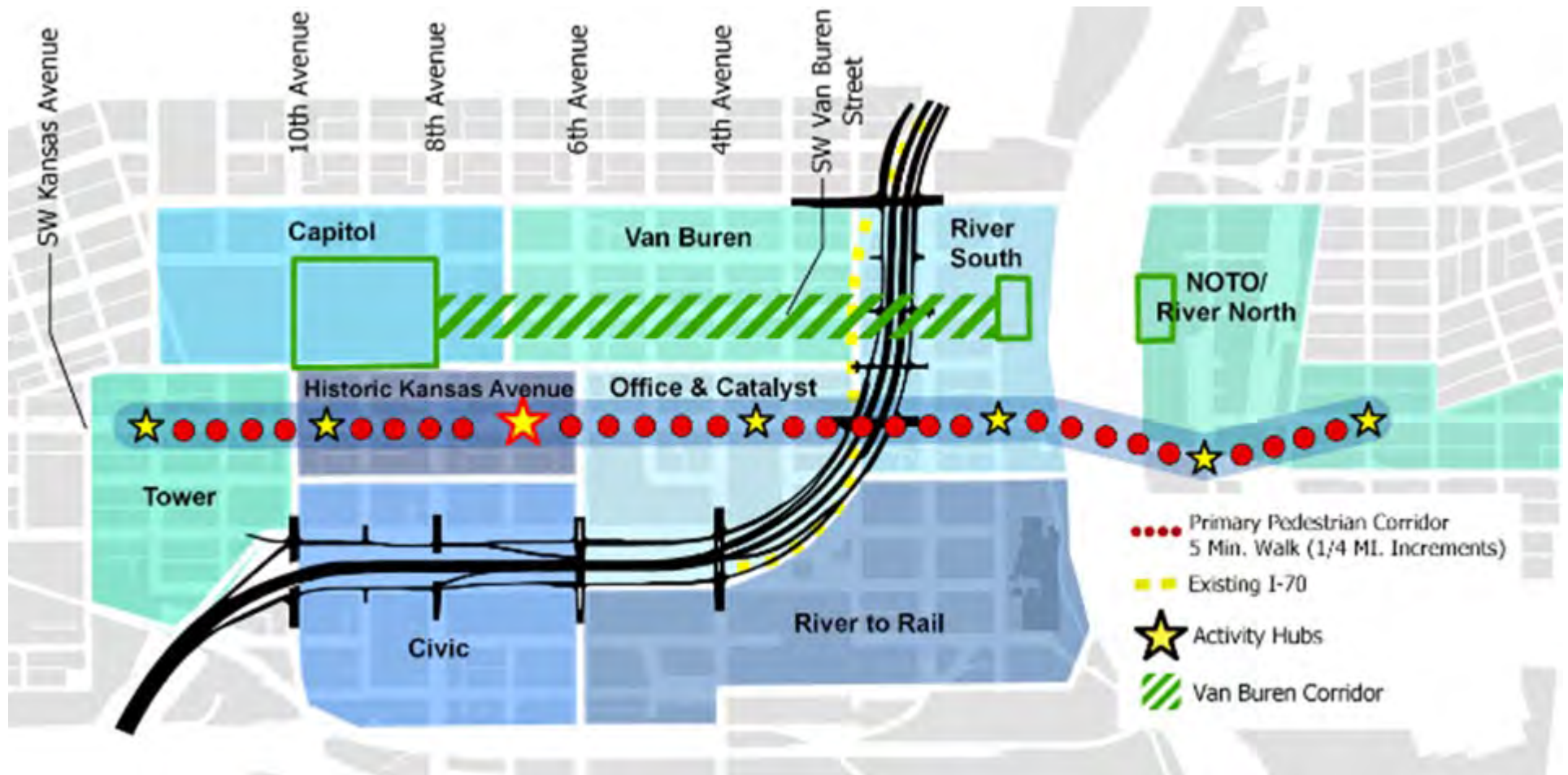


PART II: DISTRICT PLANS



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



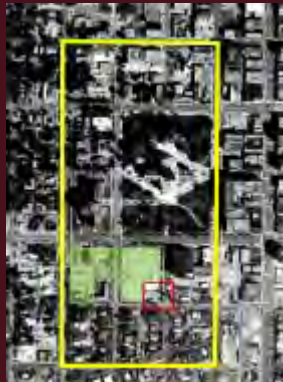
Damage caused by the June 8, 1966 tornado

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



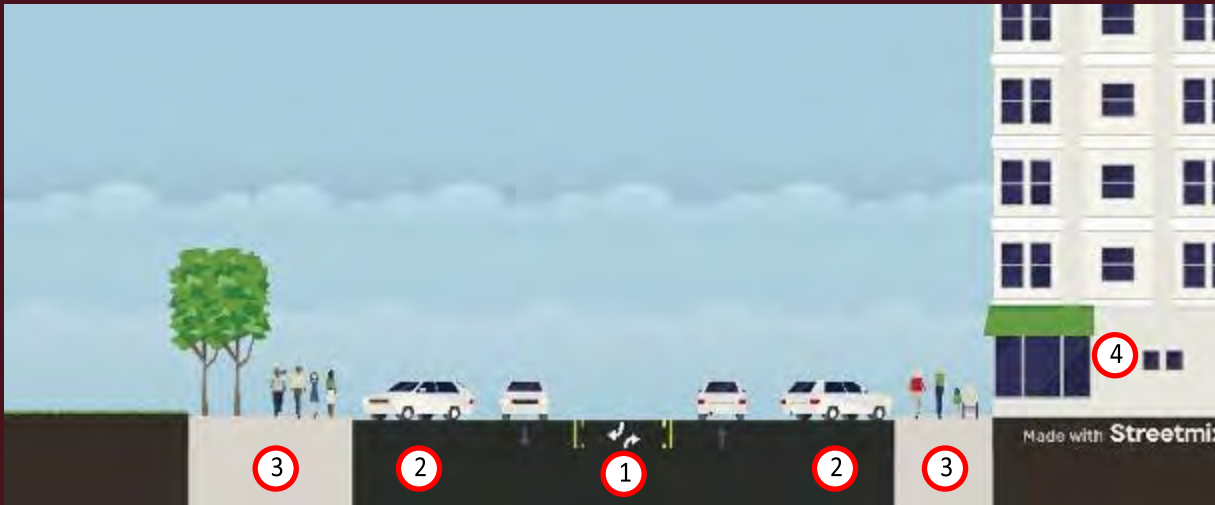
Circulation/Complete Streets



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

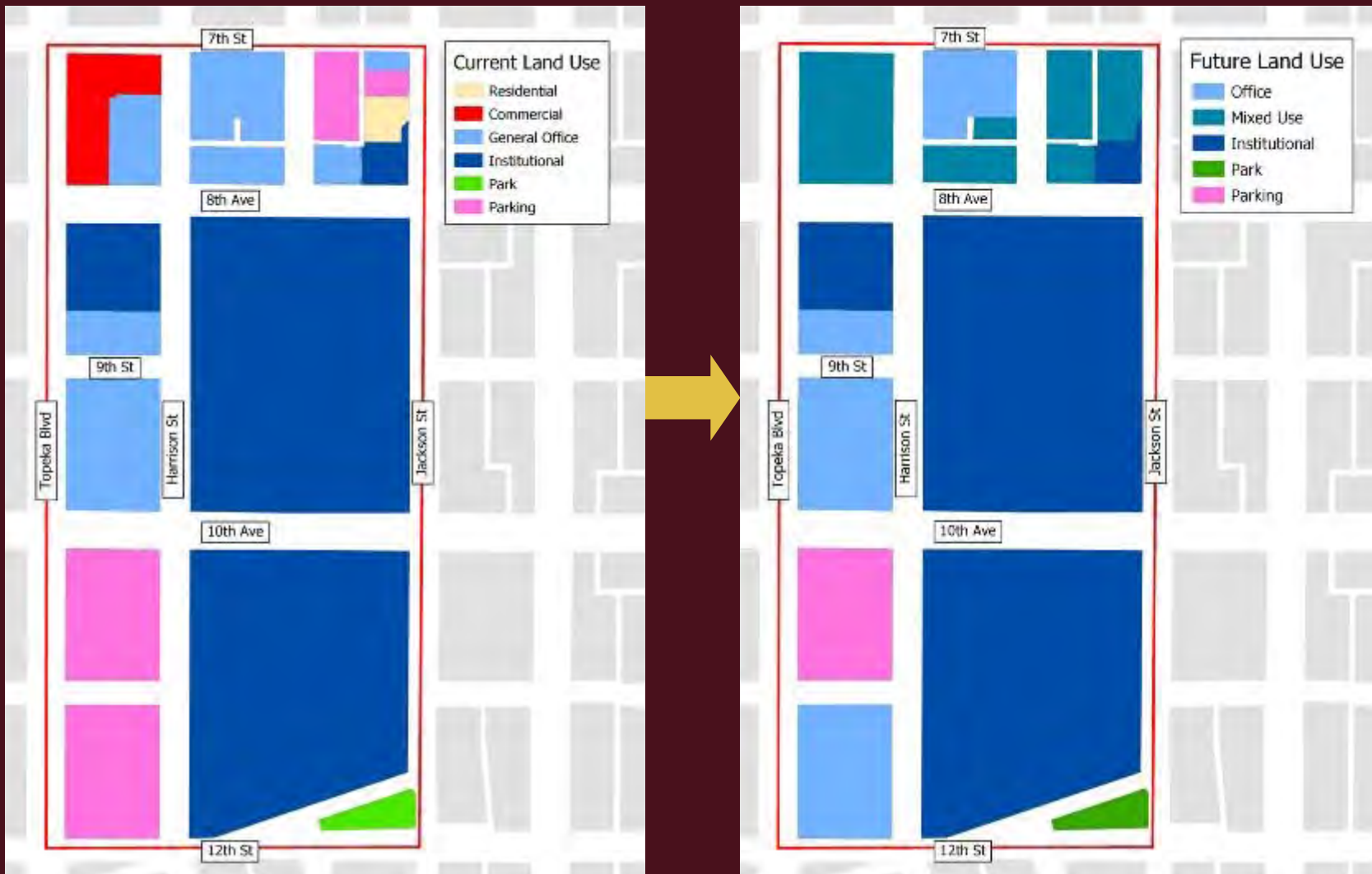


- 1 Travel Lanes converted to two-way traffic
- 2 Angled parking along both travel lanes
- 3 Generous sidewalk widths for increased pedestrian use and implementation of crosswalk bump-outs
- 4 Promote mixed use development to increase pedestrian amenities

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

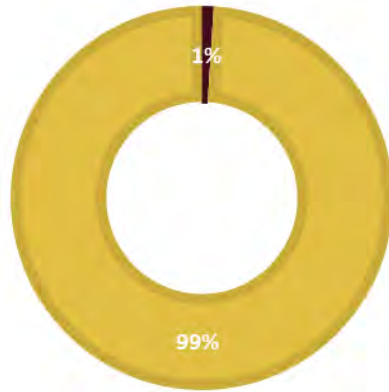
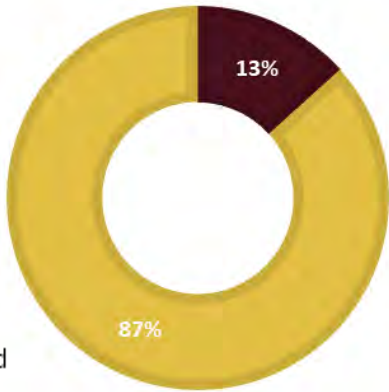
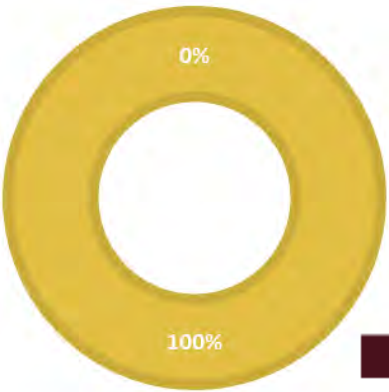
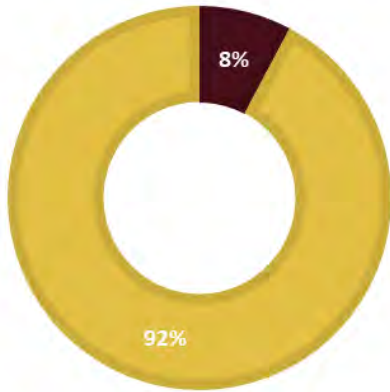
	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Increase quantity of retail uses and housing units.	
Zoning	Rezone district to D-1	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 70 units of new housing	Reliant on development of new housing on the southeast corner of 7th and Van Buren and conversion 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.	

HOUSING

HOTEL ROOMS

OFFICE

EXISTING RETAIL



Added
 Needed



CIVIC DISTRICT

History

Downtown Topeka's Civic District has a broad and varied history in terms of its overall character and more specifically its predominant uses. This variance in its history is due in no small part to its geographic spread, extending from S. Quincy Street east to the railroad tracks. As Downtown and the railroad grew, so did the divergence of the character of the District from its original development.

During this area's initial years in the 1880's, the frontage of 6th Avenue was developed in the service and retail industries. 6th Avenue, at this time, was the main access road to Topeka from the east, and was given the name "Liberty Highway" for its end destination of the Free State Capital of Kansas. Its definitive character was similar in most respects to the development occurring along S. Kansas Avenue.



Fire Station No. 2, City Hall, and Civic Auditorium at SE 7th and Quincy, 1900

The majority of the District, however, was developed as a residential neighborhood, home of many prominent early Topekans. One home in particular belonged to Col. George Veale, a prominent early developer and entrepreneur within Topeka's first several decades. Col. Veale lived at the northeast corner of SE 8th & Quincy Streets. The City of Topeka obtained this property in 1900 for the development of a multi-purpose building containing Topeka's City Hall, Fire Station No. 2, and a Civic Auditorium .

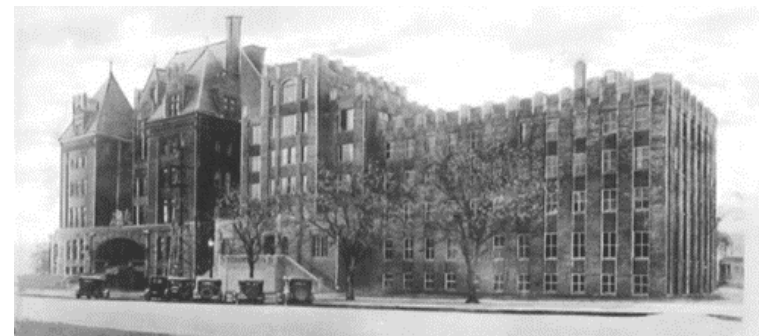
The area north of SE 7th Street, however, set its early development pattern in a different trajectory. The most prominent business to be located in the 700 block of SE Quincy Street was that of the Smith Automobile Manufacturing Company. Smith Automobile Manufacturing Company built luxury cars between the years of 1902 to 1912. Smith was the first automobile manufacturer west of the Mississippi River, and also produced the very first automobile to successfully ascend Pikes Peak in Colorado .



The Smith Automobile Co. Side Door Tanneau. 1906 Model

The Great Depression brought significant changes to the area. Among the highlights in new construction was a significant addition to the Santa Fe Railroad Hospital in 1930, and Works Progress Administration project to build what is now the current Topeka City Hall and the Topeka Performing Arts Center in 1937. After the Great Depression and WWII, construction began of Interstate Highway-70 began in 1956, becoming among the first miles completed of the nation's Interstate Highway system .

Major public development projects within the Civic District continued through the turn of the Century with the construction of the Shawnee County Jail in 1987, the new BNSF office building in 1992, and the Metropolitan Transit Authority Quincy Street bus transfer station in 2003 .



Santa Fe Hospital. SE 6th & Madison St. 1930s

Civic



- Government complex
- Office/facility consolidations
- High-quality public building design
- Gateway

Local Government Hub

The Civic District can act as the local government “campus” unifying City, County, and Transit headquarters and operations among others. Large surface parking lots provide an opportunity for government office relocation that would enable valuable property along Kansas Avenue and riverfront for catalytic developments. A consolidation of uses would enhance efficient collaboration and partnering among different agencies while providing feasible re-use of marginalized parcels in the shadow of County jail facilities.



Potential Build-Out

New Development and Conversions

- 1 **Justice Center** - The consolidation of City/County law enforcement and judicial facilities will free prime parcels for new development, streamline coordination, and transform a blighted gateway to Downtown. A new law enforcement center would feature structured parking for increased parking density limiting the footprint.
- 2 **Fleet Building** - Currently fleet facilities are located adjacent to the Law Enforcement Center and Topeka Metro. Whether necessary in one or two locations, new fleet buildings will be necessary to maintain the Topeka Police and Topeka Metro fleet. Consolidation of fleet facilities should be considered to reduce cost and increase efficiencies.
- 3 **Metro Transit Site** - Potential relocation of Topeka Metro from the River South District to the Civic District would further consolidate government uses to the Civic District and place operations near the Quincy Street Station. The proposed new site for some operations, bus barn and fleet building would replace surface parking lots and vacant parcels, and represents the most viable re-location site downtown.



- 4 **The Topeka Capital Journal Building** is currently under new ownership. The buildings mid-century modern design makes it worth preserving through rehabilitation. The resurgence of this formidable 120k sq. ft. space can be another downtown destination point for unique entertainment, recreation, retail, or drinking/eating experience in line with other nearby repurposed historic buildings.

- 5 **Entertainment Venue Rehab** - The old Capital Iron Works facility with large windows and brick exterior has the makings to become some sort of adaptive re-use entertainment venue. Other cities have experienced an increase in rehabilitation of similar structures, with intent to create a 12+ hour hub. The structures large size would allow for multiple uses like concert venue, brew or food hall, or banquet hall would add a unique destination point on the east side of Downtown.

Government Uses

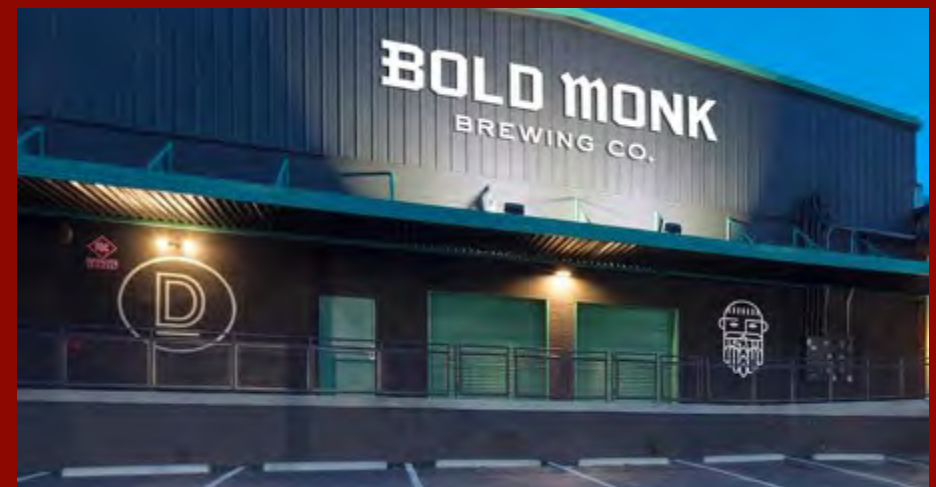
Justice Center



Metro Facility



Entertainment Venue



Circulation/Complete Streets



Changes to I-70/Polk-Quincy Viaduct will ultimately impact the circulation surrounding the Civic District. A split-diamond design between 8th Avenue and 10th Avenue will simplify access points safely and open up potential to convert Monroe Street and Madison Street will be limited to access points at 6th Avenue and 10th Street. New development along the Polk-Quincy Viaduct will highlight the government heavy uses found within the district.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
No Change	6th Avenue	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	7th Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	8th Avenue	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	9th Street	Industrial Street	•			•
	10th Avenue	Industrial Street	•	•		•
	Jefferson Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Adams Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
No Change/ Conversion	Monroe Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Madison Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•		•	•
Lane Reallocation (Removal of Travel Lane)	Quincy Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•

Polk-Quincy Viaduct Impacts

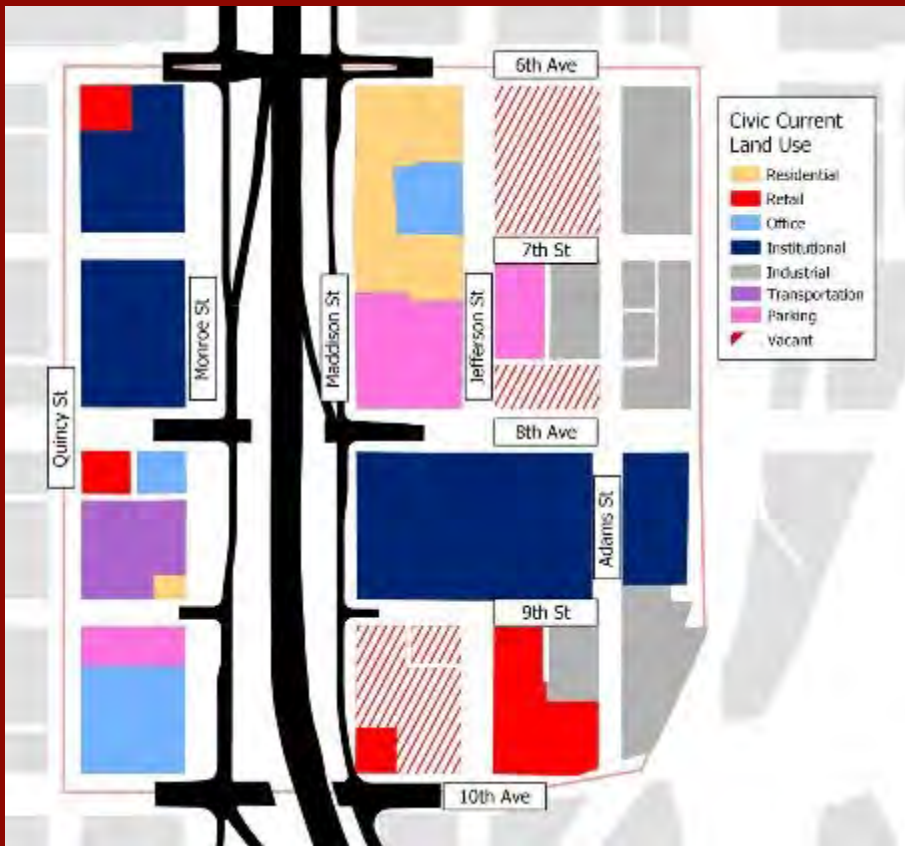
Expected changes to I-70/Polk-Quincy Viaduct will impact how vehicles interact with the Civic District. Current proposals will simplify the number of entrances and exits into the district, directing traffic to the corridors designed to handle greater levels of traffic.

Westbound Exits	Westbound Entrances	Eastbound Exits	Eastbound Entrances
10th Avenue	8th Avenue	Topeka Boulevard	Kansas Avenue
Kansas Avenue	Topeka Boulevard	8th Avenue	10th Avenue



Existing Character Land Use

Land uses in the Civic District are dominated by City, State, and institutional uses and is split by I-70 running through the middle of the district. Two full city blocks are dedicated to the Shawnee County Detention Center that dominates the eastern landscape of the district. Industrial uses are located adjacent to the BNSF rail lines on the eastern edge with vacant parcels and buildings dotting the landscape. Future land use in the district should provide further consolidation of City, State, and institutional uses for new office space oriented toward government use. Jefferson and 8th Avenue could be a potential location suitable for relocation of Topeka Metro operations facility, bus barn, and fleet services building. While Jefferson and 10th Avenue can accommodate a combined City/County Justice Center at the gateway to Downtown. New industrial mixed use at Adams and 8th Avenue may house an entertainment venue providing activity to the district after 5:00 PM.

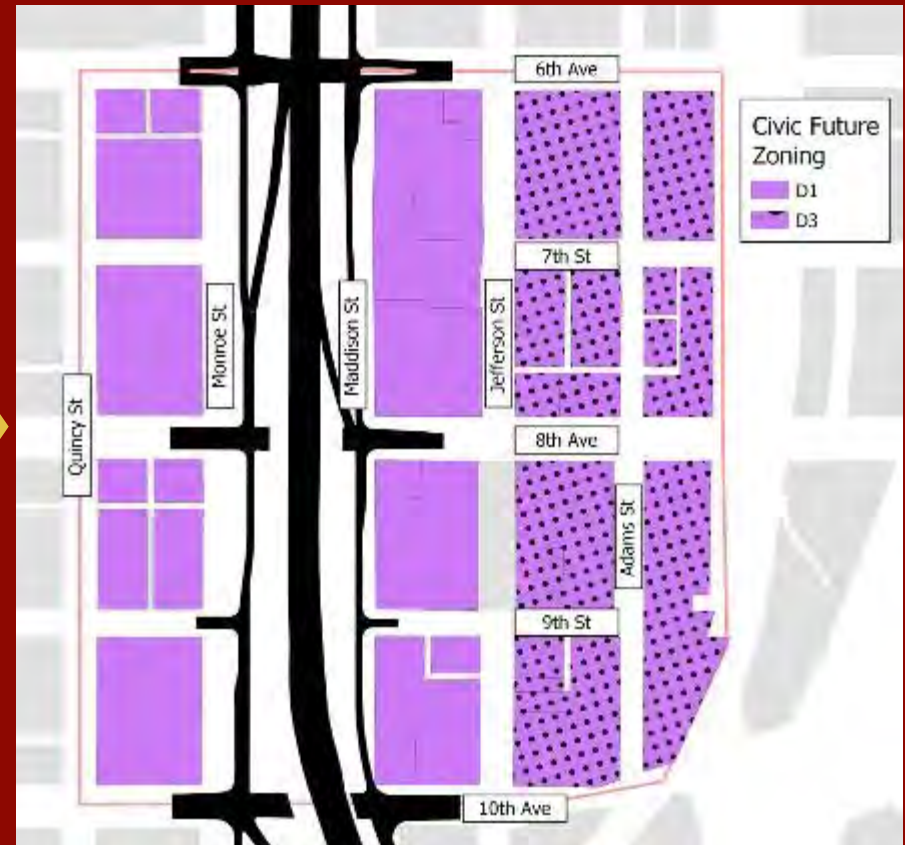


Existing Character Zoning

The Civic District will be rezoned to D-1 and D-3. Rezoning of this district will accommodate the existing office spaces, while promoting continued development of government oriented office space and institutional uses.

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.

D-3 Zoning - Intended to reestablish the linkage between downtown and the Kansas River, it also supports linkages to rail and freight areas. The district includes industrial, commercial and office uses as primary uses and housing as a secondary use. Land use in this zoning district should emphasize the relationship between downtown institutional, and industrial, as well as expanded cultural opportunities in the general downtown area.



Implementation Summary

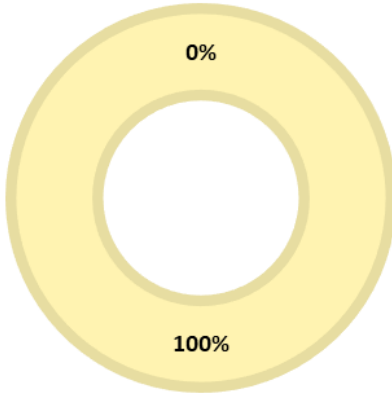
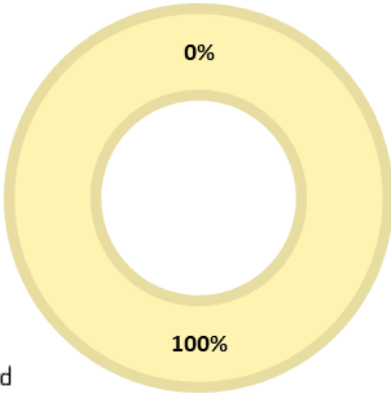
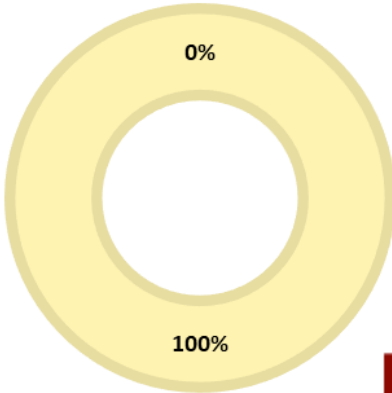
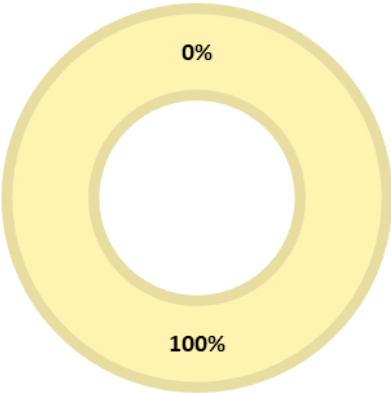
	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Consolidation of government and institutional uses.	Reliant on new build.
Zoning	Rezone district to D-1 and D-3	See map in Existing Character
Housing	No new housing added.	
Office	330,000 sq. ft. of new and rehabbed office space added for government use.	This office space does not count toward new Class A office space due to government need.
Retail	Rehabilitation of existing industrial building for entertainment venue.	
Hotel	No hotel beds added.	
Parking	Much of the existing parking will remain in place. Need structured parking may be required with new government office development.	
Building Design Standards	Create residential and nonresidential design standards for D Districts.	

HOUSING

HOTEL ROOMS

OFFICE

EXISTING RETAIL



- Added
- Needed

An aerial photograph of a city street, likely Kansas Avenue, showing a mix of historic brick buildings and modern architecture. A prominent modern building on the right has a large red 'CYRUS' sign on its roof. The street is lined with parked cars and has a clear view of the buildings' facades and windows. The text 'HISTORIC KANSAS AVENUE DISTRICT' is overlaid in large, bold, black letters across the center of the image.

HISTORIC KANSAS AVENUE DISTRICT

History

The history of this area closely parallels the rest of Downtown Topeka, albeit only a decade later than the histories of those districts extending north toward the Kansas River. Permanent commercial development south of 6th Avenue began in earnest during the 1870s, roughly 20 years after the City's initial settlement. By this time, the State of Kansas had been officially admitted to the Union as a Free State, and Topeka had won a popular vote to become the State's official capital city. The City's two major railroads, the Union Pacific, and the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, had both become firmly established within the entire region, thus propelling the city to new economic heights.



Hotel Kansan, 9th & Kansas Avenue. 1920

The distance of the Historic Kansas Avenue District from the Kansas River and the rail lines further north enabled this area to be developed for more traditional business purposes, as opposed to the service industries that defined the earliest settlement period in Topeka's history. This "business" character was solidified in 1884 when the AT&SF railroad constructed their corporate headquarters at the southeast corner of SW 9th and Jackson streets. By 1924, the headquarters of the AT&SF offices had expanded to encompass nearly the entire 900 block of SW Jackson Street. This building was occupied by AT&SF until 1992 when the Railroad relocated to a new office building located at 900 SE Quincy Street. It is currently occupied as an office building by the State of Kansas.

S. Kansas Avenue, meanwhile, developed as the City's primary customer service corridor, offering myriad retail opportunities for Topeka's citizens, along with café's, restaurants, and hotels. The Hotel Kansan (*right*) is the last remaining hotel in Downtown Topeka from the first half of the 20th Century. This hotel has since been converted for office and residential uses.



Hotel Kansan, 9th & Kansas Avenue. 1920

The Historic Kansas Avenue District remains a significant and intact example of the dense commercial corridor that began Topeka's history as the Capital of Kansas. This area reflects the economic and civic development of Topeka from shortly after its founding to the present day. Although most of the development in this area occurred in the early to mid-twentieth century, a significant revival in development is taking place within the area with the establishment of a historic district, and the construction of a new hotel and conference center the 900 block of S. Kansas Avenue in 2018.



8th and Kansas Ave., 1935

Historic Kansas Avenue



- Destination—place to gather, be seen, date night, etc.
- Retail/Dining core
- Office to residential conversion
- Historic eclectic—renovations and key infill
- Quincy Street makeover

Historic Mixed Use Centerpiece

The stock of historic commercial buildings on South Kansas Avenue is unparalleled in the City of Topeka and this burgeoning mixed-use district that will continue to evolve as the centerpiece of Downtown. As more residents and workers are drawn to the area, the quality of commercial spaces will continue to improve. Independent shops and restaurants will benefit from being clustered together in this special district, which will be the prime spot for people watching and outdoor dining.



Potential Build-Out

New Development

1 New Mixed Use - Building off of the energy of the Cyrus Hotel, a mixed use development with covered parking can continue the momentum at a highly visible intersection. Alley and sewer lines will need relocated to make this feasible.

2 New Mixed Use - Infill along Quincy Street will help provide a street presence while removing surface parking in the district.

3 Parking Garage - With new housing units and office space anchor proposed next door at 823 Quincy Avenue, adding structured parking will provide needed parking spaces at the corner of 9th and Quincy.

4 Mixed Use Addition - Existing structures in this area do not take advantage of 2nd and 3rd story space and the exteriors are in need of investment. An addition to the existing structures could provide needed capital while increasing the density of commercial, office or residential

5 New Mixed Use - Another infill project, new development on this site would help establish a Quincy Street presence, while matching existing uses along 8th Avenue.

6 New Mixed Use - With Evergy Plaza acting as a catalyst site, new infill/rehab development with ground floor commercial uses would benefit from the increased pedestrian activity.



7 New Mixed Use - With Evergy Plaza acting as a catalyst site, new development with commercial uses would benefit from the increased pedestrian activity. However, this site may be less of a priority given the green space flexibility it provides for the plaza

8 Parking Garage Façades - With multiple parking garages in place along Quincy (and one proposed), improved façades will soften the aesthetic of Historic Kansas Avenue's "back door" and create a more attractive pedestrian corridor (see page 4.6)

9 Alley Activations - Concentrated within a block of Evergy Plaza, some alleys could be transformed for public gatherings, music, and art installations on a temporary or as needed basis. This includes the alley behind the Jayhawk Theater as a compliment to their use (see page 4.6)

Potential Build-Out Conversions

- 1 **The Mills Building** - Located at 901 S Kansas Avenue, this building features ample windows and could provide market rate units.
- 2 **823 SE Quincy Street** - Having recently changed ownership, there is potential for half of the building to convert to housing units, capitalizing on anticipated pedestrian amenities along SE Quincy St
- 3 **818 S Kansas Avenue** - While currently housing Evergy, the building prime location would provide excellent views of the Capitol building and Downtown Topeka. Access to an existing parking garage would relieve the need for new structured parking.
- 4 **800 SW Jackson** - Home to multiple state offices, this building would provide excellent views of the Capitol building and Downtown Topeka. Access to an existing parking garage would relieve the need for new structured parking.
- 5 **709 S Kansas Avenue** - Currently, this building sits partially vacant. New residential units located along Kansas Avenue will provide an improved street presence with new market rate units featuring ample windows. Housing units would be located on the upper floors allowing for a mixed use land use.



6 **Wolfe's Camera Shop** - The historic building located at 635 S Kansas Avenue is currently for sale. Located across from Evergy Plaza, this property is adjacent to structured parking and could be used for innovation workspace.

7 **Jayhawk Tower/Theater** - The buildings historic context as a hotel would be fitting to return to residential uses. When paired with the rehabilitation of the historic Jayhawk Theatre as a new entertainment venue, this segment of the block will act as a mixed use destination for Downtown Topeka .

Festivals/Events



Parking Garage Facade



Alley Activation



ENVISIONING QUINCY STREET



Circulation/Complete Streets



Significant changes are proposed on Jackson St. and Quincy St. While accommodating existing traffic counts, Quincy St will have a reduction in travel lanes, creating a pedestrian friendly streetscape and promoting residential and retail uses. Jackson St. is recommended for conversion with two-way traffic throughout Downtown Topeka. While not directly influencing the boundaries of the district, changes to the Polk/Quincy Viaduct (I-70) will impact it. The current split-diamond proposal for PQV will occur at 8th Ave and 10th Ave resulting in removal of the 8th Ave westbound off-ramp and eastbound on-ramp.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
Conversions (1-way to 2-way)	Jackson St. (10th Ave to 6th Ave)	Main Street	•	•		•
Lane Reallocation (Removal of Travel Lanes)	Quincy St. (10th Ave to 6th Ave) - Street treatment to create pedestrian friendly environment. See Below.	Main Street	•	•	•	•
No Change	Kansas Avenue	Main Street	•	•	•	•
	6th Avenue	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	7th Street	Main Street	•	•	•	•
	8th Avenue	Main Street	•		•	•
	9th Street	Main Street	•		•	•
	10th Avenue	Mixed Use Boulevard	•		•	•

Quincy Street 6th Avenue to 10th Street

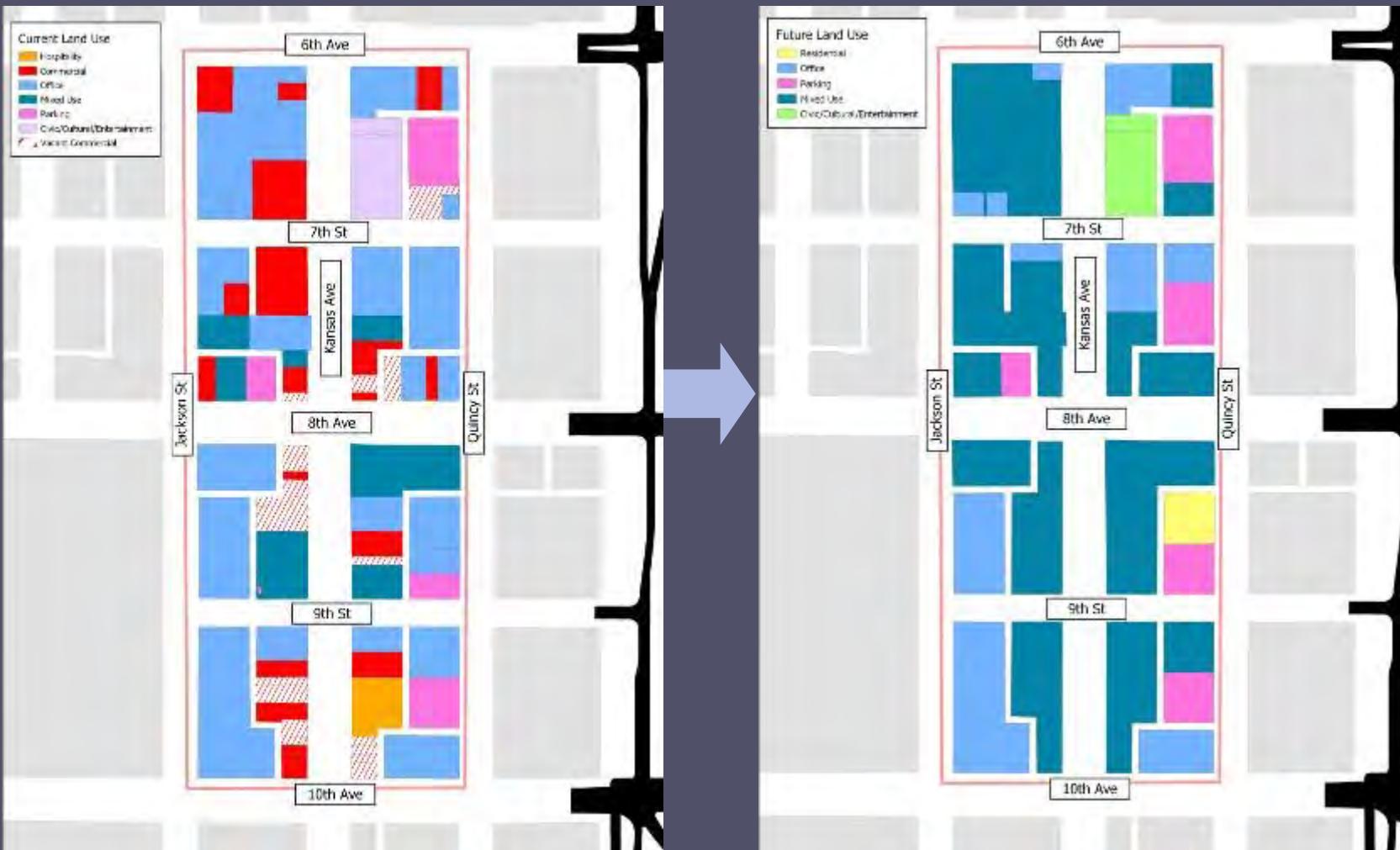


- 1 Travel Lanes Reduced to 3 lanes from 5
- 2 Sharrows/dedicated bike lanes
- 3 Angled Parking
- 4 Increased sidewalk widths for increased pedestrian use
- 5 Mixed Use Developments increase pedestrian amenities
- 6 Pedestrian medians, bump outs, and mid-block crossings

Existing Character

Land Use

Much of the existing land use is dominated by office and commercial uses with housing as a secondary land use, typically located above the active street front. Every Plaza located between 6th Avenue and 7th Street on Kansas Avenue, combined with the Kansas Avenue Streetscape project, is designed to bring 12+ hour energy and enhance the public spaces in the district. The existing office, commercial, and vacant space provides adequate square footage to generate new retail and housing units through conversion. While no one single project will elevate the district, there is ample opportunity for multiple smaller projects to generate new activity and create a higher quality of life for those who work, live, and shop in Historic Kansas Avenue.



Existing Character Zoning

The Historic Kansas Avenue District is made up entirely of D-1 Zoning. Following the adoption of the D-1 Zoning district in 2017, the Historic Kansas Avenue District was rezoned from C-5 to D-1. This rezoning allowed existing land uses to remain while creating a cohesive zoning district for the Core of Downtown Topeka.

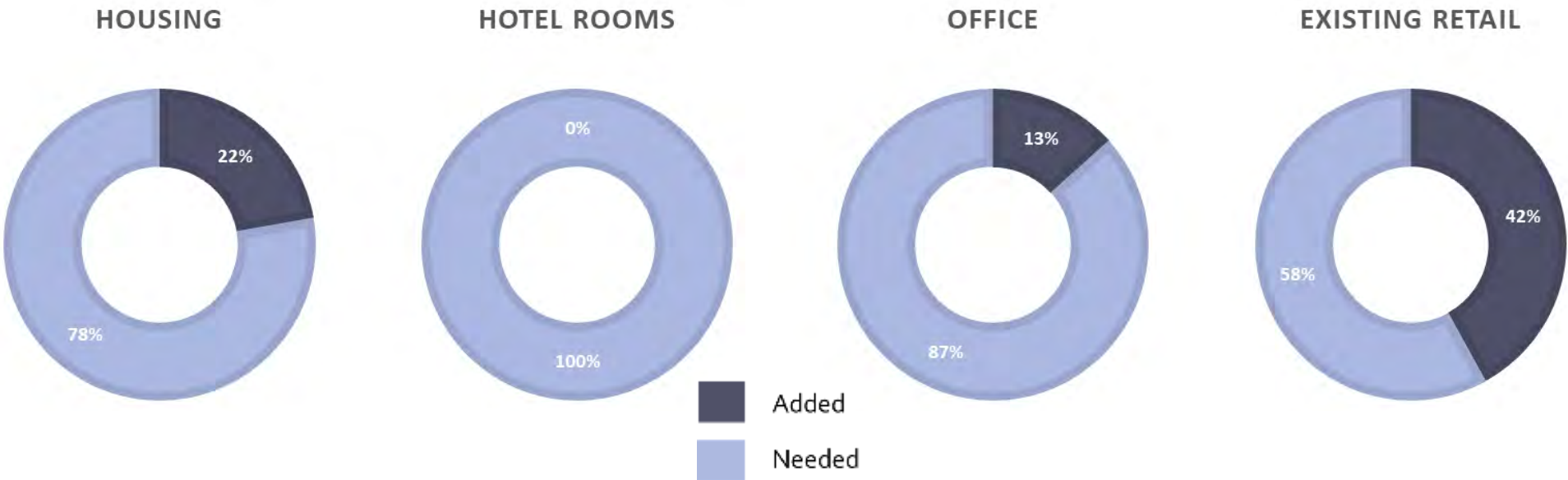
D-1 Zoning - Designed to facilitate a compatible mixed use activity center within the core area of downtown Topeka. The district is predominately composed of state offices, as well as local and federal facilities, commercial and retail uses. The district includes compatible residential, office, civic,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



Example of a hotel that was converted to mixed use commercial and housing. The D-1 zoning district encourages this type of development.

Implementation

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Increase quantity of retail uses and housing units.	
Zoning	Retain D-1 Zoning	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 200 units in the next ten years.	Reliant on conversion of existing office uses to reach unit count proposed.
Office	Conversion of segments of office space to accommodate needed housing units with new Class A office created in new mixed use development.	
Retail	New retail uses within mixed use new developments will help guide the district to become a 12+ hour district.	A new variety of retail uses will increase quality of life.
Hotel	No new proposed hotel beds in district.	
Parking	Angled on-street 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.	



NOTO/RIVER NORTH DISTRICT



River North History

Life along the north bank of the Kansas River in Topeka began in 1842 as the exit point of Pappa's Ferry across the Kansas River. Pappan's Ferry provided passage to settlers travelling westward on the Oregon Trail. This point was roughly inline with Harrison Street, immediately east of Topeka Boulevard. Many travelers on the Oregon Trail did not continue beyond this crossing, however, choosing instead to make the north bank of the Kansas River their home. These settlers established their own community on the north bank of the Kansas River, prospering as a pivotal stop for other westward travelers. The growth and stability of this settlement was eventually founded as the **Town of Eugene** in 1865 by William Curtis.

Less than a year after its establishment, on New Years Day, the Town of Eugene welcomed the first Union Pacific train. The presence of the Union Pacific in the Town of Eugene resulted in the annexation of Eugene into the City of Topeka in 1867. This annexation gave the former Town of Eugene the status of the First Ward of the City of Topeka.

Development within the First Ward was heavily influenced by the presence of the Union Pacific Railroad as nearly all commercial and industrial development was located between the Kansas River and the parallel Union Pacific railroad tracks. This included a short, one-block mainstreet along Kansas Avenue immediately south of the railroad tracks. This mainstreet was anchored by the Union Pacific Depot and Hotel at its north end, accompanied by the presence of a barber, grocer, restaurants and saloons, a hardware store, drugstores, another hotel, along with other retail businesses.



Union Pacific Railroad Depot & Hotel
700 N. Kansas Avenue, facing east, 1887

Development to the west of Kansas Avenue along the railroad tracks was dominated mostly by the Union Pacific Railroad. By 1883, the Union Pacific had constructed their Freight Depot immediately south of the railroad tracks on the west side of Jackson Street.



Union Pacific Railroad Depot and Freight Depot, 1945

The Union Pacific replaced their freight depot with the new construction of their passenger depot in 1927, with the freight depot being shifted across Railroad Street to the south. Shortly thereafter, the Topeka Avenue Bridge was constructed in 1938 as a project through the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Most of area west of Kansas Avenue was occupied by modest homes, originally constructed during its era as a residential neighborhood. These residential uses gradually transitioned into heavier industrial uses over the next several decades.

In 1991, a new entity emerged within the River North area, that being the Topeka Rescue Mission Ministries. This ministry constructed a facility at Curtis & Kansas Avenue to house over 100 homeless men, women, and families. Since this date, the Mission has continued to expand its facilities and services on adjacent properties, and within the River North district.



Homes near the future site of the Topeka Avenue Bridge, 1935

NOTO History

The 2-block stretch of N. Kansas Avenue commonly referred to as the NOTO Arts District began its life in the 1850s as the Town of Eugene. Growth of Eugene as a town, brought on by settlers traversing the Oregon Trail, and the substantial growth of the Union Pacific Railroad, quickly created economic competition with the City of Topeka on the south side of the Kansas River. This competition ultimately led to the annexation of Eugene into the City of Topeka in 1867, thus creating the City of Topeka's 1st Ward.

During the late 19th Century, the area to the west of Kansas Avenue was developed as a low-density single-family neighborhood, commonly known as The Sands. The Sands was an Exoduster settlement, dedicated by Charles Curtis.

Charles Curtis, who later would become Vice President of the United States, dedicated his portion of the Half-Breed Reservation along the Kansas River to Exodusters seeking freedom and land after the emancipation of slaves after the Civil War. Living remnants of The Sands are still visible today in the 2nd Missionary Baptist Church, located at 416 NW Laurent, and St. Mark's AME Church at 801 NW Harrison St.



St. Mark's AME Church, 1919



Kansas Avenue Iron Bridge, 1870

Meanwhile, the North Topeka business district along North Kansas Avenue was flourishing. With the completion of the Kansas Avenue bridge in 1869, access between the commercial entities south of the river and industrial areas north of the river was convenient and reliable, allowing North Topeka to establish its own downtown. By the 1880s, North Kansas Avenue had established itself as a solid commercial core, consisting of banks, drugstores, clothiers, hardware and lumber, a post office, and even Topeka's Fire Station No. 1.



Fire Station 1 at Gordon and Kansas Avenue.
Fire Station No. 1, 1890



Flood damage along N. Kansas Ave., 1903

Flooding, however, took its toll on every part of this area. Floods in 1903 and again in 1951 washed away homes and businesses, and forced the demolitions and reconstruction of many more surviving buildings. It was not until the construction of the levee system along the north and south banks of the Kansas River immediately following the flood of 1951 that residential, commercial, and industrial development could proceed free from the concerns of regular flooding.

In recent years, the life of this area has revived. During the early 2000s, the NOTO Arts & Entertainment District was born, with new types of businesses occupying the storefronts that cater to an arts scene that had never before been served in Topeka at this scale.

NOTO



- Unique public art
- Active street life
- Walkable & urban
- Outdoor dining
- Creative office
- Live-work opportunity
- Entrepreneurial
- Local

Eclectic Arts District

NOTO has successfully positioned itself as the arts district in Topeka. This area has a charming, local, entrepreneurial spirit that distinguishes it from other areas of the city. The existing mural program should continue to be encouraged. A future strategy that increases the amount of public art will draw more visitors to the area. Street art could provide a funky and unique alternative to more traditional public art. Rotating outdoor displays could be used to encourage people to continually revisit the area. This increased traffic will help support retail and restaurant spaces which will help activate the district.



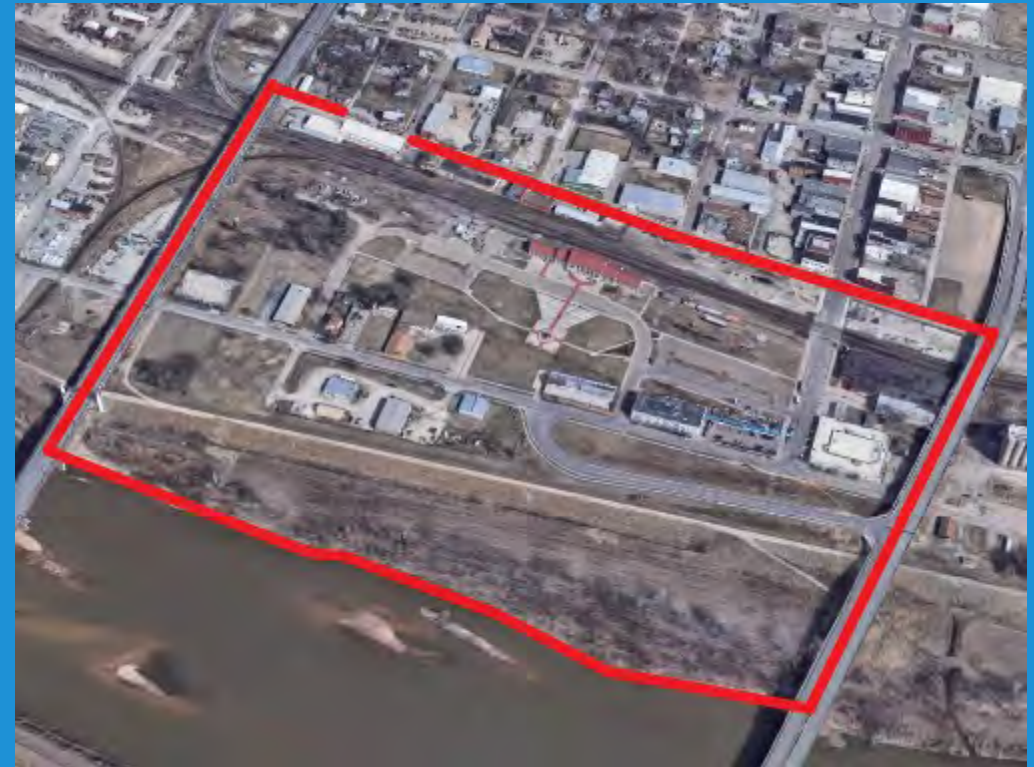
River North



- Build upon the Great Overland Station
- Develop a riverfront park
- Connect to the river
- Connect with greenways and trails
- Community event space
- Incorporate art
- Open space

Destination Park Space

Great Overland Station is a beautiful, historic asset that cannot reach its fullest potential without major improvements to the surrounding area. The planned Topeka Riverfront Park would make the area more appealing and provide another destination to bolster visitation. These improvements should include opportunities to meaningfully connect with the river by walking, biking, boating and perhaps even zip lines right over the water. Several nearby industrial properties should be adapted to infuse art into the district through major mural projects, decorating lighting, and potentially an immersive indoor art experience that could act as another anchor for the district.



NOTO

Potential Build-Out

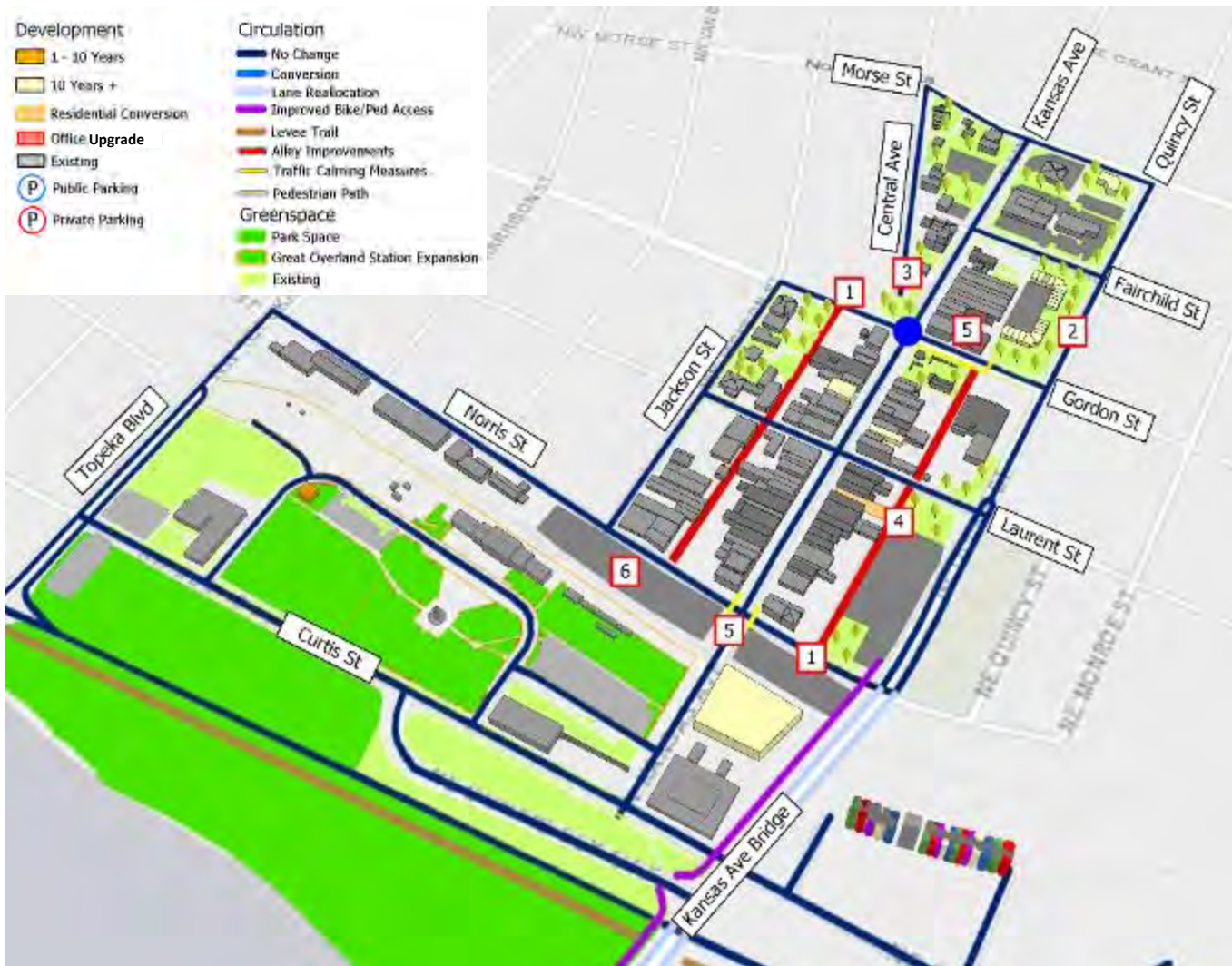
New Development & Conversions

1 Improved and Accessible Alleys - With potential to become “green corridors” these alleys can host special events and highlight local artists murals. These alleys could include wayfinding signage, plantings and pop-up people spaces.

2 New Artist Housing - Filling in currently vacant property, new townhomes could provide artist housing for the District. These new units proximity to Kansas Avenue could act as a model project for higher density housing within the district.

3 Cul-de-sac Park - Building off the energy of the adjacent Redbud Park, realignment of Central Avenue would allow for a new park space to be created. This park space could act as a “North Stage” for the district to feature special events and act as a gateway from the north.

4 Pedestrian Access - Connecting Kansas Avenue to the enhanced alleys. These corridors can highlight local art while driving pedestrians to Kansas Avenue.



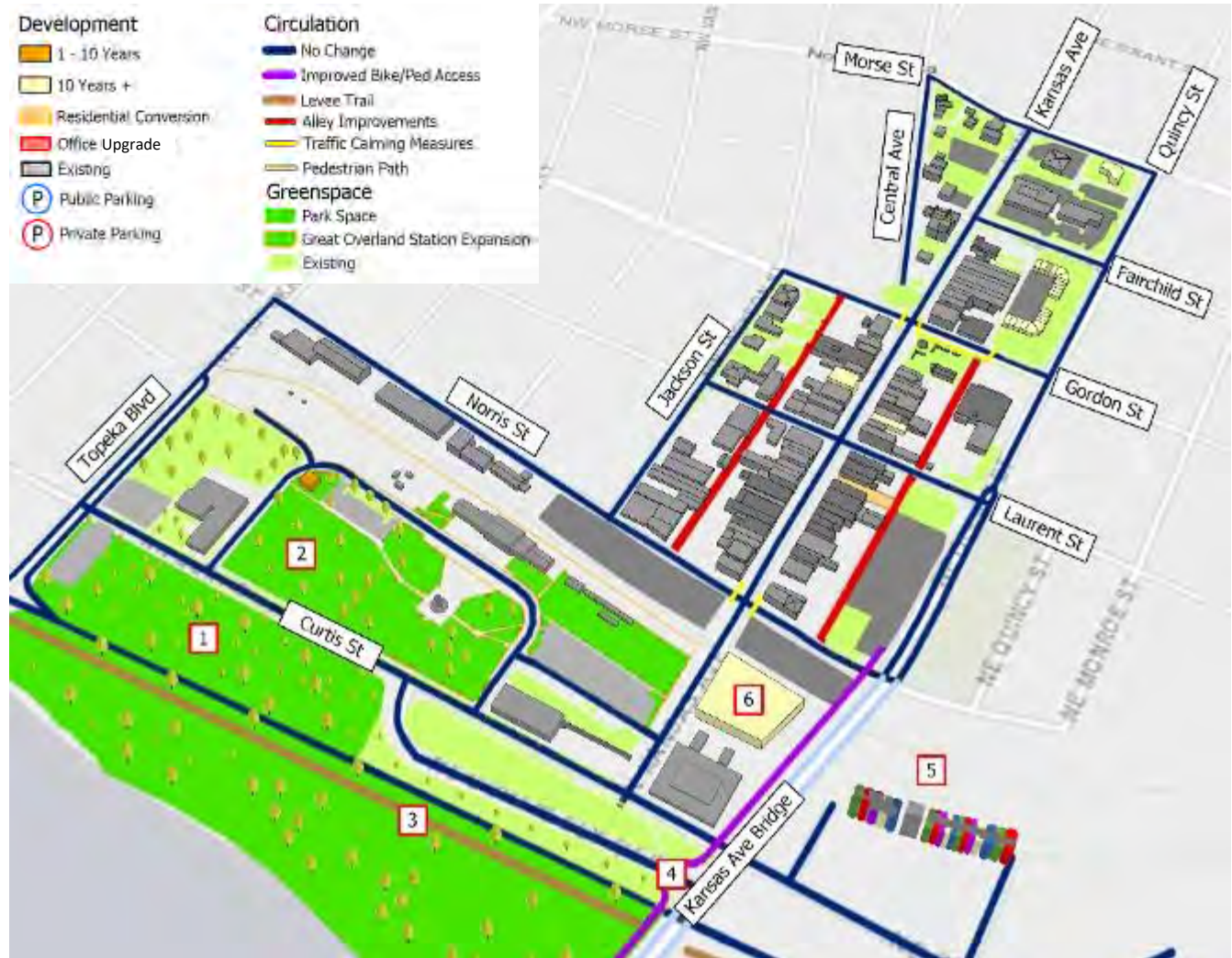
5 Traffic Calming Measures - As NOTO continues to be the premiere art district for Topeka, with an increased pedestrian presence, there will be a need to provide safe pedestrian passage from surface level parking to the core of the district.

6 Parking - With events like First Fridays flooding the district with pedestrians, there is a need for more parking within the district. By focusing on surface level parking on the periphery of the district, parking along Kansas Avenue can be used to create an improved pedestrian environment.

River North Potential Build-Out

New Development & Conversions

- 1 **Riverfront Park** - Keeping in line with the Papan's Ferry Charrette, the Riverfront park has potential to expand. Features of an enhanced riverfront park could include a new trailhead and parking, an amphitheater, river seating, overlook locations, and improved river access
- 2 **Great Overland Station Expansion** - With Shawnee County taking ownership of the Great Overland Station, an expansion could help the River North District act as a signature park space. Expansion would allow for an Oregon Trail retracement, flexible park space and programming making the River North district a true recreation destination.
- 3 **Kansas River Levee Trail** - Starting at the segment of the Curtis Fly-off, an enhanced trail will create a new recreational use connecting the Riverfront park to surrounding neighborhoods.
- 4 **Improved Pedestrian/Bike Access** - Conversion of one lane of the Kansas Avenue Bridge, to protected bicycle/pedestrian lanes, will enhance connectivity across the Kansas River. Enhanced connectivity will encourage more visitors to River North and the NOTO Arts & Entertainment District.



- 5 **Creative Lighting/NOTO Branding** - The currently unused grain silos present an opportunity to strategically brand the NOTO Arts & Entertainment District. Capitalizing on the artistic nature of the districts, lighting and or painting can of these silos can act as the welcome mat for the districts.
- 6 **New Hotel** - With few vacant parcels in the district, a new hotel on the eastern side of the district would provide new lodging for out-of-town visitors to NOTO Arts District

District Growth/Expansion

The NOTO District most closely reflects the NOTO Arts District Core, which is outlined in the NOTO Arts District Master Plan. This area acts as the heart of NOTO with the majority of recent investment occurring within this area. However, NOTO has long term plans to expand its district boundaries to assist in the revitalization of retail buildings. The growth of NOTO focuses on greater economic development in the surrounding residential, commercial and light industrial blocks.

Expansion to the Creative Arts and Technology Area will appeal to more than just artists, with additional focus on small commercial and industrial businesses associated with arts, design and technology. This area may focus on graphic design, architectural studios, internet start-ups, wood and metal working shops, and printing/framing stores

The area to the northwest of the Arts District Core will grow into the Creative District Housing (Artist Zone). This area is roughly eight blocks, with room for new infill housing catered towards artists and small business start-ups. New housing is important to the vitality of the area and bolster overall resiliency. New housing is important to the vitality of the area and bolsters overall resiliency. This area's close proximity to the Arts District Core helps facilitate an environment for creative minds to live, work and play.

For more information about the NOTO Arts District Core and surrounding areas please see the [NOTO Arts District Master Plan](#).



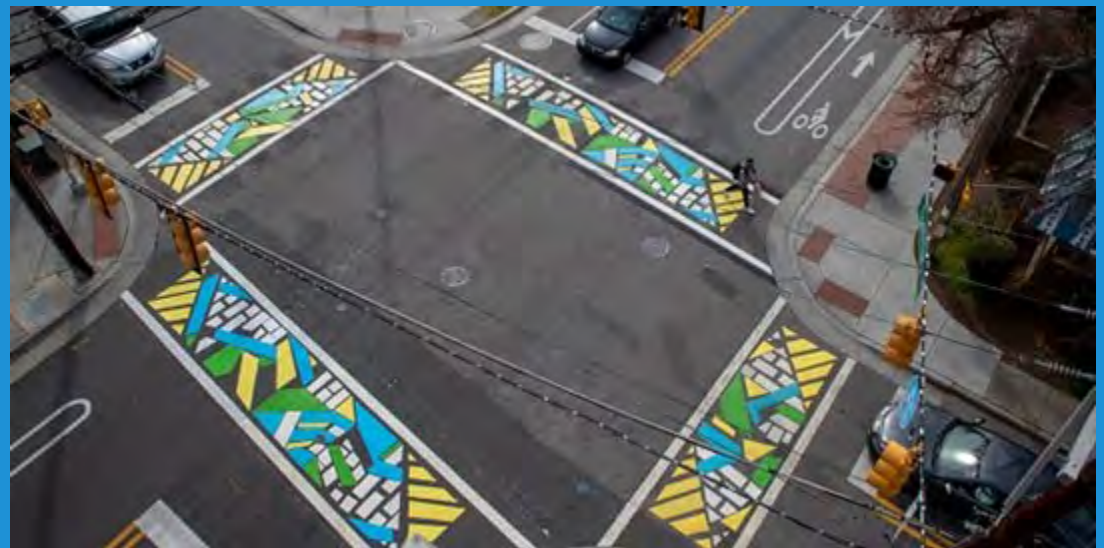
ARTS DINING CULTURE



HISTORY & TOURISM



IMPROVING THE PUBLIC SPACE



Circulation/Complete Streets



Changes to circulation within NOTO and River North Districts center around improved pedestrian and bicycle access. The Kansas Avenue Bridge will reallocate lanes to allow for dedicated bike lanes and a pedestrian path, while still allowing for two-way traffic. The intersection of Kansas Avenue and Gordon will be converted to improve pedestrian safety surrounding Rosebud Park and the proposed cul-de-sac park.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
No Change	Morse St	Neighborhood Connector	•		•	•
	Fairchild St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Gordon St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Laurent St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Norris St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Curtis St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•		•	•
	Quincy St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•		•	•
	Kansas Ave	Main Street	•	•		•
	Central Ave	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•
	Jackson St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
Topeka Blvd	Neighborhood Connector	•			•	
Lane Reallocation	Kansas Avenue Bridge	Neighborhood Connector	•	•	•	•

Kansas Avenue Bridge

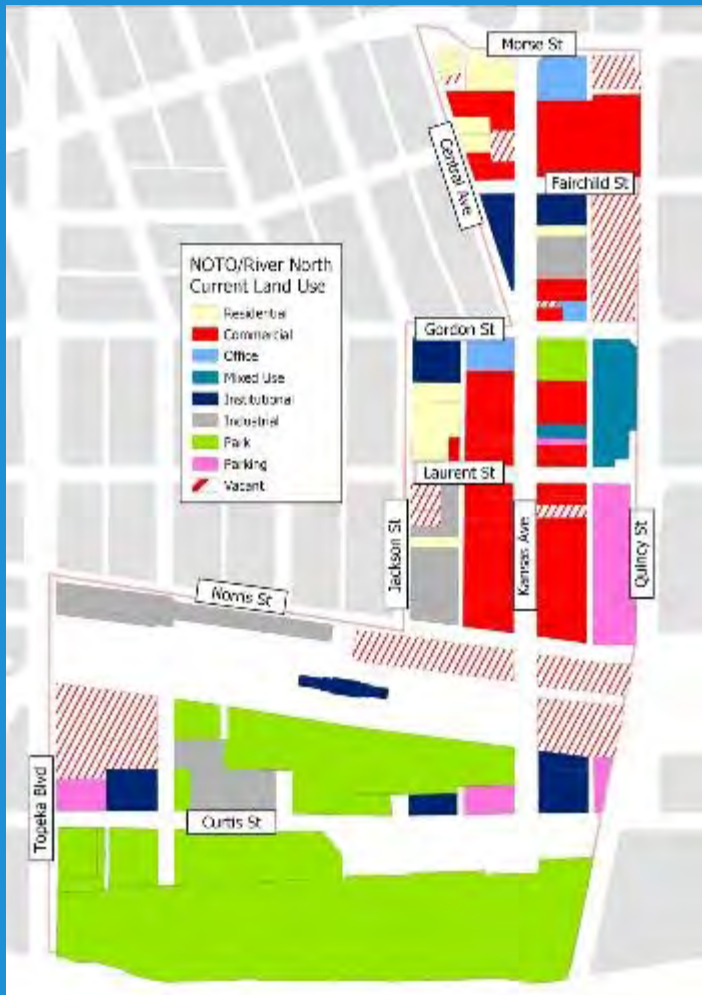


- ① Travel lanes maintained
- ② Lane Reallocation to accommodate bike/ped.
- ③ Protected bike lanes.
- ④ Pedestrian Path

Existing Character

Land Use

Land Use in NOTO and River North define a clear transition from open space to a commercial corridor with Kansas Avenue acting as the spine, with pockets of industrial, office and residential within the boundaries. Additionally, there are large segments of vacant property found throughout the two districts. Future land uses, and infill development, will likely be determined by their proximity to Kansas Avenue. Highlighting the desire for NOTO to become a 24 hour destination site, the landscape will likely be defined by a mixture of land uses. These mixed use sites would allow for first floor office and commercial and residential units on other floors. Industrial mixed use sites will ensure existing industrial uses can remain but provide an opportunity for heavier intensity art studios. New residential developments in the area are regulated by the X-1 zoning district that call for a traditional residential environment, thus limiting development density. Other new construction sites should fit the existing character of the surrounding built environment.



Existing Character Zoning

NOTO and River North are currently zoned “OI-2” Office and Institutional, “I-2” Heavy Industrial, “OS-1” Open Space, and “X-1, X-2 and X-3” Mixed Use. It is proposed all properties retain their current zoning classifications, with the exception of properties near the Kansas River should be considered for rezoning to “OS-1”. The retention of Mixed Use zoning districts will allow for the existing row stores to have commercial, office, and residential uses.

X-1 Zoning - facilitates a compatible mixed use activity center within a traditional residential neighborhood. The district includes a balance of compatible residential, office, civic, and neighborhood commercial retail/service uses of low to moderate intensity that complement and support dense neighborhood residential areas and pedestrian usage with quality urban design.

X-2 Zoning - facilitates a mixed use area that transitions from a higher intensity industrial use area to lower intensity neighborhood-scale residential areas and includes a balance of compatible residential, office, commercial/service, and light industrial uses.

X-3 Zoning - a destination-oriented mixed use that serves as the northern entertainment/cultural anchor of downtown. This zoning designation is intended to improve the area to a 24 hour destination for urban, culture, entertainment, community and residential experiences. Furthermore, this district should focus on the retention and attraction of businesses, workplaces and residences through adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties, all of which should include high quality urban design that maintains a sense of history, human scale, and pedestrian-orientation.



Implementation Summary

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Promote mixed uses with office/commercial uses on lower floors with top floor residential.	
Zoning	Retain existing zoning.	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 50 new housing units within the NOTO Arts District Core. New units may also be provided through rehabilitation and infill in the Creative District Housing Zone.	New top floor residential units will increase the number of housing units in the District.
Office	Rehabilitation of existing row stores will provide new office space.	Any growth in this category is reliant on rehabilitation of existing buildings.
Retail	Rehabilitation of existing row stores will provide new retail space.	Any growth in this category is reliant on rehabilitation of existing buildings.
Hotel	No new hotel beds.	
Parking	While structured parking is preferred, the demand for parking in NOTO is currently not being met. A focus on surface parking on the periphery of the district can provide much needed parking spaces.	
Building Design Standards	Follow existing design standards.	City-wide non-residential and X District dimensional and performance standards





UNITED STATES COURT AND POST HOUSE

OFFICE AND CATALYST DISTRICT

UNITED STATE POST OFFIC

History

The Office & Catalyst District reflects the oldest remnants of the history of the City of Topeka, being the location where the first permanent structures within this city were built. The City of Topeka has always centered its commercial activities along Kansas Avenue extending south from the Kansas River, so it was a natural progression of events for the city's first stone building to be erected in the 400 block of S. Kansas Ave. This building was originally built for mercantile and commerce, but was almost immediately adopted for use as the meeting place for the framers of the Kansas Free State Constitution (Constitution Hall). This same building was later used as the senate chamber in the early days of Kansas state government.



Shawnee County Courthouse (4th and Kansas Avenue)

As the population of the city increased, the building known as Constitution Hall ceased being a free-standing building, and was incorporated within the block by adjacent structures, and was given a new, matching brick façade. Several of the buildings within this block extending north were later collectively utilized as the Kansas State Capital during construction of the (current) State Capital building.

Construction within this block culminated in the 1870s with the construction of the first Shawnee County Courthouse and jail, built at the southwest corner of SW 4th St. & S. Kansas Ave.

Most of what is visible today within the Office & Catalyst District is the result of Topeka Urban Renewal program. Topeka initiated its Urban Renewal program in 1956 with the creation of the Topeka Urban Renewal Authority (URA). The URA established its mission in accordance with the Federal Urban Renewal Program by designating an area in the northeast corner of Downtown Topeka, for clearance and redevelopment. This area was referred to by the URA as the Keyway Urban Renewal Project, and included an area known as "The Bottoms." Historically lacking in large-scale commercial development, the Bottoms was predominately owned and occupied by Topeka's immigrant and ethnic minority population. The area suffered much damage as a result of the 1951 flood and was in declining condition. The Keyway Urban Renewal Project sought to remedy this decline with the wholesale purchase of land, and the subsequent displacement of approximately 3,000 residents from within this area, whose homes and businesses were subsequently demolished.

Another result of Keyway Urban Renewal Project was the construction of US Interstate Highway 70 along the east side of Downtown Topeka. Interstate-70 not only played a major role within the Keyway Urban Renewal Project, but it also contributed significantly to the development of the city's built environment, including the establishment of a major racial and socioeconomic divider within the city.

Other significant developments along the path of I-70 within Downtown Topeka were the construction of a Montgomery Ward's Department store (currently used as the Topeka & Shawnee County Law Enforcement Center), The Townsite Plaza & Tower (S. Kansas Ave. & SE 6th Ave.), the American Home Life Insurance Building (S. Kansas Ave. & SE 4th St.), and the Southwestern Bell Telephone Building (SE 6th & Madison).

Other historic buildings within this area include Constitution Hall, originally constructed in 1855, and the US Federal Courthouse, constructed in 1933. The US Federal Courthouse was the first courtroom to hear the historic *Brown v Board of Education* decision ending racial segregation in the United States in 1954.



U.S. Federal Courthouse (5th and Kansas Avenue)

Office and Catalyst



- Class A office upgrades/HQs
- Office to residential conversions
- Catalyst 1 - Convention Center/Hotel
- Catalyst 2—Post Office Redux
- Extend KS Ave makeover (“bridge” to river)

Convention Center Hub

While government-related uses are likely to cluster around the Capitol building, this district has the most potential for upgraded Class A office space and hospitality growth. Many office users are straying away from sterile office parks and seeking out more active places. Adding a major convention center/hotel hub to the mix of office workers will bring 12-hour activity and food/beverage choices within a 5 minute walk to Eversy Plaza or riverfront. Potential catalytic projects at 4th Street and Kansas Avenue , Post Office Building, and Townsite Plaza can fortify Kansas Avenue as the mixed-use spine and become key stepping stones between River South and Historic Kansas Avenue.



Potential Build-Out

New Development

1 Convention Center/Hotel - This new activity hub would replace the LEC and concentrate significant pedestrian activity on Kansas Avenue only 5 minutes from Evergy Plaza and River South. This addresses a higher and better use of the site post PQV while capturing larger conferences lost to other cities.

2 New Mixed Use - Due to the new Polk/Quincy Viaduct alignment the existing structures will likely be impacted. Replacement of these building with new infill will allow for a Kansas Avenue presence.

3 Parking Garage - Potential new housing located at 235 S Kansas Avenue and a signature park in the River South District would drive up the need for new structured parking. A new parking garage would align with the desire to remove surface parking for higher and better uses.

4 New Mixed Use - Development of new mixed use along Kansas Avenue would promote a vibrant and active 12 hour spine for Downtown Topeka. Mixed Use may include commercial, office and residential uses.



5 Boutique Hotel - A recently conducted Hotel Market Study showed a need for additional hotel beds in Downtown Topeka. New development on this site would remove surface parking while providing needed hotel beds.

6 Parking Garage Extension - As surface parking lots are replaced with other uses, a need for higher density parking will arise. This project builds off of an existing parking garage while eliminating another surface parking lot.

Potential Build-Out Conversions

- 1 **Townsite Tower** - To align with greater demand for housing, a portion of the 16-story Townsite Tower has potential to convert to new apartments with amazing views of Downtown and the Capitol. In addition, new conference/event space could be integrated into the “Top of the Tower”, first floor lobby, and a unique “outdoor” roof deck on the 3rd floor.
- 2 **503 S Kansas Avenue** - Similarly to Townsite Tower, this building is currently a State used Office Building. However, the buildings prime location on Kansas Avenue makes it a candidate for conversion to housing.
- 3 **424 S Kansas Avenue** - The predominantly vacant Post Office Building, home of the US Federal Courthouse and historic Brown v Board of Education, shows potential to convert to a more active use(s). The variety of spaces available in the building has potential for a food hall, office space, and potential for a few housing units.
- 4 **235 S Kansas Ave** - Another example of existing office space that has potential for housing conversion. It’s location on the north end of the district could act as an buffer from Office and Catalyst to the River South district.



- 5 **220 SE 6th Avenue** - As identified in the Downtown Market Study. Downtown Topeka is in need of new Class A Office Space. The current AT&T building shows potential for rehab, taking existing Class B office space and elevating it to Class A.
- 6 **Townsite Plaza** - With the need for a makeover, the mid-century modern Townsite Plaza is ripe for Class A office space rehab if it can soften up its outdoor plaza space with more shade and inviting features for tenants including the Tower. Critical public parking is below grade, but will need capital investment soon.

Catalyst Site

Hotel and Convention



Mixed Use

Historic US Court House



Circulation/Complete Streets



The Polk-Quincy Viaduct will impact the Office and Catalyst District, with properties to the northeast being intersected by the viaduct. The new Polk-Quincy will lead to the closure of 3rd Street, with highway access located at Kansas Avenue, 4th Street, and 6th Avenue.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
Conversions (1-way to 2-way)	4th St. (from Jackson St. to Kansa Ave.)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•
	5th St. (from Jackson St. to 4th St.)	Mixed Use Boulevard		•		•
	Jackson St. (from PQV to 6th Ave.)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
Lane Reallocation (Removal of travel lanes)	Kansas Ave. (PQV to 6th Ave.) - Street treatment to create pedestrian friendly environment while accommodating existing traffic demand. See below.	Main Street	•	•	•	•
No Change	6th Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	3rd Street	Mixed Use Boulevard				•

Kansas Avenue 6th Avenue to 2nd Street



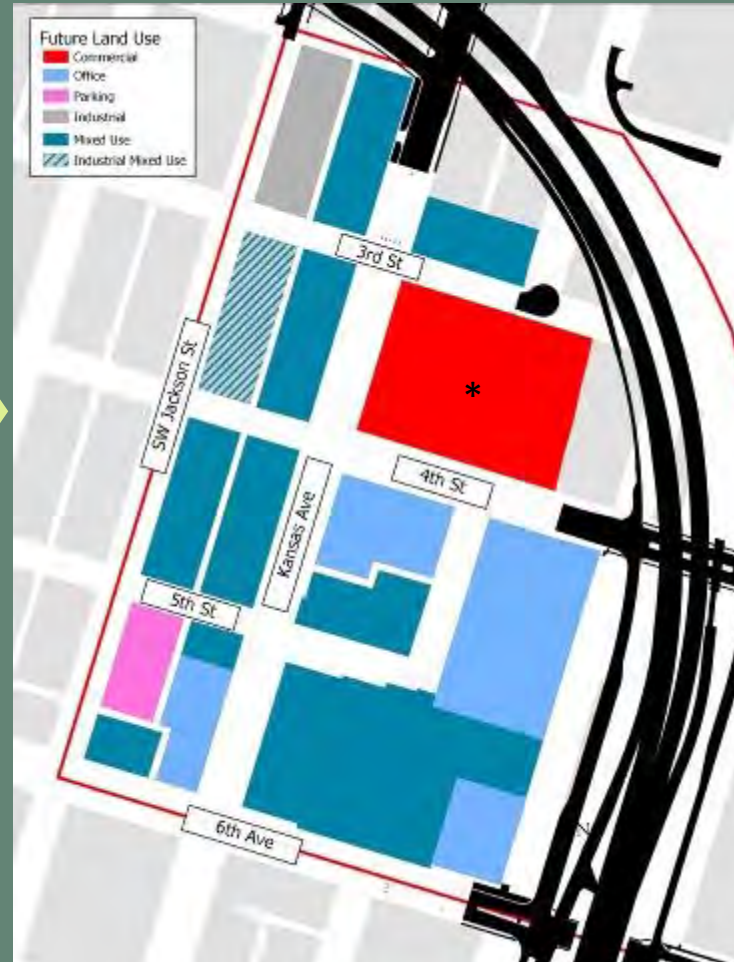
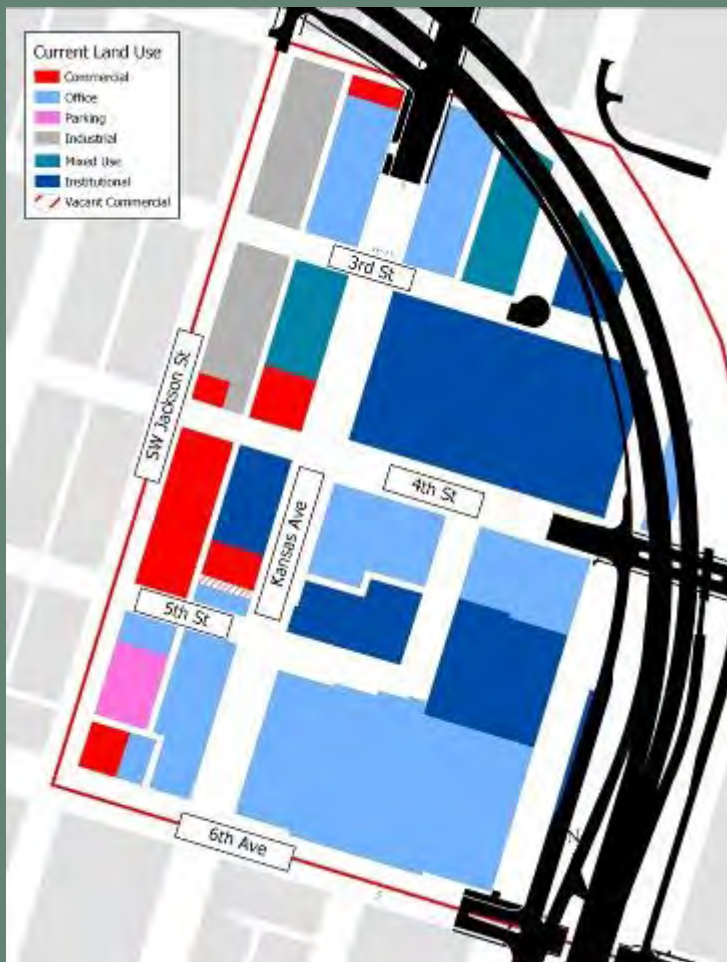
- 1 Travel Lanes Reduced to 3 lanes from 5
- 2 Sharrows/dedicated bike lanes
- 3 Angled Parking
- 4 Increased sidewalk widths for increased pedestrian use
- 5 Mixed Use Development to increase pedestrian amenities
- 6 Catalyst Hotel and Convention Center

Existing Character

Land Use

Much of the existing land use is dominated by office and institutional uses with scattered commercial uses. Building off the success of the Kansas Avenue Streetscape implementation to the south, the Office and Catalyst District expects the same street treatment from 6th Street to 2nd Street. Along with streetscape improvements, a new hotel and convention center on the Law Enforcement Center site will act as a Catalyst for the district. Several other sites along Kansas Avenue and 6th Avenue have potential for rehabilitation or conversion.

- Potential Rehab Sites:
- AT&T Building (Office)
 - Townsite Plaza and Tower (Mixed Use)
 - U.S. Post Office/Historic Court House (Mixed Use)
 - 235 S Kansas Ave (Housing)



* Catalyst Site - Proposed Hotel and Convention Center site.

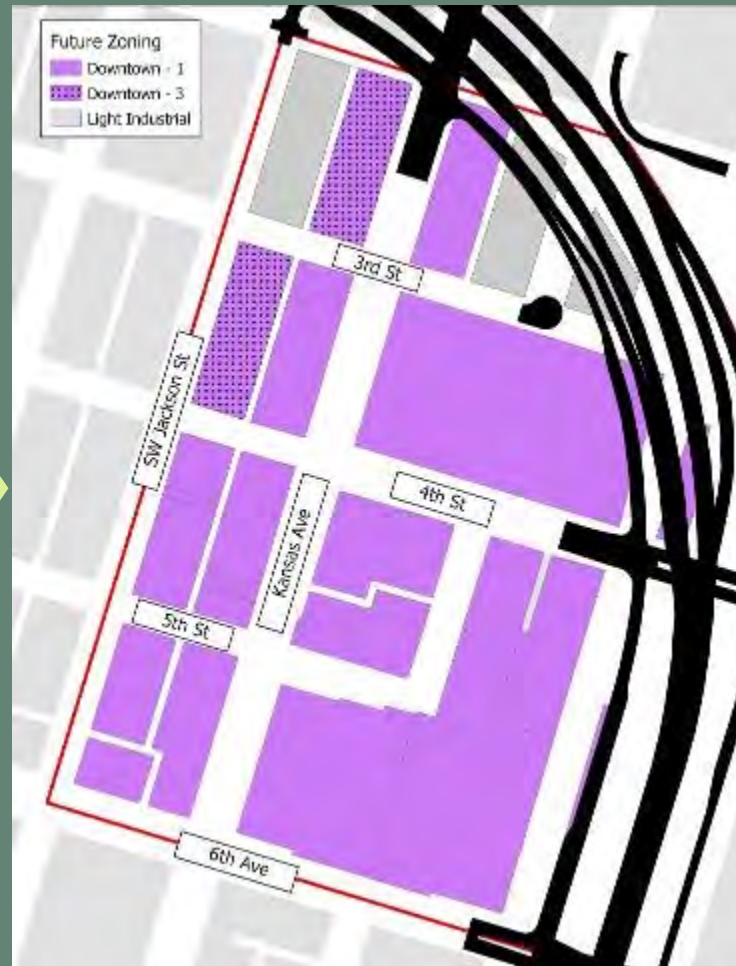
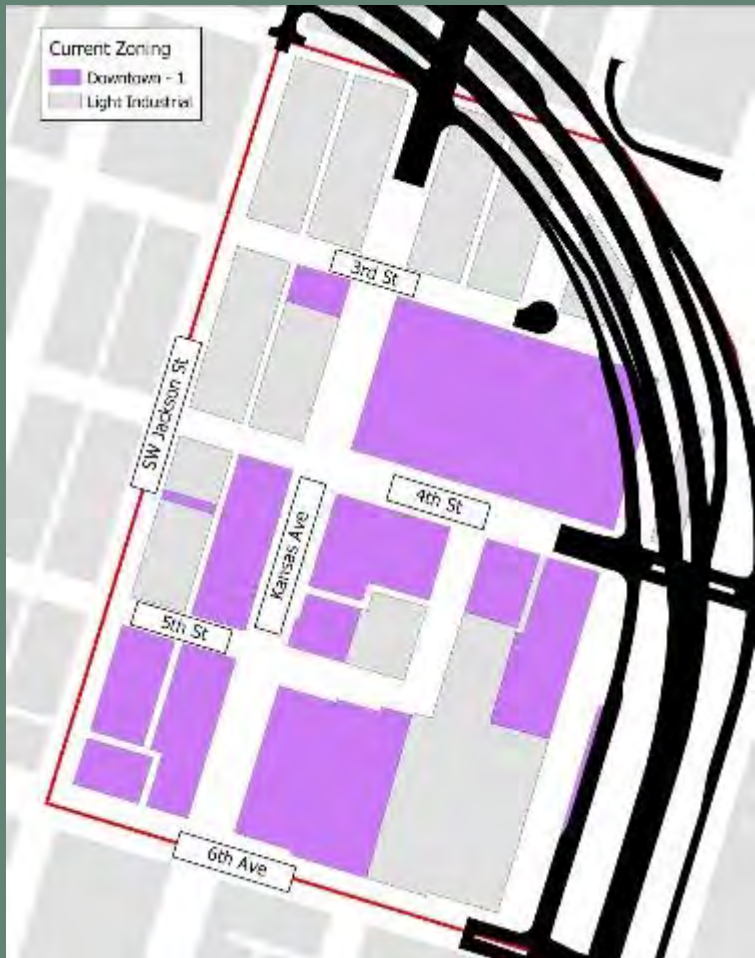
Existing Character

Zoning

The Office and Catalyst District has segments of “D-1” Downtown District and “I-1” Light Industrial. It is proposed to rezone this area to D-1 and D-3, allowing the existing uses to remain and expanding options for new development and aligning zoning with the existing office uses.

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 residential, office, civic, and commercial retail/service uses which complement and support a high density of activity and facilitate pedestrian usage.

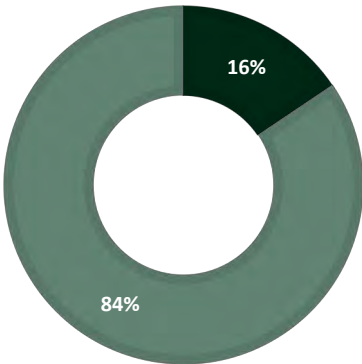
D-3 Zoning - Intended to reestablish the linkage between downtown and the Kansas River. The district includes industrial, commercial and office uses as primary uses and housing as a secondary use. Land use in this zoning district should emphasize the relationship between downtown and the river, as well as expand cultural opportunities in the general downtown area.



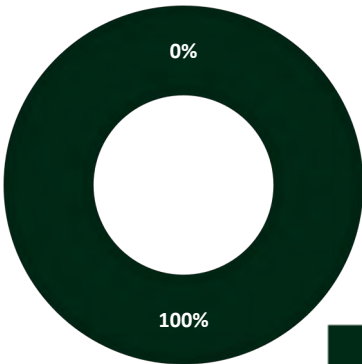
Implementation Summary

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Increase quantity of retail uses and housing units.	
Zoning	Rezone district to D-1 and D-3	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 140 units of new housing	Reliant on conversion of existing office uses to reach unit count proposed.
Office	Conversion of segments of office space to accommodate needed Class A office space and housing units.	
Retail	New retail uses within mixed use new developments will help guide the district to become a 12+ hour district.	
Hotel	Development of a hotel and convention center will provide much needed hotel beds to Downtown Topeka.	Boutique hotels could build off of energy generated by downtown hotel and convention center.
Parking	Angled on-street 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.	

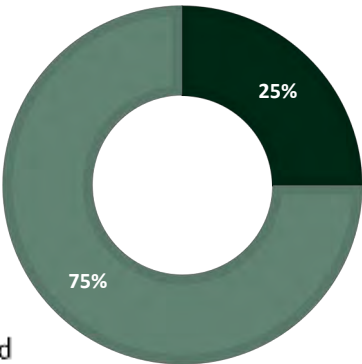
HOUSING



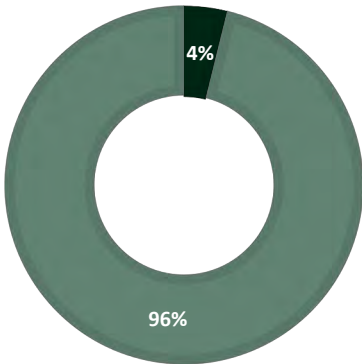
HOTEL ROOMS



OFFICE



RETAIL



Added
 Needed



RIVER TO RAIL

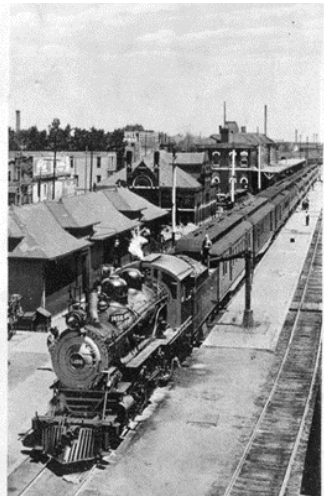
DISTRICT

History

The River to Rail District lies along the southern bank of the Kansas River, and as such, means of transportation is a core element of its history. In 1854, only two blocks to the west was located Pappan's Ferry crossing, and it was at this point where the Oregon Trail found its most secure passage across the Kansas River. The settlement of those early days was mostly residential, but also included those businesses and industries necessary for the development of a growing town, such as lumberyards, blacksmith shops, grain mills, and foundries. Nearly all non-residential development during the first few years of the city occurred along Crane Street, both east and west of Kansas Avenue.



AT&SF Railroad shops where steam Locomotives were Manufactured, 1924

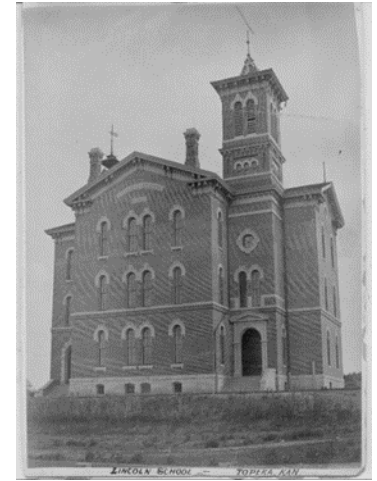


AT&SF Railroad Depot in background SE 5th & Holliday Streets, circa 1910

One of Topeka's founding fathers, Cyrus K. Holliday, chartered the Atchison and Topeka Railroad Company, with Topeka as its company headquarters. In 1863, the Railroad was officially renamed the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad when President Abraham Lincoln awarded a land grant to the company, thus enabling its expansion to the south and west. This event spawned an era of unprecedented growth of the City of Topeka as the railroad established the City as its production headquarters for its steam-powered locomotives.

The increase in rail traffic to this area fostered businesses catering to both freight and passenger-related businesses, as well as housing needed by those businesses' workers. Grocery stores, barbers, clothiers, and breweries/taverns were operated in close proximity to people's homes, while heavier industry continued its development along E. Crane Street and adjacent to the rail yards. Public schools were also built for the children of these workers.

The persistent problem of flooding from the Kansas River, however, prevented the area from establishing itself in terms of capital investment and permanent infrastructure. Two floods in particular in 1903 and 1951 decimated all development within a ½-mile or more along both sides of the Kansas River in Topeka. As a result of the flood in 1951, The US Corps of Engineers constructed a series of reservoirs and levees along the Kansas River to control and prevent subsequent flooding events.



Lincoln elementary School SE 5th & Madison Streets. Circa 1880



1950 Sanborn Map showing the impact of right-of-way acquisition required for I-70

The aftermath of the 1951 flood, however, revealed an area that was ripe for the implementation of two new federal programs. The first of these programs was the construction of Interstate Highway 70 in 1956, while the second was Topeka's Urban Renewal Program in 1957.

Together, these projects purchased land from approximately 3,000 residents, most of whom were immigrant or ethnic minority, and demolished their homes and businesses to make room for redevelopment. The subsequent development completely reshaped the character of the River to Rail District, by replacing residential and light commercial in favor of heavy commercial and industrial developments. Major industries to establish production facilities within this area include Hallmark Cards and Hill's Pet Nutrition. The construction of Interstate-70 not only played a major role within the Keyway Urban Renewal Project, but it also created a major racial and socioeconomic divider within the city.

River to Rail



- Railroad roots
- Large-scale industry
- Smaller-scale industrial services
- PQV impacts/sustain intuitive freight access
- Reclaim new development site
- Historic conversions

Industry and Re-Use District

Influenced by major industrial footprints such as Hills Pet Nutrition, the former Hallmark building, and BNSF, the River to Rail district is well positioned on Downtown's levee-protected eastern edge to attract more intermediate manufacturing, warehousing, innovation, and heavy service industries between the riverfront and railyards. Sprinkled within this urban renewal-era landscape are a few industrial heritage buildings with adaptive re-use potential for creative entrepreneurs.



Potential Build-Out

New Development and Conversions

- 1 **Topeka Transfer & Storage Building** - With the recent purchase and development of a Vendors Market, this space is large enough to facilitate housing units, gym space, office space and/or retail vendors.
- 2 **Housing Conversion** - With a need for new housing units in Downtown Topeka, the existing Ramada hotel presents an opportunity for some conversion. With hotel units already featuring similar amenities to residential units the Ramada hotel can provide a significant number of new housing units.
- 3 **BNSF Office Re-Use** - Located between Downtown Topeka and East Topeka North, this vacant BNSF office building could provide a unique re-use for housing units or co-work /living space.
- 4 **Mixed Use Rehab** - While currently providing retail space, 414 SE 2nd has potential to be used as an innovative space for continued retail, co-working office space or small residential housing units



- 5 **Rehabilitation** - This building once used by the ATSF railroad, is in need of major rehabilitation. The properties historic characteristics makes it a prime candidate to become a staple of the River to Rail district that could feature uses like a distillery or brewery. The gritty character of the building and surrounding district could capitalize on the national trend of adaptive reuse, creating an recreational activity hub for the district.
- 6 **Potential New Build** - Based on the re-alignment of the Polk-Quincy Viaduct, a new parcel may be developed. Ideally, this property would produce new class A office/lab space, light industrial needs similar to the former Hallmark facility across Madison, or a landing spot for a nearby business that needs to be relocated because of Polk-Quincy.
- 7 **1st Street Improvements** - Reuse of the railroad right-of-way will allow for a reconfigured signalized intersection in conjunction with I-70 upgrades, a beautified median, critical new parking stalls, and new bike/pedestrian paths.

Adaptive Reuse



1st Street Improvements



Circulation/Complete Streets



The Polk-Quincy Viaduct will impact the River to Rail District, with properties to the southwest being intersected by the viaduct. The new Polk-Quincy Viaduct will lead to the closure of 3rd Street, with highway access re-directed to a new frontage road parallel to I-70 with on/off ramps at Kansas Avenue.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
No Change	6th Avenue	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	4th Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	2nd Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	1st Street	Industrial Street	•	•		•
	NE Crane Street	Industrial Street	•			•
	Quincy Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Monroe Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Madison Street (2nd to Crane)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•		•	•
	Jefferson Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Adams Street	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•
Conversion (1-way to 2-way)	Madison Street (4th to 2nd)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•		•	•

Polk-Quincy Viaduct Impacts

Expected changes to the Polk-Quincy Viaduct will impact how vehicles interact with the River to Rail District. Current proposals will simplify the number of entrances and exits into the district, directing traffic to the corridors designed to handle greater levels of traffic. New “frontage roads” parallel to I-70 will allow continuous flow between Topeka Boulevard and 10th Street with the potential for a separated 10’ shared use bike/pedestrian path.

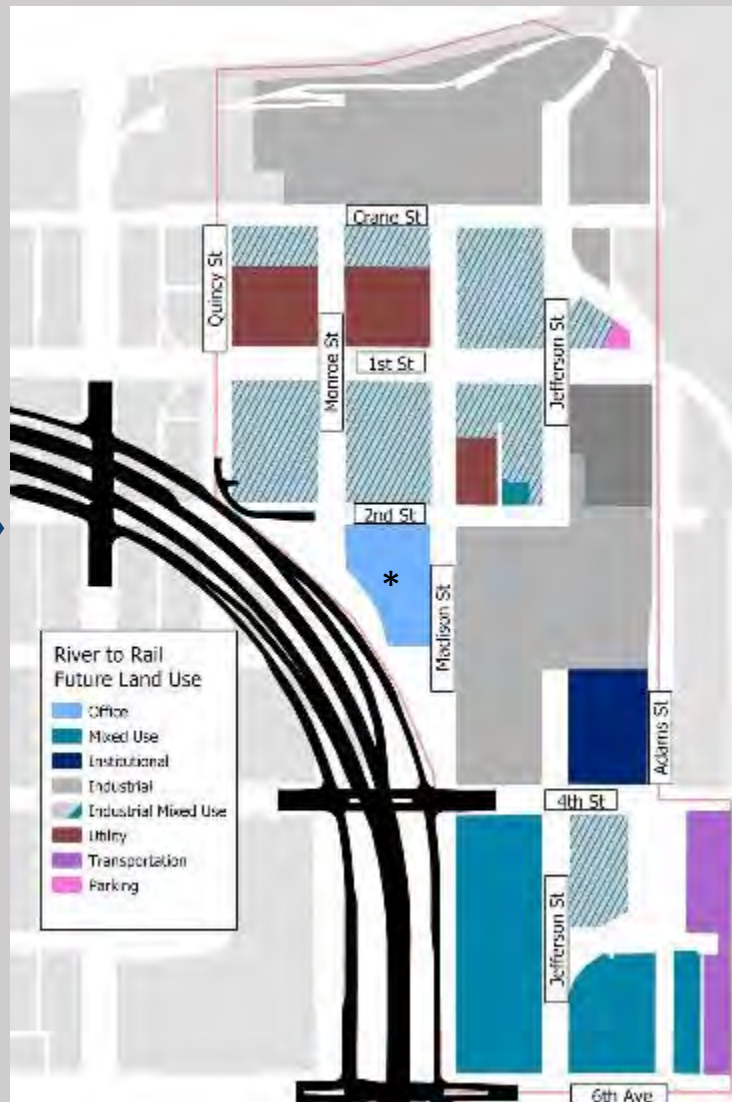
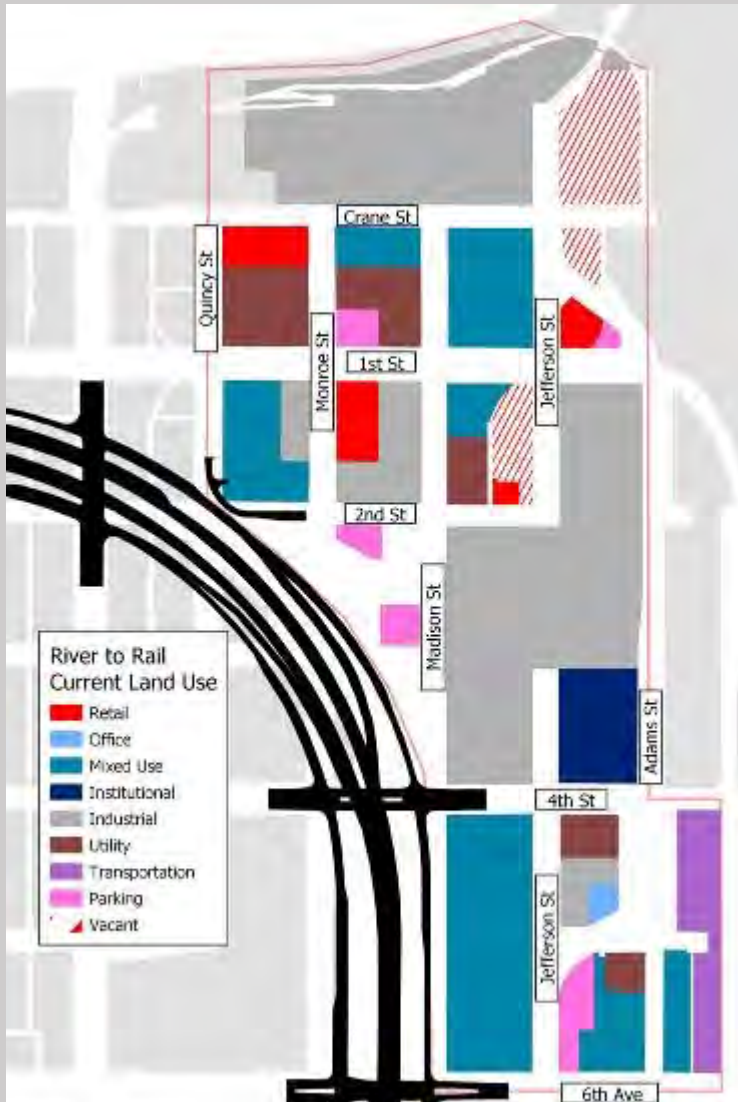
Westbound Exits	Westbound Entrances	Eastbound Exits	Eastbound Entrances
10th Street	8th Avenue	Topeka Boulevard	Kansas Avenue
Kansas Avenue	Topeka Boulevard	8th Avenue	10th Avenue



Existing Character

Land Use

Influenced by major industrial footprints such as Hills Pet Nutrition, the former Hallmark building, and BNSF, the River to Rail district lies along the south bank of the levee-protected Kansas Riverfront, and adjacent to the BNSF railyards, making it well positioned to attract more intermediate manufacturing, warehousing, innovation, and heavy service industries. Sprinkled within this former urban renewal-era landscape are several iconic industrial heritage buildings that offer opportunities for investment and adaptive re-use by a host of creative entrepreneurial interests.



* New Development Site
Dependent on Polk-
Quincy Viaduct
alignment.

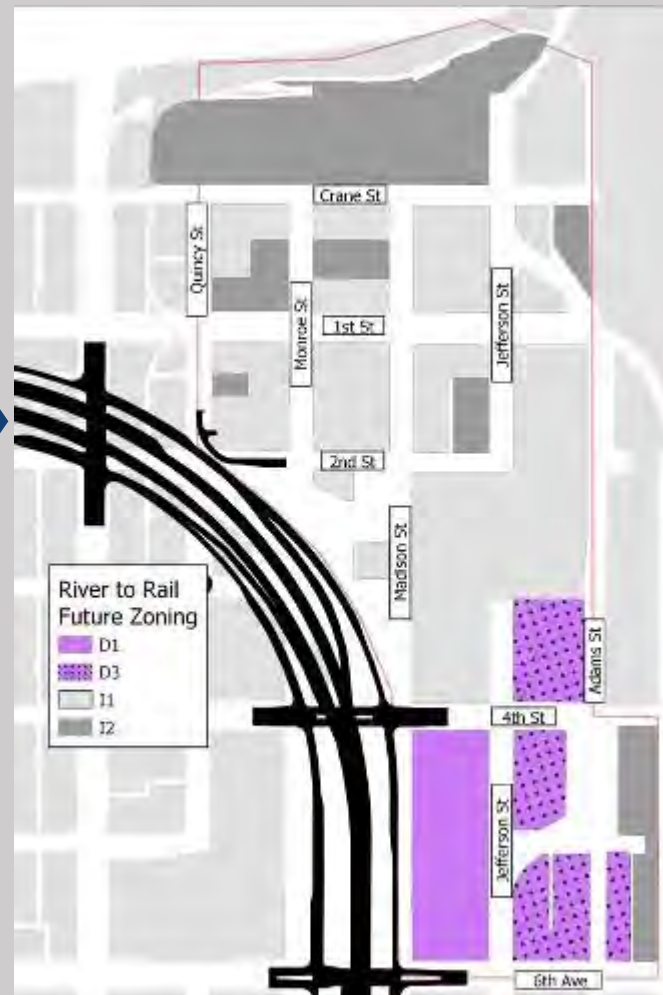
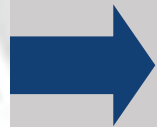
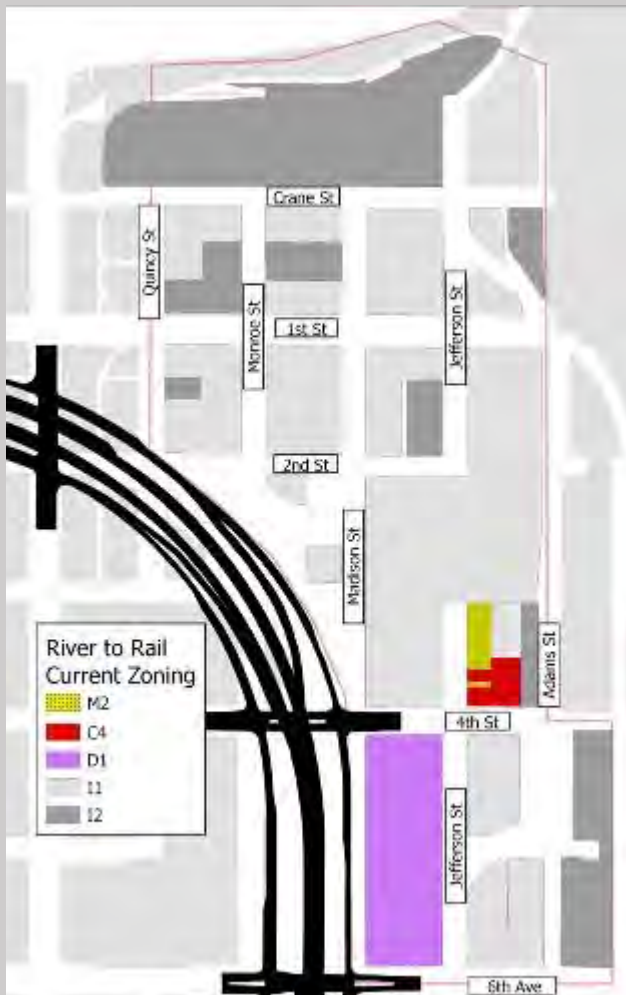
Existing Character

Zoning

The River to Rail District is primarily composed of Industrial uses. It is proposed that the district retains much of its current I-1 and I-2 zoning. Segments near 6th Avenue may be rezoned to D-1 and D-3 allowing the existing uses to remain while expanding options for conversions to accommodate other downtown related uses.

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 residential, office, civic, and commercial retail/service uses which complement and support a high density of activity and facilitate pedestrian usage.

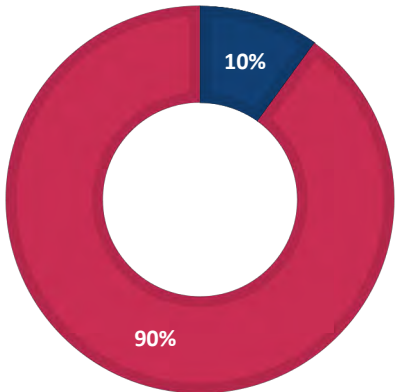
D-3 Zoning - Intended to reestablish the linkage between downtown and the Kansas River. The district includes industrial, commercial and office uses as primary uses and housing as a secondary use. Land use in this zoning district should emphasize the relationship between downtown, the river, and rail yards, as well as expand cultural opportunities in the general downtown area.



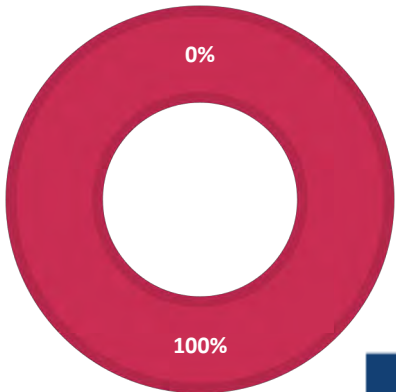
Implementation Summary

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Increase quantity of retail uses and housing units.	
Zoning	Rezone a portion of the district to D-1, D-3. Retain some I-1 and I-2 zoning.	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 90 units of new housing , mainly through hotel room conversions.	
Office	Potential for 10,000 new Class A space through conversions	Any significant growth in this category is reliant on a new build adjacent to the Polk-Quincy Viaduct.
Retail	Retail component would be part of new mixed use developments, with no new commercial developments projected.	
Hotel	No new hotel rooms added; some conversions to other uses.	Forecasts a decline in rooms which can be made up in other districts.
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.	Density still lends itself to surface parking. Heavier truck traffic may influence on-street parking capacity.
Building Design Standards	Create residential and nonresidential design standards for D Districts.	

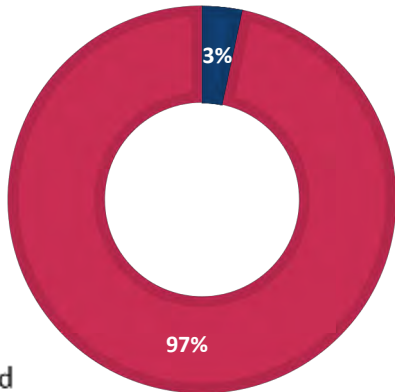
HOUSING



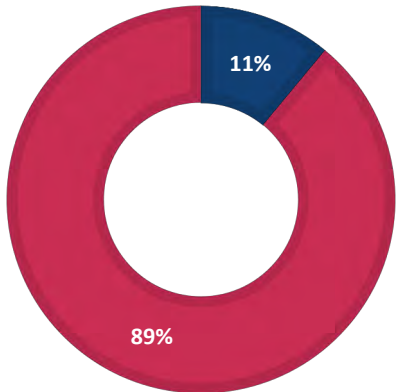
HOTEL ROOMS



OFFICE



EXISTING RETAIL



■ Added
■ Needed

RIVER SOUTH DISTRICT



History

Downtown's River South District began in 1843, when three French Canadian brothers – Joseph, Ahcan, and Louis Pappan - moved to Topeka and established a ferry service across the Kansas River along the Oregon Trail. This ferry remained in service until 1870. A few years later, in the end of 1854, nine men formed the Topeka Town Association, and selected Cyrus K. Holliday as their leader. Under his leadership in 1857, the City of Topeka incorporated as a city and was designated as the Shawnee County seat a year later in 1858.

Topeka's first Original Town plat established the land adjacent to the Kansas River and Pappan's Ferry as City Park. This land remains in use for municipal services to the present day.



Topeka City Park in a colorized photograph, 1905



Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad Depot

Located to the south of City Park were services and industries closely affiliated with the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, which constructed its depot on the southwest corner of 1st & Kansas Avenues.

Although not great in size, the entirety of the River South District became fully developed with a complete mixture of uses necessary to sustain a small and

growing town. Along with homes, there were also dance halls, a bowling lane, blacksmith shops, lumber yards, hotels,

and even the City's first crematory. Also located within the area were the City's first water pump station, complete with steam-powered water pumps, and the City's Street Department.

An iron bridge was constructed that extended Kansas Avenue north to the recently annexed town of Eugene in 1870. This was replaced in 1898 by the Melan Arch Bridge, which remained in use until its collapse in 1965. The Topeka Avenue Bridge was originally constructed through the Works Progress

Administration in 1938.

There has been a resurgence of interest in this area in recent years with the dedication of the Mill Block National Register Historic District in 2015, along with the adaptive restoration of the buildings within this district for new uses. This activity is exemplified most recently with the restoration and conversion of the Parkhurst-Davis Mercantile Warehouse into upscale loft apartments.



*Topeka Municipal Water Works Plant
SW Crane & Harrison St., circa 1895*



The Melan Arch Bridge, Kansas Avenue, 1898



Parkhurst-Davis Mercantile Co. Warehouse, circa 1890

River South



- Reclaimed riverfront land
- Potential Plug and Play/R&D
- Mix of old and new buildings; walkable scale
- Amenity rich – housing, food/beverage, “open” to public, river access
- New Polk-Quincy Viaduct access
- Convergence of all districts and corridors

Innovation District

A mix of existing industrial, repurposed buildings, and new buildings along the river could lead to an amenity-rich innovation district. It takes advantage of views to the river, nature, Great Overland Station, and Capitol in a gritty urban walkable setting to accommodate entrepreneurs and growth in animal health sciences or other research. Shared green space, river trail, and bike amenities open up a hidden and important part of Topeka’s history while complimenting the downtown core and NOTO. Updated Polk Quincy Viaduct is a portal for economic development.



River South Innovation District



Goal: Retain the existing character of the River South District, while promoting new infill construction that attracts reinvestment and diversity in the local economy through job creation in tech and innovation.

Key Ingredients for an Innovation District

Economic Assets: firms, institutions, and organizations that drive, cultivate or support an innovation-rich environment.

Physical Assets: publicly and privately owned spaces, building, open spaces, streets and other infrastructure - designed to stimulate new and higher levels of connectivity, collaboration, and innovation.

Networking Assets: relationships between individuals, firms and institutions that have the potential to generate, sharpen, and/or accelerate the advancement of ideas.



Potential Build-Out

New Development and Conversions



Potential Build-Out

New Development and Conversions



View of the potential River South build out, looking southeast from the Kansas River.

Potential Build-Out

New Development and Conversions



View of Van Buren Street looking south toward the State Capitol Building.

- 1 Park space located under the Polk-Quincy Viaduct , can create an active space that acts as an activity site.
- 2 New mixed-use developments, helping create a district that provides housing, retail, and office space that adds to the existing industrial character of the district.
- 3 Designated bike lanes can provide a multi-modal transit system within the district, enhancing the Van Buren Corridor, and linking the Capitol District to the River South District.

Park Space Under Viaduct



Redevelopment Examples



Circulation/Complete Streets

1st Street Improvements

Before



After



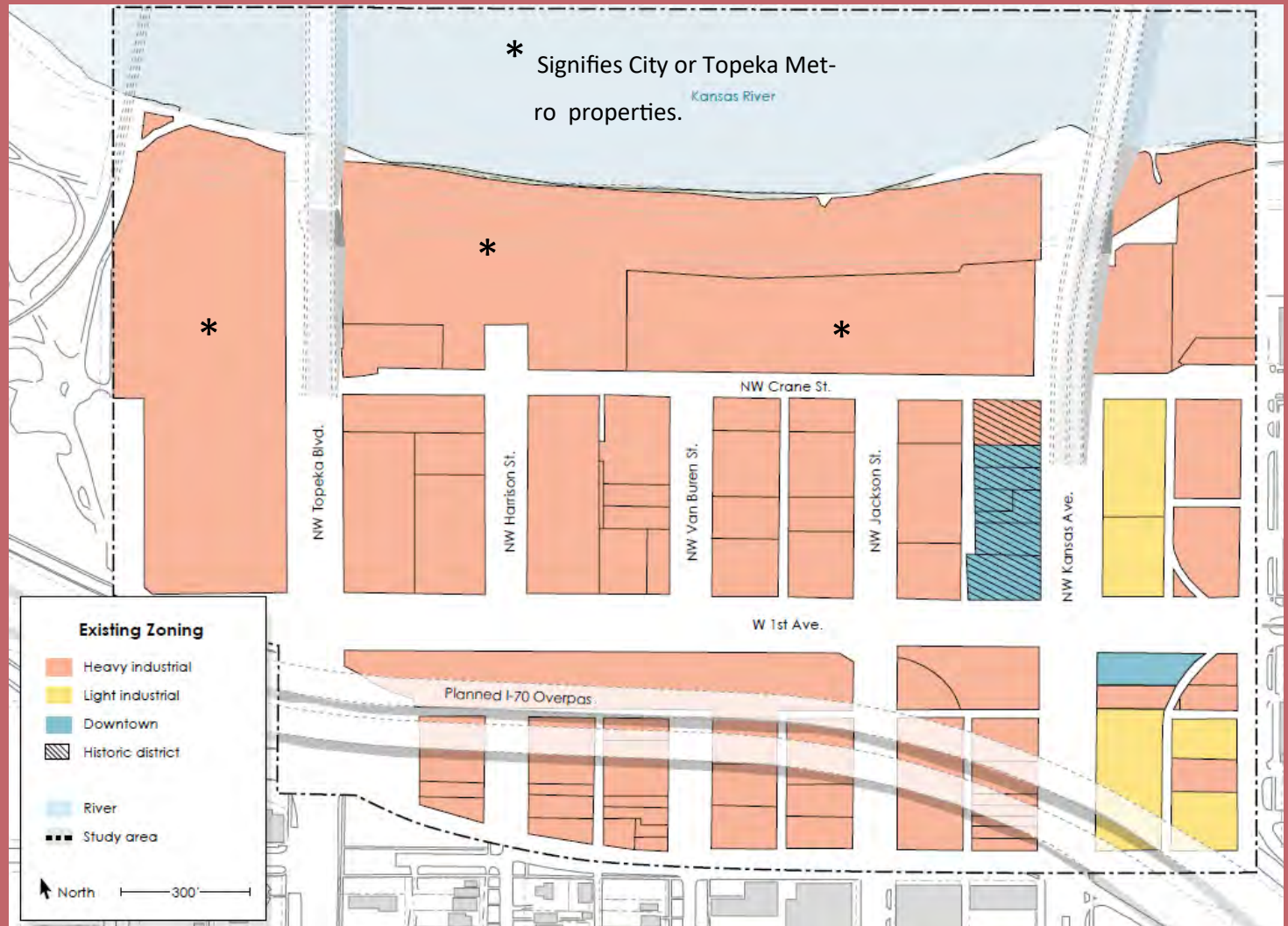
Existing Character

Land Use & Zoning

Zoning - The River South District is primarily composed of Industrial uses. It is proposed that the district be rezoned to D-3. As the River South District realizes its development/redevelopment potential, zoning changes may be necessary to accommodate the mix of uses outlined in the River South Brownfields Area Wide Planning Study. Recently, few properties along Kansas Avenue have been rezoned to a D District Zoning in conjunction with the rehabilitation of existing warehouse buildings.

D-3 Zoning - Intended to reestablish the linkage between downtown and the Kansas River. The district includes industrial, commercial and office uses as primary uses and housing as a secondary use. Land use in this zoning district should emphasize the relationship between downtown and the river, as well as expand cultural opportunities in the general downtown area.

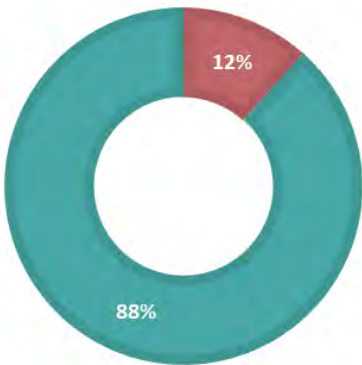
Land Use - Influenced by intensive industrial uses such as Lardner Stone, TMTA, City impound lots and various others, the River South district lies along the south bank of the levee-protected Kansas Riverfront. While intent on keeping the districts industrial and gritty feel, the large parcels owned by the City and TMTA provide opportunity for new mixed-use redevelopment attracting new office, innovation, commercial, and residential uses. These new uses will allow for growth within the district that allow for its potential to be reached.



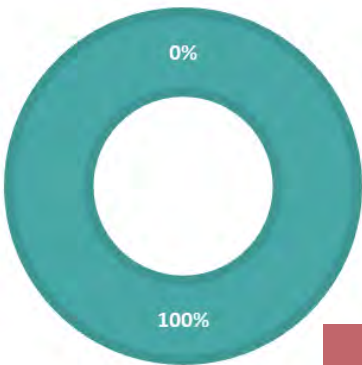
Implementation Summary

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Increase quantity of office, retail and residential uses.	
Zoning	Retain existing zoning until rehabilitation dictates need for change.	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 105 units of new housing , primarily through new development.	
Office	Potential for 110,000 new Class A space.	Any significant growth in this category is reliant on a new build
Retail	Retail component would be part of new mixed use developments, with no specific new commercial developments projected.	
Hotel	No new hotel rooms added; some conversions to other uses.	
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.	Density still lends itself to surface parking. Heavier truck traffic may influence on-street parking capacity.
Building Design Standards	Create residential and nonresidential design standards for D Districts.	

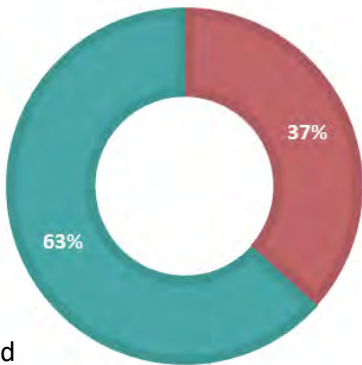
HOUSING



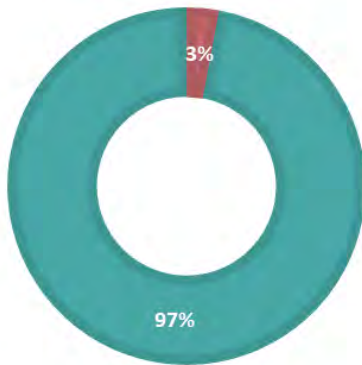
HOTEL ROOMS



OFFICE



RETAIL



■ Added
■ Needed

For more information on the River South District view the [Downtown Topeka: River South Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Study](#)

TOWER DISTRICT



History

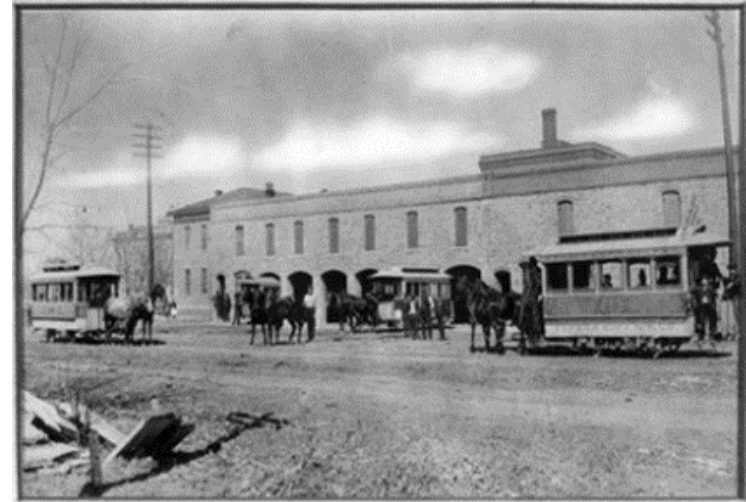
Despite current appearances, Downtown Topeka's Tower District has had a varied and important role in the growth and development of Topeka. The first notable activity within the Tower District occurred almost immediately after the City's founding when in 1855 a small tract of land outside the boundaries of the Original Town plat, located within the east side of the 1000 block of S. Kansas Avenue, was dedicated as the City's first cemetery. This cemetery was used by Topeka's earliest settlers until 1859 when a larger, more formal burial location was dedicated as the City's cemetery a mile east on SW 10th Street. Approximately 100 remains were moved in conjunction with this transition .



Hale & John Ritchie Houses, circa 1900

During this same period of time, the Kansas Free State Movement was well underway, led by one of Topeka's most prominent founders, Mr. John Ritchie. John Ritchie and his son Hale, lived in two adjacent homes that still stand at 1116 and 1118 SE Madison Street on the District's eastern boundary. John Ritchie's residence within this area mirrored the overall pattern of early development within the Tower District, which was that of an upper to middle class residential neighborhood .

The overall character of the block west of S. Kansas Avenue was developed in an urban industrial direction, highlighted by the construction of the Topeka Railway Company's horse and trolley barn within the 1100 block of SW Jackson Street in 1887. The use of this block continued in this use, either for horse-drawn trolleys, electric trolleys, or the City's municipal bus system until as late as 1966 .



Topeka Railway Company Horse & Trolley Barn SW 11th & JACKSON. 1887

Commercial-oriented development began in earnest along the frontages of SW 10th Street and S. Kansas Avenue after the turn of the 20th Century. The State Capitol heating and lighting plant was constructed at the southeast corner of SW 10th & Jackson Streets in this Century's first decade. Construction of commercial buildings along S. Kansas Avenue intensified in 1928 when the National Reserve Life Insurance Company constructed a 10-story office tower at SW 10th & Kansas in 1928.

The Tower District would not be known by this name without the presence of the water tower, located in the 1100 block between S. Kansas Avenue and SE Quincy Street. Construction of the tower began in 1942 during WWII, and was completed early in 1943. The need for this tower was prompted by the establishment of the Forbes Airforce Base at the City's southern boundary which placed a significantly higher demand for the City's water services.

The June 8, 1966 tornado destroyed most of the residential area within the Tower District. After this date, some of parcels along S. Kansas Avenue have been redeveloped for commercial purposes, but only one property, the Jackson Tower Apartments (1969), 1122 SW Jackson Street, has been redeveloped for residential purposes. New development within the Tower District culminated in the year 2000 with the construction of the Curtis State Office Building and parking garage.



11th & Quincy Water Tower. 1943

Tower



- Sports complex/Fieldhouse
- Residential village
- Mature households
- Connection to heritage sites
- Long-term feasibility

Urban Village

As Downtown Topeka progresses, it will be able to attract more mature residents who are looking for different types of housing than young professionals. This new neighborhood could include a signature sports complex that will be surrounded by new homes in the form of townhomes, duplexes, and small-scale apartment buildings. Residents will appreciate being within walking distance of the activity on Kansas Avenue, while maintain a little more space, privacy, and quiet. Redevelopment in this district can be used to help build a better connection to heritage sites farther to the south and east.



Potential Build-Out

New Development & Conversions (Option 1)

- 1 Sports Pavilion/Field House** - As a new activity hub, a sports complex intended for youth games and tournaments would add a destination site and tourist draw anchoring the south end of Kansas Ave visible from I-70 gateway. The location would be catalytic to support extended stays for hotels, shops, and food during “off-hour” evenings and weekends. Below grade parking is a must to have a more vibrant and walkable district.
- 2 Boutique Hotel** - The need for hotel beds will be exacerbated by the addition of a sports complex. A boutique hotel can address that need in close proximity.
- 3 New Mixed Use/Hotel** - New development on this site can help reinvigorate Kansas Avenue in the southern end of Downtown Topeka. Market needs will dictate which type of development will happen, but new development will be required to provide the needed amenities for the projected traffic for this district.
- 4 New Retail** - Added restaurant/retail uses, and the removal of surface parking will provide the needed density to create a vibrant district.
- 5 Climbing Tower/Observation Deck** - The existing water tower provides an opportunity to become an activity node. A climbing tower provides needed recreation for downtown, while an observation deck can provide a birds eye view of Downtown.



- 6 New Mixed Use** - New development along Kansas Avenue can provide needed commercial uses required to accommodate the additional traffic generated by a new sports complex.
- 7 New Mixed Use** - New development along Kansas Avenue can provide needed commercial uses required to accommodate the additional traffic generated by a new sports complex. Additionally, this development could include residential units as the buffer to the lower density residential uses nearby.
- 8 New Multi-Family/Flex Space** - This area has potential to develop as either higher density housing, missing middle housing, or may fill a need for new parking. Missing middle housing would provide housing options to the district, but the addition of higher density housing and sports complex may dictate a need for surface or structured parking.

Potential Build-Out

New Development & Conversions (Option 2)

- 1 Large Multi-family/Hotel** - As noted previously Downtown Topeka is in need of additional housing units and hotel beds. With an ideal location along 10th Avenue, this has potential to develop based upon current and future market demand.
- 2 New Mixed Use** - New development on this site can help reinvigorate Kansas Avenue in the southern end of Downtown Topeka. The mixed use site may include new retail, office and housing units increasing the density of uses along Kansas Avenue.
- 3 New Retail** - Added restaurant/retail uses, and the removal of surface parking will provide the needed density to create a vibrant district.
- 4 Climbing Tower/Observation Deck** - The existing water tower provides an opportunity to become an activity node. A climbing tower provides needed recreation for downtown, while a observation deck can provide a birds eye view of Downtown.



- 5 Missing Middle Housing** - In a movement to provide workforce and affordable housing, a variety of housing types, such as, duplexes, townhomes and small apartments could fill the primarily vacant lots that exist in much of the Tower District. The introduction of high-quality affordable housing units will create a residential village feel encouraging walkability for the district.
- 6 New Mixed Use** - New development along Kansas Avenue can provide needed commercial uses required to accommodate the influx of residential units in the district. The addition of uses like grocery stores and small retail can provide a self sustaining district.

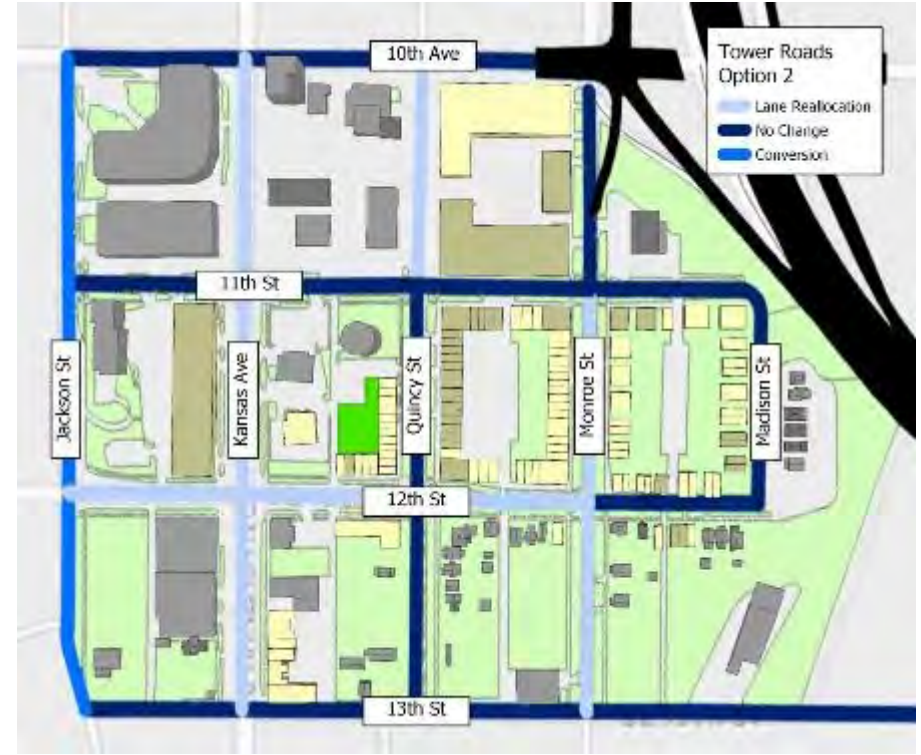
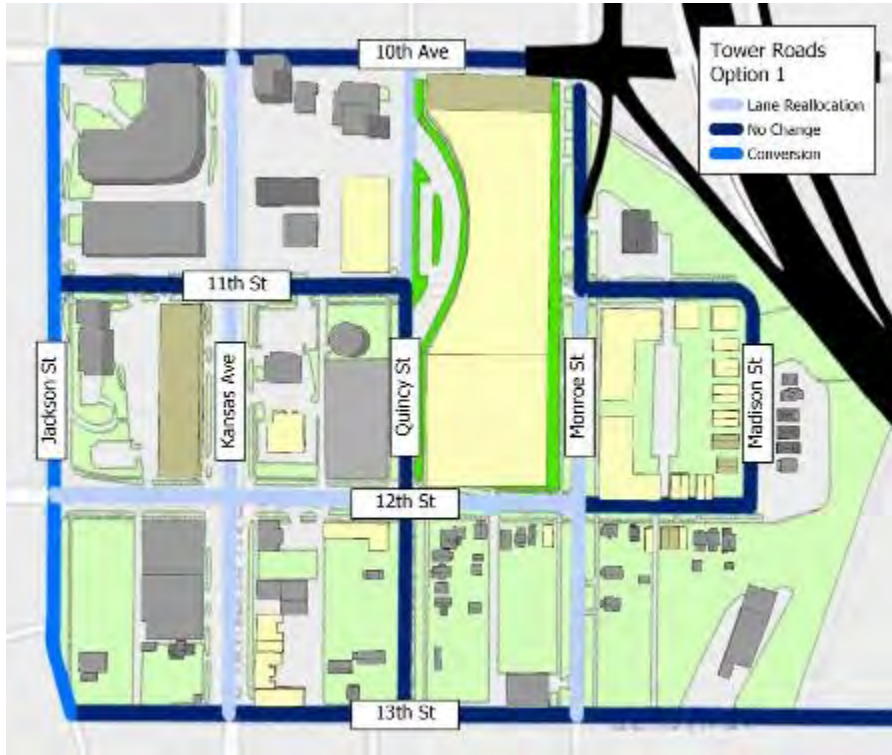
Sports Fieldhouse



Residential Village



Circulation/Complete Streets



Monroe Street is proposed for conversion, continuing the change to two-way travel found in the Civic District. Kansas Avenue, 12th Street, and Quincy Street from 10th to 11th are proposed lane reallocations that reduce the number of travel lanes. These changes will help create a more pedestrian friendly circulation pattern including 12th street which is currently under construction to reduce vehicle lanes to add a multi-use path.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
Conversions (1-way to 2-way)	Jackson St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Monroe St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
Lane Reallocation (Removal of Travel Lanes)	Kansas Ave	Main Street	•		•	•
	Quincy St (10th to 11th)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	12th St (Jackson to Monroe)	Main Street	•	•	•	•
	Monroe St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
No Change	10th Ave	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	11th St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	13th St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	Jefferson St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•
	Quincy St (11th to 13th)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•

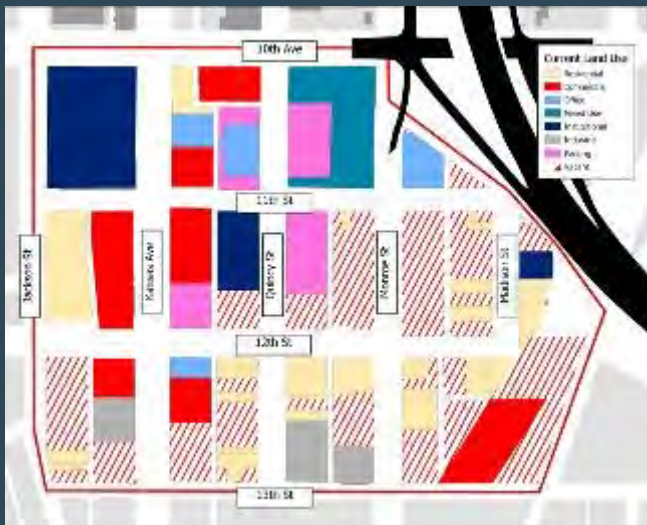
Existing Character Land Use

Land Use in the Tower District transitions from primarily office and retail uses to the north to residential in the south. However, much of the district is currently vacant with occupied parcels primarily located along Kansas Avenue and 10th Avenue. Changes in land use are currently projected to occur after 10 years, but the development of a catalyst fieldhouse within the district may spur a faster transition of surrounding blocks.

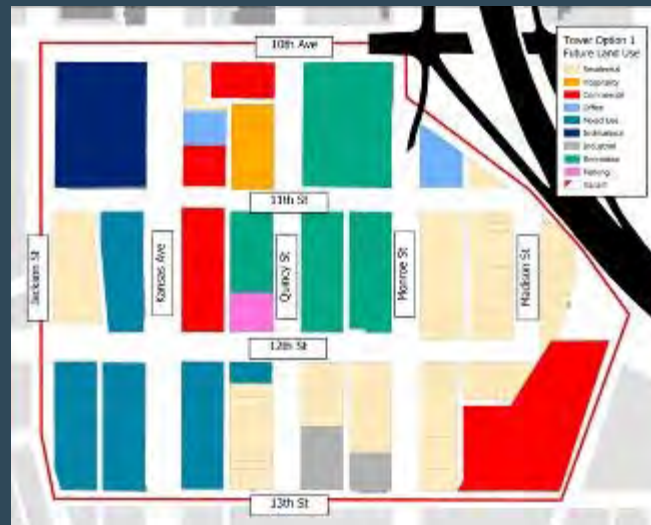
Option 1 Sports Complex: With the development of a Catalytic Sports Complex along Quincy Street, neighboring land uses will need to accommodate the large influx of people. New mixed use infill along Kansas Avenue would provide retail space and restaurants that appeal to families who are attending weekend events at the sports complex. Future land use changes likely will take place north of 12th Street, building off of the energy in the Historic Kansas Avenue District. Residential uses could make up most of the remaining parcels with a varying degree of density.

Option 2 Residential Village: With no new singular district-changing development taking place, a residential village is one alternative for the Tower District. Residential land use will encompass most of the district. Higher density housing could be located farther north in the district acting as a transitional zone to lower density missing middle housing located between 11th and 12th Streets. New single family or two-family residential infill should make up the remaining residential land uses. New mixed use developments along Kansas Avenue will provide needed commercial uses to accommodate the influx of residential uses.

Current Land Use



Option 1
Sports Complex



Option 2
Residential Village



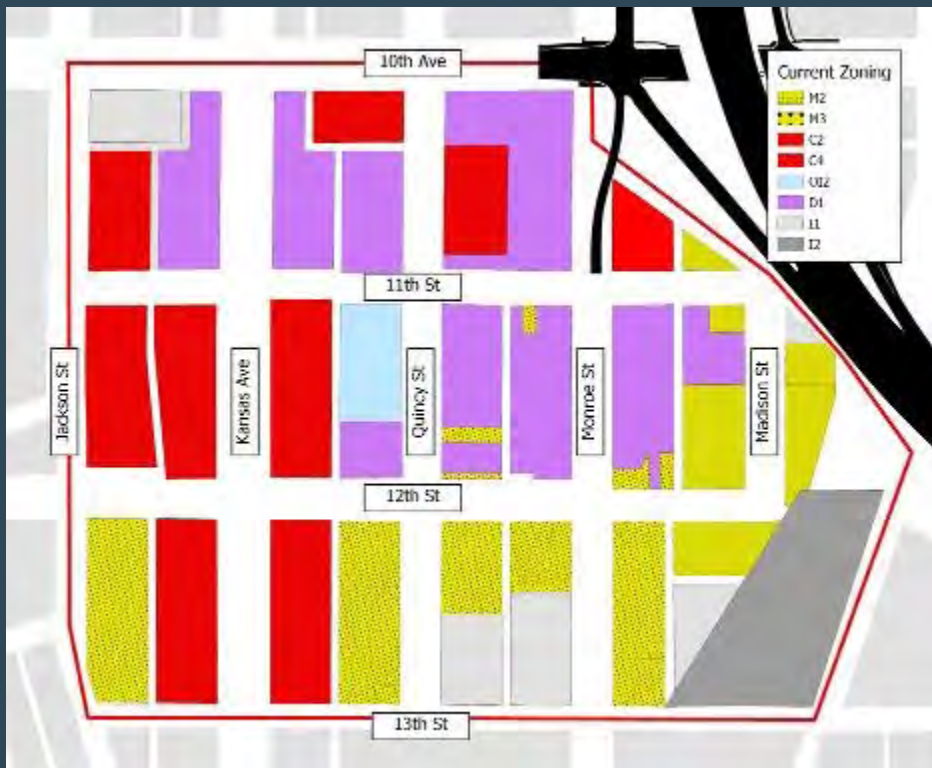
Existing Character

Zoning

The Tower District is composed of a mixture of office, commercial, and residential uses. It is proposed to rezone this area to D-1 and D-2 zoning districts to accommodate the existing uses and proposed growth of residential uses.

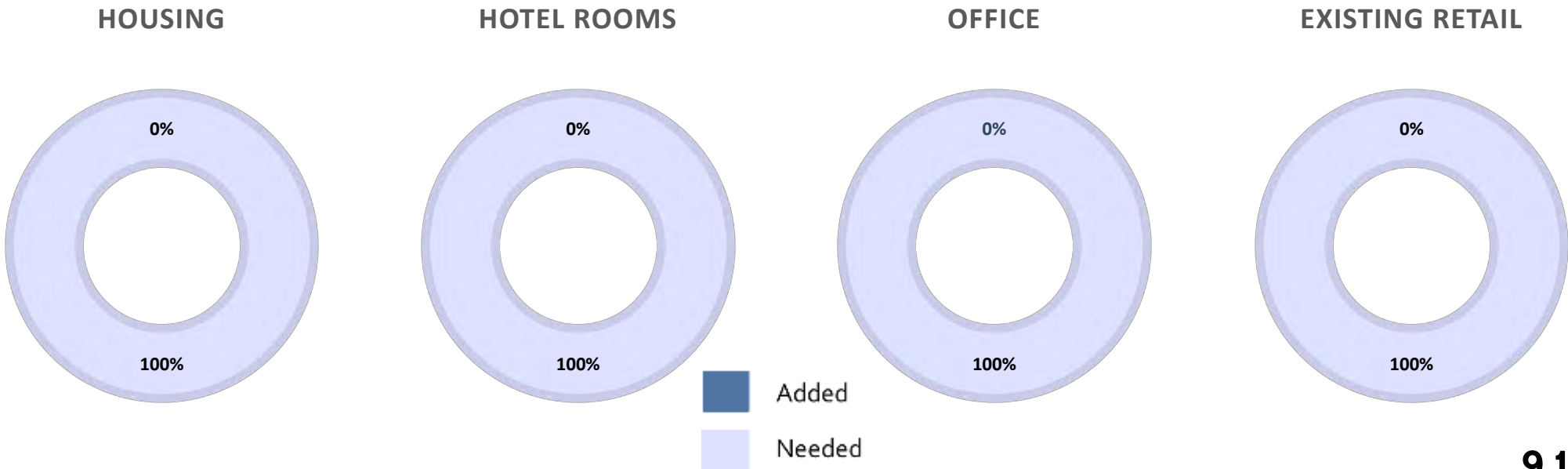
D-1 Zoning - Designed to facilitate a compatible mixed use activity center within the core area of downtown Topeka. The district is predominately composed of state offices, as well as local and federal facilities, commercial and retail uses. The district includes compatible residential, office, civic,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

D-2 Zoning - Intended to integrate a compatible mixed use activity with urban residential neighborhood. The district includes a balance of compatible residential, office, cultural, and neighborhood commercial retail/service uses of low to moderate intensity that complement and support neighborhood residential areas and pedestrian usage.



Implementation Summary

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Provide catalytic sports destination use; and/or 10+ year housing village	All housing projected 10 plus years.
Zoning	Rezone district to D-1 and D-2	See map in Existing Character
Housing	No new housing units.	All housing projected 10 + years with development of urban village setting.
Office	Little new office space anticipated.	
Retail	New retail uses within mixed use new developments will accommodate additional traffic due to sports complex or additional housing.	
Hotel	New boutique hotels may follow development of sports complex.	Reliant on sports complex development.
Parking	Angled on-street 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 for fieldhouse. 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.	





VAN BUREN

DISTRICT

History

The Van Buren Corridor District was originally settled in the 1850s and 1860s as the City's first residential neighborhood, just west of the trading and business activities established to the east along Kansas Avenue. Early residents within this area were a mix of mostly European immigrants, based on the scattered placement of churches and schools. Also, given this area's location just south of the Kansas River and railroad tracks, and west of the City's prime commercial corridor, early Sanborn maps indicate a variety of businesses also located within this area, such as lumberyards, cabinet shops, blacksmith shops and livery stables.



Shawnee County Courthouse



St. Joseph's Catholic Church

Construction of the west wing of the Kansas State Capitol Building commenced in 1866 and continued for 37 years. The presence of the Capitol Building just south of SW 8th Avenue, and centered at Van Buren Street, established a principal corridor for government services, including the Shawnee County Sheriff's office and jail at SW 5thth & Van Buren (1889), and the Shawnee County Courthouse, also at SW 4th & Van Buren (1896). The grandeur of these buildings was accompanied in 1901 with the construction of St. Joseph's Cathedral, located at SW 3rd & Van Buren.



Looking north from the Kansas State Capitol along SW Van Buren Street toward the Kansas River, 1951

Over the course of the 20th Century, this area's conversion from predominantly residential to more intensive business and industrial uses accelerated in conjunction with Topeka Urban Renewal Program. Although no portions of the Van Buren Corridor District were included within Topeka's Urban Renewal Keyway Project, this specific era marked the deliberate transition of the southern portion of downtown from residential to more intensive, non-residential uses. Today, nearly all residential uses are present only within the district's northwestern quadrant, north of SW 5th Street, and along SW Harrison Street and SW Topeka Blvd. Those areas east of Van Buren and south of SW 5th St. are predominantly occupied by heavy commercial and industrial uses, government and institutional uses, and vehicle surface parking lots.

Van Buren



- New residential construction
- Younger professionals focus—closer to action
- Pedestrian/bike connection to river
- State - development partner
- Grocery anchor

Residential Corridor

Van Buren will act as the spine for a new residential neighborhood with retail nodes at key corners. Numerous underutilized properties and parking lots provide great sites for new upscale apartments. These high quality buildings will “raise the bar” for downtown housing and provide amenities and quality that cannot be found elsewhere in the city. Young professionals will value being in an active urban environment, close to the shops and amenities along Kansas Avenue.



Potential Build-Out New Development

1 Catalyst Site/Large Multi-family - New Development on the State's surface parking lot could be the housing catalyst needed for the Van Buren District to become the true residential district. The mixed use site would provide new market rate units as well as new commercial and office space, enhancing the visual appeal of the district.

2 New Mixed Use - With a grocery store as the anchor tenant, redevelopment of this site would provide a centralized amenity to all of Downtown. The addition of structured parking removes existing surface level parking and allows for higher intensity uses in neighboring blocks.

3 New Mixed Use - Building off of the new mixed use developments south of 6th Avenue, another new mixed use infill development could provide new office or commercial sq. ft. while removing surface parking.

4 Small Multi-family Housing - Emphasizing the Van Buren District as the residential district, a smaller multi-family housing development could provide a range of units from market rate to low/moderate income units, providing additional housing choices for the district.

5 Missing Middle Housing - New infill projects throughout the district will provide a range of housing types that are compatible in scale and form to the single family homes located on the northern end of the district.



6 Dog Park - Located near the Great Life Athletic Center, and centrally located within the Van Buren District, a new dog park would provide needed greenspace for the influx of new renters in the district.

7 Single-family Infill - North of 4th Street there is a number of vacant parcels. These parcels could be filled with new single-family infill projects.

8 Van Buren Extension - Connecting the Van Buren District to River South, the extension of Van Buren will include new park/green space with opportunity to extend the residential corridor.

ENVISIONING VAN BUREN



NEW HOUSING CHOICES



RESIDENTIAL SERVICES



Circulation/Complete Streets



The Polk-Quincy Viaduct will impact the Van Buren District, with properties to the north being intersected by the viaduct providing new park and open space under the viaduct. Jackson Street, Harrison Street, 5th Street and 4th Street are all anticipated as conversions to two-way traffic. Changing these roads to two-way traffic will allow for greater mobility throughout Downtown Topeka.

Type/Location	Recommendation	Complete Streets Typology	Ped	Bike	Bus	Car
Conversions (1-way to 2-way)	Jackson St. (from 3rd St. to 7th St.)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Harrison St.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	4th St.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•
	5th St	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•
No Change	2nd St.	Industrial Street	•			•
	3rd St.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	6th Ave.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•	•	•
	7th St.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Topeka Blvd.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•
	Van Buren St.	Mixed Use Boulevard	•	•		•
	Jackson St. (from 2nd St. to 3rd St.)	Mixed Use Boulevard	•			•

Jackson Street 3rd Street to 7th Street

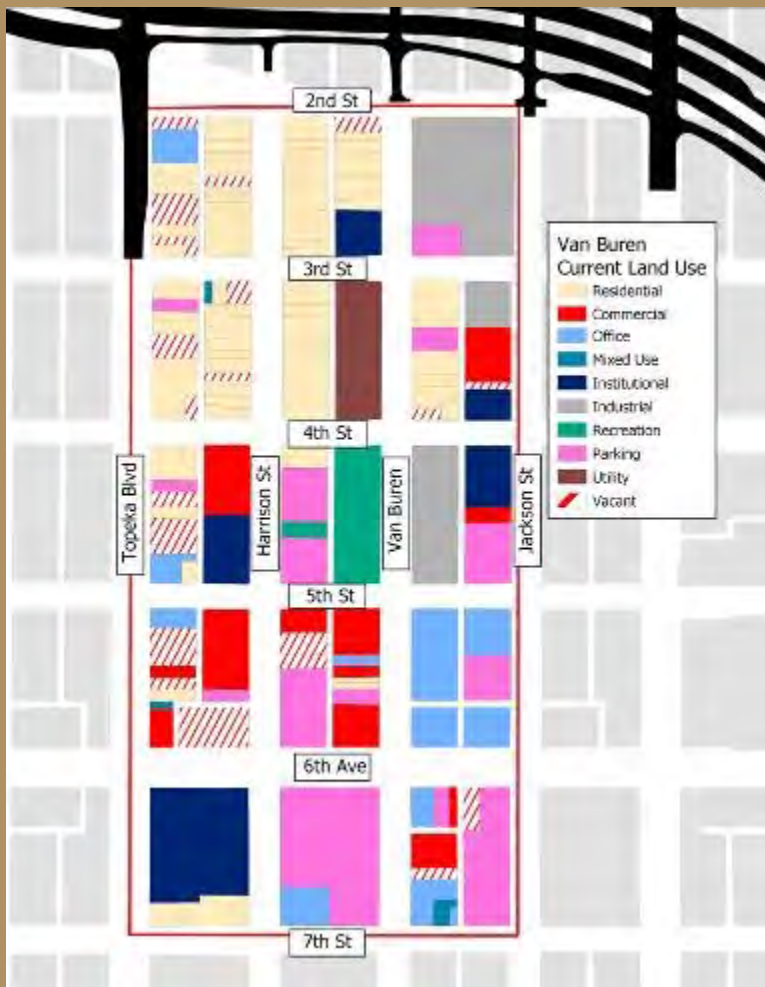


- 1 Travel Lanes converted to two-way traffic
- 2 Angled parking/parallel parking along both travel lanes
- 3 Generous sidewalk widths for increased pedestrian use and implementation of crosswalk bump-outs
- 4 Promote mixed use development to increase pedestrian amenities

Existing Character

Land Use

The existing land uses in Van Buren District is composed primarily of office, commercial and residential, with pockets of industrial found along Van Buren Street. However, as noted in the Downtown Market Study, the Van Buren District has potential to become the residential district. The large quantity of surface parking and vacant lots provides an opportunity for new infill housing, ranging from high density apartments to new single-family homes. A new mixed use development, north of the State's Eisenhower building, would replace a large State owned surface parking lot. This building could provide new market rate housing, as well as provide new commercial uses for Downtown Topeka. East of this site a new mixed use development could provide a Downtown with a much needed grocery store and structured parking. Other new housing options could focus on addressing the need for missing middle housing.



Existing Character Zoning

The Van Buren District has segments of “M-3” Multi-family, “C-2 and C-4” Commercial, “OI-2” Office and Institutional, “I-1” Industrial, and “D-1” Downtown. It is proposed to rezone this area to D-1, D-2 and D-3, allowing the existing uses to remain and expanding options for new development and aligning zoning with the existing uses.

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 residential, office, civic, and commercial retail/service uses which complement and support a high density of activity and facilitate pedestrian usage.

D-2 Zoning - Intended to integrate a compatible mixed use activity with urban residential neighborhood. The district includes a balance of compatible residential, office, cultural, and neighborhood commercial retail/service uses of low to moderate intensity that complement and support neighborhood residential areas and pedestrian usage.

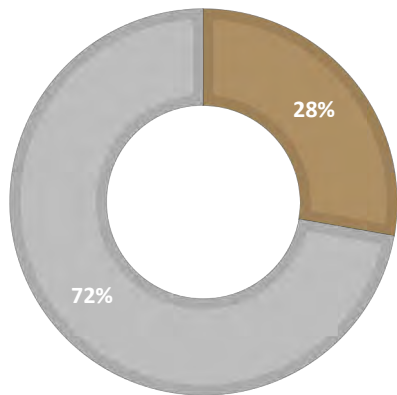
D-3 Zoning - Intended to reestablish the linkage between downtown and the Kansas River. The district includes industrial, commercial and office uses as primary uses and housing as a secondary use. Land use in this zoning district should emphasize the relationship between downtown and the river, as well as expand cultural opportunities in the general downtown area.



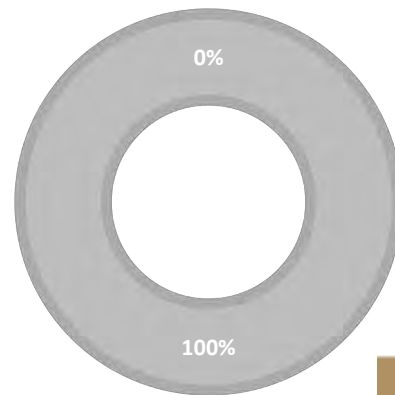
Implementation Summary

	Recommendations	Other Considerations
Land Use	Increase the quantity of Housing units through new missing middle and new mixed use development.	
Zoning	Rezone district to D-1, D-2 and D-3	See map in Existing Character
Housing	Potential to add 250 new units from new development and rehabilitation in the first 10 years.	Potential for 260 additional units after year 10.
Office	Potential to add 20,000—70,000 sq. ft. of office space	Any growth in this category is reliant on significant rehab or new build.
Retail	Retail component would be part of new mixed use developments, with no new commercial developments projected.	
Hotel	No new hotel beds	
Parking	Structured Parking is preferred. Where possible surface parking lots should be replaced with higher density structured 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.
Building Design Standards	Create residential and nonresidential design standards for D Districts.	

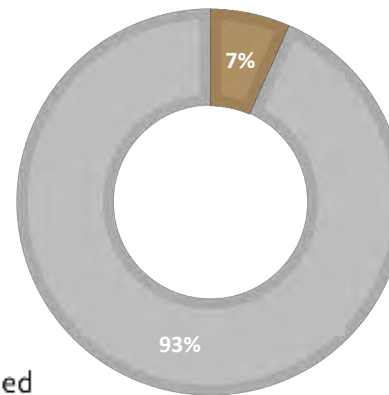
HOUSING



HOTEL ROOMS



OFFICE



RETAIL

