

MANOR HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY
MANOR, TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS



SURVEY REPORT

PRESERVATION CENTRAL, INC. FOR
TRAVIS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

August 2007

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PRESERVATION CENTRAL, INC.
Austin, Texas

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Travis County Historical Commission

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Enclosures:
Survey Report
Texas Historic Resources Survey Forms
Inventory of Properties
Survey Maps
35 mm Black-and-White Contact Sheets
Digital Photographs
Survey Database

Principal Investigator:
Terri Myers

Field Investigators:
Kristen Brown
A. Elizabeth Butman

Cover Photo:
Nagle House, 204 Smith Ln.
Photo by A. Elizabeth Butman, 2007

Report Authors:
Terri Myers
A. Elizabeth Butman

Data Production:
A. Elizabeth Butman

Cartography:
A. Elizabeth Butman

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
SURVEY AREA	2
METHODOLOGY	3
SURVEY METHODOLOGY	3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	4
HISTORIC CONTEXT	5
SURVEY RESULTS	12
DOMESTIC RESOURCES	12
PLAN TYPES	13
STYLISTIC INFLUENCES	16
COMMERCIAL RESOURCES	18
RECOMMENDATIONS	20
BIBLIOGRAPHY	22
APPENDIX A: PROPERTIES ELIGIBLE FOR LISTING IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES	
INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES	
CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES IN THE PROPOSED MANOR COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT	
APPENDIX B: TEXAS HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY FORMS, INTENSIVE-LEVEL SURVEY	
APPENDIX C: INVENTORY OF PROPERTIES, WINDSHIELD SURVEY	
APPENDIX D: SURVEY AREA MAP	

INTRODUCTION

In February, 2007, the Travis County Historical Commission retained the services of Preservation Central, Inc., a historic preservation consulting firm based in Austin, Texas, to conduct a comprehensive survey of cultural resources in Manor, Texas. The scope of the project was to survey a roughly 85-block area containing most of the original 1872 town plat and adjacent historic subdivisions to the north and east. The survey area is roughly bounded by Murray Ave. on the north, Bastrop St. on the west, State Hwy. 212 and Smith St. on the east, and Blake Manor Rd. on the south (Appendix D). This area encompasses the vast majority of properties built before the end of the historic period, defined for the purposes of this survey as 1960. The primary goal of the survey was to identify resources with a high preservation priority and conduct additional intensive-level documentation of those resources.

Manor historically served as a regional agricultural trading hub on the Houston and Texas Central Railway. Its development was characterized by an early boom in construction, followed by decline reflecting that of the area's cotton industry in the 1930s. These trends are evident in the town's extant historic fabric, which includes a number of good examples of Victorian-era houses and turn-of-the-century commercial buildings. Of the 182 cultural resources identified in the survey, 24 (13%) were identified as a high preservation priority, or exceptional examples of their type that retain a high degree of integrity. These resources were further documented with a Historic Resources Survey form developed by the Texas Historical Commission (Appendix B). Another 76 (42%) were classified as medium priority, and are good or representative examples of their type. The remaining 82 (45%) were assigned a low preservation priority due to non-historic alterations. Properties built after 1960 were not documented.

Results of the Manor Historic Resources Survey may be used to nominate individual resources and a historic district to the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Manor may additionally establish local landmarks and a historic district, governed by city ordinance and design review. This report details the survey area, field and research methodology, historic context for the town of Manor, survey results, and recommendations for preservation planning. Additional work products included with the report are an inventory of properties; historic resource survey forms for high priority resources; survey maps; contact sheets for black-and-white photography; and digital files of color photographs, the survey report, and survey database.

SURVEY AREA

Manor is located on U.S. Highway 290, twelve miles northeast of downtown Austin in eastern Travis County. Platted between Gilleland and Wilbarger creeks, the original townsite consists of an eight-by-nine block tract bisected by the Southern Pacific Railway line (Figure 1). Adjacent developments include the 1912 A.E. Lane Subdivision to the north and the 1961 Smith Subdivision to the east. More recent suburban growth has occurred primarily to the southeast and along U.S. 290 to the north, as a result of the town's proximity to the rapidly expanding city of Austin.

The Manor Historic Resources Survey encompassed most of the 1913 city limits, consisting of the original town plat, adjacent subdivisions, and contiguous farmsteads on the eastern periphery of town. The survey area is generally bounded by Murray Ave. on the north, Bastrop St. on the west, State Hwy. 212 and Smith Ln. on the east, and Blake Manor Rd. on the south (Appendix D). This area covers a roughly 85-block tract of land, selected due to its high concentration of historic-period resources and potential to contain a number of National Register-eligible properties. Outside the survey area, the consultants also documented the bridge across Gilleland Creek on Old Texas Highway 20.

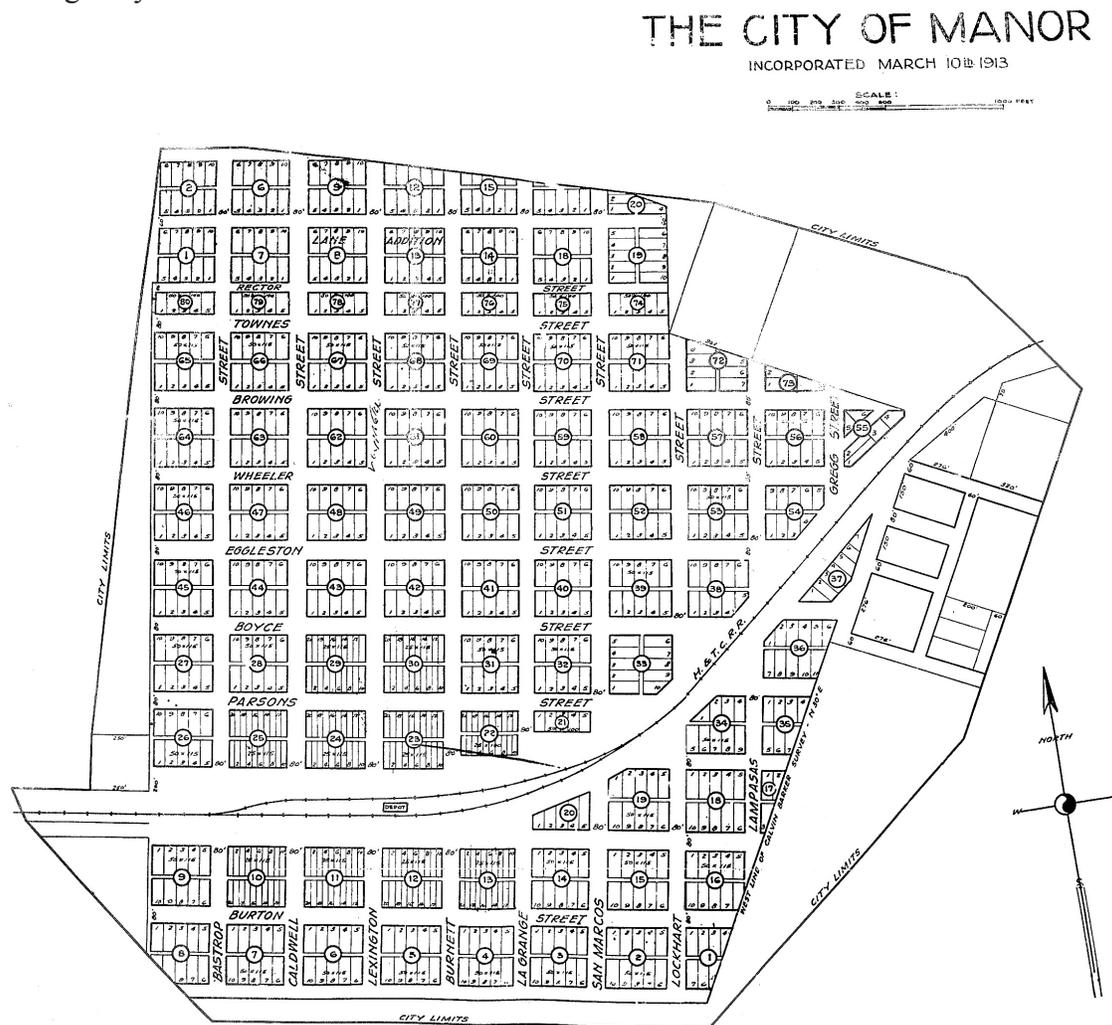


Figure 1. Plat map of the City of Manor, 1913. Travis County Plat Records, vol. V, p. 796.

METHODOLOGY

Survey Methodology

In February, 2007, the Travis County Historical Commission contracted with Austin-based historic preservation consulting firm Preservation Central, Inc., to conduct a comprehensive cultural resources survey of the town of Manor. The survey area boundaries were determined on the basis of a preliminary survey, conducted by architectural historians Kristen Brown and A. Elizabeth Butman of Preservation Central on January 9, 2007, and subsequently reviewed by principal investigator Terri Myers. Within the boundaries of the original town plat and adjacent historic subdivisions, the survey area was chosen to encompass contiguous blocks with high concentrations of historic resources. The scope of the project was approved by the Travis County Historical Commission on February 2, 2007.

Ms. Brown and Ms. Butman conducted a windshield survey of the project area over four days between February 27 and March 20, 2007. Working as a team, the consultants systematically canvassed the area on foot and denoted the salient features of each historic resource within their boundaries (Appendix C). Buildings and features constructed after ca. 1960 were not documented. Outbuildings constructed during the historic period, such as carriage houses or garages, were documented only if they contain dwelling units.

Current planning maps denoting lot and block numbers were obtained from the City of Manor. These maps were used in the field to denote the approximate location of all historic and non-historic properties in the survey area. Within sections covered by Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, the consultants determined where historic buildings are extant and where they have been demolished.

For every historic resource in the survey area, the consultants noted the address; lot and block number; approximate date of construction and any major alterations; property type; historic and current use; plan type and roof form; number of stories; exterior materials; architectural style or stylistic influence, if any; and condition. Additions or alterations to the original building were described where pertinent. Plan types and stylistic influences are consistent with the terminology established by McAlester (2000) and Longstreth (1987).

The surveyors then assigned each resource a preservation priority of high, medium, or low. A baseline priority of medium was assigned to all properties surveyed. If alterations or additions to the resource have compromised its integrity such that it no longer conveys its historic character, it was assigned a low priority. If resources dating to the historic period retain an exceptional degree of integrity, are especially illustrative examples of an architectural style or construction method, or have known historical significance, they were assigned a high priority. All resources were photographed using both 35mm black-and-white film and digital cameras. Where possible, the photographs were taken as oblique shots, showing the front and one side elevation.

Data obtained during the windshield survey was compiled into an inventory in a Microsoft Access database, and maps indicating the preservation priority of each resource were generated by Preservation Central staff. Following completion of data entry and mapping, Ms. Myers checked the preservation priorities assigned by the survey team. Ms. Myers and Ms. Butman also made a presentation of their survey methodology and preliminary results to the Planning and Zoning

Commission of the City of Manor on April 11, 2007. Members of the Travis County Historical Commission were present at the meeting.

The intensive-level survey was conducted over two days, from April 19 to 20, 2007. Ms. Brown and Ms. Butman revisited each of the 24 high-priority resources and recorded additional data on a Historic Resources Survey form prepared by the Texas Historical Commission (Appendix B). The extensive form includes detailed description of architectural features; denotation of outbuildings and other site features; architectural history; assessment of integrity and National Register eligibility; and explanation of historic significance.

To supplement photographs taken in the windshield survey, the consultants shot additional black-and-white and color digital images to ensure that at least two oblique photos exist for each high-priority resource. Where possible, the second oblique photograph shows the two elevations of the building not illustrated in the initial shot. Additional photographs of architectural details or noteworthy auxiliary buildings were taken as deemed pertinent.

All survey materials, including an inventory of properties, historic sites inventory forms, a survey map, black-and-white contact sheets, and digital photographs, are submitted along with this survey report. The survey, report, and all work products are consistent with directives provided by the Texas Historical Commission and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Identification and Evaluation*.

Research Methodology

Research efforts for the Manor Historic Resources survey endeavored to provide both a general context for the growth and development of the community, as well as establish the history of particular significant buildings and associated historical figures. To this end, the consultants gathered primary and secondary source material from libraries and repositories in Manor and Austin, Texas, between April 17 and June 6, 2007. Ms. Brown and Ms. Butman conducted deed research on individual high-priority properties at the Travis County Clerk's office. By identifying individuals associated with the historic properties, Ms. Butman was able to gather materials on significant figures from clippings files at the Austin History Center and Manor Public Library. She also obtained general sources related to the history of Manor from these repositories, the Texas Historical Commission Library, and the University of Texas library system.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The area around present Manor, Travis County, was entirely unpopulated before James Manor moved to the area from Webberville about 1850. Born in Tennessee, the son of Irish immigrants, Manor may have come to Texas with Sam Houston as early as 1832. He was most certainly in the Webberville area by 1835 or 1836. By 1839, he had taken up residence near early settler John Webber's log house at what became Webberville, before Travis County was organized (Noah Smithwick, *The Evolution of a State*, Austin, Texas: Steck Vaughn, 1968, 209, 224, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972). In 1841, Manor received two land grants from the Republic of Texas, one a headright of 640 acres and the other a military grant for 1280 acres. Both grants lay on Gilliland Creek and embrace the present city of Manor ("James Manor," typescript prepared by the Archives Division, Texas State Library, Austin, Texas, in Manor Family, Biography File).

By the early 1850s, Manor, his brothers, and other families had moved to the land grants. James was a 45-year-old farmer when he came to the area. He brought with him his wife Phebe and four daughters (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1850). Other early settlers included two Rany or Raney families and two Eppright families. His brothers remained in the Webberville area. All were farmers, and most of the men and women originally emigrated to Texas from Tennessee or Missouri (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1860). Other early families included the Barnharts, Rectors, Parsons, Townes, Lees, Wilburns, and Melones. Their farms were known as plantations, and field work was done by slaves until emancipation in 1865 (Severin [1918] 1994, 774).

Although these settlers did not plat or congregate around a townsite, they established several institutions around which a farming settlement formed. Among the first were churches, schools, a post office, and a cemetery. A Methodist Church congregation organized in 1854, and members met in a private boy's school until 1857 when they moved temporarily to another private school called Parson's Seminary (Mrs. Ernest Acker, "Manor: Community Heritage," report to the Book Club, 10 Mar. 1964, 2, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972).¹ In 1861, the congregation erected a church building adjacent to the cemetery, on land John Manor had donated for such purposes. Manor described the land as being "on Wilbarger's Creek," northeast of the eventual townsite (Evelyn S. Donnell, "Survey of Manor, Texas Cemetery," 1993, 44, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972). This community church, known as Union Church, served several protestant congregations. Bethlehem Baptist Church was founded in a log house in 1857, about three miles southeast of the present town of Manor (Acker 1963, 3-4, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972).

The area's first school was a boy's school established by 1854. Records vary as to its years of operation, but for at least some time in the 1850s, the Union Church held services in the school building before moving to Parson's Seminary. The boy's school continued in operation until 1861 when Union Church built a new sanctuary on the site adjacent to the cemetery (Acker 1963, 4, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972). One of the more noteworthy institutions in the entire region was the Parson's Female Seminary, which opened in 1858 (Katherine Hart, "Manor's Name is Now 100," *Austin American-Statesman* 12 Aug. 1972, in Manor, Texas, Subject

1 Mary Starr Barkley states that the area's first school opened about 1858 (Barkley 1970, 49)

Marker Application file 1972).² Although it was called a “female seminary” boys were admitted as well (Acker 1963, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972). Built on land given by Manor resident Isaac Wilbahn in 1857 and supported by the community’s leading citizens, including James Manor, it became one of the most renowned schools in 19th-century Texas. R.W. Kavanaugh was an early teacher, remembered for setting the challenging curriculum that gave the school its prestige. The school remained open until 1882, nearly two decades. Later the Manor Junior High School was built at this site (Barkley 1970, 50).

Although the early church buildings do not survive, the cemetery continues in use. It is one of the most enduring cultural resources in Manor, and many of the founding families were buried there. The earliest known grave is that of E.D. Townes, who died in 1861. Several others date to the to the 1860s. James Manor, for whom the town is named, was buried in the cemetery in 1881.

In 1859, a post office called Grassdale opened with James Manor as postmaster . The post office was short-lived, however, closing in 1860. Another post office, named Manor, opened in 1871 (Smyrl 2007). The fact that it took more than a decade to reestablish the post office is indicative of Manor’s small size and stature during the 1850s and 1860s. Residents thought to have lived in the Manor vicinity in 1860 were counted along with residents of Webberville in the census that year, possibly because Manor remained an unorganized community.

The Civil War posed hardships for the farm families, as it did throughout the south. Some of the men served in the war, most for the Confederacy. With the emancipation of their slaves, many of the area’s cotton plantations suffered economic loss and labor shortages. Between 1864 and 1866, Travis County as a whole lost 49 percent of its property tax receipts. About two-thirds of the loss was in slaves, with the remainder in declining livestock and farm values (Smyrl 2007). Many freed slaves remained in the Manor area after the war, as demonstrated by the many black families who took their masters’ names, such as the Manors. Other black families gravitated to the area from elsewhere in Texas and throughout the south. Most worked as farm laborers or servants for wages (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1870). Subject to segregation, they would go on to build their own churches and schools and create a separate community within the larger Manor area.

The economy slowly recovered in the postwar era, and by 1870, the rural settlement of Manor claimed three stores and a saloon. One of the stores was owned by Mr. Wheeler and thus the community became known for a while as “Wheeler’s Store” (Acker 1963, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972). Notably, residents of the Manor area were not identified as such in the 1870 census, merely as living in Travis County Justice Precinct No. 2. This designation indicates that the county did not yet recognize the community as a defined entity, but rather a collection of farms united by their general location in the county.

Regardless, many of the families had lived in the area for 20 years or more, lending a sense of stability to the rural community. Several members of the Eppright family remained in the community. Other early families were those of R.R. Rector from Alabama, L.S. Rector from Tennessee, William Rector, Louis Manor from Tennessee, and George Melone from North Carolina, among others. Melone, Manor, and David Eppright listed their occupations as farmers, but other occupations were also represented in the census record. R.R. Rector was a merchant and L.S. and William Rector operated grist and saw mills. Another member of the L.S. Rector

2 Barkley states that it opened December 14, 1863.

household, William Hall, worked as a wagon maker (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1870). These were among the first non-agricultural occupations in the Manor area, other than teacher and minister. The landscape must have appeared as a large patchwork of fields dotted with frame houses and outbuildings and having no central focus. All that would change when the railroad passed through the community the next year.

In 1871, James Manor donated the right-of-way for the Houston & Texas Central (H & TC) Railway, and the grateful citizens of the area platted and named the town after him the following year (Mike Cox, "Manor Plaque Is Dedicated," *Austin American-Statesman* 14 Aug. 1972, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972). The original townsite was roughly square and contained 80 blocks divided into lots. The east-west streets were named after Manor's founding fathers and the north-south streets named after counties and towns in central Texas. Railroad track curved through the town from northeast to southwest. Blocks fronting the railroad depot and boxcar siding contained narrow lots to accommodate more businesses (Travis County Plat Records, V:796). The railroad linked Manor with the town of Elgin in Bastrop County and the state capital of Austin in central Travis County.

New residents, including farmers, merchants, professionals, and skilled craftsmen, were drawn to the nascent railroad community by the assurance of easy rail access to outside markets in the 1870s (Barkley 1970, 91). With the railroad, Manor promised to become the business hub for surrounding farmers sending their crops to market and buying supplies and new equipment. The influx of new citizens initiated an era of development heretofore unknown in the Manor community. Within a decade of the railroad's arrival, Manor boasted a public school, three churches, six general stores, and 125 inhabitants (Smyrl 2007).

While most early residents hailed from other states, particularly from the upper South, foreign immigration also came to the region in the 1870s and 1880s. Reportedly, a small industry arose supplying foreign workers to replace freed slaves in the post-Civil War era. Immigrants signed contracts to work for their passage to America. Among the first to arrive in the Manor area were Swedes who came to work on Mrs. Parson's plantation at "Parsons Seminary," near present Manor, in 1867. The Swedes were dedicated to owning their own homes and farms, however, and usually worked for others only long enough to pay their debt and buy a pair of oxen and a plow. Swedish immigrants founded other communities in the area, including Decker, New Sweden, Manda, Kimbro, and Lund, all north of Manor (Severin [1918] 1994, 774).

Although most of the newcomers were Swedes and Germans, other nations were represented in the immigrant population. The 1880 census shows that Mexican natives also made their homes in Manor. In addition, a number of black families resided in the village, notably those with the surname Manor (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1880).

While farming persisted as the region's primary occupation, the town now claimed a lawyer/judge, three merchants, three school teachers, one music teacher, two physicians, a bookkeeper, four clerks, and an "agent and operator." Tradesmen included a blacksmith, a carpenter, a butcher, a seamstress, a miller, and a man who bought bones. A number of people were farmers living in the town, while others, including a handful of women, were farm laborers. Several women worked as laundresses and servants. Black residents typically performed more menial chores, often as farm laborers or servants (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1880).

Among the more prominent citizens of the town were Judge Thompson Rector (lawyer), Thomas Bittle (school teacher), Dr. R. Gregg and Dr. Jacob Fields (physicians), John Wheeler, Alfred Lewis, and John Bitting (merchants). Black families who lived in the town included Priscilla Manor (laundress), Wayne Manor (farmer), David Sauls (farm worker), and Francis Carroll (housekeeper). While the children of white families in Manor typically attended school, the 1880 census shows that children in black families often worked on farms or simply stayed home.

Little is known about these families, but Captain J.W. Bitting is typical of the entrepreneurs who settled there after the Houston & Texas Central Railroad came to Manor. He took the opportunity to build a store near the newly constructed railroad depot and made his living as a merchant, as did a number of other ambitious men in the last quarter of the 19th century. Immigrants, too, hoped to prosper in business. Young German immigrant William Luedecke was listed as a blacksmith in the 1880 census, but this is somewhat misleading. In 1879, at the age of 22, Luedecke started his own business making hardware and farm implements and selling barbed wire for fencing. He branched out to build wagons and coffins that he sold in his store. Eventually, he moved into banking and later farmed at the Pannell Dairy Farm (Barkley 1970, 49).

Blackland prairie farms spread out around the town in the last decades of the 19th century. They bore cotton, cottonseed, and grains, all shipped to market from Manor's railroad station (Smyrl 2007). Crop successes drew more farmers, whose presence attracted more merchants, and by the 1890s, Manor claimed to be the second largest city in Travis County (Barkley 1970, 49). Its population had reportedly risen to about 500 residents by 1892 (Smyrl 2007).

By the turn of the 20th century, Manor was a bustling agricultural hub with a wide variety of occupations represented in the 1900 census record. In an article written in 1899, Manor was said to have a population of about 1,000 and was considered a thriving and prosperous community.³ Its farms produced large crops of corn, cotton, sorghum, grasses, fruits, and vegetables, and thousands of bales of cotton were shipped to market each year (Acker 1963, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972).

Farm work accounted for the majority of jobs, with 61 farmers, 99 farm laborers, and four farm blacksmiths counted. Many sales, clerical, and general mercantile positions were listed, as well as professional occupations. Skilled labor included blacksmiths, carpenters, dressmakers, and milliners. The town had a banker, 12 merchants, a hardware merchant, 16 salesmen and one saleslady, and ten clerks. It supported a butcher and a confectioner. Professionals included ten teachers, two music teachers, four physicians, four druggists, a dentist, an editor, and three preachers.

Several occupations carried racial distinctions; two of the three preachers were listed as black, one of whom was married to the black teacher. One of three barbers was counted as black, and the town had one white and one black grocer. The only nurse was white, but the midwife was black. Most black adults in the area were farm laborers, day laborers, cooks, or servants. Black women were much more likely to work outside the home than their white counterparts, but most held menial jobs such as washer woman, housekeeper, or servant (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1900). A Texas Historical Marker commemorates the site of the Clayton Vocational Institute for

3 This number probably included nearby farm families.

the city's black students.⁴ The institute was dedicated to providing students both an education and a skill, and in the early 20th century it drew black students from all over the region.

Manor's citizens at the turn of the century included both immigrants and Americans, most of whom were native Texans. The census record shows that many of the Texas-born residents had parents born in the upper south, especially North Carolina, Tennessee, and Missouri. They represent the second-generation of migrants from the post-Civil War South. Of the Southern-born males, Tennessee contributed the greatest number of transplants, followed by Alabama. A number of residents hailed from foreign countries, with the Swedes heading the list, followed by Mexico as a close second. Other western European countries contributed to the mix, including Germany, Ireland, Austria, and England. Surprisingly, Manor had three families of Syrians and one from Arabia in 1900 (U.S. Bureau of the Census).

John Francis Nagle was typical of Manor's citizenry in 1900. He was a second-generation American whose parents emigrated from Ireland, landing first in Virginia where John was born about 1860. About 1891, the 40-year old general merchant married his Iowa-born wife, Emma. The couple must have moved to Texas by 1892 because their 8-year-old son, Marion, was born in Texas, as were their other two children, 4-year old Ruth and baby Edgar. He was a full-time merchant who owned his house free and clear. His house was on the edge of town, outside the city plat, and he probably owned farmland, as well. His parents, Michael Nagle, 67, and wife Ellen, 69, lived in Manor but owned their own farm. It is not known whether the son or parents moved to Texas first (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1900). Michael and Ellen Nagle died in 1906 and 1908, respectively. Their son, John, and his wife Emma died in 1943 and 1940, respectively. All were buried in the Manor Cemetery along with two Nagles who must have been John and Emma's children born after the turn of the century (Donnell 1993, 12, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972).

During this period of relative prosperity, a number of brick mercantile buildings were built along the downtown railroad siding and substantial Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, and Classical Revival houses – some of which survive to the present – appeared along the town's gridlike streets. In the summer of 1907, the Farmers National Bank occupied a new building. It received deposits of about \$230,000 in the fall when the crops were harvested (Barkley 1970, 50). Of the 182 surviving historic properties in the city of Manor, 29 appear to have been built between 1898 and 1909. Clearly it was an era of industry and optimism. One of the grand houses from this period is the two-story Bloor House on Lexington St., a major thoroughfare into town.

Central Texas historian Mary Starr Barkley surmised that Manor entered its heyday about 1910. Some 600 residents lived in town and construction continued apace. Growth spurred development and in 1912, A. E. Lane surveyed and platted an addition to the city. The trapezoidal shaped A. E. Lane Addition adjoined the city on the north and contained 20 residential blocks (Travis County Plat Maps, 2:223). Of 182 historic properties identified in the town, 26 appear to have been built between 1910 and 1915.

⁴ The marker indicates that the school, led by Rev. Joseph E. Clayton, was built in 1903 and was Manor's first school for black children, but a black teacher is listed in the 1900 census records. Other records confirm that school was taught in a homelike setting prior to Clayton's arrival.

First- and second-generation immigrants contributed to Manor's ethnic mix. Enough Swedish families lived Manor by 1918 that a book about their settlement in Texas noted that the little railroad town outside Austin was "mostly Swedish with a Swedish Lutheran Church and several hundred Swedes living in Manor or the surrounding farms." Although most Swedish residents farmed for a living, others established businesses in the town. Among the Swedish businesses were Sellstrom's lumber company, Oscar Anderson's variety store, the Gustafson Brothers hardware store, Wesley Swenson's variety store, and Albert Anderson's grocery store (Severin [1918] 1994: 774).

Severin's analysis that Manor was primarily a Swedish community is misleading, as there were indeed many Swedish families but about the same number of Mexican-born men and women living in Manor at that time (1920). Many fled the political unrest of the Mexican Revolution and others merely looked for a better life. They served a number of skilled trades, especially in livestock businesses but also worked at such jobs as farm laborers and cooks (U.S. Bureau of the Census).

As the town grew, Manor's citizens began seeking civic improvements. At the top of the wish list were an oil mill, an ice plant, and municipal water and light plants. To further their goals, the city sought incorporation which was granted in 1913 (Acker 1963, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972; Travis County Deed Records, V:796).

Some improvements followed quickly after incorporation but others, such as the municipal water system would wait for another two decades. By 1914, Manor had electric street lights, improved roads, and an increase in population to about 900 residents (Barkley 1970, 50; Smyrl 2007). The Clayton Vocational Institute had a population 240 students, many of whom lived on farms miles from the school. The facility contained an educational building, a cannery/vocational building, and a dormitory/millinery building (Bearden 1983, 1). A new Citizens Guaranty State Bank building was erected, and the events were reported in a local paper, the *Manor Enterprise* (Barkley 1970, 50). On summer evenings, the town's baseball team played rivals in nearby towns like Lund, Kimbro, Hutto, and Elgin (Barkley 1970, 96). By all accounts, Manor was indeed enjoying its heyday.

Despite the town's commercial development, agriculture remained Manor's lifeblood. It was cotton country; the "rich, black, and waxy" farm land sold for about \$110 an acre in 1910 and produced one-half bale of cotton to the acre. The H & TC Railroad shipped between 11,000 and 18,000 bales of cotton per year from the Manor depot. Corn was another major crop yielding about 35 bushels of corn to an acre. Stockraising began to make inroads into the agricultural economy, as well. Growth in agriculture and construction influenced the built environment, and by 1910, the town supported three gins, 14 cotton seed houses, and a lumber yard (Barkley 1970, 50; Acker 1963, 3, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972).

Development decreased in the 1920s. Only 10 surviving historic buildings appear to date to this 10-year period, compared with 29 resources from the previous five years. The reduction may be attributed to a variety of factors including the agricultural crisis of 1920-21 when postwar commodity surpluses prompted a sharp decline in crop prices. Central Texas suffered a series of droughts, floods, and boll weevil infestations in the mid-1920s that stymied agriculture and its associated businesses. In Manor, the Citizens Guaranty State Bank failed in 1923. These plagues were followed by the onset of the Great Depression which led to the community's decline. The

Farmers State Bank of Manor closed its doors during this time. As many as two-thirds of Travis County farmers were tenants or sharecroppers and during the Depression many left the farms to find work elsewhere. Manor's population in the late 1920s was estimated at 1,000 but by the early 1930s, it had dropped to 654 residents (Smyrl 2007).

The economy notwithstanding, Manor remained the commercial hub and shipping point for an extended farming community in northeastern Travis County during the 1930s. Following major crop failures, they turned to livestock and dairy products (Smyrl 2007). Manor's extant historic resources document the city's downturn. A total of only 12 historic resources date from about 1930 to 1935, a slight increase from the 1920s. Among the most noteworthy building campaign of the 1930s was the town's water tower. The Federal Public Works Administration (P.W.A.) financed the city's water works consisting of a well, a water tower, and several miles of mains in 1935 (Acker 1963, 4, in Manor, Texas, Subject Marker Application file 1972).

On the eve of World War II, Manor's economy appears to have improved somewhat. Six extant resources date to about 1940, possibly reflecting a break in the Depression. During the war, little or no domestic construction took place as both labor and materials were consigned for the war effort throughout the county. The end of the war had a two-fold effect on development in Manor. Its proximity to Austin led to a drain on the local businesses as residents traveled the distance in newly accessible automobiles. Many merchants moved from town, and frame buildings were destroyed, leaving the city something of a ghost town. At the same time, Manor became a suburb of Austin, and a booming postwar economy led to renewed residential construction (Bearden 1983). Nine buildings were constructed between 1945 and 1947 and another 28 appeared by 1950. By about 1955, Manor's population had risen to a little more than 800 residents, compared with 654 in the 1930s. New construction increased accordingly, with another 45 buildings constructed in the mid-1950s. Builders added 14 more buildings by 1960, the end of the historic period.

One of the major building projects in the city during the 1960s had its basis in segregation. Like other school districts in the south, Manor had separate schools for white and "colored" students. In 1961, the district built a new school for black children and in 1964 contemplated building a new white high school facility. The project's approval rested on whether the school district would be forced to integrate ("Manor," *Austin American-Statesman* 19 Sept. 1964, in Manor, Texas, Cities and Towns File, Austin History Center). The schools were integrated in the late 1960s.

By 1988, the city's population finally surpassed its previous high point of 1,000 in the 1920s with a showing of 1,233 residents and sixty-two businesses. The population dipped to 1,041 in 1990 but increased again to 1,204 by 2,000 (Smyrl 2007). The town's projected growth to 2005 was 1,877 but the Chamber of Commerce claims 6,000. Manor's proximity to the growing city of Austin means that it will likely share in that city's population boom in the future.

SURVEY RESULTS

The Manor Historic Resources survey encompassed a roughly 85-block area containing most of the original town plat and adjacent historic subdivisions to the north and east. Within this area, Preservation Central documented a total of 182 historic resources. High preservation priority was assigned to 24, or 13% of the resources documented. These represent exceptional examples of a significant architectural style or construction method, or resources known to have particular historical importance. Many resources classified as high priority are individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for their architectural or historical significance. All high-priority resources would be considered contributing features of any National Register historic districts defined within the survey area.

Medium preservation priority was assigned to an additional 76 resources, or 42% of the resources surveyed. These are good or typical examples of an architectural type or style that have suffered relatively few exterior alterations. They would be considered contributing features of any National Register historic districts created within the survey area. The remaining 82 historic resources, or 45% of the total surveyed, were assigned a low preservation priority. These resources are considered to lack integrity: they have been so considerably altered that they no longer convey a sense of their historic character. Resources constructed after the historic period (ca. 1965-present) were not surveyed. Low priority and non-historic resources would be considered noncontributing features of any National Register historic districts within the survey area.

Surveys document four categories of built resources: buildings, structures, sites, and objects. In the Manor Historic Resources Survey, the majority of resources identified were buildings, with 178 documented. Created principally to shelter human activity, buildings include houses, commercial buildings, and churches. Two structures – a water tower and a bridge on Old Texas Hwy. 20 – and two sites – a park and cemetery – were also noted. The survey did not document any objects, a category that includes small-scale elements such as sculpture, monuments, or statuary.

In terms of use, the vast majority of resources in the survey area are domestic in nature, with 157, or 86% of all resources, falling into this category. The survey area also includes the historic commercial core of the town, with 10 buildings, or 5% of the total surveyed, categorized as commercial resources. The remaining resources in the survey area are primarily institutional or civic features, significant to the community despite their relatively small number. These include the post office and 8 religious buildings, such as churches and parsonages. Features related to transportation, infrastructure, and recreation were also documented.

Domestic Resources

Residential construction in Manor reflected significant trends in the local economy. During the late-19th and early-20th century, development in the town boomed as a result of successful cotton trade, and grandiose Victorian-era homes were built on major thoroughfares such as Lexington Ave. Steady residential construction continued up until the late-1920s, when the boll weevil devastated area crops. Following a hiatus, numerous modest houses were constructed in the post-World War II era, reflecting nationwide building trends. The following discussion provides a roughly chronological outline of the types of houses documented in the Manor Historic Resources Survey, organized by plan types and stylistic influences.

Plan Types

The two-room or hall-parlor house was a type of folk housing dominant across the Southern United States during the second half of the 19th century and persisting into the early 20th century, with homes in the survey area dating from ca. 1900-1910. The form's name is derived from its linear plan, two rooms wide and one room deep. Typically, the two rooms are of unequal size, with the larger room originally serving as the public space for gatherings and meals, and the smaller room reserved for sleeping quarters. The roof is usually side-gabled. If a chimney is present, it is located centrally or at one or both gable ends. The primary entry door may be slightly asymmetrical, entering into the larger public room. Variations include prominent front porches and rear gabled-roof or shed-roof extensions that provided additional space. A common subtype is the Cumberland house, with two front doors each entering a separate room. Most have weatherboard or a replacement siding. Surviving examples are rare, and only two (2) hall-parlor houses were identified in the survey area, including the house at 306 E. Eggleston St. (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Hall-parlor house, 306 E. Eggleston St.

The center passage is a vernacular plan type common during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Examples in the survey area date from ca. 1900-1920. Houses of this type follow a linear rectangular plan consisting of a central hall between two flanking rooms, resulting in a symmetrical front facade. Few examples are represented in the Manor Historic Resources Survey, with six (6) center passage houses documented. Most have side-gabled roofs, though a cross-gabled roof is present in a single 1 ½-story example. Frame construction with weatherboard or a replacement siding is typical.



Figure 3. Center passage house, 810 N. Burnet St.

Houses of this type can exhibit a broad range of stylistic influences and ornamentation, with homes in the survey area possessing modest Classical Revival or Folk Victorian embellishments. Examples include the house at 810 N. Burnet St. (Figure 3).

Irregular plan types prevalent around the turn of the century account for a significant number of dwellings in the survey area. In contrast with the simplicity and symmetry of center-passage facades, irregular house types such as the L-plan and modified L-plan responded to the Victorian-era desire for picturesque, complex forms. Irregular-plan houses in the survey area, constructed between ca. 1900 and 1920, include fifteen (15) L-plan and seven (7) modified L-plan houses. The L-plan house is derived by adding an offset front-facing gable to the basic side-gabled center passage house type, forming an ell. A shed-roofed porch often extends across one or both sides of the ell. L-plan houses are usually one or 1 ½ stories in height, though only one-story dwellings

are present in the survey area. Most are clad in weatherboard or a replacement siding and feature Folk Victorian detailing. An excellent example is the former Christian Church parsonage at 205 E. Eggleston St. (Figure 4).

The modified L-plan house represents a turn-of-the-century variation on the L-plan form. Houses of this type consist of an enlarged central section, covered by a steeply pitched pyramidal or hipped roof, with lower intersecting gables. Even more than the L-plan, the modified L-plan house can vary in level of grandeur, ranging from a simple one-story example to an elaborate two or 2 ½-story mansion. More complex examples, typically associated with the Queen Anne style, can have features such as towers, bay windows, prominent dormers, decorative shingles, and spindlework detailing. All modified L-plan houses in the survey area have weatherboard or a replacement siding. Examples range from the impressive Nagle House at 204 Smith Ln. (Figure 5) to more modest, Folk Victorian dwellings, such as the Chamberlin-Eppright House in the 100 block of E. Wheeler St. (Figure 6).

Common during a brief period between 1910 and 1920, a transitional house form, referred to as the pyramidal cottage or box, adapted burgeoning interest in Classical Revival forms to the basic bungalow plan. Ten (10) examples are found in the survey area. Like the bungalow, this house type usually contains four unequally sized rooms that directly connect to each other without hallways. Its square or nearly square plan gives the house a distinctly boxy appearance. Most have pyramidal or hipped roofs, frequently accented by a central, hipped-roof dormer on the front facade, and are usually clad in weatherboard siding. Full- or partial-width integral front porches with Doric or box columns are common. Most houses of this type are one to 1 ½ stories in height. Pyramidal cottages in the survey area include the house at 209 N. Lexington St. (Figure 7).



Figure 4. Christian Church parsonage, 205 E. Eggleston St.

Figure 5. Nagle House, 204 Smith Ln.

Figure 6. Chamberlin-Eppright House, 100 blk. E. Wheeler St.

A specific, two-story form is the foursquare, characterized by its symmetrical, square plan. Two (2) examples of foursquare houses are found in the survey area, including the Gregg House at 401 N. Lexington St. (Figure 8).

The bungalow is not as common in Manor as in other communities throughout the nation, accounting for only twelve (12) dwellings. An ubiquitous house form from the early 20th century, bungalows are usually one-story homes with moderately pitched roofs, broad overhanging eaves, and prominent porches. The plan type is closely associated with the Craftsman style, with its exposed rafter tails, decorative eave brackets, and battered porch columns and piers. Most bungalows have wood or a replacement siding. Typical plans have two rows of side-by-side rooms, staggered front to back to provide space for a substantial porch. Their interiors reflect changing technology and a new informality of living, incorporating small kitchens into the home and combining living and dining areas. The bungalow can be subcategorized based on roof form. Front- and cross-gabled examples predominated during the 1910s and 1920s, particularly in the South and Southwestern United States. Side-gabled bungalows became more common in the late 1920s and 1930s. Hipped roofs, frequently with gable vents at the ridgeline, were also occasionally applied to the bungalow type. The front-gabled form accounts for over half the bungalows in the survey area, followed in prevalence by cross-gabled roofs. Examples include the houses at 105-107 Blake Manor Rd. (Figure 9).

Massed and linear-plan houses accounted for the bulk of residential construction from the 1930s through the end of the historic period.

In the survey area, 101 dwellings fall into this category. Following the Great Depression and World War II, new housing construction soared as a result of years of pent-up demand, newfound economic prosperity, and legislation that favored new construction. Though most of this residential development took place on the peripheries of larger cities, numerous houses were built as infill in older neighborhoods. Most houses built during these nationwide building booms magnified the



Figure 7. Pyramidal cottage, 209 N. Lexington St.

Figure 8. Gregg House, 401 N. Lexington St.

Figure 9. Front-gabled bungalows,
105-107 Blake Manor Rd.

architectural trends evident in later bungalows; their exteriors were simple in both form and style, while the interiors retained an overall sense of openness. A variety of hipped and gabled roof forms exist, depending on the plan shape and stylistic influences, with side-gabled houses accounting for over half of this plan type in the survey area. Houses built during this period are almost exclusively one story. The prevalence of wood siding diminished as asbestos and brick became more common cladding materials. An example in the survey is the house at 704 John F. Nagle St. (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Massed-plan house, 704 John F. Nagle St.

Stylistic Influences

Houses documented in the Manor Historic Resources Survey display an array of styles that reflect changes in aesthetic preferences throughout the city's development. Styles evident in the survey area range from 19th-century Queen Anne and Folk Victorian designs to Craftsman and Prairie School influences during the early decades of the 20th century. Elements of Classical Revival design are present during a broad range of years. Towards the end of the historic period, Minimal Traditional and Ranch-style houses were built as infill in established neighborhoods following World War II.

The Queen Anne style, and a simpler, more restrained variation known as Folk Victorian, adorn fifteen (15) late-19th and early-20th century dwellings in the survey area. Queen Anne houses are marked by devices to avoid the appearance of smooth, planar walls, including asymmetrical massing, partial-width, full-width, or wrap-around porches, projecting bay windows and towers, and a variety of exterior finishes and textures. Subtypes can be categorized by decorative elements, from the elaborate spindlework common in Eastlake houses to the more austere treatment of later Free Classic homes, which typically feature Tuscan columns as porch supports and restrained detailing. The best representation in Manor of a Queen Anne house with spindlework detailing is the Nagle House at 204 Smith Ln. (Figure 5). The Bloor House is an architecturally unique dwelling that melds elements of the Queen Anne style with Colonial Revival influences (Figure 11).

The Folk Victorian style is typically applied to folk house forms, in the South commonly the L-plan. Manor also has modified L-plan and center-passage houses with modest Victorian detailing. Examples in the survey area have wood or a replacement siding, and are one or 1 ½ stories in height. A good example of a Folk Victorian modified L-plan house can be found at 601 N. Lexington St. (Figure 12).



Figure 11. Bloor House, 709 N. Lexington St.

After the turn of the century, changing aesthetic tastes became evident in the diminished appeal of picturesque Victorian forms. A renewed interest in Classical architecture, attributed to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, led to the proliferation of the Classical Revival style. High-style examples generally have side-gabled or hipped roofs, prominent front porches with full-height Doric or Tuscan columns, and overall symmetry in fenestration patterns with a centered front entry. The style was prevalent over a long period of time, and characteristic elements were applied in varying degrees to a wide range of plan types. The use of classically inspired detailing, such as pedimented window surrounds or round porch columns, on otherwise irregular, Victorian-era house forms marked the beginning of this trend. During the 1910s, Classical Revival houses commonly took the form of foursquare or pyramidal cottages, such as the house at 209 N. Lexington St. (Figure 7) or at 202 Smith Ln. (Figure 13).

Likewise a reaction against the elaborate eclecticism of Victorian-era architecture, the Prairie style originated with the turn-of-the-century domestic designs of Frank Lloyd Wright and other Chicago architects. Prairie School-influenced dwellings were considered the epitome of style during the first and second decades of the 20th century. Adapted to bungalow plans, the style frequently translated into low-pitched roofs, overhanging eaves, expansive porches with substantial supports, and hipped-roof dormers. Most vernacular examples lack the ribbon windows, geometric patterning, and heavy horizontal emphasis that typify true high-style Prairie architecture. Only one (1) house in the survey area exhibits the influence of Prairie School design, the Gregg House at 401 N. Lexington St. (Figure 8).

The Craftsman style also originated with innovative high-style architecture. Initially associated with the California firm Greene and Greene, the Craftsman bungalow had its roots in the Arts and Crafts Movement, which championed the use of handcrafts in interior and exterior decoration. Ironically, the Craftsman-influenced bungalow was well suited for large-scale mass production, and it became the dominant style of early 20th century American houses. Accounting for seven (7) dwellings in the survey area, the style is characterized by a moderate to low-pitched



Figure 12. Folk Victorian house, 601 N. Lexington St.

Figure 13. Classical Revival house, 202 Smith Ln.

Figure 14. Loveless House, 501 E. Wheeler St.

roof with unenclosed eaves and exposed rafter tails, triangle knee braces or false beams in gable ends, and a prominent front porch with tapered piers or columns. A good example of a Craftsman bungalow in Manor is the Loveless House at 501 E. Wheeler St. (Figure 14).

The Minimal Traditional style, a categorization applied in retrospect to houses popular from the late 1930s to the early 1950s, was an outgrowth of economic frugality in the post-Depression and immediate postwar eras. The style loosely adapted Colonial or Tudor Revival details to modestly sized houses, although even these influences were sparsely applied. The style's low-pitched, side- or cross-gabled roofline has enclosed eaves with little to no overhang. The Ranch style, prevalent after 1950, has a low-slung, side-gabled or hipped roof with deep overhangs, designed to elongate and flatten the house's appearance in relation to its surroundings. Its long, linear profile required a wider lot than standard for prewar houses. Both Minimal Traditional and Ranch-style houses minimized the importance of the front porch; the Ranch house instead emphasized a sense of connectivity with the landscape through picture windows and sliding glass doors on the more private elevations. Integral carports or garages are common to both styles and are frequently used to attenuate the lengthy profile of the Ranch house. The survey area contains five (5) examples of Minimal Traditional houses, clad in wood siding, pressed board, or asbestos. A typical example is the house at 501 E. Boyce St. (Figure 15). The single (1) Ranch-style house in the survey area, located at 410 N. Lexington St., has brick cladding (Figure 16).



Figure 15. Minimal Traditional house, 501 E. Boyce St.



Figure 16. Ranch-style house, 410 N. Lexington St.

Commercial Resources

The Manor Historic Resources Survey area contains 10 historic commercial buildings, dating from the turn of the century to around 1950. These properties are located in the downtown commercial district near the railway line, primarily on Parsons St. near cross-streets Lexington and Burnet. Most of the buildings are substantial brick edifices constructed in the first two decades of the 20th century, replacing earlier frame shops. They reflect economic prosperity in Manor resulting from booming cotton trade. Due to the relatively short span of time in which they were built, these buildings display similar plans, roof forms, construction techniques, cladding materials, and stylistic influences.



Figure 17. One-part commercial blocks, 100-118 E. Parsons St.

Commercial buildings can be grouped into two broad subtypes based on their principal physical attributes: the one-part or two-part commercial block. The one-part commercial block is a one-story building that can be either freestanding or part of an adjacent grouping of buildings. Its primary characteristic is a prominent, street-level storefront consisting of a large plate-glass display window topped by a transom. Examples in Manor are of load-bearing masonry construction, including seven (7) brick and two (2) clay tile or concrete block buildings. Roofs are flat with a parapet, often featuring corbelled brick detailing (Figure 17).



Figure 18. Two-part commercial block,
14 N. Lexington St.

The two-part commercial block is generally a two-to-four story commercial building in which the first story façade consists of a commercial storefront similar to that of the one-part commercial block, while in the upper stories exterior openings are limited to smaller windows in varying patterns. One (1) example was documented in the survey area, the two-story building at 14 N. Lexington St., constructed as a bank and post office (Figure 18).

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to promote Manor's unique historic character, Preservation Central recommends that the Travis County Historical Commission nominate fifteen (15) individual properties and one (1) historic district to the National Register of Historic Places. Preservation Central additionally recommends that the City of Manor enact a historic preservation ordinance with provisions for designating and protecting historically or architecturally significant landmarks and districts.

Specifically, the Travis County Historical Commission should:

- **Nominate high-priority resources to the National Register of Historic Places.** Of the 24 high-priority resources identified in the Manor Historic Resources Survey (Appendix B), 15 retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing in the National Register (Appendix A). As part of the nomination process, additional research should be conducted in order to fully illustrate the historical significance of each property.
- **Nominate a commercial historic district to the National Register of Historic Places.** The core of downtown Manor encompasses a collection of early 20th-century commercial buildings significant to the town's economic and social history. The historic district should encompass the 100 block and part of the 200 block of E. Parsons St. and 14 N. Lexington St., an area that contains the vast majority of historic commercial buildings in Manor (Appendix A).
- **Apply for Official Texas Historical Markers for other significant buildings.** High-priority resources that have been considerably altered and lack sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register, such as the two African-American Baptist churches in southern Manor, merit additional historical research. Where appropriate, the Travis County Historical Commission should pursue subject markers to commemorate the history of these resources (see Appendix B).
- **Perform additional surveys of rural communities in the Manor vicinity.** Northeastern Travis County contains numerous intact farming communities, many related to Swedish immigration to Texas. The historic buildings and landscape features of New Sweden, Cele, Manda, and other nearby communities merit documentation as part of a rural historic landscape study.

Additionally, the City of Manor should:

- **Enact a historic preservation ordinance that establishes a program for designating and protecting local landmarks and historic districts.** While many properties in Manor are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, this is primarily an honorary designation. A local ordinance provides the practical application necessary to protect and maintain significant features of the community, which may generate economic benefits through increased heritage tourism. The City of Manor should consult Texas Historical Commission staff in the Certified Local Government (CLG) division and staff from neighboring CLG communities for guidance in drafting the ordinance.

- **Designate local landmarks and a historic district based on the results of the survey.** The aforementioned individually significant resources and commercial historic district should be considered for local as well as National Register designation.
- **Develop official design guidelines that Manor Development Services can use to consistently regulate the type and nature of changes permitted for local landmarks and properties in historic districts.** By encouraging sensitive alterations to historic buildings and architecturally compatible new construction, design guidelines provide a mechanism by which to maintain the historic character of Manor's commercial and residential enclaves. Within the commercial historic district, design guidelines should address signage, storefronts, awnings, alterations to historic buildings, and the reversal of inappropriate alterations. In residential areas, design guidelines should regulate exterior modifications and additions.
- **Hold town-hall meetings or workshops to educate historic building owners and realtors.** Topics should include the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits available to income-producing properties eligible for the National Register or constructed before 1936, as well as Manor's preservation ordinance and design guidelines.

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APPENDIX A:
PROPERTIES ELIGIBLE FOR LISTING
IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Individually Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places

- Swedish Lutheran Emaus Church Parsonage, 107 E. Browning St.
- Manor United Methodist Church, 510 N. Burnet St.
- Christian Church Parsonage, 205 E. Eggleston St.
- Citizens Guaranty State Bank/Historic Manor Post Office, 14 N. Lexington St.
- Gregg House, 401 N. Lexington St.
- Harris House, 409 N. Lexington St.
- Folk Victorian dwelling at 601 N. Lexington St.
- Bloor House, 709 N. Lexington St.
- Gilleland Creek Bridge on Old Texas 20
- Wentland Drug Store, 108 E. Parsons St.
- John Nagle Building/Ed Smith's Café, 114 E. Parsons St.
- Manor Water Tower, 100 blk. W. Parsons St.
- Nagle House, 204 Smith Ln.
- Foursquare dwelling at 104 E. Townes St.
- Chamberlin-Eppright House, 100 blk. E. Wheeler St.

Contributing Properties in the Proposed Manor Commercial Historic District

- Citizens Guaranty State Bank/Historic Manor Post Office, 14 N. Lexington St.
- Manor Grocery, 100 blk. E. Parsons St.
- Manor Inn Hotel, 106 E. Parsons St.
- Wentland Drug Store, 108 E. Parsons St.
- John Nagle Building/Ed Smith's Café, 114 E. Parsons St.
- John Nagle Building/E.D. Harris Hardware Store, 116 E. Parsons St.
- O.W. Anderson Grocery and Dry Goods, 118 E. Parsons St.
- Concrete block commercial building in 200 blk. of E. Parsons St.
- Farmer's National Bank/Manor State Bank, 201 E. Parsons St.

APPENDIX B:
TEXAS HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY FORMS
INTENSIVE-LEVEL SURVEY

APPENDIX C:
INVENTORY OF PROPERTIES
WINDSHIELD SURVEY

APPENDIX D:
SURVEY AREA MAP