



CITY NEWS

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Mayor Downtown Revitalization Statement

I am especially pleased to make additional appointments today to the Downtown Revitalization Steering Council, and I thank the Council Members for their support of this initiative.

Today we are launching a new and exciting engagement process, asking the people of Wichita to learn about the benefits of downtown revitalization but more importantly inviting all of you to dream about a new downtown, giving us your input and ideas on how we make our downtown the envy of other great American cities.

Sedgwick County Commission Chairman Kelly Parks has graciously agreed to chair this Steering Council with me along with Larry Weber, Chairman of the Downtown Development Corporation. Joining us on the Steering Council will be the chairpersons of three Advisory Teams, one engaging businesses, another engaging Wichita's groups and associations, and another engaging neighborhoods, the faith community, the arts and others called the "Friends of Downtown." The first meeting of this Steering Council will be March 31.

It is my hope that the people of Wichita will attend the Advisory Team meetings. The business team will meet on April 6, the team engaging groups and associations will meet on April 13 and the "Friends of Downtown" group is scheduled to meet on April 14. I encourage everyone in our community to attend as many meetings as they would like. In the spirit of being open and inclusive, we want as many people as possible to be engaged in creating a new and exciting

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vision for downtown. The dates, times and locations of the Team meetings will be posted at www.wichita.gov.

Studies of other cities that have taken on the task before us make a compelling case for downtown revitalization. The benefits include: new and retained jobs, new revenue through increased tourism and escalating property values, renewed and sometimes newly-discovered satisfaction with life and increased pride in their cities.

But every downtown is unique. Wichitans need to determine our future by coming together to hope and to dream, deciding our next steps in this exciting initiative, and addressing the very heart of what makes us - us.

I have been greeted by great excitement and enthusiasm as I've shared my hope for a new downtown with various groups across the city. I hope this process will expand on that excitement as we come together to move forward.

I thank everyone who has agreed to work on this with me. Your leadership is invaluable and your commitment is important to our continued success as a city and a community of choice for people and business. Other cities have shown us that downtown revitalization is an on-going process that requires intention, collaboration, community engagement and commitment. This is not an easy task. It does not happen overnight. Good cities become great when they realize that they are in this for the long haul.

I have repeatedly expressed my passion and commitment for revitalization of downtown. But I need your help. Together, we can produce results for today and for our future. In Wichita, Kansas, that future starts now.

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