



21st Century Jobs, Economy, and Recovery

Create a diversified economic base that provides opportunity for all Kansas City residents now and into the future.

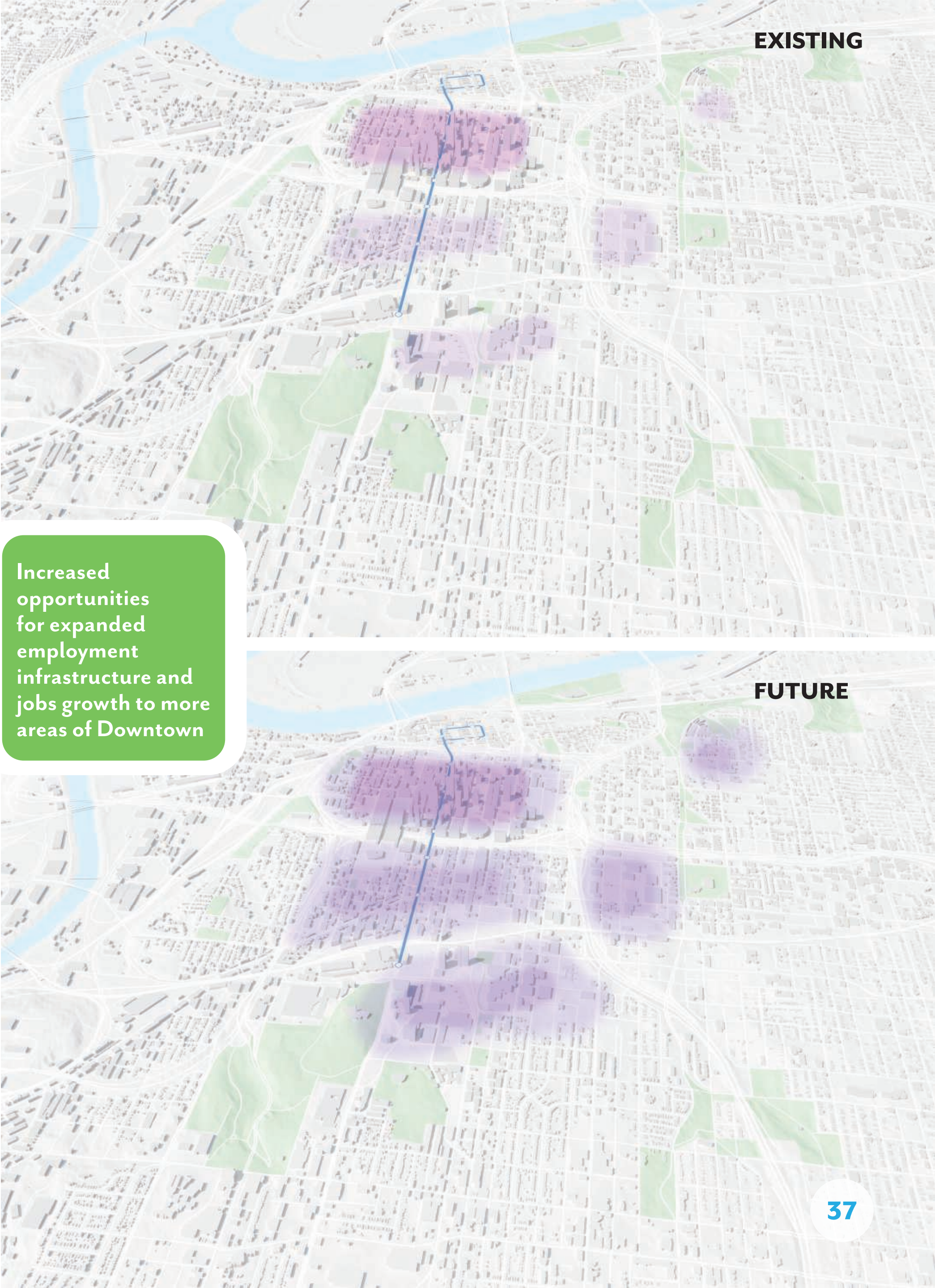
THE OPPORTUNITY

Downtown KC has a diversified economy. It includes cool shopping streets, a base of large employers including Hallmark, H&R Block, Kansas City Southern, Evergy and a growing national reputation as a technology center, with high-speed fiber, an expanding medical research cluster, a strong concentration in the digital creative field, and an exciting Innovation District in early planning stages. However, this economic opportunity is not evenly distributed. Downtown leadership must help catalyze job growth, workforce development, education and skills training, and entrepreneurship opportunities to create a diversified economic base that provides opportunities for all in Kansas City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

C1 FOCUS ON HELPING RETAIL BUSINESSES AND RESTAURANTS TO DEVELOP STRONG REOPENING STRATEGIES.

- C1a** Continue communications and marketing strategies to encourage people to patronize Downtown businesses and restaurants.
- C1b** Work with hotels, the Convention Center, the T-Mobile Center, and arts and cultural organizations to include information about local retail and restaurants as part of their reopening promotions.
- C1c** Advocate for retaining the flexible COVID-19 permitting process for outdoor dining and load zones for Downtown retailers and restaurants.
- C1d** Continue to offer expertise on local business support and financing (including COVID-19 relief) programs and how to access them.





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RECOMMENDATIONS

C1e Act as an advocate to help re-opening businesses navigate the City permitting processes.

C2 PARTNER WITH ARTS ORGANIZATIONS TO PROMOTE THEIR RE-OPENING STRATEGIES.

C2a Support the ArtsKC Recovery & Resiliency Plan, a long-term marketing, communications, and PR campaign aimed at reviving the post-pandemic KC arts industry.

C2b Promote Downtown arts through outdoor public performances, activated streetscapes, and new programming.

C2c Work with arts and culture organizations to create affordable opportunities to participate in and experience the arts. This could include audience development, perception management, new corporate programs, and pricing.

C2d Develop specific initiatives and promotions to reintroduce the Downtown arts and culture opportunities and experience to the community.

C3 DEVELOP AND BUILD AWARENESS SUPPORT PROGRAMS FOR ENTREPRENEURS.

C3a Identify and promote awareness of existing programs and training centers for women and minority entrepreneurs.

C3b Provide access to capital and coaching skills on all aspects of business from successful strategies with lenders, negotiating with vendors, and interacting with the business community power structure.

C3c Explore opportunities to work with local colleges to link students with local businesses to aid with developing online strategies, adopting new payment systems, and installing new technologies to be competitive in the digital age.

C3d Continue to support LaunchKC, which partners with Kansas City corporations, State of Missouri, and philanthropic organizations to help small tech businesses grow and continue to make Downtown a startup hub.

C4. SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS.

C4a Support Downtown neighborhood goals to develop partnerships between community institutions and local merchant associations with the goal of providing accessible training and support to existing and start-up small businesses.

C4b Support the creation of training and mentoring programs to assist Downtown neighborhood development corporations to access capital for their projects.

C4c Partner with neighborhoods on wealth-building strategies.

C4d Develop policies to link the use of public funds in private development projects with community goals such as inclusive procurement, hiring, and contracting.





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RECOMMENDATIONS

C5 CONTINUE EFFORTS TO EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN THE OFFICE SECTOR IN DOWNTOWN.

- C5a** Retain existing large employers and work to recruit new headquarters to Downtown.
- C5b** Continue support for the Downtown Council's business attraction initiative "Place Matters" to become "prospect ready" so that when an employer is considering locating Downtown, the relevant data, materials, and local leaders/peer employers are prepared and ready to be mobilized.
- C5c** Identify priority locations for clusters of new commercial office development to leverage positive impacts of concentrated locations and increase the attractiveness for potential relocation prospects.
- C5d** Identify a strategic middle ground in office development, targeting lower-scale structures and mixed-use projects with well-designed public amenities in districts outside the core to extend the Downtown business energy to other areas.
- C5e** Continue the Downtown Council's annual Office Summit to raise awareness of Downtown opportunities.

