

A BRIEF HISTORY OF DOWNTOWN



Fort Scott was established in 1842 as a military post on the “permanent Indian frontier.” By 1853 the frontier had moved west and the military abandoned the fort, selling the buildings to the settlers who had made the area their home. Our first “downtown” was the fort itself! The border troubles of the late 1850’s resulted in the return of the military to the Fort and the Civil War saw Fort Scott grow as a major supply point. After the war our ambitious civic leaders made use of abundant natural resources to establish a thriving local economy. Railroad lines were established and businesses flourished, resulting in the construction of the fine examples of Victorian commercial architecture found in our historic downtown. As in many other cities our downtown has endured the changing demands of the consumer and is currently experiencing a renaissance. Through the Community Visioning Process, the Downtown Action Committee was established to focus on the challenges of maintaining a vital city center in the face of demographic and economic challenges. We recognize that downtown is truly the “Heart of the City” and are committed to preserving our architectural heritage and the legacy of commercial success which is embodied in the historic downtown district.

HISTORIC FORT SCOTT KANSAS

RESOURCE GUIDE

*For further info about the programs listed
in this brochure or for assistance in
business development, contact:*

RACHEL PRUITT

CITY OF FORT SCOTT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

620.223.0550

WWW.FSCITY.ORG

For community info contact:

LINDSAY MADISON

FORT SCOTT AREA

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

620.223.3566

WWW.FORTSCOTT.COM

*For info regarding building codes
and zoning ordinances contact:*

ROBERT UHLER

CITY OF FORT SCOTT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

620.223.0550

PROPERTY OWNER'S GUIDE TO

SAVING SPACES

A COMPREHENSIVE OUTLINE
OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
AVAILABLE FOR PRESERVING
AND DEVELOPING THE BUILT
ENVIRONMENT OF THE
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

Opening a vintage building is like owning a piece of history! Each one has a unique story to tell as it evolves with new owners and diverse usages. The Fort Scott Downtown Action Committee has developed this brochure to help property owners find the necessary funding required to allow their buildings to continue to be a vital part of the architectural heritage of Fort Scott, Kansas.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES & ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

HISTORICAL TAX CREDITS

Historical tax credits are available for state and federal income taxes through the State Historic Preservation Office. Federal tax credits must be applied for prior to beginning work on the property. Both federal and state credits are only available for properties listed as “contributing” to the Downtown Historic District. For more info visit kshs.org/p/tax-credit-basics/14673 or contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 785.272.8681.

HERITAGE TRUST FUND

Competitive historic grant program through the State Historic Preservation Office for properties that are listed as “contributing” to the Downtown Historic District. Grant deadline is in November. For more info visit kshs.org/p/heritage-trust-fund/14617 or contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 785.272.8681.

CDBG DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL REHABILITATION GRANT

Competitive grant through the State Department of Commerce to assist downtown building owners in the rehabilitation of blighted structures. A specific for-profit business operation must be located in the building. Deadlines are in February and August. Grant writing services available through SEKRPC. For more info contact Susan Galemore at 620.431.0080.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PARTNERS, INC. (HPP)

Competitive grant program to assist in the stabilization and rehabilitation of historic properties. The maximum amount for a single project is \$15,000. Applications are accepted semi-annually on March 1 and October 1. For more info and application visit yourhistoricpartner.com or contact Rick Kready HPP’s President at 785-290-0072.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

City of Fort Scott program for properties within the contiguous city limits. Property owners who make improvements to their property that result in a valuation increase of at least 15% are eligible for a tax rebate on the increase in property taxes resulting from the improvements. For more info contact Fort Scott City Hall at 620.223.0550.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND

City of Fort Scott program to encourage business development and job growth by offering gap financing at low cost to businesses. At least one job must be created or retained, 3:1 equity match, sufficient collateral, and repayment of capacity required. For more info contact Fort Scott City Hall at 620.223.0550.

CITY OF FORT SCOTT DOWNTOWN BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Limited grant program designed to assist downtown building owners with the financial burden of maintaining and improving the structures. For more info contact Fort Scott City Hall at 620.223.0550.

USDA RURAL ENERGY FOR AMERICA PROGRAM (REAP)

The US Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Agency helps finance the cost of renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements for rural small businesses and agricultural producers. Grants and loan guarantees are available to help purchase, install and construct energy projects. For more info contact the USDA Rural Development office in Iola at 620.365.2901.

BEDCO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

The Bourbon County Economic Development Council offers forgivable loans based on job creation for new and expanding businesses. For more info contact Steve Buerge at 620.224.8411 or Fort Scott City Hall at 620.223.0550.

DOWNTOWN PAINT GRANT

Private grant funded by Steve and Elaine Buerge to help downtown building owners spruce up their building facades with a fresh coat of paint. The grant covers the cost of paint up to \$500. For more info contact the Chamber at 620.223.3566.

SOUTHEAST KANSAS PROSPERITY FOUNDATION REVOLING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

The revolving loan program is for both existing and start-up businesses in the Southeast Kansas region. It is designed to partner with local and regional financial institutions to provide access to capital. For more info contact 620.235.4920

SOUTHEAST KANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

SEKRCP offers a variety of funding options for business owners. For more info visit sekrpc.org.