

University looks to Malone expansion

by Bart Becker

The information which follows was taken from a report by the UNL Department of Geography, "The Face of Malone: An Area of Transition in Lincoln, Nebraska." The editor was Dean S. Rugg. The authors were David A. Montgomery, Frank A. Pratt, Rodney W. Schulling, Boniface N. Madubom and Darshan S. Kang.

The boundaries of what is called "Malone" are indefinite. For the purposes of the geographic study, an area of approximately 55 blocks, from Q to Y Streets and from 19th to 26th Streets, was included. This is the last of a two part series.

After Lincoln was selected in the summer of 1867 as the site for the state capital, the decision to locate the State University here followed as a matter of course.

The University of Nebraska was created by a legislative act in 1869. Four square blocks on the north edge of Lincoln, bounded by 10th and 12th on the west and east and R and T streets on the south and north, were set aside for the land-grant institutions.

For the period 1869-1916, student enrollment increased at a nearly constant rate. From 1917 through 1952 student enrollment increased and decreased at variable rates. The period 1953-1970 exhibited steady increases in enrollment.

The pattern of land acquisition parallels the enrollment increase.

An apparent characteristic of University land acquisition policy is the purchase of scattered pieces rather than continuous lots. Individual owners have been approached in an attempt to persuade them to sell.

The University, the report concludes, has no direction in which to expand except east—into Malone. However, the report notes the University could move south into an area that has been a business district in the past.

"While the central business district is expanding to the south into a 'zone of active assimilation,' it is also receding from the north," according to the report. This leaves behind a "zone of discard," bonded by Q and R streets.

The report notes that the campus suffers from several internal space problems. Two of the more apparent ones are circulation of traffic and the integration of space requirements for classrooms, services, residence and recreation. Less evident, according to the study, is the lack of married student housing.

Although the University has developed plans to eliminate through traffic by providing alternate routes, no apparent scheme has been developed to confine parking lots to the periphery of campus, the report said.

It suggests that no vehicles except those used for service should have ready access into the inner academic core of the campus. This would insure free flow of students from one class to another without having to wait for traffic.

The report also points out that UNL has the lowest number of dwelling units for married students in the Big Eight.

According to the Comprehensive Campus Plan, a future campus of 25,000 students should anticipate space for housing up to 50 per cent of the entire student body, excluding fraternities and sororities. With student enrollment at 20,810, single housing is available for about 5,300 students.

The City Campus has facilities for 2,740 men and 2,560 women, while East Campus has facilities for 118 men and 171 women. The remaining single students seek accommodation through other arrangements within the city.

The report says this need for University expansion affects the Malone area—primarily the area bounded by 19th, 23rd, Q and W Streets. In 1964 this area had 332 residential houses. As of December 31, 1970, the remaining area to be acquired consisted of 34 properties.

The average price of all the land acquired by the University is stated to be \$1.02 per square foot. This ranges from 50 cents per square foot for railroad land to \$1.74 per square foot for residential lots. This price compares favorably with those paid elsewhere in Lincoln, the report states.

Although University records show that 58 per cent of the people who moved out were whites and 42 per cent non-white, a 1968 survey (The Altemeyer report) showed 77 per cent of those who moved out were non-white. The geography department report indicated the latter report seemed more accurate.

The Altemeyer report concluded that nearly one-third of its non-white respondents experienced discrimination when trying to find other housing.

Certain questions about the use of pressure by the University in acquiring land have been raised. Out of the 109 properties purchased by the University, only three parties (2.8 per cent) preferred court settlement to the price the University offered to pay.

The situation, however, is not as simple as made out by this analysis of court-cases, because it is not the owner, but the tenant who is most affected, according to the report. University officials have had this brought to their attention and now apparently have agreed to continue renting to the present tenants until they secure new housing.

It becomes apparent that the University will expand and, because of physical barriers, is forced to expand into Malone. The Northeast Radial, an arterial street to north Lincoln, also may impose on residents of the area.

Thus the population of Malone continues to shift and the face of the area continues to change.



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