

PENDING

DOWNTOWN WICHITA ACTION PLAN 2026

APPENDIX

Looking East Along
Douglas Avenue



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Immerse ENGAGEMENT

PENDING

A group of people, mostly older adults, are gathered at a community meeting. In the foreground, a woman with short white hair is seen from behind, wearing a purple sweater. To her right, a man with glasses is looking down at a large map or document on a table. The map has the text "THE FUTURE OF" visible. Other people are standing and talking in the background. The scene is indoors, possibly a community center or a library.

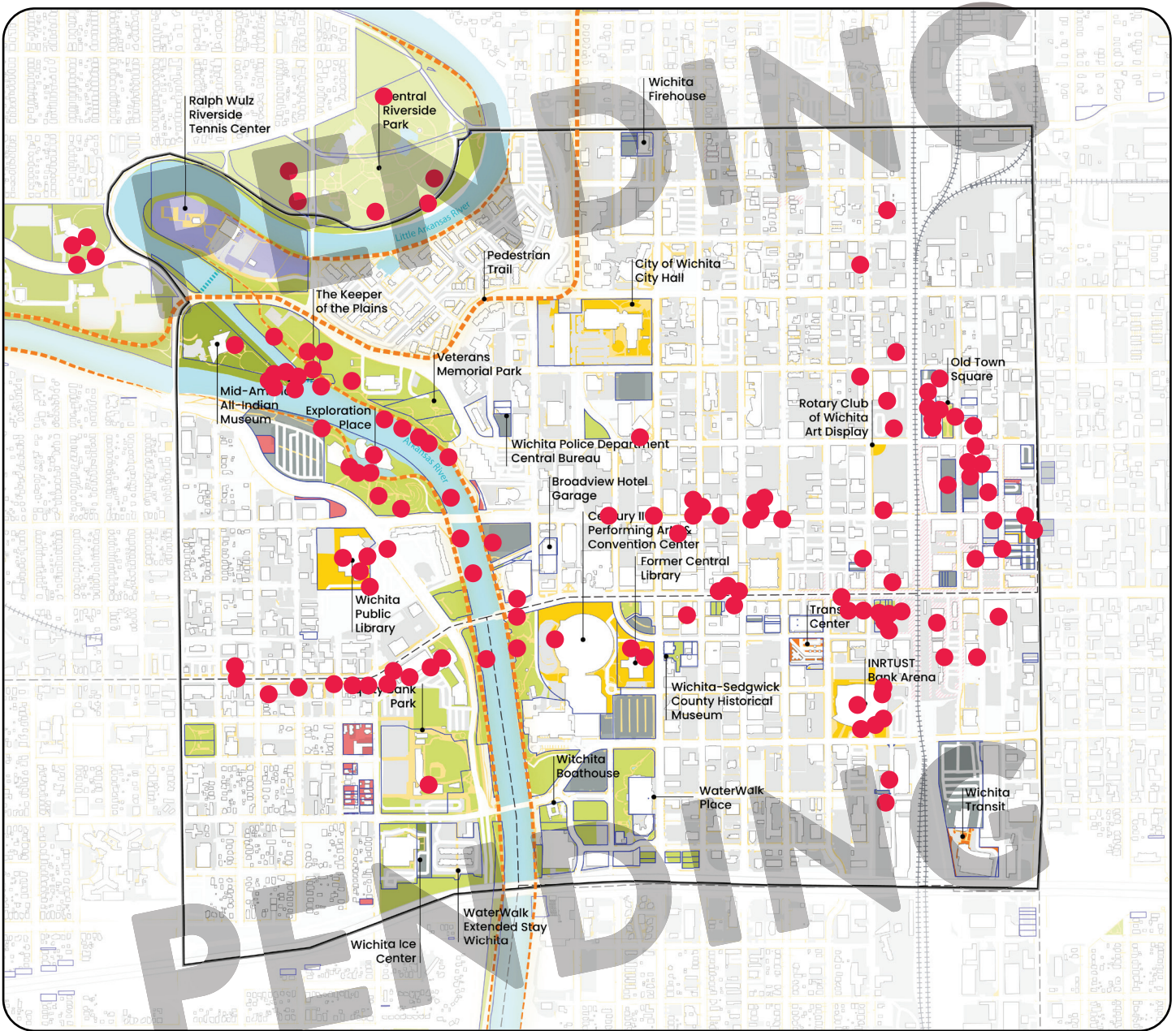
**On March 4th,
2025, over
300 Wichitans
came together
to imagine
the future of
downtown.**

**What we heard will inform key
priorities for the Ideate and
Iterate phase of the Downtown
Wichita Action Plan.**



History & Culture

Where do you take friends & family downtown?



What parts of Downtown's cultural landscape would you amplify to improve visitor experience?

- Activate the River
- Celebrate Arts and Culture
- Highlight Small Businesses
- Enhance Community Amenities and Services
- Encourage More Vibrant Public Spaces

What types of events do you attend most?



Arts and Music



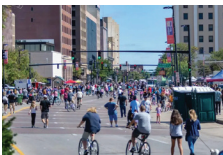
Community Events



Markets and Shopping



Food and Drink Festivals



Outdoor Recreation



Sports



Key takeaways:

When designing a tour for friends and family visiting downtown Wichita, most open house attendees recommend showcasing the Keeper of the Plains, museums along the river, Delano, Naftzger Park, and Old Town. However, there are limited tour-worthy sites in the central core, highlighting opportunities to activate this area of downtown with additional amenities, services, and points of connection.

To amplify visitor experience, attendees favor activating the river, celebrating arts, culture & small business, and encouraging more vibrant public spaces.

What types of events do you want to see more of downtown?

Music Festivals

Food / Drink Tours

Art Events / Gallery Walks

Late Night

Air Shows

Park Programming

Film Festivals

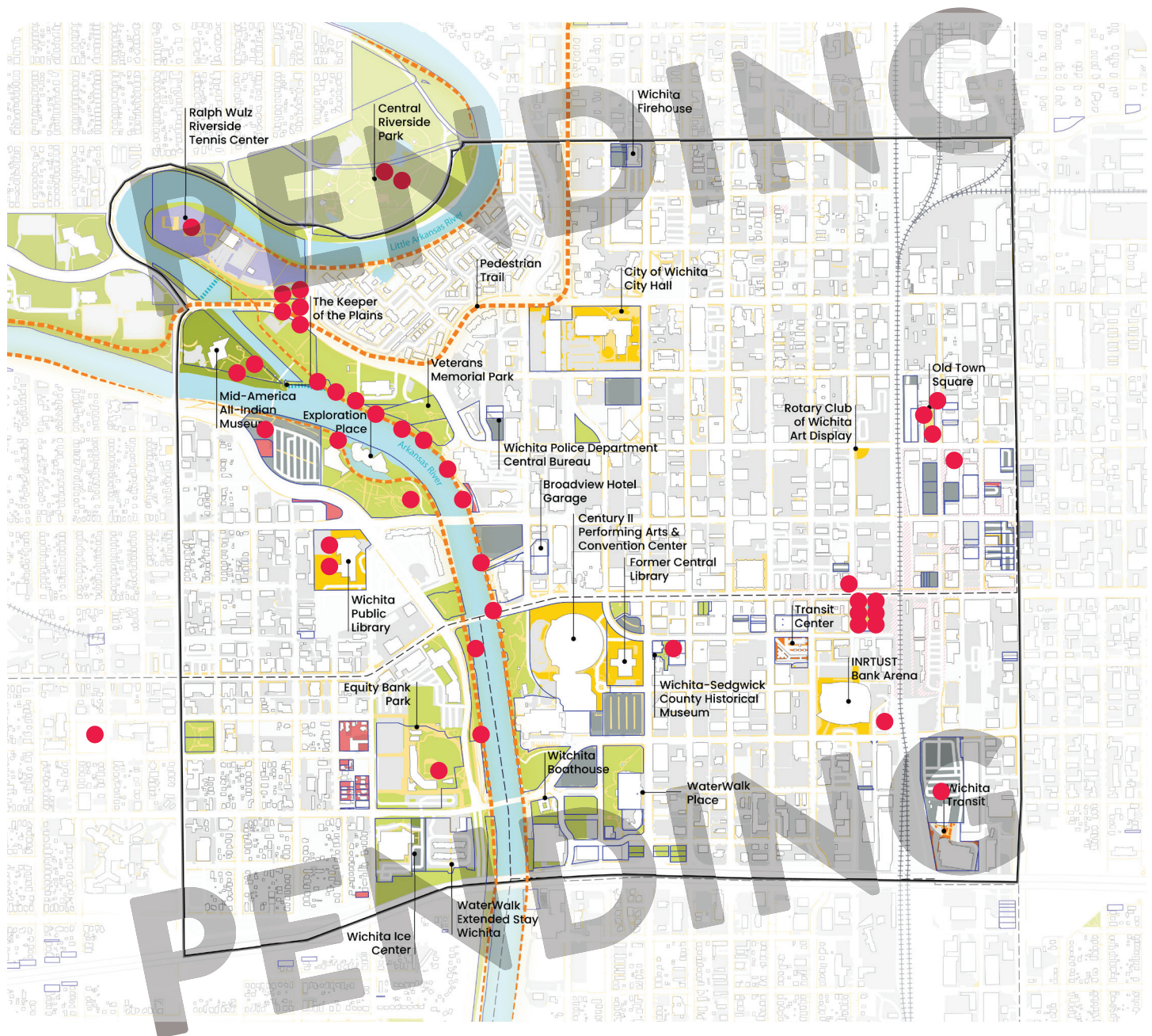
Walking Tours

Cultural Events

Sporting Events

Landscape Systems

Which Open Spaces Do You Use Most?

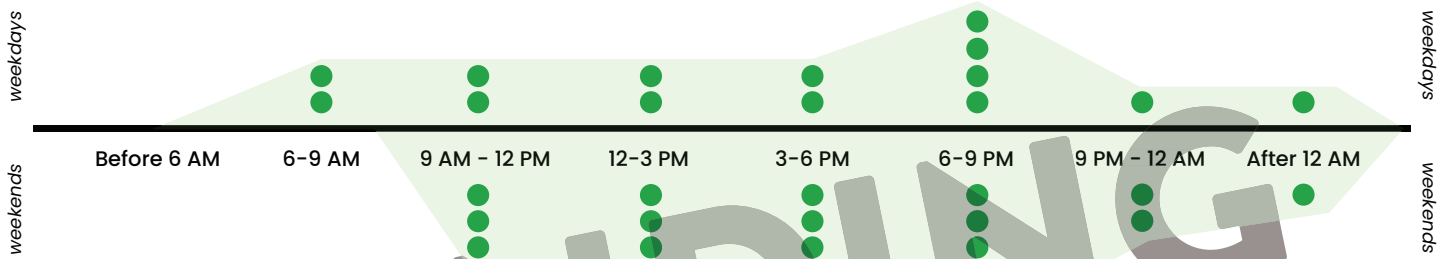


Are There Enough Open Spaces Downtown?

No 11

Yes 0

What Time(s) Do You Visit Open Spaces Downtown?



What Do You Like About Existing Open Spaces?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| +1 "Bike Paths Along River" | "Kansas Wildlife Exhibit" |
| +1 "River" | "Bike Paths" |
| "Nature" | "Spaces to Read in the Sun" |
| "Big Trees" | "Foodtruck Capability" |

What Are the Challenges With Existing Open Spaces?

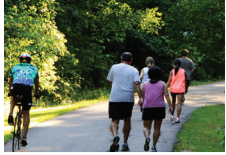
- | | |
|--|--|
| +5 "Not Enough Trees" | "Safety, Comfort" |
| +3 "Restrooms" | "Restroom, Playplaces for Kids" |
| +2 "Lack of Shade" | "No More Artificial Grass" |
| "More Trees, More Maintenance" | "Old Thinking, Reduced Parking, Not Maintaining" |
| "Family Spaces, More Nature, Art and Interactive Displays" | |
| "Less Astroturf" | |
| "Trees, Walking Path, Safety" | |
| "Lack of Maintenance" | |

Key takeaways:

Most activities reside along the river. This aligns with the challenge of "lack of trees" that many people mentioned in the city's open spaces.

What Type of Open Spaces and Amenities Would You Like to See in the Downtown in the Future?

Programs



Trails



Food & Beverage



Public Art



Playgrounds



Events



Gardening



Water Recreation



Recreation



Markets



Sports



Other?

"Open Stages Like Riverside's but better (for music, organizing, performing arts, activism)"

"Signature landmark vertical activity"

"Pickleball"

"Observation Tower at River"

"Small green space within concrete"

Key takeaways:

Trails are the most dominant type of amenity that people would like to see. There is also an interest in introducing more public art, events, water recreation, and markets into the public realm of the city.

These types of preferred amenities speak to more active open spaces that value culture and active recreation.

Character



Activated



Natural



Pedestrian



Intimate



Multimodal



Urban



Urban Plaza



Open Lawn



Integrated



Restful



Other?

"Metro"

"Maintained bike lanes"



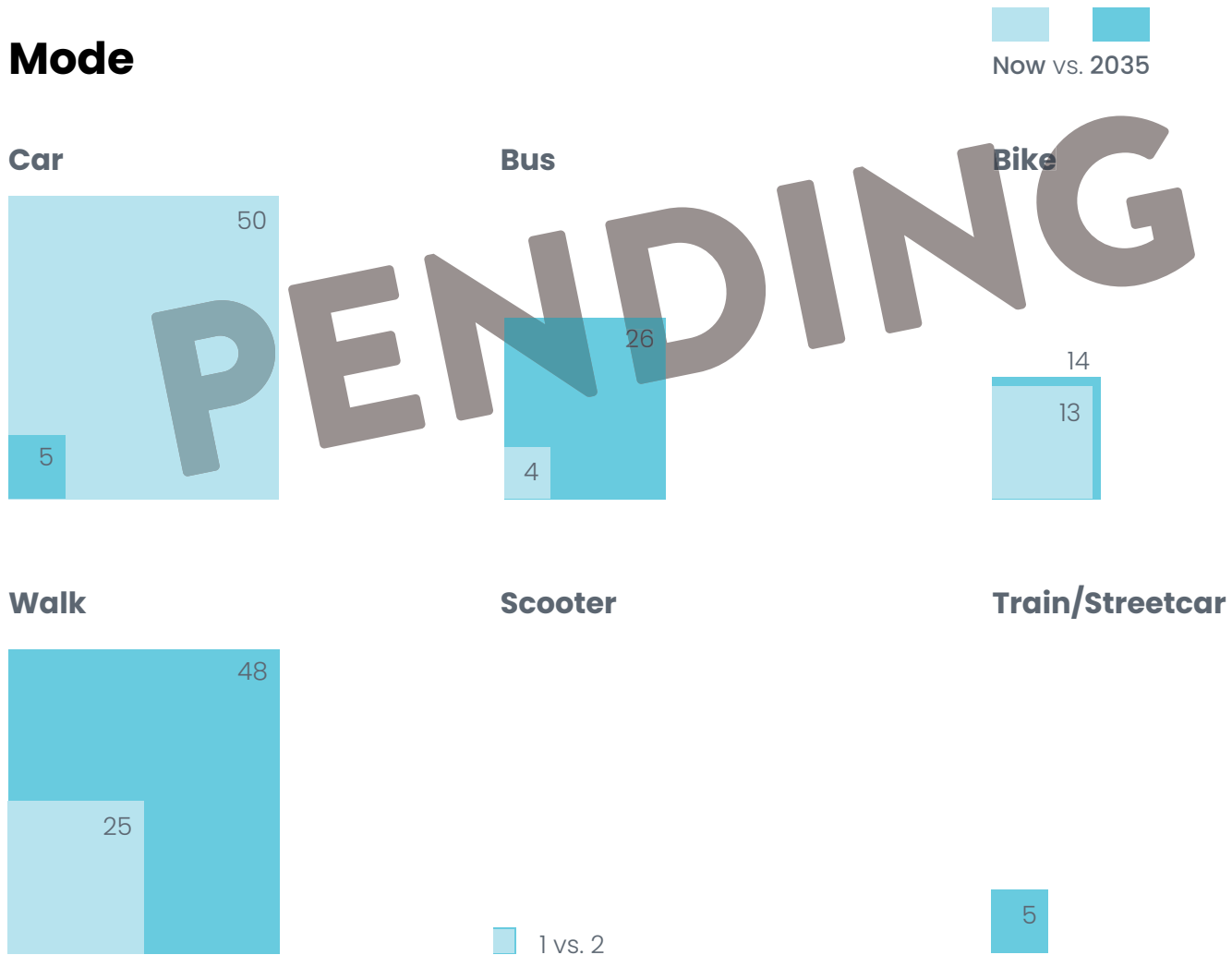
Key takeaways:

The preferred character of the open spaces is aligned with the top choice of amenities people chose previously. In this survey, most people voted for active, pedestrian, and multimodal types of spaces.

These three main characteristics share a common themes of movement, links, and active open spaces.

Getting Around

Mode

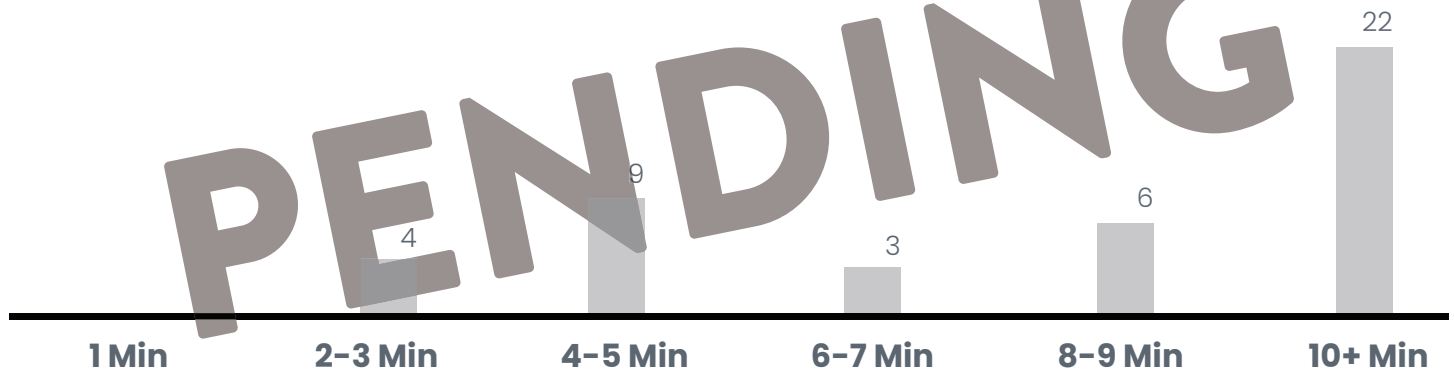


Key takeaways:

Cars are the most dominant mode of transit downtown today, but there is a strong desire to walk in the future. Some attendees also expressed desire to use public transit options like existing bus lines or a potential tram/streetcar.



How far are you willing to walk from your car to your destination?



What are the barriers to walking around downtown?



Street Quality and Environment

12



Safety

6



Transportation Infrastructure

2



Rules and Regulations

1

Notes

- "Too many vacant buildings makes it feel unsafe"
- "Sidewalks aren't well lit"
- "Unsafe crossings"
- "It's hot in summer - no trees!"

Key takeaways:

Many open house attendees cite street quality, the maintenance of the urban environment, and safety as the biggest barriers to walking around downtown.

Attendees have varying preferences for walking distances from their car to their downtown destination, with 30% preferring to walk 5 minutes or less and 50% willing to walk 10 minutes or more.

Living and Working Downtown

What Are The Barriers To Living And Working Downtown?

Accessibility and Transportation

- +3 No protected bike lanes
- +2 Not enough public transportation
- +1 Not walkable
- +1 Poorly maintained sidewalks
- +1 Parking

Unsafe for pedestrian/bike

Emphasis on car culture

Not pet-friendly

Amenities and Services

- +5 Lack of grocery store

+1 Not enough nightlife

Environment and Recreation

Not enough green space

Safety

- +2 Night safety

Office and Housing Stock

No modern work space

- +2 Not enough for-sale homes

Cost and Economic Factors

Key takeaways:

Living and working downtown present several barriers. The most significant are the lack of amenities (ex. grocery stores), public realm investment, and transportation infrastructure. Safety, green spaces, and recreation areas are also concerns.



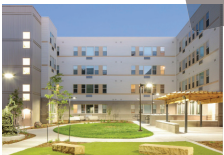
What Kind Of Housing Is Missing Downtown?



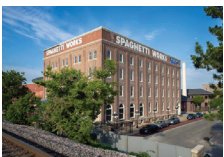
Townhomes



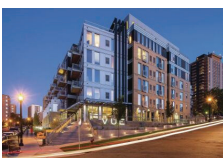
Mixed-Use Buildings



Courtyard Apartments



Loft Apartment Buildings/Reuse



Texas Wrap Buildings



Podium Building

Other?

+1 Affordable Units

Condos

Key takeaways:

Community engagement suggests that the Downtown is lacking in several housing types. Townhomes and mixed-use buildings are particularly underrepresented. Courtyard apartments, loft apartment buildings, and Texas wrap buildings are also needed. Additionally, there's a demand for affordable units and condos.

What Are The Barriers To Living And Working Downtown?

Programs



Grocery Stores



Health and Wellness



Shopping



Bars and Nightlife



Restaurants



Community/Organizations



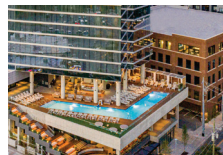
Museums



Schools



Art Galleries



Hotels



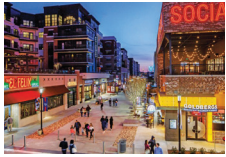
Other?

- +2** "New convention center & performing arts"
- "Parks"
- "Bike racks to lock bikes"
- "Outdoor entertainment"
- "Safer traveling (bikes on sidewalks)"

Key takeaways:

In terms of essential amenities to enhance living and working downtown, open house attendees overwhelmingly shared their need for a grocery store in the downtown core. They also emphasized a demand for additional shopping, dining, and cultural, nightlife, and wellness amenities.

Character



Pedestrian Only Streets



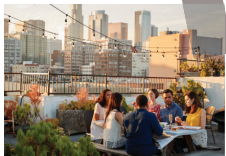
Courtyards



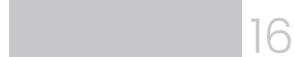
Engaging With Nature



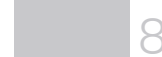
In-between buildings



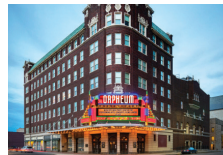
Rooftops



Active Urban Edges



Alleyways



Heritage Sites



Plazas



Street Corners



Other?

- +2** "More public art would connect places better and make them walkable"
- "More emphasis on transit (prominent bus stops, benches, signage)"
- "Open basketball courts"
- "Interactive and accessible art and activities"
- "Programmed plazas (outdoor markets)"

Key takeaways:

High engagement on public realm character suggests strong demand for quality of urban spaces. Among attendees, there is a strong desire for pedestrian-focused streets and more opportunities to connect with nature. There is also a desire for a diverse range of urban environments such as rooftop spaces, alleyways, courtyards, and active urban edges to make downtown an appealing place to live and work.

What Daytime Amenities Would You Like To See More Of Downtown?

Food and Dining

- +16 Grocery stores
- +8 Sidewalk cafes and restaurants
- +3 Lunch options
- +1 Sidewalk patios
- +1 Deli sandwich options

Food trucks

Locally-owned grocery stores

Restaurants

Business and Community

- +5 Small/family-owned businesses

Music theatre venues

“Areas to exist” (read, play, relax, gather)

Outdoor Spaces

- +3 Trees and green space
 - +1 Park+Ride
- Shade areas for seating



Key takeaways:

There is a strong desire for more daytime amenities downtown, particularly for grocery stores and sidewalk cafes. Supporting small and family-owned businesses and adding gathering places like music Theatres and shaded seating were deemed essential by the attending audience.

What Nighttime Amenities Would You Like To See More Of Downtown?

Dining and Beverage

- +3 Rooftop bars
- +3 Plaza-like spaces with bars, restaurants, and an outdoor stage (like “Power and Light” in Kansas City)
- +2 Sidewalk patios
- +1 Restaurants
- Grocery stores
- Retail open in the evening

Entertainment and Nightlife

- +2 Nightclubs
- +1 Late-night art spaces
- Outdoor performances (theatre, music, art, etc)
- More events at Intrust Bank Arena

Concerts

Transportation and Infrastructure

- +1 Trolley to and from parking
- +1 Actual Trolley
- +1 Night connections at the river

Community and Events

- +1 Sports
- +1 Convention music but with better sound than Century II
- Small businesses
- Naftzger Park events

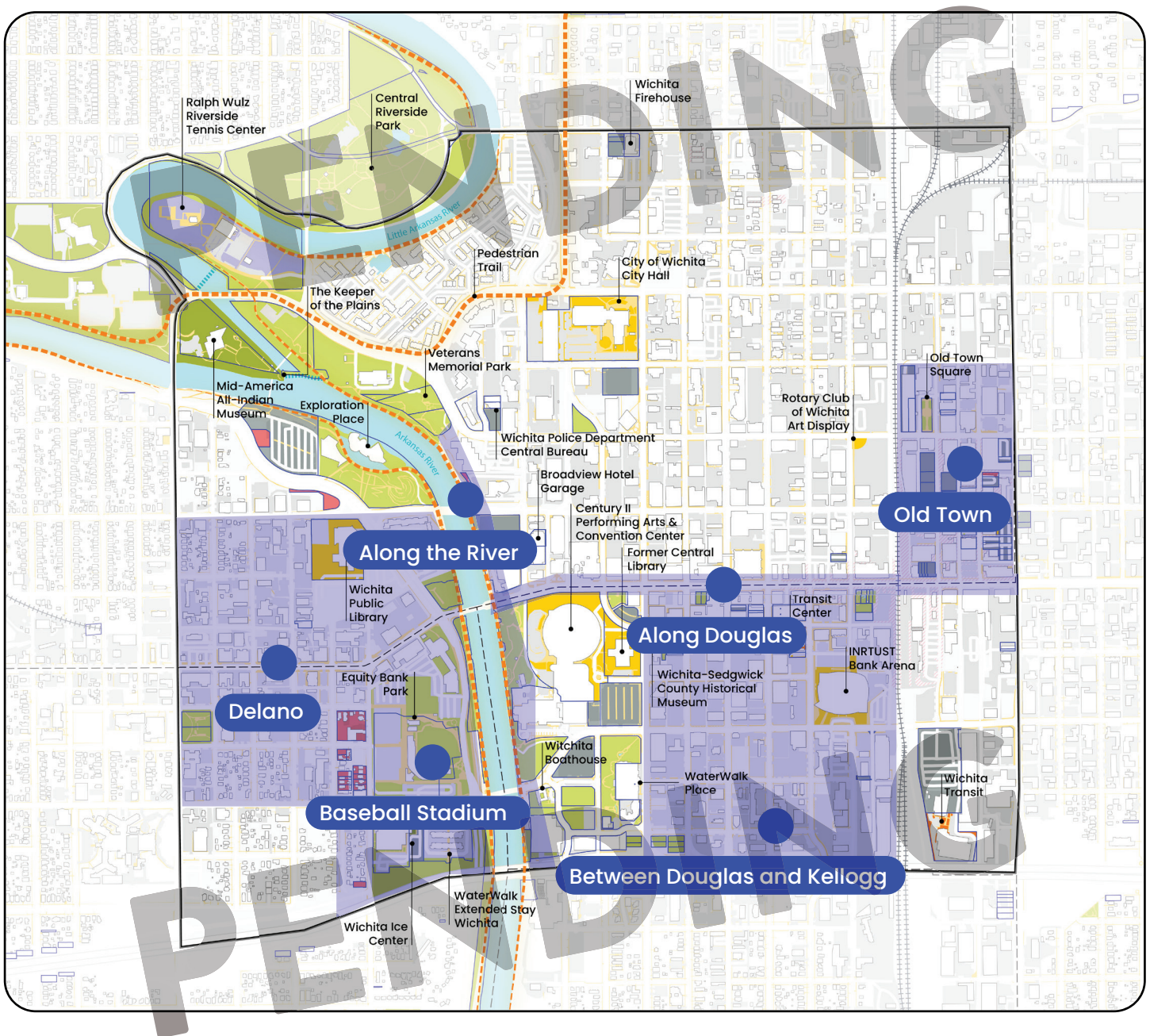
Key takeaways:

Feedback highlights a strong desire for enhanced downtown nightlife amenities, including more rooftop bars, sidewalk patios, and diverse restaurants. Improved transportation options, such as trolleys and parking, are also needed. Additionally, there is a demand for nightclubs, late-night venues, and outdoor performance spaces to enhance the overall nightlife experience.



Urban Form

Where do you want to see development?



What are barriers to developing downtown?

Parking

Vacant Parking Lots

City Ordinance 11.52.020(27)

Public Transportation Access

Public Transit Service

Lack of Urban-Suburban Connection

River Access

Hard to Access River



Key takeaways:

Open house attendees expressed a desire for downtown development to extend along Douglas Avenue from Delano to Old Town. They also showed interest in developing areas along the river and the southern part of the downtown core, between Douglas Avenue and Kellogg Avenue. Notably, there was little interest in development north of Douglas Avenue in the core area, which warrants further exploration.

Attendees identified several key challenges to downtown development, including excessive surface parking, limited public transit connectivity to the suburbs, and insufficient river access.

Logo Design

Choose Your Favorite Logo



Connected Horizons

10



Flying Arc

21

Notes

"Not Round"

PENDING



River of Opportunity

18

Notes

"This but no circles"

"Use our flag"

"Make it yellow"

Key takeaways:

The majority voted for the Flying Arc. 49 people participated in this activity; 43% of all votes went to the "Flying Arc," 37% for "River of Opportunity," and 20% for "Connected Horizons."

The two top logo options share a similar organic visual style by signifying the arc and river. This observation will guide the design team to further emphasize the arc and/or river as a unique symbol for the Downtown Wichita Action Plan logo.

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Ideate & Iterate
ENGAGEMENT

PENDING

On June 2nd,
2025, over
200 Wichitans
came together
to imagine
the future of
downtown.

What we heard will inform
the plan's design strategies
and key implementation
priorities for the Align and
Act phase of the Downtown
Wichita Action Plan.



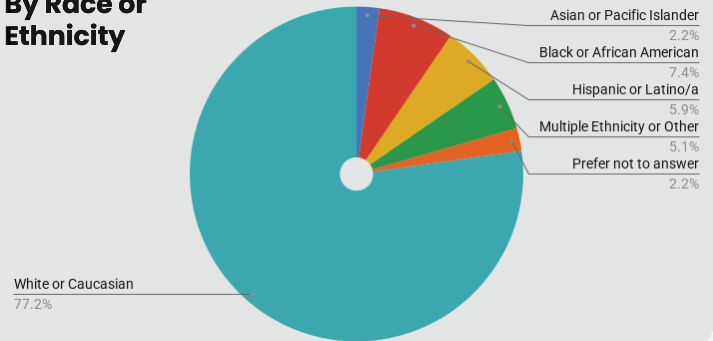
OF THE RIVER DISTRICT..

pop Up at Riverfest

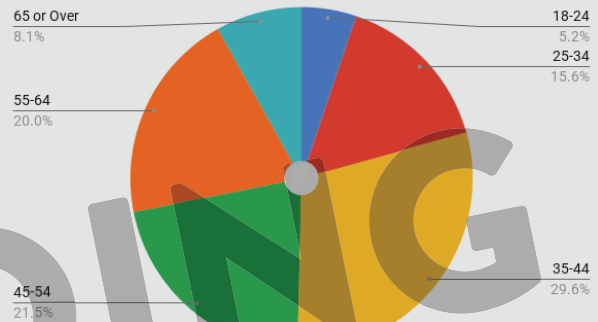


Who did we engage?

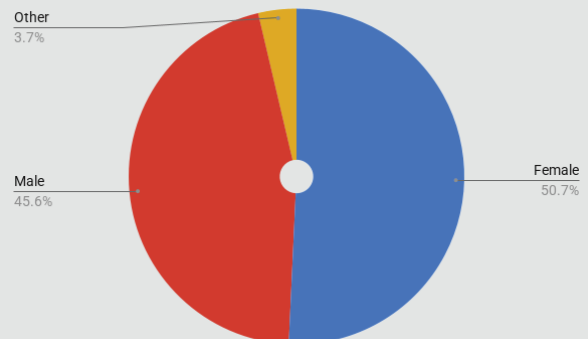
By Race or Ethnicity



By Age



By Gender



Living and Working

How can downtown become a better place to live?

Key Takeaway

Downtown Wichita can become a better place to live by creating an environment where more quality-of-life amenities like a grocery store can thrive in proximity to housing and major new developments like the Biomedical Campus. Wichitans also indicate that they'd like to see a cleaner, safer, and tree-lined downtown that engages more with the river.

Although rental housing dominates downtown Wichita's housing market today (70% of total housing), two-thirds of open house attendees indicated that they'd prefer to buy.

If you're considering moving downtown, you prioritize....

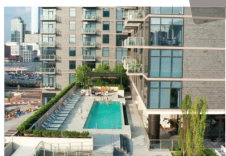
Amenities



1) Rooftop



2) Parking



3) Pool



4) Gym

Proximity To



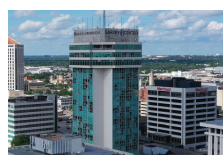
1) Shops and Dining



2) Transit



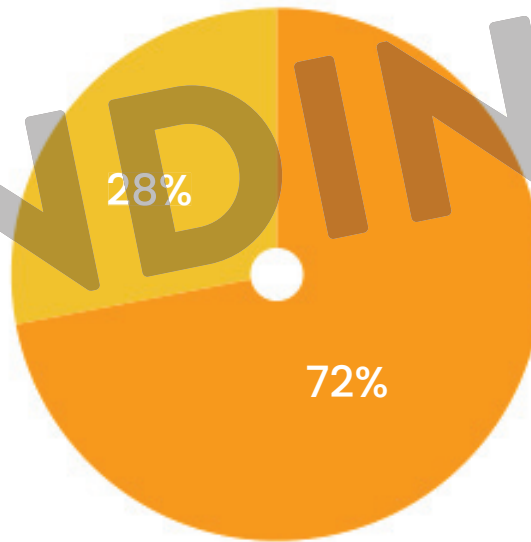
3) Open Space



4) Jobs

Would you rather rent or buy?

Buy
Rent



How else would you improve living in downtown Wichita?

Other Priorities:

- Trees and shade
- River access
- Elimination of pedestrian walk buttons
- Engage new buildings with river
- Bring back basic amenities like a grocery store near biomed
- Prioritize clean and safe improvements like taking care of homeless
- Work on infilling 1st Street east of the river

The survey board is titled "HOW CAN DOWNTOWN BECOME A BETTER PLACE TO WORK?" and is divided into two main sections: "You're an employer with an office downtown." and "You're an employee working at an office downtown." Each section contains several numbered prompts for input, such as "How important is a vibrant downtown to your ability to recruit top talent to Wichita?" and "Which of the following would help you attract and retain your employees?". The board also features a section for "Other ideas? Write them down on a post-it!" and a section for "What have you seen other cities do to attract and retain talent?". The board is filled with handwritten notes and post-it notes, indicating active participation in the survey.

How can downtown become a better place to work?

Key Takeaway

Downtown Wichita can help employers attract and retain candidates by providing high-quality and well-located amenities, transit services, and housing choices.

Employees indicate that they need additional “third spaces” like parks, plazas, or cafes to eat or relax before, during, or after work. More events and activities after work and better ways to get to work would also be welcomed.

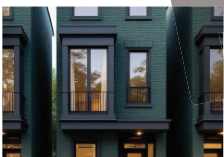
To attract and retain employees, the action plan should prioritize the following:



More shops, restaurants, and things to do for everyone



Easier and safer ways to walk, bike, or take public transit



More choices for different types of homes and apartments



Helping local businesses and creating more job training programs



For employees, the following downtown improvements would help work life:



More green spaces, plazas, and outdoor seating areas for breaks



More places to eat, shop, and relax during breaks



More events and activities for happy hours after work



Better and safer ways to get to work, like improved bike lanes or transit



More parking options close to workplaces



How else would you improve working in downtown Wichita?

Grocery and Market Access

- Local grocery or market options x6
- Higher end convenience stores like mini grocery stores

Public Spaces and Recreation

- Parks and spaces for walking, biking, and exercise
- More trees and shade along sidewalks
- Destinations along the river
- More downtown festivals
- Turn empty parking lots into open spaces

Bike Lanes

- Protected bike lanes

Land Use

- Engage new buildings with the river

Affordable Housing

- Need affordable housing for minimum or lower wage employees and families

Getting Around

How would you improve the pedestrian experience and transit connections?

Key Takeaway

Wichitans are eager for investment on downtown streets to improve the pedestrian experience and transit connections. Major streets in the core – especially near the new Biomedical Campus – like Douglas, Broadway, Emporia, William, and English are top priorities for investment in streetscape improvements like shade, safe crossings, and more street-level activity.

Building from the City’s Transit Network Plan, community members are also keen for downtown to be connected through higher frequency buses and the “right” routes to desired destinations.

You helped us build downtown’s streetscape toolkit!

Top 5 Priorities



1) Shade



4) Lighting



2) Safe Crossings

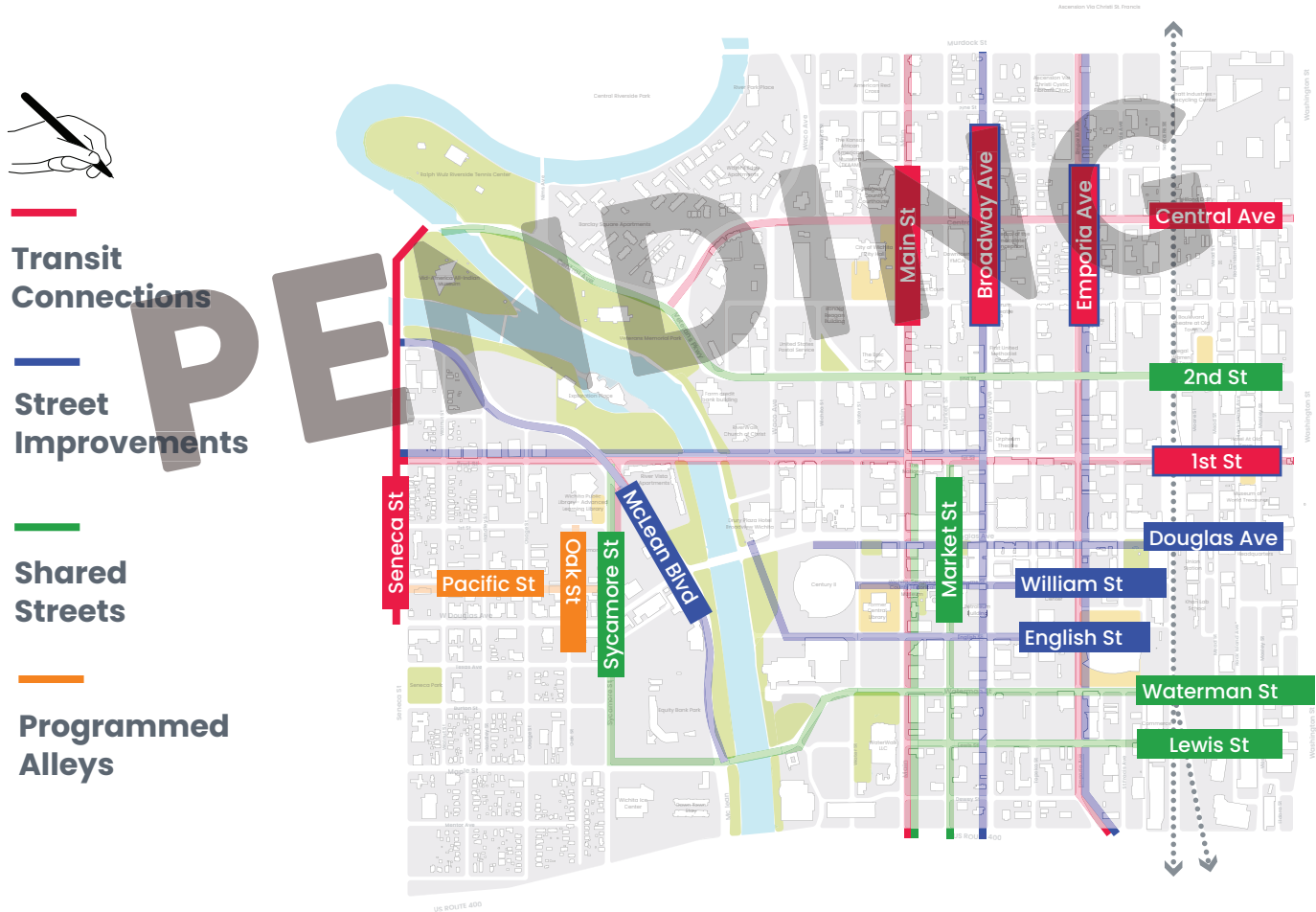


5) Benches and Seating



3) Street Level Activity

Your Designs! How Would You Redesign Streets?



How can public transit become more usable?

- 1) Higher Frequency
- 2) More Routes – “The Right Routes” to Desired Destinations

How else would you like to get around?

Public Transit Service

- A Better Q: High frequency bus, trolley, or shuttle from Delano to College Hill
- Bus rapid transit (BRT) along Central

Protected Bike Lanes

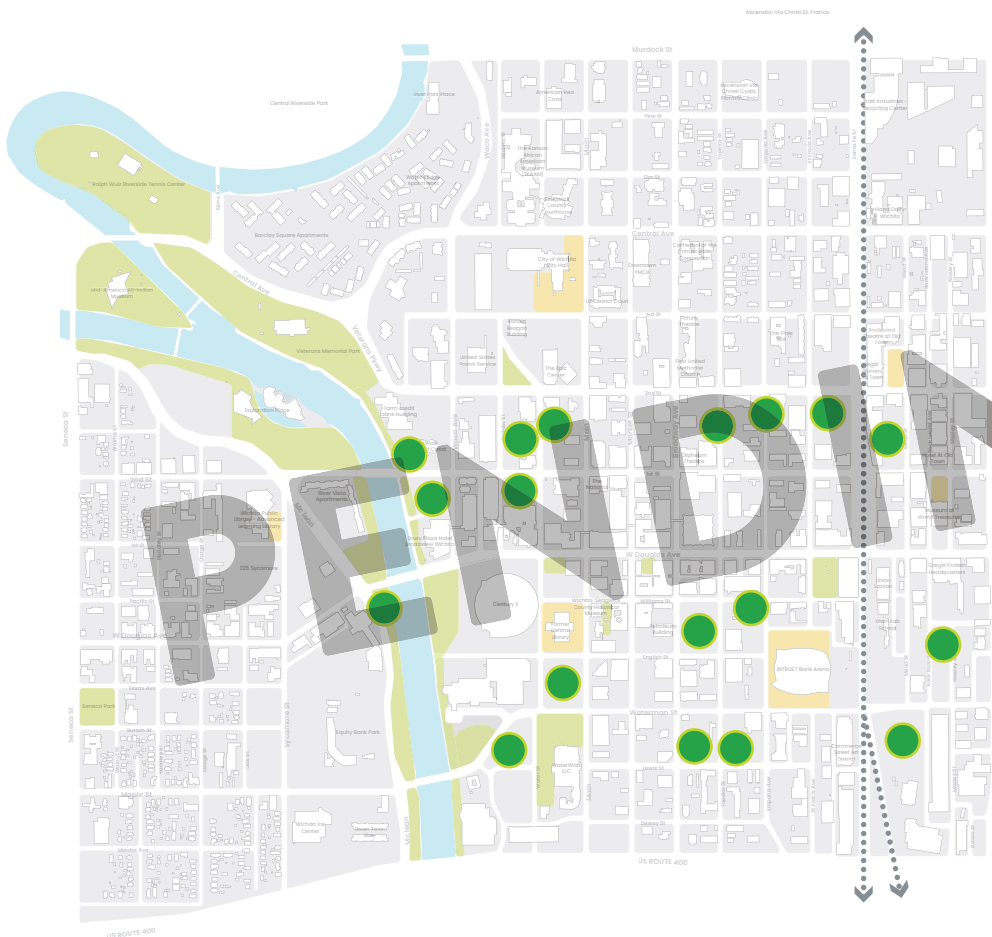
- Bike lanes should be clean and safe
- Prioritize north-south bike lanes

Landscape

Key Takeaway

Wichitans are keen to enhance the Arkansas River as downtown's defining lush and active open space, establishing walkable, bikeable, and shaded connections between the water and key assets like Century II and INTRUST Bank Arena. Open house attendees would also like to see new open spaces in many of the in-between areas or surface lots 1-2 blocks off Douglas Ave in the downtown core. Programming elements should focus on providing shaded respite areas or revenue-generating, family-friendly activities such as farmers' markets.

How would you improve open spaces or create new ones?



Many Wichitans want to see new open spaces along the river, or 1-2 streets off Douglas.

● Desire for New Open Space

Programming Priorities:

- 1) Shade and Seating
- 2) Farmers' Markets
- 3) Food and Beverage
- 4) Family-Friendly Activities



Your Designs! How Would You Connect Open Spaces?

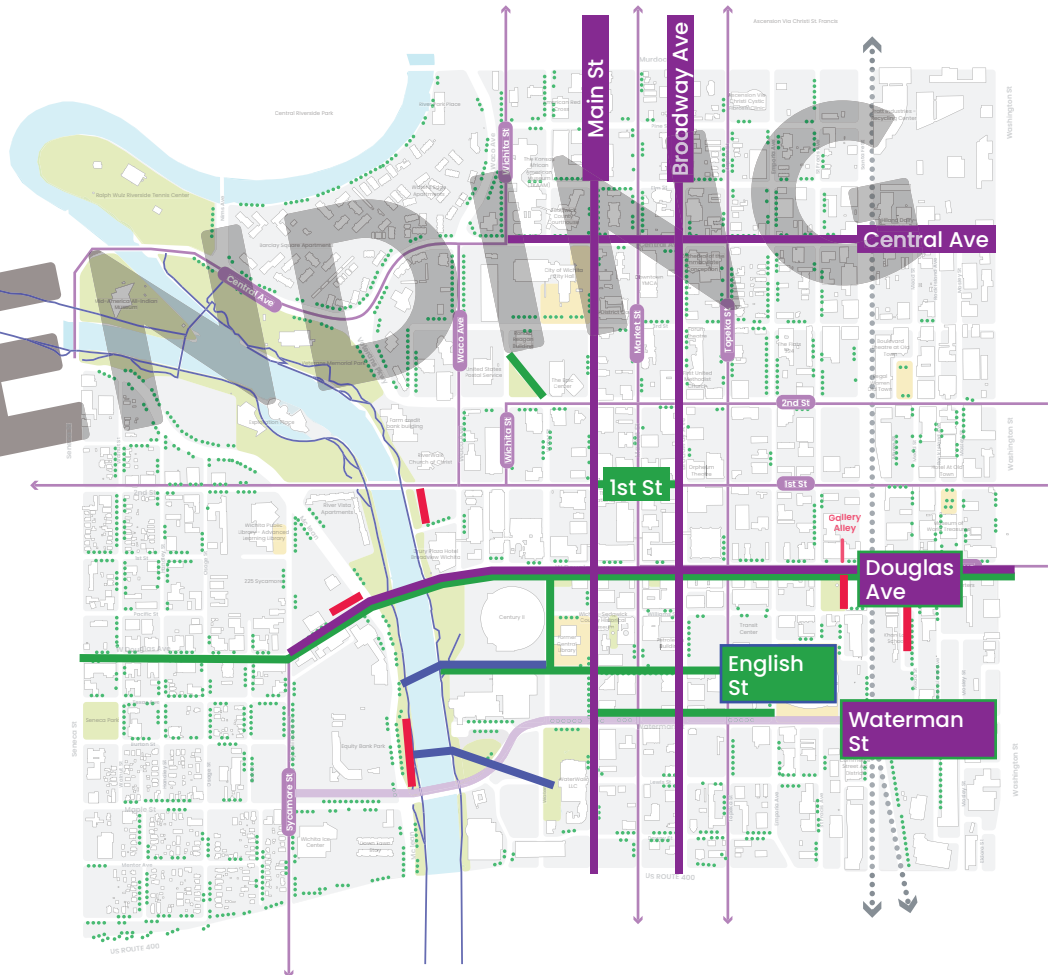


Bike Lanes

Street Trees

Trails

Commercial Activity



Activating the River

What uses would you like to see on the river?

What do you want the river to look like?



- Food & Beverage (33%)
- Recreation (27%)
- Cultural (22%)
- Retail (10%)
- Residential (6%)
- Hotel (2%)



45% of open house attendees want the river to be **lush and activated**, like the Avon River in New Zealand!

History and Culture

Key Takeaway

Stories of history and culture can be told in a myriad of ways, and Wichitans are open to all of them. Open house attendees gravitated most towards creative moments and storytelling paths as ways to connect downtown's most prominent cultural assets like Century II, the Keeper, or the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum. Residents also offered suggestions for a new performing arts center, with a clear geographic tendency to locate this potential civic asset along or near the river.

Your Designs!

Where should stories of history and culture be told?

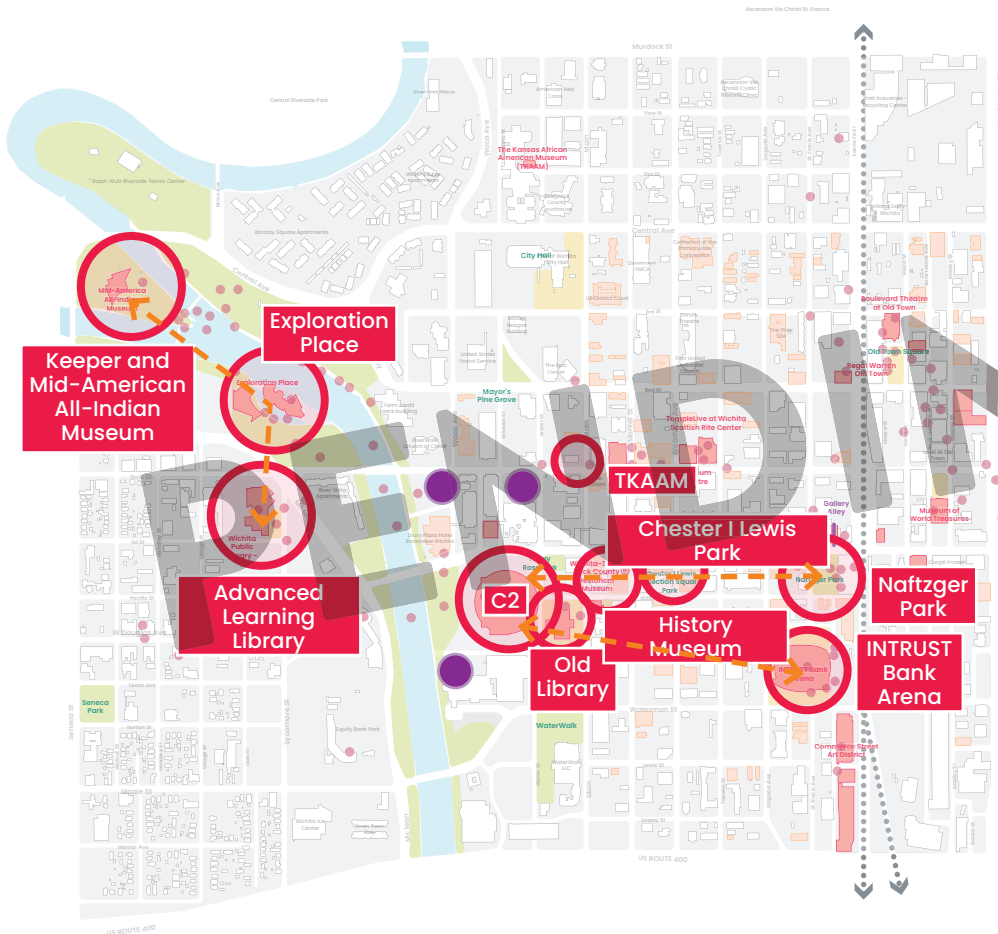
Open house attendees focused on creating series of connected itineraries between cultural destinations.

- Cultural Destination to Emphasize
- Suggested Site for New Performing Arts Center

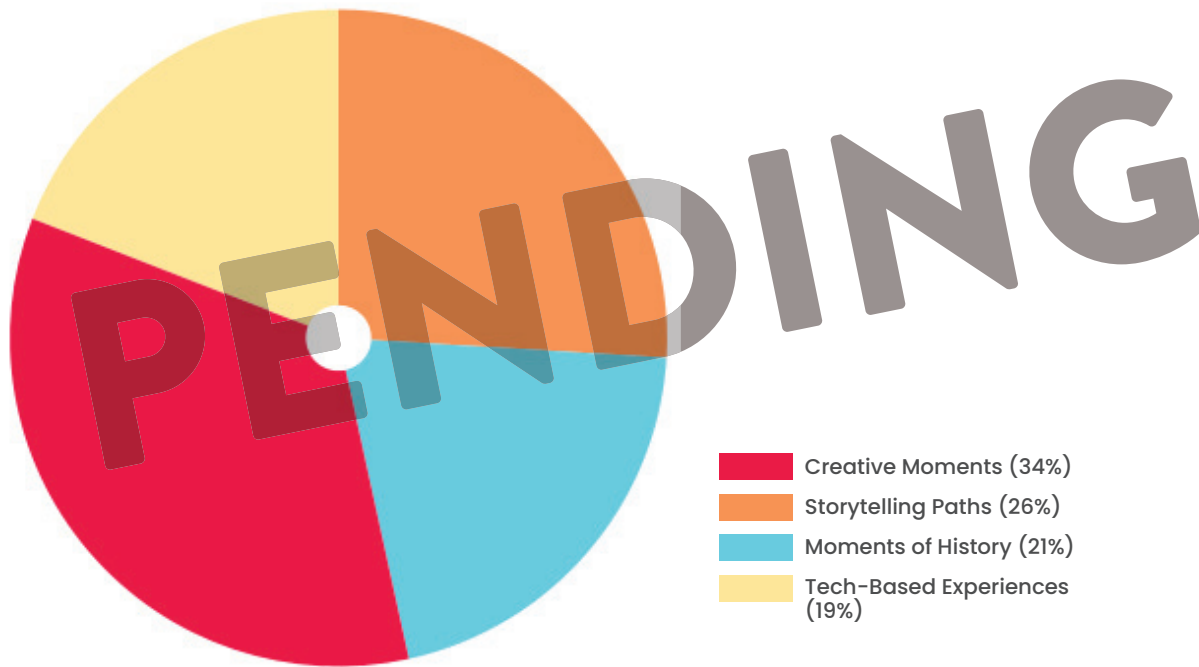
- ↕ Enhanced Connections

BASEMAP LEGEND

- Crowdsourced Hotspots from Open House I
- Landmarks
- Historic Buildings



How should stories of history and culture be told?



Creative Moments



like interactive art

Storytelling Paths



like inscription in pavement

Moments of History



like murals

Tech-Based Experiences



like building facade activation

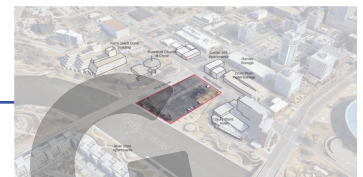
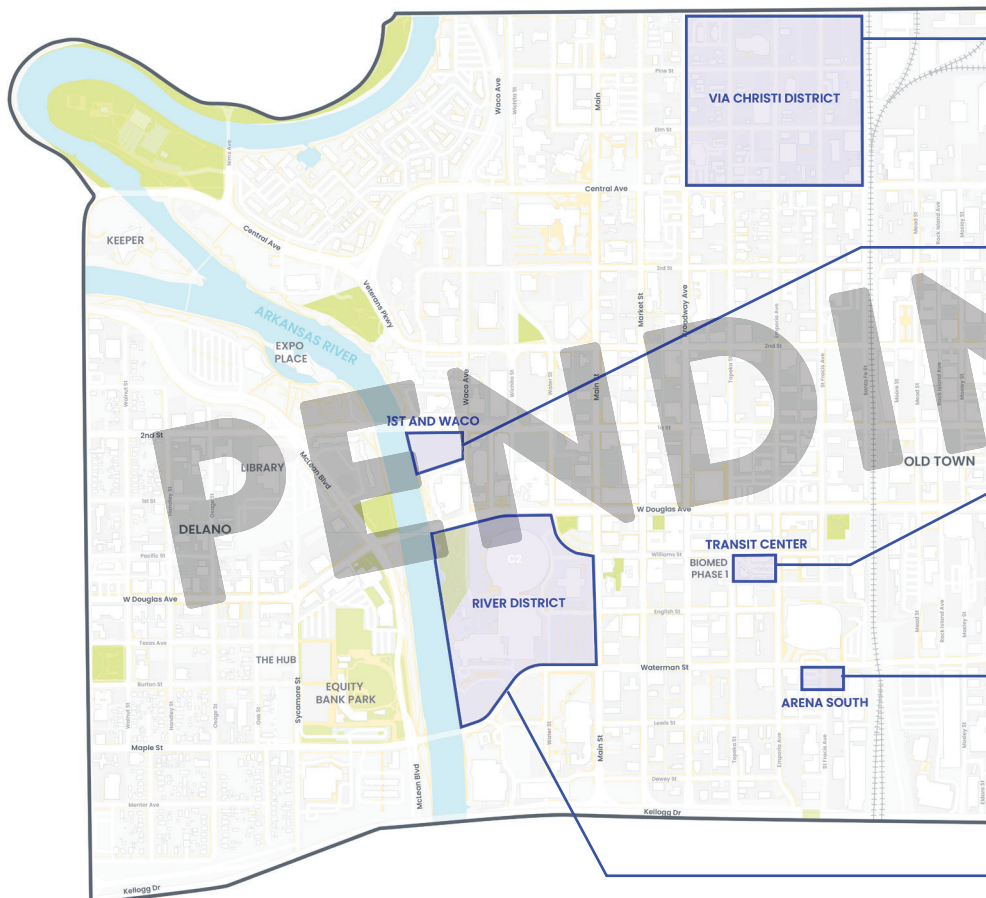
Demonstration Sites

What are demonstration sites?

Demonstration sites are key areas that can shape how the next generation of Wichitans perceives and experiences downtown. These locations have been central to public and private development discussions or are undergoing transitions where the Action Plan can ensure they reflect and respond to community needs and aspirations. As a whole, Wichitans want to see a mix of housing, retail, dining, and family-friendly open spaces on these sites to support and engage with nearby context like the river, hospital, arena, or biomedical campus.

Where are the demonstration sites?

Let's Imagine the Future of:



River District

Proposed Use

Mixed-Use River District with Market, Food Hall, Open Space, Recreational, and Cultural Uses

Other Thoughts

"New Performing Arts" "New Convention Center"

"Interesting Opportunity for Dynamic Architecture"

"Activate All Green Space" "Old Library - Grocery Store?"

"Leave Only Edges of CII - Fill In With a Park"

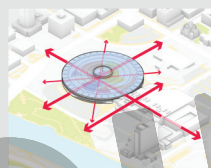
Here's how you want Century II to look in 10 years:



I like it the way it is!

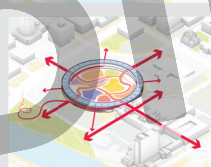
0%

Preserve the exterior, enhance river access, and introduce new uses



25%

Preserve the facade, innovate in design and use, and enhance river access



75%

The Hospital District

Proposed Use

Mixed-use hospital district with housing, research, dining, and shops

Other Thoughts

"Housing Development to Drive Density" "Mixed-Use"

"Use those empty parking lots!" "More medical"

1st and Waco

Proposed Use

Riverfront living, dining, and culture for families

Other Thoughts

"Family fun area" "Green space!!" "Face the river"

"Mixed-use green space with dining, patios, and shopping" "New performing arts center could be here"

"Housing and hotel" "Apartments"

The Transit Center

Proposed Use

Biomedical Village with student housing, shops, parking, research, and educational space

Other Thoughts

"Downtown Wichita's busiest private development"

"Housing" "Shops and corner store" "More open space"

Arena South

Proposed Use

Arena-supportive dining, shops, hotel, and parking

Other Thoughts

"Restaurants and green space" "Outdoor dining" "Base level retail/restaurants and hidden parking garage"

"More hotels in the area" "Chili's" "Retail or 3rd places"



DOWNTOWN WICHITA ACTION PLAN 2026
APPENDIX

PENDING

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TO VIEW THE FULL ACTION PLAN, VISIT
[DOWNTOWNWICHITA.ORG/ACTIONPLAN](https://downtownwichita.org/actionplan)