PUBLIC SPACES GOAL – Create an attractive public realm which enhances area identity and livability, supports a wide variety of activities and reinforces connections between neighborhoods.

RELATIONSHIP TO PLAN GOALS - The chapter provides recommendations to improve the quality of the public realm, characterized by attractive streets and well-defined public spaces which support a wide variety of activities. The recommendations in this chapter promote the following goals of the plan:

- **Maintain the Area's Rural Character** – The Public Spaces strategies create a framework of image streets and "gateway" enhancements that reinforce the areas rural character and appearance. The strategies also support the creation of an extensive system of public open spaces.
- **Create and Maintain Desirable Neighborhoods** – The Public Spaces strategies create inviting, well programmed public spaces and amenities which make LBV neighborhoods more vibrant and livable. A more active public realm will also improve the safety of LBV neighborhoods.
- **Promote Sustainability - Create a Sustainable Community –** The Public Spaces strategies support sustainability by increasing "green solutions" in the public realm that contribute to stormwater management, and improve air and water quality.
- **Foster New Development** – The Public Spaces strategies will create active and well maintained public spaces which will encourage upkeep and investment by adjacent property owners.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

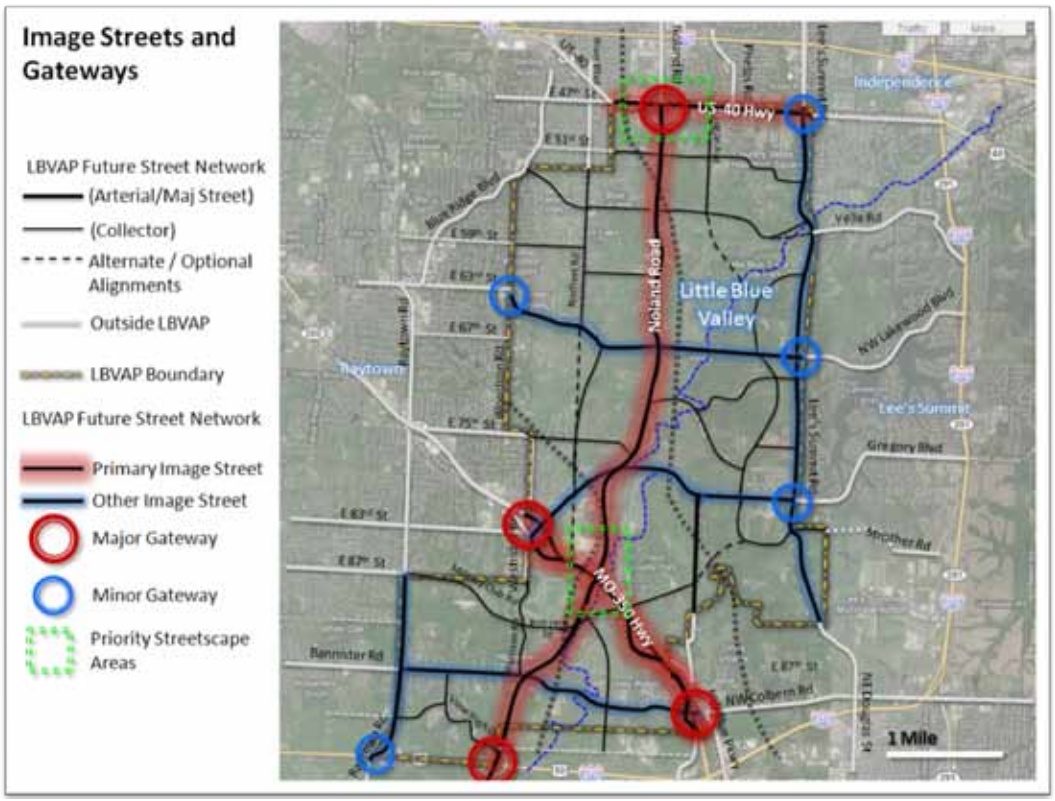
The Public Realm Chapter is intended to provide strategies to improve the appearance of public streets, increase the activity in public spaces and to enhance area identity and sense of place. These improvements should be prioritized on key "Image Streets" and should be coordinated with infrastructure, transportation and development initiatives. These strategies are organized around the following guiding principles.

- Create and promote visually attractive Image Streets and corridors.
  - § Focus on improving appearance of key "image" streets as designated by this plan (see Image Streets and Gateways map). Focus streetscape enhancements and infill development along key image streets.
    - Create a streetscape plan for primary Image Streets
    - See also Knobtown area recommendations on page ???.
  - § Primary Image Streets – These are the most important image streets in LBV and aesthetic/streetscape enhancements should be a priority on these corridors. These streets help set the "tone" of the area by establishing visual and aesthetic standards. The Primary image streets are:
    - Noland Road (including future East Longview Parkway/View High Drive).
    - 350 Hwy.
    - 40 Hwy.
  - § Other Image Streets in the LBV area are:
    - Lee's Summit Road
    - Little Blue Road
    - Gregory Blvd
    - Bannister Road
    - Raytown Road

- Image Streets will ideally have the following characteristics:
  - Diversity and density of activity.
  - Development which enhances the appearance of the corridor.
  - Safety for pedestrians.
  - Attractive streetscape amenities such as lighting, benches, signage, trees, etc.
  - Access to desirable goods and services.
- Streetscape enhancements and improvements should include "green" stormwater management (rain gardens, etc..) as well as landscaped open spaces.
- Create a visually contiguous roadway system through streetscape and roadway design that reinforces the areas rural character and respects surrounding land uses.
  - Create roads that are the minimum pavement width necessary.
  - Preserve open space and trees along frontage of Image Streets in the LBVA (see also Transportation Chapter, page ???)
  - Preserve and enhance "historic" roadways such as the roads that were part of the Jefferson Highway system (see map on page???)
  - Encourage development which enhances these corridors and discourage uses which may detract from the appearance or character of the corridor (see Land Use Chapter for more, page ???).
  - Remove and/or reduce visual clutter (billboards, communication towers, pole signs or excessive signage, etc...).

Related Public Input:

Bridge Appearance - reconstruct RR bridge at 350 hwy so it has more decorative appearance



- Create a hierarchy of gateways (see Image Streets and Gateways map) to provide a visual "point of reference" or "announcement" as well as a visual transition from one area to another.
    - § Major Gateways - are major focal points generally located at the edge of the Plan Area, major interchanges or at the intersections of primary image streets.
    - § Minor Gateways - are smaller than Major Gateways and are generally located within the Plan Area, highlighting entry pints into the LBV area, particular districts, corridors and neighborhoods.
    - § Integrate gateways into new developments and emerging new districts.
    - § Gateways and Intersection Enhancements should include vertical architectural features or focal points constructed of high-quality materials such as stone, cast stone, tile, metal, or masonry and a combination of the following elements:
        - Landscaping
        - Plazas with pedestrian amenities such as seating, shade, and triangulation elements
        - Water features
        - Decorative lighting, walls or fencing

        - Monument-style signs, if appropriate, with landscaping to announce district or municipality
    - Incorporate gateway design with overall streetscape design where appropriate.
    - Develop high impact intersection enhancements at nodes and intersections along primary image streets. Reserve areas at major intersections for enhancements such as gateways and landscaped focal points (see Development Guidelines).
    - Incorporate pedestrian crossings into gateway design.
- Enhance the individual character of area districts, landmarks and neighborhoods.
    - Identify existing unique districts. Create new unique districts as development occurs.
    - Construct district/neighborhood markers.
    - Identify individual landmarks, iconic buildings and features and preserve/enhance them.
    - Explore the application of historic landmark designations, historic districts and overlay zoning tools.
    - Implement the Development Guidelines to preserve/enhance the character of neighborhoods.
    - Expand and promote public art in the LBV area.
- Create and preserve a system of public Open Spaces.
    - Implement the future Open Space system recommendations (see Infrastructure Chapter, page ???).
    - Maintain public access in appropriate areas through a connected trail network and Parks.
- Improve and program parks and increase recreational opportunities
    - Improve <u>existing</u> parks
        - Complete master plans for existing parks.
        - Program parks to meet neighborhood needs.
            - Conduct surveys to determine demand/priorities for parks and recreation opportunities.
    - Plan <u>future</u> parks and recreation facilities in the LBVA.
        - Implement the recommendations of the Parks Master Plan
        - Identify location and need for new parks and community centers.
    - Integrate trails into public parks and open space and connect to neighborhoods.

Comment [gfw1]: Need KCIR recommendation/next step.

Related Public Input:

I would like to see a park in the neighborhood with walking trail.

Little Blue Valley needs more parks. Let's be sure to incorporate Little Blue River and create green spaces that include trails, picnic areas, active uses, and passive uses.

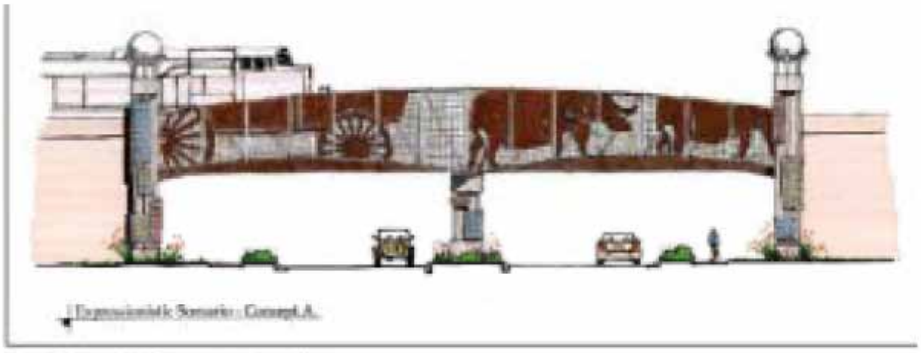
I also appreciate the idea of building a play and leisure park in our area. The Kansas City Missouri Parks and Recreation Department has a tract of land in our area for just such a purpose, located at the foot of Norfleet where it meets Little Blue Road. It contains 21.60 acres and has been named Timber Valley Park since 1979 although it has never been developed.

- Knobtown Area Recommendations
  - Streetscape Recommendations
    - Focus streetscape improvements and enhancements to Primary Image Streets (Noland Road and 350 Highway). Streetscape Recommendations by Area (See Knobtown Urban Design Framework map for locations):
    - **MIXED-USE NODES**
      - Street trees should be spaced approximately 30-ft apart.
      - Ornamental trees are clustered at major intersections such as Noland Road and 350 Highway.
      - Tree species in this area should be columnar with an open canopy and be limbed up to a reasonable height to ensure appropriate visibility to businesses and related signage.
      - Include gateways at intersections as recommended below. Include secondary gateways or enhancements at entry points into each district.
      - Provide a landscape buffer between the street and sidewalk for street trees and street and pedestrian lights.
      - A variable width, landscaped median at major intersections (where feasible).
      - Light fixtures should be spaced to ensure they meet or exceed the City's lighting standard.
      - Banners on the street lights will highlight the corridor-wide identity; banners on the pedestrian lights will highlight the mixed use district.
      - Decorative stamped paving or a change in paving material and/or paving color will demarcate crosswalks.
    - **RURAL/SUBURBAN EXPRESSWAY**
      - Regular street tree spacing on curb side and combination of shrubs and trees planted in median area.
      - Special pavers at major intersections and pedestrian crossings.
      - Provide enhanced street lighting.
      - Unifying elements, such as banners.
      - Establish street trees and aesthetic street lighting within the median extending from the Little Blue River to the east highway split.
      - Utilize natural plantings; informal plantings enhance the general driving experience and frame views along the rural segments of 350 Highway.
      - Preserve rural look with open ditches, shoulders and no curbs.
      - Utilize wide medians for plantings.
    - **TRANSITION SEGMENT**
      - Design a landscaping concept that provides a seamless transition between the Rural Expressway segment and the Urban Expressway segment.
      - Establish a gateway with monuments, a fountain, and landscaping on 350 Highway facing eastbound lanes just to the west of Unity Village near the city limit sign.
    - **URBAN EXPRESSWAY**
      - Use MODOT enhanced expressway landscape standards.

Comment [gfw2]: Insert graphics from Knobtown Plan pages 36-38

- Emphasize low maintenance.
- Additional landscaping enhancements at interchanges.
- Use simple, large scale plantings and massing.
- Utilize and preserve existing high quality natural trees and plants.

- Bridge Enhancements
  - Utilize existing bridges on Primary Image Streets for applied enhancements.
  - Each bridge should employ a unique design.
  - Remove the railroad bridge across 350 Highway to satisfy stormwater/traffic needs. Construct a new bridge with a focus on the abutments as a "gateway."
  - Bridge enhancements should be integrated into the overall streetscape design.



Major Gateway Enhancement
Source: 350 Blue Parkway Study

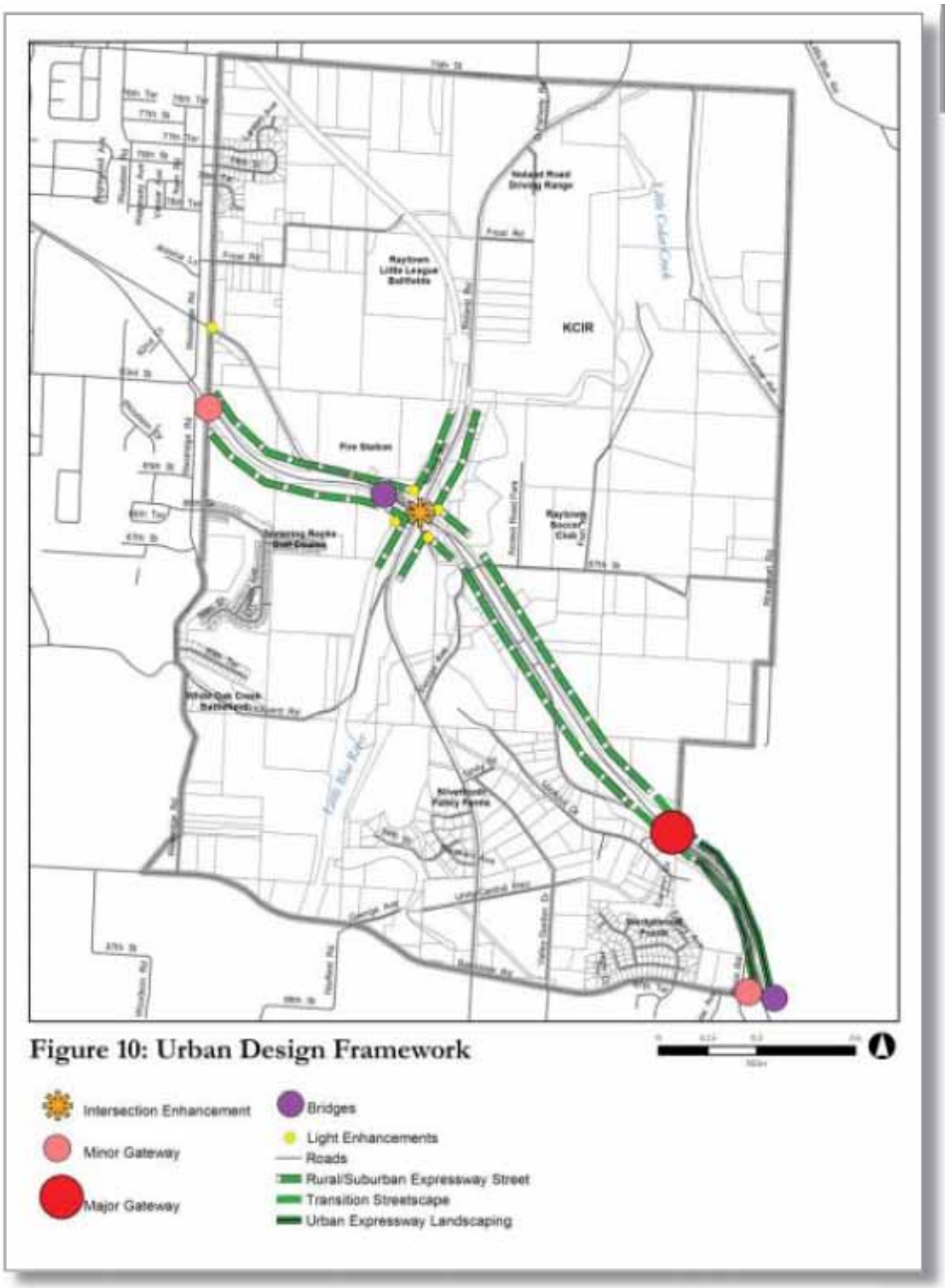


Figure 10: Urban Design Framework