



CITY OF
TOPEKA



**Brown V. Board UNESCO
World Heritage Site
Nomination**
2025

1. What is UNESCO and World Heritage Sites
2. How did we get here?
3. So what now?
4. What is an Overlay District?
5. Why an Overlay District?



What is UNESCO

3

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

- Seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.



Easter Island, Chile



Taj Mahal, Agra, India

U.S. Examples

4

- 24 total properties, 11 cultural, 12 natural, 1 mixed



Fallingwater, PA



Yellowstone National Park



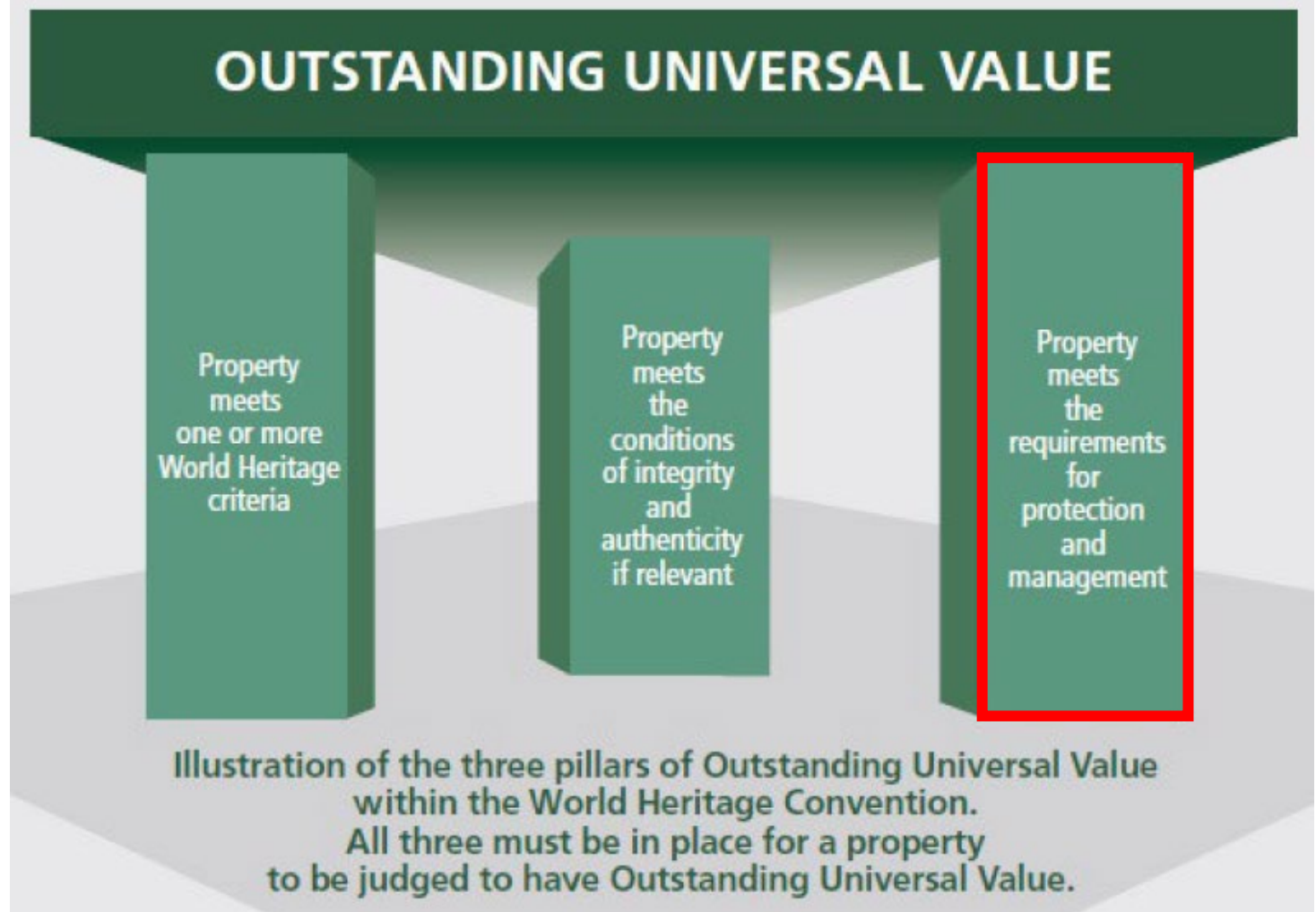
Mesa Verde, CO



Requirements for nomination

5

- National Historic Landmark or
- National Park affiliation
- Significance and Impact



How did we get here, now?

6

City of Topeka Planning Staff approached by Georgia State University World Heritage Team

- Applying for Serial Nomination – US Civil Rights
 - One listing with component site
 - Each component site should contribute in a defined and discernable way
 - It's the sum of the parts not one individual site in a Serial Nomination



How did we get here, now?

7

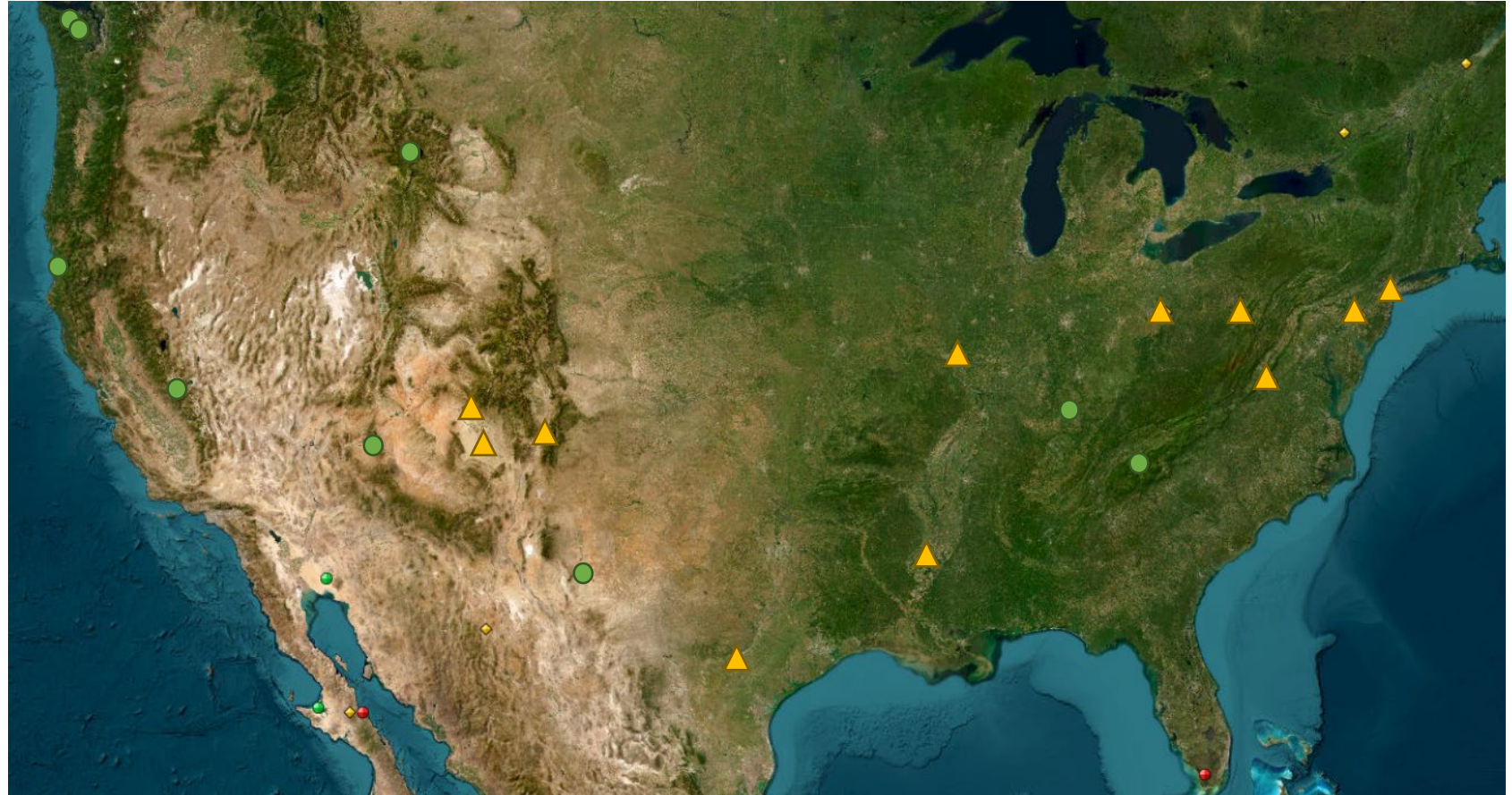
U.S. Civil Rights Movement nominations needed to be broader



Why is this important to Topeka?

8

- Topeka should be recognized for its role in the Civil Rights Movement
- World-wide Recognition



Monroe School Background & History

- Monroe Neighborhood established by John Ritchie; early Topeka Settler and abolitionist.
- John Ritchie sold or gave some land to African Americans.
- 1868 – Lots along Monroe Street purchased as a school for Black children.
- 1926 – Current Monroe School Built – One of four segregated elementary schools
- 1954 – Brown v. Board of Education rules racial segregation of children in public schools was unconstitutional.



As part of the nomination component:

- Must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and or traditional protection to safeguard the integrity.
- **MUST** have an identified **Buffer Zone** with complementary legal and or customary restrictions on its use and development.



So what now?

11

Consider a buffer zone

City Staff is engaging with the Monroe Neighborhood and property owners to develop a proposed Overlay District with identified Buffer



What is an Overlay District?

12

- An “overlay district” does not replace the zoning currently in place but instead adds a layer of provisions or restrictions.
- Example: Land zoned M-1 (Two-family Dwelling District) will continue as M-1 but with an overlay with different dimensional standards regarding height, building design.

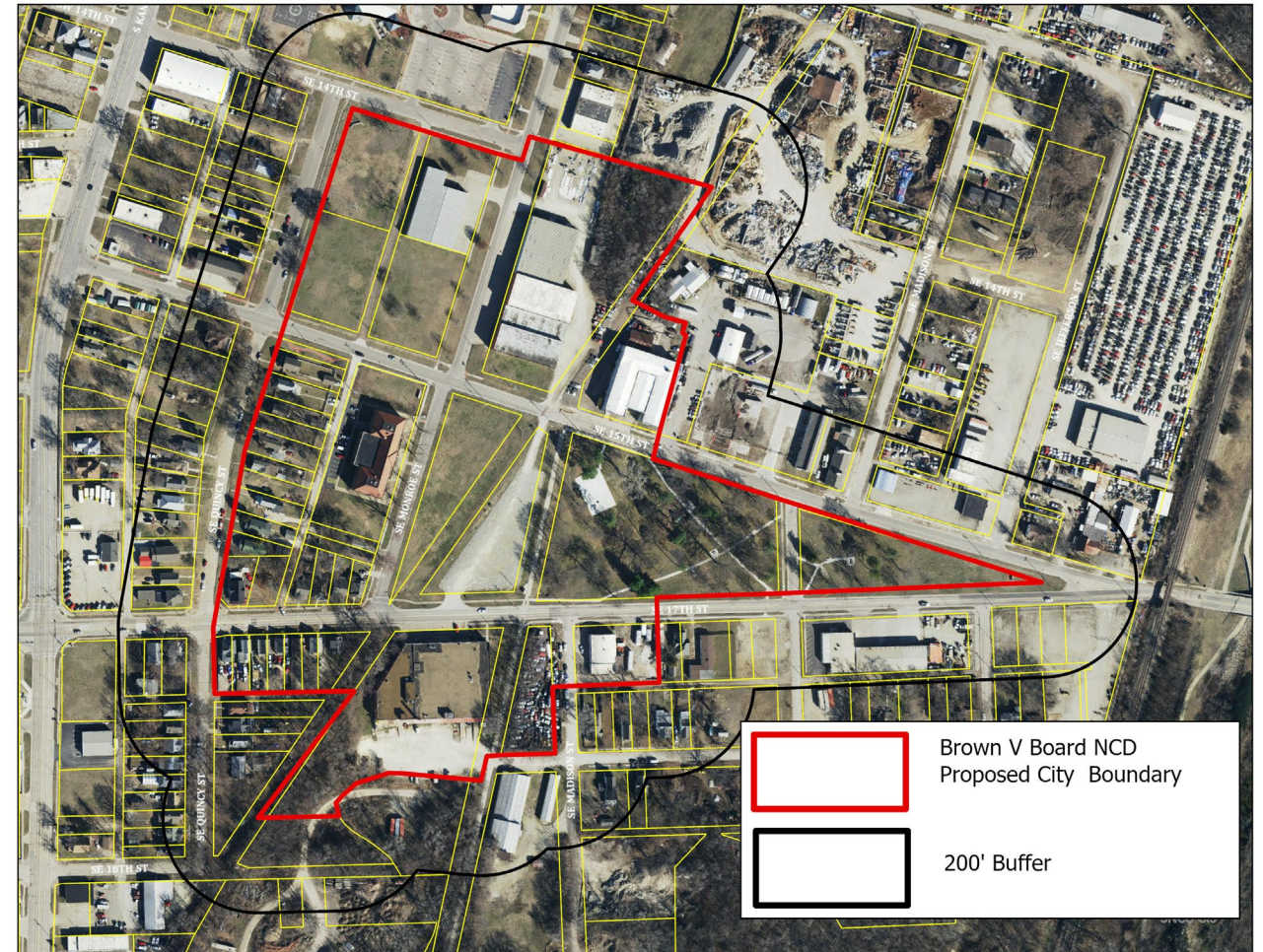


Who/What is impacted?

13

Potential Overlay Boundary/ Properties

- 4 Zoning Districts
- 39 properties (excludes Monroe School)
- Mix of residential uses, industrial uses, and vacant properties
- 5 vacant lots



What are we protecting against?

14

In areas zoned for residential use:

- Structures that block view of the Monroe School
- Additions or new accessory buildings not compatible with the existing architecture.
- New driveways from the street where alley access is possible



What are we protecting against?

15

In areas zoned for industrial or commercial use:

- Structures that block view of the Monroe School
- Unsightly outdoor storage equipment and materials
- Buildings and parking areas that degrade neighborhood character



- Meeting Tonight (March 13)
- Second Public Meeting (Mid April)
- Planning Commission Initiates (Target of April or May)
- Third Public Meeting (May)
- Planning Commission (June/July)
- Governing Body Approval (August/September)



What questions do you have for us?

