

The Belton Vision Team Journey

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A Message from the Co-Chairpersons

Every community needs a vision and supporting community plan if it wants to be a vibrant and successful community 15-20 years down the line.

Without a vision to serve as a roadmap and a good game plan to achieve that vision, a community can stagnate and face serious, if not impossible, growth and development issues. Such communities, in a sense, become “root bound.”

On the other hand, communities that effectively layout and adopt a broad-based community plan for their future growth and development move into the future in an intelligent, rational and systematic way to the benefit of all concerned. Those that don't, unfortunately just “keep on, keeping on.” They can easily wind up as islands of empty dreams with the “should have, could have blues.”

Building a long-range community vision with attendant supporting goals and strategies can be a difficult and challenging process. To be successful and gain broad-based support, community visioning activities must involve direct participation and input at all levels of the community citizenry.

When a community's residents and interested community “stakeholders” aren't directly involved in the community visioning process they may well become victims of the future, and their important inputs and ideas are often lost in the river of time.

The reality is, however, that community residents and other community stakeholders are generally very busy people. They can already be fully involved, as individuals and/or families, business owners and professionals in many activities essential to their daily lives and to the well-being of the community.

Those participating in a community visioning process rightfully expect, after months of hard work, that their recommendations, suggested strategies and action plans will be taken seriously by community decision makers and interested civic groups as benchmarks for building the community of tomorrow.

In the case of our community, Belton, Missouri, a community with a proud past and a bright future, we're doing things the correct way. We have built our vision for the future over several months of hard work in 2004, and we did it with professional guidance and broad-based community input and support.

To this end, every reasonable opportunity was provided, since the Vision process began in April 2004, for Belton residents and other interested stakeholders to have input into the visioning process to help make Belton a place where people want to live, work and raise a family.

It is important that appropriate credit be given to everyone who played a part in making Belton Vision 2004 a reality, but literally there are too many to list here. However, those who actively participated are listed in an appendix to this document.

Special credit must be given to current Mayor Bob Gregory and to previous Mayor Billie Pinkepank. Both are individuals of vision, committed to seeing that Belton citizenry are actively involved in planning the Belton of the future. Mayor Pinkepank originated the idea and Mayor Gregory and the Board of Aldermen (BOA) brought that idea to fruition. Our community owes a great deal to them for following through and making it happen. It's now up to all of us, as the citizens of Belton, to take our community forward to its rightful place in the future; that place being the best city in Cass County, Missouri.

The Initiating Committee and Vision 2004 Stakeholders are pleased to present this roadmap for the future to our BOA and to the citizens of Belton. We feel this document is an important tool, a good benchmark and a realistic guide for all levels of community operations, services and support.

The Vision 2004 Team is committed to carry on the visioning process, as necessary, from year to year, in order to make adjustments and enhancements to Key Performance Areas, in order to address future challenges and opportunities.

Karen Blankenship
Everett Loughridge

Vision 2004 Co-Chairpersons

Introduction

Someone once said that to accomplish great things, we must first dream, then visualize, then plan and then act! Several months ago, a group of citizens was convened by the City of Belton to lay the groundwork for a strategic planning project aimed at producing a community-wide vision for Belton.

The objective of this project was to engage community members representing diverse interests and viewpoints, to identify and define the challenges facing our city and to work together to develop meaningful solutions.

Details of this visioning process began unfolding in monthly meetings as citizens addressed matters vitally important to the growth and development of our community over the next 15-20 years. The stage has now been set. With the combined efforts of individuals throughout our community, the visioning process is completed and now we look ahead to the future implementation of these goals and ideas.

Throughout the process, our theme has been “Proud Past - - Bright Future.” “Proud Past” because we have been given a rich heritage from those who have gone before us. “Bright Future” as we commit to working together toward a common vision that will result in a promising and exciting future for Belton.

We must remember that a vision is only the first step towards building the path to reach a desired destination. As we embark on the implementation of our vision, it will take the help of the entire community working together. Alone we can do little, but together we can do much.

Joel Barker once wrote, “Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes time. But vision with action can change the world!” We look forward to the months ahead and welcome your input as we begin the implementation of these strategies! Our future depends upon you!

BELTON VISION STATEMENT

Belton is a city that is proud of its past but very focused on a vision for the future. Explosive growth in residential and business development provides opportunity to nurture a vision of the best of everything for a town of “friendly people.” Belton is a community of diversity that teaches high values to our children and remembers the contributions of our elders. We are a city that has earned the envy of adjoining communities by providing resources for each citizen’s fulfillment.

The Work of the Initiating Committee

With hopes running high for Belton's days ahead, the Mayor and city leadership started the ball rolling for a clear vision and specific plan for Belton's future. In early 2004 they identified several area citizens to form an Initiating Committee for Belton's Vision Team. The Initiating Committee included 11 persons, representing a variety of ages, walks of life and perspectives. It also involved members of the city staff.

Meeting monthly with the National Civic League's dynamic consultant, Derek Okubo, the team began the process of inviting an exciting vision for the future of our city. The committee selected Everett Loughridge and Karen Blankenship as its co-chairpersons. Under Karen and Everett's leadership, and with Derek's expert guidance, the committee tackled three primary goals: identifying a theme and a logo for Belton's Vision project, selecting and inviting a cross-section of citizens into the process and creating a kick-off event for the visioning process. The citizens' group would be known thereafter as "Stakeholders."

The Initiating Committee sought to create a theme and logo reflecting both the rich heritage of the community and the growth and development anticipated in the future. They selected a theme: "BELTON: Proud Past - - Bright Future." Using the existing city logo, they placed this image against the image of a rising sun, to reflect the twofold emphasis.

The Committee assembled a list of over 150 persons to be invited to the first Stakeholder gathering. The group sought as representative a cross-section as possible, seeking diversity in the following categories: age, gender, ethnicity, relational status, income level, employment, length of time in the area, residential region and vocation. The Committee members contacted everyone on the combined list, inviting them to a major kick-off event to be held at the Belton Community Center in Wallace Park.

The Initiating Committee experienced a great deal of excitement in anticipation of the project ahead, and the members felt great unity in their combined passion for the community and its future.

Belton Vision 2004 Initiating Committee Members:

***Karen Blankenship
Peggy Dryden
Perry Gough
Bob Gregory
Bob Hardin
Everett Loughridge***

***Carolyn Mills
Chris Pinion
Geoff Posegate
Melinda Spears
Jason Webb***

The Vision Process

In February 2004, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen (BOA) recognized the need to create a community-based task force of stakeholders to develop a comprehensive vision and plan for the Belton of tomorrow, 15-20 years into the future.

This project was initially named Community Vision 2004. The idea was to ask Belton residents and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive vision for our community and then formulate recommended strategies and action steps to achieve that vision.

The Mayor, BOA, and key city staff arranged for professional consulting with the National Civic League (NCL) based in Denver, Colorado. This group has assisted several communities in our area and others across the country, in developing long-range community vision plans.

Derek Okubo, a long-time, highly-respected NCL consultant, was assigned as our Vision 2004 Consultant. He worked closely with the Vision Initiating Committee, the two co-chairs, the Initiating Committee and the four Key Performance Area committees, to ensure that the vision process met its intended goals and objectives.

Mr. Okubo facilitated each of the 10 monthly meetings where stakeholders met and discussed issues, concerns and ideas that do/could impact Belton today, tomorrow and in the future. He effectively guided each stakeholder meeting with a focus on open, cooperative dialogue and group consensus.

Because of NCL and Mr. Okubo's timely support and guidance, consensus was reached on many important long-term planning strategies and initiatives. Mr. Okubo also effectively guided the co-chairs and the Initiating Committee between the monthly stakeholder meetings, to ensure that project goals, targets and timelines were met. NCL's advice and counsel, through Mr. Okubo's leadership, were instrumental in making Vision 2004 a reality.

The Vision 2004-2005 monthly stakeholder meeting agendas addressed the following action planning steps. All meetings were approximately 2.5 hours in length:

April 2004	Project orientation and vision process kick-off
May	Develop community vision and review civic index/demographics
June	Conduct community scan to determine pressing community issues
August	Select priority issues and determine Key Performance Areas (KPAs)
September	Discuss and evaluate KPA statements for stakeholder consensus
October	Refine KPA work and initiate work on related action plans
December	Finalize KPA strategies and action plans; write the Vision report draft
January 2005	Review final vision report draft and project wrap-up
March	Provide the final Vision report to the BOA

Appendices (distributed separately) provide further detail about the Community Vision 2004 process and the essential elements of Belton's citizen driven, broad-based, long-range community planning initiatives.

A group of stakeholders will meet each year to review and assess progress toward the Vision 2004 strategies and action plans. The results of these assessments will be distributed as a new appendix to the Vision 2004 document.

Annual reviews will ensure that the work of the Vision 2004 plan remains current to meet new challenges and opportunities as Belton moves forward to be the best place where people want to live, work and raise their children.



Proud Past - - Bright Future

Community Leadership
Key Performance Area

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A Belton Key Performance Area – COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

A group of citizens committed to the City of Belton make up the Community Leadership Key Performance Area (KPA). This group believes that in order for Belton to thrive and grow, our city needs to establish collective priorities for the community, to assure that every citizen has a voice in the community's development. Belton needs the establishment and maintenance of a strong leadership base in order to effectively implement citizen priorities. Without effective leadership, even the best designed plans will fail. In order to develop a plan that assures the community's success, the Community Leadership KPA spent a significant amount of time evaluating existing leadership structures. While effective leadership exists in many community groups, frequently there is no coordination between those groups. The Vision Team determined that in order for the community to be successful, citizen and community organizations must be well informed of the community's needs and priorities and collaborate with one another to meet those needs and priorities collectively. In focusing on the community's collective priorities the citizens will define and accomplish goals. In accomplishing these goals the community will evolve into a "first class" community admired by others.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP KPA VISION:

Belton will be a focused community with well informed citizens who are engaged in shaping the community's dynamic future. This future will unite its citizens in the development of a common dream. This dream will inspire open, honest communication that promotes a broad sense of community and mutual respect, regardless of age, ethnicity, religion or social status. This dream will not comply with nor recognize special interest groups, but rather it will drive a sense of cooperation or involvement from all stakeholders in the community. This involvement will provide a catalyst for positive change and a renewed sense of excitement within the community. We are proud of our past, we are focused on the present and we are committed to the prosperity of Belton's future.

Priority Issue – Communication Plan

The ability to communicate mission, priorities and strategies effectively provides the foundation of any successful organization. In communicating this type of information the stakeholders within organizations feel a part of the larger process and feel a willingness to support the efforts described by their leadership. This is an important step for the City of Belton. Recent history has seen an increasing amount of negative publicity within the city at a time when the community is growing and improving at a rapid pace. It is important to ensure that citizens within the community receive proper information to allow them to make informed and educated decisions. To be effective, the type of communication must be honest, ethical and frequently distributed in a variety of ways. The Vision Team recommends the community establish a communication plan, maintained by a public relations manager which includes the following tools:

A Website – We should establish an effective website not only for the benefit of existing citizens and businesses, but for potential ones as well. The website is a tool that would be a resource center, providing citizens with city information, civic organization information and other relevant topics. The website would promote Belton’s successes. A website could be updated more easily and frequently than other means of communication. The Vision Team recognizes that the website should not be the only means of communication, as many citizens do not have internet access.

A City Newsletter – The community newsletter is a key communication tool that should be developed and distributed by city staff, by way of inclusion in water bills, thus taking information to all citizens connected to the city’s water and sewer resources. While a good source of widely distributed information, the community newsletter lacks the advantage of quick distribution. (Four cycles of water bills would mean up to a four-week delay from the time the first newsletters are distributed until the time that the last newsletters are distributed.) Those developing the newsletter must plan the appropriate timing and content of information to be included in the water bills and make copies of the same available at strategic city locations.

Community Summits – While written communications are important, citizens need to put a human face to issues that arise within the community, giving citizens the ability to voice their interests and concerns face-to-face. The Vision Team recommends that the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen (BOA) should play a key role in this. The Mayor should hold open forum discussions with citizens on a quarterly basis and the Aldermen from each respective ward should hold a minimum of one meeting per quarter with their constituents. This will provide citizens with the ability to become better informed on community issues and successes. They will also gain a better understanding of the decision making process within the community.

A Community Calendar – This calendar would include listings of community activities hosted by Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs), the school district, churches, organized teams, etc. Belton Community Projects, Incorporated (BCPI), in cooperation with other NPOs, would maintain the calendar and would communicate it to the city staff prior to publication within the communication plan. The calendar will assist the community with planning initiative to reduce the amount of conflicting events within the city’s many different organizations.

A Community News Television Channel – The community news channel (channel 2) is an extremely valuable existing tool, with even greater potential. The current use of the channel is limited to a scrolling screen of community events, as well as tape delayed broadcasts of BOA meetings. The use of the channel should be expanded to cover additional topics of interest deemed appropriate by City staff, the Mayor, the BOA and citizens.

A Public Relations Service - The existing city staff cannot absorb the significant amount of work required to introduce the new tools in this communication plan. For the plan to be as effective as possible, the Vision Team recommends the hiring of a public relations service to oversee, coordinate and complete much of the process. The communication plan is a foundational activity that should be completed in the 2006 budget year. This would require a bid process and the appropriate allocation of funds.

Priority Issue - Staffing and Management Strategies

The City of Belton currently employs over 200 professionals within many different departments. These departments all maintain their own hiring, interviewing, orienting and training practices. The Vision Team feels it is important to ensure continuity of personnel management practices. The City of Belton will need additional staff and resources in order to grow and prosper. The Vision Team believes that the addition of a Human Relations Manager position would ensure a consistent human relations program. Such a program would allow the city to appropriately assess its needs and have a formal mechanism to plan appropriate growth. The Human Relations Manager position should be funded in the 2006 budget year. The role of this person should be expanded to include employee benefits administration after the completion of the first forecasting process. The Vision Team recommends that the city staff add a full time Human Relations Manager position to direct the staff management process. The process will include the following areas:

A Resource Forecasting Process - City staff must manage resources effectively to meet Belton's needs. To do so, the staff needs to be able to forecast not only additional staffing requirements, but all other anticipated resource needs, such as office space, training, vehicles, computers, tools, etc. The Vision Team recommends adding a full time alternative financing position whose skill set include grant writing and acquiring alternative funding sources. The Human Relations Manager, in cooperation with department heads and the City Administrator, would lead a formal process overseeing this forecasting.

An Employee Training Program - City staff must receive initial and continuing training in order to assure that citizens will receive appropriate levels of service. In cooperation with department heads and the City Administrator, the Human Relations Manager would develop this program as a necessary step for employee development. The Vision Team believes that city staff will provide a higher level of service to the citizens of Belton when they receive appropriate training. The city should allocate a portion of its annual budget (+/-3%) as a training budget, and the Human Relations Manager and the department heads should be encouraged to complete the necessary training.

Development of Service Level Agreements (SLA) - City staff should develop Service Level Agreements that would formally communicate to the citizens what the expectations for services should be. (For example - "Home inspections will be completed in "X" business hours.") The city should establish service levels for all city provided services provided by city staff and the SLA should be monitored and tracked.

Priority Issue - Leadership Development

The Belton community must not only recognize its current leaders, but must also develop leaders for the future in order to prosper in the long term. Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) should join with existing community leadership to sponsor a leadership development initiative. This program should be centered on providing innovative leadership concepts, skills and resources to citizens of any age. If such a program is provided, it would help motivate future leaders to stay in Belton and to contribute to community success. The leadership development program should include the following:

Classes - The leadership development program is centered on teaching effective leadership strategies to Belton's citizens. To ensure that people absorb and complete the necessary information, strategies should be presented to interested parties in a classroom format. The material can be provided by external agencies, but the training itself should happen within the Belton city limits. Belton Community Projects, Inc. (BCPI) in cooperation with other NPOs, would serve as the sponsoring organization for these classes, but would also depend on additional support from other NPOs.

A Community Scholarship Program - Though it is important to have leadership training within the community, citizens will find value also in relevant leadership training programs held outside the community. To promote this, the Vision Team recommends that the NPOs within the community work on a collaborative basis to establish a scholarship program to send youth and/or adult citizens to various leadership conferences.

Elected and Appointed Officials - The community's elected and appointed officials need proper training to effectively represent the citizenry. All elected and appointed city officials should be required by community mandate to participate in the orientation program offered after each new Board of Aldermen (BOA) election and to complete one additional leadership training class per year.

Summary:

The Vision Team participants are excited about the Vision process and our role in it. In order for the Vision process to be effective, all areas defined by each individual KPA must be implemented, and the stakeholders in the program should be informed of the progress of each. The Vision process will be successful when the citizens realize their role in the community's future and when the community leadership acknowledges that citizen expectations must drive the decision making process. We are proud of Belton's past, we are focused on the present, and we are committed to the prosperity of Belton's future.



Proud Past - - Bright Future

*Economic and Community
Development
Key Performance Area*

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A Belton Key Performance Area – ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A group of citizens committed to the economic and residential growth of Belton make up the Economic and Community Development Key Performance Area (KPA). In order for the goals of this KPA to succeed, city leaders, elected and appointed committee persons and Belton's citizens must all have a strong commitment to implementing each action step in a timely manner. The positive and straightforward nature of our citizens will guarantee a bright and progressive future for our community.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT KPA VISION:

Belton is a city that creates opportunities for diversified residential growth and successful business development. This attitude and environment will be maintained by providing a highly diversified commercial base that will result in employment that minimizes the impact of economic cycles. This will create a desirable atmosphere that attracts residential development conducive to a diversified population. Belton's economic climate will afford more opportunity for people to live, work and shop locally. It also will make our city a welcoming destination for those who live and work in outside communities.

Priority Issue - Development of a Strong Industrial, Professional and White-Collar Job Base

A Group to Focus on Incentives - The current process for gathering and distributing incentive information needs to become clearer and more complete. By combining members of all parties involved, the community can create a better-educated, more aggressive group to market incentives for development in the city. Rather than combining or eliminating existing groups, we recommend the establishment of a separate group for educational and marketing purposes only. The new group will need to focus on various issues, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Chapter 100 Bonds, Grants, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), tax abatements and special incentives in sales or property tax. The group could also include non-monetary incentives such as special employee training or hiring services. Funding could be sought from schools, county and state governments and corporate services.

A Program to Train and Inform all City Employees and Related Support Staff in order to Expand and Enhance Capabilities for Recruitment and Retention of Businesses - Many city employees have contact with the public on a regular basis. Proper education of employees about the available programs and benefits to businesses will ensure that all business prospects receive complete information on all resources available to them.

Developing Aggressive Strategies for Accelerated Annexation for Organized Future Growth in Areas Identified in a Comprehensive Timetable - The City of Belton has a comprehensive timetable that addresses issues of annexation, including the areas targeted for annexation and when they should be annexed. The public should receive notification and education regarding the reasons and benefits of the timetable. Aggressive strategies should be developed and communicated in the implementation of the timetable.

Because the city is limited by law as to the scope of their involvement in the promotion of annexation, Belton will need to hire a public relations firm to market and promote the advantages of annexation. The city limits of Belton need expansion so the tax revenue created by growth will not bypass our community and go to another governmental area.

The timetable and the division of the areas to be annexed should be re-examined to assure successful campaigns in the future.

Expansion of the Economic Development Team - With the visible growth taking place in our community, citizens realize that the Economic Development Team, made up of Belton Corporation for Economic Development (BCED), the City Administrator and the Planning and Zoning staff, has done a good job with the resources available. However, the team needs to expand its scope and abilities due to the aggressive economic development attempts of surrounding communities. The Vision Team recommends the following:

Promote Individual and Business Membership in BCED - We should establish a dues structure that will generate an additional funding source for expanded projects. In addition, we should visit other economic development organizations in the Kansas City metro area and establish future projects to generate other sources of revenue for the organization.

Create a Special Projects Fund - The Board of Aldermen (BOA) should create such a fund for BCED to administer, dedicated to funding expenses for industrial, residential and business recruitment and retention.

Practice Effective Networking - This effort will encourage continued and expanded coordination with national, state, county and metro Economic Development Corporations (EDC).

Hire Additional Support Staff - This will enhance the capabilities of BCED and the city's development team.

Priority Issue - Attracting Residential Development

Guidelines and Performance Requirements for All Boards and Commissions - The functions of local governments have changed dramatically over the last few years. As citizens become better educated, they expect more from their elected officials and their city services. Because of increased demand for city services, Belton should establish written guidelines and performance requirements for all boards, board members and appointed commissions. Each person should go through an educational and training process that is consistent with the growth and development vision of the City of Belton.

Consistent Communication with Developers and Builders - Data from builders and developers indicates that Belton needs to continue to improve the consistency of all correspondence and procedures with regard to persons involved in the development process. The Vision Team recommends the following:

The Development of a Job Packet for Commercial and/or Residential Development Projects - These packets should include a complete list of the contact persons and phone numbers for each step, a detailed list of all requirements within each step (to be signed off on by responsible city employee or builder/developer), all specific codes and ordinances identified and a complete inspection checklist to follow the job file.

Weekly Meetings with Developers and Contractors Continued and Expanded

Priority Issue - Retention of Discretionary Spending by Belton Citizens and the Attraction of Shoppers from Outside the City

A Cooperative Agreement for Business Advisory Services - The Belton Chamber of Commerce, the City of Belton and Belton Corporation for Economic Development (BCED) would combine to form this agreement to establish a program that provides business advisory services to new and existing businesses.

Business advisory services benefit local companies. Many business owners are unaware of the resources available through government and educational sources that positively impact their companies and their employees. As businesses succeed on a higher level, the local economy receives more money, generating revenue for the goods and services provided by the City of Belton.

Agreements need to be established with all the organizations that provide services to businesses, such as SCORE (Counselors to America's Small Business), Small Business Administration, Community Colleges and Belton High School. The Belton Chamber of Commerce would work with interested organizations to get the advisory programs underway.

Identification of Unfilled Business Opportunities - Through this effort, Belton would identify products and/or services which would enhance our community.

Leadership would conduct a series of community surveys to determine unfilled needs and desires of the community in the retail and service sectors. BCED would evaluate other communities for businesses/services/products not offered in Belton and would then actively recruit businesses to fill any void, based on the needs and wants determined.

Develop Future Residential Areas with a Small Town Atmosphere - Residential subdivisions are beginning to change in many areas of the country. Over the last 30 years, subdivisions with houses side-by-side and back-to-back have been the typical design. The sense of neighborhood connection disappeared due to commuting parents and organized events for children. Many developers now realize that communities with amenities and services close by and convenient to the homeowner generate greater profits and long-term stability for the community.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should work closely with the county to include this residential concept in its comprehensive plan. Future annexation areas should include parks, neighborhood gathering areas, walkways and bike trails in order to allow families to shop, work and relax in their own neighborhood.

Recruit Investors to support the Belton Vision Plan - Belton needs individuals and corporations willing to invest in Belton within the framework of the Vision Plan.

Summary:

In order to manage the accelerated growth the community has experienced over the past 10 years, Belton needs to recruit individuals and companies to share in the business opportunities a growing community offers. Belton still has a large number of undeveloped commercial acreage and a large potential for residential development in the proposed annexation areas. Efforts need to be made to establish business relationships with experienced developers and business owners in other parts of the country, in order to encourage them to work in the Belton community. This process should be started by BCED and the city development team as soon as possible.



Proud Past - - Bright Future

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A Belton Key Performance Area – PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The members of the Public Services and Infrastructure Key Performance Area (KPA) studied the services offered by the Belton Fire Department, the Police Department and the Department of Emergency Management, examining the long range goals of each. They compiled data focusing on Belton's five-year capital improvement plan. In addition, input was gathered from other participants in the Belton Vision 2004 Team about their hopes and dreams for services provided by the City of Belton.

The Vision Team applauds the city's headway in short-range planning and infrastructure development. The Vision Team recommends building on this to ensure a fair and equitable maintenance of city infrastructure and to develop a long-range plan and tracking mechanism to ensure improvement and adaptation as city priorities and emergency situations change.

Because of the large magnitude of services needed or currently offered by the City of Belton, the Vision Team determined that a new city committee was needed to garner both citizen input and city department input to prepare a long-range, 10-15 year maintenance and improvement plan for our city. The ability to track current projects and plan for future expansion of city services is a critical element to improving the infrastructure of Belton.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE KPA VISION:

Belton will deliver quality public and safety services and infrastructure for all citizens, property owners, and organizations, through a logical, comprehensive and fiscally sound approach. Emphasis will be on sustaining and expanding infrastructure, preserving historic sites, revitalizing neighborhoods and protecting the natural environment.

Priority Issue - Develop a 10-15 Year Public Services and Infrastructure Improvement Plan

Establish and Ordain a Community Services and Infrastructure Standards Committee (CSISC) - Formed under a city ordinance, with citizen representation, appointed by the Mayor with advice and consent of the Board of Aldermen (BOA). The CSISC would be made up of the following: two citizen representatives from each ward, the chairperson or a representative of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the president or a representative of the Park Board, the Assistant City Administrator and city department heads. The membership of the CSISC would select a citizen representative as their chairperson.

The CSISC will develop public service and infrastructure goals or benchmarks for the City of Belton by assessing citizen expectations through public hearings, surveys, focus groups, stakeholder gatherings, etc.

The CSISC will conduct a needs assessment procedure in order to meet public service infrastructure standards for the City of Belton.

Based on the determined standards of service and needs assessment, the CSISC will submit to the Board of Aldermen (BOA) a 10-15 year capital improvement plan for their review, adoption and implementation. The plan would include personnel and funding recommendations. It would also have a plan for the establishment and maintenance of a master database to track and prioritize projects.

The CSISC would annually evaluate progress toward meeting the public vision.

The CSISC will conduct annual performance reviews of the standards of service and needs assessment plan, which will be provided to the BOA.

The CSISC will also provide plan information to the general public.

Priority Issue - Research a Formalized and Coordinated Plan for City-wide Trails, Recreational Facilities and Green Space, as well as Research the Establishment of a Historical Site Designation Process and Policy

Develop Environmental Protection Processes - Develop processes and ordinances to enhance and protect the environment in the City of Belton.

Encourage Future Development and Revitalization – Establish collaborative plans between the City entities for future development and revitalization of open spaces, trails, recreational areas and environmental areas, in partnership with private industry and NPOs.

Summary:

The Vision Team feels that success in these priority areas will be measured by the designation of historical sites and landmarks, an increase in open spaces and trails, adoption of ordinances and appropriate plans and approval of a 10-15 year strategic plan which is made available to the general public on a semi-annual basis, resulting in addressing the needs of the City of Belton.



Proud Past - - Bright Future

*Community Image and
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A Belton Key Performance Area – COMMUNITY IMAGE AND BEAUTIFICATION

A group of citizens committed to the community image and beautification of Belton make up the Community Image and Beautification Key Performance Area (KPA). This group believes that successful communities and neighborhoods take special pride in the appearance of their neighborhoods and communities as a whole. How the various areas of our city looks, reflects how we feel about where we live. People need to see our civic pride in visible ways that are inviting, both to our present citizens and businesses and those we hope to attract. In thriving communities, civic policies and standards give concrete support to a positive and visible community image. Community events, signage and displays also will contribute to pride in our city. The Vision Team is committed to a City of Belton that is pleasing and welcoming both to the eye and to the heart.

COMMUNITY IMAGE AND BEAUTIFICATION KPA VISION:

Belton will have a proud, positive attitude and a pleasing appearance, with the cooperation of government, businesses, and residents.

Priority Issue - Neighborhood Task Forces (NTF)

Encourage those who live or work in a certain area to meet, organize and work together to improve the appearance of their area and the community as a whole. While focusing on their area, they would plan clean-up days, help residents in need and recognize those who promote a positive image. The city would provide support and organization to bring the task forces together to work on some issues such as a program to eliminate weeds in public areas.

Priority Issue - First Impressions of our Community

Establish specific gateway and town entry points to be signed, landscaped and maintained. Provide public workshops on landscaping and maintenance. Start an “Adopt a Triangle” program much like the MODOT “Adopt a Street” program to beautify and maintain Belton’s key “unused” areas. Encourage city officials to promote a positive community and neighborhood image. Seek Federal, State and Corporate grants to develop open areas into positive image setters.

Priority Issue - Litter and Trash Control

Through ongoing public education and support, encourage residents and businesses to deal with litter and trash on private property in order to establish a positive image and achieve the beautification goals of our community. Participate in the statewide “No More Trash” program.

Priority Issue - Code Enforcement Policies and Actions

Establish on-going programs to pro-actively inform the public about requirements for property appearance. Update, revise and modify standards to make them easier for the public to understand. Print a “Code Enforcement Log” in the local papers to inform the public what is being done and what is expected.

Priority Issue - Community Wide Cultural and Social Events

Encourage civic groups, local ethnic clubs and churches to establish and promote diverse ethnic and cultural events.

Priority Issue - Clear and Consistent Policies for Signage

Establish and enforce clear standards and expectations for permanent and temporary signs on private and public property.

Priority Issue - Flags and Banners

Establish and maintain procedures for seasonal decorations, flags and banners that promote special events, activities and areas. Research other communities’ programs, enlist volunteers, and determine public works assistance availability.

Summary:

The Vision Team believes that addressing these priority issues will enable our city’s self image and projected image to be as strong as possible. Our City’s positive, visible presentation will promote a strong inner spirit and pride in our citizens, and vice versa.

The Next Step:

The work of the Vision 2004 team began in April 2004 and was completed in January 2005. The final Vision 2004 document will be presented to the Mayor, Board of Aldermen (BOA), committees, boards, key city staff and community in March/April 2005. The intent is to share the plan's strategies and recommended action steps to those who can make the vision become a reality.

In March/April 2005 the Vision Plan Implementing Committee will begin distributing the Plan to the community as a whole. The Implementing Committee's role is to carry out important monitoring and follow-up actions that are defined within the Vision Plan. The committee will involve individuals from the Vision 2004 Initiating Committee, the participating stakeholders, Not-for-Profit Organizations (NPO) and other individuals in the community (not already involved in the Vision 2004 process) who have a real interest in our community's success. The implementation process is intended to ensure that the strategies, action steps and recommendations in the Vision Plan are not lost in time. Further, that the plan is a living document and that it is used as a benchmark and/or roadmap when officials, city staff and community leaders make important decisions that impact our community today and into the future. The goal of the Implementing Committee will be to assure that the core principles of the Vision Team are adopted, with the primary driver for decision making being the question "Is the decision good for the community; and for the children who will not only be the future of Belton but the leaders of tomorrow."

Review Process:

In November/December time-frame each year, the stakeholders who were involved in the Vision 2004 process along with additional interested community stakeholders will gather for an annual review of the goals, strategies and actions taken in support of the Vision Plan. It is recognized that each year brings new opportunities and challenges, which require yearly reviews of the Vision Plan. The review process will assure that the community recognizes the accomplishments of the vision process and that the Vision Plan direction remains consistent with the community's needs. Based on the results of the annual reviews, recommendations will be made to the Mayor and BOA for appropriate refinements and adjustments that will be required due to pressing issues, changing strategies and/or necessary timeline updates. It is then up to the city leadership (Mayor, Boards and key city staff) to align these recommendations with the annual budgeting, 5-year planning and strategic planning processes.

The Long Term Success:

In order for the Vision Plan and ultimately the City of Belton to be successful, it is important that the entire community adopt the Vision Plan. The action steps defined within the Vision Plan will require participation from the cornerstones of the community; Elected Officials, City Staff, Businesses, NPOs and Citizens. If these areas are aligned and working together toward common goals, Belton will continue to have a "Proud Past - - Bright Future."

Special thanks to the following Belton groups and businesses who have offered valuable support to the Visioning Process:

Bank of Belton
Bel-Ray Lions Club
Belton Chamber of Commerce
Belton Corporation for Economic Development
Belton Parks and Recreation
Belton School District
Big Lots!
Burger King
City of Belton Elected Officials and Staff
Crest Apple Market
Godfather's Pizza
Hy-Vee
Las Palmas Mexican Restaurant
Little Caesar's Pizza
McDonald's
Mr. Goodcent's Subs
Pizza Shoppe
Price Chopper
Prime Label, Inc.
Sonic
Subway
Tara's Café & Malt Shop
The Star-Herald
QuikTrip
\$1 Shop

Glossary

BCED	Belton Corporation for Economic Development
BCPI	Belton Community Projects, Inc.
CDBG	Community Development Block Grants
EDC	Economic Development Corporations
SCORE	Counselors to America's Small Business
TIF	Tax Increment Financing
KPA	Key Performance Area
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
SLA	Service Level Agreement
BOA	Board of Aldermen
NCL	National Civic League
CSISC	Community Services and Infrastructure Standards Committee