

Phase 2: Ideate & Iterate

April through July 2025

The Ideate & Iterate phase focused on testing design ideas through public open houses, small-group charrettes and pop-up events to gather valuable input that will guide design strategies and actions for downtown's future.

On June 2, 2025, over 250 Wichitans came together to share their visions for a vibrant, thriving downtown. The insights from this broad community engagement have been carefully analyzed and are now shaping the next steps of the Downtown Wichita Action Plan.

Open House 2 at TempleLive Wichita



What We Learned from Phase 2

Living & Working

Quality of Life

- 56% of Open House attendees said they want to live downtown in the future.
- A grocery store was the No. 1 most requested new amenity. Specifically, the community expressed a desire that a store be developed in close proximity to housing and new developments like the Wichita Biomedical Campus℠.
- Residents emphasized the need for a cleaner, safer and greener urban environment that's well-connected to the Arkansas River.

Housing Preferences

- While only 30% of the current downtown housing stock is available for ownership, two-thirds of Wichitans said they'd prefer to buy rather than rent downtown, highlighting opportunities for additional condominium and townhouse development in the city's core.

Work + Third Spaces



- Wichitans want to see more activity beyond 9 to 5, with “third places” like cafés, shaded outdoor areas and flexible public spaces that support human connection and collaboration.

Getting Around

Streets + Connections

- Participants prioritized these key streets for upgrades: Douglas, Broadway, Emporia, William and English.
- Community feedback emphasized the need for safer crossings, more shade and vibrant street-level activity, especially near the new Wichita Biomedical Campus℠.

Transit Improvements

- There is strong support for improved bus service with more frequent, direct routes and better connectivity to destinations across downtown.

Landscape & Public Realm

Open Space

- Participants want new family-friendly spaces and parks, especially in underutilized areas off Douglas Avenue, along with features such as farmers' markets and shaded areas.

Riverfront Reimagining

- Wichitans envision the Arkansas River as an active public anchor with walkable, bikeable and shaded connections to key assets.

History & Culture

Creative Storytelling

- The community wants to celebrate Wichita’s rich history with storytelling trails linking sites like Century II, the Keeper of the Plains and the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum.
- Wichitans also expressed their interest in building a new performing arts center to bring more cultural programming to the heart of downtown.

The input gathered during Phase 2 is actively informing the next steps of the Action Plan. Click here to view the full Phase 2 engagement summary report.

Save the Date: Final Open House

The community is invited to the final Action Plan Open House on Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2025, from 3 to 6:30 p.m. at Downtown Wichita, 501 E. Douglas Ave.

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