Office Use Only	
Application # HL25-	Date
Notification	Planner EC
OHPS Approval	Date
CC Resolution #	Date

City of Olathe Historic Landmark Application

This form and requested supplemental documentation is for use in applying to the City of Olathe for designation of a property as an Olathe Historic landmark. Designation as a historic landmark is primarily an indication that the property holds importance in Olathe's history and contributes to Olathe's sense of place. Nominations are based upon the significance the property holds to the history of the area or national events, architectural style, degree of craftsmanship, or contribution to archeology. Regulations to protect the character of the property do exist after the property is designated as a local landmark. Please consult the Development Services Department for information regarding necessary regulatory reviews.

Please read the instructions for completing the form prior to filling out the form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A "or "not applicable."

Date 7/16/2025

Location of Proposed Landmark:

Address 126 S. CHERRY ST.

Legal Description of Property

OLATHE LTS 6 9 & 10 BLK 51 & W 1/2 VAC ALLEY ADJ OLC 1211 BOTA 00 7030 TX

Nomination Made By:

☐ Owner ☐ Historic Preservation Board
☐ City Council ☒ Other

Name Audrey Wolfe

Address 11224 Holmes Road, Kansas City, MO 64131

Phone 202-808-6582 Email audrey.wolfe@fema.dhs.gov

Relationship to Owner FEMA contact for Gurdwara Nanak Non-Profit Security Grant Program project

Property Owner Information

Name GURDWARA NANAK DARBAR SAHIB, INC.

Address PO BOX 14423, LENEXA, KS 66285-4423

Phone (913) 839-9100 Email

Relationship to Owner

See additional instructions for document submittal on page 2 of this application

Historic Landmark Application – Supplemental Documents

In addition to the information provided on the front page of this application, the following documentation must be submitted with this nomination form. Incomplete submittals will not be considered.

1. Completion of the **Architectural Survey Form** found on page 3 of this application.
2. Completion of the **Historic Landmark Agreement** on page 4 of this application.
3. Attach a written **Statement of Significance** indicating why the property is considered historic. Statements will range is length but should be thorough in documenting how the property meets designation criteria. The "Guide to Completing the City of Olathe Historic Landmark Application" outlines how to complete the Statement of Significance. Additionally, please check the criteria under which you are nominating this landmark. At least one must be marked, although multiple criteria are encouraged and supporting historic documents must be provided within the Statement of Significance.
   - ☑ Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history of the City, county, state or nation
   - ☐ Is associated with a significant person or group of persons in the history of the City, county, state or nation
   - ☑ Embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represents the work of a master builder/architect; possesses high artistic values; or represents a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction
   - ☐ Yields or is likely to yield information important_ in prehistory or history
   - ☐ Possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship
4. **Bibliography** and supporting documents of resources used in writing the Statement of Significance.
5. **Photographs** of the landmark, including a front, side, and rear elevation.
6. **Site Plan** showing the location of the landmark, including a north arrow, adjacent streets and property lines.

Completed forms should be submitted to the attention of:
Development Services Department
Olathe City Hall, 100 E Santa Fe
Olathe, KS, 66061

Questions regarding this application or application procedures should be made to the Development Services Department at 913-971-8750.

Historic Landmark Application – Architectural Survey

1. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Street Address: 126 S. CHERRY ST.

Municipality, Zip Code: OLATHE, 66061

Historic Name: (OLD) OLATHE POST OFFICE

Common Name: GURDWARA NANAK DARBAR SAHIB

Legal Description:

OLATHE LTS 6 9 & 10 BLK 51 & W 1/2 VAC ALLEY ADJ OLC 1211 BOTA 00 7030 TX

2. FUNCTION

Property Use:

Residential
Type:

Commercial
Type:

Institutional
Type:

Educational
Type:

Industrial
Type:

Site
Type:

Other
Type: RELIGIOUS

3. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Style/Form: COLONIAL REVIVAL

Period of Significance: 1938-1939

Construction Date: 1938-1939

Date of Major Alterations:

Builder/Architect: LOUIS A. SIMON

Stories
- [x] 1
- [ ] 1.5
- [ ] 2
- [ ] 2.5
- [ ] 3
- [ ] 3.5

Plan
- [x] Rectangular/massed
- [ ] L-Plan
- [ ] U-Plan
- [ ] Irregular Plan
- [ ] Other

Historic Landmark Application – Architectural Survey Continued

4. EXTERIOR MATERIALS

Foundation CONCRETE
Structural _____
Walls BRICK
Roof ASPHALT
Windows WOOD
Doors WOOD
Other _____

Roof Type	■ Gabled	■ Flat
	☐ Hipped	
Window Type	■ Double-Hung	☐ Fixed
	☐ Casement	
Porch	☐ Yes	■ No

Additional Narrative & Distinguishing Architectural Details _____

E. SITE DESCRIPTION

Status	■ Occupied	☐ Unoccupied
Integrity	☐ Unaltered	☐ Altered
	☐ Moved	■ Original Site
Condition	☐ Excellent	☐ Deteriorated
	■ Good	☐ Ruins
	☐ Fair	
Ownership	■ Private	☐ Public
	☐ Rental	☐ Other
Historic Register	☐ National	☐ State
	☐ Local	■ None

F. SURVEY INFORMATION

Completed By _____
Date _____

Historic Landmark Agreement

Property Address: 126 S. Cherry Street **, Olathe, KS 66061**
Property Legal Description: _____

_____

The undersigned owner(s) hereby agrees that the property above described should be considered for local historic landmark designation, pursuant to the Olathe Historic Preservation Ordinance, Ordinance No.XX-XX, as codified in Chapter 2.84 of the Olathe Municipal Code, as may be amended from time to time (the "Ordinance").
J understand that upon designation, I or my successors in ownership of the property will be required to submit to the review process of the Olathe Historic Preservation Board of the City of Olathe as set forth in the Ordinance prior to the occurrence of any of the following:

1. **Reconstruction, remodeling, or alteration of the exterior of the improvements on the property, or;**
2. **Construction of, addition to, or demolition of exterior improvements on the property.**

I further understand that I or my successors in ownership will be required to submit to the review process of the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Olathe as set forth in the Ordinance if a building, grading, or parking permit or the property is requested for any one of the following:

1. **Alteration or reconstruction of or an addition to the exterior of any improvement which constitutes all or part of a landmark structure or landmark district;**
2. **Demolition or relocation of any improvement which constitutes all or part of a landmark structure or landmark district; or**
3. **Construction or erection of or an addition to any improvement upon any land included in a landmark district.**

I understand that as part of any such review process, the Olathe Historic Preservation Board shall be required to follow its review guidelines as set forth in the Ordinance. I also understand that any historic landmark designation for the property transfers with the title of the property should the property be sold.

Dated this 12 **day of** November **20** 25

Amarjit Singh
Signature of Owner

AMARJIT SINGH on behalf of DARBAR SAREES, INC.
Printed Name

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12th **day of** November, **20**25.

DARCI CLARK
My Appointment Expires
4/24/28

Notary Public

4/24/28
My Commission Expires

City of Olathe Historic Landmark Application -- Supplemental Documents

The Gurdwara Nanak Sikh Worship Center is located at 126 South Cherry Street. The one-story, brick building, originally a post office designed in the Colonial Revival style, was constructed in 1938 by architect Louis A. Simon as part of the federal New Deal Era programs. The postmaster, Cecil Pember, received orders for the site of the post office in early 1937 and it was constructed 1938-1939 before being dedicated in fall 1939 during the annual reunion of the Johnson County Old Settlers Association. The Old Olathe Post Office is eligible for designation as a local historic landmark for its significance in the area of politics and government because it represents the efforts of the federal government to improve the infrastructure of small towns throughout the nation during the New Deal era. The building is also eligible for designation as a local historic landmark in the area of architecture as a representative and intact example of post offices constructed during this period in the United States.

The New Deal was a policy spearheaded by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to boost the nation's economy after the Great Depression caused the U.S. economy to spiral. The New Deal provided various relief in the form of numerous programs and grants that included giving aid to farmers, creating jobs by building government and public infrastructure, establishing private-public partnerships to increase and boost manufacturing, and more. As a result, thousands of projects across the county including roads and bridges, parks and park trails, dams, a variety of government facilities were constructed. The construction of federal buildings increased when the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) was enacted in 1933. This act created the Public Works Administration (PWA), which oversaw the construction of thousands of public buildings in communities across America.

In 1935, 185 post offices were constructed by the federal government. This was followed by 260 in 1936, 303 in 1937, and 259 in 1938. During the span of about a decade (from 1933-1943) over 1,400 post offices were constructed under some of the federal building programs. These post offices were unique compared to some other government facilities constructed under these New Deal programs.

Designs for post offices built during this period between 1933 and 1943 followed standardized plans. Some stylistic variation was permitted on the facades, but the floor plans were well established by the early 1930s. As summarized in the National Register Bulletin, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria to Post Offices*, the Depression-era programs created public architecture as well as stimulating state and local construction industry and the general economy. The Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury for 1937 reported that standardization had been successful in achieving its goals of efficiency and stimulating employment. It is also interesting to note the reference to 11 standard designs to meet the sectional architectural traditions.

> "A large portion of the program has consisted of small post office buildings spread over the entire United States. Type designs were developed and, in order to meet the

> varying requirements of the Post Office Department and the sectional architectural traditions, eleven designs were required. By thus standardizing the designs, there resulted a great saving in time and cost of production of the drawings and specifications and the placing of these projects on the market was greatly expedited. The buildings which have been constructed from these type designs have proved economical and satisfactory.
>
> The policy of preparing drawings and specifications permitting to the greatest practicable extent the use of materials and products native to the localities has resulted in stimulating employment and spreading the benefits of the building program."[5]

The architectural styles of the Depression Era tended toward those of modernized and simplified buildings. For example, commonly used styles were the Colonial Revival style or a simplified classical style blending modern and classical elements, characterized by symmetrical massing and plain surfaces. The development of the Colonial Revival movement is thought to have started after the Centennial celebration in 1876 and the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. These events drew their roots from the colonial age and the birth of America. They brought with them a sense of nostalgia; the nation was looking back while also moving forward.

In most instances, while the architecture of these small buildings is relatively uniform, most have paintings on the interior that depict images specific to local histories. This usually involved commissioning local artists from the community to give the buildings a community connection while also making art more accessible. These post offices, as a result, were important focal points of these communities, especially smaller, more rural communities like Olathe.

The Old Olathe Post Office occupies a lot surrounded by parking garages and office buildings including the Johnson County Administration Building, located on the opposite side of South Cherry Street. The brick clad building is symmetrical with a central cupola on the low-pitched side-gabled roof. Early flat-roofed additions to both sides and the back of the building repeat the historic materials and details of the original building. The primary (west-facing) elevation consists of eight double-hung twelve-over-twelve true divided-light windows. A central entrance with paneled double doors, each with six true divided light windows is surmounted with a fanlight transom, flanked by Doric columns, and surmounted by an architrave and a brick arch. Character-defining features include the twelve-over-twelve divided light double hung windows, the main entrance doorway including columns, details on the cupola, extensive use of brick, and cornice details.

This building was one of many federally funded New Deal projects in the City of Olathe, built as the first permanent post office. A plaque on the west-facing façade of the building states that the supervising architect was Louis A. Simon. Simon was a Baltimore based architect until 1896, when he was appointed to the Office of Supervising Architect at the

U.S. Treasury Department, where he served from 1905-1933. During his career, he directed designs for post offices, courthouses, custom houses, mints, assay offices, hospitals, and other federal office buildings.

One of the interior features of this post office was an original mural by Albert T. Reid titled 'The Mail Must Go Through' and/or 'Romance of the Mail.' The mural by Albert Reid is an oil-on-canvas painting that depicts a stagecoach crossing a winter Kansas landscape. Reid was a local Kansas artist who mostly published political cartoons, but later focused on painting and teaching. The mural was removed from the Old Olathe Post Office and installed in the Olathe Public Library in 1984, where it remains.

The Old Post Office was acquired by the City of Olathe in 1990 and used for government offices until 2010, when the building was purchased by the Subrecipient in 2010 to be used as a Sikh Gurdwara. The building has undergone significant additions and renovations since its initial construction, including several additions, new interior finishes, installation of an interior and exterior security camera system, door locking mechanisms and combination storm windows.

The Old Olathe Post Office retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and feeling. While changes have occurred over time as ownership and use have changed, the building still reads as a New Deal era Colonial Revival post office.

Bibliography

[1] Boland, Beth M., *National register Bulletin 13: How to Apply the National Register Criteria to Post Offices*. Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1991.

[2] Harris, Emily. *History of Post Office Construction, 1900-1940*. Washington, D.C.: Postal Service, 1982.

[3] National Archives Microfilm Publications Pamphlet Describing M1126, *Post Office Department Reports of Site Locations, 1837–1950*, Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1986, https://www.archives.gov/research/post-offices/locations-1837-1950.html#kansas.

[4] Historic Preservation Services, LLC. *New Deal-era Resources of Kansas*. 2002.

[5] United States. Department of the Treasury. *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1937*, Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1937, p. 182.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA Region 7
11224 Holmes Road
Kansas City, MO 64131

FEMA

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

2021-UA-00015 (41521)
Gurdwara Nanak Security Upgrades
126 S. Cherry Street, Olathe, KS

Alma Hubbard, photographer, June 2025

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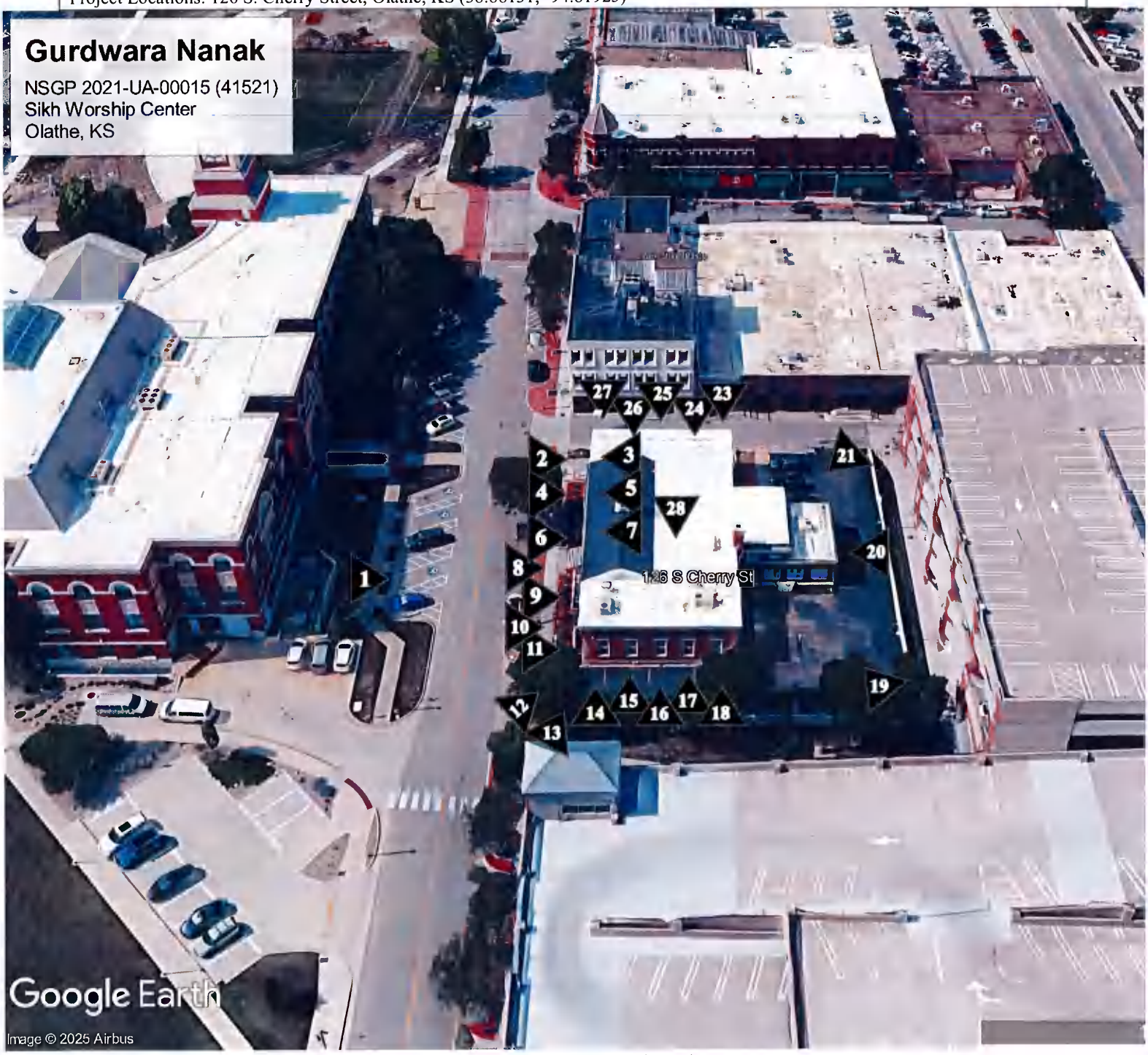
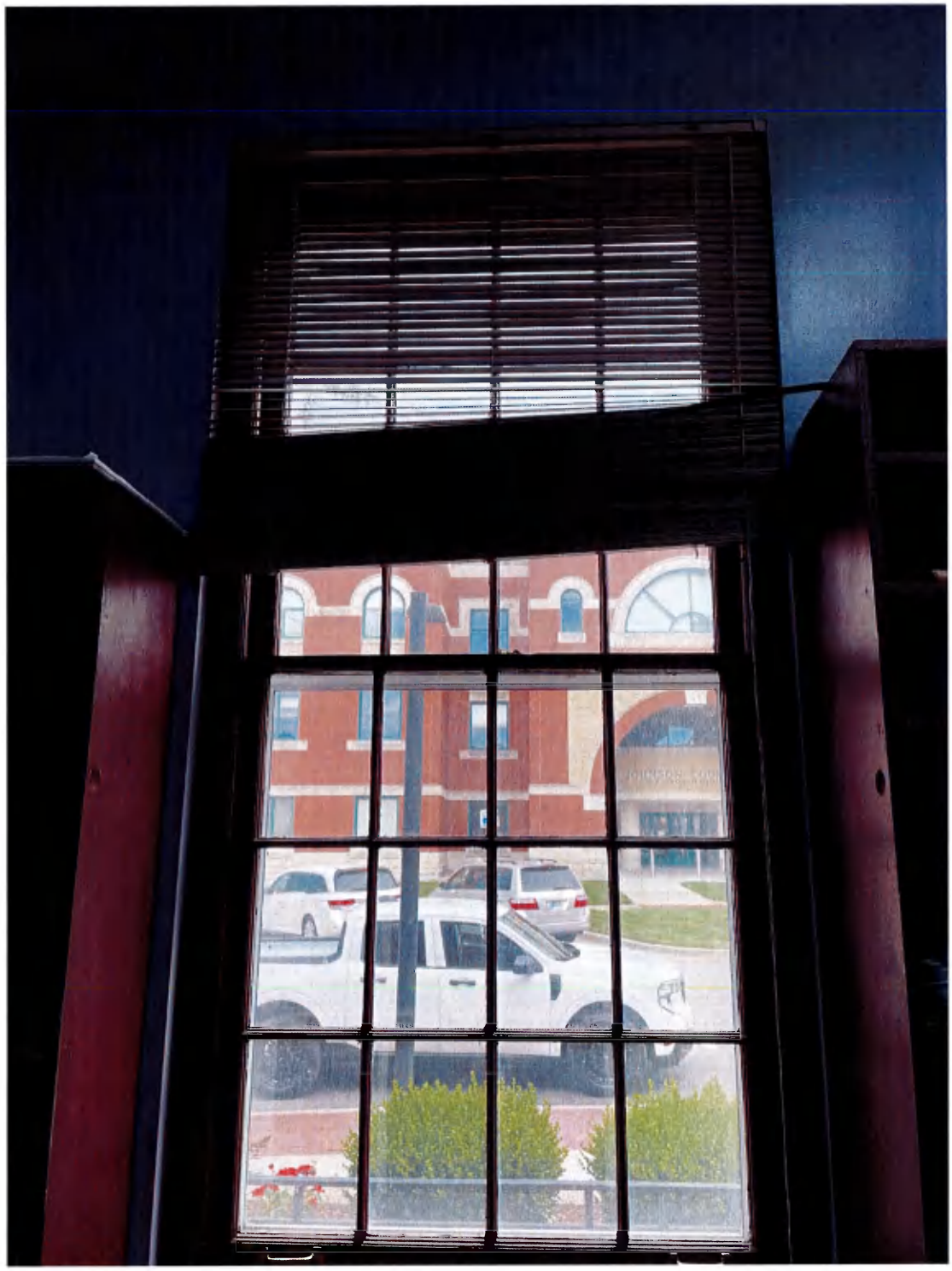


Sikh Worship Center – photo key.

Sikh Worship Center – front (west) photo key.

Photo 1: Sikh Worship Center, front (west) elevation, overview, June 23, 2025.

Photo 2: Sikh Worship Center, front (west) elevation, window 1 exterior, June 23, 2025.



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