

## Chapter 2

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Knowledge of the past historical development of an area is often important to an understanding of its future. Factors which influence growth or change may extend their effects for decades. Buildings change their purposes over periods of time as the type and intensity of uses varies. Their location, however, most often becomes a focal point to attract further growth. Almost like the natural features of an area, transportation routes when once laid out have a sense of permanency that endures for generations. For example, many streets and roadways in the nation were laid out before the automobile was even invented. History reveals the kind of planning and community effort which has been undertaken for many years to reach the physical, social and economic achievements which have provided a viable and liveable community like McPherson, Kansas.

#### Early History of The McPherson Area . . . .

McPherson is in an area rich in ancient and fascinating history with many flags having flown over it. Indians lived, traded, and traveled throughout this vast land for hundreds of years before the white man arrived on the scene. Coronado ventured north into Central Kansas in 1541 on his journey to the Quivira Indian Nation. This area was then claimed by the Spanish. At that time, this area was populated by the Quivira Indians who were also known as the Wichita Indians. Many other tribes inhabited and hunted here. In 1609, King James I of England, who also had a claim, granted land all the way to the Pacific, including this area, to the Colony of Virginia. Beginning in 1673, the French established possession by exploration, occupation, and Indian treaty. On April 9, 1682, this land was formally claimed for France as a part of Louisiana by La Salle. Other Spanish and French explorers, fur trappers, mountain men, and traders followed and travel across the Plains became more common after 1700 with the Americans reaching Santa Fe before 1776. Because of the French and Indian War, France ceded this area to Spain on November 3, 1762. In the Treaty of Madrid on March 21, 1801, Spain agreed to retrocede Louisiana back to the Republic of France. On April 30, 1803, the Louisiana Purchase was consummated and this area became a part of the United States. Zebulon Pike traveled west through this area exploring in 1806.

After 1803, this area was shown on maps as part of the Unorganized Territory and the Western Territory. With the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, it became a part of the Kansas Territory with what is now McPherson County placed in an unorganized area of the territory. In 1855, this area was a part of Washington County and in 1860, became a part of Peketon County that extended all the way to the Rocky Mountains. In 1865, Marion County was enlarged to include Peketon County. Finally, in 1867, the Kansas Legislature established McPherson County. The county government was organized on March 1, 1870.

In 1821, Spanish rule over Santa Fe ended with Mexican Independence. That year, Captain William W. Becknell left Central Missouri with a pack mule train and traveled overland to Santa Fe following portions of the Arkansas and Cimarron Rivers. In 1822, he and others brought wagons

over the route proving it could be done. They blazed the way for the many trading expeditions traveling from both ends of the Santa Fe Trail. The trail was mainly used by traders and not so much by emigrants, although gold seekers going to California and Colorado used the trail.

Because of the Mexican Independence and the growing trade with the Southwest, Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, sponsored a bill in Congress in 1825 to negotiate and survey a road to Santa Fe. The survey party mapped a route from Fort Osage near Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fe following the Arkansas River and Cimarron River cut-off. The trail also began to be called the Santa Fe Road. This trail passed by the present City of McPherson just two miles south of the City and generally follows U.S. Highway 56.

The "Sibley Survey" was carried out by three Commissioners appointed by President Adams. They were George C. Sibley, Benjamin H. Reeves, and Thomas Mather. Joseph C. Brown was the surveyor. On August 16, 1825, they met with chiefs and warriors Shone-ge-ne-gare, Ke-hea-bash-ee, Ne-a-ke-shall, and Hah-ee-see-she as representatives of the Kansa, or Kaw Indians. The treaty site was approximately two to three miles south of the Dry Turkey Creek Trail Crossing under a very large, spreading oak in a small grove of trees on the creek. The treaty site was approximately five miles south of what is now McPherson. In exchange for \$300.00 in trade goods and a \$500.00 order for goods on Curtis & Eley, who were traders in their area, the Indians agreed to allow the survey and marking of the Santa Fe Trail through their land and the free use of it forever. Six days earlier, a similar treaty was made with the Osage Indians at Council Grove. Congress had authorized \$20,000.00 to be spent on treaties with the Indians.

From 1822 to 1843, three million dollars in trade goods traveled the trail. With the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the trail became even more active. By 1859 trade had increased to ten million dollars annually. Between March 1 and July 31 of that year, 2300 men, 1970 wagons, 840 horses, 4000 mules, 15,000 oxen, 73 carriages, and over 1970 tons of freight left Missouri for New Mexico. There were also many Mexican traders traveling the trail in their own wagon trains. Trail traffic included a count of at least 1800 wagons in 1858 and over \$3.5 million in commerce in 1860.

In 1849, the trail was part of a major route for those heading for the California gold fields. It served the same purpose again in 1859 for those traveling to the gold and silver strikes in Colorado. During the 1850s and 1860s, forts were built along the trail to protect the travelers and the mail route which had been established. Ranches were opened to provide services and supplies for the wagon trains.

The California Trail, later called the Cherokee Trail, from Fayetteville, Arkansas, met the Santa Fe Trail just south of Galva at Big Turkey Creek (Fuller's Ranch). It was blazed by Captain Lewis Evans in 1849 with 40 wagons and 130 people (including 15 Cherokee Indians) who were on their way to the California goldfields. Later in 1866, when Fort Harker was established in Ellsworth County, the Cherokee Trail continued on to Fort Harker and became known as the Fort Harker Trail when it carried military traffic between it and Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Also in 1849, a stagecoach line began operating between St. Louis, Missouri, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. By the 1860s there was a daily stagecoach schedule in both directions and the eastern terminus had been changed to Independence, Missouri.

Fuller's Ranch or Big Turkey Creek Ranch was established adjacent to the Big Turkey Crossing by Charles O. Fuller in 1855 and provided accommodations for travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. This was probably the first white settlement in McPherson County and was located three miles southeast of present-day Galva. The ranch was located about 1/4 mile west of the creek on the high ground. Fuller's Ranch was a celebrated inn as he had two French women employees, one a cook and the other a waitress. They later married and settled in the area.

In 1861, the U.S. Government established a post office named Big Turkey to serve the trail travelers. It became known as the Empire Post Office in 1872. The ranch became the location of the first town in the area, called Empire. Joseph J. Colby was the government land agent of the area and he saw the town grow to several blacksmith shops, several stores, a hotel, and even a photographer's studio. A mill was once built on the creek bank. Citizens attempted to dig a coal mine, but gave it up after finding none at 100 feet. Years later the road caved in, probably where the old mine had been located south of the bridge.

Although the center section of the Trail was long exposed to Indian and outlaw attacks, both ends of the Trail were touched by the Civil War. Starting in 1856, and later throughout the war, Kansas-Missouri border disputes raged along the Trail in Eastern Kansas where it became known as Bleeding Kansas. Throughout the history of the Trail, the military played a prominent part, not only in using it for travel, but also in protecting the wagon trains and frontier settlements while being stationed at camps and forts along the trail. There were a number of military expeditions that traveled the trail on their way west.

There are numerous documented Indian and outlaw attacks in the area with most of them occurring west of McPherson. By the summer of 1864, the Plains was in the throes of a general Indian uprising that ended in this area in the late 1860s. Some Indian attacks documented include the killing of Ed Miller east of McPherson, the killing of Wiley Temple near Roxbury, and the killing of four cavalymen southwest of McPherson.

Edgar Miller was an 18 year old man who was killed by Cheyenne Indians, July 20, 1864. Miller was delivering a message to Mr. and Mr. Ira Waterman at the Big Turkey Creek Ranch (Fuller's Ranch) that their daughter was very ill and wanted them to come to her in Marion.

At this time, the Cheyenne along with the Kiowas, Comanches, and Arapahoes were in the midst of depredations while attacking various places along the Santa Fe Trail. They had started July 17, 1864, at Fort Larned and moved toward the east.

Miller was within a mile of the Big Turkey Creek Ranch when he encountered a band of about 20 warriors. They chased him east along the trail and caught him near where he is buried. His body was found south of the trail by searchers July 23, 1864. He had been shot with arrows, tortured, and scalped. Ed Miller was buried on a knoll about 100 feet north of the Santa Fe Trail.



The original homesteaders of the land set aside the area for a cemetery, now the Jones cemetery two miles east of Canton. A marker with Miller's name, age, date of death, and that he was killed by Cheyenne Indians was placed on his grave sometime around 1906, by one of the original searchers who discovered his body. (The date of death on Miller's marker has been altered.)

In another Indian raid, Captain Joel H. Shelly of the 13th Missouri Cavalry dispatched on June 30, 1865, that Indians have killed and scalped four more of his command including three of his cavalymen and a corporal of the 2nd Colorado Cavalry in two separate attacks. The band numbered about 25 or 30 and crossed the Santa Fe Road about seven miles east of the Little Arkansas. They killed two of the dispatch bearers and captured the dispatches that were being forwarded east from Major James M. Turley at Fort Zarah in present-day Barton County. The Indians then passed down and crossed the Little Arkansas about eight or ten miles below Station Little Arkansas where they found four men of Captain Shelly's command killing buffalo and killed two of them. A force was sent to intercept the Indians, if possible, before they crossed the Arkansas River.

One of the men was dispatch-carrier Corporal (James?) Douglass of Company D, Second Colorado cavalry. The others were Private H. Hogan, Private James Jones, and (Private?) G. W. Norris of the 13th Missouri Cavalry. They were buried at the Cottonwood Grove Cemetery at Station Little Arkansas.

There are still many visible traces of trail ruts left by the wagons in the McPherson County area. Some other early historical sites close to McPherson include the following:

a. ED MILLER'S GRAVE - East of Canton near the center of the Jones Cemetery (also known as East Fairview Cemetery) is the black marble gravestone of Ed Miller who was killed by Indians in 1864.

b. BIG TURKEY CREEK CROSSING/FULLER'S RANCH/OLD TOWN OF EMPIRE/EMPIRE CEMETERY - Southeast of Galva near where the present bridge crosses Turkey Creek was located an overnight camp and water hole on the Santa Fe Trail. The crossing was an ideal place for travelers to refill their water barrels and water their livestock. Big Turkey, also known as Running Turkey or Indian Creek, was fed by springs which never went dry. This water and a few nearby shade trees and firewood made Turkey Creek a major stop on the Old Santa Fe Trail. Charles O. Fuller established his ranch adjacent to the crossing about 1/4 mile west of the creek on the high ground. In 1965, a monument was erected to mark the approximate location of Fuller's Ranch. The town of Empire was established near the ranch. Empire was on the mail route from Abilene as well as a junction for the Cherokee Trail from Fayetteville, Arkansas. In 1879, the town was moved northwest to the present site of Galva when the railroad was extended from Marion west to McPherson. Just up the slope to the south of the road intersection is the Empire Cemetery. According to the gravestones, the oldest burial is that of Michael Sauer who died in 1873 after being lost in a blizzard. The cemetery is still in use.

c. DRY TURKEY CREEK CROSSING - A few miles southeast of McPherson where the Santa Fe Trail crossed Dry Turkey Creek, a waterhole and overnight stop were located. Evidence found here indicates there may have been a trading post as well as a campground on the west side of

the creek. Pottery, flint, bullets, shells, and old coins have been found. Tradition is that a caravan of gold miners returning from California with gold were attacked and massacred by Indians at this site. Their graves may be the "Plum Graves" located in the bend of the creek as shown in the 1884 McPherson County Atlas. Graves of a pioneer mother and her baby are located nearby.

d. KAW INDIAN PEACE TREATY SITE - There is a DAR trail marker and a roadside historical sign in Elyria that discusses the treaty. From the junction of county Road 445 (Comanche Road) and county Road 2043 (old US 81) in Elyria go west 1.7 miles on county road 445 (Comanche Road) to what is now marked on the east side of the general area where the treaty site was located. The precise location of the treaty site is unknown.

e. LITTLE ARKANSAS RIVER CROSSING/MARKER COTTONWOOD/STONE CORRAL/CAMP GRIERSON/COTTONWOOD GROVE CEMETERY - Southwest of McPherson less than a mile over the county's west line into Rice County is located the Little Arkansas River crossing and a major point of interest on the Old Santa Fe Trail. There was more than one crossing point in the area and still visible when the water is low are the stones that were laid in the river bed for the toll bridge across the river. The huge, forked, still-living cottonwood tree, called the Marker Cottonwood, is possibly over 200 years old and is at the crossing's east bank. It may have been a reference point used by travelers in locating the river crossing. South of the crossing on the west side of the river was located the long-since dismantled Stone Corral, a 200 to 300 foot square stone enclosure having walls seven to eight feet high and 30 inches thick with portholes for rifles. It was an over-night camping spot that provided accommodations and protection for travelers as well as a trading post. South of the crossing, Station Little Arkansas, later called Camp Grierson for Colonel Benjamin Grierson of the 10th U.S. Cavalry, was located where many cavalry and infantry soldiers, including buffalo soldiers, were stationed from 1865 to 1867 to protect traders along the trail during a period of general uprising by the Indians. In the area are depressions left from rifle pits, entrenchments, and dugouts along the river bank where the soldiers were. South of the Camp was the Cottonwood Grove Cemetery where old grave sites are still visible. Fourteen soldiers, victims of cholera and Indian battles, were buried there. The bodies were later removed to a Fort Leavenworth cemetery in the late 1880s.

There were a number of other trails that passed by McPherson. The Kaw Indian Trail brought the Kaw Indians from their villages northeast of here to the buffalo hunting grounds near the Arkansas River.

The Chisholm Trail passed by the area with millions of cattle coming from Texas while going to the railhead at Abilene from 1867 to 1871. It crossed over the Santa Fe Trail a few miles east of present-day Canton. In 1871, the railhead and cattle shipping point moved to Ellsworth with Newton, Wichita, and Caldwell also being used. The railhead for Texas cattle moved to Dodge City in 1875 for ten more years.

The Smoky Hill Trail passed by north of McPherson and was used as a more direct route to the gold fields in Colorado.

Major Santa Fe Trail trading traffic ended in this area around 1867 when the railroad began reaching towns such as Abilene and Hays City. Then many new settlers and homesteaders arrived and began farming in the area. Many were Civil War veterans. The trail was then used by local settlers and merchants to travel between towns.

### **McPherson City History . . . .**

McPherson County was organized on March 1, 1870. The City of McPherson, founded two years later, is located in McPherson Township, the center township of McPherson County - all three having been named after Major General James Birdseye McPherson. He was born in Clyde, Ohio, and was mortally wounded at the battle of Atlanta in 1864. A bust of the Union General, now displayed in the lobby of the Municipal Center, was made in 1916 during the process of designing an equestrian monument which is located in Memorial Park, west of the courthouse. The monument was designed by John Paulding of Chicago, and was dedicated on July 4, 1917, at probably the largest celebration ever held in McPherson.

The idea for locating a town on McPherson Flats, as this area was then called, was conceived by Mr. L.G. Skancke of Salina. He was head of the government land office and was aware of the availability of land for town purposes. He organized the McPherson Town Company for which the articles of incorporation were signed on May 28, 1872. The town site was laid out by the Town Company which included the following persons: R. H. Bishop, L. G. Skancke, Oscar Seitz, and James T. Marlin from Saline County; and Thomas E. Simpson, Solomon Stephens, Hugh J. Woodside, John W. Hill, Hiram A. Hendry, J. B. Haight, Landon C. Raff and Josiah R. Fisher from McPherson County. A number of streets in the new town, which was first known as McPherson Center, were named for these men. McPherson was incorporated as a City of the 3rd Class on March 4, 1874, and Solomon Stevens was elected the first mayor. In 1884, McPherson became a City of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, and in 1914, the city changed to the Mayor-Commission form of government and has remained such. This provides for the city-at-large election of a mayor and two commissioners for staggered four-year terms. In 1986, a modification changed the City Clerk position to City Clerk/Administrator with those offices now being separated into separate staff positions.

Unlike today, the town fathers 125 years ago had no comprehensive plan to guide them in planning the city. However, they were very foresighted and had considerable vision for the future. A number of tracts of ground were set aside to be used for churches, schools, and parks. The two blocks where the present courthouse and library are located were designated for county buildings. The block west of the courthouse, as well as the block to the southwest, were designated as city parks, as were the present Linnea Park and the block where the Fire Department and tennis courts are now located. The old Park School area was designated a public school block. The Town Company built the first courthouse where the present NationsBank Plaza is located. (For additional history and information about current community facilities, refer to Chapter 11.)

In 1873, there were 25 houses on the town site, the town seemed destined to grow and because of its central location become the hub of McPherson County. The same year, upon petition and election, McPherson defeated New Gottland to become the new county seat succeeding Lindsborg. Sweadal, adjacent to Lindsborg, had been the first county seat in 1870-1871.



McPherson includes over seven square miles and continues to grow at a moderate rate. In the 1890s, the city already had a large acreage and 5,000 people. During that time many new additions were being annexed and booming conditions existed, only to be followed later by a depression. An interesting sidelight of those times was McPherson's attempt to get the State Capitol relocated from Topeka to McPherson. In 1887, a reception for State Representatives was held in McPherson. The city entertained them and paid their expenses. Capitol Hill Addition, consisting of 160 acres just south of the city was platted. A large block in it was designated for the location of the State Capitol Building. Obviously McPherson lost its bid and the addition was completely vacated in 1895.

On September 3, 1879, the Santa Fe Railroad arrived in McPherson from Marion with a crowd of over 10,000 people to celebrate. In 1880, the Union Pacific railroad extended a branch to McPherson, and in 1886 and 1887, respectively, the Missouri Pacific and Rock Island railroads also reached McPherson. These four independent railroads brought the city into direct contact with the people and markets of the Eastern states, and a boom resulted which later culminated with a great deal of land inflation followed by a depression. A reminder of the boom of the 1880s is the Opera House which was completed in 1888, as one of the finest of its type in Kansas. A previous Opera House had been constructed in 1880 at the southwest corner of Main and Marlin Streets. This building still remains as a storefront on the ground level and a residence on the upper level which still contains remnants of the stage area. The first store building in McPherson, the Bowker Store, was located at the southwest corner of Main and Kansas. The downtown section of Main Street was paved in 1911.

In 1887, McPherson was selected as the location for McPherson College for the following reasons, among others, most of which are still good reasons for wanting to live or locate industry here: (1) Good water supply. (2) A central location. (3) Good railroads, and (4) a temperate community. Today, we can also add a number of good reasons. The same qualities were no doubt important in the selection of McPherson as the location for Walden College in 1904. This college was purchased in 1914 by Central College, now called Central Christian College of Kansas.

In 1907, the courthouse tower clock was added when E. A. Colburn started a public solicitation to purchase and install the clock. During World War I, a large lighted flag blazed out in red, white, and blue colors from the west end of the courthouse roof. Cost of this patriotic symbol was also subscribed through the efforts of the McPherson Travelers, an organization of traveling men who made their homes in the city. This group also contributed to the south entrance brick gateway, along with arranging for the dedication of the General McPherson monument and the plaque listing the names of 752 McPherson County citizens who served in the Civil War.

The first churches to be organized in McPherson were the Baptist and Congregational in 1873, the Methodist in 1874, the Presbyterian in 1879, the Christian and Lutheran in 1881, and the United Brethren in 1882. There are currently approximately 30 Churches in McPherson City with 72 in the county as a whole.

The earliest service club in McPherson was the Rotary Club organized in 1919 followed by the Lions in 1928, and the Kiwanis and Optimists in more recent years. Both the Masonic and Odd

Fellows Lodges were organized in 1876, followed later by the Elks Lodge. The American Legion Post #24 was organized in 1919, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #2715 in 1932.

Certainly one of the unique and traditional festivities of the community is the annual All Schools Day which has been held each May since 1914. It began as a way to honor the 8th grade graduates of the county schools and features a colorful, large parade down Main Street and many other interesting activities. Other annual events include the 4-H Fair and Rodeo, Art in the Park, Scottish Festival, and Old Fashioned Harvest Festival.

Other major celebrations in McPherson's history include the Coronado Cavalcade program on May 14, 15, & 16, 1941, at the McPherson College stadium. It was a part of the Kansas Coronado Cuarto Centennial marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Spanish explorer who came into this area in 1541.

The Diamond Jubilee of McPherson was observed in 1947. Special events and programs were held throughout the year. In 1959, the Light-O-Rama celebration included the turning on of the new fluorescent street lights downtown and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary observance of city ownership of the water and light utilities. Street lights were improved city-wide, and McPherson became known as the "Light Capitol". Probably McPherson's biggest celebration was its centennial observance in 1972. The theme for the year was "History - Heritage - Horizons". A time capsule was buried in front of the Fire Department, and various centennial souvenirs were sold. The centennial calendar included over 50 events.

Over the years, McPherson has had a steady, orderly and systematic growth and has been ahead of many cities much larger in size, primarily because of an early decision to have a city Planning Commission. On October 15, 1928, the first Planning Commission was appointed. The Planning Commission continues to be an important factor in the planning and development of the city. The area around the city has been influenced by the creation of the McPherson County Planning Board in 1948.

One of the many reasons McPherson has been an aggressive, active, and growing community is the existence of a Commercial Club which was organized in 1897. This was succeeded by organization of the Chamber of Commerce in 1921. The Chamber was certified in 1974 as being fully accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Other boosters include McPherson Main Street, Inc., McPherson Convention and Visitors Bureau, McPherson Industrial Development Company and McPherson County Small Business Development Association.

Agriculture was the basis for McPherson's economy and growth for at least the first 50 years of its existence. It continues to play a significant role, but beginning with the oil boom of the 1920s, industry has become an increasing part of the McPherson area economy. This has been greatly facilitated by the Board of Public Utilities. The city took over the water and electric utility in 1909.

The "Industrialization of McPherson" began with the completion of two oil refineries in 1933. This led to expanded oil drilling activity, pipeline construction and Municipal power plant expansion. One of the refineries, the National Cooperative Refinery Association (now Cenex



Harvest States Refinery), has been continually expanded and modernized over its 65 years of operation. Its location at McPherson has brought many other related industries to this area including crude oil and product pipelines, as well as the Conway underground petroleum storage, pipeline, and manufacturing complex seven miles west of McPherson.

Similarly, McPherson's burgeoning plastics industry began with just one small PVC pipe plant in 1958. From this initial step, the local plastics industry has grown to 19 firms including large and small manufacturing and related support industries.

In addition to oil and plastics industrial development, McPherson has attracted many other types of industries such as manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, insulation, railroad equipment, and farm equipment. They all have contributed to McPherson's robust economy and have laid the groundwork for future economic development and growth.

While agriculture and industry have provided the basis for sound and stable growth, it was the people of McPherson who took advantage of this opportunity to plan and build an exceptional city. McPherson can be proud of its municipally-owned utilities, superb parks and recreation facilities, excellent education system, and church and cultural support organizations.

In addition to its own attributes, McPherson has the good fortune to be located on an excellent highway system, including U.S. 56, K-61, and I-135. This provides less than one-hour access to Wichita, the largest city in Kansas, with its State University, regional medical facilities, and major airline service. With a population of approximately 14,000, McPherson has the advantages of small-town living as well as the availability of larger-city services. That is part of the reasons why, in 1995, McPherson was ranked number 30 in the top 100 most livable small towns in America.

For additional history and information about McPherson's community facilities, refer to Chapter 11.

### **Historic Preservation. . . .**

Recognition of historic events and preservation of historic places should be a part of the planning process. To assist communities in the State, an inventory of Kansas historic, architectural, archeological, and cultural resources was begun in 1969 by the Kansas State Historical Society. In their work, the Historic Sites Survey staff used guidelines established by the National Register Office under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The following list of historic sites with their dates of construction in McPherson City was compiled as of January 31, 2013 (in the order recognized by the Registration Office):

McPherson Opera House - 221 South Main	1888
McPherson County Courthouse, Maple and Kansas	1894
Science Hall 1300 S. Main (Central College, Formerly Walden)	1904
Church of the Brethren, Euclid and Carrie	1926
Bixby House - 321 S. Maple	1879
John Wright House – 322 W. Marlin	1887
Kuns-Collier House – 302 S. Walnut	1909

Darrah Farm – 1330 Moccasin Road	1915
McPherson Power Plant No. 1 – 414 W. Elizabeth (401 W. Kansas)	1934

A historic resources survey of McPherson was completed in February, 2006 by the City Planning Commission assisted by the consulting firm of Historic Preservation Services, LLC. This survey was done under a grant from the Kansas State Historical Society Cultural Resources Division.

The survey covered four large areas within the city which were identified as having the highest potential for inclusion of individual historic structures or the potential to become historic districts. One of these areas was the downtown business district within which several potentially historic structures were noted. This was also true for each of the residential areas studied. Due to funding limitations a complete historic context was not determined for any of the areas surveyed. However, it was determined that several areas might meet historic preservation standards should some of the structures within the areas be restored to the same type of appearance they had in their original form.

In particular the downtown area has a large number of historic facades overlaid with metal fronts which hide the historic character of the buildings.

There is a wave of renewed interest in both preserving structures of historical significance and remodeling older buildings for "adaptive uses". Partly, the latter efforts have been initiated as a cost saving measure in a period of high construction costs. The City Planning Commission should utilize the McPherson County Historical Society, Inc. to further identify historic sites for purposes of preservation and for recognition. The Society has began a program of placing plaques at historically significant structures. Zoning of historic landmarks is another method of encouraging preservation. With the extensive modern additions being made to the city, a program to preserve the interesting historical structures as a reference point to the past could be a worthy activity of the overall city planning effort.