

# B

## Innovation Districts

### OVERVIEW

Kansas City has a strong base of innovation that is starting to attract national attention. In 2019 Kansas City ranked 9th on a list published by Commercial Cafe, a commercial real estate resource, demonstrating the nation's best cities for start-ups. However, it also noted that while Kansas City offers a plethora of entrepreneurial resources, it still has work to do, particularly with available funding for early-stage startups.

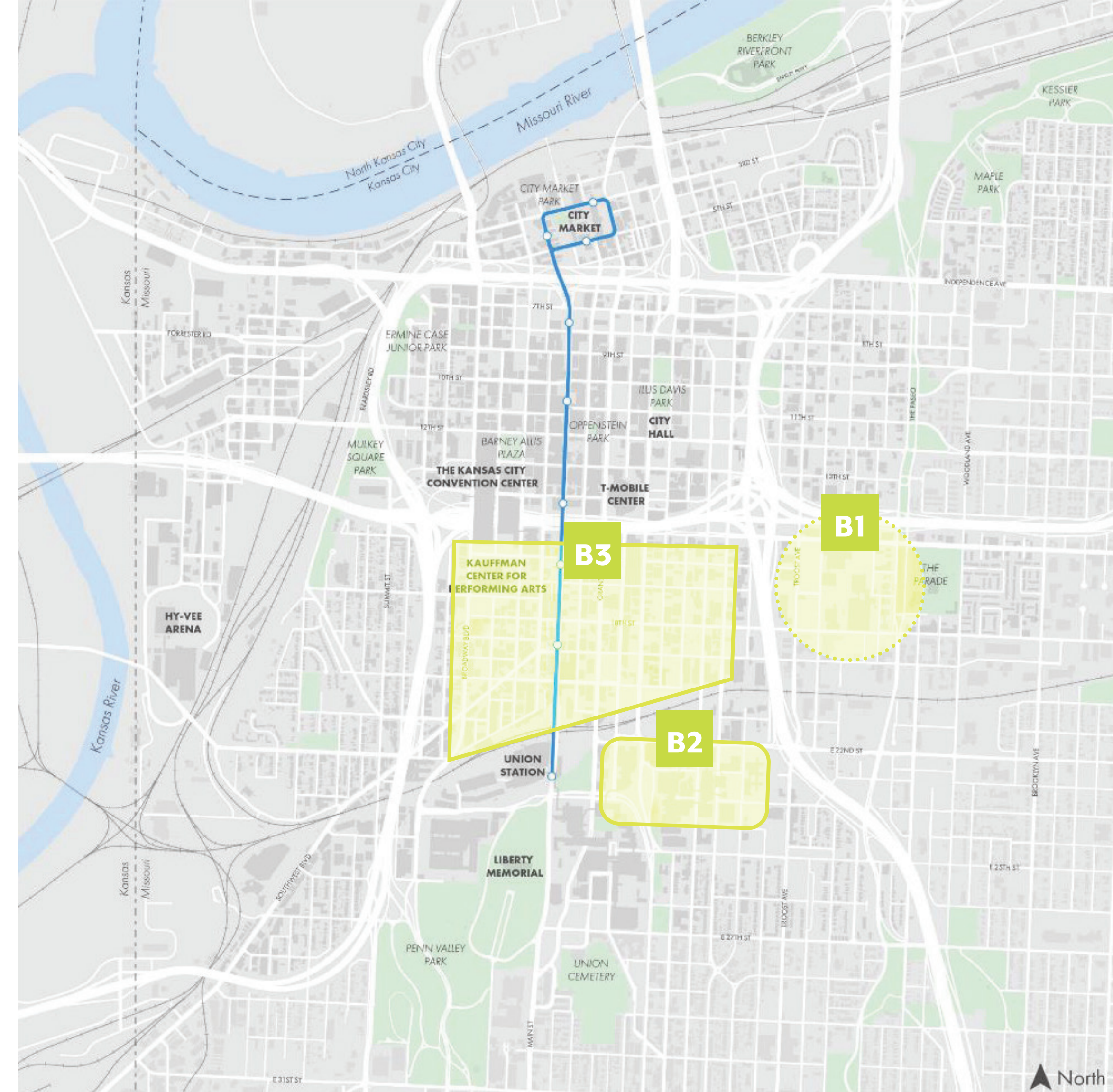
Since then, Kansas City's innovation culture has evolved and expanded. Downtown has two growing innovation districts in the creative concentration in the Crossroads Arts District and in the research and science cluster at the University of Missouri Kansas City Health Sciences District. In addition, a new Innovation hub – the proposed Keystone Innovation District – would further elevate Kansas City's entrepreneurial reputation and increase local opportunities.

### PROJECTS

**B1 KEYSTONE INNOVATION DISTRICT**

**B2 UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI KANSAS CITY (UMKC) HEALTH SCIENCES DISTRICT**

**B3 CROSSROADS ARTS DISTRICT**





# Innovation Districts

## B1 KEYSTONE INNOVATION DISTRICT

A diverse and thriving innovation community in Downtown KC can continue to be fostered with the support of major universities, philanthropic leaders, corporations, and entrepreneurs. The District's proposed location at 18th and Troost Avenue – between the Historic 18th and Vine Cultural District, Crossroads Arts District, UMKC Health Sciences

District, and Downtown business core – is an ideal location for a center of creativity and entrepreneurial energy. This new district would significantly advance Kansas City's reputation as a center of innovation and is critical for Downtown's economic future.

### TO MOVE THIS PROJECT FORWARD

B1a. Continue to support the Keystone Innovation District as it develops.

- i. Assist the District developer and Keystone Community Corporation to engage the community in its plans, supporting neighborhood engagement in its committees.
- ii. Advocate for the necessary financing and regulatory permits to enable the District to move forward.

B1b. Ensure that the District provides measurable economic opportunities for neighborhood residents and businesses.

- i. Develop programs that are specifically welcoming to local neighborhood residents and people of color, with specific programs to help build appropriate tech skills and entrepreneurial support.
- ii. Ensure local community representation in planning and development of the Keystone Innovation District.
- iii. Cultivate a strong partnership with public schools, particularly middle and high schools, to help disadvantaged students of color build skills that help them participate in the tech economy and access higher education. Connect with existing training programs and local schools in the district such as STEAM Village, Alta Vista school, and Lincoln Academy.
- iv. Provide affordable commercial live/work and studio spaces for local businesses and non-profit organizations.
- v. Develop strong relationships with entrepreneurial initiatives exemplified by programs like the Digital Sandbox and Launch KC and make participation in any of their programs easily accessible for students, women, and minority entrepreneurs.



The District will be a hub of entrepreneurship, skills training, education, events, and other enriching activities.





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## B1 KEYSTONE INNOVATION DISTRICT

### TO MOVE THIS PROJECT FORWARD

B1c. Leverage the development of the Innovation District to support adjacent physical improvements.

- i. Complement and support the neighborhood by respecting and enhancing existing character and implementing proactive measures that prevent and minimize displacement.
- ii. Prioritize multi-modal access in site and building design, especially from the immediate neighborhood, and plan for a variety of modes, including walking, biking, and transit, in addition to cars.
- iii. Invest in 18th Street to bridge the gap between the Crossroads Arts and Vine Street districts. This could include infrastructure upgrades and/or potential redesign as a flexible street.
- iv. Look for opportunities to include implementation of a section of the Greenline as plans for the Innovation District are developed.



Keystone Innovation District concept: a campus that blends into the existing urban fabric.





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## B2 UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI KANSAS CITY HEALTH SCIENCES DISTRICT

The University of Missouri Kansas City Health Sciences District is a cooperative partnership formed in 2017 by 12 neighboring healthcare institutions, including Truman Medical Centers, University Health, Children's Mercy and the UMKC Health Sciences Campus. The district collaborates on research, grants, community outreach, and shared wellness for its 16,000 employees, faculty, students, and surrounding neighborhoods. The goal of this collective effort is to stimulate new opportunities

for biomedical research, health professions education, community initiatives, and innovative approaches to well-being.

The District has the potential to help attract new talent to the Kansas City region, recruit high-caliber clinician-scientists, move discoveries to the marketplace, create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and promote shared opportunities around employee health and wellness.

### TO MOVE THIS PROJECT FORWARD

- B2a. Support the emerging growth of the medical research district by periodically meeting with representatives of the sector. The goal would be to build relationships, share information, and develop joint policy, infrastructure, and regulatory reform proposals.
- B2b. Advocate for better transit connections and walking and biking routes to the Health Sciences District.
- B2c. Support creation of a Health Sciences Community Improvement District and regulatory changes the District may need to support lab development or other infrastructure.
- B2d. Assist in the recruitment of key businesses and professionals to the UMKC cluster through offering to conduct Downtown tours and introductions when they are recruiting scientists and researchers.

A medical and technology campus in Berlin, Germany. The development is well-integrated with its surroundings and features modern amenities, housing and other features that support cutting edge research.



A fleet of AV and electric vehicles for use on the campus.



# Innovation Districts

The Crossroads Community Association is celebrating its 20th anniversary and the revitalization of one of Downtown's most vibrant neighborhoods. Over the years, the neighborhood has successfully blended new development with retaining the artists and artistic character that has made it popular.

## B3 CROSSROADS ARTS DISTRICT

The Crossroads Arts District includes a concentration of creative employers in the innovation economy that seek out its authentic, cutting-edge, urban environment. Maintaining the physical environment and the concentration of start-up businesses is critical to maintaining the neighborhood's attraction to artists and other creative professionals.

### TO MOVE THIS PROJECT FORWARD

B3a. Track the economic impact of the Crossroads Arts District

- i. Partner with a local university or economic development group to develop an economic impact study of creative employment in the Crossroads Arts District, documenting size, market opportunities, and economic impacts.
- ii. Educate the community and City leaders about the District's importance.
- iii. Support the emerging growth of the digital creative sectors by periodically convening representatives of the sector to build relationships, share information, and develop policy, infrastructure, and regulatory reform proposals.

B3b. Advocate for land-use policies that will ensure that the Crossroads Arts District retains its current character and does not transition to a uniform, commoditized district.

- i. Adopt land-use policies that preserve the existing historic building stock and limit new investment to underutilized parking lots, garages, and vacant land. This approach would allow new investment to occur, which will keep the area vibrant, without losing the assets that give it the character it has today.
- ii. Continue support for the Planned Industrial Expansion Authority overlay district to retain affordability of real estate designated as art uses, while enabling the remainder of the district to develop.



The Crossroads Arts District's popularity can be further bolstered to feature vibrant uses and creative office spaces.

