RTKL Plan

Plan completed January 1989

Consultants: RTKL Associates, Inc., Halcyon Limited, Barton Aschman, Planning Development Services, Inc.

Main Goals:

- Identify trolley links to activity centers;
- Develop user-friendly public parking;
- Encourage pedestrian/open spaces to link centers of activity;
- Link downtown to the Arkansas River corridor;
- Articulate four distinct districts – Downtown, Old Town, the government center and the Arkansas River corridor;
- Implement a two-way Main Street;
- Install signage along Kellogg Freeway and gateway streets;
- Extend Kellogg frontage roads to St. Francis and Wichita streets;
- Establish a transit center;
- Implement a parking management program;

Focus on key development opportunities, including mixed-use development along the east bank, a water walk along the Arkansas, a retail center along William Street and renovation and expansion of Lawrence-Dumont Stadium.

The RTKL plan gave city leaders their first comprehensive guide for improving our downtown. Its success exceeded expectations and provided a foundation upon which improvements have been built. Projects from the RTKL plan included building Century II Expo Hall, Hyatt Regency Convention Center, Downtown Transit Center, Exploration Place and Ice Sports Wichita. Wichita's cultural and entertainment history was preserved and enhanced with renovations to Lawrence-Dumont Stadium, Old Town Square, Orpheum Theater and the Eaton Hotel. To improve access to downtown, Main Street became a two-way thoroughfare, McLean Boulevard was relocated and parking garages were built in Old Town. The first leg of a scenic walkway and water wall along the east bank of the Arkansas was completed while landscaping and streetscaping efforts were enhanced. Citizens began to enjoy several beautiful, new attractions in the city's core. Improved signage and a better parking management system began to transform downtown into a pedestrian-friendly urban center with easy access to Old Town, the city's business district, its government center and the Arkansas River.

Download the full RTKL Development Plan here.