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Public Art On Main Street

The American Century Investments Sculpture Field at 44th & Main Street represents a partnership between American Century Investments, the Kansas City Art Institute, MainCor and other arts and civic groups. The six sculptures from local artist and entrepreneur STRETCH were dedicated on August 8, 2006. The grassy knoll which is now home to the first public art display on Main Street, is the property of American Century investments, and is intended to rotate the work of various local artists at least once each year.

The Sculpture Field responds to the Main Street Corridor Land Use and Development Plan, which encourages significant public art at a pedestrian scale. Public art, widely recognized as a catalyst for economic development, exhibits the engagement of individuals and the community, and now enhances the lively Southmoreland neighborhood that is also home to the Kansas City Art Institute, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art and H&R Block's ArtSpace. The Sculpture Field connects the economic expansion of Downtown, the eclectic mixture of the Crossroads district with Midtown Kansas City and the Country Club Plaza illustrating the new era of enhanced connectivity and growth.

Open to the public dawn through dusk, the Sculpture Field is a great new way to enjoy Main Street. For more information about STRETCH and his work, visit www.stretchsculpture.com.

Katz, Skaggs, Osco, CVS . . . Save KC's Landmark

In early August, following the purchase of the OSCO Stores by CVS, the former Katz Drug Store (at the corner of Westport Road and Main) was closed and has now been liquidated of the interior fittings. CVS will continue to do business on Main Street at their 39th and Main Street location. The future of the "Katz Building" which is on the National Register of Historic Buildings is on the minds of many individuals who have vivid memories of shopping there. If Ike and Michael Katz were alive today what would they envision for the now empty landmark at Westport and Main? Being the entrepreneurial, forward looking local businessmen and civic leaders that they were, what would they advise? Certainly they would look back on those thriving years when the Katz Drug Store was THE place to shop for school supplies, Russell Stover candies, pets (yes, even monkeys), the latest record music, cosmetics, gifts, and pharmaceutical.

Advertised as the "world's largest drug store, there was a soda fountain and lunch counter that brought Kansas Citians from all points together. It was a super store with a large parking lot and its logo was a large black cat ensconced over the corner entrance at Westport Road and Main Street. It was a great location then and it is still a great location for doing business. Merchandise was displayed in large plate glass windows that wrapped around the entire facade. The Katz Drug Store, completed in 1934, was the first design project by architect, Clarence Kivett. * He had been to the Chicago World's Fair in 1933, returning to Kansas City, impressed with the streamline Art Deco architecture that prevailed at that Fair. Art Deco was the architectural style that earmarked the 1930's in major cities across the U.S. It was the style of the times. Art Deco stood for excitement, the latest look. The Katz Drug Store at Westport and Main was known for its buff brick tower with clocks on three sides (when they work, the faces light up in neon) extending beyond the roof line at the south end of the Main Street facade. The secondary tower which extends beyond the main block has a series of three horizontal projections that add a futuristic look. The horizontal banding on the building (it is painted orange now) was originally in shiny chromium and it wrapped around the building giving it the "streamline" look.



