

CITY OF BELTON, MISSOURI



Downtown Design Guidelines

Old Town Belton Overlay District

Builders Development Corporation

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The Old Town Belton Design Guidelines were developed through a community-based process. The city staff and consultants met with leaders and members of Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc. to capture the community's vision for its historic heart. The following persons have participated in the process:

Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc.:

Bobby Davidson- Ex Officio- City Council Member

Jay Leipzig- Ex- Officio- City Staff Representative

Kay Stanbarger- Ex-Officio- Chamber of Commerce Member

Dave Clark

Jeff Fletcher

Art Ruiz

David Skwarlo

Richard Smith

Sally Smith

Charles Starkey

Sheila Sullivan

Dr. Nick Weddle

Ann Keeton- Administrative Support

City Staff :

Jay Leipzig, Director of Community Development & Planning

Robert Cooper, City Planner

Consultant :

Builders Development Corporation, Michael Snodgrass, Executive Director

Builders Development Corporation, Erik Berg, Urban Planner

Executive Summary

Historic and active downtown areas are the heart of any great city, and the citizens and city of Belton have created design guidelines for their downtown district that will breathe new life into the area. The area was formally established in Chapter 12 of the city's Unified Development Code as the Old Town Belton Overlay District (OTB), and one of the primary goals of the guidelines is to define and map the boundaries of the district. The guidelines shall also reinforce all existing city codes, especially the sign codes; amortize all traditionally "grandfathered" non-conforming land uses in the district; and encourage rehabilitation of existing buildings along Main Street, redevelopment of the BG&KC Rail Yard as a public amenity, and new mixed use construction between the Rail Yard and Highway 58 to expand downtown. These guidelines are designed to fit with and reinforce the city's Unified Development Code, Comprehensive Master Plan, and City Trails Plan.

The design guidelines divide the OTB into three distinct areas - the Main Street Core, the Rail Yard, and the Downtown Expansion area. In the first area, the Main Street Core, the intent of the design guidelines is to encourage rehabilitation of existing buildings, and a uniform streetscape in regards to architectural style and materials, signage, awnings, public amenities, and parking. Buildings of local, state, and national historic significance shall be marked with bronze placards on the Main Street **façade**. The Main Street Core Area shall be the first in the OTB to feature free-standing kiosks with a map of the District and a key with business locations. Rooftop decks are encouraged for Main Street buildings, as are courtyards on the Loop Road side of buildings. Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc. shall work with the city to establish a Business Improvement District, one of whose chief goals shall be the establishment of a properly-enclosed common waste disposal area for each block of businesses; these common waste disposal areas shall be located on the Loop Road side of buildings for businesses on the northeast side of Main St. If and where necessary, new construction along Main Street shall be of similar scale, mass, and style as surrounding buildings. The vacant lot on the southwest side of Main Street between Walnut and Chestnut Streets shall also be transformed into a pocket park and entertainment venue for the city. These measures shall strengthen and preserve the historic character of Main Street.

The Belton, Grandview, & Kansas City (BG&KC) Railroad Yard is the second key area of the Old Town Belton District, and shall be redeveloped as a recreation destination centered on the historic railroad and a new hub for cycling trails that shall span the city. The first goal for the rail yard is to build the BG&KC a new home - a proper train station featuring city-sponsored public restrooms, historic railroad exhibits, and amenities for rail passengers. This station may follow the design of Belton's 1955 Frisco Railroad Station, or another traditional station design. The locomotives and train cars are the main attraction of the BG&KC, and the city and Downtown Belton Main Street shall partner with BG&KC to accelerate the restoration and preservation of these vehicles; proper trails, benches, lighting and placards shall be built to each stationary car as well. Civil engineers shall evaluate other historic railroad structures in the yard to determine if they can be saved; if so, they shall be rehabilitated to facilitate both commercial/retail and industrial uses. The Yard itself shall be re-landscaped to transform it into more of a park-like atmosphere. The yard shall also become the hub of the city's envisioned cycling and pedestrian trails system, centered on a new Belton Cycling Station to be built near the intersection of Commercial and Ella Streets. This facility shall feature changing facilities for cyclists, a repair

shop, a small concession area, and a large bicycle stall facility. Other cycle- and pedestrian-oriented development shall be encouraged along the trail through the yard, and the same kiosk maps found on Main Street shall be constructed along the trail to show the way to downtown businesses.

The Downtown Expansion area makes up the third section of the OTB District, and the vital primary goal of this area will be to increase the visibility and viability of the District through redevelopment. One of the primary challenges for District business owners is a lack of visibility along the city's primary traffic arteries; downtown can be hard to find due to insufficient signage and a lack of visual clues passing motorists can use to know they are entering the downtown area. The key to the Downtown Expansion area will be the selection of streets as Gateway Corridors between Main Street and Missouri State Highway 58, and the redevelopment of those corridors with traditional mixed-use design and transit-oriented development. This style of development, to be carried out over the long term, will serve as a visual reference for motorists leading them to downtown. Walnut, Chestnut, and Cherry Streets are leading candidates to become Gateway Corridors, and Ella may also be considered. Well-designed signage shall be mounted near the intersection of Gateway Corridors and Highway 58, pointing the way to Main Street and listing key attractions. New construction along gateway corridors shall use architecture and materials compatible with those along Main Street, and shall be constructed with similar streetscaping. Parking along Gateway Corridors shall be parallel along the corridor itself, with off-street parking constructed at the center of blocks and accessed by alleyways. New structures shall be 2-3 stories in height (4th stories shall be optional so long as they are set back from the **façade**), and feature commercial/retail uses at pedestrian level and office or residential uses on upper floors. The commercial corridor along Highway 58 shall also be redeveloped with Transit-Oriented Development to increase the density and intensity of land use in the OTB District.

Implementation of these guidelines shall take the partnership and cooperative efforts of the City, the BG&KC Railroad, Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc., and the citizens of Belton. The OTB District shall form a Design Review Board, charged with reviewing all rehabilitation efforts and new proposals in the district for conformance with guidelines and with the UDC. This Design Review Board shall make non-binding recommendations to project applicants, and shall issue Certificates of Appropriateness for approved proposals that project applicants may present to the City Plan Commission when up for official city review. Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc. shall also consider the formation of a Business Improvement District - a self-taxing district charged with carrying out new projects and maintenance for the area according to the goals outlined in these guidelines. Funding for rehabilitation of individual historic properties may be obtained by nomination and selection to state and national historic registers. Redevelopment incentives may also be considered through the creation of a Chapter 353 Property Tax Abatement program in the OTB District, a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, or a Transportation Development District (TDD).

Introduction: The Old Town Belton Overlay District & Design Guidelines

Belton Historic Background

Though today it is one of the fastest growing suburbs in the Kansas City metropolitan area, the City of Belton has strong small town roots and a long history as a railroad community. It was incorporated in 1872 on 80 acres of land south of the city of Kansas City by two civil war veterans, George Scott and William Colbern, and was named after a veteran who had served with Scott. It began as a railroad town, with the street grid laid out parallel to a main rail line between Southwest Missouri and fast-growing Kansas City. According to an official 1895 plat of the town, Belton developed a rail yard to service several railroads, and the town's commercial district developed parallel to the tracks one block southwest along Main Street. According to accounts in the city's Centennial book, early buildings along Main were wood framed with brick facades, and many burned to the ground in an 1888 fire that ravaged the corridor. These buildings were replaced by more timber-framed brick commercial buildings, and many of these old and historic buildings remain: The Old City Hall, the original Bank of Belton Building (324 Main, finished 1884), the former Dryden's Drug Building (401 Main, now home to Tara's Restaurant), the Star-Herald Newspaper Building, and the old Baptist Church of Belton all anchor Main Street.

After the turn of the 20th Century, the federal government set to work building and paving the nation's roads, and Belton's Main Street became part of US Highway 71; a fast-changing relationship that would have a lasting impact on the future of what became known as Old Town Belton. As automobiles supplanted trains for passenger travel, the volume of traffic increased exponentially along downtown streets. The Main Street corridor was bypassed several times, eventually joining Missouri State Highway 58 on a new alignment along the northern edge of Old Town Belton. This alignment better facilitated traffic movement, but also served to isolate Old Town Belton, especially the Main Street commercial district, from the rest of the city.

The creation of Design Guidelines for the Old Town Belton is the latest of several measures the city has taken to revive its ailing heart. The city has already installed signage marking the way to Old Town Belton along Cedar St. (State Highway Y) and along South Scott Avenue, however there remains no signage along Highway 58. In 1998 Belton implemented a Main Street Improvements program that installed new curbs, gutters, and sidewalks; better sewerage and drainage; angled parking along Main Street, and made Main Street one way between Cedar St. and Ella St. These improvements also extended to Loop Drive, which carries two-way traffic along the rear of businesses located on the northeast side of Main St., and provides additional parking. In 2007 the city hired an engineering consultant to conduct surface inspections of buildings along Main Street; the purpose was to determine the overall condition of the buildings, and to see if any structures posed a public hazard. Most of the city's oldest buildings were found to be good condition, with only two structures in immediate need of repair. The city's new Unified Development Code, as an ordinance, officially designated Old Town Belton as an Overlay District with distinct standards and regulations for rehabilitation of existing buildings and for new construction. Local business owners and concerned citizens have partnered with the city in working to save downtown by forming Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc., an organization that is working with the Missouri Main Street Coalition to raise the profile and improve the conditions of the downtown area. The design guidelines have been created in cooperation with

Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc., the City of Belton, and private consultants to interpret and enhance the Unified Development Code as it applies to development and redevelopment in the downtown area.

Purposes of Design Guidelines

Defining Design Guidelines

Cities utilize a variety of tools to guide and direct land use decisions, including comprehensive plans, unified development codes, zoning, and design guidelines; for Belton, design guidelines will be another tool available to strengthen and enhance Old Town Belton. Design guidelines are supporting materials to help interpret legal ordinances, such as Belton's new Unified Development Code. According to the National Parks Service, they are to be "helpful, interpretive, explanatory recommendations" that assist "commissions, boards, and applicants" in planning new development and guiding existing development. Design guidelines cannot serve as the same legal purpose as an ordinance, limit or regulate where growth takes place, or control the use of interior space within a building; nor can it guarantee high quality new construction, or that new construction will be compatible with a surrounding historic area.

The guidelines are not ordinances, meaning that by themselves guidelines do not carry the force of law, but are created to augment districts created by ordinance. Districts have design committees to review rehabilitation and new construction, and these committees use design guidelines as a basis for making fair decisions, and to maintain consistency in the Design Review process. The use of design guidelines enhances property values by helping to preserve the aesthetic of a district, and by encouraging high quality design in new construction. Design guidelines are an incentive for investment because they provide property owners and developers clear guides to what type of development the community wants, and by helping to stabilize property values. Finally, design guidelines are a tool for education about the community.

Fitting with Existing Documents

To effectively guide land use decisions within the Old Town Belton District, design guidelines should fit within an existing framework of policy documents by the City of Belton; most importantly for these Design Guidelines is the city's new Unified Development Code (UDC). The UDC was implemented as city ordinance in 2010 to govern land use decisions, with Chapter 12 setting up the Old Town Belton Overlay District (OTB). These design guidelines have been created to expound upon and enhance the OTB in terms of architecture, aesthetics, public amenities, and other measures. The measures outlined in these guidelines are designed to comply fully with the standards specified in the Unified Development Code for the OTB, and to clarify the aesthetic character of the OTB that the code's regulations are written to foster.

The Downtown Design Guidelines are also written to fit with the citywide Trails Master Plan. This Master Plan envisions downtown Belton as a hub for pedestrian and cycling trails that will span the city. Implemented in 2009, the Master Plan features trails from Cleveland Lake and a redesigned Memorial Park passing through the downtown area along the BG&KC Railroad Yard.

The design guidelines are also written to comply with the city's current zoning for the Old Town Belton Overlay District, while recommending minor changes within the downtown area to further its revitalization. Presently the City of Belton Zoning Map shows most of the Main Street corridor zoned as C-1 Neighborhood Commercial, bordered to the north by C-2 General Commercial and R-2 Two-Family Residential to the north, and to the south by R-1 Single Family and R-2 Two-Family Residential. Generally these design guidelines comply with current zoning, while allowing for mixed use development within the OTB District. Since zoning and policies outlined for the OTB District in the Unified Development Code take precedence over all other policies, mixed use zoning and development will be permitted throughout the District where present zoning is C-1 or C-2.

Primary Vision & Goals

Vision:

Belton Downtown Design Guidelines will strengthen the historic character of the city center while encouraging economic and social vitality for the area.

Goal 1: To interpret and augment Chapter 12 Section 2 of the UDC related to the Old Town Belton Overlay District.

Objective 1: The Downtown Design Guidelines will define and map the boundaries of the Old Town Belton (OTB) Overlay District.

Goal 2: To guide future development and redevelopment in the Old Town Belton (OTB) Overlay District.

Objective 1: The Guidelines shall reinforce all existing city codes, especially the sign codes.

Objective 2: The Guidelines shall amortize all incompatible land uses "grandfathered in" per city tradition rather than actual city code.

Objective 3: The Guidelines shall encourage rehabilitation of existing buildings along Main Street, redevelopment of the BG&KC Rail Yard as a public amenity, and new mixed use construction between the Rail Yard and Highway 58 to expand downtown.

Defining the Old Town Belton District

The Old Town Belton District, as originally described in Chapter 12 Section 2 of the UDC, appears focused primarily on the Main Street commercial strip; however, in order to fully revive the city center and then fully define its boundaries, it is important to understand the purposes of the District. The Old Town Belton District (OTB), as originally stated in the UDC, is to develop a distinct pedestrian-friendly environment in the city center. The OTB District, centered on the City Hall Complex along Main Street, would feature pedestrian-centered amenities and a scale and style of building in harmony with the historic structures along the city's Main Street. Vehicle parking would be accommodated to make the least impact on the pedestrian experience, and noxious land uses - primarily auto and storage related - would be prohibited. The built environment, including the style and scale of structures, should also be designed to provide a

smooth transition between commercial and residential areas. The Belton City Zoning Map extends C-1 Neighborhood Commercial zoning along the length of the Smokey Hill Rail Road line and Commercial Street between East Avenue and South Scott Avenue; along the Main Street corridor between Loop Road and South Scott Ave.; and along Second St. from Ella Ave. to South Scott Ave. A triangular-shaped property is also zoned C-1 along Cherry St. from State Highway 58 to Commercial St. This C-1 zoning corresponds roughly to the OTB Overlay District, however the actual boundaries of the district will be expanded beyond downtown properties zoned C-1.

In order to accomplish the purposes of the OTB Overlay District - to develop an identifiable city center - it is important to define the boundaries of the district to include commercial areas along State Highway 58. One of the primary challenges facing revitalization efforts along the Main Street corridor is its lack of visibility along major transportation arteries; business owners have reported patrons often comment that they have a hard time finding downtown. By defining the OTB District to include links between Main Street and Highway 58, these design guidelines and the standards of Chapter 12 of the UDC will be used to redevelop the area in an urbane, pedestrian-friendly scale and provide citizens clear and visible gateways to their downtown.

The boundaries of the Old Town Belton Overlay District shall include the entirety of the historic Main Street commercial strip, as well as commercial areas overlapping the Main Street and State Highway 58/E. North Ave corridors; the boundaries shall be defined as follows. On the north, the boundary shall be established as all properties within one block north of State Highway 58/E. North Ave from State Highway Y to the intersection of W. North Ave. and North Scott Avenue. On the east, the boundary shall include all properties along Ella St. from State Highway 58/E. North Ave. to Commercial St.; then along Commercial St. from Ella St. to State Highway Y; and finally along State Highway Y from Commercial St. to Main St. On the south, the boundary shall include all properties along the south side of Main St. from State Highway Y to Hackberry Street; along the west side of Hackberry St. from Main St. to 2nd St.; and all properties on the north side of 2nd St. from Hackberry St. to South Scott Ave. On the west, the boundary shall be all properties on the east side of South Scott Avenue from 2nd St. to the intersection of North Scott Ave. and W. North Ave. This boundary is illustrated at right.



Figure 1: Boundaries - Old Town Belton Overlay District

Main Street Core Area Design Guidelines

- with brick, natural stone with natural stone, stucco with stucco, wood shingle with wood shingle.
- Existing Loop Road facades should be maintained, repaired, or rehabilitated consistent with the building's historic character, and consistent - though not necessarily duplicative - with the building's **Main Street façade**.
- In cases where original building facades have been covered by newer materials - ie stucco or metal siding - building owners are encouraged to restore facades to their original appearance.
- Roof Lines
 - Roof lines along Main Street should be consistent with simple horizontal planes and rectangular building forms. Flat roofs should be screened by parapet walls extending **from the vertical façade**.
- Exterior Walls
 - Where visible, exterior walls other than the Main Street and Loop Road facades may be sealed or painted for weather protection, or should incorporate decorative murals as a public amenity.

Objective 2: New Construction



Figure 4: Appropriate New Construction - Main St.

While most properties along Main Street have been developed, all new construction should be in a manner consistent with the scale, massing, and character of the Main Street Corridor. New buildings should incorporate the following elements:

- Density and Mixed Uses
 - New buildings should be designed and constructed to increase urban density and enhance the pedestrian environment, while maintaining consistency with its environs.
 - Buildings should be 2-3 stories in height, with floor-to-floor heights consistent with older multistory buildings in the OTB District.
 - New buildings should feature ground floor commercial space with residential space on upper floors, and be built to the edge of the sidewalk, consistent with neighboring building frontages.
- Ground-Level Pedestrian Oriented Activity
 - Commercial frontages along Main Street should include recessed entryways and display windows. Restaurants and **café's** are encouraged to install opening windows and outdoor seating areas for patrons along Main Street.

- Commercial frontages along Loop Road should feature secondary entrances to buildings, and should incorporate outdoor seating areas, courtyards, and/or landscaping.

- **Façade Materials**

- New building facades along Main Street should be constructed of materials and in architectural styles compatible with those of surrounding buildings. Brick, natural stone, and stucco are encouraged for use as building materials.
- Existing Loop Road facades should be consistent with - though not necessarily duplicative of - the building's Main Street **façade**. Brick, stone, and stucco are encouraged for use as building materials.



Figure 5: Stone, Brick, Stucco, or Wood are appropriate Main Street building materials.

- **Roof Lines**

- Roof lines along Main Street should be consistent with simple horizontal planes and rectangular building forms. Flat roofs should be screened by parapet walls extending from the vertical façade.

Objective 3: Enclosure & Screening Requirements

For existing buildings and new construction, all mechanical systems should be integrated into the design of the building and/or screened from public view using any and all means feasible. This includes transformers, backflow prevention and anti-siphon valves, and HVAC units. All other mechanical equipment must be located on the Loop Road side of the building or on the roof and screened from public view with parapet walls, landscaping, etc. Loading and service areas should be located out of public view wherever feasible; where not possible, loading and service areas should be integrated into the Loop Road face of buildings. All dumpsters and loading docks shall be located on the Loop Road side of buildings, and shall also include proper screening and enclosures. This is in keeping with Chapter 22 of the UDC.

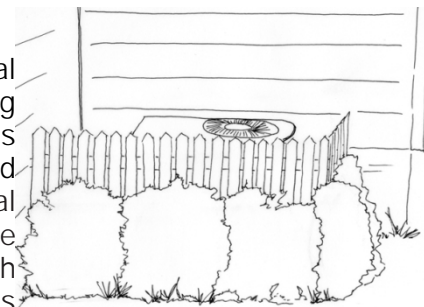


Figure 6: Appropriate screening along Loop Road

Waste receptacles must be located in alleyways or in enclosed and screened areas where visible from public streets. For buildings with secondary frontages along Loop Road, waste receptacles must be located in screened and enclosed dumpster corrals. Property owners on Loop Road are encouraged to form a Business Improvement District to fund the construction of one central enclosed dumpster corral per block; this will help defray the cost of construction of the screened and enclosed dumpster corrals, and free up more parking spaces currently used for dumpsters along Loop Road.

Goal: Pocket Parks , Courtyards , and Decks

Pocket Parks, Courtyards, and Decks are important elements of downtown areas, serving as public and semi-public amenities where members of the community can gather and engage in recreational activities. The City of Belton currently has a unique opportunity to create a pocket park along Main Street on a vacant lot adjacent to the original Bank of Belton Building, and should use the following guidelines to redevelop the space, and as general guidelines for any

and all future pocket parks in the Old Town Belton District:

- Retaining Wall - North Edge of Property
 - Retaining walls should be constructed to the



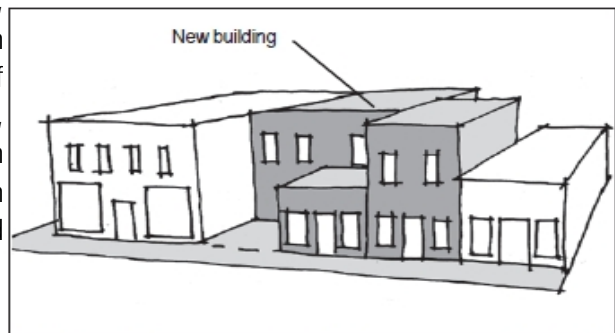
edge of the sidewalk along the frontage of the lot, with a wide entrance in the center. This wall will maintain the visual continuity of the building facades along Main Street, while separating the lot as a unique space.

- Building Walls
 - The walls of adjacent buildings shall be cleaned and repaired, and either painted in a neutral color or covered with a mural of civic interest. At least one wall should include blank space for use as a backdrop for city-sponsored outdoor entertainment events, such as summer movies in the park or musical concerts.
- Screening Wall - South Edge of Property
 - A screening wall, at least 6 feet in height, should be constructed to the edge of the alleyway on the southwestern edge of the lot. This will screen the alley from public view and provide a logical terminus for the park. The wall should feature an example of public art, such as a sculpture or fountain. The wall should include an open doorway or gateway to allow rear parking and access for official personnel during entertainment events.

Figure 7: Proposed Site - Belton Downtown Pocket Park

Courtyards, like pocket parks, should be designed as public and/or semi-public outdoor spaces where patrons can enjoy the street life and ambiance of Old Town Belton. The following guidelines shall apply to courtyards:

- When added to Existing Buildings, courtyards should be constructed as an extension of the Loop Road **façade** of buildings. Retaining walls of brick, stone, or wood should be constructed, 4 feet in height, to the edge of the sidewalk, with one primary gateway into the courtyard from the street.



A building with a courtyard in front is appropriate, if 75% of the building wall is maintained.

- New Buildings may be designed with courtyards along either the Main Street or Loop Road. When constructed as part of the Main Street **façade**, no more than 25% of the **façade** of the building may be set back **Figure 8: New Building with appropriate front courtyard.** from the sidewalk for use as a courtyard.

All courtyards constructed along Main Street must feature a retaining wall built to the edge of the sidewalk and built of brick, stone, or stucco.

Decks may be constructed on ground floors as part of a courtyard on the Loop Road side of buildings, and upper story decks and rooftop patios may also be added to buildings. The following guidelines shall apply to decks:

- Existing decks that are part of the Main Street **façade** of existing buildings and are not load-bearing may remain in place.
- For Existing Buildings, ground floor and upper story decks may be constructed of sealed wood on the Loop Road **façade** of buildings. **Ground floor decks must be constructed as part of a courtyard.** Upper story decks must be appropriately scaled and should not obscure signage marking commercial uses of surrounding buildings.
- For New Buildings, ground floor decks must be constructed as part of a courtyard on the **Loop Road façade of buildings.** **Upper story decks may be built as part of the Loop Road façade, or may be built as balconies on the Main Street side as long as the façade is recessed to accommodate the balcony; balconies may not overhang public sidewalks, and must be in line with the building’s first floor façade and with the facades of neighboring buildings.**
- Roof decks may be constructed on both existing and new buildings, and should include proper safety railings and structures to provide sun protection. Shade structures should be constructed of wood or perforated metal, but must be recessed from the Main Street **façade to minimize visibility and shall not be fully enclosed.**

Goal: Signage, Lighting, & Awnings

Signage, lighting, and awnings are important elements of central commercial districts, serving both practical commercial purposes as well as enhancing the aesthetic qualities of the area. Signs must be of appropriate scale for the district, and should be constructed of high quality materials. The following guidelines shall apply for building-mounted signage:

- Signage shall be constructed of high-quality materials, especially wood or aluminum
- Signage shall be mounted above primary building entrances. Signage may be mounted above or below awnings where present, but should be mounted below the second story **where applicable. Signage should be mounted perpendicular to the façade of the building, so as to be readable from the street in both directions, but may also be parallel to the façade and just above the entrance in the absence of awnings.**
- Signage should be properly backlit, or should have proper internal lighting where applicable, so as to be visible and readable from the street during evening hours.
- Buildings deemed to have historic significance shall feature exterior placards of **burnished bronze, mounted on the Main Street façade adjacent to the primary entrance.**
- All signage shall comply with the Design Standards mandated in Chapter 18 of the UDC.

Signage shall also be constructed along Main Street in the form of unmanned kiosks with a map of downtown businesses. The following guidelines shall apply for these kiosks:

- Signage shall be designed with maps of downtown illustrated at eye level with most pedestrians. This map shall identify businesses downtown, listing each business name and location below the map.
- Signage shall be constructed of wood or metal, have at least 2 sides, and shall be designed to aesthetically fit with the historic character of the surrounding environment.
- Signage shall be positioned near major intersections throughout the Old Town Belton District, and shall be positioned to fit within the existing pedestrian environment.

All exterior lighting for commercial and residential buildings shall comply with UDC, and should be used to highlight and accentuate the architectural features of each structure, as well as the downtown area. The following guidelines shall apply for exterior commercial/residential lighting:

- All exterior signage for commercial first floor businesses shall include lighting.
- All entrances to buildings and courtyard areas shall include proper lighting for safety and convenience.
- Exterior lighting should be integrated into the building's architectural style, and should focus on the building's most notable aesthetic elements.
- **Façade lighting should be soft enough to prevent excessive glare, and should be energy efficient.**
- Business and building owners are encouraged to use exterior building lighting innovatively.

Awnings, as well as canopies and trellises, provide shade and comfort to pedestrians in Old Town Belton, and can enhance the aesthetic character of the District. The following guidelines shall apply to the construction and use of awnings, canopies, and trellises:

- Awnings and canopies should be constructed of canvas with a metal frame. Vinyl and metal canopies, especially those constructed of corrugated steel, are inappropriate.
- Existing buildings should feature awnings over all display windows, where applicable and aesthetically advantageous, along their Main Street frontage.
- **New buildings should be designed to include awnings over all exterior façade windows along their Main Street frontage.**
- Awnings and building signage should be designed and installed to complement each other.
- Awnings, canopies, and trellises may be installed in all courtyard areas, both along Main Street and along Loop Road. These features must be designed to fit with and complement the aesthetics of the building, and must not obstruct visibility or access.

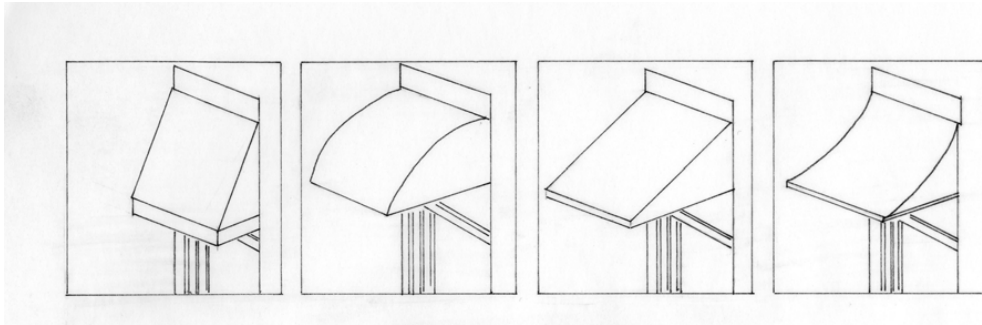


Figure 9: Possible Awning Designs

Goal: Streetscape

The goals and purposes of the Old Town Belton District, as stated in Chapter 12 of the UDC, are to enhance the downtown area as an attractive, centrally-located amenity, with particular care given to the pedestrian environment. The City of Belton has already taken positive past steps to improve the sidewalks, lighting, and parking scheme of Main Street, and it is important to build upon these steps with the following design guidelines for the Main Street Corridor streetscape.

Objective 1: Sidewalks

Sidewalks shall in general be well-maintained and free of clutter for the use and benefit of pedestrians downtown. Corners and pedestrian crossings shall be clearly marked, as shall be the sidewalk itself for ease of use by citizens of all ages. All streetscape elements, including lighting, trees, public seating, bicycle parking racks, and café seating areas shall not obstruct the sidewalk from pedestrian use.



Objective 2: Street Lighting

The city shall continue to use the present street lighting scheme first enacted with the 1998 Main Street improvements. All street lights shall be of the same design as the present, classically-styled lamps.

Objective 3: Street Trees

The Public Works Department, in partnership with Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc., shall embark on a program of adding street trees along Main Street. Street trees provide shade, improve the human scale of downtown, and enhance the ambiance of the area. A street tree plan shall be designed and implemented to fit with and enhance the existing streetscape.

This street tree plan shall include the streetscape along Loop Road. Tree species shall be deciduous, and of native species to the area.

Objective 4: Seating Areas

While the downtown core already features public seating areas in several places, most notably outside City Hall, a comprehensive program to install public outdoor seating is needed in the downtown area. Public seating areas enhance the aesthetic aspects of the downtown area, providing pedestrians a place to rest and enjoy the district. The majority of this seating should be concentrated along Main Street, but benches should also be installed along both sides of Loop Road. Benches should be constructed of wood, steel, or cast iron in designs compatible with the historic character of the surrounding district.

Objective 5: Bicycle Parking

With rising gas prices and a national desire for alternate, and health-benefiting, mode of transportation, downtown Belton shall receive enhancements to encourage cycling in the district. The Parks Department and Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc. shall partner together to formulate and enact a plan to install bicycle racks throughout the district in a manner compatible with the streetscape. Bicycle parking racks should be installed in places that minimize conflict with pedestrian travel.

Goal: Parking

Parking is an especially important consideration for downtown Belton, a result of a lack of transit options. However, the city has an effective parking plan, implemented during the 1998 Main Street improvements, and these design guidelines will conform to the existing angled spaces along Main Street, with additional parking located along Loop Road.

Objective 1: Main Street

All parking along Main Street shall be angled parking, a scheme first implemented with the 1998 improvements. Angled parking reduces the width of the primary traffic lane, slowing traffic speeds and enhancing the safety of the area. All new development shall use existing angled parking.



Figure 11: Angled Parking Along Main Street

Objective 2: Loop Road

All parking along Loop Road shall consist of traditional spaces, oriented 90 degrees to the direction and flow of traffic. These lots are the primary parking areas for businesses located between Main Street and Loop Road. All new construction shall include traditional parking along Loop Road. Consideration should be given to semi-permeable surfaces as a measure to mitigate storm run-off.

Rail Yard Redevelopment Guidelines

The BG&KC Rail Yard represents a great opportunity for Belton as a signature area for recreation, tourism, and economic development in the downtown area. Though technically still an active yard, the area sees little active rail traffic and investment. Recent metropolitan transportation studies considered the possibility that this yard might one day be used as part of a commuter rail system, but found the population density along the route would be insufficient to support commuter rail for at least the next 20 years. The rail yard should therefore be looked upon as an underutilized resource; a resource that a partnership of public and private interests

shall rehabilitate as a recreation and tourism destination.

Goal 1: BG&KC Rail Yard

Objective 1: Train Station

The Belton, Grandview & Kansas City Railroad (BG&KC) is a volunteer organization dedicated to restoring and operating historic trains, operating an excursion train set from their “Whistle Stop” station just off Walnut Street. The Whistle Stop is a small structure, used primarily as a ticket booth when the Railway operates their excursion train. In order to transform the BG&KC into an entertainment and tourism attraction, a new and larger train station will be needed. This station should feature a mix of uses, including ticketing facilities, historic railroad exhibits, a refreshments area, and indoor and outdoor seating options. The following guidelines shall apply to the design and construction of a new train station for the BG&KC:



Figure 12: BG&KC Rail Yard

- Site Design

The structure should be designed to



conform to the existing historic building footprint parallel to the rail tracks between Walnut St. and Chestnut St. The structure need

not be designed to cover the entire length of this block, but should be designed to

accommodate future additions. The building itself should be constructed with its primary frontage along Walnut St.

- The site design should include easements for sidewalks along Walnut St. and Chestnut St.

- Scale & Massing

- The structure should be constructed upon a platform to ease loading and unloading of passengers and freight. This platform should be ADA-compliant, with both ramps and stairs leading to Walnut St.

- The structure shall be 1-2 stories in height, but the total structure including platform shall not exceed 45 feet in height. Additional towers, clocks, or other decorative elements may be incorporated if they are determined to fit with the aesthetics of the surrounding area.
- Architectural Style & Materials
 - The architectural style of the train station should match that of the surrounding area, and may be drawn from other small town train stations. Architects may refer to the design of Belton’s historic, original train stations as a guide; however, the design need not be an exact replica.
 - The materials used in the construction of the train station shall be compatible with both the architectural style used, and with the surrounding Old Town Belton District. The use of brick, stone, or wood paneling is encouraged.

Objective 2: Historic Structures and Other Structures

The BG&KC Rail Yard also includes two historic freight rail structures, located on the northeast side of the yard at the intersection of Walnut and Commercial Streets. Engineering studies should be conducted to determine the structural integrity of the buildings, and if possible these structures should be rehabilitated. If deemed unsalvageable, these structures should be demolished and replaced with mixed-use commercial, retail, and industrial buildings. The



Figure 14: Belton Freight House

following guidelines shall apply to these historic structures:

- If Deemed Salvageable:
 - The city and railroad shall partner in a study to determine an economically-viable use for the structures. These may include as commercial and/or retail space focused on tourism and recreation, and may include limited industrial and storage space for railroad operations. A mix of uses is strongly encouraged.
 - The buildings should be rehabilitated to better interact with the pedestrian environment. This includes sidewalks and entrances along Walnut and/or Commercial Streets, as well as proper lighting and public seating areas.
 - Structures shall be rehabilitated using durable and energy-efficient materials. Wood paneling may be replaced with like material or with Smart Board, and windows shall be replaced with thermal-pane high-efficiency windows.
- If Deemed Unsalvageable:
 - The buildings should be demolished by the landholder, or purchased by the city and demolished to clear the space for new development.
 - New buildings shall be constructed in place of the old, consistent with the scale and massing of the previous buildings. The new structures may be 2-3 stories in height, but must include streetscaping and facades along Walnut and Commercial Streets, as well

as train platforms adjacent to the northernmost tracks.

- Aesthetically, new buildings should be designed to fit within the context of commercial buildings within the Old Town Belton District. Acceptable materials include brick, stone, or wood.
- New buildings shall be mixed use, with commercial and retail uses on ground level and adjacent to the train platforms, and office uses on upper floors.
- All new structures, including buildings and train platforms, shall meet ADA accessibility requirements.
- All new structures shall be designed to achieve energy efficiencies, and should meet Energy Star ratings.

In addition to these historic structures, the BG&KC maintains their headquarters building on the corner of Cherry and Commercial Streets. This structure should be rehabilitated with exterior **façade** treatments, so that it will fit with the new aesthetic qualities of other rail yard buildings; this can be accomplished with a new exterior **façade** of brick. Additionally, the vehicle parking area of this structure should be paved, and entrances upgraded with curbs and guttering consistent with Main Street.

Objective 3: Trains

The train cars and engines of the BG&KC are its greatest assets, and are notable and recognizable landmarks in downtown Belton. All guidelines for the rail yard must fit with the goals and aims of both the Railway and the city of Belton, and will have significant impacts for the train cars and locomotives. The following guidelines shall apply to the trains:



Figure 15: A historic Kansas City Southern lounge car (left) awaits full restoration.

- Locomotives and train cars that will not be restored to operating condition should be located on sidings, with decorative brick paths leading to them from the train station.
- Permanently stationary equipment shall feature signage, made of wood or metal, which identifies the vehicle and its history. Signage shall be compliant with the UDC.
- All equipment shall be restored according to the plans and timetable set by the Smokey Hill Railway. However, all vehicles on display should receive basic, regular maintenance including coats of paint as needed.

Goal: Rail Yard Landscaping

The rail yard represents not only a point of destination for train traffic, but it should also be viewed as a long, linear parkland running straight through the heart of Old Town Belton. Proper site-appropriate landscaping will enhance the rail yard as a public amenity. The following guidelines shall apply to the rail yard landscaping:

- Grass
 - Lawn surrounding historic train equipment should be well-maintained.
 - Outside of the primary areas of activity (i.e. the train station and train cars), the planting of native prairie grasses is encouraged. These grasses may be included as part of nature exhibits or community gardens.
 - All lawns shall come up to the edge of sidewalks, pathways, and service roads.



Figure 16: A shaded bench beside a historic locomotive lends the rail yard a park-like atmosphere.

- Flower Gardens
 - The City, the BG&KC, and Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc. shall partner together to establish flower gardens along the southern borders of the rail yard. These gardens shall feature native flowers, grasses, and other plants. Flower gardens shall be located on the southwest edge of the yard between the southernmost tracks and Loop Road.
- Public Seating
 - Public benches shall be provided in several locations throughout the rail yard. Primary locations shall be adjacent to public flower gardens and to historic train equipment.
 - Aesthetically, these benches shall be constructed of wood or metal, and shall be compatible with the historic design and character of the downtown area.
- Lighting
 - A comprehensive lighting scheme shall be created for the rail yard, utilizing the same style of lighting currently installed along Main Street.
 - All public seating areas must be lighted. This may be accomplished utilizing street lamps.
- Paths/Service Roads
 - The yard shall include pedestrian walkways leading from sidewalks at the street edge to public attractions. These attractions shall include public gardens, structures, and historic train equipment.
 - Paths shall be constructed of stone, brick, or semi-permeable paving, and shall be wide enough to accommodate bi-directional pedestrian traffic.
 - Service roads shall be wide enough to accommodate one and one half lanes of service vehicle traffic; and shall be paved with gravel, stone, or semi-permeable paving; and shall be well-maintained.

Goal: Belton Cycling Paths & Cycling Station

Introduction & Purpose

Cycling is increasing in popularity, both as recreation and as a mode of transportation, in today's environment of increasing societal health concerns and skyrocketing fuel prices. Cities across America are adding bicycle-only lanes to their downtown thoroughfares, and are adding dedicated bicycle paths to city parks. In the 1990s the State of Missouri established itself as a cycling tourism destination by transforming the former Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT) Railroad

bed into the KATY Trail State Park, a now-237 mile state park stretching from metropolitan St. Louis to Clinton that remains America’s longest “rails to trails” project. The KATY Trail is targeted toward cyclists and pedestrians, and has been a source of economic development for the cities and towns along its route; towns such as Rocheport, MO feature cyclist-oriented commercial districts along the trailside. These trends and developments should be considered carefully when rehabilitating the BG & KC Rail Yard.



The Old Town Belton District is well-positioned to become the city’s cycling hub and trailhead, and the redevelopment of the BG& KC Rail Yard should include the intersection of cycling paths and a “cycling station” to serve their basic needs. The purpose of the cycling station and paths shall be as a downtown headquarters for cycling, and as a public recreation area for residents.

Objective 1: Site Design, Architecture & Materials

The following design guidelines shall apply to the site design, architecture, and materials for the Belton Cycling Station, and for any future cycling-oriented businesses to be constructed in the BG&KC Rail Yard:

- Site Design:
 - The Cycling Station shall be constructed on the southeast corner of Ella and Commercial Streets in Old Town Belton.
 - The structure shall feature exterior walls built up to the edge of new sidewalks to be built along Commercial and Ella Streets.
 - Any future cycling-oriented businesses shall be constructed southeast of this building



Figure 18: Millennium Park Bicycle Station, Chicago

along Commercial Street.

- Architecture & Materials:
 - The Belton Cycling Station may be designed in a variety of styles, including those similar to the historic commercial buildings along Main Street; a style compatible with the proposed train station; or of a more Modern/Post-Modern style. The design shall also be compatible with the Old Town Belton District in terms of size, massing, scale, and materials.

- Materials to be used in the Cycling Station may include brick, stone, stucco, wood, or brushed steel or aluminum. Corrugated steel, cinderblock, or bare concrete walls are discouraged.
- The Station shall feature four-sided architecture with complete facades, as well as entrances along Commercial St., Ella St., and from new cycling paths to be constructed in the Rail Yard.
- The structure shall be 1-2 stories in height, with commercial/retail space on the ground floor and compatible office space on the upper floor.
- The Cycling Station shall feature an outdoor courtyard, parallel to the cycling paths, with tables and seating areas.

Objective 2: Signage, Lighting, & Awnings

Signage, lighting, and awnings shall be part of the Belton Cycling Station. The following guidelines shall apply for building-mounted signage:

- Signage shall be constructed of high-quality materials, especially wood or aluminum
- Signage shall be mounted above the primary building entrances. Signage should be mounted perpendicular to the **façade** of the building, so as to be readable from the street in both directions.
- Signage should be properly backlit, or should have proper internal lighting, so as to be visible and readable from the street during evening hours.
- All signage shall comply with the Design Standards mandated in Chapter 18 of the UDC.

The Cycling Station shall also feature one of the downtown map kiosks for the use of pedestrians and cyclists, and shall conform to the guidelines previously detailed in the Main Street section of this book.

All exterior lighting shall comply with UDC, and should be used to highlight and accentuate the architectural features of the Cycling Station, as well as the Rail Yard. The following guidelines shall apply for exterior commercial/residential lighting:

- All exterior signage shall include lighting.
- All entrances to the building and the courtyard areas shall include proper lighting for safety and convenience.
- Exterior lighting should be integrated into the building's architectural style, and should focus on the building's most notable aesthetic elements.
- **Façade** lighting should be soft enough to prevent excessive glare, and should be energy efficient.

The Belton Cycling Station shall include a courtyard parallel to the cycling paths where patrons can rest and enjoy refreshments, and this courtyard shall include an awning, canopy, or trellis. The following guidelines shall apply to this covering:

- If an awning or canopy, it shall be constructed of canvas with a metal frame. A vinyl and metal canopy, especially those constructed of corrugated steel, is inappropriate.

- If an awning or canopy, it may be constructed of a semi-permeable material that would allow limited sunlight through, while providing shading.
- The covering chosen must be designed to fit with and complement the aesthetics of the building, and must not obstruct visibility or access.
- This structure shall cover at least 90% of the seating area.

Objective 3: Cyclist Amenities

The primary purpose of the Belton Cycling Station is as a central service area for cyclists. It shall feature the following services and amenities:



Figure 19: Bicycle Parking Stalls, Germany

- Permanent bicycle stalls adjacent to the Cycling Station and courtyard with space for 20 bicycles.
- Public restrooms with safe changing and showering facilities. These would remain open during normal business hours.
- A small retail area where patrons can purchase essential bicycle parts and equipment.
- A small visitor’s kiosk adjacent to the retail area.
- A counter for the purchase of snacks and beverages.
- A rooftop patio for the benefit of patrons and tenants.

Objective 4: Cycling Paths

A primary goal for the redevelopment of the BG&KC Rail Yard, and the construction of the Belton Cycling Station, is to make Old Town Belton the cycling hub for the city and surrounding area. In order to accomplish this, the following design guidelines shall apply to the construction of cycling paths through the rail yard:

- Cycling paths from throughout the city shall converge southeast of the intersection of Y Highway and Commercial St., and northwest of the intersection of Commercial and Cherry Streets, and shall merge into one primary cycling path through the rail yard.
- The primary Rail Yard Cycling Path through the railway yard shall run parallel to and northeast of the primary railroad track between Y Highway and Ella St. The path shall then cross Ella St. diagonally and run parallel to and southwest of the primary railroad track between Ella St. and South Scott Ave.
- The Rail Yard Cycling Path shall be wide enough to accommodate bi-directional bicycle traffic, with additional room on the edge of each lane for pedestrian traffic.



Figure 20: Paved Cycling Path, New Orleans

- The Path shall be paved through the Rail Yard with semi-permeable pavement. Lanes shall be marked on this pavement similar to city streets, with a yellow center line.
- Permanent wooden safety gates shall be constructed where the path crosses primary arterial streets. These gates shall include overlapping arms, spaced such that cyclists must slow and maneuver carefully to get through. These gates shall include fencing extending 3 feet in each direction from the path. The design shall mirror those used by the State of Missouri on the Katy Trail State Park.
- The design and construction of all paths shall comply with the standards outlined in the city's Trails Master Plan.

Downtown Expansion to Highway 58 Corridor

In order to strengthen the economic health and vitality of Old Town Belton, the district must be expanded from its original concept to include a portion of the State Highway 58 corridor. One of the greatest challenges to the revival of downtown Belton is visibility, even though hundreds of cars pass within blocks of Main Street every day along a major traffic arterial - State Highway 58 (also known as North Scott Avenue). Business owners, residents, and visitors have expressed frustration that downtown Belton is hard to find, despite signage marking the way to Old Town Belton on both Highway 58 and Highway Y. In addition to the visibility problem, an increase in population density downtown would help to support local businesses in the area; however, residential expansion opportunities along Main Street are limited to second floor apartments and condos within existing buildings, since nearly all of Main Street's building stock is intact. Expanding the footprint of the Old Town Belton Overlay District to include areas along Highway 58, and encouraging mixed-use redevelopment, will give the District greater visibility and strengthen its identity as the business, recreation, and entertainment center for the city.

Defining Expansion Area

The original purpose and description of the Old Town Belton Overlay District in the UDC centers primarily on the historic Main Street Corridor, while the boundaries of the district as described in these guidelines would include the Smokey Hill Railway Yard and all commercially-zoned areas downtown from the Yard to the north side of the Highway 58 corridor. The expansion area shall be defined as follows. On the north, the expansion area shall include all properties within one block north of State Highway 58/E. North Ave from State Highway Y to the intersection of W. North Ave. and North Scott Avenue. On the east, it shall include all properties along Ella St. from State



Figure 21: Downtown Expansion Area

Highway 58/E. North Ave. to Commercial St. On the South and West, the expansion area shall include all properties along Commercial St. bordering the Smokey Hill Railway Yard from State Highway Y to Cherry St., and all areas on the east side of South Scott Ave. to its intersection with West North Avenue and Highway 58.

Gateway Corridors

A chief goal of the expansion of the Old Town Belton District is the establishment of Gateway Corridors, mixed-use commercial corridors that will connect historic Main Street with Highway 58 through architecture, population density, and land uses similar to that of the original downtown commercial district. Gateway Corridors will provide travelers along Highway 58 clear visual references that they have arrived in the downtown area, pointing the way to historic Main Street and the Railway Yard through build type, mass, scale, and intensity of use. The primary streets envisioned for redevelopment into Gateway Corridors are Cherry St., Chestnut St., and Walnut St. The Walnut St. Gateway is envisioned as the centerpiece of this effort, as its building form already has the mass and scale of a business district, existing building stock is typically older with in many cases marginal uses, and it leads directly to the heart of historic downtown Belton. Ella St. is also a potential gateway corridor, as its northern terminus on Highway 58 is close to Highway Y, and since it leads directly to Belton City Hall; however, redevelopment opportunities are more limited along Ella St. as its character is mostly that of a residential neighborhood. The Highway 58 corridor between Highway Y and W. North Avenue would also see redevelopment as a gateway to Old Town Belton with greater density and intensity, as well as an improved pedestrian environment.

Transit-Oriented Development

Redevelopment in the expansion area shall be as transit-oriented development, a type and scale of development that will fit well with Belton's historic commercial core, and will be beneficial to the city's present and future needs. As defined by editor Mike E. Miles of the Urban Land Institute, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is "a mixed-use area designed to maximize access to public transportation, generally seeking to create high-density developments within a quarter mile (402 meters) of a mass transit stop". TOD is also considered pedestrian-oriented development, with buildings constructed to the edge of the sidewalk, commercial and retail uses on ground floors, office and residential uses on upper floors, and vehicle parking generally on the street or in lots hidden behind buildings.

By rehabilitating and redeveloping the expansion areas along the Gateway Corridors as TODs, Belton will greatly expand and enhance the pedestrian environment of Old Town Belton. TODs along these corridors will increase the density and intensity of use downtown, which means more residents living within walking distance of downtown's businesses and amenities. Because transit-oriented development is very similar in scale and character to the historic Main Street business district, gateway corridors built in the TOD model will provide passing motorists a visual cue that they are near downtown, and they need only follow the corridor to reach it. Finally, and most obviously, TODs will make downtown Belton a more attractive location for public and alternative modes of transit - increasingly important to car-dependent citizens in an age of ever-rising gas prices.

Goal: Architectural Features & Materials

Buildings along these Gateway Corridors should be maintained or constructed in a manner consistent with the OTB District's history and character. All commercial structures should feature elements common to most small-town central business districts in America, such as pedestrian-oriented display windows, visible and high-quality signage, and awnings to shade potential customers. New sidewalks, identical to those presently found along Main Street, shall be constructed along these corridors. All new buildings should align along the sidewalk to maintain a unified, pedestrian friendly sense of place, and the scale and style of buildings should be of similar materials and quality, but with varied aesthetics to maintain visual interest and distinction between buildings. The following guidelines cover existing buildings and new construction, and allow for individual creativity while maintaining and enhancing the overall identity of the Old Town Belton District.

Objective 1: Existing Buildings

The existing building stock along the Gateway Corridors is characterized as industrial, low-intensity commercial, or residential, and in most cases should be replaced with transit-oriented development. However, in cases where the officials, representatives, and citizens agree that a property must be saved, these existing buildings should incorporate the following elements:

- Mixed Uses
 - Existing buildings (other than residential) should be utilized to the fullest extent possible, including first floor commercial activity and residential uses on upper floors.
- Ground-Level Pedestrian Oriented Activity
 - Existing commercial buildings with frontages along Gateway Corridors should include recessed entryways and display windows. Restaurants and **café's** are encouraged to install opening windows and outdoor seating areas for patrons.
- **Façade Materials**
 - All existing commercial buildings with frontage along Gateway Corridors must have facades compatible with surrounding structures and with the OTB District. Facades should be constructed of materials such as brick, natural stone, stucco, or wood.
- Roof Lines
 - Roof lines along Gateway Corridors should be consistent with simple horizontal planes and rectangular building forms. Flat roofs should be screened by parapet walls **extending from the vertical façade.**
- Exterior Walls
 - Where visible, exterior walls other than the facades may be sealed or painted for weather protection, or should incorporate decorative murals as a public amenity.

Objective 2: New Construction

The preponderance of buildings along Gateway Corridors shall be new, and all new construction shall be TOD, consistent with the scale, massing, and character of the Main Street Corridor. New buildings should incorporate the following elements:

- Density and Mixed Uses



- New buildings shall be designed and constructed to increase urban density and enhance the pedestrian environment, while maintaining consistency with its environs.
 - New buildings shall be designed with 4-sided architecture, complete with pedestrian entrances along Gateway Corridors and secondary entrances with parking in the rear of the building off alleyways or away from the street.
 - Buildings shall be 2-3 stories in height, with floor-to-floor heights consistent with older multistory buildings in the OTB District. The construction of 4 story buildings is permitted, provided the building is designed and constructed with setbacks for the fourth floor.
 - New buildings should feature ground floor commercial space with residential space on upper floors, and be build to the edge of the sidewalk, consistent with neighboring building frontages.
- Figure 22: New Longview Development, Lees Summit, Missouri**
- Ground-Level Pedestrian Oriented Activity
 - Commercial frontages shall include recessed entryways and display windows. Restaurants and *café*'s are encouraged to install opening windows and outdoor seating areas for patrons.
 - Commercial frontages along Loop Road should feature secondary entrances to buildings, and should incorporate outdoor seating areas, courtyards, and/or landscaping.
 - **Façade Materials**
 - New building facades shall be constructed of materials and in architectural styles compatible with those of the OTB District. Brick, natural stone, and stucco are encouraged for use as building materials.
 - Roof Lines
 - Roof lines along Gateway Corridors shall be consistent with simple horizontal planes and rectangular building forms. Flat roofs should be screened by parapet walls extending from the vertical façade.



Figure 23: Briarcliff Village, Kansas City, Missouri

Objective 3: Enclosure & Screening Requirements

For existing buildings and new construction, all mechanical systems should be integrated into the design of the building and/or screened from public view using any and all means feasible. This includes transformers, backflow prevention and anti-siphon valves, and HVAC units. All mechanical equipment must be located to the rear of the building where feasible, or on the roof and screened from public view with parapet walls, landscaping, etc. Loading and service areas should be located to the rear of buildings out of public view.

Goal: Courtyards and Decks

Courtyards and Decks are important elements of downtown areas, serving as public and semi-public amenities where members of the community can gather and enjoy the street life and ambiance of Old Town Belton. The following guidelines shall apply to courtyards:

- When added to Existing Buildings, courtyards should be constructed as part of the **façade** of buildings. Retaining walls of brick, stone, or wood should be constructed, 4 feet in height, to the edge of the sidewalk, with one primary gateway into the courtyard from the street.
- New Buildings may be designed with courtyards as part of their Gateway Corridor facade. No more than 25% of the **façade** of the building may be set back from the sidewalk for use as a courtyard. All courtyards must feature a retaining wall built to the edge of the sidewalk and built of brick, stone, or stucco.

Decks may be constructed on ground floors as part of a courtyard, and upper story decks and rooftop patios may also be added to buildings. The following guidelines shall apply to decks:

- Ground floor and upper story decks may be constructed of sealed wood or decorative metal.
- Ground floor decks must be constructed as part of a courtyard.
- Upper story decks may be built on the alley-side of buildings, or may be built as balconies on the Gateway Corridor **façade** as long as the **façade** is recessed to accommodate the balcony; balconies may not overhang public sidewalks, and must be in line with the building's **first floor façade and with the facades of neighboring buildings**.
- Rooftop decks may be constructed on both existing and new buildings, and should include proper safety railings and structures to provide sun protection. Shade structures should be constructed of wood or perforated metal, but must be recessed from the Gateway Corridor **façade to minimize visibility and shall not be fully enclosed**.

Goal: Signage, Lighting, & Awnings

Signage, lighting, and awnings are important elements of the Gateway Corridors, serving practical commercial purposes and making the aesthetic qualities of the area similar to those of Main Street. Signs must be of appropriate scale for the district, and should be constructed of high quality materials. The OTB District needs improved signage to increase and enhance its visibility along the Highway 58 Corridor. The following guidelines shall apply to OTB marker signs constructed on Gateway Corridors along Highway 58:

- Signage shall comply with all standards required by the State of Missouri (which has authority over the Highway 58 corridor), as well as city standards mandated in the UDC.
- Signage shall be constructed of wood or metal, designed similar to existing OTB signage markers along Highway Y and South Scott Avenue.
- Signage shall be of a free-standing design constructed near the intersections of Gateway Corridors.
- Signage shall feature official colors for the city of Belton, shall be of bright hues, and shall be easily readable for passing motorists along Highway 58.

Signage is also vital for the identification of businesses, and to add ambiance along Gateway Corridors. The following guidelines shall apply for building-mounted signage:

- Signage shall be constructed of high-quality materials, especially wood or aluminum

- Signage shall be mounted above primary building entrances. Signage may be mounted above or below awnings where present, but should be mounted below the second story where applicable. Signage should be mounted perpendicular to the **façade** of the building, so as to be readable from the street in both directions, but may also be parallel to the **façade and just above the entrance in the absence of awnings**.
- Signage should be properly backlit, or should have proper internal lighting where applicable, so as to be visible and readable from the street during evening hours.
- All signage shall comply with the Design Standards mandated in Chapter 18 of the UDC.

As with the Main Street Corridor and Rail Yard, signage shall also be constructed along Gateway Corridors in the form of unmanned kiosks with a map of downtown businesses. The following guidelines shall apply for these kiosks:

- Signage shall be designed with maps of the District illustrated at eye level with most pedestrians. This map shall identify businesses throughout the District, listing each business name and location below the map.
- Signage shall be constructed of wood or metal, have at least 2 sides, and shall be designed to aesthetically fit with the historic character of the surrounding environment.
- Signage shall be positioned near major intersections throughout the Old Town Belton District, and shall be positioned to fit within the existing pedestrian environment.

All exterior lighting for commercial and residential buildings shall comply with UDC, and should be used to highlight and accentuate the architectural features of each structure, as well as the downtown area. The following guidelines shall apply for exterior commercial/residential lighting:

- All exterior signage for commercial first floor businesses shall include lighting.
- All entrances to buildings and courtyard areas shall include proper lighting for safety and convenience.
- Exterior lighting should be integrated into the building's architectural style, and should focus on the building's most notable aesthetic elements.
- **Façade** lighting should be soft enough to prevent excessive glare, and should be energy efficient.
- Business and building owners are encouraged to use exterior building lighting innovatively.

Awnings, as well as canopies and trellises, provide shade and comfort to pedestrians, and can enhance the aesthetic character of the District. The following guidelines shall apply to the construction and use of awnings, canopies, and trellises:

- Awnings and canopies should be constructed of canvas with a metal frame. Vinyl and metal canopies, especially those constructed of corrugated steel, are inappropriate.
- Existing buildings should feature awnings over all display windows, where applicable and aesthetically advantageous, along their primary frontage.
- New buildings should be designed to include awnings over all exterior **façade** windows along their primary frontage.

- Awnings and building signage should be designed and installed to complement each other.
- Awnings, canopies, and trellises may be installed in all courtyard areas. These features must be designed to fit with and complement the aesthetics of the building, and must not obstruct visibility or access.

Goal: Streetscape

The goals and purposes of the Old Town Belton District, as stated in Chapter 12 of the UDC, are to enhance the downtown area as an attractive, centrally-located amenity, with particular care given to the pedestrian environment. The positive work already undertaken to enhance the streetscape along Main Street shall be combined with the following guidelines to develop the streetscape along Gateway Corridors.

Objective 1: Sidewalks

Sidewalks shall in general be well-maintained and free of clutter for the use and benefit of pedestrians downtown. Corners and pedestrian crossings shall be clearly marked, as shall be the sidewalk itself for ease of use by citizens of all ages. All streetscape elements, including lighting, trees, public seating, bicycle parking racks, and **café** seating areas shall not obstruct the sidewalk from pedestrian use.

Objective 2: Street Lighting

The city shall continue to use the present street lighting scheme first enacted with the 1998 Main Street improvements. All street lights shall be of the same design as the present, classically-styled lamps.

Objective 3: Street Trees

The Public Works Department, in partnership with the Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc., shall develop a street tree program as part of the streetscapes to be developed along Gateway Corridors. Street trees provide shade, improve the human scale of downtown, and enhance the ambiance of the area. Tree species shall be deciduous, and of native species to the area.

Objective 4: Seating Areas

Gateway Corridors shall be included in a comprehensive program to install public outdoor seating, presently needed for the downtown area. Public seating areas enhance the aesthetic aspects of the downtown area, providing pedestrians a place to rest and enjoy the district. Seating shall be concentrated along Gateway Corridors. Benches should be constructed of wood, steel, or cast iron in designs compatible with the historic character of the surrounding district.

Objective 5: Bicycle Parking

With rising gas prices and a national desire for alternate, and health-benefiting, mode of transportation, downtown Belton shall receive enhancements to encourage cycling in the district. The Parks Department and Downtown Belton Main Street, Inc. shall partner together to

formulate and enact a plan to install bicycle racks throughout the district in a manner compatible with the streetscape. Bicycle parking racks should be installed in places that minimize conflict with pedestrian travel.

Goal: Parking

Parking is an important consideration for downtown Belton, especially with new transit-oriented development along Gateway Corridors. However, the city has an effective parking plan, implemented during the 1998 Main Street improvements, and these design guidelines will conform to the plans.

Objective 1: On-Street

Parking along Gateway Corridors may be angled or parallel parking. Angled parking reduces the width of the primary traffic lane, slowing traffic speeds and enhancing the safety of the area. However, parallel parking may be needed where street widths do not permit the use of angled parking; parallel parking may also be more conducive to the Gateway Corridor's role of connecting Main Street with Highway 58.

Objective 2: Off-Street

All off-street parking shall consist of traditional spaces, oriented perpendicular to the direction and flow of traffic, behind buildings in lots off alleyways to be constructed through the center of blocks. Entrances to off-street parking areas shall be from one primary gateway located on the Gateway Corridor **façade**, and from alleyways along side streets. Consideration should be given to semi-permeable surfaces as a measure to mitigate storm run-off.

Appendix A: Implementation Strategy

Phase I (Years 1-2 of Design Guidelines Implementation)

Primary Goals

1. Define Old Town Belton District

2. Formulate Design Review Process
3. Create Design Review Committee for Old Town Belton District
4. Formulate Outreach Strategy for Design Guidelines Implementation
 - a. Establish Grant Program for District Businesses
 - b. Establish Chapter 353 Program to assist with Residential Renovation
5. Create Business Improvement District
6. Select Gateway Corridors & install downtown markers on Highway 58
7. Downtown Business Kiosks installed
8. New signage for Main Street Businesses installed
9. Historic placquards installed on Main Street buildings
10. Begin Downtown Pocket Park Project

Phase II (Years 3-5 of Design Guidelines Implementation)

Primary Goals

1. Main Street Streetscaping Begins (i.e. benches, lighting, street trees, awnings, etc.)
2. Renovation of multi-story Main Street buildings for mix of uses
3. Construction of Public Restrooms in BG& KC Rail Yard
4. Begin BG&KC Railroad Station Construction
5. Bicycle Path through BG&KC Rail Yard
6. Loop Road Centralized Dumpster Bins
7. Loop Road Streetscaping

Phase III (Years 6-10 of Design Guidelines Implementation)

Primary Goals

1. Rehabilitation or demolition of historic Rail Yard structures
2. Restoration of all BG&KC Railroad Vehicles
3. Landscaping of BG&KC Rail Yard
4. Construction of Belton Cycling Station in BG&KC Rail Yard
5. Begin property acquisition along Gateway Corridors for Downtown Expansion Area

Phase IV (Years 11-20 of Design Guidelines Implementation)

Primary Goals

1. Market Analysis for Mixed-Use Development in Downtown Expansion Area
2. Complete Streetscaping along Gateway Corridors (i.e. sidewalks, lighting, street trees, on-street parking, etc.)
3. Rehabilitation or renovation of existing residential uses along Gateway Corridors
4. Construction of new Mixed-Use Development along Gateway Corridors
5. Redevelopment of Highway 58/North Avenue Corridor through District

Appendix B: Design Review Process

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK. DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS TO BE DETERMINED.