

RESTAURANT GROWTH IN LAWRENCE, KANSAS, 1950 TO 2007

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Data gathered from city and telephone directories provide a frame for understanding changes in types of restaurants and their geographic patterns in a Midwestern university town. I display this information using GIS at ten-year intervals and add a personal dimension via interviews with longtime community members and restaurant owners. Population increase and a general trend of eating outside the home explain the general restaurant growth. Through time, diversity in ethnic restaurants increases and chain establishments expand rapidly. Restaurants always have been concentrated along or near arterial streets. Most were at downtown locations in the 1950s. Then came a move toward the periphery followed by a recent revival of the central business district. Changes in Kansas liquor laws in 1987 that allowed establishments to sell liquor by-the-drink and proprietors to open microbreweries bolstered the local restaurant business.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of Figures	vi
List of Tables	viii
1. Introduction	1
2. Simple, Homemade Food: 1950-1979	12
3. Ethnic Cuisine Boom and Changing Liquor Laws: 1980-1999	44
4. Restaurant Expansion: 2000-2007	70
5. Final Thoughts	89
Bibliography	95
Appendix	100
Labeled Restaurant Maps	

LIST OF FIGURES

1.1	City of Lawrence Before 1950 to 2008	6
2.1	Lawrence Restaurants, 1950	13
2.2	Gemmell's Café	13
2.3	Dine-A-Mite Inn	14
2.4	Dine-A-Mite Inn Customers	14
2.5	Shamrock Grill	15
2.6	Jayhawk Café	15
2.7	Chateau Drive-In	16
2.8	Blue Bucket Shop	17
2.9	Lawrence Restaurants, 1960	18
2.10	Rock Chalk Café	21
2.11	Blue Hills Drive-In	21
2.12	Lawrence Restaurants, 1970	23
2.13	Lawrence Restaurants, 1970 Insets	24
2.14	Gas Light Tavern	25
2.15	Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants, 1950	26
2.16	DeLuxe Café	27
2.17	Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants, 1960	28
2.18	Southern Pit BBQ	29
2.19	Southern Pit BBQ Employees	29
2.20	Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants, 1970	31
2.21	El Matador Café Painting	34
2.22	El Matador Café	34
2.23	Sandy's Drive-In	37
2.24	Red Lion Statue	40
2.25	Red Lion Sign	42
3.1	Lawrence Restaurants, 1980	45
3.2	Lawrence Restaurants, 1980 Insets	46
3.3	Pentimento	47
3.4	West 23 rd Street	48
3.5	The Hawk's Crossing	49
3.6	Lawrence Restaurants, 1990	51
3.7	Lawrence Restaurants, 1990 Insets	52
3.8	Paradise Café	53
3.9	Herbivores	53
3.10	Yello Sub	55
3.11	The Glass Onion	55
3.12	Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants, 1980	57
3.13	Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants, 1990	58
3.14	Applebee's, Chili's, Old Chicago	63
3.15	Free State Brewing Co.	68
4.1	Lawrence Restaurants, 2000	72

4.2	Lawrence Restaurants, 2000 Insets	73
4.3	Mass. Street Deli	74
4.4	West 23 rd Street, 1977	74
4.5	West 23 rd Street, 2008	74
4.6	Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants, 2000	77
4.7	Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants, 2000 Insets	78
4.8	On the Border Mexican Grill and Cantina	83
4.9	La Parrilla	84
4.10	Zen Zero	85
4.11	Genovese	86
5.1	Lawrence Population per Restaurant	90

LIST OF TABLES

1.1	Lawrence Area, Population, and Population Density	6
3.1	Multiple Franchise Restaurants, 1980	61
3.2	Multiple Chain and Franchise Restaurants, 1990	62
4.1	Multiple Chain and Franchise Restaurants, 2000	82
5.1	Lawrence Population per Restaurant	90

“[Lawrence,] a city recently described by Johnny Carson as having more restaurants per capita than any other city in America. . . .” (Johnson, 1982)

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Restaurants across the United States have grown in number and type since the middle of the twentieth century, reflecting both technological advances and altered lifestyles. Automobiles changed the way citizens could access restaurants, and as a result, drive-in and chain restaurants soon spread across the country (Jakle and Sculle, 1999). Quick service and the ease of driving to dinner were appealing to families in which both parents worked; so was affordability. Currently, the convenience and availability of fast food have become an expectation, even a necessity for many people.

Casual dining restaurants serve as the family dinner table more frequently now than in the past. With fewer people cooking at home, and more spending money available, eating out is a common occurrence for younger generations, whereas it was more of a treat for families in the 1950s. The National Restaurant Association reported that in the year 2000, Americans were “spending more than 45% of their food dollar at eating-and-drinking places, up from 25% in 1955. By 2010, Americans are expected to spend more than half of their food dollar at anticipated one million eating-and-drinking places” (National Restaurant Association, History, 2008).

Variety of restaurants has increased along with total numbers. Ethnic cuisines such as Chinese, Mexican, and Italian have become so common that they no longer are considered “exotic” (Zelinsky, 1987; National Restaurant Association, Mills, 2000; Dillon, Burger, and Shortridge, 2006). In addition, less common ethnic

cuisines of the past such as Indian, Vietnamese, and Thai have become popular. A survey conducted by the National Restaurant Association in 1999 indicated that, although the frequency of eating out has grown among all age groups, younger generations are more likely to visit ethnic restaurants as compared to older generations. According to Steven C. Anderson, president and chief executive officer of the group: “Today’s young consumers are continually seeking bolder, more exotic tastes from a variety of cultures. By establishing a taste for a wide variety of cuisine now at a young age, those in ‘Generation X and Y’ ensure that ethnically-diverse restaurants . . . will continue to grow in years to come” (National Restaurant Association, *Generations*, 2000).

The interplay of food and culture has been studied from the perspectives of folklore, sociology, anthropology, and geography. Geographically, researchers have found ethnic cuisines associated most with “cosmopolitanism” or locations with high flows of tourists, professionals, or business visitors (Zelinsky, 1985; Bell and Valentine, 1997). As a caveat, however, Zelinsky added that “state capitals and some of the larger college communities may have more than their share of exotic dining places” (1985, 60).

Regionally, Zelinsky’s research displayed Mexican as the dominant ethnic restaurant cuisine for the Southwest and much of the Midwest, including the state of Kansas, circa 1980. More recent study by Dillon, Burger, and Shortridge (2006) of Mexican restaurants in Omaha, Nebraska, indicates that their growth did not correlate with Mexican or Hispanic population growth in that city.

As of this time, no municipality data are available to test Zelinsky's assertion that college communities show great diversity in ethnic cuisine. In fact, community restaurant studies of any type are rare. I offer here a case study that begins to fill this gap. It looks at the historical geography of restaurant growth in Lawrence, Kansas, over the past half century. As a college town, Lawrence is relevant to Zelinsky's claim above. In addition, the study provides a test of the findings presented by Dillon, Burger, and Shortridge (2006) regarding the lack of correlation between ethnic growth of the population and diffusion of ethnic cuisine.

Lawrence is the seat of Douglas County and home to the University of Kansas. Preliminary research suggests that it is also richly endowed with restaurants. In 2006, fifteen percent of all Douglas County employees worked for food service and drinking places, compared to eight percent nationally (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Another measure of this concentration, the location quotient (LQ), which compares a regional economy to the national economy, shows a similar result.

Calculated with the following formula:

$$LQ = \left(\frac{\text{Regional industry employment}}{\text{Regional total employment}} \right) / \left(\frac{\text{National industry employment}}{\text{National total employment}} \right)$$

the location quotient for food service and drinking places in Douglas County is as follows:

$$LQ = \left(\frac{5,466}{36,526} \right) / \left(\frac{9,297,174}{122,718,858} \right)$$

$$LQ = (0.15) / (0.08) = 1.9$$

A LQ value of 1.0 would demonstrate regional industry employment equal to the national average. The total value, 1.9, indicates that in 2006 employment in restaurants and bars was almost twice as important in Douglas County as it was nationally (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

My research is historically based, focusing on questions related to the growth rate of restaurants compared to that of the population, spatial patterns of restaurant types, and periods that experienced noticeable growth in the number of establishments. I emphasize ethnic restaurants, including when specific cuisines were introduced to the community and when individual establishments began serving multiple ethnic cuisines, for example, Chinese/Thai and American/Greek/Italian, as opposed to strictly Italian or solely Greek. I refer to these multiethnic cuisine restaurants as having “blended” cuisines. To better capture the mood of the times, I highlight for each period a representative establishment or group of restaurants. These restaurants provide a snapshot of the diversity Lawrence has experienced over the years. They were selected based on frequent mention during interviews with community members as well as their innovative qualities or enduring characteristics.

Lawrence Background

The city of Lawrence was founded in 1854, twelve years before the University of Kansas opened its first semester of classes (Dary, 1982, 154). The university’s initial role in the town was small, but grew rapidly after World War II as college enrollments soared. Enrollment in the 2006 fiscal year stood at 25,423 on the Lawrence campus. This figure represents twenty-nine percent of the estimated 2006

total Lawrence population of 88,605 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2008), a strong indication that the university has a major influence on the city's demographics and culture.

As World War II ended, planning began in Lawrence to accommodate returning troops who were eager to take advantage of government-sponsored, free education benefits under the GI Bill (Dary, 1982). New students led to more businesses and jobs in the community. By 1950, 23,351 residents, including university students, were counted in the census, which jumped to 32,858 people by 1960 (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1952; U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1963). Lawrence's business district had always been centered at the northern end of Massachusetts Street, which extends south from the Kansas River. As the population grew, housing areas expanded from this core primarily to the south and west (Brinson, 2005) (Fig. 1.1).

Lawrence has grown rapidly from 1950 to 2000 (Table 1.1). From 1950 to 1970, Lawrence's area nearly quadrupled. This quick expansion allowed the population density to drop from nearly 5,000 people per square mile in 1950 to the 2,600-2,900 range from 1970 to 2000. From 1980 to 2000, Lawrence maintained a slower and steadier growth pattern, expanding to 28.02 square miles and over 80,000 people by 2000.

Iowa Street, parallel with Massachusetts Street but one and a quarter miles to the west, opened in the early 1950s (Brinson, 2005) to provide another north-south route across the city. Principal east-west connecting roads between Massachusetts and Iowa streets came to be 6th Street across the north edge of town and 23rd Street

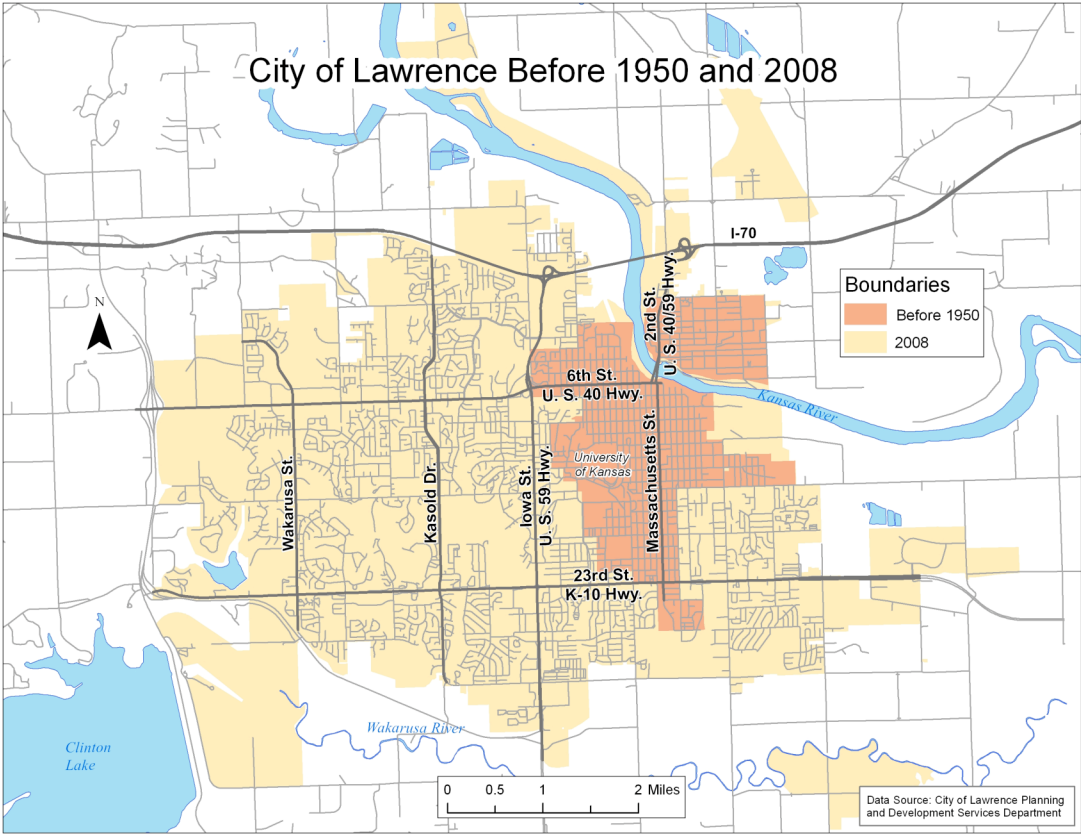


Fig. 1.1. Lawrence expansion from before 1950 to 2008. Roadways data from TIGER 2006, water bodies and water areas from 2006 National Hydrography Dataset, and annexation data provided by City of Lawrence Planning and Development Services Department.

Year	Area (Sq. miles)	Census Population	Population Density Persons/Sq. mile
1950	4.73	23,351	4,937
1960	8.06	32,858	4,077
1970	16.93	45,698	2,699
1980	19.51	52,738	2,703
1990	22.88	65,608	2,867
2000	28.02	80,098	2,859

Table 1.1. Lawrence growth by decade in area, population, and population density. Source: City of Lawrence Planning and Development Services Department.

along the south. These four roads create a rectangle and enclose the university. With the exception of Massachusetts Street, each principal road is also a highway: U. S. 59 (Iowa Street), U. S. 40 (6th Street), and Kansas 10 (23rd Street). These roads are where most businesses, especially restaurants, have developed throughout the last half century. Across the Kansas River, U. S. 40 and 59 highways continue north along North 2nd Street through the North Lawrence neighborhood. Additional businesses and restaurants have built along this route.

Kansas has a long history of prohibition and strict liquor laws. In 1880, its people constitutionally prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. This stricture was relaxed slightly in 1948 when an amendment allowed package liquor sales to be “authorized and regulated, but the sale of liquor by the drink in public places was [still] prohibited” (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 1). Other changes came in 1965 when private clubs were allowed liquor licenses, and in 1978 when restaurants were “authorized to sell liquor if they derived at least 50 percent of gross receipts from the sale of food and were located in counties that approved such sales” (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 2). Finally, in 1986, a constitutional amendment permitted the “sale of liquor by the drink in establishments open to the public” (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 3), effective January 1, 1987. Each of those legal changes had obvious implications for restaurants.

Methodology

I combined quantitative and qualitative research for this study. Previous

researchers have gathered restaurant data from yellow pages of telephone books (Zelinsky, 1985; Pillsbury, 1987; Kovacik, 1988; Jakle and Sculle, 1999; Turgeon and Pastinelli, 2002; Dillon, Burger, and Shortridge, 2006). However, not all businesses print their information in this source. For a more complete compilation I supplemented Southwestern Bell telephone directories with Polk's city directories to identify names, locations, and cuisines of Lawrence restaurants at ten-year intervals from 1950 to 2007. Telephone directories are available for each interval within this time frame and city directories are accessible for each interval except the period of 1950-1965. For years in which both a telephone directory and city directory were published, I combined data from both sources.

Restaurant addresses allowed geocoding and mapping through GIS, which was essential for visualizing the distribution. Jakle and Sculle displayed restaurants in Springfield, Illinois (1999), at twenty-year intervals through most of the twentieth century. Other researchers have mapped such data only for a specific year (Pillsbury, 1987; Milbauer, 1990). For this study, I created maps at ten-year intervals.

Annexation data represent city boundaries as of January 1 for the first year of the respective decade. Hydrographic data were provided by the National Hydrography Dataset and represent the local rivers and lakes as of December 2006 for all maps. Restaurants with address "RFD" were not included in the total counts or displayed on the maps as they were not within city limits and a specific street address was not available. The number of these excluded restaurants may be found on the appendix maps. Ethnic cuisine was identified by descriptive restaurant names as well as from

advertisements in the telephone directory. Maps were based solely on directory data for each decade, even if it was known that some establishments were not listed.

Pillsbury (1987) and Jakle and Sculle (1999) both focused on restaurant patterns related to main transportation routes. Dillon, Burger, and Shortridge (2006), in contrast, analyzed Mexican restaurant locations in relation to the Mexican population, using census block data. I have combined aspects of these approaches by focusing on restaurant location with regard to Lawrence's four primary transportation routes but adding demographic information at the municipality level for a broad view of population changes by decade.

To retrieve restaurant data, I used the categories "cafes" and "restaurants" in both city and telephone directories. Advertisements on these pages often added useful details. Several establishments identified as restaurants in these directories did not fit standard definitions of this word, however. These included coffee shops, juice bars, bakeries, clubs, bars, quick-stops, and eating establishments within grocery stores or university buildings. I elected to exclude all these categories from my analysis.

I interviewed community members of various ages in order to add personal stories and perceptions to my directory data. To gather this information, I used personal contacts within the community, the archivist of the Watkins Community Museum, authors of *The KU/Lawrence Trivia Quiz Book*, and several present and former restaurant owners in Lawrence. I also interviewed at four local retirement and assisted living communities: Brandon Woods Retirement Community, Drury Place at

Alvamar, Pioneer Ridge Retirement Community, and Prairie Commons Apartments. I especially sought out senior citizens who had lived in Lawrence since the 1950s and 1960s to assist with understanding the overall change that has occurred. This group also was key to understanding which restaurants were especially popular in years past and which had distinctive cultures or atmospheres. As per request, some participants are identified only by their first name and residence. Altogether I spoke with approximately twenty-five people.

Appointments with retirement home residents were primarily scheduled through the community's event coordinator, who contacted residents and scheduled the participants to meet with me. I referred to the interview as an informal conversation with the anticipation that more residents might attend, but kept groups small (no more than five people) to maintain a more personal atmosphere and easily allow for questions. I also conducted several individual interviews at these centers with especially interested people.

For all of these interviews I provided a list of restaurants and maps as tools to assist in recalling businesses, but otherwise left the conversation open and flexible as the participants recalled different establishments of their past. Five-year interval maps of Lawrence restaurants, from 1950 to 1965, greatly helped the retirement home participants. On these maps, I labeled each restaurant as well as the major roads for reference.

The following chapters are organized in chronological order with time periods selected based on significant change in the restaurant data. Chapter two covers 1950-

1979, a period of steady restaurant growth. Chapter three, 1980-1999, is when ethnic diversity in restaurants began to increase. Lastly, Chapter four focuses on 2000-2007, the period of most accelerated growth in total restaurant numbers.

Expectations

Because the trend of eating out has increased nationwide over the past sixty years, and because nearly fifteen percent of all Douglas County employees now work in food service and drinking establishments, it seems likely that restaurant growth in recent years has been faster than overall population growth. I wanted to test this idea. In addition, because of increasing use of automobiles, I expected the distribution of restaurants to become more and more concentrated along the four main roads.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that the 1987 law allowing liquor by the drink produced a restaurant boom. Based on this, I hypothesized a significant increase in the number of restaurants during the late 1980s and 1990s.

I also expected ethnic establishments to grow and diversify beginning about 1985. Zelinsky reported then that Chinese, Mexican, and Italian cuisines were being seen as everyday options, no longer as “exotic.” Because of the study on Mexican restaurant growth in Omaha, Nebraska (Dillon, Burger, and Shortridge, 2006), I anticipated that this growth would not correlate with immigration patterns. Instead, the university’s influence on Lawrence demographics led me to believe that the diffusion of ethnic restaurants would be more closely related to worldly interests in culture and tastes by students and faculty.

CHAPTER TWO

Simple, Homemade Food: 1950-1979

The population of Lawrence in 1950 was 23,351, which included university students. Like the majority of the state, ethnic diversity was low, and census data show almost ninety-two percent of the community as white (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1952). The population rose to 32,858 by 1960 and then to 45,698 by 1970, but diversity remained low. Euro-Americans still constituted more than ninety percent of the total for both of these periods (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1963; U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1973).

Restaurant Growth in the 1950s

Restaurant location in 1950 was largely restricted to the business district (Figs. 2.1 and 2.2). That year, almost two-thirds of the total, 28 of 46, were established within one block of Massachusetts Street. The next most common route was 23rd Street, perpendicular to Massachusetts Street, with four restaurants within one block of this road. However, only two of these were within the actual city limits. At that time, 23rd Street formed this boundary, except for a peninsula that was the United States Indian Industrial Training School (now Haskell Indian Nations University).

Along 23rd Street, the Dine-A-Mite Inn (Figs. 2.3 and 2.4) was located just feet beyond the city limits (See Appendix A). This allowed “dancing and the serving of beer at the same time . . . which was illegal within the city limits of Lawrence at that time” (Progress, 1999).

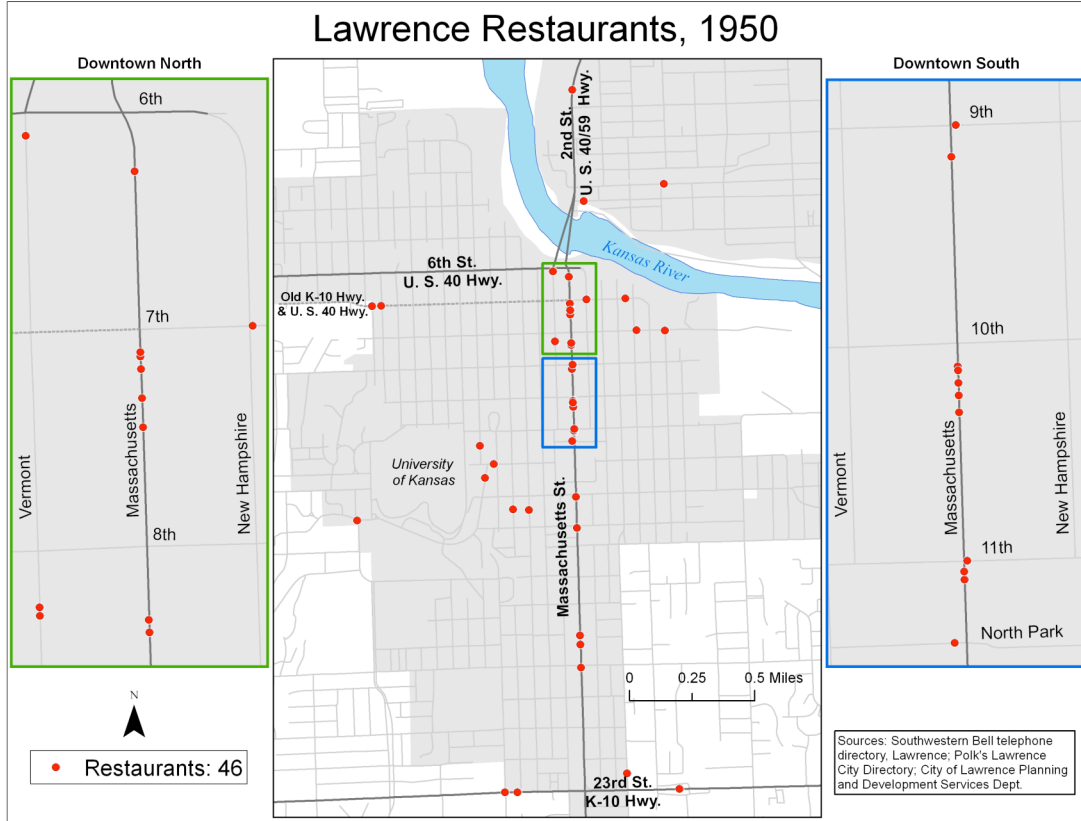


Fig. 2.1. Lawrence restaurants in 1950. The light gray shading indicates areas within city limits. Nearly two-thirds of all restaurants were located near Massachusetts Street, most of those in the business district. Insets Downtown North and Downtown South provide detail on this area of high concentration.



Fig. 2.2. Gemmill's Café, undated. Located at 717 Massachusetts Street in the 1950s and 1960s. Source: 1981.009.048 Watkins Community Museum.

Roma Kennedy personally knew the proprietor, Roy Borgen, and frequented the Dine-A-Mite:

The KU students patronized that [Dine-A-Mite] all the time then. Football games were terribly busy. Of course they were busy all the time, but football games it was exceptionally busy. . . . I'd call it more of a restaurant, nightclub together, 'cause they had dancing and everything at night. And it was the biggest hangout in Lawrence.



Fig. 2.3. Dine-A-Mite Inn, 1950s. Located on the southwest corner of the 23rd and Louisiana streets intersection, the Dine-A-Mite was beyond the city limits. This allowed the establishment to offer both beer and dancing, a combination that was illegal within Lawrence limits. Source: University Archives 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.



Fig. 2.4. Dine-A-Mite Inn customers, 1960. Source: University Archives 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Only two restaurants were located near 6th Street: Rose Lee Lunch and The Stable, both on 7th Street near Michigan Street. These locations, a bit remote in 1950, had been better situated at their founding several years earlier because Seventh Street (rather than Sixth) was then the designated route of Highway K-10 (City Planning Commission, 1930). When the route changed, the restaurants became anachronisms, but close enough to the new trafficway to survive (City Planning Commission, 1945-1948).

Several restaurants existed in North Lawrence. Two were located within one block of North 2nd Street, while another, the Shamrock Grill (Fig. 2.5), was on Locust Street, the older east-west business route of North Lawrence (for a more precise location of this and other restaurants see Appendices A, B, and C).



Fig. 2.5. Shamrock Grill, undated. Located in North Lawrence at 508 Locust Street. Source: Duke D'ambra Collection, RH PH 69.276. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Most of the restaurants that were located farther than one block from the main routes were within the rectangle formed by Massachusetts, 10th, 15th, and Iowa streets. This central area focuses on the University of Kansas main campus.

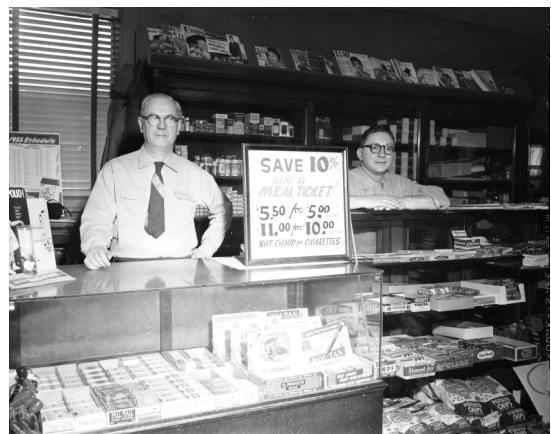


Fig. 2.6. Jayhawk Café, 1955. Located near KU's campus at 1340 Ohio Street. The sign reads: "Save 10% Buy a Meal Ticket, \$5.50 for \$5.00, \$11.00 for \$10.00. Not Good for Cigarettes." Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Although I excluded eating establishments actually on campus from this study, the restaurants within this rectangle were nearby and clearly focused on the student market. Three of the six establishments even used collegiate names. College Inn and Jayhawk Café (Fig. 2.6) were both along the eastern base of Mt. Oread (the Jayhawk is the university mascot), while the Rock Chalk Café sat atop

Mt. Oread at the northern edge of campus (“rock chalk” is part of a university cheer). For many years the Rock Chalk was known as a “hotbed of social and political debate” (Swartz, 1984), and recognized for its liberal-minded crowd, including wartime activists in the 1960s and 1970s. The other two restaurants served more of a fraternity-sorority crowd.

Drive-in restaurants had started to develop by 1950, and two existed in Lawrence at this time: Chateau Drive-In (Fig. 2.7) south of downtown on Massachusetts Street, and Chet’s Drive-In on North 2nd Street.¹ Catering to their mobile customer base, both businesses were on main city roads but away from the heart of the downtown area. No need existed for a drive-in where community members primarily walked, and the cost of the land was cheaper in outlying areas such as these.



Fig. 2.7. Chateau Drive-In, 1950. Located at 1802 Massachusetts Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Racial segregation was a fact of life in the 1950s. At the beginning of the century most black businesses had been located in three areas of Lawrence, all of them downtown: “the 600 block of Massachusetts Street, on Warren Street (now Ninth Street) between New Hampshire and Vermont streets, and in the 800 block of Vermont Street. . . . The 800 block was most important because much of that property

¹ I operationally defined drive-in restaurants as those with “drive-in” in their name or directory advertisement.

also was owned by blacks” (Smith, 1986). One restaurant here, the Blue Bucket Shop (Fig. 2.8), at 828 Vermont Street remained in operation until the early 1960s.



Fig. 2.8. Blue Bucket Shop, c. 1950. Located at 828 Vermont Street. Source: Duke D’ambra Collection, RH PH 69.275.1. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Restaurant Growth in the 1960s

Restaurant locations in 1960 followed trends similar to those of the previous decade, but expanded as annexation pushed city boundaries west and south from the business district (Fig. 2.9). Telephone directory data suggest that the total number of restaurants actually dropped slightly from the 46 in 1950 to 44 in 1960. Although Massachusetts Street still featured the highest concentration of restaurants in 1960, this area contained ten fewer than a decade before.² Eighteen of 44 establishments were located within one block of Massachusetts Street, as compared to 28 of 46 in 1950.

A popular spot on Massachusetts Street downtown throughout the 1950s-1970s was Duck’s Seafood Restaurant, known as Duck’s Seafood Tavern in the

² Data problems may have caused the drop in restaurants for 1960, but whether it was the only cause remains a mystery as an exact explanation was unattainable.

1950s. This establishment came up in almost every interview, although various community members remembered different characteristics.

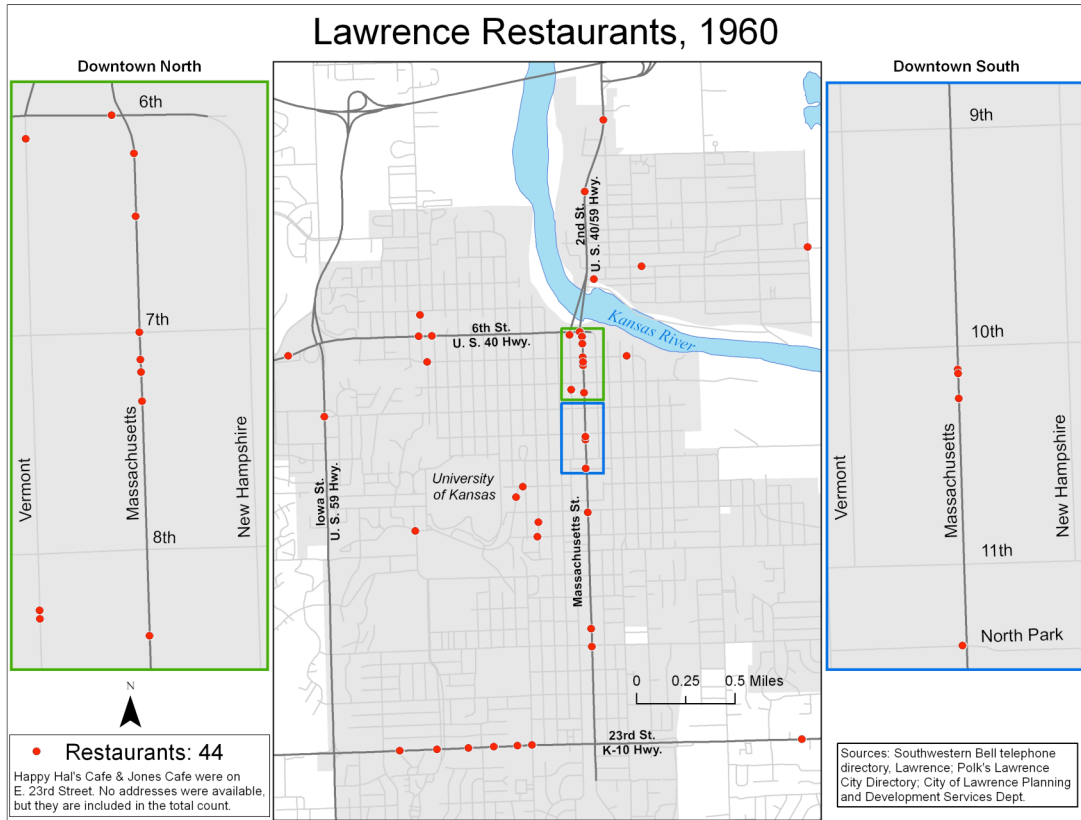


Fig. 2.9. Lawrence restaurants in 1960. The light gray shading marks areas within city limits. Restaurant concentration remained in the downtown area near Massachusetts Street. Insets Downtown North and Downtown South provide detail.

Helen Krische, an archivist at the Watkins Community Museum, recalled:

Duck's Seafood, that also was a really nice place to eat. . . . I remember going in there for lunch and you'd see a lot of the businessmen from downtown . . . in there [Duck's] drinking, sipping their martinis and stuff during lunch time so it was kind of one of the best restaurants for the business people that worked downtown to go to. That's where I tasted my first shark steak So it was kind of interesting.

Phil Minkin, co-author of *The KU / Lawrence Trivia Quiz Book*, remembered the

motto at Duck's:

“If it swims, we have it.” And then I always said, ‘And then we deep fry it.’ That’s the only way that fish was ever served in the Midwest, was heavily breaded and deep-fried. And now [2008] . . . there’s some kind of fresh fish and salmon [available at Lawrence restaurants], so that aspect has changed. We’ve become much more urbane, I guess, than hamburgers, tacos, and deep-fried [foods]. . . .

In the 1950s, Duck’s Seafood Tavern advertised fried shrimp, Maine lobster, and fried oysters, but also steak. By the mid-1960s, catering to their Midwestern location, they added chicken and sandwiches to their ads. “Duck’s was popular, very popular, in that day and age. . . . steakhouses were quite popular because of the beer that they sold and Duck’s Tavern was a college hangout. But they sold a lot of beer and had pretty good dance music, at that age,” stated Bill, a resident of Pioneer Ridge Retirement Community. “Duck’s was around for a long time, but it was another one of those dance hall places,” remembered Ms. Kennedy, of Drury Place at Alvamar. Alice Deweese, a resident of Prairie Commons Apartments, had a closer connection to Duck’s than most customers:

My husband and I used to go there because my husband was the manager of the meat department of the A & P [grocery] store downtown. And that guy that owned that [Duck’s] bought some of his supplies from him. And we used to go there and have lobster tails and then I was in a group of women, I think there was about eight of us that played cards . . . every time we played we would each put a quarter in a pot, and when we got enough money, we would go to Duck’s. And most of us had lobster tail.

A staff member of Prairie Commons Apartments, added: “I grew up south of town in Ottawa, and that [Duck’s Seafood Restaurant] was THE place to go out to eat. . . . it was pretty fancy.”

Twenty-Third Street remained the next most popular site for restaurants at this time, with nine eating establishments distributed along it. In 1960, Griff’s Burger Bar

opened on 23rd Street. This was one of the first fast-food restaurants in Lawrence. Helen Krische remembered that: “that was THE place to go when you were a kid, ‘cause it was about the only fast-food hamburger place here and their hamburgers were really cheap too . . . like twelve or fifteen cents apiece. And then you could also get the economy pack, so many [hamburgers] for a dollar.” Roy C., a resident of Drury Place at Alvamar, recalled: “Griff’s was very popular. Burger bar and was one of the first ones too. Fifteen- to eighteen-cent hamburgers. A lot of people would go there and buy a dozen of them.”

Along 6th Street, five restaurants had developed, including the Thunderbird Drive-In which was farther west than any other restaurant in Lawrence. The Thunderbird was just west of Iowa Street, which was in its early stages of development. Hillcrest Bowl and Snack Bar at 9th and Iowa was another remote restaurant, the only one on Iowa Street in 1960. North Lawrence gained another restaurant along North 2nd Street during this decade, for a total of three. The Hi-way Inn Café opened farther north than its competitors after an expansion of the city limit.

Eight of the 44 restaurants in 1960 were located more than one block from a main route (slightly fewer than the eleven from 1950). Five of these were in close proximity to the university. The Rock Chalk Café (Fig. 2.10) on top of Mt. Oread, the Jayhawk Café on the eastern side of the hill, and the Call Café on Crescent Road, were all still in operation in 1960 as they were ten years prior.

On Oread Boulevard near the north end of campus, Roberto’s had moved from downtown and had replaced Gemmell’s, which in turn had relocated to

Massachusetts Street downtown. A new business, The Wagon Wheel Cafe, had opened on 14th Street along the eastern slope of Mt. Oread.



Fig. 2.10. Rock Chalk Café, 1969. Located at 618 W. 12th Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Drive-in restaurants had expanded to six by 1960. All were found along highways. The Blue Hills Drive-In (Fig. 2.11), Fay's Drive-In, and JoYo Drive-In were located on 23rd Street / K-10 Highway, while the Moore Burger Drive-In and Thunderbird Drive-In were on 6th Street / U. S. 40 Highway, and Strick's Drive-In was along North 2nd Street / U. S. 40/59 Highway. No drive-ins existed along Massachusetts Street. All these followed the pattern seen earlier of locating away from the business district for reasons of clientele, cost, or both.



Fig. 2.11. Blue Hills Drive-In, 1956. Established in the early 1950s, it was located at 1601 E. 23rd Street, farther from the downtown area than any other restaurant at that time. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Restaurant Growth in the 1970s

By 1970, Lawrence's city limits had again expanded west and south, and restaurants quickly followed in these directions. My data for 1970 are probably more complete than for earlier years since a city directory was available to supplement information from the telephone book. I believe this partially explains a large jump in the number of restaurants for 1970 to a total of 70.

Even though restaurants increased throughout Lawrence as a whole, the number of restaurants in the business district remained about the same as for 1960. Twenty of the 70 total restaurants were near Massachusetts Street, compared to 18 of 44 in 1960, and 28 of 46 in 1950 (Figs. 2.12 and 2.13).

The next highest concentration of eating establishments was along 23rd Street, with 19 restaurants. This route still marked the general southern boundary of restaurants in Lawrence, but one establishment had moved a block beyond. Eleven restaurants were found within one block of 6th Street. City limits now extended past the next major road west of Iowa Street, Kasold Drive, and development moved toward that new roadway. Of the four main transportation routes, Iowa Street again was the least served by restaurants, with just seven within one block of the road. Two of these were found in hotels: the Ramada Inn at the intersection of 6th and Iowa and the Holiday Inn at 23rd and Iowa.

In North Lawrence, two new restaurants had opened since 1960, but other closings meant that the total was still three near the main stretch of North 2nd Street.

L & M Café was four and a half blocks north of the river at 629 N. 2nd Street, whereas The Sirloin located on newly annexed land just north of Interstate 70.

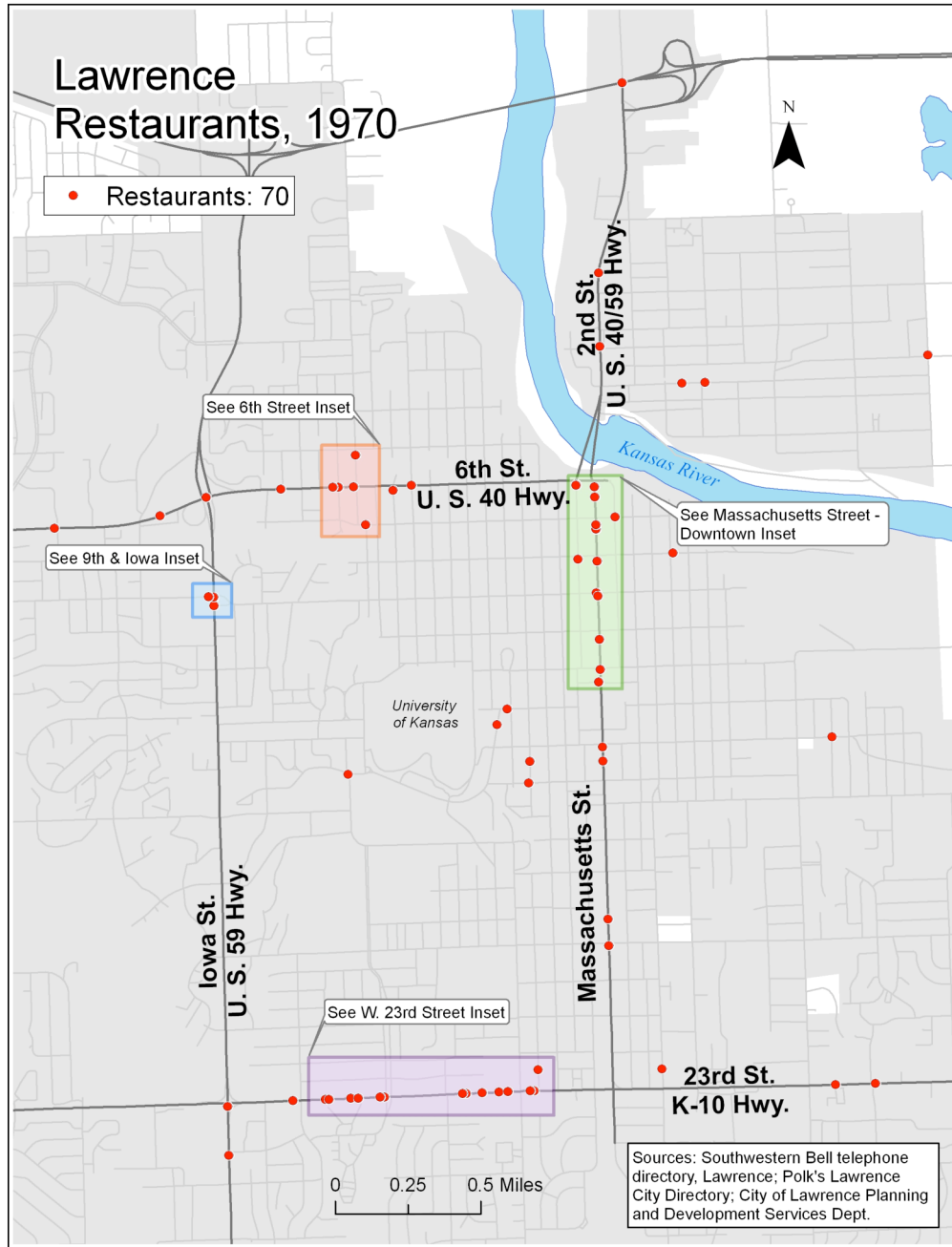


Fig. 2.12. Lawrence restaurants in 1970. The light gray shading marks areas within city limits. Areas with a high concentration of restaurants are displayed via insets in Figure 2.13. Most of the restaurants were within one block of Massachusetts Street, but 23rd Street had also developed considerably by this time.

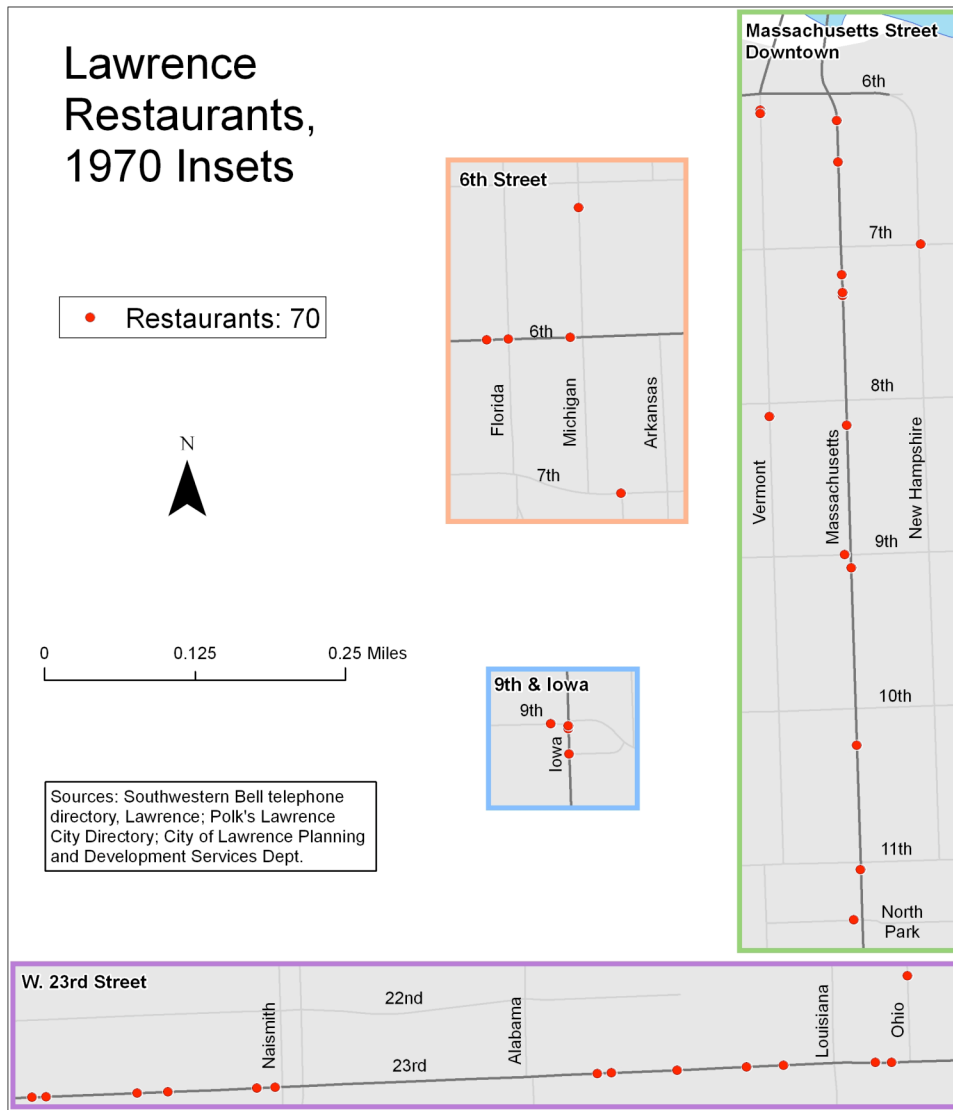


Fig. 2.13. Lawrence restaurants in 1970 insets. Most of the restaurants were within one block of Massachusetts Street. Another high area of concentration was along W. 23rd Street. Sixth and Iowa streets had only small clusters of restaurant development.

Within Lawrence, ten listed restaurants, and one known but unlisted, existed farther than one block away from a main road. Three of these were in North Lawrence: El Matador Café, Loyd & Tom’s Place Tavern, and the Flamingo Supper

Club.³ Two others were in East Lawrence: Greene Gable Café four blocks east of the business district and England's Dairy Creme, which sold sandwiches in addition to ice cream, some twelve blocks from the nearest main road on 13th Street. The remaining five restaurants were near campus. The Jayhawk Café, The Rock Chalk Café, and The Wagon Wheel remained in their familiar locations. Two new establishments on Mt. Oread, Captain's Table on Crescent Road and the Gas Light Tavern (Fig. 2.14) on Oread Boulevard, had replaced the former businesses The Call and Roberto's, respectively.



Fig. 2.14 Gas Light Tavern, 1969. White building on the left is the Gas Light at 1241 Oread Blvd. Adjacent are the businesses Campus Barber Shop and Sandalwood. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Ethnic Restaurants

The first ethnic restaurants in Lawrence opened around 1950 (Fig. 2.15). Mexican cuisine was first on the scene with El Tampico Club, in East Lawrence at 801 Pennsylvania Street. It was the only ethnic restaurant listed in the telephone directory that year and lasted until 1952.

La Tropicana, in North Lawrence at 434 Locust Street, opened its doors in 1951. In 2008, it was still operating under the same name and at the same location.

³ La Tropicana also was in business in North Lawrence at this time, but from the 1950s through the 1970s it was listed in the telephone directory only infrequently. Since maps for this study were based on directory data, La Tropicana is first displayed in the 1980 map (See Appendix D).

Phil Minkin stated, “That’s probably the longest single ownership restaurant in Lawrence today.” A third Mexican restaurant, El Matador Café, opened in the late 1950s adjacent to La Tropicana at 446 Locust Street, and in 2008 it was still in operation as well. Paul, a resident of Drury Place at Alvamar, was not surprised that

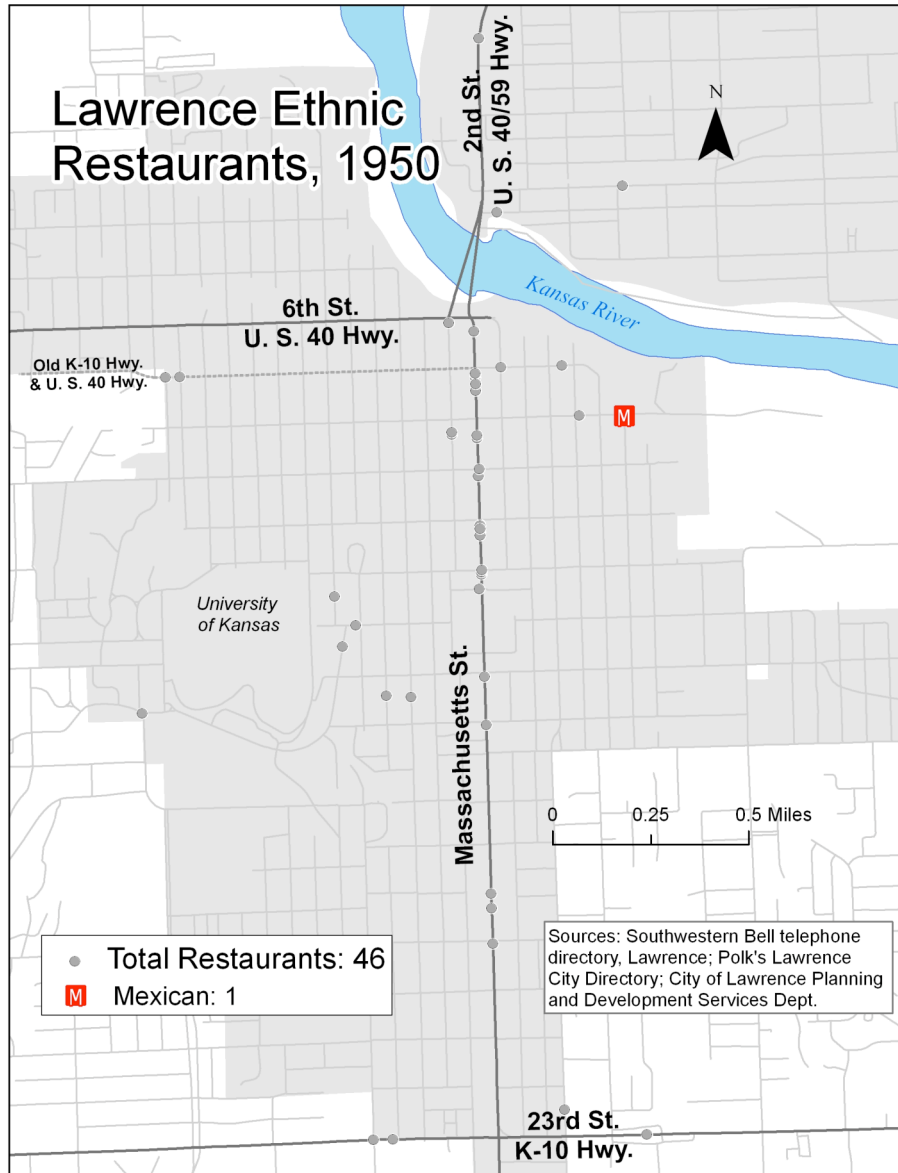


Fig. 2.15. Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants in 1950. El Tampico Club at 801 Pennsylvania Street was the only ethnic restaurant identified in Lawrence in 1950.

the two restaurants had stayed in business:

... [La Tropicana and El Matador Cafe] were about the only ones [Mexican restaurants], probably years ago in Lawrence. And Mexican food has just become more and more popular so it's not too surprising that the ones that were already established could continue getting the business, and others came in and got business too because Mexican food has got more popular and eating out apparently has gotten a lot more popular over the years.

None of the Lawrence Mexican establishments in the 1950s developed along main routes, making it even more impressive that this cuisine would not only catch on within the community, but that two of these initial restaurants would prosper for over five decades.

During the 1950s no restaurants in the telephone book advertised serving exclusively Chinese food. However, from 1952 through 1957 the DeLuxe Café (Fig. 2.16) at 711 Massachusetts Street served a blended cuisine including chop suey and chow mein in addition to chicken dinners, steaks, and chops. The DeLuxe was listed until 1966, but



Fig. 2.16. DeLuxe Café, undated. Located at 711 Massachusetts Street. Source: Duke D'ambra Collection, RH PH 69.277. Kansas Collection. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

beginning in 1958, advertisements dropped the Chinese cuisine and focused only on prime rib and chicken. Therefore, Figure 2.17 does not identify this restaurant as serving an ethnic cuisine in 1960. Sarah Schmidt, a resident of Prairie Commons Apartments, stated that, “when we got to come to the DeLuxe to eat, we thought we were really stepping up because it was one of the nicer restaurants.”

Italian cuisine first appeared in Lawrence in the mid-1950s, and it grew throughout the 1960s (Fig. 2.17). Campus Hideaway Pizzeria on North Park Street, like many of the initial Italian restaurants, primarily served pizza. As the name



Fig. 2.17. Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants in 1960. La Tropicana and El Matador Café were both located on the 400 block of Locust Street in North Lawrence at this time, but only El Matador was listed in the telephone directory, therefore it is the only one displayed for 1960. Pizza Hut, Campus Hideaway Pizzeria, and Roberto's offered Italian cuisine for this year.

suggests, it was frequented by college students plus high schoolers as well. Ms. DeWeese, of Prairie Commons Apartments, recalled, “That [Campus Hideaway Pizzeria] was the one I always thought really got pizza started here in town.” Ms. Kennedy, of Drury Place at Alvamar, similarly stated, “It was the first pizza place that we had in town.”

In 1960, the fast-food chain Pizza Hut opened a store in downtown Lawrence and by the mid-1960s several other pizza establishments had joined the scene. Earl’s Pizza Palace, La Pizza Restaurant, and The Shanty were all downtown, on or near Massachusetts Street, and Pizza Pub was on W. 23rd Street. Pizza was also advertised by restaurants that served a blended cuisine. For example, The Southern Pit Barbeque (Figs. 2.18 and 2.19) near 19th and Massachusetts included pizza on their menu, and the neighboring Old Mission Inn served spaghetti red in addition to steaks and jumbo burgers.



Fig. 2.18. Southern Pit BBQ, 1950s. Located at 1834 Massachusetts Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.



Fig. 2.19. Southern Pit BBQ, 1950s. Restaurant employees. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Roberto's was perhaps the first Italian restaurant in Lawrence to expand entrees beyond pizza. Their telephone directory listing states "Finest Italian Food" and did not advertise pizza. Roberto's was first located downtown on Massachusetts Street in the late 1950s but later moved near campus on Oread Avenue. In the 1970s Tredo's at 944 Massachusetts also served authentic Italian cuisine. Mick Ranney, friend of the late Bill McCain (former owner of the Red Lion Restaurant), remembered: "It was really nice. . . . as a college student in the early '70s, that was my favorite 'date night' restaurant. . . . it's hard to think of [an] Italian restaurant as being ethnic, because it's so prevalent [in 2008], but Tredo's was." Tredo's was a special place for Helen Krische as well: "That was a place where . . . my friends and I would go at the end of the week because we got paid, and that was a treat."

In 1969, a new ethnic cuisine appeared in town via a restaurant called Alfie's Fish and Chips on 6th Street (Fig. 2.20). Advertisements claimed it to be as "English as the Union Jack, Jack" and "Treating you to the tastiest, most delightful, quick snack that ever invaded the colonies." Alfie's was a chain restaurant and was listed in the directories through 1976.

When asked if it took a while for the community to adopt these various ethnic cuisines, Jean Collins, wife of Corbet Collins (former manager of Sandy's Drive-In and Henry's Drive-In), responded, "It was slow getting off the ground but I think Lawrence was ready for it." With two establishments, only a bit of Chinese cuisine was present in the community, but Mexican restaurants and Italian pizza parlors dominated the local ethnic scene through the 1970s.

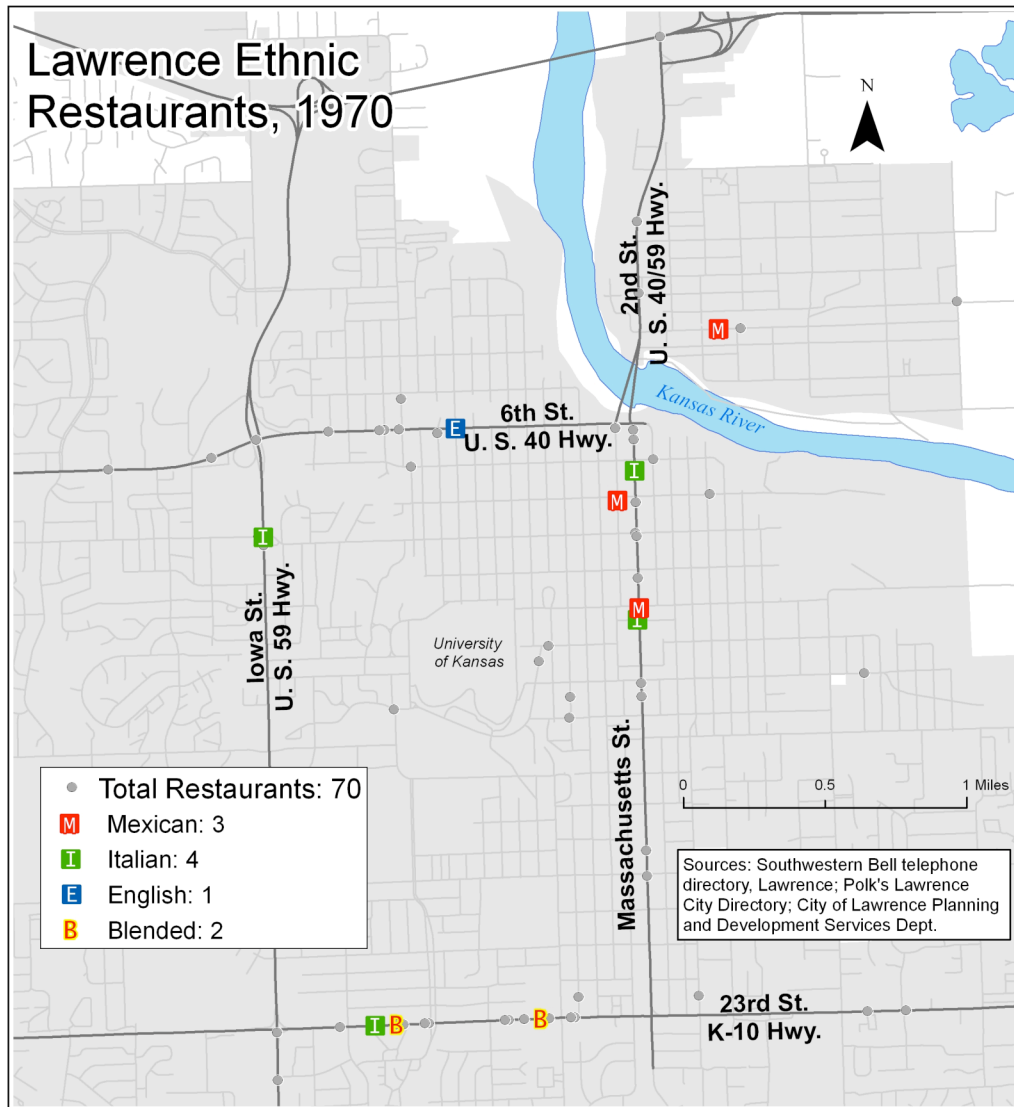


Fig. 2.20. Lawrence Ethnic Restaurants in 1970. Alfie's Fish and Chips on 6th Street brought English cuisine to Lawrence. Two restaurants served more than one type of cuisine and therefore were classified as having blended menus. Carriage Lamp Restaurant at 711 W. 23rd served Italian and American cuisines, Don Chilito's Border Restaurant at 1528 W. 23rd Street served Italian and Mexican cuisines.

Chain Restaurants

Locally owned businesses dominated the Lawrence restaurant scene in the 1950s, but by the next decade they faced competition from chain establishments. Two of the first franchise restaurants were Griff's Burger Bar on West 23rd Street and

Sandy's Drive-In near the intersection of 9th and Iowa.⁴ Sandy's was based in Chicago and was an early competitor of McDonald's. As development spread west in Lawrence, Sandy's located in the recently annexed section just west of Iowa Street. It was just across the street from the city's first, and highly frequented Hillcrest Shopping Center.

Pizza Hut came to Lawrence as the first pizza chain in Lawrence in 1960. For two years it was downtown at 646 Massachusetts Street. It relocated closer to the university in 1962 at 1342 Tennessee Street, then changed locations again two years later to the more fast-food friendly West 23rd Street. Being a fast-food chain it probably fit in better with the drive-ins than with the cafes in the business district. The temporary Tennessee Street location is intriguing, however, conveniently placed between the university and Campus Hideaway Pizzeria. This made Pizza Hut the closest pizza place to campus. The company's success in Lawrence led to a second Pizza Hut opening near 8th and Iowa streets in 1966, not far from the Hillcrest Shopping Center. Chain restaurants increased from approximately five in 1960 to about twenty by 1970.

All of the chain and franchise restaurants identified in 1970 were located on major routes south of the Kansas River. The majority of these restaurants were found not in the downtown area, but on either 23rd Street or 6th Street, with about ten and five outlets, respectively. This presages a pattern developed more fully in later years,

⁴ Chain is a more general term referring to multiple branches of a restaurant under a single owner. Franchise refers to restaurants owned by individuals but under license to a bigger named company. Chains and franchises were identified through Internet searches.

including chains with more than one store typically opening outlets on each of these two main routes. In 1970, however, Pizza Hut was the only franchise with two stores in Lawrence. They located one on 23rd Street and another on Iowa Street, perhaps a better combination at that time given the draw of Hillcrest Shopping Center. Chains and franchises typically highlighted their speedy service, often via drive-through ordering and pick-up. They catered to customers with automobiles, and since the downtown area was primarily pedestrian, saw 6th and 23rd streets as better locations. In addition, retail space would have been cheaper along these roads than in downtown.

Spotlight Restaurants

El Matador Café

A sign across the front window of El Matador Café reads “In business 50 years in 2007,” a rare feat for any business, especially a restaurant (Figs. 2.21 and 2.22). El Matador Café also displays unique characteristics that make its success even more surprising. Unlike most restaurants in town, El Matador is beyond sight of main transportation routes. Located in North Lawrence, El Matador is almost four blocks east of North 2nd Street (U. S. Highway 40/59). Across the street stretches the Union Pacific Railroad line. Few businesses exist adjacent to the restaurant, but just next door is La Tropicana, another Mexican restaurant that has been in operation even longer than El Matador.

Though familial ties exist between the two restaurants, the neighborhood is not otherwise recognized historically as Hispanic. Joe Reyes owns El Matador, while

his cousin owns La Tropicana. Reyes’s grandfather and uncle originally opened La Tropicana in 1951 just after a big flood that year, and it was Joe Reyes’s parents, Felicitas (Betty) Garcia Reyes and T. L. Reyes, who later opened El Matador in the late 1950s. Joe Reyes acquired ownership in 1989.

Reyes does not mind the close proximity of another family-run Mexican restaurant: “I don’t figure it’s competition, I think it’s good variety. Everybody has their own flair. . . . We always seem to have enough business for everybody in Lawrence.” Long-time Lawrence resident Phil Minkin had a similar perspective, “It’s kind of like, are you a Ford person or a Chevy person? Are you a Mac or a PC? Are you a Matador or a Trop?”



Fig. 2.21. “Remember, There’s Only One El Matador Café.” This image is a painting of the original El Matador Café. Two photographs are affixed to the painting, in each of the lower corners. On the right are Betty Garcia Reyes and T. L. Reyes, original owners of the restaurant. On the left is their son, and current owner, Joe Reyes. Photo courtesy of Joe Reyes.



Fig. 2.22. A 2007 photo of the El Matador Café shows the same mural painted on the east side of the building. Just out of view, the neighboring building has been attached with a walkway. This addition provides space for a live band. Photo courtesy of Joe Reyes.

Since El Matador was not established on one of the main routes in Lawrence, Minkin stressed the importance of having a “calling card” to draw in customers. For El Matador, this is a strong emphasis on fresh food. Reyes explained that he never uses a microwave and orders are made individually: “We don’t make the guacamole until you order it.”

Phil Minkin’s memory supported this:

We used to call him grandpa, the man who ran it for all those years. You’d go in and order and say, “I’d like an order of guacamole,” and sometimes you could see grandpa [T. L. Reyes] take his apron off, go out the back door, get in his truck, probably drive to--there was a Rusty’s [grocery store]--buy the avocados, come back, and make your guacamole. It was that kind of place.

Ms. DeWeese, of Prairie Commons Apartments, also remembered this type of service at El Matador, but from the other side of the counter:

. . . we bought this little grocery store over in North Lawrence . . . the El Matador, that’s there on Locust Street, it was just around the corner from our store. And those guys, they were just new, I think, in the restaurant business at that time, ‘cause . . . a lot of times at noon they would come over to the store and buy hamburger and get lettuce and go back and fix an order that they had just taken.

Most of El Matador’s patrons are return customers, and many have been honored with a custom dish named after them. The restaurant menu lists those who have frequently visited throughout the years, along with their usual orders. Examples are Dr. E’s Special: three tacos and three tostadas, or Dr. Branson’s Special: four tacos and a bowl of chili. Mayors, professors, doctors, and a fire chief are a few of those who have been recognized. Helen Krische enjoys the local atmosphere El Matador provides and stated, “. . . people from around town, they have their specials

or their combination plates named after them; I think that's really neat; it's kind of like a history lesson in itself, a who's who."

El Matador has maintained the small community atmosphere that was common in Lawrence when the restaurant opened in the late 1950s. This is rare to find in 2008, with the city population three times the size of that in 1950. Reyes stated, "... it's nice to know and look over [at] your door and see people you recognize. And if they're not there you wonder, 'Are they ok? You know, I didn't see them this weekend; I can usually count on them.'"

El Matador may not have felt a negative impact on business via remote location, but it has been affected by liquor issues. Reyes's father had eliminated the sale of all alcohol in the restaurant prior to his death in 1986. After careful consideration, Joe Reyes reversed part of this decision by allowing the sale of beer with 3.2 percent alcohol. He explained, "And I told Dad, 'You know, I got these guys saying 'Joe, we like our beer with our pizza and with our tacos.'" And he [T. L. Reyes] was going to put it back in, so I did after he passed on."

Currently, the only alcohol available at the restaurant is 3.2 percent beer, but clientele interest in higher alcohol Mexican beer and in margaritas has persuaded Reyes to consider changing his rules again. He realizes the demand, but also wants to maintain the family atmosphere El Matador has offered for so many years:

When I put liquor-by-the-drink in [the menu], my first thing is, I'm going to put a big zero tolerance [of inappropriate behavior in the restaurant]; [no] profanities, [no] obscenities. You know, just not here, because I love seeing the kids. Well, my grandkids and my kids grew up in here, and so, that's something we like, is a family atmosphere.

To maintain a restaurant for so many years, one might think that it would need to be open for as many meals as possible. Surprisingly though, in 2008 Reyes was operating the restaurant only for limited hours during the week. It served in the evening, 5:00 P. M. – 9:30 P. M., Tuesday through Saturday, plus a lunch buffet on Fridays 11:30 A. M. – 2:00 P. M.

Sandy's Drive-In / Bucky's Drive-In

Although the McDonald's restaurant chain did not arrive in Lawrence until 1970, other fast-food hamburger "joints" filled that role throughout the 1960s. One of the first of these was Sandy's Drive-In, based in Illinois. This establishment saw itself as a competitor to the nationally expanding McDonald's and followed a similar quick-service approach. The Sandy's name was a Scottish wordplay on the Irish McDonald's label (Wundram, 2005). Their trademarks included a dancing Scottish girl, a fish sandwich known as the "Big Scot," and plaid decorations.

In 1961, Sandy's Drive-In opened a block west of Iowa Street, on 9th Street, where Corbet Collins managed it for five years (Fig. 2.23). Collins's wife, Jean Collins, described Sandy's in the beginning:

At first, when we first came here [to Lawrence] and had Sandy's . . . there was Griff's [Burger Bar] on 23rd Street, . . . [and] we were the only two fast-foods, . . . [and] KU did not feed [students] on Sunday nights. We always had college students lined up all around the building . . . and I would make milkshakes, . . . and I'd have to wear gloves because my hands were freezing



Fig. 2.23. Sandy's Drive-In, 1962. Located at 2120 W. 9th Street. Photo courtesy of Jean Collins.

. . . for about two hours on Sunday nights I would make milkshakes just as fast as I could go. . . . and I was always behind.

She added, “You could get a hamburger, and fries, and milkshake for less than a dollar.”

In 1966, Corbet Collins moved on to manage another fast-food chain in Lawrence, Henry’s Drive-In on 6th Street, and Duane Buck became manager at Sandy’s. Buck initiated Brown Bag Specials, which were similar to what is commonly known a combo meal (burger, fries, and drink for one price). He recalled serving them before other well-known fast-food businesses, including McDonald’s. Buck explained that, at that time, other fast-food restaurants used white paper bags, so it was unique to use a brown bag. Buck also implemented “Pepsi Hour” from 3:00-4:00 P. M. During this hour, conveniently right when school was getting out, there were discounts on soft drinks, and Buck remembered three hundred kids in the restaurant at times.

When Buck became manager of Sandy’s, five people owned the Lawrence restaurant, along with five other franchise sites, most of them in Illinois. The Sandy’s Drive-In chain later sold out to Hardee’s Restaurant in 1972 (Rother, 2008), but these five owners instead converted their establishments into a new fast-food drive-in called Bucky’s. In 1975, the Sandy’s name in Lawrence officially changed to Bucky’s (D. Buck, personal communication, October 24, 2008). Jean Collins explained the transition:

. . . later on Sandy’s sold out to Hardee’s in that area, the Illinois area, and the owners of this one, in Lawrence, they wanted to keep this one and I think they had four or five others [Sandy’s Drive-Ins], and so [one of] their son’s

name was Buck and so they decided to just call it Bucky's . . . so there was about four or five different ones [restaurants], back in Illinois and around named Bucky's. . . . So it's kind of odd that the person that came to be manager of Bucky's, and owner in the end, of Bucky's for a long, long time, his name was Duane Buck.

When Sandy's became Bucky's, the restaurant name was the only thing that changed. The menu items stayed the same. In the 1970s, Duane Buck slowly bought out the other owners and became the sole owner of the local Bucky's until 2004. In 2007, three years after selling his store to a different owner, the business closed.

The building that housed Sandy's Drive-In and Bucky's Drive-In is located across from the Hillcrest Shopping Center on West 9th Street (See Appendix C). Since 9th Street is not one of the four main routes identified in this study, I raised the question to Duane Buck about how location affected business at the restaurant. He explained that, in the past, Hillcrest Shopping Center was the "hub" of the northwest part of town: "It was the busiest location in town for twenty-five years." During that time, Hillcrest was the home of Rusty's I.G.A. supermarket, a pharmacy, a movie theatre, and a bowling alley. He stated that the biggest impact on his business was the development of a large Dillons grocery store further west on 6th Street, between Iowa Street and Kasold Drive, in the mid-1980s. Expanding the town along these roads redirected traffic so that fewer shoppers passed Bucky's while running routine errands.

Red Lion Café

In the mid-1970s a cafeteria-style restaurant opened in downtown Lawrence at 6th and Vermont streets, a block west of Massachusetts. Mick Ranney knew the

owner, Bill McCain, personally, and he described the restaurant as, “. . . inexpensive and quick. People could go there on their lunch break, they could get their food in about seventy seconds, sit down, and they could be gone in about twenty minutes. . . . He would serve maybe seven hundred meals for lunch.” In addition to quick, cheap meals, Bill McCain drew many customers in with his “colorful” personal character (Toplikar, 1990). McCain was a strong, powerful man with a flat-top haircut, a beard, and a potbelly. He decorated himself with diamond rings and gold necklaces, and each tooth of his dentures contained a one-carat or more diamond, treasures acquired via a pawn shop that he also owned. Ranney described why the customers kept coming back:

. . . his customer base were real loyal, a lot of them would be there every day. And, he was kind of forgetful, and he wouldn't remember his [your] name, but he would interchangingly call you “Dear,” “Darling,” . . . or maybe some other name. And it was all affectionate . . . he just couldn't remember people's names. And he would call me . . . “Dear” too, and he knew me quite well. And part of the reason that he had a lot of people show up every day is, every now and then he would give away free lunch. But he wouldn't announce what it was. I mean, it just happened one day. . . . you didn't want to miss it

The Red Lion Café was open only for lunch hours, and then, Ranney added, only when McCain “wanted to be. . . . I think it [Red Lion Cafe] was closed in the summertime.” There was no signage on the outside of the building, McCain did not advertise, and Ranney remembered the



Fig. 2.24. The two-toned red lion statue sat in the window of the Red Lion Café and was the only indicator as to what was in the building, as there was no signage for the restaurant. Photo by Brackhan.

curtains being closed most of the time. The only indication as to what was in the building was a concrete statue of a red lion (Fig. 2.24) displayed in the window. More curious still, Ranney stated: “The only day that he would leave his window [curtains] open was the day that he would reopen after being gone all summer. And so, you just kept looking to see if the window was open yet, and if it was, you could start going to eat there again.” He continued:

Usually you had . . . a main meal that he would prepare a lot of, and that’s what most people would get. And you might have two or three other choices that were also kind of main for that day. And then he had a few staples that you could kind of special order, like a hotdog or whatever, but he would have the daily special and then you might have three or four other choices, and if you were trained as a customer, you knew that you had to come prepared to answer, ‘cause he’d hear the door open, he’d walk up, he’d be ready to scoop out your meal, and he’d say, “How ‘bout you, Dear?” and you were supposed to respond. And if you got tongue-tied and you didn’t know how to respond, he’d say, “Mother,” referring to his wife, “I think we have a stranger.” . . .

Ranney explained how this initiated a routine:

There’s kind of a floor show, and it was to watch Bill attack strangers, and it’s kind of like an initiation, because your first time occurs sometime and you have to go through this process of being humiliated by the guy. And so he’d say, “Well, how ‘bout you, Dear, or Darling . . . ?” and then if you didn’t respond, he announces that there’s a stranger here, who doesn’t know the rules. And then he would say things like, “I don’t have all day, make up your . . .” you know, “blankety-blank mind.” And you know the poor stranger, and oftentimes people would send their friends in, knowing that they’re going to go through this process and sometimes they would bring them in, just to watch them go through this process, and I went through it, I mean, he yelled at me the first time. But then, once I knew that I had to answer like that, it was, it’s kind of a fun thing. Kinda like it’s almost like it was your little club.

A sign inside the restaurant read “Please, do not tell anyone about the Lion!

We have NO TIME for STRANGERS. Remember, it’s your seat!” (Fig. 2.25). With this type of reverse psychology, McCain was able to spread the word about his establishment without the costs of advertising. Mr. Ranney mentioned, “Because

there was always a competition to get a chair . . . and he's telling you 'don't tell anyone about this place.' So what are you gonna do? You're gonna tell everyone you know about that place."

In 2008, the sign hung in an unrelated

bar known as the Red Lyon Tavern. A small black piece of tape was added to the 'I' in LION to make a 'Y' for the spelling of LYON at the tavern.

Ms. DeWeese, of Prairie Commons Apartments, had mixed feelings about the Red Lion Restaurant: "I remember people talking about that guy [McCain]. . . . you go through the line and he was kind of hard to get along with, I think." Ms. DeWeese visited a few times, but not much: "I had a friend who was in there one day and he got onto her, but I don't remember what it was about, but he got onto her and I think she left." When asked if she remembered Bill McCain having diamonds in his teeth, she replied: "Oh, I don't know about that. I don't know about that. I wouldn't be surprised!"

Ranney explained that storytelling was one of McCain's appeals:

I'm sure his stories were bigger than reality, but he was telling me one story where he was robbed at gunpoint, and he had a stack of one-dollar bills and he grabbed the stack of one-dollar bills and it kind of fell out of his [McCain's] hands, all of the money went out on the floor and when the guy went to pick it up he [McCain] jumped over the counter and started to beat him up. So it was like, who knows if his stories were real, but he . . . had this crowd of people who were fascinated by him and he would tell stories all day long, and he was the floor show, so you went there partially to eat cheap food, and quick, on your lunch break, but you also went there to take in the floor show, see him humiliate strangers . . . it felt like a club.



Fig. 2.25. One of the signs posted in the Red Lion Café. In 2008, it hung in the Red Lyon Tavern (no association to the café). A piece of black tape was added to the 'I' in LION to assimilate to the spelling of LYON at the tavern. Photo by Brackhan.

He continued:

One of his favorite sayings was, if someone came in with a friend and said, “Oh, I’ll just have a Coke.” He would say, “No eat, no seat.” And then, “Blankety-blank, you.” Keep in mind . . . if you’re a stranger and you just walk in for the first time, you’re not going to anticipate such rudeness. But also, . . . one of the reasons you’d be there was so you could witness this. Cause you knew it was going to happen every now and then. . . . but it was part of the initiation and so, you either could appreciate it, or it would really tick you off. And you just walk away and leave, or you cry, or who knows what.

Ranney felt that other restaurateurs had respect for McCain’s business. He estimated that the Red Lion served about the same number of meals on most days as another successful local restaurant, Cornucopia, but Cornucopia would have a wait-staff of thirty, cooks, overhead costs, and advertising costs. The Lion operated in a small building with just McCain, his wife, and maybe one other person, but:

. . . he [McCain] ran them through . . . and I think he learned that if you give people too much time to chew, they’re gonna question whether or not they’re savoring a good meal or not, but if you cram it down as fast as you can, because there’s kind of a pressure that people are standing, waiting to get your table, so you wound up eating quick.

Ranney was not sure why the Red Lion was closed in the summer, but suggested that it could have been due to poor air conditioning or students being gone at that time. Another thought was that McCain was just open when he wanted to be. His other business, a pawn shop, demonstrated a similar mentality as the only sign stating the store hours said something such as “We will close at three.” Ranney explained, “I mean, it didn’t say 12:00-3:00, it just said ‘til three. So he was just here whenever he wanted to be, but he wasn’t going to be here beyond three. But it didn’t mean he was going to be here at 10:00, maybe not even by 2:30; I mean, who knows?”

CHAPTER THREE

Ethnic Cuisine Boom and Changing Liquor Laws: 1980-1999

By 1980, Lawrence's population had reached 52,738. Ethnic diversity increased from previous decades but the white population still constituted 87 percent of the total (U. S. Census Bureau, 2008). In 1990, the population was 65,608 with ethnic diversity remaining at the same percentage level as the decade before (U. S. Census Bureau, 2008). Still, ethnic restaurants had begun to catch on in the community. Thirty existed in 1980 as compared to ten in 1970, and this pattern of growth continued through the next two decades. Because the availability of ethnic cuisine increased faster than population diversity, this change of restaurant offerings likely is correlated more with lifestyle rather than with the population itself.

Subarna Bhattachan, co-owner of three ethnic restaurants in Lawrence, feels that the university has been a strong influence on the success of ethnic restaurants:

The university has an impact because . . . it's twofold, one there are quite a few international students, so they all like to go eat their food, and then second, [it] also has to do with that a lot of students, staff, and faculty [who] have traveled abroad and tasted cuisines from different parts of the world they know. I have people that come here [Genovese], professors, who've been to Italy and they really, they're like, ok this is as authentic food from . . . today's Italy as it gets. So I think that definitely helps having the university. If the university was not in Lawrence, I don't think that you would see so much of a diverse cuisine or restaurant scene because that's definitely the stimulus right there. And also, you know, parts of Lawrence [do] have that population base that are more open, more liberal, more willing to try things than other small Kansas towns.

In addition to diversifying ethnic cuisine, the directory data for this time period saw advances in Lawrence's vegetarian and eclectic American cuisine. Presumably, the

university community and younger generations were essential for the success of all these types of establishments.

Restaurant Growth in the 1980s

Lawrence had developed dramatically to the south and west by 1980, which caused the highest concentration of restaurants to shift, for the first time, away from downtown to West 23rd Street (Figs. 3.1 and 3.2). Only 21 of the 98 restaurants in

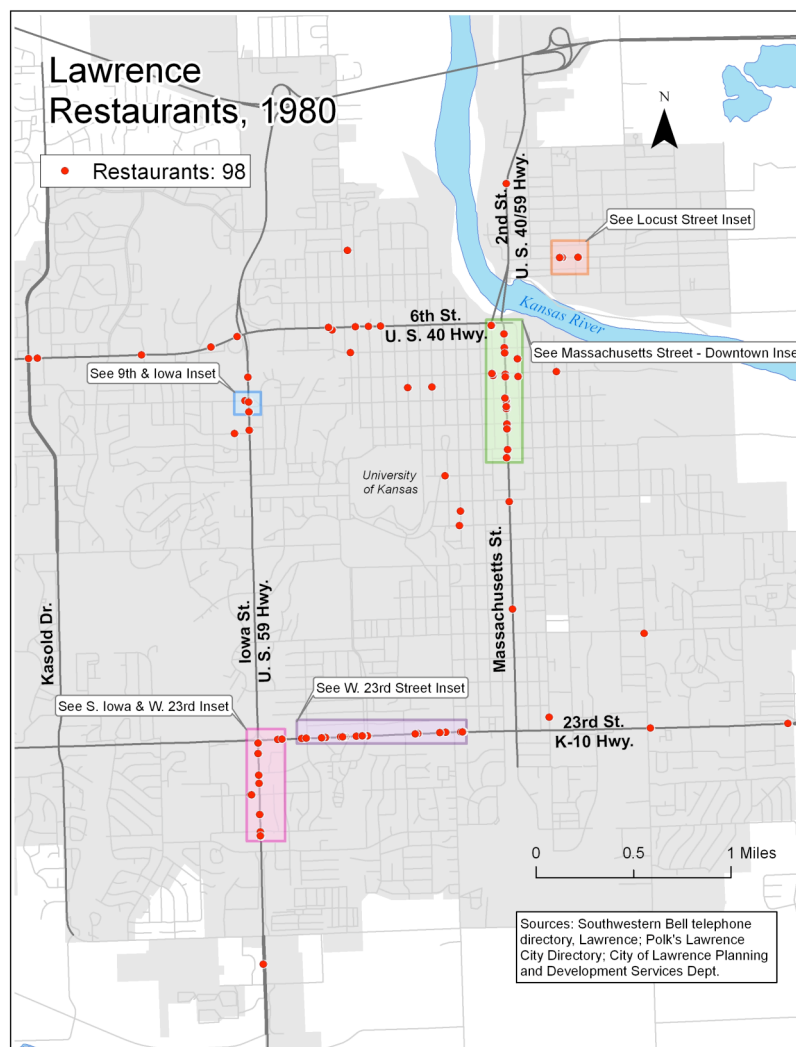


Fig. 3.1. Lawrence restaurants in 1980. Heavy development to the south and west shifted the primary concentration of restaurants from Massachusetts Street downtown to W. 23rd and S. Iowa streets. Areas with restaurant clusters are displayed via insets in Figure 3.2.

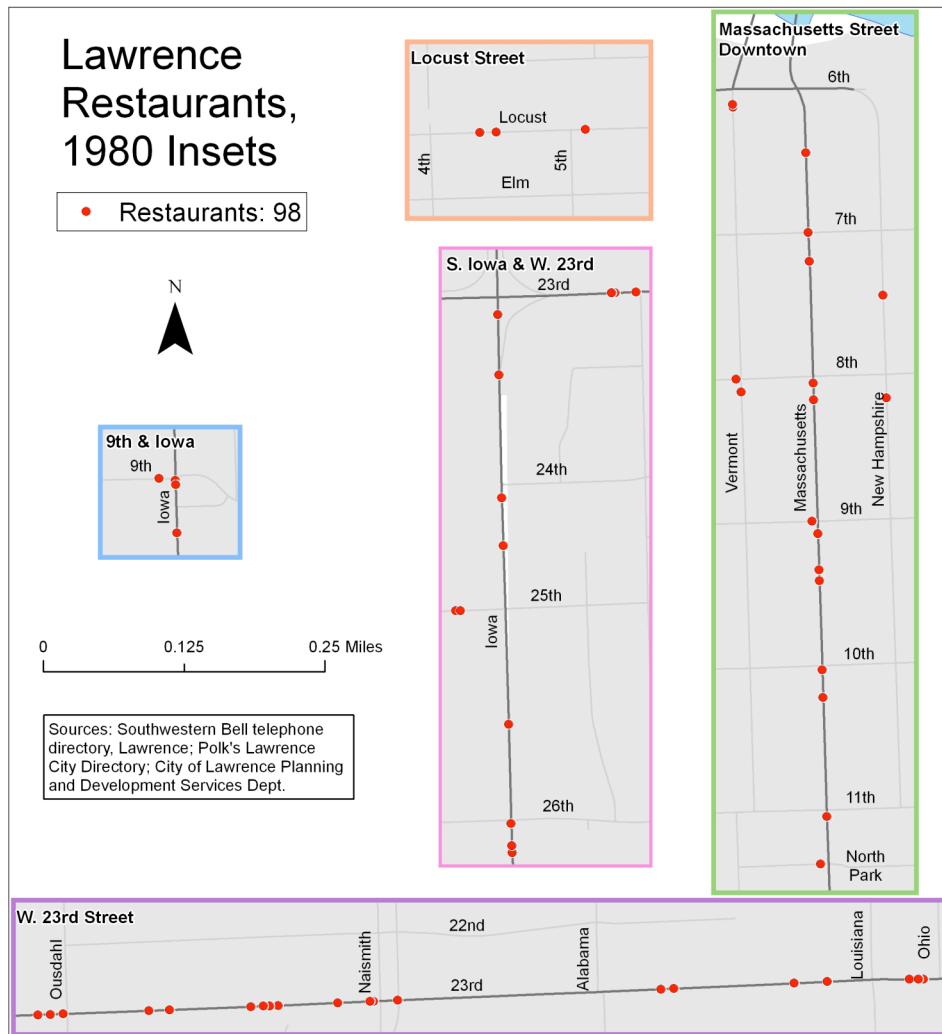


Fig. 3.2. Lawrence restaurants 1980 insets.

1980 were located near Massachusetts Street. This was roughly the same number as in the previous decades, indicating little growth to compete with restaurant development along other routes.

The Pentimento Coffeehouse and Café (Fig. 3.3) at 611 Vermont Street was one block west of Massachusetts Street and listed in the directories from 1978 through 1980. Phil Minkin recalled the atmosphere:

[The Pentimento was a] very notable restaurant; it was strictly vegetarian. They also had kind of home-grown entertainment, . . . anybody who wanted to go up there could, some good, some comparisonly bad, but always interesting. . . . Service wasn't all that great sometimes, but they did have some sandwiches and things that other restaurants picked up after they went out of business. . . . I think it was either at the Blue Bird [Cafe] or Paradise [Cafe], it was a Pentimento [sandwich], which was cream cheese, black olives, and sprouts on whole grain bread, great sandwich. So it kind of transcended But [it was] a very eccentric kind of place.

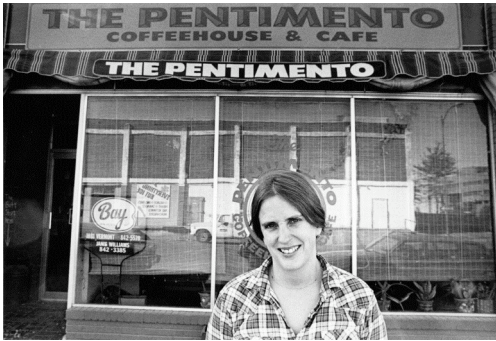


Fig. 3.3. Pentimento, 1980s. Located at 611 Vermont Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

A local article described it as “Lawrence’s only natural food restaurant with live entertainment. The Pentimento serves no sugar or preservative ridden foods and no smoking or alcohol is allowed. Some of the Pentimento’s food is a little bland, but there is no doubt that it is healthy. For some, this is worth the sacrifice” (Hiner, 1980).

Restaurants had increased along 23rd Street, mostly between Iowa and Massachusetts streets (Fig. 3.4). By 1980, there were twenty-eight eating establishments in this area, which outnumbered the restaurants near Massachusetts Street by seven. In addition to the western growth along 23rd Street, businesses located south from there along Iowa Street, which was developing as a major general shopping area. From having only seven restaurants in 1970, Iowa Street’s total jumped to twenty by 1980.



Fig. 3.4. West 23rd Street, 1977. Looking east from about the 23rd Street and Ousdahl Road intersection. Twenty-Third Street had a boom of growth by 1980. Several fast-food chains occupied the north side of the road. Those identified in the photo include: Taco John's, Griff's Burger Bar, Pizza Hut, and Sizzler Steakhouse. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

New restaurants had located west along 6th Street at a consistent rate over the years of this study and totaled 14 in 1980 as compared to 11 in 1970 and 5 in 1960. In North Lawrence, North 2nd Street maintained about the same number of restaurants as in previous decades, with just two. Strick's Café (previously listed as Strick's Drive-In and Strick's Diner, and later as Strick's Restaurant) at 732 N. 2nd Street was still in operation, and had been listed since 1956. Phil Minkin remembered it: "[Strick's was] open early for breakfast and lunch; it was the only place you could go where there would be twelve pick-ups and two passenger cars, I mean, it was that kind of place. It was kind of a North Lawrence place. They had pancakes the size of hubcaps."

In 1980, 85 of the 98 total restaurants were within one block of a main road. Of the thirteen that occupied relatively remote locations, four were close to the university. The Hawk's Crossing (Fig. 3.5) had replaced Rock Chalk Café at 618 W. 12th Street. Although the name of the establishment changed several times over the

years, the building tended to attract similar, anti-establishment crowds (Swartz, 1984).



Fig. 3.5. The Hawk's Crossing, 1980s. Located at 618 W. 12th Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

The Jayhawk Café and The Wagon Wheel Café were both still in operation on the east side of Mt. Oread. Pyramid Pizza was new to the area and listed at the same address as The Wagon Wheel Cafe. A new neighborhood of small restaurants developed north of the university, at the base of Mt. Oread near the intersection of 9th and Mississippi streets. These included Taco Grande and the Hole-in-the-Wall Delicatessen and Sandwich Shop. Phil Minkin was familiar with the latter:

Another place to note that was very popular with students . . . it was, in what was like a 7-Eleven but in one corner, there was a place where you could go and get sandwiches; they had great Reuben sandwiches, it was cheap, fast . . . it was a great place to go. . . . [It was] called the Hole-in-the-Wall [One time] the brakes slipped on somebody's car . . . and he drove through the front, so there literally was a hole in the wall in the Hole-in-the-Wall.

The Hole-in-the-Wall was inconsistently listed in the directories from 1971 through 1982.

East of Massachusetts Street, two restaurants operated at a distance from main roads: the Greene Gable Café five blocks east of Massachusetts Street at 514 E. 8th Street, and the King Arthur Restaurant in a strip mall at the intersection of 19th Street and Haskell Avenue. In North Lawrence, three restaurants remained clustered

together away from North 2nd Street: La Tropicana and El Matador, both on the 400 block of Locust Street, and The Fort at 508 Locust Street, which had previously been the Shamrock Grill.

Two other areas in Lawrence contained eating establishments more than a block away from the main road. Country Inn was north of 6th Street between Iowa and Massachusetts streets and Bobby Bell's BBQ, which was owned by a NFL Hall of Fame player for the Kansas City Chiefs, was south of Hillcrest Shopping Center and just barely beyond one block west of Iowa Street.

Restaurant Growth in the 1990s

By 1990, restaurant development displayed the same pattern of growth seen the previous decade (Figs. 3.6 and 3.7). The number of eating establishments totaled 118, up from 98 in 1980. Twenty-three restaurants were located near Massachusetts Street, a slight increase from the 20 in 1980.

Paradise Café (Fig. 3.8) at 728 Massachusetts Street was listed from 1984 through 2002 and advertised their "pleasantly priced innovative American cuisine," (Southwestern Bell, 1990⁵). Phil Minkin described the establishment:

. . . [Paradise Café] was many peoples' beloved restaurant. Their motto was "Good real food." And that's what they served. . . . [They were] only open for breakfast and lunch, then they combined with some friends of mine who had a restaurant in Baldwin, and then they started opening for lunch and dinner and they had fresh fish, and real mashed potatoes and just a great place. . . . It was where you went to see everybody on Friday and Saturday night. . . . I can't say enough about that place.

⁵ Southwestern Bell telephone directories and Polk's city directories are listed separately at end of the bibliography (See pages 98 to 99).

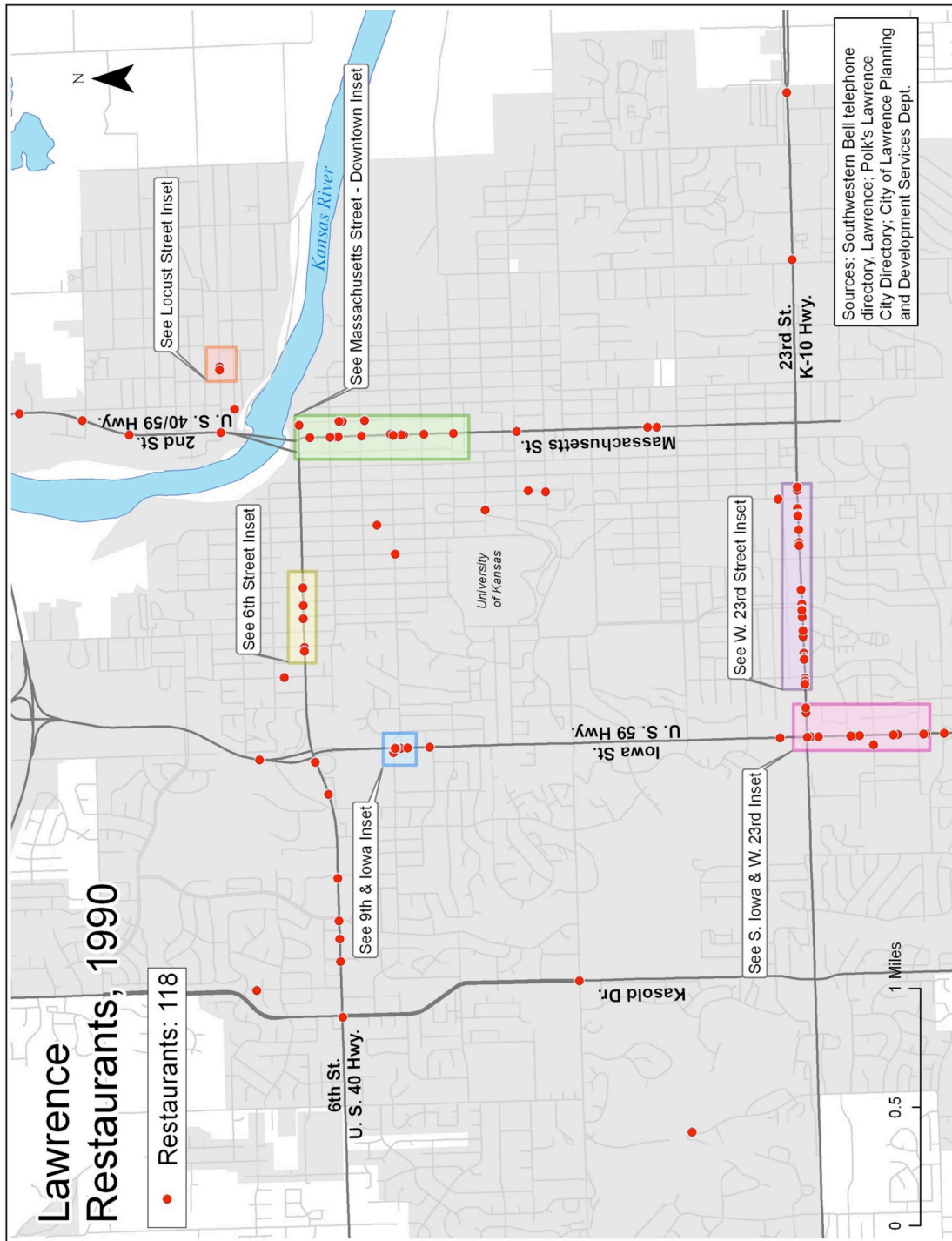


Fig. 3.6. Lawrence restaurants in 1990. A high concentration of restaurants continued to develop along W. 23rd and S. Iowa streets. Areas with restaurant clusters are displayed via insets in Figure 3.6.

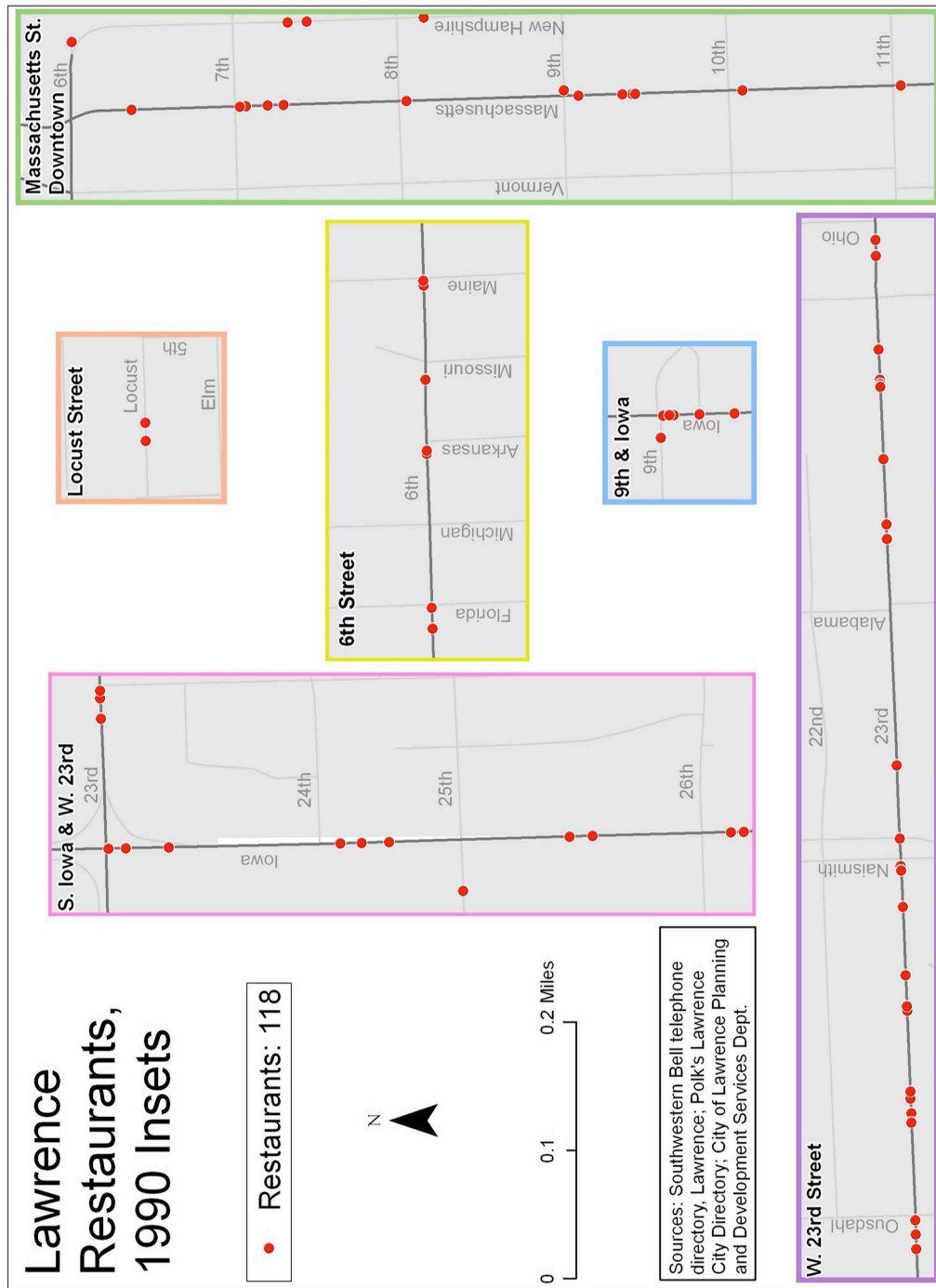


Fig. 3.7. Lawrence restaurants 1990 insets.

Herbivores (Fig. 3.9) at 9 E. 8th Street (back half of Sunflower Outdoor and Bike Shop in 2008), provided an eclectic selection of cuisine from 1992 through 1996. Phil Minkin recalled: “They [Herbivores] had a wide variety of interesting vegetarian stuff. And to this day the best pad thai that I’ve ever had, with tofu. And [they had] great soups and interesting sandwiches.”

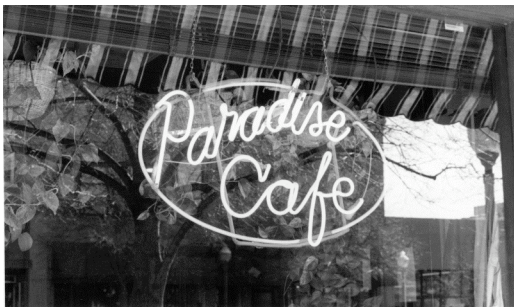


Fig. 3.8. Paradise Café, 1995-96. Located at 728 Massachusetts Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.



Fig. 3.9. Herbivores, 1992-93. Located at 9 E. 8th Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Lawrence development occurred primarily in the southwest part of the city. Twenty-Third Street remained the most concentrated area of restaurants with a total of 35, but Iowa Street totals rose to 26. Fifi’s Restaurant was located along the northern stretch of Iowa Street, in the old hub of Hillcrest Shopping Center. Helen Krische visited Fifi’s in the past: “. . . my friends and I went there to eat, and it was kind of an upscale restaurant, and only when we felt like we had, you know, quite a bit of money to splurge we’d go to Fifi’s.” Phil Minkin also was familiar with this establishment and described it as: “. . . upscale, but not hugely upscale. . . . They served very good food, but a little on the upscale side. Dining-out, instead of just

going out to eat and getting a pizza.” James Shortridge was told that this was basketball coach Roy Williams’s favorite Lawrence restaurant.

Sixth Street had developed only a few new eating establishments by this year, for a total of 18, but Kasold Drive, a new major road one mile west of Iowa Street had begun to show growth. Strip malls were created at the intersection of 15th Street (Bob Billings Parkway in 2008) and Kasold Drive that housed the Brass Apple Grill and Bar and The Jade Garden. Two additional restaurants opened along North 2nd Street for a total of four. Strick’s Restaurant still operated at 732 N. 2nd Street, and closer to the interstate was Turbo Tacos. Johnny’s Tavern, which had been established in 1953, was listed for the first time in 1990 as a restaurant. It was (and is) near the Kansas River at the intersection of 2nd and Locust streets. Even closer to the river and one block east of North 2nd Street was a new establishment, La Familia Café at 300 Elm.

Restaurants were more concentrated along main routes in 1990 than ever before. Establishments located elsewhere tended to be either in North Lawrence or near the university campus, as was seen in earlier years. La Tropicana and El Matador were away from the main road in North Lawrence. Near the university restaurant numbers increased slightly. Jayhawk Café, The Wagon Wheel, and Pyramid Pizza maintained operation at the same locations as in 1980. Atop Mt. Oread, the Hawk’s Crossing had been replaced by Rock Chalk Bar, and the buildings adjacent to the bar provided a variety of eating options: Rudy’s Pizza at 620 W.

12th Street, Yello Sub (Fig. 3.10) at 624 W. 12th Street, and The Glass Onion (Fig. 3.11) upstairs from Yello Sub.



Fig. 3.10. Yello Sub, 1990s. Located at 624 W. 12th Street. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.



Fig. 3.11. The Glass Onion, 1987-88. Located upstairs from Yello Sub. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

The Glass Onion offered different options for cuisine in Lawrence. Helen Krische saw it as: “. . . kind of a neat place to eat on campus, because they had a lot of vegetarian stuff.” Phil Minkin recalled that it “served soups and sandwiches and interesting kinds of stuff. . . . smoothies and coffees. It was never as popular as Yello Sub, but it was kind of a hangout.”

Farther north of campus, at the bottom of Mt. Oread near the 9th and Mississippi intersection, Johnny’s Classic Burgers had opened and Pup’s Grill had replaced Taco Grande. Phil Minkin remembered Pup’s Grill as being one of about three places that served Chicago-style hotdogs:

For a brief period of time there were at least three Chicago-style hotdog places in Lawrence. There are a lot of kids from Chicago that go to KU. . . . [They served] big, all-beef, kosher-style hotdogs with all kinds of special trimmings. And there was a place inside where the Bottleneck is [737 New Hampshire Street], called the Red Hot Garage, and then there was another one out on either 23rd Street or Iowa [Chicago Style at 1601 W. 23rd Street], they all served Chicago-style hotdogs, they came in quickly and they went away quickly. . . .[I] think Lawrence still needs a good hotdog place.

One other restaurant established far from main routes, Alvamar Golf and Country Club. Located north of 23rd Street and west of Kasold Drive, it was the farthest restaurant west within the city limits.

Ethnic Restaurants

Along with the increase of total restaurant numbers in Lawrence during the 1980s, diversity of ethnic establishments multiplied as well (Fig. 3.12). Thirty ethnic restaurants existed in Lawrence in 1980 and forty-six in 1990. This was a significant jump from the ten in 1970. Mexican and Italian continued to be the most popular of these cuisines, with twelve Mexican and nine Italian restaurants in 1980 and sixteen Mexican and fifteen Italian restaurants in 1990. These values generally support Zelinsky's findings that Mexican was the dominant ethnic cuisine in Mid-America. However, one could argue that Italian was just as common in 1980 Lawrence since, of the five additional restaurants that served blended cuisines four offered Italian dishes and only one served Mexican. Similarly, Italian may have been more common than Mexican cuisine in 1990 since, of the seven blended cuisine restaurants, six served Italian and only one served Mexican.

With the exception of El Matador and La Tropicana in North Lawrence, the ten other Mexican restaurants in 1980 were distributed fairly evenly. Nine were

along the main routes: one on Massachusetts Street, one on Iowa Street, two on 6th Street, and five on 23rd Street. The tenth establishment, Taco Grande at 847 Indiana Street, was just north of campus at the base of Mt. Oread.

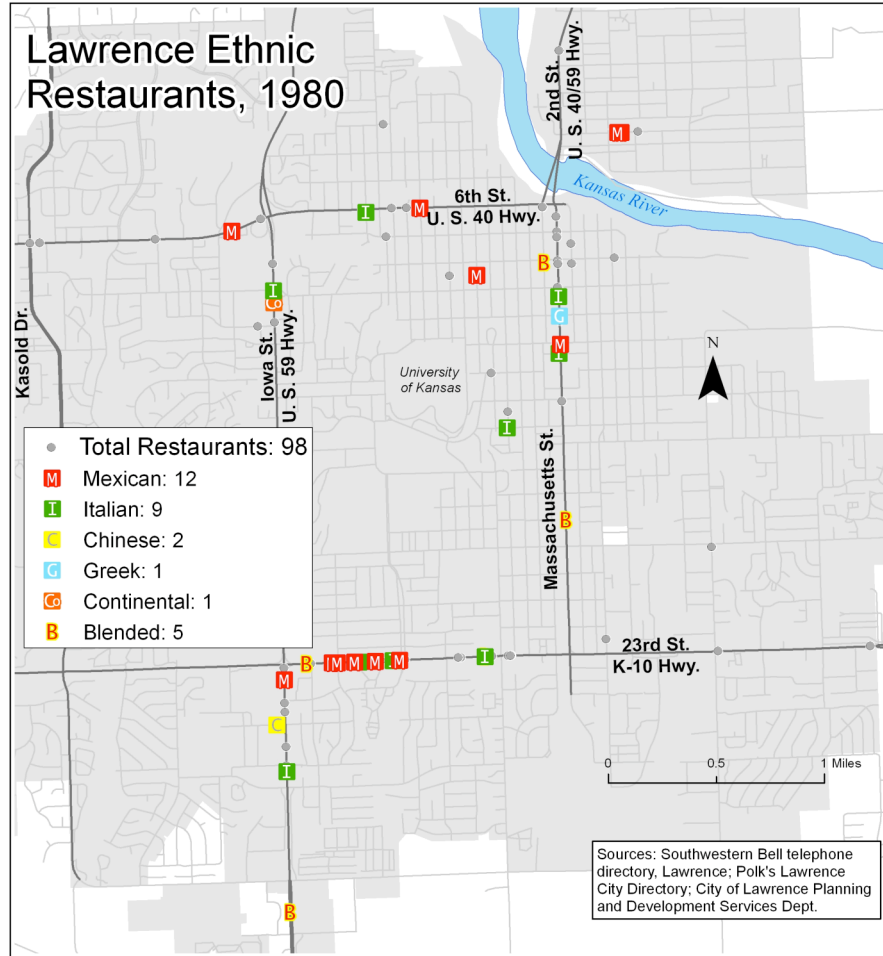


Fig. 3.12. Lawrence ethnic restaurants in 1980. Significant growth had occurred since 1970, with thirty ethnic restaurants in 1980 as opposed to ten in 1970. In addition to total numbers, the variety of cuisine diversified considerably.

By 1990, several more Mexican restaurants developed (Fig. 3.13) including Turbo Tacos in North Lawrence at 913 N. 2nd Street and a second Taco Bell at 1220 W. 6th Street (the first was at 1408 W. 23rd Street), which was about one block from Taco John's at 1101 W. 6th Street. The close proximity of the family-owned

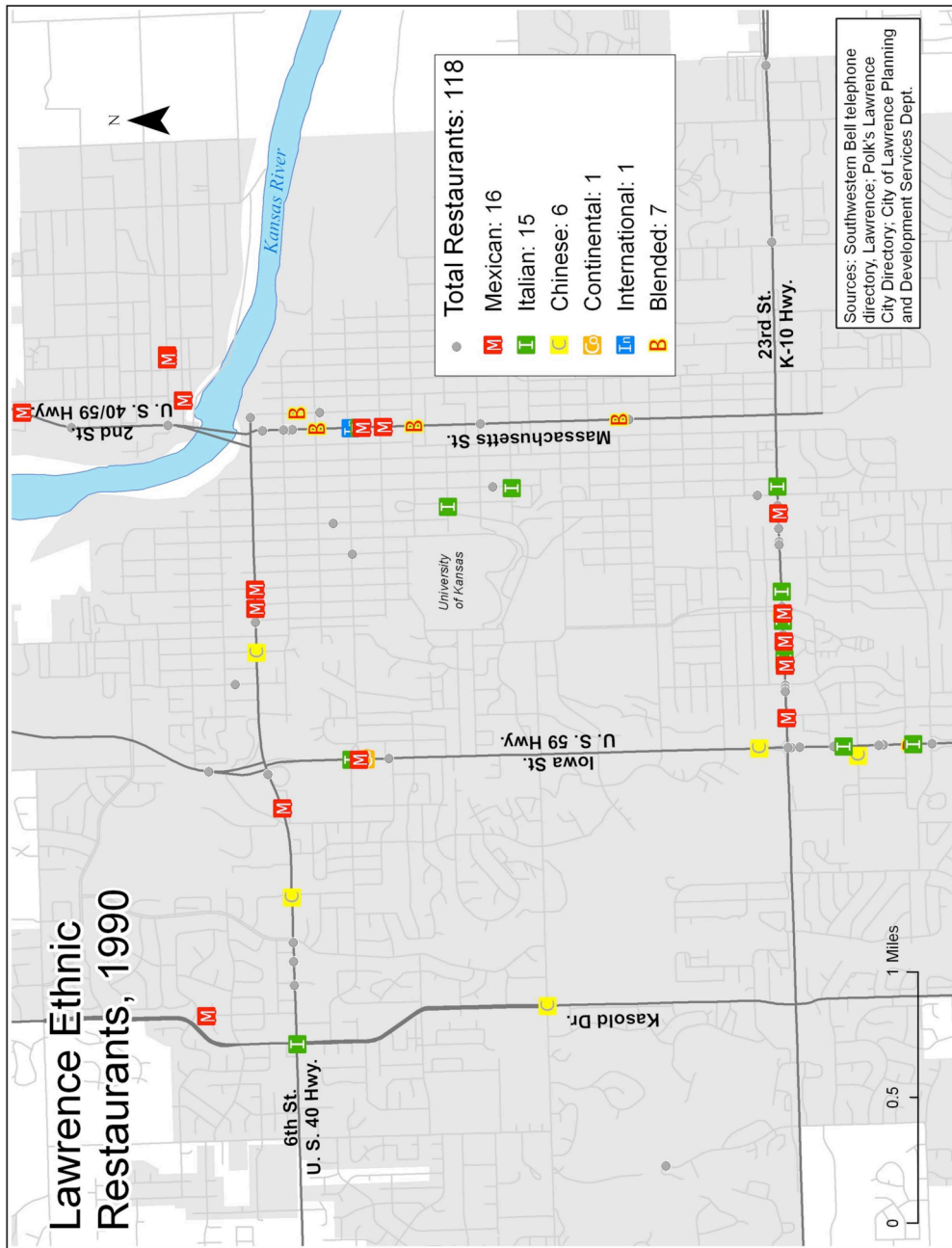


Fig. 3.13. Lawrence ethnic restaurants in 1990. Ethnic restaurants grew to a total of 46 by 1990.

restaurants in North Lawrence may not have been arranged to encourage competition against one another, but surely the cluster of fast-food chains on 6th Street had this technique in mind as Taco John's located close to its competitor, Taco Bell.

Curiously, a third home-owned Mexican restaurant opened in North Lawrence within three blocks of El Matador and La Tropicana. Its owner, Jenny Reyes, is a sister of Joe Reyes (owner of El Matador). Her La Familia Café operated at 300 Elm Street, one block east of North 2nd Street and along the Kansas River from 1988 to 1990. Then it relocated to downtown at 733 New Hampshire Street. Opening La Familia Café in North Lawrence would have had at least two benefits for the new business: cheaper rent than downtown, and recognition via proximity to the other family Mexican restaurants. La Familia Carry Out at 2420 Iowa Street was also listed in the directories for 1993 and 1994, as well as another La Familia location at 925 Iowa in 1994 only. Although ownership later changed to Phillip Rodriguez (Polk's City Directory, 2005), the New Hampshire Street location was still in operation in 2008.

Similarly to the Mexican establishments in 1980, the nine Italian restaurants were distributed fairly evenly, with a small concentration along 23rd Street. Three Italian restaurants were there, together with two on Massachusetts Street, two on Iowa Street, and one on 6th Street. In addition, Pyramid Pizza was near campus at 507 W. 14th Street. Of the nine Italian restaurants, two were franchises of Domino's Pizza and three for Pizza Hut. By 1990, Italian restaurants had increased their numbers to fifteen, all with "Pizza" in their name or as their main item of advertisement. Eight locations were on either West 23rd or South Iowa streets; the rest were spread with sites on Massachusetts Street, North Iowa Street, near campus, and 6th Street.

Two Chinese restaurants operated in Lawrence in 1980, both at strip malls. Royal Peking Restaurant at 711 W. 23rd Street focused on cuisine from a specific region with advertisements touting “famous Peking cuisine” (Southwestern Bell, 1980). Cathay Restaurant at 2104 W. 25th Street, just off of S. Iowa Street, advertised a broader selection, stating they were “famous for authentic delicacies from all parts of China” (Southwestern Bell, 1980). Lawrence had six Chinese restaurants by 1990. Generally they were located at a distance from one another and along heavily trafficked routes. The two closest Chinese establishments were three blocks from each other, but separated by the busy intersection at 23rd and Iowa streets.

Newer cuisines in Lawrence by 1980 were Greek and the broader category “continental.” The “International” label was added by 1990. Although French cuisine was the specialty at the downtown establishment Laciece, Italian dishes were also available there. No solely French restaurants were listed for either 1980 or 1990. Restaurants that advertised blended cuisines most frequently stressed Italian dishes. Three 1980 businesses combined Italian with American dishes: Cornucopia, Carriage Lamp, and Julie’s Italian Restaurant. Another, The Greek’s Sports Desk, blended Italian with Greek. One other restaurant, Aztec Inn, advertised a blend of Mexican and American cuisines. Data from 1990 suggested a similar pattern. Six of the seven blended cuisine restaurants included an Italian combination. Cornucopia, Primetime Pizza and Subs, and Mirabito’s Italian Café blended this with American dishes; Tin Pan Alley blended Italian, Mexican, and American; The Mad Greek Restaurant

blended Italian, Greek, and American; and Laciece blended Italian and French cuisine. The Plum Tree, in contrast, offered Chinese and American meals.

Chain Restaurants

By 1980, chain and franchise restaurants were taking hold and spreading throughout town. Forty-five of the 97 restaurants (46%) in Lawrence could be identified as chain establishments, up from 20 of 90 (22%) in 1970. By 1990, almost 60 of the 118 restaurants (51%) were chain or franchise establishments. Most of these were national chains, but several were specific to the region such as: Yello Sub, Pyramid Pizza, Fifi's Restaurant, and Amigos Mexican Restaurant.

In 1980, several franchise restaurants had more than one business in the community (Table 3.1). Each of these had one restaurant on 23rd Street. Domino's, McDonald's, and Taco John's had second locations on 6th Street, while Taco Grande established its second site near the 9th and Mississippi intersection, north of the university campus. The Pizza Hut location near the 9th and Iowa intersection was still in operation (close to the Hillcrest Shopping Center), and that company's third site was downtown at 932 Massachusetts Street.

Domino's Pizza	2
McDonald's	2
Pizza Hut	3
Taco Grande	2
Taco John's	2

Table 3.1. Franchise restaurants in 1980 Lawrence with more than one eating establishment.

By 1990, significant growth of chain and franchise restaurants had occurred. Though a few companies were new to the community, many were pre-existing

businesses that had just opened an additional location (Table 3.2). Six of these ten located restaurants on both 6th and 23rd streets. Additionally, Hardee’s and Taco John’s each had a third site: Hardee’s at the East Lawrence interchange and Taco John’s at 1006 Massachusetts Street. Domino’s Pizza and Yello Sub both had restaurants along 23rd Street with second locations elsewhere. Domino’s was near the 9th and Iowa intersection while Yello Sub was atop Mt. Oread at 618 W. 12th Street. Pizza Hut still had locations on 23rd Street, near 9th and Iowa, and on Massachusetts Street, but added a fourth site at 2449 Iowa Street. Dairy Queen was an exception to the pattern seen by other establishments. Instead of locations along 6th or 23rd streets, it was at 1832 Massachusetts Street and at 2545 Iowa Street.

Burger King	2
Dairy Queen Brazier	2
Domino's Pizza	2
Hardee's	3
McDonald's	2
Pizza Hut	4
Sonic Drive-In	2
Taco Bell	2
Taco John's	3
Yello Sub	2

Table 3.2. Chain and franchise restaurants in 1990 Lawrence with more than one eating establishment.

The 1990s also saw a new type of chain establishment known as “casual” restaurants. Most of these located along South Iowa Street. Applebee’s, Chili’s, and Old Chicago (Fig. 3.14) are examples of this genre, identified as demonstrating a “middle ground between the economy and functionality of fast-food and the extravagance and formality of upscale dining” (Jakle and Sculle, 1999, 289).

According to one authority, “Casual restaurants evolved out of two venues, the singles’ bar and the gourmet hamburger restaurant” (Jakle and Sculle, 1999, 289). If so, this partially explains the large bars that serve as centerpieces for many of them.



Fig. 3.14. Applebee's at 2520 Iowa Street, Chili's at 2319 Iowa Street, and Old Chicago at 2329 Iowa Street, 2008. These casual chain restaurants developed along S. Iowa Street in the 1990s. Photos by John Young.

Kansas Liquor Laws

Kansas before the mid-1980s had a history of prohibition and strict liquor laws. In 1880, its people constitutionally prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. This edict was relaxed slightly in 1948 when an amendment allowed package liquor sales to be “authorized and regulated, but the sale of liquor by the drink in public places was [still] prohibited” (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 1). Additional changes came in 1965 when private clubs were

allowed liquor licenses, and in 1978 when restaurants were “authorized to sell liquor if they derived at least 50 percent of gross receipts from the sale of food and were located in counties that approved such sales” (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 2). Phil Minkin explained:

Pizza places that could serve 3.2 [percent alcohol] beer or whatever, they were going to do OK. But a place like Teller’s or Pachamama’s (fine-dining) is not going to open in Lawrence if there is no liquor by the drink, if you can’t serve wine, and so that’s why there was a paucity of those kinds of restaurants. There were 3.2 bars, where you could go in and drink beer, 3.2 beer. Or, . . . you could pay a membership fee of \$25 or whatever they chose to charge, belong to a private club, and the pretense was that there was a bottle there with your name on it. So, it was your liquor and you didn’t have to pay for the drink, but if you ordered a scotch and water, they charged you \$2 for the water, or if you wanted Seven and Seven, it was your bottle of Seven Crown [Whiskey], but they charged you \$2 for the 7UP. And everybody went along with this charade, because it at least allow[ed] you to have a bar.

Finally, in 1986, a constitutional amendment permitted the “sale of liquor by the drink in establishments open to the public” (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 3), effective January 1, 1987. Phil Minkin continued: “Finally they got smart and realized that there would never be a major convention here, there would never be any growth unless they change[d] these arcane laws.”

Following the new liquor-by-the-drink legislation, entrepreneurs began to see fine-dining opportunities in Lawrence. Phil Minkin explained the process:

Once that barrier was broken . . . you had places like the Eldridge, or Pachamama’s or any places who wanted to be kind of fine-dining, but money in restaurants is not in food, money is in liquor. And so people aren’t going to make a huge investment in capital [and] equipment and try to make [it] just in selling [gourmet food] because you need the wine and liquor sales to supplement that.

Two stages exist according to Minkin:

First of all, there's a profit in liquor, and second of all . . . if you don't sell fish on . . . Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, you know you're in trouble on Monday, where a bottle of scotch will last you a long time before you have to do anything about worrying about it, so it improves your margins.

Spotlight Restaurant

Free State Brewing Company

"It's all about summertime, getting off work, grabbing a beer at Free State and knowing there will always be someone you know. It's like 'Cheers' that way."
- Free State patron Matt Bunch (Springs, 2000)

Although liquor could finally be sold by the drink in 1987, Kansas law still prohibited selling beer on the same premises where it was brewed. With the idea to open a microbrewery, Lawrence resident Chuck Magerl lobbied the state legislature to revisit this law. As a result of his effort, microbreweries became legal in 1987, created as a "category of licensee" (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 4) that "manufacture beer with eight percent or less alcohol content and have capacities of 5,000 or fewer barrels per year" (Kansas Legislative Research Department, 2003, 4). This limit was expanded to 15,000 barrels in 1995.

The microbrewery law in Kansas is a tribute to Magerl's determination. As Phil Minkin explained: "He's the one that got the liquor law changed. He single-handedly lobbied, went to Topeka all the time, pretty much wrote the law . . ."

Chuck Magerl recalled:

I certainly remember sitting, after making a presentation to the Senate committee, sitting down in the committee room back in my chair, and one of the lobbyists in the room just leaned over and said, "You know, that's an interesting idea, and you'll probably get some action out of this, but you know, it won't happen this year, but you know, maybe next year or the year after that," something like that. And I remember at that point thinking, "You don't understand, it can't be next year or the year after that, it's gotta be now."

Magerl's sense of urgency had to do with his own financial situation and a need to get into business. With support from State Senator Wint Winter, the bill passed that session.

In 1989, Magerl opened Free State Brewing Company, the first legal brewery in Kansas since 1880. He located in a former bus depot at 636 Massachusetts Street. In 2008, the 600 block of Massachusetts Street formed the northern end of the downtown strip with a mix of locally and corporately owned businesses. Along the east side of the street, Free State Brewing was flanked by the Liberty Hall theater and music venue, La Prima Tazza coffee shop, Kring's Interiors, and the local newspaper production building. Across Massachusetts Street stood Starbucks, Cold Stone Creamery, Claire's, Gap, Chico's, M & M Office Supply, American Eagle, Quinton's Bar & Grill, and Waxman's Candle Shop. This development is far from what it used to be twenty years earlier. Chuck Magerl described the location:

At that point . . . a lot of the rest of downtown had been part of a downtown redevelopment project, but they had left the 600 block untouched because, frankly, they had anticipated demolishing the buildings that remained here on the 600 block and building some convention center or shopping mall or something of that extent. So this area was by and large neglected.

He continued:

This section looked very different than it does now (2008), in the sense that most of the buildings on the west side were not built in actually. You know, where the Gap is now . . . that building did not exist, it was just a parking lot area, and a drive-through for a bank actually was in there as well. And some of the buildings further to the north of us were not built yet, the Journal-World production site was not as it is now.

Although Free State now has a desired location downtown, this site was not atop the list of where Magerl originally wanted to open, and it went through quite a bit of development to get it where it was in 2008. As he explained:

The downtown area was certainly the focus [for the Free State location], but Massachusetts Street, not necessarily, in the sense that when we started, the Massachusetts Street retail front . . . was definitely more expensive than something we were interested in paying. And so, honestly, the location we ended up in, . . . it was a wreck, quite honestly. I mean it was a shell of a structure and it wasn't something that we seriously considered because it was so completely unfinished. It had been the bus depot and probably sat abandoned for, I'd say, about seven years perhaps, so it was nothing more than a roof, kind of a barn roof structure, and half of that roof was rotted and, other than that, it was just something that people were parking cars in to go downtown. And so this wasn't our initial choice

Support from another business on the 600 block helped with the decision to develop at that site:

Liberty Hall had just got going probably about two or three years prior to that time, and they were interested in trying to kind of enhance their property and get more activity in this section of downtown. And so they actually . . . made the suggestion of, "Hey, we'd like to build in and if you choose this location, you know, we'll work with you on it," so that's where that came from. You know we wanted to be downtown, as part of the pedestrian traffic and have kind of an older structure, but Mass. was not crucial and this location was actually probably about number five on the list.

In addition to making history by changing legislation in 1987, Magerl has incorporated historical and local ties to his brewery. These are most evident in the brewery's name "Free State Brewing Company" (Fig. 3.15), but brews also follow this pattern. Their names include: 1933 Lager (the year of U. S. national prohibition repeal), John Brown Ale (a noted abolitionist), Ad Astra Ale (from the state's motto), and Wheat State Golden (Free State Brewing Co., 2008). Such history is partly why Magerl was able to bring legislators to his side:

That was part of what I was able to take to the committee hearings and say, “Hey, we’re talking about doing something that’s . . . been part of Kansas history, so it’s been here before, and it’s not a wacky idea out of California, it’s something that, there is a heritage here.” So that as a background certainly was actually a lot of the origin of the idea and carried through to getting the legislation passed, and carried through beyond that.

Magerl said that the historic theme also impacted the location of the brewery: “With the tie into Kansas and Lawrence history, . . . it [the location] had to be an older, historic neighborhood to have that sort of resonance. If it would have been in a new strip mall some place, it just would have felt . . . a little out of place.” Although there may have been some initial concerns about the 600 block of Massachusetts, it seems as though a structure such as the old bus depot may have been the best place for such an historic brewery.



Fig. 3.15. Free State Brewing Co., 2008. The Kansas state flag hangs above the bar at this brewery which incorporates Kansas history into its atmosphere. Photo by John Young.

In addition to the success Magerl has obtained with Free State, he is admired for his environmentally friendly mindset. He buys locally whenever possible and provides some of the produce from his own garden. As Phil Minkin mentioned: “If you go in there now (July, 2008), all of the tomatoes that are served on the menu,

Chuck grows. [He] really enjoys gardening and for several years now, I think, has grown most of the tomatoes.” He has also been able to recycle leftover grease and grain. According to Minkin:

He recycles all, I have a friend who has turned his diesel truck into one that runs on grease, and so he picks up all his [Magerl’s] grease, . . . Chuck recycles all that grease, he sells . . . grain from the brewing process to hog farmers, he’s very ecological and just all and all kind of a model businessman.

Free State Brewery has truly been a positive business for the Lawrence community. The combination of Kansas’s prohibition history, the historic theme of the brewery, the timing of liquor-by-the-drink passage, and most of all, the drive of Magerl and those supporting him reshaped the 600 block of Massachusetts Street and the downtown area as a whole. Phil Minkin acknowledged the progress:

Free State Brewery, I think has been a remarkable thing for downtown Lawrence. I mean it has really helped zing downtown Lawrence. It’s a focal point. It’s been hugely successful, because Chuck not only knows food, but he’s also a very, very good businessman. And always is working to improve his place whether it’s in the food, in the beer, in the service, in the equipment, he just never stops striving to make things better.

Magerl expressed this mentality in a local news article: “There’s no such thing as just sitting back and resting. . . . We have a restless spirit that tells us we have to keep making things better. As long as we can see something better to do, we’re going to do it” (Springs, 2000). Or, as he told me in a 2008 interview:

There have certainly been slowdown times, and by and large . . . I’m real proud of what we’ve done here, just the aspect that we’re getting ready to celebrate our 25th anniversary in business, and still have the level of popularity that we do, . . . I feel really humbled by it. It definitely seems much larger than anything I’ve tried to do before.

CHAPTER FOUR

Restaurant Expansion: 2000-2007

By 2000, Lawrence's population had grown to 80,098. Ethnic diversity increased slightly from earlier decades with the nonwhite proportion of the population rising to 16% (U. S. Census Bureau, 2008). On the restaurant scene, ethnic cuisine expanded much faster than the ethnic population. The most dramatic restaurant change, however, was a significant rise in total establishments to 168 in 2000, compared to 118 in 1990. The continuing trend toward eating out plus a growing customer base both supported this growth. Younger generations maintained their habit of eating out frequently, but now this lifestyle change was embraced by older people as well.

Sarah Schmidt and Alice DeWeese of Prairie Commons Apartments discussed the lifestyle changes that have impacted their frequency of eating outside the home. Ms. Schmidt began: "You know we didn't eat out like we do now 'a days. Even we, ourselves, at our age, we eat out a lot more, we didn't used to do that We just couldn't afford it, was part of it. And another thing, it just wasn't a thing that people did a whole lot then, you know." She continued: "Little kids, then, didn't know what it was to go out and eat, and now, it's just normal." Ms. DeWeese replied: "No. Well, but the women didn't work so much then as they do now either. And I think that's one reason You know, when you have five children, you can't go out as much." Ms. Schmidt recalled: "Well, it was just strictly a luxury then, but now it isn't. People don't consider it a luxury at all."

A similar conversation occurred at Drury Place Apartments. Roma Kennedy stated: “We just didn’t participate in eating out too much in those days because of money situations. . . . You just didn’t pick up and go out to eat, ‘cause you didn’t have the money.” Roy, another resident of Drury Place agreed: “I don’t think they took the family out as much in the old days. Couldn’t afford it.”

Regarding more recent years, Ms. Kennedy commented: “I think people do eat out more now than they ever did before. I mean, because the fast-food restaurants are always busy. . . .” Roy felt that folks in his living community were also going out to eat more frequently: “Especially since the families are gone, then they [elders] start eating out more. Older people do.” When asked why this is, he humorously replied: “It’s a lifestyle [change], they’re getting lazy.” Bill Burgess explained that the meal schedule at the retirement home impacts his decision to eat out: “. . . I have two meals here a day, but I don’t have an evening meal, so I’ll debate on whether to go out in the evening or not, so I do.”

Another group at Drury Place Apartments shared a similar discussion on frequency of eating out. Paul stated: “. . . It used to be fairly rare for people to eat out and now it’s very common.” When asked if they noticed this change in their own behavior, Carolyn replied: “When you go from a family of six to a family of two, you eat out a lot more than you used to.”

Restaurant Growth in the Early 2000s

As Lawrence’s restaurant numbers increased from 118 in 1990 to 168 in 2000, most of the new development occurred downtown and along 23rd Street (Figs. 4.1 and

4.2). Some businesses also located along the other traditional main routes south of the river plus two newer north-south streets, Kasold Drive and Wakarusa Drive, one and two and a half miles west of Iowa Street, respectively. Restaurant development

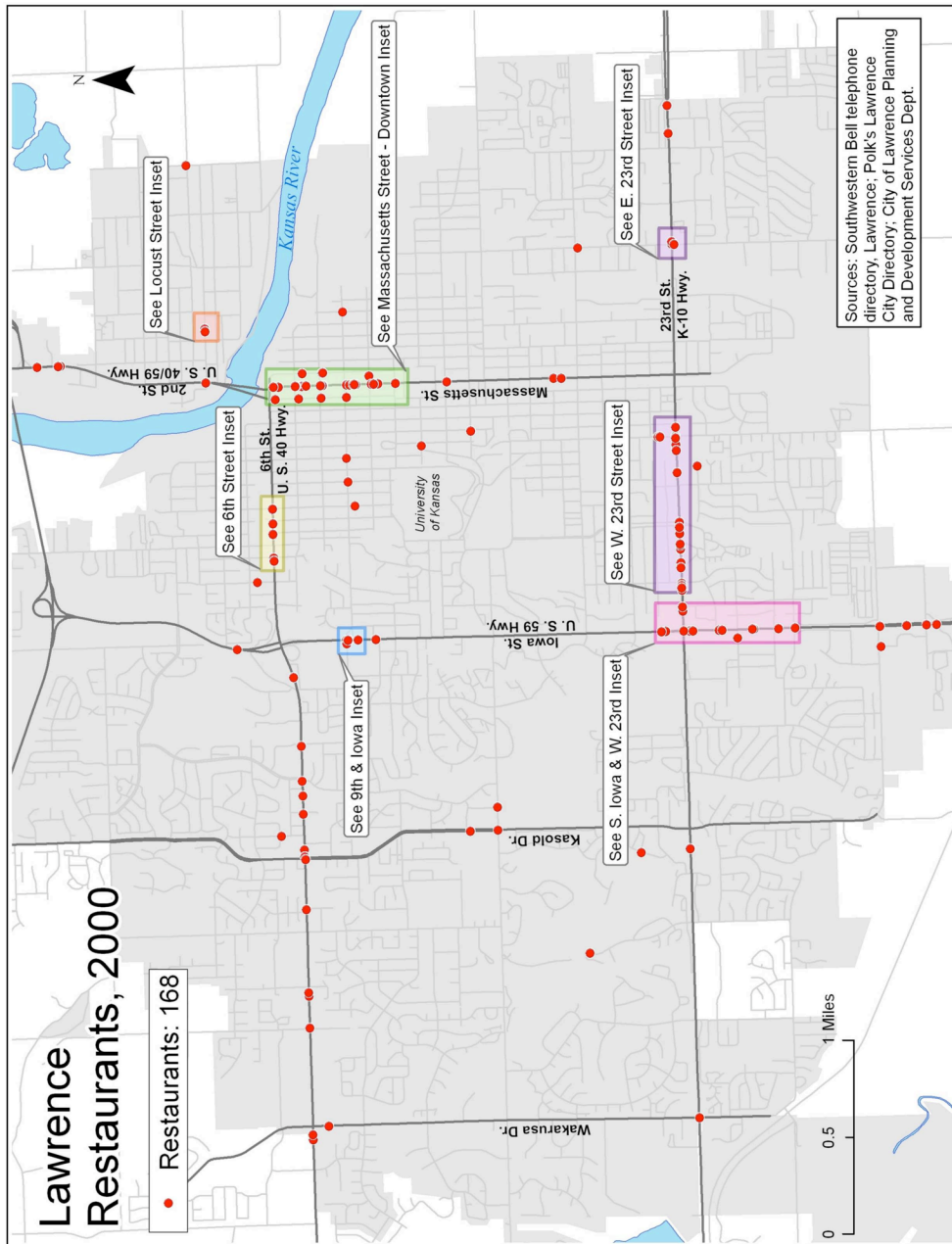


Fig. 4.1. Lawrence restaurants in 2000. Heavy development occurred downtown as well as along 23rd Street. Areas with restaurant clusters are displayed via insets in Figure 4.2.

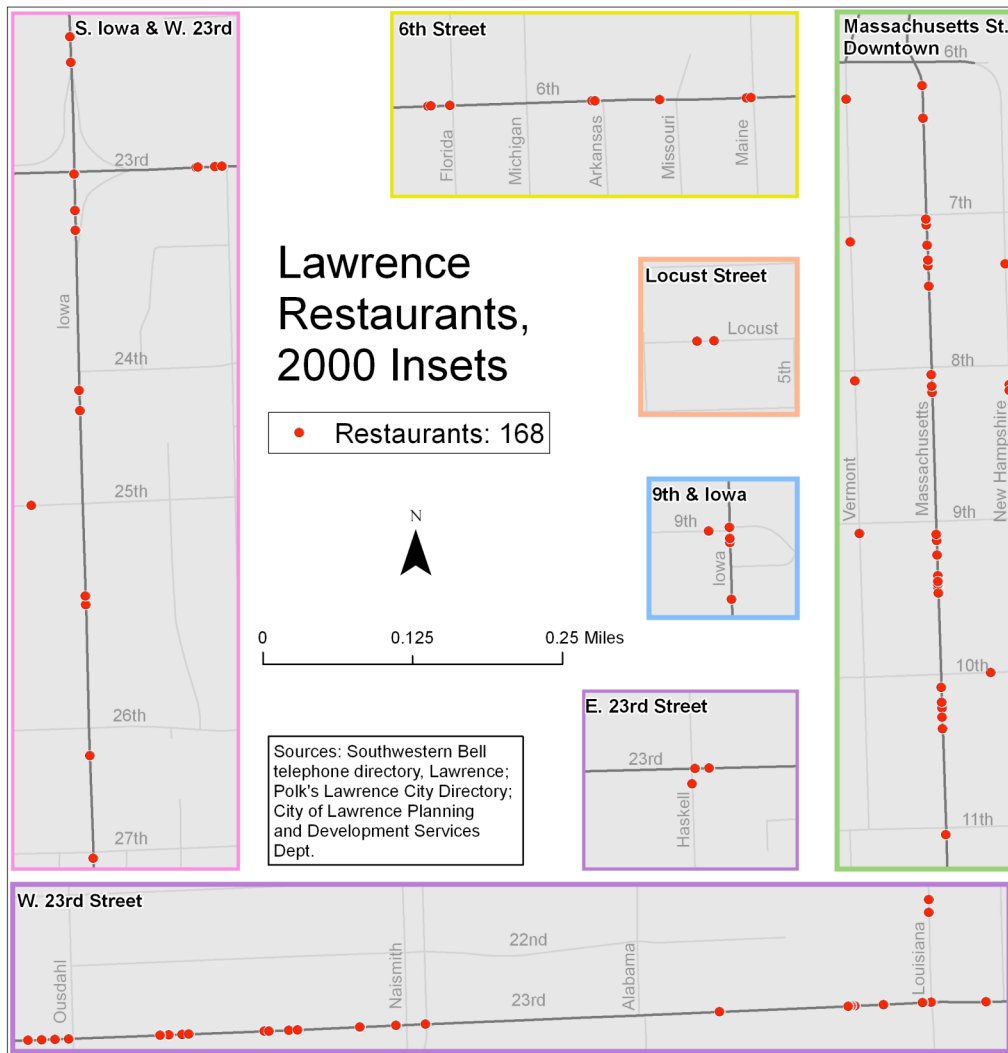


Fig. 4.2. Lawrence restaurants 2000 insets.

downtown on the roads adjacent to Massachusetts Street (Vermont Street, one block west and New Hampshire Street, one block east) significantly rejuvenated and expanded that part of town. This east-west widening of the business district allowed the number of eating establishments within one block of Massachusetts Street to nearly double from 23 in 1990 to 43 in 2000. This area once again contained the highest concentration of restaurants.



Fig. 4.3. Mass. Street Deli, 2001. Located at 941 Massachusetts Street. In operation from 1972-2006, Mass. Street Deli was one of the several restaurants owned by Lawrence resident Bob Schumm since the 1970s. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Twenty-Third Street, with 42 restaurants, continued as the main rival for Massachusetts Street. Concentrations of businesses shifted along this main route, however, and chain restaurants became more prevalent (Figs. 4.4 and 4.5). In fact, at least half the restaurants along 23rd Street could be identified with chains in 2000. Other businesses in the southwest region of town showed similar trends. South from



Fig. 4.4. West 23rd Street, 1977 (as displayed in Fig. 3.4), looking east from about the 23rd Street and Ousdahl Road intersection. Twenty-Third Street had boomed by 1980. Several fast-food chains occupied the north side of the road including Taco John's, Griff's Burger Bar, Pizza Hut, and Sizzler Steakhouse. Source: University Archives, 71/30. Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.



Fig. 4.5. West 23rd Street, 2008. This photo shows a section of the same block east of Ousdahl Road as in Fig. 4.4. Only two food establishments now existed: Taco John's and Dunn Bros. Coffee (previously Griff's Burger Bar). The former Pizza Hut building was vacant and the Sizzler had converted into a Blockbuster Video store. Although fewer restaurants existed along this particular stretch in 2008, higher concentrations of such businesses were found along other sections of the street. Photo by John Young.

the intersection of 31st and Iowa streets arose many corporate-owned stores including Walmart; Target; Best Buy; Home Depot; Old Navy; Bed, Bath and Beyond; and the World Market.

Although the Iowa Street corridor had seen significant restaurant growth since about 1980, its number of eating establishments dropped slightly from 26 in 1990 to 25 in 2000. Overall, the distribution there was consistent with earlier years with a small cluster at the 9th Street intersection, but the majority south of 23rd Street.

Restaurant growth along 6th Street increased from 1990 to 2000 as development spread west and concentrated around the intersections with Kasold Drive and Wakarusa Drive. Twenty-eight restaurants now were along 6th Street, three more than on Iowa. Restaurant growth along Kasold Drive, which had started by 1990, reached a total of seven establishments by 2000. Farther west, Wakarusa Drive had just started developing restaurants at its intersections with 6th and 23rd streets, but had not established businesses between the two routes.

North Lawrence experienced slight growth in the 1990s. Most development was close to the interstate on-ramp. Sonic Drive-In, Subway, Burger King, La Familia Restaurant, and Murra Café were all there along N. 3rd Street (N. 2nd Street curves into N. 3rd Street). Near the river, Johnny's Tavern was the only restaurant along this route as La Familia had moved to other locations, including one farther north.

Of Lawrence's 168 restaurants, only 13 were not located along main roads. Most of these were in neighborhoods where restaurants had established in the past:

North Lawrence, near the university campus, and at the 9th and Mississippi intersection. In North Lawrence, the two Mexican restaurants on Locust Street were the only two away from the main route. Near campus, The Wheel Pizza Co. (previously the Wagon Wheel Café), was still on 14th Street, while atop Mt. Oread, the Yello Sub and the Glass Onion were also in the same location at 624 W. 12th Street. Just north of campus at the base of Mt. Oread, Burrito King had replaced Johnny's Classic Burger at the intersection of 9th and Mississippi streets, and Pyramid Pizza and Seasonal Crafts BBQ opened at 701 W. 9th Street and 926 Main Street, respectively.

Of the restaurants located away from major routes, three were in neighborhoods not previously mentioned. Charlie's Eastside located among the older homes in East Lawrence at 900 Pennsylvania Street. On the same side of town, an African cuisine restaurant, Bo-Bo's Buka Authentic Tastes from Africa, opened in a strip mall at the northeast corner of 19th and Haskell where King Arthur Restaurant had previously operated. The third of these restaurants, The Alvamar Golf and Country Club, located north of 23rd Street between Wakarusa and Kasold drives. Catering to a relatively elite crowd and attracting customers for the amenities of the country club, this establishment was not overly dependent upon location for success.

Ethnic Restaurants

Similar to the trend observed in 1980 and 1990, the year 2000 showed a diversifying ethnic restaurant scene (Figs. 4.6 and 4.7). Sixty-three ethnic

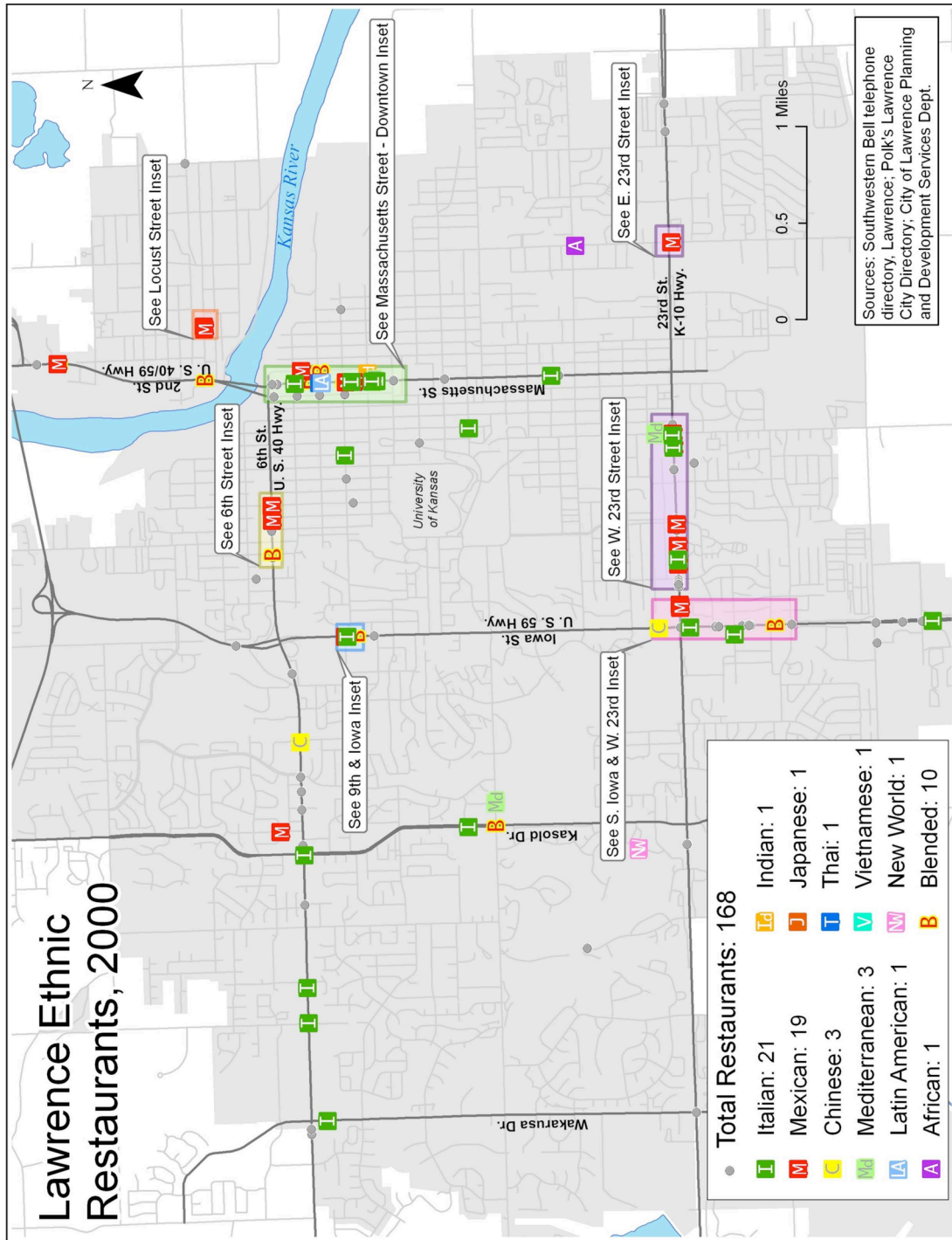


Fig. 4.6. Lawrence ethnic restaurants in 2000. As in the previous two decades, significant growth and diversification occurred in ethnic cuisine. Sixty-three total ethnic restaurants existed in 2000, and there were more classifications than any other year. Areas with restaurant clusters are displayed via insets in Fig. 4.7.

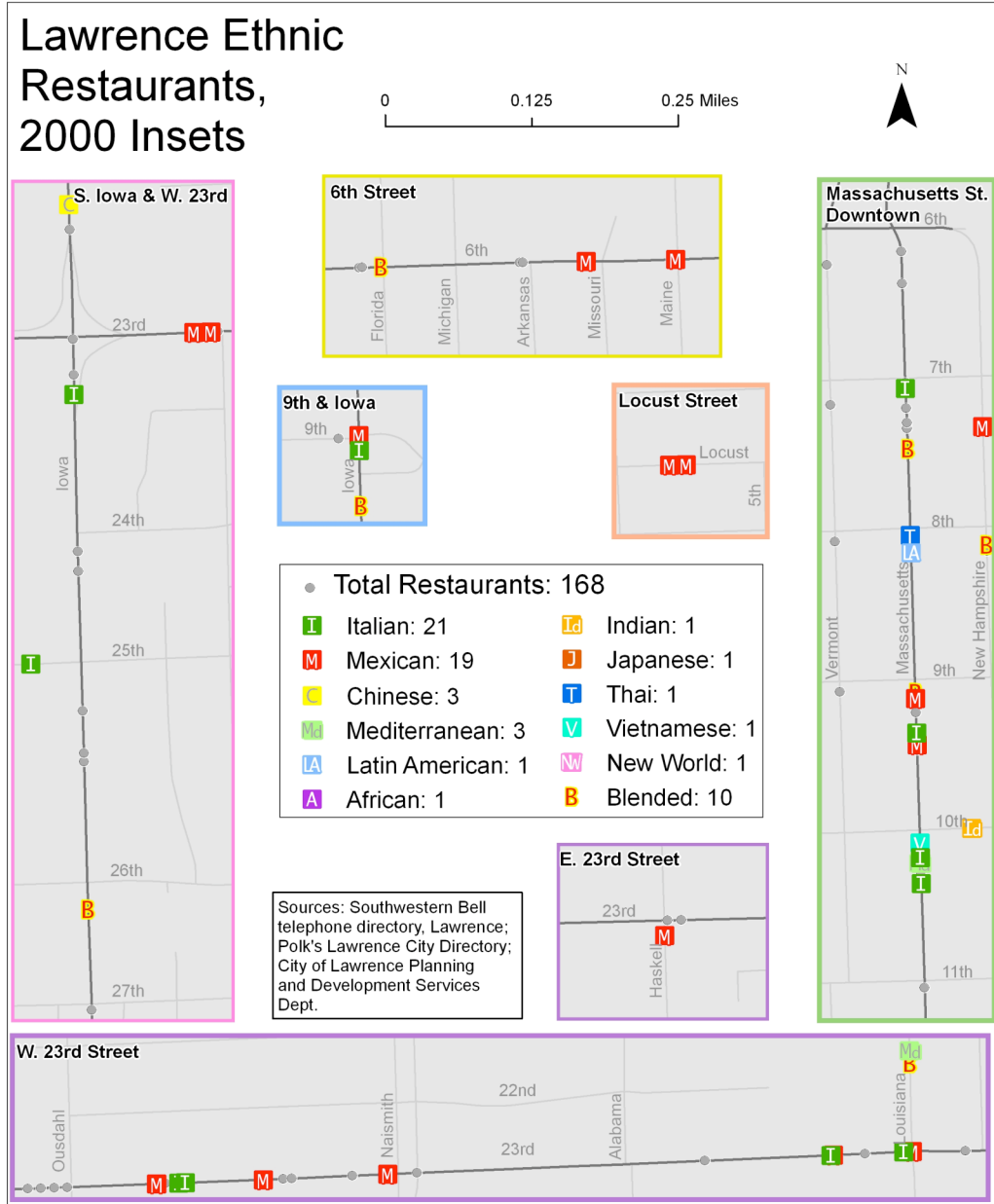


Fig. 4.7. Lawrence ethnic restaurants 2000 insets.

restaurants existed in Lawrence in 2000, up from forty-six in 1990. In addition, twelve classifications of ethnic cuisine were identified that year, more than in any previous year. The most popular ethnic cuisines were still Mexican and Italian, but for the first time, Italian cuisine dominated with 21 establishments, two more than the

Mexican total. In addition, of restaurants with blended cuisines, four offered Italian dishes, none Mexican.

The highest concentration of Italian restaurants was along Massachusetts Street with six. The rest were dispersed fairly evenly with four on Iowa Street, three on 6th Street, and four on 23rd Street. Two others located in the new development along Kasold and Wakarusa drives: Little Caesar's Pizza at 1401 Kasold Drive and Godfather's Pizza at 721 Wakarusa Drive. In addition, two Italian establishments located near campus: The Wheel Pizza Co. on 14th Street and Pyramid Pizza near 9th and Mississippi streets.

Twenty-Third Street contained the most Mexican restaurants with eight, but all the establishments tended to stay near the main arterials. In addition to 23rd Street, four were on Massachusetts Street, one on Iowa Street, two on 6th Street, and one on N. 2nd Street. Only three restaurants were elsewhere: El Matador and La Tropicana at their familiar spots on Locust Street in North Lawrence, and Taco Grande near the intersection of 6th Street and Kasold Drive, at 534 Frontier Road.

Chinese trailed far behind the two main cuisines with just three establishments: one on Iowa Street, one on 6th Street, and one on 23rd Street. However, other Asian cuisines had started to open, including Vietnamese, Thai, Japanese, and Indian. Mediterranean cuisine was slightly more prominent than in 1990 with three establishments. Three other classifications of cuisine were new to the community: new world, African, and Latin American.

As in previous years, several blended cuisine options were available in Lawrence. Four restaurants blended Italian cuisine with either international, American, or both American and Greek dishes. One establishment, Bleu Jacket at 811 New Hampshire Street, served French and American cuisine. It was listed from 2000 to 2002. Phil Minkin described the short-lived business:

The Bleu Jacket was one of the first very upscale restaurants to try to make it in downtown Lawrence. . . . It went out of business because . . . I don't know if it [Lawrence] could support [the Bleu Jacket], . . . but this place was very upscale, . . . it may have done very well on Friday night and Saturday night, but you have to do better than that, so it didn't have much else going for it.

Fifi's, at 925 Iowa Street, which was once advertised as continental, was offering both continental and American cuisine in 2000. Although only three restaurants offered solely Chinese food, three others blended Chinese with another cuisine: The Jade Garden did so with Vietnamese, while Panda Garden used Thai, and Plum Tree American. Murra Café also blended Asian cuisine, advertising American, Oriental, and Korean. Phil Minkin described the ethnic cuisine in Lawrence:

Bleu Jacket made an attempt at being a French restaurant, but there's never really been much traditional, elegant French or even the peasant French here in Lawrence. But there's been two or three Indian places, there's been several Mediterranean places, like Aladdin, . . . it's also a market you know they sell feta, and they have olives [in] five gallon kegs or whatever . . . Italian may have started with pizza but now it's branched out.

When asked about the growing diversity of ethnic restaurants in Lawrence, Paul, a resident of Drury Place Apartments, replied: "Oh, in the last ten years there has been almost an explosion of ethnic type restaurants." Carolyn, another resident at Drury Place, added: "I think they're highly popular with the younger people.

Especially, I know our son likes Thai food. [He] seems to want to eat Thai when they can, and of course, Lawrence has a lot of young people.”

One of the most interesting additions to the ethnic cuisine in Lawrence was Bo-Bo’s Buka at 19th and Haskell, which offered cuisine from all over Africa, but mostly West Africa. Modupe Leslie, a Nigerian woman, owned the establishment and gave a genuine attempt at providing an African atmosphere. Lawrence resident Garth Myers remembers a spicy pumpkin seed soup called ogusi as a favorite. Location far from the main roads may have impacted its viability, as it was only open from 2000 to 2001. Helen Krische had visited Bo-Bo’s Buka: “I don’t think the setting was really conducive to a high traffic area or a high volume of customers, but the food was OK.”

Although not listed in the directory, Myers remembered Bo-Bo’s Buka at a second location along 23rd Street, but unfortunately, the establishment had lost its atmosphere. Myers recalled: “They struggled in both places to get a clientele base. It was very good food, but strange to many ordinary Lawrencians” A rare cuisine to find in Lawrence, it was the only restaurant offering African dishes in all of the years of this study.

Chain Restaurants

The 1990s saw significant growth of chain restaurants. Nearly a hundred of the city’s restaurant total of 168 (almost 60%) could be identified as chains or franchises in 2000. Sixteen establishments had more than one location (Table 4.1).

Arby's	2
Bagel & Bagel	2
Burger King	3
Dairy Queen	2
Godfather's Pizza	2
Hardee's	3
McDonald's	4
Mr. Goodcents Subs & Pastas	2
Pizza Hut	4
Runza Restaurant	2
Sonic Drive In	3
Subway Sandwiches	4
Taco Bell	2
Taco John's	3
Pyramid Pizza	2
Yello Sub	2

Table 4.1. Chain and franchise restaurants in 2000 Lawrence with more than one eating establishment.

As was seen in earlier years, most of the establishments with multiple locations typically placed one site on 23rd Street and another on 6th Street. Six restaurants did not follow this pattern, however. Bagel & Bagel, Godfather's Pizza, and Yello Sub all had one location on 23rd Street, but with second sites on Massachusetts Street, Wakarusa Drive, and 12th Street (near campus), respectively. Runza Restaurant had one site on 6th Street, but the second on Iowa. Two restaurants did not have locations along either 23rd or 6th streets: Dairy Queen with one branch on Massachusetts and the other on Iowa, and Pyramid Pizza with one location on Massachusetts and the other on 9th near the university campus.

The rest of the chain establishments had at least one branch each on 23rd and 6th streets. Arby's and Taco Bell were located only on these roads. Other chains had additional sites: Burger King, Hardee's, and Sonic Drive-In in North Lawrence on N. 3rd Street near the entrance to I-70, and Mr. Goodcents Subs & Pastas along Iowa Street and Kasold Drive. Some restaurants had more than one site along the same

road. Pizza Hut and Taco John's both had two establishments along 23rd Street. Subway also had two branches along 23rd Street, as well as two on 6th Street and another in North Lawrence on N. 3rd Street. McDonald's had two sites along 6th Street and an additional location on Iowa Street.

Casual chain restaurants continued to grow in the community. Applebee's opened a second location in 2004 at 3900 W. 6th Street, and in the same year, On the Border Mexican Grill and Cantina (Fig. 4.8) opened its first site, located along South Iowa Street at the intersection of 31st and Iowa streets.



Fig. 4.8. On the Border Mexican Grill and Cantina, 2008. Located at 3080 Iowa Street. Photo by John Young.

Spotlight Restaurants

La Parrilla, Zen Zero, Genovese

Proprietors Subarna Bhattachan and Alejandro Lule owned three ethnic restaurants in downtown Lawrence in the early 2000s. Although other people had opened multiple restaurants in Lawrence before, these men not only opened three restaurants in eight years, but each with a different cuisine. Their decisions support the observation that ethnic cuisines were becoming increasingly popular in the Lawrence community. For mutual support, the men located all their restaurants within two blocks of each other along the pedestrian-rich Massachusetts Street.

The first of the three to open was La Parrilla (Fig. 4.9) in 2000, located at 814 Massachusetts Street. Formerly Pancho's, a restaurant that served burritos and other Mexican cuisine, this building provided a good starting ground for La Parrilla's Latin American offerings. Bhattachan felt that a Latin American theme would be successful in Lawrence, and the availability of the Pancho's building meant that no major alterations were needed to the interior design. When asked to describe the

cuisine served there, Bhattachan responded: ". . . it's kind of broad, mostly Mexican, let's say about seventy percent Mexican food, but not Tex-Mex, more like Mexican food from today's Mexico. I mean there's some Tex-Mex nuances there and some Central

American, some South American but, mostly Mexican." Phil Minkin felt La Parrilla was a great concept: "I mean

good, inexpensive food, what more could you want in a college town? . . . It's certainly not a Mexican restaurant, it's more South or Central American."

The second restaurant opened by Bhattachan and Lule, Zen Zero in 2003 (Fig. 4.10), was across the street from La Parrilla at 811 Massachusetts. In a similar broad-cuisine fashion, Zen Zero serves Asian cuisine. Bhattachan described it as: ". . . Pan-Asian cuisine, . . . mostly, seventy percent, Thai food and a little bit from Nepal, little



Fig. 4.9. La Parrilla, 2008. Located at 814 Massachusetts Street. This was the first restaurant started by Subarna Bhattachan and Alejandro Lule. Photo by Brackhan.

bit from Vietnam, little bit from Japan, you know so a little bit of everything, but mostly Thai. So yeah, you know, just like La Parrilla [is] mostly Mexican, Zen Zero is mostly Thai.” In addition, the owners felt that, since this cuisine had not yet infiltrated Lawrence, they had an opportunity to introduce it. Bhattachan explained that: “. . . because at that time there weren’t any Thai restaurants in Lawrence, we felt like there was a niche and there was a market for it so that’s what we did.”



Fig. 4.10. Zen Zero, 2008. Located at 811 Massachusetts Street. This was the second restaurant started by Bhattachan and Lule, in 2003. Photo by Brackhan.

Although the Zen Zero building previously housed a restaurant, interior design was required to create the appropriate atmosphere. About eighty percent of the building was redone. Since La Parrilla had been in business for three years, Bhattachan and Lule had accumulated some capital, so more renovation was possible for this investment than had been the case with their first establishment.

La Parrilla and Zen Zero have fairly similar clienteles, which is partly the result of pricing. Items range between six and ten dollars at both places. Bhattachan explained: “[At] Zen Zero and La Parrilla the demographics are about the same: some students, but mostly middle-aged, middle-income, middle-class people of Lawrence. We see a lot of students at both restaurants.”

The third restaurant opened by Bhattachan and Lule (now in partnership with chef Armando Paniagua) was Genovese (Fig. 4.11) at 941 Massachusetts Street, in 2007. They again chose a location that was previously a restaurant, this time the former Mass. Street Deli. But, instead of the broader, regional cuisine served at La Parrilla and Zen Zero, Genovese's cuisine highlights a very specific region of Italy.

Bhattachan described it as follows:

“ . . . not just Italian, this is actually a Northern Italian cuisine Most of this food is not only just from Northern Italy, but it focuses on the particular province of Liguria, which is from [of] northwest Italy It stretches from the Italian Rivas, from [the] border of France, kind of sweeps down all the way to Tuscany.”

At Genovese the cuisine is not only very specific, but Bhattachan, Lule, and Paniagua also created an up-scale atmosphere. La Parrilla and Zen Zero both use plastic cups, for example, but Genovese uses glass glasses. Again, Bhattachan explains: “We were going for a little more upscale environment, so everything had to be a step up, and so that means furniture costs a little bit more, everything, you know, like china, silverware, glassware.” The interior was redesigned to provide a rustic Italian feeling. In addition, they imported a wood-fired rotisserie and charcoal grill from Italy to help achieve the true tastes of the region (Genovese, 2008).



Fig. 4.11. Genovese, 2008. Located at 941 Massachusetts Street. This was the third restaurant opened by Bhattachan and Lule, with chef Armando Paniagua, in 2007. Photo by Brackhan.

The clientele at Genovese, not unexpectedly, is slightly different than at La Parrilla and Zen Zero. According to Bhattachan: “At Genovese we’re finding, because of the price-point, because of the wine, . . . maybe the ambiance, and also the cuisine, although [it] is peasant-style cuisine, it’s quite sophisticated, so because of that, here we’re finding . . . it takes a little bit of acquired taste.” Although some customers spend time at all three restaurants, Genovese attracts the most distinctive crowd. Bhattachan says that they see: “. . . people who’ve been to Europe or people who’ve been to Italy, or people who like wine and obviously middle-aged, middle-class, middle-income, I may even go to say more upper-end . . .” He continued:

I think that some of our clientele, since we had opened La Parrilla and Zen Zero, at that price-point, they were expecting Genovese to be along that price range, and obviously it’s not feasible to be at that price range, so that could be another factor. So our clientele here is a little bit different.

Pizza and pasta are available for seven to twelve dollars, which Bhattachan still sees as a good value for fresh-made pastas and raviolis.

The combination of Bhattachan and Lule, who previously had worked together at other fine-dining establishments in the city, together with the chef expertise of Paniagua, who had run an Italian restaurant in San Francisco, has allowed their entrepreneurial ideas to blossom. Phil Minkin commented: “They’re not only good with food, but they’re good businessmen.”

One challenge for the restaurant triad is that each is a completely separate entity that requires different ingredients. So, economy of scale does not work in the owners’ favor as it would for a chain restaurant, which replicates its system and

dishes at each branch. As for the future, the proprietors are trying to balance their existing establishments without going to the corporate level. Bhattachan explained:

You don't want to stretch yourself too thin. . . . If you open multiple restaurants that means you gotta go corporate, like Applebee's or McDonald's. You gotta get corporate because you, as one or two owners, you can only keep an eye on so many restaurants. After a while you have to structure yourself corporately, and stuff like that, so . . . we are trying our best to avoid that. That means we're trying not to open too many. But on the other hand, if there is a good economic opportunity or business opportunity, and we have the capital and we have the backing of our bankers, we are more than happy to be open to more adventures. But right now we'll probably take a break for a couple of years.

CHAPTER FIVE

Final Thoughts

This case study of Lawrence, Kansas, provides an historical geography of Lawrence's memorable restaurants over the past half century. From a theoretical perspective, it supports Zelinsky's (1987) claim that college communities have relatively great diversity in ethnic cuisine. It also supports the findings of Dillon, Burger, and Shortridge (2006) regarding a lack of correlation between ethnicity of population and diffusion of ethnic cuisine. For Lawrence as a whole, ethnic cuisine broadened rapidly over the past two decades while the population diversified only slightly.

Lawrence was a good candidate for a thesis-length study. It is large enough to display variety, but small enough to make data collection and review feasible and to allow interviewees a citywide perspective. Different people remembered the same restaurants, but shared unique perspectives. In addition, the Lawrence restaurant scene experienced significant changes over time. Two such shifts determined the thesis structure: the popularity of ethnic cuisine and the overall rates of restaurant growth. It would be interesting to see if other cities experienced these same changes at similar times. Restaurant growth in Lawrence has actually exceeded population growth since 1970 (Table 5.1, Fig. 5.1).

Interviews with retirement community members were ideal for gathering Lawrence details from an earlier time. All of the activity planners I contacted were very receptive to the idea as it provided an intergenerational activity for their

Year	Population	Restaurants	Population / Restaurant
1950	23,351	46	508
1960	32,858	44	747
1970	45,698	57	802
1980	52,738	81	651
1990	65,608	106	619
2000	80,098	139	576

Table 5.1. Lawrence population, number of restaurants from telephone directories, and population per restaurant value: 1950-2000. Data Source: Southwestern Bell telephone directories for Lawrence, Kansas.

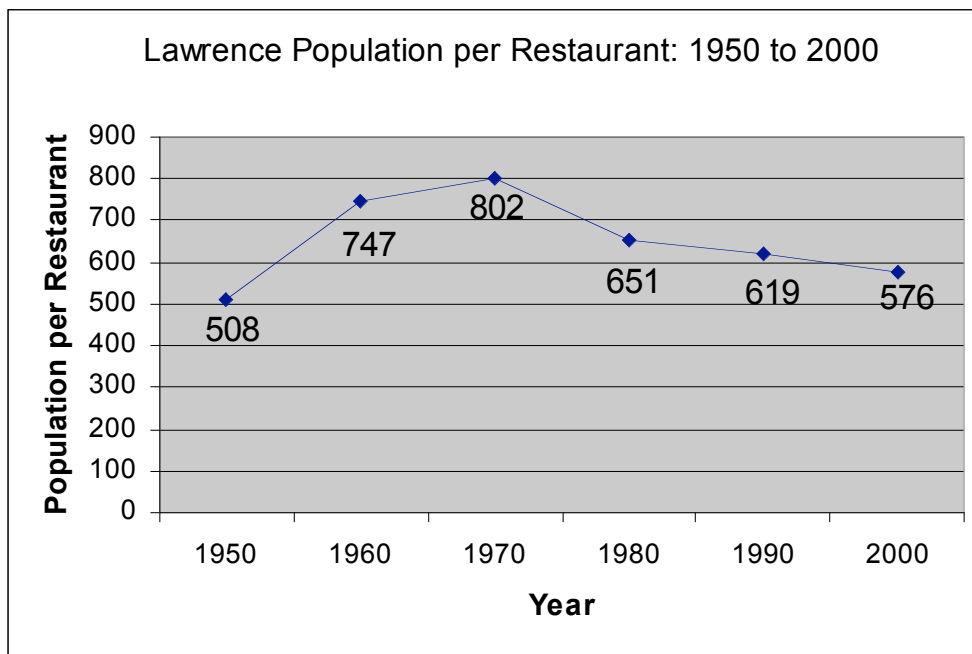


Fig. 5.1. Lawrence population per restaurant: 1950-2000. Population increased faster than restaurant development from 1950 to 1970, but this pattern reversed from 1980 to 2000. Data Source: Southwestern Bell telephone directories for Lawrence, Kansas.

community. I also received a positive response from the interviewees themselves.

Group interviews often produced the best conversations, as participants sparked

memories for each other and filled in gaps of missing information. I suggest

interviewing groups no larger than five, however. The best personal stories tended to

come from smaller groups, with the richest descriptions from people I interviewed individually or in pairs. Visual references were helpful in recalling which restaurants existed in specific years. I provided a list of establishments and a map during the interviews. If available, restaurant photographs would make good additional tools for this process.

Conversations with restaurant owners enhanced my understanding of individual businesses and the general restaurant trade over time. Much insight also came from community members who interacted with owners and experienced the broad Lawrence restaurant scene. These residents were typically not tied to any one restaurant, yet had more interest in the scene than the average community member and so offered valuable comparative perspective.

Community organizations, museums, and libraries were essential in collecting data, gathering images, and finding participants in the study. The Lawrence Preservation Alliance put me in contact with people with similar interests. The Watkins Community Museum and the University of Kansas Spencer Research Library both provided restaurant newspaper articles as well as many photographs throughout the study period. The University's collection of student hangouts was particularly rich. The Kansas State Historical Society provided additional restaurant articles and the Lawrence Public Library had nearly all of the existing city directories and telephone directories for the community.

Several limitations exist with the study's quantitative data. Not all city and telephone directories were available for each year, so combining them produced a

more complete collection of data. However, of the years mapped, 1950 and 1960 used telephone directory data only, whereas 1970 through 2000 used both the city and telephone directories. To compare all of the years consistently, I used telephone directory data only (Table 5.1 and Fig. 5.1). Discrepancies between the directories was another problem, and so using only the telephone information eliminated businesses that were listed solely in the city directory. Some of these differences may have been caused by the time of year particular directories were produced, as businesses may have begun or failed throughout the year. To test this theory, I compared directories for adjacent years, but could come to no definitive conclusion.

If I were to do this study again, I would inquire more about restaurants in operation today. At the beginning of the project, I focused on finding people who remembered restaurants from the earliest years. Though current restaurants were mentioned in these interviews, the richest memories regarded those establishments no longer in business. Perhaps participants felt there was a need to explain these restaurants as I could not visit. For whatever reasons, current businesses did not initiate as much discussion. Perhaps a sense of nostalgia skewed the discussions toward earlier years.

One could use this study for multiple comparisons. Most obvious, perhaps, would be similar research for another college town in a different region of the United States. A location in a different one of Zelinsky's ethnic cuisine regions, either the Italian East or the Chinese West, would allow more testing of his theory of dominant cuisines (1987). Such a study would also provide a base for trend comparison with

Lawrence. Another research possibility would focus on a noncollege town within the Midwest. This could provide insight on how much a university impacts cuisine in a town. For either of these studies, a community similar to Lawrence in size would be ideal, but not necessary.

One could also delve deeper into the Lawrence area itself and focus more on the society during different periods. For example, racial segregation of restaurants and other businesses could be a window for researching this controversial time and subject. In addition, the effects of liquor by-the-drink on restaurants might be further studied through research of menus before and after this turning point.

With the data I gathered and maps I produced, one could also create interactive animations that allow the reader to better visualize restaurant growth through time. Selecting individual restaurant symbols could display information about that establishment, perhaps with an image or video. This could help recreate the restaurant community of the past as well as record the current scene for the future.

Restaurant-based historical geography study would benefit any community. Such focus on social gathering places provides a topic in which all residents could participate and a window into changes in the local environment and lifestyle. It also can demonstrate how the value of particular business locations shifts and adjusts over the years. Additionally, as communities become more homogeneous with the expansion of chain restaurants, recording the history of local businesses may become more important in the future.

I hope that this study of Lawrence, Kansas, restaurants will inspire others to research additional communities through a similar perspective. A collection of studies would allow for comparisons and distinctions that might lead to further understanding beyond the local spectrum.

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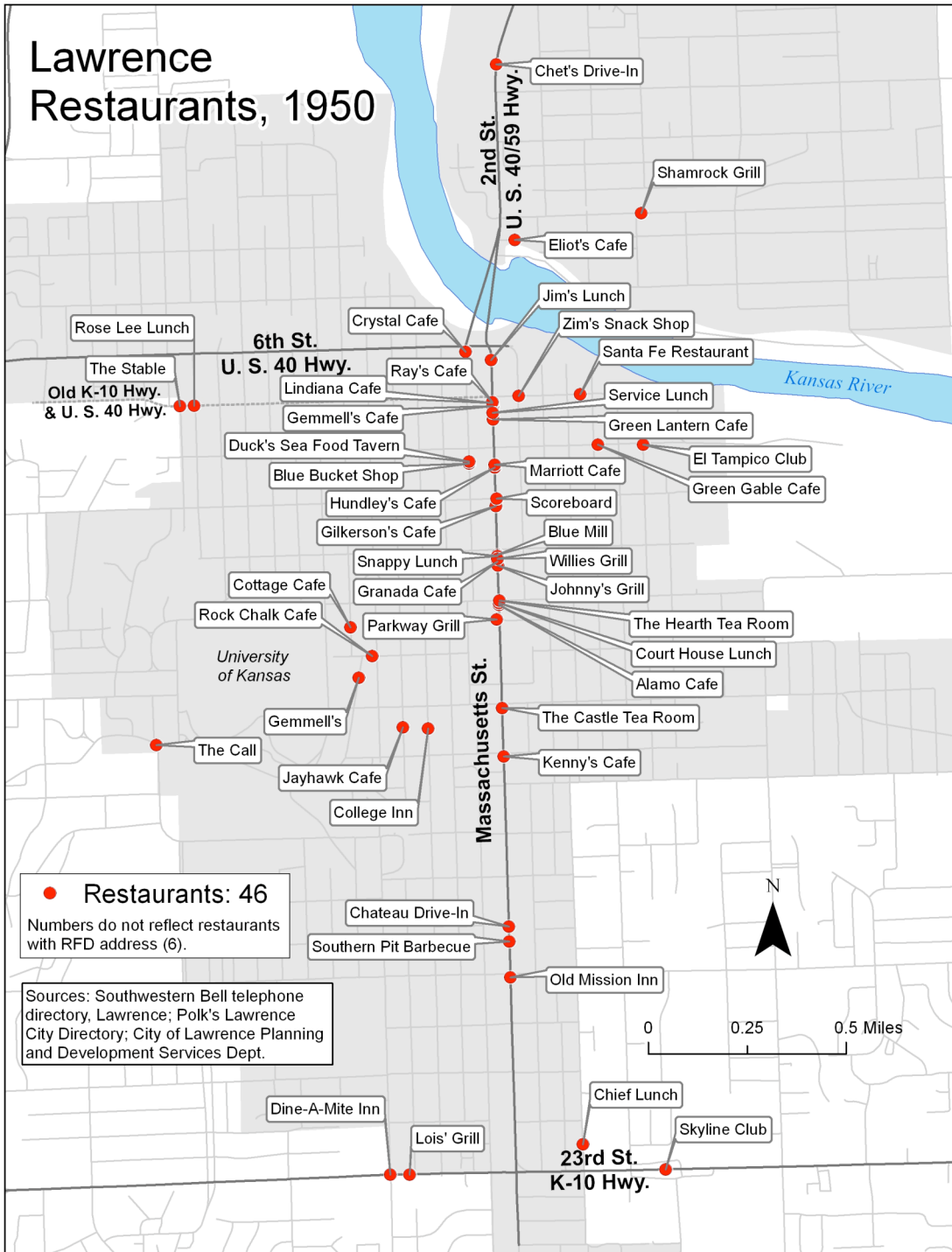
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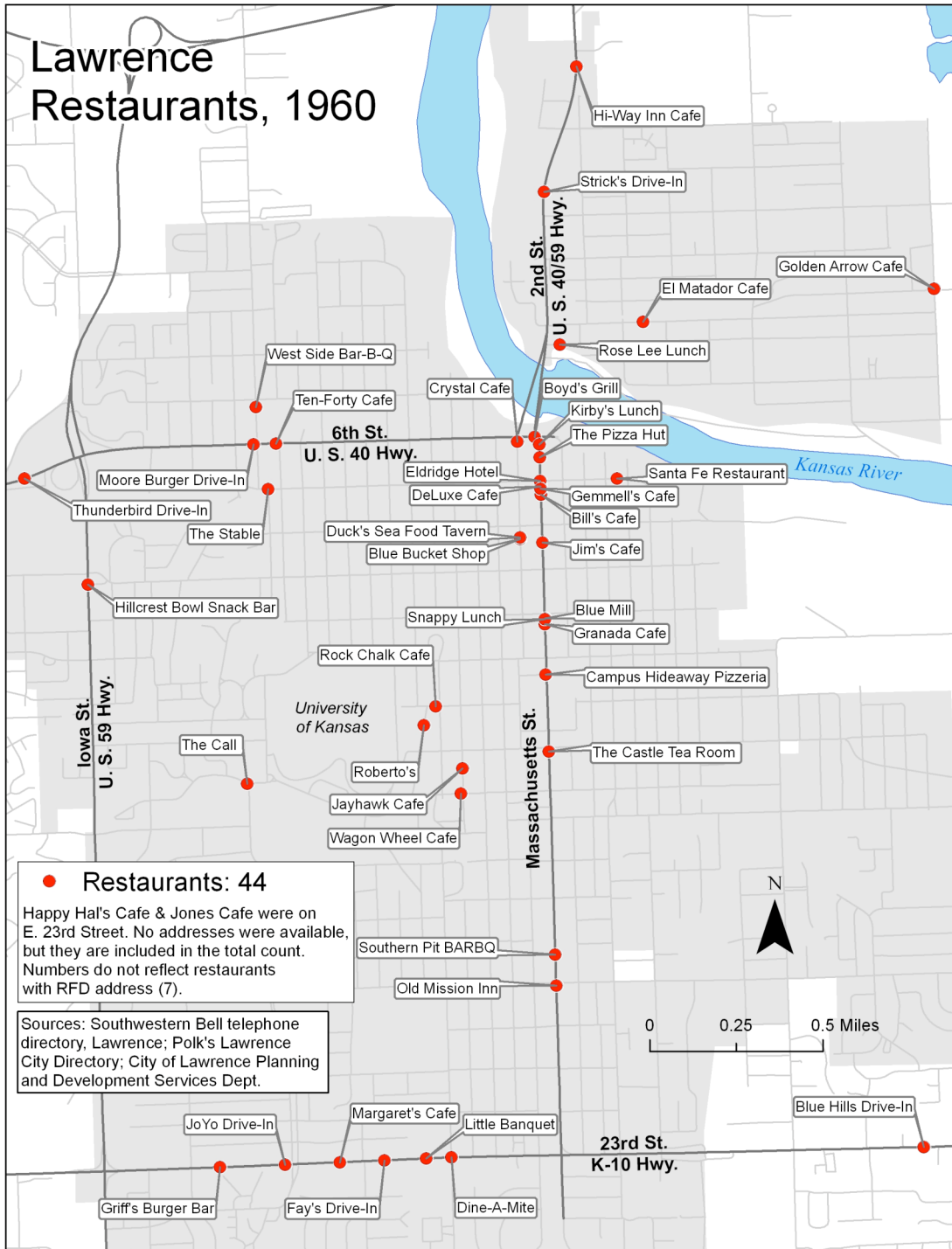
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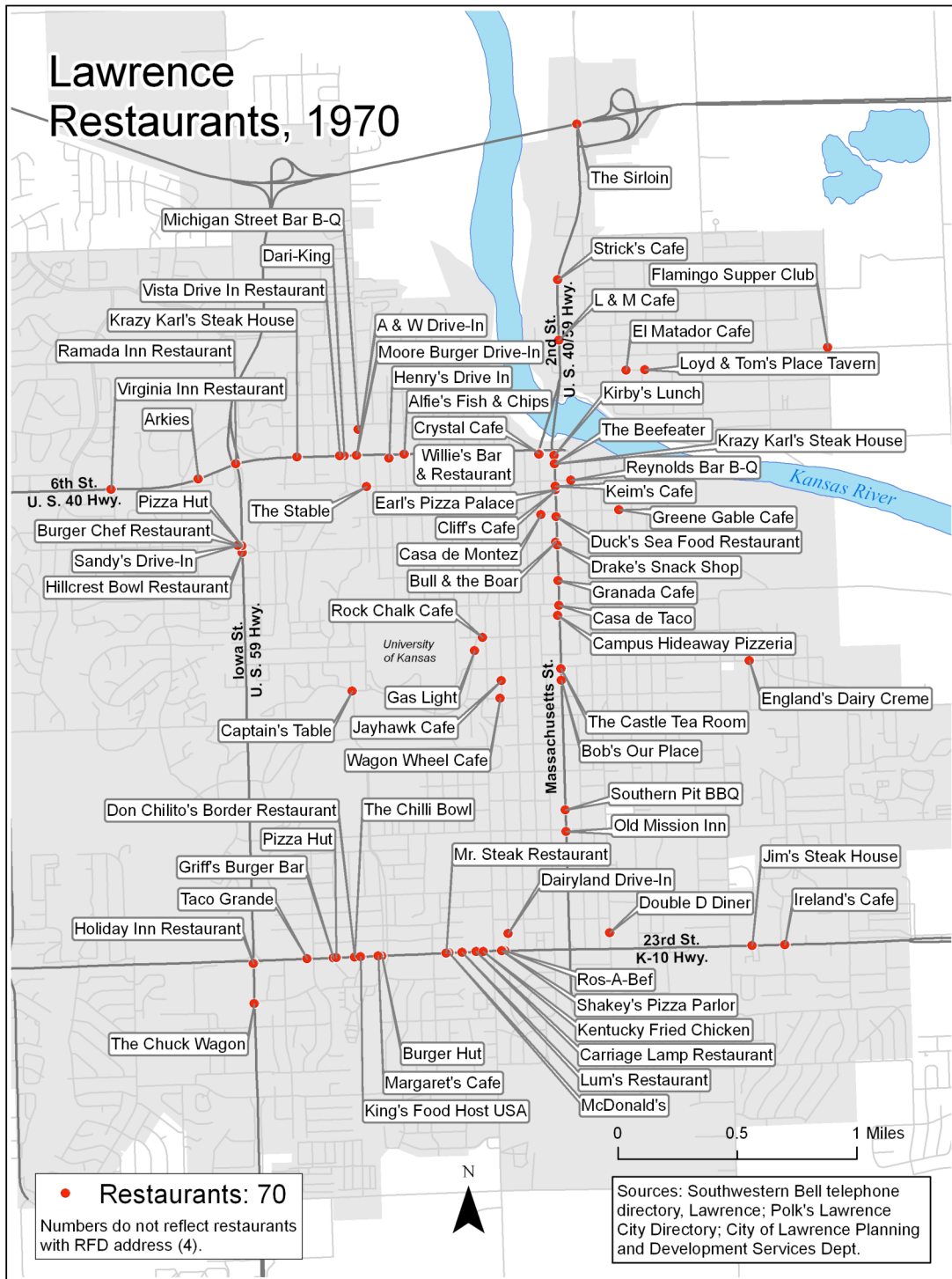
Appendix A: Labeled Lawrence Restaurants, 1950



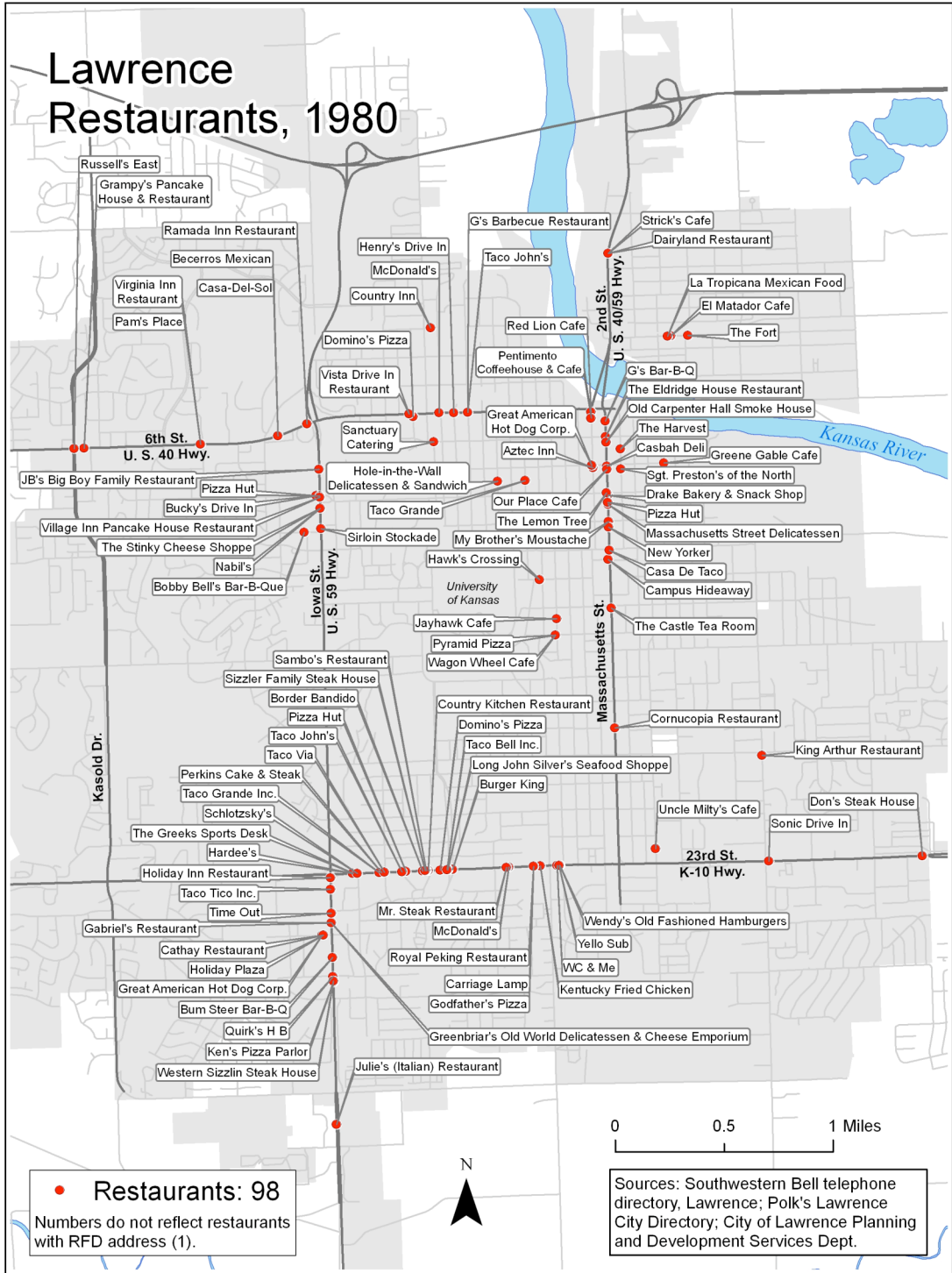
Appendix B: Labeled Lawrence Restaurants, 1960



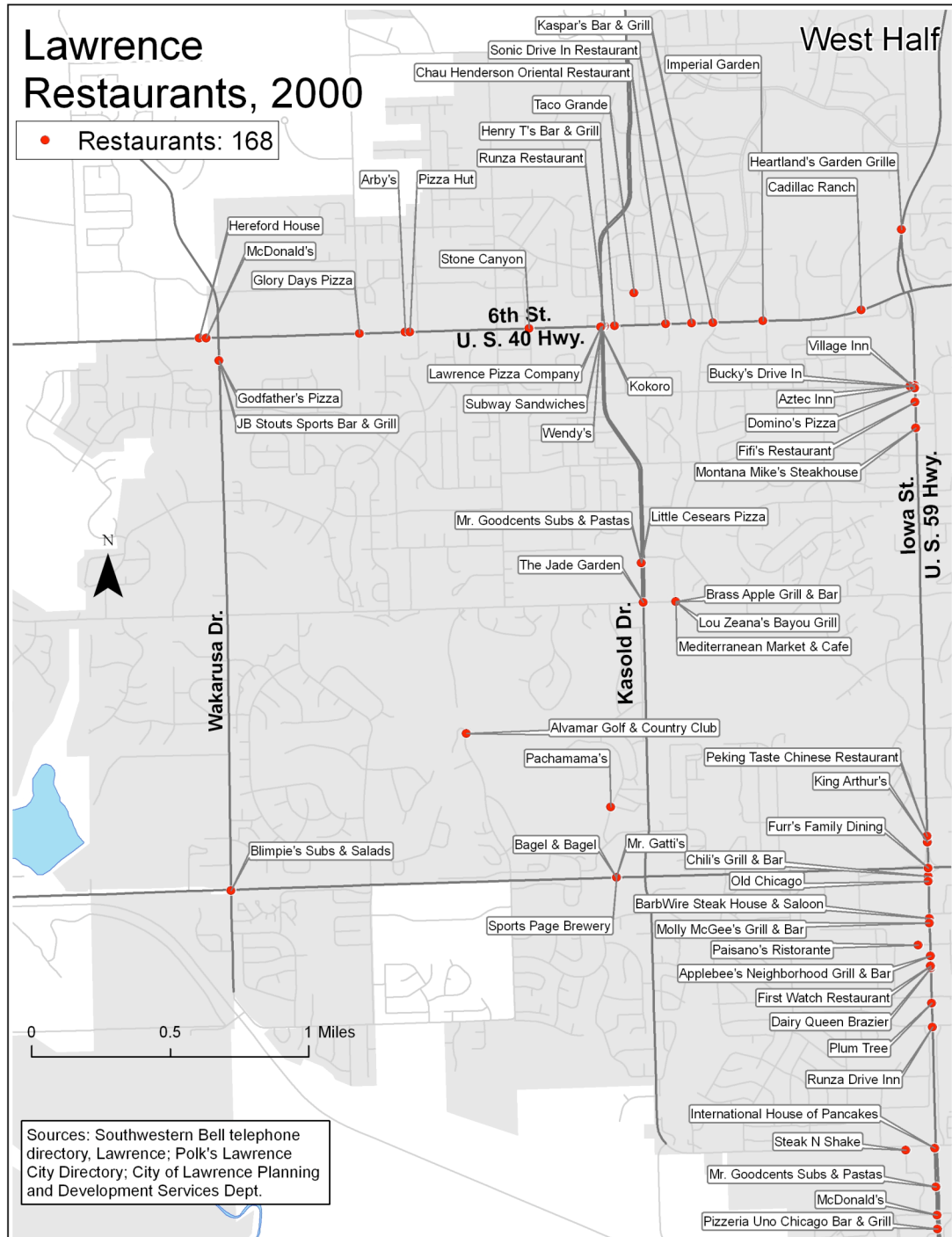
Appendix C: Labeled Lawrence Restaurants, 1970



Appendix D: Labeled Lawrence Restaurants, 1980



Appendix F: Labeled Lawrence Restaurants, 2000 – West Half



Appendix G: Labeled Lawrence Restaurants, 2000 – East Half

