

DOWNTOWN WICHITA

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 and Working Downtown

- **Quality of Life:** Residents want more amenities, specifically a grocery store, close to housing and new developments like the Wichita Biomedical CampusSM. Priorities include a cleaner, safer, greener urban downtown that's well-connected to the Arkansas River.
- **Housing Preferences:** While only 30% of 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.
- **Work Environment:** Attendees called for robust amenities, transit and housing. There's a strong desire for more "third spaces" (parks, plazas, cafés) and increased after-hours activities.

Getting Around

- **Streets & Transit:** Streets near the new Wichita Biomedical CampusSM—Douglas, Broadway, Emporia, William and English—were top choices for upgrades such as better shade, safer crossings and more activity at street level. Many also sought improved bus service with higher frequency and more direct routes.

Landscape and Public Realm



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- **Arkansas River Activation:** The community supports transforming the riverfront into a lush, active public anchor with walkable, bikeable and shaded connections to key assets.
- **Open Space Needs:** New family-friendly spaces and parks, especially in underused spaces off Douglas Avenue, are high on the wish list, along with features like farmers' markets and shaded areas.

History and Culture

- **Creative Storytelling:** Residents support more creative storytelling and cultural experiences, including paths connecting cultural sites such as Century II, the Keeper of the Plains and the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum. Wichitans also expressed interest in building a new performing arts center to bring more cultural programming to the heart of downtown.

Curious to learn more?

The full Phase 2 summary report, which details community feedback and the planning team's analysis, is available here for those interested in a deeper dive: [Iterate Engagement Summary](#).

Thank you to everyone who joined us during this crucial phase. Your ideas are helping to create a downtown Wichita that reflects our collective vision and aspirations. We look forward to sharing more updates as the plan advances.