

24th St. Streetcar line connected North & South Omaha. The little girl has just arrived at the end of her journey.

The area was once a hunting ground for many indigenous tribes. In contrast, a Venetian carousel and a bullfight occupied the intersection during festivals, such as Cinco de Mayo, and many churches served each ethnic group.

The crux of infinite loop of immigration is the drive of those seeking better opportunities for their families. Acquiring any employment they could, immigrants oftentimes take classes to improve their prospects, while maintaining a rich, intergenerational family life. By congregating in particular neighborhoods, ethnic groups have been able to maintain a sense of identity and shared language and experience. Relied upon for their hard work and commitment to values of family, tradition and culture, the immigrants who made South Omaha are the true foundation of what it means to be from South O.

Magic City - 24th & N Sts.

The celebration of ethnic traditions continues in the Sokol gymnasiums, the pottery shops and paleteros selling their ice cream and treats. Food trucks and restaurants, clothing stores and businesses - all locally owned, serve the community that surrounds South High School. One of its graduates, Charles Bryant, exhibits roundness of education, being an athlete, poet and visual artist. As the mural winds down, we see the little girl from the left side has now aged. She has experienced the richness of the Magic City, of which she has played a part. The buds at the start and have blossomed into yet another season of the cycle.



South Omaha is called the "Magic City" because its population exploded in the years just after 1886 when it was established. Immigrants from all over rode the rails to here seeking opportunity.

A shared love of music: Mexican mariachi bands still play for dancers at festivities. Swoboda's Czech owner loved to play the accordion and taught many local musicians. These were welcome diversions and reminders of home for packing house workers.

Mingling in the crowds, past and present, on 24th Street, you will find cowboys who bring cattle to the Stockyards, who encounter residents from all over: Polish, Czech, Southern Black American, Irish, Mexican, Greek, German, Croatian, Lithuanian, Italian... A true melting pot, the cultural milieu would not be found until you reach similar livestock operations in Kansas City and Chicago, which South Omaha supplanted as the world's largest in 1955. Though the stockyards are gone, the cycle of immigration continues to rejuvenate this part of town. Residents from Central America, Mayan territories, Somalia and Sudan, to name a few, have recently settled here.

The building itself is built on the site of the first brick structure in the city of South Omaha. It served as a hotel and saloon, as home of the South Omaha Daily Tribune, as a gambling hall and even roomed early classes of South High School.

SOUTH OMAHA MURAL PROJECT

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