

**City of Wichita
District III Advisory Board Meeting
December 1, 2010**

To: City Council Member
District Advisory Board Members

Subject: DER2009-08: Downtown Master Plan

Initiated By: Metropolitan Area Planning Department

Agenda: New Business

Recommendation: Recommend adoption of *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010*.

Background: In late 2008, Mayor Brewer attended dozens of meetings throughout the community to discuss a vision of creating a downtown master plan. The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive, and the meetings that the Mayor attended garnered hundreds of comments and suggestions from citizens about their vision for downtown Wichita.

The Wichita City Council unanimously voted on December 16, 2008, to initiate a downtown master plan and approved the appointment of the Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee to help engage the public on a vision for downtown. The Wichita Downtown Development Corporation (WDDC) Board of Directors unanimously voted on April 23, 2009, to commit \$175,000 to a downtown master plan as seed capital to forge partnerships and secure additional funding through the City of Wichita and the private sector. Private sector contributions to the development of a downtown plan have exceeded \$100,000.

On May 5, 2009, the City Council authorized \$225,000 in funding for a downtown master plan and initiated the process to select a design team to prepare a downtown master plan. A Request for Qualifications was sent to over 170 local, regional, and national vendors. A total of 32 design teams responded, and a 13-member selection committee appointed by the City Manager reviewed and analyzed the responses, interviewed respondents, and selected Goody Clancy, an award-winning architecture, planning, and preservation firm with significant downtown planning experience, to develop the downtown master plan. The Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee endorsed Goody Clancy on September 25, 2009. On October 13, 2009, the City Council approved a \$500,000 contract with Goody Clancy to develop a downtown master plan.

The plan took approximately 12 months to complete and involved input from thousands of community stakeholders. The end result is *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* that was unanimously adopted by the Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) on November 18, 2010 as an amendment to *The Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan*.

Analysis: *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* is comprised of eight chapters and four appendices that together comprise a 20-year blueprint for the revitalization of downtown Wichita. The plan identifies market demand for as much as \$500 million in private-sector capital investment over the next 15-20 years that would result in an estimated 1,500-1,600 new housing units, 125,000-175,000 square feet of retail space, 400,000-480,000 square feet of office space, and 350-475 hotel rooms. The plan also outlines 43 action steps for accomplishing this revitalization potential through efforts focused on creating unique downtown places, expanding transportation choices and enabling development. An estimated \$100 million in parking, streets, and parks/open space improvements are recommended to be made in conjunction with the private-sector revitalization projects. More detailed

information regarding *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* is available online at: <http://www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Planning/AP/NR/Downtown/>

In addition to being adopted by the MAPC by a 14-0 vote, the Plan has received unanimous endorsements from the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation, Visioneering Wichita, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce, Young Professionals of Wichita, Transit Advisory Board, Go Wichita, and Wichita Area Association of Realtors. Support of the Plan also was indicated at presentations to the Historic Preservation Board, Park Board, Library Board, Sedgwick County Association of Cities, Wichita Independent Neighborhoods, and Old Town Association. Only the Park Board had any members that expressed opposition to the Plan, and their opposition was based on the expense of the Plan and subsidies to developers rather than concerns with the park-related elements of the plan.

Financial Consideration: Adopting *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* involves no commitment of funding for the City of Wichita. Any City of Wichita funding of projects identified in the Plan will require future City Council action.

Goal Impact: *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* will help achieve the goals of Promoting Economic Vitality, Creating Vibrant Neighborhoods, and Ensuring Efficient Infrastructure.

Legal Consideration: The MAPC, in accordance with Kansas state statutes, published the required public hearing notice in the official City and County newspaper on October 28, 2010, held a public hearing for the proposed *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* and approved a resolution adopting the Plan as an amendment to *The Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan* on November 18, 2010.

The adopting ordinance has been reviewed and approved as to form by the Law Department.

Recommendation/Actions: It is recommended that the District Advisory Board recommend that the City Council adopt of *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* as an amendment to *The Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan*.