Project Downtown History

Project Partner (December 2024)
In December 2024, Downtown Wichita announced Sasaki, a global urban planning and design firm, as its project partner for the Downtown Action Plan**.** This community engagement and planning initiative will inform the vision and 10-year implementation roadmap for the continued revitalization and transformation of the city's core.

Click here to read the full press release.

Continued Growth Founded Upon Proven Success
Since 2010, the vision for downtown Wichita has been guided by Project Downtown, a master plan that has provided aspirational goals and deliberate strategies for public and private sector investment. Serving as a living document, the development blueprint has provided a framework to advance the economic vitality of downtown. The returns have been remarkable with more than $1.7 billion invested to date and a pipeline of projects totaling more than $760 million.

Building upon the success of Project Downtown, Downtown Wichita and the Greater Wichita Partnership began the next steps to cast vision through 2035. The teams are committed to continually cultivating a vibrant, clean and safe core that enhances the quality of life and attracts talent for years to come.

Downtown Action Plan Goals:

- **Leverage Past Successes**: The action plan will build upon Project Downtown's foundational principles and strategies with a focus on greater levels of implementation in the next 10 years.
- **Continued Cultivation**: The action plan will identify and realize current development opportunities and cultivate new, targeted opportunities for future development while coordinating with various city plans and initiatives.
- **Elevate Design and Construction**: The action plan will serve as a guiding instrument to ensure that downtown development consists of excellent architectural design and is built with high-quality materials and methods.
- **Provide Educational Tools**: The action plan will provide examples to inspire and educate the Wichita community about downtown opportunities and services.
- **Enhance Economic Vitality**: The action plan will identify the economic benefits of increased public and private sector investment that supports the collective vision.
- **Collaborative Engagement**: The action plan will represent a collaborative effort combining the insights and knowledge of the design firm with ideas generated through extensive community engagement.
- **Improved Connectivity**: The action plan will introduce strategies to enhance connectivity between downtown districts and surrounding neighborhoods to promote a vibrant economic environment.

Request For Proposal
In September 2024, Downtown Wichita launched the Downtown Action Plan campaign with a Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP is a comprehensive document outlining the plan's scope of work, evaluation criteria and selection process.

Expected Timeline:

- Release of RFP: 9-26-24
- Deadline for emailed inquiries: 10-7-24
- Response to inquiries: 10-11-24
- Deadline for submissions: 10-25-24
- Selection of committee evaluation: 11-4-24
- Notification of shortlisted candidates: 11-8-24
- On-site interviews: 11-18 – 11-22/24
- Contract negotiations: 12-2-24
- Project Downtown 2035 launch and community engagement: 1-6-24

View the Project Downtown 2035 RFP

Submissions have closed.

Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita (2010)

Project Downtown is a master plan – a blueprint for development of Wichita's urban core. It builds upon the uniqueness of our community and it casts visions for the future. The plan focuses on key areas of our downtown, illustrating the potential we have as a community to grow. The community plan benefits the public and private sectors when making decisions, guiding strategic public investment so we, as a community, maximize private sector investment. Key to the plan's success is community engagement.

Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita strives to achieve several key outcomes:

- Connect and maximize the potential of areas including Old Town, INTRUST Bank Arena and the River Corridor;
- Build upon previous downtown plans;
- Provide specific action-oriented development strategies, including implementation plans; define the vision for Downtown;
- The initiatives will be based on economic analysis and realities, and the plan will maximize private-sector investment and return on public-sector investment.
- The plan will further solidify the identity of our city and community.

As a result of such planning, we can expect a number of outcomes:

- It will assist the community in retaining young people, families and jobs;
- It will increase tourism

- It will grow existing tax base revenues; and
- It will make Wichita competitive in regional, national and global markets.

Download Project Downtown and Appendix.

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The success of 1989's initial downtown development effort, sometimes called the RTKL plan, exceeded expectations. From there, a second series of downtown improvements, the River Corridor plan, took hold. After voters approved funding for a regional sports and entertainment arena, the Arena Neighborhood plan was designed to improve areas surrounding the arena site. Collectively, these three plans have built a strong foundation. Projects evolving from them continue to grow. With each new success, residents and visitors discover new ways to use and enjoy downtown Wichita. Project Downtown was built upon the frameworks of previous plans and progress, and was adopted by the Wichita City Council and Sedgwick County Commission in 2010.

Community Partners
The Downtown Master Plan was funded through a public/private partnership. The City of Wichita committed $175,000 and a FTA grant for $50,000. The Wichita Downtown Development Corporation committed $175,000 and made the commitment to raise additional private sector funds. The following is a list of private-sector partners:

- City of Wichita
- Wichita Downtown Development Corporation
- 2009 WDDC Board of Directors
- Wichita Transit
- Cargill
- INTRUST Bank
- Fidelity Bank
- MarketPlace Properties
- Emprise Bank
- 2009 Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- Visit Wichita - Convention & Visitors' Bureau
- Professional Engineering Consultants
- Dondlinger Construction
- BOMA
- Adam Jones Law Firm
- Foulston Siefkin LLP
- Belford Electric

- Rock Island Enterprises
- Cole Consultants
- Builders Inc
- Athena Jewelry
- Casado-McKay
- Gossen Livingston Architects
- Hite Fanning & Honeyman LLP
- J.P. Weigand & Sons Inc.
- Morris Laing Evans Brock & Kennedy, Chtd.
- Northern Flyer Alliance
- Old Mill Tasty Shop
- Real Development
- Ruffin Properties
- Schaefer Johnson Cox Frey Architecture
- Sullivan Higdon Sink
- Sunflower Bank
- The Fiber Studio
- Trans Pacific Properties
- Westar Energy