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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Naomi & Leona Apartment Buildings

other names/site number Parker Arms Apartments and Brentwood Apartments; khri: 173-10965 & 173-11083

### 2. Location

street & number 507-509 South Market Street

<input type="checkbox"/>	not for publication
<input type="checkbox"/>	vicinity

city or town Wichita

state Kansas code KS county Sedgwick code 173 zip code 67202

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this x nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   x   local

Patricia Zeltner DSHPO 5-6-13  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register     determined eligible for the National Register

    determined not eligible for the National Register     removed from the National Register

    other (explain:)

Joe Edison H. Beall 6.25.13  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	0	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick  
County, Kansas: 1870 - 1957

**Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling

WORK IN PROGRESS

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN

REVIVALS: Neoclassical

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

roof: Asphalt

other: Metal cornice and railings

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## Narrative Description

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### **Summary**

The Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings at 507-509 S. Market Street in Wichita, Kansas are Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Buildings as described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas 1870 – 1957."<sup>1</sup> The buildings are twin two-story brick structures fronting Market Street on the east. The matching Leona and Naomi Apartments were built by Wichita developer/contractor Oliver S. Mourning in 1926-1927. The Leona is the north building (507) with the Naomi, adjacent on the south (509). The buildings were named by Mourning, for his mother Naomi, and daughter, Leona.

There is no specific high architectural style that can be ascribed to the twin buildings. Typical of its property type, the apartment buildings are similar in form to the commercial blocks that lined city business districts of the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The design is stately with cast stone and metal ornamentation. Fenestration is symmetrical, the impact of which is increased due to the side-by-side twin buildings.

Although the buildings are in need of repairs, they retain a high degree of architectural integrity on the exterior with only minimal former modifications. The configuration of the interior central corridors and individual apartments are intact. Most original features and finishes are in place although finishes have been severely damaged by water infiltration.

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### **Elaboration**

The Naomi and Leona are sited on Lots 99 and 97 on South Market Street in Greiffenstein's 3<sup>rd</sup> Addition to Wichita. The lots are each 7,405 square-foot; the buildings each total 4,625 square-feet and are sited at the zero lot line on the front and rear.<sup>2</sup> Fifteen feet separates the adjacent buildings allowing light to the windows on the buildings' facing elevations. A paved alley provides access to the rear doors on the west sides of each building.

This location on Market Street is five blocks south of Douglas Avenue which was, and still is, the main thoroughfare in the original central business district of Wichita. Douglas Avenue traverses Wichita east/west. Market Street was one of two primary thoroughfares running north/south through downtown Wichita when these apartments were built. Main Street, one block to the west, was the second north/south commercial street.

### **Exterior**

On the east, the public entrances overlook Market Street; the rear doors on the west elevation face the alley. A one-story, full-width porch supported by square brick posts spans the east elevation of each building. The entrances are above grade because there is a full basement under each building. The flat porch roofs function as balconies for the second-floor residents with access by way of a doorway on that level.

Midwestern low-rise apartment buildings typically did not contain high-style architectural elements. As in the case of these apartment buildings, when they were located near commercial districts, their appearance usually related to early 20<sup>th</sup> century, two- or three-part commercial blocks with brick veneer and cast stone trim. Flat roofs were universal, with or without parapets.

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<sup>1</sup> Kathy Morgan and Barbara R Hammond, "Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas 1870-1957" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (Wichita, KS: City of Wichita, Metropolitan Area Planning Department, 2008), 76.

<sup>2</sup> "Property Tax and Appraisal Information," (Wichita: Sedgwick County Appraiser's Office, 2011) <https://sedgwickcounty.org>. Accessed 6/29/2011.

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However, the architect of this apartment building combined several minimal elements that suggest a modest Art Deco interpretation of Neoclassical form, particularly the sub-type that features a full-width front porch without the traditional pedimented gable. The square porch posts evoke a one-story portico with columns. The wide metal frieze, overhanging boxed eaves that are ornamented with dentils; brackets that replace traditional modillions are also Neoclassical elements.<sup>3</sup> This colonnaded porch topped by a balcony is typical of the Low-Rise Apartment building type.<sup>4</sup> The brick masonry exterior is complemented with Art Deco cast stone caps on the balustrades; corbelled pendants are applied to the caps of the posts and chimneys, and are incorporated into the design of the eave brackets. The metal balustrade with decorative pickets lends a Mediterranean element to the overall scheme.

Fenestration, which adds a Craftsman element, is symmetrical on all elevations in the placement of paired or single, double-hung wood sashes with nine-over-one panes. The four paired windows on the east facades are double-hung sashes with nine-over-one panes; on the upper floor wide, cast stone lintels top the windows. The original doorways on the front porches and the balconies had matching multi-paned wood doors with multi-paned sidelights.

On the Naomi, the doorways on the front and rear retain their original, multi-paned wood doors with multi-paned sidelights. The Leona has experienced some modification at its entrances. The original opening at the front entry is intact but the door and sidelights are contemporary metal-framed replacement units. The doorways on the rear and the second floor balcony have original multi-paned doors and replacement single-pane sidelights.

The north and south elevations lack ornamentation. Fenestration matches that of the front with double-hung, nine-over-one sashes on ten sets of paired windows and sixteen single windows, all with brick sills. Window and door composition on the rear elevation matches that of the front elevation. Metal awnings are affixed to most windows and doors on the fronts and backs of the buildings.

The only exterior modifications are railing modifications on the Naomi and replacement doors on the Leona. The original metal railing, extant on the second floor, has been replaced by two brick piers on the first floor of the front porch on the Naomi apartments. As described above, a replacement door and sidelights have been installed at the front entrance of the Leona and replacement sidelights installed at the other entrances. On both buildings, the roofs are in need of replacement and there are areas of brick and concrete, and the metal cornice, that are in need of repairs. Overall, the buildings are in good condition. With original windows and doors largely intact, the buildings clearly portray their original design and function as 1920s low-rise apartment buildings.

Interior

*Naomi Apartments (south building)*

Conforming to the "Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building" property type, the Naomi is a flat-roofed, two-story building with twenty-four original self-sufficient apartments. All were built with private bath and kitchen facilities. The individual apartments are accessed by interior central corridors running front-to-back on the lower and upper floors; the buildings were constructed without elevators. The upper and lower corridors exit the front of the building by the original interior staircase which descends to the front vestibule. The upper corridor exits the rear by way of an original iron staircase on the exterior of the building.

The Naomi Apartment Building retains its configuration of corridors and living units. Wood flooring, stairs and banisters in the corridors are original. One of the most significant architectural features is the front vestibule which is separated from the central corridor by a roundhead arch opening with half-walls. Paneled wainscoting adds formality to the vestibule and half-walls. A bank of recessed, tenant mailboxes is located on the south wall. Doorways to the apartments retain paneled wood doors, some with original louvered outer doors. The door and window trim in the

<sup>3</sup> Virginia McAlester and Lee McAlester, *Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 343-344.

<sup>4</sup> Morgan and Hammond, "Residential Resources of Wichita," 2008, 76.

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apartments is intact in many units. Walls and room configuration are intact within the apartment units. The apartments all contain masonry fireplaces that originally held gas fixtures. All individual living spaces are studio apartments and all floor plans contain a combined living/sleeping room, kitchen, and bathroom. The basement contains furnace, utilities, and maintenance facilities. Few interior alterations have been made; the primary interior issue is deterioration of plaster walls and ceilings, and wood floors from moisture penetration due to roof failure. Some interior wood doors have been replaced.

*Leona Apartments (north building)*

The Leona Apartment Building retains its original configuration of corridors and most living units. Three of the apartments have been reconfigured. Wood flooring, stairs and banisters in the corridors are original. One of the most significant architectural features is the gabled skylight in the ceiling of the second floor corridor. The front vestibule contains a bank of tenant mailboxes on the south wall; round wood columns frame the entryway inside the front door. Doorways to many of the apartments retain paneled wood doors, some with original louvered outer doors. The door and window trim in the apartments is generally intact. Much of the plaster and lath of the interior walls has been damaged or destroyed by water infiltration. The apartments all contain masonry fireplaces that originally held gas fixtures. The floor plans of the original studio apartment spaces each contain a living room, kitchen, and bathroom. All units originally had "Murphy" wall beds. The beds are no longer present but the bed cupboards remain in some units. Few interior changes have been made to the Leona Apartment building. As mentioned, three apartment units have been reconfigured and all of the apartments have been severely damaged by water and vandalism.

**Summary**

The Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings retain a high degree of historic integrity on their exterior and interior. The plan configuration of the buildings is intact, including the design of public areas and the layout of most apartments. Character-defining features and finishes include: entry vestibules and staircases, the skylight at the Leona, louvered and paneled apartment doors, fireplaces, plaster walls and ceilings with wood trim, and wood floors (although plaster and flooring has been significantly damaged by water). As an excellent example of the Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building, Oliver Mourning's Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings meet the registration requirements identified in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas, 1870 – 1957."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

(A) Community Planning and Development

(C) Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1926 - 1963

**Significant Dates**

1926 & 1927

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Oliver Jackson Mourning (Owner/Contractor)

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification):**

The period of significance spans from the buildings' original construction in 1926 and 1927 to 1963, the 50-year threshold for historic significance when properties continue to represent their historic and architectural significance and no other date exists for terminating the period of significance.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary):** N/A

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## Statement of Significance

### Summary

The nomination of the Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings to the National Register is under Criterion C, the area of significance in Architecture. These twin apartment buildings, which represent the Conventional Low-Rise Apartment property type, were constructed in 1926-1927 by Wichita building contractor Oliver Jackson Mourning (1875-1952).

The Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings are also significant under Criterion A in the area of *Community Planning and Development* as they relate to the national and local construction of apartment buildings across the United States, a trend that was driven by improved financing possibilities to stimulate housing construction. The buildings typify the popular Low-Rise Apartment Buildings that fit conveniently into both commercial and residential areas alike.

These Market Street apartments are relevant to the historic contexts identified in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Residential Resources in Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas 1870 – 1957. The Naomi and Leona apartments represent residential development in the city, reflecting the changing domestic living patterns in Wichita as well as the evolving physical forms of the city's residential buildings.<sup>6</sup>

Located in the southern part of downtown Wichita, the Naomi and Leona are characteristic of apartment buildings that Mourning built and owned during his long career as a developer and contractor in Wichita. Although owner Oliver Mourning originally named the apartment buildings the *Naomi* and *Leona*, within about twelve years the names were changed to the *Parker Arms* and *Brentwood* apartments.<sup>7</sup> The buildings currently bear these names on a small brass plate on the front facade. Mourning lived at the Lenora, with his wife, in the early 1930s. By 1939 when the new names were assigned, the buildings were presumably under new ownership. Until recently, both apartments have remained in continuous use as multi-unit residential buildings from the time they were built. In recent years, extensive water damage caused the buildings to become uninhabitable pending rehabilitation.

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## Elaboration

### Historic Context

There have been three boom periods of apartment house construction in the United States: 1890 – 1917, 1921-1931, and 1960 – present. As with other housing starts, the national construction rate for apartment buildings fluctuated with major historic events, dropping for example in 1917-1920 due to limited resources during World War I. By 1919 and 1920, the country was beginning to recover from the effects of the war but residential construction from 1917 to 1918 was only 43% of the normal, in 1919, 58%, and in 1920, 37%.<sup>8</sup>

The housing shortage that occurred in the post-World War I years was the major factor in the boost to residential building in the decade of the 1920s. Apartment houses, which provided attractive forms of investment, were built by general building contractor/developers like Oliver Mourning.<sup>9</sup> Trade journals published encouragement to

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<sup>6</sup> Morgan and Hammond, "Residential Resources of Wichita," 2008, 79.

<sup>7</sup> *Wichita City Directory* (Wichita). 1929; 1931; 1939; 1948; 1957.

<sup>8</sup> "The Calder Report on the Building Situation," *Monthly Labor Review* 12, 6 (1921): 99.

<sup>9</sup> Anthony D. King, ed., "The Social Map of Apartment Houses: five basic types of dwelling," In *Buildings and Society: Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment*, (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2005), 88. books.google.com. Accessed July 2011.

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readers in mid-size cities such as Wichita with such comments as, "...the demand is growing and spreading to new fields. Where the building of apartments was originally confined to the larger cities, it is now becoming popular in many smaller cities and they are proving a profitable field for this type of investment."<sup>10</sup>

However, the housing scarcity caused by soldiers returning from WWI, European immigrants, and rural U.S. citizens seeking better employment in cities was so severe that even developers could not afford to fix it without help from the government. In April, 1920 the United States Senate authorized the Select Committee on Reconstruction and Production to investigate the building situation and recommend actions to stimulate and foster the development of construction work.<sup>11</sup> The resulting government involvement created a Division of Building and Housing in 1921. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover's new division was charged with "revising an infrastructure consisting of poor housing designs, costly materials and labor, outdated building and zoning regulations that were barriers to development, and a shortage of mortgage funds."<sup>12</sup> With the publication of new guidelines, the spring of 1922 saw the start of a major spurt in the construction of housing.<sup>13</sup> The trend was set for huge growth across the nation.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the highest percentage of increase in the total U.S. population took place at the start of the century, 1900-1910 and was due to "relatively high birth rates and, most significantly, the arrival of an exceptionally large number of immigrants. Immigration and high fertility levels also contributed to the high growth of the following two decades, 1910-1920 and 1920-1930."<sup>14</sup>

*Table 1* on the following page illustrates population data in Wichita and the United States between 1870 and 1950. Great increases are seen during the settlement period of the 1880s and again as people moved into the city after the turn of the twentieth century. These spikes were much higher than the national average, probably because Wichita was a relatively new city. As the country recovered from World War I in the 1920s, Wichita's growth remained remarkable as local boosterism fueled the population growth by almost 54 percent between 1920 and 1930; much higher than the overall growth in the country.

This growth led to increased development of apartment buildings. A random sampling of newspaper articles in 1926 and 1927 reveals many announcements of apartment buildings that were generally two stories and accommodating a range of six, eight, ten, fifteen, and twenty-four living units.<sup>15</sup> In addition, the Luxury High-Rise Hillcrest Apartment Building with eighty-eight units was built in 1927. Wichita already had the eight-story Shirkmere, a Conventional Mid-Rise Apartment Building (1922) and was soon to gain the Commodore, a 109-unit, nine-story Apartment Hotel (1929).<sup>16</sup> Oliver Mourning's Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings were products of those heady times.

<sup>10</sup> Robert S. DeGolyer, "Apartment House Construction from the Standpoint of the Investor" *Buildings: Building Management*, Volume XVII No. 10 (Oct 1917): 22. books.google.com. Accessed July 2011.

<sup>11</sup> "The Calder Report," *The Survey*, Vol. 46, Charity Organization Society of the City of New York (Apr 14, 1921), 86-87. <http://books.google.com>. Accessed July 2011.

<sup>12</sup> William K Hatt, "Recommended Minimum Requirements for Small Dwelling Construction", 1932 (Washington US Government Printing Office, [www.nvl.nist.gov](http://www.nvl.nist.gov). Accessed June, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Hatt, [www.nvl.nist.gov](http://www.nvl.nist.gov). Accessed June, 2011.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau online database [www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/censr-4.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/censr-4.pdf). Accessed June, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> "The Tihen Notes" to the *Wichita Eagle* and *Wichita Beacon*, 1926-1927. <http://specialcollections.wichita.edu>. Accessed Mar 2011.

<sup>16</sup> *Wichita Beacon*. Jan 2, 1924:5; *Wichita Eagle*. Sept 11, 1927:1-B.

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**Table 1: Population Data, 1870 – 1960**

Decade	Census Year	Population of Wichita, Kansas <sup>17</sup>	Rate of Growth/Decline	Population of United States <sup>18</sup>	Rate of Growth/Decline
1860-1870	1870	689		38,555,983	
1870-1880	1880	4,911	+85.6%	50,189,209	+30%
1880-1890	1890	23,853	+385.7%	62,947,714	+25%
1890-1900	1900	24,671	+3.4%	76,094,000	+21%
1900-1910	1910	52,450	+ 112.6%	92,407,000	+21.0%
1910-1920	1920	72,217	+ 37.7%	106,461,000	+15.1%
<b>1920-1930</b>	<b>1930</b>	<b>111,110</b>	<b>+ 53.9%</b>	<b>123,076,741</b>	<b>+13.5%</b>
1930-1940	1940	114,966	+ 3.5%	132,122,446	+7.3%
1940-1950	1950	168,279	+ 46.4%	152,271,417	+15.3%
1950 – 1960	1960	254,698	+ 51.1%	179,323,175	+ 17.8%

Occupancy

All individual units in the Naomi Apartment Building were designed as studio apartments that required a free-standing bed in the main living space; none had wall beds or separate bedrooms. The tenants were predominately single women, fewer single men, and through the years a few couples also rented there. It is not known if any had children. A review of Wichita City Directories sampling over four decades confirms this consistency. The samples did not indicate long-term tenancy, probably because the small size of the living spaces would be most suitable for starter quarters or short-term occupancy.

Three years after it opened, the 1931 city directory shows that the Naomi had attracted eight single women, five single men, and two married couples. Seven apartments were vacant.<sup>19</sup> In 1939, the ratio reversed somewhat with a dominance of married couples (nine) and five single women living there. Of the twenty-four apartment units, ten were vacant. This high number of vacancies corresponds to vacancies in other nearby apartment buildings on South Main and South Market Streets, perhaps reflecting the socio-economic times rather than the quality of the accommodations.<sup>20</sup> In 1948 the trend at the Naomi Apartment Building revealed a sharp increase in tenancy, but single women (78%) still outnumbered single men (11%) and married couples (11%).<sup>21</sup> Nine years later in 1957, the difference between single women (60%) and men (40%) had fluctuated, but women living alone were still dominant and no couples lived there.<sup>22</sup>

Twenty of the twenty-one individual units in the Leona Apartment Building were designed as studio apartments with wall beds in the main living space. Only one apartment contained a separate bedroom. Like the Naomi, the tenants were predominately single women, fewer single men, and through the years a few couples also rented there.

When the Leona opened in 1927, it attracted many married couples and a smaller number, but even balance, of single men and women.<sup>23</sup> Owners Oliver and Mae Mourning themselves lived in the Leona Apartment Building for a

<sup>17</sup> Institute for Population Studies, Kansas University online database. <http://ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/ksah/population/2pop33.pdf> Accessed July, 2011.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau online database.

<sup>19</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1931.

<sup>20</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1939.

<sup>21</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1948.

<sup>22</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1957.

<sup>23</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1927.

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few years in the early 1930s.<sup>24</sup> By 1939, the ratio changed, only one couple lived there with two single men, and seven single women. Of the twenty-two apartment units, at that time eleven were vacant. This high number of vacancies corresponds to vacancies in other nearby apartment buildings on South Main and South Market Streets, perhaps reflecting the socio-economic times rather than the quality of the accommodations.<sup>25</sup> In the late 1940s, the trend at the Leona Apartment Building revealed a sharp increase in single women tenants. In 1948, for instance, nineteen single women and three single men lived there.<sup>26</sup> No couples were present at that time, nor were any couples living there nine years later in 1957. The numbers of single women (fourteen) and men (seven) had fluctuated slightly, but women living alone were still dominant.<sup>27</sup>

The fact that over the years increasing numbers of single women found residency in the Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings is probably due to several factors. With the exception of the 1930s, Wichita was growing rapidly, attracting people from rural areas to the city for the plentiful jobs found there in the 1920s as well as during and immediately after World War II.<sup>28</sup>

The Great Depression and World War II witnessed tremendous changes of women's role in U.S. society. Those changes, brought on by extraordinary circumstances, allowed women to assume, albeit to a lesser degree, the independence that employment brought to men.<sup>29</sup>

Women's jobs were partially protected during the Depression because it first affected the industrial production sector. Women's jobs were so stereotyped that they were closed to men and thus women in service, clerical or secretarial positions continued to work while male production workers lost their jobs.<sup>30</sup> This typecasting is illustrated by the occupations of the employed women living in these apartment buildings during their first decade. They included waitress, secretary, department store personnel, bank teller, teacher, social worker, stenographer, café workers, and business manager. Male residents' employment reflected the opposite side of the stereotype with lithographer, salesman, policeman, newsroom worker, tailor, electrician, oil speculator, partner in used auto sales company and partner in law firm.<sup>31</sup>

Female employment in the country grew further during the World War II. In 1940 only 28 percent of women were working. By 1945, this figure exceeded 34 percent. As seen in Figure 1, the largest proportional rise in female labor of the twentieth century occurred during the 1940s.<sup>32</sup>

By 1948, the occupations of women in the Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings seem to indicate that in general, women's choices for middle-income employment had not changed much since 1928. Seventy-eight percent of residents of the Naomi and ninety percent of residents of the Leona were women, and most were employed. Office positions such as cashier, manager, clerk, stenographer, and secretary were the dominant occupations. Three of those worked at the Veteran's Administration. The women also included one teacher, one nurse, one retail

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<sup>24</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1931; 1934; 1936.

<sup>25</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1939.

<sup>26</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1948.

<sup>27</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1957.

<sup>28</sup> Morgan and Hammond, *Residential Resources of Wichita*: 21; 27.

<sup>29</sup> Daron Acemoglu, David Autor, and David Lyle, "Women, War, and Wages: The Effect of Female Labor Supply on the Wage Structure at Mid-Century" (National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper No. 9013), <http://www.nber.org/digest/nov02/w9013.html>.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1927, 1931; 1939.

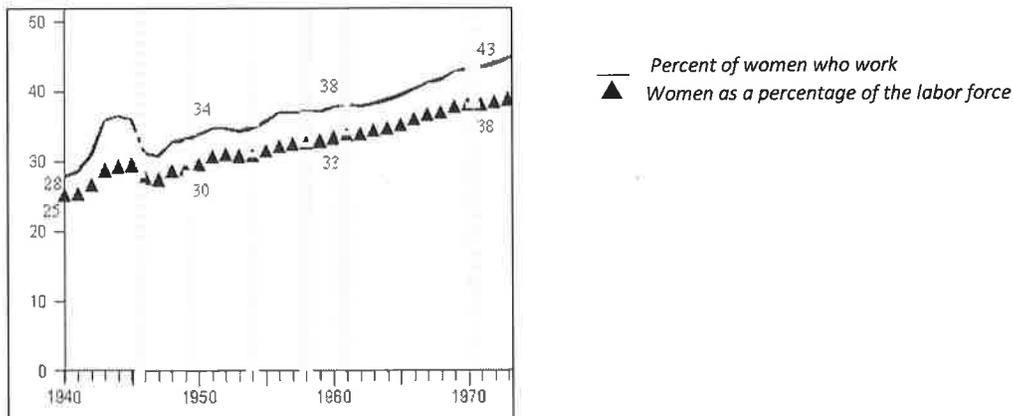
<sup>32</sup> Acemoglu, Autor, and Lyle. *Women, War, and Wages*.

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manager, an insurance agent and the Personnel Director of a large department store. Mrs. Pearl Kise had been the resident manager of the Naomi for seventeen years. Of the male residents, occupations included a hotel bellman, salesman, dry cleaners worker, partner in a law firm, and editor of the *Wichita Eagle* newspaper; two male residents were unemployed.

**Figure 1: Women’s Labor Force Participation and Business Cycles: 1940 - 1970<sup>33</sup>**



Nine years later in 1957, the pattern was repeated. Sixty percent of the residents in the Naomi and sixty-six percent of the Leona residents were women. Occupations included: bookkeeper, clerk, secretary, telephone operator, stenographer, retail clerk, a teacher, librarian, and office workers for Internal Revenue Service and the State Employment Office. One woman had crossed the gender barrier with employment as a draftswoman. Mrs. Elsie Dumbauld had been the resident manager of the Leona for over twenty years. Men’s occupations among the residents included commercial sales representatives, aviation worker and geologist. Six men were unemployed.<sup>34</sup> Over time, the high rate of employment of the tenants and the range of standard, middle-income occupations suggests that the Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings remained a respectable place to live for middle-income residents, particularly single women.

Oliver J. Mourning - Owner and Builder

Oliver Jackson Mourning was the second-oldest of sixteen children born to Joshua Bell and Naomi Steffy Mourning. He was born September 11, 1875 in Bentley, Illinois where his parents had met and married. Joshua Mourning was a brick manufacturer and general contractor and he moved his family from Illinois to Sherman County in northwestern Kansas when Oliver was a child.<sup>35</sup>

By 1900 Joshua had moved again, taking the family to Lamar, Colorado where nine of his sons, including Oliver (age 24), worked for him as molders and layers in his brick contracting business.<sup>36</sup> Oliver met his wife Myrtle Mae Kernman in Colorado and married her there in 1901; their only child, daughter Leona was born in Pueblo in 1903. In 1908 Oliver and Mae moved to Wichita where he advertised his services as a brick contractor.<sup>37</sup> Joshua and Naomi, as well as all of Oliver’s brothers also relocated to Wichita within the next eight years, bringing their bricklaying and

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau online database.

<sup>34</sup> *Wichita City Directory*. 1957.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau online database.

<sup>37</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1910:917; Connelley, 1446.

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building skills with them.<sup>38</sup> Oliver Mourning's obituary states that his education and architectural training was obtained in Kansas and Colorado. It is not known which university he attended, nor when.<sup>39</sup>

During World War I, building construction slowed in the United States due to the drain on resources. It may have been for this reason that Mourning tried his hand at managing a café at 125 W. First Street to supplement his contracting business.<sup>40</sup> Although Mourning listed his occupation as "Café operator" on his World War I draft registration, lack of listings in the city directories indicate that this was not a long-lived venture.<sup>41</sup> However, as a result of his entrepreneurship, he received in 1919 a U.S. patent for a griddle-cleaning tool that he had invented.<sup>42</sup>

After the war, new federal mortgage loan laws and affordable interest rates facilitated residential construction around the country and Wichita's contractors were able to realize great opportunities. In 1927, ninety-one apartment buildings were listed in the Wichita City Directory.<sup>43</sup>

Oliver Mourning's family had long been in the masonry industry. With apparent forethought, he took on the tradition in 1921. As noted in a masonry trade journal, he was making plans to build a brick plant in Wichita. Such an enterprise at that time would complement and facilitate his growing construction business.<sup>44</sup>

As of 1925 on South Main and Market Streets, Broadway, and Topeka Avenue, rooming houses from earlier decades were still standing alongside single-family residences of the 1880s-1910s. Oliver Mourning and fellow contractors purchased many of these deteriorating buildings in the area between the Arkansas River and Emporia Avenue, razed them and put up modern apartment houses to serve a growing migration of people to the city. These locations afforded easy access for employees of downtown businesses.<sup>45</sup>

During this mid-to-late 1920s period, Mourning built the Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings and during that same time (1926) he obtained a permit for another 24-unit building across the street at 532 S. Market (demolished). Mourning is also credited with building the Severdale and Severlawn Apartment buildings at 419 and 427 E Lewis.<sup>46</sup> Three years later he built the Mount Vernon Apartments (demolished) one block south at 615 S. Market (1929).<sup>47</sup>

Other apartment building contractors in this neighborhood were O.P. Shearer and John Wenzel. Shearer's multi-family units included a one-story six-plex plus two-story flats combination at 540 Market (demolished)<sup>48</sup>, a similar 16-unit bungalow court at 611-613 S. Market (demolished), and a two-story apartment building which he named the "Shearer" a few blocks to the east at 630 S. Topeka Avenue (extant). John Wenzel constructed apartment houses at 325 S. Main (demolished), 514 S. Main (extant) and 519 S. Main (demolished) plus a complex of four apartment buildings and his office space at 421-433 S. Main/104-108 W. Lewis (demolished). [See Figure 3, page 18] Many

<sup>38</sup> *Wichita City Directory*, 1916.

<sup>39</sup> *Wichita Eagle*. Jan 13, 1952:5.

<sup>40</sup> U.S. Military Service Registration Card (Oliver Jackson Mourning). Sep 12, 1918. [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) Accessed Apr 2011

<sup>41</sup> *Wichita Directory*. 1917; 1918: 1924.

<sup>42</sup> *Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office* Vol. 288, No 1 – Tuesday, Nov 4, 1919. Electronic edition: <http://books.google.com>. Accessed Apr 2011.

<sup>43</sup> Brenda R. Spencer, "Fairmount Apartments" National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (2009), 4.

<sup>44</sup> *Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office* Vol. 288, No. 1 – Tuesday, Nov 4, 1919. <http://books.google.com>, accessed May 2011.

<sup>45</sup> Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1903, 1914, 1935.

<sup>46</sup> Connelley. *History of Kansas*. 1446.

<sup>47</sup> "Building Permit Applications". City of Wichita Metropolitan Area Planning Department, 455 N. Main Street, Wichita, KS.

<sup>48</sup> Note: 540 S. Market was subsequently addressed as 202-214 E. Dewey.

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other apartment buildings, built by other contractors, survive in Wichita in the Riverside, Midtown, Delano, College Hill East Front, and South Central neighborhoods, but few remain in downtown.

Oliver J. Mourning was successful businessman and a generous philanthropist in Wichita. He was a member of Sunflower Lodge No. 38, AF and AM and a charter member of the Wichita Rotary Club. Mourning was active in the building trade until he was forced to retire due to ill health in the early 1940s. In 1942 he and Mae moved to Albuquerque where they were members of First Christian Church of Albuquerque. Mourning returned to Wichita in 1948 following Mae's death. Oliver Jackson Mourning died in Wichita on January 11, 1952, survived by ten of his siblings and his daughter Leona Mourning Rogers. He is buried in Highland Cemetery, Wichita, Kansas.<sup>49</sup>

Mourning named the 1927 *Naomi* after his mother Naomi Steffy Mourning and the neighboring 1927 *Leona* after his daughter Leona Mourning Rogers. In 1924 he applied for a building permit for a "Bachelor's Apartment" at 630 North Topeka, which was in service by 1927. He named that building the *Mae* after his wife, Myrtle Mae Mourning.<sup>50</sup> The Mae Apartment Building is a contributing structure in the North Topeka Avenue Apartments Historic District (NRHP 2009). In addition to apartment buildings, Mourning is also recognized for construction of the Hotel McClellan (extant) and the Gill Mortuary Chapel (demolished).<sup>51</sup>

### **Summary**

The paired Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings are significant because they relate to the construction of apartment buildings across the United States, a trend that was driven nationally by improved financing possibilities to local contractor/developers such as Oliver S. Mourning. Apartment buildings were needed in Wichita to serve the growing population of the 1920s. Mourning's father and brothers were well-known in the construction industry in Wichita and he figured prominently among other contractor/owners who built such residential facilities.

The Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings represent two of only a few apartment buildings remaining in the south section of downtown Wichita, where once they were numerous. Many have been lost to time, development of the central business district, and highway expansion.<sup>52</sup> Of the few that remain, some are compromised. Oliver Mourning's Naomi and Leona Apartments retain a high degree of architectural and historic integrity. The exterior facades are intact, as are the basic plan configurations in both buildings. The Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings conform to the criteria for "Conventional Low-Rise Apartment Building" property type as noted in *Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas 1870-1957*.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Wichita Eagle*. Jan 13, 1953:5.

<sup>50</sup> Note: U.S. Census uses two different spellings in various years: "Mae" and "May". Mourning spelled it "Mae" on his WWI Draft Registration form.

<sup>51</sup> William E. Connelley. *A History of Kansas and Kansans, Vol III*. Chicago: Lewis. 1918:1445.

<sup>52</sup> "Building Permit Applications", City of Wichita Planning Department; Sanborn Maps 1914, 1935; *Wichita Eagle*; *Wichita Beacon*.

<sup>53</sup> Morgan & Hammond. *Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas 1870-1957*.

Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings  
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, Kansas  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov  
Accessed June-July, 2011

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** .34 acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	14	646670	4171450	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2				4			

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property is defined by the following legal description:  
Lots 97 & 99 Market St. Greiffenstein's 3<sup>rd</sup> Addition, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The proposed boundary includes the lots that are historically associated with the two apartment buildings.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Barbara R. Hammond

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 1, 2011

street & number 1427 N. Jeanette Ave telephone 316-263-4283

city or town Wichita state KS zip code 67203

e-mail barbhammond@sbcglobal.net

***Individual nominations for Leona and Naomi Apartments were combined and edited by:***

name/title Brenda R. Spencer

organization Spencer Preservation date February 15, 2013

street & number 10150 Onaga Road telephone 785-456-9857

Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings  
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, Kansas  
County and State

city or town Wamego state KS zip code 66547

e-mail spencer@wamego.net

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Maps:**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

---

**Photographs:**

---

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings  
City or Vicinity: Wichita  
County: Sedgwick  
State: Kansas  
Photographer #1: Barbara R. Hammond on July 20, 2011 (\*)  
Photographer #2: Brenda R. Spencer on January 11, 2013 (\*\*)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 Naomi (right) and Leona (left) Apartment Buildings, south and east (front) facades, looking NW (\*)
- 2 Naomi (left) and Leona (right) Apartment Buildings, north and east (front) facades, looking SW (\*\*)
- 3 Leona Apartment Building, West (rear) and south facades, looking NE (\*)
- 4 Naomi Apartment Building, North and west (rear) facades, looking SE (\*)
- 5 Naomi Apartment Building, Front (east) facade, looking W (\*\*)
- 6 Leona Apartment Building, Front (east) facade, looking W (\*)
- 7 Leona Apartment Building-Interior, looking E at front entry (\*\*)
- 8 Leona Apartment Building-Interior, looking W at front entry down central 1<sup>st</sup> floor corridor (\*\*)
- 9 Leona Apartment Building-Interior, living room with fireplace (Looking NE in 1<sup>st</sup> floor apartment-typical) (\*\*)
- 10 Leona Apartment Building-Interior, paneled bi-fold doors extant between living room and kitchen (original "Murphy" bed), Looking W in 1<sup>st</sup> floor apartment-typical (\*\*)
- 11 Leona Apartment Building-Interior, front (east) apartment on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, looking E toward balcony (\*\*)
- 12 Leona Apartment Building-Interior, skylight extant in 2<sup>nd</sup> floor corridor, Looking W down central corridor (\*\*)
- 13 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, looking E at front entry (\*)
- 14 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, looking W at front entry down central 1<sup>st</sup> floor corridor (\*\*)
- 15 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, looking W at rear entrance, in 1<sup>st</sup> floor corridor (\*\*)
- 16 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, typical apartment living room with fireplace, looking W in 2<sup>nd</sup> fl. apt (\*\*)
- 17 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, looking E in 2<sup>nd</sup> floor corridor with open stair to 1<sup>st</sup> floor and door to balcony at east end (\*\*)
- 18 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, door to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor balcony at E end of corridor (\*\*)
- 19 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, looking W in 2<sup>nd</sup> floor corridor toward rear of building (\*\*)
- 20 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, typical kitchen nook with arched opening from Living Room, looking NW in 2<sup>nd</sup> floor apartment (\*\*)

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21 Naomi Apartment Building-Interior, Fireplace in 2<sup>nd</sup> floor apartment (varying styles), looking S (\*\*)

**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Jim Foulston, c/o Foulston Construction Company email: jim@foulstonconstruction.com  
street & number 229 S. Ellis telephone 316-469-5246  
city or town Wichita state KS zip code 67211

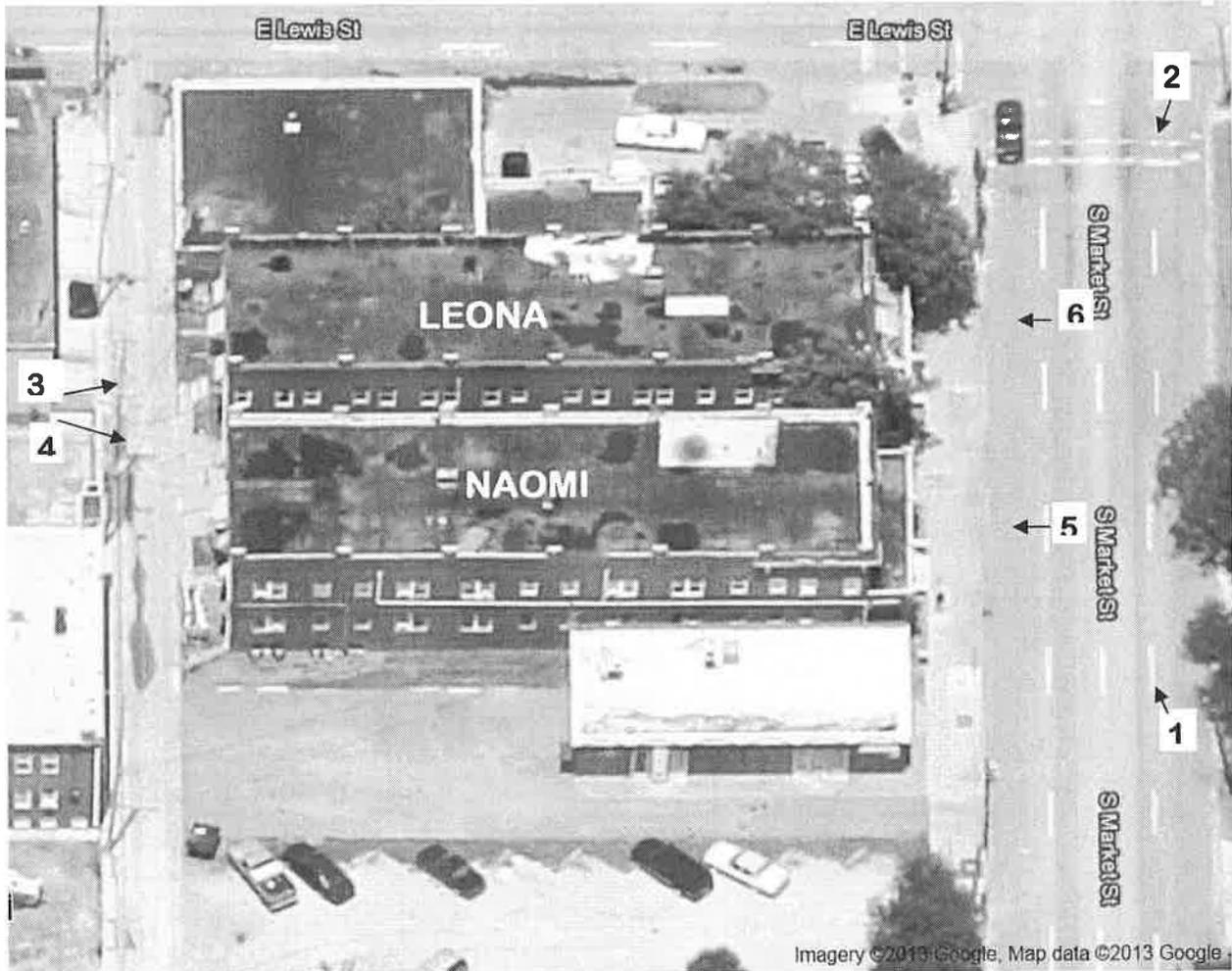
**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.)

Naomi and Leona Apartment Buildings  
 Name of Property

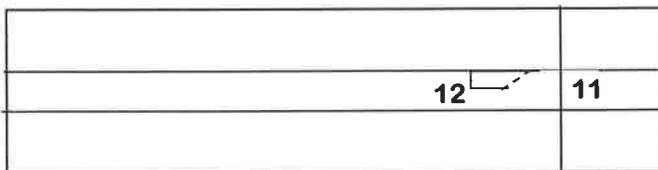
Sedgwick County, Kansas  
 County and State

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

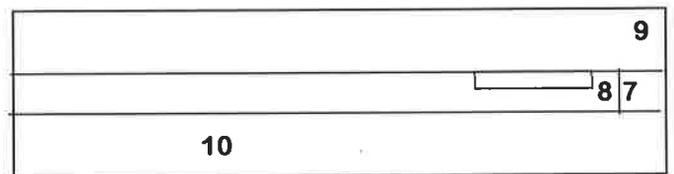
Figure 2 – Photo Key



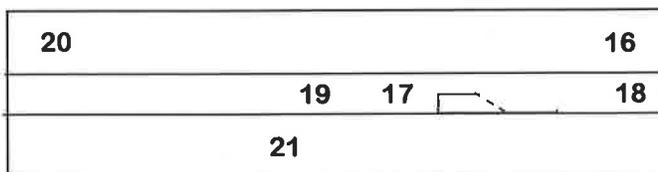
**SITE**



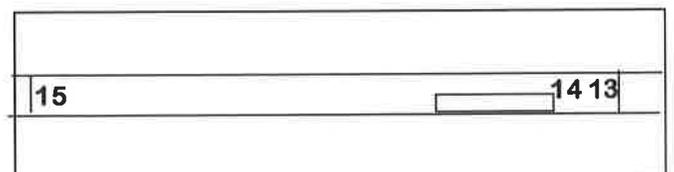
Leona 2nd Floor



Leona 1st Floor



Naomi 2nd Floor

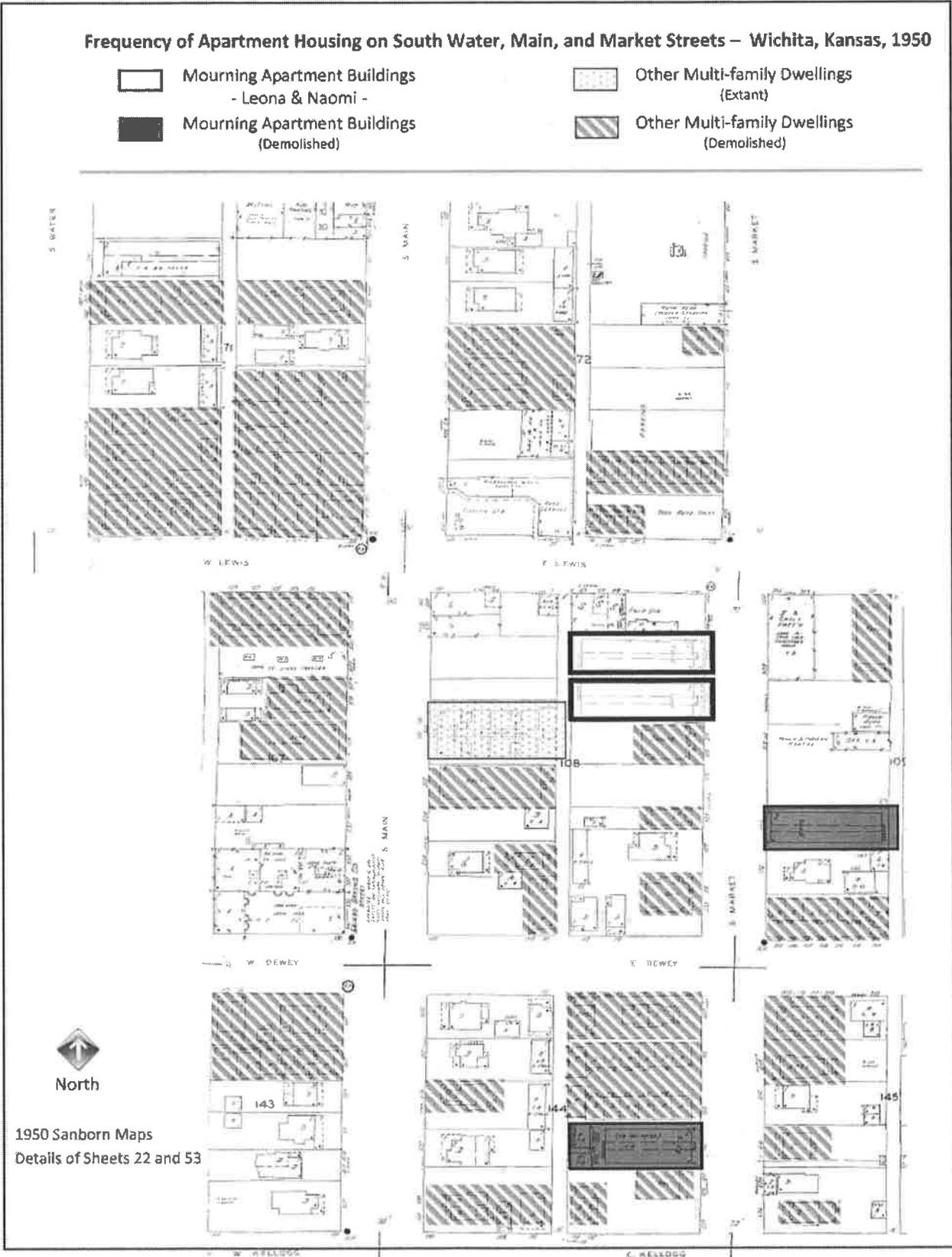


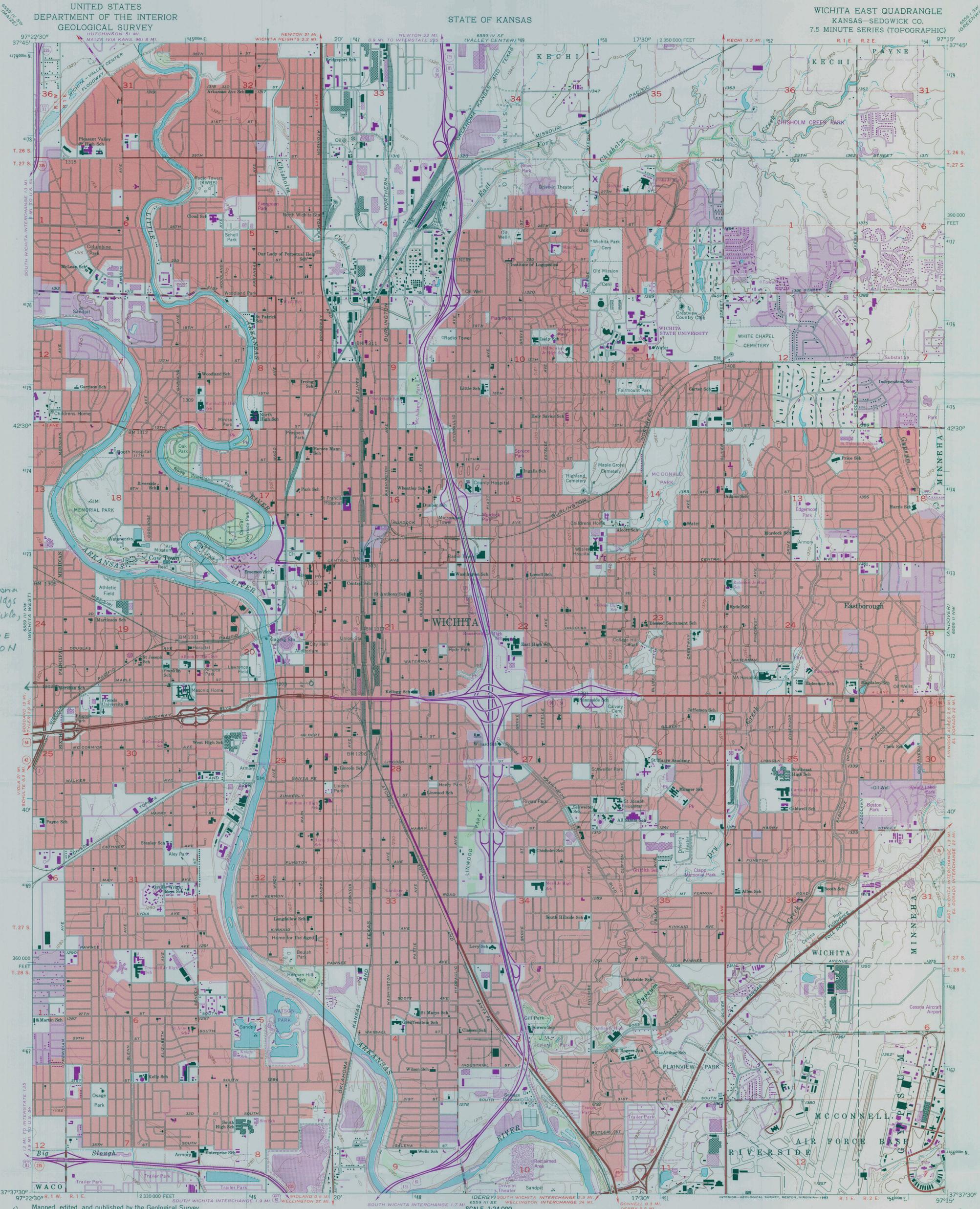
Naomi 1st Floor

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 Name of Property

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 County and State

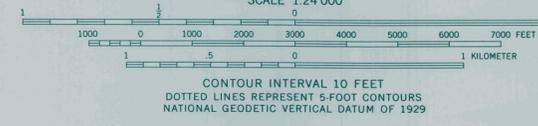
Figure 3: Apartment Buildings in Southern Portion of Downtown Wichita





Naomi + Leona  
Apartment Bldgs  
Wichita, Sedgwick Co.,  
Kansas  
14: 646670 E  
4171450 N

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
in cooperation with State of Kansas agencies  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1954. Topography by planetable surveys 1940-1941  
Revised 1961 in cooperation with the City of Wichita  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Kansas coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
move the projection lines 27 meters east as shown by  
dashed corner ticks  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of  
the National or State reservations shown on this map



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACTUARY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66044  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial  
photographs taken 1980 and other sources  
This information not field checked. Map edited 1982  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban area

WICHITA EAST, KANS.  
N 3737.5—W 9715.75  
1961  
PHOTOREVISED 1982  
DMA 6559 III NE—SERIES W878





No Parking







Wendy's



DEVELOPMENT  
APPLICATION  
308-4421



THIS DOOR TO REMAIN UNLOCKED  
DURING BUSINESS HOURS

5021

DEVELOPMENT  
APPLICATION  
FOR INFORMATION CALL  
268-4421



























