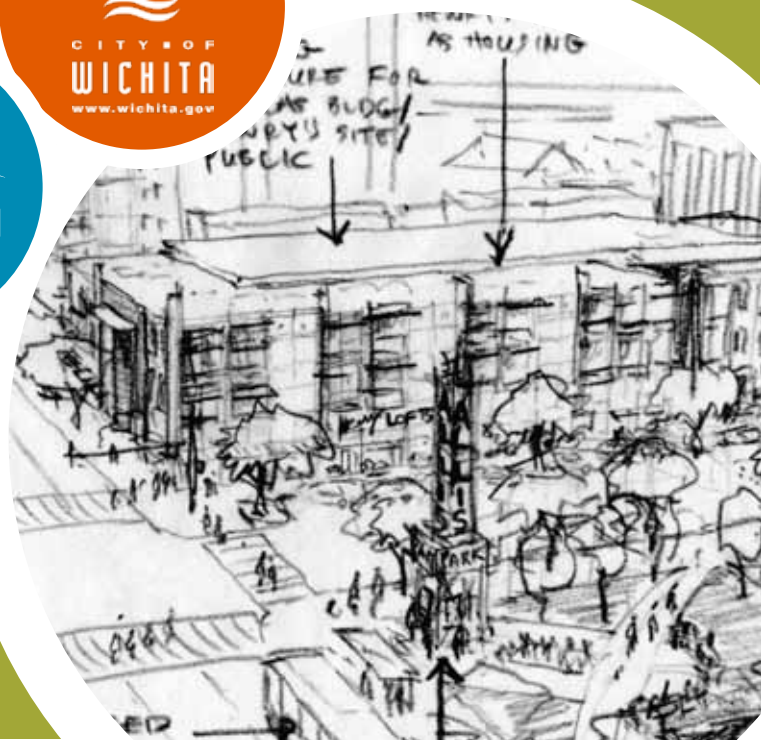
Project Downtown:
The Master Plan for Wichita



NOVEMBER 2010

PREPARED BY GOODY CLANCY
WITH
ZIMERMAN/VOLK • W-ZHA • MJB • PEC
KITTELSON ASSOICATES • PLACEMATTERS

Project Downtown: the Master Plan for Wichita

Contents

From the Mayor iii
Using This Plan v
Acknowledgements vii

1 Executive Summary
- The Vision 1.1
- The Plan 1.6
- Action Steps 1.8

2 A New Era of Opportunity
- Overview 2.1
- Market analysis 2.5
- Transportation analysis 2.13
- Urban design analysis 2.17

3 Community Engagement: Understanding opportunities, envisioning possibilities, building a shared vision
- Taking Downtown's pulse 3.1
- Cultivating great investment's downtown 3.1
- Conversations with the community 3.2

4 The Downtown Vision
- Vision statement 4.1
- Vision principles 4.1

5 Plan Framework
- Walkable development 5.1
- Green public spaces 5.9
- Transportation plan
  - > Overview 5.13
  - > Strategic public parking infrastructure 5.21
- Business plan 5.31

6 Vision Plan
- Market-based development program 6.1
- Illustrative vision plan 6.2
- District framework 6.4
  - > Arkansas River 6.6
  - > Douglas Corridor at Arkansas River/Delano 6.10
  - > Douglas Corridor at Core/Historic District 6.14
  - > Old Town 6.18
  - > Old Town West 6.22
  - > Arena 6.26
  - > Old Town South 6.30
  - > Commerce Street Arts 6.34
  - > Main Street Corridor 6.38
  - > Downtown Core 6.42
  - > Century II-WaterWalk 6.46
  - > Government Center 6.50
  - > Renaissance Square 6.54

7 Catalyst Sites

- Overview *7.1*
- Sites
  - **C1** West Bank Arkansas River and New Central Library *7.5*
  - **C2** East Bank Arkansas River at First/Waco Streets *7.9*
  - **C3** Century II and Current Central Library *7.13*
  - **C4** City Plaza and Parking Site at Douglas, Main, and Century II Drive *7.19*
  - **C5** Former Allis Hotel Site *7.23*
  - **C6** Topeka Street Firehouse *7.27*
  - **C7** Former Coleman Factory Site *7.31*
  - **C8** City Parking Lot at Naftzger Park *7.35*
  - **C9** City Parking Lots at Douglas/Mead and Douglas/Mosley *7.39*

8 Putting the Plan to Work

- Action strategies *8.1*
  - > Creating unique downtown places *8.2*
  - > Expanding transportation choices *8.7*
  - > Enabling development *8.9*
- Leadership *8.12*
- Implementation matrix *8.14*

Appendices (under separate cover)

A1 Market Analyses

- Housing
- Office
- Hotel
- Retail

A2 Transportation

- Existing Conditions Analysis
- Benefits from Transportation Improvements

A3 Development & Design Guidelines

- General
  - > Built realm: Building form
  - > Public realm: Streetscape
  - > Public realm: Pedestrian infrastructure
- Criteria specific to downtown districts

A4 Implementation Matrix

From the Mayor

CITY OF WICHITA

At the close of our 18-month master planning process for downtown Wichita, the term "dynamic opportunities" surfaced as one way to describe the work we can accomplish together.

The term struck a chord for me. It summarizes both the process itself, as well as the plan that our community has outlined for its future. We are, after all, a community that turned out by the hundreds to discuss ideas, share concerns and focus on a future that promises economic growth while paying attention to culture, sustainability, design and building a sense of community in our downtown.

It was dynamic to say the least.

The resulting plan, Project Downtown, captures the excitement of this planning process, grounds it in sound economic principles and carefully outlines the many opportunities that exist for living, working and playing in downtown Wichita.

Rather than dwelling on what hasn't worked in the past, or what will keep us from being successful in the future, our community created a common vision that benefits not just our downtown but the region as a whole. We know that by creating quality of life in the core of our city that we will be more likely to recruit young people and new businesses to the region, while retaining those who already consider this area home.

Yes, the process was dynamic and proved that we have many opportunities if we continue to work together on behalf of our community. The diversity of the voices involved in putting together the plan has made it strong; and these voices will need to continue – and grow – as we move from planning to implementation.

I would like to thank my colleagues on the Wichita City Council, as well as the Sedgwick County Commission, for their ongoing support of this downtown plan. It has only been through the partnership established between the City, Sedgwick County, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation, local businesses and citizens that we have come this far.

We look forward to continuing our work together as we move Project Downtown from the pages of this plan to the streets of our city. Together we will bring these "dynamic opportunities" to life, and we respectfully – and enthusiastically – invite you to join us in the process.

Sincerely,

Carl Brewer
Mayor

Office of the Mayor

City Hall | First Floor | 455 N. Main | Wichita, Kansas 67202-1698

T 316.268.4331 | **F** 316-858-7743

Using This Plan

This document charts a 20-year vision for Downtown Wichita. It is intended to assist a wide variety of people interested in Downtown Wichita –property owners, business owners, residents, cultural organizations, city and county staff, and other key stakeholders as well as the general public. The document contains a wide variety of material addressing different perspectives, from the motivation for the plan in the first place, to what can materialize downtown, to how to go about making it happen. Chapter 1, the Executive Summary, provides an overview considering all these perspectives. Here is a guide to what additional parts of the document address certain questions in more detail.

Why create a plan for Downtown Wichita?

- **Chapter 2, A New Era of Opportunity,** describes the compelling opportunities possible through the Downtown plan.
- **Market analyses** in the appendix provide more detail on market-based opportunities for Downtown investment.
- **Chapter 3, Community Engagement: Building a Shared Vision,** describes how the plan is built on the community's aspirations.

What is the plan? Where does it apply, and where will we see change?

- **Chapter 4, The Downtown Vision,** defines the principles that should guide the plan.
- **Chapter 5, Plan Framework,** outlines policies to guide Downtown development, transportation, investment in public infrastructure, public/private incentives, and related actions. It targets certain Downtown areas for new private- and public-sector investment.
- **Chapter 6, Vision Plan,** provides illustrated scenarios of Downtown improvements, including market-based development and the public infrastructure improvements needed to support it. This chapter pays specific attention to the variety of specific districts and neighborhoods that make up Downtown as a whole.
- **Chapter 7, Catalyst sites,** describes specific opportunities on certain strategic publicly-owned sites.

Who shaped the plan and who will produce its results?

- **Chapter 3,** Community Engagement: Building a shared vision, addresses who had a voice in shaping the plan.
- **Chapter 8, Putting the Plan to Work,** identifies who should lead and the plan and who should assist in its implementation.

How should the plan be applied to ensure successful results?

- **Chapter 5,** Plan Framework, outlines policies to guide Downtown development , transportation, investment in public infrastructure, public/private incentives, and related actions.

- **Chapter 7**, Catalyst Sites, tells how to take best advantage of these important locations.
- **Chapter 8**, Putting the Plan to Work, provides specific action strategies to advance the goals of the plan.
- **Development and Design Guidelines** in the Appendix describe how design can increase the value of new development for its owners, occupants, and the broader community.

When do we start? When will we see results?

- **Chapter 8**, Putting the Plan to Work, sets priorities among the action strategies.
- **The Implementation Matrix** in the Appendix provides more specific milestones for initiating and completing Downtown action strategies.

Acknowledgements

STEERING COMMITTEE

- Carl Brewer, Mayor, City of Wichita
- Charlie Claycomb, President, Old Town Association
- Jason Dilts, Director of Community Development, ROK ICT!
- Sharon Feary, Former City Council Member, District VI
- Matt Goolsby, Member, City of Wichita Board of Park Commissioners
- Bill Hanna, Retired President and Chief Operating Officer, Koch Industries
- Jody Horner, President, Cargill Meat Solutions
- Michael Loop, Citizen-At-Large
- Sharon Mallory, Chairwoman, Wichita Arts Council
- Rachel Norwood, Coordinator, Wichita Urban League Learning Center
- John Rolfe, President and Chief Executive Officer, Go Wichita Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Jon Rolph, Chairman, Visioneering Wichita
- Don Slawson, President, Slawson Companies
- Harvey Sorenson, Partner, Foulston Siefkin LLP
- Larry Weber, Chairman, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation

MANAGEMENT TEAM

- Suzie Ahlstrand, Vice President of Community Advancement, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Dave Barber, Advanced Plans Manager, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department
- Allen Bell, Director of Urban Development, City of Wichita
- Jerry Gray, Business Development Committee Chairman, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Catherine Holdeman, Assistant City Manager, City of Wichita
- Ron Holt, Assistant County Manager, Sedgwick County
- Dick Honeyman, Vice Chair, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Robert Layton, City Manager, City of Wichita
- John Schlegel, Director, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department
- Gary Schmitt, Treasurer/ Secretary, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Michael Vinson, Director, Wichita Transit
- Larry Weber, Chairman, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation

DOWNTOWN VISION TEAM

- Suzie Ahlstrand, Vice President of Community Advancement, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Vera Bothner, Managing Partner, Bothner and Bradley
- Carl Brewer, Mayor, City of Wichita
- Misty Bruckner, Associate Director, Center for Urban Studies, Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs
- William Buchanan, County Manager, Sedgwick County
- Catherine Holdeman, Assistant City Manager, City of Wichita
- Jeff Fluhr, President, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Ron Holt, Assistant County Manager, Sedgwick County
- Beth King, Principal, King Merj Public Relations
- Scott Knebel, Downtown Revitalization Manager, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department
- Robert Layton, City Manager, City of Wichita
- Diane Longfellow, Administrative Assistant for Community Advancement, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Scott Moore, Interim City Manager, City of Wichita
- John Rolfe, President and Chief Executive Officer, Go Wichita Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Jon Rolph, Chairman, Visioneering Wichita
- John Schlegel, Director, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department
- Van Williams, Public Information Officer, City of Wichita
- Sheryl Wohlford, Vice President, Automation Plus, Inc.
- Kristi Zukovich, Communications and Community Initiatives Director, Sedgwick County

PROJECT FUNDERS

- City of Wichita
- Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Wichita Downtown Development Corporation Board of Directors
- Wichita Transit
- Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Go Wichita—Convention & Visitors Bureau

PROJECT FUNDERS—CORPORATIONS AND BUSINESSES

- Adams Jones Law Firm
- Athena Jewelry
- Belford Electric
- BOMA
- Builders, Inc.
- Cargill
- Casado-McKay
- Cole Consultants
- Emprise Bank
- Fidelity Bank
- Gossen Livingston
- Hite Fanning Honeyman, L.L.P.
- INTRUST Bank
- J.P. Weigand & Sons Inc.
- Marketplace Properties
- Morris Laing Evans Brock & Kennedy, Chartered
- Northern Flyer Alliance
- Old Mill Tasty Shop
- Professional Engineering Consultants
- Real Development
- Rock Island
- Ruffin Properties
- Schafer Johnson Cox Frey
- Sullivan Higdon & Sink
- Sunflower Bank
- Trans Pacific Properties
- Westar Energy

CO-PROJECT MANAGERS

- Jeff Fluhr, President, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Scott Knebel, Downtown Revitalization Manager, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department

continues on next page

Acknowledgements (continued)

PROJECT ASSISTANCE

- Suzie Ahlstrand, Vice President of Community Advancement, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Vera Bothner, Managing Partner, Bothner and Bradley
- Ashley Jones, Planning Aide, Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department
- Ann Keefer, Vice President of Marketing, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Diane Longfellow, Administrative Assistant for Community Advancement, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce
- Jamil Malone, Director of Special Projects, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Nancy Moore, Administrative Assistant, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- Nathan Steele, Intern, Wichita Downtown Development Corporation

PLAN PREPARED BY

GOODY CLANCY ARCHITECTURE PLANNING PRESERVATION

with assistance from:

- Kittelson & Associates
- MJB Consulting
- PlaceMatters
- Professional Engineering Consultants
- W-ZHA
- Zimmerman Volk Associates

1 Executive Summary

Vision

Hundreds of people have shared their views on Downtown Wichita's strengths, challenges and opportunities.

Vision statement

Downtown is a place that enables people to live, work, shop, play, and learn...all within a short walk of each other. Downtown celebrates Wichita's rich history and vibrant future, and it invites people from every walk of life to share their sense of community. 150 years after Wichita took root here, Downtown is the reinvigorated heart of a region committed to a vital future.

Principles for achieving the vision:

Each has elements that speak to **culture, economic growth, community, sustainability, and design.**

Offer something for everyone.

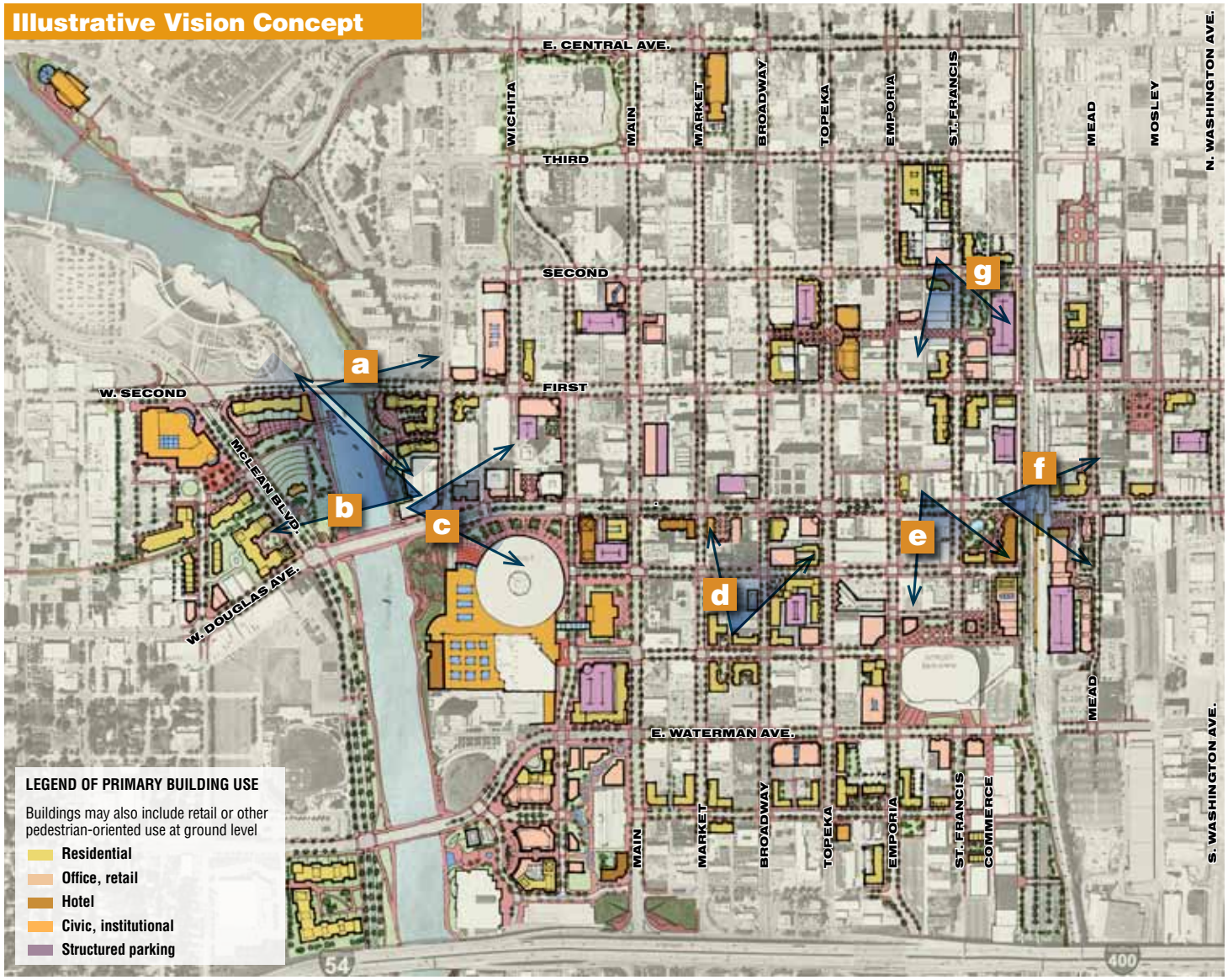
Leverage Downtown's inherent strengths to generate economic value.

Expand choices for people—and the region.

Support development that fosters walkable connections.

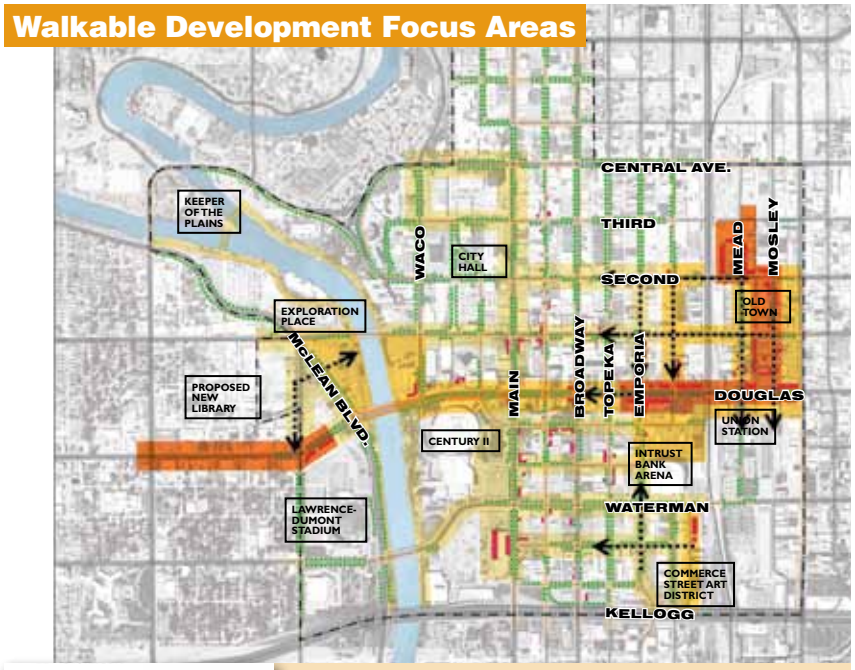
Promote Downtown's role in advancing regional sustainability.

Illustrative Vision Concept



This symbol indicates the viewpoint of each of the lettered renderings on pages 1.4–1.5, showing the point of view and the field of vision for each. Together, these renderings provide a sense of how the Project Downtown recommendations can transform downtown Wichita.

Walkable Development Focus Areas

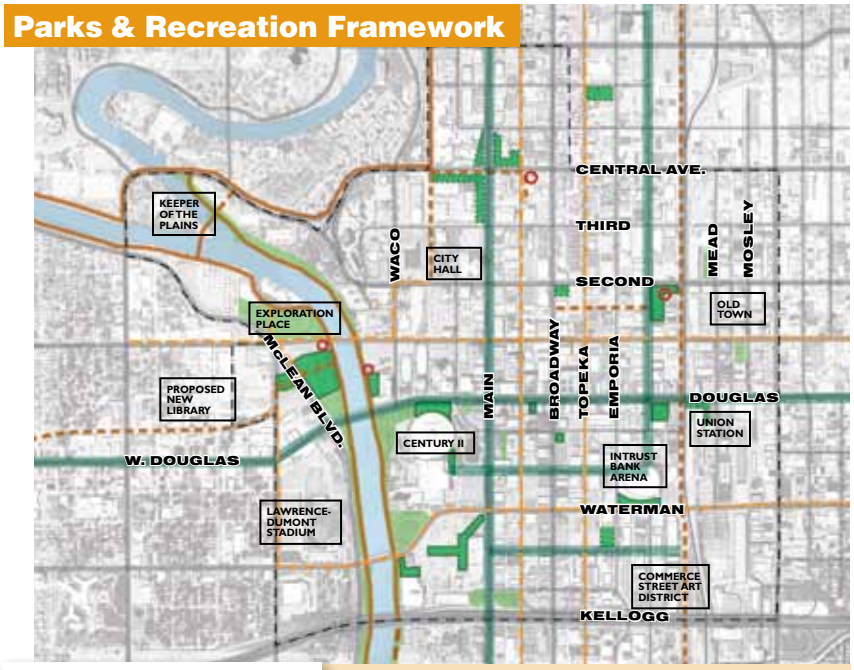


LEGEND

- Most walkable today
- Immediate priority
- Long-term priority
- Key growth direction

Maximizing Downtown's demonstrated potential to attract development and provide amenities depends on improving walkability. The priority walking corridors shown here are areas in which private investment in development and public investment in transit, parks, and other infrastructure can best reinforce each other to create the biggest impact on regional economic growth and quality of life.

Parks & Recreation Framework



LEGEND

- Existing park/plaza

POTENTIAL/IMPROVED PARKS/PLAZAS:

- Specific site
- General area
- Green street

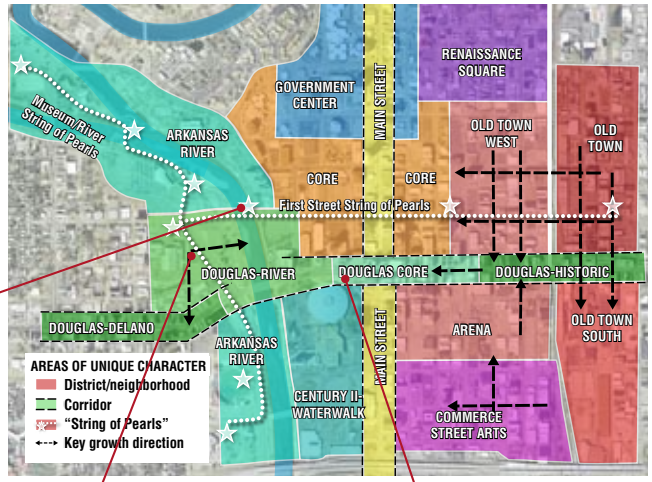
MULTI-USE PATHS:

- Existing
- Potential
- Potential on-street bike lane
- Potential new or enhanced recreation facility

Improved parks, plazas and green streets will invite community gathering and recreation, attract development, make Downtown a comfortable place to walk, and help keep Arkansas River water clean.

One Downtown, many unique districts

Built on an empty City-owned lot, housing frames a public courtyard that opens to the river and connects Cargill's Innovation Center with the restored Broadview Hotel.

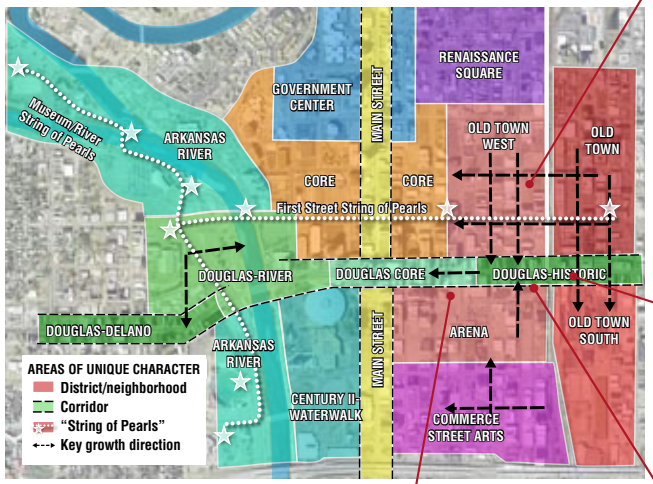


Housing ties the new Central Library to the Museum District, Delano, and the river. Public biking and boating facilities, with the housing, bring the riverbanks to life. Future expansion of Century II creates the state's most desirable meeting setting, with a park-like connection to the river.

Better walking and transit connections can transform Century II by connecting many activities that support each other: Convention goers and performing arts audiences can reach new restaurants at the Garvey Center; workers there can connect to a new landmark hotel next to the convention center; and residents can gain easy access to great walks along Douglas and the Arkansas River.

New housing, office, and restaurant development—expanding on the successful rehab of the old Wichita High School building into 68 loft apartments at Flats 324—creates development value that can help pay for street trees, a neighborhood park and cleanup of the Coleman factory site.

g



Transit and green promenades push Old Town's energy across Douglas, connecting a rich mix of uses, some in new buildings that replace parking lots, and a revived Union Station. Densely planted street trees and new vegetation shelter people from sun and wind and help capture and treat stormwater. Interpretive signage and public art connect people with culture and history.

f

d

Market-based, mixed-use development fills empty historic buildings as cost-effective public transit and shared parking infrastructure provide needed support. Surface parking gives way to a park that commemorates the demolished Allis Hotel.

Pedestrian traffic between Intrust Bank Arena and Old Town restaurants brings Naftzger Park to prominence as a square at the heart of downtown. New hotels and residential buildings join the Eaton block and other historic structures restored in the 1990s to frame the square as downtown's "living room."

e

A business plan for Downtown

A prudent public-investment policy designed to unlock private investment

Downtown Wichita is poised to join downtowns across America that have demonstrated their power as engines of economic growth and quality of life. The City has the opportunity to make its downtown development incentives as effective as its suburban ones. These policy guidelines can maximize return on public investment—using public funds sparingly to remove the obstacles to private-sector investment in high-value development.

1. Target investments to **support market-driven development**. "The plan grows from market demand" sidebar on the facing page describes significant market-driven opportunities in downtown Wichita that form the basis for the Project Downtown plan.

2. **Make the most of existing public investment**. "Connect the dots" Downtown by targeting walkable development along corridors like Douglas Avenue that link existing destinations. Encourage development near the arena and Old Town, where investment in parks, public entertainment destinations, parking, and brownfields remediation has already stimulated private investment and will naturally continue to do so.

3. **"Build it as they come,"** not "Build it and hope they come." Time incremental public-sector investments to match related private-sector development. While some modest initial investment will be needed to "set the table" for development—such as updating development-review processes and creating detailed plans for places like the Convention Center and the Commerce Street Arts District—more significant investments in infrastructure like public parking should only happen in conjunction with actual private projects' moving forward. Similarly, transit improvements can be made as a series of steps—improving stops, providing more service information, extending service hours, adding routes—rather than as a large one-time investment. Action strategies 5 and 6 on page 1.9 provide additional detail.

City investments in parking and soil clean-up made it possible for Old Town to succeed as a place for business and community.

4. Only **make public investments that bring lasting public benefits** like parks or public parking. Do not pay for private parking or other things the public can't directly use.

5. Target investments to **enable many people to benefit and invest further.** The box at right details how the Project Downtown plan opens the door to individual actions.

6. **Bring clarity and predictability to applying for and administering public incentives** for Downtown development. Establish clear eligibility criteria for developers—experience, expertise, and financial capacity—and for projects—location, uses, and design—that encourage further private investment and overall vitality in Downtown. Action strategy 8 on page 1.9 provides more detail.

Inviting initiative

The Action Strategies on pages 1.8 and 1.9 are written to enable individuals and organizations to take actions that both advance their own interests ***and*** make Downtown do more for everyone. Selected plan actions that accomplish this include:

- The **Downtown Development Go-To Center** (7a) will provide developers and property owners helpful information on market opportunity, finance sources, project approval criteria, potential partnerships and other topics to encourage successful projects.
- Households and businesses seeking locations in easy walking distance of stores and parks will have **a choice of compelling addresses** offering varied building formats, neighborhood characters, and costs (3c, 3d, 7b, 7i).
- **The Downtown Visitors Amenity Plan** (1d) will make it easier for visitors to get to know all that Downtown Wichita has to offer.
- **"Complete Streets"** (2a) that are walkable and green will offer more property owners opportunity to capture the enhanced value of walkable development.
- A **targeted retail-recruitment** program (3c) will help match businesses and property owners in the most advantageous locations.
- **Communicating what Downtown has to offer** (4d) will make it a more attractive option for young professionals and others from the region's workforce and elsewhere.
- **Investing in public parking structures** (5c) will significantly expand the economic potential of existing properties that lack parking and the options for locating new development.
- **Setting clear criteria for developers and projects** seeking public financial assistance will enable developers to move more efficiently and successfully from concept to ribbon-cutting (8a–c).

The plan grows from market demand

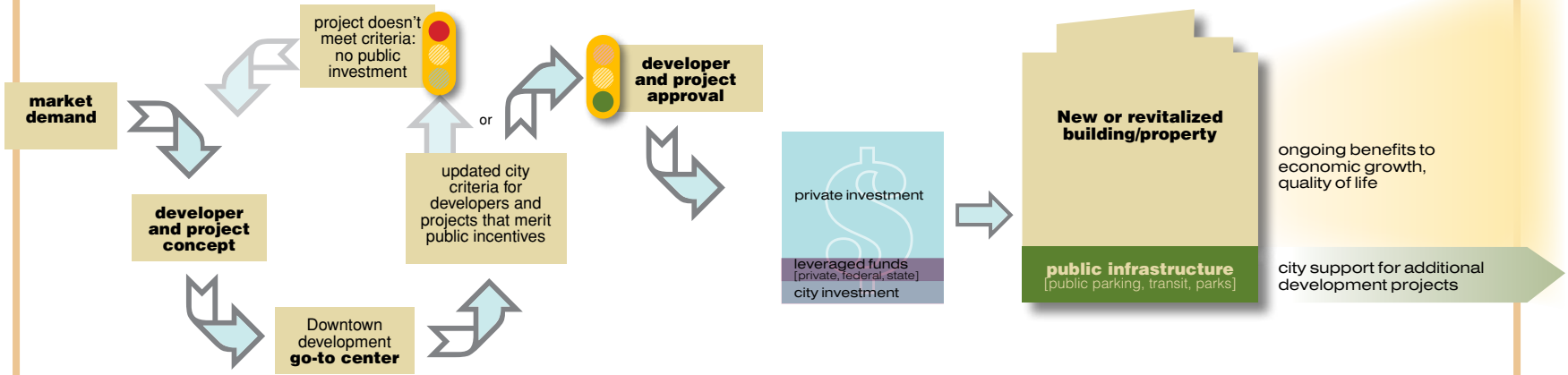
Market analysis determined there is solid demand over the next ten years for a rich mix of Downtown uses in walkable settings:

- 1,500 **housing units** in a mix of types: loft, apartment, town-house, live/work

- 220,000–480,000sf of **office space**
  - > Class A buildings, 50,000–80,000sf
  - > Distinctive Class B
  - > Convenient public parking a must

- 250–400+ **hotel rooms**, mix of products
  - > Proximity to Century II, amenities, transit
- **Retail:** real opportunity to build on successful niches and walkable concentrations
  - > Dining, nightlife/entertainment
  - > Yupsters, hipsters, students, cheap chic
  - > One-per-market, mass-market

Project development process



Moving the plan forward

Creating unique Downtown places

1. Reinforce Downtown as the hub for arts, culture, sports and education

A **Support and strengthen formal associations** for Commerce Street Arts District, Museums on the River, etc.

B Seek **expanded funding** for operations and facilities.

C **Expand joint marketing,** ticket packages, operations among Museums on the River and/or other downtown destinations to increase impact and achieve efficiencies.

D Create a **Downtown Visitors Amenity Plan** coordinating pedestrian-oriented wayfinding, maps, transit services, marketing, etc.

E Create a handbook for holding **downtown events.**

F Attract **educational institutions.**

2. Make Downtown's public streets and parks places for everyone to enjoy

A Create **"complete streets"** with convenient transportation choices, dignified addresses, greenery, beauty, and stormwater management.

B **Make Douglas a continuous promenade** with interpretive signage/ displays on Wichita (history, aviation, notable people, etc.).

C Ensure public spaces are **safe**—and perceived that way.

D Monitor and enforce **Downtown cleanliness.**
- Publicize key service contacts (Police, DPW, Parks & Recreation).
- Reach out to neighborhood/business associations, confirm needs.
- Seek association/business sponsorships.

E Revitalize existing, and establish new Downtown **parks and green streets** according to neighborhood goals.

F Make the **Arkansas River Downtown's green centerpiece.**

3. Bring street fronts and neighborhoods to life

A **Prioritize target locations and types of retail,** other active ground-floor uses:
- Sites needing immediate improvement
- Incremental growth of walkable retail environments
- Strategic locations for pioneer tenants

B **Activate street-level storefronts** with visually interesting active uses.

C **Manage retail tenant mix** with a targeted retail recruitment program.

D **Promote quality Downtown housing** that serves a broad spectrum of households.

E **Utilize historic assets to spur housing** development through adaptive reuse.

F Target **façade-improvement incentives** in walkable-development focus areas.

4. Explain how Downtown Wichita makes a difference—in the region, nation, and world

A Maintain data base on **Downtown buildings**.

B Track data on **key Downtown indicators.**

C Commission periodic **market studies.**
- Use results in recruitment, retention efforts and to promote downtown.
- WDDC lead, partner with Chamber, Go Wichita, GWEDC, others.

D **Interpret data and communicate key messages** to distinct target audiences:
- City, region, nation, world
- Businesses, developers
- Conventions, festivals
- Tourists
- Target workforce

New Residents Downtown

- **There is $30.4 million** in additional spending by new Downtown households.
- There are 765 new residents in downtown that have resulted in:
  - > *Decreased poverty rates*
  - > *Increased average income, and*
  - > *An increase in the average education attainment level*

Expanding transportation choices

5. Locate parking to improve access and stimulate re-investment

A Implement the ***Downtown Parking and Mobility Management Plan*** to improve utilization.

B **Prioritize parking in places** where it:
- serves multiple uses 24/7 (achieving best cost/benefit);
- unlocks "refill" opportunity for significant buildings lacking parking;
- expands development opportunity on prime sites through efficient land use; and
- promotes walkability.

C Based on this, **invest in public parkingstructures** as crucial downtown infrastructure.

D Institute **transportation demand management** and improve walking, transit, and biking options and to reduce congestion and future parking demand.

E Provide **on-street parking.**

6. Improve walking, transit and biking choices

A **Make walking safe, easy, enjoyable** with more visible crosswalks, links across large blocks, wayfinding signage, interpretive signage/displays, public art.

B Expand **convenient transit** servicing key Downtown destinations and corridors:
- Visible and permanent: defined stops, attractive shelters/vehicles.

- Reliable, frequent, timely service.
- Coordinated with regional transit routes/schedules
- Information/incentive programs with key destinations.

C Make Downtown **bikeable** with defined streets/lanes linked to regional networks, bike parking.

D Apply specific roles and streetscape design to each street to **improve function for all access modes.**

Enabling development

7. Foster development with new tools

A Designate a **go-to center** for aspiring development, with information on
- Master plan goals
- Downtown market opportunity
- Incentives, including New Market Tax Credits, CIDs, low-interest loan funds
- Zoning, design review process
- Partnership opportunities

B Provide access to **new and underutilized development finance tools.**

C …and summarize this in a **Downtown Development Handbook.**

D **Work to connect people** who offer complementary skills and opportunities (e.g., housing+office; local+national).

E **Leverage Wichita's historic buildings** as development assets.

F **Update zoning** to enable high-value walkable development.

G Pursue the means to address cumbersome **ground leases.**

H Create plans for more **specific initiatives** that advance Downtown. Plan (Convention Center expansion, Commerce Street Arts District, First Street String of Pearls, etc.).

I **Invite development proposals on strategic sites** under public/quasi-public control, per defined plan goals.

8. Set criteria for public/private development incentives

A For the **developer:** Past performance, appropriate expertise, capitalization

B For the **project**:
- Appropriate use(s) per location
- Design supporting walkability, downtown character (transparent facades along sidewalk, historic compatibility, etc.)
- Priority community benefits as defined by district (river access, public parking, park enhancements. etc.)

C Establish **design guidelines** for walkable development focus areas (Old Town and Delano precedents).

Who does what

Project Downtown distributes responsibility for action strategies across **Downtown's extensive and skilled private- and public-sector leadership,** assigning tasks to the groups best suited to lead them. The plan coordinates these efforts with an executive management team, and it prioritizes tasks to create a manageable implementation process that produces near-, mid-, and long-term results. The numbers listed for each responsible entity refer to specific tasks under the eight major strategies on these two pages.

City of Wichita
- Arts & Cultural Services: 1b, 1e
- Planning (advanced): 1d, 2b, 4a, 5a, 5d, 6d, 7h, 8c
- Planning (current): 3e, 7a, 7c, 7e, 7f
- Transit: 6b
- Public Works: 2a, 2d, 2f, 5e, 6a, 6c, 8a, 8b
- Project Management: 8a, 8b
- Park & Recreation: 2e
- Urban Development: 3f, 5b, 5c, 7b, 7g, 7i
- Police: 2c

Go Wichita
1c

Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC)
1d, 1e, 1f, 2b, 2d, 2e, 2f, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e, 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 5a, 5c, 5e, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d, 7e, 7g, 7h, 7i, 8c

Note: these and other private- and public-sector partners, such as Sedgwick County, Visioneering Wichita, and Wichita Area Association of Realtors may play supporting roles for other strategies.

2

The Market

A New Era of Opportunity

OVERVIEW

Downtown Wichita today offers a level of opportunity to enhance the region's economic growth and quality of life that hasn't been seen in 50 years. After years of development trends that emptied Downtown of many of its people, businesses and amenities, the tide has reversed, with new residents and businesses joining the still-significant concentrations of office, hotel and institutional activity downtown. Just as Downtown's earlier loss of investment echoed trends in cities all over America, so to does its ongoing revival reflect renewed interest all over the country—largely based in long-term demographic trends—in the benefits downtowns have to offer as places not only to work, but to live, learn, shop and spend leisure time.

Principal factors setting the stage for a new era of opportunity in Downtown Wichita:

- Downtown is increasingly an economic engine that attracts talent and investment that make the region competitive. More so than other places in the region, Downtown Wichita offers the combination of ingredients that attract creative workers and help spark business innovation: jobs, housing, restaurants, entertainment and other amenities all within a few minutes of each other.

- Today, economic diversity, jobs and investment follow skilled and creative younger workers. These workers often base their choice of where to live first on lifestyle, and then proceed to find a job that suits them. Businesses increasingly locate to be near these workers, who favor living and working in vibrant downtowns. Already, Downtown Wichita's cafes are full of younger workers doing creative and entrepreneurial work in a social setting. Younger singles and couples exert more than 70% of the demand for living downtown. The current economic

Downtown's special places make it a community destination for the region

Downtown appeals to young and creative people who will be key to Wichita's future economic prosperity.

downturn may actually amplify this trend by helping retain more younger and creative workers who previously would have been attracted to places like Chicago and Portland, and they are part of broad demographic trends that are much more "downtown friendly." For instance, 63% of Wichita's households include just one or two people—a percentage above the national average—the size category most interested in downtown living. On the other hand, 65% of Wichita's current housing stock is composed of traditional single-family homes, which are often larger or further from amenities than smaller households prefer. Hence, a number of smaller households, whether younger singles and couples starting out, or empty-nesters and other baby-boomers seeking a downsized home closer to services, increasingly look to Downtown with interest.

- People of all ages are more interested in shopping and playing Downtown. Downtown offers a level of choice, an appeal to a diverse community, and a sense of place and authenticity that many of its competitors lack.

Twenty years of successful reinvestment in Old Town, visible in the distance, is generating demand for more reinvestment that can revive empty lots and buildings in other downtown districts

- Downtown boasts advantages—historic buildings, reduced energy costs, walkability. Downtown's historic buildings—through their character and ability to tap historic tax-credit financing—and walkability have been central to Old Town's successful revival and vibrancy. They continue to be just as important today in attracting reinvestment all over Downtown. Downtown's walkability has improved, with added sidewalk improvements, residents and pedestrian-oriented businesses, and it will only continue to grow as streets become places for people. Downtown's market-based development opportunities all increase to the extent Downtown is walkable. As energy costs rise, the cost savings that Downtown offers households and businesses thanks to its efficient development pattern will become another increasingly important asset.

The INTRUST Bank Arena is attracting more people from the region downtown

- The time to act on these opportunities is now. Peer cities like Oklahoma City are busy promoting downtown reinvestment and recruiting new businesses and residents. Further, there is real near-term opportunity to seize in Downtown Wichita. Even in this economically challenging year, private entrepreneurs have begun or completed a number of significant market-based development projects

Construction of a new hotel at WaterWalk.

Downtown, including the Cargill Innovation Center, Flats 324, Finn Lofts, WaterWalk Fairfield Inn, and renovations at the Broadview and Hyatt Hotels. These demonstrate Downtown's fundamental market appeal, whatever the economic cycle. Putting a new plan in place now sets the framework to attract more successful Downtown investment in the coming years.

The analyses in this chapter of market, transportation, urban design and planning conditions Downtown reveal a solid foundation of opportunity surpassing anything Wichita has seen in two generations. These conditions demand a new and bigger perspective on Downtown's possibilities.

Even in the midst of a challenging economy, the Flats 324 housing development—an adaptive reuse of the former Wichita High School building, at left—rented all its 68 units promptly between January and June 2010, demonstrating downtown's significant market appeal.

Downtown has attracted significant new office tenants in recent years, including High Touch.

Market-Demand Analyses

Overview

Market-based development opportunities form one of the fundamental bases for conceiving and implementing the vision of the *Master Plan for Wichita*. Three nationally-recognized specialists in their respective areas—Laurie Volk of Zimmerman/Volk Associates; Sarah Woodworth of W-ZHA; and Michael Berne of MJB Consulting—conducted residential, hotel, office, and retail market demand analyses specific to the study area in 2009-2010. The residential market analysis projects demand for the coming 5 to 7 years (extrapolated to 10 years for purposes of creating development scenarios), and the office and hotel analysis projects demand for the coming 10 years. The retail analysis focused on identifying "niche" markets and employed a psychographic methodology as a key component of its review process. The key findings for each market area are summarized here; full reports for each area appear in Appendix 1.

Residential Market

BASE MARKET ANALYSIS

Zimmerman/Volk Associates analyzed housing market potential in the downtown study area based on long-term demographic trends, a key predictor of demand in emerging markets for walkable mixed-use neighborhoods. This analysis assumes that the area will continue to develop with walkable, mixed-use districts; if that does not happen, demand forecasts would be significantly lower. Key findings from the study include:

- Mirroring national trends, the potential market for new market-rate housing located within downtown is dominated by younger singles and couples, followed by empty nesters and retirees. Younger singles and couples are the most significant, comprising 70 percent of the market, while empty nesters and retirees account for 20 percent. Traditional and nontraditional families make up the remaining 9 percent (the figures here do not add to 100 percent because of rounding).
  - > 75 percent of the younger singles and couples would be moving to downtown from elsewhere in Sedgwick County, 3 percent would be moving from the regional and secondary draw areas, and 18 percent would be moving from elsewhere in the U.S.
  - > 30 percent of empty nesters and retirees would be relocating to downtown from other neighborhoods within Wichita; 30 percent would be moving from Sedgwick County; 10 percent would come from the regional and secondary draw areas; and the remaining 26 percent would be from elsewhere in the U.S.

- Analysis also revealed that approximately 63 percent of Wichita's existing households have one or two people, while approximately two-thirds of the region's housing stock consists of single-family homes. Because the greatest interest in living in walkable downtown neighborhoods comes from one- and two-person households, and because single-family homes may not always meet the location and size preferences of these households, downtown offers important opportunity to offer housing options that respond to unmet demand.

Market opportunity exists for approximately 1,000 housing units over 5 to 7 years (and about 1,500 units over the next 10 years).

EXHIBIT 2-1

Optimum Market Position: Market-Rate Dwelling Units in Downtown Wichita

HOUSING TYPE	BASE RENT/PRICE RANGE*	BASE UNIT SIZE RANGE (SQ. FT.)	BASE RENT/PRICE PER SQ. FT.*	ANNUAL MARKET CAPTURE
MULTIFAMILY RENTAL				
HARD LOFT *Open floorplan/1ba*	$500 to $1,300	450 to 1,100	$1.18 to $1.22	
SOFT LOFT *Studios to two-bedrooms*	$750 to $1,500	550 to 1,200	$1.25 to $1.36	
UPSCALE APARTMENT *One- to three-bedrooms*	$1,200 to $1,900	800 to 1,400	$1.36 to $1.50	**134 UNITS**
MULTIFAMILY OWNERSHIP				
HARD LOFT *Open floorplan/1ba*	$150,000 to $250,000	700 to 1,250	$200 to $214	
SOFT LOFT *One- and two-bedrooms*	$195,000 to $300,000	800 to 1,400	$214 to $244	
UPSCALE APARTMENT *Two- and three-bedrooms*	$275,000 to $400,000	1,000 to 1,650	$242 to $275	**48 UNITS**
SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED OWNERSHIP				
TOWNHOUSE/ROWHOUSE *Two- and three-bedrooms*	$225,00 to $350,000	1,100 to 1,800	$194 to $205	
LIVE-WORK UNIT *one- and two-bedrooms + 500sf ground-floor work space*	$325,00 to $375,000	1,350 to 1,600	$234 to $241	**18 UNITS**

** Base rent/price ranges are in 2010 dollars and exclude of floor/view premiums, options, and upgrades.*

source: Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

- From a market perspective, the assets of downtown Wichita that make it an attractive place to live include:
  - > Historic buildings
  - > Employment opportunities
  - > Culture and entertainment
  - > Shopping and dining
  - > Walkability
  - > Location and access
- From a market perspective, the major challenges are:
  - > Neglected or vacant properties
  - > High costs
  - > Misconceptions about parking
  - > Non-automobile transportation

In terms of actual market opportunity, the analysis determined that:

- Market opportunity exists for approximately 1,000 housing units over the next 5 to 7 years (and about 1,500 units over the next 10 years).
- These units could be absorbed at a rate of up to 150-200 units per year (not including turnover).

Exhibit 2-1, left, summarizes the optimal breakdown of unit types and associated size and price ranges for this target market.

PROJECTED LONG-TERM MARKET-BASED DEMAND

Longer-term projection assumes that a similar rate of demand will continue 10 to 15 years beyond the short-term time frame because the demographic trends that form the basis of the projected demand are expected to continue for 15 to 20 years. These include a continuing decline in the number of households with children, which could drop to as low as

14% of all households in 20 years. That makes it reasonable to assume that over the longer-term demand would match or exceed the rate expected in the near term. Zimmerman/Volk has found in similar communities that housing demand in walkable environments tends to accelerate over time. Likewise, the University of Michigan's Christopher Leinberger has found in his research that the success of dense, walkable, mixed-use centers adds to demand for adjacent areas based upon the appreciating value and increasing desirability of high-quality walkable urban development. In effect, the success achieved in creating a dense, high-quality, walkable mixed-use environment within downtown Wichita will help shape and drive future demand for additional housing.

EXHIBIT 2-2

Comparative Growth Rates:
Downtown vs. Suburban Office Markets (000s of sq. ft.)

	CBD OFFICE SPACE			SUBURBAN OFFICE SPACE		
YEAR	TOTAL	VACANT	OCCUPIED	TOTAL	VACANT	OCCUPIED
2000	3,409	21.2%	2,687	2,892	13.8%	2,494
2001	3,228	23.8%	2,460	3,246	15.9%	2,731
2002	3,576	26.2%	2,638	3,816	18.9%	3,096
2003	3,960	24.8%	2,977	4,060	18.0%	3,329
2004	3,973	24.3%	3,009	4,036	14.4%	3,454
2005	3,815	24.3%	2,889	4,072	15.2%	3,453
2006	3,486	22.5%	2,701	3,804	14.0%	3,273
2007	3,247	25.6%	2,417	3,815	11.7%	3,370
2008	3,133	21.4%	2,463	4,251	10.8%	3,793
Total increase	**(276)**		**(224)**	**1,359**		**1,299**
CAGR*	**–1.0%**		**–1.1%**	**4.9%**		**5.4%**

** CAGR = compounded annual growth rate.*

Source: Grubb & Ellis/Martens Commercial Group; W-ZHA LLC.

Office Market

BASE MARKET ANALYSIS

W-ZHA analyzed the demand for office space in the study area, also assuming the creation of walkable, mixed-use districts. Some of the findings included:

- Sedgwick County's office occupancy has grown at an annualized rate of 1.2 percent per year since 1990, driven primarily by professional service sectors, and this trend is expected to continue.
- While Class-A vacancy rates in downtown Wichita are low, and such spaces command lower lease rates than their suburban counterparts ($14–$16 per square foot downtown compared to $20 or more per square foot in the suburbs), downtown continues to lose share of the overall Wichita office market.
- No multitenant Class-A office buildings have been added downtown for two decades. In general, the supply of office space has changed little in the downtown market since 1990.
- Since 2000, total occupied Downtown office space has declined at a compound rate of roughly 1 percent per year. During the same period, occupied suburban office space has increased from approximately 2.9 million square feet to 4.25 million square feet, or a rate of nearly 5 percent per year (Exhibit 2-2 summarizes the changes in both markets over this period). As a result, downtown's share of regional multitenant office space slipped from 50% in 2000 to 42% in 2008.
- Despite these findings, Downtown remains the region's office hub, with its highest concentration of office space.

Downtown office space comprises roughly 64% multitenant buildings, 20% owner-occupied space, and 16% public-sector space.

CRITICAL FACTORS

While the initial findings describe challenges for Downtown Wichita, they also present some very real opportunities. The study identified critical factors that will need to be understood and addressed in order to increase downtown office tenancies. They are:

- **Parking:** Existing Class-A buildings maintain high occupancies. They tend, however, to be located on the periphery of downtown and provide suburban-style parking. Successfully incorporating additional Class-A buildings into Downtown's core may require public-private parking solutions.

- **Space availability:** A lack of available high-quality office space in downtown has contributed to several recent corporate relocations from downtown to suburban Wichita. In fact, there is only enough existing space to accommodate two or three tenants seeking relatively large amounts of contiguous space (i.e., 15,000 square feet). Assuming that current downtown tenants continue to grow and require more space, downtown will not be able to accommodate or promote growth without the introduction of new, quality space.

- **Quality of supply:** The newest Class-A multitenant office buildings in downtown are at least 20 years old. Newly constructed office buildings are better tailored for today's business operations. It is difficult to discern whether downtown's rental rate of $14–$16 per square foot is a function of weak demand or of limited supply. Downtown will need a supply of quality office space in order to attract new businesses and maintain existing ones.

- **Price:** As mentioned, downtown is highly competitive on price: its $14–$16 lease rates are consistently lower than suburban Class-A rates, which frequently exceed $20. This advantage is offset by the lack of quality space as well as a perception that downtown is not Wichita's premiere location. A further issue is that new construction requires developers to set rents closer to $25 per square foot, which would put new space on par with suburban competition. Maintaining a competitive price point will be important to attracting and increasing commercial occupants in downtown.

- **Urban environment:** While downtown Wichita has sustained a long-term decline, recent successes—the revitalization of Old Town, Airbus's expansion in downtown, the 50,000-plus-square-foot High Touch lease, new residential developments, and the opening of the INTRUST Bank Arena—have restored a sense of vitality. Downtown has the potential to bolster its competitive position as the region's urban center if it can offer an attractive, mixed-use walkable environment. It must further develop its retail, restaurant, cultural entertainment and other leisure-oriented amenities to become a more competitive office location. Forging attractive, walkable, mixed-use environments will differentiate downtown from the suburban market.

- **Labor proximity:** Upscale suburban neighborhoods are located primarily in Wichita's eastern and (increasingly)

western areas. Office development has followed the labor market to the suburbs. As the labor market has spread both east and west across the metro area, downtown's central location has become a major market advantage.

Within the next 10 years, Downtown could support 220,000 to 480,000sf of new office development.

DOWNTOWN OFFICE MARKET OUTLOOK AND PROJECTION

The analysis generated two "market-based" forecasts. One was a conservative scenario based primarily on prevailing trends. The second scenario, slightly more aggressive, envisions the potential that can be reasonably anticipated if conditions evolve as prescribed in the Downtown Master Plan. Both projections are significant for downtown. Based on a number of factors:

- Occupied multitenant office space in the Wichita region could increase by 472,000 to 779,000 square feet over the next 10 years. The conservative scenario assumes that downtown would maintain its current share (42 percent) of the overall Wichita multitenant office supply. The more aggressive scenario assumes that downtown would capture 50 percent of new growth and begin to recapture a small portion of its recently lost market share. Applying these calculation, downtown would support roughly 200,000–390,000 square feet of new space.

- In terms of new development, the 200,000- to 390,000-square-foot range represents only the occupied portion of new multitenant office development. Assuming a stabilized vacancy rate of 92 percent, actual development would range from 215,000 to 423,000 square feet or more. Adding in potential for new owner-occupied space, total office development could reach 480,000 square feet.

EXHIBIT 2-3

Downtown Wichita Office Market: 10-Year Growth Potential

	PREVAILING TRENDS	CONDITIONAL POTENTIAL
Current occupied space	6,256,000	6,256,000
10-yr. compounded annual growth rate [1]	0.73%	1.18%
10-yr. projected office growth	472,021	779,205
Downtown share [2]	42%	50%
Net downtown occupancy growth	198,249	389,602
Stabilized vacancy adjustment	0.92	0.92
New office development potential	215,488	423,481

[1] The Prevailing Trends growth rate based on economy.com employment forecast. The Conditional Potential growth rate combines consideration of two factors:
- *The 30-year forecast of employment demand (if unconstrained by labor supply) of 1.5%/year produced in 2004 by the Wichita Metropolitan Area Planning Department. Given forecasted labor supply, actual employment growth is forecasted at 0.5%/year.*
- *Previous long-term (1990-2008) employment growth occurred at an annualized rate of 1.18%. Given these data, employment growth may exceed current economy.com forecasts.*

[2] Public- as well as private-sector actions can potentially improve downtown market prospects and enable downtown to recapture some of the market share lost in recent decades.

Source: W-ZHA, LLC.

KEY FINDINGS ON DOWNTOWN OFFICE MARKET

In addition to the outlook and projections, W-ZHA noted several other key findings that will aid in increasing office occupancy downtown. These are:

- **Modest scale:** New office buildings will likely range from 40,000 to 80,000 square feet. It be difficult to achieve the pre-leasing thresholds required by lenders for buildings much larger in scale. Buildings five stories or less can be

"stick-built," which is less expensive than mid- and high-rise construction. With lower costs comes lower rents.

- **"Cool space":** Cool space offices are located in older buildings that are architecturally distinct and within walking distance of restaurants. A share of the office market will locate in these types of buildings, and developments can often take advantage of historic tax credits. Reinvestment in existing historic structures also removes the negative impacts associated with vacancy and blight and enhances the authenticity and vibrancy of urban areas.

- **Price point:** New office development will require a rent level of at least $25 per square foot to offset construction costs and operating expenses. In order to achieve these rents, downtown must offer a distinctly "urban" product. Therefore, new buildings must be developed in (or adjacent to) those districts that offer restaurants, entertainment, services and housing within easy walking distance.

- **Parking:** Office buildings will require parking within easy walking distance of the building. Public/private financing will be necessary to support the development of structured parking to service downtown land uses and should become a municipal priority. Parking should be sited in locations with the greatest potential for 24-hour use.

Within the next ten years, downtown Wichita could potentially support an additional 250 to 400 rooms.

Hotel Market

W-ZHA also studied the market for hotels in downtown. They found that overall the Wichita market has consistently outperformed the national market since 2006. Moreover, the market continues to grow and maintains a relatively high occupancy rates. The report does note, however, that almost 85 percent of all hotel rooms are found in Wichita's suburbs.

W-ZHA found that performance for downtown and its four existing hotels exceeded the Wichita market as a whole. In fact, they achieve higher occupancies even when charging considerably higher average daily rates (ADR). The revenue per available room (RevPAR) has been approximately 50% higher than the overall Wichita market.

The downtown lodging market outlook and projections are strong and reflect four considerations:

- **Office ratios:** While downtown has a 42 percent share of the Wichita office market, downtown hotel rooms account for just 16 percent of the overall lodging market supply. Since hotels derive most of their demand from the "business transient," this indicates that the downtown market is significantly underserved. As office demand growth resumes in downtown, there will be an even greater increase in lodging demand.

- **Convention business:** Downtown maintains the dominant position in the Wichita convention and meetings market. Compared to similar cities, Wichita is substantially undersupplied with lodging rooms. Over the next ten years, growth in convention/meeting activity could likely support a 25 to 40 percent increase in downtown rooms.

- **Downtown amenities:** Access between downtown and suburban Wichita is not difficult, and downtown's features and amenities increasingly provide compelling reasons for travelers to stay downtown.

EXHIBIT 2-4

Lodging Market Occupancy Rates (Wichita & U.S., 2003-09)

YEAR	WICHITA	U.S.[1]
2003	58.9%	59.2%
2004	62.0%	61.4%
2005	63.0%	63.1%
2006	66.4%	63.3%
2007	65.2%	63.1%
2008	65.0%	60.3%
2009[2]	59.2%	55.2%

[1] Source: PricewaterhouseCoopoers
[2] 2009 figures are through November for the Wichita market and forecasted as of November 9, 2009, for the national market.

- **Underserved niches:** While the full-service niche is fairly well served, downtown contains a limited supply of properties in limited-service, middle-market and budget categories. Considering the low land costs ($30–$50 per square foot) and the strong performances at the Hotel at Old Town and Courtyard by Marriott properties, a real opportunity appears to exist to increase the number of limited-service hotels within downtown.

Overall, the W-ZHA report found that, within the next ten years, Downtown Wichita could potentially support an additional 250 to 400 rooms.

EXHIBIT 2-5

Lodging Industry Growth Potential (Downtown Study Area)

YEAR	SEGMENT SHARE	CURRENT ROOM SUPPLY	GROWTH POTENTIAL (ROOMS) LOW	GROWTH POTENTIAL (ROOMS) HIGH
General business	40%	311	6.9% (21)	13.5% (42)
Meetings	40%	311	25% (78)	40% (124)
Leisure/other (Arena)	20%	155	50% (78)	75% (117)
Net total room increase	100%	777	100% (177)	100% (283)
Adjustments: replace room reduction at Broadview			30	30
Adjusted net total room increase			**207**	**313**

Source: W-ZHA

Retail Market

MJB Consulting took an innovative approach to its retail analysis of downtown Wichita. Understanding that retail-—particularly retail in urban settings—can no longer be analyzed from a mass-market perspective, MJB focused instead on niche markets within retail. Furthermore, the MJB analysis utilized a psychographic method that characterizes markets qualitatively in terms of members' lifestyle preferences, sensibilities, and aspirations. Rather than trying to appeal to everybody, the approach to enhancing the retail mix of Downtown Wichita should be one of identifying which ones would be the most promising. The niches identified and how they could best impact downtown were:

- **"Hipster:"** Young, creatively- and alternatively-minded types who live in and are drawn to the underground. Hipsters tend to be the "early adopters" who set trends and pioneer neighborhoods. Hipster-oriented businesses include vintage clothing shops, funky shoe stores, skate and bike stores, etc. The most appropriate location for such retailers would be in Delano, along West Douglas Avenue between McLean Boulevard and Seneca Street, given the cluster of hipster-oriented businesses already there.

- **"Yupster:"** A blend of a "yuppie" and a "hipster." The yupster will typically have a more established career and earn more money than the hipster, and she can range in age from young professional to empty nester, but she shares the same sorts of creative and alternative sensibilities and tends to gravitate to areas that have developed reputations as hip and arty. Yupster-oriented businesses include "upscale bo-hemian" fashion boutiques and "cross-over" ethnic eateries.

Businesses directed at yupsters should be steered toward Old Town and the emerging Old Town West in order to build upon the success of existing yupster-oriented businesses.

- **Student and Young Adult:** While a certain percentage can be classified as early-stage hipster, the majority are characterized in a more conventional manner. The men are avid sports fans who drink mainstream American beers and tend to prefer sports bars. The women follow mainstream fashion and shop at inexpensive fashion "knockoff" stores like Forever 21. Both enjoy late nights out. Currently there is no identifiable "college drag" within the Wichita area. Businesses catering to students and young adults should be directed to Old Town and surrounding blocks. Examples include "cheap chic" purveyors and dance clubs.

MJB also focused on several other retail factors. These findings include:

- Food and drink offerings appealing to the broadest possible market should be sited within or on the periphery of Old Town, heading toward INTRUST Bank Arena. Examples include "middle-of-the-road" concepts like family restaurants, as well as less conventional ones such as a trendy "retro chic" bowling alley and "casual chic" restaurant/bar combos.
  > Such establishments are most appropriately located there rather than in the WaterWalk development so as to take full advantage of the synergies of a site within or near downtown's existing dining and nightlife concentration.
  > This category of tenant serves a dual purpose, in that it also positions downtown as something that belongs to everyone, a true crossroads that in some ways welcomes all of Wichita, with businesses that are relevant to a wide audience and not just to one or two narrowly defined niche markets.
- The sorts of retail uses for which WaterWalk would be most appropriate are "one-per-market" brands that are able to stand alone and that seek a central location easily accessible from the entire metro area, making the site's proximity to U.S. 400/U.S. 54/Kellogg Avenue particularly appealling. The highly successful Gander Mountain store exemplifies this type.
- A retail incubator similar to the Farm & Art Market of the 1990s should be re-introduced, in a location that would not otherwise be leasable to market-driven tenancies. Ideally, however, it might be co-located with a non-retail anchor to ensure a level of foot traffic that gives the individual vendors at least some chance of survival in the early years.
- The Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC) should consider adding an in-house recruiter, a salaried, full-time employee dedicated solely to identifying and pursuing retail tenant prospects. The person in this position can supplement and support the efforts of brokers by assuming responsibility for the time, extra effort, and risk often involved in trying to fill downtown retail space.
- Considerations should be made for assisting recruitment efforts through the use of direct retail "stimulus" so as to level the playing field for downtown retail, in addition to the standard façade-improvement fund. An example would be a forgivable-loan program to help with tenant build-out.

Transportation Analysis

A successful downtown provides dynamic synergy between people and activities. A mix of great streets and comfortable connections makes this synergy possible. The choices available to move about and the quality of those choices influence people's perceptions of downtown and their willingness to engage in life there. This section documents existing conditions of downtown Wichita's transportation network, identifying the challenges and opportunities for creating the connections that will frame and fully enable realization of the Downtown master plan .

Downtown Wichita once relied on a variety of transportation modes for its bustling economy. Like this image of Douglas Avenue in the 1920s, the streetcar and private automobiles mix comfortably with pedestrians and other street life. As travelers began to rely more on their cars and downtown activities shifted and reformed the landscape, Wichita's multimodal transportation system was introduced to new challenges, including:

- super-blocks interrupting connections of the original street grid for all users;
- dispersed destinations, gaps between buildings, and poor streetscape conditions that discourage walking; and
- a mix of one-and two-way streets, perceived as confusing for drivers unfamiliar with downtown and its neighborhoods.

A new vision for downtown renews the potential to, once again, intertwine the transportation system and reintroduce the essential characteristics of a complete range of choices for downtown access and circulation. It can build on the significant investment of previous generations, particularly in areas of long-standing destinations and recent development. Each characteristic of circulation, from safety and freedom of movement to wayfinding and aesthetics, can help to brand downtown Wichita as a welcoming place for business, an attractive place to live, and an interesting place to spend an afternoon or an evening of culture and entertainment. The following summarizes the major findings detailed in this report; the complete existing conditions analysis for transportation appears in Appendix 2.

Transportation System Elements

Street Configuration

- Downtown Wichita has been well-defined by its major transportation "infrastructure": the Arkansas River running north-south to the west, the railway and I-135 to the east, and US 54 to the south. These significant barriers also help to organize the street system so that their few crossing points funnel the majority of traffic into only a handful of streets. The strong network of gridded streets creates redundancy to these links enhancing movement within downtown and is an asset worth preserving and re-establishing in some areas.

- Getting around downtown by car can be an intimidating experience for visitors, newcomers, and long-time Wichitans alike. The barriers of rivers and railroads

and freeways, combined with the mix of one-way and two-way streets (some continuous and others not), make for a confusing—even frustrating—system of streets. Simplifying and reconnecting the street network provides for easy access to downtown and easy orientation for even first-time visitors. It will also be critical to more intuitive, discernable transit routing and transfers.

- Street network issues include the mix of one-way and two-way streets, some of which change how they operate within the downtown; loss of connectivity through the creation of superblocks and placement of buildings in the public street right-of-way; and a lack of appropriately timed signals on some streets. Each of these creates out-of-direction travel and unnecessary delay for motorists trying to get where they want to be efficiently.

- Traffic flows freely in downtown Wichita, even during peak commute times. The wide streets that make up the downtown street network could better integrate other priority users by reallocation of some lanes to transit, bicycling and parking, thereby strengthening downtown for all users.

Pedestrian Environment

- The street grid is a major asset to pedestrian and bicyclists. For pedestrians it provides generally good connectivity between uses, and numerous crossing opportunities at urban-scaled intersections. However, the long north-south blocks coupled with dispersed destinations are less than ideal for travelling on foot around downtown. Further, the introduction of super-blocks has diminished the pedestrian experience in the areas around the Arkansas River.

- Public art has been introduced on many city streets. Coupled with a shaded sidewalk and other landscaping, public art contributes to perceptions of ownership and care for public streets and a general feeling of security for pedestrian travel. As in Old Town and along Douglas Avenue through Delano, the preservation and enhancement of sidewalk amenities and pedestrian-scale streets create unique pedestrian experiences and should be encouraged. Aesthetic designs and materials are detailed in the *Downtown Wichita Streetscape Design Guidelines*, and new installations should be functional and reflect the most up-to-date approaches to ADA accommodation and maintenance.

Bicycle Network

- The City's bicycle planning has focused largely on a recreational path system. Recent routes for on-street bicycling are geared to commuter travel, in and out of downtown. Opportunities exist to enhance circulation and parking for bicycling downtown and for connections from the street system to existing and future recreational bike paths. Streets that invite bicycling as a priority mode should generally run parallel to transit- and auto-priority streets through downtown.

- All vehicles in Wichita Transit's fleet have been equipped with bicycle racks, helping to bridge distances between bus stops and destinations for some riders. Once arrived downtown, the transit-rider may find that access to one's destination is most efficient by bicycle rather than by another bus transfer.

Transit System

- Most existing bus service runs only hourly during the mid-day and every 30 minutes during peak hours, connecting at the Downtown Transit Center to facilitate transfers. The routes reach the Transit Center using many streets, with little concentration of transit activity.

- The visibility of transit service, or presence on the street, is very limited. A few benches denote transit stops, but there are no bus-stop signs or other on-street information.

- The Q-Line operates on a one-way, 30-minute loop in downtown. During heavy travel times, such as Friday and Saturday evenings, a second bus operates a reverse loop. The Q-Line also serves as a parking shuttle for major events at the newly opened INTRUST Arena. Recognition of, and support for, the Q-Line is strong among the Wichita residents.

- Wichita Transit completed a Transit Development Plan that looks at fundamentally altering the existing hub-and-spoke system to address growth that has occurred in Wichita over the past 15-20 years. The transit plan incorporates and supports the elements of the downtown plan, ensuring strong regional transit connections as well as movement within the downtown area. Concentrating transit on fewer streets with fixed stops and clear connections to Q-Line service will be important elements of the transit component of the downtown plan.

- Wichita Transit has invested in Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) equipment and has the ability to improve customer communications, making transit more available to new riders. Communication that gives signal priority to transit vehicles is also possible with the cooperation of and modest investment by the City.

Intermodal Connections

- The existing intercity bus service terminal sits several blocks away and is not visible from the Downtown Transit Center, making the connection between local and interregional travel less than ideal. Intercity bus providers have expressed interest in relocating into the transit center.

- Amtrak service is available 25 miles to the north of downtown Wichita. Historic Union Station and its parking and rail infrastructure are located near the Downtown Transit Center. This major city asset is now privately owned. The Northern Flyer Alliance has been leading advocacy efforts to return Amtrak service to downtown. A series of studies and recent legislative action indicate that preserving the use of this landmark infrastructure will be an important outcome of plan implementation.

A downtown "walk-shop" launched the public phase of the planning process in December 2009. Participants fanned out across Downtown on a Saturday to photograph the area's problems and the things that make it appealing, then helped identify themes through discussions and electronic polling.

Urban Design Analysis

The planning process reviewed key planning and urban design factors that shape downtown's opportunities and challenges, including walkability, land use, cultural destinations, and the potential various properties hold for redevelopment. The resulting assessments played a central role in shaping the illustrative vision plan shown in Chapter 5, The Plan.

Walkability: Would you walk here?

Criteria

The analysis addressed these characteristics:

- **Presence of active ground-floor uses, typically retail, with good visual connection to the sidewalk.** Such active uses create a much more inviting setting for walking than the office windows, parking structures, parking lots, or blank walls that now line many downtown streets.

- **Presence of street trees,** which enhance walkability by shading pedestrians from hot sun, breaking strong winds, adding an intermediate sense of scale between a person and large buildings or broad open spaces, and making streets aesthetically appealing through their color, shape and texture.

- **Sidewalk quality—**the distinction between a moderate-quality sidewalks, with functional and clear paving and crosswalks, and enhanced sidewalks, with the added appeal of public art, street furniture such as benches and trash receptacles, higher-quality paving, or other design features. The diagram on page 2.19 maps Downtown walkability.

Active uses along the street—such as stores in Old Town (top)—make walking more appealing. Blank walls and other inactive stretches (bottom) discourage walking.

For decades, downtown streets have been shaped to serve cars better than pedestrians (upper photo). By contrast, sidewalks lined with active uses like stores, street trees and furniture, produce a pedestrian experience that encourages walking.

Conclusions

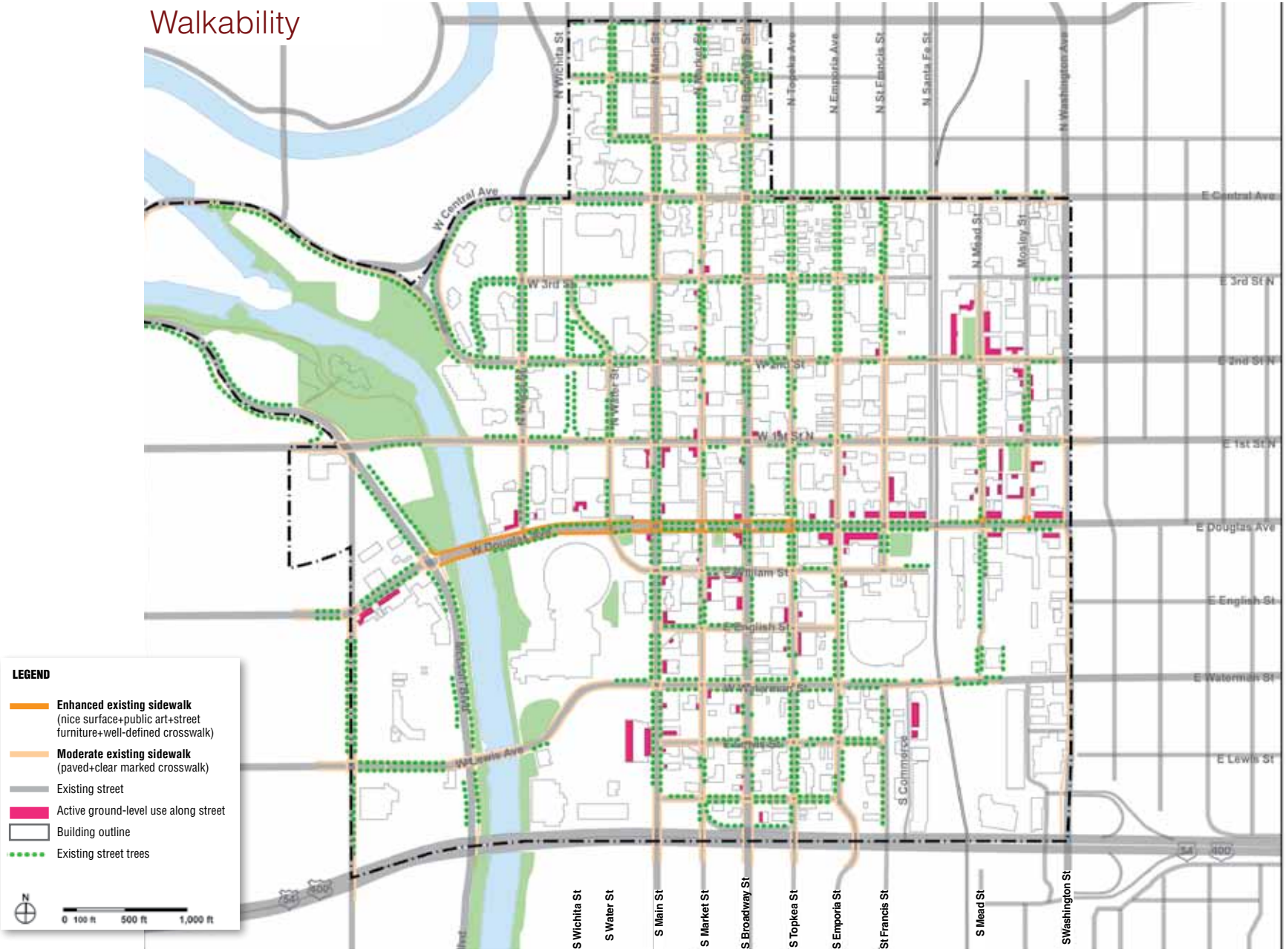
Downtown has the bones of a very good walking network, with sidewalks and crosswalks on nearly all streets. Nevertheless, significant improvements are needed:

- Active ground-floor uses have a nearly continuous presence at Old Town Square and along Douglas near Naftzger Park, but in most other cases tend to be separated enough that the blocks on which they're located feel empty. New retail should be carefully targeted to fill in the gaps along priority walking streets.

- New street trees should be added where missing or in poor health—particularly along sections of Market, Emporia, St. Francis, Commerce, Second, First, William, and English.

- Blocks with higher-quality paving and streetscape, particularly Douglas between McLean and Topeka, do not rank among downtown's most walkable. While higher-quality physical elements certainly improve the setting, a scarcity of active ground-floor uses creates a significant deterrent to walking. Some of downtown's more inviting blocks for walking have numerous active ground-floor uses but few streetscape enhancements. Streetscape improvements cannot by themselves transform sidewalk walkability; they should be accompanied by efforts to bring the ground floors of buildings to life.

Walkability



Old Town has succeeded in large part because different activities—including working, living and shopping—all take place together, supporting each other

Land Use:
What activities happen where?

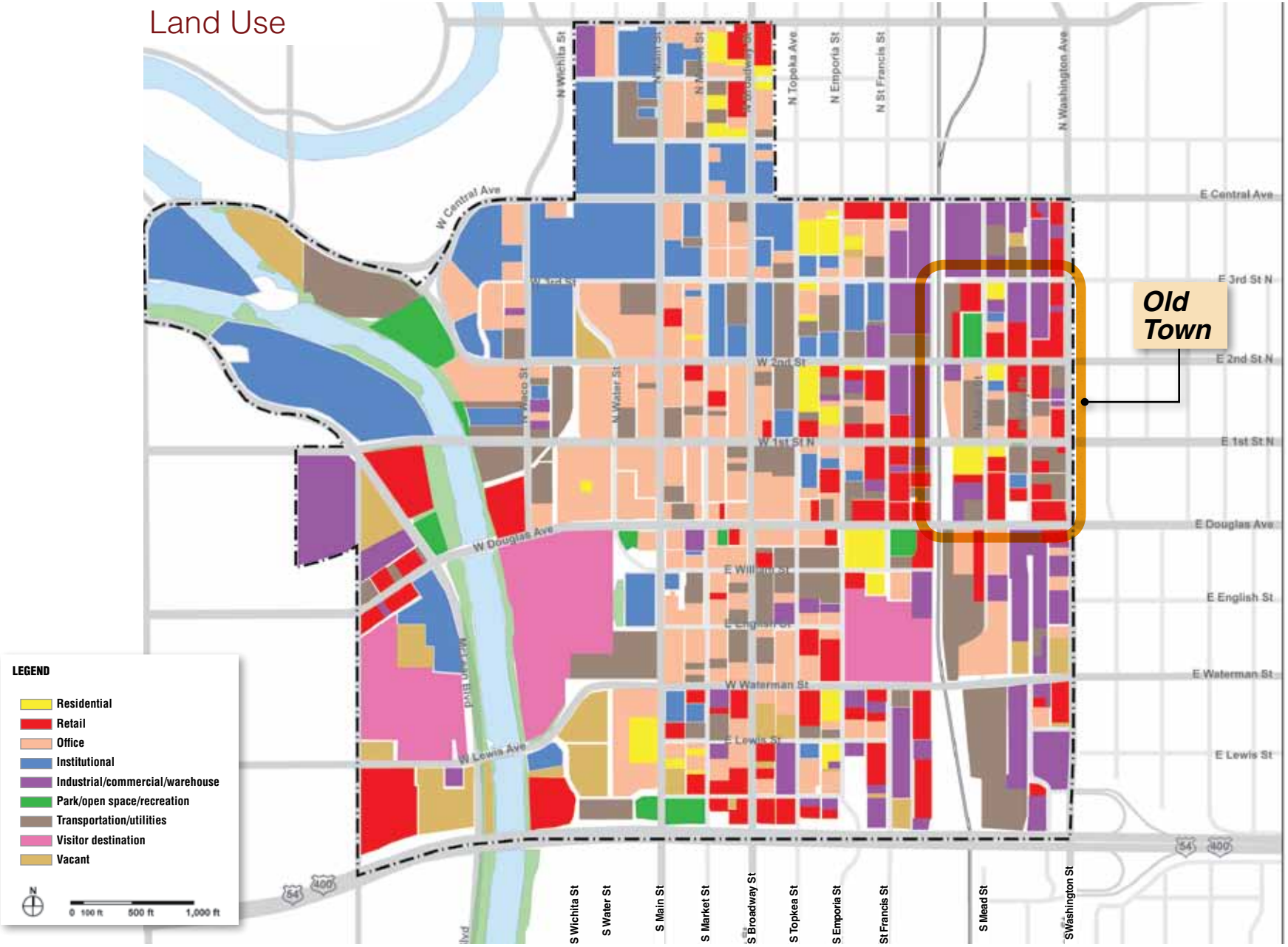
Criteria

The diagram on the facing page indicates primary uses of downtown properties.

Conclusions

The downtown districts that have seen the most reinvestment in the past decade and that tend to be regarded as most welcoming—Old Town, the Arena/Naftzger Park area, and Commerce Street Arts District—are also those with the most diverse uses. Combinations of residential, retail, office and institutional uses in particular are evident in these areas. By contrast, the traditional central business district, including Douglas between Waco and Topeka, is heavily dominated by office uses—making it no surprise that these sidewalks tend to be deserted evenings and weekends. Without question, offices remain central to downtown's economy, but complementing them with more housing, retail, and institutional uses can help create a street environment that functions as a better setting for all uses.

Land Use


Old Town
LEGEND
Residential
Retail
Office
Institutional
Industrial/commercial/warehouse
Park/open space/recreation
Transportation/utilities
Visitor destination
Vacant
N
0 100 ft 500 ft 1,000 ft
W Central Ave
E Central Ave
E 3rd St N
E 2nd St N
W 2nd St
E 1st St N
W 1st St N
W Douglas Ave
E Douglas Ave
E English St
E Waterman St
W Waterman St
E Lewis St
W Lewis Ave
N Wichita St
N Topeka Ave
N Emporia St
N St Francis St
N Washington Ave
N Water St
S Wichita St
S Water St
S Main St
S Market St
S Broadway St
S Topkea St
S Emporia St
St Francis St
S Mead St
S Washington St
54
400

The Douglas Bridge over the Arkansas River

Gateways and Landmarks:
What places mark arrival downtown?

Criteria

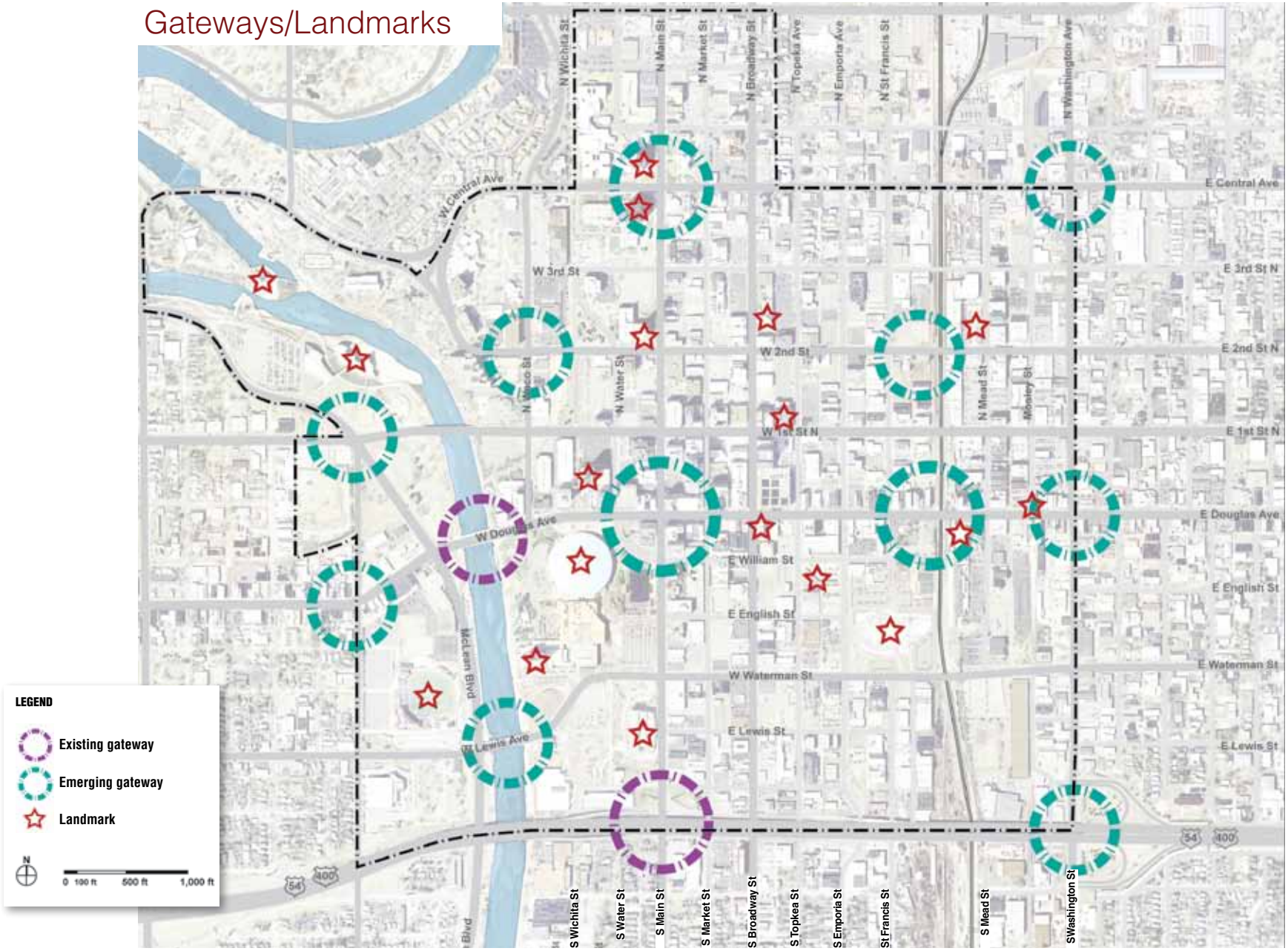
- Selected landmarks were chosen for their high visibility and distinctive form.
- Selected gateways, shown in the diagram on the facing page, were chosen as distinctive places along routes where significant traffic enters or leaves downtown, or crosses barriers like the Arkansas River and the railroad embankment.

Conclusions

Most of the gateways are *emerging* gateways—meaning they have distinctive physical characteristics that mark a transition into downtown (or one of its constituent areas), but they lack the full level of activity, development or other character that conveys a sense of dignity or quality. A combination of new development/redevelopment and public infrastructure improvements should be encouraged at every gateway to reinforce its presence.

Landmarks include a variety of buildings and places and can comprise historic architecture or modern design. Some are less architecturally distinguished but highly visible, and some are most important as community destinations. New development and public infrastructure improvements should treat these landmarks, and new ones, as important elements contributing to sense of place.

Gateways/Landmarks



Downtown has important relationships with neighborhoods on all sides.

Neighborhood Context:
What are downtown's relationships with surrounding neighborhoods?

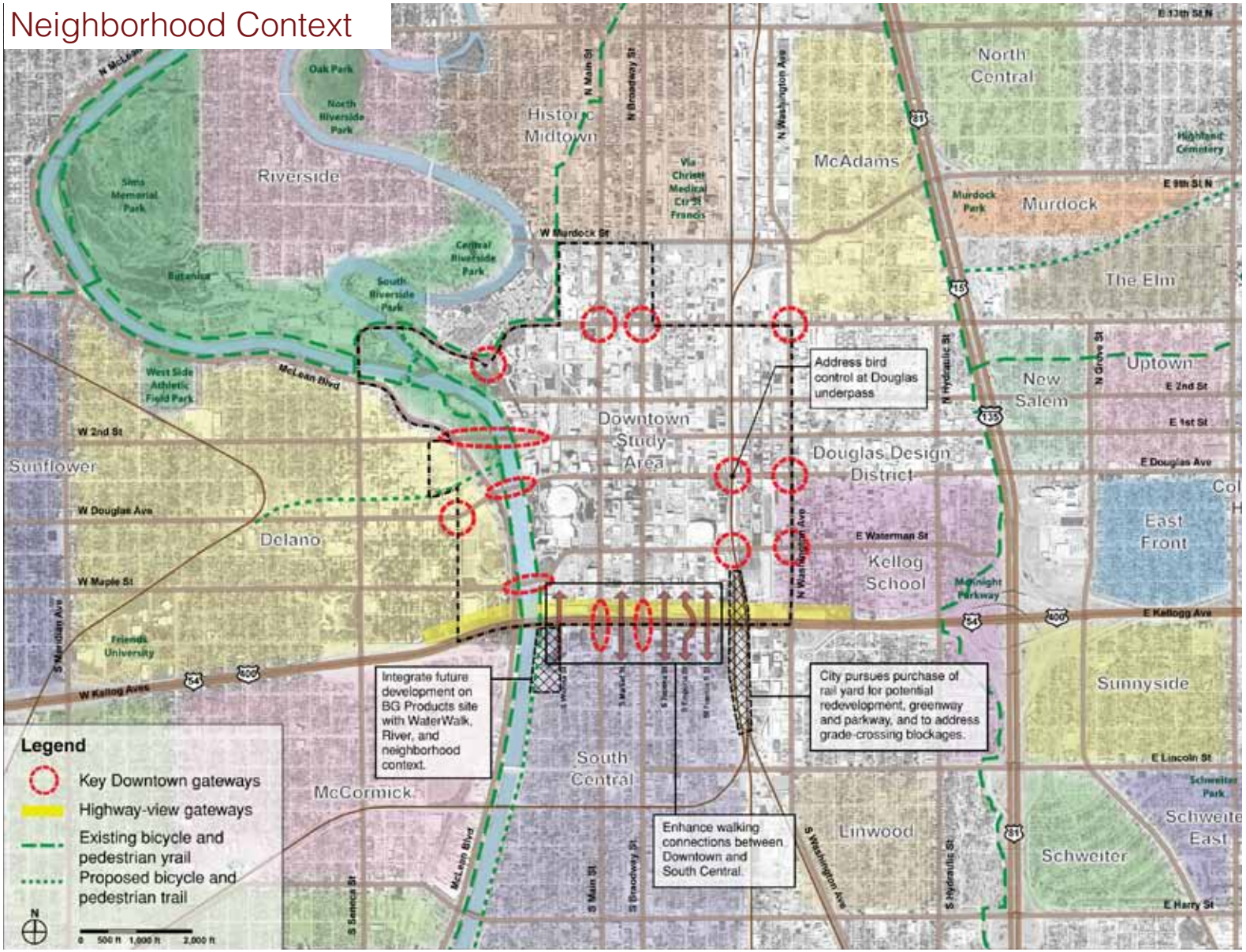
Criteria

The diagram notes key transportation connections and gateways.

Conclusions

Downtown can have important, mutually beneficial relationships with neighborhoods on all sides; ongoing reinvestment in both Delano's retail corridor and housing and in the Douglas Design District demonstrate this. Particular emphasis should be placed on improving north-south connections to Historic Midtown and Riverside to the north, and to South Central to the south. In both cases this requires overcoming barriers to walking—relatively empty blocks to the north, and the traffic around Kellogg to the south. Several specific recommendations are noted on the diagram.

Neighborhood Context



Clockwise from above: Sedgwick County Historic Museum; City Arts at Old Town; Mid-Amera All-Indian Center and the Keeper of the Plains.

Arts And Cultural Destinations:
Where do people come together around culture?

Criteria

Downtown Wichita contains Kansas' most significant concentration of arts and cultural destinations, shown in the diagram on the facing page. They include:

- Performing-arts venues
- Museums and galleries
- Sports facilities
- Educational and historical institutions
- Other privately-owned destinations

Conclusions

Wichita should continue to focus on arts and cultural destinations as major generators of activity, complementing residential and commercial development. Notable concentrations of destinations occur along the Arkansas River, in Old Town, and along Commerce Street; these groups of institutions help raise the profiles of their individual constituent destinations. More isolated destinations, such as those in the downtown core, would benefit from concerted efforts to connect them to more people though better walking connections and increased housing and commercial development nearby.

Arts/Culture Destinations

Building and Site Inventory:

Which vacant sites or underutilized buildings hold promise for redevelopment? Which existing buildings are significant historic assets?

Criteria

The diagram on the facing page highlights:

- Buildings that are officially listed as historic structures, and those eligible for listing
- Vacant/underutilized buildings of historic significance and/or substantial size
- Surface parking lots
- Vacant lots
- Other existing buildings and parking structures are uncolored

Conclusions

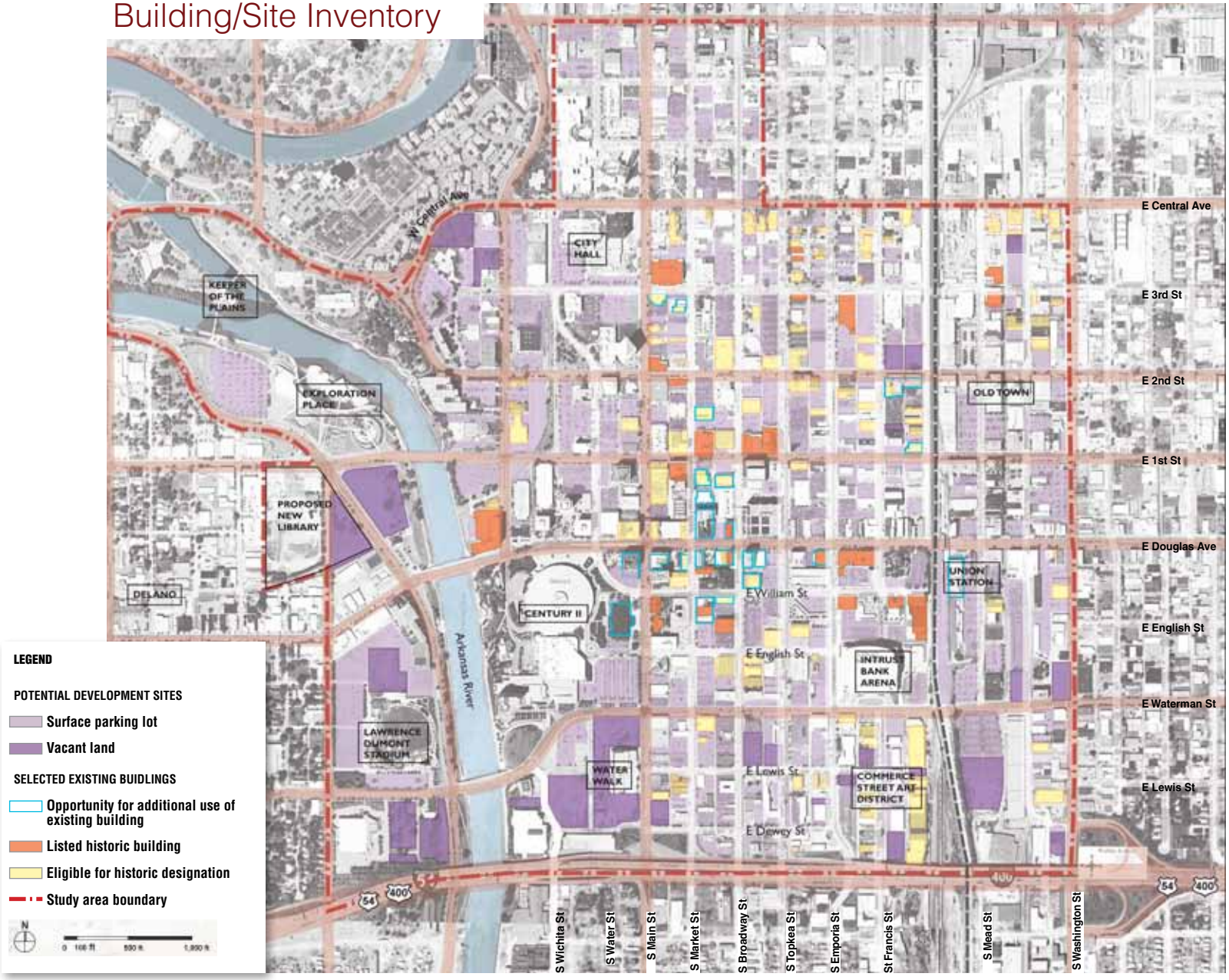
- The downtown core—particularly Douglas between Water and Emporia, and Market between English and First—contains a large number of significant but underutilized buildings. Special emphasis should be placed on finding ways to bring these buildings back to life, through alternative program (i.e., converting obsolete office buildings to residential lofts), adding parking where needed, or other strategies. The Exchange Place project, which will convert two obsolete office buildings into housing, demonstrates a highly appropriate approach in this area.

- Listed historic buildings are scattered on many blocks, and thus can assist many emerging areas as local catalysts through their contributions to sense of place.

- Numerous eligible historic buildings are also present in emerging areas like Old Town West, Commerce Street Arts District, and the Arena District. These can function as development catalysts for their architectural character and opportunity to utilize historic tax credits for development funding.

- Vacant land and surface parking lots abound downtown—totaling approximately 60% of land parcels in the study area. These offer numerous opportunities for infill development—good news for development feasibility, but also requiring conscious targeting of development in order to create needed concentrations of activity.

Building/Site Inventory



Building Height: How does building scale shape downtown as a place?

Criteria

The diagram categorizes building height in four ranges. Buildings in the 3- to 5-story range, and taller, most effectively convey a sense of downtown activity through their scale and program. Some areas with many buildings at least 2 stories high, such as Old Town and Commerce Street Arts District, also have this quality.

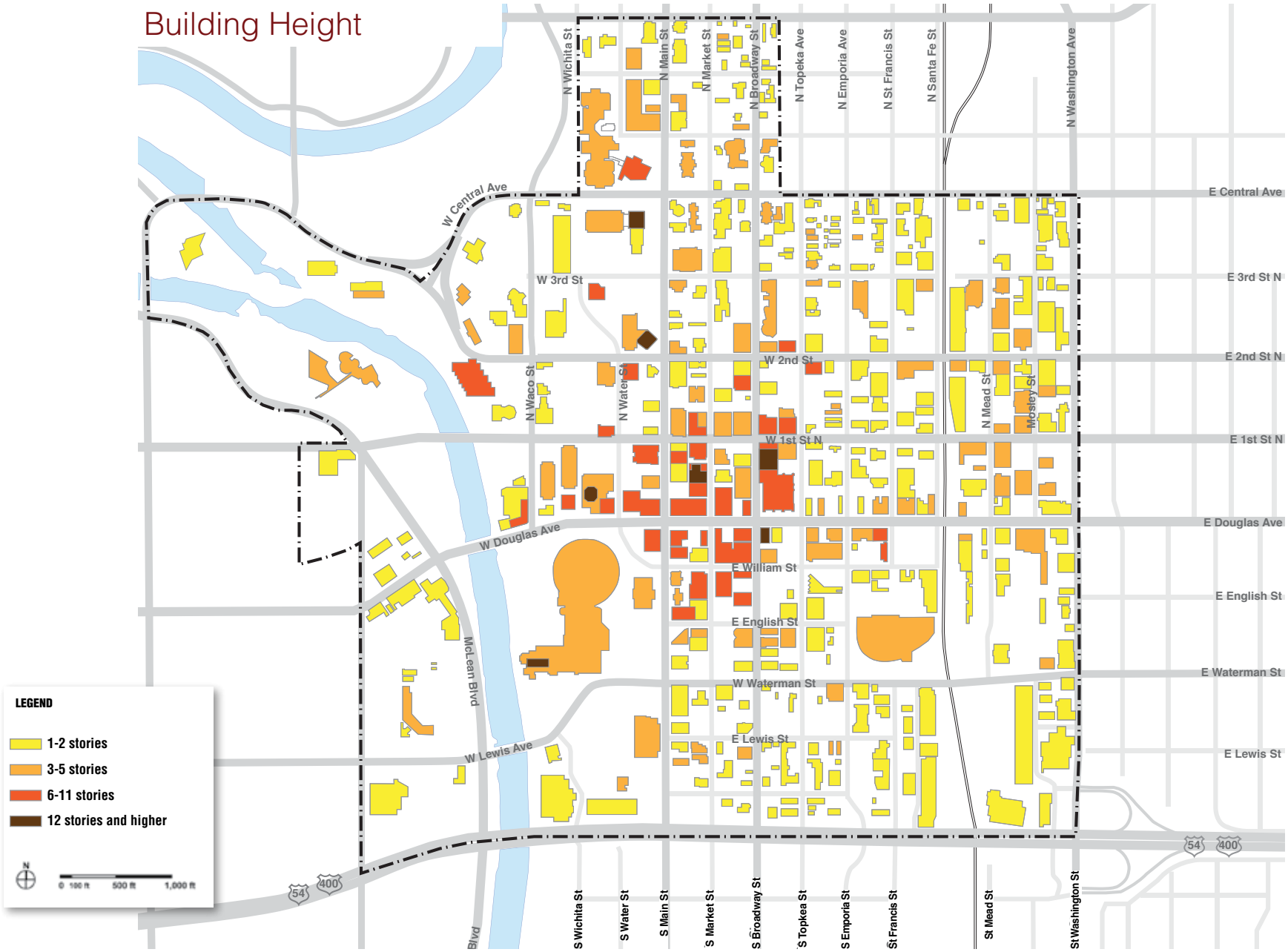
Conclusions

Allowable building height directly affects individual property value and the collective vitality of downtown by controlling potential development value. Downtown's continued vitality will depend on ongoing opportunity for investment in new and existing properties. At the same time, it is important that any new building fit in well with its context and contribute to the character of its setting. Any building that significantly exceeds the height of typical existing buildings around it should use architectural composition to make a fluid transition to their lower scale.

Significant historic buildings are present on many downtown blocks, and application of the Environs Law can constrain allowable height for new buildings nearby. Historic buildings and height should by no means be treated as mutually exclusive, however. New height restrictions must be considered in light of their impacts on overall downtown vitality as well as on Environs Law impacts. In many cases, historic properties themselves depend upon opportunity for renovations or additions—or density bonuses on other sites under common ownership—that help the properties remain economically viable and support ongoing maintenance and use of the historic structure. One strategy, used successfully in many communities, is to require buildings' street facades to conform to a specific height range, typically tied to that of nearby historic structures, but to allow portions of structures further from the street to rise higher. This "step-back" concept for height produces a streetwall that reinforces historic context, pedestrian scale, and street cohesion, while enabling the added uses and development value important to downtown vitality.

The presence of buildings of at least 3 to 5 stories on most blocks downtown means that buildings of this scale or larger can be welcome in virtually any portion of downtown. In fact, development economics are expected to result in many if not most new buildings that fall within this height range, contributing to greater coherence of building scale.

Building Height



3

Engagement

Building a Shared Vision

TAKING DOWNTOWN'S PULSE

The Downtown planning process involved hundreds of hours in meetings with the general public and important stakeholders to ensure that the Downtown master plan reflected their goals and earned their strong support. This enormous and sustained investment of time and ideas by the people of Wichita over more than a year is central to the quality of the plan and the best predictor of successful, ongoing implementation.

Stakeholder meetings framed issues and opportunities—and gave life to thoughtful Downtown reinvestment concepts even before completion of the plan. Stakeholders interviewed early in the planning process included property and business owners, developers, churches, Downtown residents, young professionals, elected officials, and City and County staff among others. The interviews, coupled with research into issues involving markets, transportation, and existing development patterns, emphasized the challenges and opportunities listed in the boxes on pages 3.2–3.3.

CULTIVATING GREAT INVESTMENTS DOWNTOWN

Ongoing meetings with property owners, business owners and developers throughout the planning process made some development concepts already under way better, sparked discussion of new development concepts, and helped make the plan more responsive to specific opportunities and more realistic in its implementation strategies. People advancing or considering reinvestment in Downtown properties and businesses valued the data, predictability and leadership that emerged from the planning process. Even before completion or formal adoption of the plan, its emerging concepts helped generate "win-win" outcomes in which individual projects

Projects that benefited from coordination and new thinking as a result of the planning process include the Cargill Innovation Center, shown far left in the early stages of construction; the Marriott Fairfield Inn under construction at WaterWalk (center); and the former Coleman factory site, acquired for conversion to a public park and parking.

(and Downtown as a whole) benefited significantly from coordination, typically at little or no real cost to the project sponsors. Examples include Cargill's Innovation Center and the Fairfield Inn at WaterWalk, as well as Sedgwick County's enhancements of the former Coleman factory site. Similar conversations with stakeholders sowed seeds for future projects. This fruitful process of stakeholder engagement exemplified efforts that should continue through implementation of the plan, to encourage two-way discussions between entrepreneurs with development concepts and private- and public-sector Downtown leadership with advice on how to reinforce the success of individual projects and Downtown as a whole.

Downtown's Challenges...

- People in the region express **a wide range of perceptions** of downtown's value to their quality of life and that of the overall region.
  - > Some feel that too much public money has been spent on downtown with too little benefit within downtown and to the larger taxpaying public.
  - > Some (such as teens) simply don't find downtown relevant to their lives today—there's no reason to go there.
  - > Some express great enthusiasm about downtown as a place where they live, do business, dine, find entertainment, attend festivals etc.
  - > Some residents of other Wichita neighborhoods and the region value a more vibrant downtown.
- **Property ownership patterns** hinder development. Downtown property ownership tends to be highly disaggregated across individual blocks. In addition, many properties involve decades-old ground leases held by multiple heirs to original owners, making property aggregation and joint action by multiple owners especially challenging.
- **"Tired old buildings"** need new economic life. Many older buildings Downtown struggle to compete for the small market for Class B/C office space. Some lack the physical characteristics, convenient parking, or potential rate of return that would justify rehabilitation as higher-quality office space or housing.
- **Securing funding for downtown development is a challenge.** At times, limited availability of historic tax credits has constrained opportunities to finance more rehabilitation. Limited interest by national lenders further restricts opportunities for new construction and rehabilitation. Public funding assistance faces intense public scrutiny and skepticism. The significant public and institutional incentive programs that do exist need to be more accessible, targeted, and effective.
- **Automobile-focused transportation and development patterns** have eroded downtown's intrinsic qualities. Most downtown streets are designed more for drivers than people walking, biking or taking transit. Most downtown buildings from the last half-century—and their associated parking facilities—are geared to the experience of arriving by car, not by foot. While good auto access will remain critical to downtown's success, a better environment for pedestrians will be essential to unlocking downtown's unique value as a place where many activities and people come together regularly in a compact area.

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Seven major public events over ten months enabled the Wichita community to share its appreciation of, concerns about, and aspirations for Downtown and to critique pieces of the emerging Downtown plan. Presentations and public input from these events can be found online at **www.downtownwichita.org/.**

- **IMAGERY, December 4-5, 2009**
  A "walk-shop" opened the community-engagement process with an opportunity to observe and discuss Downtown's strengths and weaknesses as a place for walking. Participants braved frigid conditions to take self-guided walking tours of Downtown and record their impressions with annotated photos gathered in real time for group discussion and for posting into an online photo album (**www.flickr.com/photos/walkshops/**). During the culminating walk-shop event, participants discussed opportunities and challenges for retail storefronts, parks, transit, streetscape design, and similar elements that shape how much Downtown invites people to walk. They then

...and Its Opportunities

- **Businesses like being downtown.** Major employers are firmly grounded downtown due to its centrality, identity, access to workforce, adjacency to supportive businesses/institutions—including hotels and restaurants—and similar factors. The flight of office tenants to the suburbs has clearly stopped, and demand for more high-end office space downtown is solid. Most downtown retailers and restaurants are prospering.
- **People like living downtown.** There has been consistent demand for downtown housing since more has become available at places like Old Town and the Garvey Center. There is further market demand for about 1,000 more units over the next 5 to 7 years, doubling the current stock.
- **Visitors like staying in downtown hotels.** Strong occupancy and revenue rates at hotels and a relative undersupply of rooms compared to office space suggest a market opportunity for more hotel rooms. Downtown's sense of place, highly accessible central location, convention center, business presence, and regionally unique options for dining, entertainment and culture make it a logical magnet for visitors.
- **Downtown has the infrastructure to support growth.** Downtown streets tend to be relatively wide and have ample capacity: there are no substantive problems with traffic capacity. There is room for improved infrastructure that supports walking, transit and biking. The city is actively pursuing an integrated system to develop and operate downtown parking infrastructure that could unlock important development opportunities. Significant parklands along the Arkansas River have potential to serve the community much more than they do today.
- **Downtown offers unparalleled cultural amenities.** Downtown's museums, performing arts, sports venues and places of learning constitute the greatest collection and highest quality of such resources in the region and state. They matter to the many Wichita businesses that attract national visitors, to conventions that come to Wichita, and to residents of the city and region. With enhanced presence and support for operations and facilities, they will become ever stronger assets for the regional economy and quality of life.
- **The Arkansas River provides a unique sense of place—and value.** The Keeper of the Plains embodies the city's connection to the river, from ancient times to the present. People consistently cite the river as central to Wichita's identity. The river promises great, yet largely untapped value as a living and business address, recreational amenity, and community gathering place.
- **Other initiatives hold tremendous potential** to catalyze further improvements if conceived and coordinated effectively:
  - > The new INTRUST Bank Arena
  - > Residential lofts, including Flats 324 and Finn Lofts
  - > Additional office and residential rehabilitation projects along Douglas Avenue, such as Exchange Place
  - > New Fairfield Inn at WaterWalk
  - > New main public library and complementary mixed-use development
  - > Commerce Street Arts District initiative
  - > Broadview Hotel renovations and associated riverfront improvements
  - > Downtown employment and office space growth by Airbus, Cargill, and others
  - > New YMCA
  - > Kansas Health Foundation focus on public health benefits of walking, biking and recreation
  - > First Street performing arts district concept
  - > Near- and long-term improvements at the Century II Performing Arts and Convention Center
  - > Wichita Art Museum improvement/development concepts
  - > Reorganization and expansion of city bus routes to offer more convenient options
  - > Potential for inter-city rail service at Union Station
  - > Other initiatives

A December 2009 "walk-shop," whose participants documented downtown walkability, launched a series of seven public events that engaged hundreds of Wichitans in evaluating downtown today and developing a vision for its future.

categorized images and used personal keypad polling devices to create a series of priority statements about Downtown's walkability. The Wichita Flickr photography group organized supplementary photo shoots of more Downtown areas.

- **DISCOVERIES, January 13, 2010**
  This public meeting unveiled fresh research into market-based development opportunities that represent the most effective engines for Downtown growth. Nationally-recognized experts in relevant fields shared the conclusions documented in Chapter 2, A New Era of Opportunity:
  > Laurie Volk of Zimmerman/Volk Associates profiled Wichita's Downtown housing market.
  > Sarah Woodworth of W-ZHA described existing and potential demand in the office and hotel markets.
  > Mike Berne of MJB Consulting discussed the retail market.

The meeting on January 13, 2010, focused on research into market potential that can drive new development downtown.

A panel of local development and real estate professionals responded to the three speakers' findings; Goody Clancy shared community input from the Walk-shops; and participants completed a survey ranking Downtown opportunities and challenges.

- **PROGRESSIVE, February 25 and 27, 2010**
  On Thursday, February 25, Jim Cloar delivered WDDC's annual guest lecture. Cloar drew on 30 years of direct experience with downtown organizations in major U.S. cities to explain how downtown management made a significant difference in the livability and prosperity of St. Louis, Tampa, and Dallas.

  On Saturday February 27, the Wichita Art Museum hosted an all-day community "charrette"—a public workshop dedicated to informed brainstorming a 20-year vision for Downtown. The day began with presentations on important background information: Yolanda Takesian of Kittelson Associates shared transportation analysis; Mike Berne of MJB Consulting shared updated retail market

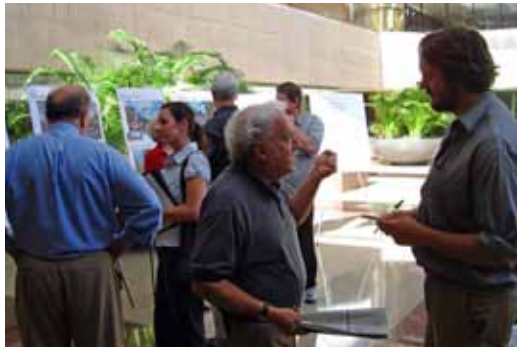
The February 27 charrette focused on the components of a vision for downtown Wichita, from the kinds of stores downtown should try to attract to the kinds of development that current and projected market demand would support.

research; David Dixon of Goody Clancy presented urban design principles for placemaking; and Scott Dunakey of PEC described Wichita's new streetscape design guidelines. Participants then divided into groups to outline priority principles that they felt should inform Downtown's urban design, transportation, management, development process, and retail offerings. At lunch, participants used keypad polling to rank statements describing Downtown and completed a survey on transportation issues. In the afternoon, eight groups created Downtown vision models using maps, markers and foam blocks representing 15 years' worth of market-based development opportunity. The day concluded with an open house where participants shared the results with a broader public audience.

- **FOCUSING, April 28, 2010**
  The vision for Downtown began to emerge at this public meeting. David Dixon introduced five draft vision principles, each with five supporting components, that evolved into the principles in Chapter 4, The Downtown Vision. Sarah Woodworth demystified development economics with explanations of what it costs to develop a building Downtown—and what key financing tools can help make new development happen. Goody Clancy's Ben Carlson presented a framework that organizes new development around street corridors that emphasize high-quality walking and transit access, and conducted a tour of existing and emerging districts

At the April meeting, participants filled boards with site-specific comments on applying the five principles to downtown.

  and neighborhoods that make up Downtown, illustrated with photos of precedents from other downtowns. Participants ranked vision principle statements arrayed on posters.



- **TRANSFORM, June 14-16, 2010**
  Hundreds of people crowded the Scottish Rite Center on June 14 to see the draft plan for Downtown. Yolanda Takesian presented the Downtown transportation plan, with emphasis on expanded Q-Line transit services. Sarah Woodworth shared new criteria for guiding decisions on when to invest public incentive funds in private development projects. Ben Carlson presented before/after photo-renderings to illustrate a series of Downtown places transformed with new market-based development and reinvigorated public spaces, and then the action strategies to make the illustrative concepts real (Chapter 6, Action Steps). Participants identified priority implementation actions in different areas of Downtown and completed a survey assessing the plan's coverage of key issues.

  Three themed workshops on June 16 allowed more in-depth public presentation and discussion of the draft plan. Each workshop placed special emphasis on a single topic: development economics, transportation, and urban design/placemaking.

- **Neighborhood Community Outreach Meetings, July 7-21, 2010**
  The City, WDDC, and Visioneering took the draft plan to a broader community audience in a series of eight meetings held in Wichita neighborhoods and in Bel Aire, Derby, and Haysville. Summary presentations of the draft plan were followed by an opportunity for participants to review and discuss plan concepts in small groups.

A workshop on July 20 focused specifically on the Commerce Street Arts District. Community members identified priority issues deserving attention during planning and engineering work for the area that brought master plan concepts to a very local level.

The Wichita Eag

An open-house crowd shows support for downtown plan, little concern for price tag

First look at city's future

- **PROJECT DOWNTOWN, September 28, 2010**
  This public open house in the lobby of the Bank of America Building on Douglas Avenue featured presentations of the final draft plan as well as an opportunity to speak with City and private-sector leaders who will implement the plan. The presentation featured demonstrations of how a series of action steps can bring about a sequence of constructive improvements in locations across Downtown.

In addition to these public events, the planning team made several public presentations of draft and final plan components to the Wichita City Council, Sedgwick County Commission, and the Planning Commission.

Strong coverage of the planning process by Wichita's print and broadcast media opened the Downtown plan conversation to a broader regional audience. The major public events drew television and newspaper coverage, and *The Wichita Eagle* and *Wichita Business Journal* each published a running series of articles on Downtown planning issues. The *Eagle's* particularly extensive coverage, including its own downtown research tours to peer cities, including Boise, Milwaukee, Baton Rouge, and Louisville, and coverage of Visioneering's city-to-city tours to Chattanooga (2009) and Louisville (2010), can be explored at **www.kansas.com/downtown/.**

4

Vision

The Downtown Vision

The vision for Downtown Wichita distills the community's aspirations for the study area into a guide to the values that should shape the future core of the city.

Master Plan Vision Principles

Five vision principles address the critical factors necessary to initiate a more strategic and accelerated revitalization process for Downtown. They provide the structure for a vision that will lead to a new, revitalized identity. Under the vision, Downtown will be woven back to together; new community assets will be created; and future development will be implemented strategically. Wichita's core will become a connected, walkable, exciting environment. Just as important, following these principles will help reshape community perceptions of what Downtown is today and can become in the future.

The five principles are:

1. **Offer something for everyone.**
2. **Leverage Downtown's inherent strengths to generate economic value.**
3. **Expand choices for people—and the region.**
4. **Support development that fosters walkable connections.**
5. **Promote Downtown's role in advancing regional sustainability.**

Within each principle, differeent elements speak to culture, economic growth, community, sustainability, and design. These elements appear on the following pages.

Vision: Downtown Wichita in 2030

Downtown is a place that enables people to live, work, shop, play, and learn…all within a short walk of each other. Downtown celebrates Wichita's rich history and vibrant future, and it invites people from every walk of life to share their sense of community. 150 years after Wichita took root here, downtown is the reinvigorated heart of a region committed to a vital future.

Vision Principles

Offer something for everyone.

- **Culture** that celebrates Wichita's rich traditions and lively diversity.
- **Economic growth:** Uses that retain and attract the skilled workforce that makes Wichita economically competitive.
- **Community:** Activities that invite people from every walk of life to enjoy… and value…Downtown together.
- **Sustainability:** Green planning and design that symbolize Wichita's commitment to environmental responsibility.
- **Design:** Buildings and public spaces that demonstrate respect for the past and excitement about the future.

Leverage Downtown's inherent strengths to generate economic value.

- **Culture:** Connections that unlock the synergies inherent in the network of museums, entertainment, and culture.
- **Economic growth:** Development that builds on documented market strengths.
- **Community:** Shopping and entertainment that take advantage of Downtown's central location and unique appeal.
- **Sustainability:** Planning that takes advantage of opportunities for efficient use of water, energy, and other resources.
- **Design** that invites walkable development.

Expand choices for people—and the region.

- **Culture:** Visual and performance arts that enhance Downtown as a vibrant cultural center.
- **Economic growth:** Entrepreneurial opportunities that take advantage of Downtown's appeal to creative workers and economic diversity.
- **Community:** Choices for housing, shopping, entertainment, and other needs that flourish in a mixed-use, higher-density, urban setting.
- **Sustainability:** Transportation choices that supplement the automobile and promote connectivity to and across Downtown.
- **Design** that conveys the character of distinctive districts.

Support development that fosters walkable connections.

- **Culture:** Public art that tells Wichita's stories.
- **Economic growth:** Art, dining, shopping, and other activities that animate connections between major destinations.
- **Community:** A riverfront that invites walking with a continuous mix of boating, cafés, museums, and other attractions.
- **Sustainability:** Transportation that makes every Downtown district readily accessible and links key destinations.
- **Design** that makes walking in Downtown comfortable, convenient… and fun.

Promote Downtown's role in advancing regional sustainability.

- **Culture:** A riverfront that tells the story of Wichita's environmental opportunities and challenges.
- **Economic growth:** Options that invite future generations to choose Wichita as their future.
- **Community:** A common ground that can help build a stronger commitment to a shared destiny.
- **Sustainability:** Compactness that offers a smaller carbon footprint and better opportunities for personal wellness.
- **Design:** Keeping Wichita's architectural heritage a central part of Downtown's economy and sense of place.

5

Plan Framework

Walkable Development

As noted in Chapter 2, "A New Era of Opportunity," walkability is a special asset Downtown should emphasize. An environment where it is convenient, safe and fun to walk among a variety of different activities offers unique benefits to economic activity and quality of life that environments dependent on automobiles can't match. While Downtown clearly has areas that do not today feel very walkable, it also has excellent fundamental infrastructure for walking: an extensive grid of streets and blocks with sidewalks throughout, street trees along most streets, destinations with a variety of uses, including living, working, shopping and recreation, and concentrations of uses that are sufficient to support transit service.

The critical role of walkability in attracting high-value development is evident in Wichita. Old Town, the Downtown district that has attracted the most development investment over the past 20 years, has succeeded in large part due to its walkability. The market analysis conclusions in Chapter 2 reveal that development opportunity, whether for housing, office, retail or hotel, increases to the extent that Downtown is walkable. For instance, the office market analysis concluded that improved walkability could double Downtown's capture of new office space, moving demand to the high end of the 220,000-480,000sf range predicted.

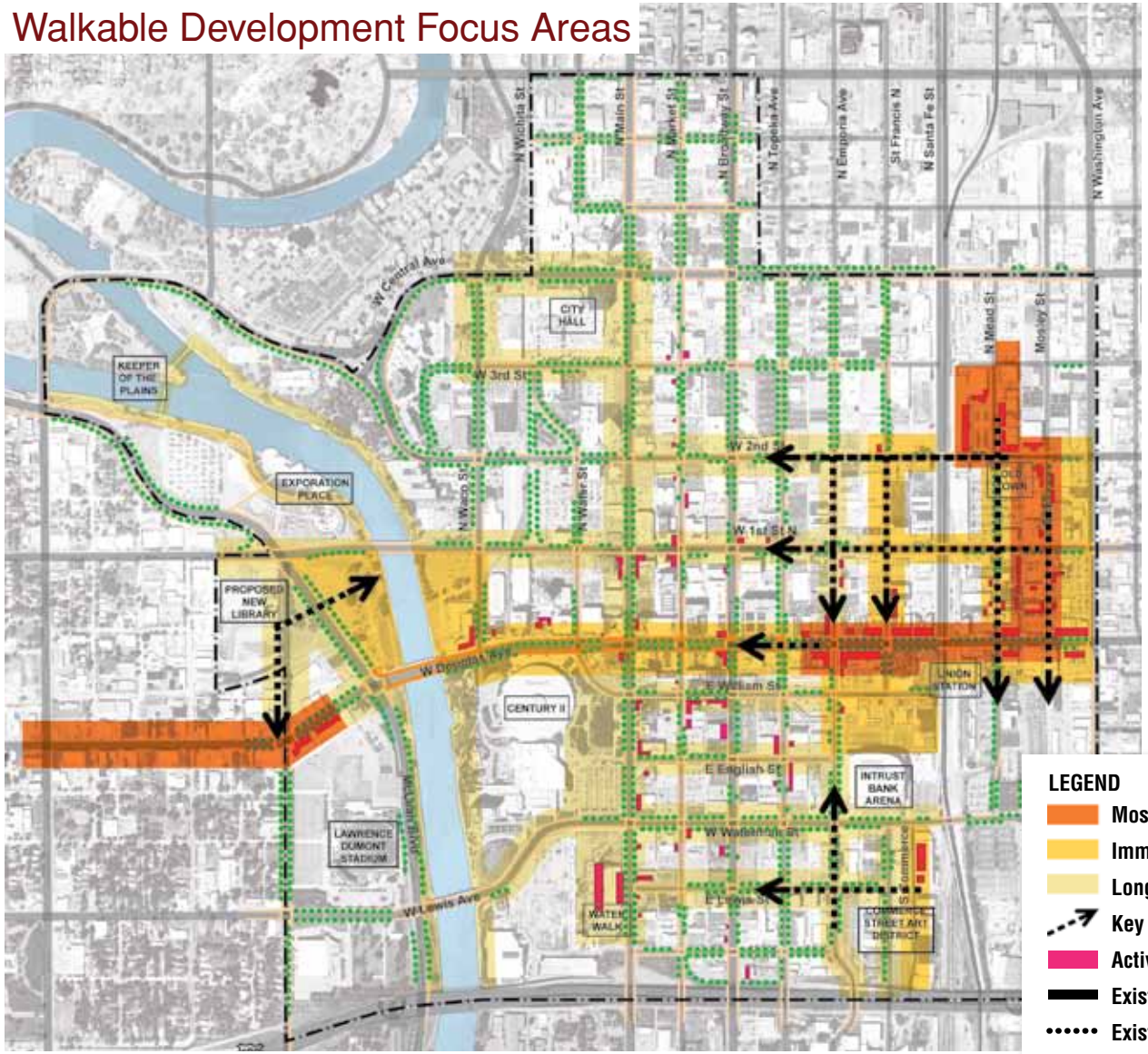
It is also important to note that the types of development attracted to walkable areas tend to further reinforce walkability. The type of creative worker attracted to a Downtown office space, or resident attracted to a Downtown loft, tends to want to walk and take advantage of convenient walking access to cafes, parks and other amenities. For every additional person walking, other people are more inclined to join them. Similarly, the type of retailer most interested in a Downtown location tends to provide an interesting, accessible storefront that welcomes pedestrians and promotes safety by placing more "eyes on the street."

Therefore, a central recommendation of this plan is that new development and redevelopment be focused in ways that best take advantage of existing walkability and help extend it to more areas of Downtown. This should be done through a complementary framework of walkable development focus areas, transit corridors, and focus areas for specific land uses.

Transit Corridors

Transit and walkability reinforce one another. In a downtown setting, transit can "extend the walk," helping a person reach a larger set of destinations without needing a car. In some cases people will be more willing to walk to a destination if they can depend on a convenient return ride by transit due to onset of poor weather, nightfall or other reasons. Transit—especially transit that has a sense of permanence, such as suggested by high-quality bus shelters—reinforces market interest in Downtown development because it increases access to amenities and housing, and it reduces the development costs associated with providing parking. Hotel development is especially attracted to transit, as many guests may lack a car

Walkable Development Focus Areas

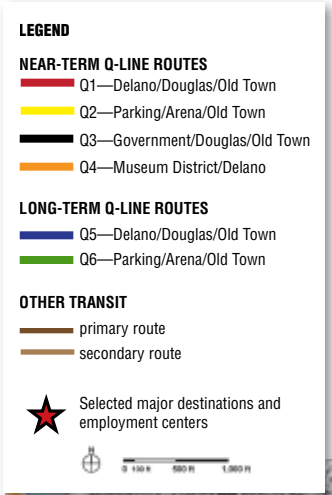


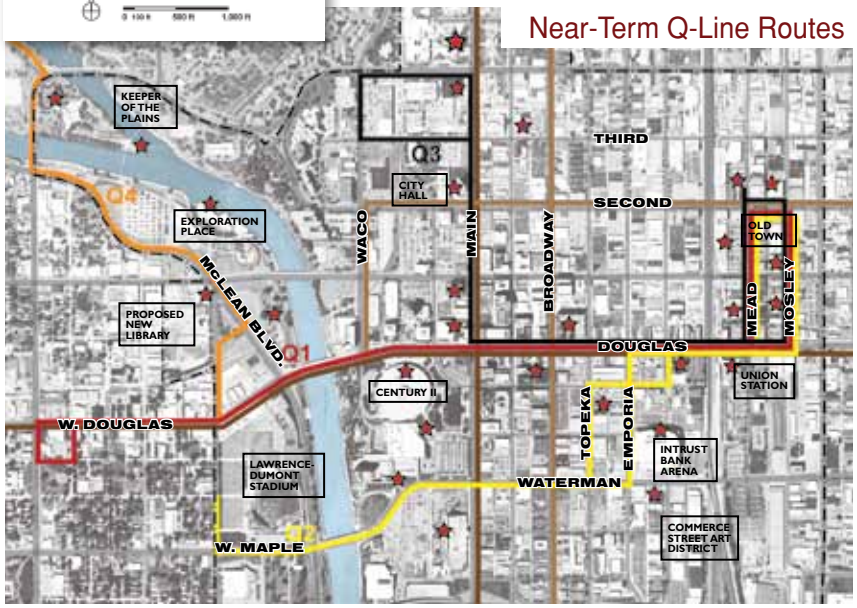
Maximizing downtown's demonstrated potential to attract development and provide amenities depends on maximizing walkability. The priority walking corridors identified in the diagram at left are those in which new private investment in development and public investment in transit, parks, and other infrastructure can best work together to maximize their benefit to regional economic growth and quality of life. While development should be welcomed throughout downtown, public incentives applied to attract private development, as well as public investment in public facilities, should be directed to the Walkable Development Focus Areas. These are indicated as street corridors in the diagram but apply to property that has significant street frontage in a focus-area corridor. Generally, encouraging development in the yellow "immediate priority" corridors should receive the highest priority. Secondary priority should be given to encouraging development in the orange "most walkable today" and light yellow "longer-term priority" corridors. For retail and any other uses that perform best in locations with nearly continuous walkability, the arrows indicate where these can build in linear fashion upon existing (or planned) concentrations.

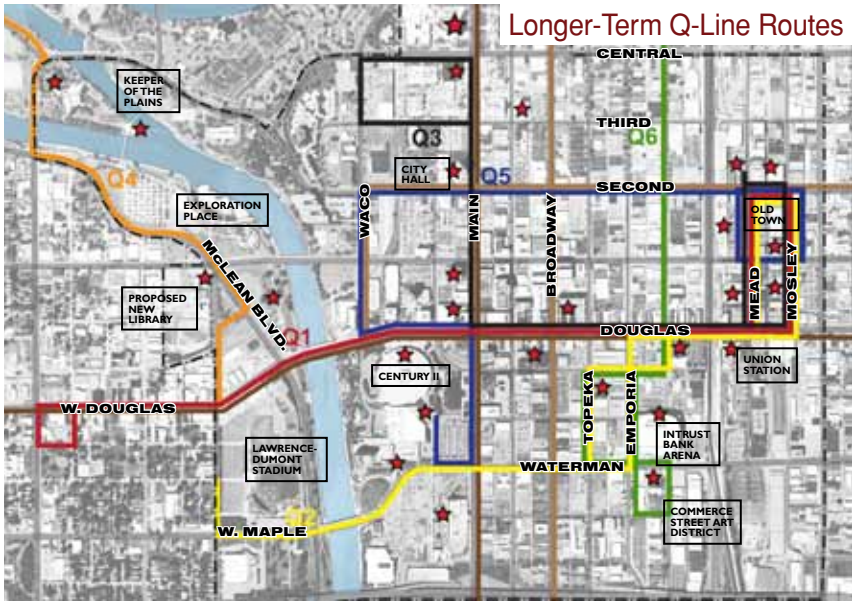
or wish to avoid renting one. Walkability is likewise critical to the success of transit, as transit is only attractive to the extent there is an inviting walk between a transit stop and a destination.

Downtown holds strong potential to support more robust transit service than it has today. The substantial increase in Q-Line ridership experienced since opening of the INTRUST Bank Arena demonstrates that convenient transit can attract many new riders who will voluntarily choose it over driving. Additional convenient transit service can in return reduce development costs and expand development opportunity by reducing the amount of funding and Downtown land devoted to parking. Further efficiency and convenience is possible by locating shared public parking facilities on transit routes. The plan recommends strategic public parking locations (see the "Framework: Transportation" section, below) that reinforce the recommended transit corridors.

Because transit, walkability, and walkable development so complement one another, expanded Downtown transit circulator services should be provided in corridors that reinforce walkable development focus areas. Like today's Q-line, new services should have distinctive, inviting vehicles that specifically serve Downtown, including major destinations, parking concentrations, and the Downtown Transit Center. The near-term Q-line transit map shows four new priority Q-line routes. All routes would feature more frequent service (with buses arriving at least every 10 to 15 minutes) and longer operating hours than the service currently provides. Routes Q1 and Q2 replicate the existing Q-line route but improve upon it with service that is more







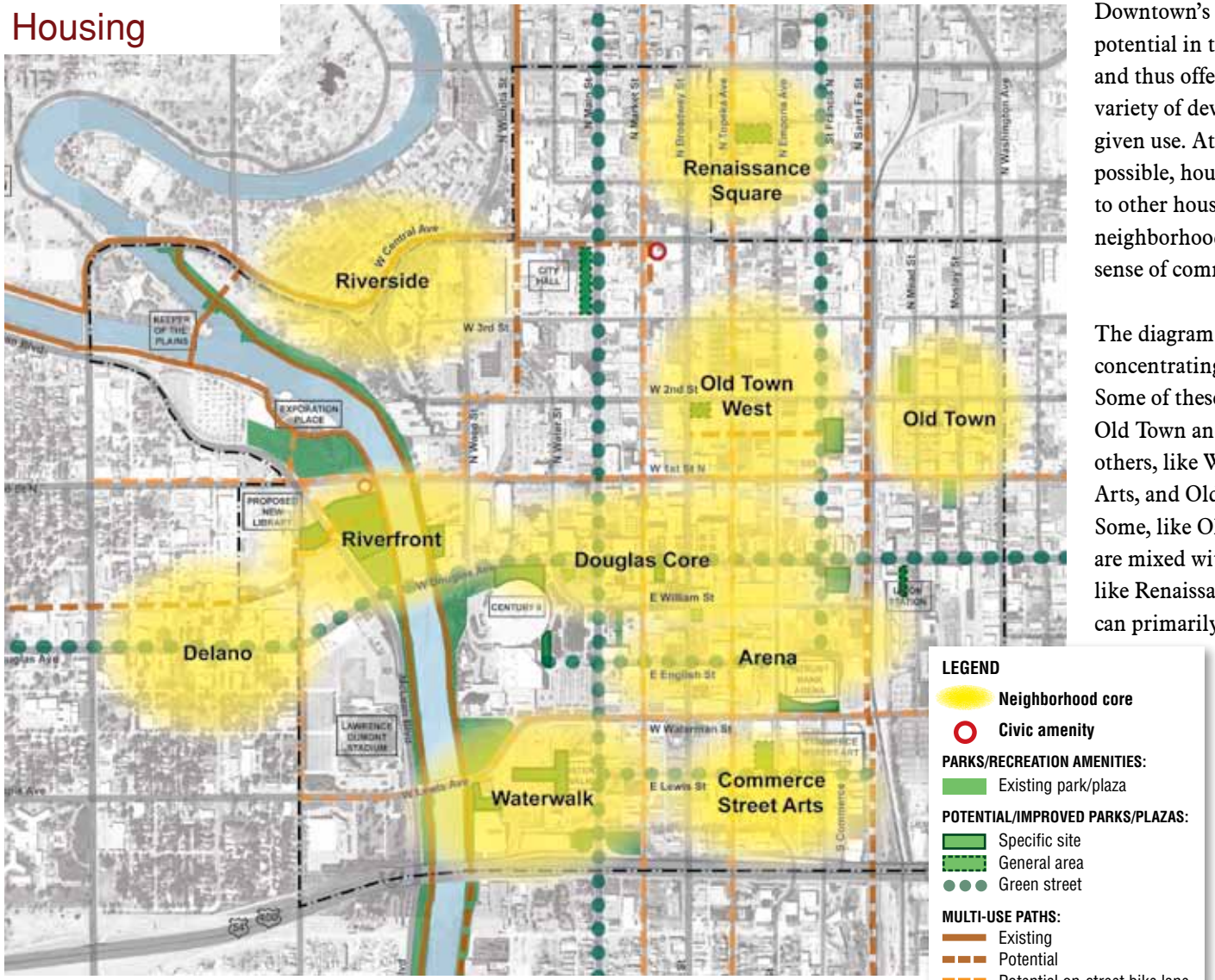
frequent, dual-direction, and more continuous along Douglas (the current Q-line typically operates with a one-way loop). Routes Q3 and Q4 provide access to important destinations in the Government Center and Museum districts. The longer-term map adds two more routes, with Q5 emphasizing performing arts, hotel, dining and convention destinations, and Q6 adding the Commerce Street Arts District and Via Christi Hospital. Together, the routes emphasize Douglas as Downtown's primary transit corridor (with city/regional routes overlapping multiple Q-line routes) as well as Old Town as a key destination.

See the "Framework: Transportation" section below for more detailed information on recommended transit improvements.

Focus Areas for Key Land Uses

The presence of a complementary mix of land uses is one of Downtown's core strengths. While an overall mix of uses is desirable throughout Downtown, different land uses may be more or less appropriate in different portions of Downtown due to market-driven location criteria, tolerance of being isolated from other uses, accessibility and other factors. The plan recommends encouraging new market-based housing, office, retail and hotel uses, as well as institutions like museums and other civic buildings, in certain areas according to the following diagrams.

Housing



Housing—Housing is appropriate throughout Downtown for several reasons. It adds needed evening and weekend activity to office districts and other areas with a predominant use or schedule. Designed and marketed well, it can tolerate being in pioneer locations, as demonstrated by some recent developments. It also represents about two-thirds of Downtown's market-based development potential in terms of building floor area, and thus offers the greatest amount and variety of development opportunity of any given use. At the same time, whenever possible, housing should be located close to other housing to form identifiable neighborhoods. This will strengthen both sense of community and marketability.

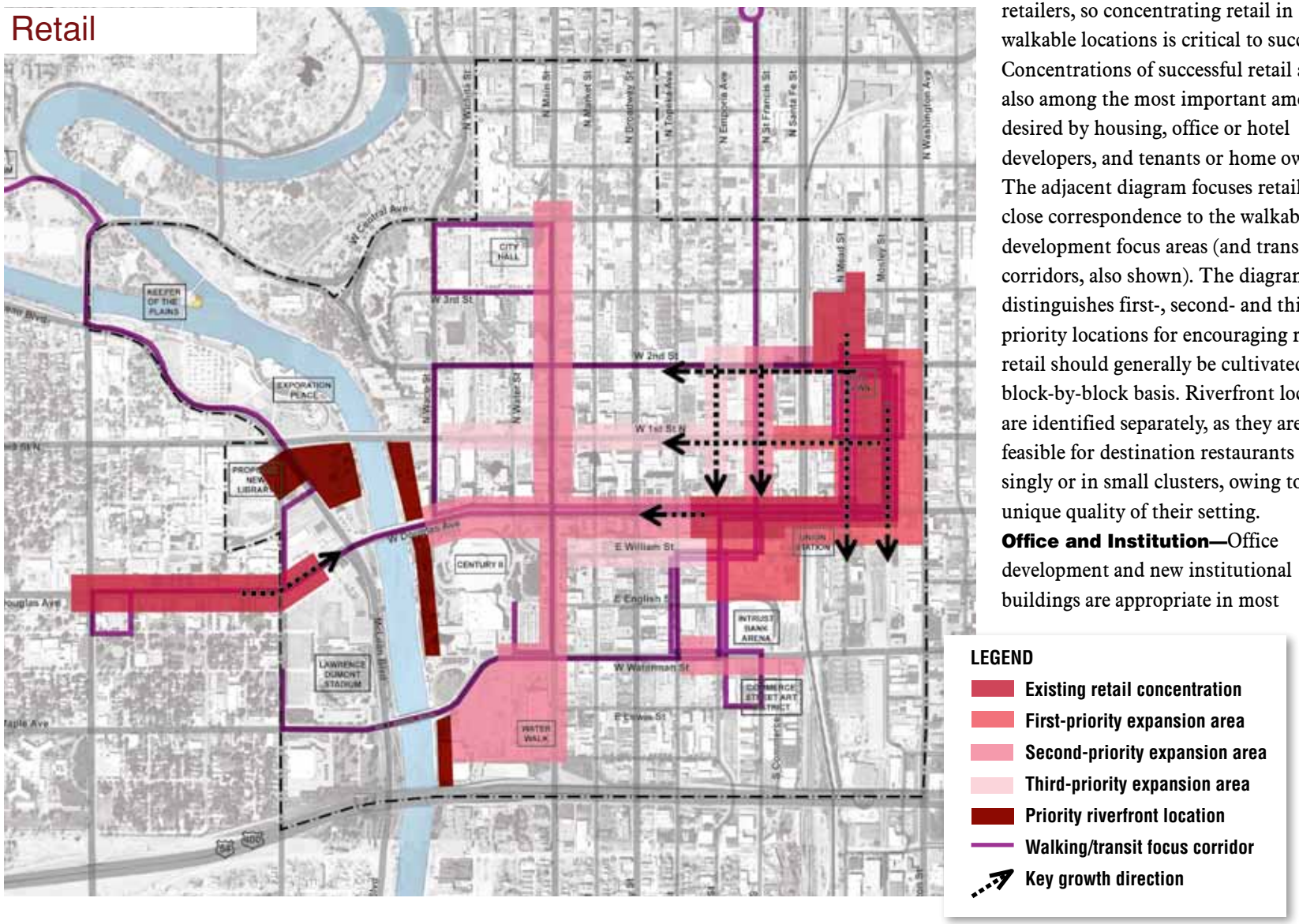
The diagram identifies priority areas for concentrating housing in neighborhoods. Some of these neighborhoods, like Delano, Old Town and Riverside, already exist; others, like WaterWalk, Commerce Street Arts, and Old Town West, are emerging. Some, like Old Town and Douglas Core, are mixed with many other uses; others, like Renaissance Square and Riverside, can primarily be residential in character. The "Framework: Green Public Spaces" section below identifies recommended park and street improvements that can further reinforce these neighborhoods.

Retail—Of all uses, retail is perhaps most sensitive to location because it is so dependent on convenient access and must compete

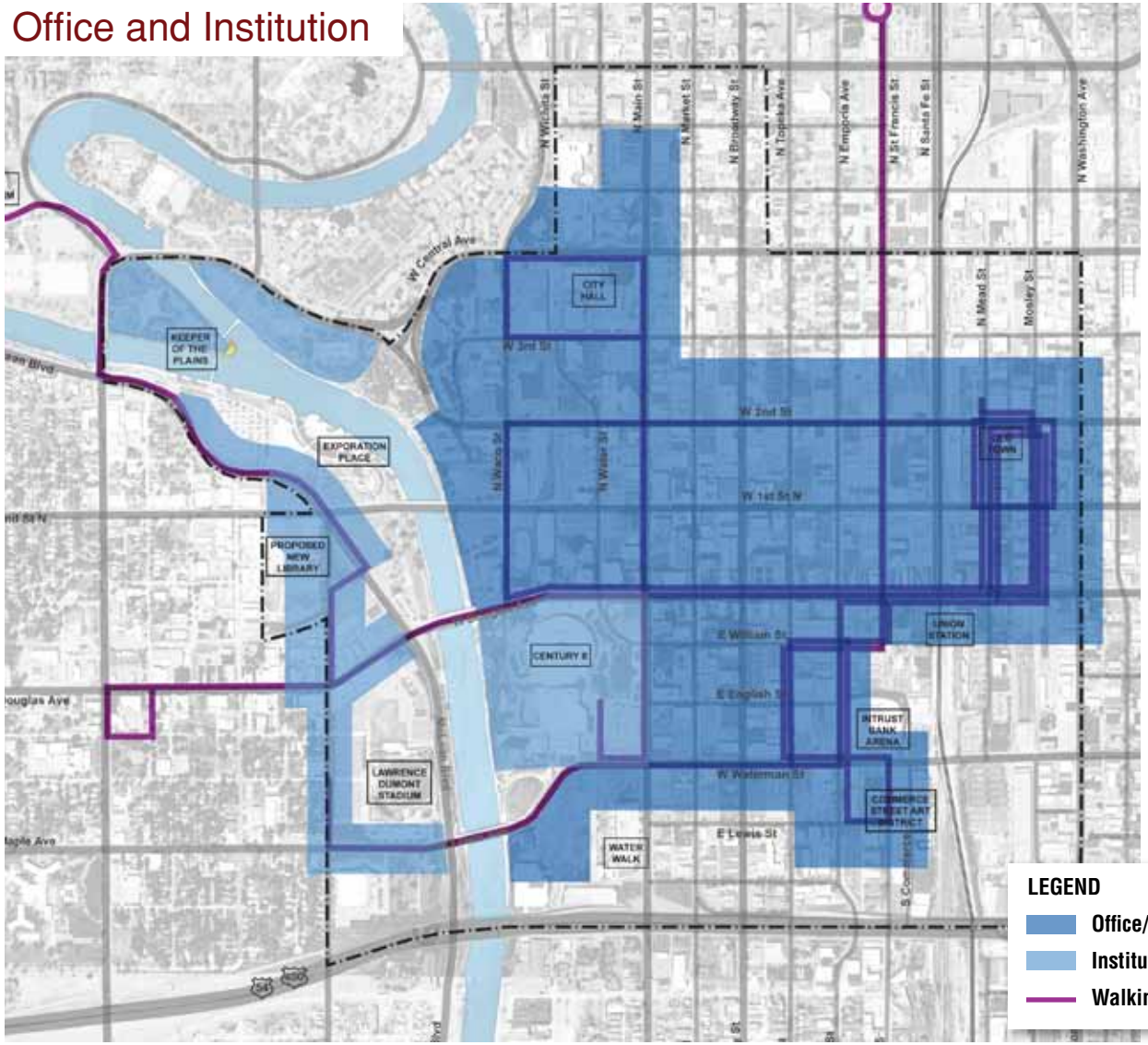
daily with other choices available to patrons. Downtown retailers almost universally prefer being close to other retailers, so concentrating retail in walkable locations is critical to success. Concentrations of successful retail are also among the most important amenities desired by housing, office or hotel developers, and tenants or home owners. The adjacent diagram focuses retail in close correspondence to the walkable development focus areas (and transit corridors, also shown). The diagram distinguishes first-, second- and third-priority locations for encouraging retail, as retail should generally be cultivated on a block-by-block basis. Riverfront locations are identified separately, as they are more feasible for destination restaurants located singly or in small clusters, owing to the unique quality of their setting.

Office and Institution—Office development and new institutional buildings are appropriate in most

Retail



Office and Institution

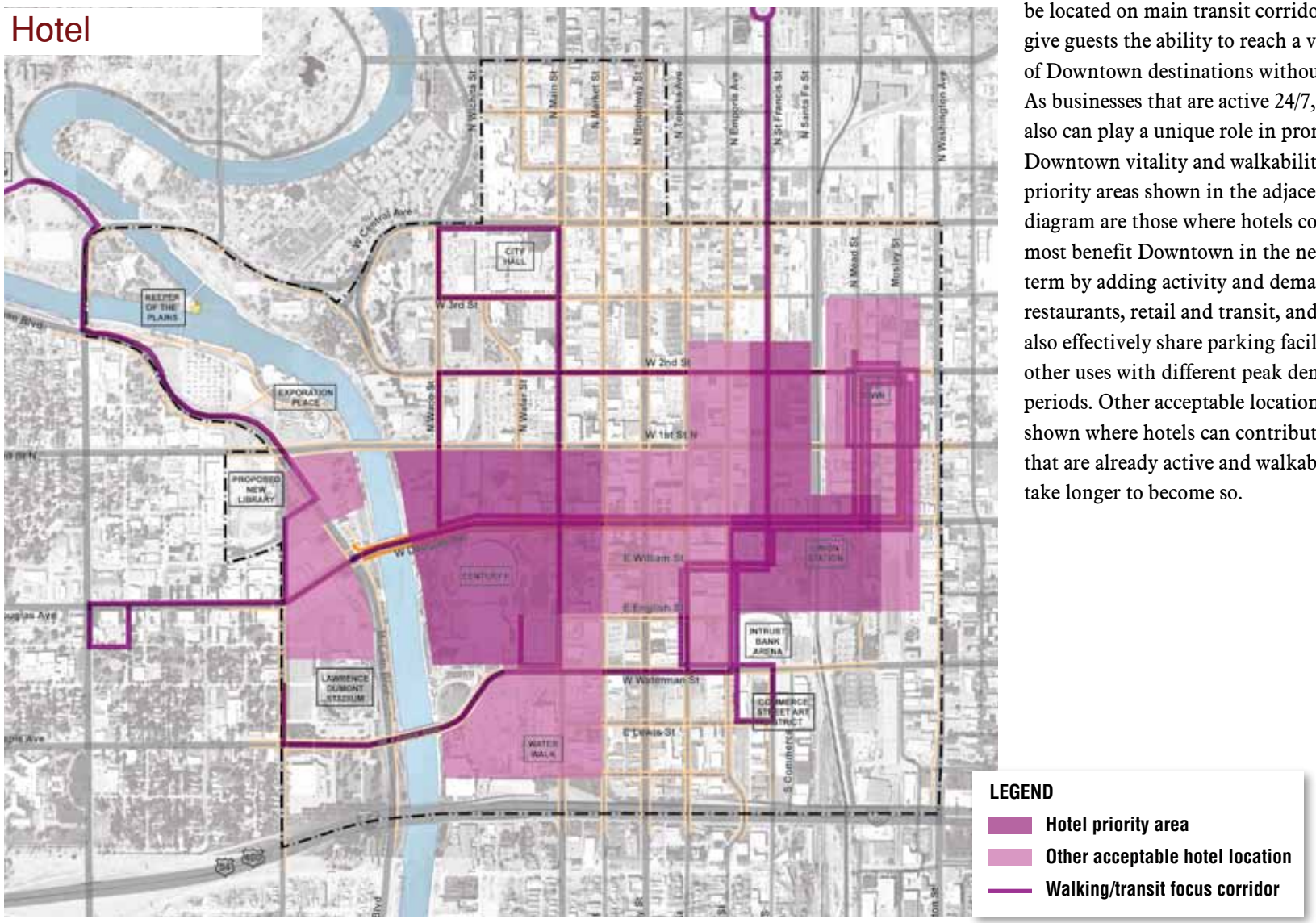


of Downtown but should be concentrated along main transit corridors to both take advantage of and help create concentrated ridership for expanded transit services. This concentration also takes advantage of shared parking locations (existing and proposed) to help make most cost-effective use of parking infrastructure. It further focuses office space in Downtown's strongest areas of walkability and mixed-use activity—important amenities that both attract additional office space and are themselves strengthened by its presence. Some priority near-term sites for new Class A office development, based on marketable location and catalytic potential, include the southwest corner of First and Water; the southwest corner of Waterman and Main; and blocks along St. Francis in Old Town West. Securing new tenants for Union Station and the Kress Building as Class B office space would also yield strong positive impacts in highly visible locations. Institutional-priority areas indicate portions of the Arkansas River corridor where additional civic institutions are desirable to reinforce existing concentration of those uses.

Hotel—Hotel development should be focused in areas with visitor destinations—

principally, near Century II as a convention destination, and Old Town as a dining destination. Hotels should also be located on main transit corridors to give guests the ability to reach a variety of Downtown destinations without a car. As businesses that are active 24/7, hotels also can play a unique role in promoting Downtown vitality and walkability. Hotel priority areas shown in the adjacent diagram are those where hotels could most benefit Downtown in the near term by adding activity and demand for restaurants, retail and transit, and could also effectively share parking facilities with other uses with different peak demand periods. Other acceptable locations are also shown where hotels can contribute to areas that are already active and walkable or may take longer to become so.

Hotel



Green Public Spaces

Improved parks, plazas and green streets Downtown can significantly enhance Wichita's social, economic and environmental sustainability alike. Investments in this green infrastructure will invite community gathering and recreation, attract development, make Downtown a comfortable place to walk and bike, and help keep Arkansas River water clean.

Parks and plazas build community by inviting a variety of people to gather, formally and informally. They also directly enhance the value of new development as marketable amenities. Parks are generally characterized by predominance of landscaping, while plazas generally have significant areas of paving more suitable to heavy pedestrian traffic, complemented by trees and plantings. The diagram on the next page identifies existing parks that can continue to play valuable roles in their current condition; existing parks that deserve significant improvements; and potential new parks intended to enhance an emerging neighborhood. To make the most of Downtown's parks and plazas, public and private stakeholders should observe several basic principles:

- **Consciously program any public park or plaza with a variety of active and passive recreational activities that are supported by its design and context.** While a particular set of activities may distinguish a particular park, all Downtown parks and plazas should, as a group, accommodate a broad variety of activities. These should include, but not necessarily be limited to:
  - > walking—including movement in wheelchairs and child strollers
  - > sitting—individually and in group conversation
  - > enjoyment of views to landmarks
  - > enjoyment of decorative gardens
  - > playgrounds/tot lots serving children of various ages from toddlers to teens
  - > activities appealing to seniors
  - > occasional special events such as farmer's markets and seasonal festivals
  - > other activities identified by community members

- **Make parks and plazas readily accessible by sidewalk, transit, bike and automobile via area street and path networks.** Create views and introduce signage to emphasize the presence of such public spaces on surrounding streets, a measure that will also add value to nearby private development.

- **Design the landscape to enhance and take advantage of existing built and natural features.** Where possible, take advantage of the opportunity to create dignified park or plaza settings around views or distinguished buildings. Add plantings that shape space and support intended uses; avoid invasive species.

- **Locate open spaces, buildings and trees to create a mix of microclimates that are welcoming to people under various weather and seasonal conditions** throughout the year. Keep in mind that Wichita is windier than Chicago.

- **Design water fountains in one or more parks or plazas** to attract children of all ages, building on precedent at Old Town Square and WaterWalk.

Green streets can function as parks and plazas as well by creating inviting places to walk or sit along sidewalk areas. They also play important roles as prime addresses for existing and new property development. In addition, many cities are creating an environmental role for streets by designing them to filter and control stormwater runoff and reduce its negative impacts on nearby rivers and streams. This approach incorporates decorative plantings along the curb. All these roles, plus the capacity to accommodate multiple transportation options, characterize the "complete streets" that best serve Downtowns. The 2010 *Wichita Downtown Streetscape Guidelines* offer helpful and specific guidance on integrating plantings into streets.

Multi-use paths accommodate walking, jogging, biking and similar activities. Downtown already enjoys the benefit of multi-use paths flanking the Arkansas River that extend for miles and link to many other neighborhoods. There are important additional opportunities to add a path on the former railroad right-of-way in Delano—as was done between Central Avenue and Midtown—and along Santa Fe Street flanking Downtown's active railroad corridor. The latter path could also have an extension west across the former Coleman factory site to Broadway, breaking down the scale of the long blocks between First and Second streets and opening access to new investments in arts facilities and housing

The diagram on the facing page shows on-street bike lanes as integral extensions of the multi-use path network. See the "Transportation Framework" section for more detail.

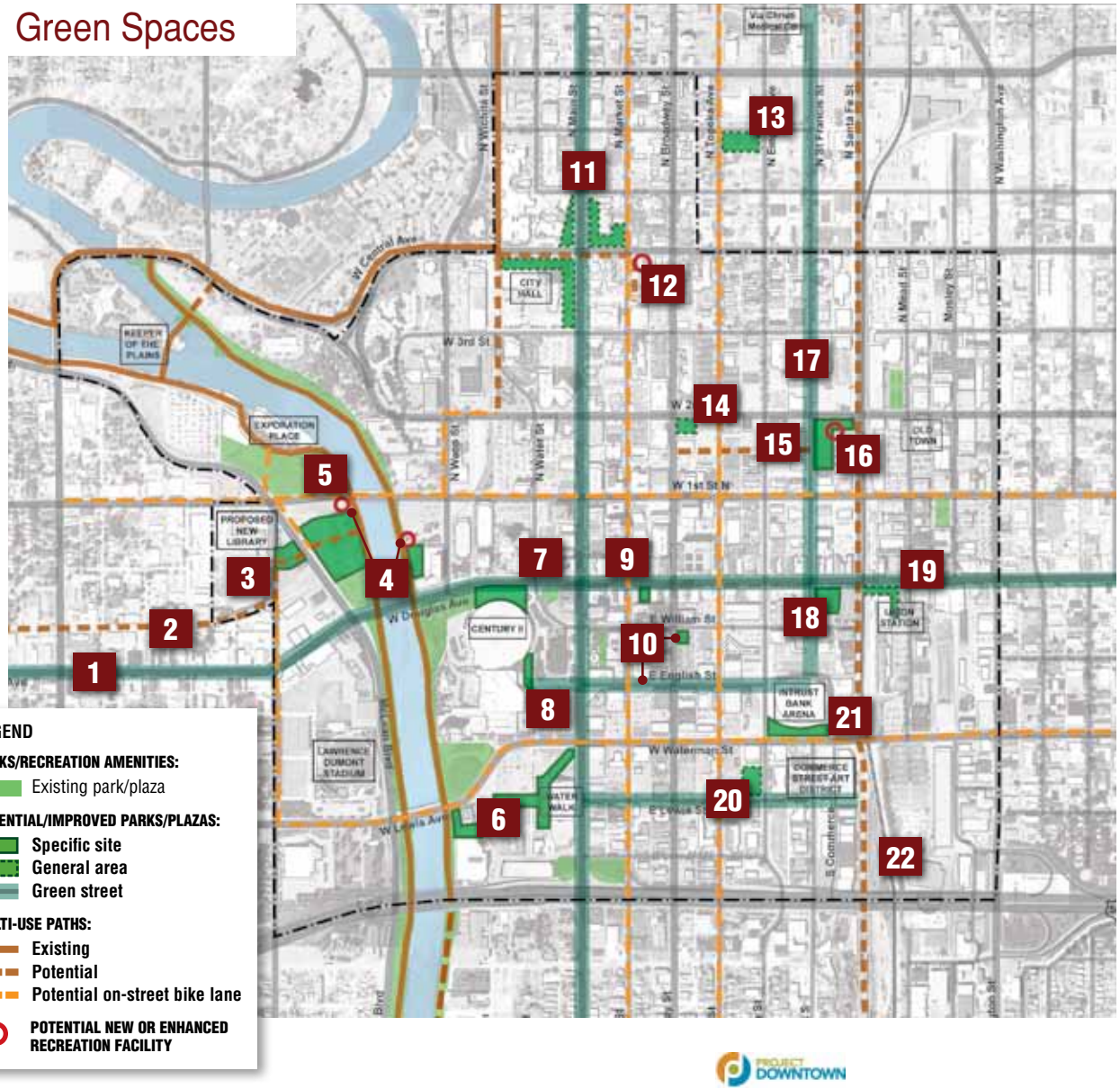
Recreation facilities are important local and regional destinations that often reinforce activity along the paths and streets that link to them. Downtown has several significant opportunities for new or improved recreation facilities.

These numbered notes correspond to the reference numbers on the diagram of Green Spaces Framework diagram at right.

1. **Enhance Douglas** as Wichita's premier street by adding street trees, where missing, and decorative plantings in tree lawns and planters.
2. **Convert the railroad right-of-way** into multi-use path linking Delano and the river multi-use paths and Downtown's on-street bike network.
3. **Create Library Plaza** and enhance existing riverfront park areas as part of the new Central Library project. *See the recommendations for catalyst site C1.*
4. **Create a new boating facility** to serve Wichita State University's crew teams, rent boats for public use, and accommodate launching of private kayaks, canoes and other non-motor-powered craft. Create a bike-rental and/or -service facility to promote use of the riverfront paths. These facilities may be combined or distributed; City-owned sites on either side of the Arkansas below the First-Second Street Bridge would provide highly accessible, visible sites that promote private investment in compatible development. Current park improvements linking the Broadview Hotel to the river reinforce this area as a community park destination and desirable setting for new river-oriented development on adjacent sites. *See the recommendations for catalyst sites C1 and C2.*
5. **Continue ongoing riparian improvements** along the Arkansas River. These include removing hazardous and unsightly debris, and introducing low plantings that naturally control the nuisance geese population, filter stormwater, and reduce the labor and energy required for park maintenance. Continue the highly successful engagement of community members in these efforts.
6. **Continue to install planned park and fountain amenities** at WaterWalk.

7. **Restore Kennedy Plaza** as an inviting, prominent civic space by relocating Century II loading functions and attracting additional mixed-use development on surrounding sites. Transform underutilized Finley Ross Park into a development site that brings more activity and reinvestment to Kennedy Plaza and the nearby river edge.

Green Spaces



LEGEND

PARKS/RECREATION AMENITIES:

Existing park/plaza

POTENTIAL/IMPROVED PARKS/PLAZAS:

Specific site

General area

Green street

MULTI-USE PATHS:

Existing

Potential

Potential on-street bike lane

POTENTIAL NEW OR ENHANCED RECREATION FACILITY

8. As part of the recommended extension of Water Street to Waterman (see catalyst site C3), **create park or plaza space that takes advantage of underutilized open space at Century II** and the current Central Library building for more intensive activities. These could include outdoor receptions or other functions related to convention center and performing arts events.
9. Despite a significant investment in public art during renovation of the Finney Building, the plaza at the state office complex on Douglas remains underutilized. **Encourage redesign and reprogramming of the ground floors of one or more adjacent buildings**—especially the state offices—to engage the plaza directly with added access, visibility, and activity such as dining linking outdoor and indoor spaces. As the planned Exchange Place adds more than 200 dwelling units and stores across the street, update seating, plantings or other elements if necessary to serve this expanded Downtown residential population better.
10. **Create two green hearts for the Arena District.** Make English Street a Green Street that forms a desirable residential address and a pleasant stroll from Century II to the Arena. Create a neighborhood park or plaza on the City-owned site of the former Allis Hotel. *See recommendations for catalyst site C5.*
11. As part of further planning for City and County property in the Government Center district, seek opportunity to **make additional use of green spaces for passive and active recreation.** Use the planted setback around

City Hall to accommodate a multi-use path spur accessing the new Downtown YMCA.

12. A prominent new facility at Central and Market will expand the downtown importance of the YMCA—already a popular destination for Downtown workers and residents alike. Better facilities and a growing residential population Downtown will add to its role. **Improve access to the new Y with enhanced sidewalks, bike lanes, a multi-use path spur** connecting to the Arkansas River and Midtown multi-use paths, and expanded circulator transit. Make the facility's recreational activities visible through the design of the building and its site.
13. **Create a new park to anchor the Renaissance Square neighborhood.** Be flexible about its location to accommodate the best opportunity for land acquisition. Encourage new development projects to contribute park space through public/private incentive criteria for projects (see "Framework: Business Plan for Downtown"). Avoid closing streets to create the park; maintain the existing street grid as an important framework for access and development.
14. **Encourage creation of a new park to serve western areas of Old Town West** and/or create a heart for a potential new performing arts district. Be flexible about its location to accommodate the best opportunity for land acquisition. Encourage new development projects to contribute park space through public/private incentive criteria for projects (see "Framework: Business Plan for Downtown").
15. **Create a pedestrian walk to add a more convenient scale** to the long blocks between First and Second streets and to help create neighborhood gathering spaces that engage the Orpheum Theatre; the Scottish Rite Center; one or more potential new performing arts facilities; the former Coleman factory site; and new housing development or other uses in Old Town West.
16. **Create a neighborhood park for Old Town** on part of the former Coleman factory site, with an emphasis on vegetation, public art, and memorializing the site's history. See the recommendations for catalyst site C7 for more detail. Consider including an adventure-themed recreation facility, such as the climbing wall pictured for catalyst site C7.
17. **Prioritize St. Francis as a Green Street** to address its lack of vegetation and support its emerging role as an important corridor for walkable development. Add trees and other plantings as part of the City's planned reconstruction of the street.
18. Although Naftzger Park already has excellent facilities that accommodate everyday use and frequent special events such as weddings, consider **enhancements that respond to the growth of pedestrian traffic** around the park since the Arena's opening, and to potential development projects on adjacent sites (see recommendations for catalyst site C8). For instance, removing at least some fencing around the park could improve access to and from potential hotel, office, housing and/or restaurant space on the parking lot to the east, via a pedestrian walk
19. **Consider using Union Station's brick drive and/or other site area as a public plaza.** Activate the plaza with outdoor dining and/or other activities connected to uses in Union Station and the Rock Island Depot. Coordinate plaza improvements with Douglas Avenue streetscape improvements, including street trees and public art.
20. **Create one or more parks serving the growing Commerce Street Arts District.** Be flexible about park location to accommodate the best opportunity for land acquisition. Encourage new development projects to contribute park space through public/private incentive criteria for projects (see "Framework: Business Plan for Downtown").
21. Consider ways to **make open space around the INTRUST Bank Arena useful as everyday park space** for Commerce Street Arts and Arena district residents, workers and visitors.
22. **Create a multi-use path along the active Downtown railroad corridor.** This path can provide a valuable connection between Commerce Street Arts District and Old Town along the east side of the Arena, as well as connect to Midtown, South Central and other neighborhoods. North of Waterman, utilize space between the Arena and the railroad embankment. Consider a City purchase of the rail yard south of Waterman to extend the path southward, to add Commerce Street Arts District parking and access improvements (see strategic parking site 9), and to serve as a district event/gathering space.

Transportation Plan

OVERVIEW

The Transportation Framework addresses key challenges facing Downtown Wichita:

- Dispersed activity centers within Downtown make it difficult to create synergy for redevelopment, fostering an auto-oriented culture.
- The pedestrian environment does not support transit use. Large blocks (typically more than 600 feet long north of Douglas Avenue) and super-blocks result in long walking distances. Buses travel on one-way streets, creating longer walks to get to a bus for the return trip. The dispersal of key destinations further increases walking distances.
- Gaps in development combined with an uninviting streetscape (including dark streets at night) discourage walking between destinations.
- A lack of bus shelters, benches, and other basic amenities expose transit riders to the elements.
- Transit visibility is very limited. The "flag stop" system requires riders to flag down a bus. Limited bus stop signage or other on-street facilities are present to indicate the presence of transit.
- The Q-Line serves primarily as a parking shuttle linking Old Town, INTRUST Bank Arena and Lawrence-Dumont Stadium. It operates infrequently and has no on-street presence (no signs, no customer information, etc.). Recognition of and support for the Q-Line, however, are strong among Wichita residents.
- A limited number of through streets—a situation created by the physical constraints of the river and railroad and by the street network itself—makes Downtown difficult to navigate. Street-network issues include the mix of one-way and two-way streets (some switch directions within Downtown) and super-blocks that have closed streets, impeding through-traffic within Downtown. Signals are not consistently timed to facilitate smooth traffic movement, forcing vehicles in some directions to stop at each light.

Key strategies for addressing traffic challenges:

- Creating a more complete Q-Line circulator system within Downtown that creates a strong on-street transit presence, connecting major activity centers (employment, Old Town shopping and night life, new housing, cultural and arts venues) for residents and visitors.
- Implementing bicycle circulation improvements, such as bike lanes, bike racks, and similar measures.
- Improving the pedestrian environment and pedestrian safety.
- Street conversion to two-way traffic, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.
- Signal coordination and re-timing.
- Introduction of more shared public parking that serves multiple destinations and has good walking, transit, and biking connections to other parts of Downtown.

TRANSPORTATION FRAMEWORK ELEMENTS

High-quality circulator bus stops/stations that create a transit presence

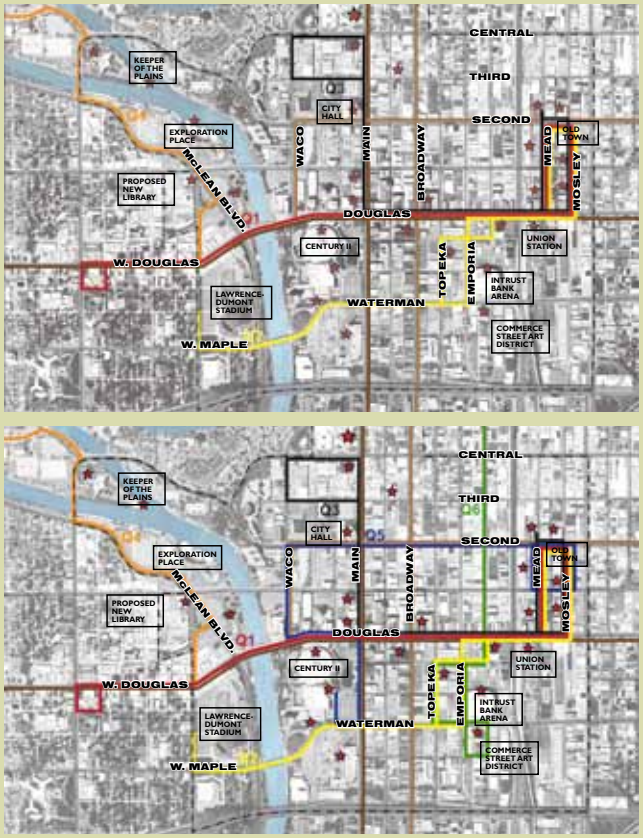
The key to the expansion of Downtown transit service lies in establishing permanent routes with high-quality stops that provide a visible "Q-Line" branding to the current Downtown circulator. A significant number of prominent, permanent bus shelters should be installed along the new Q-Line routes. The design of each shelter should convey the Q-Line brand and have electronic signage that provides information about routes, schedules, real-time next-bus arrival, and Downtown destinations.

Douglas Avenue's traditional development pattern—based on a combination of convenient walking, transit and auto access—offers a model to return to.

Develop Douglas Avenue and Main Street corridors as "transit preference" streets

Douglas Avenue and Main Street should be the primary corridors for expanded Q-Line transit service in Downtown. To better accommodate transit service, Main Street should be converted from one-way to two-way between Douglas and Murdock, complemented by pedestrian-oriented streetscaping amenities and enhanced pedestrian crossings. Douglas should also receive streetscaping amenities and pedestrian crossing improvements to improve walkable connections to and from transit stops. Synchronize signal timing to support efficient transit operations along both corridors.

A Bigger Role for the Q-Line



The plan recommends expanding the Q-Line to four routes in the near term (upper map) and six routes over the longer term (lower map). Increased days of service and hours of operation will help the system function more effectively to tie Downtown's disparate destinations together while supporting new development and jobs.

Buses to provide circulators and link Downtown activity centers

Expand the Q-Line in the near future from one 30–minute circuit to four linear routes focused on Douglas Avenue and Main Street. Extend service days and hours for all four routes. Over the longer term, add two additional routes that also focus on Douglas and connect to Old Town.

- **Q-Line Route 1** should operate Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to midnight and focus its service on Douglas, serving all of Downtown, Old Town, and the Delano district with a 10-minute headway between trips.
- **Q-Line Route 2** should primarily serve as a park-and-ride service to support events at INTRUST Bank Arena, the Century II Performing Arts and Convention Center, and Old Town and should operate six days a week from 5 p.m. to midnight, with Sunday service on event days as necessary.
- **Q-Line Route 3** should serve the governmental and office districts of Downtown, with service to Old Town on a route that focuses on Main Street and Douglas. The line should operate weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Q-Line Route 4** should serve the Museums on the River district, with a connection to Q-Line Route 1 in the Delano district. The line should operate from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.
- **Q-Line Route 5** would emphasize performing arts, hotel, dining and convention destinations; **Q6** would add the Commerce Street Arts District and Via Christi Hospital.

Conversion of one-way to two-way streets to facilitate multimodal Downtown travel

Several of Downtown's pedestrian-oriented streets should shift from one-way to two-way traffic to attract intra-Downtown travel. The conversions should include St. Francis, William, and English. Additionally, Main Street should be converted to two-way traffic between Douglas Ave. and Murdock Street to facilitate more efficient bus routing. Also consider the opportunity to convert First and Second streets from their a one-way couplet to two-way traffic on each. This would make Downtown navigation more convenient for drivers and cyclists, help keep traffic speeds moderate, and make the projected Q5 route easier to use by consolidating it on one street. Because the one-way couplet extends east through other neighborhoods, conversion to two-way traffic would require further study of the conversion's feasibility in those neighborhoods or creation of a new crossover point between one-and two-way traffic.

Traffic-signal synchronization

Improve signal timing throughout Downtown, coordinated with the street-type definitions show on the Street Hierarchy diagrams (next page). Time signals to allow consistent traffic movement wherever possible at moderate, pedestrian-friendly speeds at or below 25 mph. Coordinate traffic-management efforts to optimize flow at critical blocks and intersections.

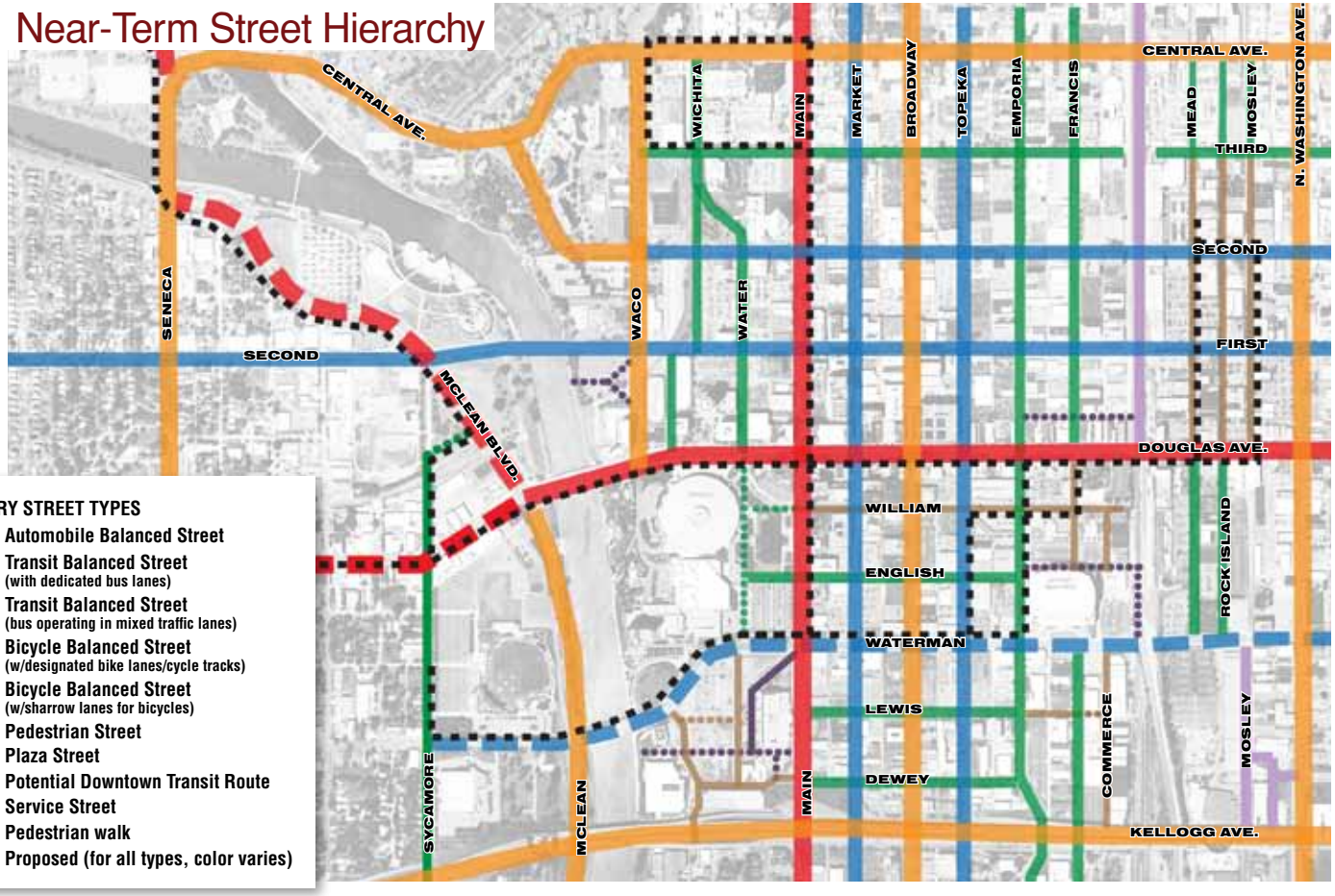
Addition of bike facilities

Dedicated bicycle lanes should be constructed on both an east-west corridor (the First-Second couplet) and a north-south corridor (the Market-Topeka Ave. couplet) through Downtown. Install "share the road" bicycle markings and signage on Waterman.

Addition of pedestrian safety and comfort features
Implement the *Downtown Wichita Streetscape Design Guidelines* on each of the street-improvement projects to install pedestrian safety and comfort features needed to improve the Downtown walking, bicycle, and transit environments. These improvements are needed to establish a walkable Downtown environment, a key to improving Downtown livability and unlocking Downtown's redevelopment potential. Tailor pedestrian safety and comfort features to the primary transportation mode of the street and the predominant adjacent land use, as outlined in the *Implementation Model of the Streetscape Design Guidelines.* These features include improved sidewalks, street trees, lighting, benches, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, and bus shelters. Pedestrian crossings

A strategic mix of street types over the near term (this page) and long term (facing page) will help rebalance Downtown's street network, allowing it to better accommodate more kinds of traffic—pedestrians, bicycles, transit, and cars.

Near-Term Street Hierarchy

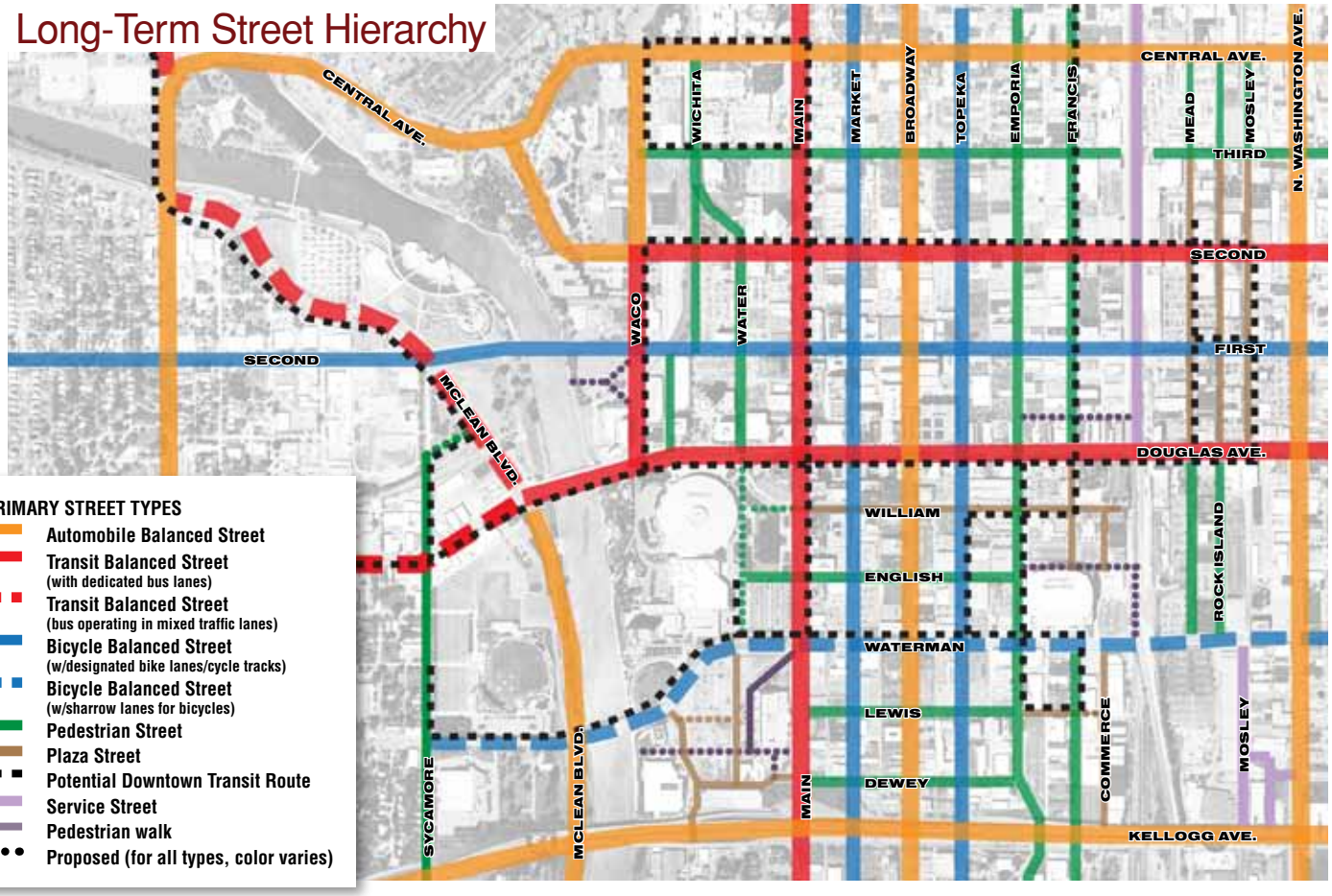


should use curb extensions, signage, and other traffic-calming measures and should be installed approximately every 1/8th mile along all street corridors.

Green Streets built into street design

"Best management practices" alternative stormwater-handling techniques should be included as pilot projects with street improvements where they are determined to be most feasible and where results can be measured to assess the best approach to broader future application. Such practices typically utilize planted areas to help clean and retain stormwater and allow it to infiltrate into the ground, reducing peak impacts on storm sewers, the Arkansas River, and its tributaries.

Long-Term Street Hierarchy



Connecting to Existing Infrastructure

Reuse wide streets with low volumes.

Currently, Downtown streets provide two or three travel lanes in a single direction, which can easily support 20,000-30,000 vehicular trips per day. Actual traffic volumes, however, do not exceed 15,000 trips per day on any segment, and most daily volumes are less than 10,000. Even with increased traffic from projected redevelopment, enough right-of-way width exists for streets to expand lanes to accommodate transit and bicycle service and to improve the pedestrian environment with wider sidewalks and crossing upgrades. The near- and longer-term street hierarchy diagrams at left indicate how design of different streets should be refined to be more effective at accommodating certain transportation modes, such as transit or cycling. Street types correspond to those identified in the 2010 *Downtown Wichita Streetscape Design Guidelines*.

Optimize connections to freeways, bridges, river, and trail system.

Downtown streets primarily align in a grid pattern that links Downtown to the region with many alternative routes. Freeways, rail lines, and the river have limited crossings points, so the streets that cross these barriers have been identified to support automobile, transit, and bicycle traffic with primary routes for each mode being designated. The remainder of Downtown streets—which support intra-Downtown traffic rather than through-traffic—have been designated to support pedestrian travel and vehicle parking alongside their more modest vehicular traffic.

Coordinating Downtown and Regional Transporation Needs

A list of Web links to each of the plans discussed in this section appears on page 5.20.

Implementing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2035

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2035 for the Wichita Area MPO (WAMPO) serves as the blueprint for all regionally significant transportation projects and activities through 2035. It is a 25-year strategic plan for maintaining and improving mobility within and through the region. It provides a framework for creating a multimodal transportation system for the region that is safe, efficient,

accessible, and affordable. Improvements proposed for Downtown under the MTP will significantly enlarge transportation choices in the core area of the region by expanding access to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Additionally, the improvements focus on improving safety, especially in the pedestrian environment—which is most in need of improvement Downtown—as well as on increasing the Downtown's accessibility to the region by providing for multiple modes of travel for intra-Downtown trips. Improving access to transit and for bicycles and pedestrians will make more affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation options available Downtown.

Implement Visioneering Wichita

Visioneering Wichita is a plan and associated community movement intended to create a future for greater Wichita, with specific goals and strategies that address regional growth and development, retaining young people, job growth, income growth, education, family stability, Downtown development, arts, recreation, racial diversity, opportunity and harmony, and leadership. Visioneering Wichita envisions transforming Downtown, the Museum District, Delano and surrounding commercial and residential neighborhoods to a regional destination for residents, businesses, and visitors. The proposed Downtown transportation improvements are essential to unlocking this vision.

Implement Wichita Travels: Transit Vision for Greater Wichita

The *Wichita Travels: Transit Vision* lays out a vision for the development of transit services in Wichita that stresses easy-to-use routes, connections to other communities, and bus rapid transit (BRT) on Douglas Avenue. These proposed transportation improvements could make this future vision concrete by providing easy-to-use transit routes in Downtown and paying careful attention to a population that currently does not use transit. Easy-to-use routes would help these users become more accustomed to using transit services. As regional transit system improvements outlined in the vision—which advocates changing from a hub-and-spoke system to a more grid-like system—take hold, increased transit ridership should occur throughout the region.

Additionally, the proposed improvements could provide a permanent and very recognizable transit presence along Douglas in Downtown, facilitating future implementation of bus rapid transit service along this corridor.

Implement the Regional Pathway System Plan

The *Regional Pathway System Plan* describes a backbone system that connects existing and future bicycle/pedestrian facilities throughout the WAMPO planning area. This plan is a cooperative effort and includes extensive participation by various stakeholders, including WAMPO, federal, state, and transit agency representatives.

The plan provides an assessment of existing bicycle/pedestrian facilities and identifies, prioritizes, and recommends future connecting links for use by cyclists and pedestrians. Proposed dedicated on-street bicycle lanes, "share the road" signage and

Web Links to Key Regional Planning Initiatives

SUPPORTING PLANNING DOCUMENTS	
Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2035	www.wampoks.org/Publications/Metropolitan+Transportation+Plan+2035.htm
Visioneering Wichita	www.visioneeringwichita.com/downloads/Vision_document_May_2009.pdf
Wichita Travels: Transit Vision for the Greater Wichita Area	www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Transit/Wichita+Regional+Transit+Plan.htm
Regional Pathway System Plan	www.wampoks.org/IconMenu/Pathways.htm
Downtown Wichita Streetscape Design Guidelines	www.wichita.gov/NR/rdonlyres/37A8A9B2-D9F0-4850-A999-D89BFD0F5079/62195/ WichitaStreetscape DesignGuidelinesWebVersionlinked.pdf
Douglas Design District Streetscape Improvement Plan	www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Planning/AP/Comprehensive/DouglasDesignDistrictPlan.htm
The Master Plan for Wichita's City Center	www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Planning/AP/NR/Downtown/DwntwnMstrPlan.htm

markings, and pedestrian improvements in Downtown would connect with the existing pathway system along both the Arkansas River and I-135 corridors.

Implement the Downtown Wichita Streetscape Design Guidelines

The *Downtown Wichita Streetscape Design Guidelines* serve one basic purpose—to help improve the sense of place in Downtown. The cornerstone of the *Streetscape Design Guidelines* is an innovative implementation model that integrates context-based design into Downtown streets. Until now, the Downtown streetscape has largely been designed on a project-by-project basis, with few consistent design features. These guidelines provide a set of cohesive design principles for future street improvements. As a result, future projects could enhance the beauty of Downtown while improving Downtown mobility for all users of the street network. These guidelines should guide the design of all of the streetscaping improvements included in the Transportation Framework.

STRATEGIC PUBLIC PARKING INFRASTRUCTURE

The concentrated development pattern that best takes advantage of Downtown's use mix and walkable setting demands efficient use of land devoted to parking. This means a need for multilevel parking structures on most central blocks, with surface parking a possibility on some more peripheral blocks. Unfortunately, paying for parking structures presents a challenge. Analysis of development economics for new and rehabilitated buildings Downtown determined that it is difficult or impossible for many market-based development projects to pay for the cost of the structured parking they need. In addition, many older office buildings suffer high vacancy rates because they lack their own parking supply or one adjacent to their block, a key requirement for most new office or residential use.

Shared public parking structures offer a proven and cost-effective solution to these challenges. Different Downtown uses with different demand patterns can use the same spaces at different times of the day—for instance, a space might serve a resident or hotel guest at night but serve an office worker or retail shopper by day. This makes efficient use of the significant land and financial investment needed to provide parking. It also works well with the mix of uses—including housing and commercial—recommended throughout Downtown to help keep it active every day of the week. Wichita's investment in two parking structures in Old Town demonstrates this approach. Parking spaces in these structures have supported significant amounts of new mixed-use development. Business user fees for spaces and property tax revenues (through a tax-increment financing mechanism) pay for the parking investment over time, and in time will more than cover its cost. The INTRUST Bank Arena parking strategy similarly makes use of shared parking spaces, most of them surface spaces. The City contracts with private parking-lot owners to use spaces for evening events at the arena after they are vacated by daytime commercial users. This has enabled thousands of people to enjoy events at the arena with little public investment needed for new parking infrastructure.

To maintain consistency with this plan's recommendation that public investment in parking extend only to spaces offered for public use—not spaces dedicated to individual private users—the Downtown parking and development program assumes that developers of ownership housing (condominiums) provide parking facilities for the units they develop, while public parking supports rental housing, office, retail, hotel and other uses. The housing market in places like Downtown Wichita typically favors a dedicated parking space (or spaces) for each condominium, but can tolerate rental units that rely on shared public facilities. If uses that share parking eventually require a dedicated supply (an example might involve conversion of rental housing to condominiums), shared public spaces may be converted to dedicated parking if the developer funds replacement public spaces elsewhere.

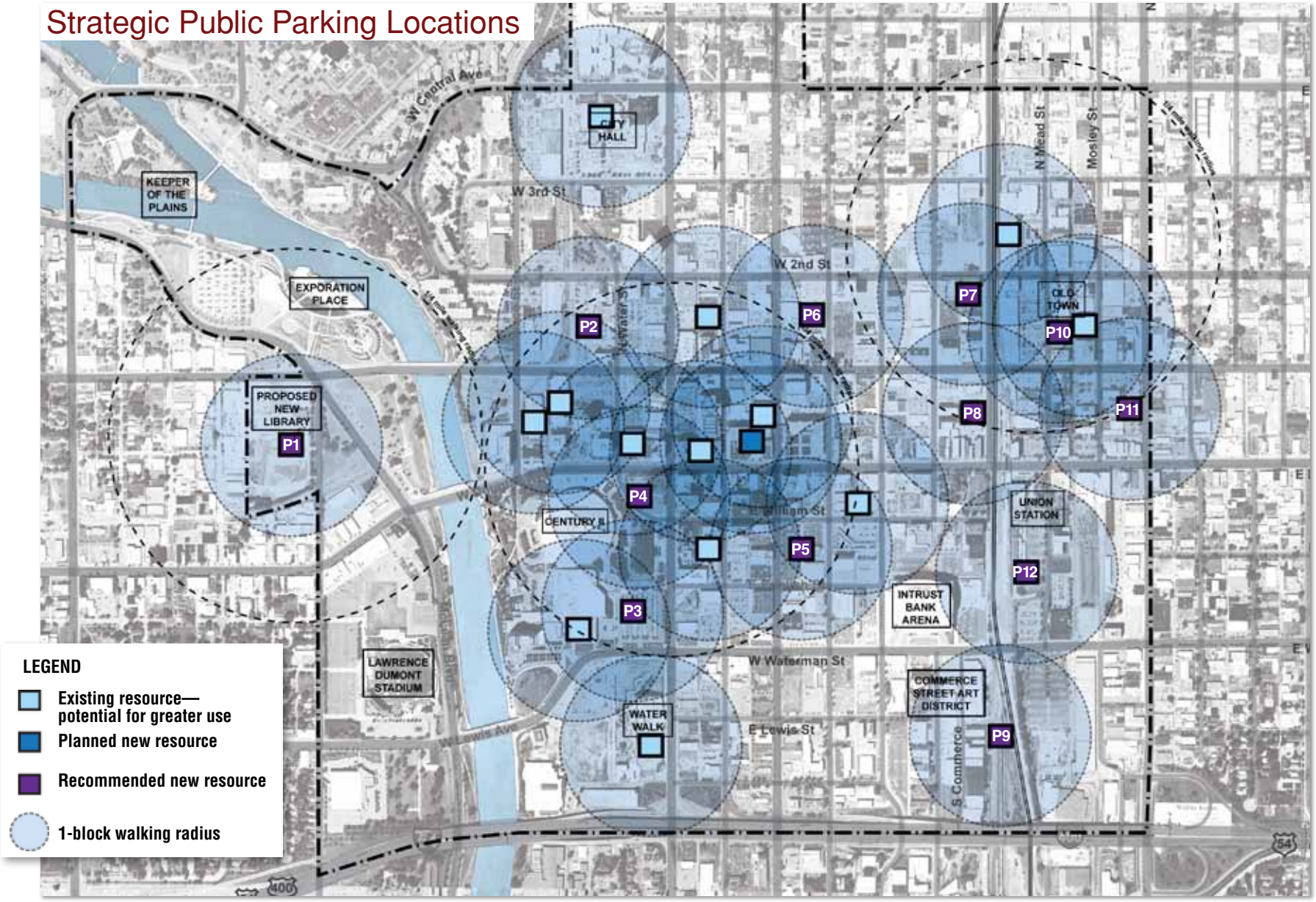
Good management is key to successful shared-parking strategies like these. The City's 2009 *Downtown Parking and Mobility Management Plan* provides the right guidance for this management. The City should utilize this plan to

gradually expand its scope of Downtown parking management to include additional public and private locations. This will support new development projects on an ongoing basis.

As higher-density mixed-use development proceeds Downtown, each project will require additional parking for its contained uses as well as to replace any surface parking that may have existed on the site prior to redevelopment. This plan suggests 12 tentative strategic locations to consider for new public parking that would support new development. The strategic locations are tentative in that the parking generally need not be built until specific privately-sponsored development activities that could use it are announced. At that time, public investment can create the new shared parking facilities as the private development occurs. Most suggested sites would contain parking structures, although several sites are appropriate for surface parking over the near and/or long term. Not all of the suggested parking locations would be needed to accommodate anticipated development over the next 10 to 15 years. Locations should be chosen where site acquisition is most feasible and private development is most intensive. On-street parking, walkability improvements, enhanced transit, added biking facilities, and transportation-demand management should be employed in parallel to minimize the quantity of new public parking spaces needed.

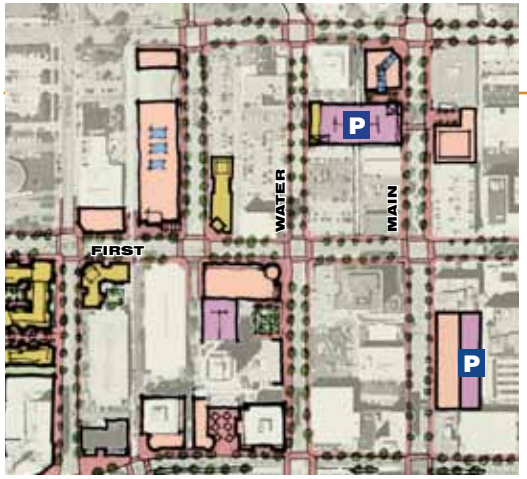
Each of the 12 strategic parking locations shown on the map is described in more detail on the next few pages. Important considerations include each site's potential parking capacity, the anticipated mix of uses that would rely on the parking, and design. A complementary use mix is especially important to maximize the opportunity for shared use of spaces and to encourage Downtown activity on weekdays, at night, and on weekends. Some locations are very specific, given the presence of existing publicly-owned land that could be used for parking facilities. Others are more general, to offer flexibility in selection and acquisition of privately-owned site(s) for a facility. The City should move quickly to develop concept plans, a program, and financing mechanisms for each site so that private developers can be made aware of the intent to provide parking.

Strategic Public Parking Locations



P1: Delano River Edge

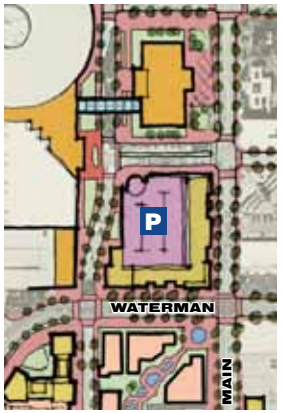
SUGGESTED LOCATION	Planned new library site; new on-street parking on McLean Boulevard at non-peak travel times
CAPACITY	• 300-450 surface spaces on library site • Up to 100 on-street spaces
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Supports library parking needs, with convenient access to/from all city neighborhoods. • Uses capacity beyond that needed by the library to provide public parking for access to riverfront park areas, events and potential retail or restaurants. • Introduces parking in curbside lanes of McLean between First and Douglas at off-peak travel times to expand convenient public parking access to the library and river edge, and to help moderate traffic speeds.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• Library functions as planned and programmed • As capacity allows, additional public parking for uses, including park and plaza use, boating, biking, new restaurant(s)
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Construct Library and its parking prior to other new development to determine typical library use patterns and potential capacity to serve other uses. Ensure convenient vehicular access from all major directions. Accommodate significant bike parking to take advantage of access from nearby multi-use paths and on-street bike lanes.



P2: Core/Water Street Area*

SUGGESTED LOCATION	Location may vary according to best opportunity (no specific publicly owned site available). Plan suggests potential sites on Main north and south of First.
CAPACITY	• 350-600 spaces in structure on block bounded by First/Water/Second/Main • 300-500 spaces in structure on east side of Main between First and Douglas, in one or two bays
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Adds mixed-use development capacity in this important central area, accommodating parking displaced from redeveloped parking lots. • Enables uses like housing that can add activity and cost-effectively share parking resources outside of typical business hours.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	450 spaces could serve 100,000sf office/retail and 100-150 housing units
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Minimize parking-structure visibility along streets, especially Main, First and Second. Include ground-floor retail or other active uses, especially along Main, First and Second. For site south of First, consider limiting parking to one bay (reached via bridges to existing INTRUST Bank garage) to enable development of commercial or residential space along Main Street frontage.

**roughly bounded by Wichita/Second/Market/Douglas*

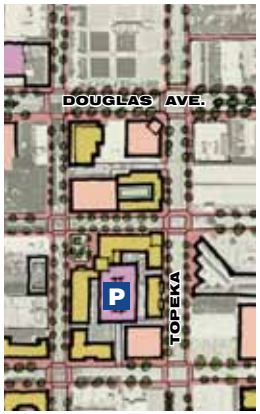


P3: Century II

SUGGESTED LOCATION	New parking structure on existing publicly-owned Century II parking lot at Waterman and Main
CAPACITY	450-750 spaces in structure
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Enables expansion of Century II's convention, arts and/or hotel facilities. • Supports additional uses on surrounding blocks to the extent capacity is available.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• Convention center expansion • 200 spaces could accommodate about 250 hotel rooms • 200 spaces could accommodate about 60,000sf office or retail
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Lining parking structure with housing or other occupied building space along Main and Waterman is strongly recommended to make these inviting, safe walking streets.

P4: Water/Douglas/Main/William Block

SUGGESTED LOCATION	City-owned parking lot and additional area created by reconfiguration of William and Water streets into a T intersection
CAPACITY	300-450 spaces in structure
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Enables re-use of the Century Building by providing convenient adjacent parking. • Enables significant new commercial hotel or office development on the block. • Supplements Century II parking capacity.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• 275 spaces could accommodate 250 new hotel rooms. • 100 spaces could accommodate 90 housing units in the Century Building.
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Minimize parking-structure visibility along streets. Incorporate ground-floor retail or other active use along Main and Water as priorities, and along William as possible. Concept assumes architectural integration of the parking structure into the adjacent hotel building.



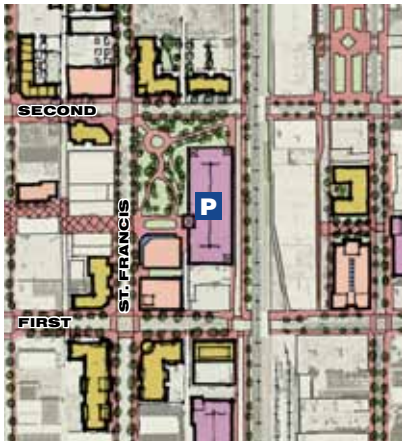
P5: Arena

SUGGESTED LOCATION	City-owned Allis Hotel site at English/Broadway/William/Topeka. Alternatively, include parking on the Broadway/Douglas/Topeka/William block.
CAPACITY	• 300-450 spaces in structure on former Allis Hotel site • Approximately 200 spaces could serve existing state office building needs and Arena events
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Enables re-use of the Douglas and/or Henry's buildings by providing convenient parking. • Continues to accommodate existing state office building parking on the Allis site. • Enables additional new mixed-use development in the Arena district.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• 200 more spaces could accommodate 160–200 more housing units (116 rehab units assumed in Douglas Building) as well as 50,000sf office or retail. • Continues to offer parking for Arena events.
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Locating structured parking at the center of the block, straddling the alley, is strongly encouraged, so the structure can be wrapped with housing or other uses that contribute to street walkability.

P6: Core/Topeka Street Area*

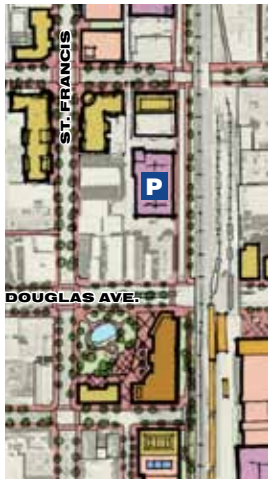
SUGGESTED LOCATION	Surface lot on Broadway/Second/Topeka/First block, suggested due to proximity to Orpheum Theatre and Scottish Rite.
CAPACITY	300-450 spaces in structure
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Add mixed-use development capacity in this important central area, accommodating parking displaced from redeveloped parking lots. • Enable uses like housing that can add activity and cost-effectively share parking resources outside of typical business hours. • Add convenient parking for performances at the Orpheum, Scottish Rite and potential new venues.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	400 spaces could accommodate 250 housing units, 60,000sf office/retail, and performing arts events.
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Wrap parking structure with housing along streets to maximize walkability. Designing the structure to straddle the midblock alley would help minimize its frontage on streets.

**roughly bounded by Market/Second/Emporia/First*



P7: Old Town West

SUGGESTED LOCATION	County-owned Coleman factory site (acquired with specific goal of providing parking and park space)
CAPACITY	Near-term surface parking: 200-300 spaces
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Enable mixed-use redevelopment on numerous vacant lots on surrounding blocks • Supplement existing Old Town parking capacity to enable more mixed-use development there. • Provides parking to support Arena events.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• Long-term structured parking: 400-700 spaces • 400 spaces could serve a mix of 250 housing units and 60,000sf or more office/retail space as well as Arena events.
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Locate parking toward railroad side of site to maximize space for parks and potential building development along Second and St. Francis streets. Build near-term surface parking economically to enable longer-term replacement with structured parking. Enhance appearance of longer-term structured parking with architectural façade, trees and other vegetation.



P8: Douglas/Historic Corridor*

SUGGESTED LOCATION	Surface parking and other vacant sites on St. Francis/ First/Santa Fe/Douglas block suggested (not publicly owned)
CAPACITY	100-150 surface spaces or 250-400 structured spaces
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	Enables additional mixed-use development around Naftzger Park and along St. Francis. Could provide valet and self-park capacity for a new hotel adjacent to the park.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	250 spaces could accommodate a mix of 150 hotel rooms and 50,000sf office or retail space
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Locate parking toward Santa Fe street to minimize its direct visibility from St. Francis. Provide clear wayfinding to and from parking, designed to accommodate both pedestrians and vehicles.

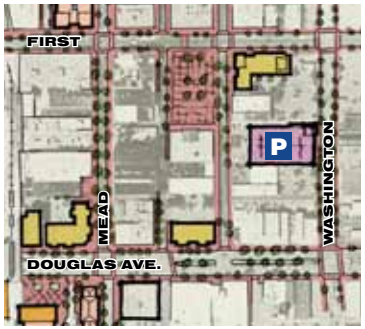
** roughly bounded by William/Emporia/First/Santa Fe*

P9: Commerce Street Arts District

SUGGESTED LOCATION	Surface parking on portions of railyard site east of Commerce Street (consider City purchase of site)
CAPACITY	• 200-350 surface spaces
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Enables more intensive use and infill development on Commerce at St. Francis Streets. • Supplements Arena parking capacity. • Adds service access to south and east. • Accommodates a new recreational path.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	150 spaces could accommodate a mix of 100 housing units and 25,000sf of office, light industrial or retail space.
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Provide lighting for nighttime safety, trees for daytime shade. Provide convenient walking connections to Commerce and Waterman. Reserve space for a recreational path parallel to railroad embankment. Design space to accommodate periodic arts-oriented outdoor events.

P10: Old Town/Mead

SUGGESTED LOCATION	City public parking lot between Mead and Rock Island Streets
CAPACITY	225-400 spaces in structure
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Expands mixed-use infill development capacity in Old Town and Old Town South. • Accommodates existing public spaces in Douglas/ Mead and Douglas/Mosley lots to allow infill development.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• Could replace some or all of roughly 225 spaces in the Airbus parking lot to enable higher-value redevelopment there. • 250 spaces could support a mix of approximately 100-150 dwelling units and 50,000-75,000sf of office or retail or retail space.
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Frontage along Mead should include ground-floor retail or other active pedestrian-oriented use. Coordinate access and management with existing public parking structure on the Rock Island/Mosley site.



P11: Old Town/Washington

SUGGESTED LOCATION	Block bounded by Washington, Douglas, Mosley, First, within easy walking distance of Douglas and easily accessible by car from Washington.
CAPACITY	• 300-500 spaces in structure
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Enables mixed-use redevelopment on numerous vacant lots on surrounding blocks • Supplements existing Old Town parking capacity to enable more mixed-use development there
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• 120 spaces replacing existing spaces at Douglas lots. • 100–120 net new spaces accommodates housing and/or office and retail developed on Douglas/Mead and Douglas/Mosley lots. • 150+ spaces supporting 40,000-50,000sf of retail and/or office space.
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	If parking structure directly abuts Mosley or Washington, frontage should not exceed 120' (two parking bays) and should include ground-floor retail or another active pedestrian-oriented use.

P12: Union Station

SUGGESTED LOCATION	South of existing Union Station building, preferably adjacent to rail embankment to leave room for additional development along South Mead. May include existing surface parking at ground and/or rail embankment levels, shared with Union Station uses, in the near term and/or to supplement an eventual parking structure .
CAPACITY	• 450-750 spaces in structure
HOW IT SUPPORTS THE MASTER PLAN	• Expands re-use capacity of existing Union Station and adjacent historic buildings. • Increases mixed-use development capacity on the Union Station site, in Old Town South, and in Old Town. • Supplements parking for the Arena and Commerce Street Arts District.
SCENARIO FOR SUPPORTED USES *(assumes some sharing of parking spaces among uses with different peak schedules)*	• Approximately 100 additional existing surface spaces possible over short and long terms • 60,000sf of rehab and 85,000sf of new office and/or retail space • 150 new hotel rooms
DESIGN, SITING AND/OR TIMING CONSIDERATIONS	Locate parking to allow additional new development along South Mead. Ensure convenient, well-lit walking access to the parking from Douglas to make it useful to development along Douglas. Convenient, well-lit walking access from Waterman is also desirable so that parking can serve Arena events and the Commerce Street Arts district.

Business Plan

Downtowns across the country are demonstrating their power as engines of economic growth and quality of life. Downtown Wichita is poised to build on its demonstrated performance as such an engine. However, development in Downtown often poses initial development costs that can be hard to address with mechanisms like special assessment districts that have funded suburban infrastructure. This can be a challenge to developers. Some of the principal cost barriers preventing developers from investing in Downtown Wichita in recent years have resulted from:

- difficulty providing convenient parking, due to lack of space on the development site and/or the high cost of building space-efficient structured parking
- old buildings in need of repair and adaptive re-use
- poor site configuration and complex construction issues
- poor soil conditions, brownfields
- frequent lack of direct comparables sought by potential lenders; many projects are not "commodity-type" investments
- land-acquisition and land-lease issues

Experience in other downtowns across the U.S. shows there is an important role for the City to play in helping overcome such obstacles to private investment, thus unlocking opportunity for compelling economic returns. Successful projects in other downtowns reveal these consistent themes:

- **A combination of public and private investment is typical in initial revitalization efforts.** In many cases, property owners and developers can't by themselves invest in their property to tap its optimum market value.
- **A clear plan supported with consensus on priorities is very important.** A downtown master plan allows developers to invest in a predictable context and gives the city clear standards and objectives by which to measure development quality.
- **It is rarely a single incentive that makes a project work; typically, a bundle of incentives is necessary.** See the Development Finance Toolbox section below.
- **Public/private cooperation and commitment are necessary.** The public and private sector each have unique roles to play.

The City now has the opportunity to refine its set of Downtown development incentives so they can be as effective as its suburban ones. The results can be significant: on a per-square-foot basis, Downtown properties in the Self-Supporting Municipal Improvement District—Downtown's traditional business district—contribute to Wichita's tax base at five times the rate of average properties elsewhere in the city, due to Downtown's inherent benefits to property value. The potential real estate value of the next ten years' worth of market-based development—on the order of $500 million—is more than four times the cost of key public infrastructure investments that this plan recommends as development incentives, such as public parking structures and parks. The following policy recommendations will enable the City to treat decisions on why, when, where, and how it invests in Downtown as business decisions. The recommendations offer guidance and objective measures for targeting public

investment to earn strong returns isn the form of new private investment and community benefits.

A Prudent Public Investment Policy Designed to Unlock Private Investment

These policy guidelines can maximize Wichita's return on public investment—using public funds sparingly to remove the obstacles to private-sector investment in high-value development.

Inviting Initiative

The business plan guides prudent public investment to invite entrepreneurial initiatives by a variety of people.

- A **Downtown Development Go-To Center** will provide developers and property owners information on market opportunity, financing sources, project approval criteria, potential partnerships and other topics to encourage successful projects.
- Households and businesses seeking locations in easy walking distance of stores and parks will have **a choice of compelling addresses** offering varied building formats, neighborhood characters, and costs.
- **The Downtown Visitors Amenity Plan** will make it easy for visitors to get to know all downtown Wichita has to offer.
- **"Complete Streets"** that are walkable and green will offer more property owners opportunity to capture the enhanced value of walkable development.
- A **targeted retail recruitment** program will help match businesses and property owners in the most advantageous locations.
- **Communicating what downtown has to offer** will make it a more attractive option for young professionals and other workforce from the region and elsewhere.
- **Investing in public parking structures** will significantly expand the economic potential of existing properties that lack parking and options for locating new development.
- **Setting clear criteria for developers and projects** that seek public financial assistance will enable developers to move more efficiently and successfully from concept to ribbon-cutting.

1. **Target investments to support market-driven development interest.** Chapter 2, A New Era of Opportunity, details the significant market-driven development opportunities in Downtown Wichita.
2. **Make the most of existing public investment.** "Connect the dots" Downtown by targeting walkable development along corridors like Douglas Avenue that link existing destinations. Encourage development in areas near the arena and Old Town where investment in public entertainment destinations, parking, parks and brownfields remediation has stimulated private investment and will continue to do so.
3. **"Build it as they come," not "Build it and hope they will come."** Pace incremental public-sector investments to related private-sector development. While some modest initial investments will be needed to "set the table" for development—such as updating zoning regulations and conducting detailed plans for specific Downtown places like the convention center and the Commerce Street Arts District—more significant investments in infrastructure like public parking should only happen in conjunction with actual private development projects as they move forward. Transit improvements can similarly be made in a series of steps—improving stops, providing more service information, extending service hours, adding routes–rather than requiring large one-time investments. See action strategies 5 and 6 for more detail.
4. **Only make public investments that bring lasting public benefits like parks or public parking**—not for privately-used parking. Do not pay for privately-used parking or other things the public can't directly use.
5. **Target investments to enable many people to benefit and invest further.** See the sidebar for ways the master plan opens the door to individual actions.

6. **Bring clarity and predictability to the process of applying for and administering public incentives for Downtown development.** Establish clear eligibility criteria for developers—addressing experience, expertise and financial capability—and for projects—addressing location, uses and design that encourage further private investment and overall vitality in Downtown. See below, and action strategy 8, for more detail.

EXHIBIT 5-2

Principal Development Finance Incentives and Their Most Appropriate Applications Downtown

All of these incentives are available through existing programs except the low-interest loan pools, which this plan recommends establishing.

TOOL	SOURCE	APPLICATION
Historic preservation tax credits	State/federal	Adaptive reuse of historic buildings
Low-income housing tax credits	State/federal	Housing developments incorporating low- and mixed-income households
New Market Tax Credits	Federal	Developments that include a commercial component (office, hotel, retail, light industrial)
Brownfield Grants	State/federal	Developments on brownfields sites
Planning funds, such as Livable City Grants and Community Challenge Grants	Federal	Planning initiatives
Transportation funds such as TIGER II grants	Federal	Transportation infrastructure
STAR bonds	State	Developments with significant sales or guest-tax revenue (mainly hotel, retail)
Capital investment	Local (city and/or county)	Public infrastructure (streets, utilities, parks)
Tax increment financing	Local (city and/or county)	Financing public parking, parks or other public infrastructure serving a variety of developments
Community improvement district (CID) financing	Local (city and/or county)	Developments with significant sales or guest tax revenue (mainly hotel, retail)
Façade loans/grants	Local (city)	Improvements to facades of existing buildings; retail business storefronts
Land	Local (city and county)	Developments on catalyst sites or other publicly-owned land; land may be provided at below-market price if the development meets defined standards of program, design, community benefit etc.
Low-interest loan pools (for housing and possibly retail)	Local (consortium of lending institutions)	Housing developments; potentially retail

Development Finance Incentive Toolbox

A variety of development-finance incentives have been established to supplement what commercial lenders offer. Exhibit 5-2 summarizes these tools. Many of these have been well-used in Wichita and elsewhere, and others are relatively new, but property owners and developers need better awareness of and access to the full range of incentive tools, as most projects end up utilizing several in combination. It's important to avoid focusing on any single tool as the primary one for a given project or for Downtown investment overall.

NEW CRITERIA FOR ADMINISTERING PUBLIC/ PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Because there is clear market interest in Downtown development, the City can afford to decide which proposed projects do or do not merit public incentives based on what the project can offer back to the public and its likelihood of successful execution. This plan thus proposes two sets of criteria for judging projects seeking incentives: one for the developer, and one for the project. The developer criteria would involve a point system: developers earning points above a certain threshold would qualify for consideration, and those with still higher point ratings could qualify for more incentive funding based on a lower debt-coverage ratio. The project criteria would include two levels. The first would include basic standards any project must meet for initial consideration, such as being located in one of the walkable-development focus areas identified in this plan. A second, optional set of project benefits that respond to master plan goals (such as providing land for a public park or public parking in an area where it is desired) could earn a project bonus points that translate into increased incentive amounts or priority consideration over other projects.

Recommended Criteria for Developers

1. Appropriate experience of the developer and design team

Urban development projects, especially those including multiple uses, are inherently complex in their design, financing, and construction. Developers experienced in these complexities are much more likely to deliver successful projects. Developers or property owners who lack sufficient experience may compensate by partnering with developers who have such experience. For instance, a property owner with retail expertise who wants to create a building including retail and housing may wish to partner with an experienced housing developer. Like the developer, those involved in designing the project also need expertise in the complexities of urban development projects.

***Criteria:** Minimum of 2-5 development projects completed by the developer and 2-5 development projects completed by the design team that fit one or more of these development types:*

- ***Urban development***
- ***Mixed-use development***
- ***Public/private development***
- ***Wichita/Kansas experience***

2. Financial Qualifications

A developer's financial qualifications are critical measures of the capacity and commitment to complete a project.

***Criteria:** Minimum "good standing" on existing loans and minimum of 10-20 percent equity in project based on the following submissions:*

- ***Financial statement of entity and/or principals***
- ***Lender commitments on the project***
- ***Existing loans and status***
- ***Equity contribution to the project, definition of equity and sources of equity (with commitment letters)***
- ***Lender testimonials on previous development projects (good standing)***

3. References of the Development Entity and/or Principals

Third-party references provide objective assessments of a developer's qualifications.

***Criteria:** Minimum 4-5 positive letters from lenders and municipal partners in development projects*

4. Public Sector Leverage/Business Deal

Is the project's financial proforma realistic? Does third-party market analysis confirm the marketability of the proposed program of uses? Will the project return compelling benefits to the community in the form of tax revenue or other considerations? Does the project really depend on public/private incentives? If so, the developer should submit an analysis indicating the project would be infeasible "but for" public/private incentives.

***Criteria**: Project program is in line with documented market opportunity; economic analysis demonstrates project's dependence on incentives; and analysis demonstrates positive community impacts, based on these submissions:*

- ***Market Analysis—The developer should submit independent market analysis addressing the project's proposed program, or refer to relevant, up-to-date market analysis on file at the Downtown Development Go-To Center (see action strategy 7a), with attention to:***
  - > ***product type***
  - > ***comparables and performance***
  - > ***projected rents/prices***
  - > ***projected absorption***
  - > ***economic analysis demonstrating need for gap financing***
  - > ***standard private investment returns***
  - > ***uses of public funding (must be public assets, not private)***
- ***Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis—The Economic Impact Model criteria established by the Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition (GWEDC) may be used to justify bonus points, such as for jobs creation, but it should not be used as the primary criterion for evaluating a project, as it does not address values such as a housing development's role in attracting target workforce or the benefits of clustering a critical mass of restaurants near each other.***

Recommended Criteria for Projects

1. Required elements, such as:

- Location in a walkable development focus area
- Land use(s) are in target locations defined by the master plan
- Promotes walkability:
  - > Significant amounts of ground-level window area promoting an interesting and safe walking

environment, and fitting with traditional contexts of retail storefronts
> Minimum height of two stories
> Provison of retail or other active uses at ground level where possible
> No addition of surface parking and no ground-level structured parking directly adjacent to sidewalks

2. **Optional elements support master plan goals, justifying additional incentive amounts or priority, such as:**
   - Participation in retail master lease program
   - Provision of land for public park or parking structure in a strategic location
   - Creation of a strategic walking connection
   - Provision of transit passes and/or participation in a transportation-demand management (TDM) program
   - Provision of additional regional economic development benefits, such as those described in the GWEDC Economic Impact Model

More detailed project criteria specific to each Downtown district are provided in the appendix.

6

Scenarios

Vision Plan

Illustrations in this section and the following District Framework section present realistic scenarios for the types, magnitudes and locations of potential building development and redevelopment over the next 10 to 15 years. Related improvements in streets and parks are also included. The illustrations should not be interpreted as prescriptions for specific locations, but rather as windows into possibilities, and guides to quality and character. The plan's framework sections on walkable development, green space, transportation, Downtown business plan and districts provide a set of policy guidelines for private development, but leave considerable flexibility for new projects to respond to unique market opportunities, locations, and the entrepreneurial thinking of individual developers, property owners, businesses, and other Downtown investors.

The vision scenario rests on analysis of market-based Downtown development potential, described in more detail below. It also reflects the unique opportunities offered by nine catalyst sites, also described in more detail below. The catalyst sites are publicly owned parcels and thus offer a higher level of control over the private development and public infrastructure improvements made there. Catalyst site descriptions indicate how they can be used most strategically to advance the overall goals of the master plan.

MARKET-BASED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Analyses of residential, office, retail, and hotel market demand in the study area were undertaken by nationally-recognized specialists as described in Chapter 2, New Era of Opportunity. Residential market analysis predicted demand over the coming 5 to 7 years, and the office and hotel analysis predicted demand for the coming 10 years. Retail analysis focused on the most viable categories of market opportunity, as well as retail recruitment and management strategy, but did not quantify potential retail development.

As this vision looks ahead to a longer time frame of up to 20 years, we have projected a continuation of market-based development opportunity at levels similar to those predicted for the next 5 to 7 and 10 years. These projections lack the tested methodology that determined the nearer-term predictions, but they represent reasonable and even conservative scenarios of demand continuing in the patterns that will drive nearer-term demand.

It is reasonable to assume that longer-term residential demand could continue at a similar or greater level than in the near term because the demographic trends forming the basis for predicted demand are expected to continue for the next 15 to 20 years. Market analyst Laurie Volk's experience shows that demand for walkable housing environments tends to accelerate over time. Because office development increasingly follows its target workforce, it is reasonable to assume that a growing

number of young professionals living in and near Downtown would help keep Downtown a desirable office location. Downtown should also continue to provide a solid market for hotel development as its amenities and accessibility to visitors improve, and as convention center and office development expand. Brookings Institution and University of Michigan real estate economist Christopher Leinberger anticipates the success of dense, walkable, mixed-use centers will increase demand further, based on an expanding appreciation for the quality and value of such centers, and on the continued decline in the proportion of households with children, which will approach 14% over the next 20 years.

Exhibit 5-2 summarizes projections for market-based housing, office and hotel development over the next 10–15 years. Retail development projections reflect approximate ground-floor building area available in priority retail locations. The development magnitudes in the table correspond to the potential building footprints shown in the illustrative vision plan on page 6.5.

EXHIBIT 5-2

Summary of projected development

USE	MARKET OPPORTUNITY	POTENTIAL SCENARIO
Housing	1,500 units (1.5 x 1,000 units in 5-7 years)	1,500–1,600 units (30% in rehabbed office or industrial buildings)
Retail	Focused in and around existing/expanded areas of concentration and walkability	125,000sf–175,000sf in targeted locations and niches
Office	220,000–480,000sf new class A space (greater walkability enables greater amounts)	400,000sf–480,000sf in 6-8 new buildings
Hotel	250-400 rooms in 2-3 hotels	350–475 rooms (one full-service hotel with convention center link; two smaller hotels, including Fairfield Inn)

ILLUSTRATIVE VISION PLAN

The illustrative vision plan applies projected market-based development opportunity to potential Downtown sites for redevelopment and new development. Several elements guide the placement of development in this scenario:

- **The master plan framework sections.** For instance, most development is located to reinforce walkable development focus areas and their central walking and transit corridors. Concentrations of development are also located to help reinforce the emergence of Downtown districts as distinct places.
- **Privately-owned sites with apparent redevelopment opportunity.** Existing buildings with historic or other value that yet remain vacant today were targeted with new market-based uses that fit their design, configuration, and location. Existing parking lots and other sites without buildings or with buildings of apparently low value were targeted as sites for new buildings. In some cases, ongoing conversations with property owners during the master plan process informed development scenarios. This development is all speculative, however; investments are ultimately at the discretion of individual property owners.
- **Catalyst sites.** Nine catalyst sites, described in further detail on the following pages, contain

combinations of market-based development, public parking, public parks and/or other investments that can have a beneficial effect on new development opportunities and the values of existing properties. These development scenarios reflect general recommendations for each site that are intended to facilitate the master plan vision, but they are subject to modification as specific projects are designed for each site.

District Framework

INTRODUCTION

The Master Plan outlines approximately 15 unique districts that work together to form Downtown. It is important to understand these districts as interdependent places that overlap one another to form a strong whole, rather than autonomous places with clear boundaries. The districts' important characteristics are their centers of place and identity, not their edges.

Generally, all the districts should incorporate a diverse mix of land uses, though some that are more predominantly residential in character might be more appropriately termed neighborhoods. Thinking about Downtown as being made up of recognizable component districts or neighborhoods is important for several reasons:

- Different areas have unique existing conditions of access, physical features, development history, land ownership patterns, adjacent land uses, and other factors that significantly affect potential development opportunities, challenges and character.

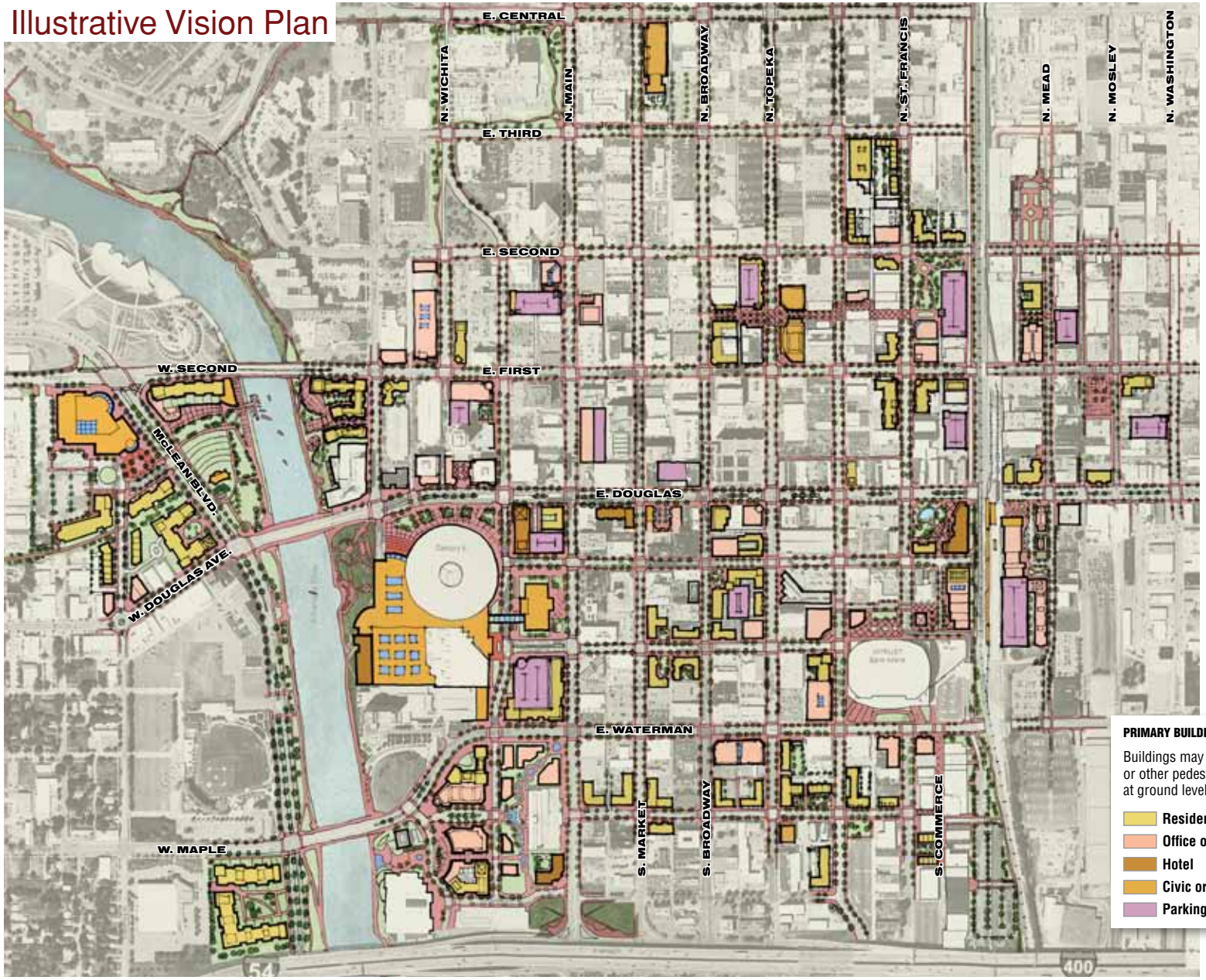
- These unique conditions mean that different districts will reflect different translations of the Vision Principles in their development. Some may fulfill certain principles more than they do others, but collectively all the districts should work together to fulfill all the principles.

- Most development opportunities in the study area are geared to walkable, mixed-use settings that depend on relatively dense concentrations of development activity in specific places that may be only a block or two in diameter—much smaller than the overall study area.

- Unique identity—cater to niche development markets, which is where Downtown's predominant opportunities are. Also reinforce sense of place and community by drawing together kindred spirits to live and work among each other. And by highlighting unique, attractive features of their physical context, such as the Arkansas River or concentrations of historic buildings.

Districts can help direct development phasing in ways that maximize the benefit of development at every stage. Development will unfold over years in pace with market absorption. While property owners and developers will have significant discretion in the timing and location of development around Downtown, new walkable mixed-use development will benefit from being concentrated in certain areas to establish "critical mass" of place, activity and infrastructure. Districts centered around walkable focus areas suggest the prime areas to direct this critical mass.

Illustrative Vision Plan



Arkansas River

The region's signature destination for cultural and recreational activities, distinguished by world-class architecture and the daily presence of Downtown residents and workers

District Overview

People in Wichita consistently point to the Arkansas River (and the Little Arkansas) as its most distinguishing feature. Native American settlements around the rivers' confluence, and later the rivers' role in determining the route of the Chisholm Trail, placed Wichita where it is. Today, Downtown's location on the river makes Wichita a "river city" in a grand tradition of other river cities like St. Louis, Louisville, Chattanooga, and Baton Rouge.

Wichita's impressive collection of cultural institutions (the Museums on the River, Keeper of the Plains, Exploration Place, and the planned new Central Library) and sports venues (Lawrence-Dumont Stadium and the Ice Arena) as well as events like Riverfest regularly draw people to celebrate the river setting. Still, the river offers much more untapped potential as a center of community life, identity and prosperity. The Arkansas River District and its own "string of pearls"—prominent community destinations—should capture this potential through a focus on key themes:

Key Themes

- **Attract people to the riverfront daily with a mix of nearby uses.** It isn't enough to bring people to the river corridor occasionally for sports events, museum visits and festivals. Many people should be present to enjoy the river setting throughout the day and week. A greater mix of activities, with better access and view connections to the river, would accomplish this. Existing development along the river—Exploration Place, the Broadview Hotel, Century II, and WaterWalk—should improve these connections through their architecture and activities. Ongoing renovation of the Hyatt, which is re-orienting dining spaces and lobbies toward the river, and renovation of the Broadview, which will add park landscaping, provide excellent models and momentum. New development opportunities, such as the lot at First and Waco streets,

WaterWalk, and the planned new library, offer an important opportunity to introduce a significant amount of housing along the river, promoting its emergence as another distinctive Downtown residential neighborhood. These sites could include river-oriented restaurants as well. Recreation activities should also draw more people as described below.

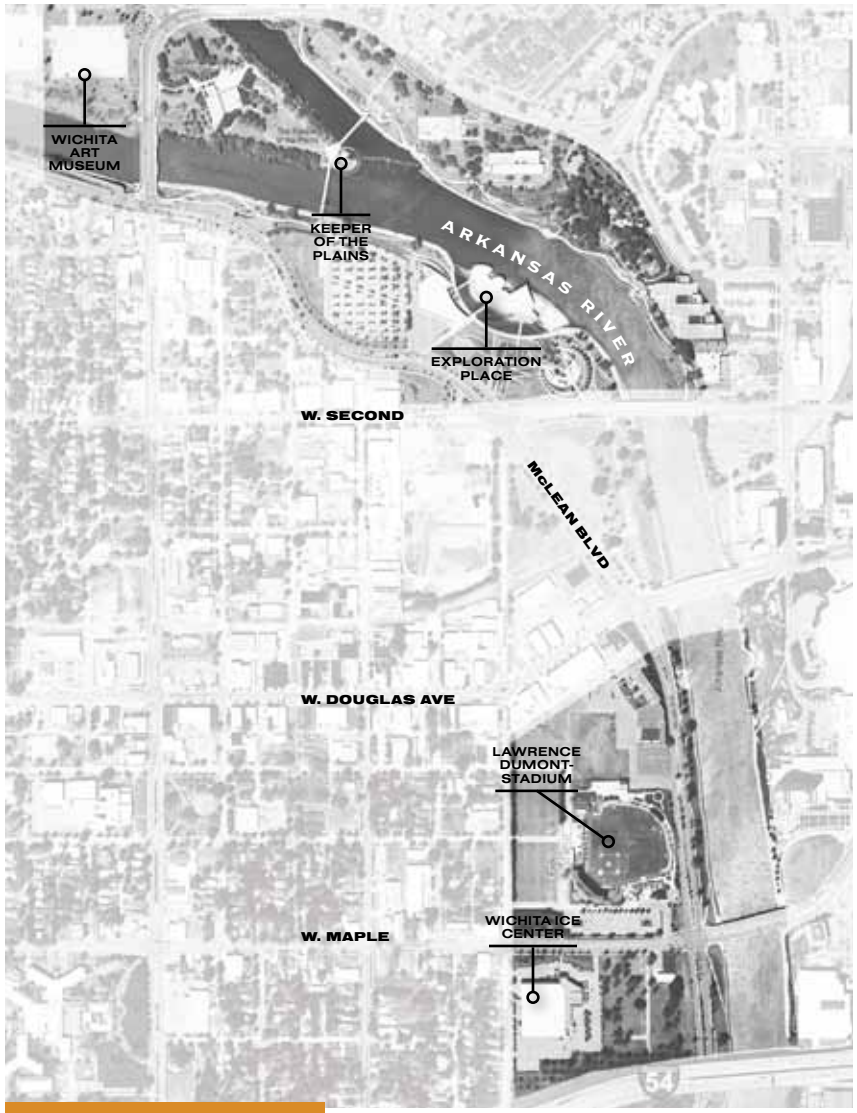
- **Reinforce the museum/river "String of Pearls" destination district.** The collection of cultural and sports institutions along river Downtown is the richest in Kansas—a destination for visitors from around the state and beyond, an important attraction for people moving to Wichita, and a daily amenity for people in and near Wichita. These institutions, while successful, would benefit from a higher profile that attracts more visitors more frequently. Actions that would help this include reinforcing joint branding and advertising of the existing Museums on the River group and other String of Pearls destinations, improving access with better walking and transit connections, and continuing the tradition of landmark architecture through the design of the new Central Library.

- **Enable more recreation on and along the river.** Modest improvements in river corridor access and facilities could take better advantage of existing park infrastructure, dramatically expanding the district's potential as a community park and recreation destination. Improve and add pedestrian connections to riverfront paths at

The Opportunity in The District

Today

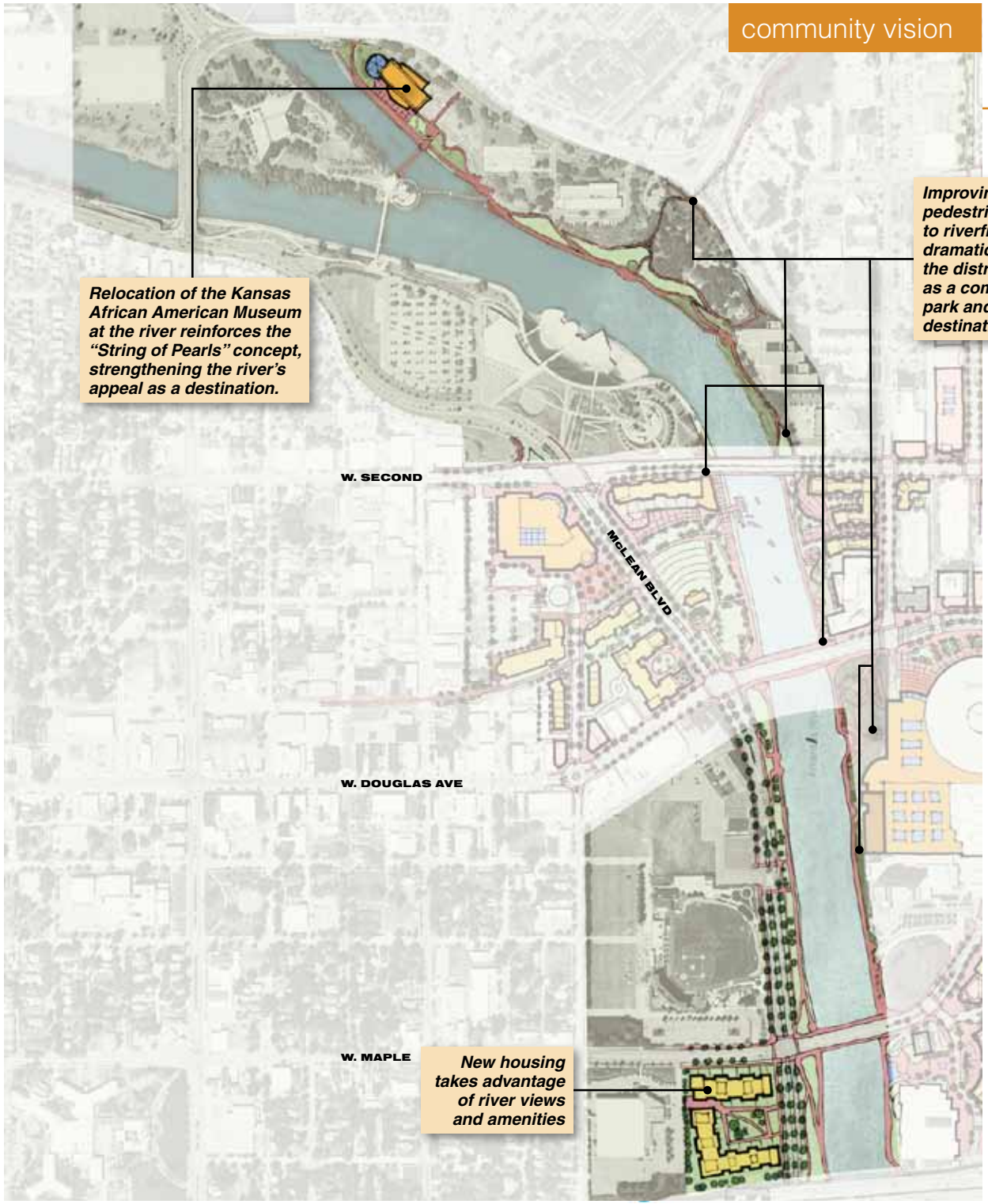
Opportunity: *This precedent from Chattanooga, Tennessee, connects people to the Tennessee River with generous stairs, seating, and fountains. An adjacent aquarium, museums, housing, restaurant district, recreational path, and boating facilities keep this place active with locals and visitors throughout the day and week.*



existing conditions

locations like First Street, Douglas Avenue, and other places identified in the diagram on the facing page. The community's tradition of boating on the river—today sustained by the WSU crew team but few others—should be re-established by creating a boathouse on the river that can provide needed new facilities for WSU crew as well as public boat rentals. Periodic excursion boats and/or water taxis during public events would further expand public opportunity to enjoy being on the water. A bike rental facility, potentially combined with the public boat facility, would enable more people to take advantage of the river's long and beautiful recreational paths. Continue to host public concerts, festivals and other events in park areas along the river to reinforce its importance as a regional community destination. Ongoing introduction of shrubs and other plantings along the river edge, and removal of debris, should be continued to help control the goose population and create a more inviting setting for people.

Additional recommendations on engaging the river are provided below in discussion of the Douglas/River, Core and Century II/ WaterWalk Districts.


Relocation of the Kansas African American Museum at the river reinforces the "String of Pearls" concept, strengthening the river's appeal as a destination.
Improving and adding pedestrian connections to riverfront paths dramatically expands the district's potential as a community park and recreation destination.
W. SECOND
McLEAN BLVD
W. DOUGLAS AVE
W. MAPLE
New housing takes advantage of river views and amenities

Douglas Corridor at Arkansas River/Delano

Two segments along Wichita's postcard avenue:

> River: Downtown's window onto the Arkansas River, energized by active residents, visitors and the river itself.

> Delano: Delano's entrepreneurial main street.

District Overview

The point where the Douglas Avenue Corridor crosses the Arkansas offers a special opportunity to link the distinctive, expansive river landscape with the intensive mix of activities along Wichita's signature street. Enhancing both the river corridor and the Douglas corridor as grand public rooms framed by attractive buildings and animated 24/7 by the activities around them, will make this the region's most memorable and exciting place.

This area is framed by two important centers of activity. Delano's Douglas corridor has been reemerging steadily as a center of neighborhood retail and community thanks to committed business and property owners and residents. The area around Century II, the Broadview Hotel and the Garvey Center includes a valuable mix of uses—offices, housing, restaurants, performing arts, and the convention center—that brings growing numbers of people to the area each day. In between, underutilized parks and streets and vacant development sites offer the opportunity to create an active river-oriented neighborhood that connects and reinforces

The Opportunity in The District

***Today**, the river edge is distinctive but underused.*

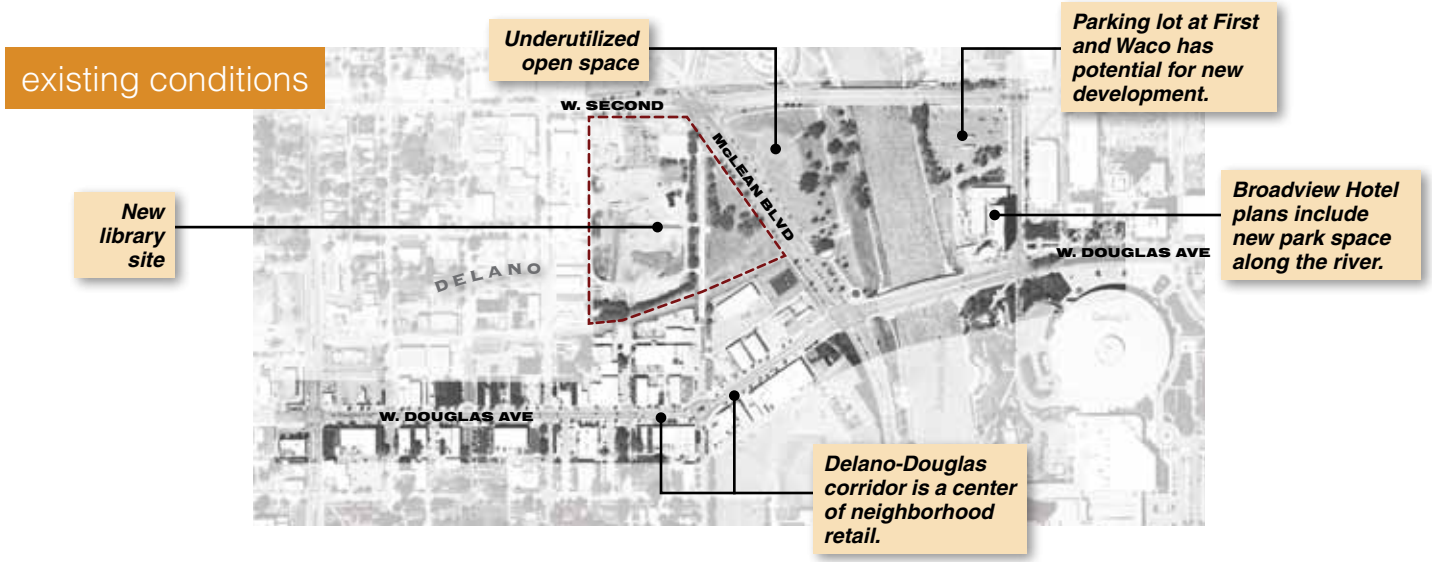
***Opportunity:** New housing and restaurants integrated with public access to the river edge—such as shown here in San Antonio (upper image) and Vancouver (lower)—can bring the Douglas-River district to life.*

Downtown to both banks of the river. Key themes—shared with other portions of Douglas but tailored to the specific contexts of the river and Delano—should guide development and public realm improvements in the Douglas-River and Douglas-Delano districts:

Key Themes

- **Create continuous walkability with appropriate development and infrastructure.** Design new mixed-use development on vacant sites to create delightful places to walk across the river on both the Douglas and the First-Second Street bridges, along the river's recreational paths, and along adjacent streets like Waco, McLean, and Sycamore. Modify Century II so that it invites people who have come for conventions and performances to see and walk along the river and Douglas Avenue. Design the new Central Library—and complementary uses, including public plazas, housing, restaurants and recreation facilities—to connect the river and Delano with active, inviting walks and streets. The rehabilitation of the Broadview Hotel with new lobby and restaurant connections to the river via new park space sets a perfect example.

- **Mix housing with other uses.** New housing offers the most significant opportunity for market-driven development in this area, and would do more than other uses to bring it to life by creating a riverfront neighborhood that would stay active throughout the day and evening. But other current and future uses should also be included to make this a still more active center of

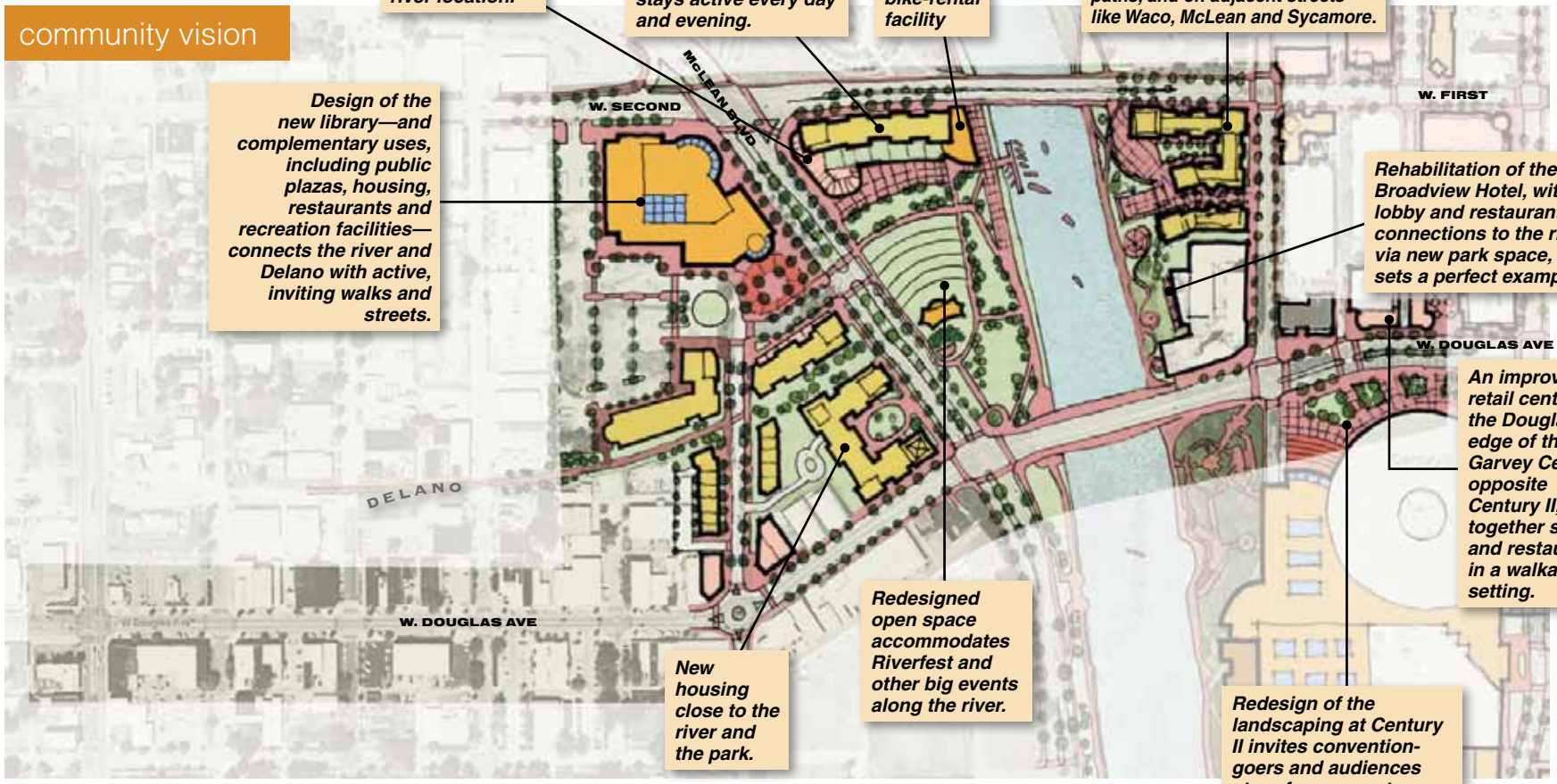


community and economic activity: continued hotel and convention center presence, offices, restaurants, and public facilities like the library and a boat and bike rental facility. New housing in this area would likely be most successful once other portions of Downtown like Old Town West and the Douglas Core become more established as residential neighborhoods.

- **Increase retail as market allows and supplement it with other active ground-floor uses.** The Douglas-River corridor is a more challenging location for retail than established Downtown retail concentrations like Douglas-Delano and Old Town. Restaurants likely represent the best market opportunity to introduce new active uses along sidewalks and river-edge paths, and can also truly celebrate the river location. New stores and restaurants will succeed best if clustered in walkable settings—such as an improved retail center at the Garvey Center's Douglas edge opposite Century II. Where retail or restaurants are not economically viable, encourage other active ground-floor uses. The new library, convention center activities, the Broadview Hotel, and a new recreation facility should be programmed and designed to enhance and benefit from walkability at their respective locations.

- **Focus transit services along the corridor to allow easy access and interchange.** Douglas-River and Douglas-Delano are a long walk from existing centers of activity like Old Town and the INTRUST Bank Arena. Improved transit connections along Douglas would enable many more people who live, work and visit elsewhere in Downtown to reach the river and Delano regularly—and leave more space and funding for parks and buildings instead of parking. Likewise, transit would represent an important amenity for residents of Delano and new riverfront buildings, connecting them to other Downtown destinations.

community vision



New restaurants introduce active uses along sidewalks and river-side paths, celebrating the river location.

New housing with ground-floor retail brings the river to life by creating a riverfront neighborhood that stays active every day and evening.

Boat- and bike-rental facility

New mixed-use development on surface parking lot creates delightful places to walk across the river (on the Douglas and First-Second Street bridges), along the river's recreational paths, and on adjacent streets like Waco, McLean and Sycamore.

Design of the new library—and complementary uses, including public plazas, housing, restaurants and recreation facilities—connects the river and Delano with active, inviting walks and streets.

Rehabilitation of the Broadview Hotel, with lobby and restaurant connections to the river via new park space, sets a perfect example.

An improved retail center on the Douglas edge of the Garvey Center, opposite Century II, brings together stores and restaurants in a walkable setting.

Redesigned open space accommodates Riverfest and other big events along the river.

New housing close to the river and the park.

Redesign of the landscaping at Century II invites convention-goers and audiences at performances to see and walk along the river and Douglas Avenue.

Douglas Corridor at Core/Historic District

Two segments along Wichita's postcard avenue:

> Historic: Old Town's front door, where its revival began, and where its vitality and character flow into the city.

> Core: Downtown's center of activity, where rich history and an ambitious future overlap.

District Overview

Reinvestment in the East Douglas Avenue Historic Landmark District encompassing Naftzger Park, the Eaton Hotel and Union Station sparked the beginning of Downtown's renaissance in the 1980s. It continues as one of Downtown's most active places, mixing restaurants, housing, office space and other uses. The opening of the INTRUST Bank Arena on one side, and continued strength of Old Town on the other, sets this area up for a new round of reinvestment and activity that will bring its remaining empty and underutilized sites to life.

The corridor as it moves west from Emporia to Water streets has much less activity. Some office and retail businesses do well here, but the corridor is clearly not the center of business and shopping it once was, and it cannot rely solely on these uses as its economic basis in the future. Many buildings are occupied, but their uses tend to be oriented to auto access and do little to make Douglas walkable. Some prominent vacant lots and storefronts further interrupt walkability. Some landmark historic office buildings sit empty because they lack the floor layouts or parking that today's office tenants want.

The ongoing Exchange Place project signals a very appropriate approach to reinvigorating this corridor by recasting it as a residential neighborhood *as well as* a place for business and retail. New housing can be a very effective reinvestment strategy here for a number of reasons:

- There is market demand for housing in the area.
- A concentration of new residents will keep people in the area evenings and weekends, which will help support retail and restaurants in the area.
- Housing makes good, economically sustainable use of older office buildings that no longer perform well as offices.
- Adaptive reuse of historic buildings for housing can tap historic tax credits, an important resource for development financing.

Housing, however, cannot effectively turn empty storefronts into places that restore Douglas as a great place to walk. Ground-floor spaces need to be filled with other uses—retail where possible, and arts, education or other pedestrian-oriented uses everywhere else—as amenities that reinforce the corridor's current role as a business location and attract further investment as a residential setting.

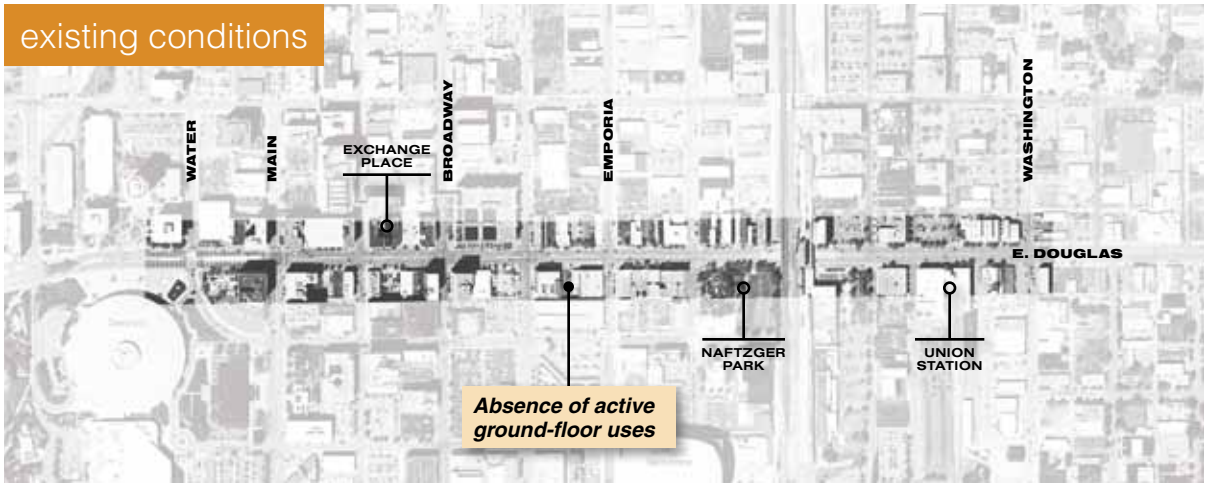
Key Themes

- **Continuous walkability with appropriate development and infrastructure.** Encourage new investment in housing, office, retail, hotel and other uses that benefit from walkable access and the proximity to Downtown's many amenities. Complement existing public art and street trees with interpretive signage and more plantings. Make crosswalks more visually prominent to make it easier to walk.

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *Douglas gradually turned from a place designed for people to a place designed mainly for cars, with blank storefronts and difficult pedestrian crossings.*

Opportunity: *Tryon Street in Charlotte, North Carolina, is inviting for pedestrians because it feels comfortable and safe. This makes its buildings inviting for a broad range of office, retail, housing, hotel and civic activities for which there is value to locating in a walkable setting.*

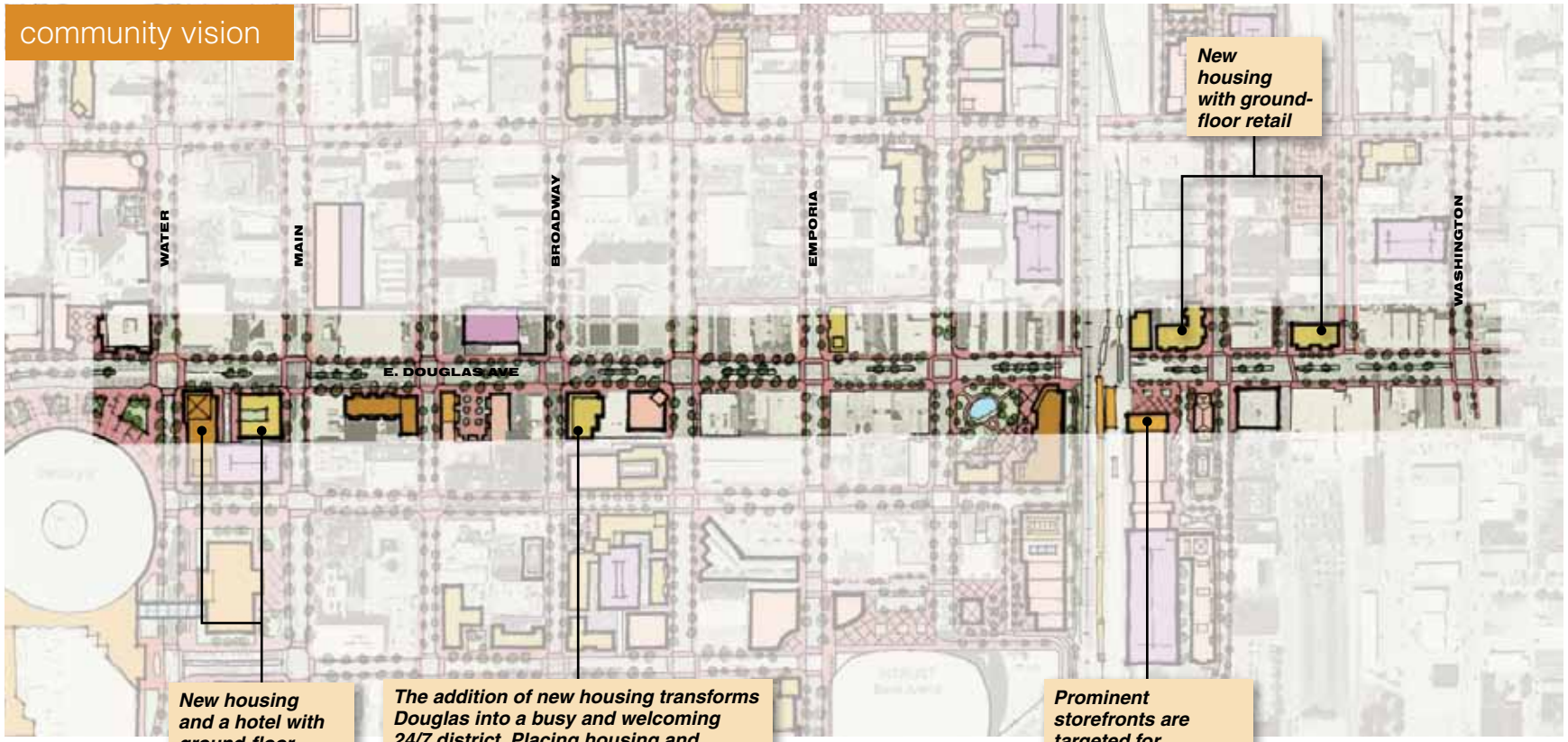


- **Mix housing with other uses.** Adding residents is important to transforming Douglas from a 9-to-5 office district to one that is busy and welcoming 24/7. Placing housing and business uses amidst each other makes double use of existing parking spaces to minimize the dollars and land needed for additional parking. It improves the economic feasibility of redevelopment, creates more attractive streets, and buttresses retail viability by providing customers days, evenings, and weekends.

- **Increase retail as the market allows; supplement it with other active ground-floor uses.** Target prominent storefronts for retail; group stores to create continuous blocks and compatible retail clusters. Seek arts, education and other uses where retail is not currently economically viable. Avoid ground-floor housing. Although residential stoops and windows can play an important role in enhancing walkability along other Downtown streets in mixed-use and predominantly residential settings, as Downtown's premier street, Douglas should maintain a continuous theme of storefronts with stores and other active ground-floor uses. Live-work spaces should similarly be avoided along Douglas, as they may revert to ground-floor residential use over time.

- **Focus transit services along corridor to allow easy access and interchange.** Make Douglas Wichita's premiere transit street—as it was when streetcars fostered its original development pattern a century ago and more. Frequent, convenient transit access around Downtown will reinforce this as Downtown's crossroads—with convenient access to and from all the activities Downtown offers. Good transit will reduce parking needs, further improving economic viability of development.

community vision



New housing and a hotel with ground-floor retail benefit from walkable access and proximity to Downtown's many amenities.

The addition of new housing transforms Douglas into a busy and welcoming 24/7 district. Placing housing and business uses alongside each other makes double use of existing parking, minimizing the investment and land needed for additional parking while simultaneously improving the economic feasibility of redevelopment and making streets more attractive.

Prominent storefronts are targeted for retail; businesses are grouped in continuous blocks and complementary combinations.

Old Town

The thriving center for dining, shopping, living, working and nightlife, energizing Downtown and the region.

District Overview

Old Town is the prime example of the community benefits and economic growth that can grow from a walkable mixed-use district Downtown. The gradual restoration and adaptive reuse of its historic buildings over the past 30 years has taken advantage of their design appeal for a variety of uses, including offices, housing, hotels, restaurants, and stores. New buildings, following design guidelines that ensure they fit in with the character of their older context, have been introduced to fill gaps and accommodate additional uses.

Old Town has demonstrated that concentrating a mix of activities in a walkable district creates energy and builds momentum—attracting still more activity and investment. After establishing an engineering facility here that employs 200 people, Airbus added 80 more positions during the Downtown master planning process because its managers saw that having restaurants, stores, and housing nearby created a setting that attracted the types of workers the company most needs. Many other businesses, including ones in creative fields like architecture and publishing, also call Old Town home.

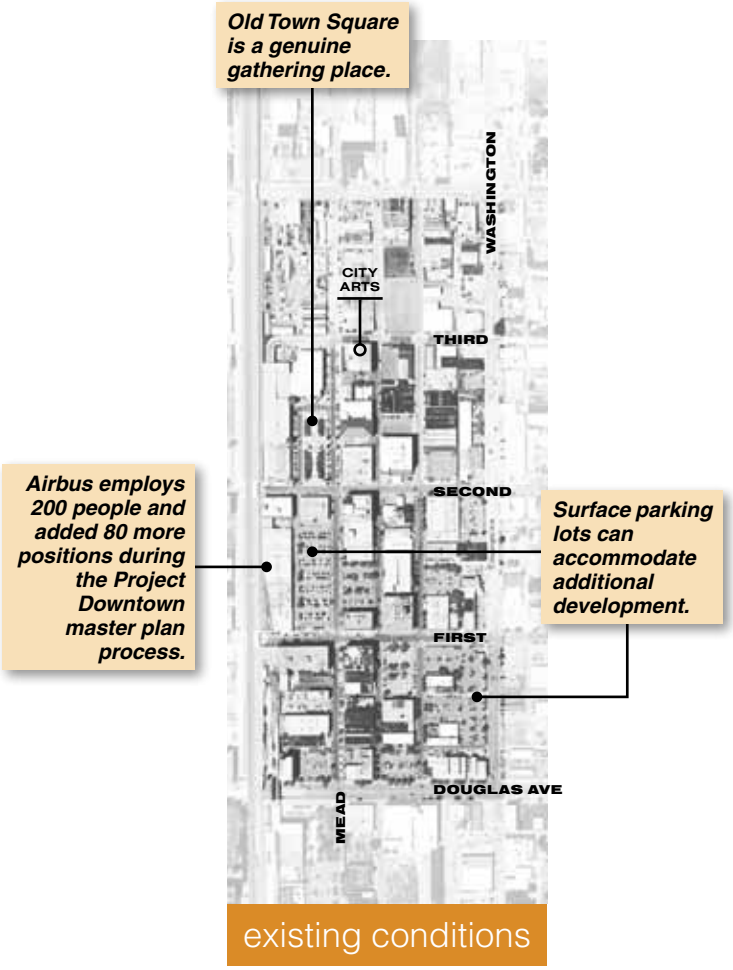
Now a true community destination, Old Town is the only spot in the region where you can walk among a variety of fine restaurants and choose one after you get there. The residents of Wichita and the surrounding region have come to consider Old Town Square a genuine place of community, one where people gather spontaneously as well as for planned events. The City Arts facility and the museums in Old Town reinforce its appeal as a frequent destination for both residents and tourists. In fact, the success of two major hotels in Old Town owes much to the vibrancy and choices on offer in this urban neighborhood.

But Old Town can do more. Remaining parking lots here could accommodate more development through greater shared use of existing parking, introduction of more transit service, and additional parking structures. New development in Old Town can take advantage of the important public investments already made in parking, environmental cleanup, and existing arts and entertainment destinations to further reinforce the district's vibrancy and economic value.

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *Despite substantial reinvestment in housing and businesses in Old Town, parking lots and blank walls still interrupt the district's activity and walkability.*

Opportunity: *There is still significant opportunity for more infill development to transform Old Town's remaining parking lots into places full of people, bringing more of its streets to life more of the time.*



At its edges, Old Town has the ability to push its vibrancy into other parts of Downtown. Intensified development along Douglas turn it from a broad traffic barrier to a seam that connects Union Station and the Old Town South district. Infill development and walkability improvements along Douglas and First and Second streets will extend redevelopment opportunities along these corridors under the railroad to the Arena and Old Town West districts—both already seeing development interest sparked by the proximity of Old Town's amenities and jobs as well as the Arena.

Key Themes

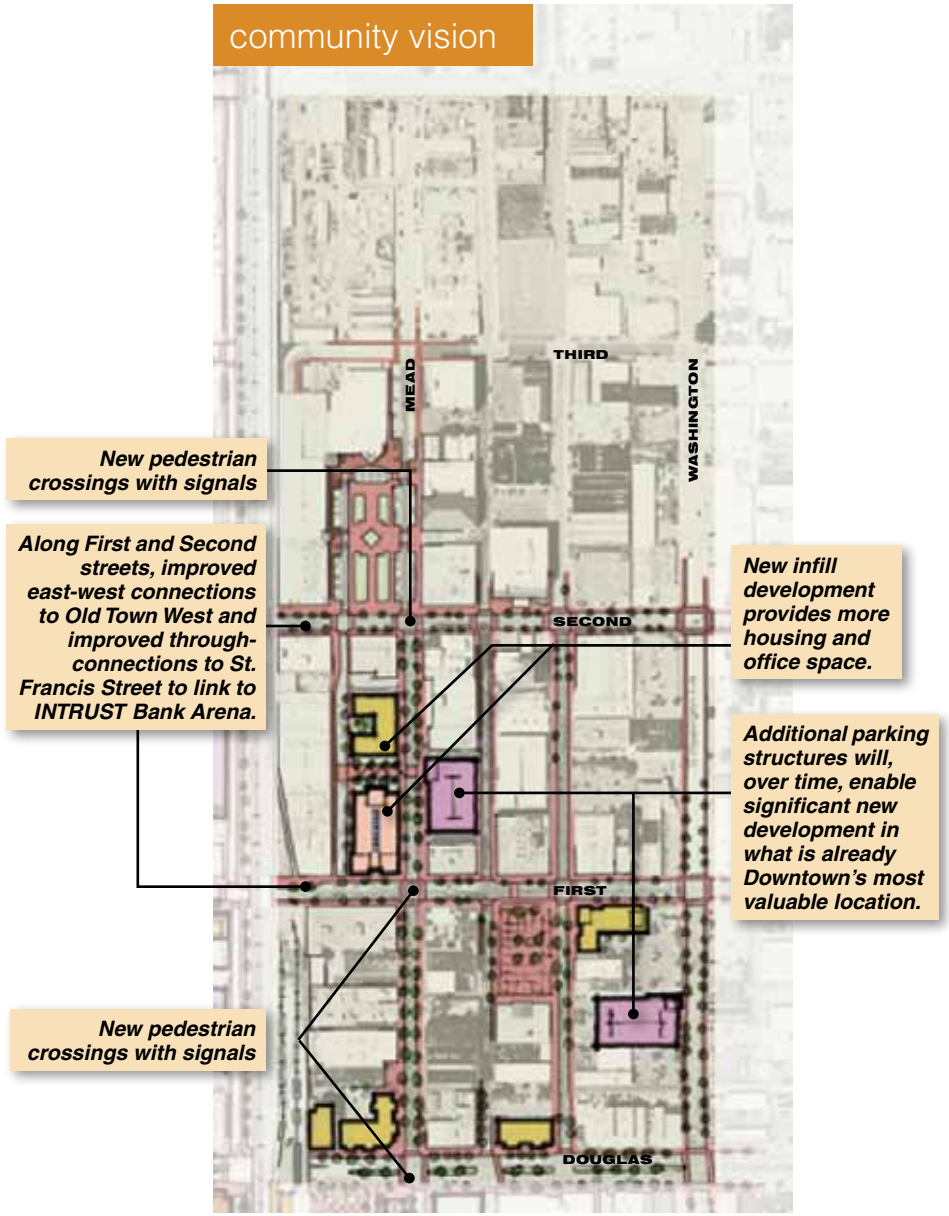
- **Create infill development opportunities with more structured parking and improved walking, transit and bike access.** Old Town's existing parking district has worked well to share public parking spaces among a number of uses that need them at different times—making the most of public investment and freeing up land for development instead of parking. One or two additional parking structures would, over time, support significant additional development in this most valuable of Downtown locations.

- **Strengthen the Douglas Avenue edge and links to Union Station and the INTRUST Bank Arena.** Install a signaled pedestrian crossing at Mead—the nearest signaled crossings at Washington and St. Francis require inconvenient detours, and drivers passing under the railroad overpass don't have a clear view of the unsignaled Mead crosswalk. Reducing traffic lanes from six to four and adding parallel parking will shorten the pedestrian crossing distance, add parking for businesses, and keep traffic speeds moderate. Ensure new development has a

walkable scale and ground-floor uses that are visible and accessible to pedestrians. Prioritize infill development on city-owned parking lots—made possible by new structured parking that continues to accommodate the needs of existing businesses while expanding the capacity for new ones. Enhance the streetcape with more street trees, decorative plantings and public art as part of an effort to improve the Douglas streetscape throughout Downtown.

- **Improve First and Second streets east-west connections to Old Town West, the INTRUST Bank Arena (via St. Francis), and the First Street "String of Pearls" corridor.** Old Town's restaurants, retail and other amenities can support more development, and additional development activity nearby means more economic support for existing and new stores and restaurants. Encourage more retail, restaurants and/or other pedestrian-oriented uses along First and Second streets in Old Town to make these corridors more walkable and lively. Add traffic signals for pedestrian crossings and turning vehicles where Mead crosses First and Second streets to improve circulation convenience and safety.

- **Add frequent, convenient transit along the Douglas Avenue corridor and Second Street, linking Old Town to and from all of Downtown's destinations.** (Also provide transit service on First Street as long as it remains a one-way pair with Second Street) This will strengthen Old Town's accessibility, activity and economic value at the same time it gives an important boost to reinvestment elsewhere in Downtown.



Old Town West

New buildings complement historic ones in this central place for living, business, nightlife and the performing arts.

District Overview

New bridges where the railroad crosses First and Second streets have dramatically opened possibilities for Old Town's successful redevelopment to spill across the railroad corridor into Old Town West. The parking lots and half-empty industrial and commercial buildings that dominate much of the district today represent opportunities for development of new buildings and rehabilitation of older ones with new market-driven uses. No project confirms Downtown's appeal as a place to live better than the renovation of the former Wichita High School on Emporia Street as Flats 324, with 68 apartments. These apartments rented rapidly when they came on the market in spring 2010 in the midst of the worst economic conditions in years. Although Flats 324 sits on a lonely block amid parking lots, its easy five-minute walk to Old Town Square and Douglas Avenue has proven to be an important selling point, one that can fuel more reinvestment throughout the district. Office development is equally desirable in Old Town West, to accommodate market interest in Old Town's amenities, keep the neighborhood active by day, and make the most of parking capacity.

The former Coleman factory at St. Francis and Second streets could play a very significant role in redeveloping Old Town West, given its prominent location at the corner of streets linking Old Town Square and INTRUST Bank Arena. The box on page 6.25 describes how this site could contribute to the emergence of Old Town West.

Walkable development should have top priority along St. Francis. The street is a natural walking route between Old Town Square and the arena; has buildings suitable for adaptive reuse; has several vacant lots and other buildings suitable for new development; and links north to the Renaissance Square neighborhood. It also takes advantage of the Coleman factory store and museum as a destination. Ongoing City investment in reconfiguring St. Francis as a two-way street with on-street parking and trees will make it a much more accessible and attractive address for residences and businesses, including restaurants and entertainment.

Old Town West can also reinforce the First Street "String of Pearls" concept—particularly by supporting the idea of introducing a performing arts district along First Street between the Orpheum Theatre and Old Town Square. Should investment in one or more additional performing arts facilities prove feasible, several sites along First Street could provide suitable locations. Locate any new facilities on existing blocks to maintain important connections along the existing street grid. With or without new facilities, walkability between the Orpheum and Old Town Square should be improved with better street trees, crosswalks, and infill development along First, Second and St. Francis streets. A mid-block pedestrian walk running east-west between First and Second Streets is also recommended to reduce the long north-south distance of these blocks and link to potential park and parking facilities on the former Coleman factory site.

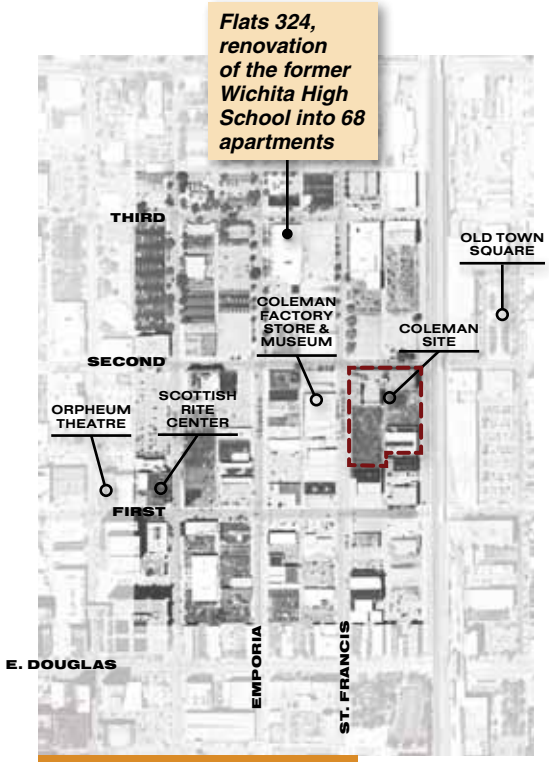
Key Themes

- **Encourage new housing throughout the district.** Flats 324 demonstrated that housing development can be very successful in Old Town West, even in locations that feel somewhat isolated today. This gives developers flexibility to introduce more housing wherever appropriate sites are available. As time goes on, this will help the area evolve into a genuine neighborhood. Adding one or more neighborhood parks would be especially valuable in making new housing more marketable and building a sense of neighborhood community and identity. Park space could potentially be added on the Coleman site and/or on portions of development sites.

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *St. Francis Street offers a lonely, treeless walk to the INTRUST Bank Arena visible in the distance.*

Opportunity: *A mix of new housing, office, stores and restaurant/entertainment development in new and rehabilitated buildings can turn the streets of Old Town West into vibrant, walkable links to Downtown districts on all sides.*



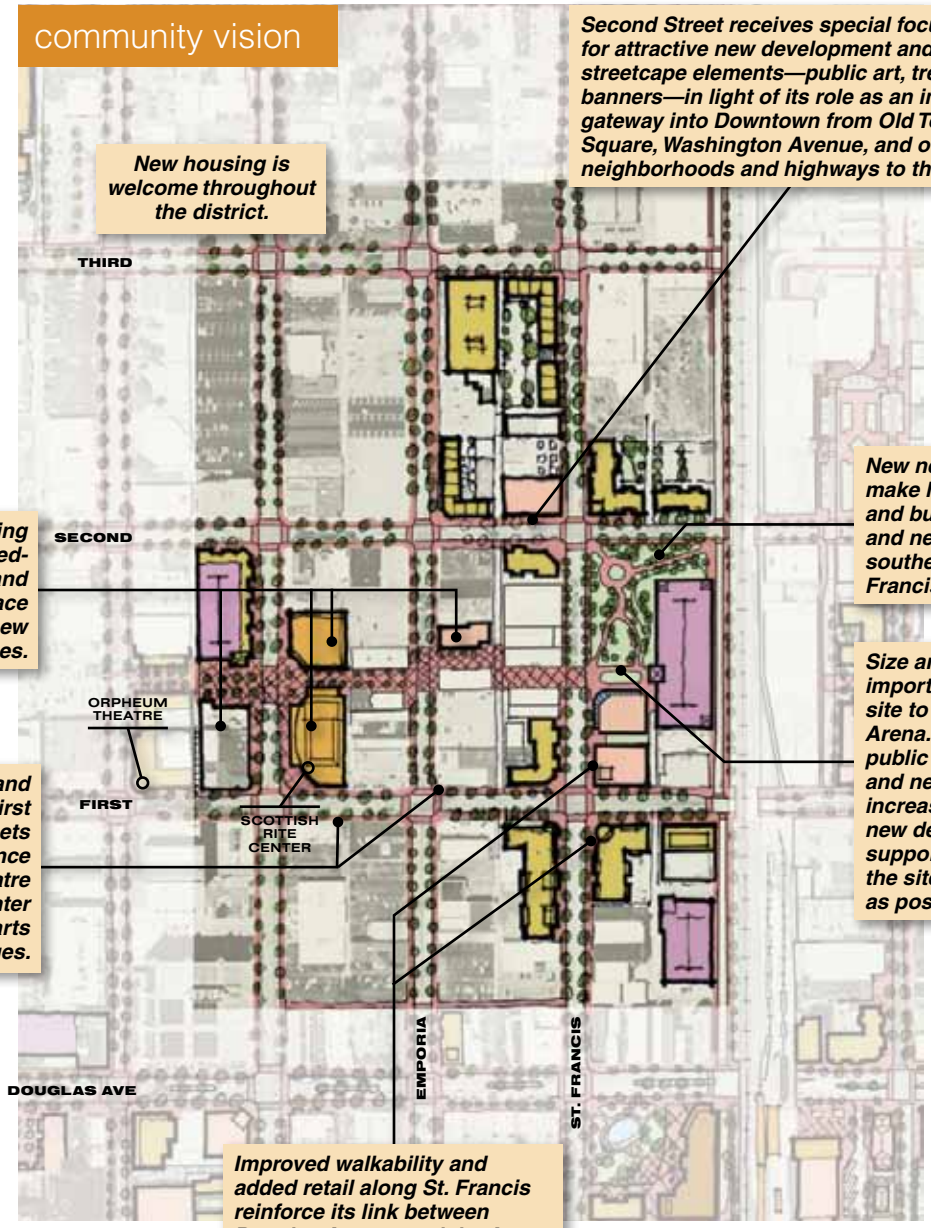
existing conditions

- **Focus on walkability and retail along St. Francis to link with Douglas Avenue and Arena.** St. Francis should become Old Town West's premier street—a principal walking corridor supporting retail and restaurants, easily accessible by car and transit without being overwhelmed by them. The City's current investments in street reconstruction should be followed by active efforts to encourage reinvestment on the Coleman factory site (see below) and other parcels.

- **Leverage the important Coleman site.** The City should work cooperatively with the County, WDDC, adjacent property owners and partner developers to make the most of the Coleman site as a catalyst for further activity and development. Large and visible, it should ideally include public park space, public parking *and* new development. These elements can add value to surrounding new development, justifying and supporting efforts to remedy the site's environmental challenges as much as possible. The Second Street edge deserves special focus for attractive new development and/or streetcape elements like public art, trees and banners, as an important gateway into Downtown from Old Town Square, Washington Avenue and other neighborhoods and highways to the east.

- **Nurture First Street's Performing Arts District.** Improve walkability and sense of place along First Street and connecting streets to reinforce the presence of the Orpheum Theatre and Scottish Rite Center as major arts venues. Support the additional performing arts venues, if feasible, with new walking connections, shared-use public parking, and a park or plaza.

community vision



Second Street receives special focus for attractive new development and/or streetcape elements—public art, trees and banners—in light of its role as an important gateway into Downtown from Old Town Square, Washington Avenue, and other neighborhoods and highways to the east.

New housing is welcome throughout the district.

New neighborhood park helps make housing more marketable and build a sense of community and neighborhood identity. The southeast corner of Second and St. Francis is a priority park location.

Additional walking connections, shared-use public parking and park or plaza space support existing and new performing arts venues.

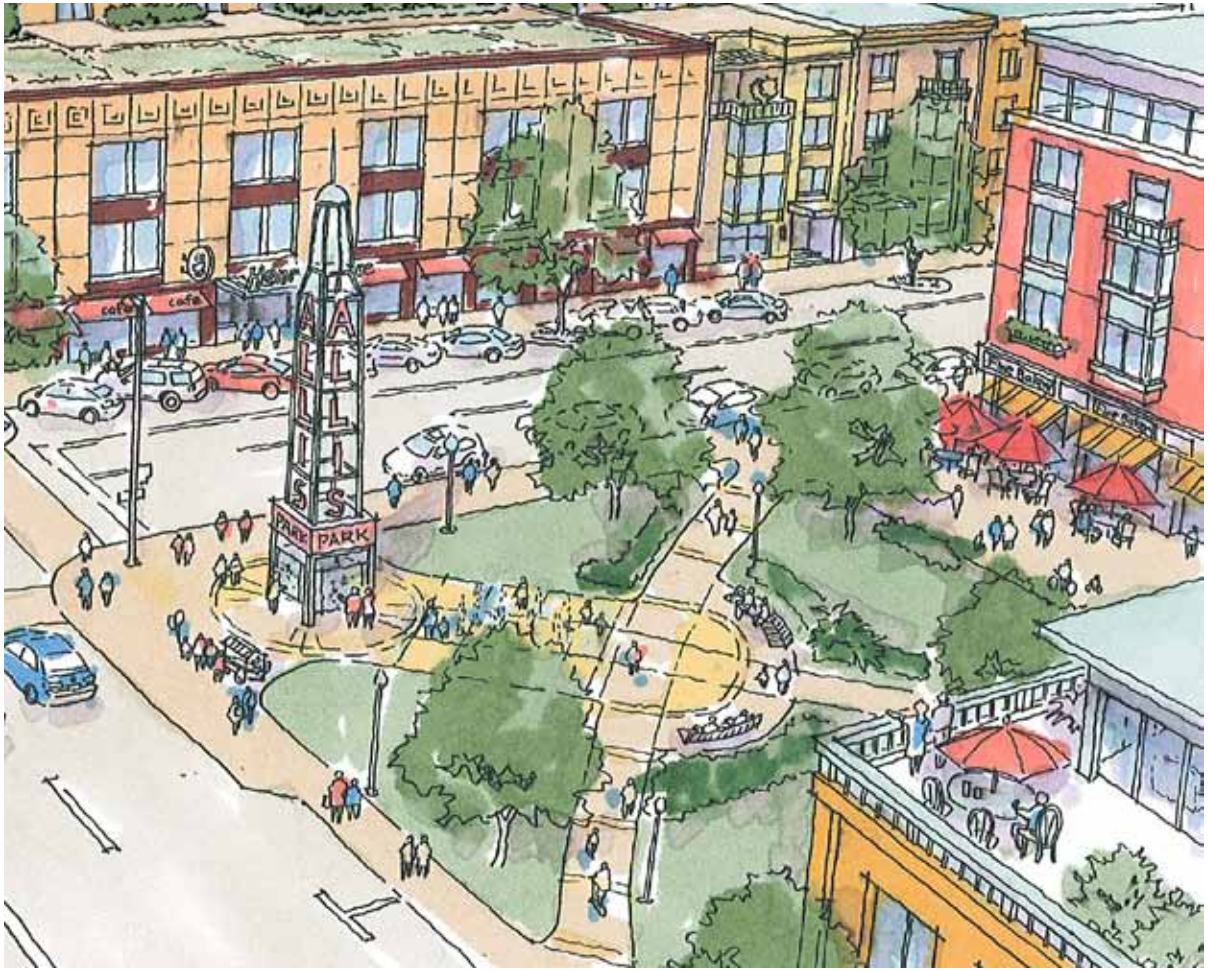
Size and visibility underscore the importance of linking the Coleman site to Old Town and INTRUST Bank Arena. Redevelopment includes public park space, public parking, and new buildings. These elements increase the value of surrounding new development, justifying and supporting as much remediation of the site's environmental challenges as possible.

Improved walkability and sense of place along First and connecting streets reinforces the presence of the Orpheum Theatre and Scottish Rite Center as major Downtown arts venues.

Improved walkability and added retail along St. Francis reinforce its link between Douglas Avenue and the Arena.

Arena

Destination arena events and a thriving residential neighborhood together sustain retail, entertainment and dining options that are unmatched in the region.



Downtown master plan advances these concepts with a more concrete analysis of market-based development opportunity and the action steps needed to foster private development investment. Note that the Arena District in this report corresponds to the William/English Street District in the *Arena Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan*; other areas in that plan are treated here as part of the Douglas and Main corridors and the Commerce Street Arts District.

District Overview

The *Arena Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan* set an important foundation for this area with its vision of quality mixed-use development on a network of walkable streets. The Project

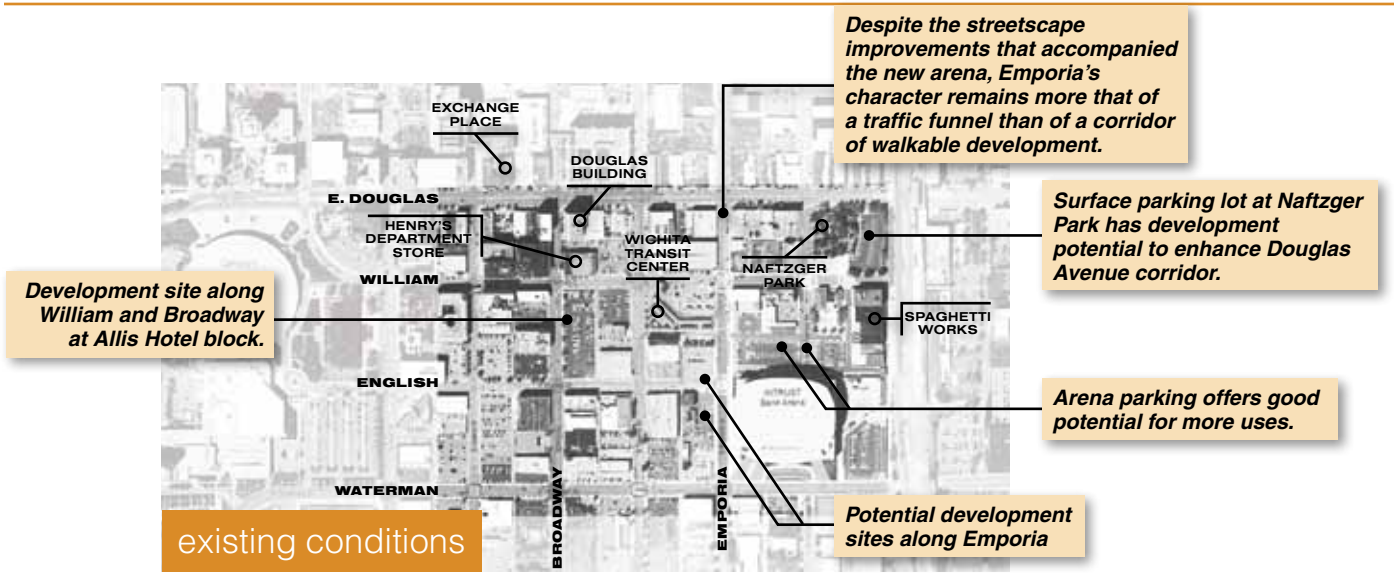
Housing, offices, and hotels should be encouraged throughout the district to keep all streets active throughout the day and week and capture a broad range of market-based development interest. This departs slightly from the *Arena Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan*, which recommended solely commercial/office and civic uses along William Street. Given the prominent role housing played in the analysis of Downtown market opportunities, however, and the momentum that the Exchange Place project has given to the emergence of a residential neighborhood along Douglas, this plan endorses housing as an appropriate and valuable use along William.

Retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses are desirable where they can be concentrated on walkable street blocks and plazas. William Street and the portions of Emporia, St. Francis, English, and Waterman that lie within a block of the Arena offer the strongest locations for concentrations of stores and entertainment venues. Extensive retail—such as along the full length of William—is not likely in the near term, nor does it make sense as a goal, given this plan's higher priority of focusing retail along Douglas Avenue. The most appropriate area for a near-term focus on developing retail lies in the blocks between the Arena and Douglas, taking advantage of Arena-generated demand and reinforcing a continuous retail environment between the Arena, Douglas and Old Town. Sites adjoining Naftzger Park, historic structures along Commerce Street like the former Spaghetti Works building, and publicly-owned parking lots adjacent to the Arena all offer good potential locations for these uses in the near and medium terms.

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *Despite streetscape improvements introduced with the Arena, Emporia retains the character more of a traffic corridor than a place of walkable development.*

Opportunity: *New housing, office, retail, restaurant, entertainment and hotel uses—framing green, walkable streets—can work together to take advantage of the Arena district's central location and influx of Arena visitors.*

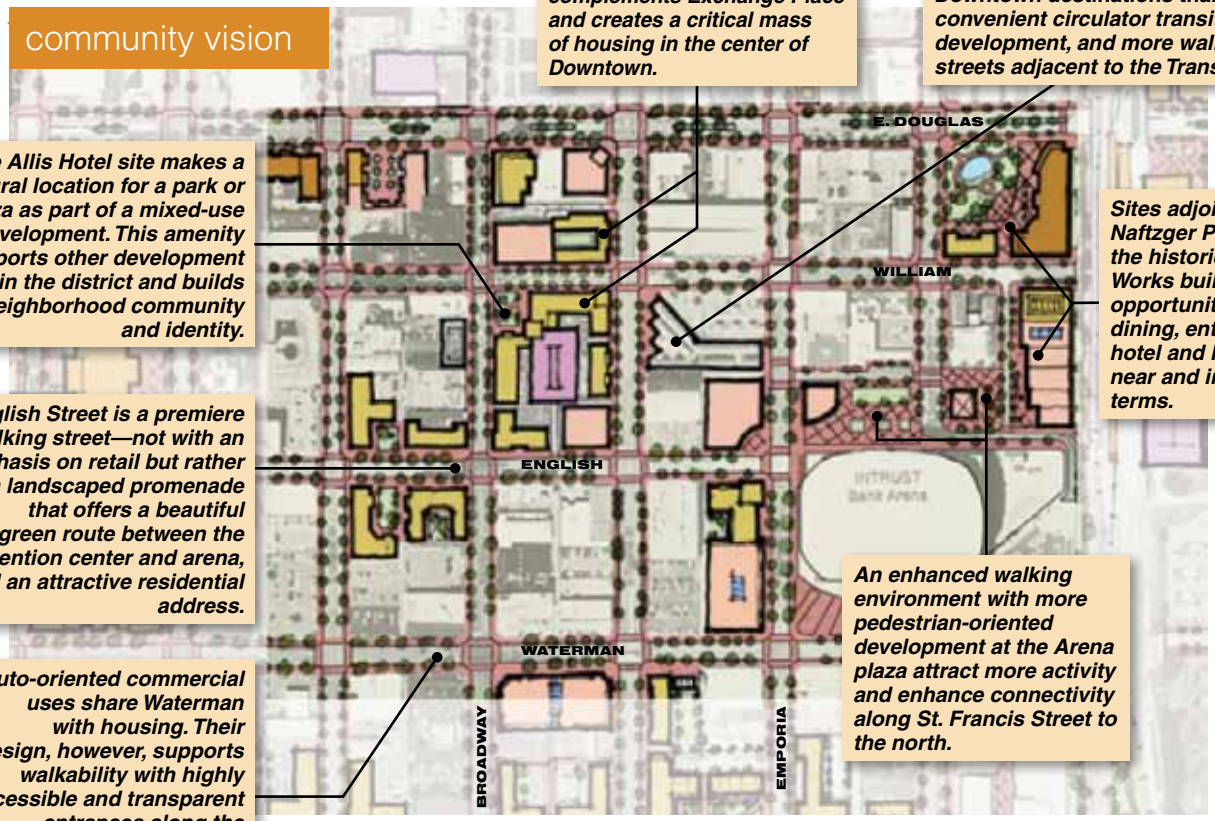


One or more parks or plazas should be created to support development and help build a sense of community and neighborhood identity. Such space should be a priority along English or William street, in as central and accessible a location as possible. The Allis Hotel site, which the City owns, would make a natural location for a park or plaza as part of mixed-use redevelopment; alternatively, park space might be built as part of a private redevelopment project. In either case, prominence and accessibility mean more than size. Compact public spaces can be preferable, in fact, because they don't require many people to make them feel active, and because they can be easier to establish when site options are limited.

English Street should be a premier walking street in the Arena District, with an emphasis not on retail but rather on a landscaped promenade offering a beautiful green walk between the convention center and the Arena, and that serves as an attractive residential address. Plantings should be given special prominence along English, using distinctive street trees, continuous tree lawns with shrubs and flowers, and consistent planted setbacks 5 to 15 feet deep in front of buildings.

Recently installed street trees, lighting, sidewalks and crosswalks along Waterman have done much to make it more walkable, despite its character as a traffic corridor. Along with housing, auto-oriented commercial uses are appropriate along Waterman as long as they also support walkability with highly accessible and transparent main entrances along the sidewalk edge, parking located behind buildings, and no curb cuts other than at existing alleys.

Better use could be made of the Wichita Transit hub and adjacent parking structure as resources that help make the Arena District a regional destination and an attractive place for development. Relocating regional bus services to the Wichita Transit hub and expanding Downtown circulator service from the hub would help transform the facility a from simple transfer point between buses to a significant Downtown gateway.



Housing on or around the former Allis Hotel block complements Exchange Place and creates a critical mass of housing in the center of Downtown.

Regional transit services link to Downtown destinations thanks to convenient circulator transit, additional development, and more walkable streets adjacent to the Transit Center.

The Allis Hotel site makes a natural location for a park or plaza as part of a mixed-use redevelopment. This amenity supports other development in the district and builds neighborhood community and identity.

Sites adjoining the Naftzger Park block and the historic Spaghetti Works building offer great opportunity for retail, dining, entertainment, hotel and housing in the near and intermediate terms.

English Street is a premiere walking street—not with an emphasis on retail but rather as a landscaped promenade that offers a beautiful green route between the convention center and arena, and an attractive residential address.

An enhanced walking environment with more pedestrian-oriented development at the Arena plaza attract more activity and enhance connectivity along St. Francis Street to the north.

Auto-oriented commercial uses share Waterman with housing. Their design, however, supports walkability with highly accessible and transparent entrances along the sidewalk, parking located behind buildings, and no curb cuts beyond those at existing alleys.

Key Themes

- **Link Arena, Douglas and Old Town with active retail/ entertainment and mixed-use redevelopment and rehabilitation.** As a first priority, focus retail, restaurant and entertainment development in rehabilitated or new buildings between the Arena and Douglas Avenue. Additional retail development can build off of this concentration along William and Emporia streets.

- **Enhance Naftzger Park and Arena plaza to attract more public activity.** These spaces, and the St. Francis and Commerce Street corridors connecting them today function as prime walking corridors for Arena visitors moving to and from restaurants, transit, parking and other destinations to the north. Enhance the walking environment with more pedestrian-oriented development, particularly on parking lots, and additional streetscape enhancements like more street trees.

- **Expand housing and retail west along William and English.** Housing is encouraged anywhere in the district. It would be especially valuable on or around the former Allis Hotel block, complementing Exchange Place to solidify a critical mass of housing in the center of Downtown. Stores and other active ground-floor uses are encouraged along William, complementing existing restaurants, to the extent they are market-supportable and do not significantly hamper recruitment of retail to Douglas Avenue. Walkable retail is encouraged along Waterman.

- **Make the Wichita Transit hub a district hub.** Link regional transit services to Downtown destinations with convenient circulator transit, plus additional development and more walkable streets adjacent to the hub.

Old Town South

Past and present come together around some of Downtown's grandest historic buildings—and sites with the most capacity for future development

District Overview

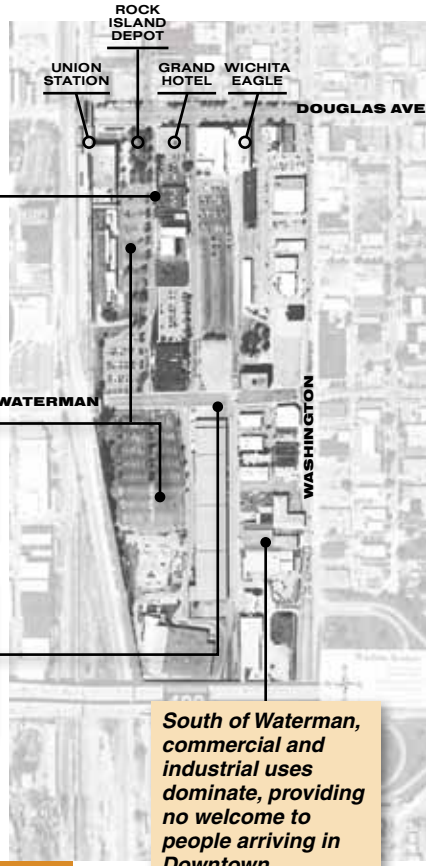
Distinct conditions mark different parts of Old Town South. Its Douglas Avenue edge clearly defines the south edge of Old Town. Here, Union Station, one of Downtown's most significant historic landmarks, helped jump-start Old Town's revival with its renovation into offices for Cox Communications in the 1980s. Now largely vacant as Cox seeks to sell it, the property holds strong prospects for attracting new commercial uses and pushing Old Town's vibrancy south of Douglas. The historic Rock Island Depot, freight depot, and Grand Hotel adjacent to Union Station also offer important opportunities for re-occupancy with commercial tenants that can restore activity along Douglas.

Further south, Old Town South becomes much less visible and accessible, with a limited street grid relieved only by Waterman, whose connection west is important but compromised by a low railroad overpass. Commercial and industrial uses dominate, providing no welcome to Downtown at the important gateway along Washington from the Kellogg Avenue highway. Compared to other areas of Downtown, these areas have few qualities that could draw walkable development today. Yet they do represent an important long-term development opportunity as redevelopment elsewhere in Downtown builds market interest and claims other available sites. The Union Station parcel, in fact, offers a unique opportunity for any large tenant that wants to locate Downtown in the existing station structure and/or in new buildings—at 9 acres, the parcel is one of Downtown's largest, and it includes significant unbuilt land south of the station building. The Waterman corridor has convenient walking access from the Commerce Street Arts District and thus could offer an important opportunity for additional low-cost arts and commercial space supporting growth of that district. Old Town South also has several historic buildings along Mead and Waterman streets with untapped potential for adaptive reuse that could combine historic tax credits and their own historic character to create development value.

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *South Mead lacks the walkability and development activity that makes it vibrant in Old Town north of Douglas.*

Opportunity: *A mix of uses in renovated historic buildings and new buildings of compatible character could make Old Town South a seamless extension of Old Town.*



South Mead Street lacks the walkability and development activity that make it vibrant in Old Town.

Two large parcels—the Union Station block and the block south of Waterman—offer a unique opportunity for a large tenant.

The Waterman corridor offers a key connection to the Arena and the Commerce Street Arts District.

South of Waterman, commercial and industrial uses dominate, providing no welcome to people arriving in Downtown.

existing conditions

Key Themes

- **Revive Union Station, adjacent sites, and Douglas Avenue with office, hotel and/or other uses.** Union Station remains one of Downtown's most attractive settings for Class B office space. Its high visibility, accessibility and proximity to Old Town and the INTRUST Bank Arena also gives it—as well as the Rock Island Depot, freight depots and the Grand Hotel, collectively—good potential for hotel, retail, restaurant and entertainment uses, individually or combined. The broad brick drive in front of Union Station could serve as a public plaza enlivened by restaurants, outdoor dining and/or other active uses in the Union Station and Rock Island Depot buildings. Housing is also a possibility on upper floors of the Grand Hotel or in new buildings. Renovation of the Wichita Eagle's ground-floor frontage on Douglas Avenue would go a long way toward extending walkability east along Douglas from the Grand Hotel toward Washington Avenue and the Douglas Design District.

- **Add shared parking to support development on area blocks and the Douglas edge.** Old Town South offers important possible locations for new public structured parking that could enable more intensive redevelopment on vacant portions of the Union Station site and/or other nearby parcels, including the public parking lots along the north edge of Douglas. Parking lots south of Union Station and the Wichita Eagle have both sufficient size and accessibility to accommodate parking structures.

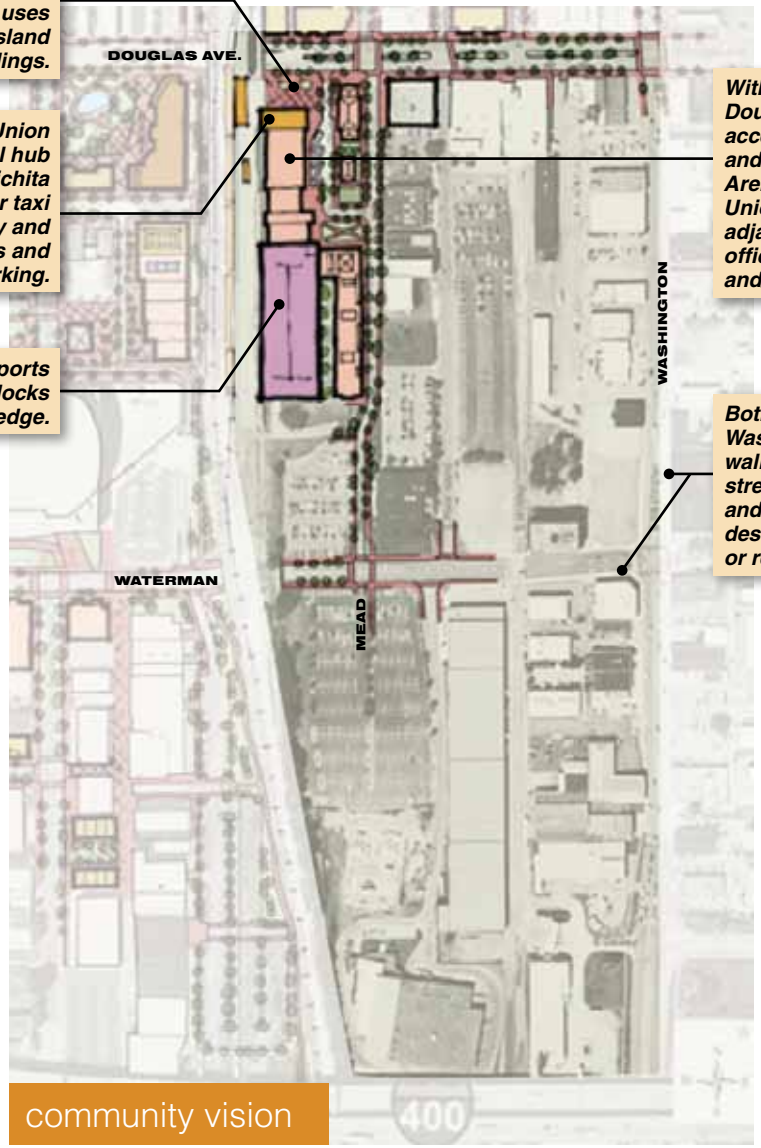
- **Create an intermodal transportation hub at Union Station.** Union Station has the potential to become a rail station once again if efforts by the State of Kansas and Northern Flyer Alliance confirm its feasibility. Any re-use of the building should allow for the possibility of reserving a prominent portion of the building facing Douglas Avenue to accommodate rail station facilities. With or without rail service, Union Station should also be considered a potential intermodal hub for Downtown circulator, Wichita Transit, regional bus and/or taxi services due to its accessibility and potential space for bus bays and public parking.

- **Prepare for longer-term redevelopment potential along Waterman Street and Washington Avenue.** Make both thoroughfares more walkable with more street trees, better crosswalks, and pedestrian-oriented design guidelines that apply to any new or renovated buildings. Adjacency to the Commerce Street Arts District and Douglas Avenue make both these corridors opportune places to extend Downtown's walkable street network.

The broad brick drive in front of Union Station serves as a public plaza enlivened by restaurants, outdoor dining and other active uses in the Union Station and Rock Island Depot buildings.

With or without rail service, Union Station serves as an intermodal hub for the Downtown circulator, Wichita Transit, and regional bus and/or taxi services due to its accessibility and space to accommodate bus bays and public parking.

Shared parking supports development on nearby blocks and the Douglas edge.



With high visibility on Douglas Avenue, good accessibility to Old Town and the INTRUST Bank Arena, a redeveloped Union Station and its adjacent parcels support offices, hotels, restaurants and/or other uses.

Both Waterman and Washington are more walkable, with improved street trees, crosswalks and pedestrian-oriented design guidelines for new or renovated buildings.

community vision

Commerce Street Arts

Pioneer artists and longtime businesses make this a center of creative energy and opportunity attracting workers, visitors and residents.

District Overview

Commerce Street Arts District demonstrates the classic qualities of arts districts that have revived areas of cities all over America. It continues to contain light industrial uses that give it a working character. It has galleries, workshops and other arts spaces created through years of committed effort by members of the arts community. It has become a regular destination for gallery crawls and other art events. Its informal character accommodates elements like utility wires and shared walking and driving areas that would be detriments elsewhere, and it celebrates creative art and architecture. It has recently attracted loft housing—such as the just-completed 25-unit Finn Lofts and other projects under construction—that has sold quickly even in a tough market. Finally, its very success now threatens to gentrify the low-cost building space that attracted its art community in the first place, demanding pre-emptive efforts to maintain and build on its success.

The City has recognized the district's dynamism and fragility by initiating studies to create needed east-west connections between Commerce, St. Francis and Lewis streets, improve walkability throughout the district, and possibly add public parking and service access on the rail yard site east of Commerce. Project Downtown advocates supplementing

this with a more comprehensive area plan that provides a detailed, community-based blueprint for physical expansion of the district's mixed uses in a way that is sustainable from economic and community perspectives.

Key Themes

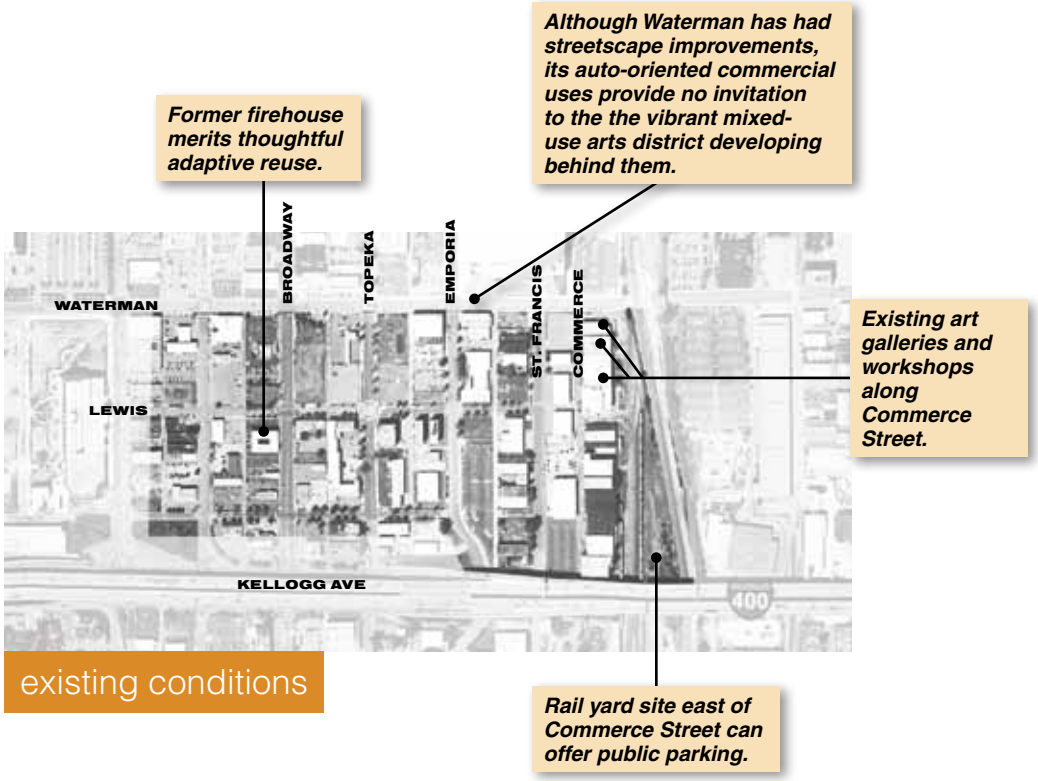
- **Encourage new housing, galleries, and supportive retail on multiple sites/blocks.** As Flats 324 demonstrated in Old Town West, new housing doesn't need to be contiguous with existing development to succeed. Additional housing and commercial uses that continue the spirit of the district should be encouraged on blocks extending west from Commerce toward Main Street, to help keep development costs reasonable and expand the catalytic influence of the district. Increasingly, the district will need to manage potential conflicts among uses through a strong district association that is broadly representative of property and business owners and tenants.

- **Grow along walkable Lewis and Emporia corridors.** Lewis Street offers a natural walkable spine that can extend the district west, offering a quieter and greener setting than Waterman Street. Its numerous vacant, developable sites can become a corridor of walkable development connecting to WaterWalk and the Arkansas River. Emporia Avenue is the district's most important north-south spine for the near future, with opportunity for walkable development stretching north to the Arena District and Douglas Avenue, and south below Kellogg to the residential blocks of South Central. Over the longer term, Broadway should also become a prime north-south walkable corridor as reinvestment patterns continue moving west.

The Opportunity in The District

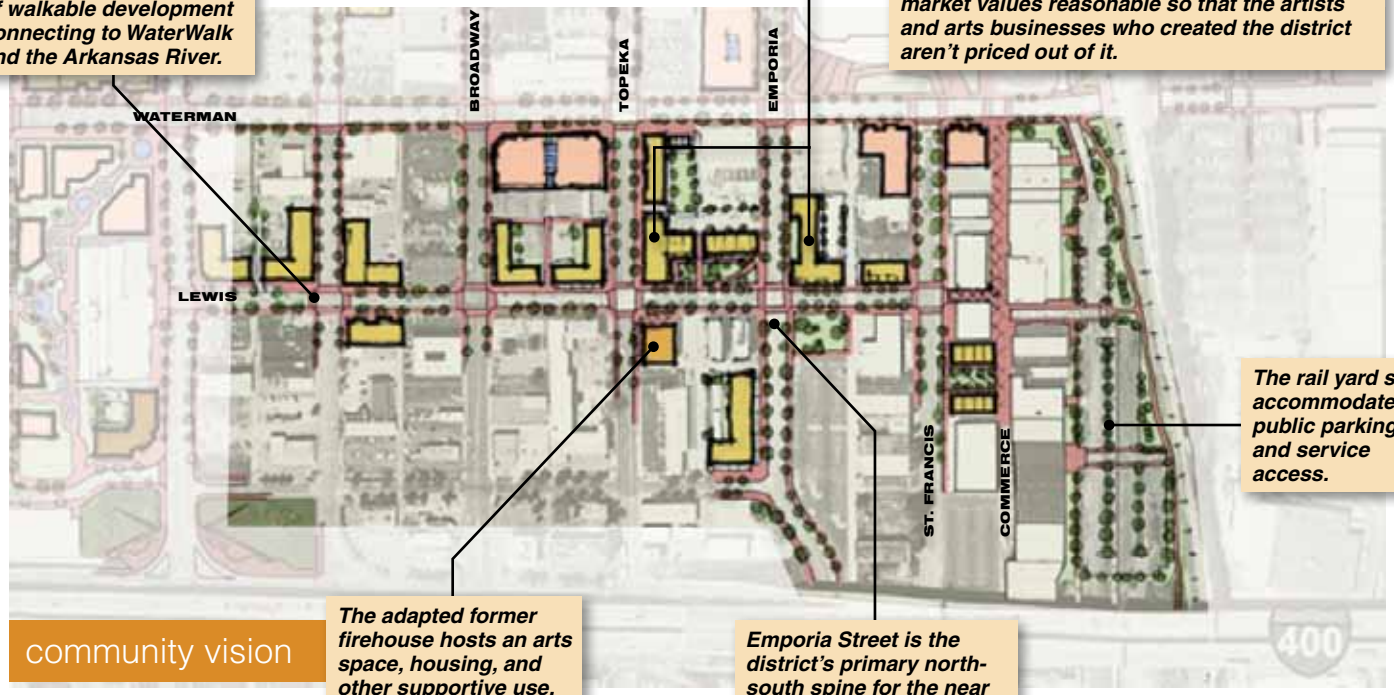
Today: *Despite streetscape improvements, Waterman's auto-oriented commercial uses provide no invitation to the vibrant mixed-use arts district emerging behind them.*

Opportunity: *The district's informal feel could make it an appropriate place to mix modern architecture amidst older industrial architecture, reinforcing a unique, creative character.*



existing conditions

- **Adapt the former firehouse as arts space, housing, or other supportive use.** The historic firehouse, which the City uses for offices and storage, is an architectural gem at the corner of Lewis and Topeka streets. The City should adapt the building and site with uses that support the Commerce Street Arts District and promote its growth. For instance, the firehouse garage bays could become distinctive gallery or retail space, and its upper floor could become affordable artist housing or studio space, anchoring a new center of energy and development in the district.



community vision

Lewis Street offers a quiet and green a corridor of walkable development connecting to WaterWalk and the Arkansas River.

New housing, galleries, and supportive retail on multiple sites and blocks extend west from Commerce Street toward Main, expanding the district's catalytic influence and helping keep market values reasonable so that the artists and arts businesses who created the district aren't priced out of it.

The rail yard site accommodates public parking and service access.

The adapted former firehouse hosts an arts space, housing, and other supportive use.

Emporia Street is the district's primary north-south spine for the near term, with the opportunity for walkable development linking north to the Arena District and Douglas Avenue, and south below Kellogg to the residential blocks of South Central.

Main Street Corridor

A vital concentration of jobs, civic destinations and housing reinforce each other along Downtown's busiest north-south street.

District Overview

Main Street complements Douglas Avenue as Downtown's premier north-south corridor. Its coherence as a corridor has suffered from decades of auto-oriented development that has left few blocks inviting to pedestrians; attrition of tenants from some of its older office buildings; and one-way traffic (except for the recent return to two directions between Douglas and Kellogg) whose greater speed and rush-hour nature limits retail potential.

Nevertheless, Main Street retains significant assets that offer important opportunities for the future. It is a major employment corridor, home to Downtown's largest employers including Cargill, INTRUST Bank, the City and County. This concentration of employees makes it ready for expanded transit service that would benefit current workers and property owners as well as Downtown amenities and destinations they would like access to. It has major publicly-owned sites, some occupied, like City Hall; some with potential for re-occupancy with new uses, like the Central Library building; and some with the potential for new development, like the Century II parking lot at Waterman Street. This means the City, County and Go Wichita have

important leverage to encourage uses and architecture along Main that can make it a walkable, mixed-use street that functions as one of Downtown's most important economic generators. The conversion to two-way traffic south of Douglas Avenue has made wayfinding easier for people coming off of Kellogg; extending the two-way traffic north through Downtown, as the City is considering doing, would further improve wayfinding for drivers as well as make Main a better transit corridor.

Key Themes

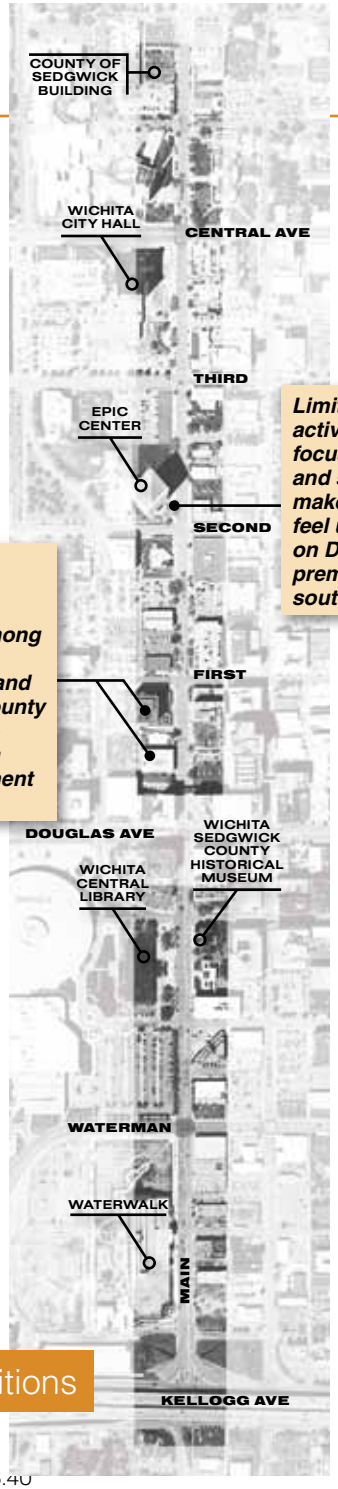
- **Build on the significant employment base with a more walkable environment.** Add street trees and on-street parking to make a more comfortable walking environment. Add housing to keep the street active beyond office hours and help foster new retail that can draw support from daytime, evening and weekend demand. Encourage ground floors of buildings to invite walking through their design and use—making office lobbies and meeting spaces more open and accessible, adding retail where economically feasible.

- **Transform the area south of Douglas with actions on key sites: the Central Library, Century II, WaterWalk.** These blocks can be transformed for the better through coordinated actions on several sites to support walkable development. A new public parking structure on the city parking lot at William and Main could revive the Century Building as housing and support a prominent new hotel or office building complementing Century II. The current Central Library building, after the library moves

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *Street and building design catering to cars make pedestrians feel unwelcome*

Opportunity: *Walkable development—incorporating a mix of housing and commercial uses—can strengthen Main Street's role as an economic generator by making it a dignified, active street.*



Limited street-level activity, auto-focused building and street design make pedestrians feel unwelcome on Downtown's premier north-south spine.

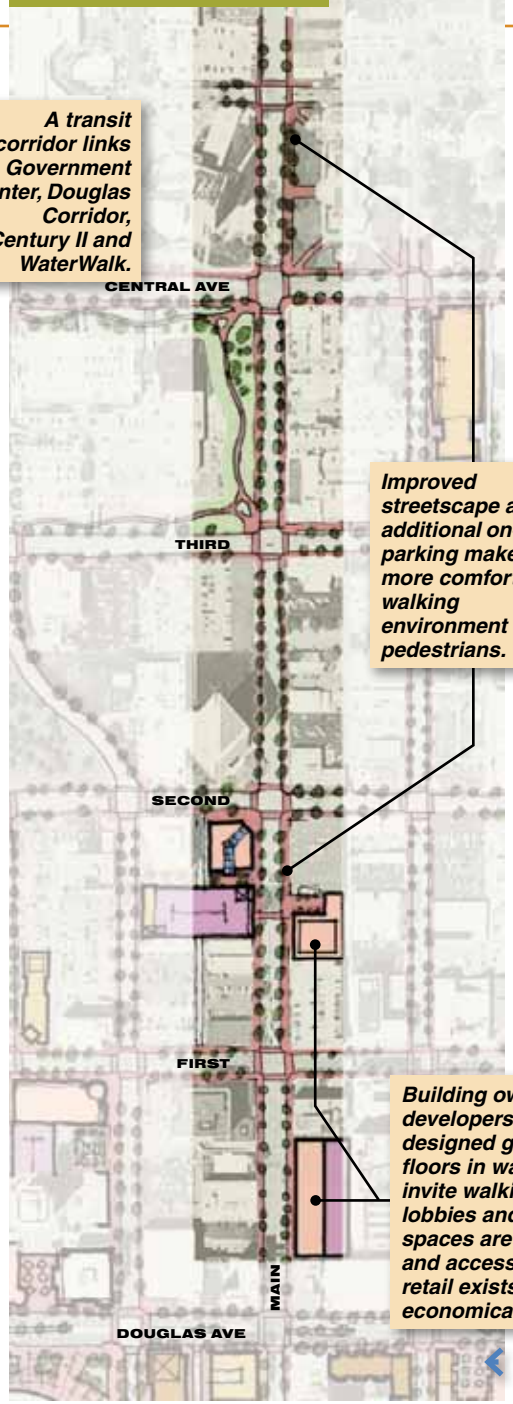
With some of Downtown's biggest employers—among them Cargill, INTRUST Bank, and the City and County governments—Main Street is a major employment corridor.

to its new site, should be re-occupied with a use that fully leverages its prominence and dignity—potentially as an expansion of Century II's convention and/or arts facilities, potentially as the address of a major educational institution or office tenant. Century II's parking lot at Waterman is a key site that would enable potential expansion of the conference center with convention facilities and/or parking. In either case, care must be taken to create a pedestrian-oriented edge along Main, as parking and convention uses tend to create poor facades. Any expansion should be lined with ground-floor retail and possibly upper-story housing along the street. WaterWalk's prominent site for a future office building flanking a pedestrian plaza at Waterman Street can perfectly accommodate a new Class A office building in the 50,000-80,000sf range that was determined most feasible through the market analysis conducted as part of the Project Downtown master plan. The new Fairfield Inn at the southeast corner of WaterWalk is now enhancing the prominent Main Street gateway to Downtown from Kellogg.

- **Establish a transit corridor to link Government Center, Douglas Corridor, Century II and WaterWalk.** Unlike many Downtown streets, Main Street is transit-ready—with a dense concentration of workers who have good opportunity to take advantage of improved transit service for commuting and for going out to lunch or conducting other Downtown errands. Adding transit will increase the value of existing real estate along Main, promote new development on infill sites through improved access and reduced parking needs, and provide a needed connection between WaterWalk and other Downtown areas.

community vision

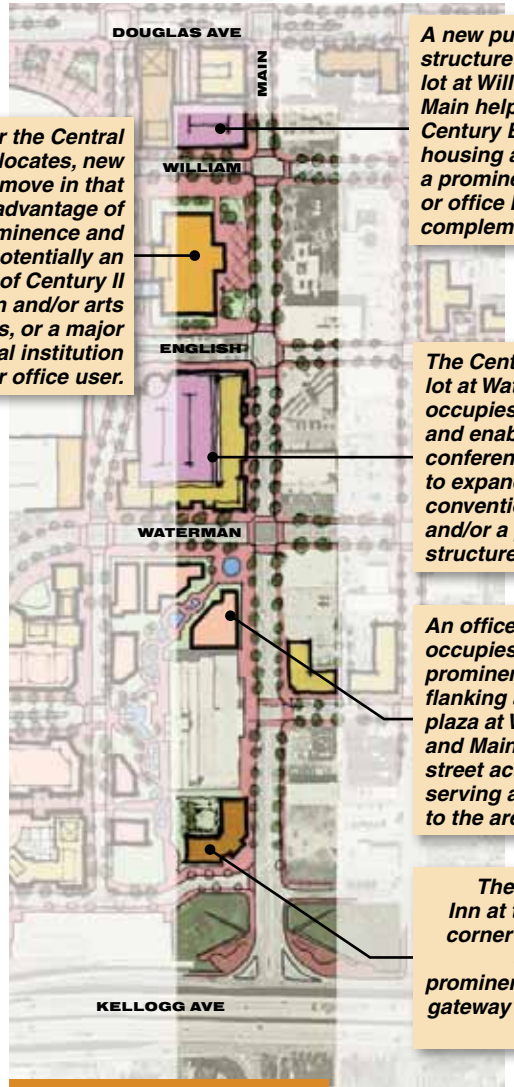
main street **north** of douglas



A transit corridor links Government Center, Douglas Corridor, Century II and WaterWalk.

Improved streetscape and additional on-street parking make a more comfortable walking environment for pedestrians.

Building owners/ developers have designed ground floors in ways that invite walking: office lobbies and meeting spaces are more open and accessible and retail exists where it's economically feasible.



A new public parking structure on the city lot at William and Main helps revive the Century Building as housing and supports a prominent new hotel or office building that complements Century II.

After the Central Library relocates, new uses move in that take full advantage of its prominence and dignity—potentially an expansion of Century II convention and/or arts facilities, or a major educational institution or office user.

The Century II parking lot at Waterman occupies a key site and enables the conference center to expand with convention facilities and/or a parking structure.

An office building occupies WaterWalk's prominent site flanking a pedestrian plaza at Waterman and Main, enhancing street activity and serving as a gateway to the area.

The new Fairfield Inn at the southeast corner of WaterWalk enhances the prominent Main Street gateway to Downtown from Kellogg.

community vision

main street **south** of douglas

PROJECT DOWNTOWN

Downtown Core

The traditional central business district brings people and their activities together around great address streets with convenient access by foot, car, transit and bicycle.

District Overview

In many ways the Downtown Core resembles the Main Street corridor (which it straddles), except that it is a district of gridded blocks, not a linear corridor. Its traditional role as the central business district means it still contains major employment centers, but it also has significant gaps where commercial development has left, and it shuts down after office hours. Several important Downtown streets in addition to Main weave together its blocks and create important address locations. Running north-south, Market represents another important office-address street and will have the important mixed-use enhancements of a new Downtown YMCA at Central and the new Exchange Place housing at Douglas. Even more significant as an "address street" is Broadway—once the regional north-south highway and still a major transit route—with several churches, office buildings, and the Orpheum Theater, as well as the empty Henry's department store and the site of the Allis Hotel, once Kansas's tallest building, which was demolished in 1996. Running east-west, First Street extends east to Old Town and beyond, and west to the Arkansas River and Delano. First Street boasts a significant number of office buildings as well as the Orpheum Theatre a highlight of the street's "String of Pearls." Second Street forms

a one-way couplet with First Street, has some major office buildings, including the Epic Center, and connects directly to Old Town Square. Waco and Water streets complete the district's grid with more local connections to Douglas Avenue and the Government Center.

While vacant sites and underutilized buildings continue to impose gaps, the Core has seen significant reinvestment in recent years. The Garvey Center has become a true mixed-use block through gradual transformation of its former hotel tower into apartments with a long waiting list, and improvements in its office buildings. Real Development revived several aging office buildings with up-to-date communications and other amenities that helped win back tenants, and it plans to convert other obsolete office buildings into housing. Cargill is building a new 60,000sf research and innovation center on First Street, reinforcing its already strong Downtown presence and creating in effect a corporate campus that incorporates two existing buildings within a two-block area. The Core District remains a choice business location for the region due to its accessibility, availability of office space, and proximity to Century II, hotels and Old Town. Its growing role as a residential neighborhood will make it not only a great place to live, but an even better place to do business as new development increases street activity and strengthens support for retail.

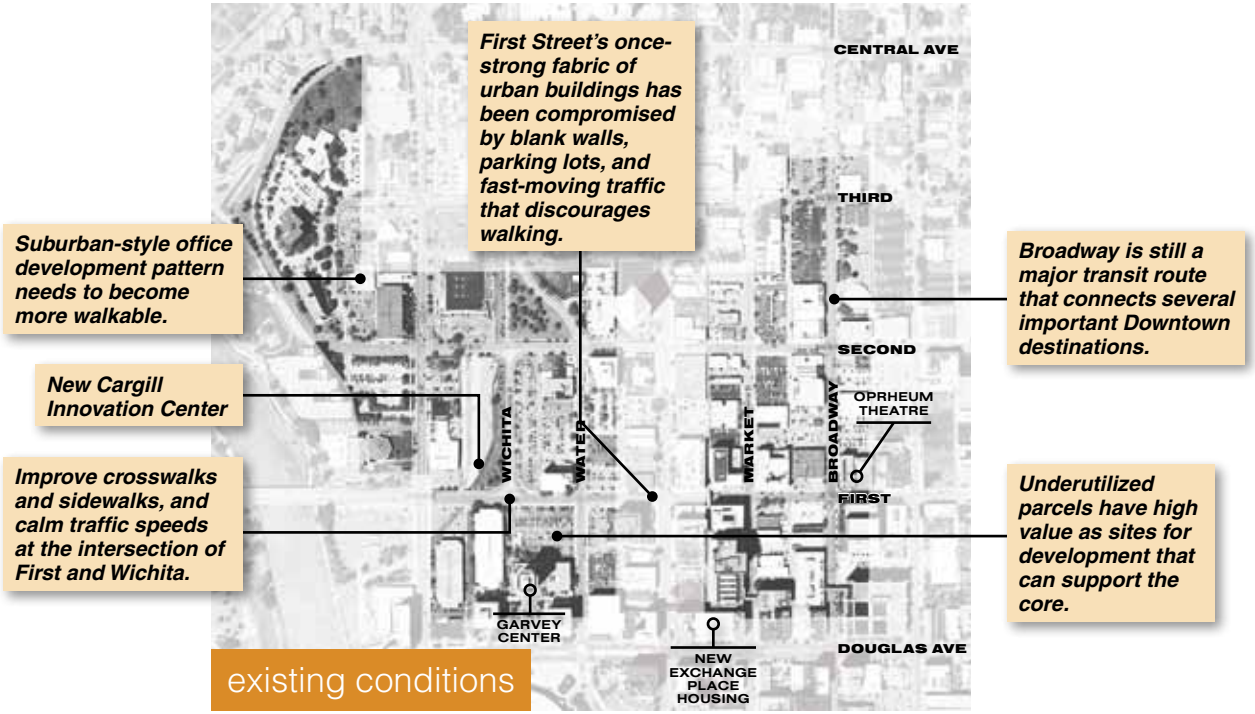
Key Themes

- **Focus infill development around shared structured parking and walking/transit corridors.** Adding shared public parking structures in two or three locations would enable infill development on parking lots. This will

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *First Street's once-strong fabric of urban buildings has been compromised with blank walls, parking lots and fast-moving traffic that discourage walking.*

Opportunity: *Focusing transit and walkability along Main, First and Second streets will make them desirable addresses for mixed-use development.*

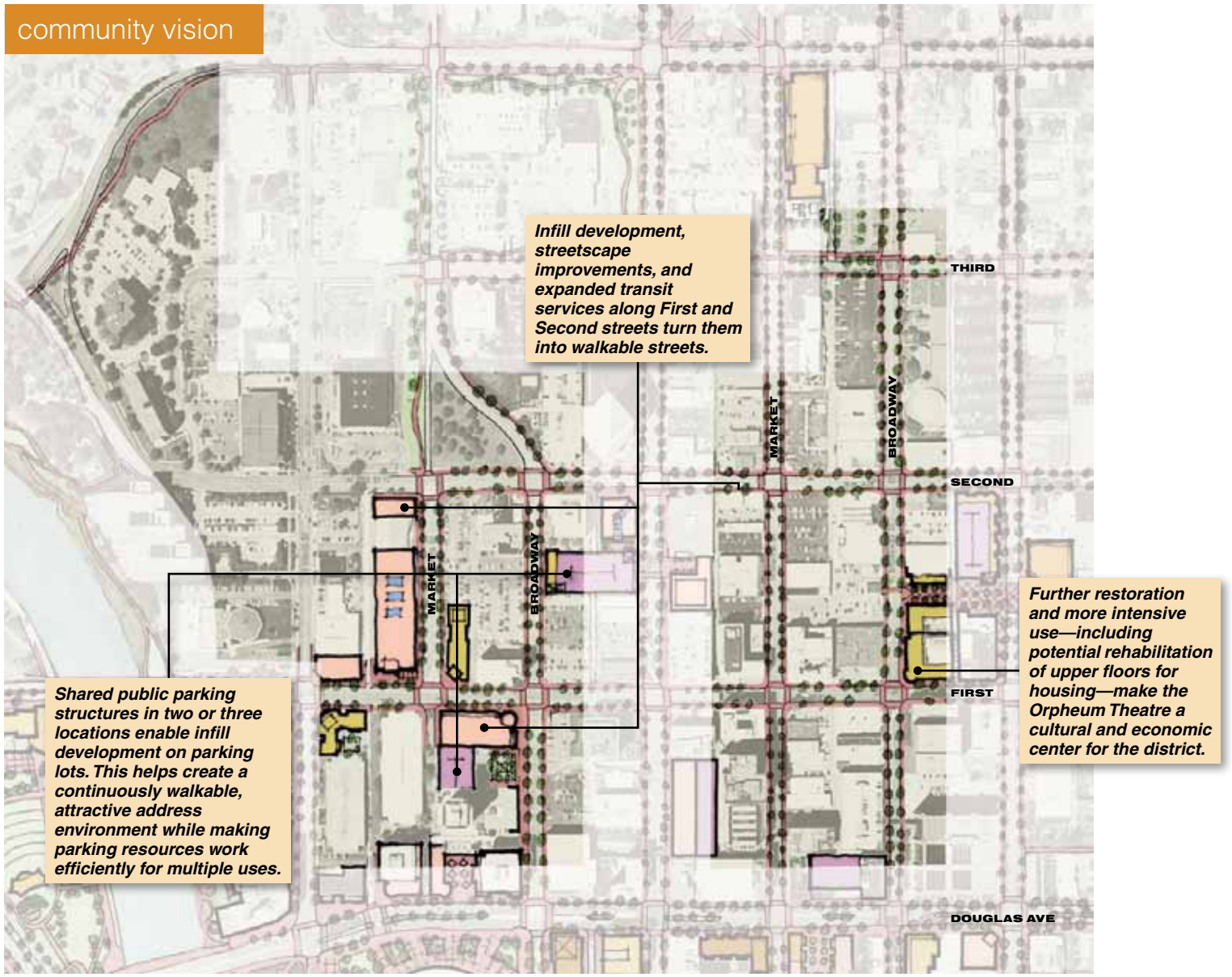


help create a continuously walkable, attractive address environment while making parking resources work more efficiently for multiple uses. It will also justify frequent transit service on Second, First, Main and Douglas, connecting the Core to the amenities all around it.

- **Celebrate the presence of historic buildings—while embracing compatible new architecture.** The district includes an eclectic mix of architecture. It is an especially appropriate place, then, to accommodate high-quality contemporary architecture that relates well to historic context in its proportions and other characteristics. At the same time, historic jewels like the Orpheum deserve further restoration and more intensive use to make them cultural and economic centers for the district.

- **Reinforce Main, 1st, and 2st Street corridors.** These corridors offer the best near-term prospects as walkable streets. To the extent possible, give priority to infill development, streetscape improvements and expanded transit services along them.

community vision



Century II-WaterWalk

The district of conventions, performing arts, dining, shopping and living that connects Downtown with its river.

District Overview

This onetime industrial area has been transformed by two generations of large-scale redevelopment. 1960s-era urban renewal created Century II, which along with the 1980s-era Bob Brown Convention Hall and 1990s Hyatt Hotel, has served a dual role as the region's major performing arts and convention center. WaterWalk was conceived around 2000 as a mixed-use center and now contains a major residential building, retail, office space and hotel, with significant mixed-use development potential yet untapped. Despite their success as destinations, each site has missed important opportunities to connect with the Downtown development context to the east and the signature Arkansas River on the west. The main focus in this district should be to establish these connections as more intense development proceeds on each site.

Key Themes

- **Plan Century II's future.** Century II deserves a more specific and conclusive long-term development plan than has been completed to date. With its performing arts and convention facilities regularly pushed to maximum capacity, and frequent space conflicts arising among different uses, there is a clear need for more and better

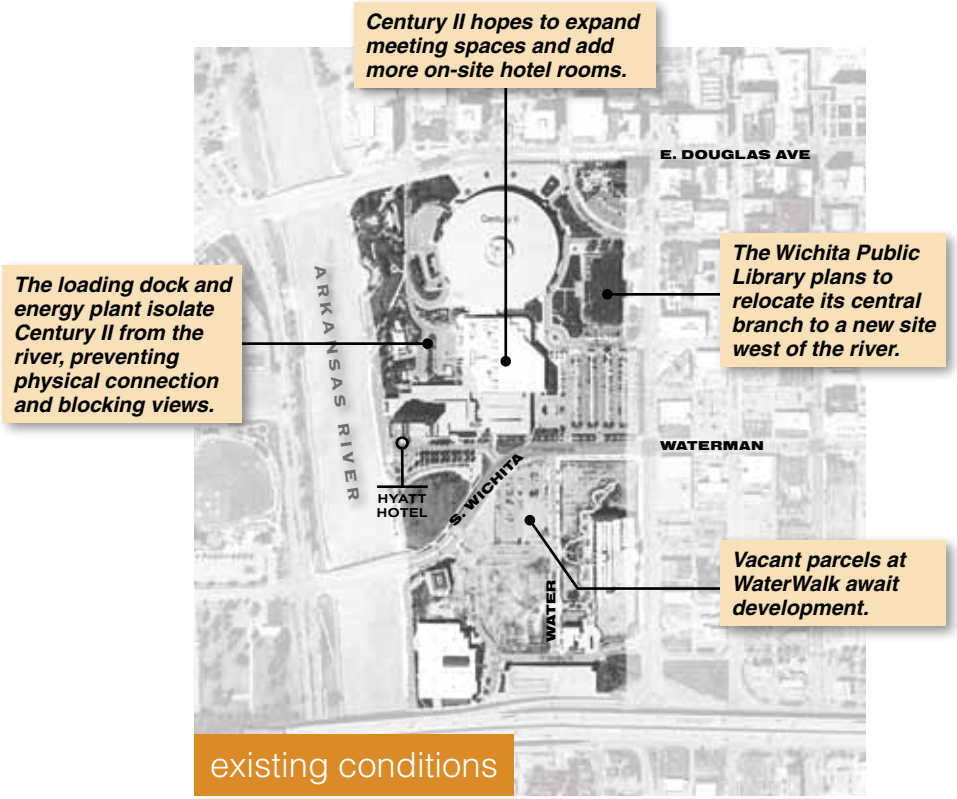
facilities. Careful cost/benefit analysis of the economics of performing arts and/or convention center space must underlie any future investments. Plans must take into account a variety of factors—from the possibility of creating a new performing arts facility on First Street to the possibility of reusing today's Central Library building, once the library completes its move, as convention event space. Any plans must also reintegrate the site into its Downtown context through walkable urban design and architecture.

- **Embrace the river edge with activities and access.** Both sites could do much more to make the river an asset. Century II's loading dock and energy plant wall it off from the riverfront's recreational path and park space. These should be replaced by reception halls, theater lobbies or other public spaces that celebrate expansive views and walking access to the river, making the beautiful setting one of the facility's most important features. Recent renovations that improve orientation of the Hyatt lobby and restaurant to the river provide an excellent model for this. Possible northward expansion of the Hyatt could introduce more strong opportunities to orient interior space to the river edge. WaterWalk's river frontage is largely occupied by the blank rear wall of the Gander Mountain store. As WaterWalk development proceeds, priority should be placed on the planned pedestrian walk/fountain connection to the river, and on introducing windows and potentially a restaurant facility into portions of the retail building. Gander Mountain could further take advantage of the river setting by using it to showcase its boating merchandise.

The Opportunity in The District

Today: *Century II lacks strong connections to the Arkansas River or to Douglas Avenue.*

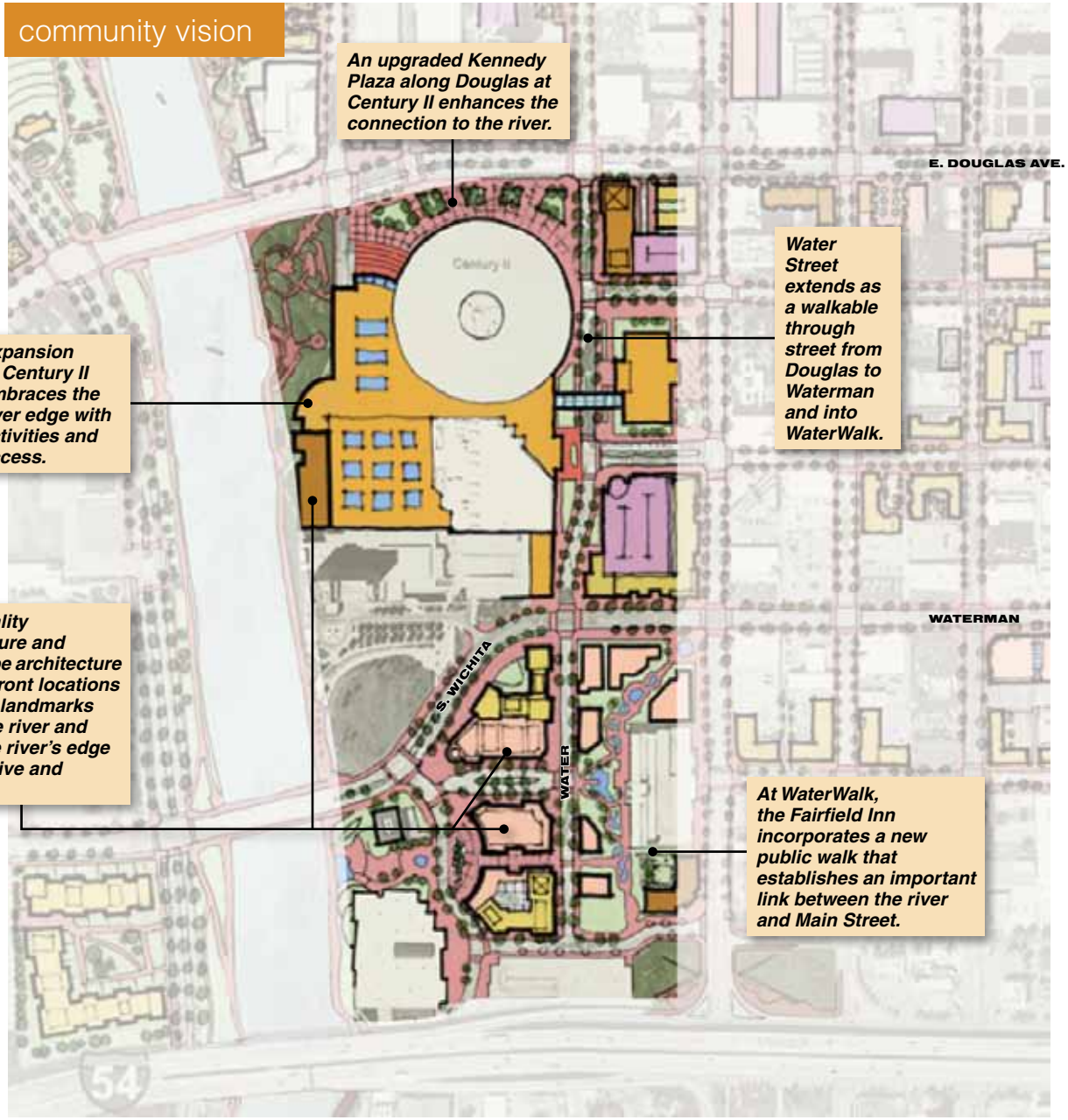
Opportunity: *Pittsburgh's convention center (middle photo) and a Hampton Inn in Greenville, SC (lower photo), embrace their river settings with extensive windows on gathering spaces, connections to public riverwalks, and distinctive architecture.*



- **Introduce walkable street connections across superblocks.** As improvements are made to Century II, priority should be placed on extending Water Street as a through, walkable street from Douglas to Waterman and right into WaterWalk. This would create an important missing connection between the Douglas corridor, Century II and WaterWalk, with particular value in establishing for convention visitors easy access to a variety of retail, dining and hotel choices on surrounding blocks. The Century II site should also create improved walking connections from Waco and Douglas to the river edge. At WaterWalk, the new Fairfield Inn is incorporating a public walk that creates an important walking link between the river and Main Street. Further development should include an extended pedestrian network, integrated with streets where possible, as anticipated in WaterWalk's master plan.

- **Create landmark architecture.** These sites' waterfront location puts them in great places to be seen. Use high-quality architecture to reinforce the collection of great architecture along the Arkansas River District as well as to distinguish the new buildings themselves. Similarly, use high-quality landscape architecture to make the most of the river's edge as a place for gathering, inviting local and regional communities as well as convention visitors to meet.

community vision



Government Center

This major center of employment and services, including the new flagship YMCA, gains a new level of access, civic identity and vitality from improved streets and recreation paths that invite walking, biking and using transit.

District Overview

Modest walking activity belies the fact that this district contains one of Downtown's principal concentrations of workers. City and County governments have an important opportunity to improve the walkability of their setting as they make needed space improvements, benefiting their workers as well as the public coming to use public services. The district offers a major opportunity to expand transit use because it is truly transit-ready: additional services can be justified today. This will benefit not only Government Center employees, but people and business and property owners along the balance of the transit routes. The region's highly-regarded YMCA is planning to add an impressive new Downtown facility nearby at Central Avenue and Market Street. This will be an important amenity not only to Governent Center workers, but to workers and residents throughout Downtown.

Key Themes

- **Major, growing employment center.** Sedgwick County will likely need to add office space as courts take more of its existing administration building. Locate any added space (whether in a new or existing building) in a place that improves the character and walkability of the district—such as new buildings that fill in vacant lots along Main Street or Central Avenue. City Hall's setback from surrounding streets, meanwhile, diminishes walkability and downplays its pedestrian entrance. Extending portions of the building to the street, adding office space between the parking garage and Central, and/or programming and designing the planted setback more actively as park space would significantly improve connections between the building and its

larger setting. A joint site master plan should be created addressing both the City and County campuses to ensure all buildings and landscaping reinforce one another and the character of their surroundings.

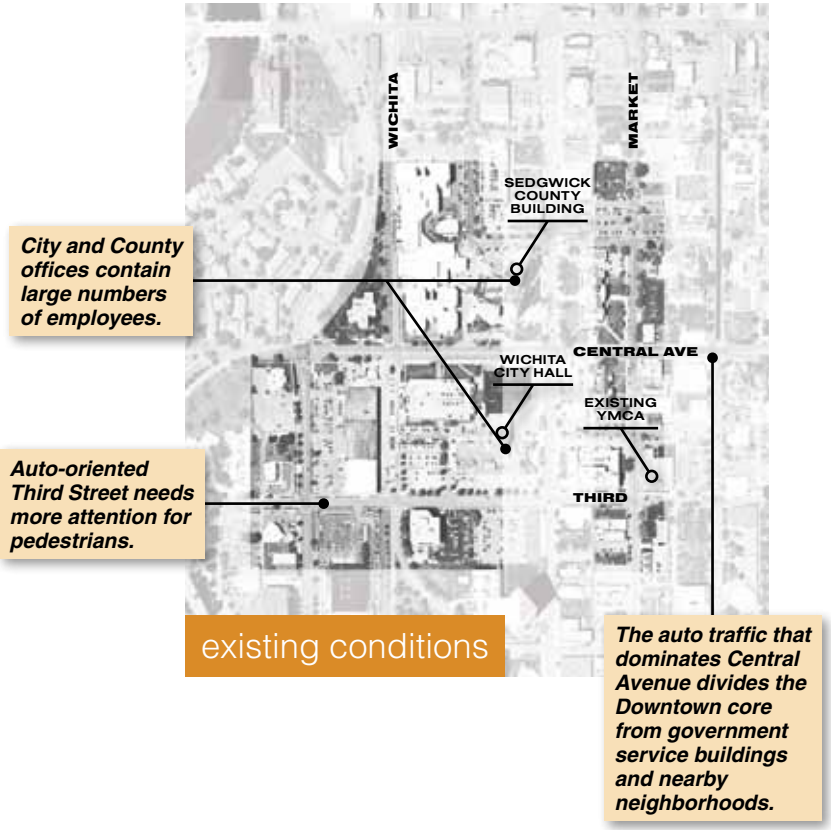
- **Leverage YMCA, churches, other landmark institutions as key destinations.** The new YMCA will be an important Downtown destination and landmark at Market Street and Central Avenue. Make it convenient to walk to the new facility from government buildings and the Main and Douglas corridors by creating a continuous network of inviting, safe sidewalks and crosswalks. Encourage architecture that fits well into the context of historic church buildings—through compatible proportions, materials and other compositional features—while also expressing its own time and program.

- **Improve connectivity to the rest of Downtown and riverfront.** In particular, create convenient safe walking connections to and from the district along Main and Market streets and Central Avenue, and institute convenient circulator transit along Main Street. The district's high concentration of employees, and the importance of the YMCA as a destination for people throughout Downtown, all contribute to making it "transit-ready." Additionally, extend the recreational-path network, which now connects the railroad corridor and the Arkansas River, eastward to the YMCA to give its patrons easy recreational jogging, walking and bicycling access to regional path networks. Landscaped areas around City Hall could offer useful area for recreational path extensions.

The Opportunity in The District

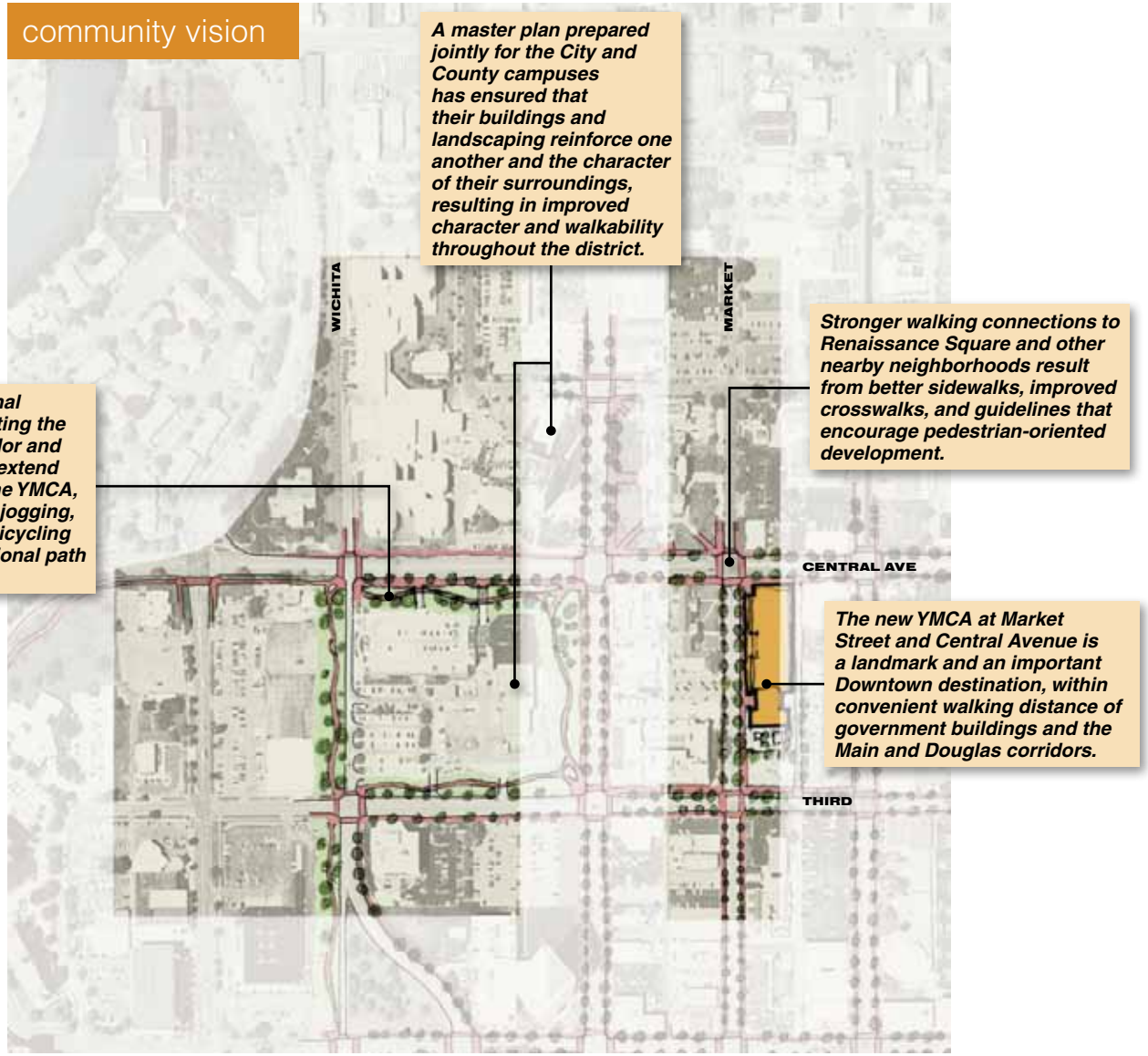
Today: *Central Avenue is dominated by traffic that divides Downtown from government service buildings and adjacent neighborhoods.*

Opportunity: *Pedestrian-friendly landscape and building design, such as in this government-building campus in Clayton, Missouri, is an amenity for government employees, makes public facilities more welcoming and accessible to the public, and burnishes the image of both City and County.*



- **Link to Renaissance Square and adjacent residential neighborhoods.** Government Center's employment base and the YMCA can provide important market support for new housing and retail in the Renaissance Square District and other nearby neighborhoods. Reinforce walking connections to these neighborhoods with improved sidewalks and crosswalks, and with guidelines that favor pedestrian-oriented development. Encourage employees to walk out of office buildings for lunch at neighborhood restaurants rather than eating at internal cafeterias.

community vision



A master plan prepared jointly for the City and County campuses has ensured that their buildings and landscaping reinforce one another and the character of their surroundings, resulting in improved character and walkability throughout the district.

Stronger walking connections to Renaissance Square and other nearby neighborhoods result from better sidewalks, improved crosswalks, and guidelines that encourage pedestrian-oriented development.

The recreational paths connecting the railroad corridor and the river now extend eastward to the YMCA, opening easy jogging, walking and bicycling access to regional path networks.

The new YMCA at Market Street and Central Avenue is a landmark and an important Downtown destination, within convenient walking distance of government buildings and the Main and Douglas corridors.

Renaissance Square

The vitality of Old Town, major hospital and government employment centers, and venerable Downtown churches shape this emerging neighborhood, which features a distinctive new park, new housing and retail.

District Overview

The existing Renaissance Square Plan sets a compelling vision for a neighborhood with many more residents, neighborhood shopping, and its own park. Market analysis suggests that such development may not receive strong market support in the near term relative to other Downtown locations, but that over the longer term it can benefit from market-driven development expanding up from Old Town West along the St. Francis and Emporia corridors. Redevelopment should be carefully oriented to Via Christi hospital, so that retail is supported by hospital-generated demand as well as neighborhood residents, and so that housing and transit are convenient to the hospital workforce. The district's many churches are an important foundation of its sense of community and character.

Key Themes

- **Encourage walkable retail and riverfront connections complementing Via Christi hospital, Governmental Center, and other institutions.** Maintain the existing street grid, which provides important assets in terms of walkable connections and development addresses. Connect with walkable connections to the Little

Arkansas River, Government Center, Old Town West and other adjacent districts. Introduce transit along St. Francis Street linking the hospital and Renaissance Square to major destinations, including Old Town, INTRUST Bank Arena and Wichita Transit hub.

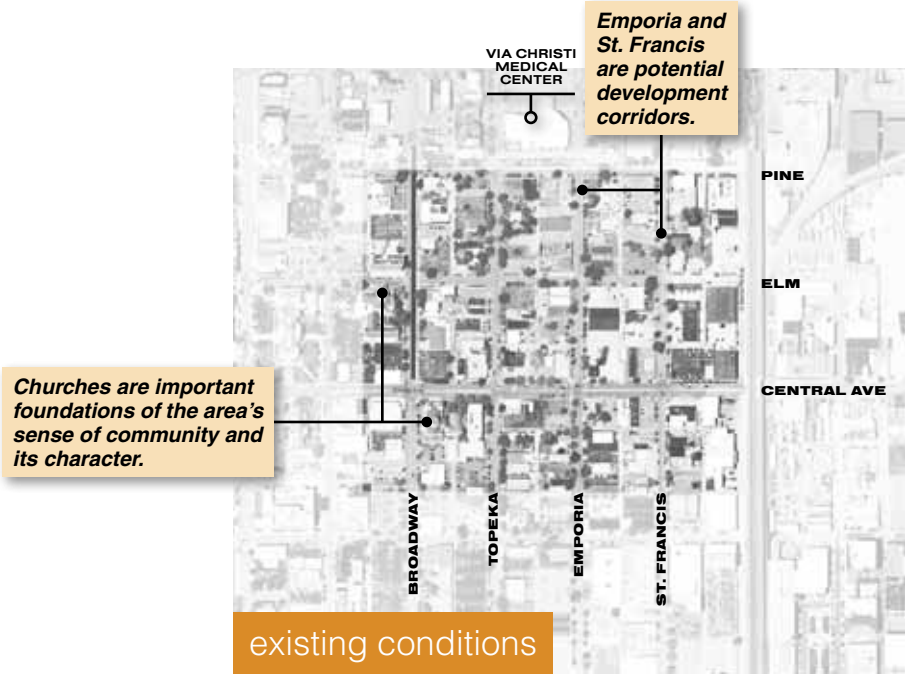
- **Infill housing opportunity.** Housing is Downtown's most significant market-driven development opportunity. The relative availability of large, vacant parcels here will help accommodate market demand. Housing is a more likely and more appropriate use here than commercial development, and it should be clustered in areas with a higher concentration of existing commercial and residential development and transit service. Churches may want to consider sponsoring housing development that addresses particular social goals such as affordability.

- **Create a park amenity.** Create a neighborhood park to add value to area housing and serve as a neighborhood destination that builds community. It is likely this park would be created from private land on an opportunistic basis. Remaining flexible about the location of the park will keep open the possibility of many good siting options. The park need not be large to be effective; avoid closing any street to create a park, as suggested in the Renaissance Square Plan.

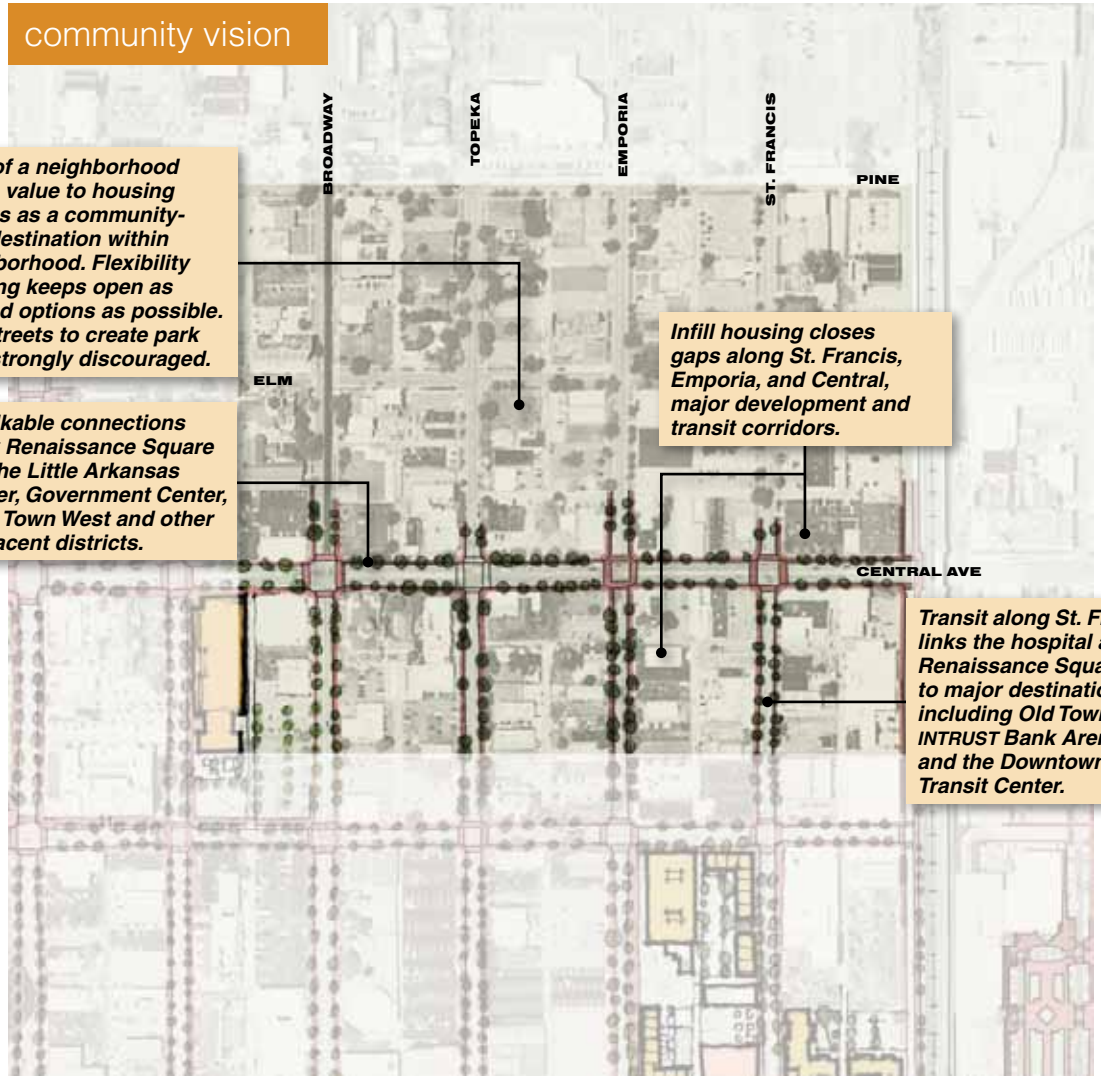
The Opportunity in The District

Today: *Numerous parking lots separating buildings make Renaissance Square's dwellings and landmark churches feel disconnected from one another, from Downtown, and from Historic Midtown.*

Opportunity: *New housing and a concentration of neighborhood retail would help reinforce Renaissance Square's neighborhood identity and would provide important support to the major job centers of Via Christi Hospital and the Government Center with amenities and housing that could serve employees.*


Emporia and St. Francis are potential development corridors.
VIA CHRISTI MEDICAL CENTER
PINE
ELM
CENTRAL AVE
Churches are important foundations of the area's sense of community and its character.
BROADWAY
TOPEKA
EMPORIA
ST. FRANCIS
existing conditions

community vision



Creation of a neighborhood park adds value to housing and serves as a community-building destination within the neighborhood. Flexibility about siting keeps open as many good options as possible. Closing streets to create park space is strongly discouraged.

Walkable connections link Renaissance Square to the Little Arkansas River, Government Center, Old Town West and other adjacent districts.

Infill housing closes gaps along St. Francis, Emporia, and Central, major development and transit corridors.

Transit along St. Francis, links the hospital and Renaissance Square to major destinations, including Old Town, the INTRUST Bank Arena, and the Downtown Transit Center.

7

Catalyst Sites

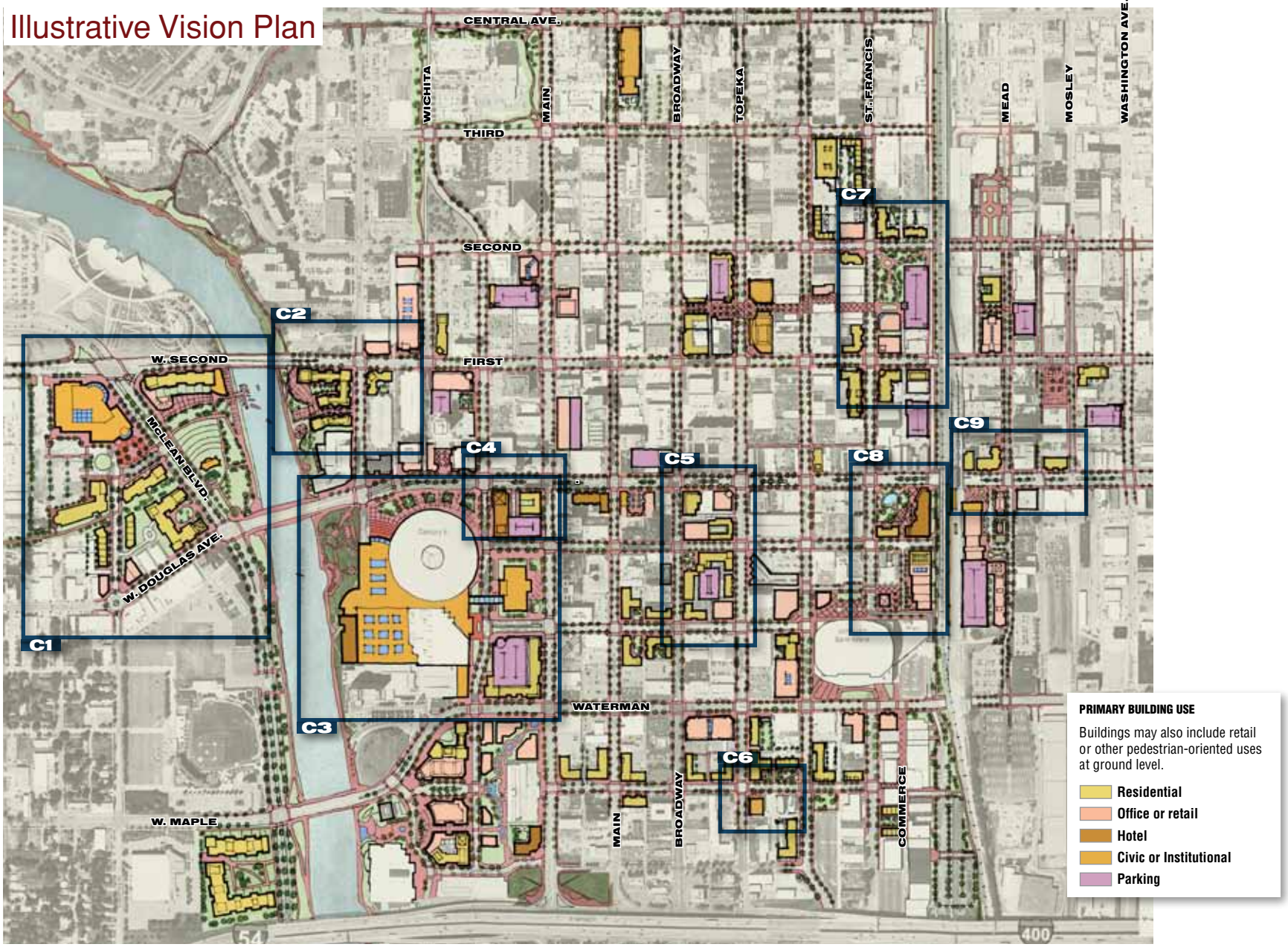
Catalyst Sites

OVERVIEW

The City and County own several land parcels Downtown that can serve as important strategic assets to help achieve the goals of the Downtown Vision. The location of each of these "catalyst sites" gives it a specific context of adjacent land uses, property ownerships, physical building and landscape, access and other factors that affect its potential to spur other growth. The unique potential role of each site is described below. In all cases, new market-driven development by the private sector play an important part in the redevelopment concept. For this reason, significant redevelopment activity on most sites should wait until there is clear private-sector interest in it. This will help maximize return on public investment. Most sites also include potential for an important piece of public infrastructure, such as public parking, a park, or improved public pedestrian access across the parcel.

Each site can and should play important roles in reinforcing a sense of place and development value in its respective part of Downtown. For this reason, the descriptions of the unique districts and neighborhoods that constitute Downtown in the District Framework section below make specific reference to the catalyst sites. Many of the sites are also strategic locations for public parking as described in the Transportation Plan section above.

Illustrative Vision Plan



PROJECT DOWNTOWN

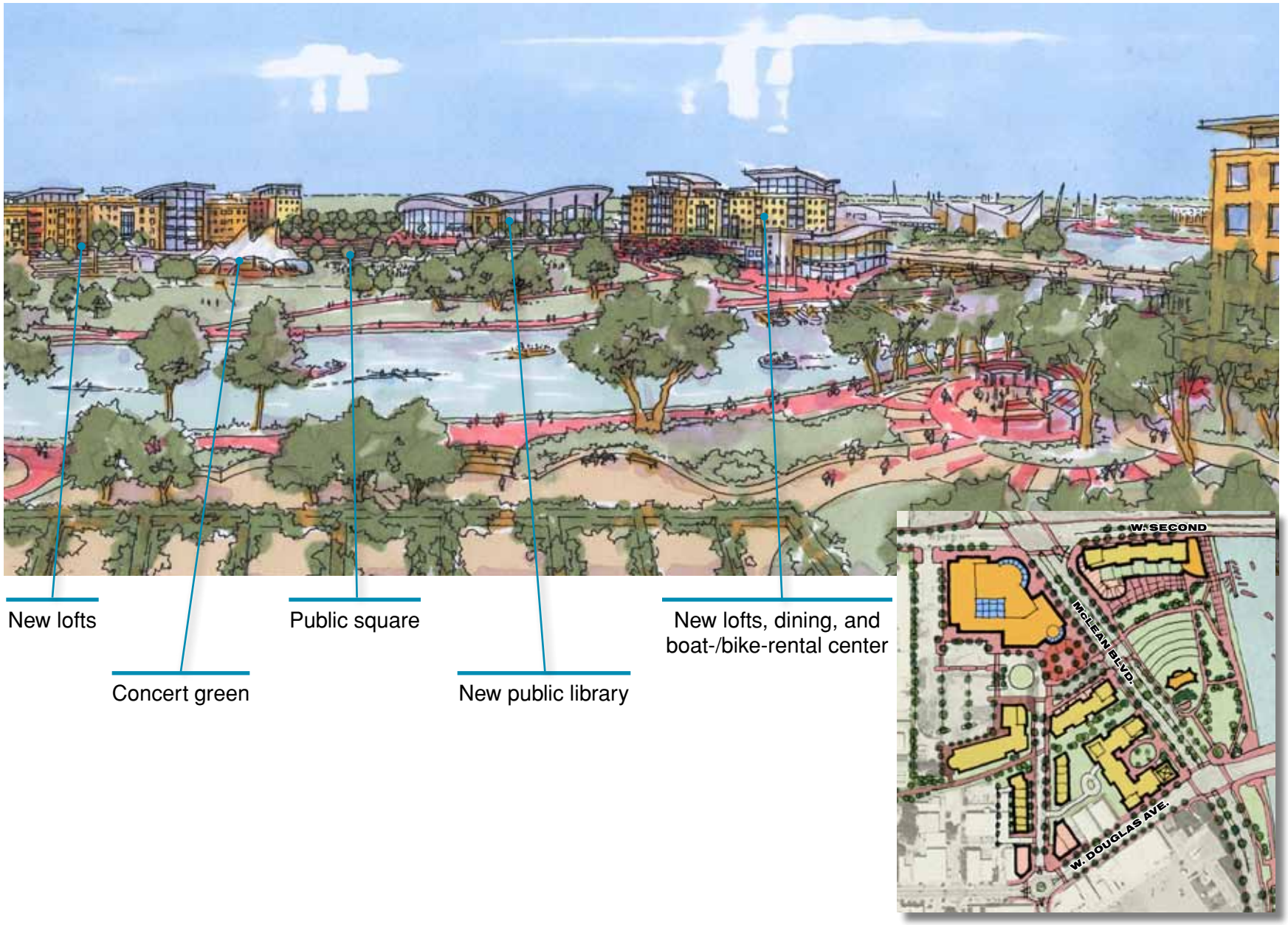
Key Catalyst Projects

Redevelopment of this City-owned parking lot with a park, housing, and structured parking could define the new Arena district and spur re-use of the former Henry's Department Store building and the underoccupied Douglas Building (see Catalyst site C5, pp. 7.22-7.25)

The Douglas Building could be revived with new housing and/or commercial uses by creating structured parking on a City-owned parking lot (see Catalyst site C5 on pages 7.22-7.25).

Improvements to Century II could transform this utility and loading area into more competitive exhibition and hotel space with access to and from public paths and views along the Arkansas River edge.

Catalyst Sites



SITE

West Bank Arkansas River and New Central Library

Including the parcel southwest of McLean /Second Street acquired by the City for the new library as well as adjacent public park areas and privately-owned parcels.

How the site advances the master plan

The planned new Downtown library can play a very important role—besides its central one as a state-of-the-art library facility serving the whole community—in bringing the Wichita region to enjoy the Arkansas River and in stimulating private development investment in Delano and near the river.

Context

The library site sits two blocks north of Delano's Douglas/ Sycamore roundabout in an area where new retail and restaurants are reviving Douglas into a distinctive and successful neighborhood shopping street. The site is directly south of Exploration Place—which could benefit from the addition of a nearby cultural destination as well as other uses—and west of riverfront park land. An existing recreation path follows the riverbank, and a planned recreation path on a former rail corridor would run directly past the library site to link with the riverbank path. The site can play a strategic role in tying all this context together with destination activities and improved walking, biking, transit and parking access; in its current state, as a former light industrial site in an auto-oriented setting, it cannot.

Target program and development approach

The Vision scenario anticipates:

- **A new library building,** designed and programmed as envisioned by the Library Board to provide a variety of new and improved facilities to the community. These will go beyond the facility's traditional role as a source of books and other media to support activities including community meetings and movie screenings in prominent spaces accessible after ordinary library hours, public computer and Internet access, children's programs, café and more. The library should be provided adequate off-street parking and access serving its needs.

- **Library Plaza,** an inviting public space at the library entrance. This plaza would feature convenient walking access from library parking as well as adjacent public sidewalks and riverfront park areas. The plaza should be programmed and designed with activities that keep it active during as much of each day and week as possible. The planned library movie theatre, community

meeting rooms and café are excellent examples of such programming that could keep the plaza active and inviting. Supplementary housing in the area, described below, could also keep the plaza active and take advantage of its potential as a neighborhood park. A new crosswalk with pedestrian-activated traffic signals should be installed on McLean midway between Douglas and Second Street, connecting Library Plaza to the riverfront park. The crosswalk should also accommodate the planned rails-to-trails recreational path extending west from the library site through Delano.

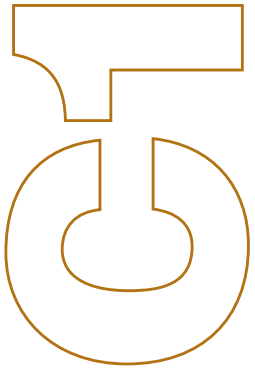
- **Mixed-use development adjacent to the library.** Library planning has wisely anticipated complementary development and activity around the library, such as housing and public recreation. Uses like these not only make the most of the city's investment in the library by encouraging private investment and supporting other community benefits, they can also benefit the library by creating a setting that is more inviting to its patrons. The library site is large enough to comfortably accommodate other development beyond a substantial new library building and associated parking and plaza. Development concepts for such development on and adjacent to the library site include:

  > **Approximately 150 housing units near the library west of McLean, incorporating ground-level retail and/or restaurant use as the market will support.** This development could be accommodated on southern portions of the library site not needed for the library or its parking, ***or*** on adjacent privately-owned land to the south (over a longer period, additional housing could fill in either site), in 3- to 5-story buildings. Development around the Library Plaza should incorporate ground-level retail and/or restaurant use wherever possible to help bring activity and visibility to the plaza.

  > **A new mixed-use building on current city-owned land along the south side of Second between McLean and the river.** This building could play an important role in bringing people to the riverfront park on a daily basis, justifying its location on a modest amount of current open space (currently occupied by a berm) by making a much larger amount of adjacent park area more useful to the community. The vision scenario anticipates approximately 20,000 square feet of restaurant and/or retail space, 70 housing units, and a boating/biking recreation facility in a 4- to 5-story building. Restaurant and retail space should face McLean, Second, and the park area to the south as much as possible, taking advantage of park and river views. Housing should take advantage of river, park and Downtown views. The recreation facility should include functions such as a bike- or boat-rental facility that gives the community more opportunities to enjoy activities on and near the river. It also could include new boathouse facilities needed by Wichita State University's crew teams, possibly co-using facilities or management serving the public.

  > **Revitalization of existing park space between McLean and the river.** Adding a stage and concert green would enhance the site's already important function of hosting concerts. The adjacent recreation facility could incorporate public rest rooms and/or other supportive facilities.

SITE



> **Other cultural or institutional uses such as a museum or conference center** could also be highly appropriate on or near the library site, in place of or in addition to the uses described above.

Timing

The library should be the first building constructed on its site to ensure it has adequate space for building footprint, access and parking. Once library parking and other site usage patterns are apparent, surplus land may be developed with housing and/or other uses that complement the library and adjacent public spaces. The new McLean crosswalk should be created during construction of the library to reinforce library-river connections as early as possible.

Market analysis suggests that new housing construction in the area may be most feasible after the library is open and after other portions of Downtown have emerged more clearly as residential neighborhoods. When housing is constructed near the library, it should contain enough units and be located close enough to the library or other nearby development to have a strong sense of community and place.

Quality standards for development and design

The library building should be an architectural landmark in the tradition of other great landmarks along the river, such as Exploration Place, the Keeper of the Plains, and the Wichita Art Museum. This will reinforce the Arkansas River corridor as Kansas' greatest concentration of cultural institutions. The primary library entrance(s) should be oriented to Library Plaza, McLean and/or Second streets. The entrance(s) should accommodate convenient walking access from library parking as well as these public spaces and streets.

Minimize the appearance of off-street parking associated with private development. East of McLean, parking may be included in the ground level of the new mixed-use building if screened from Second Street by occupied dwelling space and from park areas by a berm or other landscaping. West of McLean, library parking should be located to the west of its site, substantially screened from McLean by buildings. Enough visibility may be maintained between the parking and public access routes, supplementing wayfinding signage, to ensure driving access the library is convenient to and from multiple directions. Parking may be included in the ground level of new housing or mixed-use buildings if screened from McLean, Sycamore and the Library Plaza by occupied dwelling space or retail. Providing on-street parking in the curbside lanes of McLean is strongly encouraged as a means of adding public parking capacity for library, park, retail and residential visitor use, and as a means of keeping traffic speeds moderate to allow safe pedestrian crossing of McLean.

Design housing so that as many dwelling units as possible have the benefit of the area's fine views to the Arkansas River, adjacent parkland and Downtown skyline.

Include height and scale transitions in buildings adjoining Delano so that new buildings relate well in scale to existing residential and commercial structures around them. Portions of new buildings closer to the river may be taller as long as building massing includes a sensitive height transition to context.

Development finance strategies

- Combine public sources and private donors for the new library.
- Encourage market-based new housing and restaurant/retail development that can support its development costs, on city-owned land and adjacent privately-owned land. Maximize the city's return on its land contribution. Reduce development costs for new housing west of McLean through the use of well-designed dedicated surface parking, dedicated garages, and/or sharing of a limited amount of library parking (to the extent possible, recognizing that library parking needs must have priority). Coordinate development with ongoing private-sector-led reinvestment in Delano's Douglas corridor.
- Wichita-based low-interest revolving housing-development loan fund.
- Investigate potential Wichita State University investment in a boating facility that serves the general public as well as the university community.
- Consider other potential institutional partner(s) for conference center, museum and/or other appropriate development.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure, including existing street and utility network, park areas, and existing/expanded Q-Line service.

SITE

C2

East Bank Arkansas River at First/Waco Streets

This large city-owned parcel sits north of the Broadview Hotel and includes a riverfront recreational path. The city's partial ownership of the lot southeast of First and Waco streets (former rail corridor) as well as the public parking structure to the east side of Waco reinforce investment opportunity on and around this site.

How the site advances the master plan

This site offers a unique and important opportunity to connect Downtown to the Arkansas River with activity and inviting walking paths. It also can bring needed life to this area evenings and weekends with more housing, restaurants and possibly retail to complement substantial existing office and hospitality uses in the area.

Context

Recent park improvements between the Broadview Hotel and the river also directly benefit this site. Besides the hotel, river, and lot and parking structure along Waco described above, the site is also near the Garvey Center—a healthy mix of office, housing and retail—Century II, the INTRUST Bank offices and Cargill's offices as well as its new Innovation Center.

Target program and development approach

The Vision scenario anticipates:

- **One or more new buildings containing housing and ground-floor restaurant and/or retail space** framing a river-oriented courtyard that enhances public access to the river. Approximately 130 dwelling units could be accommodated in 3- to 5-story buildings. While market opportunity for restaurant and retail uses may not be extensive here, the site could provide at least one highly desirable and unique restaurant location overlooking the river and highly visible and accessible from First and/or Waco streets. The housing may incorporate a semi-private residential courtyard facing the river but should also leave room for public park or plaza space that expands on the existing riverfront recreational path.

- **An institutional use,** such as a museum or conference center, could also be highly appropriate on this site as long as a significant housing presence remains. This site could also be an appropriate alternate location for a boathouse serving both Wichita State University and/or the general public (see catalyst site C1).

- **Redevelopment that improves pedestrian access—** currently poor near the site—between the riverfront recreational path and nearby Downtown streets. In particular, inviting walking connections should be made in at least two of these locations: 1) at the foot of the First/Second street bridge; 2) at the corner of First and Waco; 3) from Waco midway between First and Douglas.

- On the lot partially owned by the city southeast of the First and Waco intersection, another **50 housing units,** ideally with ground-floor retail, could be possible.

- **Management of the existing public parking structure across Waco** and/or additional private

New Cargill building, offices, housing

New housing and waterfront dining

Public park and river access

Park improvements at the Broadview

SITE C2

structured parking at the Garvey Center to the extent possible to free up additional capacity for accommodating uses on the development site, such as housing or restaurants. This could significantly reduce parking cost and design challenges on the catalyst site.

Timing

Market analysis suggests that new housing construction on the catalyst site area may be most economically feasible after other portions of Downtown emerge more clearly as residential neighborhoods. This would produce housing values sufficient to support the costs of new construction and potential below-grade parking. When new housing is built, it should contain enough units and be sufficiently integrated into its riverfront and Downtown contexts to have a strong sense of community and place.

In the near-term, the site could offer a good opportunity for a public boat-launching facility for kayaks, canoes and similar unpowered watercraft, with associated surface parking.

Quality standards for development and design

Building and landscape architecture on the site should demonstrate a high level of quality and distinction in the tradition of the other great landmarks along the river, such as Exploration Place, the Keeper of the Plains and the Wichita Art Museum. This will reinforce the value of private development on the site.

One or more river-oriented restaurants on the site should include significant windows and outdoor dining space oriented to the river.

Ground-level housing units, whether oriented to surrounding streets or an internal courtyard, should have individual entrances and substantial window area facing the adjacent sidewalk or path. This enlivens the walking environment with frequent elements of interest and household identity, and makes it safer by adding more “eyes on the street.” Upper-floor housing units should include bay windows and/or balconies to add interest to the building’s appearance and value to its dwelling units. Design housing so that as many dwelling units as possible have the benefit of the area’s fine views to the Arkansas River, adjacent parkland and Delano.

Minimize the visibility of off-street parking associated with private development. Ideally, parking for on-site housing should be located below grade to diminish its impact on river views and access for site residents and the public. If additional parking is necessary at grade level for capacity or cost reasons, it

should be screened from public streets by occupied dwelling units and from the river by additional occupied units or terraced landscaping. Aim to accommodate all restaurant or retail parking on-street and/or in nearby parking structures to reduce cost and design impacts on the site.

Development finance strategies

- Pursue market-based housing and restaurant/retail development that can support its development costs on city-owned land as well as nearby land under private ownership (southeast corner of First and Waco). Maximize the city's return on its land contribution. Manage parking in the city-owned Waco Street parking structure and at the Garvey Center, if possible, to free parking capacity that can support catalyst-site redevelopment, to reduce costs for new parking.
- Wichita-based, low-interest revolving housing-development loan fund.
- Consider other potential institutional partner(s) for conference center or other appropriate development.
- Build on existing and planned infrastructure, including existing street and utility network, recent riverfront park improvements at the Broadview Hotel, and existing/expanded Q-Line service.
- Leverage ongoing private-sector-led reinvestment in the Broadview Hotel, Garvey Center, and Cargill Innovation Center.

SITE C3

Century II and Current Central Library

This city-owned land includes the Century II performing arts center and convention center, the associated Hyatt Hotel, and the current Central Library building on Main Street.

How the site advances the master plan

This large site—already one of Downtown's most important destinations for residents and visitors alike—makes important contributions to Wichita's economic and cultural life. Nevertheless, it holds significant untapped opportunities that deserve more planning and investment. An enlarged convention center that celebrates its Arkansas River setting could attract more significant events. Century II's performing arts venues could be further improved and separated from conflicting convention center uses—or possibly would profit from relocation to entirely new facilities elsewhere. The architecturally distinguished current library building needs to take on a new use of importance and prominence once the library relocates to its new site. Extension of Water Street through the site could not only improve access to Century II but make important links to and among Douglas Avenue and WaterWalk.

Context

Century II has prominent relationships with other important Downtown areas on all sides; all of these relationships could stand improvement. The Douglas Avenue edge, the facility's most prominent front door, benefits from adjacency to a variety of uses, including the Broadview Hotel and housing, offices, and restaurants at the Garvey Center. Yet the potential positive relationships among these uses are hindered by difficult walking connections across and along Douglas, limited restaurant and retail options, and regular use of Century II's Kennedy Plaza as a loading/staging area instead of as the public plaza it was intended to be. The library building has a prominent presence on Main and draws many regular visitors, but broad setbacks isolate the building from its context and are hard to use in ways that effectively support library program. The convention center's primary entrance is difficult to find, set back a block from Main. Surface and structured parking undermine the dignity of the Waterman edge, although the Hyatt's landmark presence at the river helps compensate.

Improved pedestrian connections are needed across Waterman to make a stronger connection to WaterWalk, where a new hotel and anticipated restaurants will be important destinations for convention center visitors. The Hyatt also makes a strong connection to the Arkansas River through its lobby, dining and landscaped areas. The rest of Century II's river edge, however, fails to embrace the unique river setting. Loading and parking areas and the chilling/heating plant occupy a substantial portion of the facility's frontage on A. Price Woodward Jr. Park; the fountain park toward Douglas, although well-used on hot days, has weak walking and visual connections to Douglas Avenue and Kennedy Plaza.

Target program and development approach

The Vision only suggests a very rough scenario for new and expanded facilities at Century II because further study is needed to confirm the most appropriate investments for its

Situated on the Allegheny River, Pittsburgh's convention center (above) celebrates its setting with extensive views from its interior spaces. The Hampton Inn in Greenville, South Carolina (left), connects to the Reedy River corridor with views from interior spaces and direct pedestrian access to walking paths.

SITE 3

various facilities. The scenario does include, however, several intentional elements that should receive careful consideration in the follow-up planning recommended by this plan. These elements include:

- **Expand the convention center toward the river, and extend Water Street as a full city street from Douglas to Waterman and into the WaterWalk site.** This differs from the recommendations of a past convention center study that expanded the convention center toward Main Street. Expanding toward the river (to create a much larger exhibition hall as well as additional meeting rooms and other facilities) takes advantage of compelling opportunities to connect the facility's public circulation spaces directly to riverfront park space, and to create walkable connections to other complementary Downtown areas along Water Street. The convention center would also add a prominent entrance oriented to Douglas between the circular building and the river. One challenge this approach raises is improving the loading/staging area in a way that doesn't obstruct important walking connections and "front door" areas. Conceptually, this could be done by expanding such facilities in their current general area; building added convention center facilities above the loading area; linking this upper level to street entrances and the river edge with well-designed terracing and stairs; and making sure the overall design keeps service entrances and exits as discreet as possible. Such an approach would return important benefits in the form of state-of-the art facilities and a highly memorable setting.

- **Accommodate a potential new north-wing addition to the existing Hyatt Hotel, running parallel to the river edge.** Hyatt management has already considered such an addition, which could help Century II secure larger conventions (due to a greater inventory of convenient hotel rooms) and would take excellent advantage of the river setting, with dining and/or other public spaces at ground level offering direct access to and expansive views of the river and its park edges.

- **The circular building remains a premier performing arts venue for the region,** freed from conflicts with convention center events by the construction of new dedicated convention facilities.

- **The Central Library building is re-used in one of several ways:**
  > It is retrofitted as an additional performing arts venue, such as a black-box theater, with the building's generous windows continuing to enliven public lobby spaces with daylight and view connections.
  > It accommodates an expansion of the convention center, providing meeting spaces, administrative offices and/or a "front door" and reception area that are highly visible on Main Street. Such convention-related uses would likely justify building an enclosed pedestrian bridge over Water Street linking the building to the rest of the convention center.
  > It becomes the new home of a significant institution, such as a department of a local college or university.

- The parking lot at Main and Waterman becomes a parking structure with significantly more capacity, lined on at least two sides with housing over ground-floor retail that brings Main and Waterman to life as walkable streets. See strategic parking location P3.

Timing

A dedicated planning effort to determine the most cost-effective ways to enhance Century II's value as a convention center and performing arts venue should be launched as soon as possible, so that the resulting reinvestments can occur as soon as possible. The process of completing planning, confirming funding sources, completing design, and beginning construction appears likely to take up to five years.

Quality standards for development and design

Any expansion to the river's park edge should feature direct walking access and extensive windows connecting it visually to its setting. While an internally-focused exhibit hall would be inappropriate for such a location, public lobbies, dining areas, and even meeting rooms, as part of the convention center itself or associated hotel space, would make very successful connections that not only bring vitality to the river edge, but also distinguish the convention center with the asset of a beautiful, memorable setting.

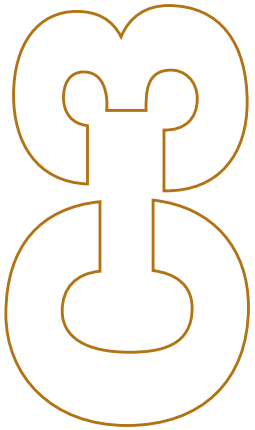
Continue Wichita's tradition of landmark architecture along the Arkansas River by engaging high-quality design talent for any expansion or other improvements at Century II and/or the Hyatt. Century II is one of Wichita's most visible landmarks, and it offers great opportunity as an improved landmark that fully celebrates and takes advantage of its river setting for views, access and activities such as outdoor dining and receptions.

Minimize the visibility of off-street parking and loading/staging areas from public streets and parks. The suggested parking structure at Main and Waterman should, for instance, be screened with housing and ground-floor retail on at least its Main and Waterman edges, if not others as well. High-quality architectural design and materials should be used to enhance the appearance of any exposed portions of the parking structure. Loading and staging areas for the convention center should display only an entrance drive, preferably screened with a garage door or gate when not in use, to public streets. Screen loading docks, parking and maneuvering areas from public view.

Development finance strategies

- Combine public sources and private donors for Century II improvements (convention center and performing arts facilities).
- Recruit public sources, private donors and/or private institutional tenants for reuse of the current Central Library building.
- Encourage market-based new hotel development that can financially support its development costs, on city-owned land and/or on adjacent privately-owned land. Maximize the city's return on its land contribution. Coordinate

SITE



development with ongoing private-sector-led reinvestment at the Hyatt and Broadview hotels and at WaterWalk.

- Wichita-based, low-interest, revolving housing-development loan fund for housing along Waterman/Main parking structure.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure including existing street and utility network, parks, and existing/expanded Q-Line service.

Prominent transit

New hotel

Improved
Kennedy Plaza

SITE

C4

City Plaza and Parking Site at Douglas, Main and Century II Drive

This city-owned site includes Finley Ross Park (a sunken public plaza) and adjacent public parking lot, and anticipates additional site area through reconfiguration of Century II and Tlalnepantla drives and Water, William and Cancun streets.

How the site advances the master plan

Redevelopment on this site can transform the forgotten, hidden space known as Finley Ross Park into a landmark hotel (or office building) that strengthens Century II's ability to attract conventions and brings Kennedy Plaza back to life as a great public space. A new parking structure here would add parking in one of the places it is needed most—to enable new development such as the hotel, enable revitalization of the adjacent Century Building (such as with loft apartments), and offer supplementary parking for Century II and other established uses.

Context

One of the most visible locations on Douglas for people approaching from the west, the site sits adjacent to a broad mix of uses that could work together much more effectively if a better walking environment and more intensively occupied buildings—especially at ground level and during evenings and weekends—were present. The site can offer precisely these missing elements.

Target program and development approach

The Vision scenario anticipates:

- **A larger site area on a squared-off block** created by replacing Century II and Tlalnepantla drives and Cancun Street with an extension of Water Street south of Douglas to WaterWalk, and an extension of William Street to meet the extension of Water.

- **A new hotel (or alternatively an office building) of up to 250 rooms at the corner of Douglas and Water,** replacing Finley Ross Park. This building would be a prominent landmark that joins Century II, the Garvey Center and the Broadview Hotel in giving shape and activity to Kennedy Plaza and adjacent portions of Douglas. A hotel would offer the advantages of providing Century II additional nearby hotel rooms that make it more competitive, and of providing activity at street level throughout the day and week, helping bring Kennedy Plaza and surrounding streets back to life.

- **A new parking structure at Main and William streets** providing needed parking for the hotel (office) building, revived use of the Century Building, and other area uses (see strategic parking location P4).

- **Adaptive reuse of the Century Building as residential lofts or other market-supported use, at the discretion of its owner.** No longer competitive for the office uses it was designed for, the building has been largely empty for nearly 20 years except for an active function hall and a limited number of office and retail tenants. The vision anticipates the building could accommodate approximately 90 dwelling units on nine upper floors. Housing provides an attractive re-use opportunity for several reasons:
  > building floor layouts and views could accommodate apartments that are attractive to the market;
  > the Garvey Center has already established a housing presence in the area;
  > residential parking could share spaces occupied by commercial or hospitality uses at other times of the day; and
  > re-use would add people to the area during evenings and weekends, when the area's office buildings tend to be empty.

- **Approximately 15,000 square feet of ground-level retail or restaurant use in the Century Building and new hotel (office) building.**

Timing

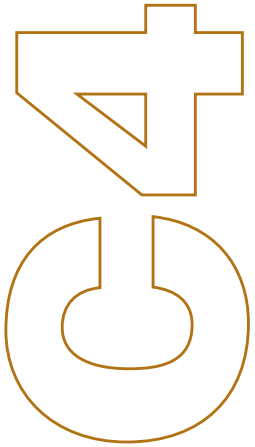
Site redevelopment should wait until there is demonstrated market interest in at least one major development on the site, either the new hotel (or office) building or Century Building re-use. It should also have the benefit of completed comprehensive planning for the adjacent Century II site, so that it can provide the optimal complement through additional hotel rooms, parking, restaurants or other means.

Quality standards for development and design

The hotel (or office) building deserves high-quality architectural design befitting its prominence. It occupies one of the few locations Downtown where new development of more than five stories appears market-feasible. Ground-level spaces along the Douglas, Main and William sidewalks should contain active hotel lobby, dining and/or retail space that invites walking. It is suggested that vehicular drop-off for the hotel be located between the new building and the Century Building to minimize conflicts with pedestrians.

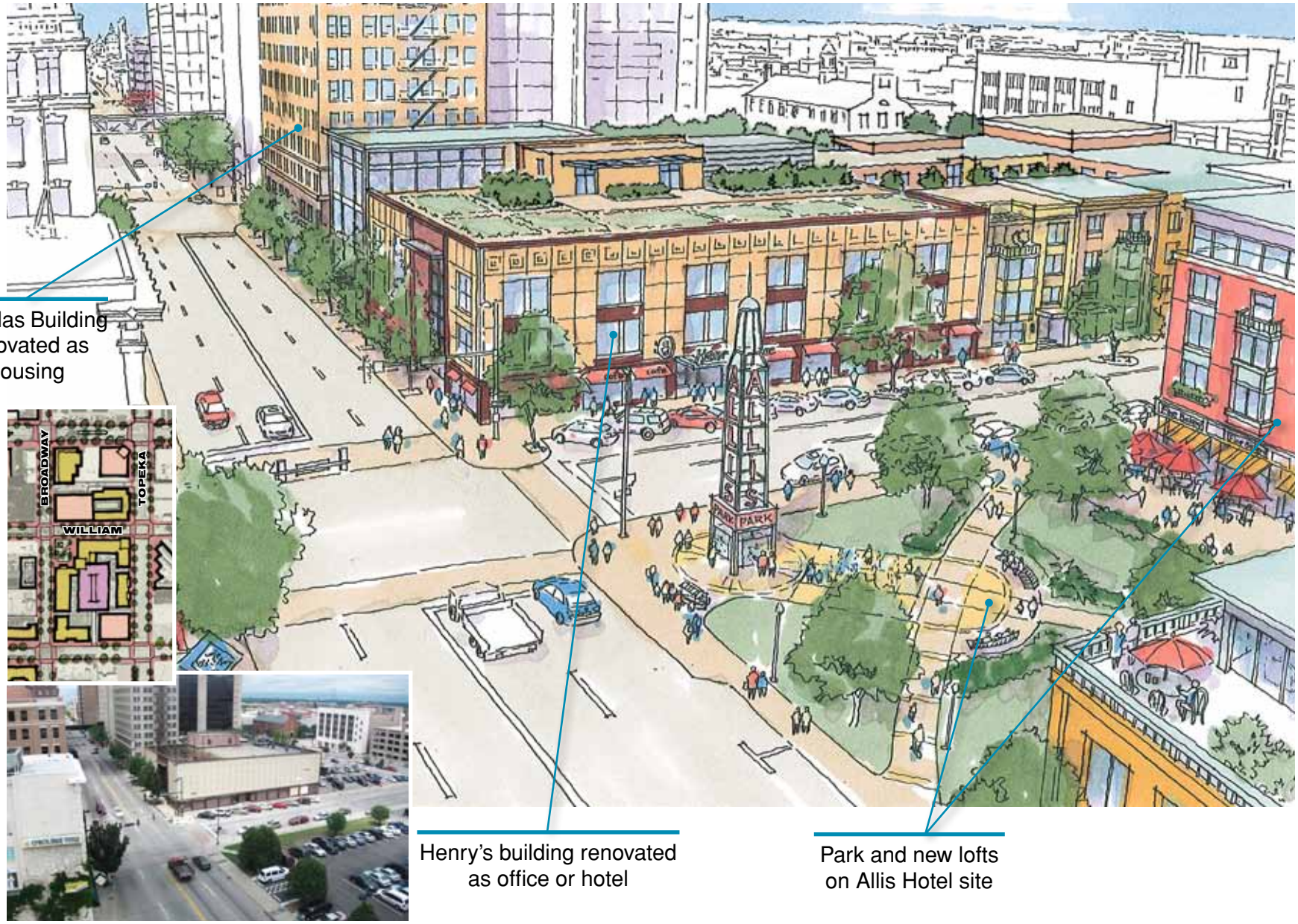
Any adaptive re-use of the Century Building should retain and highlight attractive elements such as its beautiful lobby. The parking structure should be designed to be as attractive as possible, using quality architectural design and materials. Integrate the west end of the structure into the architecture of the hotel, locating hotel rooms or other occupied uses to screen the parking from public view.

SITE



Development finance strategies

- Encourage market-based new hotel, office, residential and/or retail development that can financially support its development costs, on city-owned land and/or in the privately-owned Century Building. Maximize the city's return on its land contribution. Coordinate development with ongoing private-sector-led reinvestment at the Broadview Hotel and Garvey Center, and anticipated reinvestment in Century II.
- Fund shared public parking structure with bond funds repaid by the added value of new and rehabilitated buildings on the block.
- Wichita-based, low-interest, revolving housing development loan fund and/or historic tax credits for adapting the Century Building for residential reuse.
- Seek New Market tax credits and/or creation of a community improvement district (CID) for hotel, office and/or retail components.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure including existing street and utility network, Kennedy Plaza, and existing/expanded Q-Line service


Douglas Building renovated as housing
BROADWAY
TOPEKA
WILLIAM
PARK
Henry's building renovated as office or hotel
Park and new lofts on Allis Hotel site

SITE C5

Former Allis Hotel Site

This city-owned site occupies much of the block bounded by English, Broadway, William and Topeka. Mostly devoted to surface parking, including approximately 200 spaces that serve the state office complex at William and Market streets, it includes a modest park at the corner of Broadway and William.

How the site advances the master plan

Strategic public parking and park investments on this site could establish a new Arena District residential neighborhood as well as bring new life to the adjacent Douglas Core corridor. The added public parking would be especially important to restoring economic life to the largely vacant Douglas and Henry's buildings on the block bounded by William, Broadway, Douglas and Topeka. A lack of nearby parking greatly limits the possibility of higher-value use of those prominent and historically important buildings. Additional housing and/or commercial development on the Allis Hotel site could have a strong impact on the Arena District due to its central location, visibility from significant streets like Waterman, Broadway, Emporia and Kellogg, and potential to encourage additional private-sector investments on a variety of underutilized properties.

Context

The block occupied by city-owned parcel also includes two privately-owned commercial buildings along Topeka. The Henry's building—once home to Downtown's premier department store—and the Douglas Building are located one block north. More traditional commercial buildings along the Douglas corridor, with some additional presence on William and intersecting streets, occupy adjacent blocks. The Downtown Transit Center, one block east, offers important bus connections to other parts of Downtown and the greater city. The INTRUST Bank Arena sits one block beyond the Transit Center. Commercial buildings located to the south across English Street offer potential for conversion to housing. The block to the west includes the historic Petroleum Building, which has additional adaptive reuse potential, one other building, and parking lots that could accommodate new development. The Allis Hotel site could promote reinvestment in a wide variety of underutilized properties on these surrounding blocks, introducing a mix of residential and commercial uses.

Target program and development approach

The Vision scenario anticipates:

- **A new public parking structure, preferably centered in the block and straddling the alley so that it can be screened from adjacent streets by occupied buildings.** This parking structure should have convenient walking and driving access, with especially good walking connections to the block north of William and west along William to the state offices. In addition to serving current state-office and Arena parking needs, the parking structure could provide the capacity to support revived use of the Douglas, Henry's, and Petroleum buildings and other area buildings as well as new development on the block (see strategic parking location P5).

- **Adaptive reuse of the Douglas Building as residential lofts or other market-supported use, at the discretion of its owner.** No longer competitive for

office uses, this largely vacant Class B office building could take on new life as housing. This re-use opportunity would make sense for multiple reasons:

> the building's floor layouts and views could accommodate apartments that are attractive to the market

> re-use would reinforce planned investment in more than 200 additional new housing units nearby as part of the Exchange Place project, lending Douglas-Core an important new identity as a residential neighborhood even as it remains an important commercial center.

> residential parking could share parking spaces occupied by commercial uses at other peak hours; and

> housing would add people to the area during evenings and weekends when office buildings in the area tend to be empty.

The vision anticipates the building could accommodate approximately 115 dwelling units on 13 upper floors. Housing-market analysis indicates that the types of households that would be interested in renting an apartment in the Douglas would typically tolerate a one-block walk to parking (on the Allis Hotel site) if the walk felt safe and interesting.

Left photo: The Allis Hotel, located on Broadway opposite the Petroleum Building until demolition in the 1990s.
Right photo: Henry's Department Store in its heydey.

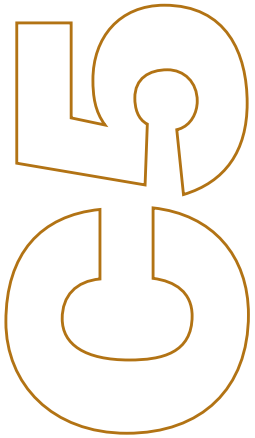
- **Adaptive reuse of the Henry's Building for commercial and/or residential use(s) at the discretion of its owner.** While market analysis has determined there is little market opportunity for a Downtown department store in the foreseeable future, the building could provide quality space for office, hotel, retail and/or housing with appropriate renovations. There is potential for continued use of existing façade and structural elements, drawing continued historic and economic value from the building while also accommodating the addition of windows and other elements supporting new uses. It may be possible for this site to provide some of its own parking with an entry from the alley to its north.

- **6,000 square feet or more of ground-level retail in the Douglas and/or Henry's buildings and/or in new buildings on the Allis Hotel site.** Limited market-based retail opportunity in this area requires that retail locations be explored in order of priority: first, along Douglas between Broadway and Topeka; second, along William; third, along Broadway or Topeka streets; and fourth, along English Street.

- **New housing on the Allis Hotel site,** making use of some of the capacity of a new parking structure on the site. Assuming the commercial building at English and Topeka remains but that the smaller office building north of it is redeveloped, approximately 80-120 new housing units could be created on the block.

- **A new park on the Allis Hotel site,** recommended at the corner of William and Broadway replacing the current green space. A park of modest size (7,000 to 11,000 square

SITE



feet) should be created to serve as a center of community gathering and identity for the emerging Arena District, as well as to enhance the value of the private development around it. Consider including in the park design interpretive signage that tells the story of the celebrated Allis Hotel that once stood on the site, and/or of other buildings or history of the immediate area.

Timing

Site redevelopment should wait until there is demonstrated market interest in at least one major development on or around the site, whether it be the Douglas Building, Henry's Building, new development on the site, or other development on an adjacent block.

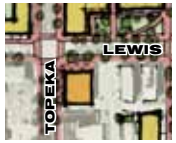
Quality standards for development and design

New housing on or near the Allis Hotel site should include a variety of units that respond to the preferences of diverse target market households. Ground-floor housing units should have individual entrances from the street and other design features that lend a sense of neighborhood identity and safety to the walking environment along streets. Housing and other buildings along English should support the plan's emphasis on English as a "green street" by incorporating shallow but richly planted setbacks.

New structured parking on the Allis Hotel site should be screened from street view to the extent possible, to prevent negative impacts on street character. Prominent pedestrian and vehicular entrances should be provided, however, to keep access convenient and safe. Any structured parking that does come to the sidewalk should include an active ground-level use, and high-quality architectural façade above.
Adaptive reuse of the Douglas and/or Henry's buildings should retain design features that are historic or otherwise significant, to the extent possible.

Development finance strategies

- Encourage market-based new hotel, office, residential and/or retail development that can financially support its development costs, on city-owned land and/or in the privately-owned Douglas Building, Henry's building or other sites. Maximize the city's return on its land contribution. Coordinate development with ongoing private-sector-led reinvestment at Exchange Place and with potential streetscape improvements on adjacent streets like English.
- Fund a shared public parking structure with bond funds repaid by the increase in value that accures to new and rehabilitated buildings in the vicinity.
- Wichita-based low-interest revolving housing development loan fund.
- Seek historic tax credits for adaptive reuse of Douglas and Henry's buildings or other nearby buildings.
- Seek New Market tax credits and/or creation of a community improvement district (CID) for hotel, office and/or retail components.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure including existing street and utility network, the Transit Center, and existing/expanded Q-Line service.


LEWIS
TOPEKA

SITE C6

Topeka Street Firehouse

The City currently uses this former firehouse, on the southeast corner of Lewis and Topeka, for office space and storage.

How the site advances the master plan

An attractive building and a strategic location make the firehouse a valuable anchor for a gradual westward expansion of the Commerce Street Arts District. Lewis Street's walkable scale, street trees and numerous vacant parcels make it a logical corridor for future private investment in development related to the district; a recently announced housing project on the parcel east of the firehouse is evidence of this. The firehouse itself has potential to accommodate a variety of program options that strengthen the viability of the district—such as affordable artists' housing and/or studio space, gallery space, or a neighborhood cafe.

Context

Lewis Street extends east to St. Francis, where an ongoing study is exploring a connection one block further to Commerce Street. Lewis extends west to Main and WaterWalk, where a walking path continues on to the Arkansas River. Topeka connects directly to the Arena District and Douglas-Core corridor to the north, and South Central to the south. Most parcels on the north side of Lewis within one block of the firehouse are vacant and offer strong potential for new residential or commercial development. Most parcels within a block west, south or east of the firehouse have commercial uses with potential for redevelopment with higher-value uses. As noted above, a planned housing development directly east of the firehouse will entail the renovation of two existing residential buildings.

Target program and development approach

Programming for the firehouse would be most appropriately done through the targeted Commerce Street Arts District plan recommended as one of the small area plans to follow this Downtown master plan. The Commerce Street arts community is best situated to identify the uses that would most benefit the district. Given the identification of affordable studio, housing and gallery space as important goals for the district in anticipation of rising real estate prices in the district, and given that preserving an arts in the district is central to the area's character, program concepts to consider include:

- Studio and/or gallery space on the ground level, taking advantage of the high ceiling and large glass doors of the firehouse bays.
- Additional studio space on the upper floor.
- Affordable housing for artists on the upper floor and/or in an addition behind the building.
- Market-rate housing on the upper floor and/or in an addition that helps finance other program supporting artists.
- A café, small store or other public use on the ground level, possibly combined with an art gallery.

Once a program is confirmed, development could move forward through any of several methods. The city could undertake renovation and management itself, as it has at the City Arts facility on Old Town Square. Alternatively an independent community development corporation could carry out development, possibly on the model of the CreateHere artist/business incubator facility in Chattanooga, Tennessee. A third possibility would be redevelopment by a private for-profit entity with the stipulation that it provide certain spaces or services that serve artists or other community needs.

Timing

Reinvestment in the site could happen as soon as a community-based planning process identifies priority uses, and associated funding for implementation is secured. Planning and reinvestment for the site would reinforce the market interest in and success of residential development already evident in the district.

Quality standards for development and design

Adaptive reuse of the building should retain and showcase the historic and otherwise valuable elements of its architecture. Improvements of the site around the building should promote walkability. Surface parking, for instance, should be screened from sidewalks, and ground-level uses inside the building should have strong visual connections with sidewalks.

Development finance strategies

- Wichita-based, low-interest revolving housing-development loan fund.
- Apply historic tax credits for adaptive reuse.
- Seek New Market tax credits and for any office or retail component.
- Include a market-based residential and/or retail component that helps support other uses.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure, including existing street and utility network, planned near-term improvements for Lewis Street and existing/expanded Q-Line service a block away at the intersection of Topeka and Waterman.

SITE C7

Former Coleman Factory Site

This County-owned site includes the northern two-thirds of the block bounded by St. Francis, Second, Santa Fe and First, plus a additional parcel facing it on the north side of Second.

How the site advances the master plan

This large and prominent site can play an important role in tapping the established energy of Old Town Square and the INTRUST Bank Arena to spawn market-based development in the Old Town West district and beyond. The recent successful rental of all 68 apartments in the Flats 324 development on the block northwest of the site, during difficult economic conditions, demonstrates significant potential for market-based housing around the site. New public infrastructure and possibly building development on the site would help accelerate such market-based development, including both commercial and residential uses.

South of Second, a public park on the site could spur redevelopment of vacant and underdeveloped sites on surrounding blocks as an amenity, and function as a center of community for the new neighborhood. Shared public parking could also support mixed-use development on surrounding blocks, including ones in Old Town nearby, as well as Arena events. The site would also make an excellent location for new mixed-use development as a complement to the public park and parking, if soil contamination issues on site can be sufficiently remedied. The site area north of Second would best be sold for mixed-use redevelopment (no significant environmental contamination issues have been identified there) that takes advantage of new public infrastructure on the southern portion of the site.

Context

Second and St. Francis, which form the main public edges of the site, are important emerging walking corridors. Second connects directly to Old Town Square one block east, and extends west past numerous sites offering mixed-use development opportunity. Second is also one of Downtown's most important east-west traffic corridors as part of a couplet with First (recommended for eventual conversion to two-way traffic) linking west across the Arkansas River and and east from I-135 and, via Washington Avenue, US 54. The Coleman factory site thus occupies an important gateway point to Downtown's traditional core for traffic from the east, north and south. St. Francis makes a more locally-significant walkable connection to Douglas and the Arena to the south, and Renaissance Square and Via Christi Hospital to the north. Substantial opportunity for mixed-use development exists along St. Francis down to the Arena in the form of numerous buildings with adaptive reuse potential and vacant parcels or parking lots with potential for new development. Planned reconstruction of St. Francis with new street trees, sidewalks, two-way travel, on-street parking and related features should be coordinated with near-term Coleman factory site improvements.

The site also can help make an important walkable connection between the "First Street String of Pearls" and Old Town, via First, Second, St. Francis and a potential east-west pedestrian walk midway between First and Second. The "String of Pearls" includes the existing Orpheum Theatre and Scottish Rite Center three blocks west of the site, and a concept for one or more additional performing arts venues in the area. These cultural venues would benefit from inviting walking connections to Old Town and intermediate destinations (such

To Old Town Square

Neighborhood park

Public parking structure

Arena

Infill housing, retail, office

SITE 5

as new restaurants); this site could play a key role in creating those connections and destinations.

The Coleman Factory Outlet Museum across St. Francis from the site is a notable visitor destination and helps convey the history of this part of Downtown.

Soil and groundwater contamination from past manufacturing on the factory site constrains its reuse potential. Despite significant remediation efforts over 15 years or more, several portions of the site are not currently suitable for buildings or even some outdoor uses that gather people for significant periods of time. While these conditions remain, parking is the most cost-effective use of these areas. Other portions of the site are suitable for park use, including the frontage along St. Francis and Second, where park space would be most useful. Because of the significant potential value of the site for new building development, continued efforts should be made to determine whether the value of new development on certain portions of the site (and/or on surrounding blocks) could justify the costs of further remediation of those portions. Priority areas for new buildings, if feasible, would be along St. Francis to the south of public park space, and/or along Second east of public park space, to lend additional vitality and visibility to these important walking areas.

Target program and development approach

The Vision scenario anticipates:

- **A new public parking structure, located toward the eastern side of the site (along Santa Fe)** capping the most contaminated soil areas and reserving the St. Francis and Second Street edges of the parcel for park space and potential development that supports walkability. Surface parking is an appropriate near-term use for this same area before new development begins to require additional parking infrastructure. Near-term parking should be designed to facilitate its eventual replacement with a parking structure. The parking should have convenient walking and driving access. See strategic parking location P7 for additional detail.

- **A new park, with a gathering area focused at the corner of St. Francis and Second** where soil conditions are suitable and where high visibility enable it to play an important role as a gateway to Downtown, an amenity for new development around it, and as a center of community for the Old Town West neighborhood. The main gathering area should be at least 20,000 square feet (about half an acre) in size. Linear extensions of the park should be created along the rest of the site's Second and St. Francis Street frontage to help screen parking beyond

and to offer additional aesthetic and park benefit. Dense trees and other plantings should be included in the park to compensate for the almost complete lack of vegetation on surrounding blocks. Given the need to cap existing soil, sufficient new soil should be placed above the cap in berms and/or terraces, with irrigation (preferably utilizing retained stormwater) as needed, to sustain the new plantings. Installation and maintenance of park plantings and supportive irrigation should be coordinated with the city's planned introduction of street trees along St. Francis. The park can also offer a prominent setting for public art that helps establish a unique identity for Old Town West, and interpretive signage that describes the site's history—possibly created in collaboration with the Coleman company. The concept site rendering includes an outdoor climbing wall on the public parking structure—one possible way to introduce an outdoor adventure theme that builds on Coleman's history and makes the park a unique destination. Community members and Coleman should be engaged to confirm an appropriate design theme.

- **New development on the site to the extent made feasible through soil remediation,** and to the extent that public park and parking space is also retained. New development would best be located to provide active ground-level uses, such as retail or dining, along portions of St. Francis and/or Second to screen parking and help add activity around the park.

- **New development on the portion of the site north of Second.** Housing or commercial development could be equally appropriate here, with ground-level retail a high priority. Scenarios could include either 75-100 dwelling units or 60,000 square feet of office plus 5,000-10,000 square feet of ground-level retail.

- **A variety of mixed-use redevelopment opportunities on surrounding sites, through adaptive reuse of existing buildings and new development.** Continuing the informal mix of housing, office and retail/restaurant uses evident in Old Town would be beneficial, bringing activity to the area every day and all week and making cost-effective shared use of public parking infrastructure. Site improvements should be made in dialogue with the private owners of the parcels immediately south to encourage coordinated investment in higher-value uses there. Overall, at least 200 new dwelling units, and at least 30,000-60,000 square feet or more of office and/or retail space, are readily possible within one block of the site, with greater magnitudes possible if market interest proves strong.

Timing

Investment in new park and surface parking infrastructure should proceed as soon as possible to invite further private-sector development interest on nearby blocks. Park investments can be of a more permanent nature than the temporary surface parking. Surface parking should be replaced with structured parking as development in the area creates demand for more parking and can help pay for it through tax revenues. Redevelopment criteria and solicitation for qualified developers should be prepared and advertised promptly for the site north of Second, as it is one of Downtown's strongest near-term opportunities for private redevelopment.

SITE 5

Quality standards for development and design

New housing on the northern portion of the site should include a variety of units that respond to the preferences of diverse target market households. Any ground-floor housing units should have individual entrances from the street and other design features that lend a sense of neighborhood identity and safety to the walking environment along streets. New office space should similarly respond to market interest.

New (near-term) surface and (longer-term) structured parking on the Coleman factory site should be screened from street view with landscaping and/or attractive fencing, with enough visual connection remaining to help ensure security. Install sufficient nighttime lighting along adjacent sidewalks and in park and parking areas to make the area safe and feel that way.

Park design should incorporate themed public art, interpretive signage, and other unique design elements as described above. It should also take every opportunity to re-use artifacts from the factory building (scheduled for demolition by winter 2011) such as its decorative entrance mouldings and bricks.

Development finance strategies

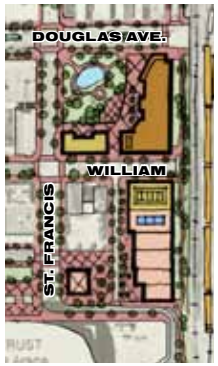
- Encourage market-based new office, residential, retail and/or hotel development on and near the site that can financially support its development costs and potentially a portion of park and parking infrastructure costs. Maximize the City's and County's returns on land contributions.
- Fund the shared public parking structure and park space with bond funds repaid by the added value of nearby new and rehabilitated buildings that gain value from the new infrastructure.
- Wichita-based low-interest revolving housing development loan fund.
- Seek historic tax credits for adaptive reuse of eligible buildings nearby.
- Pursue New Market tax credits and/or a community improvement district (CID) for hotel, office and/or retail components.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure including existing street and utility network, planned St. Francis streetscape improvements, new bike lanes on First and Second Streets, and existing/expanded Q-Line service.

New hotel, office or lofts

Upgraded Naftzger Park

Housing in new and rehabbed buildings

Arena



SITE C8

City Parking Lot at Naftzger Park

This City-owned site is directly south of Naftzger Park.

How the site advances the master plan

Although relatively small, the site's strategic location next to Naftzger Park and prominent opportunities for private-sector redevelopment give it an outsized role in helping facilitate high-quality, high-benefit development. It can help turn Naftzger Park into Downtown's signature "living room" surrounded on all sides by significant activity, economic value, and landmark architecture.

Context

Naftzger Park enjoys regular use and appreciation by the community, but it could support a significant increase in public use as well. The opening of the INTRUST Bank Arena one block south has added beneficial traffic—pedestrian, transit and car—moving past the site to Old Town and its restaurants and nightlife. The Eaton Hotel and other buildings along Douglas, among the first successful Downtown redevelopment projects, contain thriving housing and retail uses. A former industrial building to the south across William contains offices. East of the parking lot and Naftzger Park, a larger privately-owned parking lot has some of Downtown's strongest near-term redevelopment potential. To the southeast, the former Spaghetti Works and other former industrial buildings to its south hold significant potential for adaptive reuse with residential and/or commercial uses.

Target program and development approach

The Vision scenario anticipates the site either containing its own distinct development project, or being combined into a larger redevelopment of the parking lot east of Naftzger Park. Program options based on a building height of about five stories include:

- **50-70 new dwelling units and 8,000-12,000 square feet of ground-floor retail/restaurant use in a new building on the site.** Ownership units would require dedicated parking on or near the site, which would likely be difficult to provide given the parcel's small size, lack of adjacent sites suitable for parking, and high cost of providing below-grade parking. Rental units could be more feasible in that they could use shared public parking up to a block away, such as at strategic parking location P8 or the public parking structure at William and Emporia.

- **A similar number of dwelling units, or 70 or more hotel rooms, plus ground-floor retail or hotel lobby space, created as part of a larger redevelopment**

that includes the privately-owned parking lot to the east. In this scenario, the building could utilize some dedicated parking built into the adjacent site along Santa Fe.

- **50,000-60,000 square feet of office space above ground-floor retail.**

- **In any scenario, a public walk of generous width—with the capacity to accommodate outdoor dining—should be created between the new building and Naftzger Park.** This walk would continue around the park to provide additional access and pedestrian plaza space serving new development on the parking lot to the east.

- Due to the site's high potential development value—both in its own terms and as a place adding vitality to the Naftzger Park area—**it should not continue to be utilized as surface parking over the long term.**

Timing

Redevelopment criteria and solicitation for qualified developers should be prepared and advertised promptly. Redevelopment possibilities should be discussed on an ongoing basis with owners of adjacent parcels—particularly the parking lot, the Spaghetti Works, and other former industrial buildings to the east and southeast—to monitor the potential for coordinated redevelopment. Ultimately, the site should be redeveloped when market interest emerges. In the near term, it may continue to be useful as public parking.

Quality standards for development and design

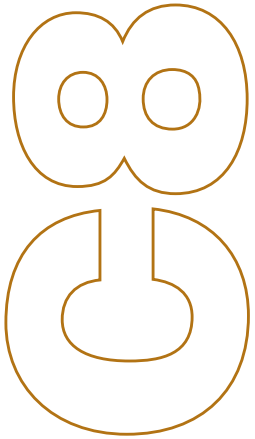
New mixed-use development should attain high standards of urban and architectural design owning to its prominence. Building form and composition should help frame Naftzger Park and should complement the Eaton Hotel and other historic buildings in the area through adherence to the *Design Guidelines for the East Douglas Historic District*, yet incorporate a distinct, contemporary architectural expression. Significant existing and potential pedestrian traffic on all sides of the site demands that special attention be paid to design and ground-level programs that enhances walkability.

Design of the pedestrian walk and any other outdoor spaces around the site should include high-quality materials and significant opportunity for outdoor seating, public art, trees, pedestrian-scaled lighting and other elements that invite walking and public gathering and that complement the design and programming of Naftzger Park itself.

Development finance strategies

- Encourage market-based new office, residential, retail and/or hotel development on the site (or on an adjacent site in a coordinated development project) that can financially support its development costs and potentially a portion of park and parking infrastructure costs. Maximize the city's return on its land contribution.
- Fund the shared public parking structure and park space with bond funds repaid by the added value of nearby new and rehabilitated buildings that gain value from the new infrastructure.

SITE

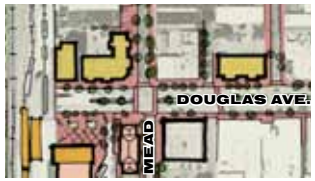


- Wichita-based low-interest revolving housing development loan fund.
- Seek historic tax credits for adaptive reuse of the Spaghetti Works building or other eligible buildings nearby.
- Pursue New Market tax credits and/or a community improvement district (CID) for hotel, office and/or retail components.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure including existing street and utility network, planned St. Francis and Douglas streetscape improvements, the INTRUST Bank Arena, and existing/expanded Q-Line service.

Housing/office above retail replaces parking lots on Douglas

Signaled crosswalk

Union Station revived with dining, entertainment, retail and office uses



SITE

C9

City Parking Lots at Douglas/Mead and Douglas/Mosley

These two city-owned sites are separated by one block and an intervening building but have similar orientation to Douglas.

How the site advances the master plan

Modest in size but significant in visibility, these sites serve as key gateways from Douglas into Old Town. New development on either or both sites could play a very important role in pushing Old Town's mixed-use vitality to Douglas and across Douglas to Old Town South. The Douglas/Mead parking lot could play the additional role of facilitating more intensive re-use of the prominent former Player Piano building next to the Great Plains Transportation Museum. These parking lots have played a vital role in Old Town's revival by providing inexpensive, convenient parking, but Old Town has matured to a point where it would benefit more from the improved walkable frontage along Douglas that new development can offer, and it could financially support relocation of the surface parking to new public parking structures nearby.

Context

Adjacent parcels in Old Town contain a variety of primarily commercial uses, including office, restaurants and bars. The Douglas/Mead lot adjoins the Great Plains Transportation Museum, which connects to equipment displays on the railroad track level above. Douglas itself makes a transition from five to six lanes in front of the parking lots and needs improvements to invite safe and walkable connections across to Union Station and the rest of Old Town South. In response to these conditions, this plan recommends adding a signaled crosswalk at Mead and bulb-outs, street trees, and on-street parking in place of the fifth and sixth travel lanes at the railroad underpass. The historic Union Station and Rock Island Depot face the Douglas/Mead lot across Douglas, and the Wichita Eagle building faces the Douglas/Mosley lot across Douglas.

Target program and development approach:

The Vision scenario anticipates ground-level retail/restaurant space and upper-floor housing and/or office space on the two sites. It also anticipates relocation of the current public parking to one or more new public parking structures nearby (see strategic parking locations P11 and P12). A combination of these parking structures, additional on-street parking along Douglas, and private on-site parking could support the parking needs of new development. Potential scenarios include:

- **At the Douglas/Mead lot, approximately 40-45 dwelling units (or 35,000 square feet of office or hotel) above approximately 9,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space.** Some off-street parking could be accommodated behind the retail space. This program

does not include potential for associated adaptive reuse of upper floors of the former Player Piano building.

- **At the Douglas/Mosley lot, approximately 35-40 dwelling units (or 30,000 square feet of office or hotel) above approximately 8,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space.**

Timing

Because these sites lie within one of Downtown's liveliest, most walkable areas, and because they benefit from good access and visibility, redevelopment criteria and solicitation for qualified developers should be prepared and advertised promptly, in coordination with plans to relocate the existing parking to new public parking facilities. Redevelopment possibilities should be discussed on an ongoing basis with owners of adjacent parcels to monitor the potential for coordinated redevelopment. Ultimately, the sites should be redeveloped when market interest emerges. In the near term, they will continue to be useful as public parking.

Quality standards for development and design

New mixed-use development on both sites should meet high standards of urban and architectural design, given the location on Downtown's premier walking street in one of its most successful retail areas. Building form and composition should help frame Douglas Avenue as a public space and should complement Union Station and other historic buildings while incorporating a distinct, contemporary architectural expression. Building form and composition should also be consistent with the *Architectural Design Guidelines for the Old Town District* already in force in the area. Significant existing and potential pedestrian traffic along Douglas, Mead, Rock Island, and Mosley demands special attention be paid to design and ground-level programs that enhances walkability.

Improvements in the sidewalk and other outdoor spaces around the site should employ high-quality materials and include significant opportunity for outdoor seating, public art, trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other elements that invite walking.

Development finance strategies

- Encourage market-based office, residential, retail and/or hotel development that can financially support its development costs and potentially a portion of parking infrastructure costs. Maximize the city's return on its land contribution.
- Fund the shared public parking structure and park space with bond funds repaid by the added value of nearby new and rehabilitated buildings that gain value from the new infrastructure.
- Wichita-based, low-interest, revolving housing development loan fund.
- Seek historic tax credits for adaptive reuse of the Great Plains Transportation Museum or other eligible buildings nearby.
- Pursue New Market tax credits and/or a community improvement district (CID) for hotel, office and/or retail components.
- Leverage existing and planned infrastructure, including existing street and utility network, Douglas streetscape improvements, the INTRUST Bank Arena, and existing/expanded Q-Line service.

8

Taking Action

Putting the Plan to Work

Earlier chapters addressed why Downtown matters to Wichita and the significant possibilities it holds. This chapter addresses how to turn those possibilities into reality. It outlines specific, strategic action steps and who is responsible for taking them.

ACTION STRATEGIES

The action strategies for advancing the plan fall into three categories. *Creating Unique Downtown Places* groups strategies that reinforce Downtown as a valued destination and a welcoming setting for a broad range of activities that serve the region's economy and quality of life. *Expanding Transportation Choices* includes strategies that make getting to and around Downtown easier. These strategies also help free up prime land for development by making more cost- and space-efficient use of transportation infrastructure. *Enabling Development* focuses on removing the obstacles to private investment in development projects. These strategies provide clearer and more consistent information and they open access to new resources to help enable more people to complete projects that can succeed on their own terms and also help Downtown thrive as a whole.

Overviews of each action strategy are described below. For additional detail, see the Implementation Matrix that appears in the appendix.

Creating Unique Downtown Places

Four areas of emphasis fall under this category:

1. Reinforce Downtown as the hub for arts, culture, sports and education

These steps strengthen Downtown's significant role as an important destination for the city, region, state and beyond. They can expand the impact of existing assets like museums with coordinated marketing and management actions that raise their profile. They can help amplify the impact of arts and educational organizations through increased funding, facilities, and visibility. They can help stakeholders improve certain Downtown districts and neighborhoods.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
1a	Support and **strengthen formal associations** (Commerce Street Arts District, Museums on the River, etc.)	• Continue current support/coordination role of WDDC. • Allow level of organization of associations to vary per area as appropriate. • Strengthen collective voice of Downtown areas, among Downtown areas, and of Downtown as a whole.
1b	**Seek expanded funding** for operations and facilities	Operations support: • Prioritize reinforcing long-term operations funding before undertaking major facilities investments. • Reduce competition among local organizations for grant and foundation funding. Facilities support: • The City proceeds with ongoing upgrades to Century II to improve functions as performing arts venue. • Examine the feasibility and desirability, from capital and operations standpoints, of creating new performing arts facilities separate from Century II (e.g., First Street performing arts district). Address ways to capitalize on touring musicals, such as *Wicked*. Coordinate with comprehensive planning for Century II and the convention center (coordinate with strategy 7g).
1c	**Expand joint marketing,** ticket packages, operations etc. among Museums on the River, Delano Business Assn, Commerce St Arts Assn, WaterWalk and/or other Downtown destinations to increase impact and achieve efficiencies	• Continue/expand shared human resources management among arts/culture organizations and the City. • Issue passes offering access to multiple destinations. • Hold joint events. • Market destinations collectively. • Target youth and other critical demographic groups.
1d	**Create a Downtown Visitors Amenity Plan** coordinating implementation of pedestrian-oriented wayfinding, maps, transit services, marketing, etc.	• Add/improve pedestrian wayfinding signage and information on transit and parking. • Address the perspective of different visitors: Arena audiences, hotel/convention guests, local dining, young professionals, etc. • Coordinate with strategies 1d, 2a, 2b, 6a.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
1e	**Create a handbook for holding Downtown events.**	• Standardize, document and circulate information currently being provided by the WDDC on a per-project basis. • Identify key contacts—for sanitation, street closures, use of parks, safety, etc.
1f	**Attract educational institutions.**	• Reach out to WSU, Friends, Newman, KU, and any other educational institutions to consider Downtown presence opportunities. • Special opportunities include shared use of arts and recreation facilities; evening and weekend activity; storefront space occupancy in key locations; student life activities; and student housing. • Coordinate with strategy 3c.

Creating Unique Downtown Places

2. Make Downtown's public streets and parks places for everyone to enjoy.

These strategies will help make Downtown streets and parks into places that welcome people—which in turn will enhance the value of existing and new addresses for development. They will raise the quality and appeal of park spaces along the Arkansas River as Wichita's unique signature, fully integrated into the life of Downtown and the broader community.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
2a	**Create "complete streets"** with convenient transportation choices, dignified addresses, greenery, beauty, and stormwater management.	• Plant/enhance street trees where they are missing (especially portions of St Francis, Emporia, Market, First, English, William). • Integrate improvements into ongoing street work. • Target improvements to walkable development focus areas and active development projects. • Lewis is a good candidate for a pilot stormwater project. • Coordinate transportation improvements with strategies 5 and 6. • Coordinate water-quality improvements with strategy 2f.
2b	**Make Douglas a continuous promenade** with interpretive signage/ displays about Wichita.	• Create a distinctive destination walking corridor through Downtown's core with consistent signage, images, displays, etc. • Potential themes could include Chisholm Trail, other history, aviation, notable people; explore possibilities with partner stakeholders. • Coordinate with strategy 1d and 6a.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
2c	**Ensure that public spaces are safe**—and perceived that way.	• Install street lighting where needed. • Support efforts to establish additional regional facilities serving the homeless. • Publicize key contacts for police and other service providers. • Publicize Downtown's vibrancy and safety. • Continue to provide ambassadors to assist with wayfinding and safety during Arena and other major events per the *Downtown Parking and Mobility Plan* (coordinate with strategy 5a). • Establish neighborhood safety-watch networks coordinated with police.
2d	Monitor and **enforce Downtown cleanliness.**	• The City provides services. • WDDC monitors actual and perceived level of quality of Downtown spaces on a regular basis in partnership with neighborhood associations. Verify that current maintenance procedures are being followed. Identify any gaps in maintaining Downtown. • Publicize key service contacts (Police, DPW, Parks & Recreation, etc.). • Reach out to neighborhood/business associations and confirm their needs. • Seek association/business sponsorships.
2e	**Revitalize existing, and establish new, Downtown parks and green streets** according to neighborhood goals.	• The master plan identifies specific recommended new and improved parks. Examples: • Improve the State office building plaza with active building edges and a Downtown living room for everyday use and special events. • Create neighborhood parks in the Commerce Street Arts District and Old Town West. • Add street trees and ornamental plantings along high-profile green streets: Douglas, St. Francis, English, Lewis. • Continue ongoing park improvements at the Broadview Hotel. • Include green streets goals in ongoing street revitalization projects.
2f	**Make the Arkansas River** Downtown's green centerpiece.	• Add walking links, housing, dining, and plantings. • Implement Downtown riverbank-improvement concepts as part of regional river corridor planning. • Encourage boating activities, including personal kayaking/canoeing, college crew, water tours and ferries coordinated with events. • Encourage redevelopment on adjacent publicly owned land as a catalyst to riverfront activity. • Complete implementation of the 1999 *River Corridor Plan.*

Creating Unique Downtown Places

3. Bring streetfronts and neighborhoods to life.

These strategies address the fact that the activities taking place in buildings, especially at ground level, play a major role in shaping the quality and character of the streets and parks around them. They place special emphasis on bringing new, market-based uses to edges of streets, where they are most needed to revive traditional walking corridors and help build new Downtown neighborhoods.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
3a	**Prioritize target locations and types of retail**, other active ground-floor uses: • Sites needing immediate improvement • Incremental growth of walkable retail environments • Strategic locations for pioneer tenants	• Create and maintain a GIS database on Downtown buildings (see strategy 4a). • Use GIS to map storefront space availability, size, location, access, contacts, and other information for potential tenants. • Hire retail specialist to monitor retail space and determine/pursue recruitment priorities. • Apply retail incubator techniques. • Coordinate with strategies 3b, 3c, 4a.
3b	**Activate street-level storefronts** with visually interesting active uses as alternatives to retail where necessary.	• Near-term: work with owners to fill priority locations with arts, etc. • Recruit/cultivate pioneer tenants: arts, restaurants, business entrepreneurship center, colleges (coordinate with strategy 1f). • Install temporary storefront displays (art, interpretive signage, etc.) at gaps on priority walkable streets. • Encourage active ground-floor work spaces along priority walkable streets that have less retail potential (i.e., off of Douglas, in Commerce Street Arts District) using design guidelines, RFPs, and development-incentive criteria. • Coordinate with strategies 3a, 3c, 7f.
3c	**Manage retail tenant mix** with a targeted retail-recruitment program.	• Apply coordinated, capable retail recruitment to blocks of Downtown storefronts on a mall-management model that utilizes up-to-date market research. Coordinate with multiple private property owners. • If necessary to prevent tenants that do not support the desired retail mix, pay interim rent for up to six months while an optimal tenant is recruited. • Coordinate with strategies 3b, 3c.
3d	**Promote quality Downtown housing** serving a broad spectrum of households.	• Create guide (online and print brochure) to Downtown neighborhoods • Conduct Downtown housing tours. • Track housing-unit inventory by type, sales, and prices as a resource for tenants/buyers and owners/buyers. • Encourage a range of different sizes and styles for diverse households. • Coordinate with strategies 3a, 4a in tracking data.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
3e	**Use historic assets to spur housing** development through adaptive reuse.	• Encourage use of historic tax credits to help finance adaptive reuse of underutilized historic buildings. • Highlight Wichita's historic architectural heritage as a unique value asset for housing. • Encourage affordable housing through historic tax credit guidelines. • Coordinate with strategy 7e.
3f	**Target façade improvement incentives** in walkable development focus areas.	• Provide low-interest loans and/or small grants for façade improvement/restoration along priority walkable development corridors. • Conditional upon developer and project meeting public/private incentive criteria (strategy 8). • Coordinate with strategies 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e, 7a, 8a, 8b.

Creating Unique Downtown Places

4. Explain how Downtown Wichita makes a difference—in the region, the nation, and the world.

Downtown's value depends in part on widespread awareness of that value. This strategy emphasizes two main actions—first, tracking data on Downtown's performance, and second, sharing that data to help people make informed decisions based on all the ways Downtown can serve as an asset in their business and personal lives.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
4a	**Maintain database** on Downtown buildings.	• Create and maintain a GIS database on Downtown buildings (see strategy 3a). • Track ownership, occupancy, size, land use.
4b	**Track data** on key Downtown indicators.	• Build on WDDC's established role as Downtown champion and marketing agent • Track data, including land use, occupancy, employment, private investment, public investment, visitors, building permits, sales and property revenues. • Coordinate with current data gathering by Go Wichita, Chamber of Commerce, Visioneering Wichita, GWED, and other agencies. • Identify any new data points for target audiences.
4c	**Commission periodic market studies.**	• Obtain analyses of market opportunity in housing, office, retail, hospitality sectors, with a focus on emerging markets to the extent possible and appropriate. • Use results in recruitment, retention efforts, and to promote Downtown.
4d	**Interpret data and communicate key messages** to distinct target audiences.	• WDDC produces an annual report on Downtown. • Issue annual awards for exceptional Downtown contributions, achievements, etc. • Key target audiences include: > City, region, nation, world > Businesses, developers > Conventions, festivals > Tourists > Target workforce including young, college/high-school age youth

Expanding Transportation Choices

Two areas of emphasis fall under this category:

5. Locate parking to improve access and stimulate re-investment.

Convenient parking is critical to the value of Downtown property. Lack of convenient parking is a key factor in the high vacancy levels of some Downtown buildings today, and new high-value office and housing development will depend on having adequate parking close by. And while some Downtown properties lack the parking they need, other areas of Downtown offer vast areas of parking lots that might be better utilized for higher-value development. These strategies aim to locate parking where it will best serve a variety of land uses, and to do so in a manner that makes most efficient use of land and funding.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
5a	**Implement the *Downtown Parking and Mobility Management Plan*** (DPMMP) to improve utilization of parking infrastructure and minimize need for new parking.	• Implement priority elements of the 2009 DPMMP such as: > creation of overall Downtown Parking District > designation of a Downtown parking director > coordinated pricing of on- and off-street parking
5b	**Prioritize parking** in places where it: • serves multiple uses 24/7 (achieving highest cost/benefit) • unlocks refill opportunity for significant buildings lacking parking • expands development opportunity on prime sites through efficient land use • promotes walkability	• Choose initial priority locations and characteristics identified by Downtown Master Plan. • Coordinate with transportation demand management (strategy 5d) to minimize the overall need for new parking. • Satisfy ongoing demand for surface parking displaced by new development or parking structures.
5c	Based on this, **invest in public parking structures** as crucial Downtown infrastructure.	• Build new (and/or acquire existing) public parking structures (and/or lease existing spaces) in priority locations as described in strategy 5b. • Follow design standards for public parking structures/lots. • Share usage among multiple activities with different peak demand times. • Incorporate bike parking and convenient walking access to destinations and transit. • Coordinate with strategies 5a, 5b.
5d	**Institute transportation demand management and improve walking, transit, and biking options** to reduce congestion and future parking demand.	• Reduce traffic congestion through voluntary coordination of business hours/shifts. • Encourage major employers to encourage transit, biking, walking, and shared structured parking to reduce the costs of providing parking and be more competitive in attracting workforce. • Coordinate with strategies 5a, 6a-d.
5e	**Provide on-street parking.**	• Prioritize efforts in/near target retail areas where a compelling cost/benefit ratio is possible. • Improve striping and signage to indicate on-street parking where capacity is available but underutilized. • Make parallel parking typical and diagonal parking possible where space allows. • Control parking access through time restrictions, updated pricing per the DPMMP. (strategy 5a).

Expanding Transportation Choices

6. Improve walking, transit, and biking choices.

While continued convenient auto access Downtown is vital, having other good access choices—including walking, transit and biking—will enhance Downtown's special value in placing many activities near each other, as these travel modes perform well in much less space than needed for auto circulation and parking. Quality, permanent infrastructure for walking, transit, and biking benefits individuals—by letting them choose less-expensive, more-convenient, and healthier choices for access than cars—and functions as a significant asset for attracting new development.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
6a	**Make walking safe, easy, enjoyable** with more visible crosswalks, links across large blocks, wayfinding signage, interpretive signage/displays, public art.	• Add white stripes or other appropriate delineation markings to block-paved crosswalks on Douglas. • Restripe faded striped crosswalks annually or as needed. • Add signals at key pedestrian crosswalks that lack them (e.g., Mead at Douglas). • Add pedestrian wayfinding signage. • Coordinate with strategies 1d, 2a, 2b.
6b	**Expand convenient transit** servicing key Downtown destinations and corridors.	• Make transit visible and permanent, with defined stops, attractive shelters/vehicles. • Provide reliable, frequent, timely service. • Expand Q-line into a true Downtown circulator service with additional routes, more frequent service, and extended operating times as recommended in the master plan. • Coordinate Downtown transit with regional transit routes/schedules. • Coordinate information/incentive programs with key employers and destinations. • Designate Union Station as priority Amtrak station (and intermodal hub) location in ongoing City railroad planning.
6c	**Make Downtown bikeable,** with defined streets/lanes linked to regional networks, bike parking.	• Confirm an integrated Downtown on- and off-street bike network and design lane markings and signage as needed to complete the network. Refer to the master plan Operating Context diagram. • Coordinate proposed Downtown bike facilities with the regional MPO bikeway plan.
6d	**Apply specific roles and streetscape design** to each street to improve function for all access modes.	• The City conducts a detailed planning effort to assess the feasibility of one-way to two-way conversions and determining streets to be converted. • The City confirms the feasibility of master plan's proposed Street Operations Context. • Restripe lanes, update signals, and make other changes as needed for implementation. • Refer to the master plan's Transportation Element. • Coordinate with strategy 2a.

Enabling Development

Two areas of emphasis fall under this category:

7. Foster development with new tools.

Tapping into the evident market interest in Downtown development requires new tools that remove current obstacles. A new Downtown development go-to center and handbook can be highly effective simply by sharing information on existing resources, development procedures, market data, and sources of development expertise. Additional steps can open access to new financing sources and make the most of underutilized publicly owned land to enable new projects and spinoff investment around them.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
7a	**Designate a go-to center** for aspiring development, with information highlighting: • master plan goals • Downtown market opportunity • incentives, including New Market Tax Credits, CIDs, low-interest loan funds • zoning, design review process • partnership opportunities	• Coordinate current City development services with added WDDC efforts. • The City revises policy on considering and granting incentives, per criteria recommended in master plan. Coordinate changes with WDDC's grant policy and that of any other funding sources, to ensure consistent/complementary policy. • Maintain a record of funding strategies for Downtown development projects; note successes, challenges, trends, etc. • Create a Downtown design resource center that assists with development planning, retail facade improvements, and similar effort. Draw upon university/college resources and the Wichita design community. • Conduct Downtown design workshops for the local design community.
7b	**Open access to new and underutilized development finance tools.**	• Establish a low-interest revolving loan fund for housing development and potentially for retail. • WDDC, the Chamber, and/or the City expands awareness and use of New Market Tax Credits and other underutilized tools. • WDDC and other parties maintain active support for state historic tax credits. • Establish a retail grant program with forgivable loans for tenant improvements, sponsored by the City or another party. • Coordinate with strategies 3g, 7a, 7c.
7c	**Summarize Downtown development information and tools** in a Downtown Development Handbook.	• Adapt and expand the City's development handbook into a version tailored to Downtown. • Distribute the handbook to interested property owners and developers as part of development go-to center assistance (strategy 7a).
7d	Actively **connect people who offer complementary skills** and opportunities (housing and office, local and national, etc.).	• WDDC actively facilitates conversations.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
7e	**Leverage Wichita's historic buildings** as development assets.	• Encourage adaptive reuse of underutilized historic buildings and ongoing vitality of occupied ones by promoting historic tax credits, providing public parking where needed, and otherwise providing incentives for development per strategies 5, 7, 8. • The City issues *Making the Environs Law Work* in coordination with the *Downtown Development Handbook* (strategy 7c). • Delay approved demolition of existing historic-eligible structures until the replacement development project can demonstrate progress. • Identify criteria that would justify new buildings that significantly differ from historic structures in their environs. • Pursue opportunity to refine application of the state environs law to optimize coordination with the Downtown master plan (i.e., consider reducing the environs radius from 500' to 400'). • Coordinate with strategies 3e, 8c.
7f	**Update zoning** to enable high-value walkable development.	• Allow residential use where it is now prohibited in the study area: change LI zones to CBD and/or apply an overlay district. • Reduce/eliminate the Urban Renewal District's required setbacks to allow pedestrian-oriented façade placement. • Incorporate updates in zoning and urban design guidelines. • Make requirements user-friendly; coordinate with *Downtown Development Handbook* (coordinate with strategies 7a, 7c).
7g	**Pursue means to address cumbersome ground leases.**	• Create a process that enables current building owners/occupants, developers, and similar parties to purchase long-term ground leases. • Facilitate communication with the dispersed owners of many current ground leases.
7h	**Create plans for more specific initiatives** that advance the Downtown plan.	• Enable private and public investments through more specific plans. • Give initial priority to the Commerce Street Arts District, Douglas corridor, Old Town West/First Street performing arts, Century II, and Government Center.
7i	**Invite development proposals on strategic sites** under public/quasi-public control, per defined plan goals.	• Incorporate development and design standards into RFP criteria. • Time the issuance of RFPs to periods when market analysis indicates strong market demand exists for the intended program. • Pursue the longer-term potential for a non-public entity to acquire and sell development parcels strategically to achieve shared public/private goals.

Enabling Development

8. Set criteria for public/private development incentives.

As described in the Business Plan Framework section of Chapter 5, public investment that spurs new business and property development Downtown can be good business, delivering strong fiscal and community benefits. But public entities and private developers alike need clear standards for use of incentives in order to make effective business decisions. These strategies offer clear standards based on successful development precedents around the country and also on the ways design can make the most of Downtown's unique districts.

STRATEGY		ACTION DETAILS
8a	**For the developer:** • past performance, appropriate expertise, capitalization	• Ensure that selected developers have the capacity and expertise to proceed with quality projects that advance master plan goals in a timely manner that justifies public incentives.
8b	**For the project:** • appropriate use(s) per location • design that supports walkability, Downtown character (transparent facades along sidewalk, historic compatibility, etc.) • priority community benefits as defined by district (river access, public parking, park enhancements, etc.)	• Promote developer confidence in potential supportive City initiatives. • Publicize and implement this plan. • Define specific public investments (e.g., for a park, land acquisition, or brownfields clean-up) that would be triggered by private-sector action to develop/redevelop related sites. • Make public investments conditional upon specific and sustained private-sector actions/milestones.
8c	**Establish design guidelines for walkable development focus areas** (follow Old Town and Delano precedents).	• Set design guidelines to encourage or require new projects to advance the master plan's goals. • Establish a design-review entity dedicated to Downtown. Projects should be subject to mandatory design review and voluntary compliance, with mandatory compliance in the event of public incentives or public land ownership. • The design-review entity should include at least one representative of each category: residents, developers, historic preservation, the City, WDDC, business and property owners, and designers. • The City establishes a review body or designates a third party to review incentive requests.

LEADERSHIP

Committed, enthusiastic, sustained and high-capacity leadership is vital to the success of the Downtown plan. Wichita is fortunate to have many people and institutions capable of offering this level of leadership for Downtown and willing to seek additional resources as they are needed.

The plan distributes responsibility for pursuing the action strategies across Downtown's extensive and skilled private and public-sector leadership, assigning tasks to the groups best suited to lead them. The plan coordinates these efforts with an executive management team, and prioritizes tasks to create a manageable implementation process that produces near-, mid- and long-term results. It also calls for oversight by a broader steering committee to measure progress and reconfirm priorities at periodic intervals.

The **executive management team** should include representation from the City, Visioneering Wichita, and the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC), continuing the partnership that very effectively managed the Downtown master planning process. The members of this team would have day-to-day responsibility for coordinating and monitoring all actions advancing the plan.

The City has a clear stake in Downtown and has shown strong leadership and support for the master planning process at all levels. WDDC, too, has provided critical leadership and support, with help from private-sector partners. As the designated entity to address downtown development, the WDDC conducted its own strategic planning process in parallel with downtown planning in anticipation of new roles and responsibilities it should assume to advance the plan. The strategic plan identifies key management, project and funding initiatives to increase the organization's capacity and effectiveness. Visioneering Wichita was a primary leader in developing the plan for Downtown. One of its core values is advancing the transformation of Downtown, the Museum District, Delano and the surrounding commercial and residential neighborhoods into a regional destination for residents, businesses and visitors.

Primary action strategy leadership is shared among nine City departments, the WDDC and, to a lesser degree, Go Wichita. The table at the end of this chapter identifies which actions fall to which of these responsible parties. The City and WDDC representatives on the executive management team will each need to coordinate the multiple actions of their respective organizations.

Many additional organizations will play essential roles as partners in advancing action strategies. These include, but are not limited to:

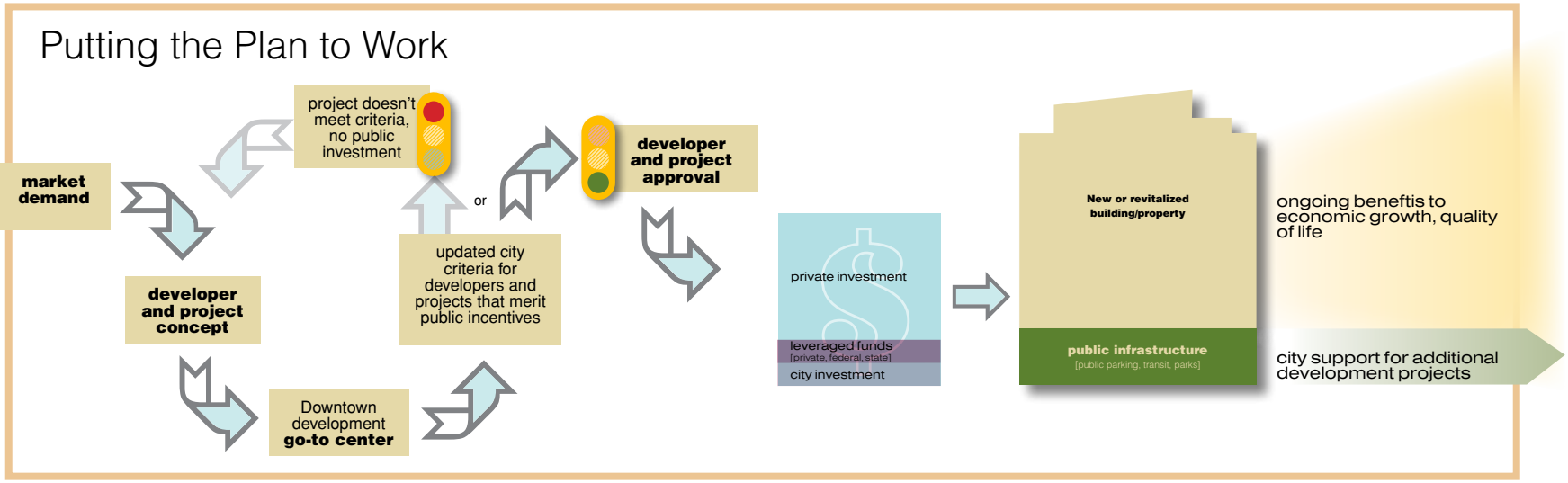
- Sedgwick County
- Current and emerging neighborhood and district associations, including the Old Town Association and Delano Business Association
- Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce
- Arts organizations
- Arena management
- ROK-ICT
- Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals group
- WAM Contemporaries

- Museums on the River
- Wichita Festivals, Inc.
- Visioneering
- Interfaith Ministries
- United Methodist Open Door
- Neighborhood/district associations, businesses
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Wichita Area Association of Realtors
- Colleges and universities, including Wichita State, Friends and Newman
- Greater Wichita Economic Development Coalition
- Kansas Health Foundation
- Individual property owners and developers
- Bike/Walk Alliance of Wichita
- Wichita Area Builders' Association
- Designers and engineers

Designated as leaders on some action strategies, The City departments, WDDC, and Go Wichita will also serve as key partners on others.

A **steering committee** like the one that has helped oversee the master planning process should remain in place to ensure plan actions are under way and achieving their intended goals. This group should meet regularly—possibly on a quarterly basis—to assess achievements, reconfirm near-term priorities, and update longer-term goals based on evolving conditions.

Leadership on plan actions by all these entities should focus on one fundamental goal: enabling a variety of people and organizations to take **independent action investing in Downtown.** The most significant plan results will ultimately come not through a handful of high-profile projects, but through many incremental actions at a variety of scales,



taking place over time. As an example, this diagram shows the process by which City and WDDC-sponsored resources should catalyze private-sector investment in Downtown development.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The Implementation Matrix in the appendix adds important details designed to promote successful results from the action strategies:

- **Lead responsible party**—is responsible for day-to-day application of a particular action strategy. This party reports to the executive management team.
- **Supporting partners**—engaged by the lead responsible party for assistance and expanded perspective as needed. In some cases, supporting partners will provide ongoing assistance to the lead responsible party; in others, they may be consulted on an occasional basis.
- **Priority level**—ranks action strategies on a three-level scale, with first-priority tasks deserving attention immediately. Exhibit 6-1, "Roles and Priorities" appears on the next two pages. It summaries which entity is responsible for which action strategies, and it assigns priorities to each strategy; actions earned a "first-priority" designation for their importance in supporting later actions, ease of near-term implementation, and/or other significant benefits.
- **Measures of success**— the executive management team and steering committee should test progress on action strategies against these measures on an ongoing basis.
- **Anticipated order-of-magnitude cost**—provides a potential cost range for the purpose of budgeting appropriate resources and assessing likely cost/benefit.
- **Anticipated funding possibilities and other resources**—outlines committed, anticipated, or potential funding sources that address anticipated costs.
- **Local and national precedents**—presents good, applied examples of strategies similar to those in this plan. Local precedents reveal valuable local know-how; national precedents bring in successful ideas from around the country.

EXHIBIT 6-1

Implementation: Roles and Priorities

	WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?	FIRST-PRIORITY INITIATIVES	SECOND-PRIORITY INITIATIVES	THIRD-PRIORITY INITIATIVES
CITY OF WICHITA DEPARTMENTS	**ARTS & CULTURAL SERVICES**		1b. Seek expanded funding for operations and facilities for arts, culture, sports education. 1e. Create a handbook for holding Downtown events.	
	PLANNING (ADVANCED)	1d. Create a Downtown Visitors Amenity Plan. 2b. Make Douglas a continuous promenade. 5a. Implement the Downtown Parking and Mobility Management Plan (DPMMP). 8c. Establish design guidelines for walkable development focus areas.	4a. Maintain database on Downtown buildings. 6d. Improve function for all access modes. 7h. Create plans for more specific initiatives that advance the Downtown Plan.	5d. Institute transportation demand management.
	PLANNING (CURRENT)	3e. Utilize historic assets to spur housing. 7a. Designate a go-to center for aspiring development. 7e. Leverage Wichita's historic buildings as development assets.	7c. Downtown Development Handbook 7f. Update zoning.	
	TRANSIT	6b. Expand convenient transit.		
	PUBLIC WORKS	2a. Create complete streets. 2d. Monitor and enforce Downtown cleanliness. 5e. Provide on-street parking. 6a. Make walking safe, easy, enjoyable.	2f. Make the Arkansas River Downtown's green centerpiece. 6c. Make Downtown bikeable.	
	PROJECT MANAGEMENT	8a. Set public/private incentive criteria for developers. 8b. Set public/private incentive criteria for projects.		
	PARK AND RECREATION		2e. Revitalize existing, and establish new, Downtown parks and green streets.	
	URBAN DEVELOPMENT	5b. Prioritize parking in places where it promotes walkable development. 7i. Invite development proposals on strategic sites.	5c. Invest in public parking structures 7b. Access new and underutilized development finance tools. 7g. Pursue means to address cumbersome ground leases.	3f. Target façade improvement incentives in walkable development focus areas.
	POLICE	2c. Ensure that public spaces are safe.		

EXHIBIT 6-1

Implementation: Roles and Priorities

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE?	FIRST-PRIORITY INITIATIVES	SECOND-PRIORITY INITIATIVES	THIRD-PRIORITY INITIATIVES
Go Wichita		1c. Expand joint marketing.	
WDDC	1d. Create a Downtown Visitors Amenity Plan. 2b. Make Douglas a continuous promenade. 2d. Monitor and enforce Downtown cleanliness. 3a. Prioritize target locations and types of retail. 3e. Utilize historic assets to spur housing. 4b. Track data on key Downtown indicators. 5a. Implement the *Downtown Parking and Mobility Management Plan* (DPMMP). 5e. Provide on-street parking. 7a. Designate a go-to center for aspiring development. 7e. Leverage Wichita's historic buildings as development assets. 7i. Invite development proposals on strategic sites. 8c. Establish design guidelines for walkable development focus areas.	1b. Seek expanded funding for operations and facilities for arts, culture, sports education. 1e. Create a handbook for holding Downtown events. 2e. Revitalize existing, and establish new, Downtown parks and green streets. 2f. Make the Arkansas River Downtown's green centerpiece. 3b. Activate street-level storefronts. 3c. Manage retail tenant mix. 3d. Promote quality Downtown housing. 4a. Maintain database on Downtown buildings. 4d. Interpret data and communicate key messages. 5c. Invest in public parking structures. 7b. Access new and underutilized development finance tools. 7c. Downtown Development Handbook 7g. Pursue means to address cumbersome ground leases. 7h. Create plans for more specific initiatives that advance the Downtown master plan.	1a. Support and strengthen formal associations. 1f. Attract educational institutions. 4c. Commission periodic market studies. 7d. Work actively to connect people who offer complementary skills and opportunities.