

Old Town Celebrates a Decade of being a "Great Place"

In October of 2008, Wichita's Old Town district was designated one of ten "Great Places in America" by the American Planning Association (APA), putting Old Town on par with such places as Pike Place Market in Seattle, Michigan Avenue in Chicago, Chinatown in San Francisco, and Central Park in New York City. This year the Old Town Association, City of Wichita, KMUW, and Downtown Wichita are celebrating ten years of this prestigious designation with community events and activities.

Making Old Town the successful mixed-use neighborhood it is today required vision and partnerships between the public and private sectors. Community leaders, business groups and citizens, including the Old Town Association, began meeting and discussing plans to revitalize Old Town in the 1970s. Their efforts resulted in the 1983 Old Town Development Plan. Five years later the development of Old Town began with just a few properties near Douglas and Mosley.



Today, almost 50 years later, Old Town is home to hundreds of businesses and has become a destination sought out for its restaurants, entertainment, shops, galleries, museums, and more. It has also become a popular place to live and stay, with hundreds of apartments and luxury hotels. Most recently its development is being driven by the vision outlined in Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, a blueprint for the development of Wichita's urban core adopted by the Wichita City Council in 2010.

The Great Place designation was awarded to Old Town ten years ago for the city's bold vision, astute planning, collaborative partnerships and innovative practices that transformed a derelict warehouse and light industrial district into a bustling and successful mixed-use neighborhood. APA's Great Places are selected annually and represent the gold standard in sense of place, culture, historic interest, community involvement and vision for tomorrow. Learn more about how Old Town became a great neighborhood in America.

To celebrate Old Town as a Great Place in America, a year-long celebration of the 10th anniversary of the designation begins in October with the following activities:

- Wichita Mayor Jeff Longwell will proclaim October as Community Planning Month during the October 3rd City Council meeting.
- The Old Town Concert Series, brought to you by the Old Town Association, KMUW and additional community event sponsors, will take place on October 7, 14, 21 in Old Town Square (353 N. Mead Street, Wichita, KS 67202) at 7 p.m. Attendees are encouraged to bring a lawn chair. View a full list of bands.
- Special banners commemorating the 10th anniversary will be hung throughout the Old Town district.



- Downtown Wichita will be promoting the past and present development of the Old Town district through a social media campaign showcasing the district's development.

