



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



DOWNTOWN  
WICHITA



## *Mission*

### **Commerce and Culture at the Core**

Downtown Wichita is a private 501(c)(3) non-profit that amplifies the energy, capital and growth of downtown by empowering residents, visitors, and businesses to explore the possibilities of our city's core.

Founded in 2002, our mission is to cultivate opportunities that revitalize and enhance Wichita's urban core. We collaborate with stakeholders to stimulate investment and interest in downtown.

*Downtown Wichita provides collaborative leadership to strengthen downtown as:*

- ▶ The heart of the city for all citizens
- ▶ An active and prosperous place for businesses and employees
- ▶ A center for artistic and cultural experiences
- ▶ A vibrant urban environment for residents, workers and visitors

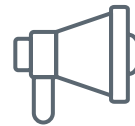
*The organization works to achieve this mission through three key areas of focus:*



**Developing  
Downtown**



**Enhancing  
Vibrancy**



**Marketing  
the District**

# Stay informed with real-time data

## \$1.5B

PUBLIC & PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN  
PROJECT DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
AREA SINCE ADOPTION IN 2010

## \$801M

SSMID\* PRIVATE INVESTMENT  
SINCE PROJECT DOWNTOWN  
*(adopted in 2010)*

## \$147M

SSMID\* PUBLIC INVESTMENT  
SINCE PROJECT DOWNTOWN  
*(adopted in 2010)*

We know you're invested in downtown Wichita and your decisions require real-time data. That's why we've created a digital Development Toolkit where investment data and resources are regularly updated. The toolkit documents the exciting transformation occurring in Wichita's urban center and can be used as a resource for those who own, develop, market or invest in real estate. View and download the reports and view sources by scanning the code or visit [www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit](http://www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit).



## Building Toward Tomorrow

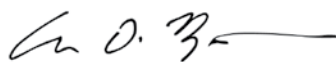
It has been incredible to watch the evolution of downtown over the past decade. The Wichita community has worked hard to renew and revitalize our urban center. The excitement of our past accomplishments is surpassed only by our excitement for what is to come in the future.

In 2021, the Downtown Wichita team focused on assisting the district in its ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in tandem with continued efforts to strengthen the core of our city. By aligning community partners, we are working to create a regional destination on our riverfront that will be a catalyst for further growth. We continue to put an emphasis on arts and cultural experiences that create a distinctive urban center. The team is also assisting local organizations to address the mental health and substance abuse issues that affect our most vulnerable community members. These key projects and initiatives will help our city continue to recover and build communal pride of place as we strive to attract and retain young talent.

With more than \$1.5 billion of investment since the adoption of the Project Downtown master plan in 2010, the future of downtown has never looked more promising. On the horizon is the arrival of the Kansas Health Science Center – Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine and the WSU Tech National Institute for Culinary and Hospitality Education. These extraordinary additions will bring a myriad of other development opportunities to the area while bringing students, staff and faculty to our downtown population.

I am proud to share this annual report with you, which provides an overview of the organization and the excellent accomplishments made by the team. I hope you will feel encouraged and inspired by the progress made in 2021 and in the groundwork being laid to ensure continued success.

Sincerely,



Alan Banta, Downtown Wichita Chair



**Alan Banta, Chair**  
Downtown Wichita

\*Self Supported Municipal Improvement District or SSMID. More details on page 5.

# MEET THE TEAM

## STAFF MEMBERS



**Jeff Fluhr**  
*President*



**Jason Gregory**  
*Executive Vice President*



**Cynthia Wentworth**  
*Executive Vice President of  
Strategic Communications*



**Bonnie Simmons**  
*Reception Administrative  
Coordinator*



**Emily Brookover**  
*Director of Community  
Engagement & Placemaking*



**Andy Kim**  
*Director of Multimedia*



**Megan Radley**  
*Director of Communications*

# 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Alan Banta, Chair**  
Trans Pacific Oil Corp.

**Joel Kelley, Vice Chair**  
Cablecom, Inc.

**Joe Tigert, Immediate Past Chair\***  
RT Financial

**Sean Weaver, Finance Chair**  
Allen, Gibbs & Houlik, L.C.

## BOARD MEMBERS

**Alex Breitenbach**  
JE Dunn Construction

**Andrea Hattan**  
The Hive

**Jennifer McDonald**  
Jenny Dawn Cellars

**Sam Chandler**  
INTRUST Bank

**Dick Honeyman\***  
Hite, Fanning & Honeyman

**Tim Nelson**  
Fidelity Bank

**Tara Clary**  
High Touch

**Tracy Hoover**  
Groover Labs

**Chrissy Robben**  
Hexcode Designs

**Cindy Claycomb**  
Downtown Resident

**Nicole Howerton**  
Howerton+White

**Don Sherman\***  
Evergy

**Randy Doerksen**  
Meritrust

**Jeremy Hurt**  
Murfin, Inc.

**Stan Smith**  
Martin Pringle Law Firm

**Sharon Fearey**  
Downtown Resident

**Joe Johnson\***  
SJCF Architecture

**Joe Surmeier**  
Professional Engineering Consultants, P.A.

**Natalie Gosch**  
Cargill Protein Group

**Tom Johnson**  
NAI Martens

**Larry Weber\***  
Garvey Center

**Arlen Hamilton**  
Adams, Browns CPA

**Dr. Tiffany Masson**  
Kansas Health Science Center

**Jessie Hartke**  
Hartke Presents

**Chad McDaniel**  
Emprise Bank

## EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

**Maggie Ballard**  
City of Wichita, District VI

**Shelly Prichard**  
Wichita Community Foundation

**Lacey Cruse**  
Sedgwick County, District IV

**Kathy Sexton**  
City of Wichita, Office of Urban Dev. (Interim)

**Debra Fraser**  
KMUW and Old Town Association

**John Rolfe**  
Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce

**Bryan Frye**  
City of Wichita, District V

**Scott Wadle**  
City of Wichita, MAPD

**Brandon Johnson**  
City of Wichita, District I

**Susan Santo**  
Visit Wichita

**Pete Najera**  
United Way of the Plains

*\*Denotes Past Chair*



ABOUT US

# OVERVIEW

## Commerce & Culture at the Core

Governed by a Board of Directors comprised of downtown property owners, businesses and stakeholders, and administered by a professional staff, Downtown Wichita contracts with the City of Wichita to provide economic development services in the city’s core. This contract is funded through a Self Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID), designating downtown as the geographic area bounded by Central Avenue, Kellogg Avenue, Washington Street and the Arkansas River.

Our staff connects prospective businesses and investors to available real estate opportunities and relevant market data. Through the Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, we facilitate a comprehensive approach to development in the downtown district. We also provide robust marketing and communications strategies on behalf of the downtown stakeholders. Primarily through our website and social media channels, we reach a wide variety of audiences. Finally, we work to improve the vitality in downtown through various placemaking and programming initiatives – working to incorporate the arts and culture throughout our public spaces.

Improving overall quality-of-life offerings is a key priority of the Greater Wichita Partnership and is essential for talent attraction and retention. Through the continued development of the region's urban center, much of this work is realized through the Downtown Wichita organization as an affiliate of the Partnership.

In 2021, Downtown Wichita leveraged SSMID funding and raised an additional

**\$164,845**

**in grant funding and other contributions**

In total, from 2009-2021, Downtown Wichita has leveraged and raised over

**\$1.46 million**

**in addition to SSMID funding**



## 2022 SSMID Advisory Board of Directors

### BOARD MEMBERS

**Joe Johnson, Chair**  
SJCF Architecture

**AJ Boleski**  
INTRUST Bank Arena

**Randy Doerksen**  
Meritrust

**Debra Fraser**  
Old Town Association

**Natalie Gosch**  
Cargill Protein Group

**Joel Kelley**  
Cablecom, Inc.

**Chad McDaniel**  
Emprise Bank

**Don Sherman**  
Evergy, Inc.

**Joe Surmeier**  
Professional Engineering Consultants, P.A.

### EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

**Jeff Fluhr**  
Downtown Wichita

**Kathy Sexton**  
City of Wichita, Office of Urban Development (Interim)

# DEVELOPING DOWNTOWN





## Empowering progress

The Downtown Wichita team works to realize the community vision outlined in Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita by collaborating with key stakeholders on urban design implementation, maintaining relevant market and economic research and advocating for investment in the district.

By connecting the private sector and local government, we steward initiatives that allow commerce and culture to thrive.

Pictured: Downtown developer Sudha Tokala on-site at the renovation of the former Henry's building into the WSU Tech National Institute for Culinary and Hospitality Education. She is the visionary behind the revitalization of five historic buildings along the William Street corridor, which includes the campus of the Kansas Health Science Center - Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine – a project that will transform a previously vacant area into a vibrant destination.



Photo of the master plan

## Project Downtown

Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita is a 15-year community vision and blueprint for growth. The plan was developed through extensive public input from 2009-2010 and was adopted in December 2010. The master plan is designed to assist the public and private sectors with strategic development decisions.



Based upon economic analysis and market potential, the plan focuses on key catalyst sites and illustrates potential opportunities for growth. Project Downtown builds upon the uniqueness of our community and casts a vision for the future. Download the full report at [www.downtownwichita.org/development/project-downtown](http://www.downtownwichita.org/development/project-downtown).

Intended outcomes:

- ▶ Develop a vibrant, distinctive downtown
- ▶ Assist the community in attracting and retaining talent
- ▶ Increase Wichita's competitiveness in regional, national and global markets
- ▶ Grow existing tax base revenues
- ▶ Increase tourism

In 2014 and 2020, Downtown Wichita received a Pinnacle Award from the International Downtown Association (IDA) for the implementation of the Project Downtown plan. Each year, IDA recognizes outstanding projects from downtown development corporations around the globe. These awards, named the Downtown Achievement Awards, highlight the best projects in urban place management. The Pinnacle Award is the industry's highest recognition and represents the most creative, inspiring innovations in urban place management.



View/download reports at [downtownwichita.org/toolkit](http://downtownwichita.org/toolkit)

### Economic Research

Downtown Wichita regularly engages market experts to update residential, hotel, commercial and retail data to provide timely, accurate information. Updated studies and market information provides lenders, investors and the public sector an accurate forecast of the market potential. Market research has proven valuable for developers, property owners and investors interested in Wichita’s urban core. In 2021, the organization contracted with three firms to conduct analyses for market-based projections to determine how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the overall downtown market as well as the Riverfront Legacy Master planning area. The results of the three forecasts indicate strong opportunities for growth over the next seven to ten years. Economic firms include Zimmerman/Volk Associates for residential, W-ZHA for office and RCLCO for residential, office, retail and hotel, including a forecast focused on the Riverfront Legacy Master planning area.



Scan on your mobile device to view data and sources

In addition to market-based research and specific planning initiatives, Downtown Wichita reports timely U.S. Census Data alongside local market information and trends. The information reported is intended to be a resource for those who own, develop, market or invest in real estate and to assist the public and private sectors with strategic investment decisions. Learn more and view sources at [www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit](http://www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit) or scan the QR code above on your mobile device.

### 2021 Market Forecast Highlights

#### RESIDENTIAL

Residential forecast has increased for downtown

Zimmerman/Volk

3,101 – 3,724 units (over 7 years)

RCLCO

3,100 units (over 10 years)

#### OFFICE

Moderate/strong opportunity in downtown overall

W-ZHA

515,000 – 601,000 sq. ft.

RCLCO

572,000 – 665,000 net new (806,000 – 900,000 gross)

#### HOSPITALITY

Analysis projects downtown could support additional hotel rooms

RCLCO

235 keys

Visit [www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit](http://www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit) for additional information and sources or scan the QR code above



*Fidelity Bank Car Park, example of urban design*

## Urban Design

Developing in an urban environment is fundamentally different from suburban development. Downtown Wichita works with developers, property owners, the design community and the public sector to ensure that critical components of urban development core practices are incorporated into projects.

Urban design principles:

- ▶ Foster walkable connections between spaces
- ▶ Encourage dense, mixed-use buildings
- ▶ Focus on ground-floor activation
- ▶ Ensure that development seamlessly connects and interacts with the streetscape

*Fidelity Bank Car Park*

*Car Park Signage*





*Rendering of the EPC Ballpark mixed-use project*

## Advocacy

An important role for the organization is to regularly advocate on behalf of the district and its stakeholders. The team shares input on development projects, offers market data and letters of support for projects that meet the objectives of Project Downtown. Staff promotes and educates on the important role that economic development programs have in the revitalization of urban centers. There are local, state and federal programs that can preserve or enhance historic architecture. These programs are critical tools that provide public benefits through improved infrastructure, streetscapes, parking assets and other development/open space amenities. Many adaptive reuse projects would not be financially viable without these important programs.

The Kansas Health Science Center – Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine is an example of a project that would not be possible without these tools. The project is a catalyst for the restoration of five historic buildings including the former Macy’s and Innes department store buildings into the campus, Broadway Plaza into an AC Marriott Hotel, Sutton Place into student housing and the redesign of Chester I. Lewis Park. Adjacent to the campus, the former Henry’s building is being renovated into the WSU Tech National Institute for Culinary and Hospitality Education, which will include a food hall and rooftop event center in addition to the institute. Another example is the new mixed-use development currently planned by Wichita Wind Surge baseball team ownership and EPC Development. The property will be located adjacent to Riverfront Stadium along the west bank of the Arkansas River and will increase the density and mix of uses surrounding the stadium. Find project descriptions on pages 13-18.

*Rendering of renovated Broadway Plaza*



*Rendering of renovated Henry’s building*

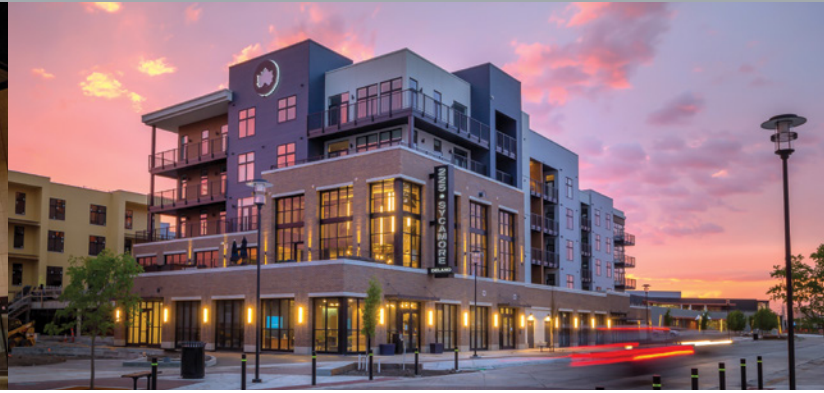


# PROJECTS COM



**Kansas Health Science Center**  
*\$75 million*

Two historic buildings have been renovated into the Kansas Health Science Center – Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine, which includes a world-class osteopathic skills training center, standardized patient teaching rooms, large lecture halls, small group study rooms and a virtual anatomy lab.



**225 Sycamore**  
*\$40 million*

EPC Real Estate developed a parcel of land in the historic Delano District into a new property with 204 residential units and ground floor retail space. Project Downtown recognizes this location as a key catalyst site. Amenities include an outdoor courtyard, pool, fire pits and BBQ grills as well as a clubhouse, fitness center and sauna.



**SPT Architecture Headquarters**  
*N/A*

Spangenberg Phillips Tice Architecture has renovated the former Greyhound bus terminal at 312 S. Broadway into their headquarters. Originally constructed in 1946, the 14,000 square foot building gives the company room to expand.



**The Baltimore**  
*N/A*

This historic building has been renovated into 30 apartment units and includes studio, one and two bedroom options. Amenities include two pools, a clubhouse, a book-share program, an on-site gym and secure parking. Each unit features upgraded finishes and sound barrier insulation between floors.

# PLEATED

MAY 2021-MAY 2022



**Moka's Cafe (Delano Catalyst Site)**  
N/A

Located between the Advanced Learning Library and River Vista Apartments, this new coffee house adds to the growing density in the historic Delano District. The menu includes coffee, smoothies, burgers, sandwiches, salads and breakfast items.



**Modig Machine Tool Headquarters**  
\$1.1 million

The building at 208 S. Commerce Street has been renovated into the North American headquarters for Modig Machine Tool. The property showcases the newest tooling machines and is designed to host training events, machine demonstrations and run time validation testing for customers.



**Arena Pointe Office Building**  
N/A

The building at 400 S. Emporia Street has been renovated into office space featuring wood floors, exposed brick walls, high ceilings and large windows. Amenities include private parking, an outdoor patio space and a key location directly across from the entrance to INTRUST Bank Arena.



**Emporia Street Two-Way Conversion**  
N/A

Emporia Street has been reconfigured from one-way to two-way between Second and Waterman Streets. Project Downtown recognizes the need for two-way conversions in order to create a safe, walkable environment for bikes and pedestrians. This project improved traffic flow and created the ideal setting for ground-floor retail.

# PROJECTS UNDER



## **WSU Tech National Institute for Culinary and Hospitality Education** N/A

The historic, 90-year-old Henry's building will be transformed into the WSU Tech National Institute for Culinary and Hospitality Education (NICHE). The property will be renovated to feature state-of-the-art commercial kitchens, classrooms, a demonstration kitchen, a food hall (that will be open to the public) and an indoor/outdoor rooftop event center on the fourth floor. The project will bring a new energy to the William Street corridor, directly south of Douglas Avenue. Two of the four restaurants have been announced, including JINYA Ramen Bar and the BVI Bistro. The bistro will be led by students in the culinary program as well as students from Envision, a nonprofit that promotes advocacy and independence for those who are blind or low vision.



## **Broadway Plaza AC Marriott Hotel** N/A

The historic Broadway Plaza is currently being renovated into an AC Marriott Hotel featuring 118 rooms. Developers plan to blend modern aesthetics with the building's unique, historic elements. The 11-story hotel will feature a ground-floor bar that will be open to the public and a covered entryway for valet parking.

## **Sutton Place** N/A

The Sutton Place building will be renovated into student housing to complement the Kansas Health Science Center - Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine. The project adds additional housing options for students and is connected to the medical school via skywalk.



# CONSTRUCTION



## **Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park** *\$1.7 million*

The City of Wichita will revitalize an underutilized urban park into a public gathering place. The park will also serve as the Douglas entry to the new medical school. The improvements will honor the legacy of Chester I. Lewis, the namesake of the park, who was the president of the Wichita chapter of the NAACP and was a leader of the modern civil rights movement at the local, state and national levels. The redesign was made possible from TIF funding from the KHSC-KansasCOM and adjacent development projects. Additional private sector funding of \$250,000 was provided by six community partners to realize the art components in the park: INTRUST Bank, Fidelity Bank, Emprise Bank, Meritrust Credit Union, The Wichita Parks Foundation, and KHSC-Kansas-COM.



## **HiTone Lofts** *N/A*

Originally built in 1910, a historic warehouse in the Old Town District is being renovated into a residential property with 72 units and ground-floor retail space. Plans also include constructing an addition to the south side of the building that will serve as a rooftop penthouse. The building's unique, historic features will be retained during renovations.



## **The Hudson at St. Francis Venue** *N/A*

Owners of The Hudson venue plan to construct a new building with ground floor office space and a new venue with capacity for up to 100 guests. The St. Francis street facade will incorporate recycled bricks from the previous building and will feature two Airbnb suites. A third Airbnb suite will be housed on-site in a unique, vintage boxcar.

# PROJECTS IN PL



## **Ballpark/EPC Mixed-Use** N/A

Wichita City Council approved plans by Wichita Wind Surge ownership and EPC Real Estate in April 2022 to develop a six-story hotel and two mixed-use buildings along the west bank of the Arkansas River. The project will increase the density and mix of uses surrounding Riverfront Stadium. The new hotel will include 160 rooms with restaurant space on the ground floor overlooking the Arkansas River. The new Class A office buildings will total 88,000 square feet of office space and nearly 22,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space on the ground floor. Plans also include the construction of a public parking garage with 283 spaces that will be integrated into the mixed-use building. Estimated completion is summer 2024.



## **Fidelity Bank Office Tower (Phase 2)** N/A

Fidelity Bank is planning to construct a new 135,000 square foot office tower. The first floor of the building will have customer parking and the remaining nine floors will be office space. Employees can utilize an outdoor walkway lined with plants or an enclosed skywalk with floor-to-ceiling windows to travel to and from the car park over the intersection of Market and English Streets. Employees will also have premiere access to the event space and Rise Farms, which is located on the rooftop of the tower. Phase 1 is now complete and included in the construction of a car park with 405 stalls featuring ground floor retail/restaurant space available for lease.

# PLANNING



## **Riverfront Village** *\$127 million*

Developers plan to transform the west bank of the Arkansas River into a seven-acre development including residential, office and commercial spaces. The site is located adjacent to the Riverfront Stadium and will become a gathering place for the community designed to draw visitors from across the region.



## **St. Francis and Commerce Street Improvements** *N/A*

Proposed streetscape improvements include upgrading utility and drainage infrastructure, refurbishing the existing brick streets, and the further definition of parking and drive lanes, all while preserving the character of the Commerce Street Arts District. Recommended design solutions also include a gathering space located just north of Kellogg between Commerce and St. Francis Streets which will link the two streets and provide new amenities such as trees, lighting and art.

ENHANCING

VIBRANCY





## Creating Memories

Quality of place is an important component to furthering the vision outlined in Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita. With the goal of strengthening the place-based identity of Wichita, we have led and assisted in a variety of placemaking initiatives and programming efforts.

These projects are designed to engage the creative community, improve perceptions, attract and retain talent and help both locals and visitors establish a personal connection with downtown.

Pictured: Young Wichitan interacting with 3D printed sculpture "Honeybee Hideaway" by local artist Laura Shank, located in Gallery Alley. The alley is now a destination for intersensory art experiences that reopened to the public last year. Each unique work of art was created with a conscious effort to serve all visitors, including specific consideration for individuals with low to no vision. Learn more on the next page.

# GALLERY ALLEY

## Gallery Alley

Gallery Alley is a playground for the senses - full of color, sound and touch. The alley is a destination for intersensory art experiences featuring five sculptures created by local artists. The works were created with a conscious effort to serve all visitors, including specific consideration for individuals with low to no vision. Visitors can experience the artwork, explore the local businesses located at the Shops at Gallery Alley and enjoy a coffee or lunch break using the cafe seating available in the space. Downtown Wichita partnered with Envision and received a grant from the Knight Foundation Fund at the Wichita Community Foundation to create this unique experience in Gallery Alley.

### Sculptures and Artists

*Alley Cats* by Armando Minjarez

*Birds of the Prairie* by Denise Irwin

*Honeybee Hideaway* by Laura Shank

*Machine-Nature Interface 89 (Arachnid)* and *Rhythm Maker* by Mike Miller

*Maitreya* by Tomiyo Tajiri



Artist Tomiyo Tajiri shares her sculpture with a visitor



Artist Armando Minjarez (left) and his sculpture "Alley Cats"





*Envision student interacts with a sculpture*

## Project Timeline

### 2017

Downtown Wichita received a grant from the Knight Foundation Fund at the Wichita Community Foundation to create Gallery Alley. Temporary improvements such as sculptures, café seating, festoon lighting and a mural on the brick pavers were installed. The space served as a venue for concerts, movie nights and the monthly art crawl.

### 2018-2019

After testing the temporary improvements, the alley became a permanent public space when the City of Wichita permanently closed it to vehicular traffic in an effort to improve pedestrian safety and encourage walkability.

### 2020

Downtown Wichita partnered with Envision and received an additional grant to reinvent the alley. Five local artists were selected to create work with a conscious effort to serve all visitors, with specific consideration for individuals of all ages who are blind, visually impaired and for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### 2021-2022

Gallery Alley reopens as a destination for inter-sensory art experiences. The space now features five sculptures created by local artists and a new ground mural. Descriptions of the artwork are available on-site through braille and voice recordings as well as online at [www.downtownwichita.org/galleryalley](http://www.downtownwichita.org/galleryalley).

*Interacting with sculpture "Maitreya"*



*Interacting with sculpture "Birds of the Prairie"*





Artwork by John Pirtle

## Art Pop-Up

Bokeh Development and Downtown Wichita commissioned local artist John Pirtle to create artwork that was on display in the windows of the building at 135 E. Douglas Avenue. The installation was 20 feet wide and covered two windows. The project was inspired by the Wichita Love Notes project that took place in 2020 to encourage those who passed by the area.

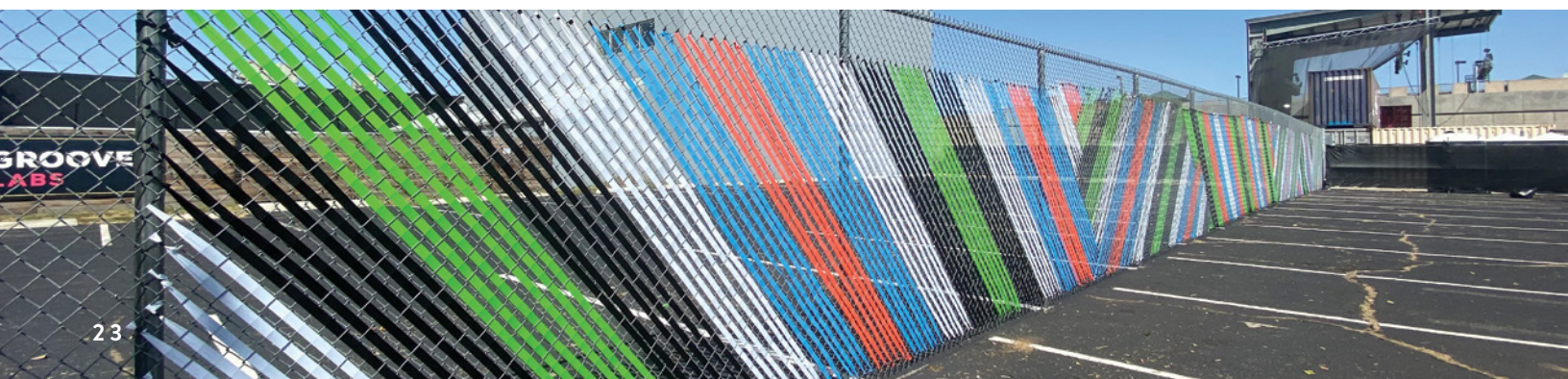
## Downtown Trash Pick-Up

Over 50 volunteers helped keep downtown clean and beautiful during the Downtown Trash Pick-Up event on Saturday, July 24, 2021. Volunteers were assigned specific areas of downtown to tackle and were able to clean up the entire district after enjoying breakfast at the Downtown Wichita office.

## WAVE Fence Pop-Up

The Wichita State University Alpha Phi Sorority volunteered to help install a colorful pop-up along the temporary fence between WAVE venue and Groover Labs. The project took place over a weekend and transformed the existing chain link fence into a bright and friendly pop-up that quickly became a popular backdrop for social media posts.

WAVE Pop-Up







Pop-Up Egg Hunt

## Douglas Avenue Egg Hunt

Celebrating the spring season, Downtown Wichita planned a surprise pop-up egg hunt on Saturday, April 3, 2021. Staff hid 26 brightly colored eggs along Douglas Avenue from St. Francis to Washington Streets. The eggs contained a plush bunny, toys, games and a gift card to a downtown shop or restaurant. The event was a success and each egg was claimed within the first hour.

## Business Support Program

The Business Support Program launched in 2020 to help small businesses that were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The program was funded by the COVID-19 Connection Fund at the Wichita Community Foundation and offered small businesses the opportunity to meet with local professionals for assistance with legal, accounting and marketing challenges.

A portion of the remaining funds were used to purchase 585 gift cards from 33 downtown businesses. The gift cards were distributed during local events, through social media giveaways and pop-up gift bag drops during holiday weekends. The goal of distributing the cards was to thank visitors and patrons for supporting downtown as well as to encourage the community to try new local shops and restaurants. Remaining funds from the program were awarded to three culturally impactful organizations: KMUW, Roxy's Downtown Theatre and the Old Town Farm & Art Market. The organizations met with Downtown Wichita staff to brainstorm creative ways to use the funds that will enhance their businesses and engage the community. Their plans will be announced in 2022.

Giftcard giveaways





Example of a parklet in Princeton, New Jersey. Design by Kirsten Thoft and photo by Halkin Mason Photography.

## Front Porch

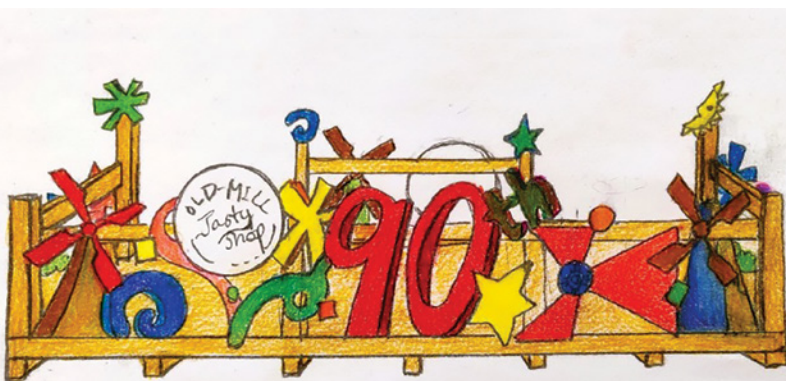
The Front Porch project will bring creatives and local business owners together to create outdoor extensions of their businesses. The inspiration for the project comes from the idea of the midwestern front porch - a space that is crucial to community, family, identity and conversation. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project has an emphasis on creating safe spaces as we reintroduce visitors and patrons to downtown. The completed porches will debut in 2022. Downtown Wichita, in partnership with the City of Wichita, received the Our Town placemaking grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) as well as additional funds from the Knight Foundation Fund at the Wichita Community Foundation to support this project. Downtown Wichita would like to thank Fidelity Bank. Through their support, we were able to work alongside Blais and Associates, an incredible grant consulting firm, whose expertise was imperative in completing our successful application for the NEA grant.

### Front Porch Partnerships

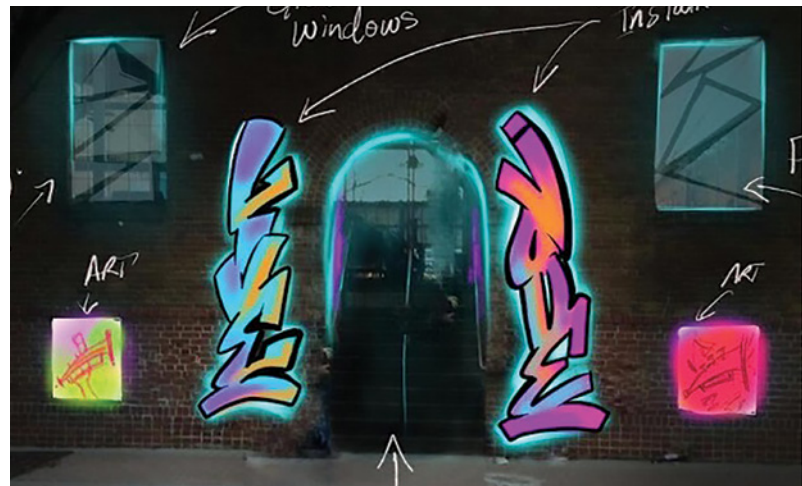
Belinda Smith with Jenny Dawn Cellars  
 Chiyoko and Sarah Myose with Old Mill Tasty Shop  
 Drew Phillips with Standard Issue Company  
 Elisabeth Owens with Lucinda's  
 Engy AlGraf with Wichita Cheesecake Company  
 Kevin Harrison with Public at the Brickyard



Sketch by Chiyoko and Sarah Myose



Sketch by Kevin Harrison





*Holiday Family Pet Photos by Riverside Photography*

## **Santa's House at Naftzger Park**

Downtown Wichita partnered with Hutton and Star Lumber to build Santa Claus a house for his headquarters right here in Wichita! Local artist Heather Byers transformed the structure into a cozy, winter-themed home that made the perfect backdrop for holiday photos. It was designed to create an environment where imaginations come alive for both children and adults. Santa's House was located at Naftzger Park, making it a holiday destination. Downtown Wichita partnered with the Kansas Humane Society to host a Holiday Family Pet Photo fundraiser at Naftzger Park. Families brought their furry friends to pose in front of Santa's House and received a digital copy or print of their photo from local photographer Riverside Photography. Attendees enjoyed sweet treats after their photoshoots. All proceeds benefited the pets at the Kansas Humane Society.

## **Douglas Avenue Banners**

During the holiday season, new holiday banners designed by fourth-grade students from USD 259 were displayed along Douglas Avenue. Over 100 students participated by creating unique artwork along the theme of "Hometown Holiday." Twenty-three student designs were selected and printed on banners that were displayed along Douglas from the Arkansas River to Topeka Street. Seven of the designs were also featured in the Downtown Wichita and Greater Wichita Partnership office storefront in conjunction with the banners.

*Santa's House designed by Heather Byers*

*Holiday banner*



# MARKETING THE DISTRICT



## Promoting Progress

Collaborating with the public and private sectors, Downtown Wichita works to enhance perceptions of the urban core through marketing and communications. The team creates and develops strategic branding initiatives to increase awareness while providing support for the organization's key areas of focus – developing downtown and enhancing vibrancy.

We develop and manage resources for key audiences such as the local community, developers, residents and business owners. The team regularly promotes development projects, upcoming events, local shops and restaurants, organizational initiatives and parking and transportation options. Resources and promotions can be found at [www.downtownwichita.org](http://www.downtownwichita.org) and across multiple social media platforms.

Pictured: Promotional photo of the new text subscription service that highlights unique, local events each week. Learn more on the next page.



First Friday at CityArts

## Promoting Events

Downtown Wichita is a hub for local events, activities, arts and culture. The organization partners with Visit Wichita to maintain a robust community events calendar on [www.downtownwichita.org](http://www.downtownwichita.org). A weekly events email is sent to over 5,000 subscribers every Thursday highlighting the top local events. Late last year, the organization expanded event promotions to include a text subscription service to reach new audiences and diversify communications offerings.

## First Friday Art Crawl

The monthly First Friday art crawl has a positive impact on our local economy by encouraging the community to support local artists. The event provides an opportunity for both residents and visitors to explore local places and connect with the city. Artists display and sell their work at participating locations such as galleries, restaurants, shops and more during this free event.

Downtown Wichita coordinates with artists and galleries to gather and create a list of all participating locations each month. Art lovers can also utilize an interactive, mobile-friendly map and view event details at [www.FirstFridayICT.org](http://www.FirstFridayICT.org), which received over 4,000 pageviews in 2021.



## 2nd Saturday Shopping Event

2nd Saturday creates awareness for small businesses and promotes the importance of shopping local for the Wichita economy. The event provides incentive for both residents and visitors to discover new local retailers. Anyone who purchases a reusable 2nd Saturday bag or keycard for \$5 will gain access to discounts at participating locations. Deals and discounts can be found on the event website, [www.2ndsatict.com](http://www.2ndsatict.com). Once a month, Downtown Wichita works directly with the participating local businesses to update the deals on the website.





Display of development progress at the Downtown Wichita office

## Promoting Development

Downtown Wichita is passionate about attracting and sustaining dynamic commercial interests that will further accelerate development. To further this mission, the downtown team consistently communicates development news and updates digital platforms including social media and [www.downtownwichita.org](http://www.downtownwichita.org). This includes, but is not limited to:

- ▶ Tracking ongoing development progress through printable and interactive maps
- ▶ Maintaining downtown real estate offerings for sale or lease on the downtown website
- ▶ Sharing content about development projects and progress regularly through emails and social media

## Development Toolkit

A core function of the Downtown Wichita organization is to provide the public and private sectors with market-based data that allows the community to make strategic investment decisions based on research. Previously, the organization produced an annual, printed State of Downtown Report containing market, economic and investment data. Last year, we created and launched a new digital Development Toolkit where the data (previously found in the printed report) is now published and regularly updated. Moving this information to a digital platform makes the data more accessible, easier to share and allows our team to make regular updates ensuring the most accurate information is available.



Scan on your mobile device to view Development Toolkit

Reports on residential, office, hospitality and retail market sectors as well as investment data is available online both digitally and as a printable PDF download. The most recent market forecasts for downtown are also available in the toolkit. The information can be used as a resource for those who own, develop, market or invest in real estate and as a reference tool for preliminary project due diligence and research. View and download the reports by scanning the code above or visit [www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit](http://www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit).



Promotional graphic

## Partnership with the Old Town Association

Last year, Downtown Wichita partnered with the Old Town Association to begin an integrated marketing strategy. Management of the website [www.oldtownwichita.com](http://www.oldtownwichita.com) and social media channels shifted to the Downtown Wichita communications team to create a more sustainable and efficient promotion strategy for the overall district.

Both organizations worked with local marketing agency Howerton+White to restructure the website, which launched in August 2021. This new partnership also allowed the organization to hire a communications intern to assist with the management of the website and create content designed to promote the unique amenities and businesses in Old Town.

Follow @oldtownwichita on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for business spotlights, upcoming events and more.

Promotional photo at Uniquities Home



Promotional photo at Sabor Latin Bar & Grill







*Flowers in front of Gallery Alley*

## Flowers on Douglas

The Flowers on Douglas beautification project is a key component to enhancing vibrancy in the urban core. The flowers evoke a sense of pride and beauty for residents, visitors and businesses. The program launched in 2017 and is maintained through an ongoing partnership between Downtown Wichita, the City of Wichita and community partner Cindy Carnahan. Cindy is a passionate gardener and local real estate professional who continues to help lead the project through ongoing fundraising efforts and lending her expertise with the planning and installation of the flower arrangements.

To date, the project has added over 120 planter pots and 85 hanging baskets along Douglas Avenue from Main to Washington Street that are updated seasonally. The floral arrangements are planted by a team of talented, volunteer Master Gardeners and are maintained by Hein Landscape. Funding for this project comes from both the Self Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) and private donations, which can be made through the website [www.flowersondouglas.org](http://www.flowersondouglas.org). This community initiative creates a welcoming environment for anyone exploring downtown.

*Flowers with Naftzger Park in background*



*Hanging baskets*





Q-LINE at Naftzger Park

### Parking and Transportation Promotion

Downtown Wichita manages the "Where to Park" brand, which was created to provide a one-stop destination for event parking information for the district. Parking information for INTRUST Bank Arena, the Century II Convention and Performing Arts Center, the Orpheum Theatre and more can be found at [www.parkdowntown.org](http://www.parkdowntown.org), which directs users to the "Get Around" section of [www.downtownwichita.org](http://www.downtownwichita.org).

This section includes digital and printable parking maps, traffic route updates, transportation options and features a mobile-friendly, interactive map that makes it easy to explore the core. The accompanying Twitter account (@parkdowntown) regularly shares event parking information as well as real-time updates during large events. In addition to promoting wayfinding online, Downtown Wichita partners with Wichita Transit to design and update the interior and exterior displays of the transit shelters located along Douglas Avenue.

### Cover Artist: Rebecca Hoyer

Rebecca Hoyer was born in Chicago but has moved about, living in Philadelphia, St. Louis, Boston, New York and now Wichita. She received her BFA from Washington University in St. Louis (1980), followed by painting at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (1983) and at the Art Students League in New York (1986-7).

Since arriving in Wichita, she has been working with the local landscape, trying to identify what makes it both distinctive and beautiful. She paints familiar things – trees and houses – in a style that is both pastoral and radical.



Rebecca has exhibited her work regionally for over 20 years. Her artwork is included in numerous collections including the Emprise Bank Collection, the Kansas Health Foundation, and the Wichita Art Museum. New work can be seen in Wichita at Reuben Saunders Gallery, in Manhattan (Kansas) at the SNW Gallery, and on her website, [www.rebeccahoyer.com](http://www.rebeccahoyer.com).

# Stay informed with real-time data

If you are reading this report, you are invested in downtown Wichita.

Previously, the Downtown Wichita organization produced an annual printed State of Downtown Report containing market, economic, investment data and more.

We know your decisions require real-time data. That's why we've created a new digital Development Toolkit where accurate, up-to-date information and resources (previously found in the printed report) are now published and regularly updated. The toolkit documents the exciting transformation occurring in Wichita's urban center.

Reports Available:



Investment



Residential



Commercial



Hospitality



Retail

This information can be used as a resource for those who own, develop, market, or invest in real estate and as a reference tool for preliminary project due diligence and research.

View and download the reports by scanning the code or visit  
[www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit](http://www.downtownwichita.org/toolkit)



Scan on your mobile device



505 E. Douglas Avenue  
Wichita, KS 67202  
316.264.6005  
[www.downtownwichita.org](http://www.downtownwichita.org)