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Belton, Missouri's Carolyn Yatsook Named 2021 Economic Developer of the Year
Recognition was announced at MEDC's June annual conference

June 22, 2021 – BELTON, Mo. – On Wednesday, June 16, 2021, the Missouri Economic Development Council announced Carolyn Yatsook, city of Belton economic development director, as its 2021 Economic Developer of the Year, recognizing the substantial contributions she has made in the city of Belton and the region. Founded in 1979, MEDC is the statewide association advocating for economic growth in Missouri.

In introducing the recognition, Lisa Franklin, lead economic development manager with Evergy referred to Yatsook when stating, "She is a trusted partner who has inspired me and others with her optimism, hard work and tenacity to stay the course to carry out the economic development strategy she put in place seven years ago to make her city (Belton) more competitive."

In its 2020 annual report, Belton Economic Development reported significant accomplishments, the result of the city's long-term strategic initiative to diversify its economy. These include the 2021 completion of NorthPoint Development's 2 million-square-foot Southview Commerce Center (SVCC) with the national brands Progress Rail, A Caterpillar Company; BoxyCharm and Chewy.com bringing more than 2,000 jobs as well as an explosion of housing choices such as – single family homes, townhomes, apartments and villas – to meet the needs of young adults, families and seniors.

Among the initiatives accomplished under Yatsook's leadership were a community competitive assessment, an economic development strategic plan, a community housing study, economic development 101 sessions for elected officials, a branding and marketing strategy, the master plan of the 115-acre Markey Business Park, redevelopment of a long-abandoned city golf course into the thriving SVCC, the North Scott Corridor Plan – which also just received a grant award of almost \$2 million in road/complete streets improvements -- the Chapter 353 Old Town Belton Redevelopment Plan and numerous workforce initiatives.

Yatsook, who joined the city of Belton in 2007, became its economic development director in 2017.

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