

The Olde Towne Development Committee was formed to spearhead the efforts necessary to revitalize the Olde Towne business district. These efforts will involve soliciting grants that could help in Uniform Design Efforts, business recruitment or the establishment of a Business Incubator Program. This group is registered as a 501 3(c).

The so-called Ole Towne area was once the City center. Significant growth from the late 1950's until the present has seen the movement of business to areas more closely associated with the City's center geographically. The Olde Towne region, as the name implies, is the older portion of the City of Bellevue. While it no longer functions as the City's center of business district, it nonetheless holds great promise as a neighborhood commercial district. The Committee seeks to develop a plan that hold sand attracts its natural constituency as a thriving neighborhood business district. The development of this core business community will also see seasonal boots from the activities in the parks and marinas along the Missouri River as well as the development of the Softball Village just south of the Olde Towne business district. The core development of the business district will be our primary focus.

The obvious strengths of the business district are the abundance of space at very affordable rates. The area possesses ample parking albeit poorly advertised with no signage directing the consumer to its use. The challenges facing the district to attract businesses to occupy these spaces are the lack of commercially destined traffic. The demographics of the neighborhood suggests the need for basic consumer needs such as a grocery store, gas station, general merchandise store and full service restaurant. This sort of daily commercial traffic allows the more peripheral retail enterprises a greater opportunity to thrive through increased commercial traffic. Traffic that stops to spend money. The pedestrian friendly nature of the business district can only be leveraged with consumers recognizing the availability of basic services that they would otherwise, and currently, drive elsewhere to procure.

The population within 3 minutes drive of the business district watch their pennies closely, shop with coupons, use mail order houses for much shopping, eat out at full service restaurants regularly and especially weekends, spend more than the average on reading materials, spend generously on their kids toys and learning activities, enjoy walking, ice hockey and auto racing. They tend to purchase American built cars, do much of the repair work themselves and take great pride in their property. The mix of the population in age tends to be young with children mixed with empty nesters or retirees. These traits will help businesses find support in their efforts to hold or attract them when the most basic of services are available for their use. The neighborhood will embrace the redevelopment of the business district when basic services can be found there.

New development in the area should consider a "mixed use" approach that would supply not only commercial space but residential as well. Buildings with the lower level being commercial with the second story being utilized for apartments would be part of that vision.

The biggest challenge for the Committee is identifying adequate space for the three main needs of the district, a grocery store, and general merchandise store and gasoline station.

UPDATE: Since the inception of this Committee, slow-yet steady growth has helped to move Olde Towne forward.

New businesses such as Nebraska's very first Mead Room (Moonstruck Meadery), the expansion of a new Kwik Shop that will include twelve pump stations, Olde Towne Cyclery, The Sweet Stuff Bakery and A Bridal Boutique.

In addition, the committee worked with the City of Bellevue to obtain CDBG funding to help update the facades of some of the older buildings, improve sidewalks, update Thompson Park and assist with several lower income home improvements in the area.

In 2011, the Bellevue Farmers Market in Washington Park had its first successful year. In 2012 it will continue to expand and provide area families not only with fresh produce and homemade products, but live entertainment and other fun activities.

Also in 2011, the first Bellevue Community Celebration was held in Olde Towne. This event will be expanded and the second annual Community Celebration will help to kick off the Spring Season in the Olde Towne area.

The OTDC has initiated a program titled, "Support Olde Towne Eateries." The goal is to educate the public about the importance of eating at locally owned eateries. Unlike large chains, locally owned restaurants support our local economies and the families that depend on the business for income. A website has been created at [www.wheredidyoeat.com](http://www.wheredidyoeat.com) to help promote the cause.

Strategic Planning for the City of Bellevue has included the goal of working with the Olde Towne Development Committee to explore additional grant opportunities and doing a blighted and substandard study within the next twelve months to further help revitalize Olde Towne.

Although progress has been slow, Olde Towne continues to have improvements, expansions and good growth. The OTDC will continue to support Olde Towne Bellevue through its volunteerism and continued efforts.