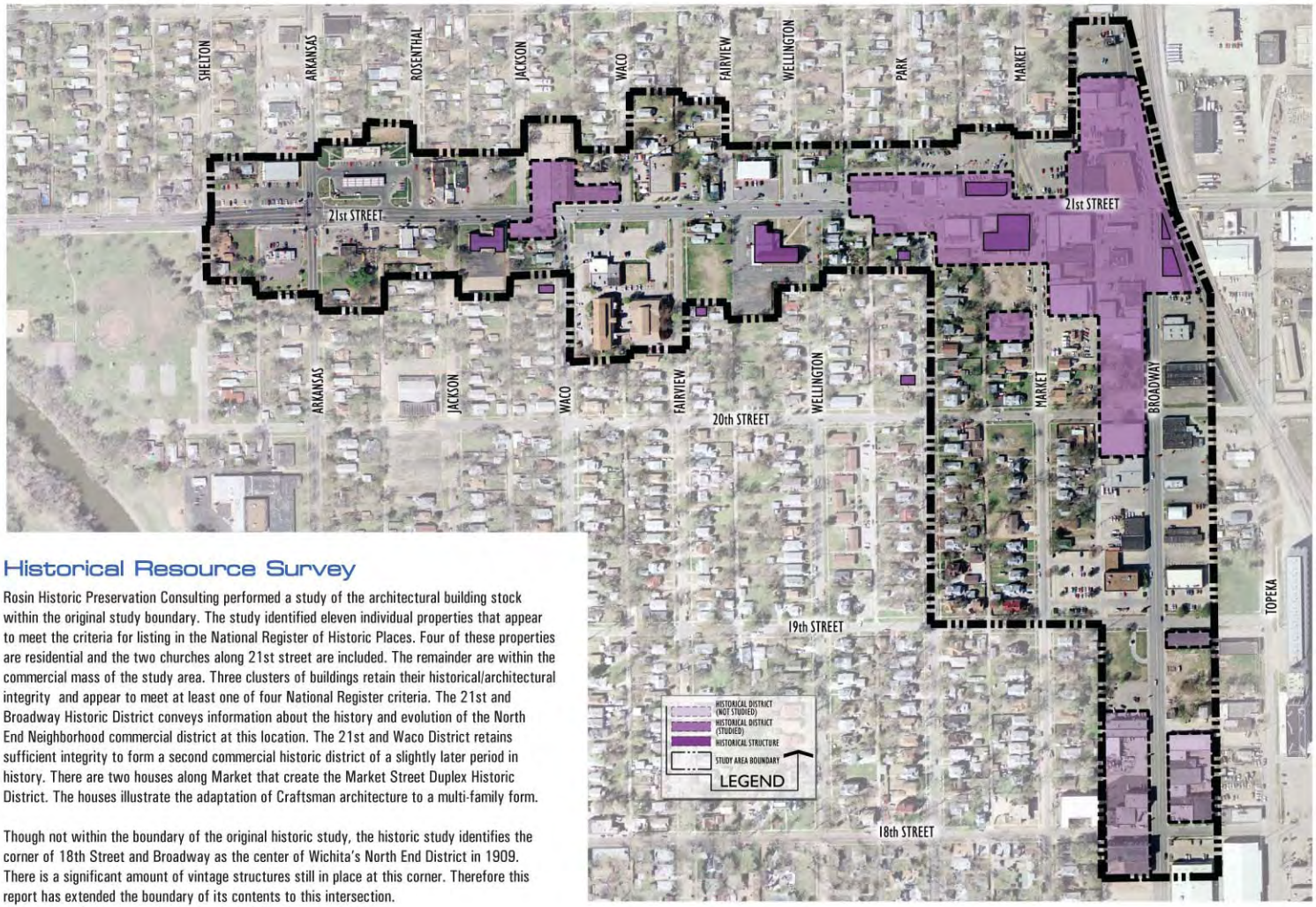

Historical Resource Survey

Rosin Historic Preservation Consulting performed a study of the architectural building stock within the original study boundary. The study identified eleven individual properties that appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Four of these properties are residential and the two churches along 21st street are included. The remainder are within the commercial mass of the study area. Three clusters of buildings retain their historical/architectural integrity and appear to meet at least one of four National Register criteria. The 21st and Broadway Historic District conveys information about the history and evolution of the North End Neighborhood commercial district at this location. The 21st and Waco District retains sufficient integrity to form a second commercial historic district of a slightly later period in history. There are two houses along Market that create the Market Street Duplex Historic District. The houses illustrate the adaptation of Craftsman architecture to a multi-family form.

Though not within the boundary of the original historic study, the historic study identifies the corner of 18th Street and Broadway as the center of Wichita's North End District in 1909. There is a significant amount of vintage structures still in place at this corner. Therefore this report has extended the boundary of its contents to this intersection.

18th Street & Broadway
The center of Wichita's "North End" district in 1909

The "Flat Iron" building at 21st & Broadway

Vintage streetfront along west side of Broadway from 20th to 21st Street

The Nomar Theater and the old L.T. Hill Department Store (21st & Market) reflect this areas cultural heritage

Market Street Duplex Historic District

Connie's Mexican Restaurant (22nd & Broadway) was once a hotel

Timeline of Wichita's North End - The Nomar International District

1880 - Houses for workers in the North End
1888 - Burton Stock Car Factory, Francis Whittaker & Sons Meat Packing Plant
1903 - Influx of immigrants from Mexico, Wichita Railroad and Light Company (street car system)
1909 - Center of North End – 18th and Broadway, Creation of Mexican barrios (neighborhoods)
1914 - All property platted, Hispanic entrepreneurs in "El Norte". Bakery, Headlight Gas Company, movie theater, black smith shop
1917 - Stock Yards State Bank (Flat Iron Building), Jones Motor Car Company.
1920s - Infrastructure added to area – water, sewer and paved streets
1929 - L.T. Hill Company – department store, Nomar Theater
1935 - Dense residential and commercial development in area, Thriving commercial center. Private automobiles began to supplant public transit.
1944 - Shinpaugh Grocery store renamed the Nomar Market
1951 - Small strip shopping centers, rectangular one story commercial blocks.
1966 - Mixed use apartment and commercial complex, 21st Street widened
1970 - Nomar Theater showed Spanish-language films, Influx of Southeast Asian residents, grocery stores and restaurants

Wichita in 1920-1930

During the 1920's Wichita was a thriving metropolitan city. It was labeled as one of the top 100 largest cities in the United States. Trains and trolley cars transported "North End" residents and workers to and from downtown Wichita where shops, tall buildings and theaters catered to their every need.

The streetscape of downtown Wichita consisted of brick buildings with awnings, arched doorways, bold signage and lots of lights. It was very simple and very industrial. Though automobiles were just starting to occupy the streets, it was not yet the main form of transportation.

Challenges – Broadway

Broadway is a busy arterial street lined with a variety of commercial buildings. Some of the buildings have historic character and some house cultural oriented businesses. There is a minimal amount of space provided for streetscaping but it is needed to define the area as part of the Nomar International District. (fig. 1 & 2) A pocket park has begun to bring pedestrian scale and amenities to the Broadway streetscape but improvements to the streetscape and building faces are required to define the district.

Challenges – Market

In the late 1960's improvements were made to the sidewalk area along Market and 21st Street from Broadway to Park Place. The improvements consist of brick pavers, tree planters, tree wells and a signage defining the "21st Street Market" district. It appears that funding was not sufficient to provide more.

There is adequate sidewalk width in this area to provide attractive and functional streetscape amenities to complement the buildings along the street wall. These buildings were built in the 1920's and 1930's and are a part of the 21st and Broadway Historic District as defined in the historical survey.

The quantity and character of the vintage buildings in this area provides an excellent base for improvements that could define the Nomar International District and create a central pedestrian based market place that would be the anchor for future development.

Challenges – 21st Street

Like Market, 21st Street was the recipient of renewal in the 1960's when it was widened to four lanes. Unfortunately, the improvement left little sidewalk width for pedestrian circulation or amenities. In an effort to provide vehicular parking at the fronts some stores, drives were constructed between the right-of-way lines and the building wall (fig. 1). Modern strip malls ignored the character of the area and catered to vehicular needs by setting buildings away from the street to provide storefront parking and wide landscaped street buffers (fig. 2).

The vintage buildings remaining within the historical districts still have characteristics that can be strengthened to revitalize the architecture. But pedestrian and vehicular spaces must be developed to serve potential patrons.