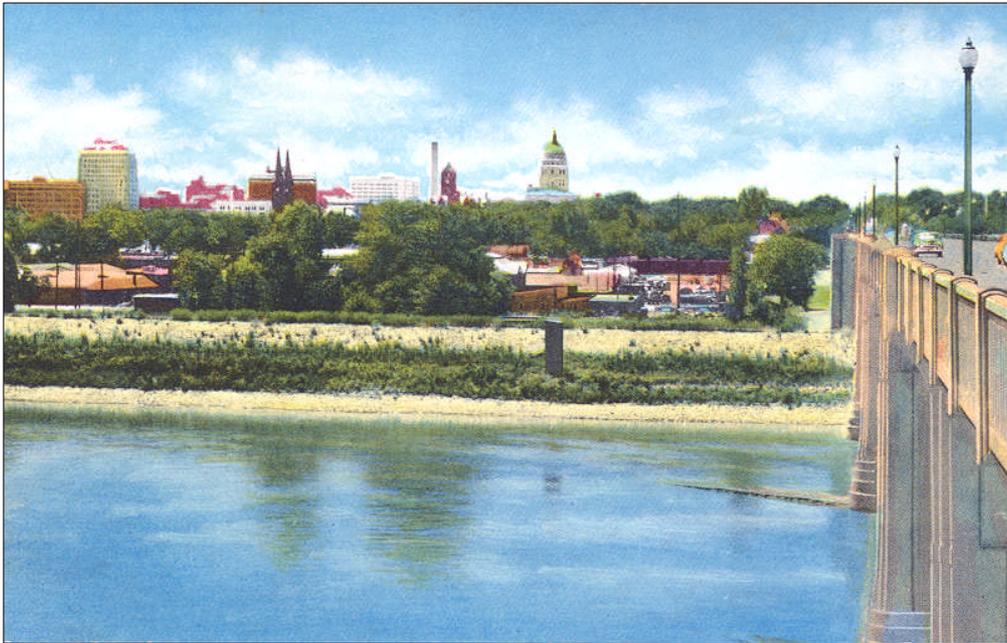


Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department

# **DOWNTOWN TOPEKA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**



**Topeka-Shawnee County  
Metropolitan Planning Department  
Topeka, Kansas  
2000**



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development of this plan began early in 1999, as a collaboration between the City, a Downtown Advisory Committee, and Lu Hou, an urban designer and principal of the firm, Cityscapes. This working group established an overall vision for the future, and articulated goals to achieve it. The document itself has evolved through the discussion and analysis of relevant issues, and represents the distilled essence of everyone's hard work. Additional thanks are due to Downtown Topeka, Inc. and the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce for their support. Special acknowledgement is due to the Kansas State University students of the Downtown Topeka Collaborative studio, under the professorship of Stephanie Rolley, David Sachs and James Dubois, several of whose drawings illustrate this document as noted below.

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## **DOWNTOWN TOPEKA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **1. Introduction**

Topeka's most impressive single asset is its Downtown. It includes the City's best access to the river, the seat of government, over 35,000 daily workers, first-class streetscaping, over 9,400,000 square feet of office space, and appraises for more than \$350,000,000. As shopping moved out of the central city, however, Downtown began to decline, shifting from subsidizing property tax revenues for the general citizenry to demanding needed improvements that they could not afford. Topeka has seen that disinvestment process continue over the past twenty years, but the tide of capital investment is beginning to reverse its flow. New shops and new construction now characterize the area, and new development plans are being detailed. This plan will provide a framework for those development activities, both through examples and by direct policy recommendations.



*Downtown Topeka ~ Looking Southwest*

Downtowns around the country are being reborn, not as strictly commercial and office centers, but as real communities, with a mix of uses that make them “hot” spots for residential development, and the services that residents need. In a recent article, Neal Peirce, of the Washington Post Writers Group, reminds us that “rebuilding our center cities for the new century isn’t just nice, it’s critical for our economy and our soul.”

Economically, Topeka is part of the Northeastern Kansas economy, and needs to be able to compete directly with its counterparts in the

region. In that sense, Downtown sets an image for Topeka and Shawnee County, and becomes our “product brand.” Spiritually, a strong city center provides a common meeting place for the community as a community. As Mr. Peirce observes, “Civic societies do require a shared space, one of some grandeur, quality, culture, stimulation and fun.” Today, Topeka has the opportunity to accomplish that dream Downtown.

Granted, redeveloping Downtown Topeka seems a daunting task at first blush. The extent of the district considered to constitute “Downtown” is huge for a city Topeka’s size, and the false-starts of past years have discouraged many. When considered with the larger context of the regional economy, however, it takes on the appearance of an opportunity long overlooked.

A series of meetings with the Downtown Advisory Committee, administrators, business people and designers have served to spotlight latent resources that Topeka can rejuvenate, and new opportunities based on successful models from around the world. Through the efforts of both volunteers and paid



specialists, a clearer image is developing from a new perspective, and that image is one of the rebirth of Downtown as the governmental, business and entertainment center of the Topeka region.

In the following pages, Downtown Topeka will be defined, analyzed and generally reconsidered. Its future will be envisioned, and a path laid out to realize that vision. Certainly, there are many possible alternative paths, and course adjustments will be necessary over the coming years, so revisions to this plan are only to be expected. Economic growth in the economies of Kansas City and Wichita, coupled with the emerging dynamics of the “new economy” will only serve to emphasize Topeka’s role as a governmental and business center, with Downtown Topeka at its core. While no one can foretell the future, the purpose of this plan is to position Topeka to take advantage of both future development opportunities and conservation of existing cultural and historic resources.

### Looking Ahead & Defining a Vision

The visioning process begins with a dream. By defining details and refining ideas, dreaming becomes planning. And by dogged determination, plans become realities.

#### **“Welcome to Topeka’s Birthday Celebration, 2015!”**

*As visitors arrive and Topeka celebrates the first fifteen years of the new millennium, the scene that greets them Downtown is familiar, yet radically different from 20 years before. In 1999, need for improvement was widespread due to vacant stores and vacant offices, and in a perception that nothing could be done to really improve the Downtown economy. Even an expensive streetscaping program failed to attract investors.*

*In 2015, those who failed to make reservations early are compelled to stay on the west end of town, because all of the rooms Downtown have been reserved for weeks. Shops along Quincy and Kansas Avenues are filled with specialty items, and the restaurants in between offer shoppers a variety of eatables and potables. Hawkins Alley still shows signs of the jazz festival last weekend, and the new seafood restaurant on Kansas Avenue has the best seafood in the state. After the shows at TPAC or the Jayhawk Theatre, relaxing with some live jazz or blues rounds out a full day. Or one can trolley up to North Topeka, and for an evening of Bluegrass or Country Swing. And another band is playing in Oakland, too. It will be a long weekend!*



*Kansas Avenue Redevelopment Concept*

Downtown Topeka has certainly seen a sea-change in its prospects between 1999 and 2015, but it was hardly as easy as it seems in retrospect. There were times when the doomsayers seemed to be prophets instead, but their only accurate predictions are now seen as self-fulfilling prophecies. But those who ignored the negativity, and those who simply didn’t know any better, dove in and made it happen anyway. The restored facades along Kansas Avenue remind everyone of “home,” regardless where they came from, and the loft



*apartments above the stores have become rather pricey. For that matter, south of the Kansas Judicial Center, townhouses and offices mingle with several new neighborhoods of townhouses and single-family homes, providing something of an enclave for attorneys and other professionals who work Downtown.*

*Quite apart from the commercial development, but feeding it nevertheless, are the new office buildings along Interstate 70 and Topeka Boulevard. With Billard Field just minutes away, and with its fiber-optical communications systems, Downtown Topeka has become an attractive corporate alternative to Kansas City and Johnson County. And the professional managers brought in by those companies have really made the Ward-Meade and Old Town Neighborhoods trendy addresses as well.*

*As we make our way over to the Kansas River levee, the trail system allows us to walk for miles around town, either back through the 8<sup>th</sup> Street entertainment center or across to the north bank across the pedestrian bridge. The levee trail gives us a great view of the waterfront development that has converted warehouse space into condominiums, and an adjacent office tower that provides both shops and green park space. And the new Topeka Trolley is now up and running, traveling Kansas Avenue to Topeka's "Left Bank" in North Topeka, and serving as much as an adventure as a mode of transportation.*

A few years ago, this hypothetical narrative would have seemed absurd. But that absurdity has been replaced with a realization that it *should* happen just as described. The challenge facing Topeka in 2000, however, is to articulate that vision and translate it into action in an orderly manner. Some individual items that need action can be considered as soon as the players can be assembled. Other items will take their own time to mature. As with any dynamic system, the only constant is change!

Geographically, Topeka's "Downtown" covers nearly two square miles. The area considered herein will be bounded generally by the Expo Center on the South through the Historic North Topeka Entertainment District on the North, and by the Shunga Trail on the East, with revitalized Center City homes west of Topeka Blvd. Within that area, Topekans will be living, working, dining, shopping, playing, strolling, as well as, enjoying entertainment of all kinds. They will stroll on sidewalks with "hardscapes" that include benches and lighting reminiscent of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Similarly, the buildings in which they live, work, dine, shop, or play, whether new or refurbished, will reflect a traditional architecture and scale of years past. The infrastructure that sustains development will be renewed and modern, however, incorporating the latest in technology with the best of traditional and modern design. Everywhere one looks, there will be trees, shrubs, planters, fountains and art, to shade, soothe, and celebrate. It will be Topeka's neighborhood, "the place to be" for offices, dining, entertainment, specialty-boutique shopping, and even living. It will provide Topeka's "front parlor" to the State and window on the World!

The vibrant creation of this refurbished, rebuilt, and revitalized people-place requires individuals, businesses, and local governments to work in concert. With an eye to attracting private investment, public-private partnerships, public investment, inter-governmental cooperation and support, and - last but not least - private entrepreneurship, must all be coordinated and focused on a common set of goals. The community must be dedicated to creating a quality environment in which we will all thrive. There are many steps to take, and they can't all be taken in the first year...or the first five years. We must figuratively and physically concentrate our efforts, establish critical masses of activity, and make sure each initiative enables additional steps toward realization of our new Downtown. This Plan will serve to guide that process.

The following pages paint a more specific picture of where we are today, as well as a general idea of where we expect the various types of development to be concentrated Downtown, including



dining, entertainment, specialty retail, office, and residential activities. More important, the Plan discusses some of the tools that need to be either refined or added to our toolbox so that we can turn this plan into a living, breathing reality. Finally, the Plan sets goals and identifies strategies to guide us, emphasizing what we must achieve in the early years to provide the foundation for the necessary development and investment down the line. This Plan will be a working guide. Both the Plan and the actions it stimulates must be revisited and reviewed frequently, and accommodate specific new activities designed to build on accomplishments and to carry the Plan forward. The following listing summarizes the plan's key objectives, and strategies calculated to achieve the vision:

### **Objectives**

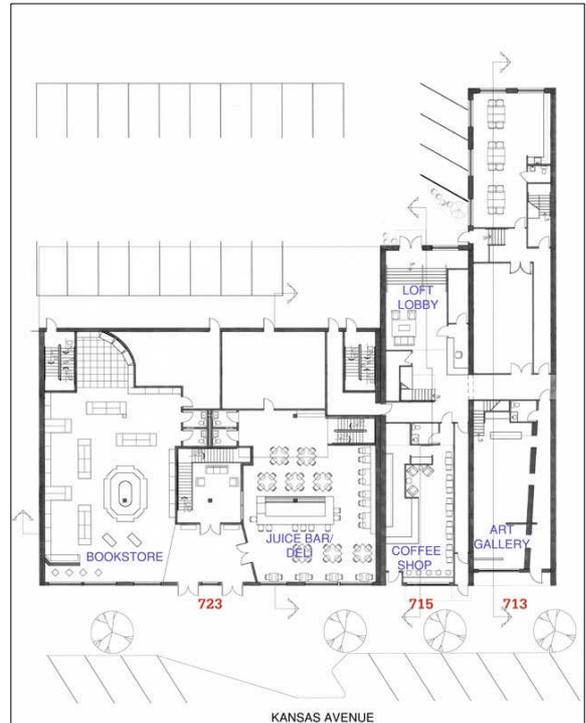
- Develop exciting, family-oriented cultural and entertainment venues to make Downtown a place for 24-hour, year-round learning and fun activities.
- Develop a pedestrian-friendly environment and a sense of public space Downtown, for celebrations of its role as host to the State Capitol and of the City's history and cultural heritage.
- Encourage mixed-income urban housing development, with high-quality living standards.
- Enhance the streetscape and develop an attractive visual character.
- Develop a safe, clean, convenient and comfortable urban environment that will retain existing businesses and attract new development.
- Identify development sites for major office / administrative centers.
- Recapture targeted specialty and boutique retail activities Downtown, to strengthen the economy and add to the urban quality of the area.

### **Urban Design Strategies**

- Coordinate development projects with one another.
- Ensure that new development both enhances and is compatible with the State of Kansas Capital Complex.
- Make aggressive and creative efforts to retain existing retail businesses and recruit new ones – particularly brand name stores and specialty retail; duplication of department stores already on the Wanamaker Corridor should not be encouraged Downtown.
- Conserve historic facades.
- Build new development on the basis of existing buildings and infrastructure, protecting the old and promoting it along with the new.
- Maintain the present sense of human scale in new development.
- Design new structures to be aesthetically compatible with older buildings.
- Guide future mixed-use development gradually to Van Buren Street, creating a capital-city community boulevard, connecting the Capitol to the Kansas River.
- Encourage mixed uses and diversity to create an adaptable and cohesive community, and a sustainable business environment.
- Develop Topeka Boulevard as a major office corridor.
- Encourage infill development and the redevelopment or renovation of old buildings, especially along both sides of Kansas Avenue.
- Connect entertainment venues to one another by wayfinding and street signage.
- Create landscaped streetscapes to unify Downtown as a whole.
- Develop continuous pedestrian streets that will link proposed projects to existing activity centers.



- Develop trails to link the newly-developed areas to the older ones, the parks to the river, and people to one another.
  - Develop a pedestrian-friendly public transportation system that connects venues in and around Downtown.
  - Develop a series of outdoor plazas and open spaces as public gathering spaces, each with its distinctive streetscape.
- Develop attractive cultural and entertainment places to celebrate the capital area’s history and cultural heritage.
    - Develop parks on both sides of the Kansas River to celebrate its role in forging the community.
    - Develop cultural and entertainment venues as anchors to attract new development.
    - Encourage small business development.
  - Protect and enhance the neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown core area.
    - Develop high quality urban housing.
    - Provide incentives to preserve, rehabilitate and reuse historic buildings, which should be considered non-renewable resources in the community.
    - Encourage the development of loft apartments and the rehabilitation of existing apartments over commercial spaces.



*Integrated Redevelopment Concept*

**Looking Back & Gaining Perspective**

Downtowns across America underwent dramatic change beginning in the 1950s as retail enterprise shifted from the center of town to suburban shopping centers, both strip and mall. Many center cities were robbed of their principal economic base, quickly becoming hollow shells of deteriorating cores. Topeka’s downtown also lost it’s retail base - first to White Lakes Mall and new neighborhood centers on the south and west sides of town, and then to the regional retail facilities that developed in the late 1980s along Wanamaker Road. Buoyed by a continuing strong office base, however, Topeka’s downtown fared far better than many city centers across the country.

In the 1980s and 1990s, cities around the country began to recognize the important contribution a vibrant downtown makes to the overall economic well-being of their communities. Many of those cities set about recreating attractive, fun places to be, often most successfully by utilizing the assets that were already in place in their center cities. The goal was not to recreate downtown precisely as it was in the 1940s and 1950s - few, if any, downtowns are likely to be regional retail centers again - but they can still fill the role of the entire city’s common neighborhood, with it’s own unique character defined by the architecture of it’s remaining old structures. The avenues chosen to revitalize downtowns around the country are varied, but most involve dining and entertainment districts that also soon include specialty and boutique retail. Those developments are typically followed by urban housing. Whenever downtowns are safe, clean, pretty, and full of activity at all hours of the day, many people want to live in or near them. That observation is especially true in downtowns that are also office centers, such as Topeka.



Cities have encouraged building owners to refurbish their building facades to “show off” their original architecture and design, sometimes by providing incentives. Attention also has been given to “streetscape” improvements, from brick sidewalks, to benches, period light fixtures, and landscaping - especially landscaping! Some communities have invested millions in ventures, from ball parks to aquariums to encourage their citizens and visitors to come back downtown. Such enterprises are intended to put the “feet on the street” required to encourage entrepreneurs to invest in the restaurants, clubs, and boutique shopping that make being in downtown an event that can’t be duplicated anywhere else in anybody else’s hometown.

As it enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Topeka possesses a solid foundation on which to base the revitalization of its Downtown. There are already more than thirty thousand people working for both public and private employers in downtown each day. In the late 1980’s, the community spent several millions on a truly attractive and quality streetscape on Kansas Avenue from 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Streets. During the 1990’s we restored the Municipal Auditorium, creating the exciting Topeka Performing Arts Center, or TPAC. Most important, Downtown Topeka is the home of the beautiful Capitol of the State of Kansas, a huge bonus to be added to the unique assets of Downtown’s existing late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century architecture. Still, Topeka’s downtown is far from the vital, 24 hour a day, people place we expect it will be in 2025.



*Capitol of Kansas*

## **2. Current Conditions & Mixed-Use Districts**

In some respects, the physical structure of Downtown Topeka has changed little over the past twenty years. Although much of the retail trade once conducted in the area has moved elsewhere, most of the storefronts that housed those businesses remain, although often suffering from deferred maintenance. The market statistics for the area are generally, good, however, and merchants are interested in locating in the area, as recent new store openings in the 900-block of Kansas Avenue testify.

### **Downtown Districts**

Downtown Topeka’s physical structure is most easily visualized as consisting of several districts, nestled together and serving one another. The organization of this plan will consider each of the districts in turn, under each heading. The “mixed-use” nature of these districts makes any definitive listing of permitted uses difficult, and their boundaries somewhat indistinct, but relatively higher concentrations of use types are found in some areas more than others. While each may contain sub-elements, and mixed uses are encouraged, the general classifications will make it easier to consider how each functions and how it needs to integrate with the others.

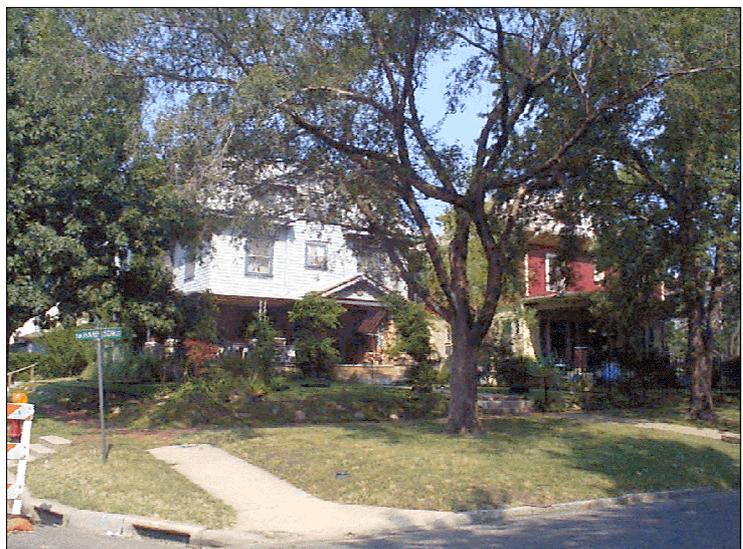
**Government Core Districts** – Government Core Districts include both administrative and support uses, whether for local, state or federal agencies. Planning in these areas must consider the needs of agencies, in terms of both access and security, as well as jurisdictional considerations. Designs for development need to center on the Capitol itself, and views of the dome should be protected. The Capital Area Plaza Authority, for example, is responsible for many development activities within its boundaries, and its



planning activities must be considered in the context of “Downtown” in the aggregate. Moreover, governmental investments in facilities such as the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site will bring tourist dollars into Downtown, emphasizing the need for a contextual, mixed-use approach to planning efforts.

**Commercial Districts** – Combining retailing with entertainment, commercial districts need to function as “social support centers” for Downtown. As shopping itself comes to be considered a leisure activity, the type and mix of activities associated with Downtown Topeka needs to reflect changes in retailing. Cultural amenities act as “people generators” to attract visitors, and generate economic activity in their own right, but they also generate the foot-traffic that retailers and restaurateurs need to prosper. Commercial / Entertainment Districts in the area will provide the catalyst for social activity, and a basis for developing enough residential demand to justify townhouse development.

**Office Districts** – Of all activities traditionally associated with Downtown Topeka, the office sector has remained strong over the past 25 years, and is expected to expand over the next 25. The location and intensity of office projects needs to be considered carefully, and access to transportation for employees will be critical for healthy development. Accommodating workers’ vehicles, both on the streets and in parking facilities, is a perennial issue. New office development will require new parking and circulation patterns to be considered, and as needs change over time the infrastructure needs to be able to reflect new sets of demands.



*Current Office & Residential Uses in Orchard Place*

**Residential Districts** – Ultimately, a healthy Downtown includes a residential element, ensuring a 24-hour-a-day community. Marketed primarily to professional office workers, facilities also will accommodate young workers just starting out, and retirees who wish to forego yard work and concentrate on living. Overall, residential districts in the area will support higher densities, emphasizing townhouses and condominiums along with apartments, but will also accommodate larger single-family homes and selected office or commercial uses.

**Industrial Districts** – Some industrial uses are inextricably tied to Downtown Topeka, and the Burlington Northern / Santa Fe Shops are an excellent example. Adams Business Forms, Hallmark Cards, Inc. and others also represent major investments in the area. While relocation for some industrial uses may be seen as desirable in the long run, an economic rationale for such a drastic decision will take time to develop. Accommodating industrial uses in high-density, high-energy environments can be and is done in cities across the country, but careful planning is necessary to balance community goals, public safety, economic reality and policy objectives.

**Infrastructure** – Within and between each of the districts just described, a complex system of roads, utilities, parks, sidewalks and public amenities are necessary to enable development to occur. Developed and maintained through collaborative arrangements, which include all levels of government as well as the private sector, infrastructure provides the framework without which nothing else is possible.



**Downtown Environment**

In the past few years, several studies have been completed to establish base-line information regarding Topeka generally, and Downtown specifically. Additional studies are currently underway as well, which will help to bring the community vision for Downtown more sharply into focus. A few statistics will help to set the stage for consideration of those studies, and provide a basis for evaluating the status quo:



*Kansas Avenue ~ ca. 1950*

Downtown contains:

- about 1 sq. mi.,
- a total of 806,000 sq. ft. of commercial space, with 131,000 sq. ft. (16%) vacant,
- a total of 4,600,000 sq. ft. of office space (including governmental offices), with 200,000 sq. ft (9%) of private office space vacant,
- some 35,000 daily employees working Downtown,
- a total appraised valuation of about \$350,000,000,
- the Capitol of the State of Kansas.

Additionally, it contains an extensive investment in infrastructure, both public and private, that is presently being inventoried and evaluated. Utilities and streetscaping improvements are only part of the investment already in place Downtown, and the importance of its architectural heritage to redevelopment activities is being articulated.

**Physical Structure**

Somewhat typically, Downtown Topeka's physical structure is a mixture of old and new, decrepit and state-of-the-art. While its wealth of old buildings represent assets, with their appealing architecture and human scale, many have also been neglected. Outdated floorplans and mechanical systems, deferred maintenance, and code compliance issues have kept much of the available space Downtown underutilized for years. Those issues are being addressed, and renewed interest by investors makes those discussions extremely timely. Similarly, sewerage and telecommunications systems are being replaced and upgraded, with the common goal of making Downtown Topeka both an inviting place to do business, but an efficient one as well.

**Government Core Districts** – Federal, state and local governments are all based Downtown, although satellite offices abound around the City. While federal offices center around the Courthouse at 5<sup>th</sup> and Kansas Avenue, and local government offices are centered at 7<sup>th</sup> and Quincy, each also has facilities elsewhere Downtown. These facilities are generally in quite good condition, characterized by both new construction and well-maintained existing facilities.

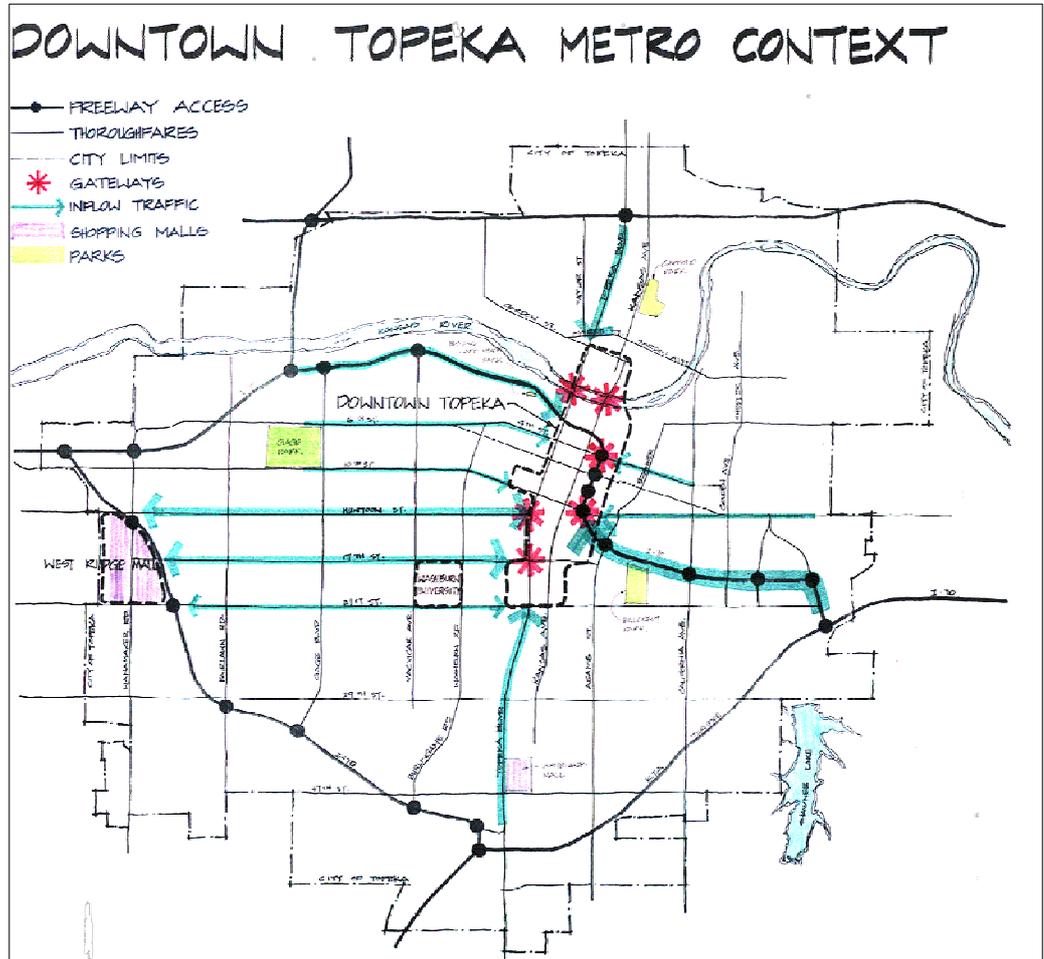
By far the largest governmental presence Downtown is the State of Kansas, including the Capital Plaza Authority. New construction and recent purchases by the state demonstrate its commitment to remain



Downtown, but also help to maintain property values for private owners. In addition, the investment currently being made to restore the Capitol reinforces its role as a node of human activity and the center of political power. An inventory of spaces occupied by the state, whether state-owned or leased from private owners, illustrates the importance of its role, and will form a basis for planning future development.

**Commercial Districts –**

While many of the storefronts that once lined Kansas Avenue have gone, replaced by parking, the commercial architecture still extant is impressive. Some storefronts are vacant, and others need substantial repair, but the basic fabric of a commercial core is still intact. A key element of the plan focuses on filling storefronts along Kansas Avenue with commercial businesses, and the spaces above with residential and office uses that do not require street-level access by the general public. Entertainment venues are critical to healthy commercial districts, as exemplified by the 8<sup>th</sup> Street entertainment development project, which itself is critical to commercial development Downtown.



**Office Districts –** The condition of Downtown office space varies widely, and includes some spaces that have not been noticeably altered for generations. Even new spaces that are commercially available tend to suffer from the slow market, and Class A space that rents for less than \$15 per sq. ft. in Downtown Topeka would not be considered Class A in other regional markets. Increased demand for quality office space would result in increased rental rates, and provide an economic incentive both to upgrade existing office space and for construction of additional space to compete with top quality space in the region. While consolidation of State offices demonstrates a commitment to Downtown, the spaces vacated will add to the excess supply currently being experienced. Moreover, most of that vacant office space lies north of 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Efforts to create a demand to fill existing space can also help recruit immigrant corporations, which may choose to build new facilities if inadequate space is available.



**Residential Districts** – The existing housing Downtown and in adjacent neighborhoods is generally scattered and neglected. Many fine homes and apartment blocks still stand west of Topeka Boulevard and north of 10<sup>th</sup> Street, but the area south of the Kansas Judicial Center contains many vacant lots and has seen substantial disinvestment. While the former area will best be a target for traditional neighborhood revitalization efforts, the latter will be considered for its potential as up-scale housing at higher densities than Topeka typically sees. Both of these areas are positioned to provide housing for professionals and support staff in Downtown offices, and potentially represent a large shift in property valuations over the course of this plan.



*Santa Fe Shops ~ ca. 1950*

**Industrial Districts** – Investment in industrial resources has managed to maintain a healthy pace Downtown, where modern facilities enjoy easy access to transportation and labor. As long-range planning for the metropolitan area identifies and develops additional industrial sites, with specialized infrastructure and improved access to inter-modal transportation facilities, some relocation of industrial uses is likely over the next quarter-century. Some facilities, such as the railroad yards, are literally tied to the land, and cannot be relocated. Others may find new locations, or may be rendered obsolete by new technologies. In either case, the proximity of industrial uses to non-industrial districts Downtown, and the interface between them, presents both opportunities and challenges. Downtown's

healthy industrial sector is an asset to the community, and its investments are important to the aggregate tax base, but not all of the facilities have kept pace with trade developments. As these facilities continue to age, consideration must be given to mitigating the negative effects these activities may have, while maintaining the jobs and other benefits to the community.

**Waterfront** – Although the City Park once stood there by the riverfront, Topeka has been cut off from the Kansas River since the construction of the levee. Apart from the greenspace it provides, waterfront properties should be among the most expensive found Downtown. Today, they are given over to industrial uses, including governmental functions, none of which depend on river access. Plans for a levee trail and additional riverfront park space are under way in North Topeka, but efforts on the southern shore will require more time. The southern shore is more apt to take on an urban character as well, due partly to its existing infrastructure but also to market demands, should residential or office development begin to acquire land. Presently, however, the area is made up chiefly of storage, steel yards and similar, related facilities.

**Infrastructure** – The infrastructure Downtown mirrors most other facilities, contrasting the cutting-edge of the year 2000 with that of the Nineteenth Century. Maintenance and improvements over the generations have generally kept pace, and an on-going program of replacement and upgrading keeps Topeka competitive. High-speed fiber communications links, pedestrian- and vehicle-friendly walkways and trafficways, and state of the art stormwater management techniques exemplify improvements either planned or under way. Kansas Avenue boasts as fine a sidewalk system as anywhere, intersection improvements are under



construction at Huntoon and Topeka Boulevard, and both transit and parking facilities are being planned. Gaps in the walkway system, including trail linkages, are identified, and standards developed to extend walkways south to the South Kansas-Quincy area, and laterally from Kansas Avenue to link it with businesses on intersecting streets. Plans to upgrade the stormwater control system Downtown are being developed, and will focus on retention and filtration using low-maintenance, natural means as part of the Governor's Water Quality Initiative.

**Economic Conditions**

Every community has an economic base that serves its residents. The economy in Downtown Topeka was very stable for generations prior to World War II, and it remained strong during the restructuring after the War. Since the 1960s, however, improvements in communications and basic shifts in the American economy from farming and manufacturing to a service basis resulted in some dislocations. The retail base moved to malls and strip centers, the types of office space preferred by businesses rendered many buildings functionally obsolete, and the advance of the suburbs robbed Downtown of its indigenous market.

**Markets** – The real estate market Downtown has shown life in recent months, after an extended period of stability. The rising level of activity will help to raise rents to a level that can support further development.

**Office** - Approximately 3.1 million sq. ft. of office space in the Business Improvement District (BID) is privately owned, representing 67% of the total at a vacancy rate of 9%. In 1997, ZHA, Inc. and Barton-Aschman completed a report entitled, *Downtown Topeka Economic Assessment and Development Strategy*. In its conclusions, the report noted that, "The greatest constraint to office development in the Downtown is development costs. Full service rents are currently \$12.50 to 13.50 per sq. ft. This rent level cannot support the construction of a Class-A building with structured parking. To be a competitive office development location, the City must proactively pursue joint development arrangements that result in lowering private sector development costs."



*Pedestrian Alley Concept*

**Retail** - There are approximately 806,000 sq. ft. of retail space in the Business Improvement District (BID), of which about 131,000 sq. ft. is vacant, or 16%. For comparison, vacancy rates at West Ridge Mall have never been lower than 10% for a significant period of time, and of Topeka's nearly 3 million sq. ft. of total retail space, over two-thirds of the Class-A space lies along the Wanamaker Corridor. Overall, the City is drawing sales from outside its boundaries, but the percentage of sales made Downtown stands in stark contrast to the City as a whole. A 1995 study entitled, *City Pull Factors for Fiscal Year 1995* rated Topeka third among first-class cities in the state, its pull factor of 1.65 indicating that retail sales are 65%



above average for a city its size. The market potential exists for select specialty retailing Downtown.

*Residential* – No statistics are available for Downtown Topeka as a separate entity, but in the community as a whole housing starts have averaged about 500 annually over the past 10 years. Much of the new growth has occurred west and southwest of the City, developing along with the Wanamaker Corridor, and overall some 90% of new homes have been priced below \$150,000. At present, apartments do exist Downtown, and good quality single-family homes still stand within its bounds. At the end of 1998, the Topeka apartment market consisted of approximately 17,000 units, with a vacancy rate of 6.1%. Over the preceding 10 years, demand for apartment space held steady with the rate of new construction, while rents have increased at an annual rate of 2.4% since 1995, averaging about \$0.65 per sq. ft. Redevelopment efforts in the South Kansas-Quincy area will help spur demand for additional residential units to the west of Kansas Avenue, and even west of Topeka Boulevard. Additional office development will also help to spur the market for *housing* Downtown.

**Employment** – Currently, nearly 35,000 people work Downtown on a daily basis, and this plan presumes adding another 5,000 jobs over its term. In 1997, 8,000 state workers were employed in Shawnee County, and most of them Downtown. With a projected growth rate of 7.6% by 2005, an additional 1,800 state workers will find themselves working Downtown. Coupled with the \$43 million Signature Office Building and the \$12 million Myriad Building, as well as acquisition of the SBG Building (\$18 million) and refurbishing the Memorial Building (\$5 million), the State of Kansas is a major player Downtown. As noted in a recent study by Richard Caplan (see the *Economic Development Strategy* summary, page 59), “This visibility and concentration of public employment can serve as the foundation for expanded private employment and office development and residential growth.”

### 3. OBJECTIVES & GOALS

Defining a vision for Downtown Topeka provides a conceptual framework for redevelopment, but goals provide clear directions to achieve our vision. The Downtown Advisory Committee articulated an overall goal for the area:

**Reestablish Downtown Topeka as a family-oriented, economically sound, culturally vital and visually attractive regional destination – the center and symbol of Topeka and Shawnee County.**

As a goal for the 25-year horizon of this plan, that statement is fine. In the near term, however, some additional focus will assist both public and private sectors in planning.

**Objectives** – Each District has a unique set of circumstances that influence its development. Governmental Districts, for example, are directly influenced in their development by their budgetary allocations, while private sector investors are influenced by market demand. Both are economic forces, but approach development considerations from different perspectives. Strategic planning will help to identify “critical path” issues, and separate them into those that can or should be accomplished right away, and those that must mature before they can be implemented. Therefore, some short-term goals are noted below, to be accomplished within 5 years, for each of the districts in this plan. Long-term goals will be considered separately, and are intended for consideration after a critical mass of activity and investment has been established by meeting short-term goals. It should be noted that the goals for individual districts will have a tendency to overlap, just as the mixed uses being encouraged will result in commercial development in



Office Districts and offices in Residential Districts. Goals marked with a  are recently invigorated initiatives.

**Government Core Districts** – As the State Capital, Topeka hosts state government, and federal offices as well. Although the City has little direct control over senior branches of government, it does have a responsibility to ensure that all branches can operate efficiently. Moreover, all branches have their constituencies, which must be served in addition to the needs of local residents. Objectives and goals for governmental core areas are therefore divided into two categories:

“Administrative” and “Infrastructural.”

Administrative objectives and goals consist of regulatory and policy decisions, and the procedures for implementing them. In this instance, “Infrastructural” refers to all government capital investment, including buildings but primarily concerned with traditional elements such as sewers and streets.



*Topeka City Hall*

Federal plans for the short-term center on the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site. Eventually projected to draw as many as 1 50,000 visitors annually, this National Park is scheduled to hold its grand opening in 2004, to acknowledge the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Supreme Court Decision in that landmark civil rights case. Development of the Monroe School building and adjacent playground as a museum facility would be enhanced by reestablishing residential uses around the school, south of Williams Magnet School. At the same time, ensuring pedestrian and vehicular linkages to the hotels and restaurants of the South Kansas-Quincy District to the north, as well as to the Amtrak station, will help make the site more accessible.

As the largest governmental entity Downtown, the State of Kansas has an important role to play in determining how Downtown functions. The *Capital Plaza Development Plan* provides a perspective view of the State’s efforts, but those efforts extend beyond the Capital Plaza. Completion of the Signature Office Building at 10<sup>th</sup> & Kansas, as well as the Myriad Building at 5<sup>th</sup> and Van Buren, are emblematic of the state’s goal to consolidate state agencies in Topeka’s Downtown. While those are the only construction projects currently under consideration, they are well under way. The purchase of additional buildings and facilities around the Capitol further concentrate state efforts. The Downtown plan must ensure that state operations are supported with adequate parking and accessibility, and that new development is very compatible with state buildings.

Local governmental agencies are located in a variety of spaces within the Downtown area, although they are concentrated between Quincy and Monroe Streets, straddling 7<sup>th</sup> Street, where the main offices and public meeting facilities are located. Within the context of this Plan, further substantial expansion of local government operations is not considered likely in the short-term.



Capital improvement projects in the area are scheduled through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and are primarily limited to maintenance and repairs to buildings and infrastructure, which are considered elsewhere in this plan. The administration of development processes is within the purview of local government, however, and adapting those requirements for simplicity and efficiency will help spur development. Implementing design guidelines within an administrative review process will also help to inspire confidence in investors. Infrastructural improvements that directly support collaborative efforts by multiple property owners should also be considered, and funding options identified for them.

“Redevelopment Authorities” represent an approach that many local governments take to manage development. Local Kansas governments are somewhat constrained under current state laws, however, which do not authorize the establishment of such an authority to acquire and develop property. It would operate much like a port authority or the Capital Plaza Authority (see K.S.A. 75-2237 et seq.), and could plan and authorize development projects. Typically, the members of an authority are appointed to represent the community, and final actions by the authority generally require approval by the appointive body. Establishing a Downtown Redevelopment Authority would make it easier for developers to evaluate and refine project plans, allowing final deliberations to be conducted in a focused manner on a mature proposal.

#### *Administrative*

**Goal:** Work with the State of Kansas to identify appropriate locations for state facilities Downtown, and alternative sites for those necessary activities deemed incompatible with long-term Downtown development plans.

**Strategy:** Identify key personnel and organize regular opportunities to meet and discuss planning and development issues or projects.

**Goal:** Provide efficient design review (Architectural, landscaping and streetscaping) and project approval.

**Strategy:** Assess needs and regulations, using the results to develop efficient procedures.

**Goal:** Bridge gaps in the development process and find solutions when conflicts arise.

**Strategy:** Establish an ombudsman position in the Planning Department to coordinate and facilitate redevelopment activities.

**Goal:** Make code compliance understandable and smooth the process for both contractors and inspection staff.

**Strategy:** Use a collaboration of area architects, academic and national experts, assess the needs of the community, so that appropriate procedures can be developed. Develop training for code compliance, targeting contractors, developers and City staff.

**Goal:** Implement a Downtown Redevelopment Authority.

**Strategy:** Introduce and support the required legislation.



*Shawnee County Courthouse*

#### *Infrastructural*

**Goal:** Redevelop the Monroe neighborhood in general accordance with the Cultural Landscape Guidelines adopted by the National Park Service for the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site.



*Strategy:* Collaborate regularly with the National Park Service to develop and adopt a Monroe School Environs overlay.

**Goal:** Enhance connectivity between distant destinations Downtown.

*Strategy:* Expand trolley service to interconnect Downtown, and connect Downtown to hotels, from morning through much of the night.

**Commercial Districts** – The nature of commercial development has changed as Downtown has evolved, and redefining Downtown’s niche in the regional economy will help make it complimentary with commercial development along Wanamaker, not directly competitive. Shopping has become a leisure activity, once the basic provisions of canned goods and paper products have been stockpiled, and designing a commercial district to also function as a diversion makes it a fun place to be. Such initiatives as the Façade Improvement Program will assist businesses in putting on their best face, and a plan for business development will help to identify preferred businesses that will complete a complimentary mix.

**Goal:** Coordinate Capital Improvement Program (CIP) with Plan priorities and strategies.

*Strategy:* Coordinate through the budget process with Department heads and elected officials.

**Goal:** Coordinate permitting and compliance procedures to make the Plan’s explicit goals the easiest objective to achieve, and counter-productive development the most difficult, to make Downtown competitive with suburban development.

*Strategy:* Develop design standards that advance policy goals, and develop procedures for review and compliance that implement those standards in a fair and timely manner.

**Goal:** Solicit entrepreneurs to come Downtown and fill gaps in the Downtown business mix.

*Strategy:* Research current retailing and marketing trends, evaluate existing businesses, and develop a marketing program to target those missing links.

**Goal:** Improve the physical appearance of the storefronts Downtown.

*Strategy:* Using grant funds from the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing, backed by additional funding through local service organizations, the Façade Improvement Program is being implemented, and targeted on both sides of the River.

*Strategy:* Develop revolving loan fund to help finance façade improvements.

**Goal:** Ensure that new development or redevelopment projects Downtown are compatible.

*Strategy:* Develop architectural design guidelines that encourage compatible construction of high quality, and an efficient administrative review procedure for implementing them.

**Goal:** Develop a “critical mass” of activity to compliment and encourage entertainment district development.

*Strategy:* Focus initial development efforts along Kansas Avenue, and on cross streets up to 8<sup>th</sup> Street, to concentrate activity within comfortable walking distances.

**Goal:** Encourage strolling and window shopping along Kansas Avenue south to 13<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Strategy:* Extend streetscaping down Kansas Avenue to 13<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Goal:** Identify historic buildings that may be eligible for tax credits or other favorable considerations.

*Strategy:* Inventory buildings and structures within 1 block of Kansas Avenue to provide a database of property types and characteristics for potential business developers with the Topeka – Shawnee County Landmarks Commission and Downtown Topeka, Inc.

*Strategy:* Develop a checklist for matching developers with appropriate spaces.

**Goal:** Increase the number of visitors Downtown, both local and from out of town.

*Strategy:* Develop one or more people generators Downtown to draw visitors to the area.

*Strategy:* Increase funding for the Downtown Community Events Program.

*Strategy:* Encourage collaborative efforts between the BID, Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau need to refine a permanent program for developing events Downtown.

**Goal:** Improve the appeal and attraction of Downtown as a safe place to shop, recreate, live and work.



*Strategy:* Increase the number of walking police and BID staff on the street Downtown.

**Office Districts** – Identifying tenants for existing vacant space Downtown needs to be a short-term priority, and improving the process of locating sites for additional construction is also important. Both circulation implications and views of the Capitol, especially from the Interstate, must be considered.

**Goal:** Maintain a locational advantage for Downtown, emphasizing Topeka's importance as a nexus for communications relative to other areas in the region.

*Strategy:* Work with telecommunications corporations to ensure that Downtown Topeka is as state-of-the-art as anywhere else in terms of data access and capacity.

**Goal:** Make Downtown Topeka a magnet for office locations.

*Strategy:* Develop a strategy for identifying, attracting, and retaining office tenants, including a marketing plan and incentives package.

**Goal:** Provide space to accommodate 5,000 additional jobs Downtown, including a parking and/or transportation strategy.

*Strategy:* Develop a strategic plan for developing high-rise office space on the periphery of the Governmental District around the Capitol, with careful consideration of transportation access demands.

*Strategy:* Initiate discussions between development professionals in both public and private sectors, in order to ensure that views of the Capitol are protected, and that all transportation modes flow smoothly throughout the day.

**Goal:** Improve competitive position of Downtown office space with regard to suburban space.

*Strategy:* Develop guidelines for architecture, streetscapes, landscaping and open spaces that will create a competitive physical environment Downtown.



*Western Resources*

**Residential Districts** – A residential element is vital to Downtown's redevelopment, but it must be tailored to the core area. Higher density, mixed-income development in the blocks south of the Kansas Judicial Center and traditional neighborhood development west of Topeka Boulevard will both provide convenient living arrangements for the Downtown workforce. Incorporated in these areas will be small public parks and plazas, to add livability and to improve the overall environment. The high-density residential development should also allow some office uses, as well as larger homes. The traditional neighborhoods should also provide some flexibility in permitted uses, in accordance with the Neighborhood Plan currently under development. Experiences in other communities indicate that residential development of any magnitude will only successfully follow the establishment of a dining and entertainment district. The amenities such districts as the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Entertainment District provide to residents will be within easy walking distance, as will be the offices in which many of these people will work.

**Goal:** Develop new residential areas for professionals working Downtown.

*Strategy:* Develop high-density, mixed use residential district south of the Kansas Judicial Center, emphasizing high standards for construction and design, to support professionals who work Downtown.

*Strategy:* Use administrative mechanisms to assemble land for mixed office and residential development, with community-owned public squares and greenspaces.

**Goal:** Convert vacant spaces in upper floors of older buildings to loft apartments.



*Strategy:* Implement a program to assist commercial property owners in adapting upper floors as residential and/or office spaces, in which obstacles to upper-floor conversions are identified and addressed.

**Goal:** Reinvigorate traditional residential districts adjacent to Downtown.

*Strategy:* Tailor NRA provisions to core area redevelopment.

*Strategy:* Support state tax credit legislation for residential improvements.

*Strategy:* Develop public park, plaza and/or community center to encourage private development and individual investments.

**Goal:** Preserve particularly significant buildings that are poorly sited.

*Strategy:* Establish a program for relocating exceptional residences within neighborhoods in and around Downtown.

**Industrial Districts** – While most of the industrial development in Topeka is expected to be concentrated away from the Downtown, existing operations must be accommodated and integrated into the overall redevelopment strategy. Buffering, freight access and environmental considerations must be considered, as well as possible transition scenarios for redevelopment at a lower intensity of land use.

**Goal:** Match industrial uses with sites appropriate to industry and with surrounding uses.

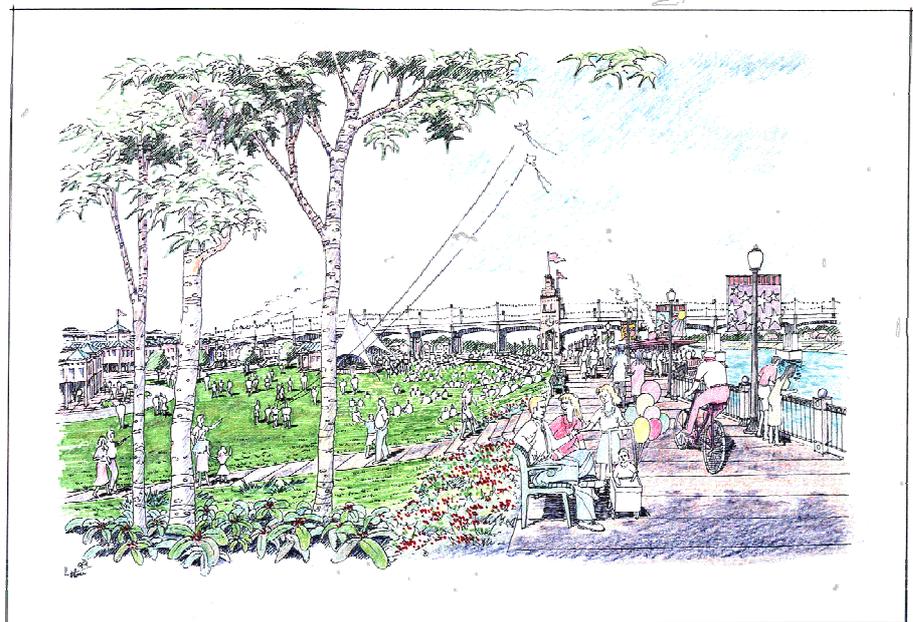
*Strategy:* Inventory industrial uses within the BID to assess their requirements and to locate specific uses at specific locations.

**Goal:** Ensure opportunities for redeveloping industrial sites.

*Strategy:* Develop a program to underwrite relocation and remediation efforts for businesses that wish to relocate outside the BID.

*Strategy:* Develop funding mechanisms to underwrite environmental cleanup costs as well as simple relocation costs.

**Waterfront** – Topekans have been isolated from the Kansas River since the levees were constructed in the 1950s. Development of access locations and riverfront amenities will aid in reconnecting people with the river that located Topeka where it is, and provide an amenity that most cities of this size have already developed. The Army Corps of Engineers has fairly strict guidelines for development within 500 feet of the levee, but those guidelines also provide a context for finding workable solutions, allowing access while



Riverfront Park - Looking west on south levee of Kansas River

Urban Design Consultant: CITYSCAPES

safeguarding the City's flood control system. Planning for the development of trails and parks along the River is already under way on the north bank, and the development of more intense uses on the south bank is under discussion.



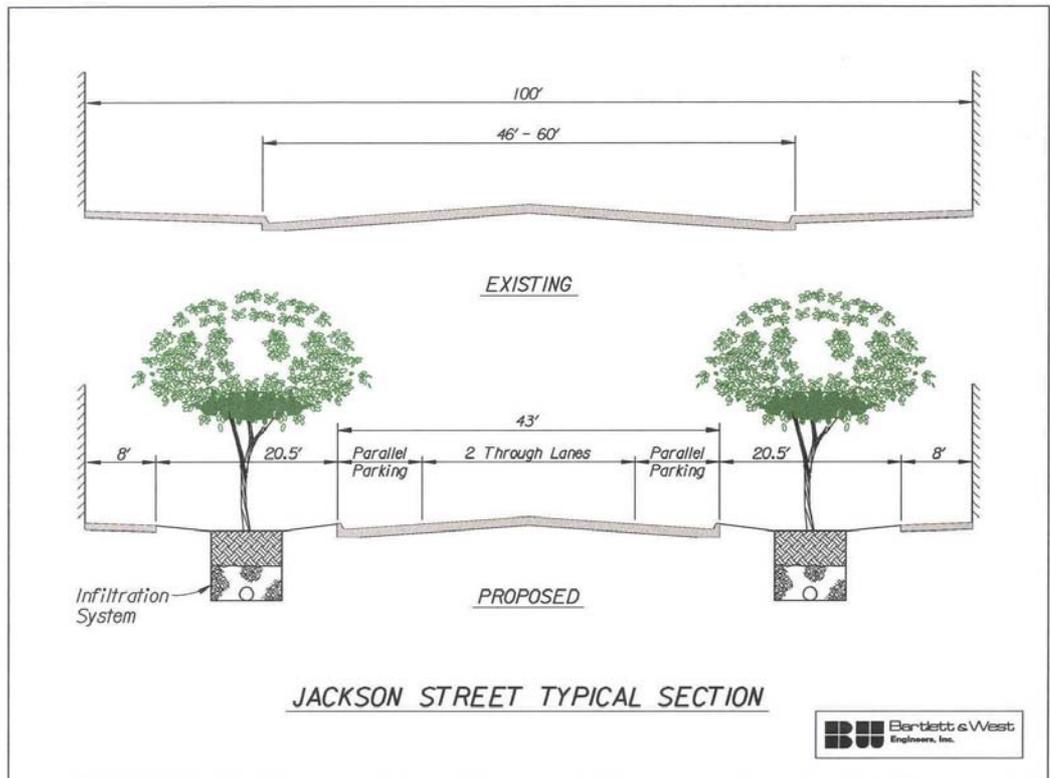
**Goal:** Reestablish a link between the river and Topekan.

*Strategy:* Develop Pappan’s Landing on the north side of the Kaw, and City-owned land south of Sardou Bridge as park space.

**Goal:** Establish high-density office and residential uses along the river.

*Strategy:* Develop warehouse space and adjacent property overlooking the River as condominiums and office space on its south bank.

**Infrastructure** – The network of roads, communications, power and other utilities constitute Downtown’s infrastructure, which serves to knit everything together into a smoothly operating system. In this context, essentially everything that the local governmental units provide and maintain can be considered elements of the infrastructure.



**Goal:** Make Downtown easily navigated and “user-friendly.”

*Strategy:* Develop an efficient “wayfinding” program of signage and hardscape elements to assist visitors in navigating around Downtown.

*Strategy:* Include funding in the CIP for regular investment in sidewalk lighting enhancements to support walkable residential development adjacent to Downtown.

**Goal:** Ensure adequate and convenient parking Downtown.

*Strategy:* Evaluate parking needs, and develop structured parking to serve as necessary to stimulate Class-A office development on Van Buren Street and the Topeka Boulevard corridor.

*Strategy:* Develop pocket parks or plazas to connect sidewalks with parking in the interiors of blocks.

**Goal:** Increase green space Downtown.

*Strategy:* Implement “natural” stormwater retention program between 10<sup>th</sup> Street and the River.

*Strategy:* Identify spaces for pocket parks and connecting “green” links between destinations.

**Goal:** Encourage visitors and Downtown residents to use public transportation.

*Strategy:* Construct parking facilities for visitors in close proximity to trolley stops.

*Strategy:* Provide Pass cards for unlimited trips over a set period of time (e.g., weekly, monthly).

**Goal:** Establish a fund for infrastructural improvements, or a means for programming funds for projects that support small business’ rehabilitation efforts.





**Commercial Districts** – Once a critical level of activity has been reached in the core of Downtown, and especially along Kansas Avenue between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets, demand for vacant commercial space should increase along Kansas Avenue. Kansas Avenue should also command the highest rents, with declining rents as one moves away. Smaller entrepreneurs will still be able to boast a Downtown address on the side streets, and neighborhood commercial enterprises will round out the mix of opportunities. Additional support for cultural functions, such as museums and public art, will provide important marketing tools for the area.



*Wolfe's has expended into adjacent storefronts.*

**Goal:** Improve communications and support services for smaller businesses, through Downtown Topeka, Inc. or the BID.

**Strategy:** Use existing forums and newsletters to inform interested parties, bringing together those who need information and those who can provide it.

**Goal:** Expand development throughout Downtown.

**Strategy:** Develop a schedule for expanding the activity core north of 8<sup>th</sup> Street, building upon recent development activity.

**Goal:** Maintain buildings to high standards.

**Strategy:** Develop a funding mechanism to assist businesses with selected improvements (e.g., sprinkler systems, ADA compliance).

**Office Districts** – As the nature of business evolves, so do office buildings that house them. In today's market, versatile buildings that can be customized as tenants change. Maintaining a sense of place also means maintaining a sense of scale, which is normally accomplished with design guidelines. Locating tall office structures away from the Capitol, so as to protect views of the dome, helps to maintain a human scale in Downtown's core. Taller buildings are encouraged to locate in proximity to the Interstate, Topeka Boulevard and other office districts. At the same time, open spaces around the capitol and the surrounding business and entertainment facilities can be retained.

**Goal:** Make Downtown Topeka competitive with suburban office development in the region.

**Strategy:** Develop streetscape, open space, and parking incentives to keep Downtown competitive.

**Strategy:** Develop and maintain database of spaces available for office locations Downtown.

**Goal:** Encourage office buildings that support Downtown design goals.

**Strategy:** Develop incentives to encourage compatible locations for high-rise office buildings, and help induce developers to collaborate in community design, rather than compete with it.

**Goal:** Provide developers with information about potential development sites Downtown.

**Strategy:** Develop a program of planning and development services to assist location decisions and design issues, which can then be integrated into the area's GIS coverage, and may be accessible via the internet.

**Residential Districts** – Provisions for comparatively high density residential development will need to include large apartment blocks, designed with adequate access to transportation, green space and other urban



amenities. Developing “courtyard townhouses,” with central green spaces covering a sunken parking garage, can provide public green space. Such developments can be structured as condominiums to pay for lawn maintenance, or under a neighborhood association or similar community group.

**Goal:** Ensure that housing Downtown is both adequate and of the types needed.

*Strategy:* Assess changes in residential demand, and tailor future construction to the market that Downtown redevelopment will have created.

**Goal:** Enhance the development of neighborhoods in and around Downtown.

*Strategy:* Establish funding mechanisms for neighborhood or community groups to help develop and implement such projects as pedestrian lighting plans, neighborhood daycare, and community facilities.



**Industrial Districts** – Industrial uses are expected to decline in intensity overall, but remain an important factor in Downtown planning. The railroad yards will remain a permanent fixture, and their interface with roadways and airports will need to be reconsidered at some point. Transition and buffer zones around industries will help them coexist with a revitalized Downtown, and improved transportation linkages will also ease tensions.

**Goal:** Improve circulation of trucks and materials between industrial sites and transportation links.

*Strategy:* Work with KDOT and the Federal DOT to plan a comprehensive, intermodal transportation system for Topeka/Shawnee County and the region. □

**Goal:** Improve access to I-70 from Topeka Boulevard.

*Strategy:* Work with KDOT and FHWA to redesign the Topeka Boulevard Bridge to serve the community, and identify funding for replacement of the existing bridge.

**Waterfront** – A comprehensive redevelopment plan for the Kansas River as it flows through Shawnee County will provide a natural corridor that still fills its role in the ecosystem. Integrating state-of-the-art flood control principles with a stated goal of providing community access will result in a system of parks and trails, interspersed with shops, kiosks and other sorts of buildings, all carefully designed with flooding in mind. Designing storm water containment systems in conjunction with wetlands retention will also create more green space and protect the river from pollutants.

**Goal:** Enhance the appearance of the Kansas River as it runs through Downtown.

*Strategy:* Design a low-water dam to maintain a constant water level between the Topeka Boulevard Bridge and the Kansas/Quincy Avenue Bridge.

**Goal:** Improve amenities along the river for visitors and for public assemblies.



*Strategy:* Develop a design inventory of flood-resistant architecture for placement along an extensive riverside park system.

**Infrastructure** – Infrastructural investments will focus on expanding the sphere of redevelopment, and include traffic, parking, accessibility, and compatibility with overall project design issues. Curbs, streetlights, walkway lighting, street improvements, and fiber-optic cable will be extended as development proceeds along Downtown's fringes.

**Goal:** Create a consistent experience for everyone visiting Downtown.

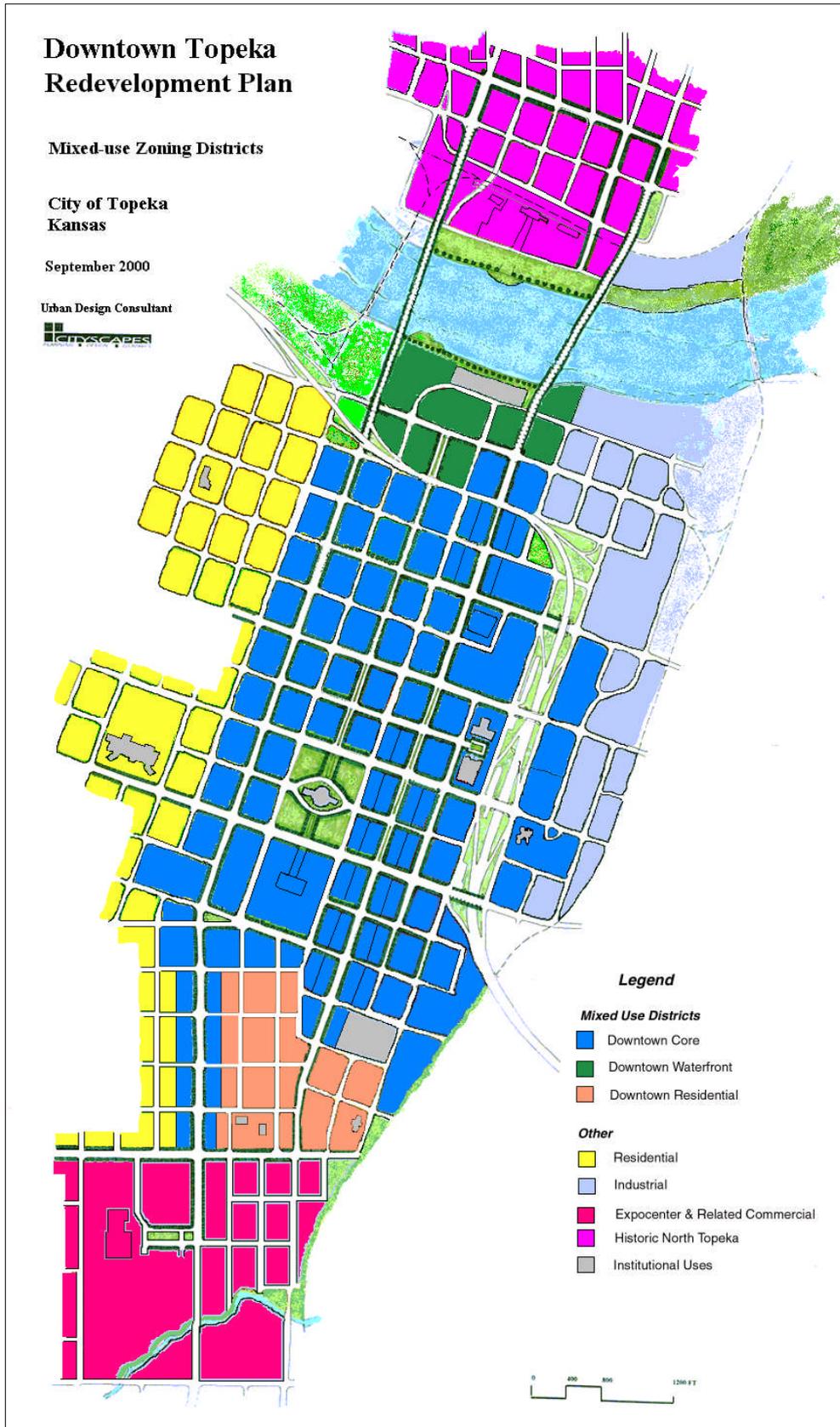
*Strategy:* Extend streetscaping throughout Downtown according to the schedule.

*Strategy:* Implement design guidelines and standards for architecture, landscaping and infrastructural improvements. □



*The Kansas River past Downtown & North Topeka*





#### 4. Implementation Policies

Implementing redevelopment policies takes as many approaches as there are possible projects, but by laying out a framework for development preferred options become more clear. By making desired outcomes the easiest options for developers, they become champions of quality design in the community. As noted above, Governmental agencies may not be subject to local regulations, so the zoning for that core area needs to acknowledge their autonomy.

**Regulations** – Ordinances and regulations lay down the rules of the game, and while they can't be written as one goes along, they can be structured in advance to provide a level playing field in a variety of circumstances. Zoning, design review and code enforcement in turn involve increasingly detailed planning for developers, and an orderly approval process makes everyone's life easier.

**Mixed-Use Zoning Districts** – While a revitalized Downtown requires a mixture of uses, some uses will predominate in certain areas. Commercial and entertainment uses will typically be found east of the Capitol, and industrial uses around the BN/SF railroad yards, for example. The strict segregation of uses that has characterized zoning codes through most of this century is being replaced by codes that encourage living communities, with a variety of activities coexisting within a single zoning district. A zoning code crafted for Downtown generally will need to include existing uses, while guiding future development in ways that are reasonably compatible. Design guidelines and performance standards will shape development, defining general limitations but allowing latitude for expressive designs. While the details of such an ordinance are not a part of this plan, general standards for each Downtown District are considered below.

**Government Core Districts** – While not immune from local zoning regulations, the Capital Plaza Authority coordinates development within its boundaries (See K.S.A. 75-2236 – 2266). The arrangement acknowledges that properties housing governmental agencies may well merit special consideration in the State Capital. As a practical matter, these uses may be classified with other institutional uses, but they do generally cluster around Downtown's core. Regulations for this District need to facilitate both staff and transient visitors, enable dining and entertainment uses along with offices for attorneys and other professionals. Maintaining viewsheds for the Capitol will require some performance standards, and could lead to provisions for the Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) to encourage compatible design. In addition, construction must be coordinated with the Capital Area Authority, which must approve construction permits and rezoning in areas adjacent to the State Capitol.

**Commercial Districts** – To protect existing businesses, while encouraging new investment and construction, zoning provisions need to encourage a variety of shopping, entertainment and dining options. "People generators" such as museums and theaters are assets to commercial development, and should also be encouraged. Centralized parking and transit facilities should be encouraged, along with plazas or greenspaces. Developers may qualify for development bonuses when they incorporate public amenities into their projects, such as public restrooms or art.

**Office Districts** – Accommodating additional space for new office jobs Downtown may be less a problem than accommodating their vehicles. Encouraging office development north of the Capitol and in proximity to the Interstate will help planning efforts to weave office development into the fabric of Downtown Topeka. Office structures that include structured parking, policies that provide for TDRs, and building designs that include street-level commercial options are examples of development goals for Office Districts.



**Residential Districts** – Two general residential types are envisioned for Downtown, based on their population density. Traditional neighborhoods, such as those west of Topeka Boulevard, will typically house less than 10 people per acre of land. On the other hand, higher-density development, such as south of the Kansas Judicial Center, may approach 25 people per acre, overall. Separate design guidelines and performance standards for each of these neighborhood types may be necessary, but each should allow for home-occupations and context-sensitive office and commercial development. Encouraging developers to include greenspaces and public areas in their designs, and individual property owners to maintain their public easements, helps ensure that the residential districts this plan encourages become functional and vital neighborhoods, not simply clusters of private compounds and individual enclaves. In any case, non-residential uses in these areas need to adapt to the neighborhood, rather than adapt the neighborhood to their designs.



*Concept plan for the Orchard Place neighborhood.*

**Industrial Districts** – Safeguarding the substantial investments made by industries over the years must be balanced against the changing economy in which we live. While existing industrial uses may be “grand-fathered in” under a new zoning ordinance, discussions regarding industry’s future plans and those of the community will aid in charting a course for industrial development Downtown, and tailoring the underlying zoning to accommodate the modernization of industrial facilities and keep them competitive.

**Waterfront** – Development of the waterfront requires some special considerations, not least because of the water level fluctuating between sub-surface and flood stage. The reuse of existing warehouse facilities for housing and/or office space could be encouraged here, and new construction can add even more space along the river. Access to the water itself is another issue, which can be aided by establishing parks and greenspaces along its banks. Zoning provisions for this area need to reflect the federal regulations of the Army Corps of Engineers regarding construction around the levee system, and emphasis should be on preserving open spaces, but intensive development in specific areas will help to transform the riverfront into Topeka’s most valuable real estate.

**Infrastructure** – In order to maintain design continuity throughout Downtown, and to ensure adequate services, Downtown will need to have some standards for infrastructural improvements. Incorporating permeable surfaces into parking lots for stormwater control, providing a design catalog for streetscape elements, and generating landscaping plans for development proposals are all examples of approaches that would help both public and private sectors in maintaining Downtown’s character on an on-going basis.



**Design Guidelines and Review** – While redeveloping existing buildings may cause some concerns and discussion regarding what designs are “compatible,” especially when the building is certified as “historic,” infill construction is likely to pose a more comprehensive list of issues. Most of Downtown Topeka, and virtually all of Kansas Avenue, lies under the review authority of the Kansas State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), based on the provisions of the Kansas Historic Preservation Law (K.S.A. 75-2724). The Topeka – Shawnee County Landmarks Commission may also have some review authority over individually listed historic properties, but the SHPO review procedure is more likely to be relevant to Downtown developers for the foreseeable future.

Design guidelines for Downtown have been developed for new and infill construction. The guidelines are intended to keep the scale of new construction in the commercial and entertainment areas consistent with existing buildings on Kansas Avenue, and help encourage the development of new construction with high quality standards. Similarly, office, industrial and waterfront projects will be expected to respect surrounding landowners, and encouraged to contribute to the urban community.

Procedures for design review will vary according to the project type and location, but designs for the majority of projects will be reviewed administratively. Administrative review procedures tend to be less time consuming than reviews by Boards or Commissions, and also tend to result in better designs being built. By keeping design criteria clear and concise, and by keeping the review procedure simple and timely, both private developers and the community at large benefit.



*Pedestrian Landscaping Enhancement Concept*

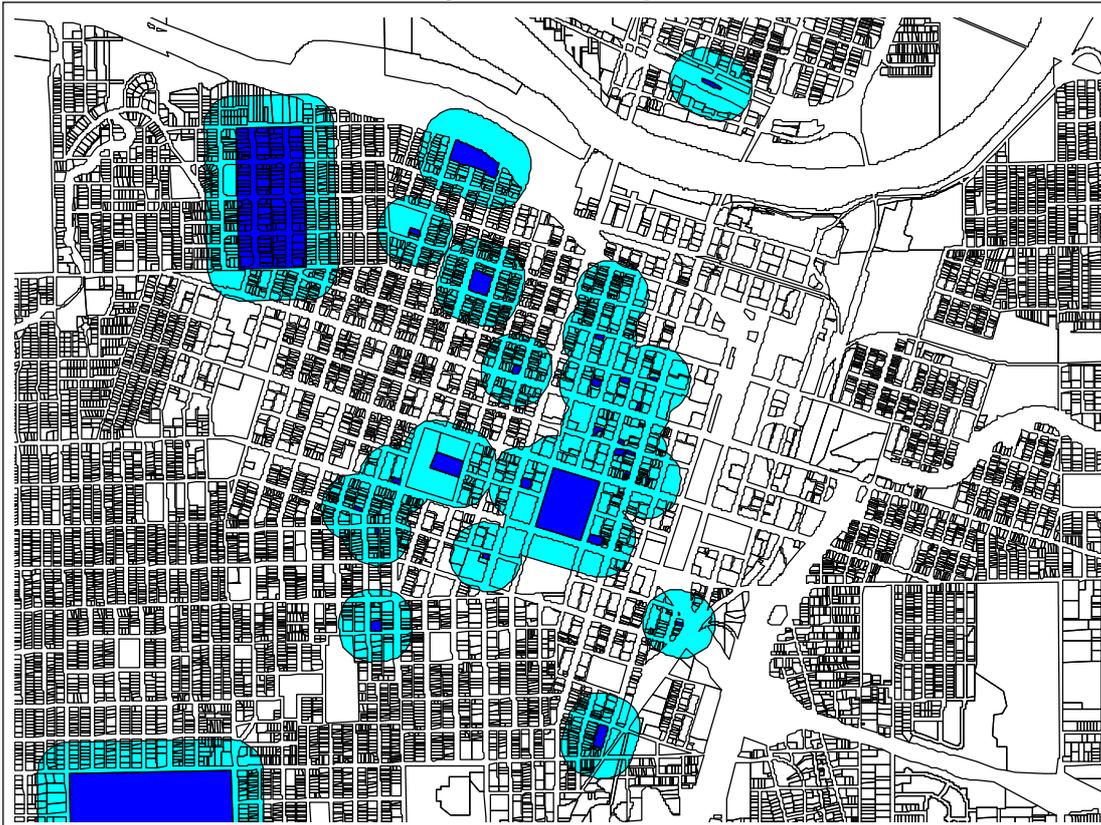
**Landscape Guidelines and Review**

– The benefits of good landscaping are not limited to pretty trees or bushes. Good landscaping reduces noise and pollution, cools pavement, provides shade for pedestrians, helps provide visual continuity between development areas, provides screening, and a number of other benefits. The City is presently developing a Landscape Ordinance, and its provisions will provide a basis for developing landscaping plans Downtown.

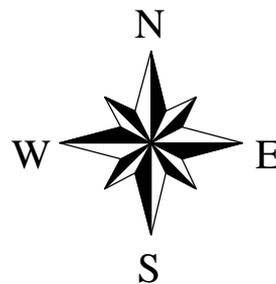
**Code Enforcement** – While Topeka uses the same life and safety codes as other municipalities, the application of those codes has been somewhat inconsistent and more strictly interpreted than in many other cities. A practical tool for assessing and redeveloping older buildings is the Uniform Code for Building Conservation (UCBC), which provides some extra latitude for meeting compliance standards in historic buildings. It also provides technical data regarding the “archaic” materials that were commonly used in construction fifty or more years ago. Topeka adopted the UCBC in 1997, but without training in its application and a clear mandate to use it, the UCBC has simply not provided the flexibility that was initially expected.



# State Historic Review Zones Downtown (500 ft.)



-  Historic Parcels
-  Parcels
-  Historic Review Zone



## 5. Action Program

Without a carrot, the stick simply drives away development. Topeka and Shawnee County need to take the lead in shameless self-promotion, and in developing initiatives that encourage developers to meet or exceed the standards our City sets.

**“How do I develop Property Downtown”** – Cities that are serious about redevelopment make the process simple and understandable. Customer services in the form of advice and assistance through a single office centralize information and provide a common contact point for all parties. No two redevelopment projects are the same, just as no two buildings are the same. Working with the Planning Department, Development Services and Downtown Topeka, Inc. from the beginning ensures that a development project gets the individualized attention it deserves.

**Action step:** Develop a checklist of inspections and approvals, noting required documentation.

**Action Step:** Identify a team of professionals who are qualified to evaluate older buildings and archaic materials.

**Action step:** Provide training in applying the UCBC to inspectors and developers.

**Action step:** Develop a walk-through program for evaluating building conditions and rehabilitation priorities on a project-by-project basis.

Projects that involve a historic site, or lie near one, also go through a state review process similar to the City’s. Although evaluated under different criteria, the overlapping review “environs” for historic buildings takes in almost all of Downtown north of 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Despite the “red tape,” however, the *Standards* essentially consist of sensible, time-tested repair methods that ensure a quality project.

### **Façade Improvement Program –**

Currently under way, this program will 1) develop design guidelines for commercial rehabilitations, 2) provide basic design assistance to participants, and 3) provide some funding assistance for actual improvements, in the form of matching grants. Separate funding and implementation details will be established for businesses north and south of the River, but both programs will represent collaborations between the public and private sectors.



*Kansas Avenue Facades*

The Façade Improvement Program will enlist academics and professionals in developing guidelines for rehabilitation of existing storefronts, or the redesign of extinct façades. General guidelines for construction of any kind should implement the goal of making the street an interesting and pleasurable environment. Utilization (or reutilization) of existing features helps to reinforce the character of Downtown



Topeka. Canvas awnings, for example, require regular attention and periodic replacement, but can be depreciated and provide both shade and ambience.

Maintaining the rhythm of doorways, shop windows and informative signage maintains a “human scale” Downtown. Using masonry rather than synthetic surface treatments reduces maintenance costs over the long term, ensures quality development, and also helps integrate new constructing into the existing urban fabric.

**Action Step:** Prepare checklist for preparing projects submittals.

**Action Step:** Prepare checklist for reviewing project submittals.

**Action Step:** Develop an administrative review process for timely approvals of applications.

**Action Step:** Develop a system for arbitrating disagreements.

### ***Development & Redevelopment Funding Programs***

A variety of programs have been developed for helping underwrite building improvements. Some are managed by state and federal agencies, but many are “grass-roots” efforts that communities implement for themselves. They often take the form of low-interest revolving loan funds, outright grants, or easements, and usually have some management controls associated with them.

*Façade Easements* provide a means of managing the faces that buildings present to the street without interfering with their internal configurations. Particularly with regard to historic facades, fairly substantial income tax credits may be garnered by property owners as well. Façade easements are normally granted to a qualifying body, commonly a governmental unit or 501( C ) (3) not-for-profit corporation. As with other easements, façade easements “run with the land,” and obligate successive owners to observe their provisions. That characteristic makes them especially useful in providing continuity in an actively developing area.

Easements are useful tools for several reasons. First, granting an easement allows an individual to retain private ownership of a property and obtain potential financial benefits. Second, the perpetual nature of guarantees to the community maintenance by future owners. Third, easements can be tailored to specific circumstances. Finally, if certain criteria are met, the owner can receive a Federal income tax deduction equal to the rights relinquished to the organization that holds the easement.

The value of an easement is based on the difference between the appraised fair market value of the property prior to conveying the easement and its value with the easement restrictions in place. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidelines suggest that a façade easement can often be appraised at 10-15% of the value of the property.

*Revolving Funds* provide a mechanism for business and property owners to borrow funds for improvements that would not otherwise qualify for a conventional loan, or at very favorable rates (in one program, at 4 points below the Prime Rate). Alternatively, a fund can be used to acquire, rehabilitate and resell properties in order to underwrite the operation of the fund. In either case, the revolving fund is a pool of monies used by a non-profit organization or governmental agency to facilitate rehabilitation efforts.

The source of those monies depends on the nature of the organization, and the resources to which it has access. In many communities, such funds have been seeded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Those funds are provided to communities for a variety of purposes associated with redevelopment efforts, and are particularly targeted towards under-privileged elements of the community. As such, they tend to have income and/or “blight-related” restrictions attached to them that may disqualify



some applicants. A more flexible approach would acquire funding through donations by financial and/or philanthropic institutions, which can then define qualifications however they please.

One approach manages a loan programs for façade improvements and small business assistance. The façade loan program provides 10-year loans of up to \$20,000, with interest and principal deferrable for years 1 – 5, and 5% per annum simple interest for years 5 – 10. The Small Business Development Loan Program also provides 5% loans, and may be used to acquire buildings or property, to clear land, for relocations, rehabilitations, machinery or equipment, and new construction, within project areas.

*Historic Preservation Income Tax Credits* provide for credit against income taxes owed at rates of 10 or 20%, based on costs accrued in approved rehabilitation. Approved rehabilitation projects will have complied with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, under the aegis of the State Historic Preservation Officer. <sup>vi</sup> The federal income tax credit is equal to 20% of the cost of rehabilitating historic buildings, or 10% of the cost of rehabilitating non-historic buildings constructed before 1936. While the 20% credit is available for rental residential buildings, neither credit is available for homes or apartments occupied by their owners. In order to qualify for the 20% credit, a building must be a “certified historic structure.” In other words, it must either be a) listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places, or b) located in a “registered historic district” and certified by the Secretary of the Interior as being of historical significance to the district. Similarly “a *registered historic district* is any district that is a) listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or b) designated under a state or local statute certified by the Secretary of the Interior as containing criteria that will substantially achieve the purpose of preserving and rehabilitating buildings of significance to the district and that is certified as substantially meeting all of the requirements for the listing of districts in the National Register.” (Boyle, Jayne F, Stuart Ginsberg and Sally G. Oldham, revised by Donovan Rypkema. *A Guide to Tax-Advantaged Rehabilitation*, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1998)

*Tax Increment Financing* is a financial tool that makes the redevelopment of blighted areas possible. It allows the City to earmark all of the property tax revenues from new construction in a particular area. The City can then reinvest those funds in that area to assemble land and infrastructure and encourage further development. TIF projects vary in scale from a portion of a block to a multi-block area. The TIF finance process is governed by State law. It should be used in particular areas of Downtown that require infrastructure improvement, or for consolidating properties to enable new development.

**Tax Credits and Abatements** – Tax considerations can take any of several forms, but those of principal interest to Downtown redevelopment are federal income tax credits and local property tax abatements or financing arrangements. Some tax strategies are mutually exclusive, and others are complimentary, but each is designed to achieve a specific aim.

Income Tax Credits – The Historic Preservation Tax Credit program provides for up to 20% of qualified rehabilitation costs to be credited toward income taxes owed. The building itself must either be listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), contribute to a NRHP Historic District, or be certified as being eligible for listing. If a building is not listed, but was built before 1934, then developers still may be eligible for a 10% income tax credit. Low-income tax credits are often used in conjunction with Preservation Tax Credits.

**Action Step:** Establish a review team, including inspection staff and SHPO representatives, to preview projects and ensure that they will meet legal requirements for tax advantages.

Neighborhood Revitalization Act – The Neighborhood Reinvestment Act (or NRA, K.S.A. 12-1770, et seq.) provides for up to 95% of an owner’s property taxes to be rebated for up to 10 years, based on either



new construction or the increase in value on improved properties. Virtually all of Downtown Topeka is included in the Special District, and residential, commercial and industrial properties are included. Additionally, newly constructed, privately owned, multi-level parking garages may be eligible for a rebate over a 25-year period, and listed historic properties may have as much as 100% of their taxes rebated. In 1997, American Investors Life Insurance Company constructed a new office building at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Kansas Avenue. The City of Topeka Neighborhood Revitalization Act program provided a 95% rebate of the property taxes to the owner over 10 years, which made the project feasible.

**Action Step:** Review boundaries and targeting for NRA eligibility.

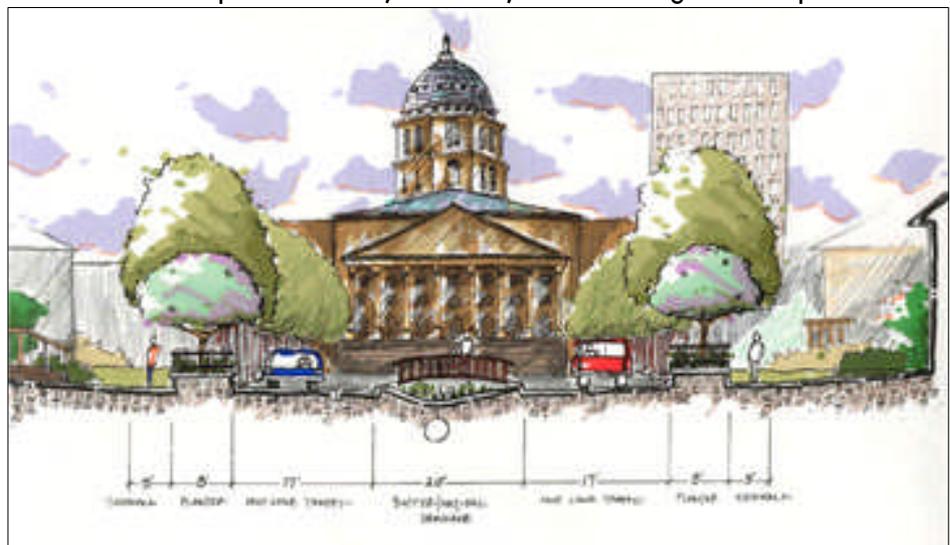
**Action Step:** Develop a priority list of needed projects that could be eligible for this program.

**Action Step:** Develop selection criteria for priority projects.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** – TIF districts authorize the sale of bonds to pay for infrastructure improvements. When developers improve the property in the district, and the taxes go up, the difference between their old and new tax bills is dedicated to paying off those bonds. Most appropriate for areas that need substantial street, lighting or similar improvements, TIF districts may also be used where the bond money will provide parking.

**Action Step:** Identify any areas Downtown that need major infrastructural improvements, and for which TIF might be especially appropriate.

**Public Funding** – The implementation of any project will necessarily involve some public funding, whether for capital improvements or simply providing staff time. Specific costs associated with specific projects are not possible in the conceptual planning stages, since development plans are not development proposals. Capital costs must be reflected in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), however, which is updated and adopted annually. Costs can be estimated on a per-unit basis, however, and those figures are provided in the table on page 40. As specific projects are approved and scheduled for implementation, specific costs can be associated for individual elements. Public sector involvement in any project also requires obtaining public feed-back, typically through a public hearing, which may further modify the project and its initial budget estimate.



*Storm Water Management Concept Element*

**Infrastructure** – The most visible and pro-active steps that local governments can take to aid redevelopment will literally “level the playing field” through policy decisions. By updating and maintaining the infrastructure Downtown to accommodate increased rates of growth, the community can stay one step ahead of the game, and avoid playing catch-up. Infrastructure improvements need to be coordinated with commercial investments to ensure adequate services, but also to ensure that the Capital Improvement Program is synchronized with new development proposals.



The most innovative improvement currently planned for Downtown's infrastructure will upgrade the storm water collection system, and also provide greenspace Downtown while improving the water quality of the river. By making site surfaces more permeable to rainwater, construction projects can facilitate water infiltration and enhance flood control. Once implemented, the strategy will reduce the reliance on tap water for landscape maintenance, allowing the rainwater that falls naturally on the site to flow back into the subsoil. The program will also improve the livability of Downtown by reducing pavement, planting desirable trees, shrubs and other "greenscape" elements, creating a more humane environment within an urban context. The program also provides an opportunity to reorganize selected sites and provide more useful outdoor spaces. Plans being considered call for Jackson and Van Buren Streets to be partially reconstructed, and for some publicly owned parking lots to be rehabilitated.

### **Economics & Finance**

Twin muses of any development project, economics and finance are intimately related but yet distinct concepts. While economics considers the inter-relationship between individual activities, finance considers the viability of each activity alone. Thus, while the redevelopment of a particular parcel of property may be critical to development in a district as a whole (economics), mitigating circumstances such as environmental contamination may make the project too expensive for investors to turn a profit. Often, an economically desirable project comes close to paying its way financially, but a gap exists between available funding and that needed, It is this gap that governmental and quasi-governmental programs are meant to fill. A variety of mechanisms may be used to help developers, most of which are administered through one or more governmental agencies. Public/private partnerships represent a useful and successful approach to forging beneficial relationships and making redevelopment possible. Topeka has its own assortment of incentives, and by coordinating private efforts with City staff great things can happen.

### **Economics**

Topeka's economy is presently being examined, evaluated, and diagnosed. Some preliminary assessments can be made, based on larger economic trends, but more specific recommendations are outside the scope of this examination. A few general observations can be made, however, that relate to the Downtown economy:

- Downtown's economic base has shifted from primarily retail to primarily office.
- Continued expansion of the office base depends on the provision of adequate services.
- Adequate services include infrastructure (i.e., roads, parks and similar amenities) and services (i.e., restaurants, specialty shops, lodging).
- Mixed-use development provides a mechanism for integrating critical functional and design elements that will support a viable and healthy economic base.
- A viable and healthy economic base will help encourage the expansion of Downtown's office base, which in turn will make possible expansions of support services.
- Some investments have already taken place that will begin the resurgence of Downtown. The State of Kansas has committed to consolidating offices Downtown, spurring millions of dollars worth of new construction and supplying hundreds of workers to the Downtown economy. Redevelopment south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street will mean the influx of additional construction investment, but more important is the influx of thousands of visitors that the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site will generate.

### **Finance**

Arranging the financing of a development project is something of an art. It requires one to marshal the skills of an architect, an entrepreneur, a builder, a banker, a realtor, an attorney and whatever other specialists the specific business may require. And all of their conclusions typically need to have been



complied yesterday. No simple “cookbook” approach is possible, and none will be presented here, but some principles can be examined and resources identified.

***South Kansas & Quincy Avenues Mixed-Use District***

It is critical to integrate different uses in a mutually supportive manner, and the following example analyzes one scenario in an area that historically has proven difficult to develop. Recognizing the strategic location of the South Kansas & Quincy District, and its potential for developing visitor amenities to service all of Downtown, it is wise to plan for an influx of visitors there. The Brown v. Board National Historic Site lies just to the south. The Site expects to draw 150,000 visitors per year, making it a major “people generator” for Downtown. Additional attractions at TPAC and the Jayhawk Theatre can bring that total well over 250,000. Efficiently accommodating those visitors and welcoming them Downtown is essential to successful revitalization.

The mixed-use potential for this area remains strong, and capitalizing on that fact by encouraging good design will only increase its desirability. Successful development of the area to its full potential will require a coordinated approach, however, and the most effective vehicle for coordinating the efforts of individual property owners would be a zoning overlay district. Design guidelines will both articulate desirable design concepts for the area and ensure that all investors live by the same rules. Consistency in requirements and expectations reduces uncertainty, which increases investor comfort. Infrastructural improvements are still necessary, and sidewalks, sewer lines and water lines need replacement regardless which specific development proposals are constructed. Removing electrical service underground will also support development potential.



*South Kansas & Quincy Avenues Mixed-Use District*



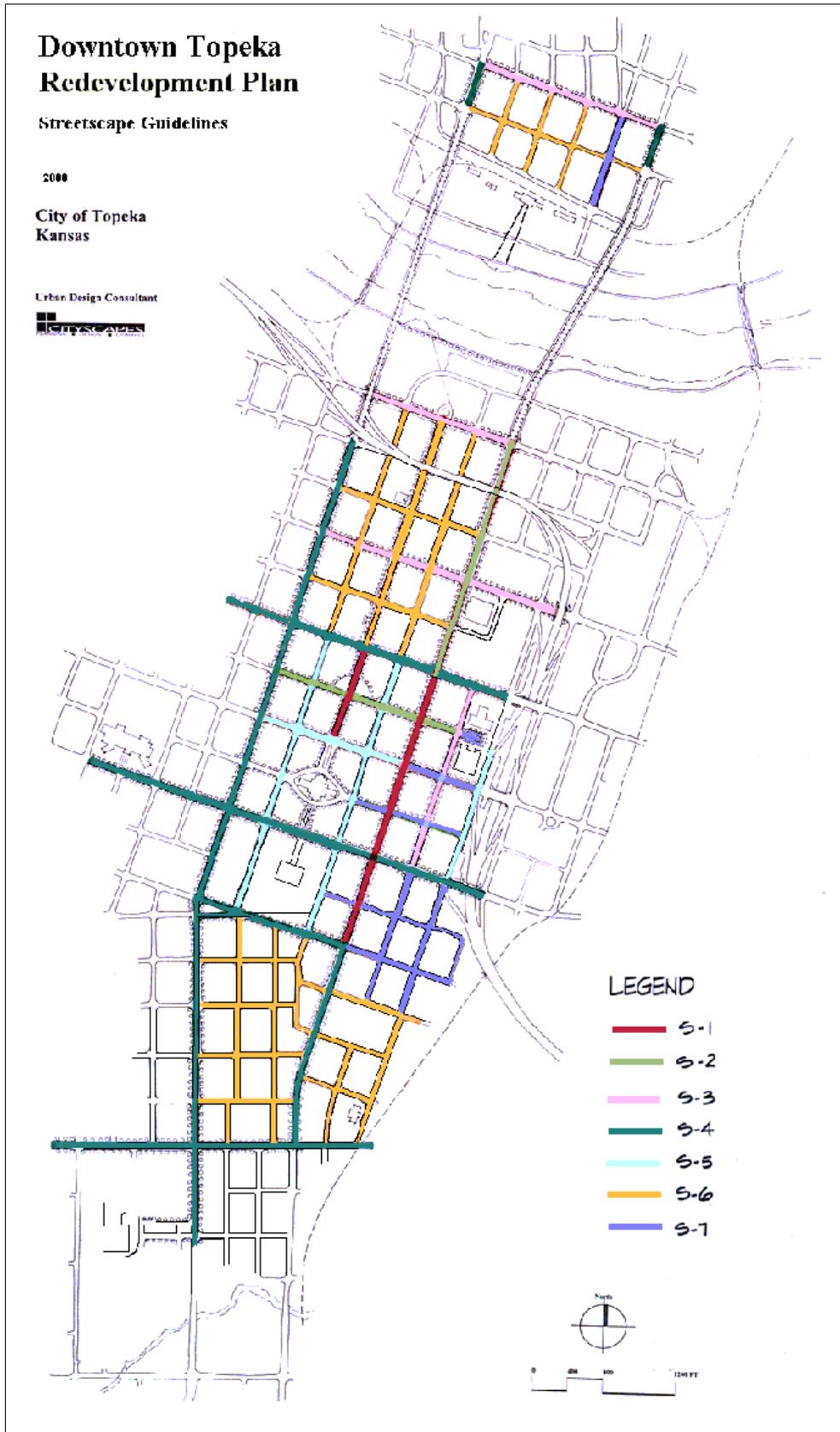
The obvious focal point for the area is the water tower itself. It serves as a landmark to guide visitors to the area, and they need to find something there when they arrive. A plaza around the Water Tower will provide a “people space” for gatherings, as well as a venue for public art. It will also form a miniature “town square” for Topeka, where events such as Thursday Night Live can find a permanent home.

The eastern portion of the District will most efficiently be dedicated to enhancing the existing resources of the site, particularly its elevation and historic buildings. The Ritchie House is particularly visible from the Interstate, and effectively serves as an “environmental billboard” for the area quite apart from the water tower itself. Completing the trail connection between the Ritchie House and Monroe School, linking also to the Shunga and Landon Trails, will increase access and improve functionality in the District. Completion of the trail link will also provide an opportunity to develop the proposed “Freedom’s Pathway,” a didactic journey through our Nation’s history from Topeka’s perspective.

The south-eastern portion of the District may house offices, additional hotel space, or be held in reserve for the present. The importance of creating density of activity recommends that this area be developed last, and that designs take full advantage of the location.

The location of the Ritchie House and its relationship to the Trail system and the Monroe School, in addition to its proximity to the Interstate, makes the Kansas-Quincy area ideal for a trail head/visitor’s center. State and federal funding assistance for such projects is available through economic development programs.





**Streetscaping & Pedestrian Access** –The expansion of streetscaping needs to be coordinated with business expansions, both to make efficient use of resources and to ensure that the improvements meet the needs of the businesses they will serve. The hierarchy of streets developed for Downtown provides a model for future improvements, and developing a catalog, or “vocabulary,” of street furniture and other elements will also aid in making design decisions. The sidewalks already in place on Kansas Avenue may need to be extended south to 13<sup>th</sup> Street, but any other improvements need not be nearly so extensive. Attention to the details of pedestrian access are most important, and compliance with ADA requirements will ensure walkability throughout Downtown Topeka. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) devices help tremendously, such as the “chirping” Walk lights on Kansas Avenue, but the program needs to be expanded, first south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street, and incrementally throughout Downtown.

**Action Step:** Develop a catalog of street furnishings and amenities.

**Action Step:** Use DOT programs (e.g., TEA-21) to fund additional ITS applications.



*Shopping on Kansas Avenue*

**Walkability** - A term that recurs throughout Downtown's vernacular is “pedestrian-friendly.” The term reflects the simple fact that *people* shop and spend money, not their automobiles. They are also more likely to use the amenities meant to attract shoppers if they are comfortable and convenient. Therefore, the interaction between people and vehicles needs to be considered carefully. Ideally, by making the downtown area pedestrian-friendly, the district not only become more walkable, but more “driveable” as well.

Our working presumption for Downtown, therefore, is that foot-traffic is more important to retail sales than traffic volume, and that has traditionally been the case in downtowns everywhere. Once visitors have been attracted to the downtown area, regardless of their initial motivation, their stay must be a pleasant one, or they are unlikely to return. Moreover, by encouraging a strolling environment, visitors may be induced to window-shop, providing merchants the opportunity to lure them inside and make sales.

A design element that has emerged in recent years is embodied in the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Intended to assure reasonable access to public amenities, it is often also used as a marketing tool, targeting the millions of people for whom it was written. Apart from legal obligations, compliance with the ADA also ensures that the area is convenient for those who are not necessarily legally “disabled,” including children, parents with strollers, and the elderly. For the purposes of this study, elements of the ADA that are relevant include ramping (especially at curbs), clearly distinguishing between vehicular and pedestrian areas, and clearly marking especially accessible paths.

**Action Step:** Coordinate with Transit and ADA coordinators to ensure that pedestrians and the disabled have reasonably full access to all of Downtown.

**Action Step:** Coordinate City and BID personnel to maintain high standards for sidewalks, crosswalks and connecting pathways.

**Streetscapes** - Guidelines for streetscapes are provided for all of Downtown, defining a hierarchy of street types. The general character of Kansas Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street can be applied to the other streets in Phase



I, too, in accordance with the needs of businesses located along them, and available funding. The existing one-way streets

The Streetscape Table for Phase I summarizes street types and their basic characteristics. Specific details and cross sections will follow.

Streetscape Table – Phase I		
Street	Classification	Comments
6 <sup>th</sup>	S-4	Secondary pedestrian street
7 <sup>th</sup>	S-7	Primary pedestrian street; paving & street furniture enhancements
8 <sup>th</sup>	S-5 & S-7	Secondary pedestrian street at Capitol; primary east of Kansas
9 <sup>th</sup>	S-7	Primary pedestrian street; paving & street furniture enhancements
10 <sup>th</sup>	S-4	Primary traffic thoroughfare with a landscaped median
Van Buren	S-1 & S-7	Primary pedestrian street; significant amenities south of 6 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup>
Jackson	S-2 & S-3	Secondary pedestrian street, one-way with angled parking
Kansas	S-1 & S-2	Primary pedestrian street; significant amenities south of 5 <sup>th</sup> to 13 <sup>th</sup>
Quincy	S-3 & S-7	Secondary pedestrian street north of 10 <sup>th</sup> ; primary south of 10 <sup>th</sup>
Monroe	S-5 & S-7	Secondary traffic street north of 10 <sup>th</sup> ; primary pedestrian south

Kansas Avenue: Not all of Kansas Avenue can be considered in the first five years, but attractors to draw visitors from Quincy Street need attention. Some specialty retail already has appeared, including florists, a magic shop, and a home furnishings store. Pairing new uses with existing storefronts, with due consideration for existing businesses, then recruiting businesses to fill those voids, will result in a mix of shopping and leisure options for visitors.

Another concept suggested for Kansas Avenue is derived from successful prototypes elsewhere. It consists of rehabilitating the original trolley rails in the center of the street. A functioning rail trolley, running up and down Kansas Avenue, would both connect one end to the other, and provide an attraction in itself, and could be extended to North Topeka if demand dictates it. Suitable for a later Phase, the idea should be remembered and considered when establishing use and capital plans for Kansas Avenue in the future.

8<sup>th</sup> Street: West of Kansas Avenue on 8<sup>th</sup> Street, the north side of the street retains several storefronts. Such businesses as Aunt Sue’s provide local interest, but additional uses for the empty storefronts are needed. The old bank building retains many interior design elements that are quite in vogue today, and might be easily converted to retail or entertainment uses. “Shakers” could be upgraded, and perhaps connected to the building to its north; these are two of Downtown’s first buildings, and an ambience can be created for an intimate, fine dining restaurant or similar establishment. Utilization of alleyway spaces behind Shakers and the Thacher Building provides urban spaces of the type that encourages social interactions.

The streetscape along Kansas Avenue is already of high quality, and generally needs only a facelift. Jackson Avenue is classified as Secondary Pedestrian street (S-3). Van Buren Avenue is identified as a pedestrian street (S-7), but could be upgraded to the same classification as Kansas Avenue (S-1) between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets, recognizing its axial orientation, and consequent excellent view of the Capitol. Additional landscaping on this street will encourage both office and residential development, with attendant commercial uses. Quincy Street is now classified for relatively high-volume vehicular traffic, but as designs develop for South Kansas-Quincy its importance as a pedestrian link result in its as a secondary pedestrian street (S-3).

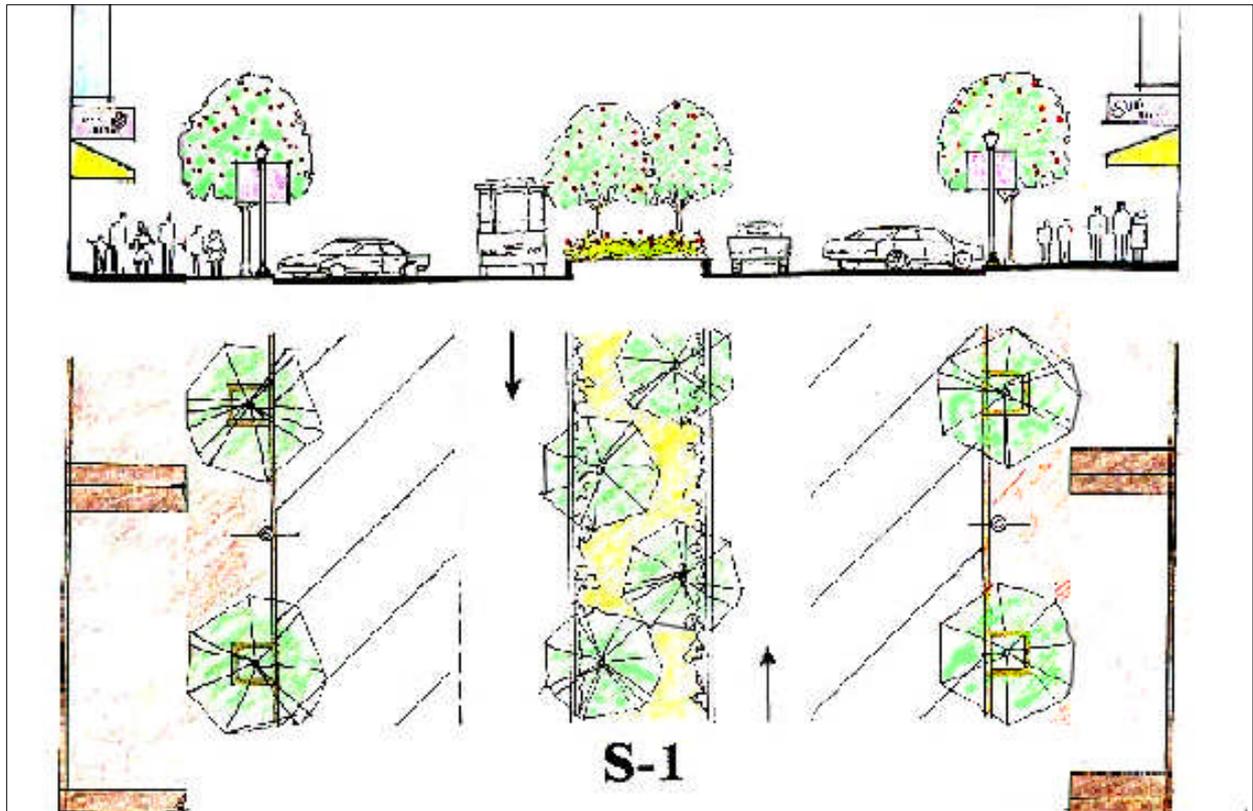




<b>COST ESTIMATE</b>		
<b>Downtown Street Improvements by Classification</b>		
	<b>Construction</b>	<b>Project</b>
	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Classification</b>	<b>(\$/LF)</b>	<b>(\$/LF)</b>
S-1	\$1,068.00	\$1,315.00
S-2	\$960.00	\$1,180.00
S-3	\$1,068.00	\$1,315.00
S-4	\$1,005.00	\$1,236.00
S-5	\$1,054.00	\$1,296.00
S-6	\$907.00	\$1,115.00
S-7	\$969.00	\$1,192.00
<b>1 Block = 500 ft.</b>		
<b>FEATURES CONSIDERED</b>		
Landscaping		
Period Lighting		
Irrigation		
Furniture, Street		
Miscellaneous		
Brick Crosswalks w/Conc. Base		
Brick Sidewalk (20% of Sidewalk Area)		
4" Concrete Sidewalk, In Place		
Storm Sewer		
Curb & Gutter, Type I		
Pavement - Reinforced Concrete		

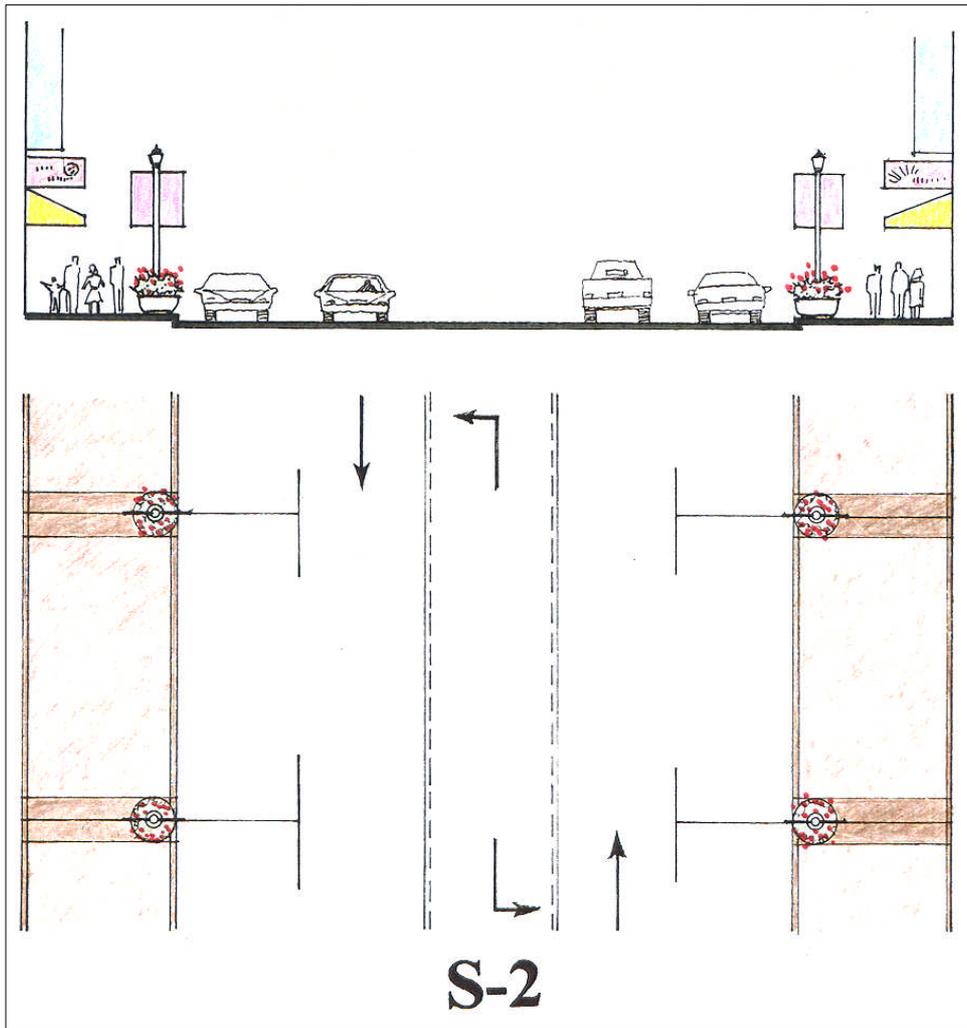
This table provides estimated costs for each of the streetscape Classifications. The Project Cost includes design work in addition to Construction Costs, and the features considered in making the estimates are noted below. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) actually schedules funding for such projects, and specific costs can be calculated as they are designed and come on-line. Naturally, special projects will entail additional costs, which cannot be anticipated. These estimates simply provide general, preliminary estimates for the planning phase, helping the community to evaluate options and establish short-term priorities on an on-going basis.



**S-1**

Classification:	Primary pedestrian street with a significant number of pedestrian-oriented uses on both sides.
Traffic Lanes:	2-way, 2-lanes, with a left-turn lane in the median at intersections.
Median:	10 – 20 ft.
Parking Pattern:	Angled
Sidewalk:	Yes
Width:	8 – 20 ft.
Materials:	Special pavers.
Trees:	Yes
Character:	Flowering, ornamental, medium size
Interval:	30 ft.
Lighting:	Yes
Interval:	30 ft.
Banners:	Yes, on pedestrian lighting fixtures.
Furniture:	Yes

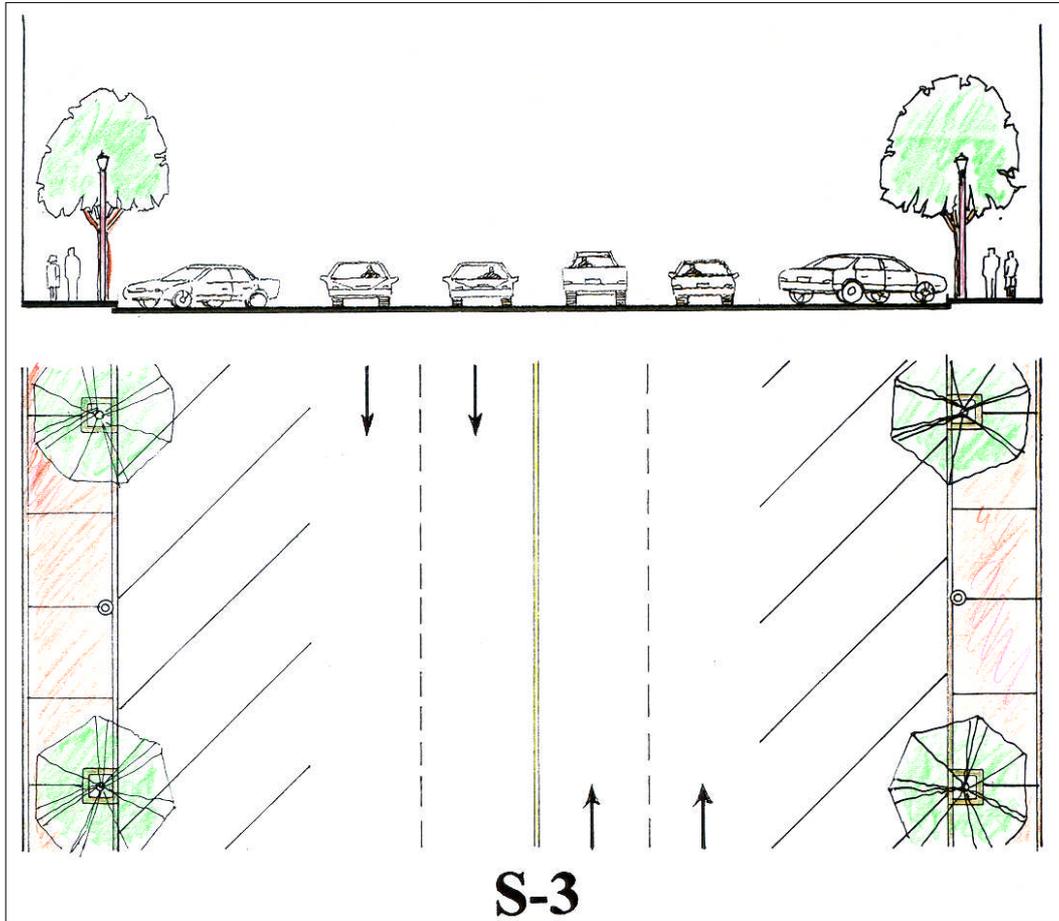




**S-2**

Classification:	Primary pedestrian street with a significant number of pedestrian-oriented uses on both sides.
Traffic Lanes:	2-way, 3-lanes, with a left-turn lane in the center.
Median:	None
Parking Pattern:	Parallel (may be changed to traffic lanes at peak hours)
Sidewalk:	Yes
Width:	8 – 20 ft.
Materials:	Special pavers in patterns.
Trees:	Planters
Character:	Perennial, flowering, small size
Interval:	30 ft.
Lighting:	Yes
Interval:	30 ft.
Banners:	Yes, on both pedestrian lighting and buildings.
Furniture:	Yes

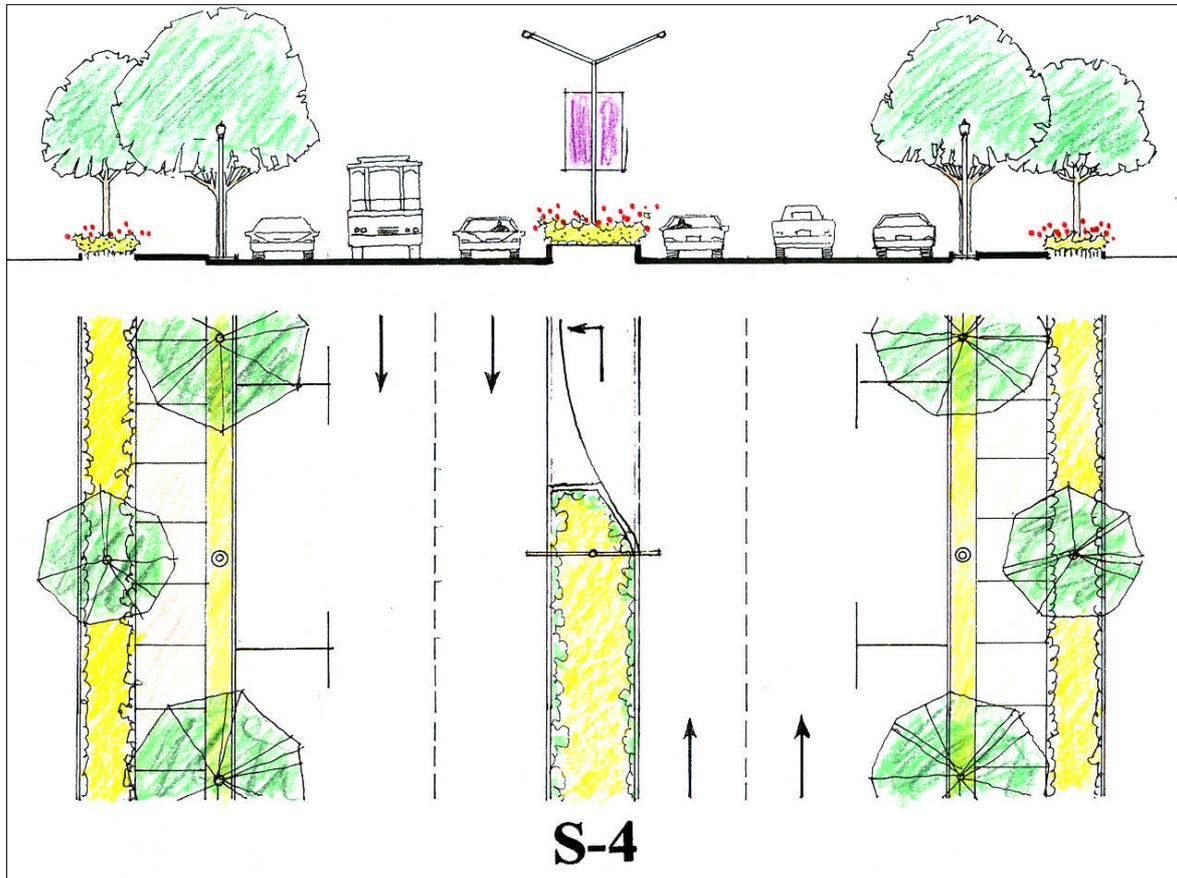




**S-3**

Classification:	Secondary pedestrian street with a moderate to limited number of pedestrian-oriented uses on both sides, mainly serving as linkage.
Traffic Lanes:	2-way, 4-lanes.
Median:	None
Parking Pattern:	Angled
Sidewalk:	Yes
Width:	5 – 15 ft.
Materials:	Concrete or pavers.
Trees:	Yes
Character:	Deciduous, medium to small size
Interval:	40 ft.
Lighting:	Yes
Interval:	40 ft.
Banners:	None
Furniture:	Some

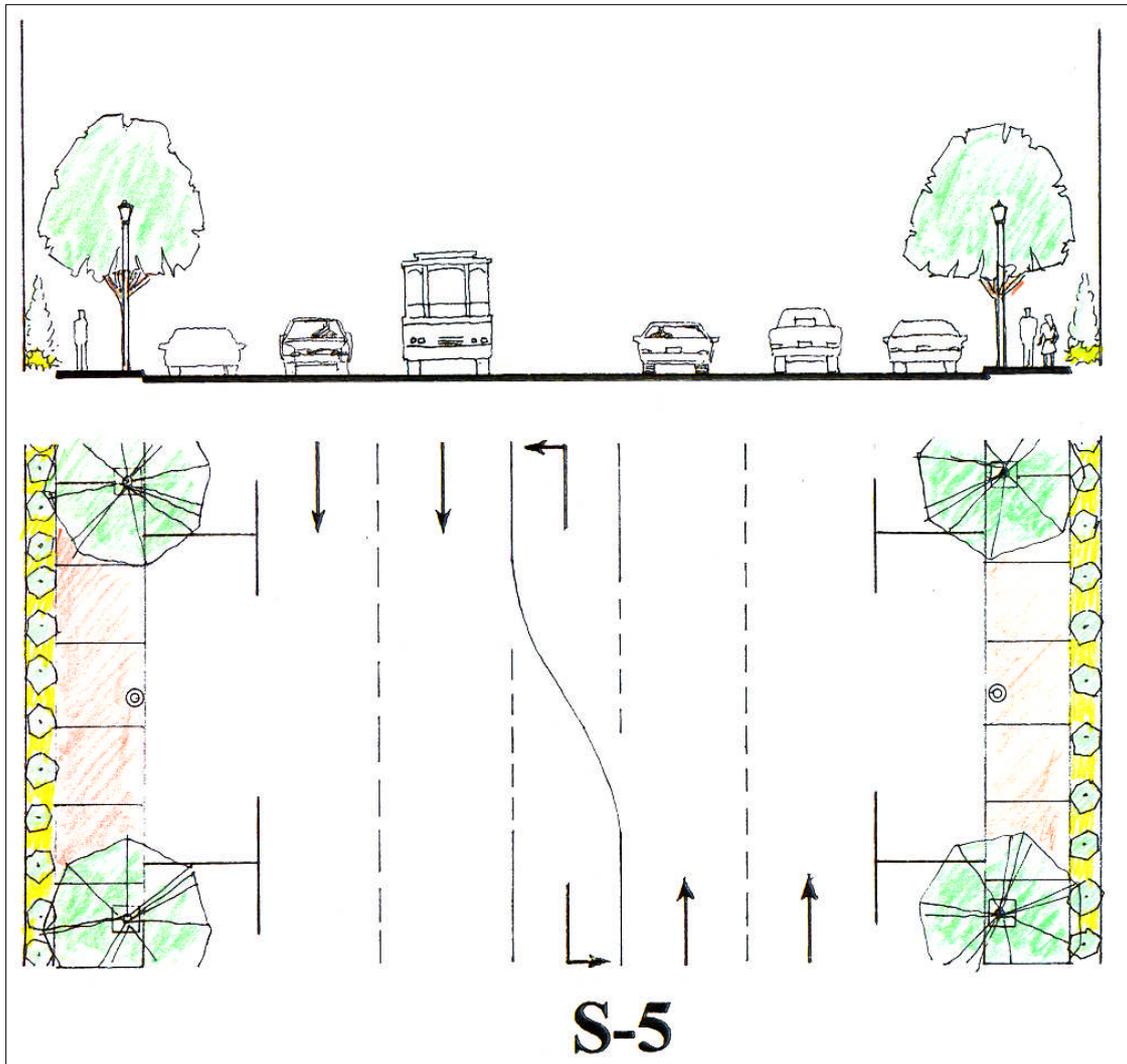




**S-4**

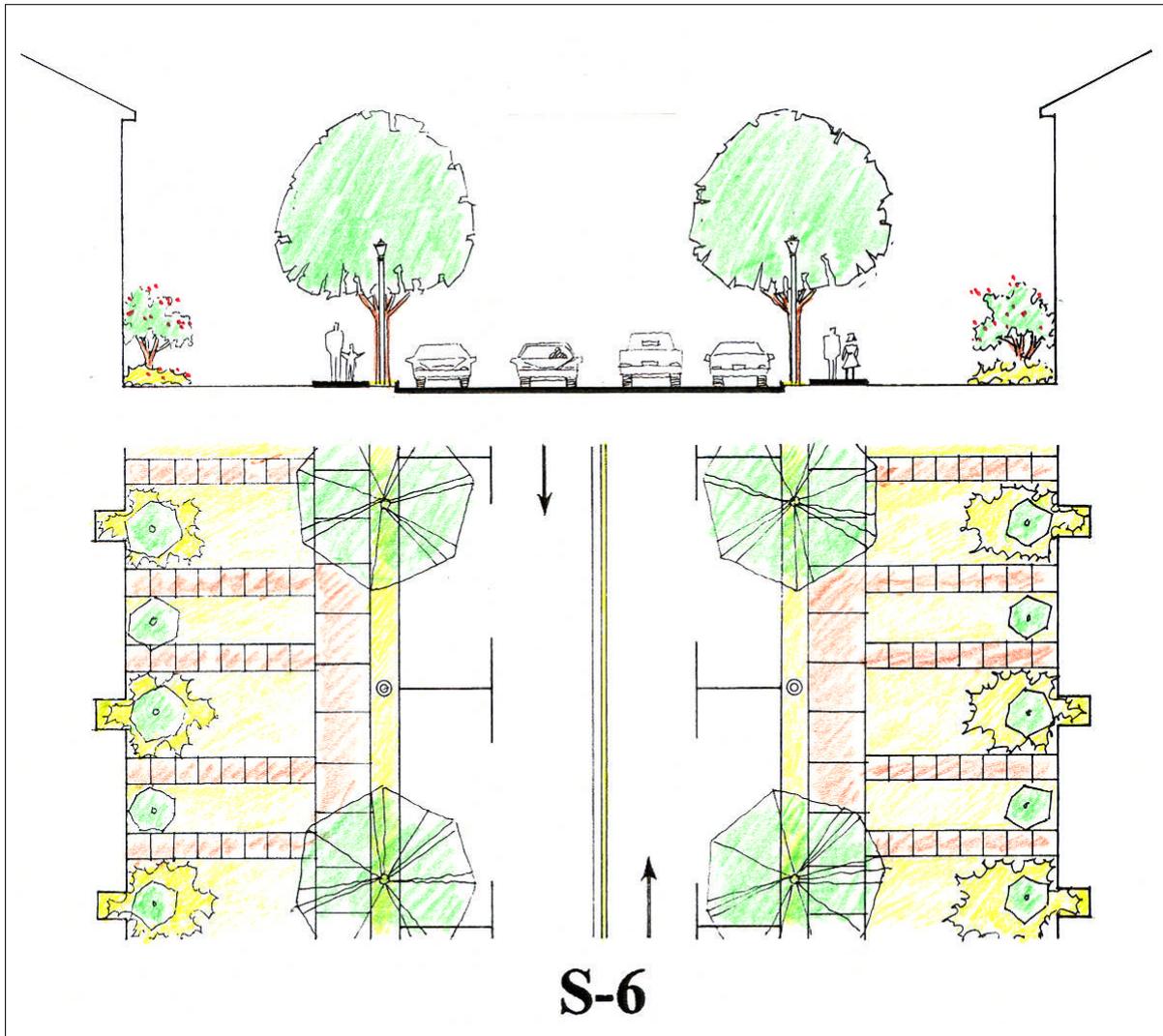
Classification:	Primary traffic thoroughfare with few pedestrian-oriented uses.
Traffic Lanes:	2-way, 5-lanes (a left turn lane in the median at intersections).
Median:	10 – 20 ft.
Parking Pattern:	Parallel (may be changed to traffic lanes at peak hours).
Sidewalk:	Yes
Width:	5 – 8 ft.
Materials:	Concrete
Trees:	Yes
Character:	Deciduous, larger size
Interval:	50 ft.
Lighting:	Yes
Interval:	50 ft.
Banners:	High banners on light fixtures in the median.
Furniture:	Little to none.



**S-5**

Classification:	Secondary traffic street with few pedestrian-oriented uses.
Traffic Lanes:	2-way, 5-lanes (a left turn lane in the center).
Median:	None
Parking Pattern:	Parallel (may be changed to traffic lanes at peak hours).
Sidewalk:	Yes
Width:	5 – 12 ft.
Materials:	Concrete
Trees:	Yes
Character:	Deciduous, medium to large size
Interval:	50 ft.
Lighting:	Yes
Interval:	50 ft.
Banners:	None
Furniture:	None



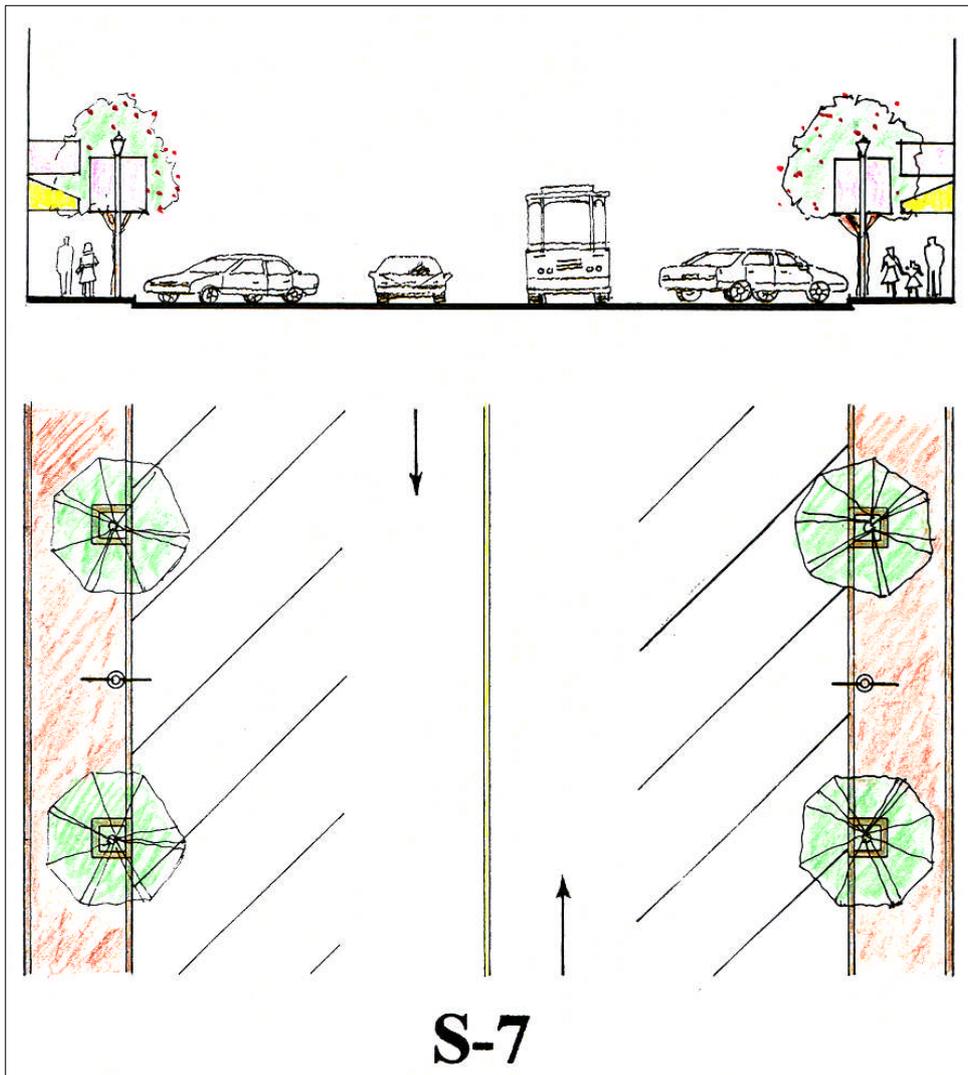


**S-6**

Classification:	Primary residential street
Traffic Lanes:	2-way, 2-lanes
Median:	None
Parking Pattern:	Parallel (may be changed to traffic lanes at peak hours).
Sidewalk:	Yes
Width:	5 – 8 ft.
Materials:	Concrete or brick pavers
Trees:	Yes
Character:	Deciduous and flowering, various size
Interval:	40 ft.
Lighting:	Yes
Interval:	40 ft.
Banners:	None
Furniture:	Some







**S-7**

Classification:	Primary pedestrian-oriented street
Traffic Lanes:	2-way, 2-lanes
Median:	None
Parking Pattern:	Angled
Sidewalk:	Yes
Width:	10 – 15 ft.
Materials:	Brick pavers
Trees:	Yes
Character:	Flowering, ornamental, small to medium size
Interval:	30 ft.
Lighting:	Yes
Interval:	30 ft.
Banners:	Yes
Furniture:	Yes



**Traffic & Parking** – As visitors increasingly visit Downtown, providing for their efficient movement around the area will become increasingly complicated. The goals articulated for Downtown require high levels of pedestrian activity throughout the area, with the prerequisite that drivers be induced to become walkers at the first opportunity. Providing convenient parking, coupled with equally convenient transit options, will reduce traffic congestion while increasing pedestrian congestion. Ned Crankshaw, of the University of Kentucky, recently undertook a study to establish models for the design and placement of parking and pedestrian corridors in historic downtowns. Locating the Transit Center at 9<sup>th</sup> and Quincy positions it well to serve visitors, provided adequate parking is also available in the immediate vicinity. Visitor parking should be served by expanded trolley service regardless where it is located, but at the same time traffic circulation should be encouraged on the periphery and discouraged on Kansas Avenue. Reducing Kansas Avenue to two lanes between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets could make that area more pedestrian-friendly, and through traffic can still access both the Topeka Boulevard Bridge and the Kansas – Quincy Bridge from 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

A key to smooth traffic flow through Downtown consists of providing options to visitors. Both 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets are thoroughfares, and should continue as such. In contrast, 8<sup>th</sup> Street provides both an entry point for traffic exiting from I-70 (also providing new arrivals with their first glimpse of Downtown), and an opportunity for a wide sidewalk. Signage at both 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets should clearly direct motorists toward parking and other likely destinations in the area.

As part of a possible scenario, vehicular traffic exiting I-70 would have easy access to a parking garage. This arrangement also facilitates their transition from motorists to visitors as they board the trolleys at the Transit Center. Once aboard the trolleys, visitors will have easy access to the entire Downtown area. Keeping visitors out of their cars while Downtown also helps ensure that they stay Downtown, in addition to enhancing the pedestrian atmosphere.

East-west traffic through Downtown will remain essentially unchanged. 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets are the major thoroughfares through Phase I, but vehicular traffic will also continue to have access to 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets.

North-south connections for drivers are facilitated by the existing one-way streets on Monroe, Jackson and Harrison. Through traffic will be encouraged to take Topeka Boulevard, or the Kansas-Quincy Bridge as accessed from 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Kansas Avenue could be reduced to one lane each direction, slowing traffic and providing opportunities for streetscape enhancements.

**Action step:** Implement the circulation and parking studies recently completed, as appropriate.

**Action step:** Develop circulation and parking plans for various scenarios to anticipate needs as development proceeds.

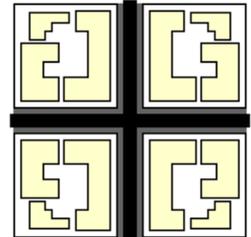
**Action step:** Identify funding sources and methodologies for financing structured parking.

**Open space** – Parks and plazas provide pedestrians a break from walking, and workers a break from their office spaces. They also serve social functions,

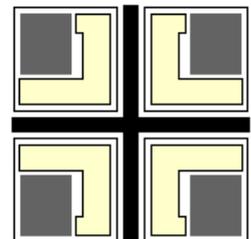
Crankshaw's research identified five primary patterns of public parking space distribution, represented in five idealized diagrams

■ Parking □ Building

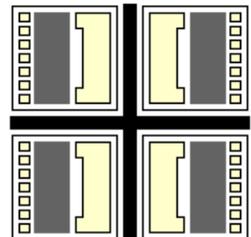
**On-street**



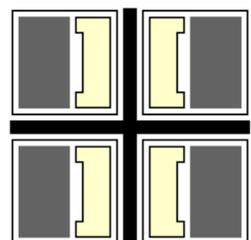
**Quadrant**



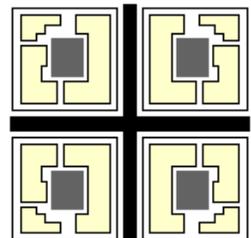
**Alley Slot**



**Perimeter**



**Block Interior**



providing people places, either for casual conversations or public gatherings. The plazas around the Capitol and along Van Buren will be augmented by both more urban plazas and small park spaces. Although riverfront park land is presently confined mostly to the north side of the river, riverfront land also exists just west of the Topeka Boulevard Bridge, which could provide a wildlife park adjacent to Downtown. While the Parks and Recreation Department has developed plans for trails and other amenities around Downtown, and the storm water treatment plan will also add greenery, developers will also be encouraged to provide public open space.

Parks and plazas should be located throughout Downtown, but within easy walking distance whenever possible. Gaps in the rhythm of storefronts along Kansas Avenue, for example, can provide access through a block to parking, as well as places to rest and to install public art. Finding locations for open spaces often may be an opportunistic endeavor, including rooftops and unused spaces along alleyways, which helps add to the area's character and creates "people places" in urban residential areas. Open spaces also provides places where people can assemble for special occasions, to celebrate their community or simply to enjoy the weather. Structured parking facilities also can provide green space on their top levels, and both can be integrated into the center of a block given over to residential development.

**Action step:** Identify funding sources and methodologies for financing additional parks and open space.

**Action step:** Establish a fund to underwrite public art installations Downtown.

**Action step:** Develop a program for regular maintenance, using the BID and Parks Department personnel as appropriate.

**Wayfinding** – A system of signs that both tell people where they are and direct them to where they want to go will be helpful to visitors and residents alike. The overall design of a wayfinding system may be complex, but the elements are not. In fact, simpler is better when it comes to wayfinding. Using a basic shape painted with a simple color scheme, and using the forms consistently, a system for directing visitors and residents alike can be implemented in a fairly short time. Depending on the information types provided on wayfinding signs, they may need periodic updates as business and service locations change. If confined to public accommodations, however, regular maintenance will be all that is required.

Wayfinding techniques help visitors become oriented, so they can find their way around. While signage is a key element, and should be themed and consistent, such elements as benches and street lampposts also provide cues that the visitor is in a special place.



Wayfinding Concept Element ~ Locational Map



Signage should be consistent with accepted standards, but signs directing visitors to venues should also incorporate a characteristic design that makes them easily identifiable. For example, the Federal Highway Administration uses colors to code their signs, so that travelers understand immediately that a brown sign indicates a recreational facility, or a blue sign indicates a rest top or other convenience.

Signage should also include area maps, similar to those in malls, that locate venues. These can be posted on the existing kiosks in the area, and elsewhere. They might also be connected to the trolley or other transit element to provide a sort of “on-call” service, especially for ADA considerations.

**Action step:** Develop distinctive, simple signage that clearly orient visitors.

**Action step:** Develop an easily updated area map for visitors and for marketing purposes.

**Dining & Entertainment** – A central feature of Downtown redevelopment must, by definition, provide a focal point for activity. Using the existing attraction of TPAC, adding additional venues on 8<sup>th</sup> Street and the Jayhawk Theatre to the northwest, a central area is already beginning to emerge at the southern edge of Downtown. Dining & Entertainment (D&E) areas provide the diversions that people need, and do so in a way that also reinforces a sense of place and community. D&E enterprises include restaurants and lounges,



*Topeka Performing Arts Center*

but also live performances and motion pictures. Live performance venues attract a variety of acts, and a related variety of aficionados, and motion pictures attract a more general audience, although foreign and specialty films also have their constituencies. By creating destinations Downtown, a D&E area can help to generate and maintain a level of activity that will encourage economic development by increasing spending and foot-traffic counts, improve the housing market in the area, and increase the number of people Downtown after dark.

While initially concentrated in a fairly confined area, it is expected that additional restaurants and venues for performances will evolve

around Downtown, and will provide much of the “mixed-use” in the mixed-use districts north of the Expocenter. Experiences in other cities indicate that the original D&E districts will mature and refine their ambience, but that successful performance venues will also spark imitators elsewhere in adjacent areas with lower rents. That hierarchy of venues will define the dynamics of the development process Downtown, as the area evolves and new development centers shift the focus from place to place.

In a recent article, David Peterson outlines “The Twelve Habits of Successful Retail/Entertainment Centers.” He notes that, “The success of a retail/entertainment center ... is substantially, if not totally, dependent on nearby or adjacent land uses, a unique structure or location, and the visitation its neighbors generate,” which accurately describes the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Entertainment strip. To ensure reinforcing land uses, the “Twelve Habits” are:

- The Center and its offerings must be unique.
- There must be adjacent visitor Generators.
- The area needs pedestrian circulation and links to adjacent anchors.
- Entertainment must provide “depth of show.”



- Food quality must be high.
- Merchandise must be affordable.
- Critical mass is needed to support length of stay.
- High repeat (resident) visitation and diverse supporting markets are essential.
- Common area maintenance costs are high.
- Large-scale urban entertainment center development costs often require subsidies.
- The project must ensure personal security and safety.
- A local developer/advocate is usually part of the equation.



*Majestic Theater & Thatcher Building ~ 8<sup>th</sup> Street*

Successful development of markets and tour packages requires that a variety of activities exist for visitors to enjoy, whether they arrived for business or pleasure. Coordinated development is both complex and time consuming, but can result in mutually supportive businesses locating so as to enhance the overall market. A brief discussion of the process can be presented as two steps using a two-block stretch of 8<sup>th</sup> Street as an example.

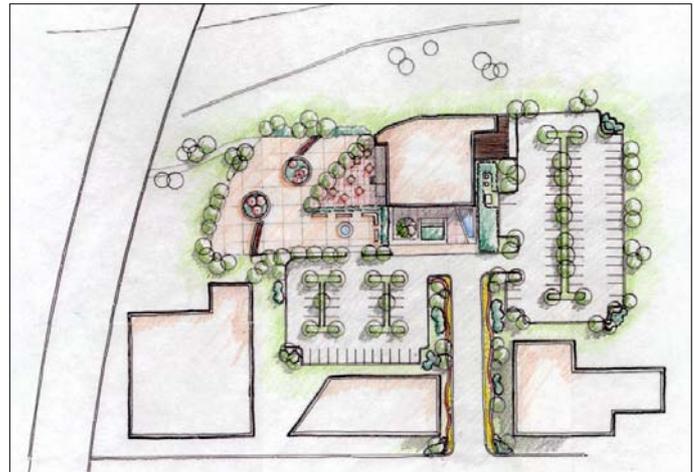
A first step includes identifying attractions that Topeka currently has to offer, under-served market niches, and gaps between the two that entrepreneurs can fill. As an example, the alleyways behind the stores on 8<sup>th</sup> Street have been proposed as pedestrian spaces. At the east end, next to the Thacher Building, is the old Majestic Theater. Just east of that block stands TPAC, and just north of Shakers is the Jayhawk Theatre. At the west end, on Jackson, stands Shakers Blues House. Those remaining performance Downtown spaces happen to be in close proximity, and are easily visited by pedestrians. Considering the spaces in those alleys, and their different characteristics, helps define their marketing potentials.

On the east, the alley is paved in brick and has a very urban character, emphasized by the Capital Federal parking garage. Relaying the bricks in this alley, as is being done around town, and installing appropriate lighting on the buildings that frame the alley, can create an area reminiscent of the 1920s or 1930s, when jazz ruled the music scene. Memorializing Coleman Hawkins by naming the alley for him, and devoting the surrounding buildings to supportive restaurants and shops, will transform a space for garbage into a space for people, an amenity across from TPAC, and destination in its own right.

The corresponding block west of Kansas Avenue already contains Shakers, as already noted. It also contains Aunt Sue's Buffet. In addition, the alley behind these establishments is paved in stone, which combines with the buildings that define the alley to provide a more "New Orleans" feel, opening the way for a seafood restaurant, and expanded menus at other area restaurants. This alley is just across an intersection from the State Capitol, as well as one of Topeka's largest office buildings. Together with potential development of the alley to the east, it also provides a solid row of businesses and "people places" to connect the Capitol to the City and County offices.



A second step develops a marketing plan to capitalize on those resources will coordinate their activities, provide a vehicle for marketing them as part of Downtown Topeka, and produce regular bulletins to make visitors aware. In this example, the profusion of musical talent in those clubs and theaters could be summarized on a weekly newsletter, listing all the acts in the area over the next four weeks. Thousands of those could be printed regularly, distributed through the CVB and State Visitors Centers, and include short articles about upcoming acts. Taking it a step further, the trolley could provide late night service to the entire Downtown.



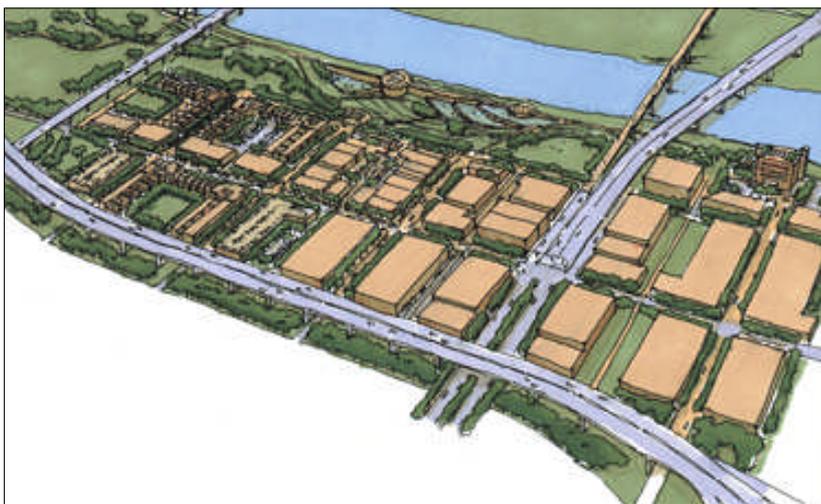
*Riverfront Redevelopment Concept Element*

The South Kansas-Quincy area represents an important redevelopment opportunity for Downtown Topeka. Situated at the important intersection of 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Interstate 70, it not only provides a very visible entrance to Downtown, but also to the State Capitol, the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, the Expocenter and many other destinations. Featuring multiplex theaters, shopping, restaurants and at least one hotel, it may also house a museum and athletic center. The demand for space inside the district may well exceed the space available, which will encourage businesses to opt for space on Kansas Avenue. In fact, several businesses have opened their doors in the blocks of Kansas Avenue nearest South Kansas-Quincy, and are pre-positioned to take advantage of that investment.

**Action step:** Create a plan for developing Dining & Entertainment venues.

**Action step:** Create a program to attract, market and coordinate visits by well-known performers among available venues Downtown.

**Waterfront** – Parks, trails, residential and office space will compete for river access, and developing programs for meeting those demands will probably never end. Project development that builds on existing elements, and on projects already underway, will enhance the waterfront’s appeal to everyone. The levee trail is being developed to extend west past US 75, and east to connect with the Soldier Creek Trail. The park planned for development between the Great Overland Station and the river provides both a focus for development, and a base for expanding riverfront amenities in both directions. Policies also need to use the natural characteristics of the river ecosystem to its best advantage, such as to help manage stormwater or provide nature reserves. Proposals surface regularly to construct a low-water dam or weir that will maintain a relatively constant water level in the Downtown area, and discussions with the Army Corps of Engineers could



Riverfront Redevelopment Concept



help establish their feasibility.

**Action step:** Create a plan for waterfront development that clearly identifies natural reserves, open spaces, and sites for new construction or redevelopment.

**Action step:** Work with the Army Corps of Engineers and conservation groups to identify parameters for development along the levee system.

### **Marketing**

No amount of development or investment will pay dividends if no one knows it is there. Downtown Topeka needs to establish a comprehensive, well-funded program that includes national advertising, but also targets Topekans and the Kansas City market.

Downtown Topeka must look beyond Shawnee County for its economic strength in order to have an important role in the regional economy. The amount of activity in the area draws people when the level is high, so attracting people Downtown is an obvious priority. While tourism itself may never dominate Downtown's economy, the marketing necessary to a successful destination will be to the area's benefit. The development of the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site brings a National Park Downtown. TPAC and the Jayhawk Theatre do and will provide venues for live performances. Inducing visitors to these facilities to spend the night in Topeka, as well as those visiting the Kansas Expocenter and State Capitol, new money comes directly into the local economy. It is that influx of wealth that will finance Topeka's redevelopment, catering to a tested market.



*Wayfinding Concept Element ~ Trolleys*

Developing an area map, developing and using similar typefaces and logos on both map and newsletter, applying that logo to Downtown signage, and advertising aggressively will bring people to Downtown Topeka. It is only incumbent on Downtown Topeka to be ready to receive them!

**Action step:** Develop a program with DTI, for use in signage, promotional materials and entertainment newsletters.

**Action step:** Develop an easily updated area map for wayfinding and marketing purposes.

**Action step:** Develop a program for listing available space Downtown, and make it available on a Downtown Topeka web site.

**Action step:** Develop video and CD-ROM presentations and an interactive guide, suitable for internet exposure.

**Action step:** Encourage an internet presence with a "virtual mall" that represents all of the businesses Downtown.

**Heritage Tourism** - One of the fastest growing industries in the country is "Heritage Tourism."-Particularly as people become comfortable with their lives, as families or retirees, they become interested in their roots. Heritage tourism builds on that interest in an organized and systematic way. By marketing to travelers who are interested in our heritage, communities have found a clean industry that, in part:



1. Provides an infusion of new dollars into local economies, creating business opportunities and jobs,
2. Provides a framework for the redevelopment of older, "problem" properties,
3. Provides amenities that are available to local residents year-round.

Topeka, as the capital of Kansas, occupies a unique position in U.S. history. As a way-point on the Oregon Trail, it provided a respite while waiting to cross the Kaw (Kansas River). After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, Topeka and the surrounding countryside became embroiled in the murder and mayhem known to history as "Bleeding Kansas," which led directly to the Civil War. Kansas' progressive and populist politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century focused the attention of the nation on its statehouse, often seen through the eyes of William Allen White. More recently, the dedication of Monroe School as the *Brown vs. Board of Education National Historic Site* represents, in many respects, a signal event in the development of Civil Rights in this country that began in 1854.

Charles Curtis, Cyrus K. Holliday, Carrie Nation, Nick Chiles, Alf Landon, Karl Menninger, and Coleman Hawkins are but a handful of notables who called Topeka home at some time in their lives. Their contributions to American society are undeniable, and Topeka is fortunate to be an ideal venue to tell their stories.

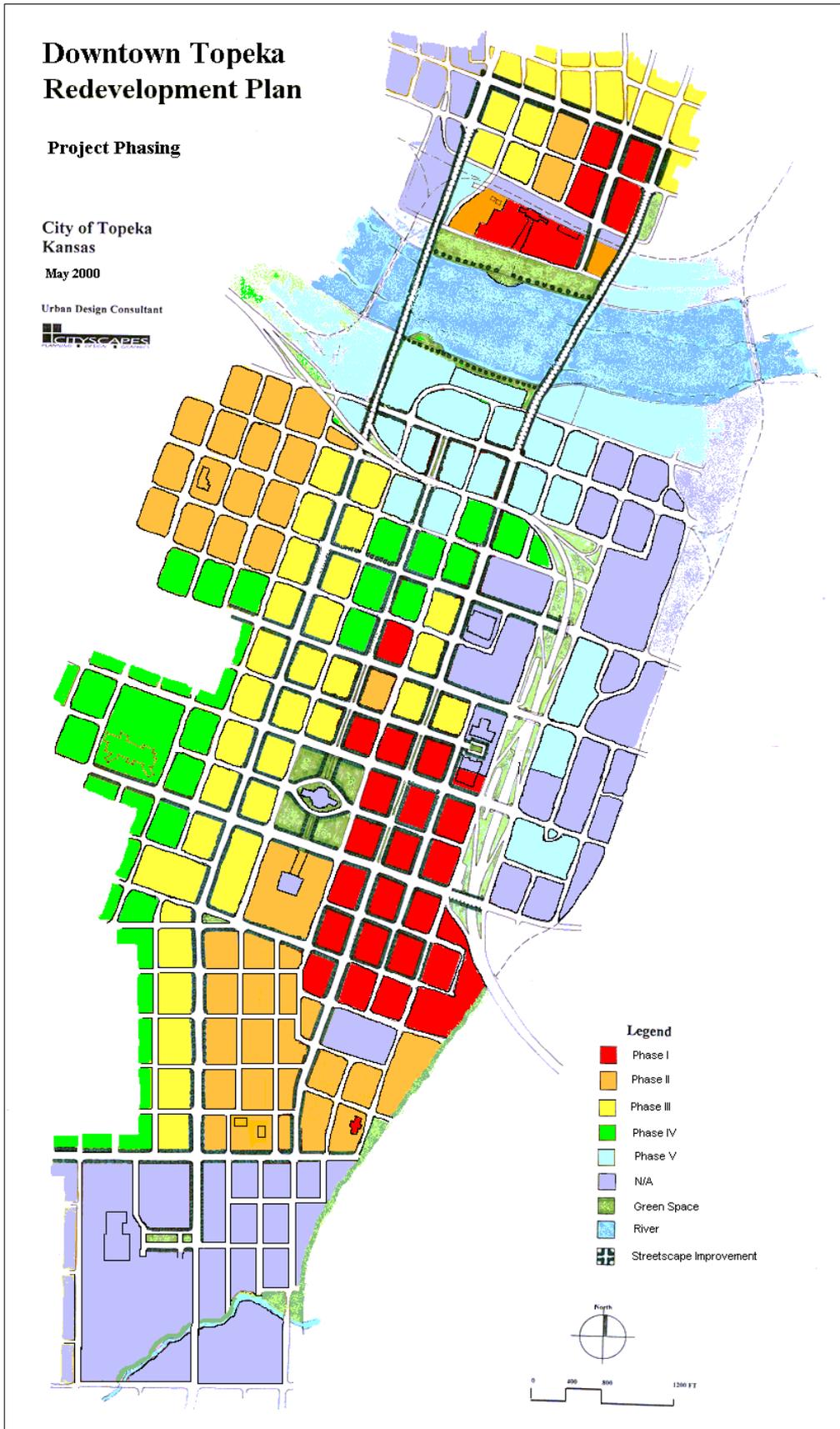
#### **Visitor Generators**

An additional attraction that Topeka will have to offer at its 150<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party in 2004 will be the grand opening of the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site. The 100,000 visitors expected by the National Park Service to visit the site every year represents a major attraction for Downtown Topeka. These visitors are an important market. Visitors to historic sites typically have more disposable income, spend more time at their destination, and spend more per capita than casual visitors. The entire history of race relations in America can be illustrated in Topeka, from the Indian resettlement programs, to Emancipation, to Integration, to Today. In counterpoint to the Great Overland Station Railroad Museum in North Topeka, the Brown v. Board site, addresses other social issues of our history. Overall, the two museums compliment one another. They also provide a context in which to remember other ethnic groups in the community, and especially the Mexican laborers who actually built the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, and many of whose descendents still live in Oakland.



*Brown v. Board National Historic Site ~ Monroe School*





## 5. Priorities

A great deal needs to be done in order to make Downtown Topeka competitive in the regional market, let alone the national market. Establishing goals helps to focus planning efforts, but a simple list of priority items that support those goals also provides individual investors and organizations with a “To Do” list from which to choose projects. The following lists provide some perspective on the relative importance of individual projects, in terms of timing. Particularly in Phase I, all the items listed need to be addressed as quickly as possible.

**First 5 Years (Phase I)** – The first five years Downtown will see the completion of many projects already underway, and their linkage to one another. Most of these projects are geared toward bringing additional people Downtown, particularly as residents. They will be linked physically by streetscape and wayfinding programs, and economically by marketing and recruitment activities. A concerted effort in the first five years will tie a variety of efforts together, and provide a strong basis for future development. The priorities listed below are provided in no clear order apart from their general grouping, and parties that need to be involved are noted for each undertaking. It should be noted that each of the organizations identified must be responsive to its own directorship, and to that extent participation in any suggested project or program is necessarily voluntary.

- Promote a Visitors Information Center, convenient to the Brown v. Board National Park and TPAC – City and State Department of Commerce & Housing.
- Commence developing plans for alleyway development on 8<sup>th</sup> Street – City (Public Works & Development Services) and adjacent property owners.
- Develop plans for redeveloping each block in the Downtown area, detailing alternative uses and streetscape / infrastructural improvements – City and DTI.
- Develop a list of “Best Practices” that have been successfully applied to redeveloping downtowns in other, similar communities, especially state capitals, and adapt them to Topeka’s needs – City & DTI.
- Begin streetscape improvements on streets crossing Kansas Avenue, from 7<sup>th</sup> Street to 13<sup>th</sup> Street, and on Quincy north – City, Property Owners & BID.
- Develop directional (“Wayfinding”) signage, and area map – DTI & Business Owners.
- Develop appropriate zoning to encourage prescribed uses throughout Downtown – City, Developers, DTI.
- Develop design guidelines (architecture, landscapes & streetscapes) for redevelopment projects, and a simple review procedure – City, DTI, AIA, ALA.
- Move forward with the Façade Improvement Program, identifying funding and initial projects – City, DTI, NOTOMA, Kansas Department of Commerce & Housing.
- Develop training for contractors and inspectors to apply the Universal Code of Building Conservation (UCBC), preferably in conjunction with the State Historic Preservation Office – City, Topeka Association of Homebuilders, SHPO, Developers.

Encourage the following through public/private relationships:

- Develop a public art program, featuring local artists but also including other important works – City, Arts Council, Kansas Arts Commission.
- Develop a series of Downtown festivals and similar events – DTI, CVB.



- Develop a marketing campaign, with individualized elements aimed at local, national and international audiences – DTI, CVB.

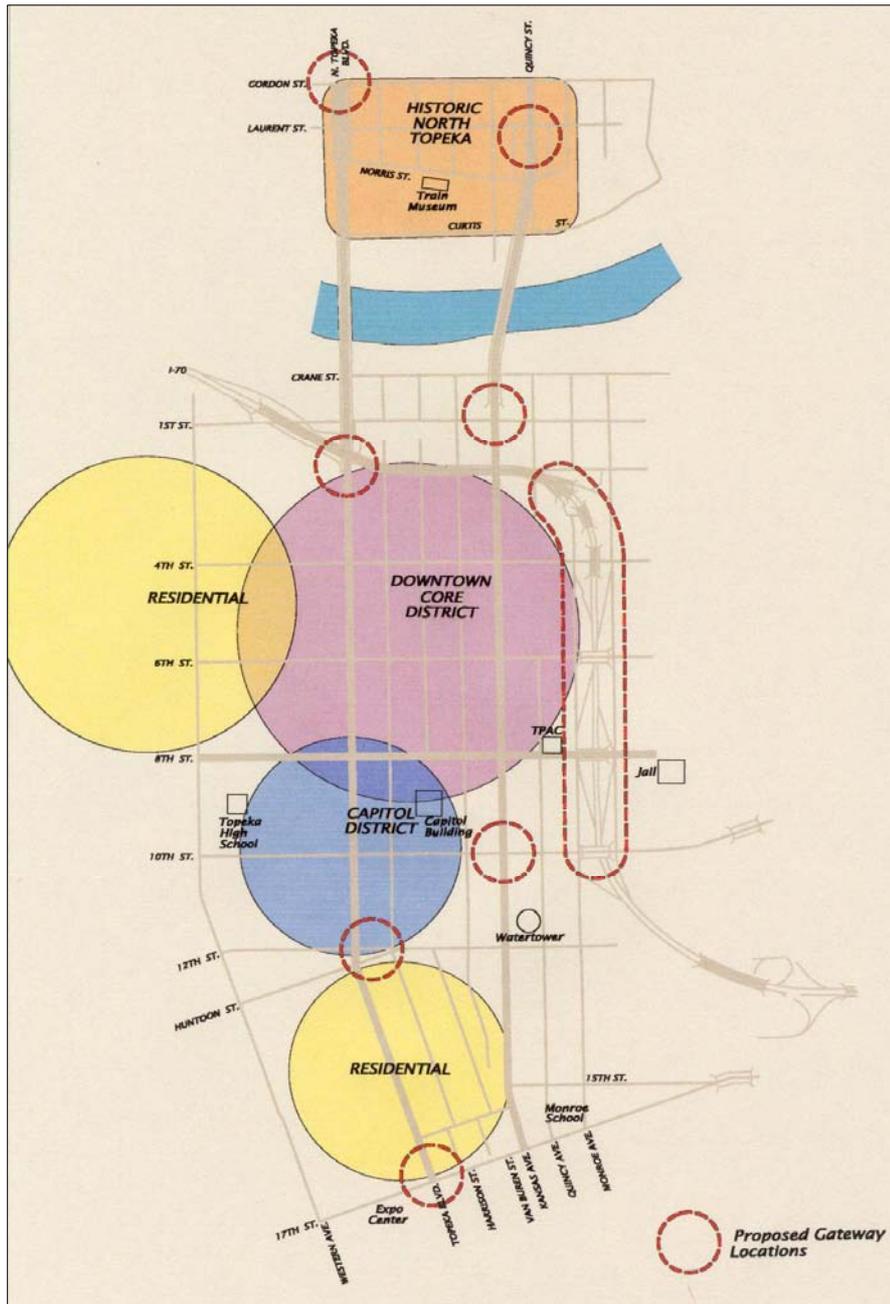
**Second 5 Years (Phase II)** – The second five year period will build upon work already done, and will tie Topeka more closely to Kansas City and the regional economy as a whole. Programs will be refined and new ones initiated, as voids in the web of activity are filled.

- Develop incentives...including possible Parking Garage...to stimulate new high rise, Class A Office Building north of 6<sup>th</sup> in the Van Buren corridor to initiate linkage with future River Front development and Historic North Topeka – City, DTI, Kansas Department of Administration & Department of Commerce & Housing.
- Extend infrastructure improvements (curbs, streets, lighting) in the east, south, west, and north -west sectors to stimulate urban residential development and redevelopment on the edges of Downtown – City, NIAs, Department of Commerce & Housing.
- Refine the Van Buren & Jackson Corridor Streetscape (8<sup>th</sup> Street to 4<sup>th</sup> Street), and use the improvements to leverage and support Downtown Class A Office development and support services – City (Public Works, Parks, Storm Water, Planning), Property Owners.
- Extend 8<sup>th</sup> Street Streetscape to Interstate 70 on the East, and Topeka Blvd on the West – City, DTI, Property Owners.
- Extend 10<sup>th</sup> Street Streetscape to Topeka Blvd. – City, DTI, Property Owners.
- Develop the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Streetscape from I-70 to Topeka, and use it to leverage new high rise office development north of 6<sup>th</sup> – City, DTI, Property Owners.
- Work with KDOT to design plans for Topeka Blvd access to I-70 – City, BID, KDOT, Army Corps.
- Work with KDOT to design plans for Topeka Blvd access to the Great Overland Station and Historic North Topeka - – City, KDOT, FHWA, Army Corps, GOS, Property Owners.
- Develop River Front Park as an anchor and incentive to support mixed use suburban scale office and urban residential between new urban scale, high rise office complex and the river. Park might be scaled back to allow space for at least one high rise apartment/condo development that would offer river and downtown vistas from upper floor living spaces – City, DTI, Army Corps, Property Owners.
- Design 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street Streetscapes, between Kansas Avenue and Topeka Blvd., to encourage mixed use office/residential development – City, DTI, Army Corps, Property Owners.
- Extend Kansas Avenue Streetscape from 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Streets, to encourage mixed income residential development and redevelopment – City, DTI, Property Owners. Initiate curb, sidewalk, pedestrian scale street light projects in adjacent residential neighborhoods east, south, and west of Downtown Plan area to leverage mixed use/mixed income residential development – City, NIAs, Department of Commerce & Housing.
- Initiate curb, sidewalk, and pedestrian scale street light projects in adjacent residential neighborhoods east, south, and west of Downtown Plan area to encourage mixed use/mixed income residential development – City, NIAs, Department of Commerce & Housing.



**10+ Years** – The next phase of development Downtown is as difficult to predict as the past five would have been ten years ago.

- Begin Streetscape linkages to near Downtown and Midtown nodes including Ward Meade Park, Topeka High, Hospital Complex, Public Library, Washburn University, and Kanza Park,
- Develop a Gordon Street Streetscape between Topeka Blvd and Quincy – City, NOTOMA.
- Develop E. 10<sup>th</sup> and E. 6<sup>th</sup> Streetscape Linkages to leverage mixed use/mixed income residential development – City, NIAs, Department of Commerce & Housing.



*Wayfinding Concept Element ~ Entrances*





*Kansas Capitol & Plaza*

## **APPENDICES**

### **STUDIES**

The following studies contributed to the preparation of this plan:

1. ***Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan: 2010*** – The 2010 document is the plan under which the metropolitan area is presently operating, and which this plan serves in part to replace. The 2010 Plan specifically states that the CBD must be revitalized in order to promote commercial growth, and that it must be given development priority, emphasizing a mixture of land uses in the Downtown area.
2. ***Capitol Plaza Master Plan*** – Dating from 1987, and updated periodically, the Master Plan has three goals: 1) Develop a plan that provides for the long-range needs of the State and gives direction to the future physical development of the Capitol Plaza, 2) Enhance the image of the Capitol Plaza as a historic and visitor landmark, while providing a pleasant open and convenient environment for the visitors, employees and elected officials of Kansas, and 3) Prepare an “implementable” master plan, which is attainable within the priorities and financial resources of the State. Governor Graves recently reiterated the State’s commitment to Downtown Topeka, and the construction of two new office buildings underscores that commitment.



3. ***Downtown Development Plan*** – Prepared in 1986, the Downtown Development Plan considers a much smaller area than this plan, which will replace it. In summary, that plan recommended development of the 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> & Quincy – Jackson Streets area as a “compact, high-intensity, pedestrian-oriented shopping and business center.” For context in the present effort, additional recommendations included:
- Redevelopment west of Kansas Avenue, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets, including parking, to support offices to the east and retail to the south.
  - Improvement of the physical environment in the Industrial area south of the Kansas River, orienting it away from the commercial core.
  - Identification of two “supporting” commercial/office areas: 1) between Quincy and Monroe Streets in the southeastern corner of Downtown, and 2) along the west side of Kansas Avenue, between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets.
  - Preservation of the residential neighborhood bounded by Topeka Boulevard, Van Buren, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets.
  - Classification of 9<sup>th</sup> and Van Buren Streets as “identity” streets, since they both link major land use districts and offer excellent views of the Capitol.
4. ***Downtown Topeka Economic Assessment and Development Strategy*** – Completed in 1997, this study considers 5 “frameworks:” Policy, Social & Demographic, Economic, Market, and Parking & Transportation. The report and its five frameworks are considered more closely below. Each section of the report provides background information, a summary, and observations. In conclusion, it also identifies three “vision statements” for Downtown’s future, which this plan addresses:
- Downtown will continue to be the premiere office location in the Topeka Metropolitan Area,
  - Downtown will be the cultural and entertainment hub of the Topeka Metropolitan area, and
  - The Downtown will be an attractive and convenient location for living, shopping, working and playing.
5. ***Economic Development Strategy for Topeka and Shawnee County*** – Richard Caplan and Associates provided an analysis of current economic conditions in Topeka, including both labor and target industry analyses. In conjunction with other factors, the labor analysis led the researchers to identify 12 target industries for Topeka. The top five ranked industries are, in descending order:
- Administrative Center,
  - Food & Kindred Products,
  - Distribution,
  - Health services, and
  - Industrial Machinery and Equipment.

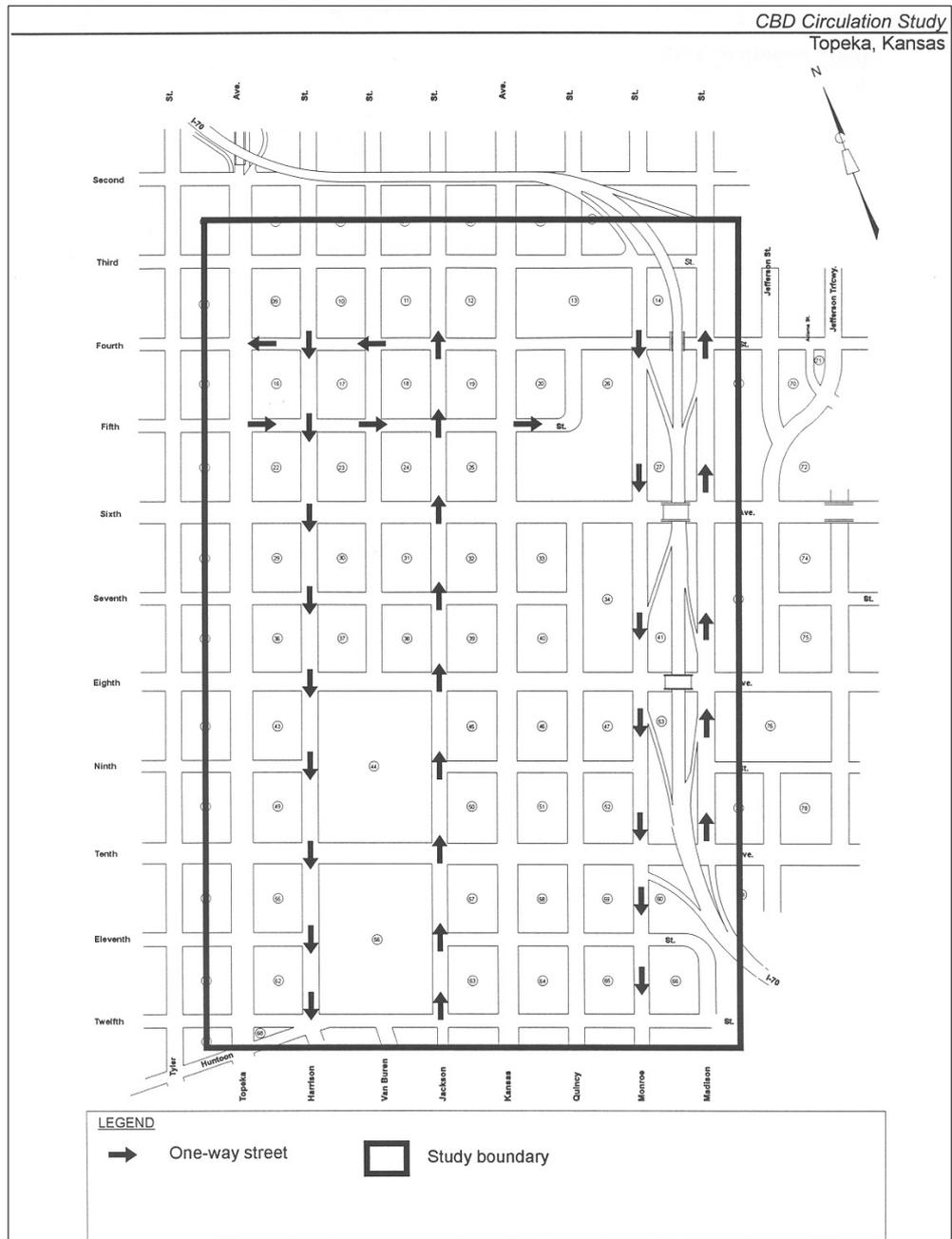
This plan focuses on the first of these five targeted industries as being most appropriate for Downtown, although some elements of each may be desirable under certain conditions.

6. ***Urban Design Framework for Downtown Topeka*** – Early in 1999, an advisory committee met with Lu Hou, of Cityscapes, to develop a design framework that would guide future development. The results of their discussions are incorporated into the design section of this document, and some central elements of the report provide additional context. The goal that the committee defined for Downtown reads, “Reestablish downtown as a family oriented, economically sound, culturally vital and visually attractive



regional destination,” and it forms the guiding principle of this effort. The balance of the document identifies objectives to attain that goal, and strategies to implement those objectives, most of which are incorporated into this iteration.

- 7. **Topeka Central Business District Circulation Study** – This recent study, by Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Corporation (BWR), recommends improvements to signaling under a *status quo* scenario, as well as some infrastructural upgrading to accommodate new development in the CBD. Signaling improvements consist of optimizing the timing and coordination of traffic signals throughout the area, in order to smooth traffic flows and minimize congestion. Setting priorities for streets in the area is vital to coordinating signals, and the BWR study establishes four priority levels. First priority streets include the even numbered streets (4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>) and Topeka Boulevard. Second Priority streets are identified as Monroe and Madison, which provide access to Interstate 70. Third priority streets are Kansas and Jackson Avenues, which integrate the state and commercial sectors. Fourth Priority streets are Harrison and Quincy. Considerable improvements were demonstrated by the BWR timing analysis, particularly in terms of shortened delays and higher



average traffic speeds. Those measures improve both the capacity of roadways and fuel economy for drivers, and timing adjustments have been made based on this study. Development of the Brown v.



Board of Education National Historic Site, south of Downtown proper, could well result in increased traffic volumes at the 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Street Interstate interchanges, however, and consultation with KDOT regarding access would then be warranted.

8. **Central Business District Parking Needs Analysis** – This study was conducted by Walker Parking Consultants, and provides a basis for the planning and management of Downtown's parking resources. The report anticipates a parking deficit of some 500 - 600 spaces upon completion of future development projects. It also identifies likely sites for parking garages, and considers the potential effects of development south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street.
9. **Historic North Topeka Revitalization Plan** – The result of a community-based effort, a neighborhood redevelopment plan for North Topeka came to focus as much on commercial development as on the surrounding residential areas. The plan profiles the neighborhood, articulates guiding principles, categorizes land uses, outlines a revitalization strategy, and presents an agenda for implementation. A central fixture of the plan involves down-zoning much of the area to better reflect actual land uses, and to manage development. The old Union Pacific Depot is presently being redeveloped as the Great Overland Station railroad museum, and the surrounding area is expected to become a regional entertainment center.

Several other plans and recommendations have been superceded by subsequent development. For example, center-street parking was tried and abandoned, and the *Strategic Action Plan to Revitalize North Topeka* has been replaced with *Historic North Topeka Revitalization plan*, which was adopted in 1999.

## **ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT**

A primary source for information regarding Downtown redevelopment is the *Downtown Topeka Economic Assessment and Development Strategy*, submitted by ZHA, inc. and Barton-Aschman and adopted by the City Council. The Frameworks identified in that document are summarized below.

### **Policy Framework**

#### **Organizational Structure**

Any listing of relevant agencies and organizations is necessarily incomplete, given shifting personnel and policy determinations, but the following listing represents those players critical to implementing this plan.

1. **The City of Topeka and Shawnee County** – Both City and County governments share responsibility for development in Downtown Topeka. Both control land in the area, and both exercise other controls, such as zoning and code enforcement, which they administer on behalf of the public. Although there have been periodic discussions about consolidating into a single, metropolitan government, thus far only the Metropolitan Planning Commission bridges both administrative bodies. The Zoning Ordinance provides a mechanism for managing development Downtown and throughout the county, and tailoring its provisions to encourage community goals will serve everyone's interests. Therefore, coordination between the City and County is critical if redevelopment is to flourish in the Central Business District (CBD).
2. **The Capitol Area Plaza Authority** - The Capitol Area Plaza Authority was established by the State Legislature to provide planning for the State Zoning Control Area, within which lie the Capitol Plaza Area and the Capitol Plaza. The Authority oversees development in the State Zoning Control Area,



planning improvements to support the needs of the State and to enhance and maintain the integrity of the Capitol Plaza.

3. **The Capital City Business Improvement District (BID)** – The BID was established in 1986 by the City of Topeka to provide the special services for the CBD. The BID is governed by an Advisory Board, and businesses within its borders pay fees every year, which pay for those special services including promotion, general maintenance, special events and security. Its budget is approved each year by the City Council.
4. **Downtown Topeka, Inc. (DTI)** – Downtown Topeka, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization, with voluntary members. Although similar to the BID, it is independent from local government, and members' dues are used for promotion, planning, events and similar activities to benefit Downtown businesses and the community at large.
5. **The Topeka Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (TMTA)** – The Transit Authority manages the mass transit system for the Topeka Metropolitan Area, coordinating buses, para-transit programs and the trolley service.
6. **The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** – Legally distinct from the Planning Commission, the MPO serves to program, receive and distribute transportation funds from the Federal Government. The Topeka Metropolitan Area is somewhat unique, in that the Metropolitan Planning Commission as a whole serves this function, rather than a separate body.
7. **The Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce** – The Chamber provides marketing and research assistance to local businesses and prospective investors, both Downtown and throughout Shawnee County. Its publications include an Economic Development Interactive Disk, which provides information about local development incentives, demographics, statistical data on the local economy, and quality of life. The user can also compute tax incentives on a given set of circumstances relating to size of investment and number of jobs created.

### **Social Framework**

Social and demographic trends indicate that the Topeka Metropolitan Area (TMA) is a stable economy. Moderate population growth occurred between 1980 and 1990. While the TMA did not grow as rapidly as the state as a whole, the state's growth is largely driven by growth in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area. City growth has been negligible, and demographic figures have remained relatively constant. Figures from the latest Census will provide a basis for evaluating these trends over the past decade, and will be critical in evaluating planning efforts over the next few years.

A recent policy brief by the Weatherhead School of Management Center for Regional Economic Issues at Case Western Reserve University (Gottlieb, Paul D. and Michael Fogarty. *Educational Attainment and Economic Growth*. Case Western University, July 1999.) revealed that "Among the 75 largest US metropolitan areas, the ten that had the most college graduates in 1980 enjoyed per-capita income growth of 1.8% per year between 1980 and 1997. The ten with the fewest college graduates in 1980 experienced annual income growth of only 0.8% over the same period." Clearly, the close proximity of universities in the region represents an asset that should be exploited, using the University of Kansas, Kansas State University and Washburn University to form an intellectual corridor of intellect and research.



### **Economic Framework**

The ZHA report notes that “The Metropolitan Area’s economy is stable and diverse.” Employment has increased over time, unemployment is below state and national averages, and wages are consistent with state and national averages. It also notes that there is a higher than average concentration of employment in the Metropolitan area in finance, insurance and real estate, due to the insurance industry cluster in Topeka. At the same time, area employment in manufacturing is below the state and national averages. ZHA makes several observations:

- The Topeka Metropolitan Area economy is dominated by service industries.
- Approximately one out of four people who live in the Metropolitan Area work for the government.
- Approximately one out of four people who live in the Metropolitan Area work in the service industries, like health services, business services, etc.
- Approximately one out of five people who reside in the Metropolitan Area work in the retail industry.
- Between 1990 and 1993, non-farm employment grew by 2.4%, but approximately 45% of the new jobs generated were government jobs, while non-government job growth was only 0.4%.

Based on that data, and subsequent research, it should be possible to identify market niches that Topeka can occupy within the national economy. In fact, plans have been made to redevelop the old State Hospital grounds as a Kanza Business and Technology Park that could conceivably build on existing expertise. Topeka is well sited to support such development, and the recently completed fiber-optic loop around the Metropolitan area makes it even more marketable for the communications and transportation industries. With careful planning and coordination, Downtown can be equally competitive, and must be so over the coming decades.

### **Market Framework**

The overall market reflects a number of individual elements, each making its own contribution. ZHA, Inc. and Choen-Esrey provided a market analysis for the area in 1996, and that study’s conclusions are summarized below. General market information is organized under Office Market, Retail Market, and Residential Market, and the 1990 Census results are expected to provide updated data once they are tabulated and released.

1. Office Market – According to ZHA figures, approximately 61% (2.18 million sq. ft.) of the office space in the BID is privately owned, with a 10% vacancy rate. The balance is government-owned space, which is both 100% occupied and expanding. The Signature Office Building, plus the new SRS Building, exemplify the State’s presence Downtown. ZHA cites the 1996 Cohen-Esrey *Market Analysis* indicated that there were 1.75 million square feet of multi-tenant leasable office space in the Downtown area at the end of 1995. That study excluded single-occupant buildings and office space that was not immediately available for lease. The Cohen-Esrey study data indicated that Downtown continues to be the premier office location, boasting over 90% of all Class-A office space in the metropolitan market. A low absorption rate indicates that there is minimal growth in the market, however, which will ensure that any expansion will be project-driven and tenant-specific. ZHA concludes that, “The greatest constraint to office development in the Downtown is development cost. Full service rents are currently \$12.50 to \$13.50 per square foot. This rent level cannot support the construction of a Class-A building with structured parking. To be a competitive office development location, the City must pro-actively pursue joint development arrangements that result in lowering



private sector development costs.” In other words, substantial new construction will only begin if a tenant expands or relocates to Downtown, and if the City actively participates in that process.

2. Retail Market – In 1996, there was approximately 685,000 sq. ft. of retail space in the BID, representing some 20% of the total retail inventory in the Metropolitan area. Of that total, approximately 111,000 sq. ft. was vacant, however, representing an 86% vacancy rate. Overall, Metropolitan Topeka has nearly 3 million sq. ft. of retail space, but over two-thirds of the Class-A space on the Wanamaker Corridor. Overall, the City is drawing sales from outside its boundaries, but the percentage of sales made Downtown stands in stark contrast to the City as a whole. A 1995 study of City Pull Factors for Fiscal Year 1995 rated Topeka third among first-class cities in the State. Its “pull factor” of 1.65 indicates that retail sales are 65% above average for a city its size. Development of the Downtown area as a destination for visitors apart from office workers is vital it is to benefit from that economic activity. The development of cultural and entertainment facilities in the area will provide both an attraction for visitors and an inducement for office workers to linger in the area after 5 P.M. Specialty retail and non-chain eating establishments will go a long way toward achieving that goal.
3. Residential Market – Demolitions have generally outpaced new construction in the Downtown area, resulting in a net loss of housing units. In general terms, the redevelopment of housing Downtown will necessarily follow improvements in retail and entertainment. In communities across the country, attempts to force housing development ahead of those amenities have been unsuccessful, but later development of high-density housing has provided a built-in market for commercial services, building synergies. At present, apartments do exist Downtown, and good quality single-family homes still stand within its boundaries. Concentrations of single-family housing exist north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street and east of Topeka Boulevard, and south of the Kansas Judicial Center. The Design Framework identifies these general areas as appropriate for additional housing development. Apartment occupancy rates are high in the Metropolitan area, and home ownership is encouraged by a variety of policies and programs.

### **Parking & Transportation Framework**

A *Topeka Central Business District Circulation Study* has been completed for Topeka by Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Corporation. Also, a *Central Business Districts Parking Needs Analysis* was concluded recently by Walker Parking Consultants. Together, these studies provide the City with an overview of existing conditions in the Downtown area, and form a basis for making policy decisions.

The recent *Topeka Central Business District Circulation Study* recommends improvements to signaling under a *status quo* scenario, as well as some changes to accommodate new development in the CBD. Signaling improvements consist of optimizing the timing and coordination of traffic signals throughout the area, in order to smooth traffic flows and minimize congestion. A critical element for coordinating signals consists of setting priorities for streets in the area, and the study establishes four priority levels. First Priority streets include the even-numbered streets, 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>, and Topeka Boulevard. Second Priority streets are identified as Monroe and Madison, which provide access to Interstate 70. Third Priority streets are Kansas and Jackson Avenues, which integrate the State and commercial sectors, and Fourth Priority streets are Harrison and Quincy. Considerable improvements were demonstrated, particularly in terms of shortened delays and higher average traffic speeds. Both of those measures improve both the capacity of the roadways and fuel economy for drivers, and timing adjustments have been made based on this study.



**ACRONYMS**

- ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA provides a set of standards and guidelines for making public accommodations and spaces accessible to all people. In this document, its provisions are primarily considered in terms of community design.
- BID** – Business Improvement District. The BID represents the property owners in a specific area that includes virtually all of Downtown. Business owners pay into a fund, from which cleaning, sidewalk maintenance and other expenses are taken.
- CDBG** – Community Development Block Grants. The CDBG program earmarks federal funds for community improvements. CDBG funds can be used for a variety of projects, and may also be used as a local component when applying for other federal funding.
- DTI** – Downtown Topeka, Inc. DTI provides administrative services to the BID, and coordinates marketing for the area.
- HND** – Housing and Neighborhood Services. HND is an agency of the City government, and coordinates the City's efforts to maintain and create affordable, safe and attractive housing.
- MPO** – Metropolitan Planning Organization. The MPO is mandated by federal transportation legislation, and is intended to coordinate regional planning efforts. In Topeka and Shawnee County, the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission fills this role.
- NRA** – Neighborhood Reinvestment Act. The NRA provides for property tax rebates for redevelopment in the City's target area, which includes Downtown. Essentially, rebates are based on the cost of improvements, and can range up to 100% on some historic properties.
- SBA** – Small Business Administration. A federal agency, the SBA provides loans and technical assistance to small businesses, including start-up operations.
- SHPO** – State Historic Preservation Officer. The SHPO represents the state and federal governments, primarily in terms of design review for historical properties, or within 500 feet of such properties Downtown. It also reviews projects that intend to take advantage of Historic Preservation Income Tax credits.
- TDR** – Transfer of Development Rights. TDR programs provide low-intensity development to trade its unused development rights to other developers to apply at other locations. For example, if a small store in a 2-story building lies in a zoning district that allows 5 story buildings, it could legally construct three more stories that it doesn't need. However, if the developer of a neighboring parcel of land wants to build an 8-story building, it can buy the rights to build those extra three stories from the small store. This approach is most useful in areas with very high demand for development, but limited land available for new construction.
- TIF** – Tax Increment Financing. TIF projects identify a specific area for redevelopment, typically one with substandard infrastructure (e.g., streets, sewers, etc.). New development within the district raises property values, which raises property taxes. Any increase in taxes collected in the district are used to update the infrastructure, in order to service the new development.



**TMA** – Topeka Metropolitan Area. The TMA is a demographic designation, which includes Topeka and the surrounding area, that is used in analyzing Census data.

**TMTA** – Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority. The TMTA coordinates bus and transit service for the area, and helps to implement federal programs targeted at disabled individuals, job accessibility, and meeting general transportation needs for the community.

## **RESOURCES**

### ***A. Federal / National***

#### **Main Street - National Trust for Historic Preservation**

1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington DC 20036

(202) 588-6269

<http://www.mainst.org/>

#### **NTHP Mountain/Plains Regional Office**

Suite 1100

910 16<sup>th</sup> Street

Denver, CO 80202-2910

(303) 623-1504

<http://www.nthp.org/main/frontline/regions/states/kansas.htm>

#### **Small Business Administration**

323 W. 8<sup>th</sup>

Kansas City, MO

(816) 374-6729

[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

### ***B. State***

#### **Capitol Area Plaza Authority**

Capitol Building

300 SW 10<sup>th</sup>, Rm. 152E

Topeka, KS 66612

(785) 296-3011

#### **Department of Commerce and Housing**

700 SW Jackson, Suite 1300

Topeka, KS 66603

(785) 296-3481

<http://www.kansascommerce.com/>

#### **Kansas Development Finance Authority**

Jayhawk Tower

700 SW Jackson, Suite 1000

Topeka, KS 66603

(785) 296-6747

[kdfa@kdfa.org](mailto:kdfa@kdfa.org)



**Kansas. Inc.**

632 SW Van Buren, Suite 100  
Topeka, KS 66603  
(785) 296-1460

**Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)**

Kansas State Historical Society  
6425 SW Sixth Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66615-1099  
Phone 785-272-8681  
<http://www.kshs.org/>

**C. Local****Downtown Topeka, Inc. (DTI)**

906 S. Kansas Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66612  
(785) 234-9336  
[dti@cjnetworks.com](mailto:dti@cjnetworks.com)

**Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce**

120 E. 6<sup>th</sup>  
Topeka, KS 66603  
<http://www.topekachamber.org/>

**Housing and Neighborhood Development Department**

2010 SE California  
Topeka, KS  
(785) 368-3685  
<http://www.topeka.org/>

**Topeka Convention and Visitors Bureau**

1275 SW Topeka Boulevard  
Topeka, Kansas 66612  
(785) 234-1030 or 1-800-235-1030  
[tcvb@topekacvb.org](mailto:tcvb@topekacvb.org)

**Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department**

515 S. Kansas Avenue, Suite 404  
Topeka, KS 66603  
(785) 368-3728  
<http://www.topeka.org/>



**D. Reference Books, Plans and Periodicals**

- Boyle, Jayne F., Stuart Ginsberg, and Sally Oldham, revised by Donovan Rypkema. *A Guide to Tax-Advantaged Rehabilitation*. National Trust for Historic Preservation, Information Series (1986, 1994).
- Caplan, Richard. *Economic Development Strategy for Topeka / Shawnee County, Kansas*. Lawrence, Kansas: Richard Caplan & Associates, 1997.
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- \_\_\_\_\_. *Reinventing Real Estate*. Washington: Urban Land Institute, 1995.
- Weaver, Glen. *Tourism USA: Guidelines for Tourism Development*. Washington: United States Travel and Tourism Administration, 1986.

**E. Internet Resources**

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>
- American Pathways (Tourism): <http://www.americanpathways.com/AmericanPathways/>
- American Planning Association: <http://www.planning.org/>
- Business Plans: <http://www.bplans.com/>
- City of Pittsburgh, PA.: <http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/>
- Congress for the New urbanism: <http://www.cnu.org/>
- Design Center (Chattanooga): [http://www.chcrpa.org/design\\_center.html](http://www.chcrpa.org/design_center.html)
- International Downtown Association: <http://www.ida-downtown.org/>
- Main Street Center - National Trust for Historic Preservation: <http://www.mainst.org/>
- National Association of Homebuilders: <http://www.nahb.org/>
- National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials: <http://www.nahro.org/>



National City Government Resource Center: <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/1389/>  
National Civic League: <http://www.ncl.org/ncl/>  
National Trust for Historic Preservation: <http://www.nthp.org/>  
Planning Commissioner's Journal: <http://www.plannersweb.com/>  
Preservation Briefs: <http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm>  
Resource for Urban Design Information: <http://rudi.herts.ac.uk/rudi.html>  
Small Business Administration Guide: <http://www.geocities.com/WallStreet/2172/>  
Tourism Industries: <http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/>  
Traditional Building Magazine: <http://www.traditional-building.com/>  
TREES Project: <http://www.treepeople.org/trees/>  
Urban Land Institute: <http://www.uli.org/>  
Walkable Communities: <http://www.ota.fhwa.dot.gov/walk/wanted/wcover.html>  
Waterfront Center: <http://www.waterfrontcenter.org/>

