

CAPITOL DISTRICT



History

The Capital District is located on what was southwestern edge of the City of Topeka back during its first full decade as an incorporated city. Its status as undeveloped land changed dramatically in 1866 when construction of the Kansas State Capitol Building commenced on the four square block area between SW 8th & SW 10th Avenues, and between SW Jackson Street, and SW Harrison Avenue. Construction on the Capitol Building would last for 37 years until its final completion in 1903. Topeka's first free public library was constructed on the Statehouse grounds at the south west corner of SW 8th & Jackson Streets in 1883. The Library would remain standing and in operation at this location until it moved to its current location in 1953.



Topeka Free Public Library with the Kansas State Capitol under construction in the background, 1888

For the remainder of the 19th Century, the areas surrounding the State Capitol were constructed consistent with the initial development patterns of the City, with business and commercial businesses rising to the east and north, and predominantly residential dwellings being built to the south and west.

It was not until the turn of the Century that government and institutional/civic uses began to occupy the frontage of SW 10th Avenue, directly south of the State Capitol Building. By 1910, the Kansas State Printing Office was built at the corner of SW Jackson & SW 10th Avenue. This was followed by the Masonic Temple next door to the west by 1920.

In 1954, the State of Kansas expanded their offices with the construction of the Docking State Office Building in the 900 block of SW Harrison, directly west of the Capitol. With this development began the replacement of the residential neighborhood to the south with vehicle parking lots to accommodate the expanding State workforce.

Devastation, however, struck this area on June 8, 1966 when an F5 tornado destroyed the vast majority of buildings south of 10th Street. The recovery of this disaster prompted the wholesale replacement of all residences within the Capital District with



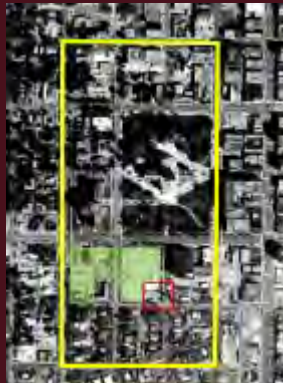
Damage caused by the June 8, 1966 tornado

District Parking Development and Utilization

1942



1966



1994



2002



2018



Capitol



- State government focus
- The People's greenspace - dual purpose
- Docking renovation/Class A space
- Parking lot re-use/infill
- Jackson/Harrison conversions

Government Green Space

The Capitol building is the heart of this district, which is dominated by government uses. This area will remain as one of the major employment centers downtown and would be a great place for a new museum or cultural destination. In an area with little other green space, the Capitol Grounds can act as an oasis for downtown residents - a great place to read a book under a tree, meet with friends or eat lunch outside.



Potential Build-Out

New Development & Conversions

- 1 New Mixed Use/Flex** Contingent on the development of structured parking for Docking State Office Building, a new opportunity could arise for a variety of uses including class A office space, retail, lofts or sports fieldhouse with shared parking for weekends. Construction on this site provides a more intensive use than the existing surface parking, while putting space back on the tax rolls .
- 2 Potential Office Rehabilitation** - The Docking Building currently sits vacant. Multiple rehabilitation proposals provide a varying level of occupancy. Only a full rehabilitation accommodating new KDHE labs, conference space, other State office consolidation and structured parking will provide the highest economic impact .
- 3 Mixed Use Infill** - Replacing surface level parking with infill development will complete the streetwall along the block and provide space for new retail, office and residential housing units, with a spectacular front door view of the Capitol Building.
- 4 Parking Garage** - To account for parking spaces lost to new development, structured parking will provide parking for nearby offices.
- 5 New Office** - With a need for new Class A office space, new development along 7th Street would fit in appropriately with other office uses.



- 6 New Residential** - Replacing the State's surface parking on the southeast corner of Van Buren and 7th Street, a new mixed use housing development would provide needed housing units and anchor the southern end of the Van Buren housing corridor. Structured parking should be integrated to replace the lost surface parking.
- 7 Potential Office Rehabilitation/ Conversion** - The State's Eisenhower Building, currently not on their central plant, could provide needed housing units and anchor the future Van Buren housing corridor. The building height/proximity and location would provide excellent views of the Capitol and walkability to Kansas Avenue.

RESIDENCES AND GREENSPACE



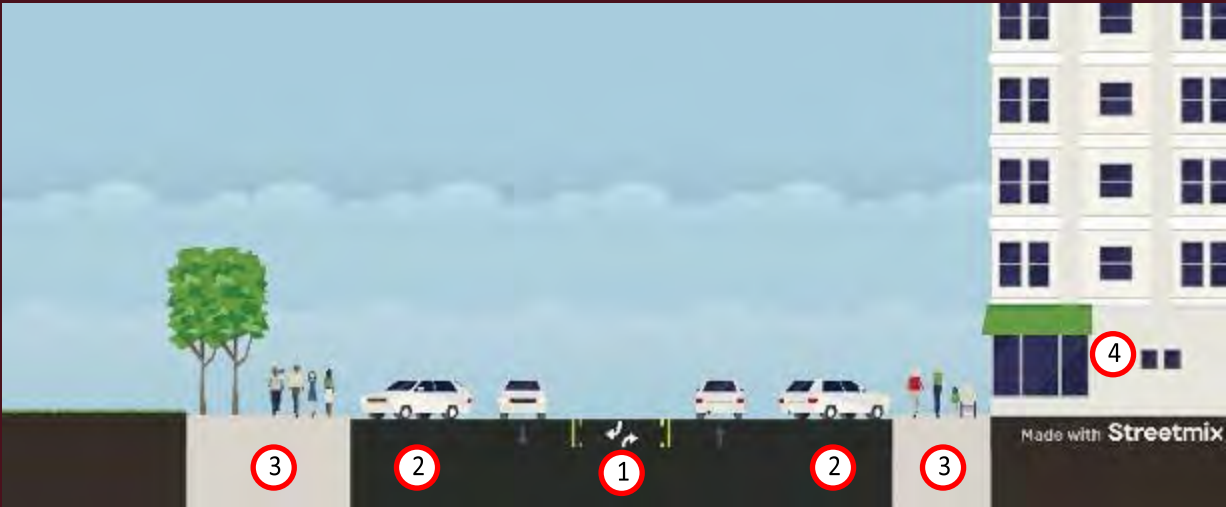
Circulation/Complete Streets



Significant changes are proposed on Jackson St. and Harrison St. While accommodating existing traffic counts, both roads are recommended for conversion to two-way traffic throughout Downtown Topeka. These changes will create a more user and pedestrian friendly circulation pattern. 12th Street is currently under construction to remove one traffic lane and create a designated bike and pedestrian path.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
Conversions (1-way to 2-way)	Jackson St. (7th to 12th)	Main Street	•			•
	Harrison St (7th to 12th)	Main Street	•			•
Lane Reallocation (Removal of Travel Lanes)	12th St. (Topeka Blvd to Jackson St.)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	8th Ave.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
No Change	7th St.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	9th St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	10th Ave	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	Topeka Blvd	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Van Buren St.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•

Jackson Street 7th Street to 12th Street



- 1 Travel Lanes converted to two-way traffic
- 2 Angled parking along both travel lanes
- 3 Generous sidewalk widths for increased pedestrian use and implementation of crosswalk bump-outs
- 4 Promote mixed use development to increase pedestrian amenities

Existing Character

Land Use

Land uses in the Capitol District are dominated by State offices, and to accommodate these uses, two full city blocks dedicated to parking make up the southwest corner of the district. With the State searching for a new KDHE research site and rehabilitation of the Docking building, both of the blocks dedicated to surface parking can be utilized to accentuate Topeka Boulevard and condense State offices. The northern end of the district has plenty of opportunity to provide new commercial and residential uses, building towards a centralized “core” within Downtown Topeka. A proposed new housing development at the southeast corner of 7th and Van Buren can act as transitional zone to more intensive residential and commercial uses.



Existing Character

Zoning

The Capitol District will be rezoned to D-1. Rezoning of this district will accommodate the existing office spaces, while promoting new commercial and residential uses along the north end of the district.

D-1 Zoning - Designed to facilitate a compatible mixed use activity center within the core area of downtown Topeka. The district is predominately composed of state offices, as well as local and federal facilities, commercial and retail uses. The district includes compatible, office, civic, commercial retail/service, and residential uses which complement and support a high density of activity and facilitate pedestrian usage.



Implementation Summary

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Increase quantity of retail uses and housing units.	
Zoning	Rezone district to D-1	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 70 units of new housing	Reliant on development of new housing on the southeast corner of 7th and Van Buren and conversion of Eisenhower building.
Office	Rehabilitation of Docking building and other government-owned spaces allow for consolidation of government office space.	Government-owned space not included in estimates of new class A office space.
Retail	Retail component would be part of new mixed use developments, with no new commercial developments projected.	
Hotel	No new hotel beds.	
Parking	Angled parking is preferred in high density commercial areas. However, bike and pedestrian considerations may dictate the need for parallel parking or other parking requirements.	Structured Parking is preferred. Where possible surface parking lots should be replaced with higher density structured parking.
Building Design Standards	Create residential and nonresidential design standards for D Districts.	

