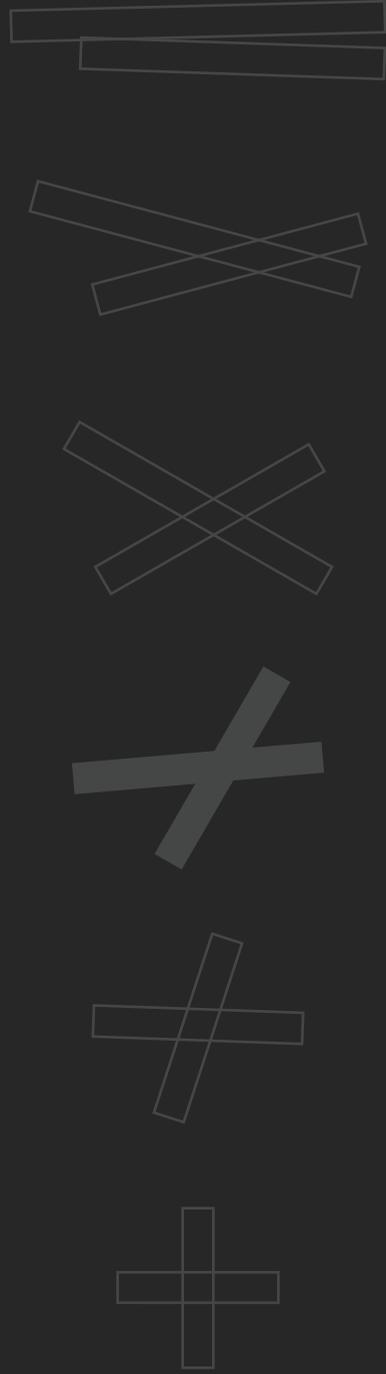
Figure 3.2  
Survey Interface  
(Wendling 2019)

Once scanning the QR code or navigating to the webpage, people saw the landing page (shown above). The landing page clarified the intent of the research and displayed historical images of Paseo Boulevard. Each image included a descriptive caption and proper citations. Visitors were invited to take the survey and did so by selecting the “Take the Survey” button.

After the screening questions, respondents were asked seven questions regarding notable landmarks on Paseo Boulevard. These questions presented an image of a landmark and asked respondents to rank the landmark’s importance and significance on a seven-point Likert scale. Respondents could describe the landmarks significance in a text box.

Following the questions regarding The Paseo’s landmarks were questions regarding use. One of the more influential questions was *What improvements or additions would you like to see on Paseo Boulevard?* Respondents could select as many improvements or additions as they felt were needed.

After completing the survey, people were asked to share the weblink and survey via social media. This helped generate additional responses from people who are familiar with The Paseo.



# RESULTS

## RESULTS OVERVIEW

Data collection through historical image analysis, interviews with stakeholders, and an online survey are included and analyzed in this chapter. The data presented in this chapter demonstrates that The Paseo was once a place of local pride whose uses and purpose have changed over time.



Figure 4.1  
A postcard titled "Fountain, 9th and Paseo" was postmarked on September 3rd, 1918 (Missouri Valley Special Collections)

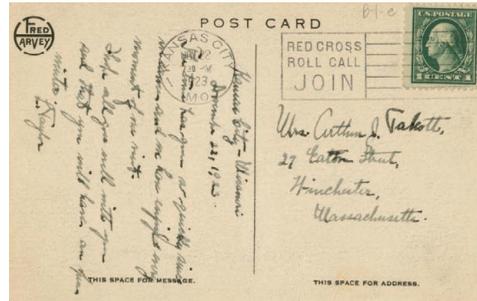


Figure 4.2  
A postcard titled "The Paseo, Kansas City, Mo." was postmarked on November 22nd, 1923 (Missouri Valley Special Collections)

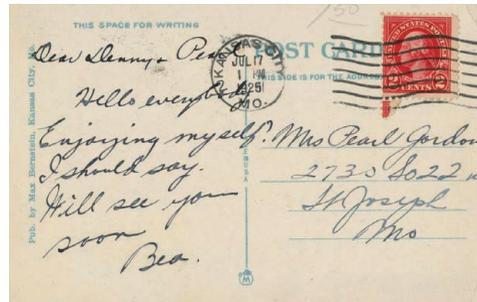
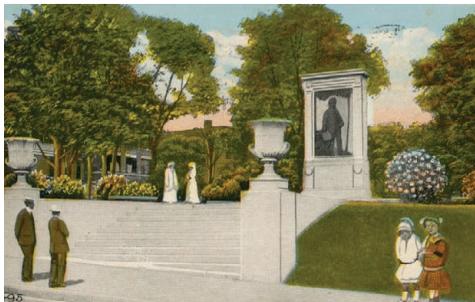


Figure 4.3  
A postcard titled "Meyers Memorial, Kansas City, Mo." was postmarked on July 17th, 1925 (Missouri Valley Special Collections)

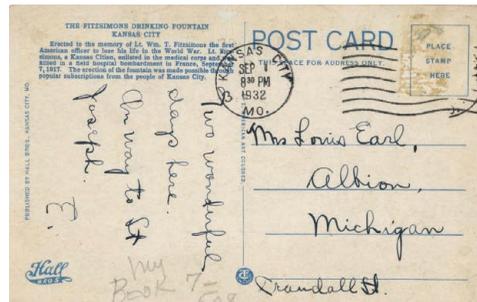


Figure 4.4  
A postcard titled "William T. Fitzsimons Fountain, 12th and Paseo, Kansas City, Mo." was postmarked on September 1st, 1932 (Missouri Valley Special Collections)

## HISTORICAL IMAGE ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Themes that emerged from analyzing historical maps, images, and postcards are primarily perceptual. Overall, they relate to literal and social connectedness of places and of people. Historical images, postcards and maps also provide evidence of the landscape's historical uses, the urban form and architectural character, and the maintenance of the landscape. For Kansas Citians, the landscape was a source of pride. It was used to demonstrate innovation in the public realm. These findings are significant because they heavily influenced the research's constraints and projective designs.

## 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY SOCIAL MEDIA

Visitors and residents of Kansas City sent innumerable amounts of postcards across the world to share the landscape with friends and family. Historical postcards provide a glimpse of how proud Kansas Citians were of The Paseo. In many ways, postcards were the social media of the 20th Century.

Postcards were concise, widely available and inexpensive. They became popular because they were a quick and easy way for people to communicate with each other across long distances (Figure 4.1, Figure 4.2, Figure 4.3, Figure 4.4). As postcards of the landscape spread, The Paseo and Kansas City's Parks System quickly became the envy of the world.

There may be a correlation between the popularization of postcards and the origins of the City Beautiful Movement. The first picture postcards were sold at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. The City Beautiful Movement began in the late 1800s as a progressive urban reform movement. Postcards were part of the City Beautiful Movement. They may have played a role in the spread of the movement.

By the early twentieth century, business people leveraged the ideas of City Beautiful to make their cities more attractive to commercial interests. As a result, postcards were used to propagandize cities. They often pictured romanticized representations of their subjects. Paseo Boulevard may have never been in the exact condition as represented in some postcards. Regardless, historical postcards proved valuable to this research.

Not only do historical postcards provide evidence to the pride Kansas Citians felt, they also provide evidence to the landscape's use, maintenance, and Kansas City's historical urban character.

### DEMONSTRATING INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC REALM

During the early twentieth century, Paseo Boulevard was a public space used to demonstrate the latest innovations. The physical organization of The Paseo was innovative for transportation design. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sidewalks, tree-lined streets, streetlights (Figure 4.5), and concrete curbs and gutters were the most avant-garde trends in engineering and urban design. Historical images and postcards reveal the pride Kansas Citians took in their new infrastructure.

Postcards and images of the Sunken Gardens of The Paseo make known the landscape's contribution to horticultural demonstration and innovation. Most every photograph or postcard of the gardens shows a different floral parterre (Figure 4.6, Figure 4.7, Figure 4.8, Figure 4.9). The garden was highly curated and demanded extensive maintenance. In a report submitted to the city's Board of Park and Boulevard Commissioners, Kessler wrote "The city should have some place where everybody can see beautiful flowers, and flowers more or less rare, in abundance and under conditions of artistic grouping or display. The 'Paseo' offers this opportunity" ("Report of the Board of Park and Boulevard Commissioners of Kansas City, Missouri" 1893).

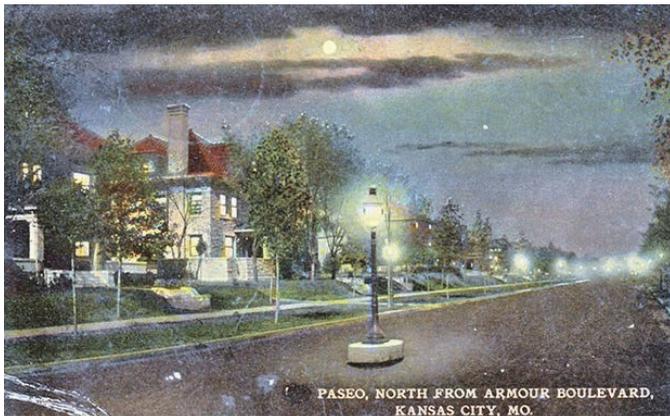


Figure 4.5  
Postcard titled "Paseo  
Boulevard from Armour  
Boulevard, Kansas City, MO"  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)

Not only was The Paseo itself a tribute to contemporary design, it served as a catalyst for design and architectural innovation throughout the city. Historical images and postcards reveal the many state-of-the-art design projects that took place along the corridor (Figure 4.10, Figure 4.11, Figure 4.12, Figure 4.13).



Figure 4.6  
Sunken Gardens on Paseo.  
1903. (Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)



Figure 4.7  
Sunken Gardens on Paseo.  
1908. (Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)



Figure 4.8  
11th Street and Paseo. 1915.  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)



Figure 4.9  
11th Street and Paseo. 1900.  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)

Figure 4.10  
A postcard titled "Dr.  
McCleary's Parkview Hotel  
and Sanitarium, 10th &  
Paseo, Kansas City, Mo."  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)



Figure 4.11  
A postcard titled "The St.  
Regis The Paseo at Linwood  
Blvd., Kansas City" (Missouri  
Valley Special Collections)



Figure 4.12  
Delaware Apartments  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)



Figure 4.13  
The Pergola and Henderson  
House (1016 Paseo).  
(Missouri Valley Special  
Collections)





*Figure 4.14  
A 1903 photograph taken  
from a rooftop looking  
northeast across 12th and  
Paseo. The parade was  
for President Theodore  
Roosevelt's visit to  
Kansas City. Shows New  
York Apartments under  
construction. (Missouri Valley  
Special Collections)*



*Figure 4.15  
A 1923 photograph shows  
cars in procession moving  
southward along the Paseo  
at 14th. The parade was for  
President Warren G. Harding  
visit to Kansas City. (Missouri  
Valley Special Collections)*

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The purpose of these interviews was to assemble information directly from a range of stakeholders. This qualitative portion of the research clarified issues and concerns regarding the site. These interviews confirmed assumptions made in the Historical Map and Image Analysis portion of this study. They also helped to make known knowledge about existing facilities, management, history, and future of Paseo Boulevard and east Kansas City.

Interviews consisted of 12 questions, ranging from topics on economics to landscape design. The interviews were conducted in person in a conversational format. Four professionals were interviewed; an employee of LISC of Greater Kansas City, two representatives of Kansas City Parks and Recreation, and a local high school teacher.

Extracted from each interview are key points and important quotes. The IRB letter of approval is located in Appendices D.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW I

### LISC of Greater Kansas City

A semi-structured interview with an employee of LISC of Greater Kansas City (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) took place on February 8th, 2019. The qualitative interview allowed flexibility while gathering data regarding the interviewee's thoughts, feelings, and opinions of The Paseo and related ongoing KC-CUR (Kansas City Catalytic Urban Redevelopment) projects. The interview included both prepared and ad-hoc questions. The goals of this interview were twofold. One, the interview clarified an understanding of how the non-profit development corporation conceptualizes Paseo Boulevard as part of the Kansas City parks and boulevard system. Secondly, the interview clarified an understanding of how LISC of Greater Kansas City reasons, articulates, and prioritizes Paseo Boulevard's dilemmas, opportunities, and historical significance.

### Organizational Goals

- East Kansas City needs more affordable housing, and a variety of housing types near and around The Paseo
- Increase density in east Kansas City
- Although The Paseo should remain a residential corridor, it should be dense, walkable, and full of activity
- Leverage existing investments; build on current investments, interventions, and development efforts

### Development and Design Recommendations

- Currently there are not any LISC projects happening directly on The Paseo, but there is one happening to the north of the site, and another to the south. The interviewee recommends trying to connect the various efforts in a mutually beneficial way.
- Redevelopment in the heart of this area should support the revelation of this history whenever possible
- Building back a proper density of residential and commercial development will be mutually beneficial for all and support an increased sense of safety, health, and well-being.
- Identify and attract neighborhood serving retail

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW II

### Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department

A similar semi-structured interview with the director of Kansas City Parks and Recreation and a landscape architect in the department took place on March 6th, 2019. The goals of this interview were the same as the previous. Unlike the other interviews conducted, the interview with the Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department involved two interviewees. The Director of Kansas City Parks and Recreation and a licensed landscape architect with the department.

#### Citywide Department Goals

- The department has identified a need for an additional community center and recreation facility in East Kansas City.
- The department wants to replace grass lawns with native, low maintenance vegetation.
- Facilities the parks department would like to add or expand include fitness trail loops, outdoor aquatics, playgrounds, flexible use sports fields, community gardens, and indoor recreation space.
- The department has a community gardens program that it would like to enhance by working with schools, churches, clinics, nonprofits, and other partner organizations

#### Barriers and Limitations

- One interviewee said that the deferred maintenance has made preservation more difficult and costly.
- A weakness within the Kansas City Parks Department is the variance in maintenance standards. Often, parks in low-income areas are not maintained to the same standard as similar parks in more affluent neighborhoods.

#### Funding for Park Improvements

- Sales tax provides sustainable operational funding for Kansas City's parks, however; the sales tax may only go towards park operations. The sales tax revenue cannot finance capital improvement projects.
- The department is interested in revenue-generating recreation, like aquatic centers, and gyms.
- An interviewee identified potential private partners as Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences, and the 18th and Vine Business District.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW III

### Local High School Teacher

Lastly, an interview with a teacher at Lincoln College Preparatory Academy occurred on April 5th, 2019. The interviewee wishes to remain anonymous. The interview was used to gather qualitative data regarding a local citizen's thoughts, feelings, and opinions of The Paseo. The interview included both prepared and ad-hoc questions. The goals were to clarify an understanding of how a layperson conceptualizes Paseo Boulevard as part of the Kansas City parks and boulevard system and as park space.

#### Perceptions and Understanding of The Paseo

- The interviewee was not aware of the Kansas City Park System, nor of its historical significance
- They were in support of renaming Paseo Boulevard to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. They did not understand why it was so controversial or why the Parks Department was against the renaming.
- They describe The Paseo as "a road with a lawn in the middle." At first, they did not think activating The Paseo was important, nor did they understand why it may be important.
- It would be nice if the 18th and Vine Historic District was better connected to The Paseo.

## PUBLIC SURVEY FINDINGS

An online survey expanded the research and allowed for community input. The survey tested the findings from stakeholder interviews with a broader audience across East Kansas City. The two main portions of the survey were the questions regarding landmarks on The Paseo and the question about improvements and additions on Paseo Boulevard. This chapter will discuss the findings from these questions in depth.

First, the landmark assessment uses the data collected and an objective understanding of the landmarks' historical significance to inform suggestions to communicate the historical importance of Paseo Boulevard.

Secondly, this chapter explores survey responses to the question "What improvements or additions would you like to see on Paseo Boulevard?" The responses were sorted into four categories to draw broader conclusions from the data. Lastly, the report combines this question's quantitative data with qualitative site analysis to recognize opportunities to implement the improvements and additions.

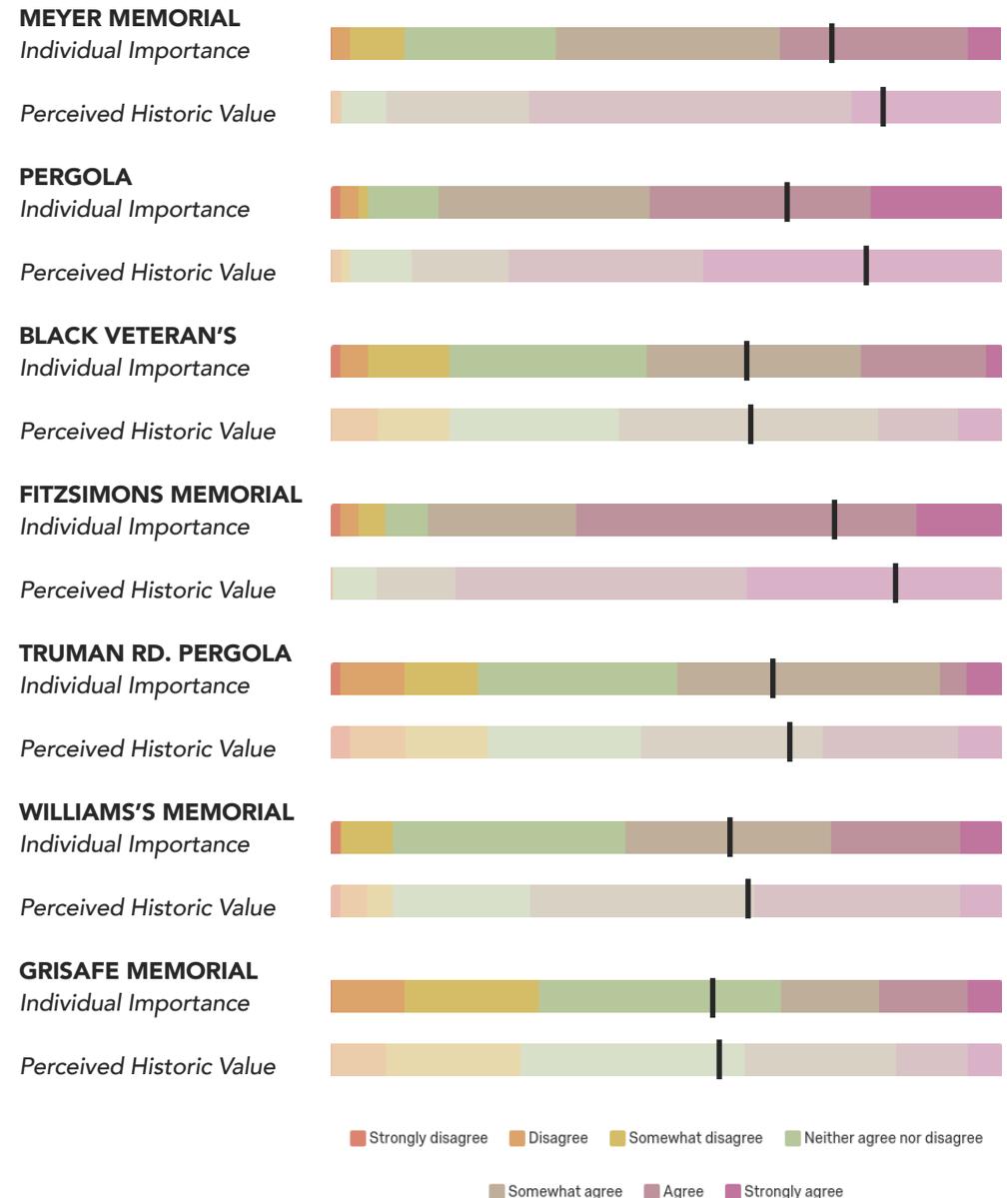
## LANDMARK ASSESSMENT

The first portion of the public survey asked respondents seven questions regarding notable landmarks on Paseo Boulevard. These questions presented an image of a landmark and asked respondents to rank the landmark's importance and significance on a seven-point Likert scale. Respondents could describe the landmarks significance in a text box. The following landmark assessment presents the findings and their importance to adaptive preservation.

The chart on the following page (Figure 4.16) shows the responses for each question, the black line indicates the mean response. For The Pergola and William T. Fitzsimons Memorial landmarks, the results were as expected. Participants found these landmarks both important and historically significant. However, one result that was not expected was the Truman Road Pergola landmark. A higher than expected number of the participants stated that this landmark had historical significance. This landmark is not

Figure 4.16 (Opposite) Landmark Assessment Overview. The black tick indicates the average response (Wendling 2019)

historically significant, however; it was constructed in 1990. The survey results demonstrates that there is a lack of knowledge about the historic elements on the Paseo Boulevard. Design interventions may help solve this dilemma.



## AUGUST MEYER MEMORIAL

On the southern edge of the northmost block of Paseo Boulevard is the August Meyer Memorial (Figure 4.17). August Robert Meyer (1851-1905) was the first President of the Board of Park Commissioners. His vision for the Parks system created the foundation for Kansas City's parks and boulevards. Included with the memorial is a staircase and two large vases. The north face of the monument reads: *In memory of August Robert Meyer, First President of Park Commission of Kansas City*. The south face of the monument includes an epitaph that reads:

*Houses and shops are man's  
But grass and trees and flowers  
Are God's own handiwork.  
Undaunted this man planned and toiled  
That dwellers in this place might ever  
Freely taste the sweet delights of nature.*

New York sculptor Daniel Chester French designed the monument which was dedicated in 1909. It consists of a nine-foot-high bronze bas-relief of Meyer, mounted in Knoxville marble. A Tennessee marble staircase, enclosed with sidewalls mounted with decorative urns lead to a sidewalk along E. 10th Street. Mature deciduous trees flank both sides of the memorial and line the east side of the block (Kelsay and BPRC 1987).



Figure 4.17  
Meyer Memorial  
(Wendling 2019)

Figure 4.18  
Meyer Memorial "This  
landmark is important to  
me" Results (Wendling 2019)

## IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Survey respondents were shown an image of the August Meyer Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is important to me." Respondents then ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Twenty-eight percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is important to them. Thirty-three percent somewhat agreed, twenty-three percent neither agreed nor disagreed and eleven percent of respondents disagreed or somewhat disagreed (Figure 4.18).

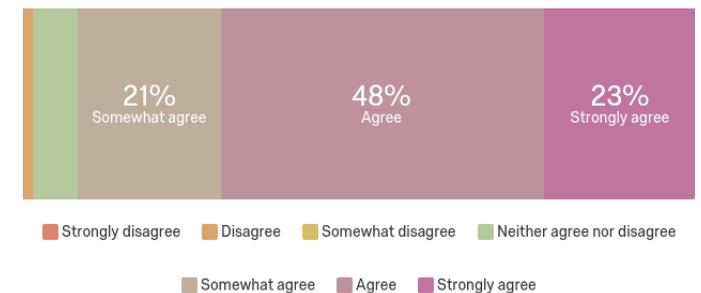
### "This landmark is important to me"



## PERCEIVED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Survey respondents were shown an image of the August Meyer Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is historically significant." Respondents ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Seventy-one percent of respondents generally agreed that the memorial is historically significant. Twenty-one percent somewhat agreed, seven percent neither agreed nor disagreed. One percent of respondents disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.19).

### "This landmark is historically significant"



## THE PERGOLA

Central to the second northernmost block of Paseo Boulevard is the Pergola (Figure 4.20). The pergola is the main feature on the site, and possibly the most iconic of The Paseo. It features a wide pedestrian walkway that stretches to the end of the block where a wide concrete area is located. Local, Kansas City architect John Van Brunt designed the monument in 1900. The limestone structure consists of regularly spaced, fluted Doric columns of cast stone supporting a trellis of concrete and cast stone elements that form a partially enclosed roof. The pergola is terraced into three levels, connected by stone steps that follow the south sloping grade.



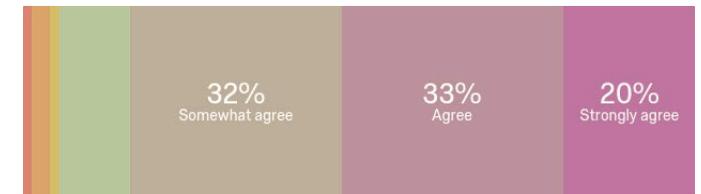
Figure 4.20  
The Pergola  
(Wendling 2019)

Figure 4.21  
The Pergola “This landmark  
is important to me” Results  
(Wendling 2019)

## IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Pergola on The Paseo and presented with the statement “This landmark is important to me.” Respondents then ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Fifty-three percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is important to them. Thirty-two percent somewhat agreed, eleven percent neither agreed nor disagreed and four percent of respondents disagreed (Figure 4.21)

### “This landmark is important to me”



## PERCEIVED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Pergola on The Paseo and presented with the statement “This landmark is historically significant.” Respondents ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Seventy-four percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is historically significant. Fourteen percent somewhat agreed. Nine percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Two percent of respondents disagreed (Figure 4.22).

### “This landmark is historically significant”

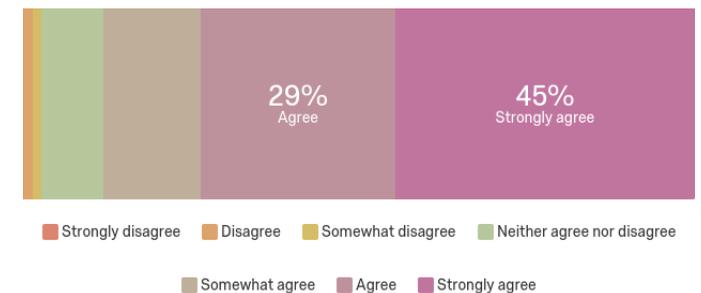


Figure 4.22  
The Pergola “This landmark  
is historically significant”  
Results (Wendling 2019)

## BLACK VETERAN'S MEMORIAL

Along East 11th Street is a polished granite monument and walkway that commemorates the service of black veterans throughout United States history (Figure 4.23). At the south end of the same block above the retaining wall of The Terrace, an American flag flies atop a 50' pole set in a granite base. A wide sidewalk down the center of the block links the monument to the flagpole and is lined with benches and ornamental lights. This plaza space is bordered on both sides by oak trees. In the middle of the walk, dedicatory granite pavers fill a four-foot wide panel. The pavers are etched with the names of veterans and/or military units.



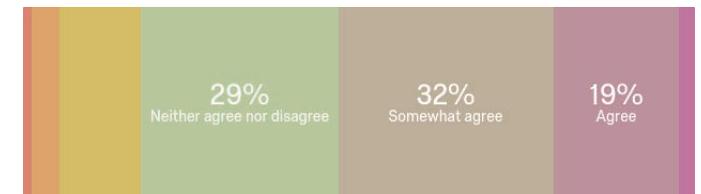
Figure 4.23  
Black Veteran's Memorial  
(Wendling 2019)

## IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Black Veterans Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is important to me." Respondents then ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Twenty-two percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is important to them. Thirty-two percent somewhat agreed, twenty-nine percent neither agreed nor disagreed and seventeen percent of respondents disagreed (Figure 4.24).

Figure 4.24  
Black Veteran's Memorial  
"This landmark is important to me" Results (Wendling 2019)

### "This landmark is important to me"

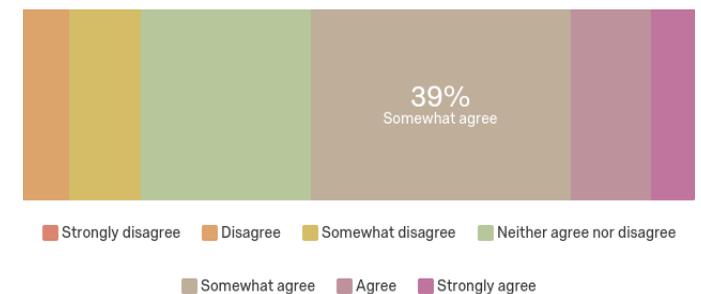


## PERCEIVED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Black Veterans Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is historically significant." Respondents ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Nineteen percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is historically significant. Thirty-nine percent somewhat agreed. Twenty-five percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Eighteen percent of respondents disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.25).

Figure 4.25  
Black Veteran's Memorial  
"This landmark is historically significant" Results (Wendling 2019)

### "This landmark is historically significant"



## WILLIAM T. FITZSIMONS MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN + TERRACE

The end of the Black Veterans Memorial is where the Twelfth Street Terrace begins (Figure 4.26). Designed by John Van Brunt, the Terrace is a large oval plaza with a grass parterre, consisting of 12 foot high native quarry-faced limestone retaining walls. Limestone steps and walls provide access to The Paseo on both the east and west sides. Ornamental light fixtures and the William Fitzsimon's Fountain are located on the balustrade and south face of the Terrace wall.

The William Fitzsimons Fountain is a bas-relief memorial fountain embedded in a curved, Dakota limestone wall that is 19 feet high and 80 feet long. John Van Brunt, the same architect that designed the Pergola and 9th Street Fountain, designed the memorial. The memorial fountain was installed in 1922 and is not original to the terrace (Kelsay and BPRC 1987). The steps on either side of the walled terrace lead to a grass deck and the Black Veteran's Memorial. On the entablature is a bronze Staff of Hermes approx. 2 feet high and 2 feet wide. Under which is the inscription that reads:

*This fountain is erected in memory of William T. Fitzsimons, 1st Lieut Medical Corps U.S.A. killed in France, September Seventh, Nineteen Hundred Seventeen. The first American officer to give his life in the Great World War for liberty/Anno Domini MCMXII.*



Figure 4.26  
Fitzsimons Memorial  
Fountain + Terrace  
(Wendling 2019)

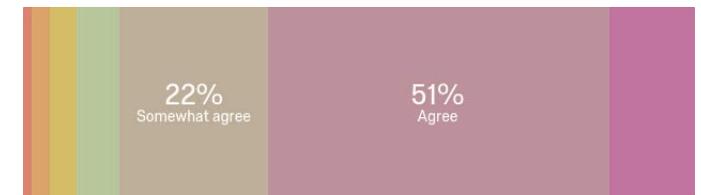


## IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Fitzsimons Memorial Fountain on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is important to me." Respondents then ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Sixty-four percent of respondents agreed that it is important to them. Twenty-two percent somewhat agreed, six percent neither agreed nor disagreed and eight percent disagreed (Figure 4.27).

Figure 4.27  
Fitzsimons Memorial  
Fountain + Terrace  
"This landmark is important  
to me" Results  
(Wendling 2019)

"This landmark is important to me"

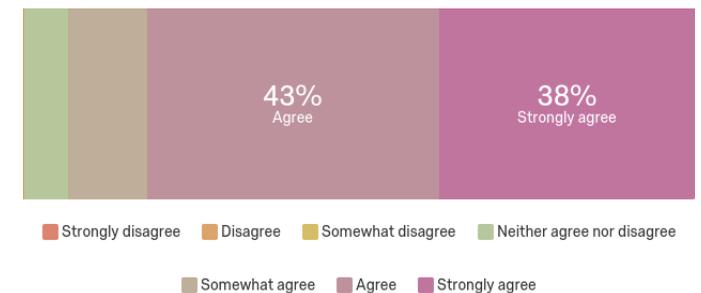


## PERCEIVED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Survey respondents were shown an image of the William T. Fitzsimons Memorial Fountain on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is historically significant." Respondents ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Eighty-one percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is historically significant. Twelve percent somewhat agreed. Seven percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Zero percent of respondents disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.28).

Figure 4.28  
Fitzsimons Memorial  
Fountain + Terrace  
"This landmark is historically  
significant" Results  
(Wendling 2019)

"This landmark is historically significant"



## TRUMAN ROAD PERGOLA

Central to the eighth block of Paseo Boulevard is a small pergola (Figure 4.29). The pergola was designed in the likeness of the pergola between 10th and 11th streets. Unlike the other pergola, this pergola was constructed in the 1990s. The small pergola is situated at the northern edge of the block. A small plaza space is under the pergola. On the southern side, steps follow the south sloping grade and open onto a small lawn.



Figure 4.29  
Truman Road Pergola  
(Wendling 2019)



## IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Truman Road Pergola on The Paseo and presented with the statement “This landmark is important to me.” Respondents then ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Nine percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is important. Thirty-nine percent somewhat agreed, thirty percent neither agreed nor disagreed and twenty-one percent of respondents disagreed (Figure 4.30).

Figure 4.30  
Truman Road Pergola  
“This landmark is important to me” Results (Wendling 2019)

“This landmark is important to me”

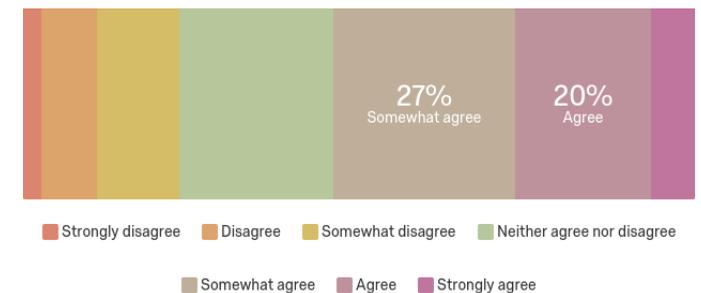


## PERCEIVED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Truman Road Pergola on The Paseo and presented with the statement “This landmark is historically significant.” Respondents ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Twenty-seven percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is historically significant. Twenty-seven percent somewhat agreed. Twenty-three percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Twenty-three percent of respondents disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.31).

Figure 4.31  
Truman Road Pergola  
“This landmark is historically significant” Results (Wendling 2019)

“This landmark is historically significant”



## REVEREND JOHN WILLIAMS MEMORIAL

The Revered John Williams memorial is a seven-foot-tall bronze sculpture of Reverend John Wesley Williams (Figure 4.32). Local sculptor, Tom Corbin was selected in a national competition to sculpt the statue.

Williams was a civil rights activist and pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church from 1944 to 1983. St. Stephen Baptist Church is directly west of the monument on the opposite side of The Paseo. The statue rests on a granite slab atop a truncated limestone base. The base contains bronze a tablature memorializing Reverend Williams. The inscription reads:

*Dr. John Wesley Williams, January 2, 1906 to April 22, 1988. "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." (John 1:6) Fearless Prophet. Eloquent Preacher, Respected Leader, Loving Husband, Christian Statesman, Faithful Pastor, Loving Parent and World Citizen. Pastor, St. Stephen Baptist Church, 1944-1983.*



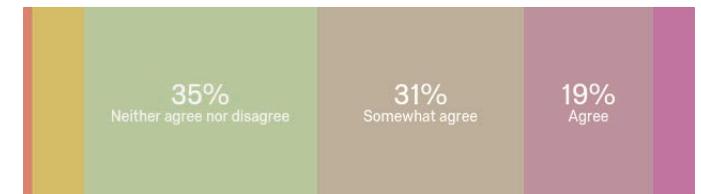
Figure 4.32  
Rev. Williams Memorial  
(Wendling 2019)

## IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Reverend Williams Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is important to me." Respondents then ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Twenty-five percent of agreed that the memorial is important to them. Thirty-one percent somewhat agreed, thirty-five percent neither agreed nor disagreed and nine percent disagreed (Figure 4.33).

Figure 4.33  
Rev. Williams Memorial  
"This landmark is important to me" Results (Wendling 2019)

"This landmark is important to me"

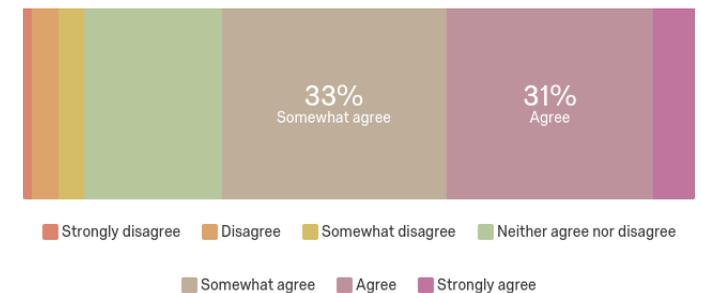


## PERCEIVED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Reverend John Williams Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is historically significant." Respondents ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Thirty-seven percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is historically significant. Thirty-three percent somewhat agreed. Twenty-one percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Nine percent of respondents disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.34).

Figure 4.34  
Rev. Williams Memorial  
"This landmark is historically significant" Results (Wendling 2019)

"This landmark is historically significant"



## SALVATORE GRISAFE MEMORIAL

The Salvatore Grisafe Memorial, a 12' high stainless steel contemporary sculpture, is located in a small concrete plaza at approximately 16th Street (Figure 4.35). The monument memorializes Grisafe, a seventeen-year-old student who was shot and killed attempting to prevent a robbery of two young women. Local sculptor Jac T. Bowen designed the memorial. It was dedicated on April 21, 1968. This memorial and the east-west concrete walkway are modern additions to The Paseo.



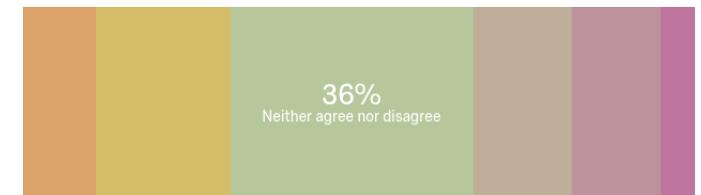
Figure 4.35  
Grisafe Memorial  
(Wendling 2019)

Figure 4.36  
Grisafe Memorial "This  
landmark is important to  
me" Results (Wendling 2019)

### IMPORTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Salvatore Grisafe Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is important to me." Respondents then ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Eighteen percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is important to them. Fifteen percent somewhat agreed, thirty-six percent neither agreed nor disagreed and thirty-one percent of respondents disagreed (Figure 4.36).

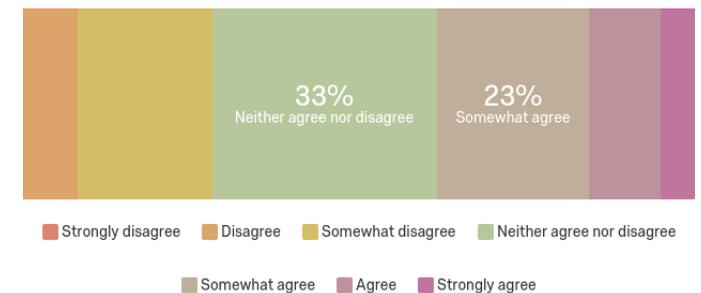
#### "This landmark is important to me"



### PERCEIVED HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Survey respondents were shown an image of the Salvatore Grisafe Memorial on The Paseo and presented with the statement "This landmark is historically significant." Respondents ranked their attitude on a 7-point Likert scale. Sixteen percent of respondents agreed that the memorial is historically significant. Twenty-three percent somewhat agreed. Thirty-three percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Twenty-eight percent of respondents disagreed with the statement (Figure 4.37).

#### "This landmark is historically significant"



## IMPROVEMENTS + ADDITIONS

The public survey asked respondents “What improvements or additions would you like to see on Paseo Boulevard?” Respondents could choose from twenty predetermined options. Respondents could select as many or as few responses as they desired. Additionally, they had the option of providing an alternative response. The order of the options was randomized for each survey. The options presented are common site enhancements in contemporary landscape architecture and were determined using knowledge of industry trends. Respondents could type an alternative improvement or addition in a textbox; however, zero respondents chose to do so.

This data was observed at face value (Figure 4.38), sorted to draw broader conclusions, and in conjunction with site analysis, was used to reveal opportunities.

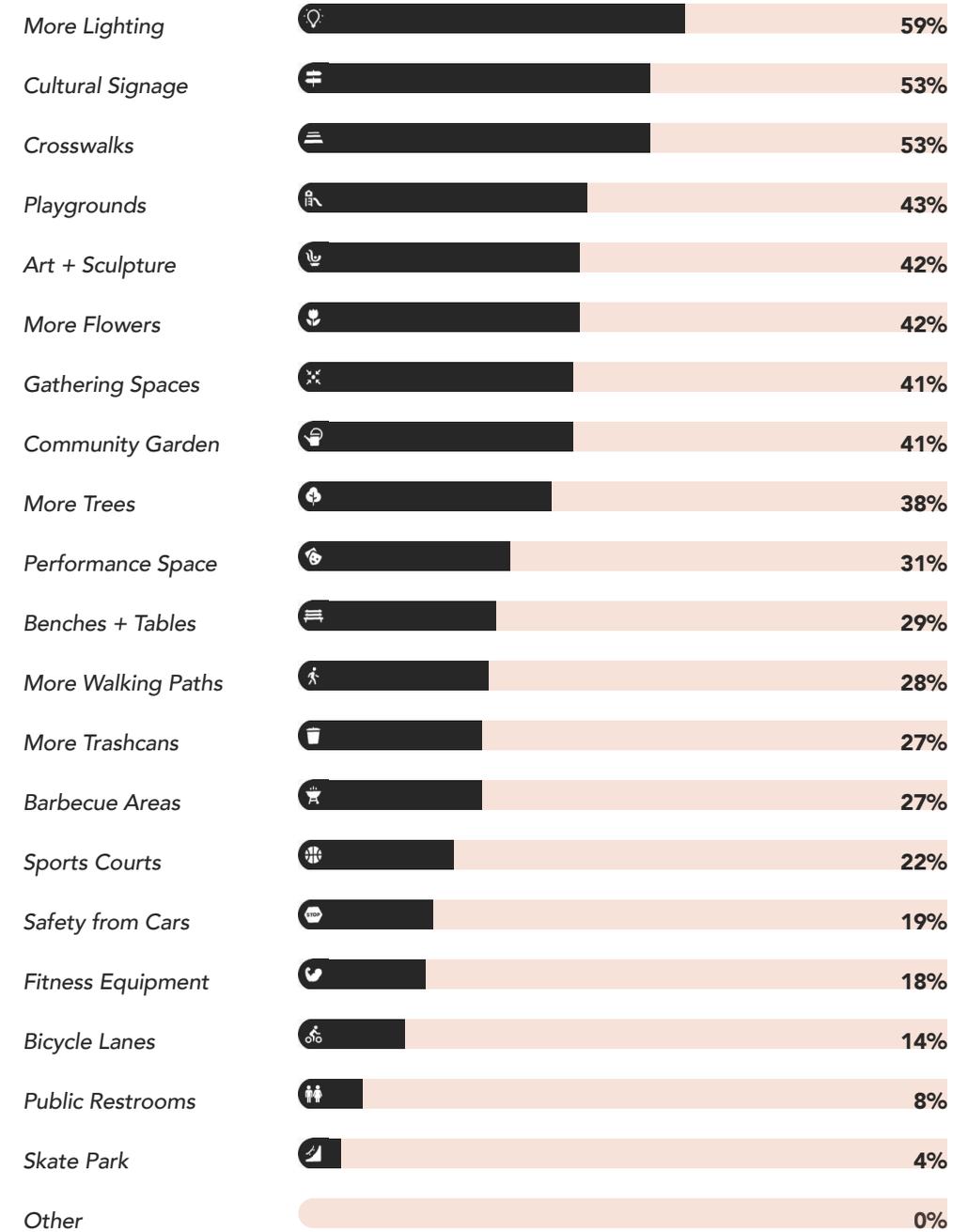


Figure 4.38  
Improvements + Additions  
Results Overview  
(Wendling 2019)

Improvement or addition

Percentage of respondents that wanted the improvement or addition



## COMFORT + IMAGE

Improvements and additions in the category Comfort and Image received the highest percentage of responses. Twenty-eight percent of responses went to improvements and additions in this category. To be successful, public spaces must be inviting and make a good first impression. Users should feel comfortable in public spaces; this includes perceptions about safety, cleanliness, and the availability of places to sit (Project for Public Spaces 2018).

## ACCESS + LINKAGE

Improvements and additions in the category Comfort and Image received the highest percentage of responses. Twenty-eight percent of responses went to improvements and additions in this category. To be successful, public spaces must be inviting and make a good first impression. Users should feel comfortable in public spaces; this includes perceptions about safety, cleanliness, and the availability of places to sit (Project for Public Spaces 2018).

## SOCIABILITY

Improvements and additions in the category Sociability received twenty-four percent of responses. People tend to feel a stronger attachment to places that foster sociability. Places that foster social activities like seeing and gathering with friends, meeting and greeting neighbors, and interacting with strangers are valuable to communities (Project for Public Spaces 2018).

## USES + ACTIVITIES

Improvements and additions in the category Uses and Activities received the lowest percentage of responses. Twenty-one percent of responses went to improvements and additions in this category. To be successful, public spaces must be inviting and make a good first impression. Users should feel comfortable in public spaces; this includes perceptions about safety, cleanliness, and the availability of places to sit (Project for Public Spaces 2018).

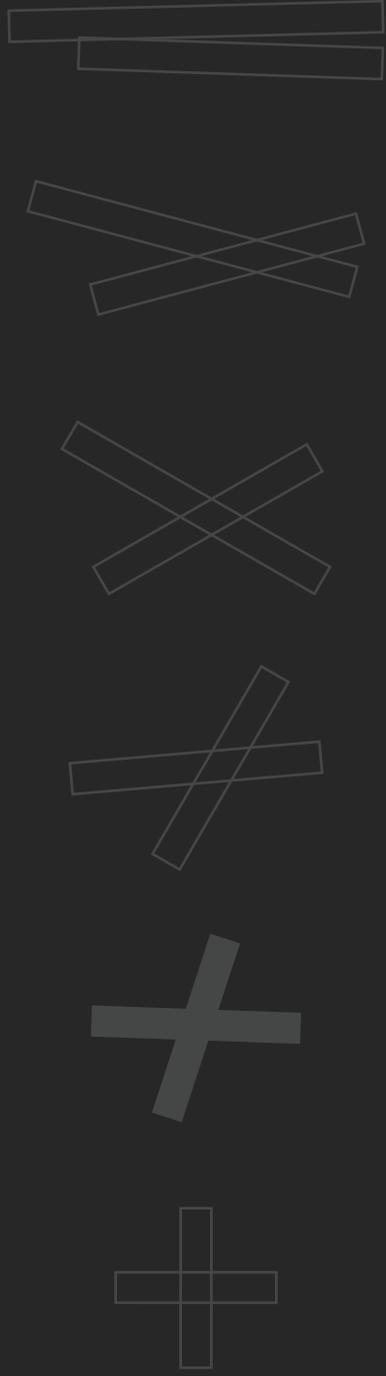
## IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY BLOCK

The data and conclusions drawn from the survey question “What improvements or additions would you like to see on Paseo Boulevard?” combined with a compound understanding of the site’s history and existing conditions was used to evaluate each block’s potential improvement opportunities. As seen in the diagram below (Figure 4.40), each of the twenty improvements and additions presented by the survey is compared with the nine blocks of The Paseo. The larger the circle the more suitable that block is for that specific improvement or addition. If a block does not have a circle for a specific improvement, the improvement was deemed unsuitable for that block.

This diagram helped to inform design interventions and preservation efforts along the corridor. In the following chapter, this data is combined with historical themes, and interview findings by means of nine projective designs. One for each block.

Figure 4.40  
Diagram showing suitability and opportunities for site enhancements.  
(Wendling 2019)





## **VISIONING PASEO**

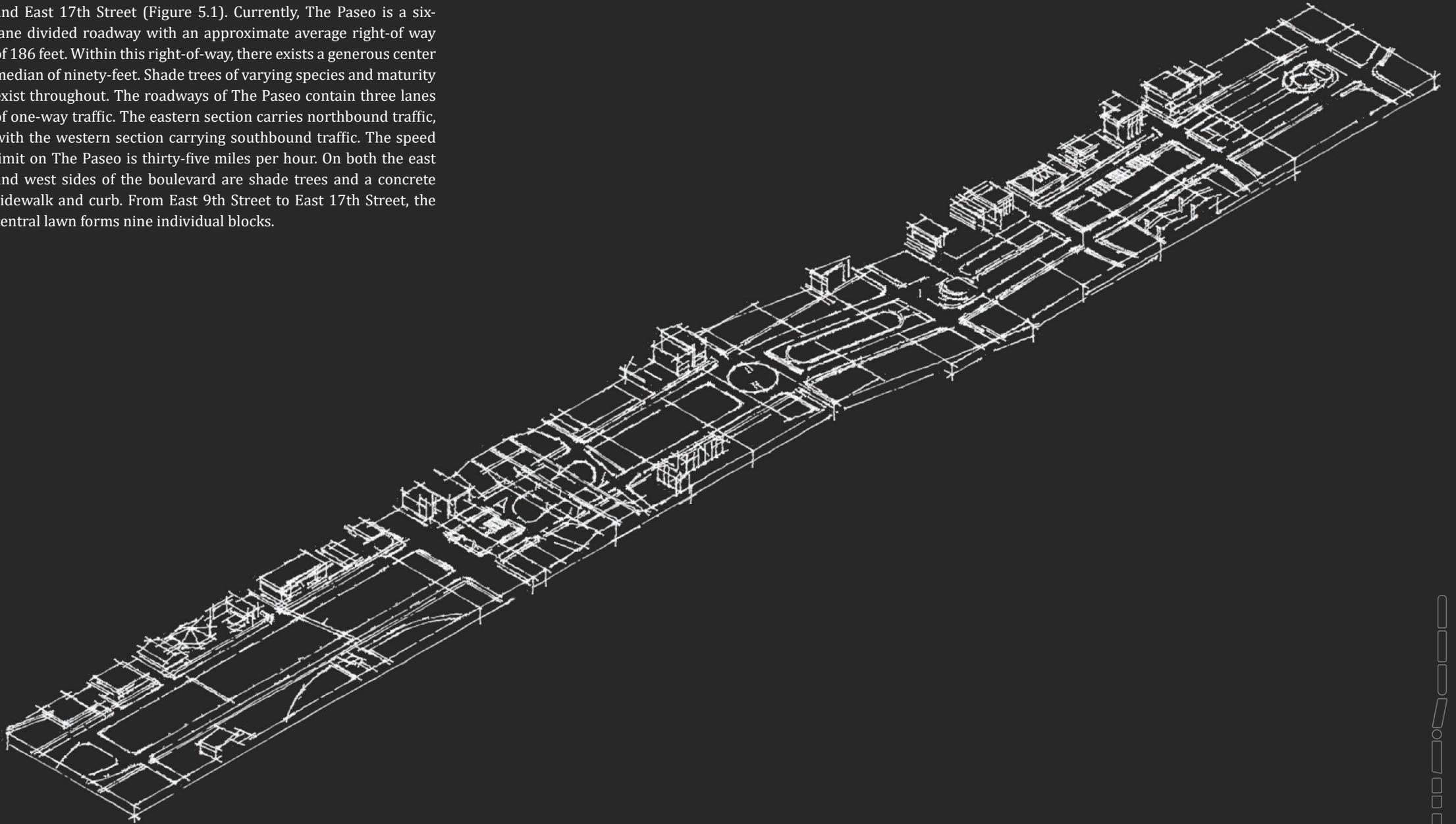
### **PROJECTIVE DESIGN INTRODUCTION**

Finding and results discovered during the research were ultimately used to inform nine projective designs – one for each block of The Paseo between 9th and 17th Streets. This chapter explains the proposed design for each block. The chapter relates the design to the site's historical and existing conditions in order to demonstrate how adaptive preservation can preserve the site as a historical asset while increasing the site's use-value.

## THE PASEO IN 2019

This research focuses on Paseo Boulevard between East 9th Street and East 17th Street (Figure 5.1). Currently, The Paseo is a six-lane divided roadway with an approximate average right-of-way of 186 feet. Within this right-of-way, there exists a generous center median of ninety-feet. Shade trees of varying species and maturity exist throughout. The roadways of The Paseo contain three lanes of one-way traffic. The eastern section carries northbound traffic, with the western section carrying southbound traffic. The speed limit on The Paseo is thirty-five miles per hour. On both the east and west sides of the boulevard are shade trees and a concrete sidewalk and curb. From East 9th Street to East 17th Street, the central lawn forms nine individual blocks.

Figure 5.1  
Focus Area Overview  
(Wendling 2019)



## OVERARCHING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Although each block of The Paseo is unique, some overarching design principles and interventions are demonstrated through the nine designs. They are described below.

### ROAD DIET + BICYCLE LANES

In Kansas City, there is already momentum to create bicycle lanes along the entire nineteen-mile Paseo Boulevard. Each design presented in this chapter includes two wide, one-way bicycle lanes. Kansas City is studying whether it can make parts of Midtown more bicycle and pedestrian friendly by reducing the number of lane in the street. This is commonly known as a “road diet.”

The same ideas are being considered for Paseo Boulevard. Removing one northbound and one southbound vehicular lane accommodates for the new bicycle lanes and makes streets easier for pedestrians to cross.

This idea is beneficial to the preservation of the corridor for two reasons. In the 1940s, a third vehicular lane was added to either side of The Paseo. This condition remains today. Kessler designed the streets so a third lane could be added later if need be. At face value, the addition of the lane did not compromise Kessler’s intentions for the traffic way. However, Kessler never intended The Paseo to accommodate high traffic volumes of fast-moving “horseless carriages.” Removing the 3rd lane would improve the safety of the boulevard. Cyclist on The Paseo would experience the landscape at speeds similar to horse drawn carriages – George Kessler’s intended mode of transportation for the boulevard.

### CROSSWALKS + PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Although “More crosswalks” was the third most requested addition, crosswalks are the most urgent need. Navigating between the different blocks of The Paseo is difficult, frustrating, and unsafe for pedestrians. More frequent and safer crosswalks are needed in addition to supplementary traffic calming measures. This public space cannot succeed without safe and clearly delineated crosswalks leading to and connecting the nine park blocks.

### LIGHTING + GENERAL SAFETY

“More lighting” was the most popularly selected improvement in the survey, likely because of the area’s alarming crime statistics. Future designs for The Paseo should address lighting concerns for safety and crime-reduction purposes. Additionally, designs should take advantage of the opportunity to light the corridor in playful, artful ways. Obviously, lighting can enhance the safety and attractiveness of The Paseo. Lighting can also be used to improve the physical and visual continuity, the evening and night use, and the vitality and uniqueness of the landscape.

### WAYFINDING + SIGNAGE

“More cultural and historic signage” was the second most commonly selected improvement in the survey. This improvement is most evidently needed in blocks one, two, and three. These blocks have the most historical monuments. Signage can also be used to delineate crosswalks and improve wayfinding for pedestrians along the corridor.

### MEDIUM DENSITY NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

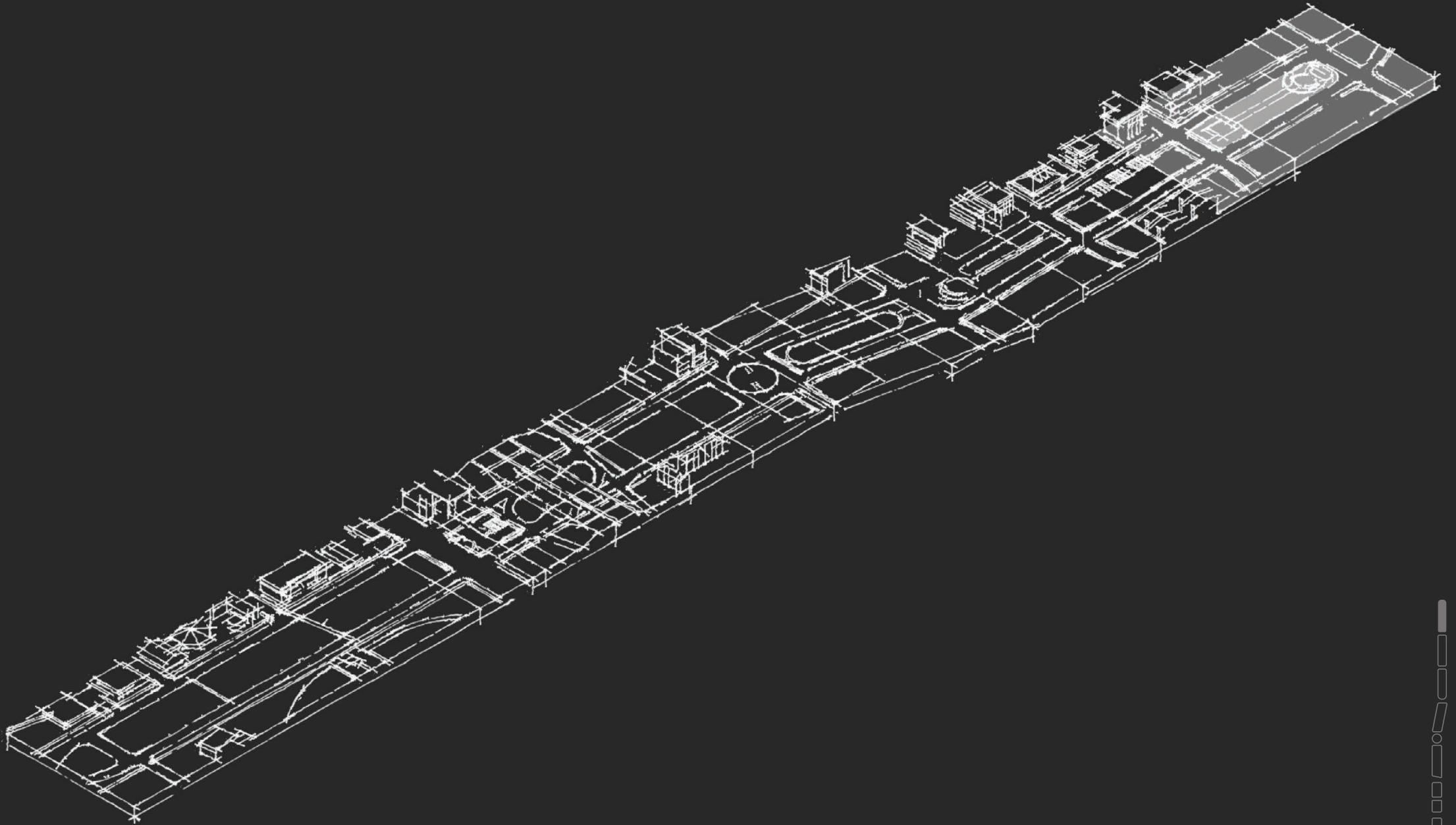
Historic images and postcards reveal that The Paseo was once a medium density residential corridor. Each design aims to increase residential density along the historic corridor. Any commercial development that happens along the corridor should be restricted to neighborhood retail. Retail such as small grocery stores, laundromats and dry cleaners, small restaurants, barbershops and beauty parlors, and local drugstores would be appropriate. Chain restaurants, box-stores, and boutique or luxury retail are not appropriate for this location.

### NINE BLOCKS, NINE PARKS

The remainder of this chapter demonstrates the physical design additions and interventions that may enhance and preserve Paseo Boulevard. Sections are grouped by block, beginning with the northernmost and working southward. The sections visually convey the historical, existing, and proposed state of the boulevard.

**HISTORIC GATEWAY**  
**THE FIRST BLOCK ON THE PASEO**

Figure 5.2  
Historic Gateway  
(Wendling 2019)



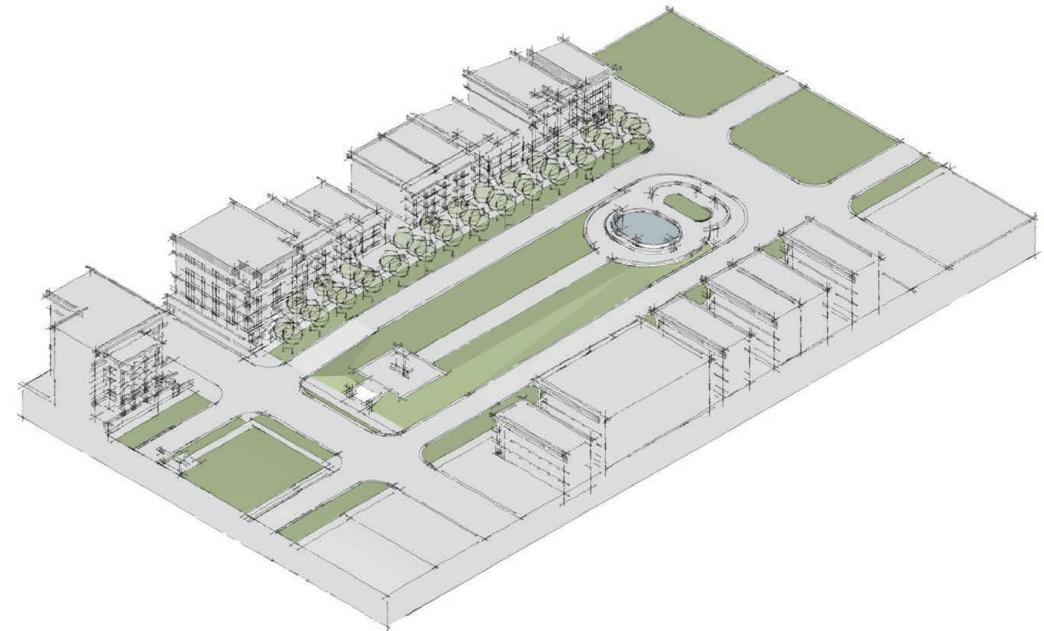
## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

The north most block of historic Paseo Boulevard was once a landmark of pride for the neighborhood and for Kansas City. Narrow, easily crossable streets made this block, and all of The Paseo, easy to access for pedestrians. The 9th street fountain anchored The Paseo's northern edge. The fountain was the second fountain built in Kansas City's and its oldest working fountain. Designed by George Kessler and John VanBrunt, it was completed in 1899 and is original to The Paseo.

Manicured lawns and park benches bordered a central walkway that connected the 9th street fountain to the August R. Meyer Memorial. The monument was dedicated in on June 2, 1909. It is not original to The Paseo but is an important part of the landscape's historical character.

Shortly after the completion of the boulevard, the area grew dense with luxury apartments and the homes of Kansas City's most elite. Properties abutting this block had a particularly high population density because of the park's desirability.

Figure 5.3  
Historic Gateway Historical  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The “Historic Gateway” block consists of two historical landmarks, the Women’s Leadership Fountain and the August R. Meyer Memorial. The block is approximately one acre, sixty percent of which is softscape.

The first block in the nine-block series of The Paseo is located between 9th and 10th Street. Directly adjacent to 9th Street is a concrete entry plaza, enclosed by low cut limestone seat walls and steps surrounding a central planting bed. Decorative lights rest on limestone pedestals on the north, east and west sides of the plaza space. Within the concrete entry plaza sits the Women’s Leadership Fountain. The fountain, originally known as the Ninth Street Fountain, was unsuccessful and taken out. The fountain was then recreated in 2003, and is now known as the Women’s Leadership Fountain (Kelsay and BPRC 1987).

The Kansas City Star described the fountain in an article published May 2, 1970, “The fountain, known today as a waste fountain, sent its waters high into the air, then as the play of waters ended and they fell to the basin, they wasted away, draining to sewers below. Because of the expense, the fountain was shut down. This summer the fountain will again be used. An underground electrical system will be installed to operate a circulating pump, which will allow the water to be reused” (Kansas City Star, 1970).

A concrete central walkway connects the fountain plaza to an additional plaza space surrounding the August R. Meyer Memorial. The staircase at the memorial spills onto a sidewalk along E. 10th Street. Mature deciduous trees flank both sides of the memorial and line the east side of the block (Kelsay and BPRC 1987). Kessler Apartments, Elsworth Apartments, and Maryland Apartments are historically significant apartment buildings along the west edge of this block. These apartments are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places under a separate designation. Currently, they are owned and managed by Jazz Hill Homes.

Figure 5.4  
Historic Gateway Existing  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

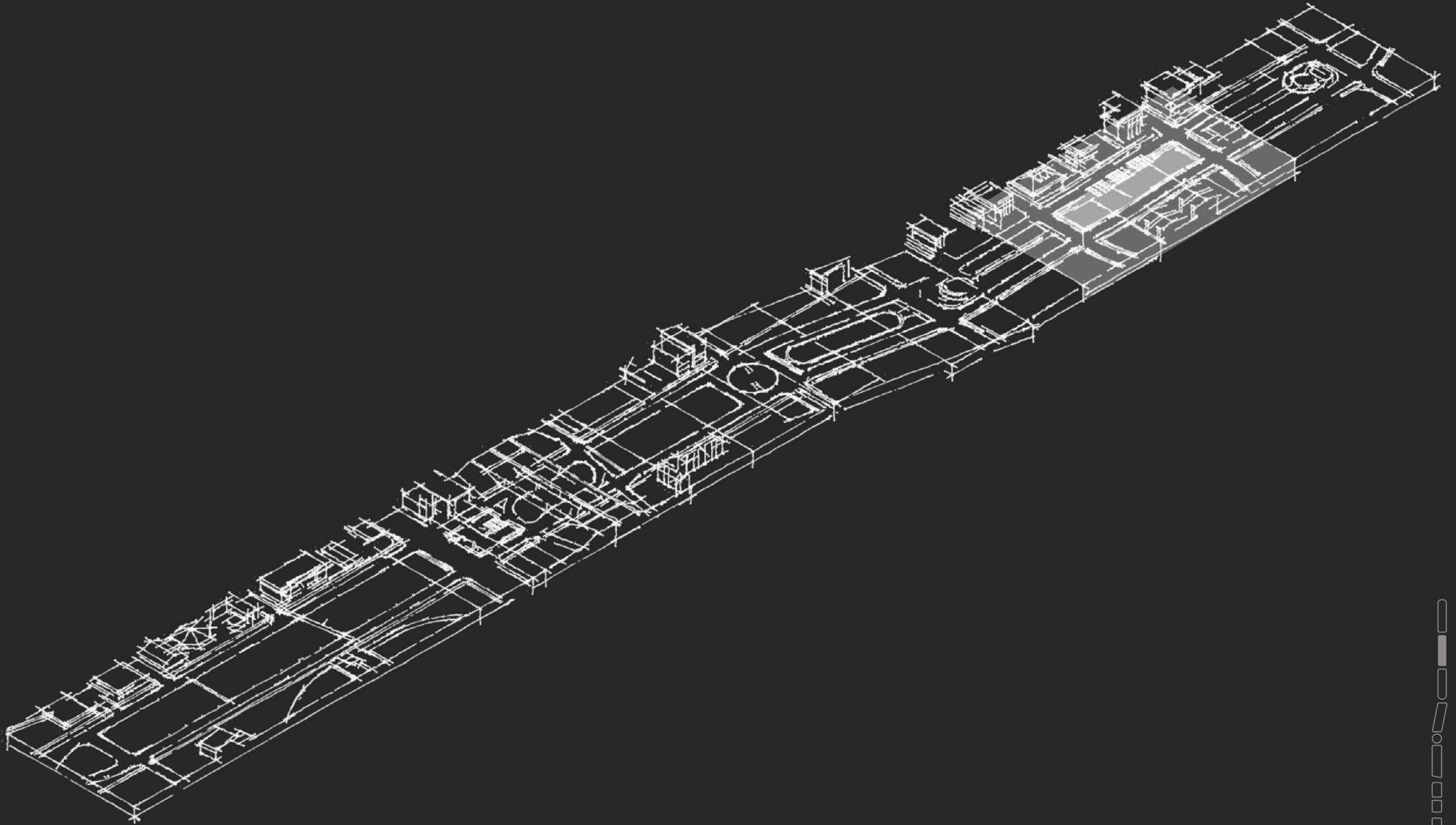
The first block along The Paseo does not require much to be preserved and adapted. The historical character of the Women's Leadership Fountain and of the August Robert Meyer Memorial remain in-tact and they do not require significant repairs or additional maintenance. Native meadows can replace some of the grass turf through the site. The context of the site becomes denser through a variety of housing types. The original character and use for the landscape was dependent on the contextual density.

Figure 5.5  
Historic Gateway Adaptive  
Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)



**PASEO PERGOLA**  
THE SECOND BLOCK ON THE PASEO

Figure 5.6  
Paseo Pergola  
(Wendling 2019)



## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

The block between 10th and 11th Street is the second northernmost block of the boulevard. The most notable element of the park is the historical pergola located on the west side of the center median. The pergola was designed by Kansas City architect John Van Brunt in 1900 and is original to the landscape. A wide pedestrian walkway stretched between 10th and 11th streets.

Historically, the pergola was a wooden feature that was covered in flowering vines. The greenspace to the east was planted with native vegetation. Benches under the pergola were places where strolling pedestrians could escape the heat of the summer sun.

Like the Historic Gateway to the north, properties that abutted this park were primarily dense, luxury apartments. The Central M.E. Church was located at 11th and Paseo. The church was constructed in 1907.

Figure 5.7  
Paseo Pergola Historical  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

This block consists of one historical landmark, the Pergola. The block is approximately one acre, seventy-five percent of which is softscape. There are narrow sidewalks on the east and west sides of the center median. This block slopes down from north to south and west to east and is planted with large shade trees in an informal manner. The pergola remains central to this block, however; the wooden trusses have been replaced with concrete trusses. The pergola is the main feature on the site, with a wide pedestrian walkway that stretches through to the end of the block where a wide concrete area is located.

A Kansas City Times article published on April 17th, 1971 states “The pergola remains today, and extensive repairs recently were made on it by the park board. All of the old buildings in the entire block directly across the street to the east have been razed for urban renewal” (Kansas City Times 1971).

Parkview Apartments, The Maples Apartments, and The Henderson House are historically significant buildings along the west edge of this block. These buildings are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places under separate designations.

Figure 5.8  
Paseo Pergola Existing  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

The second block along The Paseo does not require much to be preserved and adapted. Addressing the deferred maintenance of the pergola would dramatically enhance the site. The greenspace to the east of the pergola is an opportunity to replace a high maintenance grass lawn with a low maintenance native meadow. The context of the site becomes denser through a variety of housing types. The original character and use for the landscape was dependent on the contextual density.

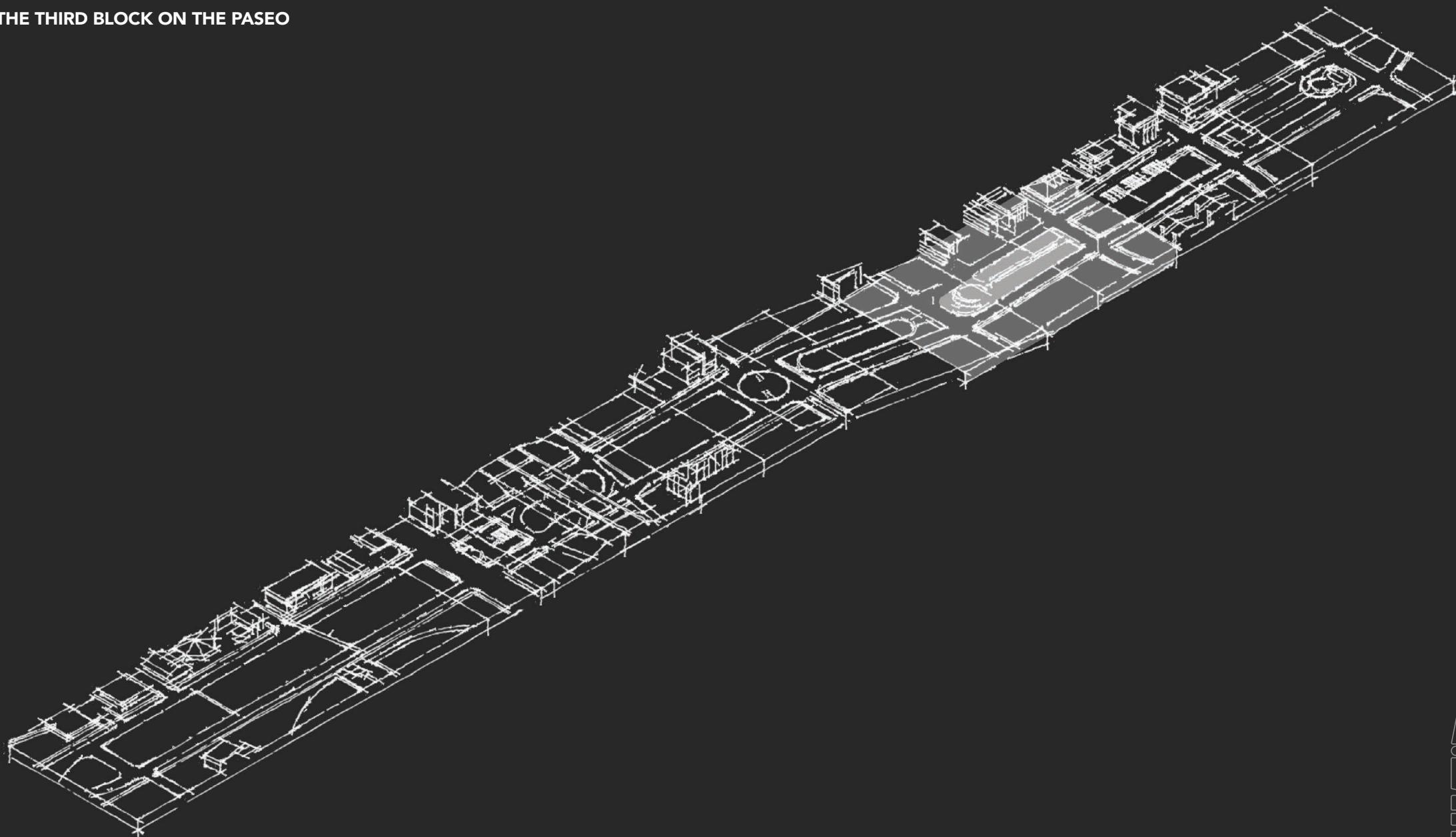
Figure 5.9  
Paseo Pergola Adaptive  
Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)



# BLACK VETERAN'S MEMORIAL + TERRACE

THE THIRD BLOCK ON THE PASEO

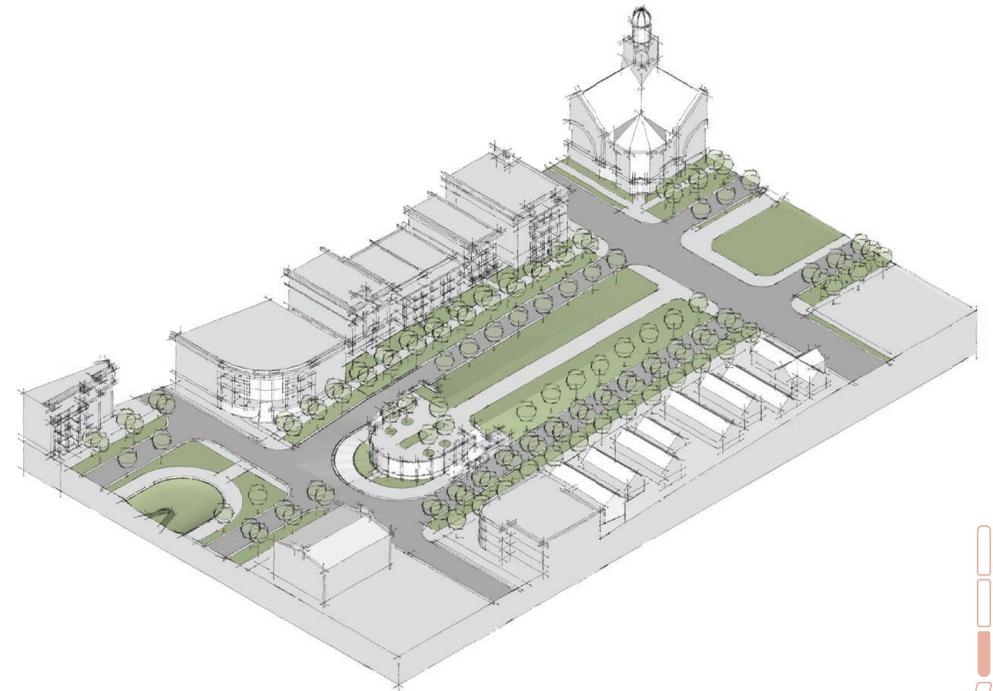
Figure 5.10  
Black Veteran's Memorial +  
Terrace (Wendling 2019)



## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

Between East 11th Street and East 12th Street on Paseo Boulevard was a long, wide walkway leading to the terrace. Designed by John Van Brunt, the Terrace was a large oval plaza with a plantings and trees atop. It consisted of twelve-foot high native quarry-faced limestone retaining walls. Limestone steps and walls provided access to The Paseo on both the east and west sides. Ornamental light fixtures are located on the balustrade and south face of the Terrace wall. The William T. Fitzsimons Memorial Fountain was later added to the south face of the Twelfth Street Terrace.

Figure 5.11  
Black Veteran's Memorial +  
Terrace Historical Conditions  
(Wendling 2019)



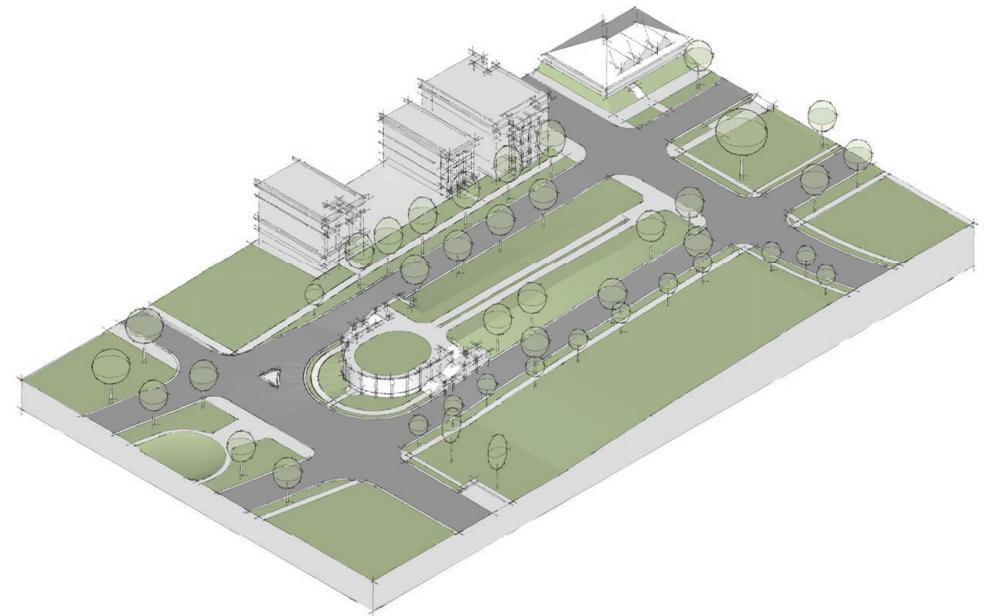
## EXISTING CONDITIONS

This block consists of two landmarks, the Black Veterans Memorial, and the historic William Fitzsimons Fountain. The block is approximately one acre, seventy percent of which is softscape. Within the median between 11th and 12th Street, the sidewalk shifts to the center of the median. The central walkway of this block contains a narrow central planting bed, regularly placed decorative metal benches, and contemporary lighting.

At the north end is the Black Veterans Memorial, designed in 2010 by the Kansas City Parks Department and Enshriners. At the north end of the walkway, a polished granite monument commemorates the service of black veterans throughout United States history. At the south end of the walkway, above the retaining wall of the Twelfth Street Terrace, a large U.S. flag flies atop a 50' pole set in a granite base. A wide sidewalk down the center of the block links the monument to the flagpole and is lined with benches and ornamental lights. This plaza space is flanked on each side with a row of oak trees. The end of the Black Veterans Memorial is where the Twelfth Street Terrace begins.

The Virginia Apartments and The McMahan Apartments historically significant buildings along the west edge of this block. These buildings are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places under a separate designation. Currently, they are owned and managed by Jazz Hill Homes.

Figure 5.12  
Black Veteran's Memorial +  
Terrace Existing Conditions  
(Wendling 2019)



## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

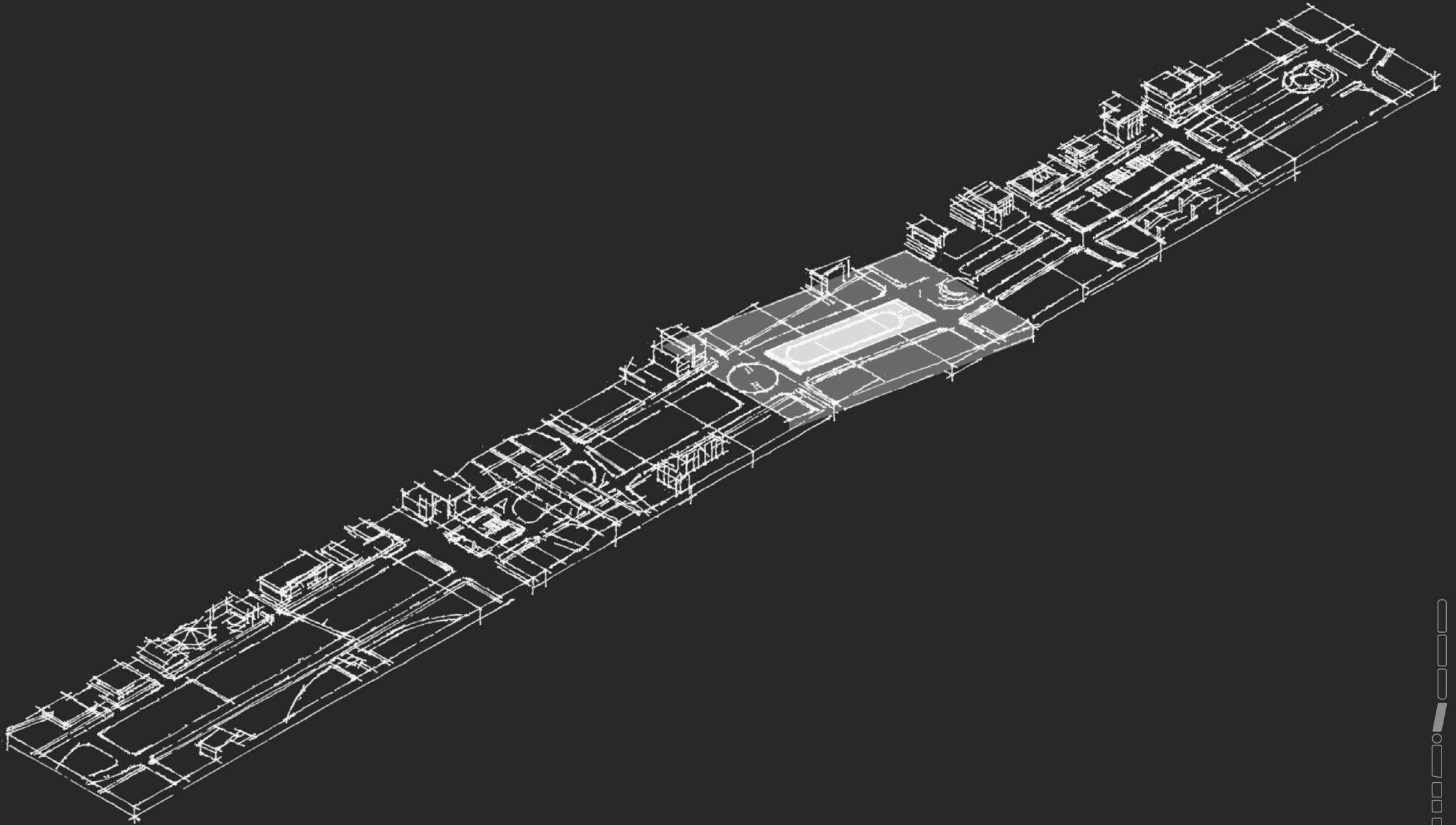
The third block along The Paseo does not require much to be preserved and adapted. Maintenance of the terrace and of the fountain would dramatically enhance the site. The context of the site becomes denser through a variety of housing types. The original character and use for the landscape was dependent on the contextual density.

Figure 5.12  
Black Veteran's Memorial +  
Terrace Adaptive Preservation  
Vision (Wendling 2019)



**THE SUNKEN GARDEN**  
**THE FOURTH BLOCK ON THE PASEO**

Figure 5.14  
The Sunken Garden  
(Wendling 2019)



## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

Between East 12th Street and East 13th Street is the “The Sunken Garden” of the Paseo Boulevard. At the northernmost edge there was a small plaza space where a Spanish cannon sat. The eleven-foot-long Spanish cannon, cast in Seville, Spain (Kansas City’s sister city), in 1865 from 6,500 pounds of bronze, with the crest of Spain inscribed near the breech and the words Sancho El Bravo inscribed near the muzzle, was a gift from the United States government to the Kansas City Board of Park Commissioners Aug. 22, 1899. It was placed at 12th and the Paseo.

The sunken gardens on The Paseo were constantly rotating displays of intricate and exotic plantings from around the world. The sunken garden was enclosed by a generous oval walkway with benches and streetlights.

Figure 5.15  
The Sunken Garden  
Historical Conditions  
(Wendling 2019)



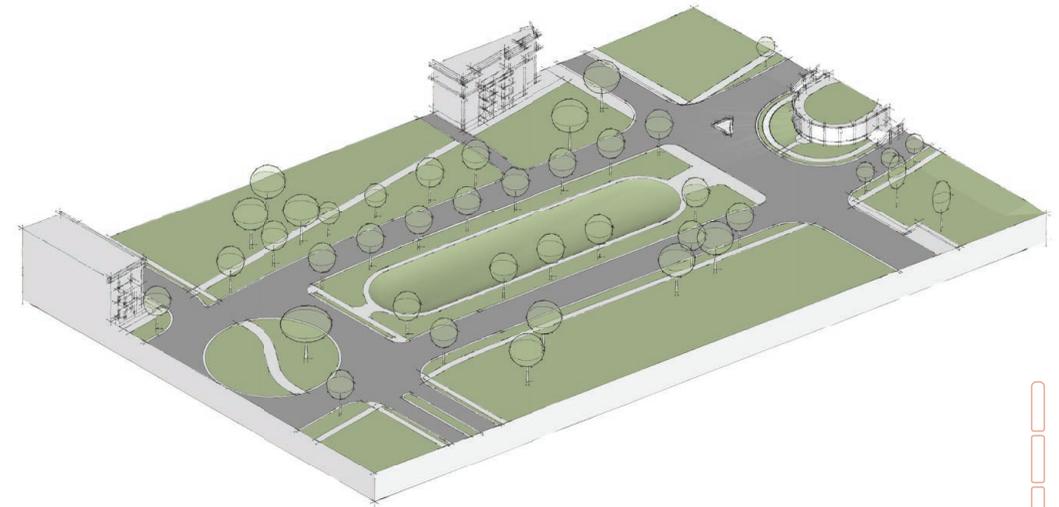
## EXISTING CONDITIONS

This block consists of one historical landmark, the Spanish cannon from the Spanish-American War. The block is approximately one acre, seventy percent of which is softscape.

The median between 12th and 13th Street contains an oval concrete pedestrian walk and encloses an area of turf, shrub and seasonal plantings that was originally designed for a sunken flowerbed. The area is slightly depressed from the sidewalk level. The primary landmark on the site is a Spanish Cannon within a small concrete plaza.

This portion of the boulevard has undergone extensive alteration. In addition to the widening of the street, the road was realigned and no longer resembles the historical design.

Figure 5.16  
The Sunken Garden  
Existing Conditions  
(Wendling 2019)



## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

The fourth block along The Paseo is preserved and adapted through several deliberate alterations. Described below are the major interventions.

The sunken gardens can no longer serve as a place to display exotic plants and formal arrangements. Instead, the space is transformed into an open lawn with interactive lighting projections. Overhead catenary lights bring interest to the space and increase the comfort value. The perimeter of the oval walkway includes stormwater management strategies with native vegetation.

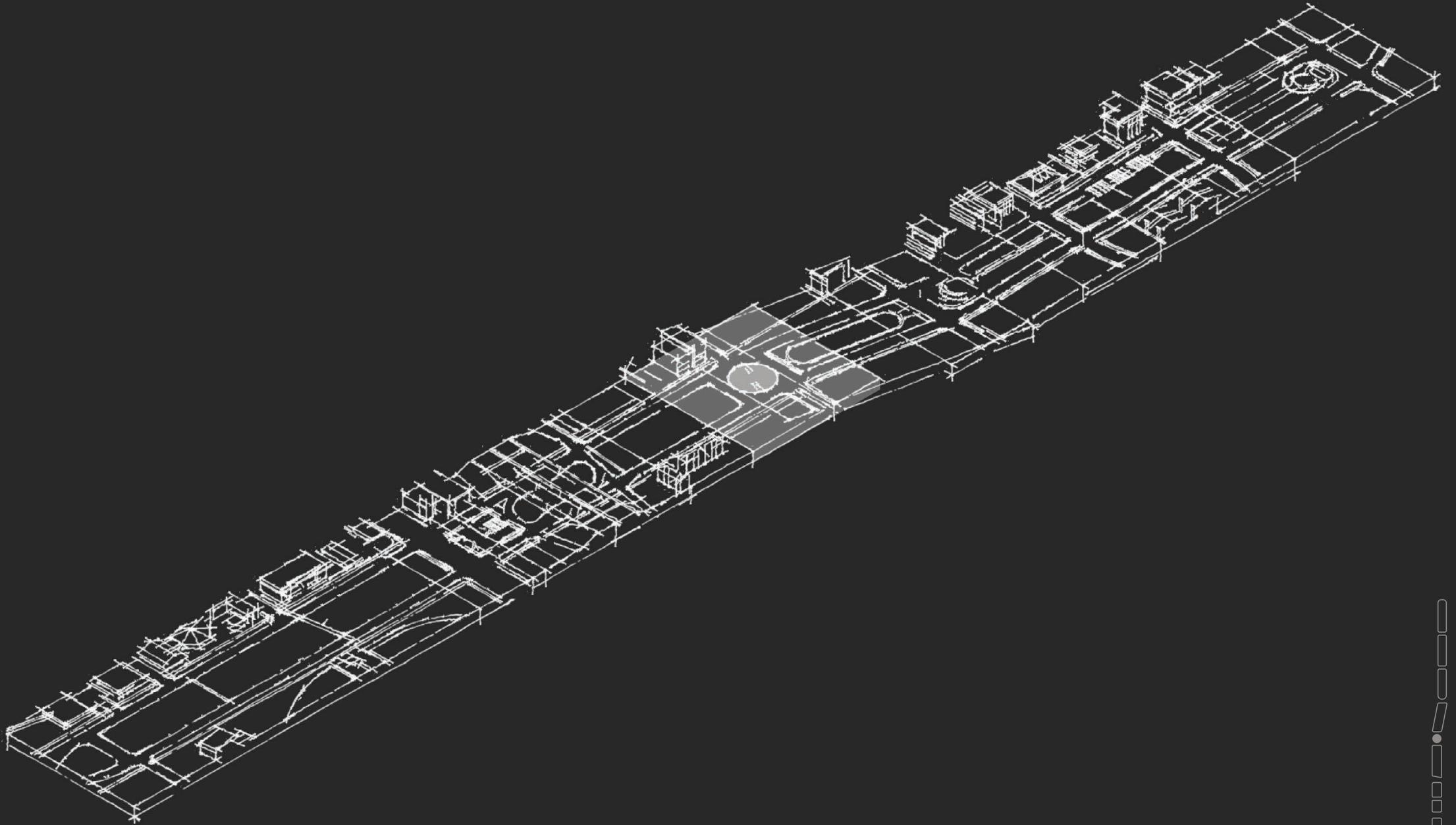
The Spanish cannon remains in the same location it is and a descriptive plaque is added to communicate its historical value. The context of the site becomes denser through a variety of housing types. The original character and use for the landscape was dependent on the contextual density.

Figure 5.17  
The Sunken Garden  
Adaptive Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)



**THE CIRCLE**  
THE FIFTH BLOCK ON THE PASEO

Figure 5.18  
The Circle  
(Wendling 2019)



## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

The small circular median East 13th street contained intricate floral parterres and a concrete walkway around its perimeter. The surrounding properties were residential with affluent single-family homes to the east and luxury apartment buildings to the west.

Figure 5.19  
The Circle Historical  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



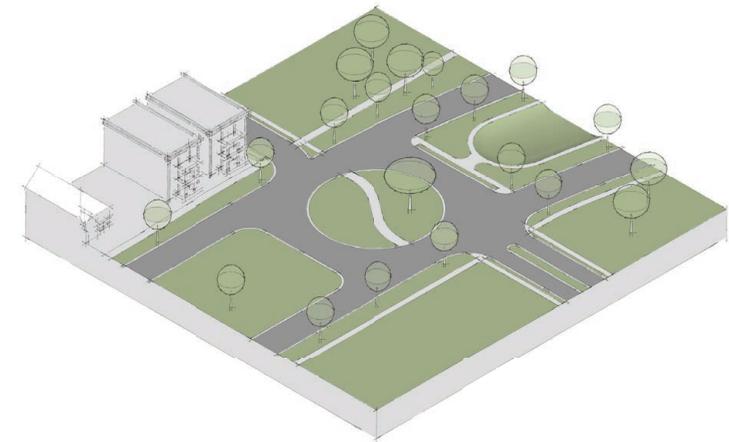
## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Between East 12th Street and East 13th Street is the “The Circle” of the Paseo Boulevard. This block does not contain any historical landmarks; however, its alignment and character is iconic of The Paseo and the City Beautiful Movement.

The area of The Circle is approximately one quarter of an acre with a diameter of 120 feet. The Circle is difficult to access safely, as there are no direct crosswalks. The block contains a ten-foot wide concrete sidewalk running east to west. The sidewalk does not serve a purpose, it is not historical, nor does it enhance The Paseo in any meaningful way.

The terrain is predominantly flat and contains one large shade tree. There is a single, mature golden rain tree (*Koelreuteria paniculata*) in The Circle and is in healthy condition. There are four light poles on this block, one oriented in each cardinal direction.

Figure 5.20  
The Circle Existing  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

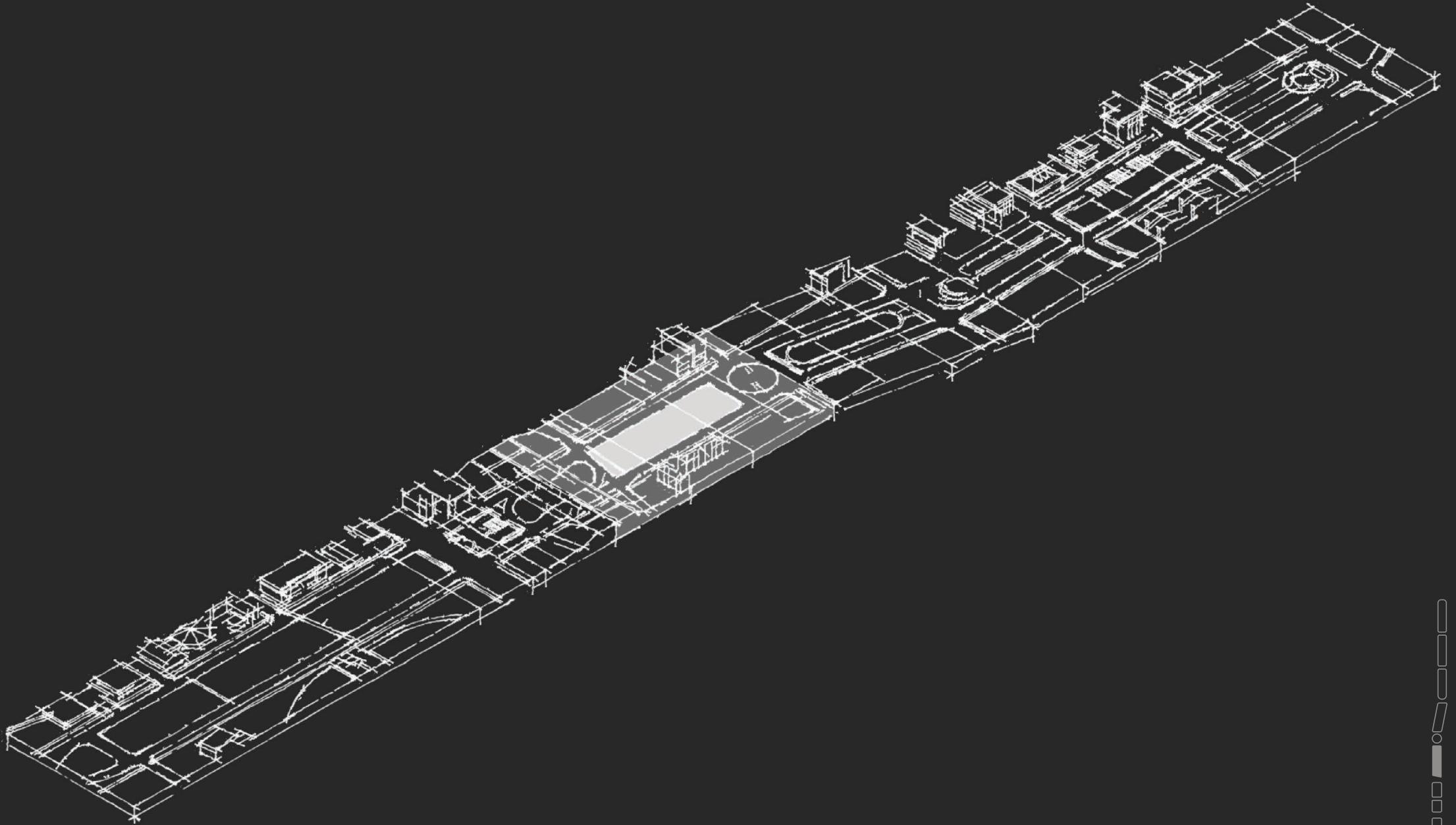
This block of The Paseo is preserved and adapted through several deliberate alterations. The design retains the specimen tree and reintroduces the concrete path on the perimeter. In place of the historical floral parterre, the design proposes a low maintenance native meadow. The context of the site becomes denser through a variety of housing types. The original character and use for the landscape was dependent on the contextual density.

Figure 5.21  
The Circle Adaptive  
Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)



**THE NORTH GREEN**  
**THE SIXTH BLOCK ON THE PASEO**

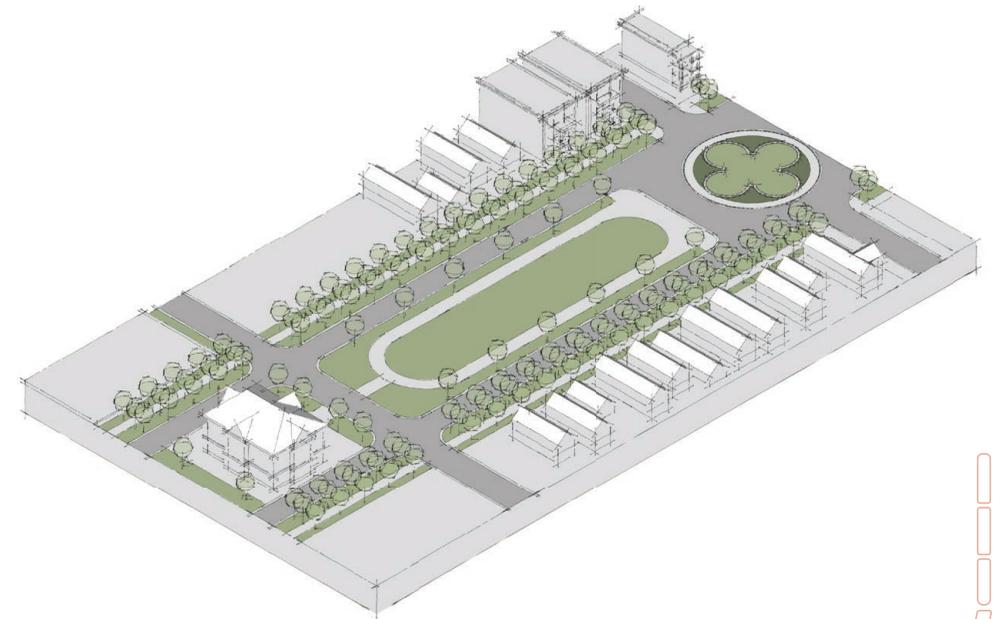
Figure 5.22  
The North Green  
(Wendling 2019)



## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

The area between East 12th Street and East 13th Street is referred to by this report as “The North Green” of the Paseo Boulevard. Historically, this block contained generous walkways that connected “The Circle” and the Chace Elementary School stood at 14th and Paseo. The highly manicured park space provided opportunities for both passive and active recreation. The park was bordered by primarily single family homes.

Figure 5.23  
The North Green Historical  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

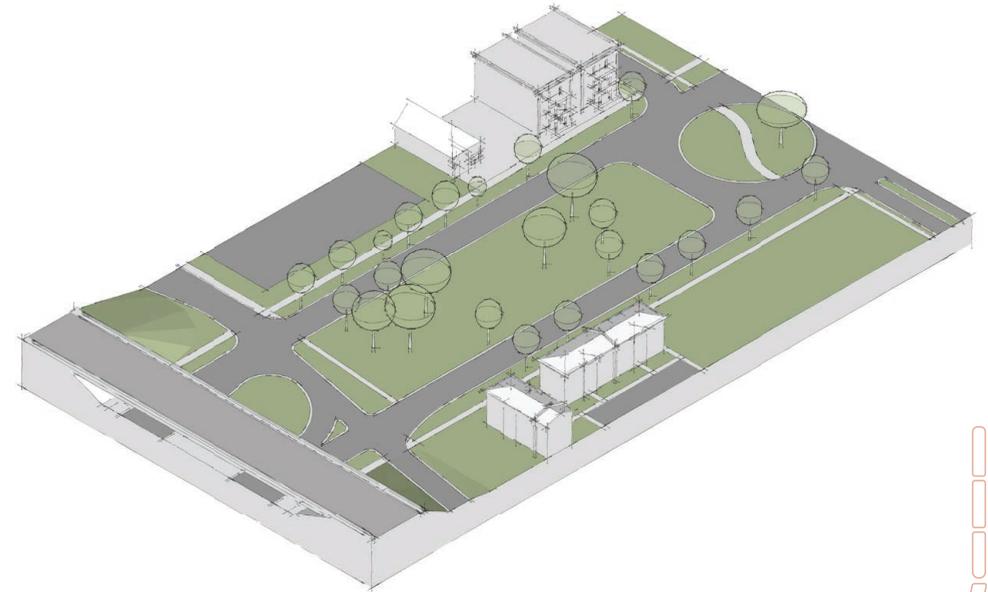
Between East 13th Street and East 14th Street is the “The North Green” of the Paseo Boulevard. The median from 13th to 14th Streets contains a grass lawn and a mix of shade and evergreen trees planted in an informal layout. The area of the rectangular block between 13th and 14th Street is approximately 1.26 acres, measuring at 130 feet by 425 feet. A single east-west concrete sidewalk runs along 14th Street at the southern perimeter of the block. The sidewalk is 4 feet wide. The terrain is mostly flat.

The construction of Interstate 70 dramatically changed the historical character of Paseo Boulevard and altered how this block functioned.

This greenspace is difficult to access safely and is infrequently used. The only crosswalks connecting the block to its surroundings are on the southern border along 14th Street. There are several mature specimen trees in The North Green. The most notable is a healthy American Planetree (*Platanus occidentalis*) in the north-west corner.

Along the western perimeter of the site are the Maine Apartments and the Missouri Apartments, a single family home, and surface parking that is currently used by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority. To the east perimeter is a suburban-style, low-income apartment complex managed by the Kansas City Housing Authority. The Maine Apartments and the Missouri Apartments are historically significant buildings along the west edge of this block. These buildings are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places under a separate designation. Currently, Jazz Hill Homes owns and manages these properties.

Figure 5.24  
The North Green Existing  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

The sixth block along The Paseo is preserved and adapted through several deliberate alterations. Described below are the major interventions.

The block reintroduces the wide concrete walkways of earlier years. In the design, the east path bends westward to connect create a crosswalk on 14th street. Between the paths, the landscape lifts off the ground to create a hill that can serve both active and passive recreation needs. The open lawn in front of the hill can serve as a casual performance space for small events. Thirty-one percent of community members surveyed said they would like to see more performance spaces on The Paseo.

Beneath the constructed hill and facing onto 14th street is a twenty-five-hundred square foot community space. This can be used by local organizations, the nearby American Jazz Museum, or the Negro Baseball Leagues Museum to host community events in a highly visible setting. A school once occupied this portion of The Paseo. By reintroducing a built community asset, the community can regain social capital.

Figure 5.25  
The North Green Adaptive  
Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)

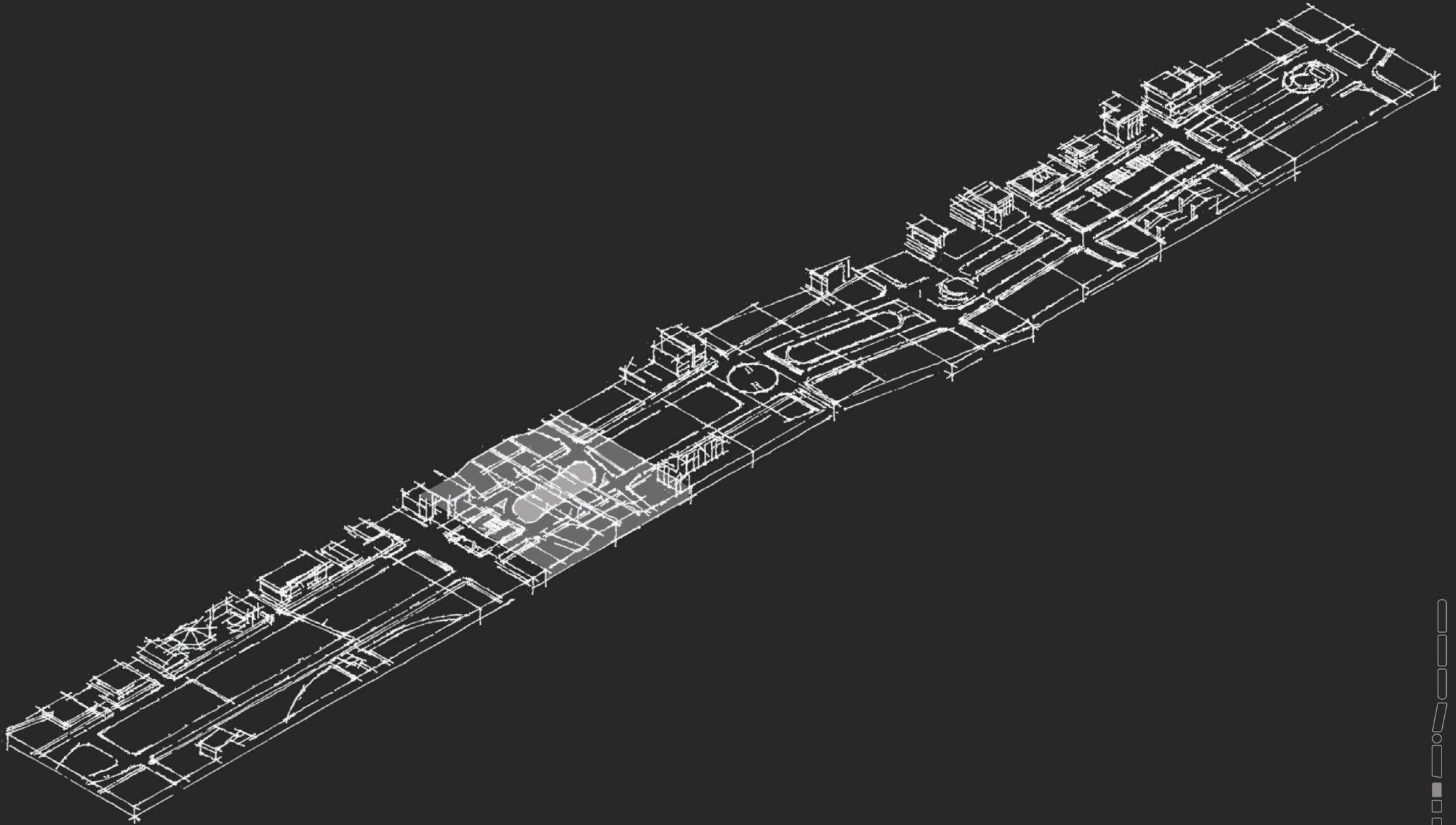




Figure 5.26  
The Neighborhood Pavilion  
on "The North Green"

**THE INTERSTATE**  
**THE SEVENTH BLOCK ON THE PASEO**

Figure 5.27  
*The Interstate*  
(Wendling 2019)







## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

The seventh block along The Paseo is preserved and adapted through several deliberate alterations. Described below are the major interventions.

The most significant intervention is to allow the space under interstate 70 to reconnect the north and south portions of The Paseo. Improving the walkability and creating a well-lit, comfortable plaza beneath the interstate will help to reconnect the spaces. Clear sight lines through will visually unite the boulevard and will make the space more comfortable and safe. The plaza space provides for outdoor gathering space during inclement weather.

Sound absorbing panels are attached to the overpass to increase the comfort of the adjacent spaces. The panels can also be canvases to display local art. Forty-two percent of survey respondents said that they would like to see more art and sculpture along the corridor.

Figure 5.30  
Under the Overpass  
Adaptive Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)

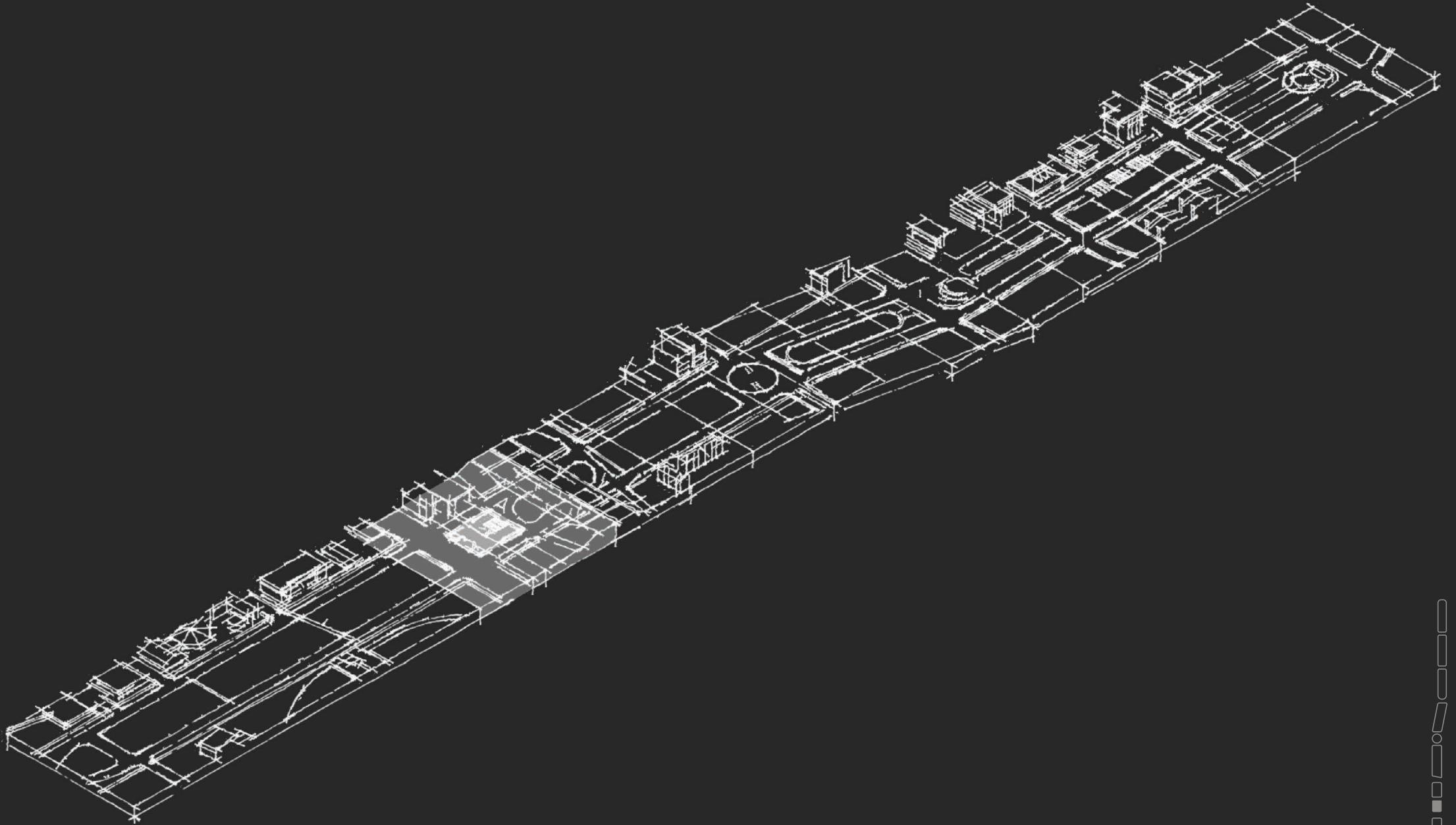




Figure 5.31  
Artist Residency + Sound  
Reducing Artwork on I70  
(Wendling 2019)

**TRUMAN ROAD PLAZA**  
**THE EIGHTH BLOCK ON THE PASEO**

Figure 5.32  
Truman Road Plaza  
(Wendling 2019)

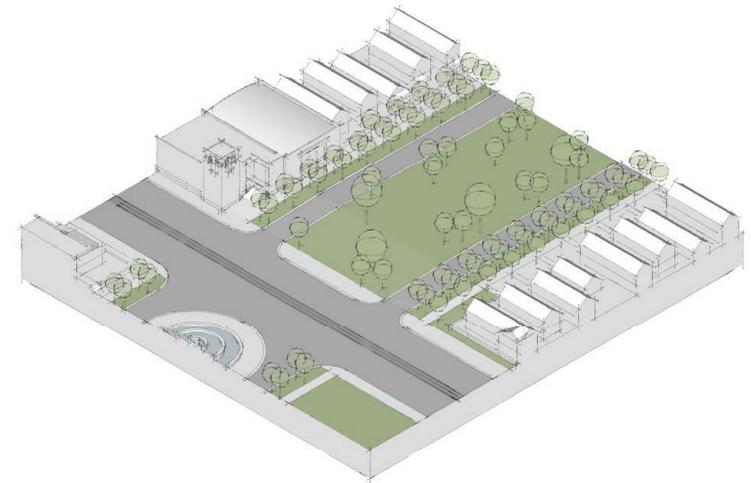


## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

Prior to the construction of Interstate 70 in the late 1950s, the seventh and eighth blocks of The Paseo were one contiguous park space. The southern half of that block is now the eighth block of The Paseo. In the early 1900s this portion of the block was an open, manicured lawn with naturalized tree plantings. It was used by the students of Chase Elementary School as a playground and practice ground for athletics. The shade trees on this site provided a natural backdrop to the 15th Street Fountain.

Postcards, images, and historical maps reveal that the abutting properties were primarily single family residential homes. West of the site is St. Stephen Baptist Church. Since the churches construction in 1943, St. Stephen Baptist Church has been a positive force for community change.

Figure 5.33  
Truman Road Plaza Historical  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)





## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION VISION

The eighth block along The Paseo adapted through several deliberate alterations. Described below are the major design interventions.

Because of the major alterations that occurred to the site in the second half of the twentieth century, this design does not attempt to restore Kessler's spatial vision. Instead, the design serves to amend the division that interstate-70 created in this community.

First, the lawn is transformed into a large and welcoming plaza space that can serve the congregation of St. Stephen Baptist Church, the homeless population, and the general community. Central to the plaza space is a single large community table. Moveable chairs allow everyone to find comfort in this space. Moveable chairs, a community table, barbecues, and adequate lighting send a message of trust, ownership, and connectedness to the community. Deliberate messaging through programming and site enhancements may help restore the community's pride in The Paseo to that of what it was in the early 1900s.

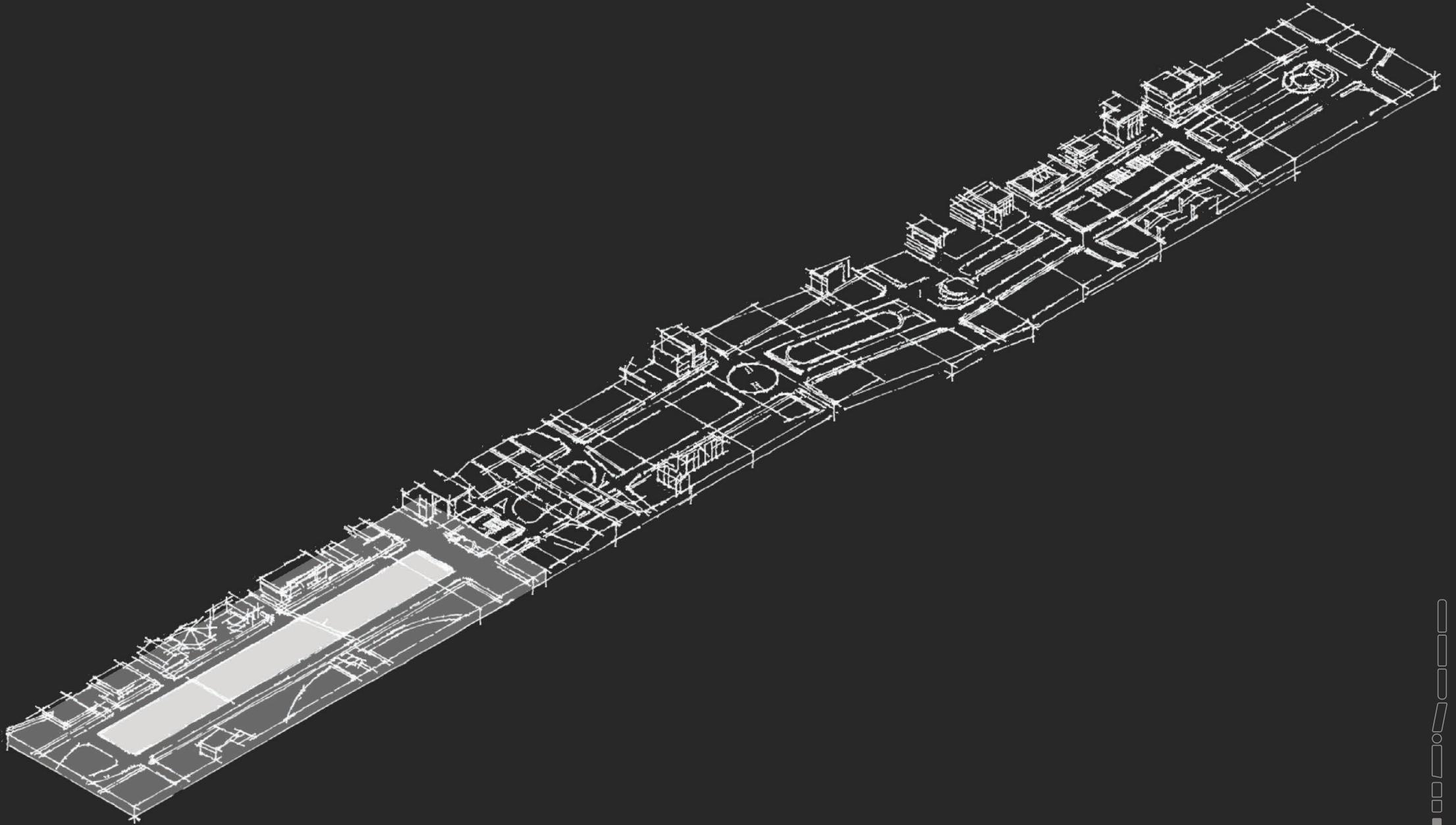
The John W. Williams Memorial remains on this block. The memorial is moved slightly to the north to allow groups of people to gather around and pay tribute to the civil rights and community leader.

Figure 5.35  
Truman Road Plaza  
Adaptive Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)



**THE SOUTH GREEN**  
**THE NINTH AND FINAL BLOCK ON THE PASEO**

Figure 5.36  
The South Green  
(Wendling 2019)



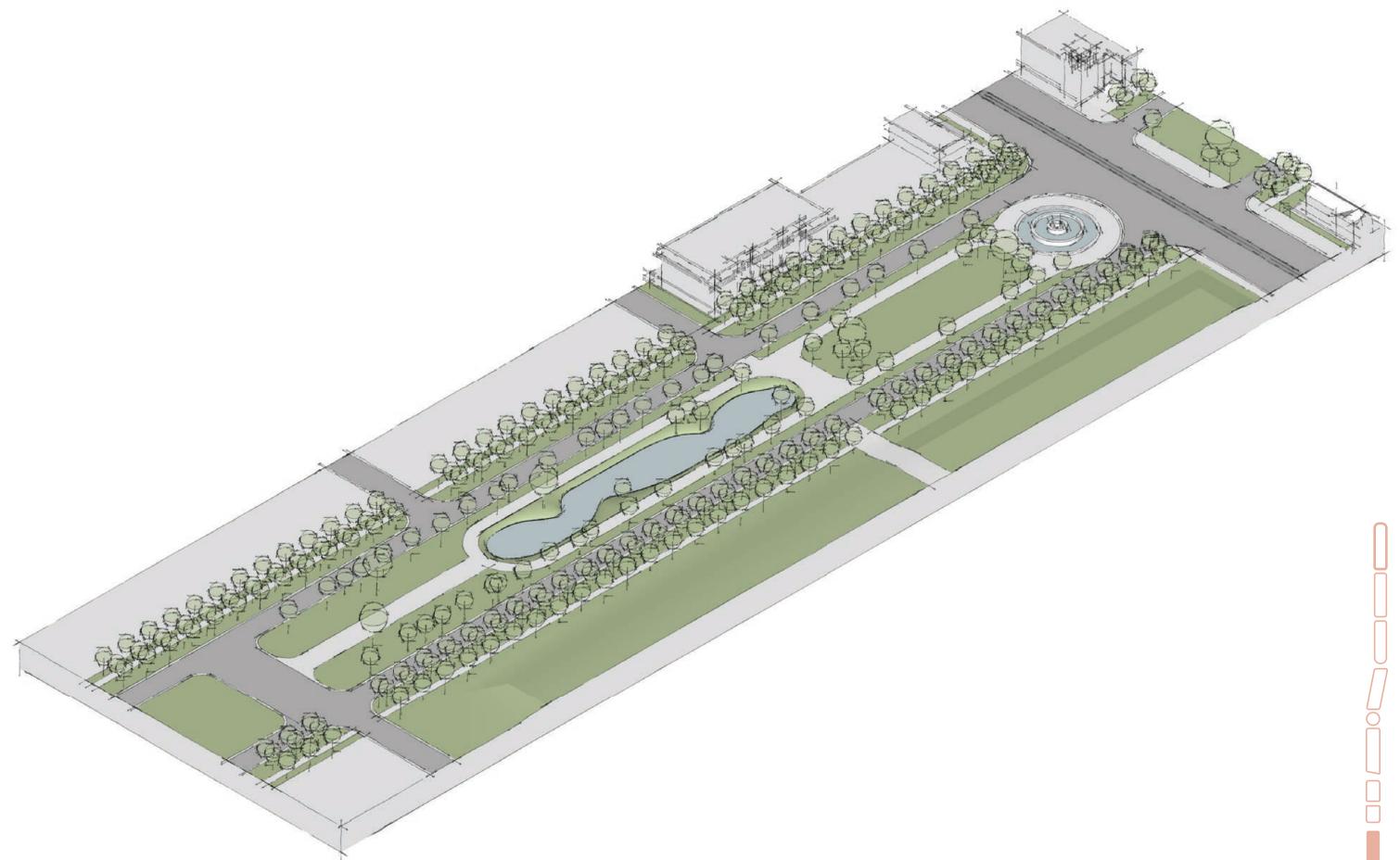
## HISTORICAL CONDITIONS CIRCA 1910.

In the early 1900s, there were many site amenities and design features between 17th Street and Truman Road (15th Street). Some of these amenities were once iconic elements of The Paseo.

The Fifteenth Street Fountain was the first fountain constructed by the park department. George Kessler modeled the fountain after the Fountain of Latona in Versailles. The fountain rose above the ground in five circular terraces. The lower terrace was 86 feet in diameter and the highest was 15 feet above the ground. The fountain was completed in conjunction with The Paseo in 1899; however, the fountain never worked as planned. The water was not recirculated and instead drained into The Paseo Lake to the south. The fountain was labeled the “white elephant” of The Paseo and was an embarrassment to Kessler. It was redesigned in 1908 following the lake’s draining, but the fountain remained problematic. Throughout the prohibition era and until its removal some referred to the fountain as the “colored wading pool.”

There was once a lake between 16th and 17th Streets that was used to collect storm water runoff from the boulevard. The Paseo Lake used indigenous rocks, incorporated an irregular shoreline, and natural landscaping to make the humanmade lake look as rustic and natural as possible. The lake occupied nearly all of the 1600 block of The Paseo. This block’s physical design demonstrates Kessler’s intention to interweave nature into the city.

Figure 5.37  
The South Green Historical  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The final block of The Paseo stretches from Truman Road to 17th Street and remains unbroken by roads for three blocks. This block contains turf and shade trees. The shade tree edge is not continuous, as trees were removed over time. At one time, the northern end of the block featured a fountain, called the Fifteenth Street Fountain. While the Fifteenth Street Fountain no longer exists, the Salvatore Grisafe Memorial, a 12' high stainless steel contemporary sculpture, is located in a small concrete plaza at approximately 16th Street.

The historical design and character have been eliminated from this portion of The Paseo. The bed of the old lake was drained in 1907 due to associated maintenance costs. The park board later filled and covered the basin with shrubs and flowers. The fountain was redesigned in 1908 but never functioned properly and was later removed from the site.

This block is difficult for pedestrians to access and does not contain sidewalks on any perimeter edge other than the north. There are two east-west pathways. One at approximately 16th street and one at approximately 17th street. Both pathways are difficult to access safely and do not enhance connectivity. There are churches, non-profits, a community center, and a charter school directly adjacent to this block. These institutions and organizations would benefit from site enhancements and may lead to potential public-private partnerships.

Figure 5.38  
The South Green Existing  
Conditions (Wendling 2019)



## ADAPTIVE PRESERVATION DESIGN

The South Green of Paseo Boulevard is preserved and adapted through a number of strategic design interventions. The design is based on the restored historical path alignment, according to Kessler's original The Paseo. Some paths need to be shifted slightly to adjust for the site's current circulation and accessibility demands. Described below are the major design interventions.

The historical Fifteenth Street fountain is re-introduced to the site as a dry deck fountain. A dry deck fountain allows the plaza space flexibility while minimizing maintenance demands and safety concerns. Lights can be installed in the pavement beneath the fountains, increasing the visibility of the plaza and meeting the community's request for more lighting on The Paseo.

Relocating the Salvatore Grisafe Memorial and adding a commemorative plaque will address some of the problems found in the Landmark assessment portion of this report. The memorial is relocated to a high-activity area. Pedestrians will be able to view and engage with the memorial in ways that its previous location did not allow for.

George Kessler and August Meyer designed The Paseo to introduce nature into the urban environment. A natural playground with rolling hills, native vegetation, climbing rocks and large stumps encourages children to interact with nature. Above the playground are hanging catenary lights and musical wind chimes. These will illuminate the playground at dusk and at night allowing for a highly visible and safe environment. The presence of wind chimes reflects the community's relationship to music. Additionally, the wind chimes will help drown out unsavory noises like traffic volume.

A multi-sport game court is central to the re-designed South Green. This responds to the survey findings, twenty-two percent of respondents requested sports courts to be located on The Paseo. This location is ideal for a multi-sport game court because it is highly visible and adjacent to the baseball fields at the Urban Youth Academy and the Guadalupe Centers Charter School.

Figure 5.39  
The South Green Adaptive  
Preservation Vision  
(Wendling 2019)





Figure 5.40  
Activities on The South  
Green (Wendling 2019)



## CONCLUSION

Cultural landscapes like Paseo Boulevard must become resilient and receptive to the dynamic conditions of their urban environments. Ever-changing urban, economic, environmental and sociocultural conditions do not need to be barriers to the success of preservation projects. Lifting unnecessary constraints and limitations, and reframing problems as opportunities can improve the use-value of historic places and better connect them to their contexts. Historic landscapes can be designed to honor history and reflect the diverse and dynamic society of today.

In this report and in the resulting designs, preservation has manifested itself in many forms. Nonetheless, conventional preservation is not enough to protect the cultural identity of a place. Cities are fascinating, vibrant, and memorable places because of their unique and individual cultural identities. Urban designers must protect and, when necessary, enhance them. Urban design, historic preservation and gentrification-prevention are incredibly complex, interconnected undertakings. Designers and policy-makers of the twenty-first century have the responsibility to learn from their predecessors, celebrate their successes and productively communicate their failures while simultaneously planning for a better future.

History reminds us of our humanity. It transcends generational differences to inspire and connect us. However, as this report demonstrates, transcendence cannot occur unless history is first communicated to an audience. This report studied and designed for Paseo Boulevard. Many buildings, landscapes, and historic districts could benefit from a similar approach. Preservation should be adaptive rather than redactive.

Paseo Boulevard is an exceptional landscape that did, and still does, command international acclaim. As mentioned, there are many challenges to preserving and activating a cultural landscape. This project attempted to tackle some of those challenges by first understanding their origins. Once these challenges were understood, they could be communicated through useful, research-informed programming and site design.

## PROJECT LIMITATIONS

Time is the most apparent limitation of this project. Each section; background investigation, methodology, findings, and design, could be expanded with more time. However, this project made the most of the time allocated. It is successful in providing relevant answers and design solutions to meet the research question. Precedent studies regarding gentrification, historic preservation, and use-value could be expanded on and would benefit this research.

Another limitation of this project is site specificity. The design presented is not a replicable model for historic preservation. In fact, no approach to historic preservation should be universal. The approach should be deeply connected to the site and the community. This work is beneficial because it focuses on creating an inimitable site response. Climate, topography, wildlife, existing vegetation, and the surrounding community greatly influence historic preservation. Future preservation projects in urban environments need to respond to the sites' environmental and cultural context.

This project and resulting designs did engage some stakeholders and community members. However, engagement was limited due to time and resources. If this project were to be implemented much more community engagement would be necessary to ensure success and longevity of the public space.

A final limitation to this project is the lack of a transdisciplinary team. It is necessary to work with other professionals; architects, planners, historians, sociologist, and others when preserving cultural landscapes. Collaborating with a team of designers and professionals educated on urban design and the area's historical significance would add depth to the project.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

The preservation of Paseo Boulevard is ongoing. Neighborhoods in east Kansas City are developing quickly and there are many high-profile investment projects happening near the historically significant portion of The Paseo. There is little research of how these projects will affect existing and long-term residents of the community.

The background of this project attempts to synthesize historic preservation, changing urban conditions, Kansas City's history and the city beautiful movement. Future research can expand this knowledge. Additional projects that attempt to preserve places through adaptive and experimental preservation strategies would strengthen the arguments presented in this work.

The spread of The City Beautiful Movement does correlate to the popularization of picture postcards in America. Postcards and the postal age propagandized cities in ways never done before. There is a need for more historical research that connects these ideas. What influence did postcards have on the design of cities and landscapes in the twentieth century? This research may be beneficial to contemporary landscape architecture as designers and planners position the field in the Social Media Era.

Paseo Boulevard was innovative in every way. Kansas City is uniquely positioned to once again be a leader in transportation innovation. In April of 2019, Virgin Hyperloop One's CEO, Jay Walder, announced that Missouri is the lead contender for the Hyperloop's inaugural project (Collins 2019). Interstate 70, the highway that crosses The Paseo between East 14th Street and East Truman Road is the most direct route linking Kansas City and St. Louis. This project along with the advent of autonomous vehicles could dramatically change how highways and arterial roads are used in Kansas City. Just as the introduction of the automobile changed the use of Paseo Boulevard, so will the introduction of the autonomous vehicles and alternative future transportation like the Hyperloop.

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- Figure 5.32. Wendling, Mackenzie. "Truman Road Plaza." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.33. Wendling, Mackenzie. "Truman Road Plaza Historical Conditions." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.34. Wendling, Mackenzie. "Truman Road Plaza Existing Conditions." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.35. Wendling, Mackenzie. "Truman Road Plaza Adaptive Preservation Vision." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.36. Wendling, Mackenzie. "The South Green." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.37. Wendling, Mackenzie. "The South Green Plaza Historical Conditions." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.38. Wendling, Mackenzie. "The South Green Plaza Existing Conditions." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.39. Wendling, Mackenzie. "The South Green Plaza Adaptive Preservation Vision." May 2019. Diagram.
- Figure 5.40. Wendling, Mackenzie. "Activities on The South Green." May 2019. Digital Rendering.

## APPENDIX C | IMAGE CATALOG



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## APPENDIX D | IRB APPROVAL

TO: Dr. Hyung Jin Kim  
Landscape Architecture/Regional and Community Planning  
1102 Seaton Hall

Proposal Number: 9568

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair   
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 02/01/2019

RE: Approval of Proposal Entitled, "Protecting People and Place: Adaptive Preservation of Paseo Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects has reviewed your proposal and has granted full approval. This proposal is **approved for one year from the date of this correspondence.**

APPROVAL DATE: 02/01/2019

EXPIRATION DATE: 02/01/2020

In giving its approval, the Committee has determined that:

- There is no more than minimal risk to the subjects.  
 There is greater than minimal risk to the subjects.

This approval applies only to the proposal currently on file as written. Any change or modification affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation. All approved proposals are subject to continuing review, which may include the examination of records connected with the project. Announced post-approval monitoring may be performed during the course of this approval period by URCO staff. Injuries, unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the IRB and / or the URCO.

