

Strang Line Interurban Railroad



In 1906 a unique commuter railroad opened between Kansas City and Johnson County. The Strang Line, as it was commonly known, connected Johnson county residents to jobs and stores in Kansas City and offered city residents the opportunity for leisure in the country.

Named for its developer and the founder of Overland Park, the Strang Line carried many of Johnson County's first suburbanites to Kansas City on a route that paralleled the Santa Fe trail until 1940

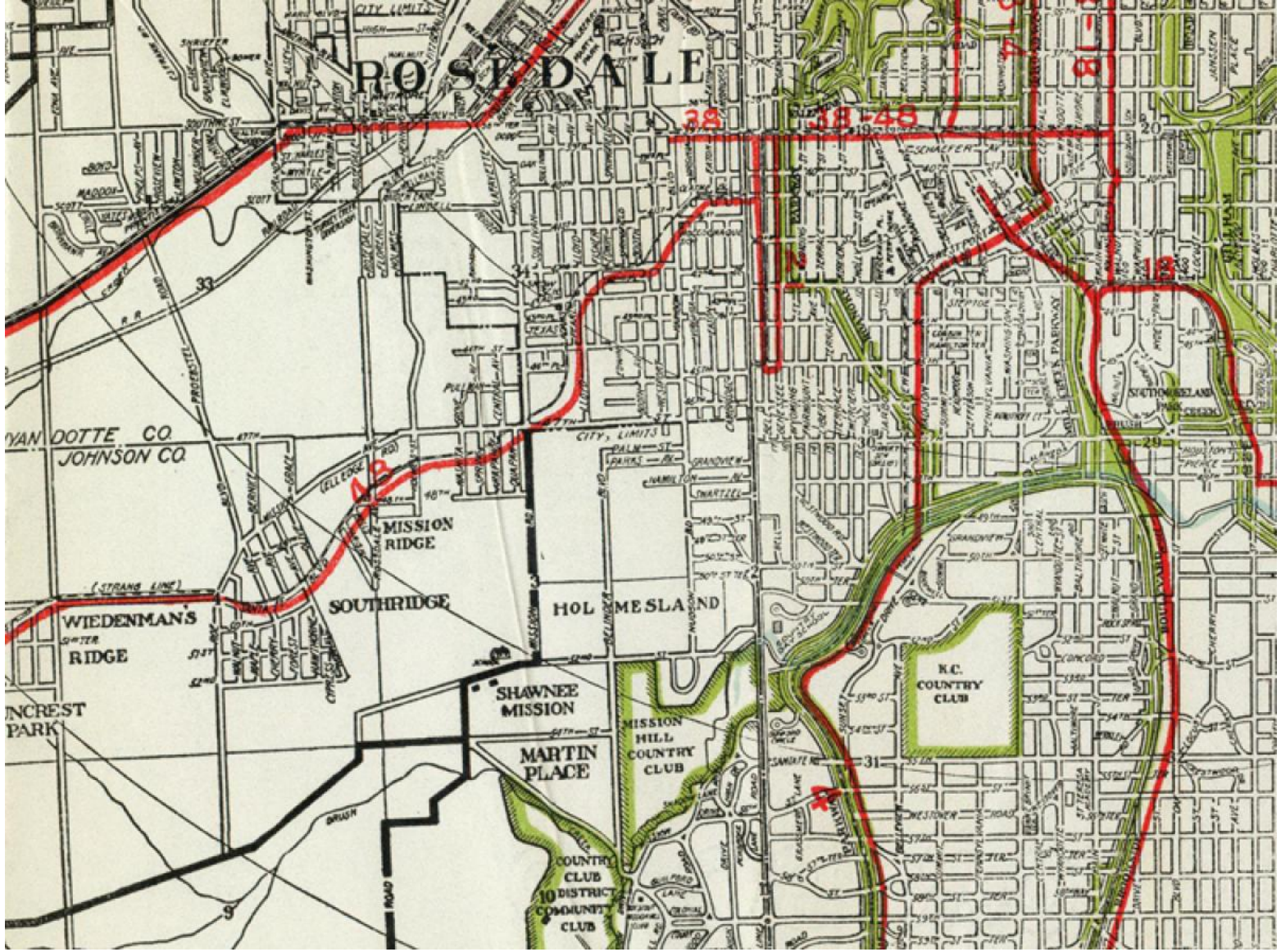
The Strang Line interurban system ran adjacent to what is today the City of Westwood. Crossing near the intersection of today's 47th Street and Mission Road, the interurban railroad route ran just north of where [Joe's Kansas City Bar-B-Que](#) and the North Wood Shopping Center in Kansas City, Kansas is located, connecting the far suburban reaches of Johnson County and Olathe to Kansas City proper.

By 1911, the Strang Line was primarily serving suburbanites who lived in subdivisions such as Overland Heights, Overland Hills, or Milburn Place. They rode the Strang Line to work or shop in Kansas City; and Kansas City residents traveled to Olathe to shop for groceries or to attend social events in Overland Park. As was expected, Strang's speculative development of Overland Park greatly increased the value of farm land located along this interurban line.

The Strang Line continued to prosper until 1916, as automobiles and trucks became the preferred methods of transportation and shipping. Between 1916 and 1940, the Strang Line struggled to compete with an expanding trucking industry and the automobile. By 1925, a paved highway connected Olathe with Kansas City and steadily reduced passenger service on the Strang Line.

Despite their efforts to continue passenger service, the Strang Line could not compete with new highways and the prestige and convenience of commuting to the city in one's own automobile. By November 1937, commuters could drive along two new concrete roadways — US 50 and K-10 — from Olathe to southeast Kansas City in half the time it took on the Strang Line.

When the Strang Line made its final run on July 9, 1940, it was the sole survivor of numerous interurbans that once operated out of Kansas City.



As noted from this clipped excerpt of a circa 1920 Gallup Map & Supply Co. map of Greater Kansas City and Suburbs, the red 48 line shows the route of the Strang Line railway. Credit to The David Rumsey Map Collection - [full size map here](#).

Visit the [JoCoHistory website](#) to learn more about William Strang and his interurban railroad in Johnson County - [click here](#).