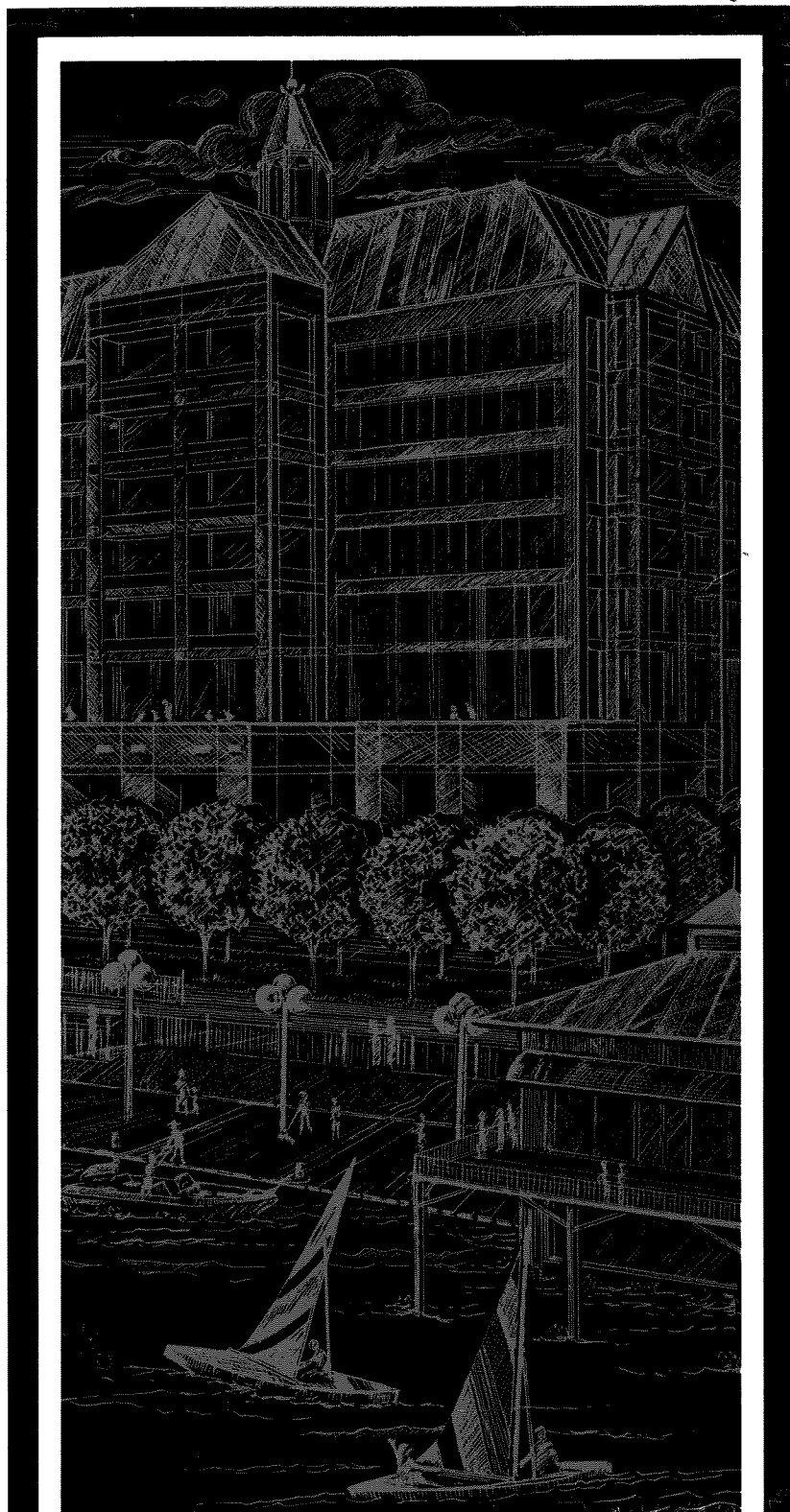


DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN WICHITA



THE RTKL PLANNING TEAM
January 1989

WI/SE Partnership for Growth, Inc.

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January, 1989



Aerial view of downtown from the southwest

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

- Background
- Strategic Goals and Objectives
- The Planning Process
- Executive Summary of the Plan

BACKGROUND

Over the last several decades, Wichita has experienced sustained and respectable economic growth. Though several of its major employment sectors have been slowing down in recent years, Wichita, unlike many other cities and counties across the country grappling with the new forces transforming the U.S. economy, finds itself in the fortunate position of having much of the industrial base, human resources, technology and long traditions of entrepreneurship required to succeed in the new economy.

Downtown Wichita has shared some of this past growth. But much of this growth has occurred in suburban locations and has drained the vitality of downtown. Negative signs of change have surfaced in the downtown area. The central business district (still a strong office center) is losing ground as the commercial heart of the region, as suburban development captures an increasing share of Downtown Wichita's employment and retail activity. As a result, Downtown Wichita is becoming a single-use district.

In response to the desire to protect the community's commitment and investment in downtown, and to enhance the functioning economic vitality and physical appearance of downtown, the WI/SE Partnership (a public/private partnership set up to oversee long-range economic development and central business district planning) decided, as part of its overall strategy for the area, to sponsor a major downtown revitalization planning study.

In February, 1988, the Dallas office of RTKL Associates, Inc., a national architectural and planning firm, was commissioned to plan the revitalization of Downtown Wichita.

RTKL Associates formed a planning team with three other professional consulting firms to prepare the Revitalization Plan for Downtown Wichita (in conjunction with the planning department of the city of Wichita). The planning team included:

RTKL Associates, Inc.: planning, implementation strategies, urban design, and team management.

Halcyon Ltd.: market analysis and implementation.

Barton Aschman : traffic, parking and public transit evaluation.

Planning Development Services, Inc.: data collection and local liaison.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The term "planning" is applied to many different activities. And many types of documents are labeled "downtown" plans. Whatever the title, effective planning for a downtown area should include the following:

- ° A strong physical plan based on good site and market analyses. The plan should provide a flexible development and transportation framework and a realistic vision of the downtown area's future.
- ° A strategy that describes the roles and tactics of local business and government and the resources required to implement the plan. It is the logical link between an area's economy, downtown's potential for development, and the activities and projects that result from the planning process. This creates "results-oriented" planning for a community.
- ° Public commitments from city government to ensure that funds for essential improvements will be provided, and that complementary public-sector development will either take place, or else be maintained, as a precondition for encouraging private investment.
- ° The creation of a downtown development entity able to coordinate both public and private improvements and activities. This entity must incorporate a strong management structure with a **full-time staff** providing leadership through active merchant and business associations.
- ° Identification of one or more demonstration or "early action" projects that are vital for the downtown area. Once a city has generated noticeable changes and renewed enthusiasm for downtown, potential for further redevelopment increases.
- ° Leadership from local residents and businesses who can provide direction, organization and commitment, broad-based political and community support, and the entrepreneurial spirit to make investments in downtown.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Recognizing that an effective planning process must incorporate community involvement and participation, a Downtown Plan Advisory Committee was formed to guide the RTKL planning team. This committee was composed of a broad spectrum of community representatives who were concerned about the fate and future of downtown.

In addition to the Advisory Committee, community input into the planning process came through:

- ° An extensive personal interview program with business and civic leaders, as well as with downtown businessmen and property owners.
- ° Workshop sessions with the Long Range Planning Task Force, and the Technical Advisory Committee – comprised of technical staff from city and county departments and other planning and engineering professionals from the community.
- ° Public hearings at critical steps in the planning process.

The RTKL team's methodology divided the planning process into six steps that followed a traditional "systems approach" to complex problem solving. Through this approach, a process of analysis, synthesis, and program conceptualization, the team produced a range of alternative solutions which were then weighed against the goals and objectives established by the Advisory Committee and the community at large. The feasibility of each alternative was assessed and the most suitable options were then selected for further refinement. The conclusion of each process step became the foundation upon which subsequent steps were based.

The steps of the planning process are outlined below:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Step 1: | Reconnaissance |
| Step 2: | Final Goals and Objectives |
| Step 3: | Preliminary Land Use Programs |
| Step 4: | Plan Evaluations |
| Step 5: | Plan Refinement and Implementation Strategies |
| Step 6: | Final Plan Documentation |

The findings and recommendations of each step of the planning process were presented to the City Council for its review, modification and approval. In addition, the county commissioners were briefed. This provided not only a thorough understanding of the emerging plan, but also allowed for necessary public-policy inputs at critical junctures by those officials who ultimately will be responsible for committing the powers and resources necessary to implement the plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE PLAN

The Development Plan that has evolved from the planning process is the city's own plan. It reflects the desires and aspirations of the community (as expressed in their participation and input into the process), which, in turn, have been translated by the RTKL team into a definitive plan. The intent of the plan is to create an environment that will distinguish Downtown Wichita as the heart of the community, and the center for the people of Wichita and the region. It should be a place where young and old live, work, shop, learn, play and congregate.

The Development Plan builds upon downtown's strengths while attempting to remedy problems which threaten its continued vitality. The plan envisions the **Downtown Core** as a "pedestrian-friendly" district that includes a distinctively new, mixed-use hotel/office/retail center linked to the East Bank riverfront, a linear waterfront park (The Water Walk) that is the catalyst for river-front development, a revitalized retail center along William Street, and new generations of offices along Main Street (from the government center at Central to Kellogg). The plan also envisions the rehabilitation of Old Town warehouse district into a multi-purpose center anchoring downtown at the east end of Douglas Avenue. A street-landscaping and graphic-signage program is recommended to beautify the area and inform and direct people to downtown activities and parking.

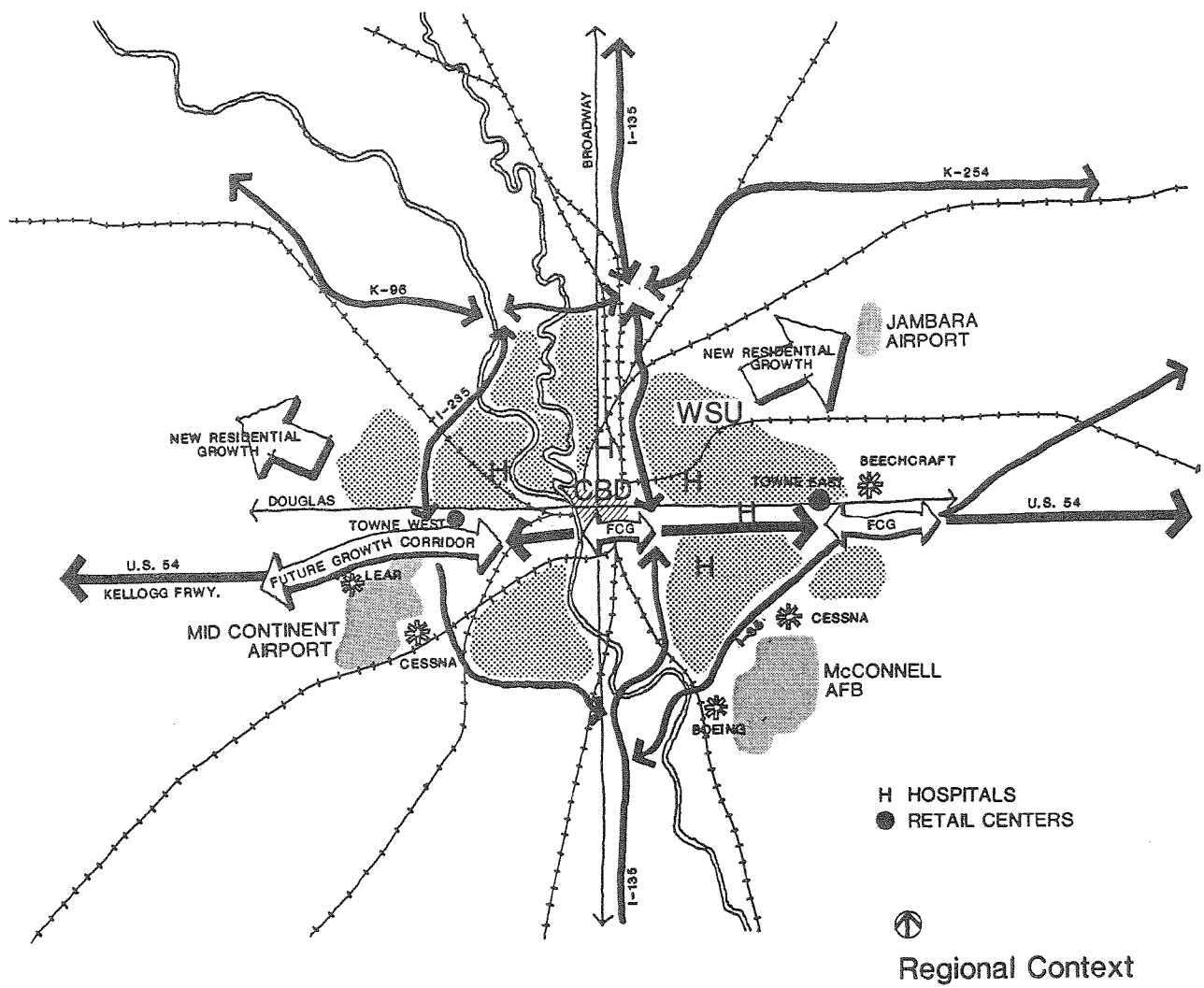
The plan's implementation strategy employs a leveraging concept of public investments to trigger private redevelopment efforts. The city's role in implementation involves coordinating capital improvements, land assembly and the provision of public parking facilities as primary incentives for attracting private investment. The WI/SE Partnership's role includes aggressive and persuasive leadership, an active development packaging/recruitment program and the creation of a central management structure for downtown.

The public-works program includes implementing a two-way Main Street as the new gateway street into downtown, the Water Walk, a new transit center, and a new riverside street from Douglas Avenue south to Lewis Street along the east bank of the Arkansas River. In addition, streetscape improvements along Douglas Avenue, Main Street and William Street have been proposed. Public-sector costs for these downtown improvements are estimated to be \$13.5 million over a five-year period, funded by combinations of local, state and federal monies. This investment is expected to have a multiplier effect, causing a projected \$73.8 million of private-sector investment in downtown by 1995.

The Development Plan outlined here is ambitious, achievable and economically feasible. It provides a way to phase development one project at a time, starting with realistic "early action" projects. It will require the community's effort, commitment and initiative. The Development Plan will contribute positively to the economic well-being of the community and will rekindle a sense of civic pride and investor confidence in downtown.

SECTION 2: DOWNTOWN WICHITA TODAY

- Regional Context
- Site Analysis
- Economic Profile
- Urban Design Analysis
- Parking and Traffic Analysis
- Conclusion



REGIONAL CONTEXT

Downtown Wichita is located at the geographical center of the Wichita metropolitan region. Its regional accessibility is enhanced by an excellent roadway network. The existing downtown infrastructure is also well suited to future real estate development.

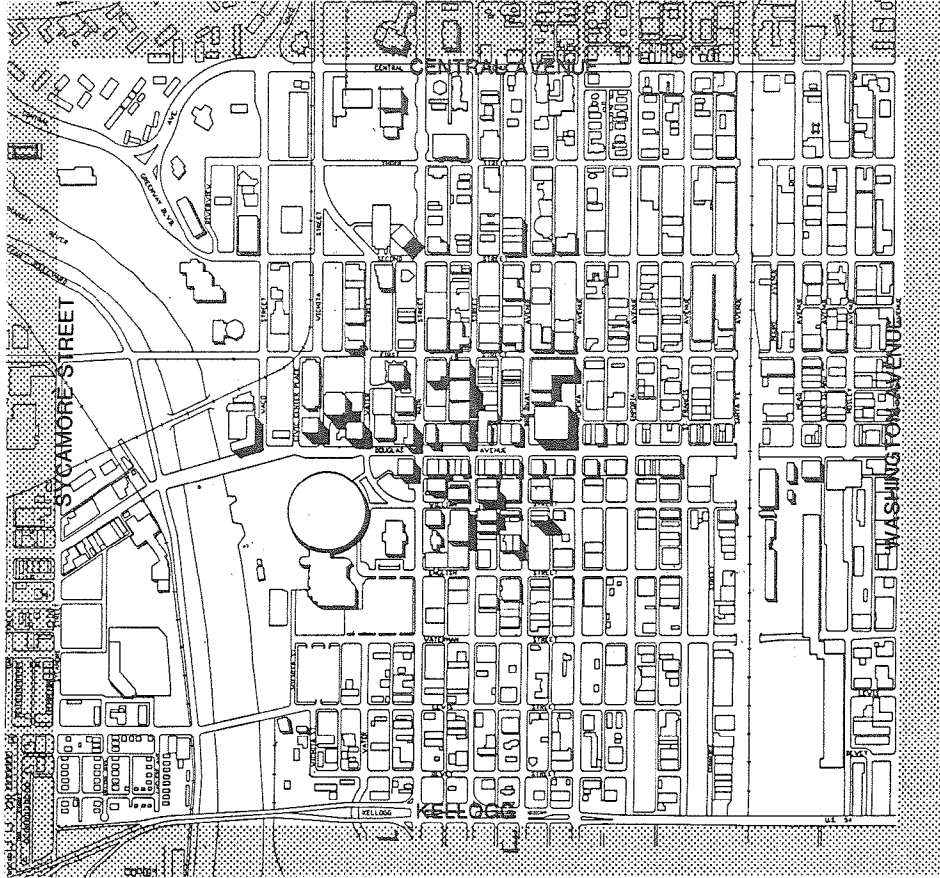
Overall, the market evaluation indicates that while Downtown Wichita is losing some ground, it is still the largest and most diverse employment center in the region with a daytime population of approximately 25,000 people. Downtown Wichita is recognized as the center of financial, governmental and legal services for the entire region and it remains the predominant and prestigious business and office address.

Other large concentrations of employment in Wichita are essentially suburban in character, particularly aircraft manufacturing industries, the medical centers and the Wichita State University campus. While there are several new office developments in the outer suburbs of the city, none have developed the density or critical mass to become employment centers competing with downtown. This may change in the future, however, considering the scale of proposed developments and highway construction, particularly in the northeast quadrant of the city.

Analysis of Downtown Wichita did not identify an accelerated growth rate for the future. It did indicate a steady regional growth trend of 1 percent annually in population and employment. And Downtown Wichita, with the largest concentration of office workers, still affords a variety of opportunities for continuing development.

SITE ANALYSIS

A summary of the study area's regional context, natural setting, physical opportunities and constraints for development, existing land uses and traffic circulation, and its interrelationship with the areas that frame it follows.



The study area is bounded by Sycamore to the west, Washington to the east, Central Avenue to the north, and Kellogg to the south.

Land Uses:

Office: The majority of downtown land use is in some type of commercial development, with public and institutional uses the two next largest categories. The downtown office core contains approximately 60 percent of the metropolitan office market, with a vacancy rate of 18 percent, and approximately four to six Class A office buildings. The market can support multi-tenant office space, and is projected to absorb approximately 150,000 to 200,000 square feet of Class A space annually between 1991 and the year 2000. Downtown must be prepared either to absorb this demand for space with new buildings, or lose it to suburban-area developments.

Retail: The two existing regional shopping malls and numerous commercial strip centers throughout the metropolitan area have all but eliminated general retailing from downtown. Only the more specialized support-service retail catering to the downtown employment base remains. Apart from some downtown business clubs, all of the "best tablecloth" restaurants are located outside the central area. An unmet demand was identified for 100,000 to 130,000 square feet of additional specialty retail, entertainment, and food and beverage services drawing from downtown and the regional market. This demand forecast also identified 30,000 square feet of new service support retail, in conjunction with office development serving the downtown employment base.

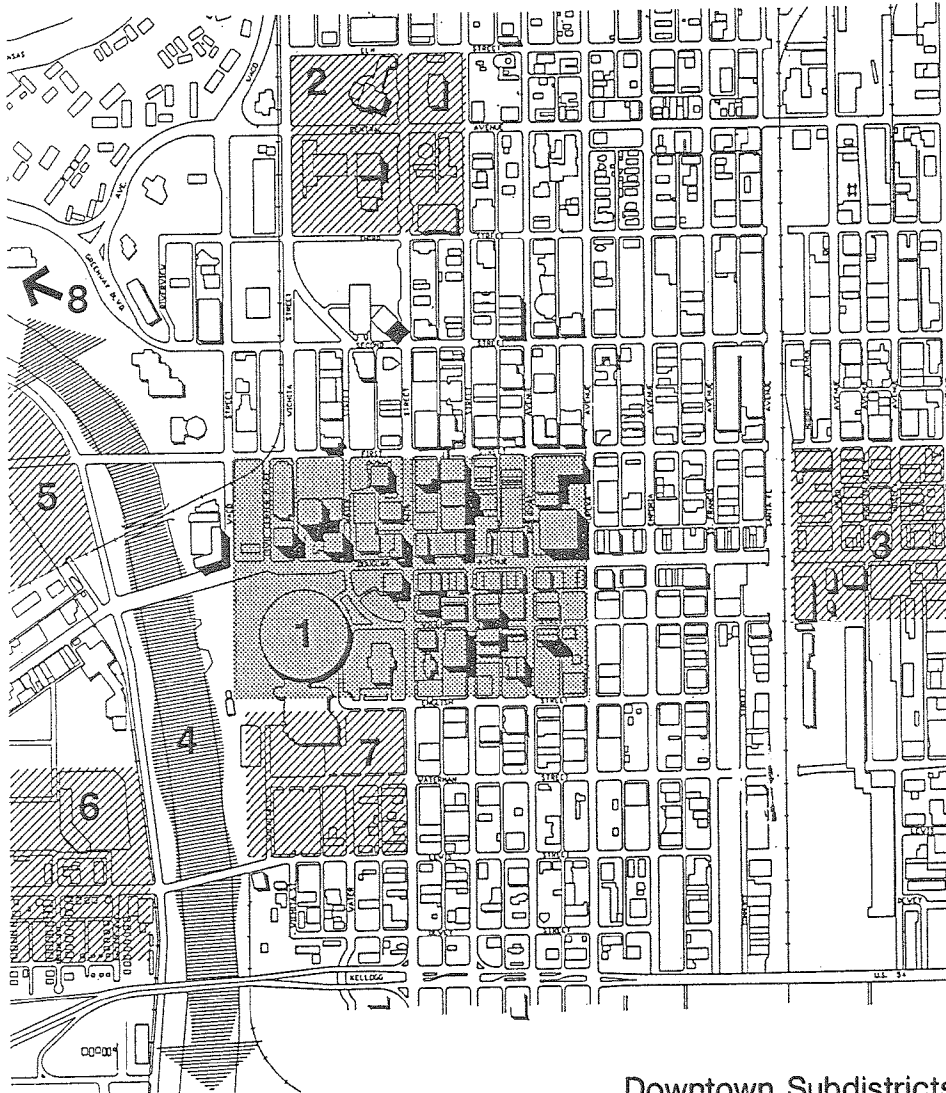
Residential: The downtown zoning category D (a generous cumulative zoning category) embraces a large area beyond the downtown core. This has encouraged the dispersion of higher density commercial, office, and government uses. In turn the corresponding higher land values that follow have discouraged residential development within the core and frame areas. Stable residential neighborhoods are therefore limited to the fringe areas that encircle downtown. Within this fringe area, however, residential uses maintain consistently high occupancy rates and relatively strong resale values. The 1,100 garden apartment units north of downtown are enjoying 97 percent occupancy, but low-rent structures have slowed the market for new construction.

Hotels: The citywide occupancy rate is approximately 60 percent, due largely to the high occupancy rate of newer hotels/motels located in the suburban areas around the city. Downtown hotel occupancies approximate the 45 percent range due in part both to their age and lack of direct freeway accessibility. However, projections over the next three years indicate a need for a 300-room hotel. An evaluation of the hotel market indicates it could possibly be an all-suite hotel with meeting facilities, within walking distance of the convention center. Suite hotels are popular nationwide and can capture a wide range of users, including conventioners, corporate businessmen, and tourists.

Subdistricts:

There are several identifiable subdistricts within the study area, each with its own distinct range of land use and primary function. The districts identified within the downtown study area include:

1. Downtown Core: The downtown core is anchored by development along Douglas and Main Street. Douglas was the "main street" of Wichita throughout this century before retail began leaving downtown in the late sixties. It was the street along which the major banks and commercial businesses were located. In recent years, however, most of the new government and speculative office buildings have located along Main Street, and it is apparent that the downtown office core is shifting from the traditional east/west alignment along Douglas Avenue, to a north/south alignment along Main Street.



Downtown Subdistricts

The other major component of the downtown core is Century II which houses the convention center and civic functions. This facility brings more regional and national traffic to the downtown area than any other single development. Because the downtown core historically has been the heart of downtown with the most prestigious business addresses, the real estate values are too high for easy large-scale land assembly. Opportunities for significant, new infill mixed-use developments are, therefore, dependent on the return of a strong office, hotel and retail market demand.

2. Government Center: Located half a mile north of the downtown core and anchored by City Hall and the County Court House at Central and Main Street, this subdistrict has evolved over the past quarter century as the center of city, county and federal government. It is anticipated that this district will remain one of the largest of employment centers outside the downtown core.
3. Old Town: A subdistrict of red brick turn-of-the-century warehouses and workshops, Old Town is served by the railroads and centered around the original station along Mead Street and Santa Fe Street at Douglas Avenue. Although many of its buildings are abandoned, Old Town is still a wholesale warehousing and distribution location, attracting heavy truck traffic. It is an area of underutilized property with uses that could effectively be relocated to suburban locations, and is ripe for rehabilitation.
4. The Arkansas River Corridor: Wichita, like many cities in the United States, developed on the banks of a river. The national railroads, however, quickly emerged as the primary transportation link attracting business and industry and growth shifted to areas clustered around the railroad depot early in the city's life. Today the river corridor is still relatively underdeveloped, and has evolved as a scenic linear park with some commercial, residential, and recreational uses. The annual ten-day Wichita River Festival of parades, races and social events indicates the importance of the river to the city's identity.
5. The West Bank Area (North): The west river-front district embraces approximately 30 acres of land partially occupied by commercial, industrial and residential uses, which lack cohesive or complementary patterns of development. The KG&E substation and transmission tower are visual intrusions that are too costly to be relocated. Elimination of the existing Union Pacific railroad along the river bank has long been sought by city officials.

Not suited for commercial/retail development because it is too far from the downtown core to reinforce the downtown (and could become a competitive subdistrict) this city-owned property awaits a viable development program. It offers a unique opportunity for development of a large-scale residential urban neighborhood supporting downtown and the existing West Douglas neighborhoods.

6. West Bank Area (South): While the Lawrence-Dumont Stadium is separated from downtown by the Arkansas River, it occupies a strategic location relative to downtown and the Arkansas River corridor. It has the potential for creating a regional amenity that will reinforce downtown activity, and in particular, reinforce the East Bank development. Its parking lot serves as a remote lot for downtown employees. Plans to renovate the stadium and expand it into a sports training facility are currently being developed.
7. The East Bank: This 30-acre area is made up largely of city-owned land bounded by English Street on the north, Main Street on the east, Lewis Street to the south, and the east bank of the Arkansas River to the west. It is located adjacent to the Century II Expo Hall, and contains an existing brick warehouse and several older apartment blocks. It is a strategically located site with the potential for a variety of uses that could be driven by three different markets: the downtown employment base, the regional population, and convention center business.
8. The Sim Park/Riverside Area: This area contains many cultural, recreational and historical attractions, including the following: the Wichita Art Museum, Botanica (the new botanical gardens), the Mid-America All-Indian Center, a public golf course, Old Cowtown Museum, and several pieces of modern sculpture set in the landscape (including the remarkable Indian figure "Keeper of the Plains" situated at the confluence of the Little and the Big Arkansas Rivers). The area serves as the major recreational space for metropolitan Wichita and the region. In reality, Sim Park/Riverside is not part of the downtown study area, but it is an important fringe area district that provides significant cultural and recreational support to downtown.

ECONOMIC PROFILE

The economic and demographic characteristics of a city are an indicator of the city's relative economic health. They are also used by many firms and businesses in deciding whether to move, expand or contract in a particular city. These characteristics are one measure of a city's attractiveness.

With a population of approximately 300,000 residents, the city of Wichita includes 118 square miles of land, about one quarter of Sedgwick County. It is the largest city and metropolitan area in the State of Kansas. With 116,000 households and an estimated mean household income of \$28,900, Wichita's primary trade area (within a 50-mile radius of downtown) includes a population of 625,000. Its secondary trade area (100-mile radius) encompasses over one million people. The Wichita Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) employment force totals 223,000. Unemployment has been in the six percent range for the past three years.

Downtown Wichita provides an excellent location to capitalize on the market opportunities presented by the greater Wichita marketplace. The downtown offers several exceptional advantages which will significantly enhance its overall marketability. These advantages include the following:

- Downtown Wichita is located at the geographical center of the Wichita metropolitan region. Its geographical accessibility is enhanced by an excellent roadway network. Improvements to this network – specifically the upgrading of Kellogg to freeway status – will greatly enhance downtown's regional accessibility.
- Downtown is well served by the Mid-Continent Airport, located only six miles and 10 to 15 minutes away.
- Downtown Wichita is recognized as the center of financial, government, and legal services for the entire region. Although suburban office development has occurred, the downtown area remains the predominant and prestigious office address.
- The city's population grew by nearly 20,000 between 1980 and 1988. Projections indicate that growth will continue at a healthy rate. Household incomes are relatively high, supporting additional real estate development.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, employment and demographic statistics in the City of Wichita and the Wichita MSA strongly suggest that future development opportunities will unfold.

Despite setbacks in the early 1980s in the energy, agriculture and aircraft industries, the economy has rebounded strongly. Future employment growth will lead to significant opportunities, particularly for office development. There is significant potential for development in all four major real estate areas: office, hotel, retail and housing. Details of these opportunities, as determined by an evaluation of the market conditions and development trends, are described below.

Office Market

Despite the fact that currently there is a vacancy rate of more than 20 percent in the greater Wichita office market and a 17 percent vacancy rate in the downtown market, the greater Wichita market (and specifically the downtown area) shows great promise for future office development. Recent spurts in the employment growth have resulted in relatively high office absorption levels of approximately 300,000 square feet annually. Rental rates range from \$13 to \$19 per square foot for Class A space in the downtown. Downtown stills dominates in existing office space, as well as new office construction. Sixty percent of the region's office space is located in the downtown area – a significant statistic that would be the envy of many cities nationwide.

Calculations and market research indicate that it is reasonable to expect that downtown will require additional office space of 200,000 square feet annually over the next five to ten years. Since the downtown currently has between 400,000 to 600,000 square feet yet to be absorbed, it becomes reasonable to plan the opening of new office development for the downtown in the years 1990 to 1991. National experience indicates that if new space is not made available within this time frame, more office development will shift to the suburbs, absorbing the downtown's market share.

Hotel Market

Supported by general growth in the economy, the Expo Hall addition and the successful effort by the Wichita Convention and Visitors Bureau to increase the number of national conventions held in Wichita, the hotel market was able to grow substantially in 1986 and 1987. This growth trend will continue, enabling a new first-class property to be developed in the marketplace by 1990 or 1991.

Six existing hotel properties are considered to be the primary competitors of a new downtown hotel. Two of these properties, the Ramada Hotel at Broadview Place and the Wichita Plaza Hotel are located in downtown. The remaining four – the Hilton Inn East, Holiday Inn East, Marriott and the Airport Hilton – are located in the suburbs. 1987 market-area room rates for these properties ranged from \$50 to \$68, with the newly developed Marriott achieving the highest room rate in the market.

Current occupancies in suburban properties are higher than those downtown. 1987 occupancies ranged from 64 to 65 percent in the suburbs, and 45 to 50 percent in the downtown. Analysis indicates that a new, 250-room, "mixed concept" downtown hotel should be developed in the next two to three years. The hotel will not only add stature to the downtown and create an additional destination and amenity, it also will add to the ability of The Wichita Convention and Visitors Bureau to market the convention facilities. In other words, a new downtown hotel will not only be able to capitalize on normal market growth, but will be expected to create additional convention center-related demand for the entire market.

Retail Market

Significantly less retail is located in downtown than in years past. Most Wichita metropolitan area retail expenditures are made in suburban malls. Currently, retailers in the downtown area are paying approximately \$10 per square foot for their stores. Although rents are somewhat higher in the suburbs, retail rents in Wichita have not climbed to levels which easily support new development. The conclusions presented below were predicated on the ability of retailers and restaurateurs to capture significantly more sales than has currently been the case, enabling them to pay rents of approximately \$20 per square foot. This would support the following potential retail development:

- ° The East Bank development adjacent to the convention center presents the most significant opportunity for large-scale, destination retail development. Expenditures generated by convention center attendees, hotel guests, downtown employees and metropolitan residents can potentially be captured at this highly accessible location. The market will easily support – at minimum – a specialty retail/restaurant center of up to 45,000 square feet. But market demand forecasts indicates that a larger specialty retail center of up to 120,000 square feet as part of a mixed-use center is also possible.
- ° The Downtown Core presents other opportunities: The presence of quality retailers such as Brick's and Lewin's, and the large concentration of downtown employees present a secondary retail opportunity for downtown retail development. Although there is potential for destination retail of approximately 90,000 square feet, this alternative is not highly recommended because of perceived access and parking problems within the downtown core. Instead, it appears to be more realistic to develop a mixed-use retail/office development that will contain approximately 23,000 square feet of retail, as well as additional non-retail uses (such as banks, copy centers, etc.). This will bring the retail component to nearly 30,000 square feet.

- The Old Town district presents a third area of opportunity. Analysis indicates that incremental development of restaurant and retail establishments should be encouraged in the Old Town area. This analysis indicates that employees located within walking distance of Old Town can only support approximately 17,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space. As the area becomes better established, it too will be able to attract a larger regional clientele as an alternative entertainment destination offering a wide variety of choices..

Residential Market

The population of the city of Wichita, which grew by nearly 20,000 residents between 1980 and 1988, is projected to continue to show significant growth. Currently, only one percent of the city of Wichita's area households reside near downtown. Approximately 1,100 apartment units are located on the east bank of the Little Arkansas river, within one mile of the downtown core. The units appear to be quite desirable, as evidenced by a vacancy of less than three percent. Rental rates, however, are low for new construction, with the highest-priced one-bedroom units renting for \$400 per month, and the highest-priced two-bedrooms renting for about \$500 per month.

Analysis indicates that the downtown market will be capable of absorbing between 35 and 163 additional multifamily housing units annually between 1988 and the year 2000. The obtainable range in demand levels depends on whether or not a higher proportion of the city's new households can be lured into the downtown market.

Based on national trends and changes in taste and preferences of the population for downtown housing, it is reasonable to assume that the downtown can achieve a higher share of total housing market. This is particularly true as more investment is made in the downtown and as the range of amenities and shopping improve. At present, the greatest difficulty in achieving new housing development in the downtown is that housing prices are insufficient to finance new construction. Therefore, developers probably would require some form of public subsidy or assistance.

URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS

The following issues address the spatial character of the existing downtown environment. They include both the intangible and subjective aspects of the physical environment that leave a collective impression and visual understanding of a special place or district.

Urban Fabric:

Although Douglas Avenue and William Street maintain a tight corridor of buildings, the streetwall continuity in the rest of downtown is becoming fractured by new generations of "stand alone" buildings, especially along Main Street. Buildings of historic and architectural interest are scattered throughout the study area (including a magnificent collection of remarkable churches along Broadway Avenue, Market Street, and Topeka). But apart from the Old Town district, these are not sufficiently concentrated to warrant the creation of special historic district overlay zoning.

The Pedestrian Experience:

Apart from a three block area centered around Douglas and Main Street, there is no high density pedestrian traffic in the study area. Pedestrian street activity has been reduced by the lack of retail, internalized employee cafeterias, and skybridges to parking garages. The street-level experience has also been compromised on most downtown streets by the intrusion of blank parking garage walls, surface parking lots, and the feeling that the sidewalks have been narrowed to make room for vehicular traffic. Outside the downtown core the other downtown activity generators are too infrequent and dispersed to be linked by comfortable walking distances.

Areas of usable public urban space are limited. Apart from Naftzger Park and the beautifully executed and appropriately scaled Heritage Square Park behind the Carnegie Library, the few public plazas and city parks downtown are unwieldy, left-over windswept spaces lacking definition or any clear function – especially those spaces around Century II and the library. The only downtown riverside park is located at the Douglas Street bridge and is separated from the downtown core by the massive Century II complex.

Downtown Portals:

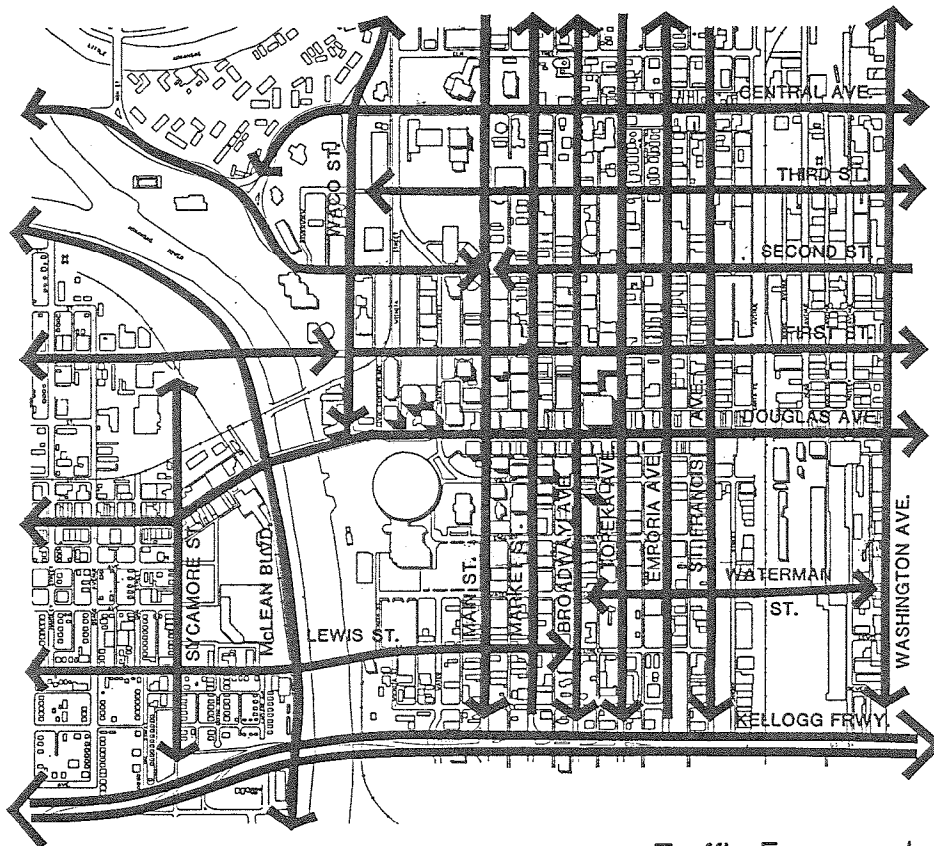
The existing gateway streets into the downtown area, Market Street, Washington Avenue, and Broadway Avenue are unremarkable. There is no sense of arrival or the perception of entering a special or distinctly different place. Currently, the nicest entry portals into downtown is along McLean Boulevard and over the Douglas Avenue bridge, but this is a circuitous route for anyone unfamiliar with the area.

PARKING AND TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

Regional Access:

Downtown will have improved regional access when the reconstruction of the elevated Kellogg freeway is complete. As currently proposed, direct regional access into downtown will be provided for eastbound traffic at Market Street, and for westbound traffic at Topeka Avenue, Broadway and Market Street. New at-grade frontage roads will connect these two streets on both sides of the freeway. There are no proposals to extend these to Wichita Street and St. Francis Avenue. McLean Boulevard brings in traffic from west and northwest Wichita, and the Murdock/Central/1st.-2nd. Avenue couplet brings in traffic from I-135 to the east.

Reconstruction of Kellogg to freeway standards will cause shifts in the development pattern on the south side of downtown, if not in the actual center of the employment base. The Development Plan recognizes the location of each new highway intersection and cross-street link into the core of downtown, and has evaluated each, not only in terms of efficiency of traffic movement, but also in terms of their potential for downtown growth.



Traffic Framework

Existing Street Capacities:

Downtown streets appear to have enough right-of-way (R.O.W.) and lane configurations to accommodate existing and projected traffic demands. In fact, traffic is so evenly dispersed (due to the one-way couplet system), that volumes are too low for major retail development, except along Douglas Avenue and Main Street. Proposals to computerize downtown traffic signals will also facilitate future increases in traffic volumes.

Transit Center:

The existing transit line-up is comprised of a series of 18 on-street bus layovers (waiting time between scheduled bus runs). Layover and exchange of passengers occur along three segments of the following downtown streets:

- ° on Main Street: seven layover positions north and south of William Street,
- ° at the junction of William Street and Main Street at Century Plaza: nine layover positions between Main Street and Douglas Avenue, and
- ° on Douglas Avenue: two layover positions west of Water Street in front of Century II.

Buses converge, or "pulse", in and out of these layover positions on 30-minute and 60-minute cycles, Monday through Saturday from about 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Five to seven buses per pulse enter and leave these layover locations. Transferring between buses – a critical element of a pulse transfer concept – is already spread across four locations on different city blocks. Passengers currently experience difficulty transferring in a three-to-four minute period between buses stopping on Douglas Avenue at Water Street and those stopping near Main Street and William Street. There is an obvious need for a new centralized transit center in this general area of downtown to mitigate this passenger transfer problem by grouping the bus layovers in one location.

Parking Standards:

Parking in downtown Wichita is perceived as a major problem by visitors and employees alike. One issue is the cost. Because of downtown land values and the existence of separate garages and lots, a parking fee is usually necessary. The public's perception that parking in the suburbs is free complicates matters. Generally, parking is not paid for directly in suburban office and retail centers. Instead, it is usually included in space rental costs. In reality, one pays for parking by paying for goods and services from suburban businesses.

Another issue is the amount of parking. Again, there is the perception of not enough parking. According to the "Century II Parking Feasibility Study for City of Wichita, Kansas, December 1983," by Walker Parking Consultants, supply of parking in the downtown area exceeds the demand. But the problem does not seem to be in the distribution of this parking as related to destinations. There appears to be adequate parking generally within easy access of most major concentrations of employment. In fact, while the employment base has remained constant in downtown for the past ten years, the parking supply has doubled. Approximately 50 percent of downtown employees are within 50 feet of parking, while 82 percent of employees are within 150 feet. The overall supply of parking is good but short-term parking is poorly distributed and hard to find.

CONCLUSION

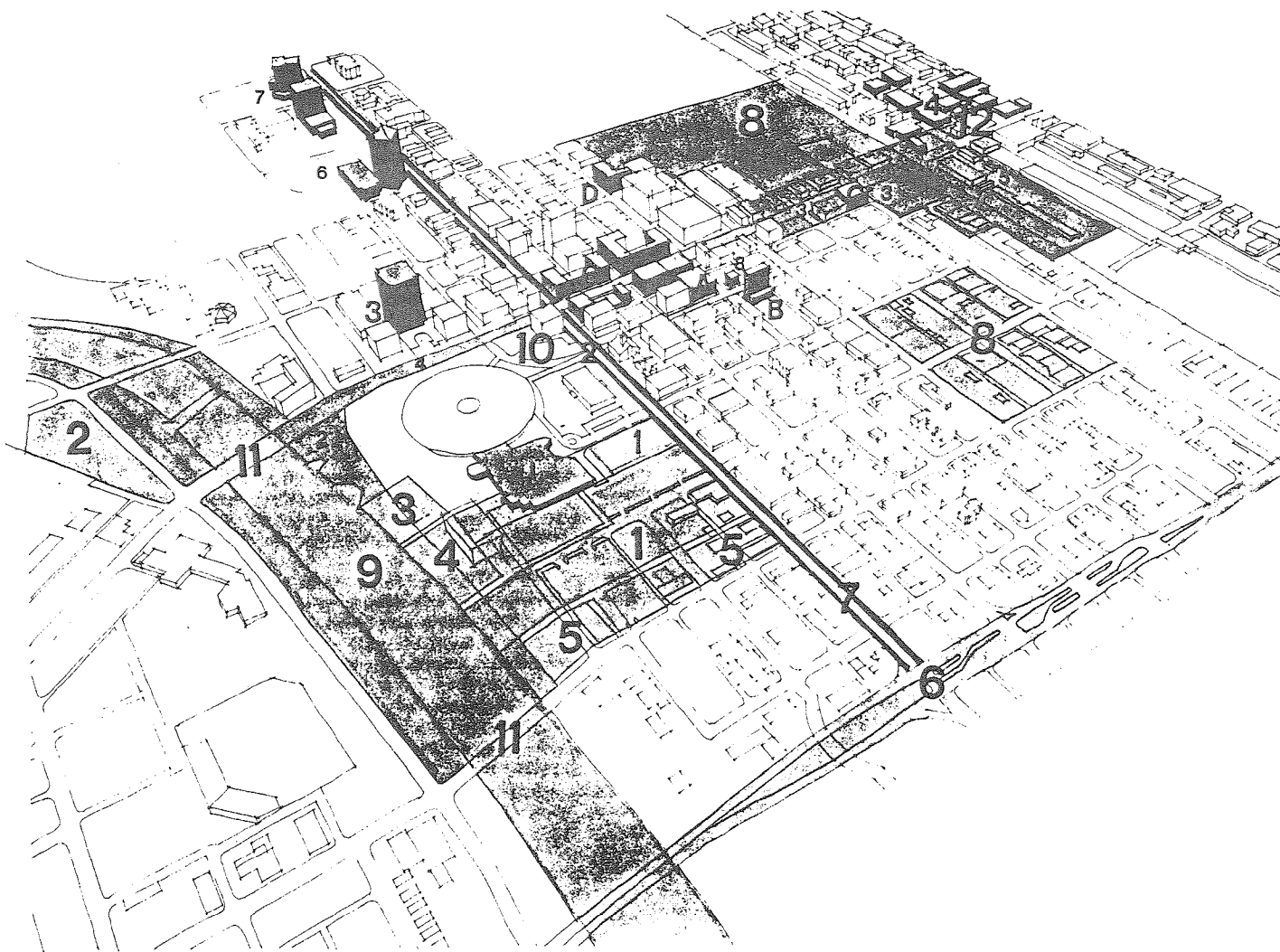
Downtown Wichita today has strengths and weaknesses, problems and opportunities. Certain forces and characteristics contribute positively to downtown's revitalization. At the same time, many problems exist whose negative effects must be recognized and dealt with.

Assets:

- A strategic location at the center of the metropolitan population.
- An attractive setting with a riverfront location.
- A safe and clean environment that is relatively free of the social and environmental problems which plague many cities today.
- A strong existing base, including city and county government centers, banking and financial institutions, and major churches.
- A number of architecturally noteworthy buildings and districts.
- A stable downtown fringe area with attractive residential neighborhoods.
- Existing downtown property, merchants and promotion organizations.
- Strong business leadership for economic development and long-range planning.
- General media understanding and support of the benefits and process of downtown revitalization.

Liabilities:

- A declining image.
- A general lack of activity.
- Competition from new suburban developments.
- Inconvenient retail and visitor parking.
- A lack of pedestrian amenities.
- A lack of investor confidence.
- A lack of a single coordinated downtown development entity.
- Poor riverfront utilization.



ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Convention Center Expansion
2. River Corridor Improvements
3. Naftzger Park
4. Douglas Avenue Streetscape
5. East Douglas Historic District
6. Epic Center
7. City/County Complex
8. Childrens Museum

CHALLENGES

1. Convention Hotel
2. William Street
3. Wichita Plaza Hotel
4. Old Town/Rock Island Rehabilitation
5. Individual Building Reuse
 - a. Dillards
 - b. Allis Hotel
 - c. Eaton Hotel
 - d. Orpheum Theater
6. Douglas Retail Consolidation

OPPORTUNITIES

1. East Bank
2. West Bank
3. Amphitheater
4. River Hotel
5. Corporate Office
6. Kellogg Access Improvements
7. Two-Way Main Street
8. Downtown Housing
9. River Corridor Linkages
10. Transit Station
11. Bridge Enhancements
12. Trolley Square

SECTION 3: THE PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN WICHITA

- Planning Goals and Objectives
- The Strategic Plan
- The Land Use Plan
- The Transportation Plan
- The Parking Plan
- Pedestrian/Open Space System
- Urban Design Elements of the Plan

PLANNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Development Plan for Downtown Wichita is a blueprint for action. But it is not a static or inflexible document. The plan recognizes that unanticipated changes certainly will occur, and is flexible enough to accommodate the unexpected. It establishes a framework of public improvements that capitalize on recognized community assets and provide the setting within which private investment can occur. It may be necessary to depart from the plan on occasions. The basic objectives, however, should always be adhered to. Changes should always be consistent with the broader goals of creating a vital, active and dynamic downtown — one that is truly the heart of the city.

The following set of goals and revitalization objectives have guided the formulation of this plan:

Downtown as the Regional Activity Center:

Wichita's downtown must have enough synergy, variety and activity to make it a major attraction, able to attract wider regional, national and even international markets. It must incorporate all the functions of urban living that provide choice through diversity. And it must create an atmosphere conducive to growth and change, while maintaining a sense of community and a sense of place.

The downtown subdistricts, activity centers, and river corridor must be linked in order to mutually reinforce each other. Well-designed linkages can expand the walkable core area, while enhancing the pedestrian experience. The opportunity exists to create new linkages through the use of street beautification programs, widened sidewalks, and trolley shuttles. Reorganizing public transit routes to connect activity centers outside the downtown area must also be encouraged. In addition, public transit routes should connect other major employment centers and residential districts such as St. Francis Regional Medical Center, Riverside Hospital, and the West Bank that frame downtown.

Retain the Downtown Employment Base:

Downtown Wichita is supported by three main groups of employers: financial institutions, local and state government departments, and professional services such as lawyers and accountants. Traditionally, synergistic relationships have existed among these main groups of users, based on familiarity, proximity and convenience. However, with modern communications systems and with alternative choices emerging in the suburbs, there are no guarantees that these groups will stay downtown.

Once a major downtown employer relocates outside the core area, a process of attrition begins, and supporting amenities (the service retail, cafes, lunch counters, restaurants) decline. Downtown as a working environment begins to look seedy and poorly served, beginning the evolution into a single-use district.

This process of decline has started but is not beyond control. Organized employment centers and business parks in suburban Wichita are not yet fully competitive. Local traffic patterns are still focused on downtown. However, for new start-up businesses and for the businesses relocating to Wichita who are not "captives" of downtown, the choice of a peripheral location over a downtown location is almost overwhelming. Businesses move near the newer residential subdivisions: they are close to major retail, restaurant and entertainment centers, and can occupy newer buildings.

It is, therefore, important that downtown revitalization strategies encourage the creation of new generations of office buildings that provide state-of-the-art office environments and services. The retention and rehabilitation of other types of older office buildings suitable for conversion into shops, lofts, studios and workshops (providing very essential low-rent "incubator space" for start-up businesses) must also be encouraged. This is a necessary revitalization and regenerative function in any city that must capitalize on existing resources.

Revitalize Downtown Retail:

The quality of retailing sets the overall public impression of a city's downtown image, even when it is a small component of the total area. In order to bring downtown shopping back into prominence, Downtown Wichita must reach out beyond the downtown employment base to a wider regional market and derive demand from the growth occurring outside of the core area.

In order to make downtown retail competitive with suburban centers, there must be state-of-the-art retail space suitable for a wide range of tenants. Retailers attracted to a new downtown location are not necessarily the retailers currently located downtown. These retailers include new retailers who have to be sold on the idea that downtown is the place to be. And they must be convinced that there are niches in the regional markets for unmet demands not currently served by the suburban malls and shopping centers.

Downtown retail must create a special environment that is different from the suburban retail setting: one that encourages the downtown workforce to stay in town for eating, entertainment and shopping, that is attractive enough to draw regional traffic after work and on weekends, and that forges effective links to other downtown activities and entertainment uses.

Promote Mixed-Use Development:

Mixed-use developments have quietly reshaped much of American city life over the last fifteen years. The essence of this form and source of its popular appeal is an intricate and compact orchestration of mixed land uses: shopping, office, food, lodging and entertainment. They provide a rich mixture of mutually supporting uses, enhance people's range of experience, and create easy access to a wide variety of activities. The mixture of public and private uses and activities in a mixed-use development should reinforce the cultural, commercial and public character already established in the downtown area.

Mixed-use developments are one of a very limited number of project types that have had any success at achieving the objective of keeping downtowns alive, and their antecedents go back many centuries. Such a project could enhance downtown in a variety of ways by:

- Providing a focal point of larger regional significance;
- Introducing lodging, residential and/or recreational activities to areas inactive during non-working hours;
- Having a far greater catalytic effect on community development than single-purpose projects; and
- Providing a means for organizing growth where fragmented, single-purpose developments are not feasible.

Create a "User Friendly" Public Environment Downtown:

The city street, unlike a road, is not only a way to get from here to there, but is also a place to be. The city street is experienced and used by people more than any other form of public open space. It is a public space that can be creatively used and developed. But in order to promote increased pedestrian use and enjoyment, improvements to the streetscape or street environment are essential — even at the expense of improved vehicular traffic in some cases.

To energize the street, expanded pedestrian areas such as sidewalks, plazas and arcades would encourage a variety of pedestrian-related activities, open-air restaurants, sidewalk sales and street vendors. Design details, such as paving materials, planting, lighting, benches and street furniture, should be coordinated when feasible. These details should ideally be selected from a family of compatible forms and materials that are employed by both the public and private sectors. The number and types of these amenities should vary with the intensity of use and activity in a given area, but a degree of continuity should exist for the entire system.

More "softscape" in the downtown should be provided, such as trees, flowers, parks, and moving water -- even places to sit, meet, talk, watch, play and read. Opportunities for biking as well as walking should be provided.

The existing city street pattern should be preserved and reinforced in downtown by recognizing the historical basis and hierarchy of the city's districts, major streets and building forms. The clarity of the downtown grid form can then be expressed by distinctive street landscaping, district light fixtures, and by special streetscape and pedestrian amenities. Gateways into the core area should be reinforced with special signage, graphics, lighting and landscaping, to send a clear signal to both motorist and pedestrian that they are entering a district where the character of activity is significantly different. A comprehensive directional sign program should be provided for major public and private parking facilities, to aid motorists in locating and traveling to these facilities. "Trail Blazer" signs should be located at all of the major entry points into downtown and along the major streets leading to these facilities.

Appreciate the Needs of Private Sector Development:

The plan must recognize the importance of private investment and the needs of the development industry. A flexible system of downtown development controls sensitive to environmental as well as economic concerns must be developed. This system must incorporate incentives that encourage adaptive reuse of buildings that are well located and structurally sound, but that lack a strong market for their original use.

The Arkansas River Corridor:

The river is a unique regional resource. A coordinated program of public and private actions and investments must visually and functionally reunite the river corridor with downtown, by creating new riverside development opportunities. Other major facilities that attract large groups of people should be located along the riverfront to help create a corridor of activity extending from downtown to Old Cowntown and Sim Park. The river itself also provides the potential for water-oriented recreational activities, including boating, water-skiing, a floating barge used as a dinner theater or restaurant, and water taxis.

Cluster Community Facilities, Theaters, and Museums Downtown:

Although this study does not include a detailed analysis of space needs, previous reports and discussions with responsible individuals led to a number of suggestions for aggregating these facilities downtown. Such facilities are a key to an active downtown and thriving cultural activities. Museum facilities and the arts and sciences they display should not be located in some remote park-land setting, but should have a more direct relationship to the urbanized context and the culture, society and history that produced them. Each of these community facilities should ideally be located in the downtown core, where other uses are clustered and where there is maximum access for people using all modes of transportation.

Relocate Incompatible Uses:

Some uses which were originally located downtown because of rail access or tradition are no longer compatible with the area. They create congestion, truck traffic and environmental or safety problems. They use space that could be converted to shops or housing and could be better located elsewhere. Relocate auto-related facilities (used car lots, auto dealers and repair shops) to specially designated districts near downtown, away from the major gateway streets. Re-evaluate, control and enforce land-use and zoning decisions that could prevent strip-commercial or business services from continuing along the Kellogg frontage roads. The city should encourage nonconforming businesses and industries to relocate to areas designated for this purpose.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The overall revitalization strategy for Downtown Wichita has evolved in response to the existing problems and opportunities, planning goals and objectives and market projections of future space needs. The basic strategy is as follows:

Create and Reinforce a Strategic Development Framework:

The development framework is made up of fixed elements, such as major streets and highways, and parks and open space systems that do not change much over time. It provides the armature for new development opportunities and should be supplemented with the following systems:

- Trolley links to activity centers.
- User-friendly downtown public parking systems.
- Pedestrian/Open Space system linking centers of activity.
- Links to the Arkansas River corridor.

Articulate Four Distinct Downtown Districts:

Future development decisions regarding downtown land use, pedestrians and vehicular traffic should recognize that four distinct and functionally different districts within downtown have different land uses, regional markets, identities and physical form. They are:

- The downtown core.
- The Old Town district.
- The government center area.
- The Arkansas River corridor.

Improve and Maintain Regional Traffic Access:

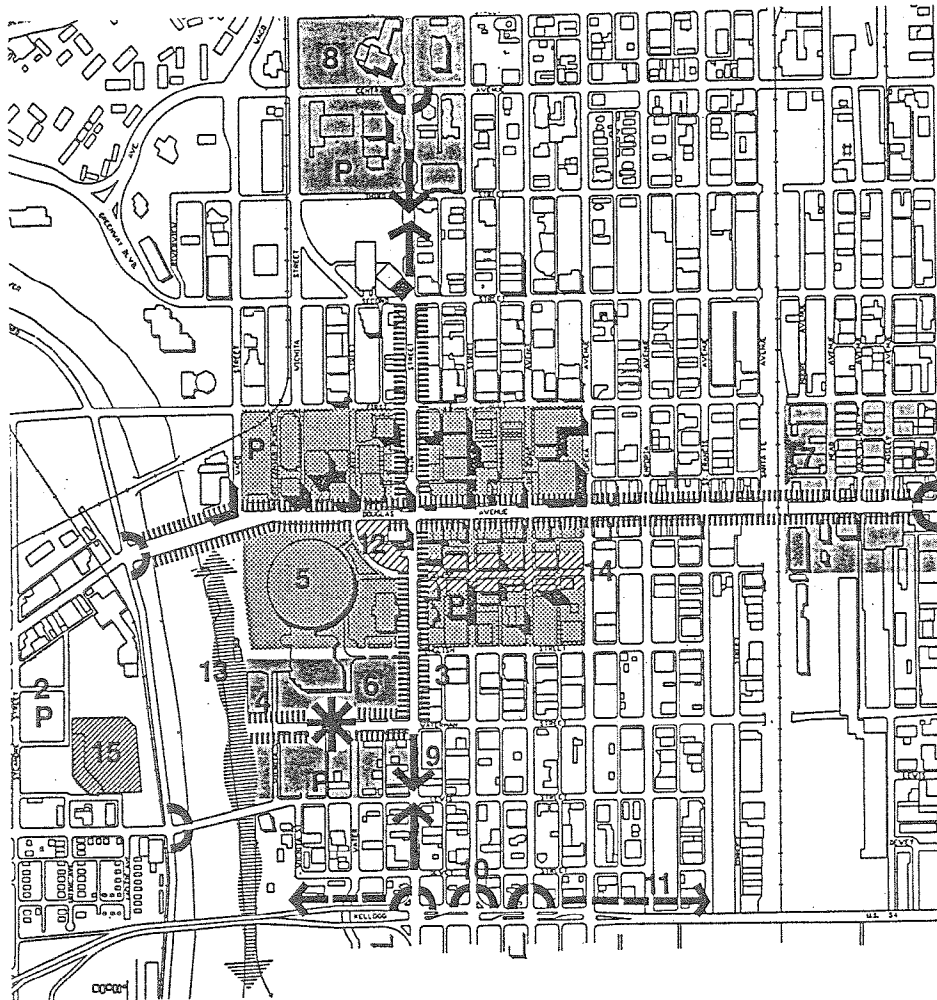
Traffic is the lifeblood of commercial development. Therefore, downtown must be accessible to the regional population for the sake of its future economic well-being. The following items are the key for providing this:

- Implementation of the two-way Main Street program.
- Installation of downtown identification signage along the Kellogg freeway and other gateway streets.
- Extension of Kellogg freeway frontage roads to St. Francis Avenues and Wichita Street.
- Establishment of a downtown transit center.
- Implementation of a parking management program.

Focus on Key Development Opportunities:

To restore a sense of investor confidence and civic pride in downtown, it is essential to focus early attention on these key projects, whose impact and image-upgrading qualities will have maximum effect:

- The downtown streetscape enhancement programs.
- The East Bank mixed-use development.
- The "Water Walk" along the Arkansas River.
- William Street retail center.
- Lawrence-Dumont Stadium renovation and expansion.
- Downtown transit center.



- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Trolley Systems | 6. East Bank District & Mixed Use Development | 12. Transit Center |
| 2. Public Parking Systems & Management Program | 7. Old Town District | 13. Water Walk |
| 3. Pedestrian Improvements on Streets | 8. Government Center | 14. William Street Retail |
| 4. Link to Arkansas River | 9. Two Way Main Street | 15. Stadium Renovation |
| 5. Downtown Core Area & Enhancement Programs | 10. Downtown Entry Signage & Portals | |
| | 11. Extend Frontage Roads | |

Revitalization Strategies

Focus on Key Development Opportunities:

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- The "Water Walk" along the Arkansas River.
- William Street retail center.
- Lawrence-Dumont Stadium renovation and expansion.
- Downtown transit center.

THE LAND USE PLAN

The goal of this plan is to promote the development of a compact, pedestrian-oriented downtown core with a strong regional identity. This core area sits within a transportation framework that is designed to strengthen the links to the other major centers of activity framing it (Government Center and Old Town and the Arkansas River corridor), combining the following mixture of compatible land uses:

Office Uses:

Potential sites for new office development include the downtown core area, Main Street north or south of the core, and the Old Town district (for potential development of Class B renovated space). High-density office uses would be concentrated along Douglas Avenue between the river and Topeka Avenue, and along Main Street from the government center area at Central to Kellogg. Any expansion of local, state, and federal government offices is encouraged south of City Hall along the Main Street corridor, so that this important employment base is brought closer to the downtown core at Douglas Avenue.

Retail Uses:

New downtown retail opportunities basically fall into three categories:

- ° Support retail serving the downtown businesses and workforce, which can be accommodated in new core-area infill mixed-use developments.
- ° Specialty retail districts catering to both the downtown workforce and a wider regional and metropolitan market. Such districts require sites with good regional access and a distinctive atmosphere (such as Old Town and William Street).
- ° Combinations of support and specialty retail as components of new large-scale mixed-use complexes catering to a regional clientele. Ideally this could include supporting retail shops, theaters, restaurants, and possibly some public community space. Mixed-use retail can trigger the revitalization of the East Bank site, and can act as the catalyst for new development along the southern leg of Main Street between English Street and the Kellogg freeway. New development here will reinforce the downtown core, the river corridor and the convention center.

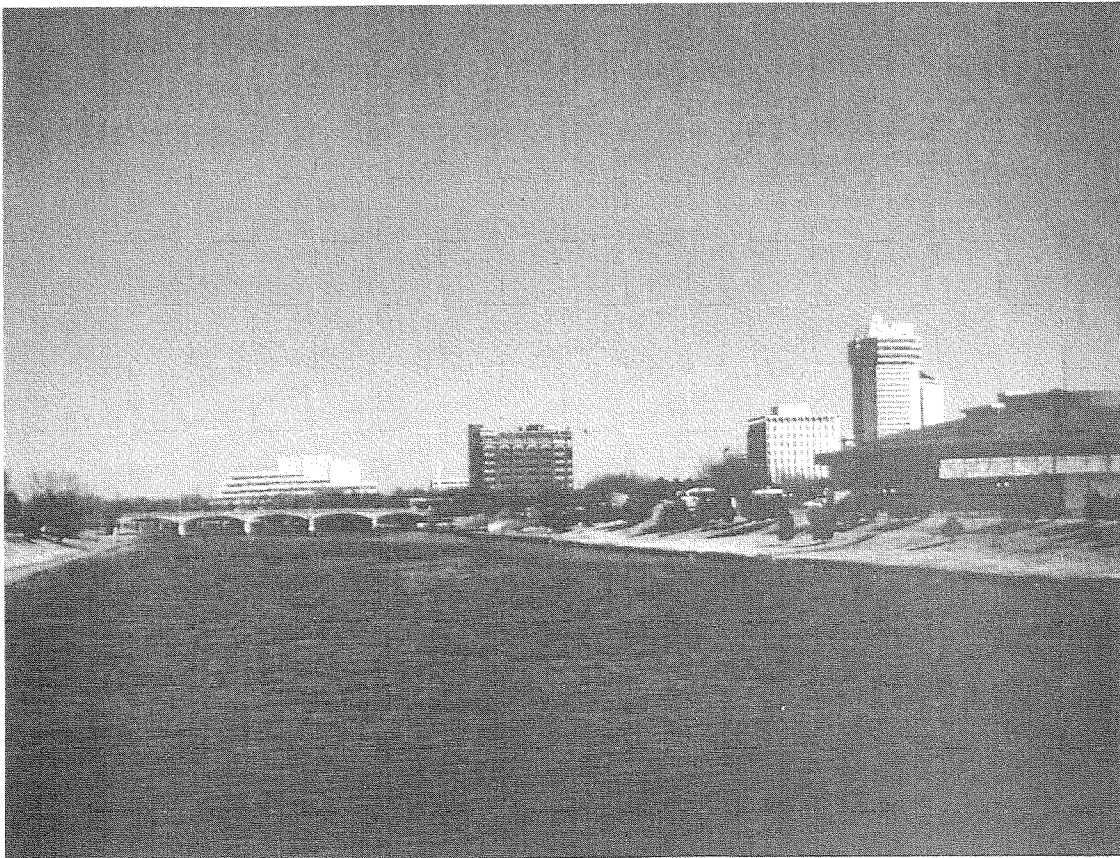
Residential Uses:

The Plan envisions several major new downtown housing developments to provide a larger 24-hour-a-day resident population, and logical extensions of existing neighborhoods. They include:

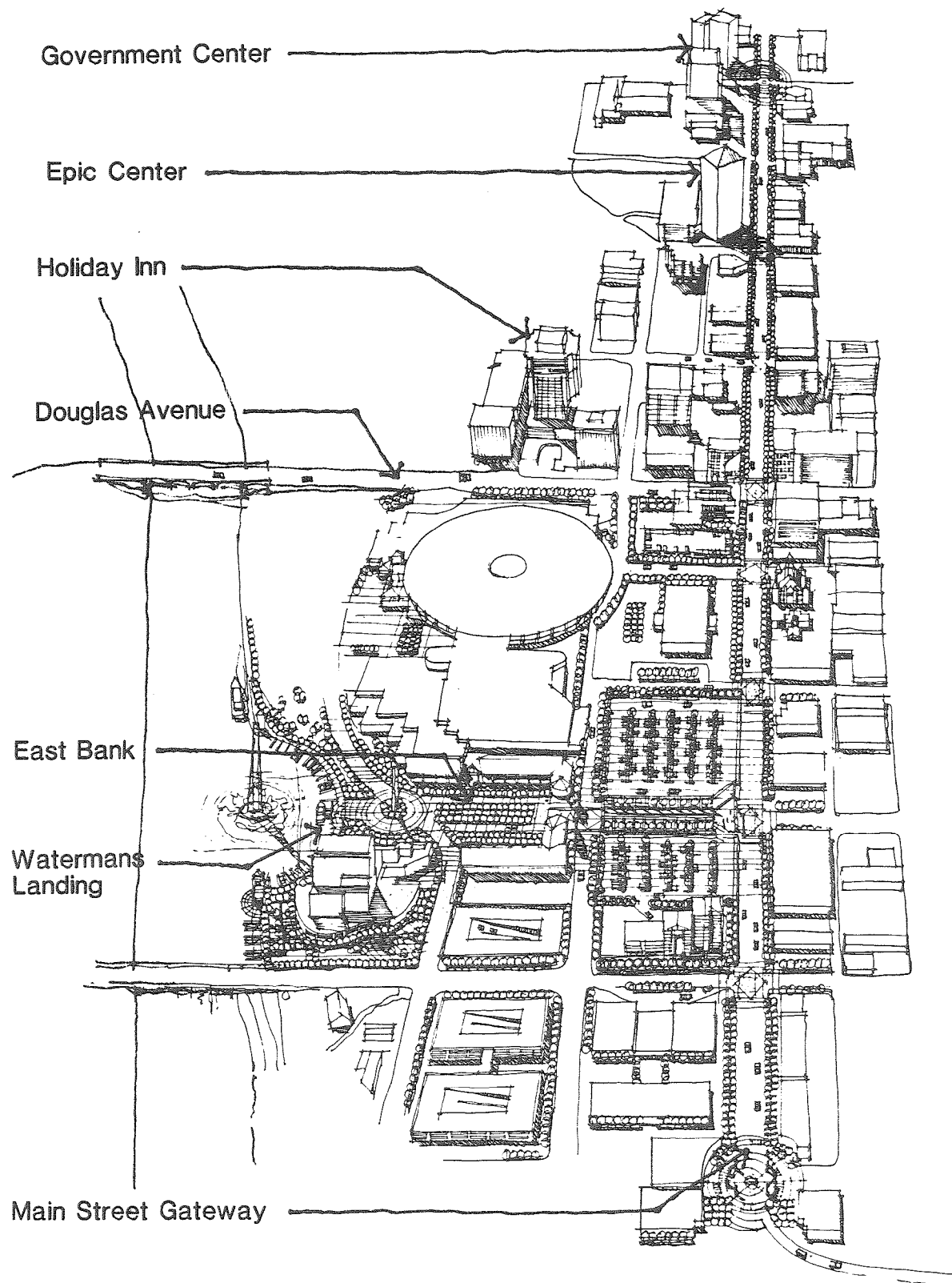
- ° Housing developed in Old Town will probably take the form of rehabilitated loft space conversions, or as new infill apartments and townhouses -- different from most types of housing so far developed in the entire MSA. This will produce a more urban lifestyle than has currently been available.
- ° A West Bank urban neighborhood on the land assembled by the city will provide support not only for Downtown Wichita, but also for the West Douglas neighborhood. Development will take place for market-rate housing with a combination of rental- and owner-occupied unit types. Densities should be allowed up to as much as 40 to 60 units per acre to encourage as many market-rate housing types as possible, including mid-rise apartment blocks.
- ° There are several areas framing the core area that are declining in commercial appeal. It may be possible to introduce higher-density urban housing as alternative development types in the future. Sites behind the blocks fronting onto Douglas Avenue mid-way between Topeka Avenue and St. Francis may have this potential.
- ° Riverfront housing as a component of the East Bank development should also be encouraged.



Old Town



Arkansas River Corridor



Aerial view of Main Street looking north

THE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The close relationship between land-use decisions and transportation should be carefully considered for each individual development proposal. The main objective is to provide a safe and efficient system of pedestrian and vehicular circulation in Downtown Wichita. The system must be planned to serve future traffic needs as well as existing demands, and to provide access to and through the downtown area to adjacent sectors of the community. The transportation plan proposed here recognizes the importance of Douglas Avenue and Main Street as the main business corridors for Downtown Wichita. Many of the proposals outlined here must be planned in conjunction with the Kellogg freeway reconstruction program.

Street System:

The individual recommendations are as follows:

- A. Two-Way Main Street: Main Street is emphasized in the plan as a major gateway street into downtown. Making Main Street a two-way street with improved freeway access at Kellogg creates a single linear business corridor linking several subdistricts and activity centers: the government center, Epic Center, the downtown core, the convention center, William Street retail center and the East Bank development. Significant historic buildings, new office buildings, public buildings, and underutilized land front onto this street. The plan, in effect, makes Main Street the new "main street" for future growth and a business address that is equal to Douglas Avenue.
- B. Wichita/Waco Connection: The Wichita/Waco connection is a new riverside street linking Wichita Street to Waco Street along the east bank of the Arkansas river between Douglas Avenue and Lewis Street. As part of the Water Walk proposal, this new street serves several purposes: it links the proposed East Bank mixed-use center to Douglas Avenue, it provides new access to the river corridor, and it creates an additional street address for components of the East Bank development that cannot be served by Main Street.
- C. Lengthen Kellogg Frontage Roads: At some time in the future the freeway frontage roads should be extended east to St. Francis Avenue and west to Wichita Street. The extension to St. Francis Avenue will serve the St. Francis Regional Medical Center, one of the strongest activity centers located in the area framing downtown. With a growing employment base, it contains uses that have local and regional significance, and its link to the regional highway system should be strengthened.

D. Water Street: The extension of Water Street south of William Street provides another means of linking the East Bank Development back to Douglas Avenue. It can also serve as part of a proposed Main Street trolley loop acting as an alternative route for the northbound leg along Main Street.



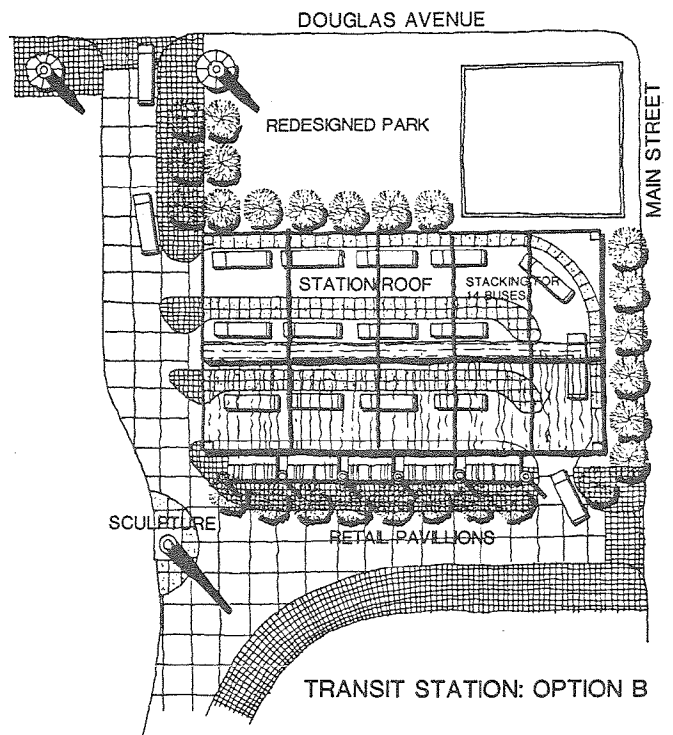
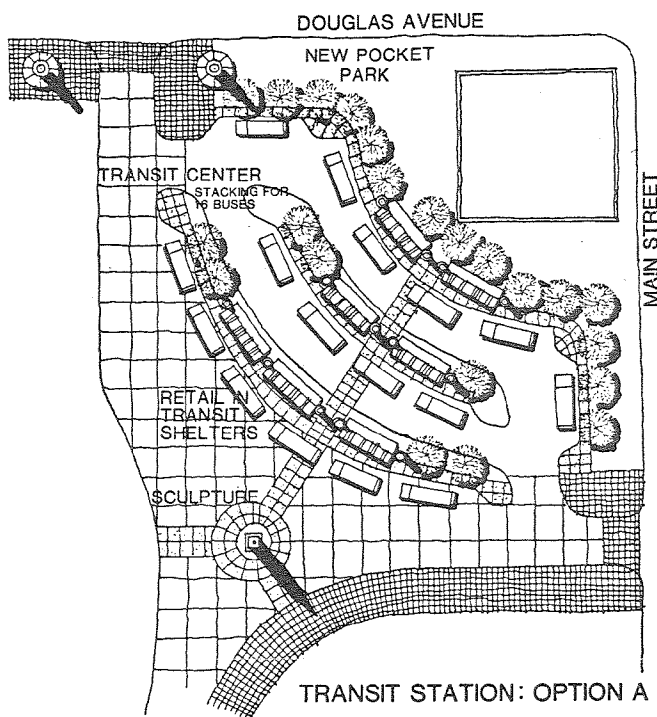
- E. English Street: English Street west of Main Street should be abandoned to create a new development site next to the library that links the East Bank development more directly to the downtown core and William Street.
- F. McLean Boulevard Access: Improving and emphasizing McLean Boulevard as a major gateway into downtown brings the river corridor into the forefront. It links the Douglas Avenue bridge and Kellogg and provides a comprehensive view of the downtown skyline. This proposal also envisions upgrading McLean Boulevard to a true boulevard standard and providing safer bridge intersections.
- G. William Street Retail: Widening the sidewalks and implementing streetscape improvements along a three-block length of William Street between Main Street and Topeka Avenue will create a pedestrian-friendly environment for shoppers and visitors. Future mixed-use developments along Douglas Avenue or William Street must be encouraged to provide interior pedestrian linkages between both streets.

The Transit Center:

The potential traffic/transit conflicts arising from the redesign of Main Street, coupled with a need to find expandable bus layover space, point to the need to completely redesign the downtown transit operations to coincide with the proposed changes to Main Street. A new transit center with its own identity will also demonstrate Wichita's commitment to quality public transportation, and will serve as a catalyst to preserve — if not expand — ridership.

The Plan recommends a site occupying the Century Plaza block at the intersection of Main and William streets. This site is close to the center of downtown employment and would cause the least amount of bus-route relocation and disruption to passenger routines. It should be designed to accommodate the existing eighteen layover spaces, plus one additional space for the proposed trolley links and room for future expansion.

The cost of constructing this transit center could be substantially financed (up to 80 percent) with federal Urban Mass Transportation (UMTA) funds. The small amount of parking that would be displaced could easily be absorbed in the Century II and East Bank development parking areas.

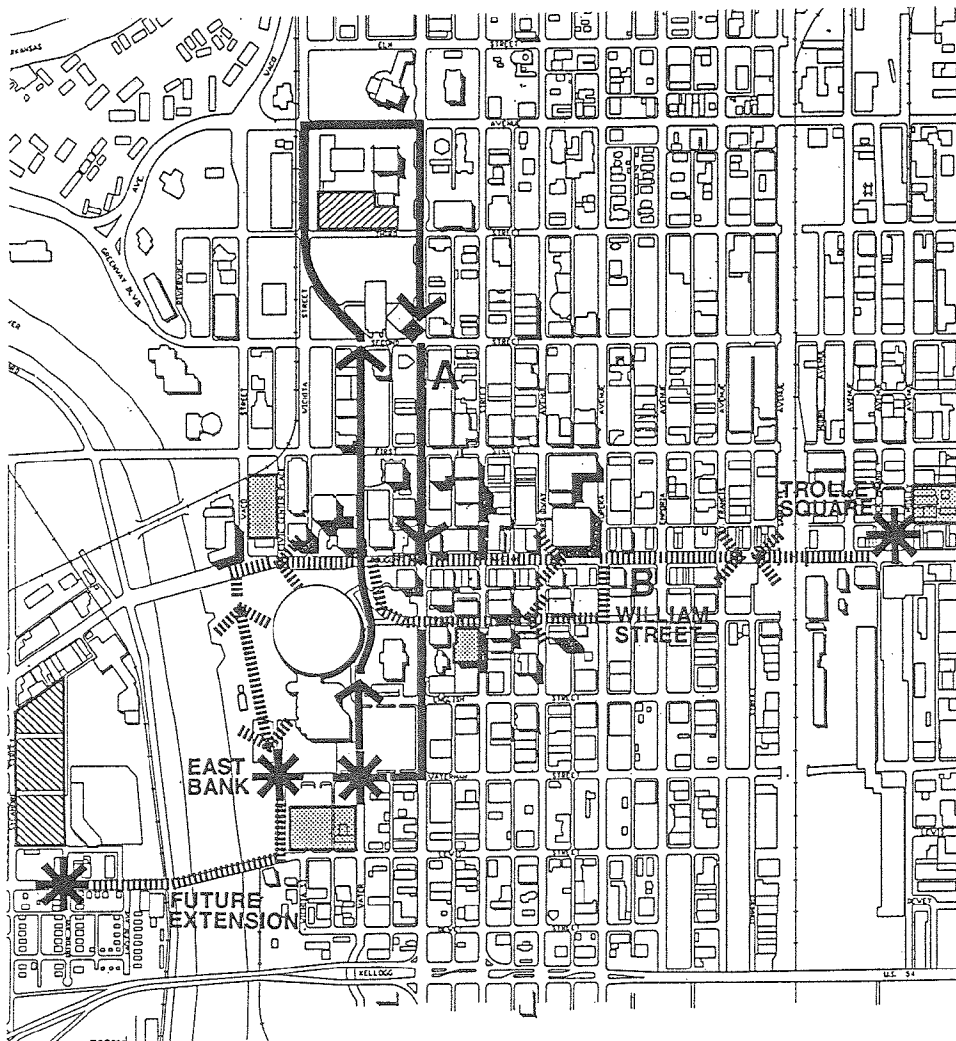


Transit Center Options

Trolley Shuttle:

Trolley shuttle service offers an alternative to inefficient use of cars for short trips. An assessment of potential ridership based on the distribution of downtown employment indicates that a north/south route (A) along the Main Street would serve a significant number of riders. The route could potentially link the government center subdistrict at Central Avenue, Epic Center, the downtown core, Century II, and the proposed East Bank development. It must also link the major public parking facilities located within this corridor.

A second route (B) should be implemented only after increased development activity in Old Town justifies the establishment of service linking this district to the downtown core along Douglas Avenue. This route should terminate in the proposed East Bank development, with a possible future extension across the river to the commuter surface parking lot near Lawrence-Dumont Stadium. It should also operate along William Street.



Proposed Trolley Routes

Suggested operating hours are presented below:

<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Trip Time</u>	<u>No. of Round Trips</u>
7 - 9 a.m.(a.m. peak)	10 minutes	12
9 - 11:30 a.m.	30 minutes	5
11:30 - 1:30 p.m.	10 minutes	12
1:30 - 4 p.m.	30 minutes	5
4 - 6 p.m.	10 minutes	12

Route (A) would incorporate two buses (one bus off-peak) and a round-trip length of 1.4 miles, with a round-trip travel time of 11 minutes (including a layover and an average speed of 8 miles per hour). Daily miles equal 64 revenue miles, plus 15 percent deadhead miles, which equals 74 miles total.

Route (B)) would incorporate one bus and a round-trip length of 0.9 miles, with a round-trip travel time of seven minutes (including a layover and an average speed of 8 miles per hour. Daily miles equal 41 revenue miles, plus 15 percent deadhead miles, which equals 48 miles total.

THE PARKING PLAN

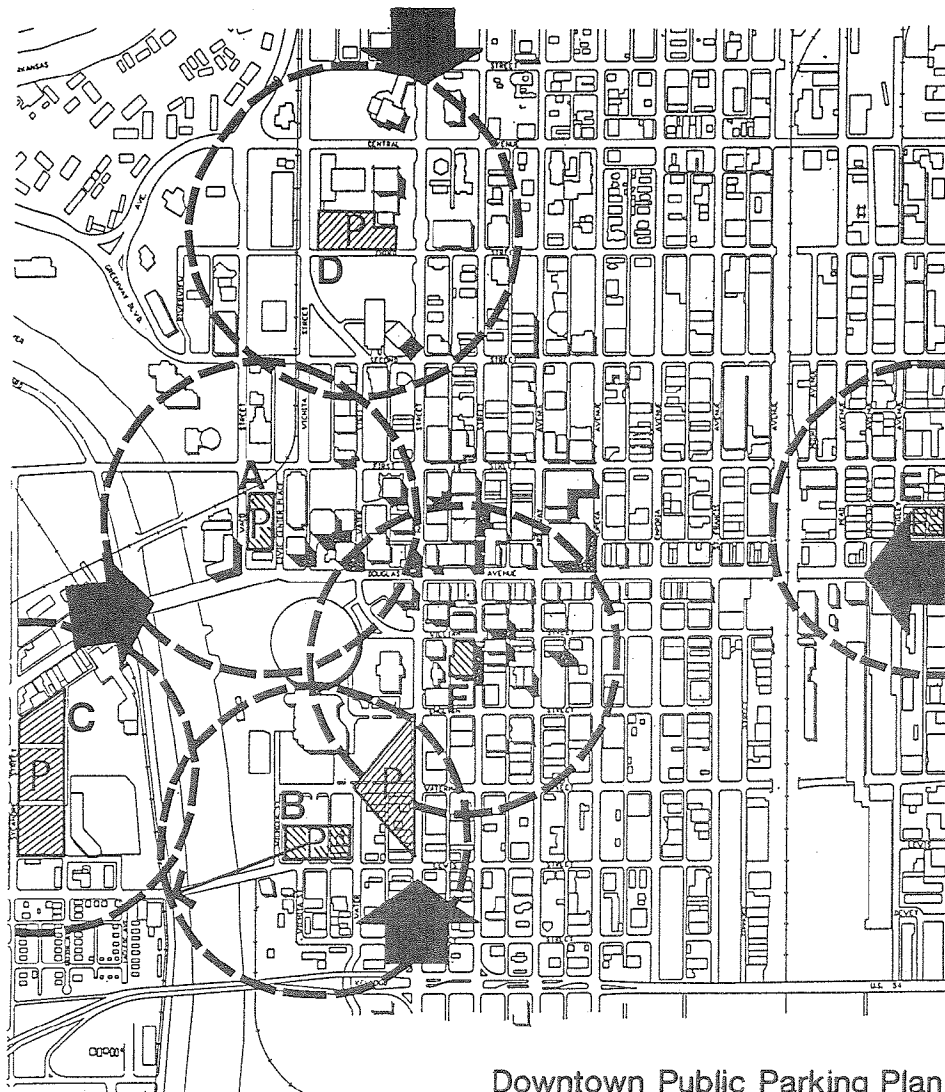
Parking is a major land use downtown, requiring careful design treatment to minimize its adverse impacts on the visual quality and character of the downtown streetspace. Currently most of the parking facilities within downtown are single-purpose, private facilities. Opportunities to enhance existing parking include these actions:

- ° Establish a parking operations group to coordinate the activities of both private and public operators and to assume responsibility for parking violations enforcement.
- ° Reorganize parking into a coherent system and create an informational sign program to direct visitors and shoppers to downtown parking facilities.
- ° Establish at least one major public parking facility in close proximity to the major downtown retail centers, primarily for short-term shopper use.
- ° Locate parking facilities on the periphery of the downtown area to intercept commuters and to reduce vehicular traffic congestion in the downtown core. This peripheral parking can be linked with the various downtown subdistricts by providing the previously described trolley shuttle service.

The Plan also recommends the following additional parking garages and lots in locations where they will supplement and complement existing parking:

- A. Ramada-Broadview Hotel Garage: This facility is currently under construction and will be the hub of the parking system. It will serve existing development in the area including Century II, Ramada-Broadview Hotel, The Garvey Center, The Chamber and WI/SE Partnership.
- B. East Bank: This garage would provide initial capacity for the proposed East Bank development, including a hotel, retail, office, and mixed-use development. It would also provide additional parking for Century II.
- C. West Bank (South): The Lawrence-Dumont Stadium parking lots would principally serve commuters with free or low-cost remote parking and connecting bus shuttle service to downtown.
- D. City Hall: Structured parking could be provided on city-owned land to serve commuters going to the north side of the core area.

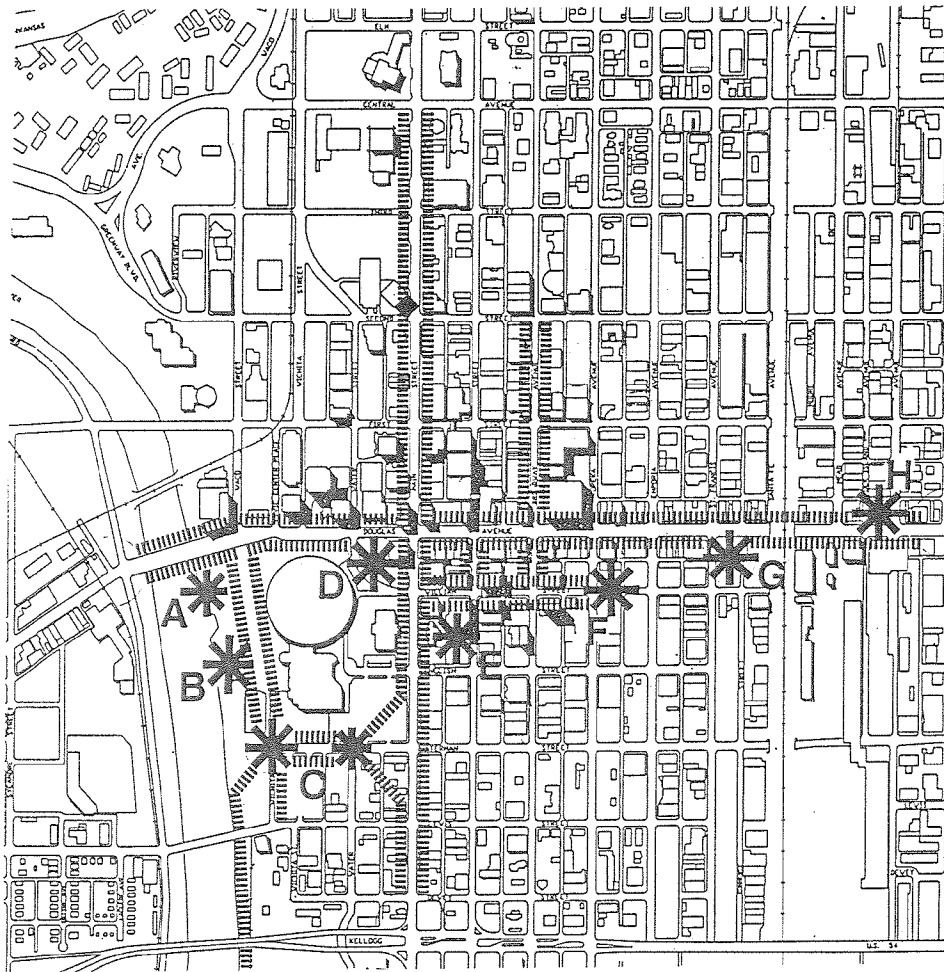
- E. Old Town: This facility will be crucial to the success of the Old Town district redevelopment. Currently only limited on- or off-street parking is available, and adequate parking is essential to attract visitors, shoppers and patrons to the district. A single, centrally located parking supply must be implemented early in the rehabilitation of this district, to avoid destroying the character of the district through indiscriminate building demolition for surface parking lots.
- F. Dillard's: This existing garage is strategically located in the heart of a potentially revitalized retail center along William Street. The garage should be rehabilitated to improve ease of access and to provide short-term parking for shoppers at little or no charge. Operating costs would probably need to be subsidized by merchants (as in suburban centers), but is considered essential to the success of downtown retail.



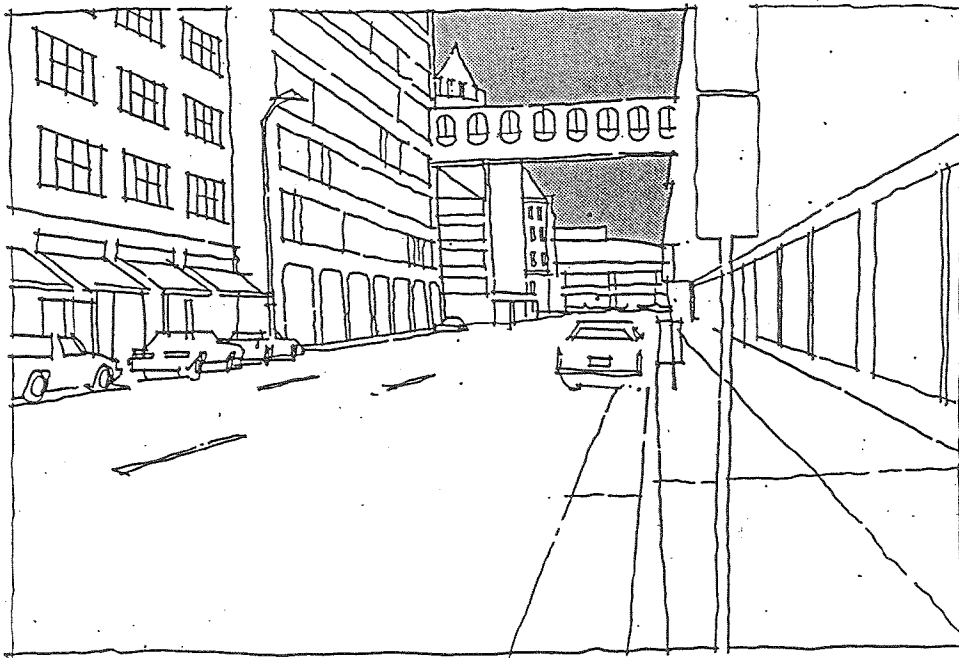
THE PEDESTRIAN/OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

The proposed open space network for Downtown Wichita includes man-made elements such as parks, plazas and streets, as well as the existing natural corridors such as the Arkansas River. The Arkansas river corridor, Main Street and Douglas Avenue provide the primary framework for the downtown open space system and should be treated as major unifying features, sharing common street planting, lighting and street furniture elements. This framework of open space can link the following public open spaces, as shown in the map below:

- A. A. Price Woodard Park.
- B. The riverfront Water Walk on the east bank of the river.
- C. Watermans Landing: a riverside public events space in the East Bank development.
- D. Finlay Ross Park/Transit Center.
- E. Heritage Square Park.
- F. The William Street Retail Center.
- G. Naftgzer Park.
- H. Trolley square in Old Town.



Major Pedestrian Streets and Urban Spaces



Before view looking west along William Street

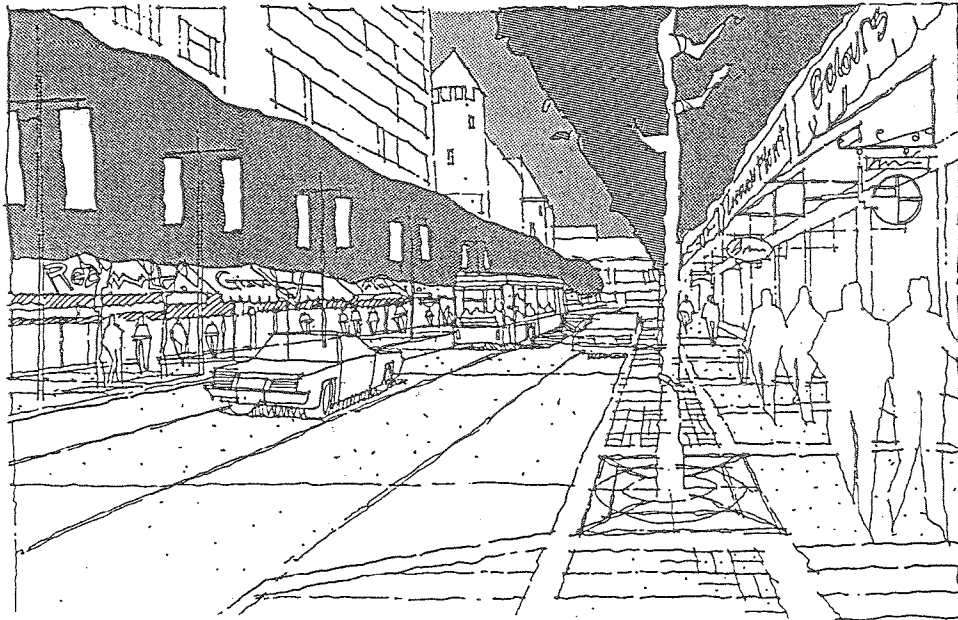
URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

The following three-dimensional environmental guidelines for the revitalization of downtown area focus on four distinct elements of the plan: the William Street retail center, the Water Walk, the East Bank development, and the Old Town special district.

William Street Retail Center:

The design concept proposes to create a pleasant open air pedestrian shopping environment while retaining one-way vehicular traffic within the entire three-block area. Vehicular traffic within the area would be limited to three lanes. Flanking these traffic lanes would be one row of parallel short-term parking/unloading areas. The existing sidewalks would be widened to 13 feet on both sides of the street and would "neck down" at each cross street intersection to provide additional areas for benches, kiosks and trolley shelters. Pedestrian crosswalks at each intersection and at mid block would be paved in contrasting materials (brick or granite paviors) to signal to motorists that they were entering a special pedestrian activity zone.

Trees will be planted along the street at 30-foot intervals within a 5-foot-wide planting zone next to the back of the curb on both sides of the street. Canopies, awnings and arcades should be encouraged along this three-block area to add interest and color and to provide more comfort for pedestrians.

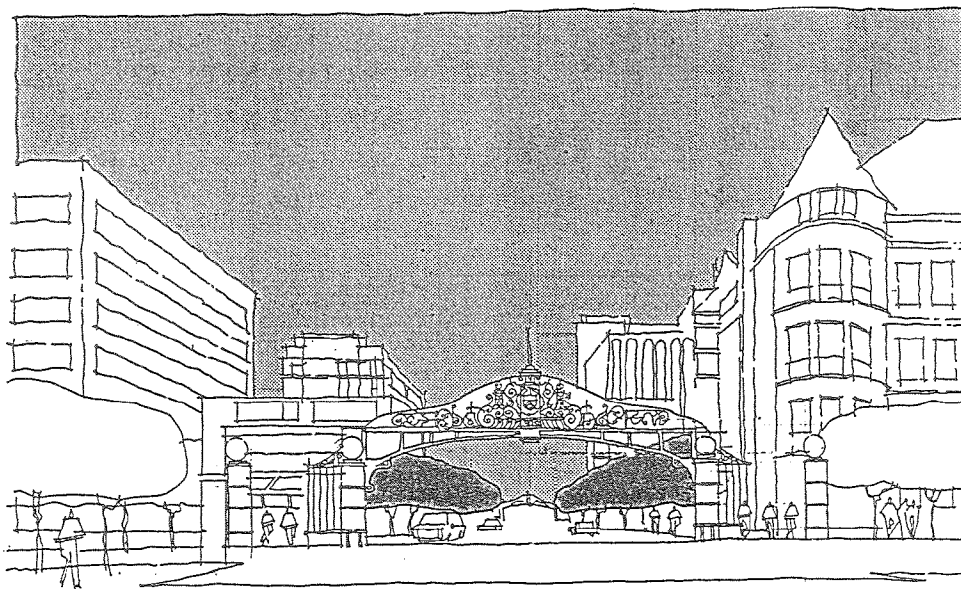


After view looking west along William Street

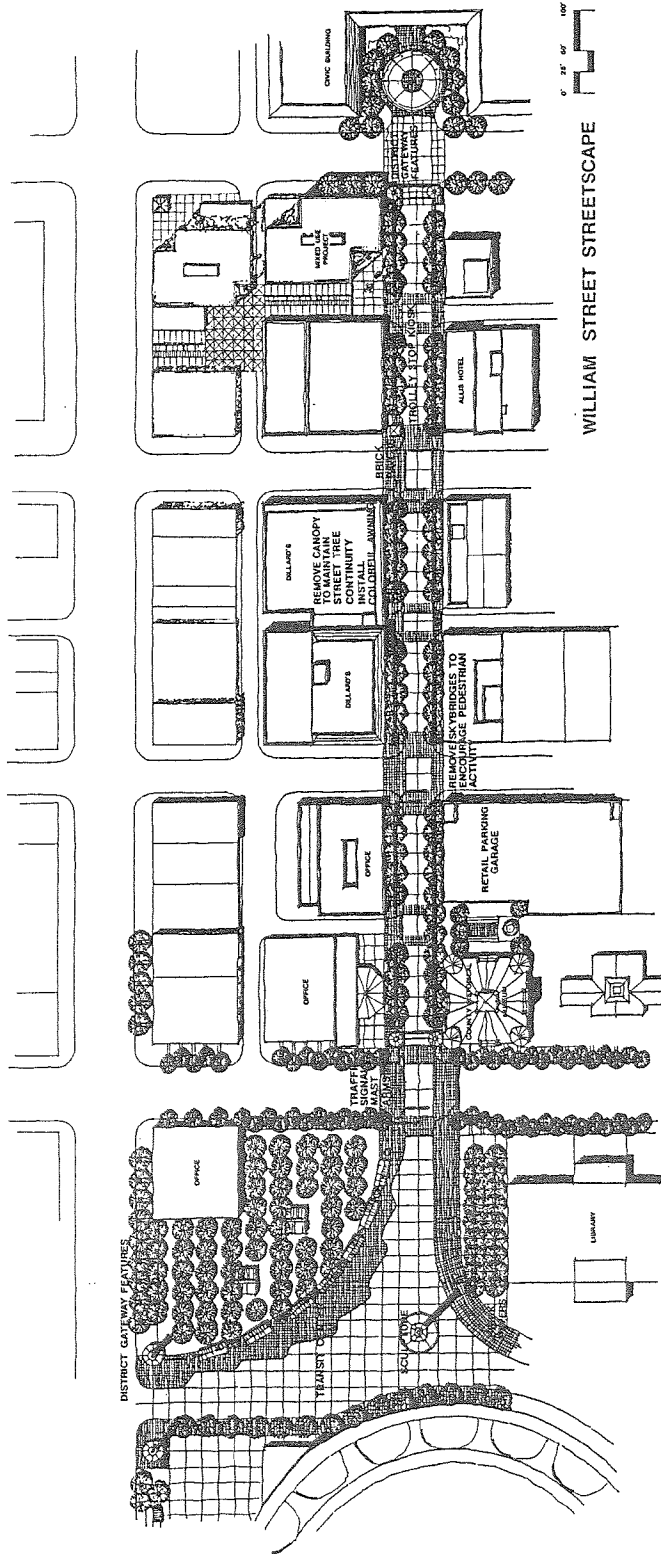
Continuous street-level activities should be encouraged, particularly those which are conducive to evening activity. Facades should be designed to provide variety, while maintaining horizontal continuity of the street level, all geared to the human scale. Locations for non-commercial regional-destination uses, such as the Children's Museum and science museum, are recommended along this avenue. It terminates at Topeka Avenue by a civic, cultural or educational building complex (art or performing arts center, recreational center, and an urban campus incorporating the magnet school and the community college), and at Water Street by the proposed transit center and Century II.

Reserved shoppers' parking will be accommodated in the existing Dillard's parking structure, and in improved surface parking lots behind the stores. Mid-block alleys should be converted to pedestrian walkways. The existing skybridge that connects the Dillard's parking garage to the former Dillard's store should be removed. This pedestrian linkage diverts pedestrian activity from the street level where it belongs.

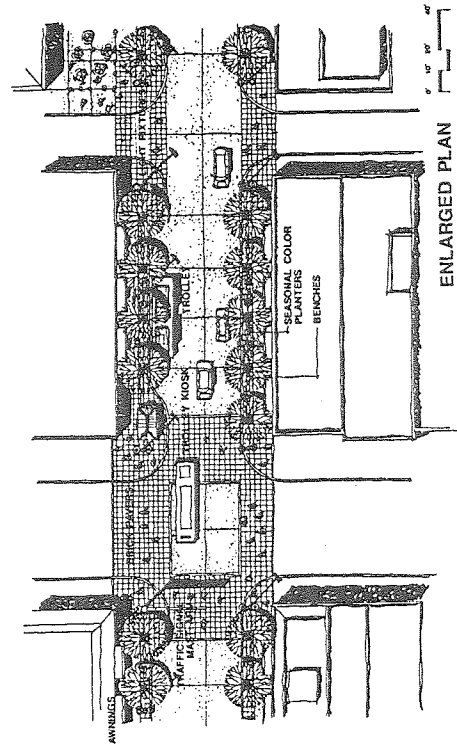
Special gateways at Main and at Topeka will alert motorists that they are entering a specialized area with more pedestrian traffic. The trolley between the East Bank and Old Town will be routed along William from Topeka to the transit center at Water Street.



Proposed William Street Retail Center Gateway

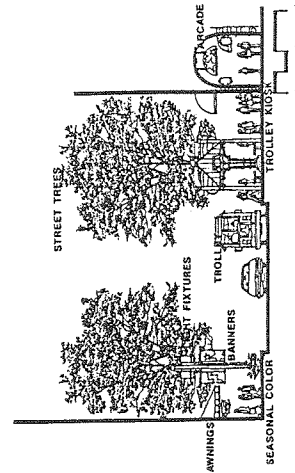


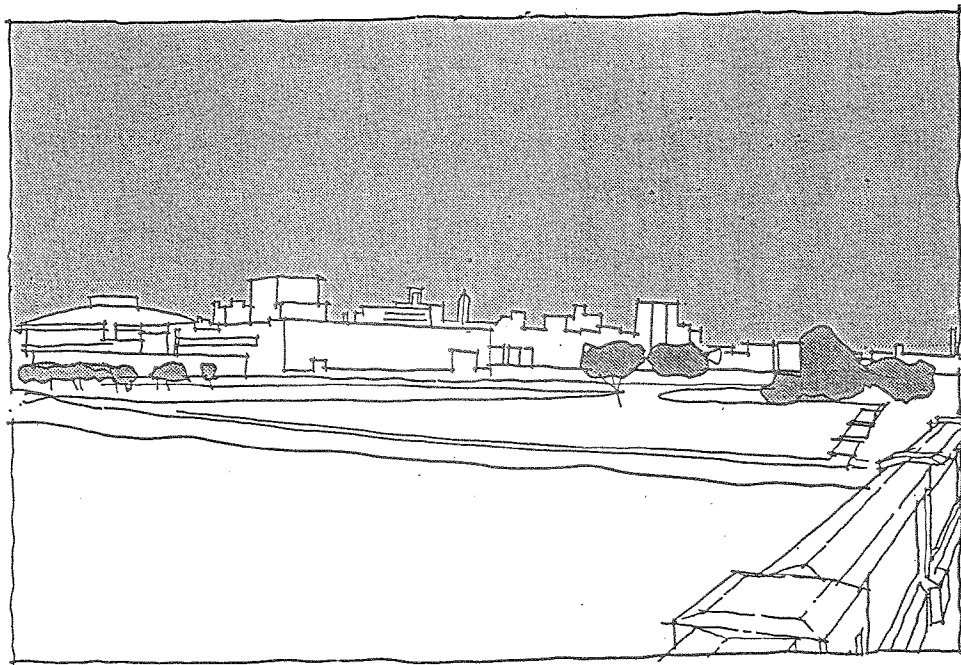
WILLIAM STREET STREETScape



ENLARGED PLAN

SECTION AT TROLLEY KIOSK



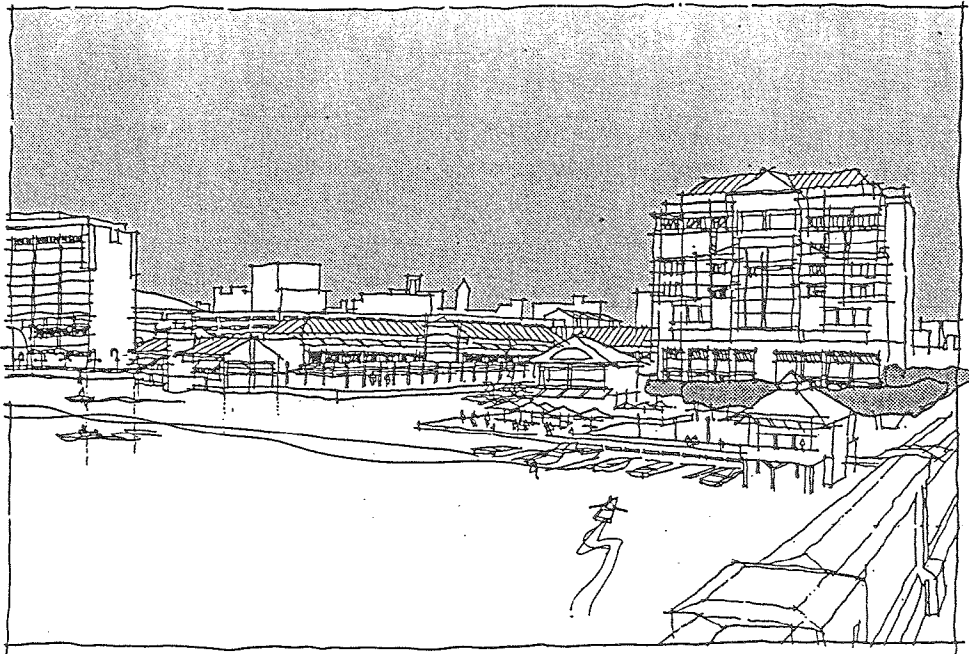


Before view of East Bank From Lewis Street Bridge

The Water Walk:

The Water Walk is a public-improvement project initiated by the city to encourage private-sector investment along the east bank of the Arkansas River between the First Street bridge and the Kellogg bridge.

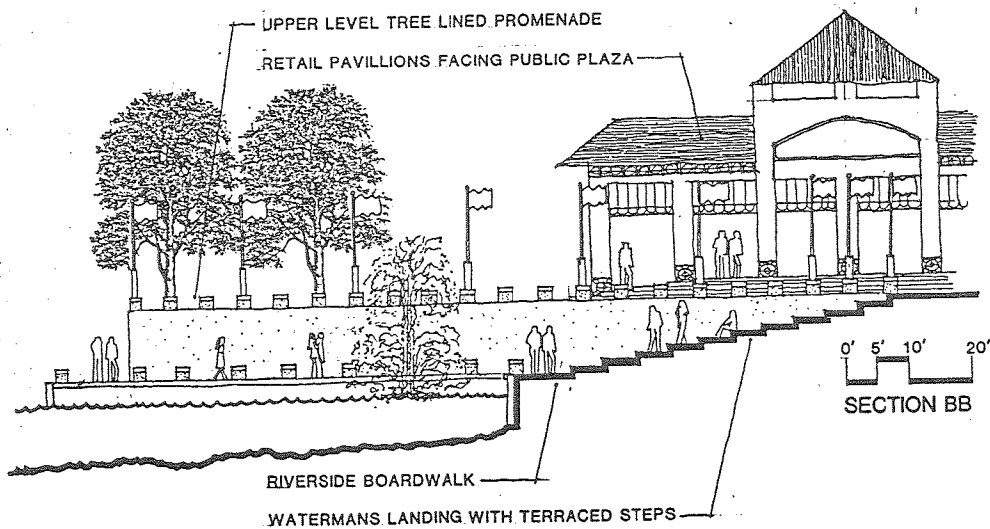
The design concept of the Water Walk will provide an urbanized edge to the river corridor between these bridges. It will create a wide, secure riverside promenade that allows public access along the river, continuing the links to the Sim Park area to the north and the residential districts to the south. It will also encourage a whole series of water-related activities including riverside cafes, boat clubs, marinas, water taxi docks and floating restaurants. The objective is to create so much pedestrian activity along this section of the river that it becomes not only an attractive amenity for the downtown workforce but also a regional attraction.



After view of East Bank from Lewis Street Bridge

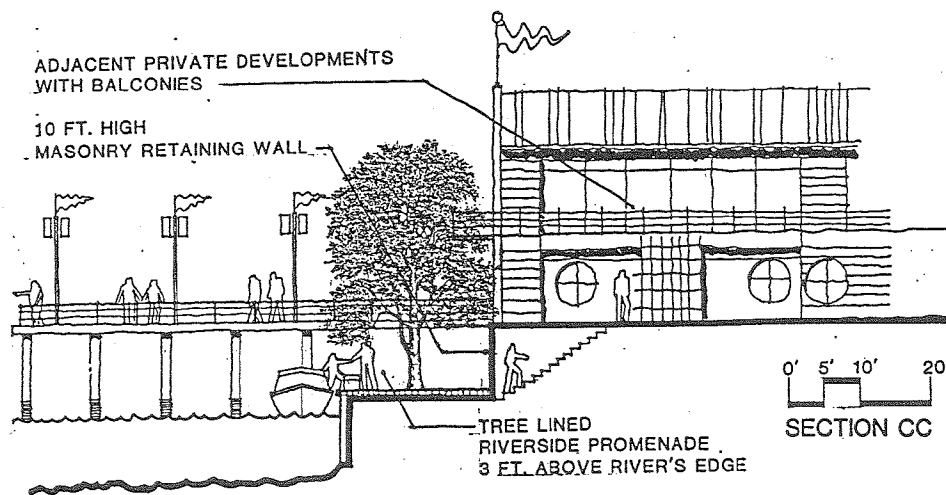
There are three distinct components to the Water Walk:

1. Watermans Landing: Conceived as a large public plaza located on the riverbank at the terminus of Waterman Street, Watermans Landing is designed to connect the upper levels of development with an active boardwalk located closer to the river surface. It should be designed as a "hardscaped" public-events space, with steps down to the river for water taxis and other boating activities. This space will figure prominently in future River Festivals. At other times of the year it will be the central pedestrian focus for the East Bank development, an area surrounded by shops, cafes, and entertainment activities, and the terminus for the trolley route from Old Town.



Section at Watermans Landing

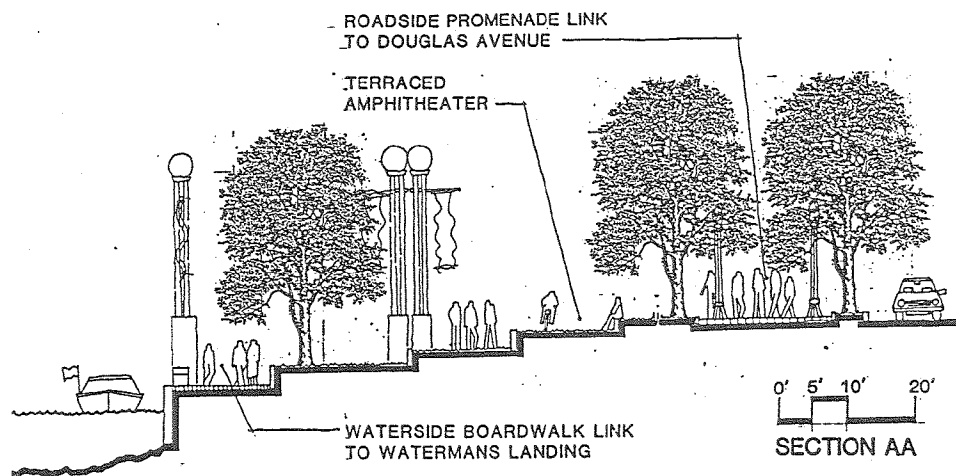
2. The segment between the Kellogg bridge and Waterman Street features a broad, tree-lined riverside promenade three feet above water level, bordered by a 10-foot high masonry retaining wall that acts as the flood control bulkhead for river-fronting properties. This feature provides a vertical separation between the public waterside and the private or semi-private riverfront terraces and balconies connected to restaurants, offices and housing.



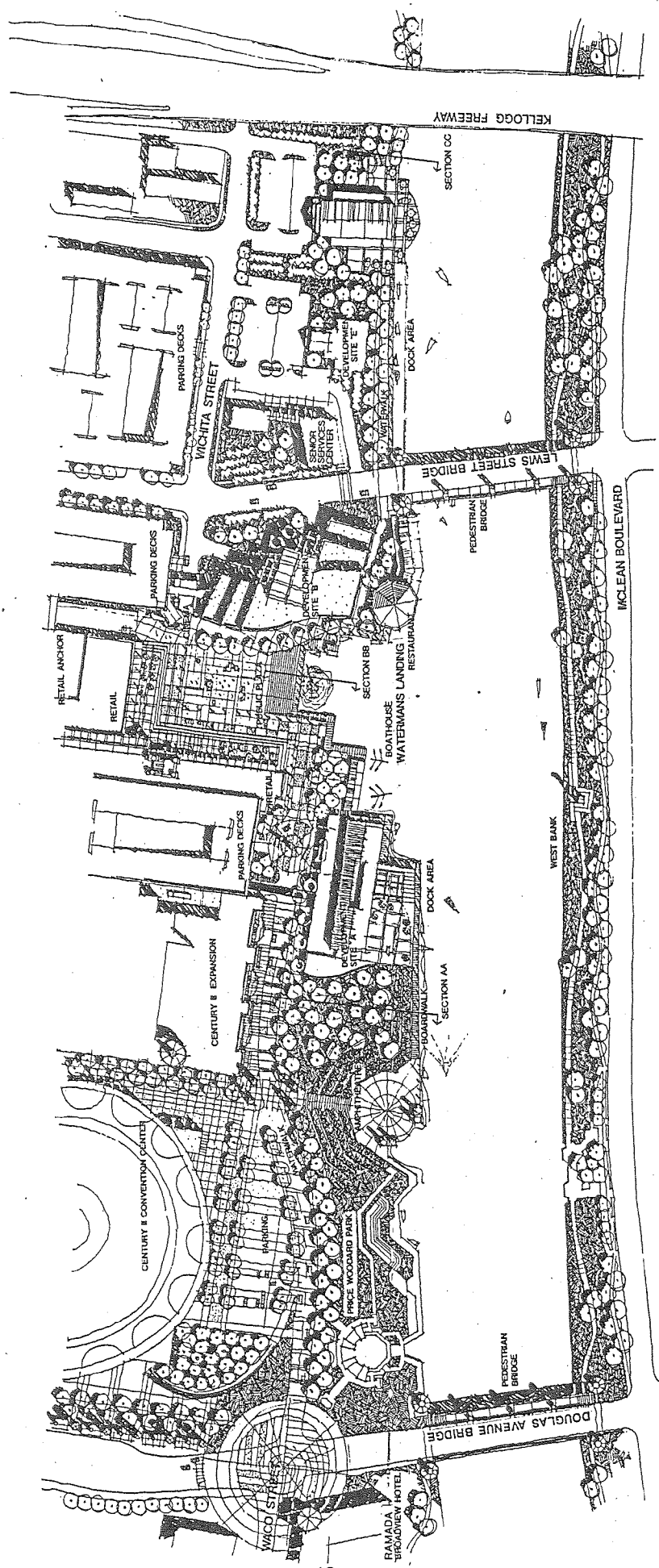
Section at Riverside Restaurant and Promenade

3. The sector running north from Watermans Landing to Douglas Avenue has two parts: an upper level roadside promenade that links the East Bank development back to Douglas Avenue at the Ramada-Broadview Hotel, and a lower waterside boardwalk that ties the Watermans Landing into A. Price Woodard Park, continuing the public riverside access system.

To minimize the barrier created by the massive bulk of the Century II complex, the Plan proposes a public-access easement through the lobby space that separates the convention facilities and the exhibition space. This new link between the office core of downtown and the proposed riverside amphitheater site directs activity to an area that is currently blocked from public exposure by Century II.



Section at Riverside Amphitheater

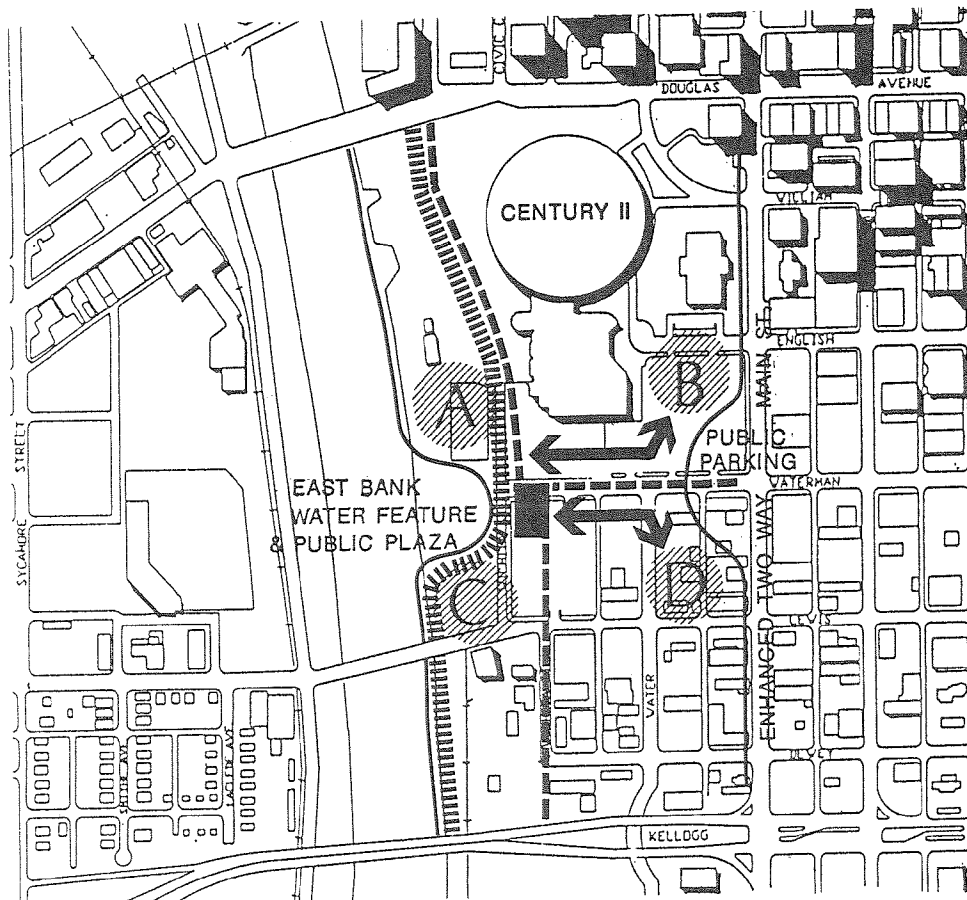


Water Walk Concept Plan

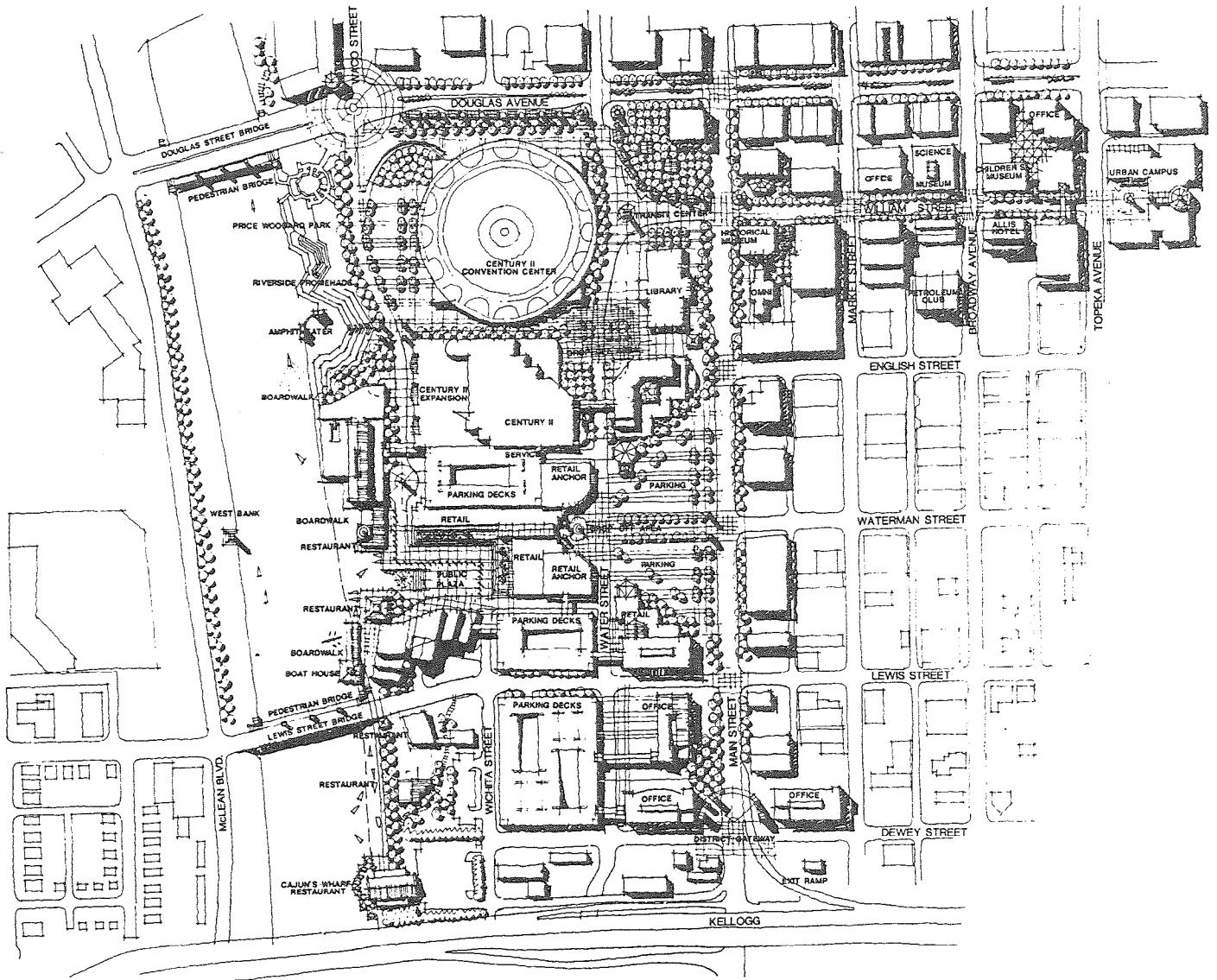
The East Bank Development:

The East Bank development occupies a 30-acre site bounded by Main Street on the east, Lewis Street on the south, the Arkansas River on the west, and Century II and English Street on the north. The city owns most of this property, excluding the existing apartment buildings on the southeast corner.

The design concept provides a development framework fronting onto Main Street and composed of a new riverside road (the Wichita/Waco connector), intersected by Waterman Street at Watermans Landing, and a redesigned Water Street link between Waterman Street and Douglas Avenue. Within this framework, there are four interchangeable development sites for office, hotel or apartment towers that are linked together by linear blocks of retail. A total development program of between 700,000 to one million square feet, including approximately 150,000 square feet of specialty retail/restaurant uses is possible. The parking requirement for this program is approximately 2,500 spaces. This can be located within two zones of structured parking (one serving as the public parking garage for Century II, the other for the private sector East Bank projects). An additional surface parking lot next to Main Street for short term visitors is also proposed. This is parking that can be utilized as a major public-events space on special occasions.



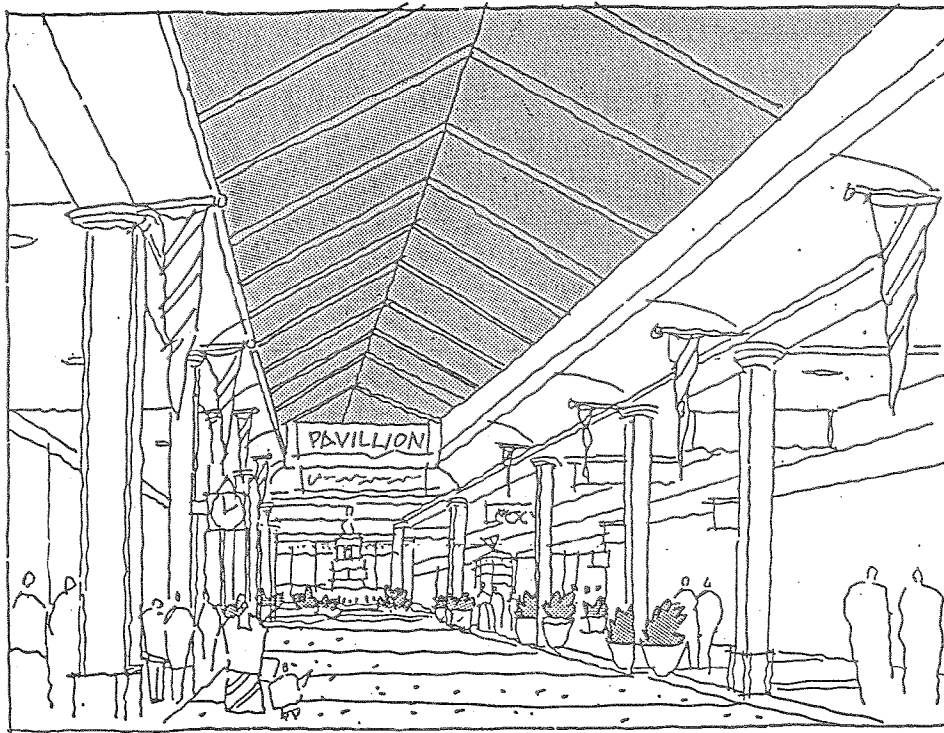
East Bank Development Framework Diagram



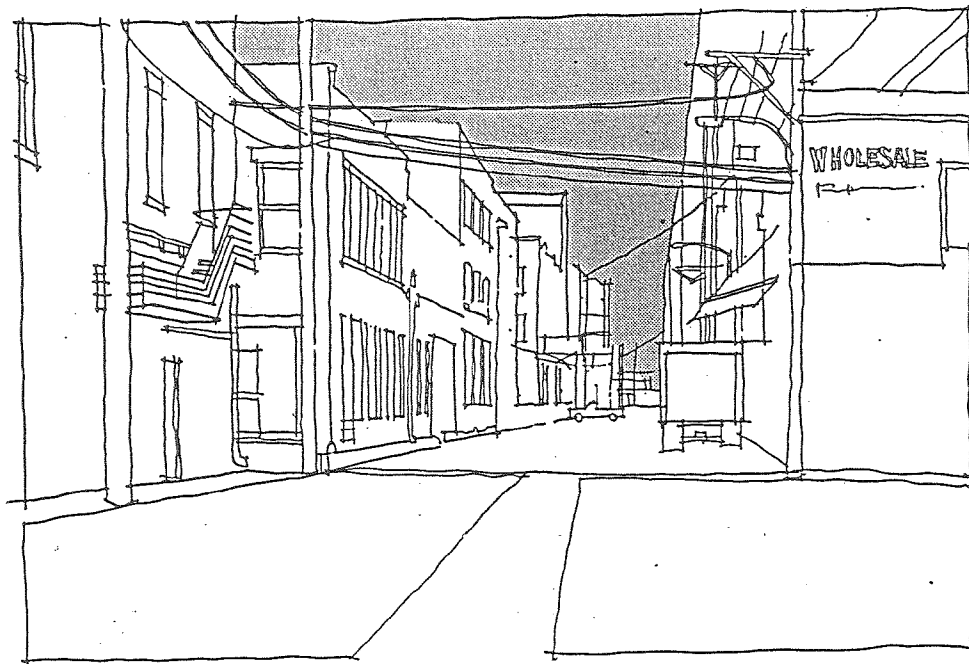
East Bank Concept Plan

The specialty retail component of the development has to appeal not only to downtown employees but also to a wider regional clientele. It should be state-of-the-art, exhibiting design flair, color, variety and texture. The center should have a distinct theme and could include ethnic restaurants, dinner theaters, cinemas, outdoor cafes, bookstores, florists, gourmet food shops, ice cream parlors, and bakeries. It is envisioned as a series of small shops and stores clustered around Watermans Landing, with a mall connecting back to Main Street along Waterman Street. The public spaces within the development should be designed as comfortable "people places" with witty signage, lighting, environmental graphics and plenty of places for casual sitting. The minimum total space provided should be approximate the total area gained through street closures. These spaces could be open or enclosed, and should be able to accommodate large public events and gatherings.

The development framework allows this project to be built by either a single developer as a mixed-use complex or as a series of individual developments implemented under a set of comprehensive development guidelines by several builder/developers. Additional public land assembly south of Lewis Street down to the Kellogg freeway frontage may be desirable for later phases of development. In any event, the city should extend design controls over private sector development on this land all the way to Kellogg to ensure a compatible riverside district.



Interior view of Retail Pavillion



Before view of Rock Island Avenue looking north

Old Town Special District:

The Old Town district as we define it is bounded by First Street to the north, Washington to the east, Douglas Avenue to the south, and the railroad line to the west. This section of downtown provides an opportunity to create a distinctive mixed-use district, with urban housing in rehabilitated loft space, restaurants, bars, professional offices, studios and craft workshops.

There are examples of the successful revitalization of such red-brick warehouse districts all over America. The key to their success is due, in part, to the careful rehabilitation of the existing fabric, so that the historical character is not diminished. The district's success is also due to the introduction of a rich mixture of food, beverage and entertainment uses that extends activity beyond the typical nine-to-five cycle, and to the attraction of activities that need a lower-rent structure than typical downtown businesses. Even though ownership is fragmented, land assembly and building renovation would be less expensive than in other parts of downtown because the original building types are simple brick warehouses. Redevelopment could occur incrementally through a series of independent individual initiatives, according to a set of design controls and development guidelines.



After view of Rock Island Avenue looking north

The plan's key concepts for Old Town include:

- A trolley square at the junction of Rock Island and Douglas Avenue, creating a downtown public space and landmark identifying the Old Town district.
- A pedestrian mall along Rock Island Avenue that retains the existing brick pavers, accommodates one lane of one-way traffic/delivery vehicles and widened tree-shaded sidewalks with benches and distinctive street lighting and furniture.
- A centrally-located parking garage with easy access from Washington, able to accommodate parking demand ahead of actual need. This is an early-action project initiated either by the city or by the property owners.
- A combination city and farmers' market, utilizing an adaptive reuse of the existing warehouses. This tenant mix provides a rich mixture of produce ranging from fresh fruit, flowers and vegetables sold from the back of pickup trucks to processed foods: meats, fish, breads, wines, fast-food counters, as well as arts and crafts, all located within air-conditioned central market halls. They attract lunch-hour as well as home-based trade. The building types should be inexpensive, designed in festival-style architecture, bringing color and diversity to this area of downtown.
- An expanded Great Plains Transportation Museum located near the old station and utilizing abandoned rail track.
- Design guidelines for infill development and the adaptive reuse of the existing buildings, and a strong signage and environmental graphics program to create a distinct district identity.

SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- A Central Management Structure for Downtown
- Action Agenda
- Public Improvement Costs
- Funding Sources
- Retail Revitalization Tactics
- Parking Management
- Development Control Recommendations
- Organizations to Assist Implementation

A CENTRAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE FOR DOWNTOWN

If downtown is to remain a major center for business, convention and retail activities, as well as the central focus for the city of Wichita, there must be an agent for downtown's development. Although several public and private organizations play a role in downtown development and promotion, many of the functional responsibilities overlap. No single organization has the power and capability to act as the development agency for Downtown Wichita. Existing organizations should be consolidated or retrofitted into one central management organization as a first step in the redevelopment program. Some may be absorbed into or utilized by the new entity. Others will best further the goal of downtown development as affiliated organizations.

Central management structures have proven themselves in other cities. They are useful for the following reasons:

- ° One Contact Point For Developers: A developer who comes to the city for assistance with a development concept must have one contact point able to coordinate all parties. Additionally, this point of contact must be able to give developers a sense of what is possible or desirable within the context of the downtown development plan. This entity must be able to guarantee confidentiality and must be able to assure a developer that his ideas will not be shared inappropriately with other individuals or groups. For this reason, most cities feel it is critical that the management entity be separate from city government, but be able to negotiate for the city.
- ° Short, Clear Chain of Command: The developer must be able to determine who to go to and understand how decisions will be made. Therefore, the management entity must be able to make decisions simply and efficiently. This entity must be given certain powers which will enable it to make decisions concerning each project's feasibility and desirability within the area.
- ° Continuity of Decision Making: In cities where downtown development has been most successful, development standards do not fluctuate according to changing political circumstances. Developers are therefore assured that dollars spent up front for planning and design are not lost. Because downtown development takes place over decades rather than years, the city must commit to the development plan and not tamper with the rules of the game.

The central management organizations will act as a clearinghouse for other business groups, civic organizations, municipal authorities, and private developers. As a highly visible management entity, it can provide such services as promotional programs, land assembly, events management, and negotiations with prospective developers and city officials. The organization will also provide a consistent management focus and technical resource for funding and policy decisions relative to development and growth of Downtown Wichita. This function includes advocacy for downtown in an increasingly competitive regional market and the ability to serve as convener, facilitator and catalyst for redevelopment.

The organization's emphasis should be on making things happen, which in many cases will involve identifying and assisting the appropriate entity to undertake desired programs. In some instances, it may be necessary for the organization to undertake those programs itself on an "incubator" basis, or as part of its work program.

Duties:

Duties of this central management organization may include advising the city staff and council on funding decisions in the downtown area, including the following:

- Soliciting and reviewing proposals and recommendations of developer RFP's for specific projects, including selection of preferred development entities and structuring public/private partnerships.
- Recommending capital improvement priorities required for downtown development, including parking, transportation (highways, roads, trolleys), and streetscape improvements.
- Recommending land acquisition and assembly strategies, including technical review of costs and phasing.
- Monitoring and updating the Downtown Master Plan.
- Facilitating project review and communications between developers and city staff.
- Promoting economic development and convention opportunities in downtown Wichita through coordination with city departments, the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the WI/SE Partnership.
- Coordinating promotions and fund raising for downtown events.
- Assisting in technical review of zoning or other land use/development requests for downtown.

- Acting as resource for developers and public/private entities interested in Downtown Wichita.
- Managing maintenance, security, and parking systems for downtown.

Organizational Structure:

As a precondition to any of the following actions, we recommend that the Downtown Development Corporation (DAC) be organized immediately to coordinate and manage the implementation phases. A highly visible downtown organization can also focus greater attention on early-action projects. The structure of this organization with its functional entities is described below:

- Downtown Action Corporation: DAC becomes the primary implementation entity. Through public/private cooperation it provides the technical and staff resources to manage downtown development and development decisions. It also is responsible for marketing, promotions and raising funds for esthetic enhancements. Staff for DAC should include a project manager for development, a project manager for marketing and promotions and support staff, all serving under the executive director. It will be incorporated as a 501 (c) (6) corporation. Members of Greater Downtown Wichita will become dues-paying members of DAC and will be eligible for membership on the advisory council and the board of directors.
- Downtown Advisory Council: The council, with a membership of approximately 50, is similar to a corporate board of directors. Meeting at least biannually, this group would provide community-level input and policy oversight into downtown planning decisions. Its primary function would be to direct and monitor the activities and achievements of the Downtown Action Corporation. The chairman of the council should be a top business leader committed to downtown and a member of the WI/SE board. Council members should include major public and private stakeholders.
- Board of Directors: The board should be comprised of approximately 15 people selected from the advisory council. It is vested with primary authority for the operation of DAC and should meet monthly with the executive director.
- Civic Enterprises Foundation: The existing CEF, a 501 (c) (3) philanthropic corporation, should be restructured to serve as the conduit for tax-deductible grants, donations, endowments and gifts to enhance the esthetics of downtown. These can include Christmas decorations, gateways, statuary and other works of art.

Funding:

Both the city and other public/private groups must recognize that the entity has value and ensure permanent funding for its operations. A combination of public and private funding sources will be required, including dues, payments for services rendered and an initial subsidy from WI/SE.

An immediate effort should be made to create a downtown municipal improvement district (MID) which can fund needed programs. Other revenue sources would include payments for services rendered and an initial subsidy from WI/SE.

ACTION AGENDA

The following is a list of potential downtown development opportunities and revitalization strategies. The criteria used to identify sites include size of parcel, relationship to the core area, the condition of existing buildings and existing uses, ease of land assembly, site access, and project feasibility. They are ranked under four broad categories according to priority: Immediate Action and Early Action Projects, Mid-Range Developments and Long Range Developments:

Immediate Action: One to two years.

- Boathouse: Investigate funding and site selection for a boathouse and marina as part of the Water Walk development. Initiate a summertime water-taxi service to Old Cowtown and Sim Park.

Funding: Local general obligation bonds or with private donations.

- Downtown Hotel: Pursue initiatives for a joint public/private development of a business/convention hotel, located near Century II as part of the proposed East Bank development.

Funding: UDAG "pocket-of-poverty" funds, CDBG or local government funds for infrastructure improvements; land write-down or favorable land lease; possible IRB financing/tax abatement.

- East Bank site: Complete the East Bank land assembly program and prepare RFP for a joint public/private mixed-use development program.

Funding: Acquisition with local government funds or land swap to complete land assembly. Revenue or tax increment bonds could be employed to fund the parking component. Hotel/motel tax moneys could fund tourism and convention business improvements. Development could benefit from tax increment financing.

- Main Street Gateway: Modify the Kellogg reconstruction plans to provide a functional gateway to Main Street, featuring synchronized traffic signals along the frontage roads, at-grade northbound turn lanes onto Main Street, enhanced freeway exit signage and suitable landscaping treatments.

Funding: Local sales tax funds for additional land acquisition and portal entry features.

- Riverside Restaurant: Finalize site transactions for a destination restaurant (or restaurants) that can demonstrate viability of entertainment/restaurant uses along the Arkansas River.

Funding: Negotiated land sale or lease for potential developer.

- Transit Center: Confirm the feasibility of locating the downtown transit center at the intersection of Main and William streets and complete design plans. The station could also consolidate bus transfer points and redirect pedestrian traffic patterns to reinforce links between the proposed East Bank development and the core area.

Funding: UMTA funds available for 80% of construction costs. General obligation bonds could provide 20% local match.

- Two-Way Main Street: Implement two-way Main Street proposal to create a new gateway street into the core area from Kellogg.

Funding: General obligation bonds, tax increment financing (TIF), or special assessment district.

- Water Walk: Set up a funding mechanism, prepare detailed designs and implement the Water Walk along the east bank from Douglas Avenue to Kellogg as a major public riverside space. The design should include an amphitheater providing outdoor space for lunch-hour concerts and summer musical performances.

Funding: General obligation bonds or TIF District could be established for public improvements. Possible private donations.

- West Bank: Continue to negotiate with the railroads to abandon the west-bank rail lines in order to complete West Bank land assembly.

- Wichita/Waco and Water Street Connectors: Implement these roads as part of the Water Walk public-improvement project.

Funding: General obligation bonds to construct roadways; UMTA funds may be available to fund part of Water Street connection if related to transit center concept.

- William Street Retail Center: Create a special retail district in downtown that incorporates a merchants' association and parking and property-management structure. Implement a public-improvement program to widen sidewalks, install street trees and create an identity program including signage and environmental-graphics programs. Start negotiations for acquiring parking spaces in the Dillard's parking garage.

Funding: General obligation or TIF bonds with private contributions possible through municipal improvement district (MID) or special assessments.

Early Action Projects: Two to five years.

- **Adult Education Facilities in Downtown:** Secure sites for educational facilities, ranging from a downtown community college campus for adult education to vocational/technical training schools. Investigate the feasibility of creating an urban campus incorporating the magnet school and the community college.
- **Church Campus:** Promote church operations in the areas that frame the downtown core. At a time when suburban congregations are growing, these downtown churches must consolidate and retain their downtown ministries by using their existing church facilities for a range of expanded social programs. Reach out to the community by providing additional activities such as day care centers, retirement housing and educational facilities. These activities would provide a stabilizing influence on the surrounding areas and neighborhoods.
- **Downtown Area Identity Programs:** Develop and implement programs for signage, environmental graphics, streetscape improvements and landscaping that project a distinct identity for the core area and the East Bank.

Funding: General obligation bonds or CBDG funds for streetscape improvements and graphic/signage system.

- **East Bank Retail:** Coleman's Country Store and similar businesses would provide an ideal anchor to seed the retail component within the East Bank development.
- **Farmers' Market:** Find a permanent home for the existing Farmers' Market, preferably on Mead street as a development that could anchor the rehabilitation efforts in the Old Town district.

Funding: Sedgwick County & State Agricultural Department could fund site acquisition. Possible city land swap to assemble land. TIF district in Old Town could help finance public improvements.

- **Lawrence-Dumont Stadium:** Renovate, update and expand the ballpark as a baseball facility. It would anchor a West Bank family entertainment and recreational complex that could eventually house a new multi-use arena.
- **Museum Complex:** Prepare a financial feasibility analysis for combining the Children's Museum and Omnisphere facilities into a museum complex of more than 100,000 square feet established permanently in the downtown area, preferably on William Street in the rehabilitated Dillard's building.

Funding: Private contributions with possible matching contributions by City and County for acquisition/renovation of Dillards building..

- Parking Management System: Prepare a final downtown parking plan and set up a parking management system that generates a user-friendly parking system for visitors and shoppers.
- Old Town Special District: Establish development guidelines for rehabilitation, parking and traffic management.

Funding: TIF district and other public/private funding to finance improvements including a public garage, trolley square, infrastructure and streetscape improvements. UDAGs and revenue bonds are other potential funding sources. City and/or private financial institutions could establish a revolving fund for facade renovations.

- Relocate Government Offices in Downtown: Consolidate local, state and federal government agencies and departments in a new generation of downtown speculative office space.
- Trolley System and Trolley Square: Set up trolley shuttle system linking centers of activity. Establish a trolley square at the intersection of Rock Island and Douglas Avenue as the terminus and turnaround for the Douglas Avenue trolley route linking the farmers market and Old Town to the core area. It would create a gateway to downtown for westbound traffic along Douglas Avenue.

Funding: 80% UMTA funds, with city and/or private contributions providing the local match for land acquisition, construction, and purchase of trolleys.

Mid-Range Developments: Five to ten years.

- Arkansas River Bridges: Widen bridges according to design standards that reflect the current arched design idiom.
- Eaton Hotel Block: Prepare a renovation and funding strategy for the reuse of the hotel, shops and office block along Douglas Avenue.

Funding: Revenue bonds, possible UDAG for parking garage to serve renovated properties. Federal investment tax credit for rehabilitation, public improvements from TIF or CDBG funds. UDAG funds for hotel, with possible IRB financing/tax abatement.

- Intown Housing: Prepare housing strategy that identifies funding, programs, land assembly strategies and development opportunities for downtown and near-downtown housing.

Funding: General obligation or TIF funds for housing infrastructure; land buy-back guarantee for private housing developments by city.

- Public Parking Garages: Implement public parking according to the downtown parking plan as necessary.

Funding: General obligation or revenue bonds or IRBs to build garages.

- Orpheum Theater: Implement a renovation funding and implementation strategy.

Funding: Private donations with possible public matching funds and possible WSU funds for renovations. Federal investment tax credits may be available.

- West Bank Residential Neighborhood: Implement a joint city- and private-sector initiative to develop this site as an urban neighborhood containing high density housing, a neighborhood retail component linked to the existing West Douglas shopping street and an open space system connecting to the Arkansas River corridor.

Funding: Land write-down by city; CDBG or TIF funds for infrastructure improvements, HUD moneys for certain types of housing.

- McLean Boulevard: Upgrade McLean to boulevard standards along its current alignment. Enhance landscaping around Lawrence-Dumont Stadium.

Long Range Developments: Ten years and beyond.

- ° Multiuse Arena: Develop and implement a program for constructing a multi-use arena adjacent to Lawrence-Dumont Stadium. A state-of-the-art arena, it should have 15,000 to 17,000 seats and could host WSU basketball games, concerts, cultural events, spill-over convention business and entertainment events such as rodeos and car shows. The arena would share parking with the convention center and would be within walking distance of the downtown core, the East Bank development and riverside restaurants, cafes and bars.

Funding: General obligation or revenue bonds, private investor funding and/or possible WSU funding. Built on city-owned land.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT COSTS

First Five Years

Douglas Avenue Streetscape	\$.5 million*
East Bank Land Assembly	\$ 1.6 million
Kellogg Gateway	\$.6 million
Main Street Streetscape/Two-way	\$ 2.0 million*
Old Town Streetscape	\$.6 million*
Transit Center	\$ 1.4 million
Water Walk	\$ 6.5 million*
Williams Street Streetscape	\$ 1.0 million*
Downtown Signage/Identity Program	\$.4 million
<hr/>	
Less anticipated UMTA funds for transit center	\$ 1.5 million
Less existing local 1988-89 CIP funds designated for landscape	\$.3 million
TOTAL:	<hr/> \$12.8 million

This leverages the following private sector improvements:

Williams Street Rehabilitation	\$ 2.0 million
Children/Science Museum Rehabilitation	\$ 7.6 million
Riverside Amphitheater	\$.5 million
East Bank Hotel	\$22.0 million
East Bank Retail/Restaurants	\$20.0 million
East Bank Office	\$20.0 million
Old Town/Farmers Markets	\$ 1.7 million
TOTAL	<hr/> \$73.8 million

*Some of these costs could be funded by private sector, through MID, special assessments, or donations.

Later Public Sector Programs:

Arkansas River Bridge Improvements	\$ 5.0 million
East Bank Public Garage	\$ 3.0 million
McLean Boulevard Improvements	\$ 3.0 million
Old Town Public Garage	\$ 1.2 million*
Trolley System (Equipment)	\$.6 million*
<hr/>	
Less FHWA funds for bridges	\$ 4.0 million
Less UMTA funding for trolleys	\$.5 million
TOTALS:	<hr/> \$ 8.3 million

This will leverage private sector investments as follows:

East Bank Office #2	\$20.0 million
East Bank Office/Hotel Expansion	\$20.0 million
East Bank Retail 2nd Phase	\$10.0 million
Old Town Rehabilitation	\$ 7.0 million
West Bank Residential Development	\$16.0 million
West Bank Sports Complex	\$10.0 million
TOTAL	<hr/> \$83.0 million

*Some of these costs could be shared with the private sector through MID, special assessments, or donations.

RETAIL REVITALIZATION TACTICS

The city, DAC and the merchants association should join forces to adopt a clear plan of action leading to a retail revitalization strategy. Initial actions to be carried out are:

City And DAC Tasks:

- Investigate incentives that would encourage reinvestment and relocation into downtown. Among these are property tax incentives for street level retail, technical assistance and financing programs.
- Seek funding for participation in the "Urban Main Street Demonstration Program" for building facade and streetscape improvements.
- Investigate funding for a downtown retail leasing director to coordinate data gathering, prospective tenant contacts, and centralized leasing activity for available retail space in downtown.
- Compile a complete property ownership inventory of all retail/commercial properties within the designated retail district. The data should be compiled block by block, parcel by parcel, to serve as a data base for future leasing activities. The inventory should list ownership, occupancy, size of spaces by floor, special amenities (such as service elevators, basement storage, separate rest rooms), and lease or sale terms.
- Develop an inventory of financing programs which encourages investment and attracts retail to the target area; these could include Small Business Administration funds for new business startups and low-interest facade improvement loans for retail storefront rehabilitation.
- Establish a design assistance program, which should be made available to property owners free of charge. The design assistance program should be targeted toward those property owners most likely to carry out rehabilitation projects early in the program and should be linked to low-interest facade improvement incentive funds.
- Sponsor a business assistance workshop for the existing downtown retailers and retail prospects from other parts of Wichita.

- Conduct a parking survey and inventory, to include the number of on-street and off-street parking spaces near the retail district. The parking survey should identify characteristics of downtown parking patrons, hours of use and preferences and opinions regarding downtown parking.
- Through surveys and other means, research and establish profiles for current and potential customers for downtown retailers and leasing prospects.
- Contact or visit other cities in the region to investigate public-sector assistance models (financing, technical assistance, innovative planning and zoning techniques, central management, marketing strategies).

Downtown Merchants Tasks:

- Develop a questionnaire for current customers to analyze specific patron profile.
- Develop a similar questionnaire to be placed in downtown hotels.
- Using the materials on property ownership and available incentives developed by the public sector, develop a recruitment package oriented toward prospective retail tenants, including size and rent levels of available space, the selected marketing strategy for downtown, available financial incentives, targeted customer group(s).
- Target potential tenants, which may include tenants already in the market, in other cities within the region, or elsewhere. This list should also be grouped by retail category.
- Ask merchants to contact their vendors/suppliers about potential tenants looking to expand from other markets, or effective store managers who wish to set up their own retail businesses and would consider Downtown Wichita as a location.
- Establish a retail recruitment team including one to two retailers from the downtown merchants group, a banker, a realtor/developer, and a representative of the public sector. This team should visit specialty retailers in Wichita and surrounding cities to present a recruitment package and build interest in revitalizing the retail district. This task is time-consuming and may only generate one lead out of ten contacts. However, the process will offer other benefits, not only resulting in genuine leasing prospects, but also in building unity among downtown merchants.

- Concentrate the first phase of improvements in a target area of no more than two to three blocks of William Street. Using the property ownership inventory and other data, work to cluster stores, restaurants, entertainment facilities and other attractions within this area before moving on to other blocks. This will build an identity and create critical mass.
- Focus on an image-building campaign including a retail district logo, a program of special marketing and entertainment events, joint advertising and store hours and targeted retail recruitment strategies.
- Concentrate on quality before quantity in all efforts. If the budget allows two spectacular downtown promotions per year or five average ones, it is better to conduct two successful, memorable events rather than five mediocre ones.

PARKING MANAGEMENT

Parking Operations – The responsibilities associated with parking operations are dispersed among several city functions and private interests. These functions should be consolidated into a single activity by establishing a **Parking Operations Group** within the traffic section of the engineering division of the department of public works, in order to provide a single focal point for citizen and city input. This approach is preferable to establishing a parking authority which can create an additional bureaucracy, and can often remove desired authority from the City Council. This group would be given responsibility for enforcement, setting standards and restrictions, installation of parking meters and regulation of private and public lot operations within Downtown Wichita.

Creating the parking operations group will require more detailed study to determine the staffing, budget, responsibilities and organizational structure; but the concept is considered appropriate for the city of Wichita to pursue.

Funding – While parking authorities are often established to create a funding mechanism to construct parking garages needed to respond to major parking shortages, this particular need does not exist in Wichita. The problem in Downtown Wichita is one of making the existing supply more accessible to visitors and shoppers and making sure that future development can use strategically-located new parking efficiently. Funding in the form of revenue or general obligation bonds can easily be established through the existing city government structure. Only about one-fourth of the major cities have parking authorities. Cities throughout the country use this method.

ORGANIZATIONS TO ASSIST IMPLEMENTATION

The following organizations should assist in the implementation of the Wichita Downtown Development Plan:

Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce – focus on improving quality of life in Wichita, community development and planning and attracting new business to the community. Funded by membership dues and closely affiliated with WI/SE.

WI/SE Partnership – a corporate venture of the City of Wichita, Sedgwick County, The Chamber, Wichita State University, and the business community, it recognizes the need for a strong downtown as the focus of Wichita. Sponsored the downtown master plan and is overseeing its implementation. Funded by city, county, and private sources.

Downtown Action Corporation – Affiliated with WI/SE, DAC is the successor organization to Greater Downtown Wichita and the Downtown Council and was formed as a result of this study. DAC combines public and private resources in leading the downtown plan implementation effort. Organizational elements include a 50 member advisory council and a 15-member board of directors.

Metropolitan Area Planning Department – The city/county planning office with ongoing responsibilities for both current and advance planning. MAPD will play a crucial role in implementing the downtown plan by focusing on public strategies and investments. Areas of involvement will include land use regulation, urban design and the capital improvements program.

City/County Economic Review Committee – A jointly established board with responsibility of reviewing city and county tax exemption policy, IRB policy, enterprise zones and other special projects.

Wichita City Council – responsible for determining spending priorities for all city funds, including CDBG funds. The council also establishes priorities for the Capital Improvement Program and new street locations, as well as reviewing all proposed zoning amendments.

Downtown Merchants Association – association of merchants and other businesses founded to promote downtown retail through events and cooperative actions. Has open membership with dues.

Wichita Convention & Visitors Bureau - an independent incorporated board of city of Wichita that actively markets and promotes the city nationwide as a convention site and visitor destination. Works with a board of directors and Century II staff (a separate city department) and supported by transient guest tax.

Housing/Economic Development Department - city department that assumed responsibilities of former Urban Renewal Agency. Targets Community Block Grant funds, advises city council on IRBs and financial incentives including UDAG applications. Has marketed city land for private development. Department also handles state constitutional tax exemptions and provides economic marketing assistance to WI/SE.

Updowntowners - an organization of dues-paying young professionals. Affiliated with DAC, promotes downtown through fund raisers and events that showcase social and cultural aspects of downtown. Events often support charitable causes.

Old Town Association - an association of property owners and others interested in Old Town, a commercial district on the national register of historic places. Holds annual block party during River Festival, Old Town Chili Cook-off, noon-hour concerts and other events. Also works for revitalization of district. Affiliated with Greater Downtown Wichita and funded by donations, events and dues.

Civic Enterprises Foundation - a not for profit organization established to raise funds for holiday decorations for downtown area. Staffed by Greater Downtown Wichita and funded by donations.

Neighborhood Associations - Riverside Citizens Association and Midtown Association established to help stabilize older neighborhoods adjacent to downtown and address such issues as spot zoning, excess traffic, poor public services and code enforcement. They have also been instrumental in creating residential historic districts.

Historic Landmark Preservation Committee - advisory board appointed by the city council and charged with administering the historic preservation ordinance, as well as identifying potential landmarks and landmark areas.

Wichita State Division of Continuing Education - outreach arm of WSU, conducts courses on- or off-campus for adult education, professional and personal development, business and legal programs and special-interest community education.

SECTION 5: DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

- Development Control Recommendations
- Urban Design Guidelines

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL RECOMMENDATIONS

The city and DAC, working with private enterprise and operating within guidelines and controls derived from the plan, will provide the primary impetus for implementing the Downtown Master plan.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Department and DAC should jointly review existing land use regulations on zoning districts, density and lot coverage, building heights, building setbacks and parking requirements as they relate to downtown and modify them as necessary.

The following are recommended as necessary development controls:

Plan Approval:

The Downtown Master plan should be approved by the city council and county commission to serve as a public statement of policy guiding growth and development.

All downtown development, regardless of size, should be subject to site plan and urban design reviews. This process should involve both MAPD and DAC, whose staff would review and assist a developer prior to submission of final plans to the city council.

An urban design consultant, chosen jointly by the city council and DAC, would serve as an advisor to the planning commission and be charged with evaluating the quality of urban design as a basis for development approval by the city council.

Zoning Ordinance Revisions:

Zoning is the public's principal method of regulating development. The Plan provides the basis for revising present downtown zoning. Zoning revisions should be carefully designed to represent the public interest as well as provide flexibility and incentives for private development. Guidelines proposed for revising the zoning ordinance include:

Land Use: The zoning ordinance and land use map should recognize four distinct downtown areas, the downtown core, Old Town, the government center, and the Arkansas River Corridor. Each has its own land use character and functions.

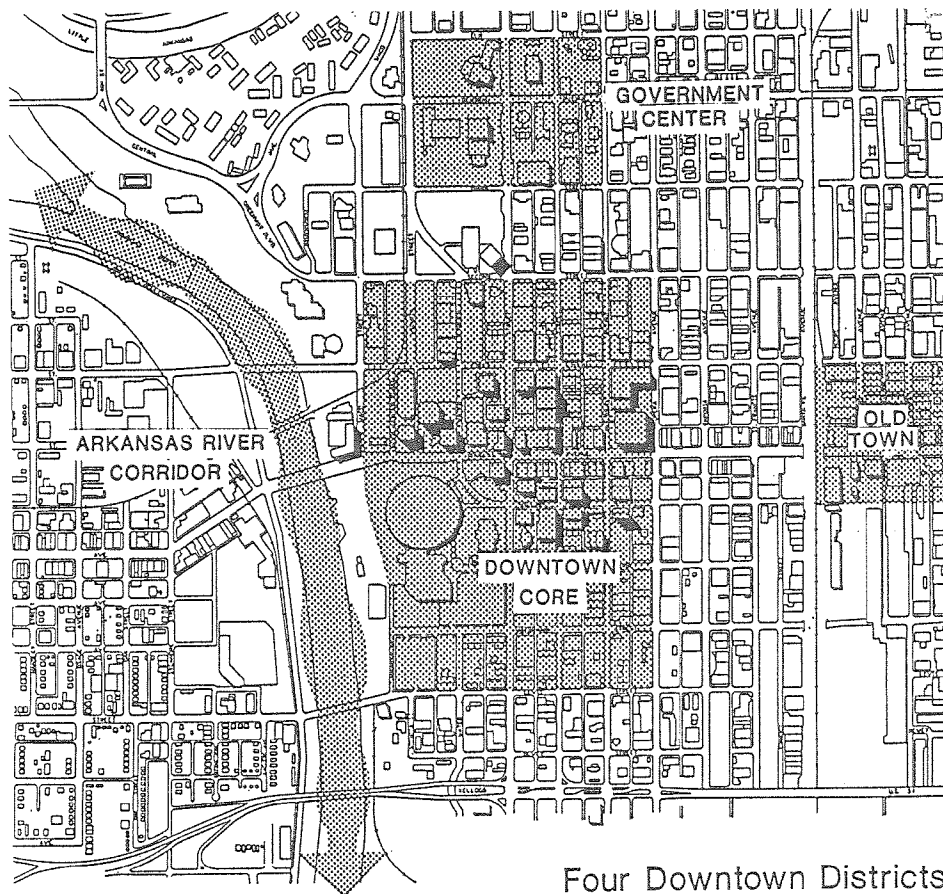
Density and Lot Coverage: No specific density restrictions should be required within the downtown core, Old Town, and the government center. New construction within these areas should have 100 percent lot coverage, not only to provide an incentive for development, but also to fully occupy each block and to maintain the continuity of each street. For sites fronting the Arkansas River corridor, lot coverage should be reduced (a minimum of 40 percent and a maximum of 60 percent) to allow for stand-alone buildings and views to the river from downtown.

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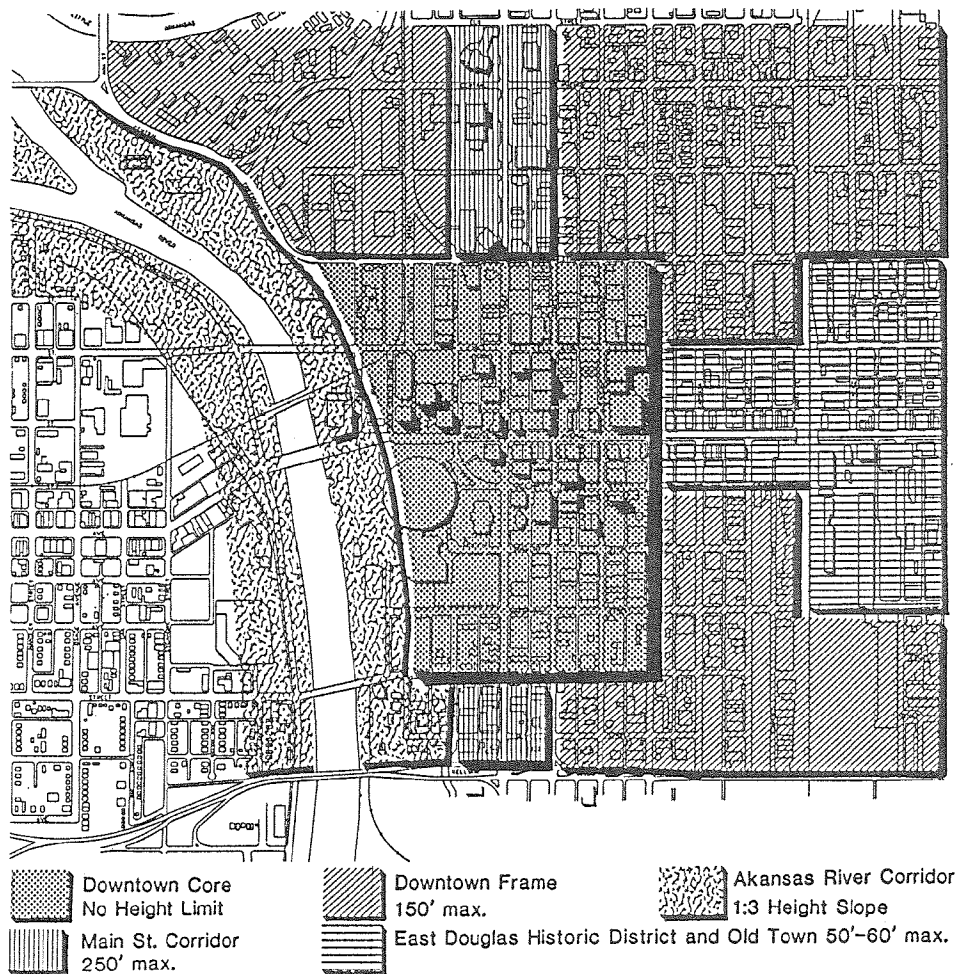
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Building Heights: Within the downtown core, building heights should be unlimited to provide an incentive for development and to create an interesting skyline. Within the areas framing the downtown core (including the government center), a lower maximum height (150 feet) should be set to create a lower building foreground. Main Street is emerging as a major development corridor and a new business address. As an incentive for new construction along those blocks fronting Main Street outside the downtown core (Central to Second and Lewis to Kellogg), higher buildings than elsewhere in the frame area should be permitted.

To preserve the low-scale, brick, boxy character of the Old Town district, a height limit that corresponds to the cornice line of the major buildings is recommended (50 to 60 feet approximately). Flat roof forms are encouraged.

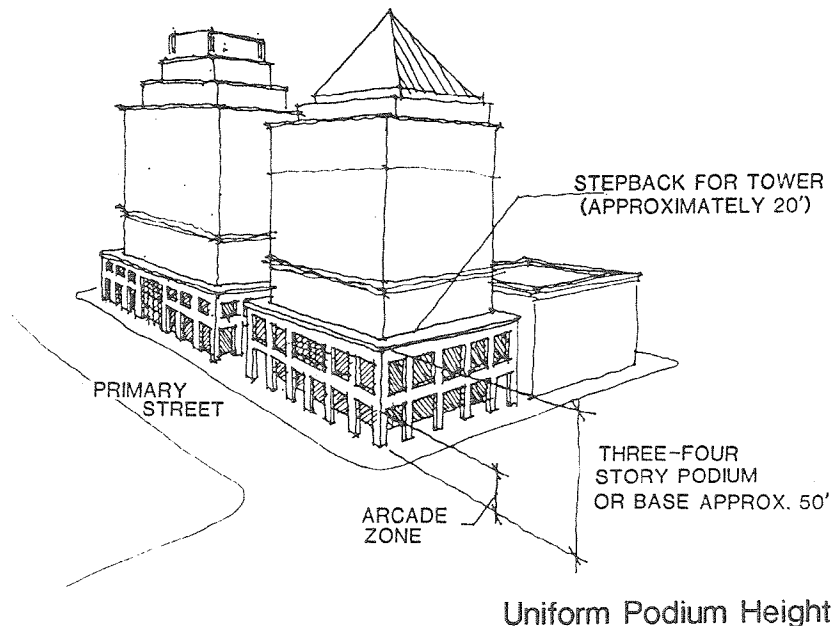
In order to preserve the scale and open feeling of the Arkansas River corridor, buildings located within 600 feet of the east and west banks should generally conform to a 1:3 height proximity slope line that originates at high water level at the centerline of the river corridor.



Building Heights Diagram

Building Setbacks: While there is no ideal building setback appropriate for the entire downtown area, a uniform and well defined street wall is desirable in the downtown core. The setbacks can vary from street segment to street segment, depending on the width and cross section of the street. The existing downtown core street space and grid pattern should be respected however. The following setback standards are recommended:

- ° The position of the front facade of buildings fronting on the major streets is critical to the spatial quality and scale of downtown's development pattern. Because the exact size and shape of new infill development is unknown, a "mandatory facade line" should be established along all major streets with high volumes of pedestrian traffic within the downtown core (Douglas, Main, William, 1st). Such a line is not to be confused with the traditional front building setback, which indicates the minimum distance that a building must be set back from the street, permitting a greater setback if desired. The "mandatory facade line" requires the building facade, or parts thereof, in all cases, be located on this line.
- ° Modern high rise office towers have windows on all four sides as they very rarely occupy an entire city block or abut adjacent buildings. Therefore, a design that allows a lower base podium which "spreads" the building footprint over a greater area of the site at street level should be encouraged to provide a street wall and a sense of street enclosure for the first two or three stories. This podium helps to mitigate the canyon-like effect along streetwalls made up of tall buildings. A building podium of consistent height is encouraged (50 feet is a typical height with a minimum stepback of 20 feet) along all major downtown streets.



Parking Requirements: Consideration should be given to establishing minimum parking requirements in the downtown core, and developers should have the option of contributing money towards additional centralized public parking facilities in lieu of providing all or part of their own on-site or off-site parking facilities. We recommend the following standards:

- Land Use: Parking Ratio:
Office uses: 3 spaces per 1000 GSF
General retail uses: 3 spaces per 1000 GSF
Restaurant,cafes: 5 spaces per 1000 GSF
Dwelling units: 1 per bedroom
Hotels: 1 per guestroom
- Parking within the downtown core and Old Town might also be revised by setting standards for **maximum** number of spaces for office, retail and other commercial land uses. This will avoid the constant erosion of urban fabric for surface parking lots.
- All developers should be required to submit a parking plan, including proposed landscaping and screening, as part of their submittal for site plan review.

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The purpose of the following urban design guidelines is to address those design issues that have the most effect on the physical design quality of the downtown public environment. They are aimed at all public and private sector parties involved in initiating downtown revitalization efforts. The aim is to provide coherence and guidance for downtown development, while providing flexibility for individual developers.

Forms of Revitalization

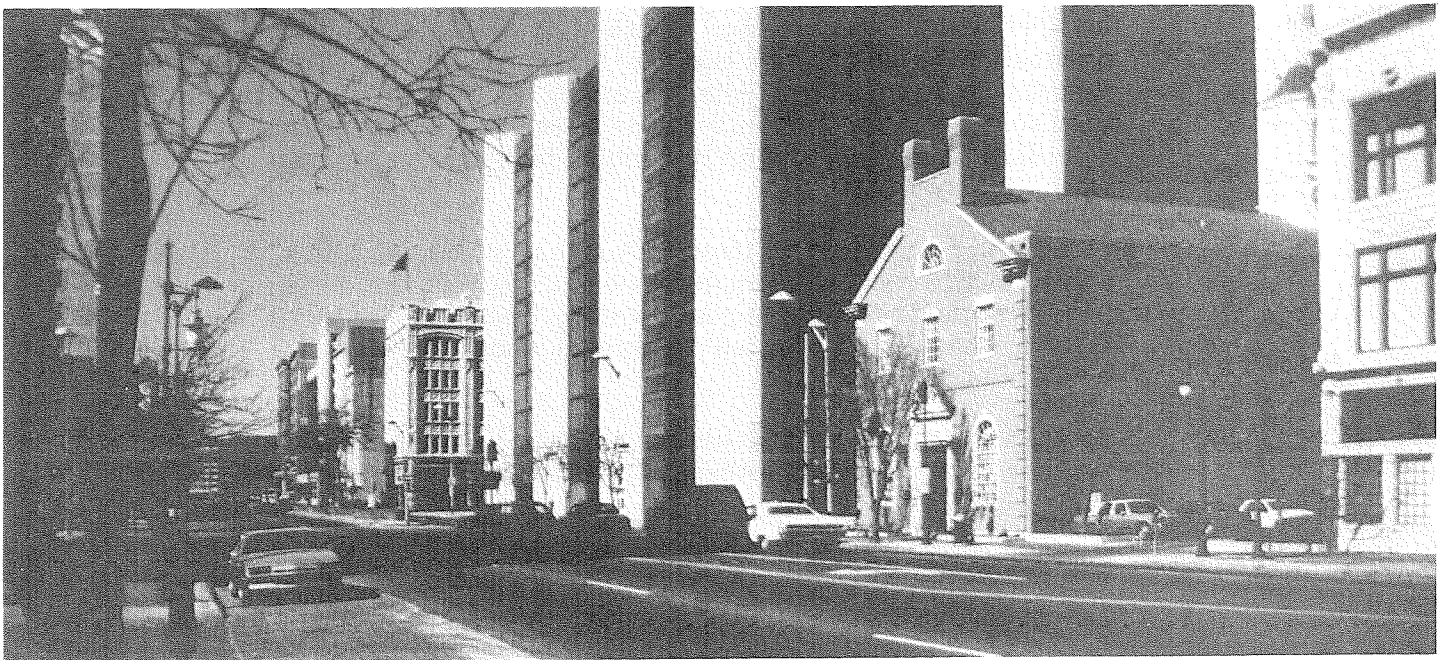
Downtown Wichita is a rich mixture of new and old buildings, consequently, downtown revitalization efforts will consist of a mixture of new development, redesign and rehabilitation, and it is important to understand the special nature and constraints of each type of development.

New Design – If new construction is to be undertaken, the design solutions must be sensitive to the surrounding environment. An effort should be made to create buildings that complement the scale and design idioms of the surrounding buildings.

Redesign – There are also many other older buildings located downtown that still have many years of useful life that are necessarily architecturally or historically significant. Redesign is the recommended technique for buildings that now retain little of their original architectural character. Redesign is also necessary for a building of unattractive design or for one whose intended use is totally different from its original use. Redesign should also be sensitive to neighboring buildings and to the element of scale, design idiom, texture, color and materials.

Restoration – This technique is usually reserved for buildings of rare historical or architectural significance. An accurate well-crafted restoration requires a great deal of research, time, and money, and means literally restoring a building to its original condition and appearance..

Rehabilitation and Adaptive Re-use – Rehabilitation is the process of returning a building to a state of usefulness through repair or alteration, making as efficient a contemporary use as possible while retaining the historic spirit of the building. Rehabilitation may entail the introduction of elements that are non-historical but that are well-designed in themselves and relate well to older parts of the building. The key is that the original form of the remodeled building is still apparent although modified.



Design Idiom

The many architectural styles found in Downtown Wichita reflect the growth of the town and the vitality of its distinct streets and districts. The design of new infill buildings and the redesign of less-than-historic buildings should be evaluated in terms of how well they relate to their surrounding context as well as in terms of their individual design. Overall image and visual harmony of a particular street or district can be attributed to an individual buildings' facade design, scale, exterior materials, and the use of windows of similar size, style and placement. The following design guidelines are proposed:

- Consistency in the relationship of solids (exterior walls) to voids (window openings) in existing building facade openings in historic structures should be preserved and remain unaltered wherever possible. When new window or door openings are introduced in existing facades for functional reasons, they should compliment the existing facade grid and proportion pattern.
- Window openings on facades fronting a public streets should not be greater than 70% nor less than 30% of the facade area, in order to avoid glass box buildings and blank facade walls.
- Glass curtain walls, spandrel glass, or mirrored glass should be discouraged as facade cladding systems. They tend to generate ethereal buildings that have no apparent scale, solidity, or fixed position in the urban fabric.
- A variety in window proportions is encouraged to avoid horizontal or vertical banding. Avoid the use of strongly "banded" or "layered" design vernaculars employing highly contrasting colors. This has the effect of changing the apparent scale of the building, creating an optical illusion that makes the building jump out of its setting. It can result in a disjointed appearance in the line of buildings on a single street or city block.
- Vertical architectural extensions such as parapets, spires, gables, sloped roofs and towers are encouraged in the design of all new and rehabilitated construction. These architectural elements should be allowed to extend above the building height limits.
- To add visual interest and variety at street level, porches, arcades, canopies and other architectural elements are encouraged.

Exterior Appearance of Buildings

Facade colors and materials can provide visual consistency and unity within downtown and its subareas. The number of materials employed on the exterior of new buildings should be kept to a minimum. Limiting the number of materials allows visual simplicity and harmony to be achieved without setting up complex individual material requirements or restrictions. The following guidelines are proposed:

- The general requirement for the selection of suitable exterior building materials is that they work well together visually, and are compatible with the existing adjacent buildings in the same block or street.
- No more than two basic exterior building materials, in addition to glass, should be used on separate buildings. Ideally, one of the materials must have the dominant role. Some exterior cladding materials should be prohibited because they either look fake or create glare or are out of character with an urban environment, such as the following:
 - Imitation stone (but not precast stone)
 - Aluminum siding
 - Raw aluminum
 - Galvanized steel
 - Wood siding
- Color is an integral element of the total building design and will, if carefully considered, add to the distinctive unity and identity of the city fabric. Preferred dominant colors are:
 - Light, medium, dark warm greys or sand tones (matching some of the native sandstone colors)
 - Tinted glass – solar bronze, solar grey.
- Avoid using blacks and stark whites for exterior cladding, and tinted or reflective glass in pinks and golds. The dominant color range should relate in tone value to other dominant colors in the block or street.
- The dominant colors of building facades are also enhanced through the use of accent colors for the trim and detailing of facades. Accent colors should not be restricted, however, garish or fluorescent colors should be avoided. They can be applied to trim, fascia boards, door or window panels, awnings, and miscellaneous metals, and can be chosen with flexibility to create building or tenant identity, or to draw attention to certain architectural details.

Creating Pedestrian Friendly Street Space:

Improving the amenity of the pedestrian spaces within the downtown core and the other subdistricts should be pursued even at the expense of improved traffic flow. Street level activity and pedestrian linkages should be encouraged. Gaps in the continuity of the street wall must be avoided, particularly along the major pedestrian streets (Douglas Avenue, Main Street and William Street).



Wherever feasible the following design elements should be introduced:

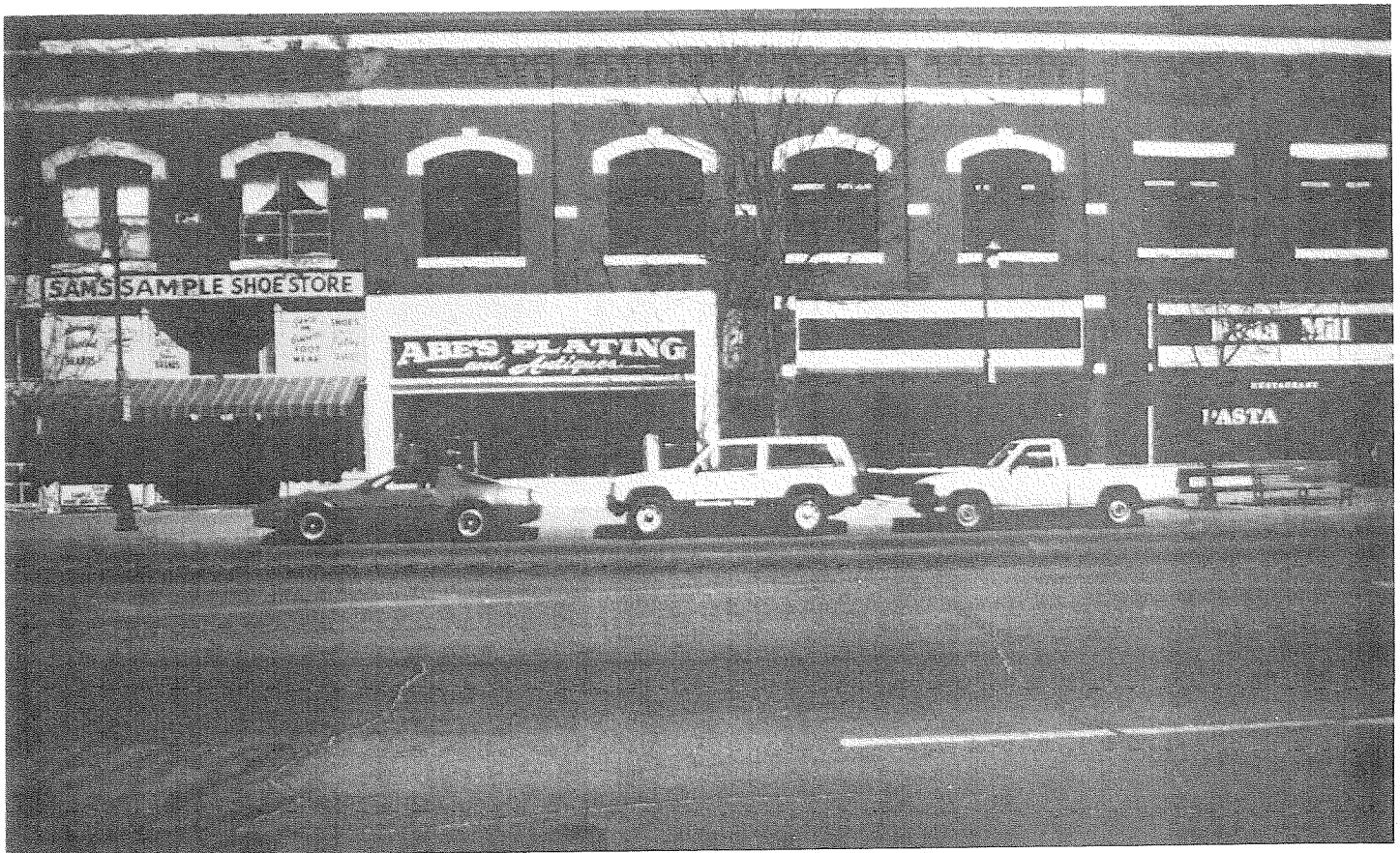
- Sidewalk "neck down"s at all major street intersections within the downtown core to lessen the distance pedestrians have to cross moving traffic lanes. In addition to the neck downs proposed along William Street the other important major street intersections are:
 - Main at Douglas
 - Douglas at Broadway,
 - Market and Topeka
 - Main at First and William
 - Douglas at Water, and
 - The new Wichita/Waco connector.
- For pedestrian safety, crosswalks (either at intersections or mid-block) require adequate width and a change in texture and color to identify an interface of pedestrian and vehicular movement. Materials that can take the wear and tear of heavy traffic include; brick and pavers of concrete and granite. At intersections on major streets crosswalks should be a minimum of 15' wide, while at intersections on secondary streets they should be at least 10' wide.
- Douglas Avenue, Main Street, and William Street are the primary pedestrian streets in Downtown Wichita, should have generous pedestrian sidewalks. We recommend at least 15 feet from the building face to the back of curb. This allows a five-foot paving grid that can integrate a standard five-foot tree grate neatly. It also allows three people to walk abreast in comfort. The mandatory facade line for all new construction along these streets should therefore be set at 15' from back of curb.
- Along other streets within downtown a minimum setback of 10' is recommended, set either at the front property line or at a line that is 10' from back of curb, whichever is less. This dimension allows two people to walk abreast comfortably and still leaves room for a tree planting zone.
- Special attention should be given to the building forms permitted on street corners. At major intersection (such as Douglas and Main), special corner building setback conditions may be appropriate to create enlarged sidewalk spaces to accommodate the volume of pedestrian traffic or to create public spaces for sitting and meeting. At other minor intersections it is equally as important to anchor the end of a city block with buildings coming right out to the street corners.

- Arcades provide protection from the elements and contain or extend public space and should be encourage in new construction along all major street within the downtown core. New arcades can be created in some existing buildings on major downtown streets by replacing the plane of windows at the first floor level with an open line of columns.
- Skybridges should be employed only in the last resort. Extensive skybridge systems kill and sterilize ground level activity. Luring pedestrians off the streets leaves the street merely a vehicular traffic corridor. Street level pedestrian activity and retail shops are the key to a multi-use downtown.
- Special paving materials and patterns can help differentiate public spaces. A limited range of paving materials should be used. Special paving materials different in color and texture from standard roadways should clearly delineate major pedestrian zones and the narrowing or widening of sidewalks. Existing brick sidewalks in the downtown should be preserved and maintained wherever possible.
- Street furniture can increase the attractiveness of an area by providing important pedestrian conveniences. It is important to coordinate the public and private components, and to strive for a degree of uniformity in styles, and the elimination of redundant furnishings. Street furnishing should include but not be limited to: bus shelters, information kiosks, advertising and telephone booths; newspaper dispensers; drinking fountains; waste receptacles, bicycle racks; benches, planters, fire hydrants; police and fire call boxes; traffic control devices; mailboxes; parking meters; and lighting standards.

Cleaning Up Existing Storefronts

Storefronts play an important role in shaping the overall character of Douglas Avenue, William Street and Main Street. While the interiors of the structures may or may not be preserved, existing building facades should be preserved and integrated into new development where possible. Encourage storeowners and proprietors to relate improvements of their storefronts to the streetscape and to pedestrian activity. Some design suggestions for accomplishing this are as follows:

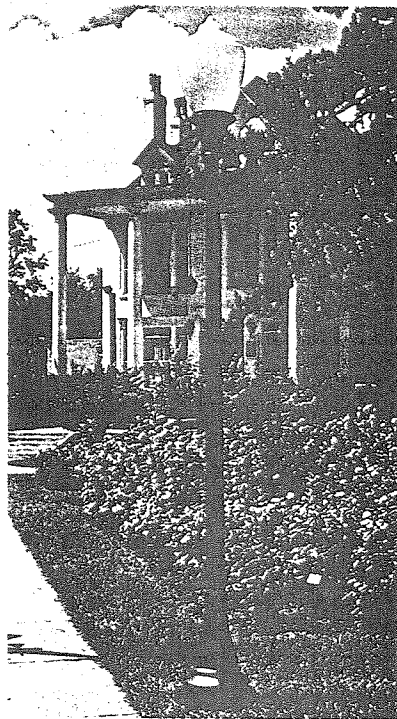
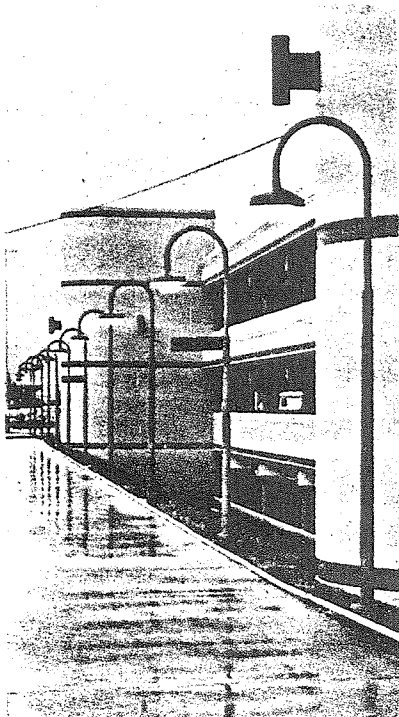
- Storefronts should form a continuous "display case" of street merchandise, and be designed to fit inside the original window opening, be as transparent as possible to let in a maximum of natural light, and to allow the activity inside to be obvious to the passerby in the daytime as well as at night.
- Remove false fronts or screens pasted on storefronts and signs that cover upper facades;
- Remove solid panels that cover original windows;
- Remove fixed storefront canopies which visually isolate upper facades and replace with operable awnings or transparent canopies (Dillards Store);
- Eliminate newer, large, hanging signs that have no historical character or significance.



Night Time Appearance of Streets, Buildings and Structures

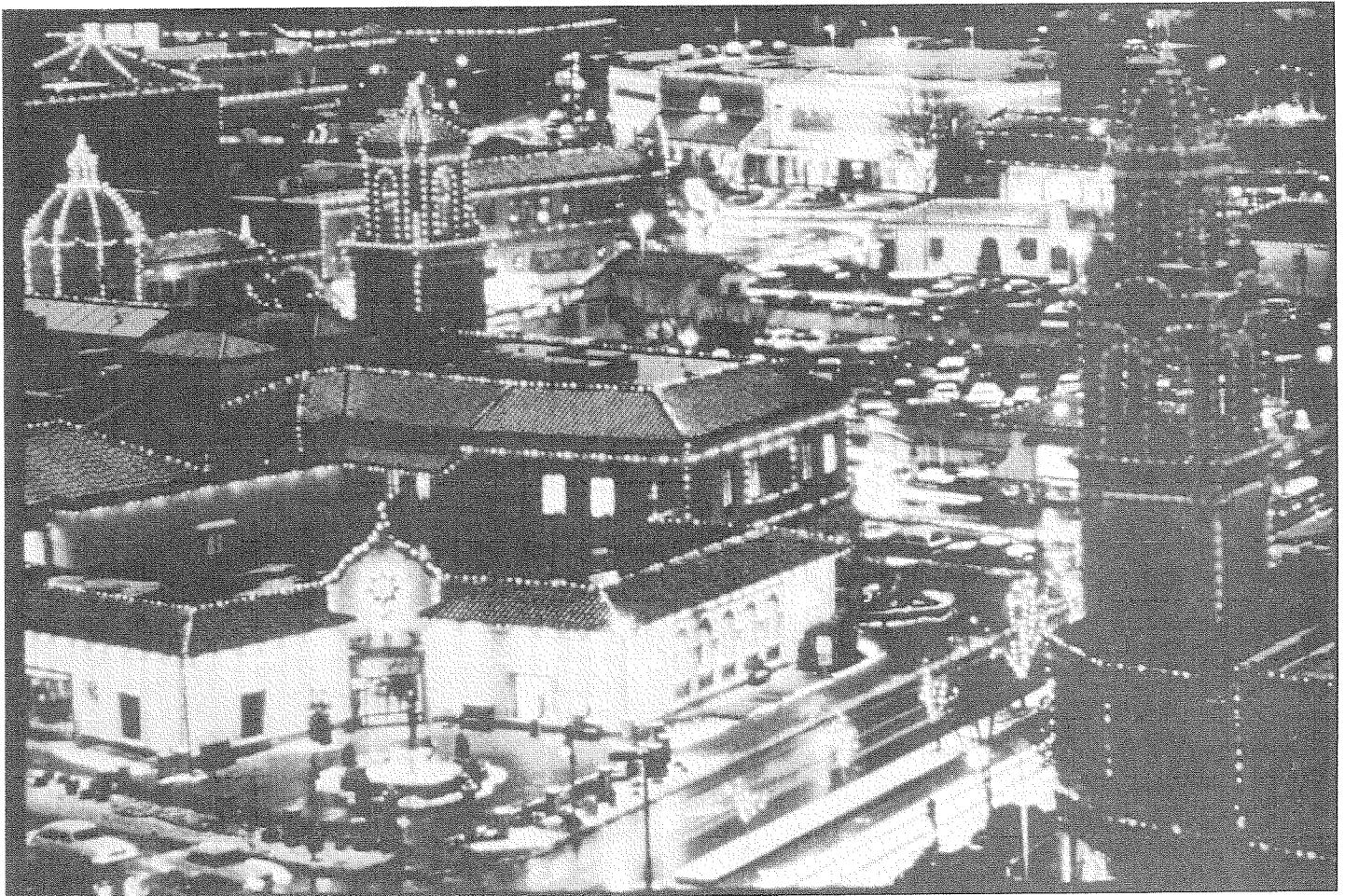
A downtown lighting system should be developed to give a clear hierarchical direction to the motorist as well as to the pedestrian, distinguishing areas where pedestrians have clear right of way over vehicular traffic. Other types of special lighting should be used in certain areas of the downtown especially to accent landmark buildings, architectural features on individual buildings, sculpture and landscaping. Augmenting normal lighting with such lighting techniques will give downtown the sparkle and glow it needs to be a pleasant nighttime place. The following guidelines are proposed:

- ° Because of the diversity of architectural styles, we recommend the use of a limited range of street lighting fixtures, neutral in design and character, as the primary street light fixtures for downtown. Fixture such as the Kim EKG "Shoebox" or Kim CCL curvilinear cutoff types are appropriate. Light levels at the road surface should average approximatey one footcandle.
- ° In some areas, supplemental pedestrian lighting fixtures may be desired. These fixtures should be selected to express a style or idiom appropriate to a specific site or district. For example, within the Old Town district, a turn-of-the-century cast-iron lamp post may be appropriate to provide an historic detail, while the new development along the East Bank may require fixtures in a contemporary idiom .



Typical pedestrian fixtures

- Lighting should reveal the edges, cornices, roof forms and other architectural features of all significant downtown buildings, and all buildings along major street corridors – Douglas Avenue and Main Street.
- Individual buildings may be illuminated at night through the use of uplights and spotlights, or neon or argon tubing to outline the building forms.
- Beacons, spotlights, laser lights or other forms of illumination may be used to identify entry portals to downtown, the Arkansas River corridor, and major public spaces.
- Bridges across the Arkansas River (including the arched forms) should be outlined with strings of lights or neon/argon tubing to create a distinctive nighttime identity for the river corridor.



Parking

Parking is one of the largest land uses in downtown. Surface parking lots need to be properly located, screened and landscaped in order to minimize their impact on downtown fabric. Better security, consistent lighting, paving patterns and materials, striping, signing, and landscaping of interior areas and edges would greatly improve the appearance of parking lots, stimulate greater public use, and complement new development. The following guidelines are proposed:

- Wherever possible, surface parking lots shall be located behind a building or to the rear of the parcel.
- Surface parking should not be allowed in the front of buildings along Douglas Avenue, Main Street and William Street.
- Parking lots that currently front directly onto Douglas, Main and William should be screened with landscaping and/or screen walls that respect the existing building setback line of adjacent structures.
- Surface parking should be prohibited close to the Arkansas river edge.
- Parking structures can contribute to the urban street wall by filling gaps between buildings and by creating space for for street level retail. They should be architecturally finished on each side visible from a public street, and designed to be compatible with adjacent buildings.
- Where possible, the narrow facade of a parking structure shall be oriented to the street.
- Street level retail and other types of pedestrian activities are encouraged at grade level in all parking structures fronting Douglas Avenue, Main Street, and along William Street between Main Street and Topeka Avenue.
- The first level of all parking lots and structures shall have a solid wall or spandrel panel 3' in height, or a dense planting of evergreen plant materials to screen parked cars from the public view.

Street Wall Continuity (Infill Development)

Continuous street walls enhance the pedestrian space by creating a sense of enclosure and provide the opportunity for retail and commercial activities to front directly onto the sidewalk. The following design guidelines are recommended:

- To maintain a sense of continuity all lots fronting on major streets within the downtown core should have a continuous front facade equal to at least 80 percent of the lot width. This percentage can be reduced to 60 percent for lots along secondary streets, and for the areas that frame the downtown core. Front facade extensions of the overall building design, integrating arches or walls across vehicular driveways and pedestrian accessways may be utilized to achieve these percentages.
- The design of new infill buildings should not pretend to mimic older historic facades, and should respond to their surroundings striking a proper balance between the existing architecture and good contemporary design. General ideas that should govern the visual relationship between an infill building and its neighbors are: scale, setback relationship to the street, roof forms, proportion of window openings, color and materials, and architectural detail.



Old Town Rehabilitation Guidelines

This district presents a strongly unified appearance, that is the product of the common age of most of the buildings (turn of the century warehouses) and the load bearing brick construction that produces a distinctive texture, color, and solid-to-void relationship. The scale of the overall district is also distinctive. The streets are relatively narrow, and, together with the low height (3-5 stories) of most of the buildings, creates an interesting contrast to the broader and much grander commercial streets and avenues throughout the rest of downtown. The following design guidelines are recommended:

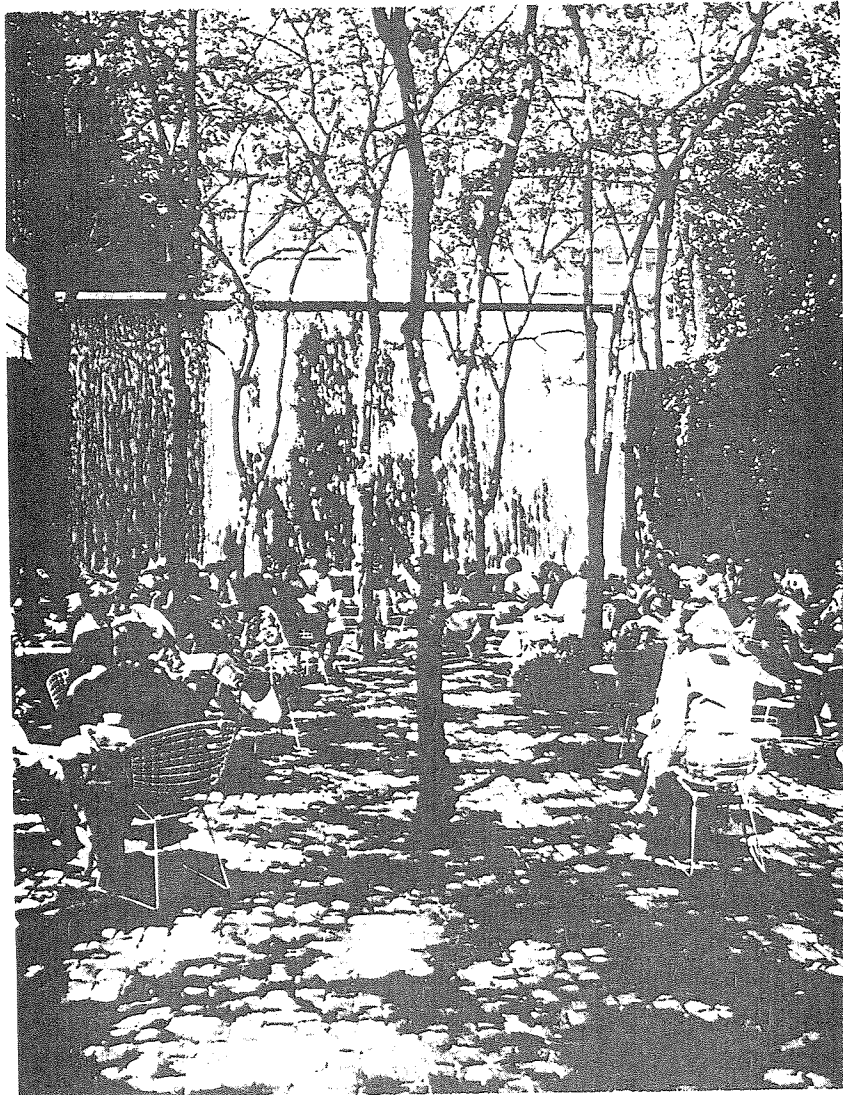
- ° For new or infill construction the interval of vertical and horizontal bay elements should match the proportions and facade grid of immediately adjacent buildings.
- ° New construction should employ brick as the dominant facade material, in a color compatible with the existing buildings color ranges. Existing facades shall not be painted unless renovations or repairs create color differences between the original facade and the repaired area.
- ° Trim elements such as pilasters, cornice lines, string courses, window sills, lintels, and rustication add detail to a building's facade, and should never be painted (unless made of wood). Brick, cast stone, stone, ornamental metal, concrete, or hard wood may be used for trim elements.



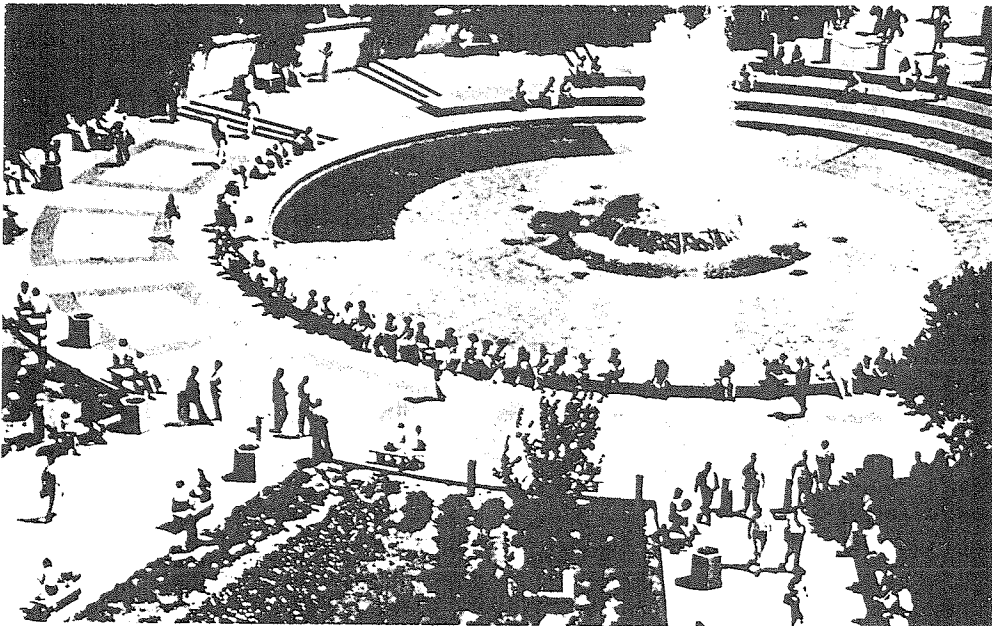
Plazas and Pocket Parks

Downtown Wichita can benefit from the development of "left-over spaces", vacant lots, and building setbacks, into plazas or pocket parks. Heritage Square Park, behind the Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum is a good example of this type of urban space. When properly designed and sited, plazas and pocket parks can provide shaded and colorful outdoor spaces for brown bagging, people watching, quiet conversations or relaxation. Successful plazas and pocket parks throughout the world's cities have incorporated many of the following elements in their design and evolution:

- Frame and enclose the space by building facades on two or more of the plaza's boundaries.
- Locate some retail and commercial uses to front on the space to provide activity and a self-policing element.



- A focal point element in the form of a water feature, public art, sculpture or monument.
- Permanent seating – in the form of benches, low walls, planter walls, and the provision of portable chairs and tables (to move in and out of the sun, and to form casual group seating arrangements).
- A combination of hardscape and soft landscape textures within the space.
- The provision of shade through the use of canopy trees, trellises, and building arcades, canopies, and awnings.
- A perceived safe and secure self-policing public environment with direct exposure and access to the public and to adjacent activity centers, high levels of pedestrian lighting, and no blind spots.
- Public and semi-public spaces should contain special works of art. Incentives should be developed to encourage the inclusion of art of sculpture as a part of public or private development, perhaps one percent of the site development cost. Many cities earmark a percentage of project costs for art or sculptural elements.



The Arkansas River Corridor

The Arkansas Riverfront open space system provides opportunities for both active hiking, biking, and water related recreation, as well as more passive types of uses. It could for example, provides ideal opportunities for an outdoor art or sculptural park. Special environmental sculptures could be developed using native material, land forms and wind-activated sculpture. A potential site for an outstanding sculptural focal point is the termination of Douglas Avenue at the river to symbolize the original town site at the Chisholm Trail crossing. To protect and preserve this major community asset the following guidelines are proposed:

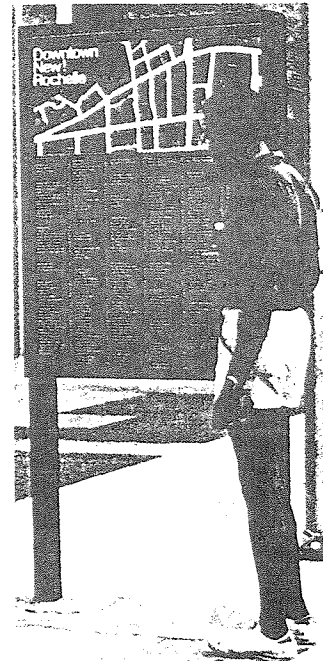
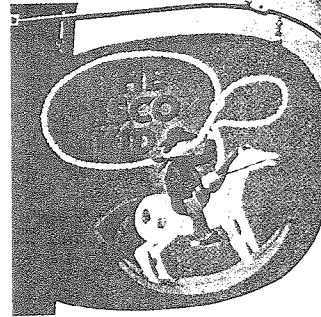
- ° New riverfront development (including new bridges), should not impede public access along the rivers edges. This public access, however does not have to be continuously at the waters edge. It can, for example, detour around individual waterside buildings provided the detour is no longer than 400 feet.
- ° Reworking the rivers edge to create bulkheads, boardwalks, esplanades or boat docks for private sector developments should be encouraged, provided they do not impact the floodway characteristics of the river.
- ° Views to and from the Arkansas River should be maintained on the east and west bank. Continuous street walls or individual building frontages are inappropriate. Therefore, new construction or additions on land fronting the corridor should have a maximum facade frontage of 50 percent of the lot's width.
- ° All surface parking should be located at least 100 feet from the rivers edge.
- ° New construction along the river corridor should respect the height controls outlined earlier in this section.



Downtown Signs and Environmental Graphics

A sign system should be developed throughout the downtown area to help simplify and clarify the provision of public and private information. Uncontrolled signs can lead to a random and competing profusion of confusing information and visual clutter. Therefore a system of sign controls should be established that sets a consistent design framework that includes the size, location, and number of signs permitted on and around each building. The following sign guidelines are proposed:

- Billboards and detached non-premise signs should be prohibited. Flashing or motion signs should be permitted on a case by case basis within certain designated retail/entertainment districts like the East Bank development or Old Town.
- Awnings and canopies may be used as advertising devices. Verbage should be limited to the awning valance. Graphics may be used on the sloped part of the awning but should not exceed 30 percent to 40 percent of the surface area.

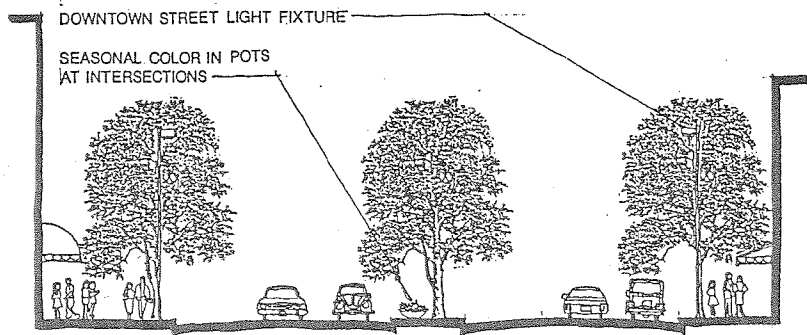


- Window signs should be allowed at the first floor only and should not exceed 30 percent to 40 percent of the window area.
- Portable signs (sandwich boards) should be allowed in the public R.O.W. if located in the tree planting zone out of the way of normal foot traffic. They should not exceed four feet high, three feet wide and three feet deep.
- Each building should be allowed one projecting and one attached facade sign. Attached facade signs should be located at the first floor level only and should not obscure significant architectural elements. Individual commercial tenants should be allowed one projecting or one attached facade sign.
- Rooftop and silhouette graphic symbols should be allowed in three dimensional form, but they should not incorporate word, letters, or numbers. They should be limited to a maximum of 15 feet to 20 feet in height above the parapet.
- Marquee signs should be allowed to project into the R.O.W. provided they do not interfere with the street tree growth and have a 10-foot clearance over the public sidewalks.

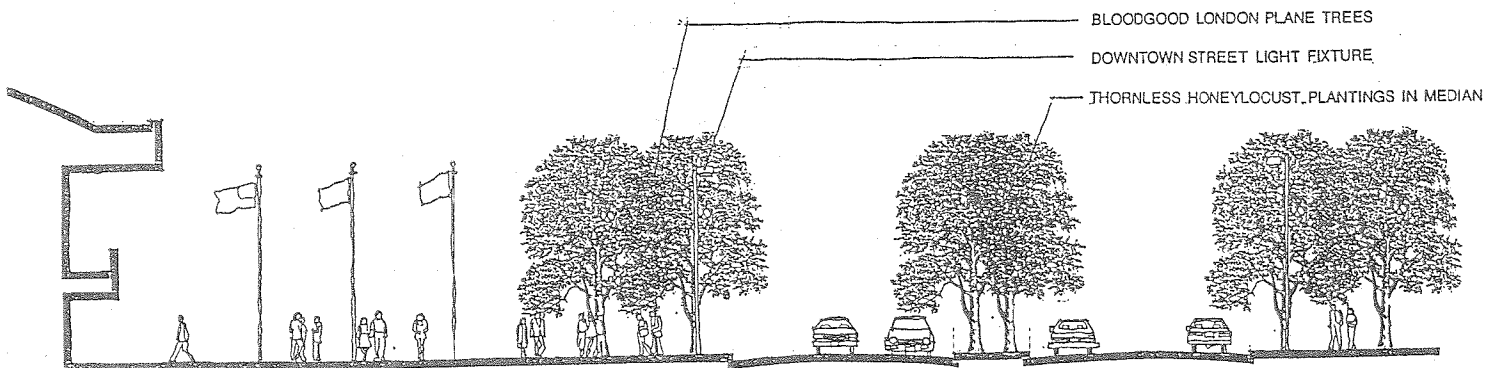
Douglas Avenue Median Treatments:

Two difficult median conditions exist along Douglas Avenue:

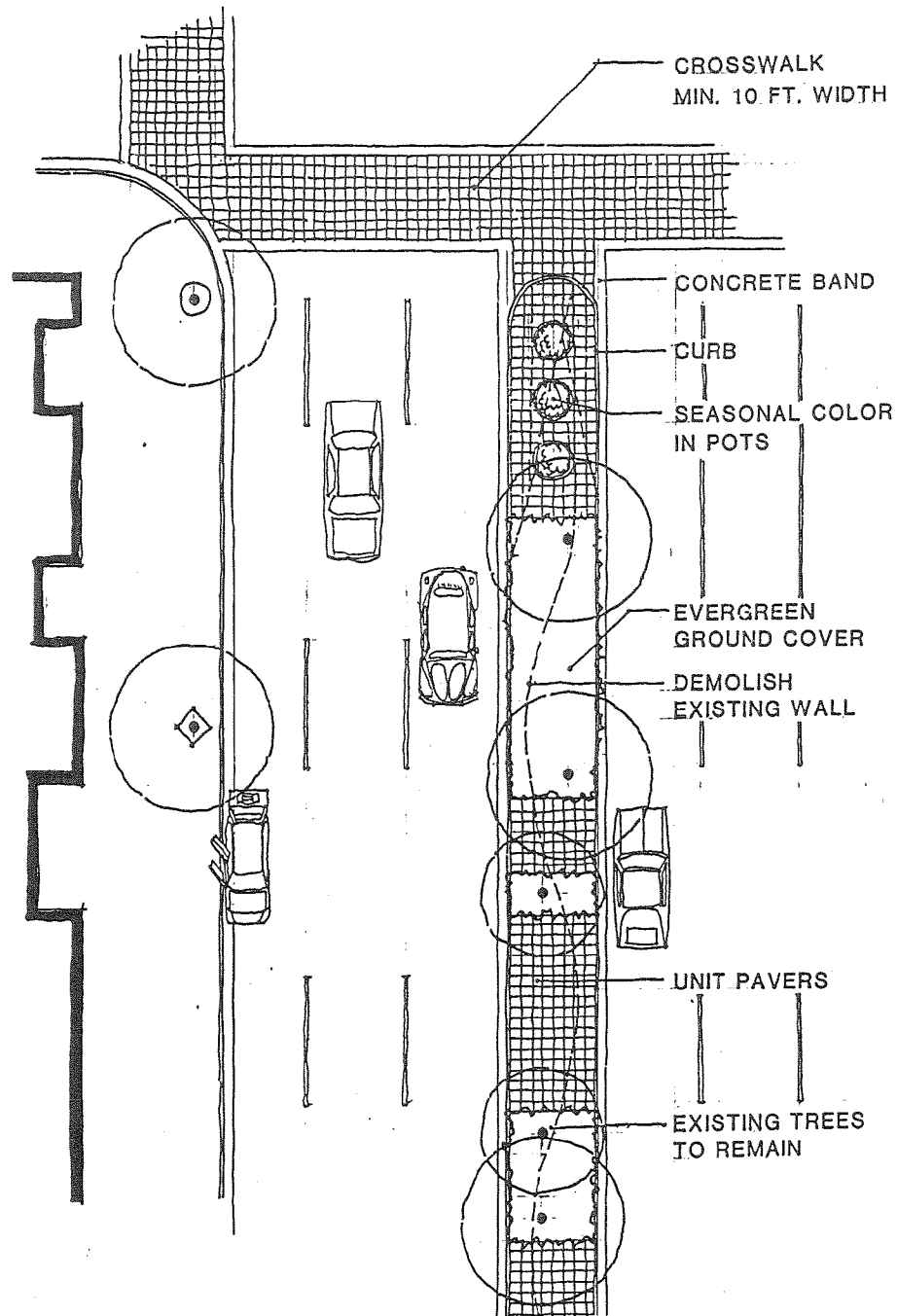
Near Century II, a pavement enhancement program has been implemented, but the median has been left as a paved island without plantings of any kind or as a painted area delineated on the road surface itself. The accompanying illustration depicts our recommendation for its reconstruction and planting, in conjunction with recommended street tree planting and sidewalk paving design.



Douglas Avenue between Market and Topeka



Douglas Avenue near Century II



**Proposed median treatment on Douglas Avenue
(from Market to Topeka)**

A median beautification scheme implemented in the 1960s exists along Douglas between Market Street and Topeka Avenue. We recommend removing the curvilinear walls and introducing planting beds and unit pavers matching those used in front of Century II, to produce a more integrated street cross-section. This can also be reinforced by unit paver cross-walks. The existing mature trees in the median should be supplemented by plantings of evergreen ground covers and the use of seasonal color plantings (in pots) near crosswalks.

Downtown Landscaping Programs:

Landscaping in an urban context should separate and define various uses while shading and enclosing pedestrian space. Plantings within the public right-of-way may consist of shade/street trees, shrubs, ground covers (other than lawn grasses) and seasonal color plantings. Consistent street tree planting in the public right-of-way along major streets can also create a unifying image for downtown Wichita. The street trees emphasize major pedestrian corridors, creating enclosure and shade of the pedestrian space. The following standards are proposed:

All street trees should be large, deciduous shade tree species, capable of attaining an expected height at maturity of at least 30 feet (when grown in urban conditions), whose lower branches may be maintained at a minimum height of 8 feet above the sidewalk and 12 feet above the street. Evergreen trees and small ornamental trees are not appropriate for use as street trees. The following tree species thrive in urban environments:

Bloodgood London Plane	<u>Platanus acerifolia</u> 'Bloodgood'
Red Maple	<u>Acer rubrum</u>
Norway Maple	<u>Acer platanoides</u>
Sweet Gum	<u>Liquidambar styraciflua</u>
Thornless Honey Locust	<u>Gleditsia triacanthos</u> 'Inermis'

No single-row street tree should be located closer than 2.5 feet (on center) from back of curb and further than 5' (on center) from back of curb.

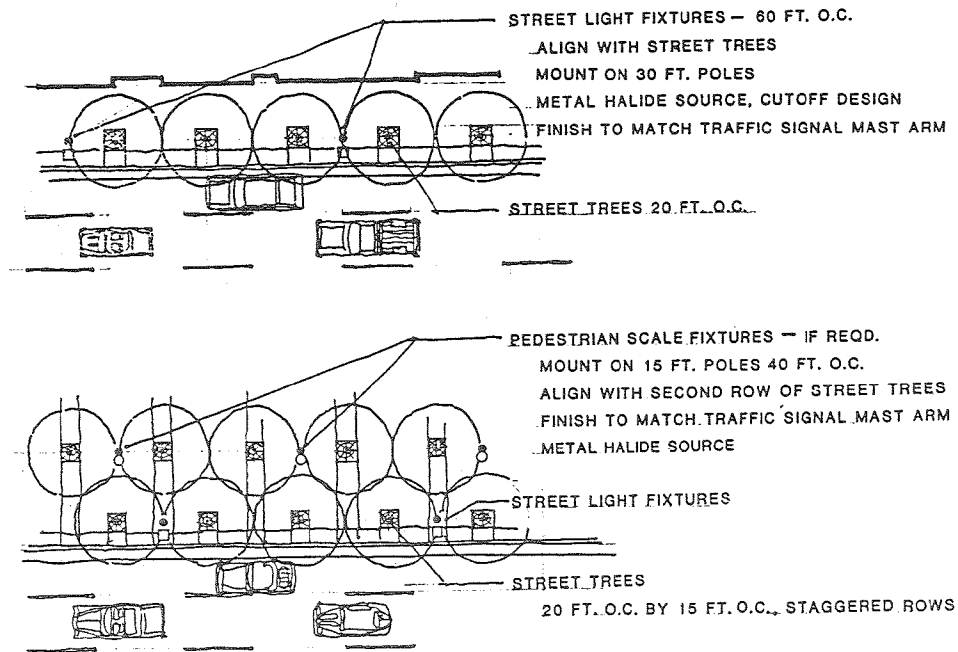
Wherever double-row street tree are possible they shall occur within a zone extending from the curb to 25 feet from back of curb. The first (curb-side) row shall be located to match a single-row spacing, the second row of street trees shall be located no further than 22.5 feet from back of curb.

Main Street: The tree species selected for the Main Street corridor is the Sweet Gum (Liquidambar styraciflua). Trees should be planted in single or double staggered rows, 30 foot (on center) spacing, staggered equidistantly.

Douglas Avenue: New infill street tree plantings along Douglas should be Bloodgood London Plane Trees (Platanus acerifolia 'Bloodgood'). For single row plantings, trees shall be planted at a spacing of 20 feet (on center). For double rows, the second row shall be 15 feet (on center) from the first row to match the existing spacing, and consist of a 20 foot (on center) planting staggered equidistantly.

Waco/Wichita Connector: This street provides a riverside esplanade along the Arkansas River corridor. The "pedestrian-oriented" side of the street or riverside is designed to accommodate a staggered double row of street trees. The street tree selected for use is the Bloodgood London Plane Tree (*Platanus acerifolia* 'Bloodgood'). Trees should be planted in double staggered rows 20 feet (on center) spacing. Rows of plantings shall be staggered equidistantly.

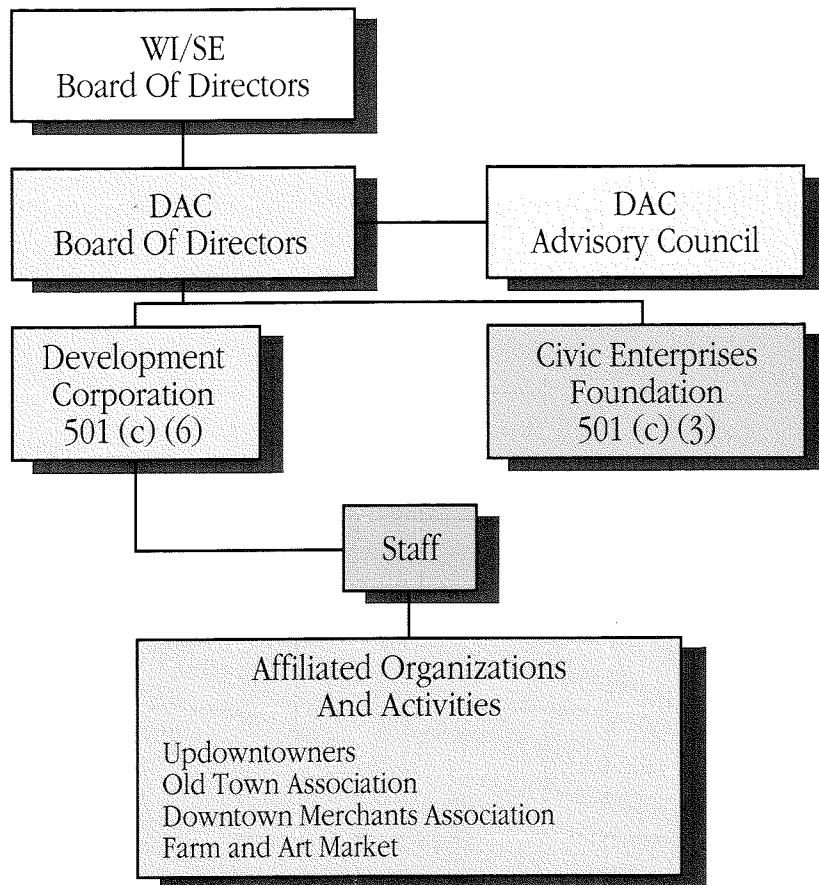
William Street: William Street is a shopping street with a narrow cross-section. The public planting zone in this corridor shall extend from the curb to 5 feet from back of curb. The street tree selected for William Street is the Thornless Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triancanthos* 'Inermis') planted 25 feet (on center).



Proposed light fixture and tree spacing standards

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DOWNTOWN ACTION CORPORATION



THANK YOU

A community plan of this scope doesn't just happen. It develops when public-spirited people have the opportunity to freely contribute ideas and work together to shape them into a living form.

Nobody kept track of the thousands of hours volunteers spent doing exactly that, with no public recognition. They gave generously of their time and talents because they care about our community and its future.

In recognition of their involvement and valuable contributions, WI/SE extends its sincere appreciation.

The real thanks to those who participated, however, will come a day at a time. As, through your efforts, you watch downtown Wichita radiate with a new energy.

WICHITA

WORKING WONDERS.

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