In the summer of 2004, Sedgwick County leaders conducted an extensive community engagement process for the purpose of gauging support for a new arena in downtown Wichita. This process enabled leaders to share with the community information about other arenas, parking and traffic concerns, costs and financing options, local economic impact, Kansas Coliseum renovations and an overall project timeline. On November 2, 2004, Sedgwick County citizens voted to approve a 30-month, one percent sales tax for the purpose of financing a new downtown arena. This vote subsequently resulted in Senate Bill 58, which was signed by Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius on April 4, 2005.
The Sedgwick County Arena will be a multi-purpose center, with 15,000 seats for basketball and up to 24 box suites. The facility will be owned and operated by the Board of Sedgwick County Commissioners and will be located in the heart of downtown Wichita. The Sedgwick County Arena will make a large and long-term impact on the downtown area of the City of Wichita. Sedgwick County and the City of Wichita are working together to create a neighborhood redevelopment plan that will make downtown a vibrant community and destination point for years to come. The Arena will be part of a revitalized atmosphere that will provide future economic development and will enhance the quality of life in conjunction with other projects such as the Old Town entertainment district, Eaton Place, the Transit Center, the proposed Art District, and Water Walk.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Department (MAPD), which is jointly funded by Sedgwick County and the City of Wichita, is tasked with producing the redevelopment plan for the area surrounding the Sedgwick County Arena. MAPD has and will continue to utilize consultants and seek community input to build consensus on the development of the neighborhood plan.

On July 27, 2005, the BoCC approved the Request for Proposal for architectural and engineering services submitted by the Arena Design Consortium (ADC). ADC met the standard requirements for architecture and engineering services for the Sedgwick County Arena, plus the additional specification of having experience designing large arenas in an urban setting. ADC has previous experience designing facilities with similar scope and size, which will help control long-term operational costs for the facility.


Preliminary design costs at the existing Kansas Coliseum and the construction improvements for the Pavilions at the Coliseum are also part of the Arena project costs. These improvements will allow the Pavilions to continue their mission as a much needed venue for horse and livestock events and trade shows that would not take place inside the Sedgwick County Arena.

Sedgwick County has used citizen engagement throughout this process to provide information about the Sedgwick County Arena and assure that all perspectives, views, concerns and ideas from citizens are heard. Two citizen-based committees, the Citizen Arena Sales Tax Oversight Committee and the Citizen Design Review Advisory Committee, have been created to ensure public participation. Additionally, Sedgwick County utilizes the County’s website and streaming video in an effort to have a transparent and open Arena planning process.